





THE PATH

"SAFAR"

SEPT. 1993

"The Beginning of Wisdom is the Fear of God"

Mrs. Sarojini Naidu

"Islam was the first religion that preached and practiced democracy, for, in the mosque when the *azan* (call to prayer) is sounded and the worshippers are gathered together, the democracy of Islam is embodied five times a day, when the peasant and the king kneel side by side and proclaim: 'God alone is Great.' I have been struck over and over again by this indivisible unity of Islam that makes a man instinctively a brother. When you meet an Egyptian, an Algerian, an Indian and a Turk in London, what matters is that Egypt was the motherland of one and India the motherland of another?"

Any Change of Address should be notified
to the Publisher.

Compiled and Published by :
Hamina Tambuwalla
YOUSUF N. LALLJEE
"Balmoral", Apt.2, Bund Garden Road,
Poona - 411 001, INDIA.

Printed By :
V. MUKESH & CO.
96/97, M. G. Road,
PUNE - 411 001, INDIA.

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سُورَةُ النَّاسِ مَكِّيَّةٌ
 بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
 قُلْ أَعُوذُ بِرَبِّ النَّاسِ
 مَلِكِ النَّاسِ
 إِلَهِ النَّاسِ
 مِنْ شَرِّ الْوَسْوَاسِ الْخَنَّاسِ
 الَّذِي يُوَسْوِسُ فِي صُدُورِ النَّاسِ
 مِنَ الْجِنَّةِ وَالنَّاسِ

About Suratun - NAS

Sura "AN-NAS", which is the last Chapter of the Holy Qur'an, was revealed for the 7th time, at Mecca. The word "waswaas" وَسْوَاسٌ which is translated here as "whisperer" has also the meaning 'devilish insinuation' 'temptation' 'wicked thoughts' 'doubt' 'anxiety' 'melancholy' 'buds' etc. This word is derived from the verb "waswas" وَسْوَسَ which means 'to whisper' 'to tempt or prompt s.o. with wicked suggestions' 'to awaken doubts' and 'to bud'. The word "sudoor" سُدُورٌ which is translated here as 'breasts' has the meaning 'heart' 'front' 'leader' and 'beginning'. The word "khanaas" خَنَّاسٌ which is translated as "slinking" is the 'epithet of the Devil'.

However this is according to "Arabic-English Dictionary" by Maan Z. Madina. In the "Arabic-English Dictionary" by Steingas, we can find the deeper and more meanings of the Arabic words. Steingas introduced in his Dictionary that the word "INARI" has the meaning 'The One which gives Light'.

Now the Holy Prophet has declared "Verily the Holy Qur'an has been revealed on Seven Letters (Seven phases, or aspects) of which there is no letter which has not a manifest and a latent meaning - And Verily Ali ibne Abi Taleb, with him is the Manifest and the Latent (of it). : Sahih Bokhari, Suyuti's Itqaan." Even from the points which I have introduced above, we can easily imagine the meaning of the Hadith from the Holy Prophet. Furthermore we will come to know the deep meaning of the Qur'anic verses, when we consider the historical background of each Revelation. The theological meaning of Qur'anic verses is far beyond description.

One of the reasons why I started introducing the short Chapter in the Holy Qur'an on this paper is that if someone wants to know the meaning of the Qur'anic verses, he must give himself up to Prayer, because the Holy Qur'an is the Word of ALLAH HIMSELF. The Holy Prophet said "The daily Prayers are the MI'RAJ of the faithful". The Faithful must ascend the Heavens and proceed to the Divine Throne of ALLAH, when he offers Prayer. It is absolutely necessary to learn by heart 2 Suras at least except Fatiha (the first Chapter in the Holy Qur'an) in order to offer Prayer. For that purpose I introduce the short Chapter of the Holy Qur'an and explain the meaning of that Chapter and transliteration for how to pronounce.

Now, when we translate the beginning of this Chapter as "Seek protection by the Lord of the people, the King of the people, the God of the people, from the evil of the temptation of the Devil....", we are reminded of the 'Prayer to our Lord' taught by Messiah Jesus. Al-Allamah as-Sayyid Muhammad Husayn at-Tabatabai touched on this 'Prayer to Lord' in his Exegesis of the Qur'an 'AL-MIZAN'. It is quite natural that Jesus Christ taught such Prayer, because he taught "Islam", not Christianity. Unfortunately the so-called Christian countries in Europe had assumed the hegemony of the world after the Industrial Revolution in the 16th Century. They indulged in pushing forward the Imperialism and Colonialism in a global scale. Since then, Muslims had suffered from their oppression, tyranny, despotism. They were too cruel, brutal and atrocious for description. Japan accomplished 'Meiji

Chapter 114 AN-NAS (People)

Bismi-llah-ir Rahman-ir Raheem
Qul A'oodhu biRabiin Naas
malikin Naas
Ilaahin Naas
min sharril Waswaasil khanaas
Iadhi yuwaswisu fi sudoorin Naas
minaul- Jinnati wan Naas

In the name of Allah, the Beneficent the Merciful
Say: "I seek refuge in the Lord of the people !
The King of the people!
The God of the people !
From the evil of the slinking whisperer.
Who whispereth into the breasts of the people,
From among the Jinn and the Men.

Restoration' 125 years ago in order not to fall in such miserable conditions. The leaders of Meiji Government in Japan endeavored to learn the advanced technology from the European countries. Nowadays there are opinions discussing whether the policy which Meiji Government adopted were correct or not.

Anyway we must pay our special attention to the fact that the so-called Christian countries had no connection with the teaching of Jesus Christ, although they called themselves "Christian". Rather we must say they were contrary to the teaching of Messiah Jesus. There is KEIKYO 景教 which is considered to be one sect of Christianity. KEIKYO is pronounced as 'jing jiao' in China. This KEIKYO is usually considered to be "Nestorian" which was branded as 'pagan'. But it is not correct. KEIKYO is the Syrian Church which was established by St. Thomas, one of the 12 disciples of Al-Massieh Ecsa. In 431 A.D., Nestorius was expelled from the Church. He escaped to Syrian Church. At that time Nestorius abandoned his opinion, and declared to follow the doctrine of the Syrian Church.

It is very simple. If some one wants to know the meaning of the teaching of Messiah Jesus, he must make research in Aramaic, because Messiah taught in Aramaic. The word "Christ" itself is Greek, not Aramaic. The Greek word 'Christ' is translated as 'Anointed One'. However Jesus is called 'Messiah' in Aramaic, and "Al-Masieh" in Arabic. Aramaic, Hebrew, Arabic etc. are called Semitic. The word 'Semitic' is derived from the name 'Sem', son of Noah (Nooh). According to the linguistic scholars, among the Semitic languages, the language which has kept the original characters of Semitic language most clearly until now is Arabic. There is Hadith of the Holy Prophet that the Human Being had been speaking the same only one language. It means that the language which has kept the original characters of the only one language spoken by all the people on earth is Arabic. Now there is mysterious relationship between Arabic and Persian language in the ancient times and Sanskrit.

