

ENGLISH BIMONTHLY ISSUE 103 NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 2021

# SPIRIT OF ISLAM

Towards Global Peace & Spiritual Living



Just as we cannot detach thorns from a rose plant, similarly we cannot detach unpleasant circumstances from situations of joy.

# A MAGAZINE FOR THE JOURNEY OF LIFE

This is a current magazine. Its articles are based on sound principles of reason and science with a particular emphasis on the spirit of Islam rather than the form or the ritual. All the articles have been either written by Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, translated from his Urdu writings, or based on his writings developed by a team trained and guided by him.

## Spirit of Islam bimonthly...

- ▶ Presents Islam, the religion of nature, in the contemporary idiom to help Muslims rediscover Islam from the original sources
- ▶ Explains Creation plan of God for humankind
- ▶ Enlightens people on the subject of global peace
- ▶ Addresses contemporary issues
- ▶ Assists the readers to deal with life's challenges
- ▶ Offers Spirituality to a wider circle of seekers
- ▶ Fosters greater communal harmony through religious understanding

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SOI Editorial Committee



# SPIRIT OF ISLAM

Towards Global Peace & Spiritual Living

ISSUE 103 NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 2021

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## FROM THE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF'S DESK



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### THE AUTHORITY OVER RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS

**D**URING interfaith programmes, these questions are often posed by our Christian brothers and sisters: What is the hierarchical order followed by Islam? How the faith and principles are taken care of or explained to the believers? They ask this question in the context of the church acting as the Magisterium. The Magisterium of the church is the custodian of the faith and teachings of Catholic Christians. This arrangement holds good for most religious communities and institutions. In this article, we shall see where Islam stands in this regard. A question is often asked to this effect: What is the hierarchical order of Islam?

In Islam, the Quran and the practical model of conduct established by the Prophet Muhammad (known as *Sunnah* in Arabic) serve as the fountainhead of religious guidance. There is no centralized authority that governs or decides such matters. There is no vertical chain of command in Islam. The believers are encouraged to study these two sources and apply the teachings to their lives. It must be kept in mind that Islam is a religion of nature. Its teachings are quite simple. The teachings contained in the Quran and the corpus of *Hadith* (a record of the sayings and the deeds of the Prophet Muhammad) are not esoteric. The Quran has this to say:

Indeed, We have made the Quran easy to learn lessons from. Is there anyone who would receive admonition? (54: 32)

The religion of Islam is easy, beautiful and simple. The Quran says: God desires ease for you, not hardship. (2: 185)

This verse explains that Islam is easy to follow and rather encourages us to create ease in religion. Unfortunately, some Muslims are under the misconception that the more stringent they are in following religion, the more pious they become. This is totally in contradiction to what Islam teaches us. The misconception is a result of a lack of understanding of religion and at times drives some people away from religion, mainly because of the way it is presented to them.

***The Quran is present in exactly the same form as it was revealed fourteen centuries ago. Therefore, one can, with full conviction, derive lessons and guidance from it.***

One of the main features of Islam is that it is a balanced religion. Whenever the Prophet had to choose between two options, he always chose the easier.

Moreover, the language of the Quran has been made easy and free from ambiguity. A point is brought home by making use of references to phenomena from nature and history. A verse from the Quran says:

We have set forth to men all kinds of parables in this Quran so that they may take heed: a Quran in Arabic, free from any ambiguity—so

that people may be mindful. (39: 27-28)

One very important point that must be considered here is that the religious text of the Quran as revealed by God to the Prophet is preserved in its original form. Higher Criticism has proved beyond any doubt that the Quran indeed is present in exactly the same form as it was revealed fourteen centuries ago. Therefore, one can, with full conviction, derive lessons and guidance from it. This preservation of the original text of the Quran is no ordinary matter. It is God-ordained. The Quran says:

It is We Who have sent down the Reminder and We will, most surely, safeguard it. (15: 9)

There are competent religious scholars (or *ulema*) who after spending a lifetime studying these texts in original Arabic, present the pristine teachings of Islam for the common man. Any Muslim can become a religious scholar after undergoing the due process of learning the Islamic texts.

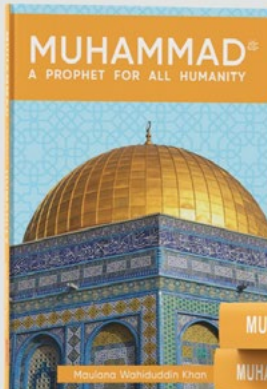
However, the disagreements that arise among religious scholars on any given injunction is that of interpretation. This means the scholars do not disagree over the veracity of the source material but on its interpretation. Such disagreements over interpretation are considered a blessing for the Muslims as they prevent the community from plunging into intellectual stagnation. A common person can follow the interpretation of any religious scholar.

The Prophet Muhammad described the simple and straightforward nature of Islam thus:

The Prophet was once asked, "Which religion does God Almighty love the most? He replied, 'The simple God-oriented one.'" □

**Prof. Farida Khanam**

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The Prophet of Islam brought an unprecedented revolution to the world, one that was initiated by a profound feeling of spiritual discovery, and accomplished by a unique display of positive virtues.

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# A DANGEROUS APATHY

*Pay Heed to the Signs*

**A** COMPANION of the Prophet Muhammad, Abu Hurairah recorded God's Messenger as saying, "I have seen nothing like Hell whose fear-struck may have gone to sleep. I have seen nothing like Paradise whose seekers may have gone to sleep."

Man should abhor Hell above all else, but he has become totally insensitive to its perils. Man should seek Paradise first and foremost, but he no longer has any ardent desire for it. These two shortcomings sum up the story of humankind.

***On the Day of Judgement, God will address those who forgot the only thing that they should have remembered thus: 'Just as Our signs came to you and you ignored them, so will you on this Day be ignored.'***

Man's apathy towards this reality is indeed strange. Not even in their subconscious minds are people wary of Hell. Not even in their most fervent wishes do people include the prospect of Paradise. Given this kind of apathy, how is it possible for them to remain safe from the Fire of Hell, or to be rewarded with the good things of Paradise?

People's fears are all about something quite different. Their emotional outbursts are all for something else. Fears and hopes alike are focussed elsewhere. Under the circumstances, how can they ever become claimants of the divine blessing?

The temptations of this world are the pivot of their lives, causing them to disregard the Hereafter. They have concentrated their attention on worldly wealth, leadership, popularity, fame and physical contentment.

There is scarcely anyone who is worried about forgiveness and deliverance in the life Hereafter, or who can be galvanized into action by the fear of divine punishment or the desire for Paradise.

What a pity that this world boasts of offering everything except what is most desirable. What a pity that man knows everything except what he should know best. Undoubtedly, this is the worst kind of omission. A time will come when man will realize his mistake. This realization will not, however, serve to compensate for what has been lost. On the Day of Judgement, God will address those who forgot the only thing that they should have remembered thus: 'Just as Our signs came to you and you ignored them, so will you on this Day be ignored.' (20: 126) □



# IT'S A GIVE AND TAKE WORLD

## *Pay the Price*

**O**N the insertion of a one-rupee coin, an electronic weighing machine ejects a neatly printed card showing one's weight or displays it on the digital screen.

Fascinated by this machine at an airport, a little boy stood on its footplate, reached up and dropped a one-rupee coin into the slot. The machine made a rattling noise, then the card, with the child's weight printed on it, came out of another slot.

The little boy found this amusing. He demanded more coins from his parents and kept repeating the process, just as if it were a game. And the machine never failed to oblige him. Every time he put in a coin, a card would come out. Eventually he ran out of one-rupee coins. He only had a 50-paise coin left. So he just put that in the slot. The machine made the same rattling noise as before, but no printed card appeared. With no response from the machine, the little boy started to cry.

