

## Guides of Humanity

It is obvious that traversing this path requires guides who with their extra-ordinary knowledge and piety may guide all and may set an example for them to follow.

Human knowledge and intelligence being limited, it is quite likely that we may make a mistake in determining what is in our interest and what way leads to our eternal happiness. Hence there must be some persons, who, because of their communion with the metaphysical world, are in position to find the right path and show that to others.

That is why, we say that it is not conceivable that the All wise and Rational Allah would leave us in darkness. His limitless benevolence demands that He, through His chosen prophets, themselves human beings, puts necessary laws and programs at the disposal of mankind.

Prophets are the chosen and distinguished person who get in contact with Allah, find out the truth and communicate it to the people. This contact is called revelation. It is a special kind of contact between a prophet and Allah. A Prophet with his inner eyes sees the mysteries of the universe, and with the ears of his heart listens to divine calls and conveys them to the people.

### Prophets are Infallible

Prophets must not commit any sins, errors or mistakes; otherwise they cannot be fully relied upon in the performance of their mission. They should be rendered by Allah immune from sins and mistakes, so that people may repose cent percent confidence in them.

If they be liable to commit sins and mistakes, they cannot be a mode and example for others, nor can their acts, sayings and ideas become a source of a code of conduct to be followed.

This immunity from sins and mistakes is called Ismat (infallibility), and those who possess it are called Ma'asum (infallible).

# Number of Prophets

Traditions tell us that for the guidance of people Allah has sent about 1,24,000 prophets, first of them being Adam and the last Muhammad (S) son of Abdullah.

Prophets are divided into two groups. Some received revelation, but were not charged with the mission of propagation. Others had such a mission. Some of the latter group did not have a distinct code of laws of their own, but spread the laws of another prophet. It has also happened that at the same time there were several prophets, carrying out their functions in different countries or different cities and towns.

The most outstanding prophets who brought independent codes of law were five. Their names along with the names of the Books revealed to them are given below:

1. Noah (A) Epistle
2. Abraham (A) Epistle
3. Moses (A) Torah
4. Jesus (A) Evangel
5. Muhammad (S) Qur'an

# Aims of Prophets

The program of the prophets includes:

1. To lay the foundation of justice on a firm basis.
- 2 .To teach and educate.
- 3 .To combat every form of superstition, corruption, undue discrimination and deviation from divine unity, truth and justice.

The Holy Qur'an says:

***"Surely we have sent Our messengers with clear proofs and we have sent own with them the Book and the balance (necessary Laws) so that mankind may keep justice." (57: 25)***

In respect of the Prophet of Islam it says:

***"It is he who has raised up among an unlettered people messenger from among themselves, who recites to them His verses and purifies them and teaches them the Book and the wisdom although before this they were in a clear error." (62:2)***

This is the noble aim for which the prophets have been sent.

## Proofs of Prophethood

Prophets must have a living and clear evidence to prove their apostolate. This evidence must be an achievement which is beyond the power of ordinary man, so that it may be proved that they are in communion with the metaphysical world and are inspired and take instructions from there.

The stories of the conversion of the rod of Moses(A) into a python and the coming to life of the dead and the recovery of the born blind through Jesus (A) are undeniable. The story of speaking of Jesus (A) in cradle has expressly been narrated in the Holy Qur'an.

Similarly the Prophet of Islam, though raised from amongst the most backward people, brought the book which is the masterpiece of knowledge, methods of education and secrets of creation. Admittedly it is beyond human power to accomplish such a feat.

That is why we call the Holy Qur'an inimitable. The Holy Qur'an, is miraculous from several angles. Its literary style is so wonderfully striking that its enemies called it a magical act and advised people not to go near Muhammad (Peace be on him and his progeny), whose penetrating words bewitched the listeners and pulled them to his system. This shows that even the enemies were convinced of the Holy Qur'an's extra-ordinarily striking effect.

Apart from its style, the contents of the Holy Qur'an are such that within a short time they brought about an extra-ordinary changes in the environment of the world and laid the foundation of a bright culture along with a vast scientific and intellectual revolution.

Further, the Holy Qur'an in several of its passages has referred to a number of scientific truths which were totally unknown in that age and centuries later attention of research scholars was drawn to them.

Such reference include the question of rotation of the earth (Naml, verse 90), existence of male and female cells in plants (Taha, verse 35), existence of two contradictory forces within all particles, i.e., composition of atoms of negatively charged electrons and positively charged protons (Zariyat verse 29) and the law of gravitation (Ra'd, verse 2). For these reasons it must be admitted that this Book, which is the eternal miracle of the Prophet of Islam, is not the product of any human brain.

