

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

THE FIRST ISLAMIC MISSION IN THE U.K. ESTABLISHED 1913 C.E. AS THE WOKING MUSLIM MISSION

Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at Islam Lahore (U.K.)

Dar-us-Salaam, 15 Stanley Avenue, Wembley, HA0 4JQ, U.K.

Imam & Head of Mission 020 8903 2689 President 020 8524 8212

Secretary 01753 692654 Book Depot 020 8903 2689

Fax 0870 131 9340 E-mail aaii@saziz.globalnet.co.uk

<http://www.islamic-book-depot.org.uk>

Next Meeting

Venue: *Dar-us-Salaam*

Date: Sunday, 7th March 2004

Time: 3 pm

Speaker: Dr Jawad Ahmad

Please make every effort to attend and be on time.

Regular Activities

Dars-i Quran: Every Friday at 2:30 pm.

Meeting of the Executive: First Sunday of every month at 2 pm.

Meeting of the Jamaat: First Sunday of every month at 3 pm.

Contents

<i>News</i>	Page 1
<i>General Musharaf hounours</i>	
<i>Khan Muhammad</i>	Page 2
<i>Hazrat Amir's message</i>	Page 3
<i>Trinity</i>	Page 3
<i>By Hazrat Maulana Abdul</i>	
<i>Haq Vidyarthi</i>	
<i>The Muslim Dilemma</i>	
<i>By Mahmud S. Dean Aziz</i>	
<i>Barrister at Law</i>	Page 5

News

إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ °

Hamid Farooq: The younger son of Hazrat Maulana Muhammad Ali (Ra) passed away on 6th February 2004 in Karachi.

Mahmooda Abdullah: Wife of Master Muhammad Abdullah, who was our missionary in Fiji and in the US, passed away in California. Apart from playing a crucial role in bringing the Nation of Islam back to orthodox teaching both, husband and

wife played a great role in helping members of the jamaat to settle in California. May Allah bless them and grant them a place amongst those dear to Him.

Prayers

Begum Qudsia Chaudry, wife of Chaudry Masud Akhtar, who was an assistant imam of the UK jamaat some time ago was taken very ill and had to undergo surgery. The operation was successful and she is now recovering at home. The family want to thank every one who prayed for them during this difficult period.

A Great Victory in Holland

Dutch government announces it will not accept any organisation as representative of Muslims if Lahori Ahmadis are not included in it.

The following email from Hikmat Mahat Khan, the secretary of the Holland jamaat will be a great boast to our members. It shows what can be achieved despite the obstacles we face, if we work hard and with dedication.

“Assalamo alaikum wRwB

My dear brothers and sisters,

I would like to share with you all a news that can be encouraging for all of us and it is a proof that Allah is with our movement and this the time that we have to come forward and bring the news of our Ahmadiyyat.

I would like to inform you that with the help of Allah almighty we had a major breakthrough in Holland this weekend. This case is comparable to the case in South Africa.

As I had mentioned before that we, Lahore Ahmadiyya, were not involved in any platform in the past because of obstructions by our Sunni (especially surinam Sunnis under strong influence of Pakistani soennie maulana's) brothers.

My statement made in Indonesia that we will conquer Holland was made

in the light of this action. In the past two years I started a battle against this obstruction. Our government wanted a body with Islamic representation of the community. This is when and where we decided that we have to be represented in that body and that first of all the general Holland community should start to know us and that the Moslem community should start paying respect to us.

This battle became stronger and stronger and in the past month I spent all my energy in writing letters to ministers, parliament and press to fight the obstruction. I had about a weekly press coverage about our movement and the fact that we as "liberal" Moslem are excluded by "fanatic" Muslims.

I had live TV coverage and interview on this and finally I visit all parliament member with influence to inform them about us and that we can not accept this anymore.

Under influence of all this the government finally declared that the government will not accept any body without participation of the Ahmadiyya movement.

This was declared on Saturday afternoon by the government and we had a big Jalsa on the same Saturday evening (coincidence) and it was for me a very warm feeling to inform my fellow brothers and sisters that we had a milestone for our movement. I get emotional when I write you this since this so magnificent and great and it is nationwide on the news. I thank Allah very much for his help, support and guidance.

Please pray for us.