But this was the occasion not to cry but to learn a lesson. The machine's failure to oblige was a silent reproach to both the child and his parents. Its significance was that everything had its price, and that without paying in full, no one could satisfy their wants.

***It is only on payment of the full price that we can receive anything in either of the two worlds. One who is not prepared to pay should have no expectations of receiving anything.***

This is an immutable law, which applies equally to our present world and to the Hereafter. It is only on payment of the full price that we can receive anything in either of the two worlds. One who is not prepared to pay should have no expectations of receiving anything. This law is immutable and eternal. No amount of wishful thinking or voicing of protests will ever put an end to it. □



# LIVING A FOCUSED LIFE

## *Set Your Priorities Right*

**W**HEN the first manned flight took place on December 17, 1903, it lasted 12 seconds and covered 120 feet. Only five newspapers in America thought the news fit to publish. The rest dismissed it as some kind of hoax. This was because the two brothers, Orville and Wilbur Wright, who had successfully got their 'heavier-than-air' aircraft off the ground, had carried out their experiments in complete privacy. There was no glare of publicity for their attempts.

The Wright brothers were bicycle makers from Ohio. When they set out to construct a flying machine, starting with the most primitive structures, they persevered until they had developed a craft which was to usher in a new era for humankind.

***Public attention, before the task is accomplished, will only act as hindrance. It is a disability which jeopardizes the very outcome of an endeavor.***

They set about their now famous work on a 600-acre farm in Kitty Hawk, a secluded spot on the North Carolina coast. This approach was in great contrast to the methods of Samuel P. Langley, who was then America's most distinguished aeronautical scientist. The latter had the advantage of funds, expert know-how, and a great deal of publicity. The site of his experiments was just thirty miles south of Washington D.C. The eyes of the nation were set on his project. In spite of these advantages, his endeavours ended in failure.

The Wrights had achieved by quiet endeavour what others could not achieve by substantial funding and much-publicized preparation. They kept their sights firmly on the goal ahead of them. They shunned publicity until they actually had a positive contribution to make to modern technology. When Orville Wright was asked after World War II whether he had ever imagined the terrible destruction which would be wrought by subsequent aeroplanes, he simply said that on "that day at Kitty Hawk, we thought only of getting off the ground."

Great success demands unwavering focus, dedication, perseverance, and hard work. Public attention, before the task is accomplished, will only act as hindrance. It is a disability which jeopardizes the very outcome of an endeavor. □

# A LIFETIME OF DEVOTION

## *Example from a Missionary*

**F**OR no less than forty years, Pandit Ashu Ram Arya, a Vedic scholar, had been busy completing his self-ordained mission to translate all of the four Vedas into Urdu. He embarked upon his task when he was in his youth. In the year 1984, when he was 70 years old, the Urdu translation of Yajurveda came out. Pandit Arya was a missionary whose zeal was fired by the Arya Samaj.

Pandit Arya said in an interview that his life's mission would be completed when he finishes the translation of Sam Veda in Urdu and publishes it. Then for the first time, translation of all the four Vedas in Urdu would be available.

His translation of Yajurveda in Urdu was published in 1984 and his translations of the Rig Veda and the Atharva Veda came out a year later from New Delhi and Chandigarh.

Before him, several scholars had attempted to translate the Vedas into Urdu, but their efforts took them no further than putting the Hindi '*Rig Veda Adi Bhashya Bhumika*' (only the gist of the Vedas) into Urdu.

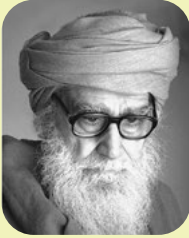
Panditji accomplished this task in an age when Urdu poetry was the first thing writers turned their attention to. He too started his writing career by composing some poems. It was his missionary spirit that made him realize how important it was to produce Urdu translations of the Vedas. He writes: By embarking on the difficult journey of translating the Vedas, I left the field of poetry.

What was the objective that Panditji desired to attain through these translations? He writes in the preface of Yajurveda:

I am hopeful that the publication of Urdu translations of the Vedas would usher in a pleasant revolution that would demolish the walls of ignorance that separates people. It will clear the way towards peace, love, friendship and brotherhood. People will be inspired to lead a pious life.

Panditji's life presents a beautiful picture of the life of a missionary. One should be willing to change the field of action as and when necessary. A missionary must possess well-wishing and love for his fellow human beings. And most of all, missionary life should be governed by the single-minded pursuit of some noble purpose. □

## IN FOCUS



We bring you two articles every issue under the headings of 'Journey of God-realization' and 'Personal Experiences' of our mentor and founder of CPS International Maulana Wahiduddin Khan (1925-2021). Though he is no more with us, we feel the presence of his guiding spirit motivating us through his teachings and his advice.

Maulana, through his study of science, religion, psychology and the experiences of his own life, enlightens about the path to discovery of God through one's journey of life. A discovery of this kind involves pondering on the word of God, converting one's material experiences into spiritual insights, constant introspection, and contemplating on the numerous phenomena of the universe.

The journey of realization begins with a questing spirit. Seeking is an intellectual journey. If a person is sincere and honest in his discovery of God, if there is no negativity in his thinking, if he is free from prejudices, if he has become a completely complex-free soul, attainment of God-realization is as certain as the dawn of light after the rising of the sun.

The greatest success in this world is to live life in such a manner that you should not have an iota of negative thought against any person. You should depart from this world with a totally positive mindset. This is my last discovery in this world.

***-Maulana Wahiduddin Khan (1925-2021)***



## INTERFAITH SPEECH

*This is a paper presented by Maulana Wahiduddin Khan in an interfaith programme.*

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I AM grateful to the organizers of this meeting for giving me this opportunity to participate in this important religious gathering and to share my views with this learned audience. The theme of this meeting is 'Togetherness'. It is indeed a very beautiful theme.

I would like to begin with an incident very relevant to the present theme. Once I visited Rishikesh. My host was Swami Chidanandji. He had arranged for my stay in a room on the upper floor of his Ashram. It was situated on the bank of the river Ganges. At night I went out of my room on to the balcony. It was facing the Ganges. In this calm and quiet atmosphere, there were various scenes of nature all around me—river, trees, mountains, moon, stars, etc. It was a world full of differences. But at the same time, there was complete harmony between the diverse parts of this world. It was a perfect picture of what we may call unity in diversity. I could only hear the sound of the continuous flowing of the water in the Ganges. It was like a sweet song of nature. I felt as if the Ganges was conveying a message on behalf of the whole world around it.

***Man is required to follow the same religion which has been established by God in the universe. Thus, living together with peace and harmony is the only religion for both man and the universe.***

When I paid heed to the sound of the Ganges water, I felt that it was conveying this universal message: Blessed are those who live together in peace and harmony. This unworded message of nature has been recorded in the Quran in these words: "Do they seek a religion other than the religion of God, when everything in the heavens and the earth has submitted to Him, willingly or unwillingly?" (3: 83)

This means man is required to follow the same religion which has been established by God in the universe. In other words, living together with peace and harmony is the only religion for both man and the universe.

There are numerous stars and planets in the vast space. All are continuously in motion, but there is no clash between them. This provides an exemplary scene of togetherness and harmony. There are so many rivers flowing on the surface of the earth but there is no clash between them. There are so many trees on our beautiful planet earth but they live in complete harmony. Even the animals of the forest are following the same culture of peace. No fighting like that of the first or second world war ever takes place in the animal world. Now I would like to add some relevant references on this subject from the Islamic scriptures. God has declared in the Quran: Mankind! We have created you from a male and female, and made you into peoples and tribes, so that you might come to know each other. (49: 13)

In the words of the Quran, this means all men and women of the world are blood brothers and blood sisters. The entire human race has a common ancestor. So according to Islam, universal brotherhood is not just a theoretical idea, but a biological and historical fact.