It is the word of Allah, which descended into the heart of the Holy Prophet from the metaphysical world. That is why the Holy Qur'an, in a number of passages, has challenged the unbelievers to produce a book similar to it. Though the diehard opponents of the Holy Prophet (S) tried their best, they could not succeed.

The Holy Qur'an expressly say:

***"Say: Surely if all men and jinn combined to bring the like of this Holy Qur'an, they would not be able to do so, even if some of them were to back the others." (17:88)***

This challenge of the Holy Qur'an still holds good. The Holy Qur'an, still throws a challenge to all the intellectuals of the world to bring a like of it, if they doubt its divinity. Their failure to accept the challenge is living evidence of the inimitability of the Holy Qur'an.

## **The Qur'an is Unaltered**

The Holy Qur'an is a book which preserves its original form and remains unaltered, because its special style and composition are such that nothing can be added to it nor anything can be deducted from it. If such an attempt is made by anyone, it would before long be detected.

Moreover, a large number of the companions of the Holy Prophet (S) from the very beginning of the descent of the Holy Qur'an put all its verses to writing so that they may remain immune from any alteration or change. The names of these persons are recorded in history and they are known as scribes of the revelation.

Imam 'Ali (A) is one of the most outstanding amongst them. Further, it is historically well known fact that hundreds of persons during the Prophet's time and thousands in the following centuries learned the whole Qur'an by heart and recited it to the people on all occasions. Such people are called Huffaz. (memorizers of the Holy Qur'an).

This tradition still continues and even now a large number of persons are found in Islamic countries who know the whole Qur'an by heart and can easily recite it from memory. This arrangement of preservation through scribes and memorizers and the unique style of the Holy Qur'an are the proofs of its originality and unaltered purity. It is evident from the above why the Holy Qur'an has remained unaltered and has not undergone the slightest change.

If the Muslims want prosperity and glory and want to regain their lost position and prestige they have no alternative but to follow and abide by the firm teachings of the Holy Qur'an. That is the only way how they can solve their apparently incurable social problems.

## **Call of Islam**

Like all revealed religions, Islam called for the acknowledgement of the Unity of Allah and combating the worship of anyone or anything else. Islam lays the greatest emphasis on Divine Unity. The very first sentence which a neo-Muslim utters is 'There is no god but Allah.'

Anyone who professes the Unity of Allah and the apostolate of the Prophet of Islam becomes a Muslim without any further formalities.

Next to unity, Islam calls for justice, Obedience of Allah, piety, cleanliness, banishing undue discrimination, work and effort in life and knowledge. It also calls for thinking and urges us to refrain from disunity and dissensions. The Holy Qur'an says.

***"I exhort you with a single exhortation, namely that you stand up for the sake of Allah in twos (collectively). or singly, and then think." (34:46)***

Islam proposes that religion should be accepted out of free will coupled with logic and reasoning and not through force or compulsion, for belief is not a thing to be imposed by force or compulsion, for belief is not thing to be imposed by force.

***"There is no compulsion in regard to religion. The right way has been made distinct from the wrong way." (2:256)***

## **Islam the Last Revealed Religion**

Just as an individual has to pass through various educational stages, like primary school, secondary school and the stage of higher education before he reaches the final stage, similarly from the point of view of religious teachings, humanity has passed through several evolutionary stages, till it has reached the final stage, which is Islam.

## **Islamic Principles Accord With Human Nature**

Human nature everywhere and every time is more or less the same. Thus humanity is the common factor among all the people, whether they are white or black, Arabs or non Arabs, men or women, old or young, rich or poor, weak or strong, wise or ignorant.

Whatever they are; their innate nature is the same, their being in the Stone Age or the Space Age makes no difference at all. The compiler of the "History of Political Philosophy" observes:

Habits and customs are the robes in which our unchanging body as a solid fact is clothed and these robes are there in every country and every society in some or the other shape and color, although human temperament as a reality is one and the same and is there in accordance with specific principles.

This is to such an extent that psychology {which deals with human nature), contains nothing but this unchangeable nature of man. Thus as long as man exists and retains his nomenclature of man, this nature remains and will not alter at his hands.

## **Man's Individuals and Natural Needs**

Human needs are of two kinds the primary needs and the secondary needs. The needs under discussion here are the primary needs. They spring from man's physical and spiritual edifice and its

foundation and from his social nature and he is subject to them all in his capacity of man.