Now the Arabic word "Al-Massieh" is derived from verb "masaha" مسح which means 'to stroke with the hand' 'to wipe away' 'to wash off' 'to wipe out' 'to clean' 'to anoint' 'to deprive'. The first meaning of 'Al-Massieh' is 'to stroke with hand'. Until Meiji Restoration 125 years ago, HAKKE SHINTO 伯家神道 had been performing the religious ceremony on behalf of the Emperor. Prince SUMI-HITO, son of Emperor KAZAN was appointed as the head of this HAKKE SHINTO in 1025 A.D.. I believe it must have had close relationship with The twelfth Imam (Imam Zaman). Anyway the Great Emperor Meiji who accomplished Meiji Restoration was the successor of the secrets of 'HAKKE SHINTO'. There are 2 greatest secret teachings in HAKKE SHINTO. One of them is 'AMATSU-MITEFURI' which is 'to stroke with the hand'.

Several years ago, Catholic and Protestant Churches in Japan published the Japanese translation of New Testament cooperation with each other. It is very interesting that they adopted the word 'Messiah' instead of the word 'Christ'. It means that the Western Church has accepted the opinion which KEIKYO or Syrian Church had appealed.

[Introduction] to Islam

- From Shiite point of view -

 With the initiative of H.E. Mr. Hossein Kazempour Ardebili, Iranian Ambassador in Tokyo, we are planning to publish the Book [Introduction to Islam]- from Shiite point of view in a near future. It means that the Shiite Book in Japanese appears in the Japanese Society for the first time. It is quite an epoch-making undertaking in the history of Islam in Japan. This Book is to be published as one of the activities of "Holy Qur'an Institute", from various points of view. The contents of the Book will be as follows:

Introduction

- What is Islam ?

1. A Glance at the Life of the Holy Prophet of Islam
 - The Pre-Islamic World
 - The Prophet's Birth and Childhood
 - Some Reminiscence of His Childhood and Youth
 - The Prophet's Marriage
 - The Character of the Holy Prophet before the Actualization of the Prophetic Mission
 - The Beginning of the Revelation
2. The Qur'an and Its Impact on Human History
3. System of Life
4. Islam and Women's Rights
5. The Roots of Religion (Five Principles)
 - Branches of Religion
6. A Glance at the Life of
 - The Twelve Successors of the Prophet of Islam
7. [A concise Commandments of Islam]
8. Islam and Japan

The articles from No.1 to 6 have been provided by Mr. Ali Bashardoust, Attaché Public Relations & Cultural Affairs Iranian Embassy in Tokyo. It is without saying that No.7 is the 'the valuable guide to the Islamic Commandments' by Ayatullah Imam Khomeini, condensed from the 'Tawdih al-Masā'il' with footnotes by the Marāji'ut-Taqlid, Ayatullah Shariatmadari, Ayatullah Najafi-Marashi, Ayatullah Gulpayegani, Ayatullah Khunsari, Ayatullah Shirazi, Ayatullah Khui, etc.. I presented No. 8 'Islam and Japan'

As I explained repeatedly, Allah teaches us in the Holy Qur'an that He sent His Messengers to all Ummah^{اُمَم} on earth in order to let them teach the same Truth 'la ilah illa Allah' لا اله الا الله with the language of each Ummah. These Qur'anic verses clearly mean that the Messenger of Allah was sent also to Japan before the advent of the Holy Prophet. Then who was the Messenger (or Messengers) to Japan and how has the teaching of that Messenger been kept in Japan? The coming of the Holy Prophet Mohammad (Peace be upon him and his progeny) must have been taught to the Japanese people. I have been making research of the Japanese religious traditions and culture from that point of view. When I explain those points to the people, they are unanimously and admiringly surprised with the mysterious fact. The Chinese characters 伊奈利 for 'INARI' are praising and extoling the greatness of the Holy Prophet. Also the Chinese characters 奈良 for 'NARA', the old Capital of Japan (710 ~ 784 A.D.) express 'The Superiority of the Last Prophet'. NARA was called 'The Eastern Terminal of [Silk- Road]'. The Persian people lived in row in NARA. It is very interesting that 5 Mountains in Nikko symbolise 'PANJETAN' (The Holy Prophet, Ali : Amir ul-Momineen, Fatimah who is Umm-ul-Aimma, Hassan and Hussain : Leaders of the youths of Paradise : PBUTUTP). I presented this story on our new book, so I want to explain its outline very briefly.

Nikko is one of the most beautiful National Parks in Japan. People say 'No place can be equal with Nikko in its combined beauty of nature and art - the high density of the wonderful sceneries such as the surrounding mountains, many waterfalls and variegated lakes and swamps'. Nikko lies 150 kilometers north-west to Tokyo. During Tokugawa Shogunate (1603 ~ 1867 A.D.), Nikko was the most sacred place in Japan and played a role of Spiritual Center which controlled the whole country.

Nikko is generally considered to have been opened to the public in 766 A.D. by Shodo-Shonin ('Sho-nin' means

'prominent Saint') . Shodo-Shonin started climbing the 5 Mountains from the hermitage which he built up near River INARI at Nikko. When Shodo-Shonin climbed up to the summit of those mountains, he erected "Stone" over the top of those mountains respectively in order to pay his respect to Godly persons. Those 5 Mountains are named 'TARO' 太郎 which literally means 'The Biggest Man', 'NANTAI' 男体 which means 'Man's Constitution', 'NYOHO' 女峰 which means 'Woman's Peak' and 'OH-MANAGO' 大真名子 and 'KO-MANAGO' which literally means 'bigger or elder son' and 'smaller or younger son' respectively. I believe those names are Japanese translation or expression of 'PANJETAN'. 小真名子

Senior Brother Mr. Izumo Enomoto

On the Issue No. 5 & 6, I informed that the member of our Institute Mrs. Toshie Fujihara published a book under the title of 'Study of Fujihara clan : Fujiha clan is the descent of [ŠAKA] tribe', last year. I have come to have acquaintance with Mrs. Fujihara through the introduction of our senior Brother Enomoto.

Mr. Enomoto recently wrote some article about "ŠAKA" tribe. The outline of that article is as follows:

The Dynasty which was established by 'Persian ŠAKA' tribe, which was descended from Eastern Siberian Scythians, was called 'ARSAK Dynasty'. This Dynasty was called 'AN-HSI' 安息国 in Chinese, and 'PARTHIA' in Greek. The Dynasty 'ARSAK' was also called 'KAYANE' which literally means Dynasty "Star". It does not mean 'to worship the Star'. In the ancient history of Japan, it is pronounced as 'KO-YA-NE' and written 児屋根 in Chinese characters. The Ancestor of Fujihara clan which had been taking the helm of the state affairs in Japan for 1000 years long is called 'AME-no-KO-YA-Ne-no-MIKOTO'. ('Ame-no' means 'Heavenly', and Mikoto means 'Godly person'). Therefore Fujihara clan is the descent of nomadic people came from Altay, Tyan Shan district. (It does not mean that they worshipped Star. They worshipped Only One God, Creator of the Heavens and Earth).