***The only difference between man and the universe is that what the rest of the world is following under compulsion, man has to follow by his own choice.***

According to a saying of the Prophet of Islam, a Muslim is one from whose hands and tongue people are safe. This means human society should be one of peaceful coexistence.

The Prophet of Islam once saw a funeral procession passing through a street in Madinah. He was seated at that time. On seeing the funeral, he stood up in respect. At this, one of his Companions said: "O Prophet!

It was the funeral of a Jew, not a Muslim. The Prophet replied. 'Was he not a human being?'

There may be differences between people as regards religion and culture. Yet there is a common element among people, and that is they are humans. According to the teaching of Islam, everyone should be accorded equal status as a human being, even if differences exist between them. The Prophet of Islam used to rise early in the morning and say in his morning prayer: "O God, I bear witness that all human beings are sisters and brothers to each other."

The entire human race is destined to live together as one family. Togetherness is the culture of the universe of which we are but a tiny part. Togetherness is the only base for a better human society.

Man is a social being. He cannot live without a society. His very nature requires a peaceful society where he may live with others in peace and harmony. Man is a part of the universe. He is a part of the vast cosmos. So man must adopt a code of ethics which is universal. This is the will of God who has created all of us.

The only difference between man and the universe is that what the rest of the world is following under compulsion, man has to follow by his own choice. Herein lies the greatness of man. Herein lies the key to success for all kinds of progress and development. □

The origin of every evil is **complaint**. Complaint leads to hate; hate leads to enmity; and enmity leads to violence



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## THE NINETY-NINE NAMES OF GOD

**T**HERE is a teaching which has been recorded in different books of *Hadith*. According to *Sahih al-Bukhari*: The Prophet of Islam once observed: God has ninety-nine names, one less than a hundred. Those who have counted these words will enter Paradise.” In this saying of the Prophet, reference is made to the enumeration of the best names of God. This realization must be at a conscious level rather than at the level of counting the beads on the rosary.

These names of God are, in fact, different aspects of the attributes of God. When a person reflects on the existence of God and His creations, various aspects of God appear to him and he is able to understand these different aspects of God. Conscious realization of these aspects is what is meant by enumeration of God’s names. Those who attain the realization of God in this way will undoubtedly go to Paradise, because Paradise is the reward for the realization of God.

*When the feeling of servitude awakens within man and God’s consciousness becomes a reality then, naturally, different kinds of spiritual feelings arise within him.*

The term ninety-nine in the teaching is purely symbolic. In reality, it means that there are countless names or attributes of God. Imam Razi (1149-1210) in his commentary has quoted the opinions of certain religious scholars—“God’s names amount to five thousand.” (*Tafsir Ibn Kathir*, vol. 1, p. 36). But the truth is that God has innumerable names. In the teaching the number of God’s attributes (*Asma-e-Husna*) is put at ninety-

nine. By studying the Quran, the scholars have discovered these, name by name. But these names do not denote the countless attributes of God. All these names, in fact, relate to the need of human beings.

The truth is that when the feeling of servitude awakens within man and God’s consciousness becomes a reality then, naturally, different kinds of spiritual feelings arise within him. Naming the divine attributes, in fact, is an appropriate way of expressing these divine feelings. For instance, a person reflects on his own existence, which is indeed an example of the best of moulds (95: 4). He reflects on nature, in which



everything is astonishingly a model of perfection. He reflects on the earth and the sky, and finds no defect in them (67: 3).

This thinking and observation create experiences for a person. He spontaneously feels that he should have the words which are appropriate to express these sublime feelings. At that time, the Quran, in exact accordance with his desire, gives him these words: "Glory be to God, the Best of Creators." (23: 14) □



# A RUTHLESS TEACHER

*Learn before it is Too Late*

**R**OBERT HOLMES à Court was a South Africa-born Australian entrepreneur who became Australia's first billionaire. His first venture was a woollen mill which he set up in Western Australia in 1962. From there he soon went on to carve out a financial empire for himself. His assets were estimated to be of the order of \$1.1 billion. Then in 1987, his business started going downhill and he lost half his empire. In September, 1990, he suffered a heart attack and died at his horse-breeding farm at Perth when he was only 53 years old. "Once the country's wealthiest man, he died the second richest (after fellow entrepreneur Kerry Packet) with an estimated fortune of \$650 million." (*Time Magazine*, September 17, 1990)

***Death is the most  
ruthless of teachers.  
Wise is he who learns  
this for himself  
before this 'ruthless  
teacher' catches up  
with him.***

In this world, everyone remains in the first position before death. Then death relegates everyone to a 'second' position. Before death, man regards his life as the only 'real' existence. Nothing else matters to him. But death brings the message that the only reality is that of God; no other 'I' has any real existence.

Death is the most ruthless of teachers. Wise is he who learns this for himself before this 'ruthless teacher' catches up with him. A man endowed with such insight will be looked

upon kindly by his Maker. One who waits to learn his lesson from the 'ruthless teacher' is little better than a blind man. When his end comes, he will be left forever groping in the dark. It will be too late for him then to find the right path.

How disillusioned will such a man be when he finds himself relegated from the position of 'Mr. First' to the rank of 'Mr. Second', when the moment of truth ultimately arrives. □



# TOWARDS GLOBAL PEACE

*We often talk of peace in the context of war. But this is a very narrow and restricted notion of peace. Peace is deeply linked with the entirety of human life. Peace is a complete ideology in itself. Peace is the only religion for both—man and the universe. It is the master-key that opens the doors to every success. Peace creates a favourable atmosphere for success in every endeavour. Without peace, no positive action—small or big—is possible.*



---

## PEACE: A UNIVERSAL RELIGION

**P**EACE is a product of a positive mental attitude, while violence is the result of negative thinking. Peace is the natural state of society; violence is an unnatural state. Peace is as much in accordance with nature's plan as violence is against it.

When peaceful conditions prevail in a society, all activities take place in their proper form. But if the atmosphere of peace is disturbed, the normal functioning of society is disrupted. This law applies to man as well as to the entire universe.

According to the scheme of nature, peace is the only secret of smooth functioning in human society as well as in the rest of the universe. Peace, therefore, is such a basic requirement of man, that it is crucial to maintain it in all situations. Without peace, there can be neither development nor progress. No excuse whatsoever justifies the use of violence, in individual or national life. Regardless of how unfavourable circumstances might be, an environment of peace is indispensable.

We must maintain peace unilaterally, for nothing that we desire can be achieved without it. We need peace as all positive activities can take place only in an atmosphere of peace. When peace prevails, constructive activities flourish and existing resources can be used for development or other creative activities. A positive bent of mind will prevail, which will help develop academic and intellectual advancement.

If we fail to establish peace, then we must face destruction in every field of life. The option for us is not between peace and no peace, but between peace and annihilation. Without peace, there is no hope for the survival of humankind.

What disturbs the peaceful plan of nature is mainly traceable to the fact that people have become excessively materialistic. It is this thinking that leads to the exploitation of nature. If people opted for a path of moderation, they would soon discover that, if earlier they were comfortable physically, now they are comfortable spiritually. And without doubt, spiritual comfort is far better than material comfort.

***Without peace, there can be neither development nor progress. No excuse whatsoever justifies the use of violence, in individual or national life.***

The perpetrator of violence invariably suffers from remorse, while the peacemaker derives great satisfaction from his efforts. If one were to think of the end result, one would never indulge in violence. One should bear in mind that peace is in consonance with humanity, whereas violence means a descent to the animal level.

Peaceful minds make for a peaceful world. A peaceful society is a result of peaceful persons. Therefore, peace can be established only when every single unit of society is ready to live in peace.

Only those persons can live in peace who are ready to remain patient regardless of the circumstances. The fact is that everyone is born with different tendencies and everyone is free to follow their preferences. That is the law of nature, due to which it is impossible to establish uniformity in society.