Sociology has also called attention to this reality that there are common words in the dictionaries of different societies and these are quite in conformity with man's nature and they can all be recognized in their meaning,

Keeping in view the fact that all men are the same in their build and that they have the same characteristics and requirements are commonly the same and are of the same kind and the same way.

For instance, at no time and for no nation is it ever possible not to be bent upon waging war against an enemy who is determined to wipe the other out, particularly when there is no other way to get him out of their way except through bloodshed. In such a case it is not possible for a people so confronted to bar bloodshed.

Similarly no society can run away from the obligation of feeding the people, protection of whose lives is its own responsibility. Nor can any society put a ban on the sex life of its members. Thus there are other numerous examples which throw a flood of light on the unchangeability of human nature which is the same at all times and in all ages.

These are the natural aptitudes which are latent in man since his birth. They emerge when man grows and develops or when the obstacles in their way are removed. They give birth to new needs and ultimately help the growth of man's culture.

However, no factor in one culture can ever tolerate that our primary needs be suspended. For an example, it can be said that as a result of our civilization we are used to finer food, richer clothes and easier and pleasanter being.

But it can't be said that our needs of eating, drinking, sleeping and living are a result of our civilization. Nor can it be said that before the civilization there was no eating, drinking and living. Surely these are the needs of our existence.

It is also the demand of nature that when specific and definite habits have a routine of their own, then there ought not to be anything which might cause a change in these definite and specific habits.

It is this nature of man which the Islamic Principles have in mind. Since the religion of Islam is for the whole world and is not meant for any specific group or people, so in the forming of its moral code it is this nature of man which was kept in view. His basic needs have been taken into account in fixing Islamic principles, thus it is that in conformity with man's basic unchangeable nature, Islam has a code of unchangeable laws of life, a code that admits of no change at all, in spite of the fact that this code exists in many lands and for indefinite time without a change.

The injunctions of Islam have been framed to suit the creation of man and to be in harmony with his aptitudes and his attributes.

"Turn your face to the stable religion." Religion is that nature of Allah on and after which God has created people. There is no change in God's creation and it is this religion which has encompassed man.

So long as man is man, this nature will invariably be his. Future, present or past don't affect it. It is an established truth that human temperament does not change. Nor can it be said that along with the time human nature has changed and that something else has taken its place.

Islamic teachings are based on nature. It is the same nature which Providence has decreed and since it is divinely ordained, it can admit of no change. Thus religion means this very unchangeable nature of man.

It is clear from this that a system of permanent and stable principles is quite necessary for this human nature. So in its call Islam has said nothing beyond this. Thus according to Islamic ideology only such code of principles can be offered for human nature as is practicable by the people in general and particular.

According to these eternal principles there can be no difference in the simple and plain life of the primitive man and the life of the present civilized man with all his complicated ways of life since their basic inherent nature is the same.

Nor can the different modes of life have any effect on man's unchangeable nature, no matter whether he travels in animal-drawn vehicles, whether he travels in jet planes or atomic submarines, whether he lives in caves and eats wild roots and fruits or whether his abode is palatial buildings and his dining table is full of choicest dishes and his bed is of fur and velvet. His inherent nature is the same.

These ways of life are temporary and are of little value from religion's point of view. What is aimed at is man's training. It is the development of those basic aptitudes with which man is endowed according to his capacity.

This really means that Islam is another name of those aptitudes, those trends which are hidden in man. Thus Islam is to be found true to the highest standard of man's evolution. It is true by whatever criterion it is judged. So, as long as man is there in this world, so long will Islam and its code remain true and will not grow old with time.

## **Realistic Nature of Islamic Principles**

In modern law-making, the basic features of the subject of legislation are not kept in view. So it is possible that a law is made which is beneficial only partially and which is harmful as a whole and which is hidden from our eyes.

Wine drinking for example is an undesirable habit and in view of its evil consequences, it can be regarded as a serious menace to human existence. Yet, in consideration of the material and financial

gains that accrue from wine, government deems it justified. Such also is the case with gambling and prostitution dens.

The Islamic principles are, however, quite different in their composition because they have come to us from the Creator of this universe. God has created this universe and He is in the Know of all the ins and outs of it.

In His Knowledge past and future are the same. His Knowledge is in conformity with nature because He Himself has created the nature. Islam keeps in view human nature as it is and as made by God. It pays attention to this aspect and to man's natural desires and inclinations in the same way a human nature was kept in view while making the Islamic code.

