AND FROM AMONG YOU THERE SHOULD BE A PARTY WHO INVITE TO GOOD AND ENJOIN THE RIGHT AND FORBID THE WRONG. AND THESE ARE THEY WHO ARE SUCCESSFUL.
The Holy Qur'an Ch. 3 verse 103

In this Issue:       Page

Our Beliefs          2

The Islamic concept of war
by N.A. Faruqui       3

The manifesto of world peace 8

Who was the real Jesus
by N.A. Faruqui       10

Conjugal Concord
by N.A. Faruqui       13

The golden era of Islam
by Masud Beg Mirza   15
OUR BELIEFS

We believe Allah to be the Possessor of all the perfect attributes, free from all defects and imperfections, Unique in His Person, unrivalled in His Attributes and Works, and One without a partner.

We hold it essential to believe in angels, all of the Divine Books, and all the prophets and messengers of God.

We believe that the Holy Prophet Muhammad is the Khatam al-Nabiyin. With his advent religion has been perfected, so he is the Last Prophet after whom no prophet shall come, neither a new one nor a former one.

We believe in the life after death, and in all matters relating to the grave, the day of judgement, and paradise and hell, that are proven from the Qur'an and Hadith.

From the depth of our hearts, we hold the Righteous Caliphs, the Holy Companions (as), the Purified Wives, and members of the Holy Household (ahl bait), as beloved, worthy of respect, and honourable in the sight of God.

We hold the Imams Abu Hanifah, Shafi'i, Malik, and Ahmad Hanbal to be the leaders of jurisprudence (fiqh); and saints such as Shaikh 'Abdul Qadir Jilani, Khwaja Naqshband; and Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindhi to be leaders of Tawswaf (the spiritual sciences). We believe all such elders of the religion to be worthy of esteem.

In accordance with the Holy Prophet's sayings about mujaddids and muddathths, we believe in the truth of the mujaddids of all the centuries, and in accordance with the same tradition, believe in Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian as the Mujaddid of the fourteenth century of Hijrah, not as a prophet.

We consider each such person to be a Muslim who professes to believe la ilaha ill-allah, Muhammadur rasul Allah (there is no god but Allah, Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah) and calls himself a Muslim.

All the members of the Ahmadiyyah Anjuman Isha'at Islam Lahore believe in acting according to God's Book the Holy Qur'an and the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, and if no specific direction is found there, they give precedence to the Hanafi school of jurisprudence.

The Ahmadiyyah Anjuman Isha'at Islam Lahore has not only been proclaiming these beliefs but, for over eighty years, it has been engaged in the propagation of Islam and service to its cause. The whole world and in particular the Muslim religious scholars of the Indo-Pakistan sub-continent have borne witness to this fact.

SWORN DECLARATION OF HAZRAT MIRZA GHULAM AHMAD OF QADIAN:

"I make it clear to the public that I swear by Almighty Allah that I am not a kafir. My belief is la ilaha ill-allah Muhammad ur rasul Allah, and regarding the Holy Prophet I believe that 'he is the Messenger of Allah and Khatam al-Nabiyin' (the Qur'an, 33:40). I swear to this statement as many times as the Holy Qur'an, and as many times as there are excellency of the Holy Prophet in God's eyes. No belief of mine is opposed to the directions of God or of the Holy Prophet, and he who thinks otherwise is mistaken. Whoever still considers me a kafir, and does not refrain from declaring me as such, should remember with certainty that God will question him after his death."

"In all matters my beliefs are the same as those of the other ahl sunnah. In this house of God, I admit most clearly that I believe in the finality of prophethood of the Khatam al-anbiya, the Holy Prophet. Whoever denies the finality of prophethood, I consider him to be a disbeliever and outside the pale of Islam."

SWORN DECLARATION OF HAZRAT MAULANA MUHAMMAD ALI, FIRST HEAD OF THE LAHORE AHMADIYYA COMMUNITY:

"I, Muhammad Ali, head of the Lahore Ahmadiyyah Community, do swear by Almighty God that my belief is that Hazrat Mirza Sahib was a Mujaddid and the Messiah, but not a prophet, and that a person cannot become a kafir and excluded from the pale of Islam by denying him as such; this was also the belief of Hazrat Mirza Sahib himself.

"O God, if I have lied in swearing by Thy name, send upon me such exemplary punishment as could not come from human means, and by which the world would see how terrible and frightening is God's punishment for those who deceive His creatures by swearing falsely in His name."
THE ISLAMIC CONCEPT OF WAR

(N.A. FARUQUI, LAHORE)

The root-meaning of the word “Islam” is “to enter into peace”. And a “Muslim is one who is at peace with God, with himself and with other men”. Another significance of the word Islam is to submit completely to Allah. The connection between the two meanings is clear. It is only through complete submission to Allah that one can find peace within himself and without. The present day man, in spite of his tremendous progress intellectually and materially, and in spite of his full realisation of the horrible consequences of war, and of mental conflict, is constantly on the brink of war, if not actually at war, and eternally at conflict within himself. Why? The reason is obvious that the advance of knowledge, and the accompanying growth of human power over Nature, have gone to Man’s head. Atheism, now so prevalent in the world, is a negation of the evidence of human reason, of man’s own heart and of the present day science. Some of these conceited upstarts have had the cheek to declare openly that either God did not exist or that, if He did, He was now dead! Man has gained control over Nature but lost control over himself.

War Within

2. According to Islam, there is a constant struggle or war within man. He is torn between conflicting internal urges for good and bad. The animal in man, like the animals outside, has to be tamed and trained to be put to good use. To show man the way, the Creator sent Divine guidance in the form of revelation from time to time which found its perfection in the Holy Quran. And He sent his apostles from time to time, again the perfect and last one in the person of the Holy Prophet, to provide a living example of how human beings can bring their animal passions and desires under control by subordinating them to moral and spiritual values, and can thus achieve peace within themselves and outside. The minimum reward promised to the true Muslims in this life is that “They shall have no fear nor shall they grieve” (2:38). Fear as you know precedes an event; grief follows it. That is peace, or state of bliss, within man.

3. If the animal within man is not tamed and subdued, the animal passions and desires spill over from man’s heart to the world outside and thus cause all the troubles mankind suffers from. Besides, no one can hold a proper balance between conflicting human interests except the Great Judge i.e. God. As no two faces are identical, no two natures are the same. So people disagree. Then there are differences of colour, language, sex etc. How can conflicting interests be resolved by any one of the parties concerned? It is only the Great Creator Who knows best and can decide best. If man does not accept Divine guidance, then he naturally obeys his own desires and passions. They cloud his conscience and good sense and drag man to commit acts of cruelty, aggression and war. He commits them even if the other side is on its best behaviour.

Self-Defence

4. The best example of such high-handedness is what the opponents of the Holy Prophet did to him and his companions. They suffered the worst possible form of religious persecution, torture and eviction from Mecca but did not retaliate. It is only when their enemies took to arms to destroy them that they took up arms in self-defence. This is clear from the very first verse of the Holy Quran on the subject of fighting:

“Permission to fight is given to those upon whom war is made because they are oppressed; And surely Allah is able to assist them” (2:29). Note that the taking up of the sword required Divine permission and that it was granted only after the enemy had taken the initiative and committed aggression against the Muslims. In such a situation, a Muslim must defend himself; whatever the odds against him. How unequal the battle of Badr was well-known. The Holy Quran itself testifies to it: “Fighting is enjoined on you, though it is disliked by you” (2:216).

5. Let us look at another earlier verse on the subject:

“And fight, in the way of Allah, those who fight against you but be not aggressive. Surely Allah does not love the aggressors” (2:190).

Muslims had suffered long and grievously at the hands of their opponents and were now being permitted to fight but only when they were attacked in war. In hitting back there was human possibility of exceeding the limits of decent conduct, particularly in victory. This was prohibited.