In such a situation, the question arises as to how peace is to be established in society? The only answer is the magic word: *sabr* (patience). *Sabr* is the key to having a peaceful society. A peaceful society requires tolerance, positive thinking, the ability to retain one's emotional equilibrium, even when provoked and avoidance of friction.

Peace is the only religion for both man and the universe. In a peaceful environment, all good things are possible, whereas in the absence of peace, we cannot achieve anything of a positive nature, either as individuals, or as a community, or even at a national or international level. □

# WHEN APPEARANCE REPLACES SUBSTANCE

## *Don't Waste Your Energy on Trivialities*

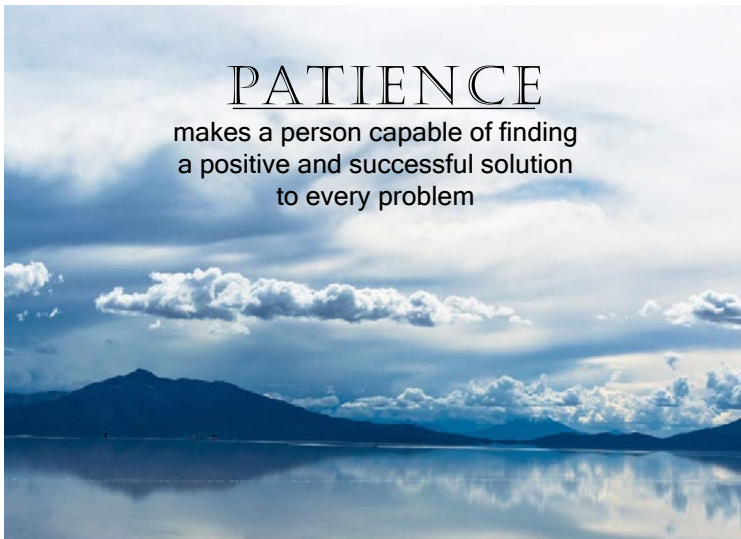
**I**T is said that once a man came to the court of Caliph Harun al-Rashid (AD 766-809) and said, "If allowed, I will perform one of my tricks." Harun al-Rashid gave permission. And the person then took out twelve large needles from his satchel. He threw a needle. It went a distance and fell to the ground in such a way that its points went right in the ground and the needle stood erect. And when he threw the second needle, it went into the hole of the first needle. And he threw the third needle, and this needle entered the hole of the second needle. He kept throwing all needles one after another, and the point of each needle entered the hole of the needle before it. Eventually, it became a chain of twelve needles. Harun al-Rashid watched the spectacle with surprise. He took out ten dirhams and threw it at the man, and said, "Woe unto you, if only you had developed this skill in some useful work."

When the Muslims were alive and vibrant, they knew what the difference between real work and acrobatics was. However, today the state of ignorance of the Muslims is so advanced that they are unaware of this difference. They are offering such praises for the trivial acts which should have been offered only for the work of real substance. Poets who compose rhymes, orators who make rousing speeches, leaders who wish to extract a commendable future for the nation by performing political trickeries, are all the same kind of tricksters as the person mentioned in this story. Caliph Harun al-Rashid said to the trickster of his time 'Woe to you'. While today's tricksters are receiving lavish praises and grand welcomes.

At the forefront of the list of present-day tricksters are revolutionary leaders who keep on raising the glorious edifice every day through speeches. If the man of Harun al-Rashid's time showed the play of needles, they are showing the play of words. Once, a leader was speaking at a great gathering. He concluded his enthusiastic speech on this sentence: My message to the Muslim youth is to extinguish the lamp of disbelief wherever it is found.

*When the Muslims were alive and vibrant, they knew what the difference between real work and acrobatics was. However, today the state of ignorance of the Muslims is so advanced that they are unaware of this difference.*

These kinds of incendiary speeches are echoing all over the Muslim world today. They have made the Muslim youth very emotional. However, Muslims have no dominance over the nations they call non-Muslim nations because these nations have made themselves extremely powerful by accumulating all the power. Muslims are far behind them in every respect. Muslims were fired with zeal, and they needed some target to vent their anger. Now, Muslims have discovered "lamps of disbelief" among their Muslim brethren, and they are engaged in extinguishing them. Somewhere this *jihad* is going on through the barrage of bullets and where there are no such opportunities; some other form is being employed. The slogan of extinguishing the lamp of disbelief has become practically equivalent to extinguishing the lamp of Islam. Somewhere the military forces are hoisting the flags of victory by attacking their own country, somewhere the leaders themselves are killing their Muslim political rivals and taking the title of *Mujahid*, somewhere a party is doing the job of eliminating falsehood by targeting other members of the same community through armed aggression. □



# ISLAMIC MESSAGE IN A CHANGING WORLD

## *Explosion of Opportunities*

**T**HE world we live in has changed tremendously since the close of 20<sup>th</sup> century. The Soviet empire crumbled, taking down with it the communist ideology. The US has abandoned its role as universal master when it declared to demilitarize many warzones around the world. The Berlin wall has been demolished by the very people who built it. The Cold War has come to an end. The superpowers have put their guns down, admitting that warfare is no solution to human problems.

Thinkers have coined a new term 'endism', which means that all 'isms', all ideologies, all systems, have exhausted their credibility as modern man's ideal. Endism is the belief that something of significant scope and duration is coming to an end.

Muslims generally see these changes as a tide that is going against them, as a danger, in fact, to Islam. This kind of thinking is quite wrong and is no doubt against the teachings of Islam. The Quran says: "Surely with every hardship there is ease." (94: 6) It means hardships and ease inevitably coexist. They have been ordained inseparable.

Modern changes have brought problems in their wake for Muslims, but these changes have also created new opportunities. Fortunately the opportunities far exceed the problem.

When we look at that matter from this angle we find many positive and hopeful aspects in the situation. For although the modern world is witnessing great changes, these changes are going mostly in favour of Islam. This is the most important aspect of the new world.

There are many examples which clearly indicate that the present changes greatly favour Islam. Two examples are cited here to bring the point home. The one is theoretical, and the other is practical elucidation.

Stephen Hawking starts his most popular book *A Brief History of Time* with the following amusing anecdote:

***Modern changes have brought problems in their wake for Muslims, but these changes have also created new opportunities. Fortunately the opportunities far exceed the problem.***

A well-known scientist (some say it was Bertrand Russell) once gave a public lecture on astronomy. He described how the earth orbits around the sun and how the sun, in turn, orbits around the center of a vast collection of stars called our galaxy. At the end of the lecture, a little old lady at the back of the room got up and said: "What you have told us is rubbish. The world is really a flat plate supported on the back of a giant tortoise." The scientist gave a superior smile before replying, "What is the tortoise standing on." "You're very clever, young man, very clever," said the old lady. "But it's turtles all the way down!"

***The scientific study of the universe has strengthened religious belief rather than weaken it. Scientific discoveries have opened up opportunities for performing Islamic dawah with far greater effectiveness.***

Mr. Hawking comments that this picture of our world as an infinite tower of tortoises would appear ridiculous to most people, but the alternative view presented by science is also subject to doubt. Modern science has replaced the tower of infinite tortoises with a tower of infinite causes. It was necessarily assumed that there was always a cause behind every event. Thus the chain of causes is infinite in length.

Then arrived the theory of Big Bang. With this, the theory of a "tower of infinite causes" lost its validity, as this theory suggested that a sudden explosion had marked the beginning

of the universe rather than an infinitely continuing process of causes and effects.

Mr. Hawking calculated the rate of the expansion of the universe after the Big Bang. Providing details of this calculation, he writes:

"The initial rate of expansion would have had to be chosen very precisely for the rate of expansion still to be so close to the critical rate needed to avoid recollapse. This means the initial state of the universe must have been very carefully chosen indeed if the hot big bang model was correct right back to the beginning of time. It would be very difficult to explain why the universe should have begun in just this way, except as the act of a God who intended to create beings like us." (*ibid*)

This means the scientific study of the universe has strengthened religious belief rather than weaken it. Such discoveries have opened



up opportunities for performing the task of conveying the message of Islam to people with far greater effectiveness.