In the same way, while selecting the topics of Islamic injunctions, human nature has been kept in view and it has been made quite clear that these injunctions, are subordinates to their being profitable or injurious.

This is an indication that there is harmony between human nature and Islamic teachings. Basic characteristics that are the topics of the injunction will remain so long as the topics themselves remain. Thus the unchangeable nature of the characteristics of things is also reflected in the unchangeable nature of Islamic injunctions.

Thus the laws framed on this basis will remain so long, as this basis remains. This relationship of the Islamic principles with their effectiveness in being beneficial or harmful grants them an eternal status.

For example, Islam regards the false person as an enemy of God and declares the evil flowing from the false person as breach of trust. Can this now be said that falsehood is breach of trust but only for the people living fourteen hundred years ago and that for the people in this age of science and wisdom, falsehood is not breach of trust?

Similarly, Islam has declared wine drinking as wholly unlawful. The Holy Qur'an treats it as an evil and describes it an act of the Devil. The Holy Prophet has called it the mother of vices and the begetter of sins.

He has termed the drunkards as accursed. The punishment for a single sip of wine is eighty stripes. It can't be denied that it is only out of consideration for the ruinous consequences of wine drinking that Islam has declared it unlawful. It is also an established fact that the great harm of the intoxicants will be there so long as the intoxicants are there.

Is this, therefore, not stupid for someone to say that drinking was an evil fourteen hundred years ago but in this age of space and moon flights it is not an evil at all? No year of history passes without there being hundreds of cases of murders, suicides, defalcations, burglaries, adultery, degradation and obscenity as a direct result of this fatal poison of drinking.



Can it be claimed that now this outmoded prohibition is not worth being reed? The law that speaks the language of nature can never grow outdated and outmoded. This is so because there is no new and old for truth and reality. Truth and reality is always fresh everywhere and every time.

Islam has severely censured adultery, obscenity, sex-license and lawlessness. To guard the honor of the people, it has ordered for the first time that a hundred stripes be delivered to the man and woman guilty of illicit sex relation. As compensation for this immoral act, it has also ensured by law that the public shall witness and be present at this whipping.

Can any sensible person still maintain that such laws have grown old and that they are meant for backward people only or that such laws were well observed in the past but now in this age of liberty and sex freedom, they have become defunct and meaningless? If we look at the sad plight of the West in particular and how it has lost its glamour, we will realize that these laws have not only not grown old but also will never grow old.

The long and short of this is that whatever Islam has declared to be lawful and unlawful is on the basis of its being beneficial and because there is a purpose behind it and because it is expedient.

Whatever is declared to be lawful in Islam is for the good of man and whatever is declared to be unlawful is in some way or another harmful for him, whether this harm is material or moral. Man is not aware of this truth about the things. There will come a time when man, on the basis of his knowledge and experience will get acquainted with them.

How just are the words of the British thinker Mr. Wells!

"A religion I know and about which I have often said that it is fully aware of the secrets of creation and of the reality of things and which is co-extensive with civilization, is the religion of Islam and Islam only."

## **Reality is Always Fresh**

Everything possessing factuality and reality is not only always new but also it never gets old. For instance look at the theories of Plato and Aristotle. Although two thousand five hundred years have passed, yet it is fresh and will always remain so.

The passage of time does not affect it. In his time two and two made four and they make four even today, and two thousand years hence, also, two and two will make four. The upheavals of the world and the march of time have no effect on it.

There is no doubt that every principle of Islam is in harmony with the system of Creation in every respect. Nowhere in this world do we find a law as natural and as close to reality as the law of Islam. In other and better words it should be said that the principles and the teachings of Islam are reality itself. Had it not been a religion of nature, it would have been exterminated by the vicissitudes of the world.

Rather it is very much alive to this day, though it had no material props for its survival. Nor does it have them now. This is in spite of the fact that in every age all attempts were made to wipe it off and such attempts are still being made.

The secret of it all is that it has a touch of the supernatural and its progress is bright. The great thinkers of the West are amazed at this. The reason is that Islam is a natural constitution and it accords with the nature of life. It will exist so long as the world exists.

Although fourteen hundred years have passed, the greatness and grandeur of this religion is quite apparent from the fact that what the Holy Prophet (S) said at that time is true even today and for man's happiness and wisdom it is quite necessary to act upon the constitution he provided. For this reason his message is always fresh and vital. For and in every age it has in its soul a noble and casting ideal of life worthy of the human race.