Wassalaam

Hikmat Mahawat Khan"

We congratulate our Dutch brothers and sisters on this great victory. We also admire their dedication and devotion to the cause of presenting the true picture of Islam to the world. Let us emulate their example and dedicate ourselves to propagation of Islam and the expansion of the jamaat. If

Mr Khan Muhammad, a friend and well-wisher of the jamaat, honoured by the President of Pakistan.



M. Khan Muhammad
GOLD MEDALLIST



65 BARONSMEDE
EALING,
LONDON,
W5 4NL,
U.K.
TEL: +44 (0) 208 567 2405
FAX: +44 (0) 208 579 2232
MOBILE: 07887 994 786
EMAIL: kayemagencies@hotmail.com

Khan Mohammed played for Pakistan for twelve years from 1947 to 1960 and was the proud member of the team who beat all the cricketing nations of the world.

He was the first one who sacrificed county cricket for his country.

He captured the maximum wickets in the test trial matches played at Lahore and Karachi soon after Pakistan was recognised as official test status and Pakistan became the official cricketing country of the world.

He was also the first member of the official test team which toured India in 1952 and now he is awarded the Gold Medal by the President of Pakistan, General Pervaiz Musharraf, on 16th September 2003.

He was the first one to bowl the first official test ball and got two Indian batsmen out, namely V Mankad and P Roy in India in the Dehli test.

He was the first one to become a first class qualified coach and worked at the M.C.C. at Lords, London, England.

He was the first one to bowl Len Hutton (who was holding a world record for 364 not out for England) for a duck.

He was the first one who got five wickets all clean bowled at Lords, London, England.

He was the first one who got the first five wickets against South Africa in 1952 for Somerset County.

He was the first one who clean bowled the five top batsmen of England: Len Hutton, Peter May, Edrich, Bailey and Godfrey-Evan.

Khan was the first one who got seven wickets and won the match against the strongest Australian side to ever visit Pakistan in 1957.

The team was Johnson (Capt.), R Lindwal, K Miller, Davidson, Richie Benaud, O'Neil, Macdonald, Harvey, Burke, Burge, W Grout.

He was the first one to be on the world Eleven organised by The Lancashire in 1953.

He was the first one to retire at the age of twenty-eight in 1960.

.....
General Pervaiz Musharraf, President of Pakistan

Pakistan Test Cricketer 1948-1958
Pakistan Selector 1962
Life Member of the Board of Control of Cricket in Pakistan
Life Member of the M.C.C. (London)

International Cricket Coach:
Pakistan, England, Sri Lanka & Malaysia
Director of Coaches, Canadian Cricket Association
Holder of M.C.C. Coaching Certificate
Holder of M.C.C. Advanced Coaching Certificate

Hazrat Ameer's Message for Eid-ul-Adha 2004

الْحَجُّ أَشْهُرٌ مَّعْلُومَةٌ فَمَنْ فَرَضَ فِيهِنَّ الْحَجَّ فَلَا رَفَثَ وَلَا فُسُوقَ وَلَا جِدَالَ فِي الْحَجِّ وَمَا تَفَعَّلُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ يَعْلَمُهُ اللَّهُ وَتَزَوَّدُوا فَإِنَّ خَيْرَ الزَّادِ التَّقْوَىٰ وَاتَّقُونِ يَا أُولِيَ الْأَلْبَابِ

"The months of the pilgrimage are well known; so whoever determines to perform pilgrimage therein there shall be no immodest speech, nor abusing, nor altercation in the pilgrimage. And whatever good you do, Allah knows it. And make provision for yourselves, the best provision being to keep one's duty. And keep your duty to Me, O men of understanding." (Al Baqara 2:197)

Millions of Muslims will be visiting the Holy city of Makkah to perform the Hajj (pilgrimage). It is a time to reflect how Muslims from all over the world gather in one place irrespective of their nationalities, colour, caste or creed. It is a time when Islamic brotherhood is seen as the people of the entire world pray and perform their pilgrimage together. No one is bothered by who is performing his or her devotion next to him or her. The institution of Hajj in Islam is a lesson of unity and brotherhood to all mankind irrespective of their religious beliefs. It however is a pity that the lesson of tolerance learnt in these days spent together is soon forgotten on return from Hajj. It is the need of the time to reflect on the spirit of Hajj and bring the lesson of unity and tolerance back with us as we return from the Holy Pilgrimage. This will make the world a better place to live and help remove the stigma that the action of a few has placed on the face of Islam. Let us return from Hajj with a resolve to practice Islam as a religion of tolerance and peace. As we slaughter the animals to demonstrate our submission to the will of Allah, let us also slaughter the animal that abides within our hearts; the animal that leads us to hatred and aggression against our fellow beings. I wish you all a very Happy Eid-ul-Adha.

we do so sincerely I am sure that in a short time Allah will make us victorious despite all the obstacles that we face for a Muslim does not give up hope in the face of adversity but tries even harder.