Take the practical aspect of the changed circumstances today. Here also we find clear indications that the present changes are only paving the way for presenting Islam the religion of nature on an unprecedented scale.

Let us see for instance, what happened in the socialist world. In one of his writings, Karl Marx had said that religion was the opium of the masses. But today, the socialist Russians are themselves saying that Marxism itself was the worst kind of opium of the mind. Just a few years ago, it was well-nigh unthinkable to carry a copy of the Quran inside the Soviet Union. Then, Aeroflot (Russian Airlines) was engaged to airlift one million copies of the Quran from Jeddah to Moscow.

In its March 12, 1990 issue, *Time* magazine gave detailed report on the religious position in the Soviet Union. It said: "Some 55 million Soviet Muslims enjoy the fruits of new religious tolerance." The strange but meaningful title of this report was "Karl Marx makes room for Muhammad."

These changes taking place in the world today have opened up great new scope for introducing Islam a religion of nature. Muslims must remain very alert in order not to miss these opportunities.

The foregoing arguments suffice to show that the changes taking place in the present world have opened up new vistas for conveying the message of God to people. These changes have made it possible for Islam to be presented to the modern man in the modern jargon. The most important task ahead is to have a thorough understanding of these changes and then to avail of them in an organized and disciplined way.

This is undoubtedly a historic task. History awaits the advance of certain dedicated individuals towards this goal so that it can give them resounding credit for having shared the message of Islam to humanity in this modern age. Those who can prove themselves worthy of such historic credit will be the most fortunate of men. □

*History awaits the advance of certain dedicated individuals towards this goal so that it can give them resounding credit for having shared the message of Islam to humanity in this modern age.*

# READING BETWEEN THE LINES

## *Discovering the True Import of Quranic Injunctions*

**T**RUE believers, the Quran tells us, are those who, 'who forgive when they are angry' (42: 37). Everyone knows the turbulence that is aroused within a person when he becomes angry with someone. This being the case, forgiveness is only possible when this turbulence is suppressed. When set against this background, the full meaning of this Quranic verse becomes apparent thus: When angered, they are willing to forgive, even if this means curbing their emotions and suppressing the turbulence within them.

Likewise, whenever a statement is made or an injunction laid down, some words are mentioned and some are left unmentioned. The appearance of literal and figurative, implicit and explicit language is common in every work of literature. Readers arrive at the true and intended meaning of such expressions with some effort. That is why

***When the simple words 'Speak the truth' are uttered, what they really mean is: 'Speak the truth, even if the truth appears harmful to you.'***

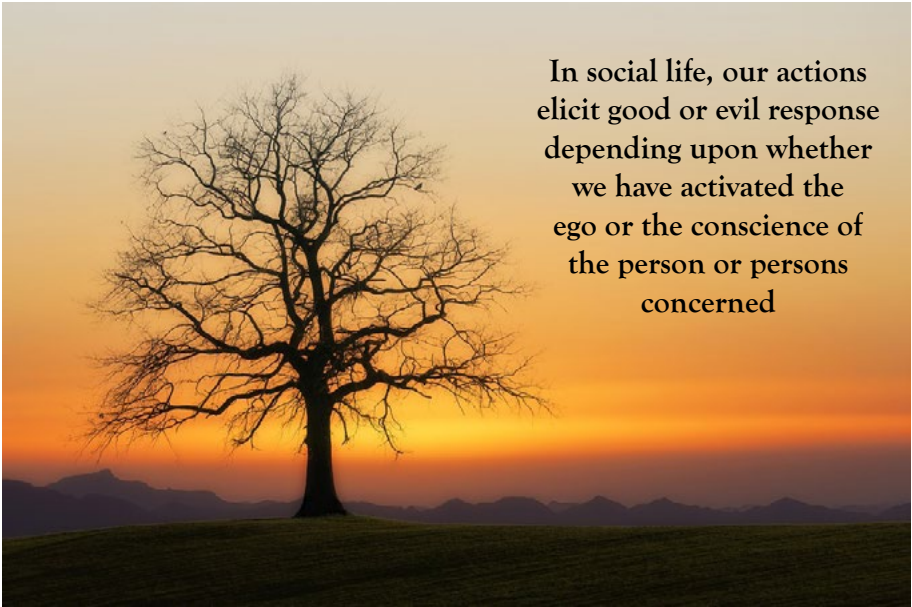
we have been urged to ponder over the teachings of religion, to keep turning them over and over again in our minds. In this way, we are able to grasp a deeper import of what has been said, fathoming what is implicit as well as what has been explicitly stated.

When the simple words 'Speak the truth' are uttered, what they really mean is: 'Speak the truth, even if the truth appears harmful to you.' When we are commanded to "hand back your trusts to their rightful owners" (4: 58), the full meaning of this would be: 'Hand back

your trusts to their rightful owners, however difficult it may be for you to part with them.' The same verse of the Quran exhorts us to "pass judgement upon men with fairness." This means even when justice appears detrimental to our interests, we should still adhere to it.

The same applies to the words "fast," "pray," and "pay *zakat*". Fasting implies abstaining from food, however much we may desire to eat; prayer is worship of God, no matter what other preoccupations we may have; paying *zakat* incorporates the fuller meaning: "Pay *zakat*, however difficult it may be for you to give up your hard-earned profits." The same is true of all Islamic injunctions. In order to implement them, something has to be sacrificed; the order is laid down, the sacrifice involved is for us to infer.

We must spend in the cause of God, in spite of our attachment to our wealth. We must acknowledge the truth, in spite of the fact that this involves disclaiming all personal greatness. Something is written in the lines, something else between the lines. For what is written to be put effectively into practice, it has to be read along with what is in between the lines. □



In social life, our actions elicit good or evil response depending upon whether we have activated the ego or the conscience of the person or persons concerned

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# SUCCESSFUL MARRIAGE

## *Through Adjustment*

Live with them in accordance with what is fair and kind; if you dislike them, it may be that you dislike something which God might make a source of abundant good. (4: 19)

**I**N order to enjoy a successful marital life, the Quran gives a practical guide: This Quranic teaching concerns not just husband and wife, but all human relations in general. In this world of God the only effective principle to lead a successful social life is for every person to realize that if one does not appreciate some trait in the other, it is just possible that there may be some other quality in the same person which would be to their liking or advantage. It is, therefore, prudent for everyone to scrupulously overlook the disagreeable feature of the concerned person and accept them on the basis of appreciable qualities.

***Inculcating the mentality of adjustment is the right approach. It is this quality of adjustment which makes a person capable of surviving with all kinds of people, and leads him through a fruitful association with others to shape a successful life for himself.***

Realistically, nobody in this world is perfect. Everyone has some inherent shortcoming. The person who comes into direct contact with us gets exposed to us and has no means of concealing this shortcoming; whereas one who remains out of our practical life, is less vulnerable because he escapes this scrutiny. Thus, we imagine and presume that all the others are good except the one associated with us, though on closer acquaintance with others, it becomes evident that the latter are not very different from our partners in marriage.

The attitude of leaving one and grabbing another is not correct, and, in any case the quest for perfection is unlikely to succeed.

Quran also mentions another extremely useful injunction about adjustment. It says: Reconciliation is best. (4: 128) Inculcating the mentality of adjustment is the right approach. It is this quality of adjustment which makes a person capable of surviving with all kinds of people, and leads him through a fruitful association with others to shape a successful life for himself. □

# UNDERSTAND THINGS IN CORRECT PERSPECTIVE

## *Sign of an Objective Person*

(People) who listen to what is said and follow what is best in it. These are the ones God has guided; these are the people endowed with understanding. (39: 18)

**T**HE above verse from chapter *Al-Zumar* (Crowds) of the Quran gives a criterion by which we can recognize those who are endowed with understanding. A statement, whether religious or secular, has different aspects to it. You can see it from different angles. No statement about the human condition is ever as simple as 'two plus two equals to four'. So, every statement can be interpreted in different ways. Although each statement has only one real meaning, everyone has the freedom to put a right or a wrong interpretation upon it.