6. The Muslims had been forced to leave their homes and hearths, and were now sought to be annihilated physically for the only fault that they were Muslims. The Holy Quran itself says:

“Permission to fight is given to those who are driven from their homes without a just cause except that they say: Our Lord is Allah. And if Allah did not repel some people by others, cloisters and churches and synagogues, and mosques in which Allah’s name is much remembered, would have been pulled down. And surely Allah will help any man who helps him. Surely, Allah is Strong, Mighty” (22:40).

7. One can well appreciate the situation Muslims were then in, because Muslims from India were also driven out of their hearths and homes for no fault except that they were Muslims. And then Muslims were attacked in their refuge i.e. Pakistan in the same way as the Muslims who migrated to Madina were sought to be destroyed.

False Charge

8. The charge that Islam was spread by the sword is malicious, not only because it is contrary to well-known historical facts, but also because of the following, among several, clear injunctions in the Holy Quran;

“There is no compulsion in religion” (2:256)

“And fight them until there is no persecution and religion is only for Allah. But if they desist, then there should be no hostility except against the oppressors” (2:193)
That “religion is only for Allah” means that religion is to be treated as a matter between man and God, is clear from other verses e.g. “And fight with them until there is no more persecution and all religions should be only for Allah” (8:39).

“And if Allah did not repel some people by others, cloisters and churches, and synagogues, and mosques in which Allah’s name is much remembered would have been pulled down” (22:40). For an exhaustive study of this subject, please see “The Religion of Islam” by Maulana Muhammad Ali.

9. That the Muslims fought only in defence of their religion, their people and their homes is further clear from the following verses of the Holy Quran:

“And they will not cease fighting until they turn you back from your religion, if they can” (2:217).

“And what reason have you not to fight in the way of Allah, and for the weak among the men and the women and children, who say: Our Lord, take us out of this town whose people are oppressors, and grant us from Thee a friend, and grant us from Thee a helper” (4:75).

“They (the Bani Israel) said: And what reason have we that we should not fight in Allah’s way and we have indeed been deprived of our houses and our children? But when fighting was ordained for them, they turned back except a few of them. And Allah knows all about wrong-doers” (2:246).

“And whoever retaliates with the like of which he is afflicted and he is oppressed, Allah will certainly help him” (22:60).

“And those who when great wrong afflicts them, defend themselves” (42:39).

“And were it not for Allah repelling some men by others, the earth would certainly be in a state of disorder; but Allah is Full of grace to the worlds” (2:251).

**Pre-requisites of War**

10. It is clear from the above verses that fighting in the way of Allah constitutes fighting: (i) in self-defence when the enemy has taken the initiative, (ii) in defence of religious freedom and places of religious worship, (iii) to restore order and peace in the country, (iv) to rescue the weak among the men, and the women and children who are oppressed, (v) to recover lost homes, families and properties, and (vi) to defend those with whom one has an alliance and they are attacked, as the Holy Prophet had to do when Mecca was eventually conquered.

11. Islam is a balanced and practical religion. It recognises that forces of evil will exist, that they will try to crush others, and that they will have to be fought with their own weapons. The Christians who accused Islam of being warlike are now constrained to spend the best part of their budget on war-like preparations. And they proudly acclaim those who fight or die in self-defence. Could there be a greater vindication of the correctness and usefulness of the teachings of Islam?

**Defence Preparedness**

12. Islam, which is a complete code of life, tells us that one must not be caught unawares or ill-prepared for defence. There are many verses of the Holy Quran on this subject. To quote a few:

“O you who believe, take your precautions. Then only go forth in detachments or go forth in a body” (4:71).

“And fight in the way of Allah or defend yourself” (3:166).

“And make ready for them whatever force you can, and steeds (of war) tied at the frontier, to frighten thereby the enemy of Allah and your enemy and others besides them, whom you know not (but) Allah knows them. And whatever you spend in Allah’s way, it will be paid back to you fully and you will not be wronged” (8:60).

There are hadith which speak of the excellence of keeping a horse (Bukhari 56:45) for fighting in the way of Allah, or of keeping horses ready on the frontier of the enemy (Bukhari 56:73), or recommending the learning of shooting and practising with implements of war (Bukhari 56:78, 79). Paradise is spoken of as under the shadow of swords (Bukhari 56:22) so long as they are used in the right cause. Similarly, the Holy Prophet said, “Shouldn’t I tell you of the night which is better than the night of Qadr (glory)? It is the night spent by a Mujahid on sentry duty during jihad in a place of danger from where there is little of hope of returning to one’s kith and kin”. He also said: “The fire of hell will not touch the eye which kept awake on sentry duty during jihad”. The Great Master also said: “To spend one day in jihad is much to be preferred to the world and all it has to offer.”

**Exhortation**

13. Muslims are asked not to hesitate to fight in the way of Allah. Here are some verses:

“Fight them in Allah’s way - thou art not responsible except for thy self, and urges on the believers. Shortly will Allah restrain the fighting of those who disbelieve. And Allah is stronger in prowess and stronger to give exemplary punishment” (4:84).

“O you who believe, what (excuse) have you that when it is said to you, Go forth in Allah’s way, you should incline heavily to earth? Are you contented with this world’s life instead of the Hereafter? The provision of this life is but little as compared with the Hereafter. If you do not go forth, He will chastise you with a painful chastisement and bring in your place a people other than you, and you can do Allah no harm. And Allah is Possessor of power over all things” (9:38-39).

“Those who believe, fight in the way of Allah, and those who disbelieve fight in the way of the devil. So fight against the friends of the devil, surely the struggle of the devil is weak” (4:76).

“Go forth, light or heavy, and strive hard in Allah’s way with your wealth and your lives. This is better for you, if you know” (9:41).
Jihad

14. In most places of the Holy Book, Jihad with one’s wealth and lives go together. The word Jihad means literally, to strive and to exert one’s self. The Holy Quran speaks of the propagation of truth, and the extermination of falsehood and evil, as Jihad when it says: “And strive against them (the disbelievers) with this (Book) which is the greatest Jihad” (25:52).

Similarly, The Holy Prophet said: “Strive (jihadu) against your low desires as you strive against your enemies.”

Even in Urdu we use the expression Jidd-O-Jihad to mean exertion. Fighting is called Jihad because it is the highest form of exertion when undertaken against aggression. For the purpose of this article, taking the last view of Jihad to mean fighting, you have to spend a lot of money to prepare for defence or to wage a war. It seems, on the face of it, inef fctuous expenditure. That is why economists and finance people cavil at it. The trouble is that we try to find it from the ordinary revenues. Why not a special fund for which appeals should be made especially, and that too in the words of the Holy Quran. Jihad with wealth has been placed first in the Holy Book because it goes on all the time and the all the people can and should take part in it. Jihad with one’s life arises only occasionally, and all the people cannot take part in it. The Holy book is full of appeals on the subject. To quote a few:

“Surely, Allah has bought from the believers, their persons and their property, in return for which they will have paradise” (9:111)

“O you who believe, shall I lead you to a merchandise which will deliver you from a painful chastisement. You should believe in Allah and His Messenger and strive hard in Allah’s way with your wealth and your lives. This is better for you, did you but know” (61:10,11)

Fear of Death

15. In fighting, it is natural to be afraid of dying. The Holy Quran removes that fear as follows:

“And no person can die but with Allah’s permission. The term is fixed” (3:144)

“Those who said of their brethren while they themselves held back (from the battle field) had they obeyed us, they would not have been killed. Say: Avert death from yourselves, if you are truthful” (3:167)

“O you who believe, be not like those who disbelieve and say of their brethren when they travel in the earth or engage in fighting: had they been with us, they would not have died or been slain; that Allah may make it to be a regret in their hearts. And Allah gives life and causes death. And Allah is Seer of what you do” (3:155)

“They (the hypocrites) say: Had we any hand in the matter we would not have been slain here. Say: Had you remained in your houses, those for whom slaughter was ordained would have gone forth to the places where they would be slain” (3:153)

“Wherever you are, death will overtake you, though you are in towers raised high” (4:78)

“Say: Flight will not profit you, if you fly from death or slaughter, and then you will not be allowed to enjoy yourselves but a little” (33:16)

Cowardice Condemned

16. Weakness or cowardice in battle is due to the whisperings of the devil, according to the Holy Quran. To quote:

“Those of you who turned back on the day the two armies met, only the devil sought to cause them to make a slip on account of some deeds they had done” (3:154).