Al Azhar grants Muhammad in World Scriptures the certificate of authenticity

Copy of an email from Mrs Samina Malik to Hazrat Amir

Dear Hazrat Ameer Sahib,

Assalamo Alaikum wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakaatuhu.

Alhamdulillah! I am very happy to inform you that Alazhar Alsharif has issued a certificate of approval for "Muhammad in World Scriptures" by Maulana Abdul Haq Vidhayarthi.

Trinity

By Hazrat Maulana Abdul Haque Vidyarthi

The unity of God is the common basis of all revealed religions. This has been rejected by the later builders of Christianity. But this belief shall, in the long last, prove to be the edifice of religion. Having proved the unity of Godhead, it is useless and futile to enter upon a discussion on the doctrine of Trinity. Trinity, or rather the Holy Trinity of the Christians is only an intellectual deception and fraud. It is contended that the triad of God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Ghost can be deduced, though not severally, from the collective evidence of Matthew (3 : 11, 16-17, 11 : 27, 16 : 16), John (20 : 28), the Acts

(5 : 3-4) and the Epistles of the Apostles. There is, however, no saying of Jesus which can be adduced in proof of the Trinity of God.

It is in Hastings' *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*:

"The term 'Trinity' (from Latin *trinitas*) appears to have been first used by Tertullian, while the corresponding Greek term 'Triad' appears to have been first used by Theophilus the Christian apologist, an older contemporary of Tertullian, as in the subsequent usage the term designates the Christian doctrine of God as Father, Son and Spirit. In Indian religion, we meet the trinitarian group of Brahma, Shiva and Vishnu, and in Egyptian religion with the trinitarian group of Osiris, Isis, and Horus, constituting a divine family, like the Father, Mother and Son. Augustine said: 'In the book of the Platonists it was to be found that in the beginning was the word; it was not found there that the word became flesh and dwelt among us.'

"The Old Testament could hardly be expected to furnish the doctrine of the Trinity, if belief in the Trinity is grounded upon belief in the incarnation of God in Christ and upon the experience of spiritual redemption and renewal through Christ.

"In the New Testament, we do not find the doctrine of the Trinity in anything like its developed form, not even in the Pauline theology. If the passage contains no formulated expression of the Trinity, it is yet of great significance as showing that, less than thirty years after the death of Christ, his name and the name of the Holy Spirit could be employed in conjunction with the name of God Himself."

And it is written in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*:

"The Christian doctrine of Trinity can be best expressed in the words, 'The Father is god, the Son is god, and the Holy Ghost is god and yet they are not three gods but one god. So we are forbidden by the Catholic religion to say that there be three gods or three lords.' The creed, it has

been suggested, means that there is only one being that can, with strict theological correctness, be called God, i.e., the Trinity as a whole; but each of the three persons can be called God in a looser sense. This suggestion is offered as a short method of 'rendering consistent' the statement of the creed. But the paradox is not thus lightly to be got rid of. Plainly the Church did not regard itself as lowering the conception of the Father, so that He should become merely one component of a divine whole. 'The Father,' says St. Thomas Aquinas, 'is as great as the whole Trinity,' and explains that in such matters greatness signifies perfection of nature and pertains to essence. His conception of the Trinity is systematically developed by theologians, Greek, Latin and Protestant. The whole perfection of the divine nature is in each of the persons. The essence and dignity of the Father and the Son is the same, but is in the Father according to the relation of giver, in the Son according to the relation of receiver. Writers in the fourth and fifth centuries had compared the relation of the Father to the Son with the relation of the 'flame to its light,' of the 'spring to the stream,' of the 'seal to the impress.' 'Think,' says St. Augustine, 'of fire as Father, light as a Son. See, we have found coevals; and it is easy to see which begets which.' The Son, we are told, is necessary to the completeness of the godhead. The Son is not 'external to the Father' (Athn. Discourse I, Chap. 5) does not 'accrue' to the Father from without, but is 'of the substance of the father.' If the Son, it is argued, were not eternal, the Father would not always be Father, and absence of fatherhood, it is implied, would be a defect."