Whether the statement will be taken in its true sense or otherwise is determined not by the wording of the statement itself but by the mind of the listener. If the listener is objective, he knows, taking the statement point by point, how to sort out what is valid and what is invalid. He has the ability to assess and analyze things. Moreover, if he is an honest person, he will take the statement in the right way, without allowing misunderstandings to arise.

The sign of a man of reason is that he has the ability to take the statement in its right perspective. He is free of biased thinking and can take things as they are without going astray.

Anyone who has any claim to being a man of logic and reason must develop this kind of understanding. He must train his mind in such a way that he can understand things in their correct perspective. This is a very great asset for both men and women.

If you want to be a right thinker, you have to train yourself and develop this quality. The first condition of right thinking is that you should be objective and be free of all kinds of bias and prejudices. You must have the ability to analyze things on a logical basis. You must know the difference between what is relevant and what is irrelevant. □

*The sign of a man of reason is that he has the ability to take the statement in its right perspective. He is free of biased thinking and can take things as they are without going astray.*

# MAHATMA GANDHI: A TRUE VISIONARY

*Know the Ground Reality before Taking Action*

**I**N 1919, the All India Congress held its annual meeting in Amritsar. Many years later, in 1973, I had the opportunity to hear about the highlights of this meeting from one of the participants, Professor Niranjana Singh (1892-1979). He was a brother of Master Tara Singh (1885-1967). The details of this discussion were published in *Urdu Weekly Al Jamiat* (August 31, 1973) a part of which is reproduced here.

Among the noted leaders present were Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Moti Lal Nehru and Annie Besant. Mahatma Gandhi too was present there, but he looked so insignificant that when the schoolboys saw him sitting on the stage, they shouted, "Who is this grass cutter?"

Tilak proposed a resolution for complete freedom. The second proposal came from Gandhiji. He had proposed Dominion Status. After both the leaders had concluded their speeches, a vote was cast. Gandhiji got 127 votes against 123 of Tilak. Gandhiji's proposal was accepted.

Mr. Singh said that Gandhi's victory over Tilak was surprising indeed. When the result was announced, the students started shouting "The grasscutter has won! The grasscutter has won!"

Bal Gangadhar Tilak had a revolutionary bent of mind. He always spoke in a thunderous voice whereas Gandhiji was coolheaded and spoke in a low tone. Tilak and the Muslim leaders wanted to demand complete freedom straightaway, whereas Gandhiji wanted it in stages, keeping in view the prevailing conditions. In the beginning, leaders like Tilak looked very towering compared to the diminutive Gandhi. But when history gave its verdict, the world saw Gandhi as the front rank leader, while Tilak and the others brought up the rear.

M K Gandhi (1869-1948) was a true visionary. He knew how the forces of history work. Moreover, he was well aware of how prepared his countrymen were. His plan of action took into consideration all relevant facts. It was this vision that put India on course to gain freedom from British colonial rule. □



# AN INTERVIEW

*In Conversation with Khaja Kaleemuddin*



**Khaja Kaleemuddin** is the founding member and chapter head of the CPS USA team. He has been tirelessly engaged in spreading the Quran in the Americas in particular. Identified as the Quran Man in the local community, he has been instrumental in distributing around 1.3 million copies of the translations of the Quran. He is a teacher by profession. He has rendered his services in many countries such as India, Zambia, Nigeria, and the USA. He has been associated with

Maulana for more than 40 years. He was the first CPS member to visit New Zealand after the gruesome Christchurch mosque shootings in 2019. Through his effort, the Quran copies and other books on Islam are available in the same mosque. These books are aimed at dispelling the misconceptions about Islam. He lives in Pennsylvania, USA.

He visited CPS International, New Delhi in August 2021 where he was interviewed by **Dr Rajat Malhotra**. The interview was live-streamed on Facebook. Some of the questions were from the online viewers. This is an edited and abridged version of the interview.

## **How were you introduced to Maulana Wahiduddin Khan?**

I had started reading Maulana Wahiduddin Khan's Urdu monthly *Al-Risala* Urdu in 1976. If you remember, this was the year the magazine started. Thus, I can say that I have read every single issue of *Al-Risala*. I continued to read it for the next 10 years before I decided to meet him. My Urdu was not so fluent then. I could read Urdu but only with difficulty. I found that articles appealed to my inner nature. They were a treasure of wisdom. Then I read some of his books. Around the same time, I had to leave India for Zambia for a teaching assignment. The magazine contained so much practical advice about the art of life management. I started applying those principles in my life. I began sharing the magazine with others. I met him in 1986.

## **Do you remember your first meeting?**

I was staying in a hotel in New Delhi. I was returning from Zambia and had to wait in New Delhi for a day before taking the flight to Hyderabad. I called him on phone and sought an appointment the same evening. Maulana told me to come right away if I had time. He knew me already as I had got *Al-Risala* printed in Nigeria and sent him the samples.

I had some ideas about how imposing the house and the personality of a writer and religious scholar of his stature could be! Quite the contrary, I found Maulana sitting in a very simple and modest office without the train of people following him everywhere. He welcomed me personally. He had the Nigerian edition in his hand. We had a fruitful conversation.

**Looking back on your student life, how was your mentality then? I mean what did you think of religion in particular Islam?**

I divide my life into two parts. The first part is before I started reading Maulana's books. And the second part is after I started reading him.

I grew up in a village and only knew traditional Islam. It was a form-based religion. It taught that if you do this, read that you will get so much reward. If you recite such and such a word for this number of times, your place in Paradise is assured. I was not satisfied with this explanation of religion. When I entered college. I was introduced to another type of Islam. It may be called political interpretation of Islam. It held the view that Islam and Muslims are superior. Muslims are a unique nation, and establishing divine government is the goal of Islam. It was at this time, I got the opportunity to read *Al-Risala*. After reading it for 10 years, I was fully convinced that the arguments presented by Maulana were based on Quran and *Hadith* and the interpretation of Islam presented in these pages were sound indeed. I found that this is the answer to my quest. I knew that this is the true face of Islam. Every page of *Al-Risala* contained explanations of the verses of the Quran and *Hadith*. The art of life is found on almost every page. I found these were the traits to win a day and not some form of lip service. I had a 180-degree change in my mentality. From those days till now, whatever I have become, it is because of Maulana's literature. My personality is the result of Maulana's writing. I have dedicated my life to this mission.

**You said that you didn't know Urdu. What motivated you to learn it?**

The storehouse of wisdom of Maulana's writing could be found on every single page of *Al-Risala*. I was so enamoured of the magazine that I would read an issue many times over. I vividly remember which article appeared on what page and which issue of *Al-Risala*. It is no surprise then just by reading the magazine in such a fashion, my Urdu improved. I would also like to mention that Urdu was my mother tongue, only my medium of education was different.



**When a reader reads an author he likes so much, it is natural to form a mental picture of the writer. What difference did you find in the image and actual picture of Maulana?**

When I met Maulana for the first time, he was all alone in his office. I thought he would be crowded by the people. I thought about why he is alone. As I had read his writings, I knew that his is the true interpretation of Islam and futuristic. I told him that his literature is futuristic and Muslim thinking is not yet up to the level. In later meetings, he took me to different mosques each morning for *Fajr* prayers. I could see no one paid attention to him or knew what his status as an Islamic thinker and writer was! I was not demotivated that Maulana was not recognized and that these people didn't recognize the true import of his writings. I knew that in the future there will be people who will understand it and make it a mission to carry forward Maulana's writings and interpretation of Islam. Maulana would often read an Arabic saying to the effect that the people generally become enemies of the things they do not know. Now, we know that his books are read and appreciated all over the world.