Another group went down to south along the western district of Tyan Shan from Altay is called Ta-yüeh-chih or Persian ŠAKA tribe, and the group which entered Highlands 'Tibet' was Indian-ŠAKA from which Gautama Buddha, the founder of Buddhism appeared. The Dynasty ASOKA is of Yüeh-shih family

In the ancient Persia, Persian ACHAEMENES Dynasty raised its head among the Association of Aryan 4 tribes which destroyed Assyria Empire in 610 B.C.. It was the nomadic dynasty from the Western Scythians tribe. The ACHAEMENES Dynasty was destroyed by the Great Alexander in 333 B.C.. After then, the Greeks controlled from Persia to Afghanistan . The One which overthrew the Greek Powers was ARSAK Dynasty of Persian ŠAKA.

According to the traditions of this Dynasty Arsak, ŠAKA tribe, the First , Second , Third Dynasty was called respectively 'Kay Dynasty' 'Kayane Dynasty' and 'Arsak Dynasty' . ACHAEMENES Dynasty was not included in this descent because it was from different tribe.

This Eastern Siberian nomadic Dynasty Arsak ('An-hsi' in Chinese and 'Parthia' in Greek) existed until 220 A.D., after then Sassanid dynasty became influential.....

Mr. Enomoto developed his unique opinion in connection with the places of historic interest from linguistic point of view. He stresses that the origin of the Japanese is Arabic and Persian language. I am not an expert in such field, so I hesitate to comment on his opinion.

However I know that Gondophares (Guduvhara), one of the ŠAKA Kings (20~50) followed the teaching of Thomas, one of the twelve disciples of Al-Massieh Eesa, founder of the Syrian Church in Syria, KEIKYO 景教 in Japan. Therefore Mr. Enomoto's opinion is very useful. (Haji Mohammad Sawada)

Gathering for familiar talk

Date : July 16(3rd Friday) from 2.30 ~ 5.00 p.m.

Place : Gakushi-Kaikan (28-3, Kanda Nishiki-cho
Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo) at Conversation Room

Fee : free 8(03)3292-5931

Holy Qur'an Institute
Address: 201-19-6-1 Shirahata Urawa City 336 Japan
8(048)863-5406 Representative: Ibrahim Tatsuichi Sawada

THE ELEXIR OF LOVE

The Persian poets called love the "elixir" (*iksīr*). The alchemists believed that there existed a material in the world which they called the "elixir"⁵ or "the philosopher's stone" (*kīmiya*) which could change one matter into another matter, and they searched after this for centuries. The poets took over the use of this terminology and said that the real "elixir" which has the power of transformation is love, because it is love which can transmute a substance. Love, absolutely, is the "elixir" and has the properties of the philosopher's stone, which changes one nature into another, and people also are different natures.

النَّاسُ مَعَادِنُ كَمَعَادِنِ الذَّهَبِ وَالْفِضَّةِ

People are mines, like gold-mines and silver-mines.

It is love which makes the heart a heart, and if there is no love, there is no heart, just clay and water.

Every heart that is not aflame is no heart;

A frozen heart is nothing but a handful of clay.

O God! Give me a breast that sets ablaze,

*And in that breast a heart, and that heart consumed
with fire.⁶*

One of the effects of love is power; love is the power of glory, it makes the coward courageous.

A hen will keep its wings folded by its side as long as it is alone. It will strut about quite peaceably, looking about to find small worms to swallow. It will start at the slightest noise, and not stand its ground even in front of the weakest child. But when the same hen has chickens, love takes up its dwelling at the centre of its being and its character completely changes. The wings which were folded by its side are now lowered in a sign of preparation for defence, it assumes an aggressive posture, even the sound of its clucking becomes stronger and more courageous. Previously it fled at the possibility of danger, but now it attacks where there is that possibility, and it attacks bravely. This is love which displays the frightened hen in the form of a valiant animal.

Love makes the heavy and lazy nimble and cunning, and even makes the slow-witted astute. A boy and girl neither of whom, when they were single, found themselves thinking about anything except what was directly related to their own persons, see that they have become concerned about the fate of another being for the first time as soon as they fall in love and set up a family environment. The radius of their wants extends; and when they become parents, their spirit completely changes. That heavy and lazy adolescent boy has now become active and mobile, and that girl who used not to get out of her bedclothes even during the day moves like lightning when she hears the cry of her child in the cradle. What is this power which has so galvanised the languor and weariness in these two young people? It is nothing but love.

It is love which turns the miser into a benefactor, and an impatient and intolerant person into someone with endurance and tolerance. It is love which gave the selfish bird which collected grain only with itself in mind and looked only after itself, the form of a generous creature which calls for its chickens when it finds a grain of corn; or which, by some wonderful power, makes the mother,

who was until yesterday a spoiled child who just ate and slept and was irritable and impatient, persevering and forbearing when faced with hunger, lack of sleep and dishevelment, which gives her the patience to endure the hardships of motherhood.

The bringing into existence of tenderness in, and the removal of heaviness and coarseness from, the spirit, or, put in another way, the purification of the feelings, and also the unification and singleness of purpose and concentration, and the disappearance of distraction and dispersion are the strengths and, in the end, power which is produced by the coming together of all the resulting effects of love.

In the language of poetry and literature, when love is spoken of, we encounter one effect more than any other, and that is the power of love to bring inspiration, and its prodigality.

*The nightingale learnt its song by the favour of the
rose, otherwise there would not have been
Any of this song and music fashioned from its beak.⁷*

Although the favour of the rose is, if we attend only to the words, a matter outside the existence of the nightingale, it is in fact nothing but the force of love itself.

*Do you imagine that Majnūn became deranged (majnūn)
by himself?*

*It was the glance of Laylā that transported him
among the stars.⁸*

Love awakens sleeping powers, and frees chained and fettered forces, just like the splitting of the atom and the freeing of atomic power. It fires with inspiration and builds heroes – how many poets, philosophers and artists there have been who were created by a strong and powerful love.

Love perfects the soul and brings out astounding latent abilities. From the point of view of the powers of perception, it inspires, and from the point of view of the emotions, it strengthens the will and determination, and when it rises to its highest aspect it brings miracles and supernatural events

into existence. It purifies the spirit from the tempers and humours of the body; or, in other words, love is a cathartic, it purges the base qualities arising from egotism, or from coldness and lack of warmth, such as envy, avarice, cowardice, laziness, conceitedness and self-admiration. It removes grudges and malevolence, although it is possible that deprivation of, and frustration in, love may produce, in their own turn, complexes and aversions.

By love, bitternesses became sweet,

By love, pieces of copper became gold.⁹

In the spirit, the effect of love is in terms of its development and thriving; in the body, in terms of melting and decomposition. The effect of love in the body is the complete opposite of what it is in the spirit. In the body love is the cause of ruination, and the reason for pallor and emaciation in the body, for indisposition and disorder in the digestive and the nervous systems. Perhaps all the effects which it has in the body are destructive; but in connection with the spirit it is not so – it depends on the object of love and how the person responds to that object. Leaving aside its social effects, it is predominantly perfecting in the spirit and the individual, because it produces strength, compassion, serenity, singleness of purpose, and determination; it abolishes weakness, meanness, annoyance, uncollectedness and dullness. It removes the confusions which are called *dassā* in the Qur'ān (91:10), meaning adulterations of purity with impurity, destroys deceit and purifies the cheat.