The Christians, however, believe all the three persons of the Trinity to be everlasting and eternal, holy and true God, omnipresent and omnipotent, having knowledge of the unseen, purifying and possessing power to forgive sins.

It is unfortunate that the unity of godhead is examined and discussed with reference to the arithmetical

numbers. Divine unity, from the viewpoint of Islam and philosophers, does not mean one unit of God, but Trinity surely denotes three units of God (just parallel to the United Kingdom or the United States of America). It is true the oneness of the Divine Being has nothing to do with the arithmetical numbers. The Quran has defined the unity of godhead as *hū Allāhu aḥad*, i.e., in all His attributes and actions, the Most High God is without a partner or associate. There is no other being to share His attributes, and to perform deeds like unto Him.

In mathematics, which is an exact and precise science, one is used neither for more nor for less than one. In mathematics, One can never be equal to 1+1+1, nor equal to 1,3; and three or more can never be equal to one. Excepting one, all numbers are different names for the additions of one. The number three is in reality one added to itself three times and nothing else. It is the lowest of the cardinal numbers, the number of a single thing without any more, and to which the addition of another makes two.

The relation between one and three is that of addition and subtraction, but the Divine Being is above and beyond addition and subtraction. The trinitarians, therefore, notwithstanding their reposing faith in the *three personalities*, believe them to be equal and alike in their attributes. Just as three and one are not alike mathematically, in the same way the three personalities cannot be equal and without difference in respect of attributes and actions. If the Father is equal and alike to the Son in all respects, it will be wrong and incorrect to call one Father, and the other Son. The Father creates and the Son is created, and the Holy Ghost is the product of both.

The First Person, i.e., the Father, is the Creator and the Destroyer; the Second Person, i.e., the Son, is the Deliverer and the Liberator, and the Third Person, the Holy Ghost, is the Restorer of life. Every Person, it is thus evidently clear, has special attributes of his own which are not to be found in the others. And it is on account of these particular attributes

that there is an order of priority among the three persons; first comes God the Father, then God the Son, and last of all God the Holy Ghost. Their rank is also determined in the same order; and to utter their names in a different order is considered to be a great heresy. Nobody can say that the Holy Ghost is the First Person, the Father the Second, the Son the Third, or "in the name of the Holy Ghost, the Son and the Father". **If the three Persons composing the Divine Being are equal and alike in all respects, why should there be a particular order and superiority in uttering their names?**

The Second Person is the Word of the First Person. He incarnates and dies upon the cursed cross in order to fulfil the justice of the Father; and the resurrection is finally perfected by the Third Person. It is an admitted truth that God is present everywhere. Is it, then, possible that all the three Persons are present in all places at the same time? Where one will be, the others will not be.

Again, are all the three united and combined in the execution of every deed that is done on this earth? Or, is the creation of each separate and distinct? Both these conditions are logically wrong and absurd. If all the three perform it unitedly, then imperfect is their power which is made perfect and faultless with mutual help and cooperation. And if their creation is separate and distinct, then equality and likeness is impossible among them; and all the three cannot, therefore, be compounded into one.

God, according to the doctrine of the Trinity, is an amalgam of Father, Son and Holy Ghost. What was He (God) before these three united to form this amalgam?

The meaning of the statement, "I and the Father are one" will be that the Son is similar to and like his Father in all respects, as like as two peas; but Father is the cause and Son the effect, and the cause and the effect, according to the statement, are one. This is an absurdity; cause and effect cannot be one.

If Father and Son are one and the

same, can we say that the Father was born of the Son?

The Holy Ghost came into being with the union of the Father and the Son. If they had not united, the Holy Ghost would not have come into existence, and if the emergence of the Holy Ghost was possible without their union, then the union which is said to have caused the existence of the Holy Ghost becomes useless and futile.

It is evident that the Father had not depended for His existence on the Son, but the Son did rely in His manifestation on the Father. The needy and the dependent cannot be self-existent; therefore, the Son was not God.

The Son is an amalgamation of humanity and godhead, but God the Father never was and never would be an amalgamation of such anti-beings; hence Father and Son are not alike and species of one godhead.