“IT is the devil only who frightens his friends, but fear them (i.e. the enemy) not, and fear Me, if you are believers” (3:74)

17. How should the Muslims face the enemy when it attacks? The Quran says:

“Surely Allah loves those who fight in His way in ranks, as if they were a solid wall” (61:4)

“When people said: Surely hordes have gathered against you, so fear them; but this increased the faith of the believers, and they said: Allah is sufficient for us and He is an excellent Guardian” (3:172)

“And be not weak-hearted, nor grieve, and you will have the upper hand if you are believers: (3:138)

“And how many a prophet has fought, with whom were many worshippers of the Lord. So they did not lose heart on account of any misfortune that befell them in Allah’s way, nor did they weaken, nor did they abuse themselves. And Allah loves those who are steadfast” (3:145).

“O you who believe, when you meet those who disbelieve in war, do not turn your back on them. And whosoever turns his back on that day - unless manoeuvring for battle or turning to join a company - he, indeed, incurs Allah’s wrath and his refuge is hell. And what an evil destination it is” (8:15,16).

“O you who believe, when you meet an army, be firm and remember Allah a lot so that you may be successful. And obey Allah and His messenger, and do not quarel with one another lest you get weak-hearted and your power depart, and be steadfast. Surely Allah is with the steadfast” (8:45,46).

“And when the believers saw the allies, they said: this is what Allah And His messenger promised us and Allah and His Messenger spoke the truth. And it only added to their faith and submission. Of the believers are men who are true to the covenant they made with Allah, so of them is he who has paid the supreme sacrifice, and of them is he who yet awaits it, and they have not changed in the least” (33:22,23).

Divine Assistance

18. The Muslims are promised Divine assistance if they fight in the way of Allah, even if they are smaller and weaker than the enemy:

“How often has a small party vanquished a numerous host by Allah’s permission. And Allah is with the steadfast” (2:249)

“If Allah helps you, there is none that can overcome you; and if He forsakes you, who is there that can help you after Him? And in Allah should the believers put their trust” (3:159).

“And surely Allah will help any man who helps Him. Surely, Allah is Strong, Mighty” (22:40).

“We have made it incumbent upon Ourselves to help the believers”. If there be of you twenty who are steadfast, they shall override two
hundred; and if there be of you a hundred, they shall overcome a thousand of those who disbelieve because they are a people who do not understand. Now Allah has lightened your burden and He knows that there is weakness in you. So if there be of you a hundred who are steadfast, they shall overcome two hundred and if there be of you a thousand they shall overcome two thousand by Allah's permission. And Allah is with the steadfast." (8:65,66)

According to the above, the winning ratio of 1:10 applies to the Muslims when they are well-prepared. The second ratio of 1:2 applies when they are weak. Muslim history is full of instances to prove it. We only have to avoid incurring Divine displeasure.

"We will cast your fear into the hearts of those who disbelieve because they set up with Allah that for which He has sent down no authority, and their abode is the fire. And evil is the abode of wrong-doers" (3:150)

"When thy Lord revealed to the angels: I am with you, so make firm those who believe. I will cast terror into the hearts of those who disbelieve"(8:12)

Miscellaneous Instructions

19. Here are some miscellaneous but useful instructions, for those who fight, about what they should not do:

"And on the day of Hunain when your great number made you proud, but they availed you of nothing"(9:25).

"And be not like those who came forth exultingly and to be seen of men" (8:47)

"So when Talut (Saul) set out with forces, he said: Surely Allah will try you with luxuries. Whoever partakes of them he is not of me, and whoever does not he is surely of me, except he who takes a handful with his hand. But they partook of them save a few of them" (2:249). (The Quran then goes on to explain how those who fell for comforts and luxuries could not stand up to their enemies).

"And be not weak-hearted in the pursuit of the enemy. If you suffer they (to) suffer as you suffer, and you hope from Allah what they hope not: (4:104).

"Your relationship (among the enemy) and your children would not profit you, on the day of Resurrection - He will decide between you. And Allah sees whatever you do" (60:3)

Prayers

20. The Muslims are taught a few prayers too to seek Divine help and to make their hearts firm:

"Allah is sufficient for us, and He is an excellent Guardian"(3:172).

"And their cry was only that they said: Our Lord grant us protection from our sins and our extravagance in our affair, and make firm our feet and grant us victory over the disbelieving people" (3:146)

"And when they went out against Goliath and his forces, they said: Our Lord, pour out patience on us and make our steps firm and help us against the disbelieving people" (2:250)

21. Apart from the casual prayers mentioned above, the regular prayers can be said during journey or battle as follows:

The Holy Quran says: "And when you journey in the earth, there is no blame on you if you shorten the prayer, (and also) if you fear that those who disbelieve will cause you mischief, for the disbelievers are your open enemies. And if thou art among them and keepest up the prayer for them, let a party of them stand up with thee and let them take their arms: then when they have finished their prostration, let them go to your rear, and let the other party who have not prayed come forward and pray with thee" (4:101,102).

The above injunction deals with two situations, first, when a Muslim is on a journey; secondly, during a hot war. There are instances of both in the life-time of the Holy Prophet. In the first case, i.e. ordinary journey, his practice was as follows. The sunnat rak'ats are all dropped with the exception of those of the morning prayer; the number of farz rak'ats in the Zuhr, Asr and Isha prayers, which is four ordinarily, is reduced to two, but the three rak'ats of the Maghrib prayer stay intact like the two farz rak'ats of the morning prayer. The three wir Rak'ats of the Isha prayer are also retained.

In addition the traveller is allowed to combine the Zuhr and Asr prayers (at Zuhr time or Asr time) and the Maghrib and Isha prayers are also combined (at Maghrib or Isha time). There is some difference of opinion among the Muslim jurists as to whether it is necessary that the journey should extend over a certain specified distance or a certain specified time. But the best judge on this matter is the person concerned as to when he is on a journey and when he is not. But when the period of stay at a place during travel is uncertain, the combination of prayers is permissible. So when it is raining and the prayer is said in a congregation or when one has to attend a function or a job which would keep him busy at the time of the other prayer.

When facing the enemy, each prayer is much shortened. When there is a fear of attack from the enemy, the congregation is divided into two parties, each party saying only one rak'at of prayer with the Imam, while the Imam says only two rak'ats. The first party terminates the prayer after the prostrations of the first rak'at, the second party then joins the Imam and the second rak'at with him. In case of still greater fear, when congregation is not possible, it is permitted to say prayers whether on foot or riding (Bukhari 12:2). The Holy Quran itself says: "But if you are in danger, then say your prayers on foot or on horseback" (2:239).

Supremacy of Peace

22. That Islam, the religion of peace, places peace at a premium, even at some risk, is clear from the verse:

"And if they incline to peace, incline thou also to it, and trust in Allah. Surely He is the Hearer, the Knower. And if they intend to deceive thee, then surely Allah is sufficient for thee. He it is Who strengthened thee with His help and with the believers" (8:61,61).

So that if the enemy seeks peace at any time, the Muslims must accept it. If any deception is apprehended, trust Allah for Whose sake you agreed to the peace, but take your precautions. "Unconditional surrender" is therefore, not contemplated in Islam. The last two world wars have shown how wrong that demand was, because it recoiled on the heads of the
victors. The Holy Prophet was so prone to peace that on the occasion of the Hudaibiyah truce, he did not hesitate to accept highly unfavourable terms although he had not been defeated on the battlefield. On the fall of Mecca, he forgave his worst enemies.