The spiritual way ruins the body,

And, after having ruined it, restores it to prosperity:

O happy the soul who, for love and ecstasy,

Gave up hearth and home, wealth and riches,

Ruined the house for the sake of the golden treasure,

And with that same treasure rebuilt it better;

Cut off the water and cleansed the river-bed,

Then caused drinking-water to flow in the river-bed;

Cleft the skin and drew out the iron point –

POLARISATION AROUND THE CHARACTER OF IMĀM 'ALĪ

*Then fresh skin grew over it.
The perfect ones who are aware of the secret of reality
Are in ecstasy, bewildered, intoxicated and deranged
with love.
Not bewildered in such wise that his back is towards
Him,
But so bewildered that (they are) drowned and in-
toxicated with the Beloved.¹⁰*

* * *

BREAKING DOWN THE BARRIERS

Love brings man out from egoism and self-love, irrespective of what kind of love it is – animal and sexual, animal and parental, or human – and irrespective of what qualities and excellences the loved-one has, whether bold and valiant, artistic or wise, or whether her or she be in possession of a fine morality, social graces or other special attributes. Self-love is a limitation and a defensive barrier; love completely breaks down this defensive barrier to other than the self. Man is weak until he has gone outside his own self, he is timid, avaricious, covetous, misanthropic, quick-tempered, selfish and arrogant; his spirit gives out no spark or brilliancy, it has no vivacity or animation, it is always cold and cut off. However, as soon as he takes a step outside his “self” and breaks down his defensive barriers, these ugly habits and qualities are also destroyed.

*Whoever's garment is torn by love
Is entirely cleansed of covetousness or blemish.¹¹*

Self-love, in the sense of something which must be eliminated, is not something which really exists. What we mean is that it is not a real, existing fondness for himself which man must do away with so that he can become liberated from “self-love”. It makes no sense for a human being

to try not to like himself; esteem for oneself which we can call "amour-propre" has not been mistakenly overlooked so that we have to throw that out. The reform and perfecting of man does not mean that, let us suppose, a series of extraneous matters in his existence are thought up and then that these extraneous and detrimental things must be eliminated. In other words the reform of man does not lie in reducing him, it lies in perfecting and adding to him. The responsibility that creation has assigned to man's charge is in the direction of the course of creation, that is, in perfection and growth, not in decrease and reduction.

The struggle with self-love is the struggle with the limitations of the self. This self must be expanded; this defensive structure, which has been placed round the self and which sees every other thing, apart from what is connected to itself as a person or an individual, as foreign, "not me", and alien to itself, must be broken down. The personality must expand to take in every other human being, if not the whole of the universe of creation. Thus the struggle with self-love is the struggle with the limitations of the self; and therefore self-love is nothing else but a limitation of the conceptual and motivational process. Love turns man's affections and drives towards what is outside his self, it enlarges his existence and changes the focal point of his being. For the same reason, love is a great moral and educative factor, on condition that it is well guided and is correctly used.

* * *

CONSTRUCTIVE OR DESTRUCTIVE?

When affection for an individual or a thing reaches the summit of intensity so that it conquers man's existence and becomes the absolute ruler over his being, it is called love. Love is the peak of affection and the sentiments.

But it should not be imagined that what is called by this name is of only one kind; it is of two completely opposite kinds. Those things which are called its good effects are connected with one of its kinds, but its other kind has completely destructive and opposite effects.

The sentiments of man are of various kinds and degrees; some of them are in the category of the passions, especially the sexual passions, and are of those aspects which are shared by man and the other animals, with the difference that in man, for a particular reason the explanation of which cannot be appropriately undertaken now, it reaches its peak and takes on an indescribable intensity; and for this reason it is called love. It never takes on this form among animals, but, in any case, in its reality and essence, it is nothing but a torrent, a bursting forth, a tempest of the passions. It originates from the source of sexuality, and reaches its end there too. Its rise and fall are, too a large degree, connected to the physiological activity of the genital organs and naturally to the years of youth; it diminishes and eventually ceases

altogether with an increase in age, on the one hand, and, on the other, with satiation and separation.

A youth who feels himself a-quiver at the sight of a beautiful face or a tress of hair, or who feels a frisson when touched by a tender hand, should know that there is nothing more operating here than a material, animal process. This kind of love comes quickly and goes quickly. It cannot be depended on, nor recommended, it has dangers and it kills virtue. It is only by the help of modesty and piety and not becoming abandoned to it that it may profit a human being; that is, in itself, it is a power which leads man towards no virtue. But it gives a strength and a perfection to the spirit, if it penetrates into a man's being, is met with the power of modesty and piety, and if the spirit tolerates the pressure of it — provided it does not succumb to it.

Humans have another variety of sentiments which, in their reality and essence, differ from the passions; it is better to call these noble sentiments, or in the language of the Qur'ān, "love and mercy" (*muwaddah wa rahmah* [see 30:21]).

As long as man is under the control of his passions, he has not gone out from his self, he seeks a person or a thing whom he is attracted to for himself, and he wants it dearly. If he thinks about a love-object, it is with the idea of how he might profit from being united with it, or at the most how he can derive enjoyment from it. It is obvious that such a state cannot be the perfecter or the educator of man's spirit, or refine it.

However, man occasionally comes under the effect of his higher human sentiments; his loved-one receives respect and eminence in his eyes, he seeks that person's happiness. He is prepared to sacrifice himself for that person's desires. This kind of sentiment brings purity, sincerity, tenderness, compassion and altruism into existence, as opposed to the first kind which creates crudeness, savagery and criminality. The kindness and affection of a mother for her child is of this second kind. Devotion to, and love of, the pure ones

and the men of God, as also patriotism and the love of principles, are also from the same category.

It is this kind of sentiment from which, if it reaches its summit and perfection, all the aforementioned good effects result; and it is this kind which gives dignity, distinction and greatness to the spirit, in contrast to the first kind which brings wretchedness. Similarly it is this kind of love which is durable, and which becomes stronger and warmer with union, as opposed to the first kind which is not permanent and whose graveyard union is reckoned to be.

In the Qur'ān, the relationship between a man and wife is described as "love and compassion"¹², and this is a very great point. It is an indication of the human and higher-than-animal aspect of married life. It is an indication that the factors of the passions are not the only natural link in married life. The fundamental link is purity, sincerity and the union of two spirits; or, in other words, the thing which joins the married couple one to the other, and unites them, is compassion, mercy, purity and sincerity, not the passions, which also exist between animals.

In his own subtle way, Rūmī distinguishes between the passions and true love; he calls the former animal and the latter human. He says:

*Wrath and passion are the attributes of beasts,
Love and compassion the attributes of man.
Thus Love is the characteristic of
Adam, missing in animals, a deficiency.*

Materialist philosophers too have not been able to deny this spiritual state which, from several standpoints, has a non-material aspect, and which would not be in conformity with man and what is beyond him being material.