The only reference in support of the Trinity is the First Epistle of John. It runs thus: "For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghot: and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness in earth, the spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one." (1 John, 5 : 7-8, Authorised Version)

In these two verses "in heaven, The Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness in earth" is an addition made after the fifteenth century.

In the Greek version there is a footnote on it, which Luther omitted from his German edition.

THE MUSLIM DILEMMA

*Mahmud S. Dean Aziz LL.B (Hons.)
Barrister at Law*

All praises are due to Allah, the Lord of the worlds, and greetings and salutations to our Holy Prophet Muhammad (uwbp). I bear testimony that there is no being worthy of worship except Allah Who has no associate and I bear testimony that Muhammad (uwbp) is His Apostle and Messenger.

O believers! Reflect upon the historical references in the Holy Qur'an and consider the fate of the Pharaohs, and the many evil tyrants who exceeded the limits of God. Do you believe that individuals and nations are immune in this era from the same severe punishment if they transgressed and failed to do their duty to Almighty Allah as it ought to be done? The Holy Qur'an is quite clear about rewards and punishment. The wrath of Almighty Allah will visit every nation and individual for their misdeeds unless they sincerely repent and seek forgiveness from their Lord.

The record of human rights violations in Muslim states today is unbelievable as well as unprecedented. The abject poverty and hunger; the prevalence of disease and human suffering; the high level of ignorance and disregard for human dignity; the political oppression by rulers and governments with unjust and barbaric legal systems that permit inhumane torture of prisoners and the innocent; and the extravagant waste of the national resources by the privileged, are all alien to Islamic practice and in direct contradiction with Qur'anic injunctions and the authentic Traditions of Prophet Muhammad (uwbp).

Our Lord has promised in the Holy Qur'an that those who anchor themselves firmly in faith in Him and do good deeds for His pleasure shall be rewarded with an abundance of good. He has enjoined upon us the promotion of truth and justice and the doing of good to our kinfolk. He has specifically forbidden the doing of evil acts and engaging in lewdness, indecency and causing strife or rebellion in the community. He has guaranteed the devotee who seeks and follows His guidance the enjoyment of His protection. He has warned those who disobey and ultimately find themselves in error that there will be no one to guide them. The Holy Qur'an reminds us that *the Lord best knoweth those who yielded to His guidance.*

We cannot, therefore, hope to deceive Allah by our overt show of piety if internally we nurture a false assessment of our true relationship

with Him. He promised *those who surrender themselves to Him and accept the true Faith, who are devout, sincere, patient, humble, charitable and chaste; those who fast and are ever mindful of their duties to Him - on these both, men and women - He will bestow mercy, forgiveness and a rich reward.*

Islam has been universally acclaimed by its adherents to mean complete resignation to the Will of God. Some theologians and philosophers say Islam implies submission to the Divine Will. Prophet Muhammad (uwbp) has explained it through the observation he made of the obligations imposed upon mankind by the Creator and summed it up to be:

1. Bear witness that there is but only one God – *Iman*.
2. Recite the daily prayers in submission to His command – *Salah*.
3. Uplift the standard of life of members of the society by alms-giving and other charitable acts. The establishment of the *Bait-ul Maal* or Treasury for the administration of these funds – *Zakah*.
4. Observe the fast during the holy month of Ramadan for the pleasure of Allah and for the personal purification and spiritual development of the devotee – *Saum*.
5. Perform the pilgrimage to Makkah at least once to show solidarity with the Muslim *Ummah* and in preparation for our own inexorable end of this earthly journey and the transition to the Hereafter – *Hajj*.

These five pillars of Islam are the common ties that bind the *Ummah* of Prophet Muhammad (uwbp). Every person who has taken the *Shahada* or accepted Islam as a way of life is required to learn the rules of conformity. In obedience to the Lord he must faithfully practice these fundamental principles of the faith for the pleasure of Allah and ultimately inherit the rewards promised by the Almighty.

The devotee is not called upon to alter his physical appearance or change his identity, dress, cultural customs and language except in areas where they patently offend the basic principles on which the pillars

of Islam are founded. The change must be made in the character of the individual and evidenced by his deeds and actions. The Holy Qur'an makes the point in the following words: *O mankind, We have created you from a single pair of male and female, and established you as nations and tribes, so that you may know one another. The noblest of you before your Maker is the most dutiful of you. Surely Allah is Knowing, Aware* (49:13).