**Prohibitions**

23. Beastiality and cruelty, so common during the heat of fighting by even the so-called civilised nations of the present day world, are forbidden in Islam. So is the mutilation of dead bodies. Could they be nobler instructions than those given by the Holy Prophet when dispatching troops against the Byzantine: “In avenging the injuries inflicted upon us, molest not the harmless inmates of domestic seclusion: spare the weakness of the female sex; injure not the infant at the breast, or those who are ill in bed. Abstain from demolishing the dwellings of the resisting inhabitants; destroy not the means of their subsistence, nor their fruit trees” (p. 81 Sayyid Amir Ali’s Spirit of Islam).

On another occasion, the Great Master said to the troops about to depart: 

“Go in the name of Allah and in the cause of the faith of Allah and His Prophet. Do not kill old men or infants or innocent women. Do not commit breach of trust. Preserve all booty carefully. Give good advice to one another and live righteously, Allah likes those who are considerate to others”.

Abdullah ibn Umar reports that, in a certain battle, the Holy Prophet noticed a woman among those slain. On this the Holy Prophet forbade the killing of women and children in wars (Bukhari 56:147,148). Hadith relating to this prohibition are repeated very often in all collections of Hadith such as Abu Dawood, Tirmizi, Ahmed bin Hanbal and Muslim. In some of these, the labour units (attached to troops) are included in the prohibition. Monks are also not to be molested(Ahmad ibn Hanbal - vol. I, p.300). On another occasion, the Holy Prophet excused the chance killing of a woman or a child because it was night time.

Hazrat Abu Bakr gave the following instructions to the commander of an army leaving for the Syrian front: “When you meet your enemies, acquitted yourselves like men, and do not turn your backs; and if you gain victory, kill not the children, nor old people, nor women. Destroy no fruit trees, nor burn any fields of corn. Don’t do any mischief to the cattle except such as you kill for the necessity of subsistence. When you make any covenant or article, stand by it, and be as good as your word. As you go on, you will find some religious persons that live retired in monasteries. Let them alone, and neither kill them nor destroy their monasteries.”

**Prisoners of War**

24. As for the prisoners of war, long before the Geneva Convention, the Holy Quran and the Holy Prophet laid down the most civilised and humane rules. The Holy book says: “So when you meet the disbelievers in battle, smite the necks until when you have overcome them, make them prisoners, and afterwards either set them free as a favour or let them ransom themselves, until the war lays down its weapons”(47:4). The Holy Prophet carried this injunction into practice in his lifetime. In the battle of Hunain, 6,000 prisoners were taken from the tribe of Hawazin. They were all set free, simply as an act of favour (Bukhari 40:7, Tabari III, p 132). A hundred families of Bani Mustaliq were taken as prisoners in the battle of Muraisi; and they were also set at liberty without any ransom (Tabari III, p.66).

Seventy prisoners were taken in the battle of Badr and it was only in this case that ransom was taken, but the prisoners were granted their freedom while the Quraish had given no indication of giving up fighting (Abu Dawood 15:22). But ransom for those prisoners who could not find cash was that they should teach Muslim children to read and write (Ahmad bin Hanbal - I, p. 247). The prisoners were distributed among the various Muslim families because no arrangements for their maintenance by the state existed at the time, but they were treated honourably. A non Muslim prisoner of war stated that he was kept in a family whose people gave him bread while they themselves had to live on date (Tabari II, p. 287). This was better than the provisions of Geneva Convention drawn up centuries later by the so-called civilised nations.

About the women who come over from the enemy professing willingness to accept Islam, the Holy Quran requires that they should be carefully examined before being accepted as genuine Muslims, because women were used as spies and agents even in those days.

**Martyrs**

25. Lastly, let me quote the verses regarding those who make the supreme sacrifice:

“And speak not of those who are slain in Allah’s way as dead. Nay, they are very much alive but you do not perceive it” (2:154)

“And if you are slain in Allah’s way or die a natural death, surely Allah’s protection and mercy are better than what others collect” (3:156)

“So let those fight in the way of Allah who sell this world’s life for the Hereafter. And whoever fights in the way of Allah, be he slain or be he victorious, We shall grant him a mighty reward” (4:47).

“And think not of those who are killed in Allah’s way as dead. Nay they are very much alive, being provided sustenance from their Lord. Rejoicing in what Allah has given them out of His grace, and they rejoice for the sake of those who (being left) behind them have not yet joined them, that they have no fear, nor shall they grieve. They rejoice for Allah’s favour and His grace, and that Allah wastes not the reward of believers” (3:168-170)

Lastly, who are the people on whom Allah has bestowed His favours whose path you seek in all your prayers when you say: “Guide us on the right path; the Path of those upon whom Thou hast bestowed favours (Surah Al-Fatiha v.5 and 6).

The Holy Quran answers it thus: “And whoever obeys Allah and the Messenger, they are with those upon whom Allah has bestowed favours from among the prophets, the truthful, the martyrs and the righteous, and what a good company are they” (4:69)
THE MANIFESTO OF WORLD PEACE

THE HOLY PROPHET MUHAMMAD'S FAREWELL PILGRIMAGE ADDRESS

The Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) during his Farewell Pilgrimage gave as sermon which could be styled the “manifesto of world Peace”. The Prophet attached so much importance to this Manifesto that he repeated it five times during that Haji season! Once he gave this sermon on 7th Dhu al-Hijjah in the Sacred Mosque at Mecca and twice at “Arafat” on 9th Dhu al-Hijjah and again twice at Mina on 10th Dhu al-Hijjah (or 11th and 12th) each day once.

Ya’qubi, the historian, records that the sermon of the 7th Dhu Al-Hijjah was delivered by the Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him) while on a camel after the afternoon prayer and the sermon on 9th Dhu al-Hijjah in the valley of ‘Arafat in the afternoon first before the afternoon prayer and again after finishing the afternoon prayer; on both these latter occasions he spoke on camel-back. The sermon at Mina was delivered after the morning prayer, also on camel-back. His companion, Bilal, was in attendance, holding the camel reins. On all these occasions the Prophet had a crier to repeat his words, sentence by sentence, after him. During the Mina sermon it was his son-in-law, ‘Ali, who acted as a crier, while on other occasions it was a young man of vigorous voice named Rabi’ah ibn Khalaf. The Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) had him standing very close to him and asked him to repeat after him each sentence. When the Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) reached Arafat (near Mecca), he asked Rabi’ah ibn Khalaf, who had a very powerful voice, to act as a crier. During the Farewell Pilgrimage of 632 C.E there were present at ‘Arafat between 120 to 140 thousand men and women. The Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) repeated his sermon again and again because everybody could not find it convenient to attend only one assembly. As the pilgrims’ presence in the plain of ‘Arafat forms an integral part of the Pilgrimage rites and his stay at ‘Arafat is obligatory, the Prophet soon after the whole congregation was ready to perform the afternoon prayer mounted his camel. After praising and glorifying God, the Prophet said to Rabi’ah, “Say to them: O people! the Messenger of God says:

“I am a man like unto you. It is possible that you may not see me again in this place (the Prophet passed away about three months later - 8th June 632 C.E). Therefore listen to what I am saying to you very carefully and take these words to those who could not be present here today.

May God bless the person who, after having heard me, guards my words and takes them to others! It is possible that you do not understand the import of my words here, but there are people in the world who would understand the meaning of my words better than you. Therefore understand that you should Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) stopped and asked the audience if it had heard his words well. When everyone shouted to say that they had heard them, the Prophet turned his face upwards and said: “O God! Thou art my witness. I have conveyed Thy message.”

The Prophet said to Rabi’ah, “Say to them: O people! Do you know what month this is?” They said: “It is the sacred month of Dhu al-Hijjah”.

Then the Prophet said to Rabi’ah, “Say to them: God has hallowed your blood and your property like the sanctity of this month until you meet your Lord.”

Then the Prophet said to Rabi’ah, “Say to them: Do you know what territory this is?” and they said, “The Holy land (of Mecca).”