In *Marriage and Morals*, Bertrand Russell writes:

Work of which the motive is solely pecuniary cannot have this value, but only work which embodies some kind of devotion, whether to persons, to things, or merely to a vision. And love itself is worthless when

it is merely possessive; it is then on a level with work which is purely pecuniary. In order to have the kind of value which we are speaking, love must feel the ego of the beloved person as important as one's own ego, and must realise the other's feelings and wishes as though they were one's own.¹³

Another point which should be mentioned and carefully attended to is that we said that even loves of the passions may possibly become beneficial, and that occurs when they become linked to piety and modesty. That is to say, in connection with, on the one hand, separation and inaccessibility, and, on the other hand, purity and modesty, the pains and anguishes, pressures and difficulties to which the spirit is subjected bear good and beneficial results.

It is in this connection that the mystics say that allegorical love is turned in real love, i.e., love of the Essence of the One; and it is also in connection with this that the following tradition is narrated:

He who becomes a lover, who conceals (his love), who is chaste (in his love) and dies (in that state) has died as a martyr.

However the point must not be forgotten that this kind of love, with all the advantages that may, under particular conditions, possibly be brought about, is not to be recommended – it is a dangerous valley to enter. It is in this respect like an affliction, which, if it troubles someone and he opposes it with the force of his patience and will, becomes a perfecter and purifier of his soul; it cooks what is raw in it and clarifies what is turbid in it. But one cannot recommend an affliction. No-one can create an affliction for himself so as to profit from these factors which prepare and train the soul; neither should he bring about an affliction for someone else on this pretext.

Here, also, Russell has something valuable to say:

Suffering fills people with energy, like an invaluable counterweight. Someone who deems himself to be

entirely contented will not exert himself any further for happiness. But I do not advocate that this be made a pretext for causing others suffering so that they may tread a profitable path, because it often gives the opposite result and destroys man. Rather, it is better in this case to submit our own selves to chance events that fall in our way.¹⁴

As far as we know, the effects and advantages of afflictions and misfortunes have been much emphasized in Islamic teachings, and they are well-known as signs of God, but this in no way permits anyone to create afflictions for himself or for others on this pretext.

Moreover, there is a difference between love an affliction; and that is that love, more than any other factor, is against reason. Wherever it sets foot, it ousts reason from its governing position. This is why love and reason are well-known in mystic literature as two rivals. The antagonism between the philosophers and the mystics originates from here, the former depending on, and confiding in, the power of reason, the latter in the power of love. In Sūfī literature, reason is always condemned and defeated in this field of competition. Sa'dī says:

My well-wishers advise me:

It is useless to make bricks on the sea.

But the power of yearning prevails over patience:

The pretension of the intellect over love is futile.

Another poet has said:

*I drew a comparison for the counsel of reason in the
path of love:*

*It is like a fall of dew trying to trace a pattern on
the sea.*

How can a force which is as powerful as this, which snatches the reins of the will out of our hands, and which, in the words of Rūmī "blows a man here and there like a blade of straw in the hands of a fierce wind", and in the words of Russell "is something with propensity for an-

archy", be recommendable?

At any rate, it is one thing to happen to have useful results, but it is another to be advisable or recommendable.

From this it will be seen that the objection and complaint which some Islamic jurists have levelled against some of the Islamic philosophers¹⁶ who have set forth this matter in their metaphysics and have explained its results and advantages, is invalid. For the former imagined that the opinion of the latter group of philosophers was that this matter is both advisable and recommendable, whereas they only considered the useful effects of this kind of love which appear under conditions of piety and chastity, without recommending or advising it, just as they would have done with afflictions or misfortunes.

* * *

Lesson Two Two Views Concerning the Pleasures of This World

Man can construct a solid barrier against the danger of the dissolution of his inward personality only when he attains religious belief and certainty, the conviction that our sorrows and joys do not go to waste, that we are not advancing to annihilation, but are rather moving towards Him. In other words, our residence in this abode of clay is temporary, lasting only until the appointed day when the summons of resurrection arouses us from our tombs and transfers us from our narrow earthly abode to our eternal residence, in order to enjoy everlasting existence in the proximity of the favor, blessings and mercy of God, the infinite source of all grace.

Belief in the existence of an eternal essence bestows nobility and value on man; it enables him to become a creature that is endowed with wisdom and aspires to ascend. Without the presence of man thus defined, nature itself would become meaningless, for all of its wonders. Once equipped with such a belief, man obtains the peace of mind and tranquillity he desires.

A European thinker writes:

"When the human mind is purified and cleansed of all the evils and lusts that plague the soul, it will turn away from purely human concerns to contemplating the beauty of nature. It will take pleasure in observing the variety of animals, plants and minerals, with the different forms, qualities and substances

that each possesses, together with the relationships, contradictions and hierarchies of causation that exist in every natural phenomenon.

"When man's mind advances beyond this stage, he will next begin to fly in the heavens on the wings of thought and awareness. He will gaze on the splendor, beauty and power of the heavenly bodies, witness their motion and phases, and listen to the pleasing harmony that prevails throughout the universe. A pleasure of the purest kind will suffuse his being, and an ardent desire stirs within him to discover the primary cause and creator of this masterpiece of beauty. When he becomes aware that the essence, power, intelligence and goodness of this primary cause are infinite and beyond his perception, his mind will finally have attained rest."⁴

If the world be regarded as a laboratory and the hereafter as a continuation of the life of this world, albeit on a higher plane, and the body be considered as a means of implementation or expression for the wishes and intentions of man, the personality of man is no longer restricted to a single orbit. A vast space is opened before him for his flight and ascent, and life takes on its true meaning.

The Effectiveness of Faith

If we examine the influence of belief in the hereafter in preserving social security and preventing the spread of corruption, crime and the violation of law, we reach the conclusion that this belief is the only force capable of taming the rebellious desires of the soul. It is like a protective shield that guards man from the assault of his passions, for the one who holds this belief will obey a series of ethical principles without hypocrisy and without being subject to external pressure; he will accept the discipline they inculcate with a clear conscience.

Such an aim cannot be assured simply by a high standard of education or economic prosperity, the power of technology, or by the existence of highly developed punitive mechanisms. A society that relies on these will be unable to advance toward

a balanced and ideal situation.

Today we witness a growing wave of corruption, injustice and cruelty in countries which are well-developed with respect to education, economic prosperity, and judicial organization. Such is the extent of the moral decay in those countries that the forces of law and order – well organized though they are and provided with all the equipment that the scientific and technological revolutions have bestowed on them – are unable to take the place of the basic element of faith in taming the rebellious inclination of the soul to deviance and sin.

There are many people today who lament and are distressed by the present condition of their societies, but they are unable to do anything effective or to sketch out a plan of action.

A society that has fallen prey to a sick culture cannot fail to be replete with all kinds of impurity and abomination. What we mean by a "sick culture" is pessimism, the absence of goals, a belief that life lacks all meaning. Intellectual confusion is also one of the chief symptoms of a sick culture. The solutions that are proposed for the solution of the crisis are fruitless and ineffective when it comes to controlling the deviant tendencies rampant in society.