Only by adherence to Islam can man come out safe and successful from the storm of life. It is only by acting on its principles that man create harmony between his life and the vast creation of Allah.

Thus it is that the Islamic way of life and man's progress and civilization, can never be at conflict with each other, since Islam gives guidance along the path of God by giving a man and instilling in him a sense of his responsibility and a sense of his greatness in making sacrifices for a high and sacred cause.

## **The Nature of Islamic Laws**

The injunctions of the revealed religions are of two kinds. The first kind consists of injunctions that are stable and invariable; these do not die out with the passage of time but rather join a higher form of religion despite vicissitudes of the world.

The second kind of injunctions are specific in respect of time, place and conditions. Such injunctions get worn out and become outdated with the passage of time and they are replaced by new ones. It is in respect of such laws that we say, "The old religion has changed yielding place to new."

The displaced injunctions are also meant to operate only for a time and place and as such they represent reality though in part only. How is it then possible that one reality should displace another reality?

On this ground, a new religion need not annul all the injunctions of the old religions. Rather there are in the revealed religions injunctions that are stable and unchanging and towards which all the prophets right from Adam to the last Prophet Muhammad (S) have invited the people.

It is also possible that annulment of a law is provided for in a religion's constitution. There may be a law which may be superseded by another law. In Islam itself there are examples of this and they have been

regarded as unstable and variable.

In view of man's stable and unchanging needs, Islam has formulated stable and unchanging laws and considering his changing needs has also foretold the change in its modus operandi. Thus in an Islamic society the operative laws are of two kinds.

#### 1. Eternal Laws

#### 2. Variable Laws

The first kind includes those laws which were revealed to the Holy Prophet for a natural religion. And which were declared to be operative for mankind under all circumstances. For example, there are principles like justice, peace, liberty, cleanliness, the keeping of covenants, truthfulness, righteousness, honesty, doing good to all, sacrifice, fight for the right cause, love and sincerity, obedience of Allah, abstaining from cruelty and aggression, Combating undue discrimination, corruption and tens of other rules of morality.

Similarly, Islam prohibits defamation, discord and dissention, libertinism, falsehood and forgery. These are questions of eternal values which admit of no change. Even after millions of years tyranny will not become good and justice will not become bad. The important portion of the teachings of Islam is concerned with these abiding principles which do not change in any age.

Thus an elucidation of this truth is to be found in the traditions, that what Muhammad (S) declares to be lawful is lawful till the Day of Judgment and that what Muhammad (S) declares to be unlawful is unlawful for all time to come.

Time has no effect on such laws. Like the exact formula of mathematics they remain exact at all times. This is so because there is at their back the basic needs as dictated by nature inherent in man. It is an established fact that human nature will remain the same so long as man remains man. There can be no change in this.

The second kind consists of laws that are framed according to the exigencies of time and place. These laws are not based on a strong and stable foundation. So they keep on changing according to the development of civilization and according to good or bad circumstances. Such laws depend on time and place for their existence, because it originates from human requirements which change with the passage of time.

The questions covered by this portion include the relations and treaties of the Muslim countries with non-Muslims, political and economic relations, defense tactics, defense requirements and many other similar questions.

There is no denying of the fact that such things do change, and every age has its own specialties. But Islamic teachings, in this field consists of a large number of general rules which are applicable to every

age and meet all requirements of the changing circumstances.

For example, in connection with defense preparations and equipping military forces, the Holy Qur'an says: "Prepare you (Muslim), against them whatever you can of forces and well-fed horses to put terror amongst the enemies of Allah and your enemies."

It is remarkable that after enunciating the general rule utmost preparation should be made against the enemy and every possible war equipment should be acquired. It has been expressly stated that the aim is not aggression or manslaughter. but the aim is to fill the enemy with awe so that he may be terrified and may not venture to resort to war

This is an example of the general rules of Islam to meet the requirement of every age. The same is the case with all questions which undergo a change with the passage of time. In fact Islam has a series of general rules, details of which can in every age be adapted to particular requirements.

Besides those divine leaders who are a competent authority in this respect, have certain powers which have been scrupulously defined in Islamic law. Using these powers they (Mujtahids), can, when necessary, meet the requirements of any special circumstances.

The well-known decree forbidding temporarily the use of tobacco and enjoining the economic blockade of a foreign imperialistic company, which was issued in Iran by a religious authority in 1309 A.H. to counter foreign influence, was of this very nature. In Islamic terminology, such a decree is called "Hukm-al-Faqih" a jurist's order.