*I agree with you Kaleem Saheb that Maulana's literature is indeed futuristic. I remember that Maulana was invited to the Islamic Centre in New Delhi for a speech. It was a successful event. At the end of the programme, the President of the Islamic Centre Mr Siraj Qureshi met Maulana and emotionally said, "Your literature will be valued all over the world once you are gone." Today, not just in religious and secular spheres, even in academic circles, his writings have become topics of research. In Sha Allah, this ideology will spread.*

**How would you describe the thought process of Maulana behind the ideology he presented?**

Maulana's interpretation of Islam is based on a thorough and in-depth study of the Quran and the corpus of *Hadith* literature. It is then fortified by a master's grasp over all the related fields of study. Maulana presented the results in a contemporary language. We cannot say that he presented something new. He did not present what was not there. He once wrote that after his *madrassa* education, he was not able to address the modern man and convince him about the veracity of Islam. He learnt English and the western mind on his own. He understood the mentality of the modern man. Then, he presented Islam in a modern idiom for the modern man. It is comprehensible for the modern man. His writings have a unique trait that they appear natural. For a seeking

person, his writings serve as an answer to his innermost nature, and he readily accepts them

**Let's turn our attention to the USA to the time when you moved there from Zambia. Today the USA chapter of CPS is so involved in spreading the message. Tell us how it all started?**

When I was fully convinced about the truthfulness of this mission, and that there is no other religious literature that inspires us to the extent Maulana's literature inspires. It is a pure and unadulterated form of Islam, unlike other ideologies that claim to present Islam. It was then I decided to devote my time and resources to this mission. In Nigeria, I started publishing *Al-Risala* for the Urdu speaking people of the subcontinent residing there.

Those who were impressed by the political interpretation of Islam didn't like this material. They were more moved by the prospects of establishing the Islamic Caliphate. I would visit their homes and talk to them at length on these topics. I started printing *Al-Risala* English.

At the same time, the economy and currency of Zambia plummeted, and I had to move to the USA in 1989. I performed Hajj in 1984. I prayed there, "O God! Grant me the strength to spread this message all over the globe." I was never demotivated that people then did not welcome the message when they returned me the copies of the magazine, I just thought that they did not yet understand.

In the USA, my priority was to spread the message. I called Maulana for guidance. He told me to get settled first with family and job. I started putting together a team. I would distribute books on Islam at various gatherings. I would get Maulana's books reprinted in the USA. I used the platforms available. I started getting support. In 1996, Maulana visited the USA. It was during this visit that a team was officially formed named **Al-Risala Forum International**. We registered it in New York. We formed a website to reach people far and wide. This was [www.alrisala.org](http://www.alrisala.org). I uploaded soft copies of Maulana's books, *Al-Risala* Urdu. I also recorded *Al-Risala* in my voice and uploaded it. Now all material is available on [www.archive.org](http://www.archive.org).

**There are many women members in the CPS team of the USA. How did that happen?**

At the very beginning, the first women member who joined us was Sister Gul Zeba. She had already read Maulana's literature. She contacted me on phone. Now, she is so busy conducting classes for women and

children. She has established a vast network for the task in introducing Islam on her own. Then sister Kauser Izhar joined. Their enthusiasm and sincerity are unparalleled.

I am often asked by the new team members what should they do first. I always advise new CPS members to do nothing except reading Maulana's literature. They should get fully convinced about the truthfulness of the mission. It is only after a thorough reading of Maulana's writings that one should venture out into the field of introducing the message of Islam. Maulana used to say that we don't produce programmes, we produce programme-makers.

It is a defining feature of CPS members that they have a sense of mission that they must spread the message of CPS forward. Wherever they are, they set up libraries and study centres.

### **What inspires you to devote yourself wholly to the mission? What is the secret behind this?**

This is something I cannot answer. I was convinced of the truthfulness of this mission from day one. I knew that it would get the support of the people who would know its true value. Many events could have derailed me but I never wavered. I was never demoralized.

We need to stand up for God. Whenever you are weak, just stand, angels, will line up to help you.

Maulana is my source of inspiration. To cater to the needs of others, people often deviate from the truth. It was not the case with Maulana. Only after a thorough and first-hand study of any event or topic would he arrive at a conclusion. Then, he would speak and write on the subject. He knew that people will not understand it now but later they will come to realize it. His solutions to the problems of Indian Muslims were based directly on the life of the Prophet such as unilateral peace, big bird thinking. He always stood by his conclusions.

*CPS USA played a massive role in the distribution of the Quran. Some containers that reach Kaleem Saheb's house carry at least 80 thousand copies of the translations of the Quran. His house is a centre from where the task of introducing the message of the Quran is being carried out. His basement is filled to the brim with translations of the Quran and Maulana's books. I remember that once while Maulana was there, the containers reached. He helped in pushing the carts. He was 85 years old then. That was way back in 2013. He watched the whole process while sitting under*

the tree. He said that Kaleem Saheb, you have opened an industry for the spread of the message of the Quran.

**You were called a special name by the postal department of your area. What was it?**

I would dispatch the translations of the Quran by post. I would visit the postal office again and again. They asked me what I was sending in so large a quantity. I told them I was dispatching copies of translations of the Quran. Then they started calling me **Quran Man**.

My house is now officially called the Quran House. I pray that my house retains this status always and this work goes on always. I maintain that we are helped by the angels. So far, we have distributed 1.3 million copies of the Quran. We distribute it to other organizations and institutes.

**Maulana visited you many times in the USA. Please tell us some insightful events from his visits.**

There are many such events. In 1996, someone from Detroit contacted me. He said he had read *The Vision of Islam* and wished to read more of Maulana's books. These books contained my phone number then. I told him the books are available and the author of the books would be here in a few days. He visited and stayed for two days with Maulana. He asked him if he did not wish to die for the sake of God, Maulana said, "Do you think I am alive?"

On another trip in North Carolina, while driving, Maulana related how *Al-Risala* started. People told him that it would not be successful. They said, "Your articles are suggestive and not informative. People do not like suggestive magazines. People don't want someone to tell them what to do." Maulana replied that those were the days he was flooded with ideas of articles and books. He said, "If I start *Al-Risala*, the magazine will die of failure; and if I don't start *Al-Risala*, I would die being burdened by the ideas."

**God-realization is central to the message of Maulana. Please share some personal experiences of God-realization?**

In a recent article by Maulana, I read about a group of people who were waiting to see a President. The moment it was announced that the President is about to enter the hall, everyone became a picture of anticipation, respect and awe. He also wrote that if you are standing in front of a cave about which you have been informed that it is empty

and no creature lives inside. Suddenly, you see a human being coming out of it. How surprised you would be!

Compare these experiences with the event of a child being born. How surprised we should be to see childbirth!

There are countless phenomena in the universe through which God is manifesting His presence to us. How much more thrilling this discovery should be for us!

Maulana said that God-realization is true faith indeed.

### **How to use Maulana's lectures to guide youths to the right path and personality development?**

The best way to make children discover Islam is through your example. One cannot inculcate Islam by just establishing Islamic schools. First, adults need to live a truly Islamic life, children being silent observers will imbibe these values. No need to specifically train them, start with yourself. It's through practical demonstration that such an objective can be achieved.

### **How can we become sincere about the task of introducing the message of Islam?**

Keep reading Maulana's books over and over again. Introducing the religion of Islam is a two-part task. Personality development, increasing God-realization and then sharing the experience. No derailment is then possible from this path.