It also says: *Verily you have in the Prophet of Allah an excellent exemplar.* In accepting the Holy Prophet (uwbp) as a role model, the believer is not expected to become a clone of the Messenger, a look-alike, and attempt to walk in his shoe. The intention is to imbibe the character of the Holy Prophet and follow his teachings; to understand his love for the Creator in order to walk in the footprints that he has left behind on the sands of time.

It is common practice in most Islamic communities today to make a convert to Islam feel as if he is changing his national identity to that of someone from a different tribe or nation - an Indian, Pakistani or Arab. A Canadian accepting Islam recently was made to dress as a Pakistani when he took the *Shahada* from an *Imam* from Pakistan. This convert struggled for several months with doubts about his national identity. He was made to believe that the change was necessary and obviously had the strange misconception that his Western dress was inappropriate for the ceremony. The intention in 49:13 of the Holy Qur'an is to keep the identity of the convert intact and to recognize his basic intention, sincerity and willingness to accept and practice the Islamic way of life. In 2:143, it is stated: *All mankind is naught but a single nation.* The principle of the brotherhood of man is laid down here on the broadest basis. The injunction here encompasses the entire human race as members of one human family.

The world today is a spectacle of human beings who are simply lost. People are confused and unsure of the direction to follow. Everywhere, faith and belief in the established world religions have become largely

problematic both in individual and collective life. People in every society are stammering incoherently in borrowed symbols, searching for some new and separate identity. The growth of certain religious cults and devil-worshippers in Western societies has seriously affected the mores of the society. Institutions such as marriage and the family are seriously threatened. In the case of Islam, the political, social and economic transformation is occurring more rapidly than the spiritual and intellectual transformation and development and herein lies the Muslim dilemma. It is rooted in the fact that science and technology, with their ever-growing ideas and prowess and modern transient life by its glitter and enchantment, are considered to be threats to the Muslim psyche.

Muslims, for too long, have neglected the basic teachings of Islam and have promoted the traditional and cultural element of countries and peoples who are yet to emerge into the twenty-first century. They have added so many extra prayers and rituals to the faith that the fundamental and basic rules for the practice of obligatory *salah* in Islam are being subjugated.

Today Muslims are faced with a dilemma of being caught unprepared to confront the new social paradigm in the West. To escape and avoid the challenge, Muslims are encouraged to return to the practice of Islam in the seventh and eighth centuries and to reject the reality of the environment in which we now live. They are busy struggling with insignificant issues of the *hijab* and the right to practice polygamy. They are silent, however, on the promotion and propagation of the fundamental teachings of Islam. No serious effort is made to highlight the injunctions of the Holy Qur'an which give man and woman the right to life; the right to the freedoms we all cherish in seeking knowledge, earning a livelihood with dignity; the right to freedom of speech and travel; the right to own property; the right to freedom of conscience; and the right to the use of the democratic process for the election of our leaders.

It is, therefore, ironic to have so many Muslim scholars and community leaders, who should be speaking out against this retrograde step, to be engaged busily propagating and recommending the return to the early practice of Islam as the panacea for the evils that abound in the world today. Speaking to his followers, the Holy Prophet Muhammad (uwbp) is reported to have said: "The greatest enemy of God are those who have entered into Islam and do acts of infidelity, and who, without cause, shed the blood of men."

He also said: "Do you know what sappeth the foundations of Islam and ruin it? The errors of the learned destroy it, and the disputations of the hypocrite, and the orders of kings who have lost the road."

In one of his prophesies, the Messenger of Allah said: "The time is near in which nothing will remain of Islam but its name, and of the Qur'an but its mere appearance, and the mosques of Muslims will be destitute of knowledge and worship, and the learned men will be the worst people under the heavens, and contention and strife will issue from them and it will return upon themselves."

What does the Holy Qur'an recommend for the removal of the social ills, prejudices, injustices, discrimination and domination that have brought about the apparent decline and complete breakdown in the moral quality of life in society generally and the Muslim nations in particular? Living in the past is not what the Holy Qur'an recommends or intends for mankind. The Holy Prophet is reported to have said: "If one's today is not better than his yesterday and his tomorrow is not better than his today, he is a loser." To be a winner, therefore, one has to strive for excellence or drop out from the race as the religious leaders of Muslim communities are recommending.