## **Righteous Rulers Protect Religion from Getting State**

To meet the changing needs of society, Islam has kept in view the mode of life of the same nature and has thus rendered the changing conditions stable and unchanging. In this connection. Islam has permitted the Spiritual Guide to issue judgments in accordance with the requirements of time and frame rules and implement them accordingly.

Although these rules are to be issued in the same manner as the stable ones, yet they have difference of their own. In that difference, they have to depend for their life and stability on those needs and requirements which have given them birth and to which they are subordinate. Since the Islamic Society is revolutionary and evolutionary in nature, so also these codes of laws keep on changing, yielding place to new and better codes of rules.

This is the reason why the verse "Ulil amre minkum" enjoins that the Spiritual Guide is to be obeyed in the same way as God and the Holy Prophet are. Apparently these powers, in the first phase are associated with the person of the Holy Prophet and with his government. After the Holy Prophet, the powers are associated with the governments of the Imams (Spiritual Guides) and afterwards, through them, with the other lawful governments.

Thus, in the first phase, after the Holy Prophet, the spiritual guides are the persons of the Holy Imams who incorporate within themselves divine chastity and after them, in the subsequent phase, only those persons will be the holders of this high honor, who truly represent them and who are their deputies.

The jurisdiction of these powers is very wide. An Islamic Government, in consideration, of new circumstances and new requirements of the time, can frame laws according to the basic principles of Islam and the traditions of the Holy Prophet, if such laws did not exist before.

Islamic rulers have the power to meet the changing needs and new situations of every age and country and fulfill the demands of the Muslim Society in such a way that the fundamental provisions of Islam are neither annulled nor infringed.

## **Ijtehad**

It means assiduous efforts to deduce a ruling from the Holy Qur'an, the sayings and doings of the Holy Prophet and the Imams for a comprehension of divine injunctions.

At present this deduced decision (Ijtehad) imposes upon the sages and the learned scholars a serious and highly responsible duty. During the regime of the Holy Prophet, Ijtehad (deduced decision) had a sensitive and foundational role and in reality it is a bridge that connects the future with the past. This is the prerequisite to keep the Islamic Code eternal and it has rightly been termed as the dynamic force of Islam.

The highly esteemed Muslim Philosopher Abu 'Ali Sina (370– 428 A.H.) has stated this question in sparkling style thus:

The unchanging and stable principles of Islam are limited. But accidents and events bring along with them specific problems. Therefore, it is essential that in every age, there should be a band of scholars, well-versed in Islamic code, well-acquainted with the world problems and with the demands of the time so that it could bear the responsibility of finding solution of these problems on the basis of Ijtehad, that is to deduce a judgment for the problems from the holy book and the traditions.

Why not so? The world is advancing with terrific speed and this is necessarily giving birth to such strange new problems as could never be conceived in the past. In meeting out these new demands, there is genuine need for such a living and enlightened jurisprudence, as will keep abreast of time and as will reconcile man's new life with the connotation and denotation of Islamic Jurisprudence, so that along with the advancement of knowledge, the spirit of religion could be instilled into human mind and heart.

According to the needs of the time, they have to present Islamic jurisprudence in such a manner as to justify its needs to understand and solve the new problems in its light and guidance. This is essential so that religion should not get stale and stagnated in the new set-up and relapse into the past.

Among the traditions of deduced decisions and emulation, one states:

Ishaque son of Yaqub, submitted a letter to the Imam of the time, in which he had stated the remedy he had discovered for the adversities which had befallen him. Muhammad Bin Usman Samic. The special representative of the Imam, put up this letter before him. The Imam replied to the letter in his own hand :

In respect of adversities and events you should refer to our narrators as they are the proof of us for you as we are the proof of Allah.

In this tradition actual adversities mean the new problems cropping up. The writer had raised a question as ' what they should do when confronted by a problem and when they have no access to the Imam. The Imam replied that in a case like that they should refer the matter to the jurist and to the man in authority.

Some contemporary jurists are of the opinion that the occurrences don't mean problems and religion's decisions since this is quite common to the Shia sect that in these matters the reference should be made to the jurists. They think that these occurrences mean those problems which keep cropping up in the life of the Muslims, that is they wholly encompass the cultural, intellectual, social, political and economic events.

At any rate, whether they signify event and occurrences or whether they signify those new problems which crop up and subside in every age and time, they really have only one meaning that in both the cases, you have to refer to the jurists and the narrators to know your duty in that respect.