And then the Prophet said to Rabi’ah to say to them: “God has hallowed your blood and your property like the sanctity of this land until you meet your Lord.”

Then the Prophet said to Rabi’ah, - “Say to the people: Do you know what day this is?” And they said: “The day of the great Hajj”. 

And then the Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said to Rabi’ah to say to them: “God has made sacred and inviolable the life and the property of each of you unto the other like this day of the Haji until you meet your Lord”.

The Lord has ordained to every man the share of his inheritance. A testament is not lawful to the detriment of heirs.

The child belongs to the parent, and for the violator of wedlock a stone.

You are about to meet your Lord Who will ask you to account for your actions. He who has a pledge should re turn it to him who entrusted it to him.

This day all sums of interest are remitted, including that of my uncle, ‘Abbas Ibn ‘Abd al-Muttalib. This day retaliation for all murders committed in the days of paganism (the Jahiliyyah) is prohibited, and foremost of all, the murder of Rabi’ah Ibn Harith is forgiven.

0 people ! you have certain rights over your wives, and so have your wives over you. They are the trust of God in your hands. So you must treat them with all kindness. You have taken them only as a trust from God, and you have enjoyment of their persons by the words of God.

And as regards your slaves, see that
you give them to eat of what you yourselves eat, and clothe them with what you clothe yourselves. If they commit a fault which you are not inclined to forgive, then part with them; for they are the servants of the Lord, and they are not to be harshly treated.

And keep always faithful to the trust reposed in you and avoid sins.

All men are from Adam and Eve. An Arab has no Superiority over a non-Arab; also a non-Arab has no Superiority over an Arab except by good actions.

0 people! listen to what I have to say and take it to heart. You must know that every Muslim is the brother of another Muslim (and as he pronounced these words he raised his arms aloft and placed the fore-finger of one hand on the fore finger of the other). You are all equal. (You enjoy your equal rights and have similar obligations.) You are all members of one brotherhood. It is forbidden for any one of you to take from his brother save what the latter should willingly give.

“Guard yourselves from committing injustices.”

The Prophet then proceeded to recite the 36th and 37th verses of the 9th chapter of the Holy Qur’an which abolish the triennial intercalation of the year, and fix the month of Pilgrimage to the changing seasons of the year”.

He said: “Verily, the number of the months with God is twelve months (in a year, so ordained by Him the day He created the heavens and the earth. Of them four are sacred, three consecutive and the month of Rajab). That is the true religion. So wrong not yourselves.

Verily the transposing (of a prohibited month) is an addition to unbelief. The unbelievers are led to a wrong thereby; for they make it lawful one year, and forbidden another year, that they may equalize the number of months which God has forbidden and make such forbidden ones lawful.”

And now on this very day has time performed its cycle, and as it was on the day that God created the heavens and the earth.

0 people! truly ‘Satan has deserted, of being worshipped in your land forever. But should you obey him in some matter which may seem to be trifling, it will be a matter of pleasure for him. So you must beware of him in the matter of your faith.

Let him that is present tell it to him that is absent. Haply he who shall be told may remember that who has heard it.

“0 people! so understand my words. I have left with you something which, if you will hold fast to it, you will never fall into error - a plain indication, the Book of God and the practice of His Prophet. So give good heed to what I say”.

Then the Prophet looking up to heaven cried at the top of his voice, “0 Lord! I have delivered Thy message.” And the valley resounded with the reply from the myriad of human throats with one accord, “And that thou hast!”

Thereupon the Prophet said, “0 Lord I beseech Thee! bear Thou witness unto it.”

An Analysis of the Address
In the Farewell Pilgrimage Address of the Prophet there are fifteen items which taken collectively could be styled “The Manifesto of World Peace”. In this sermon the one thing which catches one’s eye is the holy Prophet not even once mentioned the importance of rituals - the Prayers, the Zakat and Fasting - and that whatever he said and emphasised had a bearing on human relationship tending to establish peace amongst men and security in the world. Ritualism is given no pride of place in this Address. The fifteen items in the Manifesto are:

1. The blood, prophecy and honour of Muslims is sacred to one another. In this regard the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said, “O men! listen to my words and take them to heart. Know that every Muslim is a brother to every other Muslim, and that you are now one brotherhood. It is not legitimate for any one of you, therefore, to appropriate to himself anything that belongs to this brother unless it is willingly given to him by his brother.”

2. Equality of rights. In this regards the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: “All men are from Adam and Eve. An Arab has no superiority over a non-Arab; also a non-Arab has no superiority over an Arab, except by good actions.”

3. The abolition of family distinctions. He said that people should not take pride in their genealogy. It is good actions alone they should take pride in.

4. Interdiction of bloodshed resulting from old feuds. The Holy Prophet said, “Blood feuds of the pre-Islamic days are under my feet. i.e., forbidden.”

5. Interdiction of usury. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said, “All usury money chargeable from the pre-Islamic period is under my feet. (i.e. cancelled), and the first usury money which I cancel is the money that belonged to my uncle ‘Abbas ibn Mutallib.”

6. The enforcement of the law of cease-fire. The Holy Prophet emphasised the importance of observing peace and cease-fire during the four sacred months of Arab calendar. The meaning underlying this observance of the sanctity of the four sacred months was that the elders and leaders of the Arab community would thus be able to consolidate peace.

7. Safeguarding of the rights of women.
WHO WAS THE REAL JESUS?

N.A. FARUQUI, LAHORE

Under the above heading, the London “Observer” of December 23, 1979, has reviewed a forthcoming book by Dr. Elaine Pagels, Professor of Religious Studies at Barnard College, Columbia University, U.S.A. I am grateful to Mr. Majeed Ali of London, an indefatigable honorary missionary of Islam, for sending me a copy of the review. Much has been written recently about who the real Jesus was, by Christian scholars themselves. I had summarised the almost worldwide reappraisal of the real position of Jesus by the Christian Scholars themselves in my article entitled “Great Prophecy Fulfilled” in the “Light” dated May 24, 1978. In a nutshell, modern enlightened Christian Scholarship has come to the conclusion that Jesus was not, and never claimed to be (in the real sense), the son of God; but he was a man of great moral and spiritual eminence, which he indeed was as vouchedsafed by the Holy Quran which calls him one of the outstanding prophets of God. The sooner Christendom as a whole accepts that view, the sooner will the quest for the real Jesus end.

The “Observer” article under consideration is being reproduced in parts by me for another reason. Eversince the Dead Sea Scrolls came to light, I had felt that the reference in chapter 18 of the Holy Quran to “Companions of the cave and the inscription or tablets” is a reference to some early Christian hermits who retired to a cave or caves and left behind some very vital evidence (about the true teachings of Jesus) in the form of writings or scrolls. When this evidence comes to light, the truth about the religion taught by Jesus will come to be known, and the falsehood of the creed spread by St. Paul which unfortunately came to be accepted later as the real Christianity will be exposed.

The evidence discovered in the caves of Jabal al-Tarif in Egypt, unfortunately partly lost, is vital to the future of Christianity. One can only hope that it will be fully and candidly interpreted and not suppressed as some of the vital parts of the Dead Sea Scrolls seem to have been. Before I quote from the “Observer” review, I would like to make three points:

(i) That Jesus had a twin brother named Thomas has now been known. It has now been further confirmed by the Jabal al-Tarif scrolls. The point to note is that, apart from other evidence that Jesus was born of the seed of Joseph the carpenter and Mary, if Jesus was conceived along with Thomas, the theory of Immaculate Conception and Virgin Birth collapses completely.

(ii) As regards the Resurrection of Jesus after three days of lying in a cave (after his crucifixion), now that his resurrection from the dead is no longer tenable, the whole confusion would disappear if Christian scholars were to accept the view put forward by Hazrat Mirza Gulam Ahmad Sahib, the Promised Messiah, 90 years ago, that Jesus did not die on the cross but that he fainted so much as to resemble a dead man, and that he recovered after treatment in a cave for three days. So that his sight by the disciples in his physical being is also correct. This view has been confirmed by the recent discussion of the Holy Shroud of Turin.