Allah (swt) says in the Holy Qur'an: *You are the best of peoples evolved for mankind, enjoining what is right, forbidding what is wrong and believing in God* (3:110). In another injunction, the believers are told that *Allah will not change the condition*

of any person or community unless there is some positive effort on the part of the individual or community towards effecting the desired change. A true Muslim is dedicated to the pursuit of excellence so that his life will be sophisticated, dignified and kept up-to-date with the developments that are constantly taking place in a changing society.

Muslims must come to realize that they have voluntarily put themselves in a time warp. When they yearn to live in the past and engage in wrestling with the present they become a liability to themselves, the Muslim community and the overall development of the nation. Muslims must wake up to the realities of the new forces that are set free by the extraordinary development of human thought in all its directions. They must be aware and come to grips with the fact that they live in a period when science and technology have put man in space and made it possible for him to sit in his home on planet Earth and view the topography on planet Mars. Muslims must know that they live in an age when genetic engineering and the use of robotics are fast changing the shape of things. They must now focus their attention on accessing the new technologies and move Islam away from the arid deserts to fertile valleys of progress and enlightenment.

History will testify that Muslims were the forerunners and torchbearers of knowledge and civilization when Europe was still struggling through the Dark Ages. These forces that are set free in society today, technically speaking, are neither alien to Islam nor in conflict with the injunctions of the Holy Qur'an and the Traditions of Prophet Muhammad (uwbp). Muslims today have the good fortune to view both the bright and the dark sides of Islamic historical growth and development to evaluate the true status of Islam in the world community. They must move to correct the situation and align themselves with the forces of progress and become benefactors and not remain in the poor status as beneficiaries of all the new technologies.

The change must first come in the area of the *Shari'ah* Law (Muslim jurisprudence and legal system). We know from Islamic history that *Shari'ah* Law experienced a phenomenal growth and development during the first six centuries of the *Hijrah* (migration of Prophet Muhammad (uwbp) from Makkah to Madinah). The stagnation we have today has existed from that time when the door of *Ijtihad* (development in the law) was virtually closed. The full and proper use of Islamic legal principles such as *Ijma* (consensus of opinion) will certainly ensure the ongoing process of fresh thinking and influence some creative and desirable adjustments to that body of laws. *Qiyas* (judgments or juristic analogy), *Al-Istihsan* (deviation on a certain issue from the rule of a precedent to another rule for a more relevant reason that requires such deviation), *Al-Istislah* (unprecedented judgment motivated by public interest to which neither the Holy Qur'an nor the Traditions of the Holy Prophet (uwbp) explicitly refer) or *Al-Urf* (custom of society) are all necessary tools for Muslims to use in interpreting and expanding Islamic legal principles for the development of the legal systems in society today.

The Holy Qur'an is a living source of jurisprudence and as such provides for changes that will keep it relevant and alive. The old interpretation of legal theories in many areas of the Muslim life, though obsolete, are still used by some contemporary scholars to deliver edicts or *fatwas* that create greater hardships and quite often embarrassment to the believer and his faith. Prophet Muhammad (uwbp) bequeathed a legacy to suit the needs of mankind for all times. In this background, the believer is better able to understand why his faith, Islam, is being maligned, misunderstood, misrepresented and misinterpreted in the media as well as among the traditional enemies of the faith. Muslims, too, will come to realize the injury they continue to inflict upon the faith causing a steady decline of the image that Islam once boasted for six centuries after the demise of Prophet Muhammad

(uwbp).

Muslims must therefore rethink and plan again their strategy for life in an ever-changing world. They must hasten to contribute and keep abreast with the developments in the society and not remain complacent, leaving the task to be undertaken by future generations of followers. Muslims must not remain silent and be condemned to live under rules that were established by Islamic scholars and jurists who lived in the eighth and ninth century. Qur'anic legal principles must be critically examined with all the available knowledge at the time of the examination before deciding on the changes to be made in the relevant sections of *Shari'ah* Law.

The Holy Qur'an is addressed to men of reason and understanding who are commanded to ponder, to reflect, to reason, to analyse, to contemplate on the message of the Qur'an, and to arrive at the best solutions for the challenges of the day. Why is this injunction in the Holy Book if we are already condemned for life to follow the schools of thought of the *Imams* and their interpretation of *Al-Qur'an*? The pristine message of Holy Qur'an and the authentic Traditions of Prophet Muhammad (uwbp) are the sources to which every generation of Muslims must turn for guidance. This is why the Holy Book is addressed to men of reason and understanding – *oo lul al baab* - and advocates the pursuit of knowledge.