This is an enlightened precaution of Shia jurisprudence that during every age new problems keep on growing, for which the old law offers no solution. Thus it is essential for jurisprudence to take due notice of the truth and after weighing them in the balance of knowledge and deduced decisions, solve them and furnish an answer for them.

By a study of and research into the juristic compilations of different countries, it is concluded that ever new problems do crop up and the jurists do furnish solutions for them. Thus slowly has our jurisprudence grown in volume.

For example, when we study the books of jurisprudence prior to Shaikh Abu Ja'far Tusi, 400 A.H., we come to know how brief they are and how limited were the problems then. Then Shaikh Tusi widened the scope of jurisprudence and brought about a revolution through the compilation of his renowned book , "Al-Mabsoot."

Thus from age to age, through the efforts of the jurists, and the scholars, the volume of jurisprudence kept on growing, until a century ago it was possible for the author of 'Jawaher' to complete one series of jurisprudence by dint of hard labour of a life time.

So extensive has jurisprudence grown in our time, that it is not possible for any single person either to write or teach a full series of jurisprudence with research and interpretation. From this truth, it is easily

known how Islam, in different periods of history, has forestalled the problems of change, revolution and newness and how it has held the jurists responsible in confronting these problems.

This is precisely the secret of Ijtihad that it should reconcile Islam with the demands of the Age. Thus Islam encompass all the decisions and injunctions that are to be issued and awarded till the Day of Judgment, and which decisions and injunctions, this world will need for its good fortune and for the completion of its evolution.

In "Al-Kafi " there is a whole book, the topic of which precisely is "All needs of mankind are covered by the holy book and the traditions ". The Holy Qur'an explains everything. The Imam states on oath that all the needs, that will arise during all ages for the Muslims, are to be found in Islam and that there is no room for any doubt about it.

This is not merely a claim. On the contrary it is a reality which has been acknowledged by the legal experts of the East and the West. They also accept the high teachings of Islam as a dynamic school of lasting legal system.

The esteemed philosopher of Europe, Santayana says that "the Code of Islamic Jurisprudence is so full of legal provisions that it has to be admitted that for the organization of Muslim Society it is a perfect legal system."

Prof. Hockin, Professor of Philosophy in the Harvard University and a renowned American scholar in his famous book after criticizing the principles of Islamic Jurisprudence states:

The secret of progress for the Islamic countries does not be in aping the values and the ways of the Western life and to install them in their own life. Some people ask whether there is room for the creation of new thoughts in Islam and whether a stable and distinguished code could be framed as could agree with and be in conformity with the new needs and demands of life?

The answer to this query is that not only does Islam have the potential for every kind of progress but it also has greater capacity of evolution than other systems.

The difficulty of the Islamic countries is not that its system of life has no room for progress. The difficulty really is the deplorable lack of will on their part to derive any benefit from those provisions of the Islamic Code as admit of this evolution.

## **Prophet Muhammad (S)**

In the wake of the seventh century of the Christian era, a youthful man in the prime of his life could be seen walking in the streets of Holy Mecca, deep in his own thoughts, yet with a gentle smile, never forgetting to return the salutations of the lowliest, or to pause and speak a few kindly words to children who flocked around him wherever he went.

The young man with deep wistful eyes and a sweet gentle disposition, painfully sensitive about human sufferings, carried with him an air of nobility and grace that inspired love and respect amongst his kinsmen. Even in those days he was known as Sadiq and Amin (the truthful and the trusted). As a lover of nature, and quietude he worried about human sufferings, and very often retired to Mount Hira for meditation. One night a voice communicated him the following divine message:

***In the Name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful.***

***Recite in the Name of your Sustainer who created. Created man from a clot. (96:1-2)***

***Taught man what he knew not. (96:5)***

After an interval the Voice from Heaven spoke again,

***"O you, enwrapped in the mantle, arise and warn, and glorify your Lord." (74:1-3)***

This was a signal for him to start preaching. In the beginning, Prophet Muhammad (S) invited only those near him to accept the new faith. The first to embrace Islam amongst women was his wife Khadijah, and the first amongst man was his cousin 'Ali (A).

Muhammad (S), the last Prophet, is regarded as the institute of the highest and final divine training. By the time he was raised to apostolate, as the result of persistent and long-drawn efforts of the past prophets, the religious consciousness of the people had reached such a level that they could receive the best and the most perfect laws, could understand the highest items of knowledge and could preserve forever the heritage of the prophets.

