

## Our Past, Present and Future.

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With the advent of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.), Islam re-emerged on the scene as a great blessing for mankind. It was a dynamic, progressive movement that shaped the entire pattern of life and gave a new meaning and purpose to man's endeavours. As long as the movement adhered to Quranic principles, it remained an integral part of life itself and the Muslims continued to perform memorable deeds in the world of science and practical knowledge that had no parallel in history.

With the passage of time, the Muslims, unfortunately, sought to concentrate more on dogmatic aspects and less on the inherent greatness of the Islamic ideology. Whilst the non-Muslim nations have advanced in various fields, the Muslim Ummah has remained static for centuries. "By the eighteenth century," observes Lothrop Stoddard, "the Moslem world had sunk to the lowest depths of its decrepitude...the austere monotheism of Muhammad had become overlaid with a rank growth of superstition and puerile mysticism. The life had apparently gone out of Islam (out of the followers of Islam! — author). Leaving not but a dry husk of soulless ritual and degrading superstition behind. Could Muhammad have returned to earth, he would unquestionably have anathematized his followers as apostates and idolators."

## INTELLECTUAL SUICIDE

The miracle of Islam was that it destroyed idolatry, but the tragedy of Muslims is that they have turned dogmas into idols! We are now the prisoners of rigidity. Our scholars who are required to steer us out of stagnation, have committed intellectual suicide. They advocate adopting ancient structural solutions to solve the seemingly similar problems which have arisen in radically different social environment. Ijtihad which would have enabled Muslims to

adapt to changing times, is looked upon as heresy. Knowledge has changed critically in its scope and insight, and thus a new cognition of changed environment has become necessary. The problem calls for creative thought and action.

The Ummah is static. To be static is to be dead. Muslims HAVE TO respond creatively to the evolutionary changes that are taking place on this planet. They HAVE TO meet the challenges and crises confronting them. There is a need for the emergence of a creative group that will, in the light of the Quranic fundamentals and through the process of Ijtihad, discover solutions to our problems. They will have to re-start the process of Ijtihad to evolve new conformations to Islamic principles. The task is of gigantic proportions. How true is the statement of Imaam Ghazzali: "The glass of....naive beliefs lies broken. This breakage cannot be mended; it's a breakage that cannot be repaired by patching or by assembling fragments. This glass must be melted once again in the furnace for a new start, and out of it another fresh vessel formed." The vessel is the Islamic society. It existed. It is now broken. We have to reform it. The fuel is to be provided by the Quranic principles; and the machinery of Ijtihad, which at present is rusting, has to be employed to



understand those principles. We have to strive hard for a new start. Strive, and we shall survive. That, indeed, is the promise of Allah; "And those who strive hard for Us, We shall certainly guide them in Our ways." (29:69)

## ROBOTS

The Muslims who were commanded to "hold fast to the rope of Allah" are divided in a manner that will put to shame the Mushriks of pre-Islamic Arabia. They are divided and sub-divided. These divisions have their own fiqh, their own teachings and their own mosques. Yet they say they are "believers". They claim to believe in the same Quran and to follow the same Prophet....but they have separate mosques! Our Imaams are robots with their memories programmed by the theological institutions.

They have nothing to offer, for they are allergic to common sense. They have turned the Holy Quran into a book of magic mantras. As a result the Message remains hidden from the masses.

If this state continues and no positive steps are taken to undo the harm we are doing to ourselves, then we must remember the warning: "And if you turn back, He will bring in your place ANOTHER PEOPLE; they will not be like you." (47:38) And again in crystal-clear terms the Almighty has told us: "Surely Allah does not change the condition of a people, until they change their own condition." (13:11)