Islam as a way of life is the most recent of the revealed religions and has the 'mark' and 'royal seal' of perfection from Allah *Subhanna wa taala*. Almighty Allah says in the Holy Qur'an: *This day have I perfected for you your religion and have completed My favours upon you and have chosen for you as your way of life Al-Islam (5:3).*

In modern terms, Islam is 'state of the art' among the established religions. It must not remain in the hands of those leaders who lack the courage, qualifications and good intentions to promote its real value and true purpose for mankind. The leadership in Muslim lands have failed to address the social and

economic problems among their people and have allowed capitalism and communism to permeate their social structures and ruin the Islamic way of life. The economic questions of banking, mortgages, interest payments, insurance, investment banking, money exchange and transfers continue to pose problems for Muslims in Western states as well as in Islamic jurisdictions. This state of affairs has posed another serious dilemma for Muslims at the personal level, and many are forced to practice double standards while others suffer the financial loss resulting from non-participation.

Conclusion

Many communities in the West are turning to scholars from the East to promote their development in the Islamic way of life and, unfortunately, are finding themselves in yet another dilemma. They are, in fact, becoming victims of this imported leadership from depressed communities where Islamic values are being compromised and corrupted by ancient culture and traditions. Almighty Allah says: *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. And be not like those who became divided and disagreed after clear arguments had come to them. And for them is a grievous chastisement (3:103-104).*

Muslims in the West must benefit from the knowledge and experience gained in recent times concerning the corruption and decay that have gripped Islamic communities in the East. They must not depend or rely solely on intellectuals from foreign cultures to help with the promotion of the faith in their domestic settings. Islam will thrive and Muslims will attain their comfort level in the faith more readily through their own home-grown role models and leadership. In the multi-racial and multi-religious states and countries in the West, Islam will thrive and be given the role to redeem some of the lost causes that have been plaguing the institutions of the family and other societal structures. This, however, would depend upon the

willingness of Western Islamic communities to consider positive action in the following areas:

1. Conduct a mass educational campaign to inform Muslims as well as non-Muslims about the concept of *Jihad* for Arab nationalism as opposed to *Jihad* in defence of our community's right to the freedom to worship Almighty Allah and to engage in Islamic activities and practices that are basic and fundamental to the faith.

2. Differentiate and distinguish among the cultures of the Far East, the Middle-East and South-East Asia that have been incorporated into the practice of Islam in those regions with a view to separate the traditional and cultural from the basic fundamental elements of the Islamic faith.

3. Be prepared and willing to strive towards the reorientation of attitude, ideas, and plans for national development which will require them to work alongside non-Muslims to improve the quality of life in the country.

4. Endeavour to establish a relationship with the political authority in each state. A relationship founded on Islamic doctrines and principles to protect the integrity and national security in each of the states in which he has enjoyed his status and civic rights.

5. Without offending or sacrificing the basic principles of Islam, promote activities that will help to strengthen the social and moral fabric of the nation. Introduce Islamic principles to demonstrate that Islam is the solution for racial barriers and the discrimination of persons by reason of colour, class, rank and sex.

6. Islamic groups should unite to evolve a basic code of practice to be used at occasions such as Islamic social functions, religious festivals, and ceremonies such as weddings and birthday celebrations. To serve as a guide in presenting Islam to the believers as well as the non-believers.

7. Recognize and appreciate that

their duties and obligations to Islam do not end in their homes or the mosques but must be projected into the large and more hostile environment and community.

8. Recognize the importance of Islamic education and knowledge of the Islamic value system for both adults and children who must be equipped to present the proper Islamic way both by precepts and example.

9. Provide opportunities for non-Muslims to attend public gatherings at which Islam is promoted. The practice today is to deliver the message only to the converted.

10. Dig deep into the religious mines of the Holy Qur'an and the Traditions of the Holy Prophet (uwbp) to unearth enough relevant information and knowledge that will serve as a database for Islamic research and scholarship. This will undoubtedly enable Muslims to proceed with the amalgamation of thoughts between the essence and spirit of Islam. It will provide the platform for change as Muslims can once again enter today's world of science and technology, industry, commerce, economics, banking, politics, culture and a whole way of life that has been avoided thus far. They can advance into the frontline of progress and be distinguished as a new Islamic civilization.