(iii) Not only did Jesus survive the crucifixion but he escaped to Kashmir where he married Mary Magdalene and had a family. I saw an article by a Christian scholar that Jesus had in fact married Mary Magdalene even before the crucifixion. This is necessary to mention to clear his name from the reference in the Jabal al-Tarif scroll under review that he was seen kissing Mary Magdalene on the mouth quite often. A prophet of God does not kiss a woman like that unless she is his wife.

I will now reproduce some parts of the “Observer” review:

Paigham-e-Haqq 10 July/September 1999
Who was the Real Jesus?

“An entirely new view of Jesus is revealed in long-lost Christian Gospels and texts, some of which are claimed to be contemporary with Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Elaine Pagels, an American Scholar now working on the texts, tells the extraordinary story of their discovery in Egypt and how they challenge traditional belief in the virgin birth and the resurrection.

“In Dec. 1945 an Arab peasant made an astonishing archaeological discovery in Upper Egypt. Rumours obscured the circumstances of this find - perhaps because the discovery was accidental, and its sale on the black market illegal.

“For years even the identity of the discoverer remained unknown. One rumour held that he was engaged in a blood feud; another, that he had made the find near the town of Nag Hammadi at the Jabal al-Tarif, a mountain honey-combed with more than 150 caves. Originally natural, some of these caves were cut and painted and used as grave sites about 4,300 years ago.

“The discoverer, Muhammad Ali al-Samman, finally told what happened 30 years after the find. Shortly before he and his brothers avenged their father’s murder in a blood feud, they had saddled their camels and gone out to the Jabal to dig for sabakh, a soft soil they used to fertilize their crops.

“Digging around a massive boulder, they hit a red earthenware jar, about three feet high. Muhammad Ali hesitated to break the jar, considering that a jinn, or spirit, might live inside. But hoping that it might also contain gold, he raised his mattock, smashed the jar, and discovered inside 13 papyrus books, bound in leather.

“Muhammad Ali returned home (Nag Hammadi is about 50 miles north west of Luxor, on the Nile) and dumped the books and loose papyrus leaves on a pile of straw beside the family oven. Muhammad’s mother admits that she burned much of the papyrus in the oven along with the straw she used to kindle the fire.

“A few weeks later, as Muhammad Ali tells it, he and his brothers avenged their father’s death by murdering Ahmed Ismail. Their mother had warned her sons to keep their mattocks sharp; then they learned that their father’s enemy was nearby, the brothers seized the opportunity, ‘hacked off his limbs...ripped out his heart, and devoured it among them, as the ultimate act of blood avenge’.

“Fearing that the police investigating the murder would search his house and discover the books, Muhammad Ali asked the local Coptic priest to keep one or more for him. While Muhammad Ali and his brothers were being interrogated for murder, a local history teacher had seen one of the books and suspected that it had value. He took a book from the priest and sent it to a friend in Cairo to find out its worth.

“Sold on the black market through antiquities dealers in Cairo, the manuscripts soon attracted the attention of Egyptian Government officials. Intervening, the officials bought one and confiscated ten-and-a-half of the 13 leather-bound books (called codices), and deposited them in the Coptic Museum in Cairo. But a large part of the thirteenth codex, containing five extraordinary texts, was smuggled out of Egypt and offered for sale in America.

“Word of this smuggled codex soon reached the Biblical historian Professor Gilles Quispel, at Utrecht, in the Netherlands. Excited by the discovery, Quispel urged the Jung Foundation in Zurich to buy the codex. But finding, after the purchase, that some pages were missing, he flew to Egypt in the spring of 1955 to try to locate them in the Coptic Museum. He was able to borrow photographs of some of the texts, and set about deciphering them. Tracing out the first line, Quispel was startled, then incredulous, to read: ‘These are the secret words which the living Jesus spoke, and which the twin, Judas Thomas, wrote down. Quispel knew that a colleague had already identified the opening lines with fragments of a Greek ‘Gospel of Thomas’ discovered in the 1890s.

“The discovery of the whole text raised new questions: Did Jesus have a twin brother, as this text implied? Could the text be an authentic record of Jesus’s sayings? According to its title, it contained the ‘Gospel According to Thomas’; yet, unlike the gospels of the New Testament, this text identified itself as a secret gospel. Quispel also discovered that it contained many sayings, known from the New Testament: but these sayings placed in unfamiliar contexts, suggested other dimensions of meaning.

“Quispel found that some passages differed entirely from any known Christian tradition. The ‘living Jesus’, for example, speaks in sayings as cryptic and compelling as Zen Buddhist riddles:-

Jesus said, ‘If you bring forth what is within you, what you bring forth will save you. If you do not bring forth what is within you, what you do not bring forth will destroy you’.

“What Quispel held in his hand, the ‘Gospel of Thomas’, was only one of the 52 texts discovered at Nag Hammadi. Bound into the same volume with it is the ‘Gospel of Philip’, which attributes to Jesus’ acts and sayings quite different from those in the New Testament:-

...The companion of the (Saviour is) Mary Magdalen. (But Christ loved her more than all the disciples and used to kiss her (often) on her mouth). The rest of (the disciples were offended) ....They said to him, ‘Why do you love her more than all of us?’ -The Saviour answered and said to them, ‘Why do I not love you as (I love) her?‘

“Other sayings in this collection criticise common Christian beliefs, such as the virgin birth or the bodily resurrection, as naive misunderstandings. Bound together with these gospels are the ‘Apocryphon (literally, “secret book”) of John,”
which opens with an offer to reveal 'the mysteries (and the) things hidden in silence' which Jesus taught to his disciple John.

"Muhammad Ali later admitted that some of the texts were lost-burned up or thrown away. But what remains is astonishing: some 52 texts from the early centuries of the Christian era - including a collection of early Christian gospels, previously unknown. Besides the 'Gospel of Thomas' and the 'Gospel of Philip', the find included the 'Gospel of Truth' and the 'Gospel of Egyptians', which identifies itself as 'the (sacred book) of the Great Invisible (Spirit). Another group of texts consists of writings attributed to Jesus's followers, such as the 'Secret Book of James', the 'Apocalypse of Paul', the 'Letter of Peter to Philip', and the 'Apocalypse of Peter'.

"What Muhammad Ali discovered at Nag Hammadi, it soon became clear, were Coptic translations, made about 1,500 years ago, of still more ancient manuscripts. The originals themselves had been written in Greek, the language of the New Testament, as scholars recognised from the earlier discovery of a few fragments of the original Greek version of the 'Gospel of Thomas'.

"About the dating of the manuscripts themselves there is little debate. Examination of the datable papyrus used to thicken the leather bindings, and of the Coptic script, place them circa AD 350-400. But scholars sharply disagree about the dating of the original texts. Some of them can hardly be later than c.180, since Irenaeus the orthodox Bishop of Lyons, writing c. 180 declared that heretics 'boast that they possess more gospels than there really are,' and complained that such writings had already won wide circulation—from Gaul through Rome, Greece, and Asia Minor.

"Quispel and his collaborators, who first published the 'Gospel of Thomas', suggested the date of c. AD 140 for the original. Some reasoned that since these gospels were heretical, they must have been written later than the gospel,' of the New Testament, which are dated c. 60-110. But another Biblical scholar, Professor Helmut Koester, of Harvard University, has suggested that the collection of sayings in the 'Gospel of Thomas' - although compiled c.140, may include some traditions even older than the gospels of the New Testament, 'possibly as early as the second half of the first century' (50-100) - as early as, or earlier, than Mark, Matthew, Luke and John.

"Why were these texts buried - and why have they remained virtually unknown for nearly 2,000 years? Their suppression as banned documents, and their burial on the cliff at Nag Hammadi, it turns out, were both part of a struggle critical for the formation of early Christianity. The Nag Hammadi texts, and others like them, which circulated at the beginning of the Christian era, were denounced by orthodox Christians in the middle of the second century.