Modern science has expelled man from certain spheres of thought he used to inhabit; this is a phenomenon which has inevitably affected the whole of humanity. Insofar as man retains a firm and correct belief, this is a positive development, but insofar as he is ignorant and lacking in belief it is harmful. Man is not always in a position to draw logical conclusions from his knowledge, and if scientific civilization is to be a civilization that benefits man, true faith and wisdom must be added to man's augmented body of knowledge.

In this world where the need for the cultivation of virtue is always keenly felt, the moral capacities and abilities of men are always tested by the goods that come into their possession. It is belief in the hereafter that enlarges the inner capacities of man through a profound and qualitative transformation; they begin to unfold like an unending succession of waves. Belief in

the hereafter tames the obstinacy of the self and its mad greed for the untrammelled enjoyment of the goods of this world; it brings under control all of his faculties and properties. Hoping for great rewards and fearing severe chastisement, man shuns the greedy, irrational and undisciplined accumulation of worldly goods.

For he knows that here he is dwelling in a temporary realm; his residence on earth is like that of passing caravan. When he quits his bodily form, which was simply the expression of his transitory life, and is freed from this narrow realm, the gateway to another world is opened before him, and bounties are placed before him that bear no relation to the enjoyments of this world.

Man's heart never ceases to desire as long as he is in this world. Nonetheless, belief in the hereafter will permit him to realize that the opportunities afforded by this world are limited, that the gain to be had from it is very slight, that even the portion which lies within reach cannot be retained for ever, and that delight and pleasure are not restricted to our brief days here on earth. He will not be overcome every instant, then, by an endless surge of desire, causing him to form countless attachments and ultimately to lose himself, nor will he be excessively troubled if he does not acquire an excessive amount of the bounties of this world and the pleasures they yield.

His attitude to material enjoyments will never be the same as that of the hasty person who is in a state of constant anxiety and agitation lest his possessions not last him until death. It is only for those who worship this world that material possessions count as a goal in themselves; those who are advancing towards the abode of eternity use the bounties of this world as a means for attaining lofty goal. Moreover, indifference to what this narrow world contains causes man to enjoy the inner peace that he seeks. Such peace will undoubtedly permit him to enjoy to a heightened degree those pleasures of life that are in conformity with the criteria of religion.

Rousseau says:

"I know that I am destined to die; why, then, should I create attachments for myself in this world? In a world where all things are changing and passing, where I myself will soon become non-existent, of what use to me are attachments? Emile, my son, if I lose you, what will be left for me? I must nonetheless prepare myself for such an intolerable eventuality, because no one can assure me that I will die before you.

"So if you wish to live happily and rationally, attach your heart only to beauties that are imperishable; try to limit your desires and hold duty in higher esteem than all else. Seek only those things that do not violate the law of morality, and accustom yourself to losing things without distress. Accept nothing, unless your conscience permits you. If you do all of this, you will surely be happy, and not become overattached to anything on earth."⁵

When the spirit of man overflows with faith in God and is assured of its own immortality, it will feel a remarkable and ever-increasing power within itself. Once it frees itself of absolute attachment to the perishable values of this world, it will in fact be the master of the universe.

The elevating tranquillity that results from such an orientation of the spirit gives man the ability to resist firmly the allurements of the world and the demands of the passionate self. He no longer laments the deficiencies and misfortunes that assail him, nor does he become proud and arrogant on account of his successes. Whatever causes other men to lose their bearings has no undesirable effect on him.

Belief in the day of reckoning and in the existence of an absolute perfection whose scrutinizing gaze encompasses all things and before whom the deeds of all man are present, even if they be as inconsequential as an atom – this belief creates a powerful influence in the depths of man's being that no other force can equal. Belief in God and His commands not only prevents man from fearing the difficulties of life but also transforms those difficulties into means of development and ascent toward the lofty goals of life.

Thus the Qur'ān says: "Whosoever believes and reforms himself shall never be prey to fear or to sadness" (6:48).

"God shall guide to the path of happiness those who believe and do good deeds" (10:9).

Who can underestimate the role of the spirit and the heart in the development of man and not ascribe to the heart the greatest share in the ascent of the spirit to the highest degree of perfection? Have not love and faith made possible throughout human history the greatest acts of devotion and self-sacrifice?

It is the purpose of the Qur'ān firmly to implant awareness in the inner being and heart of man, to transform his heart and fashion him in such a way that he is inwardly impelled to perform deeds of value.

Since the believer depends for success in his striving on the infinite power of God, in Whom he places all his hope and reliance, the passing hardships and sorrows he encounters will never be able to darken his life, however difficult the path to his goal may appear. He will even accept failure with equanimity, if that failure occurs on the path leading to God, and regard failure as being a kind of victory in itself.

Whoever chooses God as His protector and guardian will escape the darkness of bewilderment and misguidance.

The Qur'ān says: "God is the Guardian and Protector of those who believe; He brings them forth from darkness into light" (2:257).

Those who refuse to worship God find themselves prostrating before their inner idol; passion and desire rule every dimension of their beings.

Self-worship is a dangerous sickness that with its different manifestations in the individual and social life of man entails the most tragic misfortunes and disorders. It creates a powerful barrier between man and the truth and results in the breakdown of man's capacities of perception and the blinding of his inner being.

The Qur'ān says: "Do you see the one who takes his own desires as his god? God has made him go astray, despite his possession of knowledge; He has placed a seal on his ears and his heart and drawn a curtain of darkness over his eyes. Who other than God can guide

him? Will you then not take heed? (45:23).

- Since Islam regards this world as the tillage of the hereafter, it is acceptable that man should regard it as a means. Through choosing the correct path and acting virtuously man is in fact preparing his own life in the hereafter. But if man regards the world not as a passage leading to a higher, eternal life but as an aim and goal in itself, his meaningless attachment will deprive him of happiness and prevent him from growing towards perfection.

The Qur'ān declares:

"Are you content with the life of the world in exchange for the hereafter, although the life of this world is as nothing when compared with the hereafter?" (9:38).

A Unique Advantage

A unique and valuable advantage enjoyed by the one who accepts the principle of an afterlife as part of his belief system is that he knows his future is fundamentally dependent on his own conduct and deeds. His behavior is therefore based on truthfulness and the absence of hypocrisy, on purity and sincerity. Belief in the hereafter not only raises qualitatively the level of his deeds but even accelerates their quantitative growth. The richer the content of his belief, the greater will be the extent of his sincerity, to the extent that even the least of his acts will be suffused by the purest intention.

He will be aware that all of his acts are constantly subject to the severest scrutiny. Whatever good or evil act he performs will be entered in the ledger of his deeds and retained for accounting. The day will come when his account will be examined with the greatest of care, for there is no mystery that is hidden to the one who watches over him.

By contrast, one whose inner being is empty of belief in the Last Day and who denies the most fruitful of realities, imagines that he will not be called to account for any aspect of his deeds, that he will not be burned by the flames of the fire that he kindles today, and that he will not suffer the grave consequences of his corrupt deeds. He is accordingly engulfed

in waves of delusion and untruth; he looks with hot desire on all forms of corruption and gazes coldly and listlessly on virtues and lofty qualities of the soul. Because of his mode of thought, if he occasionally undertakes some useful and creditable deed, this will remain unappreciated by the blind and purposeless future in which he believes. He therefore regards himself as justified in remaining indifferent to all considerations of virtue and emotion and in disdaining all lofty human qualities. If he commits various forms of crime, treachery and oppression, he recognizes no sanction other than the conventions and regulations of society that would call him to account for his misdeeds and punish him.