With the raising of the Prophet of Islam a complete program and a code of comprehensive laws have been placed at the disposal of humanity. The implementation of the laws and teachings of Islam, would ensure the prosperity and happiness of human beings in this as well as the next world. They were adequate for the guidance of people during the period of the Holy Prophet and they are equally adequate for the prosperity of the present age as well as the progressive generations of the future.

Seeing that the new religion posed a threat to their vested interests, the tribe of Quraish tortured Prophet Muhammad (S) and all converts to the new faith. But the Muslims held fast to their faith in spite of unbearable hostility and suffering.

In the 13th year of his prophet hood occurred the most momentous Night of Migration (known as the Night of Hijra) from which date the Muslim era begins.

Before he left, however, his enemies had made a plan to assassinate him whilst he was sleeping in his bed. God through Angel Gabriel made the Holy Prophet aware of the dastardly intention of his enemies. To make good his escape and to make his enemies believe that he was in bed, he asked Imam 'Ali (A) to lie in his place.



On the day the Holy Prophet set his sacred feet on the soil of Yasrib, the natives named their city Medinat-un-Nabi (City of the Prophet), to commemorate that historical day.

The Holy Prophet created a brotherhood between the immigrants and an equal number of well-to-do Medinans. They worked together to earn their livelihood, and aided one another in the business of life. Thus the problem of rehabilitation of the displaced persons was solved satisfactorily.

The Holy Prophet then invited the representatives of the Muslims as well as the non-Muslims of Medina and with their assent, endowed the city with a written constitution. Therein he defined the duties and rights both of the citizens and the head of the state—the Prophet Muhammad (S), who was unanimously hailed as such.

This document laid down principles of defense and foreign policy. It recognized that the Prophet Muhammad (S) would have the final word in all differences. It also recognized the liberty of religion for all.

The news of the success and glory of Islam kindled the fires of jealousy amongst the idolators of the Quraish in general and the Ummayyads in particular. They conspired with the Jews to uproot the Muslims. There was widespread treachery all round and the Prophet, who had never wielded a weapon, was now compelled to defend Islam by the force of arms.

Commencing from the battle of Badr, a series of battles were fought in which the newly formed community defended themselves successfully. None of these battles were of aggression. Each and every one was for the defense of Islam.

Seven years later, the Holy Prophet entered the holy Mecca as a conqueror. He who was once a fugitive in this town, persecuted by his kinsmen, entered to prove grandeur of Islam with acts of mercy and generosity.

During the ten years in Medina, Prophet Muhammad (S) presided over the commonwealth of Islam, and a great change had come over the character of the Arab people. By the appointment of delegates to the different tribes and cities, with powers to decide internal as well as tribal disputes, the ancient system of private vendetta was put to an end and impetus given to trade and commerce.

The style of living and mode of dressing underwent a great change especially among the women. The reckless freedom of heathenism was abandoned, and manners became decorous, almost asters; gambling and drinking were forbidden. Before this there had been no privacy in houses; from this time it became customary to have special apartment for women.

Within a few years Prophet Muhammad (S) established order and inspired in his people the belief in One God, prohibited idolatry and made the people ponder not only of this world but the world beyond. He asked them to practice charity, goodness, justice and universal love. The whole mission was achieved in

his lifetime.

The Holy Prophet was occupied all the while in looking after the new Islamic State and had no thoughts for his personal welfare. A number of believers therefore requested him to permit them to buy land and build house for him. The reply revealed by God was:

***"Say, I do not ask of you any reward, but love for the nearest of my kin" (42:23)***

Thereupon the believers asked the Holy Prophet whose love was made incumbent on them ? The Holy Prophet answered, "Love for 'Ali, Fatima, Hasan and Husayn " (Peace be upon them).

Anybody who studies the laws and teachings of Islam carefully and minutely and compares them with others can easily realize the superiority of the laws of Islam. That is why Prophet Muhammad (S) is the last prophet, and no other prophet is to come after him. The Holy Qur'an has described him as the seal of the Prophets.

To believe that Muhammad (S) is the last prophet is one of the fundamentals of Islam and anybody who does not believe so, cannot be considered to be a Muslim. Thus Islam is the last revealed religion. The Holy Qur'an expressly says:

***"Muhammad is not the father of any of you men, but he is the Messenger of Allah and the seal of the Prophets ". (33:40)***

(It may be noted that the Arabic word, 'Khatam' which is translated as seal, originally meant concluding or ending. It came to mean seal, because seal is customarily affixed at the end of every covenant and treaty).

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