"This campaign against heresy involved an involuntary admission of its persuasive power; yet the bishops prevailed. By the time of the Emperor Constantine's conversion, when Christianity became an officially approved religion in the fourth century, Christian bishops, previously victimised by the police, now commanded them. Possession of books denounced as heretical was made a criminal offence. Copies of such books were burned and destroyed. But in Upper Egypt, someone, possibly a monk from a nearby monastery of St Pachomius, took the banned books and hid them from destruction-in the jar where they remained buried for almost 1,600 years.

"But those who wrote and circulated these texts did not regard themselves as 'heretics'. Most of the writings use Christian terminology, unmistakably related to a Jewish heritage. Many claim to offer traditions about Jesus that are secret, hidden from 'the many' who constitute what, in the second century, came to be called the 'catholic church'.

"What Muhammad Ali discovered at Nag Hammadi is, apparently, a library of writings, almost all of them gnostic. Although they claim to offer secret teaching, many of these texts refer to the Scriptures of the Old Testament, and others to the letters of Paul and the New Testament gospels. Many of them include the same dramatis personae as the New Testament Jesus and his disciples. Yet the differences are striking.

"Orthodox Jews and Christians insist that a chasm separates humanity from its creator: God is wholly other. But some of the gnostics who wrote these gospels contradict this: self-knowledge is knowledge of God; the self and the divine are identical.

"Second, the 'living Jesus' of these texts speaks of illusion and enlightenment, not of sin and repentance, like the Jesus of the New Testament. Instead of coming to save us from sin, he comes as a guide who opens access to spiritual understanding. But when the disciple attains enlightenment, Jesus no longer serves as his spiritual master; the two have become equal - even identical.

"Third, orthodox Christians believe that Jesus is Lord and Son of God in a unique way: he remains forever distinct from the rest of humanity whom he came to save. Yet the gnostic 'Gospel of Thomas' relates that as soon as Thomas recognises him, Jesus says to Thomas that they have just received their being from the same source:-

Jesus said, "I am not your master, because you have drunk, you have become drunk from the bubbling stream which I have measured out.

"....He who will drink from my mouth will become as I am: I myself shall become he, and the things that are hidden will be revealed to him."
CONJUGAL CONCORD

[N.A. FARUQUI, LAHORE]

Conjugal discord is so widespread and there are so many unhappy homes and broken marriages, particularly in the West, that the future of mankind depends on saving the institution of marriage. Mankind itself failed to find the right way of going about it. Religions, other than Islam, provide no guidance. What light does Islam throw on this vexed question?

2. Firstly, the Holy Quran describes what the Great Creator himself intended to be the relationship between man and woman, in these words: “And of His signs is this, that He created mates for you, of your own souls, that you might find solace in them, and He put between you love and compassion. Surely there are signs in this for people who reflect (30:21). So that the beautiful and unique need of man for the woman, and vice versa, itself provides signs of the sublime wisdom of the Great Creator. What he intended was that men and women, created of the same soul for this purpose should find solace, love and compassion in each other. Then why has this beautiful relationship turned sour?

3. On this question too, the Holy Quran had forewarned us thus:

“And We said, O Adam, dwell thou and thy wife in paradise, and eat from it plenteous food wherever you wish and approach not this tree, lest you be of the unjust. But the devil made them slip from it, and caused them to depart from the state they were in. And We said: “Go forth, some of you will be the enemies of others. And there is for you in the earth an abode and a provision for a time. Then Adam received (revealed) words from his Lord and He turned to him mercifully: Surely He is Oft-returning (to His creatures), the Merciful” (2:35-37)

Students of the Holy Quran, already aware of the allegorical account of Adam and Eve in the Book, know that-

(a) Adam and Eve were created, not in the heaven of the Hereafter, but on this earth (2:30).

(b) Their account stands for what transpires within each man and woman. (7:27)

(c) The paradise of this account is the paradise within each human being in which he is born in a state of innocence and purity.

The other and external paradise is in the Hereafter (55:46). The paradise in which Adam and Eve were born, and in fact each man and woman is born, is therefore the state of paradise within each human being at his birth, due to his innocence and purity of soul.

4. Therefore what the verses (2:35-37) quoted in paragraph 3 above, state is that -

(a) each man and woman is born in a state of paradise within him or her.

(b) Every human being is free to eat of the fruits of the earth as and when he wants to.

(c) But he is warned not to go near a particular tree. The Holy Quran compares both good or evil to a good or evil tree respectively (14:24 and 26). The tree of evil forbidden to man and woman was the evil displayed by the devil itself when it refused to obey Allah due to its pride (2:34).

(d) However, unfortunately man or woman may fall to the temptation of the devil and fail to obey the commandments of Allah, due to the pride and conceit within each human being which are instigated by the devil, and thus lose the paradise within each human being which are instigated by the devil, and thus lose the paradise within him or her.

(e) The paradise thus lost can be regained by reverting to the obedience of the revealed Word of Allah. Thus guidance within each human being is not sufficient to save him or her from the temptations of the devil. Only Revelation can be a sure guidance.

5. Let us apply the above to the husband and wife (man and woman) of today. They follow such inner light as each one has been given, but that is blurred by the devil in two ways:

(a) By inciting evil within each one of them.

(b) By inciting pride leading to the disobedience of the Creator’s guidance.

Let us take each of these evils one by one.

EVIL

6. Evil in all its varieties is well-known. All religions warned against them. Yet men and women fall for them except for those who guard against evil. Religions other than Islam having lost their appeal in this age of knowledge and reason, the religious brake on human beings is unfortunately no longer effective. Evil is therefore rampant in a vast majority of people. To the same extent mankind has disappeared. Take the glaring sexual immorality, addiction to intoxicants and drugs, and lack of any religious moral code, which are prevalent throughout the irreligious world. Aren’t they clearly responsible for unhappy marriages, broken homes and the loss of the peace of mind with which each human being was born in a state of
paradise as explained earlier? As also stated there, only the Revealed Word of Allah can redeem the lost paradise within each human being who has fallen a prey to evil. The trouble is that revealed books other than the Holy Quran are non-extant, their original texts having been lost altogether, as in the case of the Bible, or been tampered with as in some other cases. Besides, the Holy Quran is a complete guide on the subject, as opposed to the incomplete guidance available in other books as they exist today.

7. The importance of guarding against evil (Taqwa) to a successful marriage and a happy home is so great that all the three verses of the Quran (4:1, 3:101, and 33:70) recited by the holy Prophet at the religious service on the occasion of marriages emphasised the need for the husband and wife to be to guard against evil (Taqwa). And the prayer taught by the Holy Quran to a couple seeking a happy marriage and a blissful home runs as follows: “Our Lord, grant us in our spouses and our off-spring the joy of our eyes, and make us leaders or exemplars for those who guard against evil” (25:74). Here the praying spouses are exhorted to set an example of guarding against evil to each other and to their children, if they want to have a blissful home.

8. Human beings themselves cannot determine what evil is, for moral standards are apt to undergo drastic changes at human hands. For instance, adultery and even homosexuality have now become acceptable in the West, the latter having been legalized in most countries. So only the Great Creator can guide us on this all-important subject, for therein lies not only the happiness of this world but also of the Hereafter for us. And the Holy Quran, the only Divine Book acceptable in this age of reason and knowledge, is a complete guide for those who want to guard against evil (2:2)

Differences of Opinion

9. Apart from evil, the other common causes of married unhappiness, squabbles, and even separation or divorce are the differences of opinion which arise almost daily between husband and wife. Each tries to have his or her own way, and he or she who fails, begins to nurse resentment and even anger within his or her heart.

The wife takes to taunts and the husband to beating when he is drunk. The ever growing number of separations or divorces is not a correct indicator of unhappy marriages which are much, much more. Religions other than Islam, and human laws, have failed to give the suffering humanity the solution to this problem. Before I mention the key to happy marriages revealed in the Holy Quran, I must mention the rights given by Islam to women.