The fundamental shortcomings of human laws are that they assume all forms of human life will come to an end with death and that they are based on the wishes and sentiments of the majority of the members of society. Divine legislation follows a different path, one based on the eternity of human life, a life that is not severed by the blade of death, and it draws up its agenda accordingly.

A question calling for analysis is why science and the human mind are incapable of enlarging their sphere to aid in building the loftier dimensions of man and in bringing about profound transformations within him as does the fertile power of religion. The reason for the descent of man into the depths of banality and for the existence of all kinds of shortcoming in society is to be found in the very essence of man-made laws and their lack of congruence with the essential nature of man.

The religious man willingly implements the laws that he has come to accept as expressions of the eternal wisdom of God. He recognizes, moreover, that while obeying those laws he is journeying towards eternity and an imperishable realm across a span of infinite time. The narrow vision of human knowledge is incapable of fully comprehending the lofty destiny of such a man.

PHILOSOPHY OF PRAYER

وَإِذَا سَأَلَكَ عِبَادِي عَنِّي فَإِنِّي قَرِيبٌ أُجِيبُ
دَعْوَةَ الدَّاعِ إِذَا دَعَانِ فَلْيَسْتَجِيبُوا لِي وَلْيُؤْمِنُوا
بِي لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْشُدُونَ ۝

“When My servants ask thee concerning Me, I am indeed close (to them): I listen to the prayer of every suppliant when he calleth on Me: let them also, with a will, listen to My call, and believe in Me: that they may walk in the right way” (ii. 186).

The central theme of this verse is prayer. It is a peculiar style of the Holy Qur'an that when it speaks of the greatness of God or His sovereignty or His wrath, it uses the plural form for God. This is the royal way of speech and the monarchs talk in this way. But where the Holy Qur'an speaks of the mercy or grace of God, it uses the singular form. In this verse all the words used by God for Himself are singular. This shows that God is particularly merciful to His creatures. Man prays to God in fulfilment of his own needs, but God treats it as one of the noblest form of prayer. It is His kindness that He removes all veils between Himself and His creatures. He says that He is nearer to you than your

**SULAYMAN
and the Throne of Bilqis**

Towards Understanding the Qur'an

life-vein. Whatever you have to ask for, ask it directly from Him.

From the Traditions of the Holy Prophet, it seems that when a man prays to God, he is given one of the three things by God. Either his prayer is answered immediately or it is stored up for the Hereafter or, due to his prayer, some imminent trouble is removed from him, which might otherwise have befallen him.

For example, if you ask a most generous person for something repeatedly, he will become disgusted with you. But the case is different with God. Ask Him and ask Him repeatedly, He will still be pleased with you. But if you give up asking Him for His favours, He will be displeased with you. In this world it is a matter of disgrace to stretch out your hand before another person to ask something of him, but ask something of God and you will not be disgraced but get more respect and honour from Him.

Sayyidna Sulayman sailed right in on his flying carpet with armies of Jinn. His carpet was six-hundred cubits in length. He had great power. Allah was his strength! Allah once said, 'Be a powerful king, or a prophet smarter than anything!' But Sulayman said, 'Please, give me Light! Knowledge is better than earthly might!'

So Allah gave him both Light and worldly power, strong like lightning, sweet as a flower. Then Prophet-King Sulayman taught all day in his palace garden, and he would say, 'This comes from Allah's overflowing favor! Rhia knowledge is Light you can taste and savor!'

He rode past his armies lining the hill, past jinn and men who stood stock still, and his legions of birds who lined the trees ready to fight Allah's enemies!

Then one day they marched through a certain valley. He heard an ant shout as it shot down an alley, 'Get into your houses! But Sulayman laughed, and said, 'Save your breath!'. Then he prayed, 'O Lord, make me one of the grateful!! Your Light is everywhere Nothing is hateful!'

Then Sulayman's birds began to assemble. He said, 'Where's my hoopoe?' They started to tremble. 'Where is my favorite, my trusty lieutenant? I can't see him anywhere. Is that bird absent?' Then Sulayman frowned. 'He'd better come quick, or I'll punish him firecely (unless he is sick)!'

But he soon arrived, and bowed down low, and said, 'All this time I've been on the go flying far from a place you have never seen, called Sheba. There rules a powerful Queen on a giant throne. But they worship the sun instead of Allah, the Mighty One.

Allah's Throne holds up the whole creation! But Bilqis rules an idolworshipping nation.'

'Well, we'll see if you're telling the truth,' he said. 'Take this letter to her,' and he bowed his head and wrote with his quill for a minute or two. 'Drop it upon her. They we'll see what they do!'

So the hoopoe took off and flew through the skies, then swooped through her window, to her great surprise, for she thought that no one could ever get in unless they were wiser than she was, or jinn!

Then she went to her sages to think of a plan. This comes from the Prophet-King Sulayman. It says, "Allay's Name, Merciful, Compassionate, Do not rebel! Be of those who submit!"

What do you think?' They said, 'We are strong!' She said, 'Well, this time I think you are wrong. When kings enter a city they always lay waste to it. We'll send gifts instead. We won't fight. Now make haste to it!'

So on hundreds of camels they packed up bricks of pure gold and silver a good foot thick, jewels by the tons, and crowns, and real pearls, and slaves by the hundreds, both boys and girls.

But Sulayman ordered his jinn, it is told, to build a palace of solid gold! With great silver stairways as huge as can be, it shrunk her gifts down to the size of a pea! Sulayman laughed at her minister, and said, 'I don't need this. Take it all back instead! What Allah had given me is much much better. Now we have to attack. She's ignored our letter!'

So Queen Bilqis wisely decided to see the Prophet-King Sulayman personally. She locked up her throne behind a big strong door, and set out across the vast desert floor. She said, 'I am usually right all the time. Can Sulayman's wisdom be greater than mine?'

Now, meanwhile, Sulayman had a plan, so he asked a jinn and a wise old man if they could bring him her throne right away. The jinn said, 'You'll have it by the end of the day!' 'Too slow, too slow!' answered Sulayman, then he turned and asked the enlightened old man, and that learned old man just said with a sign, 'I'll bring it to you in the blink of an eye!' Suddenly before him stood Bilqis's throne! It glimmered and shimmered and beamed and shone! It arrived in his palace before he had reckoned, He said, 'O Allah, make me grateful each second! This world is made of miraculous stuff! A test from Allah! Do I thank Him enough?'

Then he ordered his jinn and the winds to change. Bilqis's throne so it would look strange! He wanted to test if in fact she was wise and able to see with her heart, not her eyes. Then, perhaps, if she was really so smart she would know her own throne deep down in her heart, and see that Allah is the Power Supreme, Lord of what is, and how things seem! She entered. He asked her, 'Is this your throne?'