Women’s Rights

10. Woman, being weaker than man, has suffered throughout history. Moreover she was declared to be the cause of mankind’s expulsion from paradise by the Bible, as opposed to the Holy Quran’s statement that both man and woman are equally open to the devil’s temptation. According to Hinduism and the pre-Islamic Arabs the woman was like chattel, the property of man to be inherited and disposed of according to his sweet will. Islam revolutionized the concept and declared that woman was made of the same essence, the same soul, as the man, and was equal to him as a human being. She was given rights in her parent’s property, in her husband’s property, in her children’s property, and even in her brother’s property if they had no offspring. The rights given by Islam to women are much more than those enjoyed even today by the so-called emancipated woman of the West. The Holy Quran took the precaution of spelling out in its own text the rights of women so that they should not be detracted from by the men in any way. The latter are frequently exhorted to discharge the women’s rights in kindness and if possible to forego their (men’s) own rights (2:237).

11. The Holy Prophet, in his farewell address during the last pilgrimage, exhorted men to look after the women well whom Allah had entrusted to their care. Of his other exhortations in favour of women, one may be quoted: “The best man among you is he who is best in his treatment of his wife and children.” The Holy Quran made it an incumbent duty (4:34) on men to maintain women i.e. look after their maintenance in every way, their safety and their honour. The women were however given the right of earning themselves: “For men is the benefit of what they earn. And for women is the benefit of what they earn” (4:32)

The Final Word

12. The final word about the rights of women are couched in the following words: “And women have rights similar to those against them in a just manner, and men are a degree above them. And Allah is Mighty, Wise.” (2:228). The charter of women’s rights makes the following points:

a) Women have the same rights against men as the men have against women, in a just manner.

b) But if in the exercise of their equal rights, the husband and wife cannot agree with each other then the husband’s will must prevail.

c) Both, particularly the husbands who have been given the upper hand in case of irreconcilable difference of opinion or dispute, are warned that Allah is Mightier than they. So that they should be careful how they exercise that right. And if He has appointed this method of resolving conjugal disputes, it is the best because He is All-Wise.

13. The above solution of conjugal differences of opinion or disputes has been strongly objected to by some of the modernised women. They protest that they should not be required to accept the men’s opinion if it is not right. Who is to decide whether the wife or the husband is right? Obviously both claim to be right; that is why a dispute arises. So how can such differences leading to disputes, which arise almost daily, be resolved? Obviously the parties can’t go to court every day and for such petty
For The Younger People

THE GOLDEN ERA OF ISLAM

HAZRAT ‘ALI, THE SOLDIER, SAINT AND SCHOLAR

By Masud Beg Mirza

Hazrat ‘Ali, the fourth Caliph of Islam, was the first among the younger people to accept Islam. He was a boy of ten, when the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) announced his Mission. Since ‘Ali was brought up in the house of the Holy Prophet and lived under his direct care and influence and he knew all about the Holy Prophet, he had no difficulty in recognising the Truth. The people of Mecca were antagonistic and averse to the call of Islam. So the Holy Prophet invited his kinsmen and his friends to a feast and conveyed to them the message of Islam, and asked if any of them would come forward to help him in the sacred cause. All kept quiet, but ‘Ali got up and offered himself for the service of Islam. ‘Ali was not a rich man and he could not make financial sacrifices as his predecessors had done. But he possessed some other distinct qualities, which gave him a high status among the companions of the Holy Prophet. He was a valiant soldier, a mystic and a saint, whose life was characterised by abstinence and self-denial, and he was a man of great learning.

Hazrat ‘Ali had many occasions to display his extraordinary valour and courage and performing wonderful deeds of heroism. His brave exploits won him the epithet “Lion of Allah”. At the battle of Badr, as also on other occasions he was the bearer of the Prophet’s banner. He over-powered his powerful opponents in single bouts as well as smashed the enemy in the general encounter. During the battle of Uhud, ‘Ali received sixteen wounds on his person. When he saw Mus’ab ibn ‘Umar, the standard-bearer of Islam, fall fighting, ‘Ali at once took hold of the standard, rushed forward and killed the standard-bearer of the enemy. ‘Abd Wudd was a famous warrior among the Arabs, and when ‘Ali encountered him, the proud wrestler, looked at him contemptuously and said “I do not wish to kill you”. ‘But I do wish to slay you”, retorted ‘Ali and after a
hard fight he killed the proud infidel. Of all the martial exploits of ‘Ali,, the most brilliant was the capture of Khyber, a very strongly fortified fort of the Jews. The fight here was very fierce, and Hazrat Abu Bakr and ‘Umar held the standard on different days, but the fort was captured when the standard was entrusted to ‘Ali by the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him).

At the fall of Mecca, when the Holy Prophet entered the city at the head of 10,000 people, the standard was again entrusted to ‘Ali. The valour and bravery of Hazrat Ali had also won him the title La fata illa ‘Ali. “There is no (brave) Youth except ‘Ali”.

Hazrat ‘Ali led a very simple life — rather the life of a poor man. He had to labour hard to earn his livelihood. His illustrious wife (the daughter of the Holy Prophet) would herself grind corn and perform all household duties without the help of a maid-servant. They had seldom tasted dainty food and enjoyed delicacies of life. Their staple diet was just dry bread, often the bread of barley, as Allama Iqbal has said:

“The value of Haider (‘Ali) rests on barley bread. ‘Ali took pride in the life of simplicity which he led in the life-time of the Holy Prophet. Once the Holy Prophet saw him lying on bare ground and called him Abu Turab, “father of dust”, and this came to be a surname of ‘Ali. In the words of Maulana Mohammed ‘Ali: “The examples of simplicity presented by the Prophet and his four successors stand unrivalled in the annals of kingship. Monarchs of a vast empire, they led the lives of hermits and they never cast a glance at the worldly riches which were laid in heaps at their shoes. Kingly palaces and regal robes came their way but these four kings, temporal as well as spiritual, ever took pride in the cottages they lived in and in the rough, coarse clothes they wore while they worked and laboured for their daily bread” (Early Caliphate, p 317)

Purity of heart and selflessness were the keynotes of ‘Ali’s character. This is the first step of mystical or saintly life. And the holy men and women who had abandoned the world and devoted themselves exclusively to devotion and piety (Zuhd, nd Taqwa) and are known as sufis and saints, their spiritual descent is traced back to the Holy Prophet through ‘Ali and Abu Bakr.

With regard to ‘Ali’s great learning the Holy Prophet is reported to have said: “I am the city of learning and ‘Ali is its gate”. ‘Ali’s education and upbringing had been in the hands of one who was the fountain-head of all knowledgeviz, the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). ‘Ali was just a boy when the sun of Islam dawned, and his very intellectual birth took place in the lap of Islam. Since he lived under the same roof with the Holy Prophet, he often did the work of a scribe of the Holy Quran. He knew the Holy Book by heart, and was a commentator of high standing. In the preservation of Hadith too, he had a unique distinction. As a jurist, he was considered the best among the companions, and difficult problems and knotty questions were always referred to him and his verdict was considered final. Hazrat Abu Bakr and ‘Umar often consulted him on important affairs and always valued his advice and sound judgment.

‘Ali’s learning was not confined to the knowledge of the Quran and Hadith only, but he was also well-versed in other fields of learning. To quote Syed Amir Ali; “In spite of the upheaval of the Arab race under the early Caliphs, literature and arts were by no means neglected in the metropolis of primitive Islam. ‘Ali and Ibn ‘Abbas, his cousin, gave public lectures on poetry, history, and mathematics; others taught the art of recitation or elocution whilst some gave lessons in calligraphy, in ancient times an invaluable branch of knowledge. “Again he says “Ali lectured on branches of learning most suited to the wants of the infant commonwealth.

Among his recorded sayings are the following:

‘Eminence in science is the highest of honours, “He dies not who gives life to learning; “ The greatest ornament of man is erudition. “ The spirit of Islam, pp. 362-63)