She said, 'Why, it seems like my very own!' She was stunned. There it stood, in Sulayman's hall! He said, 'We worship Allah, Lord of all - Greater than suns or molecules bursting!' She thought, 'That's the knowledge for which I've been thirsting!' Then he asked her to enter a mirrored hall which his jinn had just built, glass floor wall to wall, water flowing beneath, fish swimming along. She thought she would get wet (but she was wrong), so she lifted her skirts and made her legs bare. Then he said, 'It's not water. It's just glass there!' She

was so shocked she almost started to weep, but Allah had awakened her heart from its sleep!

She suddenly saw that Allah was One! She fell to her knees with everyone. She said, 'I have wronged my self - now I see! I submit to Allah, Lord of all worlds that be! I submit with Sulayman, Prophet and King, to Allah, Who creates us and everything!'

O Allah, bless Bilqis and Sulayman, and help us to try as best as we can to have just a bit of their wisdom and Light, and give us the knowledge to know what is right, for You are the Powerful Lord, and the Glory! We thank Allah for this wonderful story!

A MIRACLE

A Divine Proof of the Truth of Islam.

Huzaifa al Yamani and Jabir ibne Abdullah Ansari, two companions of the holy Prophet appeared in a dream one day to King Feisal I of Iraq, asking him to remove their bodies and bury them elsewhere, as the river had come near to their graves.

Though in normal cases and circumstances dead bodies in graves decompose and disintegrate yet there are proofs where bodies of saints, martyrs and prophets have been dug up under special circumstances or accidentally.

The following incident will suffice to confirm and support the above assertion:-

Centuries ago, Hazrat Huzaifa al Yamani and Jabir ibne Abdullah Ansari were buried near each other somewhere in Baghdad near the river Tigris. Unfortunately the river changed its course and the graves were in danger of being water-logged and would ultimately be destroyed. Hazrat Huzaifa died in the year 36 A.H. and Hazrat Jabir in the year 77 A.H.

In the year 1931 A.D. (1351 A.H.) King Feisal I of Iraq dreamt that he was being addressed by Hazrat Huzaifa al Yamani as follows:-"O King! Remove Jabir ibne Abdullah Ansari and myself from the bank of the Tigris and bury us at some other safe place, because my grave is already water-logged and Jabir's grave is about to be water-logged." The dream was repeated again the next night, but King Feisal did not pay attention to it on account of his preoccupation with State affairs. On the third night Hazrat Huzaifa was seen in a dream by the Grand Mufti of Iraq. He addressed the Grand Mufti as follows:-"I have been directing the King since the last two nights to transfer our graves but he has not paid any heed. Tell him emphatically for the transfer."

In the morning the Grand Mufti went to Noore as-Sayyed, the Prime Minister of Iraq, and related to him his dream. On hearing this narration, the Prime Minister took the Grand Mufti to King Feisal. On hearing the incident, the King confirmed that he had also had the same dream.

After mutual discussions, they decided that the Grand Mufti should issue a Fatwa (Verdict) for the transposition of the graves, and after which a Royal Decree supporting the Verdict would be given and the press be informed about the forthcoming event so that the public would also know about this event. It was decided that on the 10th Zilhajj after the Noon prayers (Zohar) the graves would be opened and the holy bodies transferred to Madayan, a place 30 miles from Baghdad near the tomb of Salman-e-Farsi, a companion of the Holy Prophet, and for whom the Holy Prophet has said, "Salaman is one of our Household".

As it was the season of Hajj, pilgrims had gathered in Mecca. They cabled to King Feisal I to postpone the event by a few days so as to enable them to attend after finishing their Hajj. Similar requests were received from other countries of the world. In compliance with these requests, King Feisal issued another proclamation fixing the 20th of bodies to Madayan.

A huge course of people of all communities gathered in Baghdad. At the appointed time there was no place even to stand in the already congested place. First, the grave of Hazrat Huzaifa was opened and the body lifted with a crane in such a way that it safely came on a stretcher which was lifted by King Feisal, Prince Farook of Egypt, the Grand Mufti and the Prime Minister. The body was then placed in a glass Coffin box especially made to keep the holy bodies. The body of Hazrat Jabir was also lifted in a similar way.

Both the bodies were fresh and their open eyes were issuing such divine light that the spectators were amazed. Their coffin clothes were also intact and at a first glance it seemed as if they were alive and asleep.

From here the bodies were taken to Madayan where they were reburied near the tomb of Salman-e-Farsi.

Another Incident from Teheran

Recently in Teheran, during earth moving operations, ground diggers accidentally came across the grave of a very learned man who had died about 65 years back. The corpse was as intact as the day it was buried.

His name was Haji Muhammad Siddique, and he was a resident of the town of Akharku. His last request of the town of Akharku. His last request was that he should be buried near the shrine of Janab-e-Masooma (sister of the Imam Reza) at Kum. Kum is about 60 miles from Teheran. As his heirs could not afford to take his body to Kum, they had him buried near Teheran.

When people came to know about this incident, they started to visit this grave. They set about to collect the amount required for sending the body to Kum, since this was the last request of the deceased. Before sending the body to Kum, they kept the coffin for some time for the devotees to pay their respects.

ISMILLAHIR RAHMANIR RAHIM

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As-Salaamu Alai Kum Wo Rahmatullah

Dear Brother Yousuf Lalljee,

We pray that you are in better health so you can continue Allah's work.

All the brothers and sisters send their Salaams. I think I told you, that we are renting a building for \$750.00 monthly of which the brothers and sisters contribute towards from their salaries. Since we establish, this center it kept me busy, concerning repairs, in order to make the place look how we desired to see it, with an office, Library, Lecture Hall, Kitchen, Toilet and Baths and a masjid area. Organising Programmes and activities to get the center active on a daily basis, took a lot of my time. So I hardly wrote abroad much and I did not have an active secretary, of which I am working on now, Since we recently completed the office.

Thanks for the booklets 'The Path' and the other books you sent us. We have many new members, we need desperately some know your Islam and other books on the contrary we need a good shipment of Literature. The book Then I was guided, is also badly needed, here in Trinidad.

May Allay reward you for your efforts..

Wa Salaam.

Yours Brother In Faith

Abdul Kareem Ibrahiim

Qualities of a true Muslim.

May God bless the man who has heard His orders and remembered them; who was called by Him and obeyed the commands; who has affiliated himself to His Messenger and has thus secured his salvation; who has faithfully obeyed the commands and interdictions of his Preserver and Protector and fears the consequences of his sins; who has been sincere in doing such good deeds as will get him rewards in Heaven; who has always acted sinlessly, righteously and honourably; who has tried to earn His blessings and avoided vices and sin; who has discarded false pomp and glory of this world and concentrated in achieving an exalted position in the world to come; who has completely checked and restrained his desires and longings and kept his fancies and cravings under control; who has decided that patience on suffering is the best way to reach Heaven and abstinence from sin as the best mode of securing salvation; who has adopted the best of religions (Islam) as his creed and followed the bright path of truth and justice; who has correctly decided that the span of his life is a period of grace allotted to him to do good before his end and having provided himself for the next world is eager to welcome death.

Sermons of Hazrat Ali from Nahjul Balagha. (Sermon 79)