There is a great example from the life of the Prophet Muhammad about the supremacy of the task of introducing Islam. *Hilf al-Fudul* was an alliance created by the Makkans in the year AD 590 to establish justice for all through collective action, even for those who had no connections to the powerful. *Fudul* commonly means "virtuous", therefore, the alliance is often translated as 'League of the Virtuous'. Later, the Prophet expressed his wish to become part of such alliances if the need arose. It means he was willing to be led by others in community matters, while in matters of introducing Islam, he was the leader.

### **What is your message to the CPS family?**

Keep doing the work of spreading the message of Islam sincerely. Keep reading Maulana's books. Don't get demotivated. Aim to do this till the last breath.

I always tell my team that we should keep working for the mission. We should not worry about the result. We should not be discouraged from not getting support from the people. CPS members should not be disheartened if more people are not coming to join them in the cause of spreading the Word of God. Our tireless efforts will bring results from places we least expect. Maulana would say that we should set a target, then fight every impulse that derails us from the target. We should follow this advice. □



Alexa, ask Quran player to play chapter 1

Alexa, open Quran Player

The Quran on  
**amazon** echo

[bit.ly/quranplayer](https://bit.ly/quranplayer)

# AN OUTREACH JOURNEY TO BRAZIL

*This is an account of a journey to Brazil Khaja Kaleemuddin undertook to spread the message of peace.*

**O**N behalf of CPS USA, I embarked upon my third outreach journey to Brazil on June 23, 2021. As Maulana Wahiduddin Khan once highlighted that any such outreach effort will be aided by God's angels, I can confidently say that I experienced angels helping out every step of my journey.

In these Covid-19 days, international passengers are supposed to present a negative Covid-19 PCR test result at the time of check-in. I had completed this requirement but I was unaware of the second requirement, i.e. to fill out my health profile on the Brazilian government's health department website. At the check-in counter, the lady completed this formality for me. It took her 45 minutes to complete the process but patiently helped me register. It was God's help through a kind soul.

The main goal of this trip was to arrange for the distribution of 50,000 copies of the Portuguese and Spanish translations of the Quran. These had been shipped in March last year and were stored in a Mosque called "Mesquita Muçulmana" in Foz do Iguacu, Brazil. The mosque administration has been very kind to let us store these copies of the Quran in the mosque's storage.

The town of Foz do Iguacu borders two other countries of South America, Paraguay and Argentina. Brazil is the largest and only Portuguese-speaking country in South America and the rest speak Spanish. There are some whose official languages are English and Dutch. I consider Foz do Iguacu town was chosen by God for our help for the distribution of both Portuguese and Spanish Qurans. This town has a large and beautiful mosque. Daily 400 to 500 tourists used to visit this mosque during non-Covid times. Even now, during these Covid times, 50 to 100 tourists stop by daily. CPS USA has now arranged with the mosque administration that all tourists would be gifted with a Portuguese translation of the Quran supplied by us.

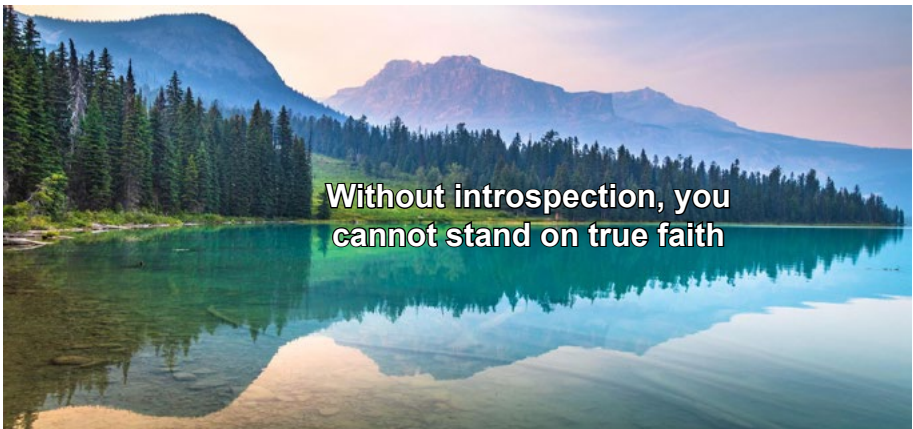
Besides this, I was also able to form a group of Brazilian and Paraguayan youths who would help us in the task of distribution of Qurans in Brazil and Paraguay by placing Qurans in Muslim business stores for their clients to pick up a copy for free. CPS USA will stay in constant contact with this group.

Then, I traveled to Sao Paulo, the largest and most populated city in Brazil. Here I met with the administration of Abu Bakr mosque, one of the largest mosques in the city. I presented to them the mission of CPS International in general and the activities of CPS USA in particular. They were very much receptive to the CPS mission. Most of the people knew Maulana Wahiduddin Khan because they had already read Maulana's book *Al-Islam Yatahadda*, the Arabic version of *God Arises*.

They were so inclined to our peace mission that they are even prepared to translate all of Maulana's literature into the Portuguese language and spread it throughout Brazil. May God make it happen and make the task easy for them! They will have our full support all the time.

I intended to stay longer there given their interest in our outreach project, but I had to leave as my stay was for only two weeks. I am convinced that the CPS peace mission will take root there, by the will of God, and spread to all of South America and beyond. This mission is already very well rooted in North America, especially in the USA and Canada. If all of us sincerely devote our time and resources, our efforts will take shape into an intellectual revolution throughout the world by the will of God.

I arrived back in the USA on July 8, 2021. □

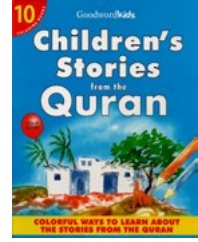




# CHILDREN'S CORNER

## *Selections from Children's Stories from the Quran*

*Goodword is an award-winning publishing company with a splendid range of Islamic Books in many languages. It offers innovative products for children, including Quran stories, moral stories, craft and activity books, gift packs, Islamic games, Arabic and Islamic readers for home and school.*



**T**HE best way to learn is by seeing, doing and exploring things. And what better way to learn about the best loved stories from the Quran than coloring the story yourself. **Children's Stories from the Quran** is a set of 10 colouring books written by Dr Saniyasnain Khan. He is recognized as one of the world's most influential Muslims<sup>1</sup>. Each book narrates one amazing story from the Quran along with complementing pictures to colour. The ten stories selected are:

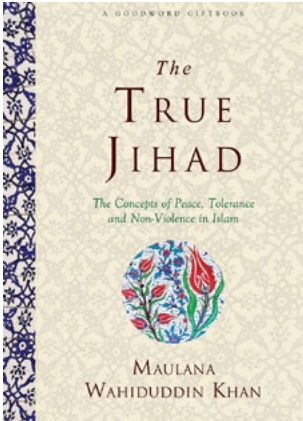
- The First Man on the Earth
- The Camel and the Evil People
- Tale of a Fish
- The Two Sons of Adam
- The Ark of Nuh and the Animals
- The Builder of the Kabah
- The Iron Wall
- The Queen and the Bird
- The Origin of Life
- The Prophet King

Enlighten your kids with these selections of stories from the set. Kindly read the books for the whole story. □

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<sup>1</sup>The World's 500 Most Influential Muslims 2020, Royal Islamic Strategic Studies Centre, Jordan.

# BOOK REVIEW



**Name of the Book:** THE TRUE *JIHAD*: THE CONCEPTS OF PEACE, TOLERANCE AND NON-VIOLENCE IN ISLAM

**Author:** Maulana Wahiduddin Khan

**Published by:** Goodword Books, New Delhi (India) ([www.goodwordbooks.com](http://www.goodwordbooks.com))

**Year: Reprinted in 2021**

**Pages:** 110

**ISBN:** 9391481027

**Reviewed by:** Dr. Maria Khan

**I**N the light of the events of the past decade, among the words that have been most written on and debated about and have made many inquisitive minds read about Islam is the word '*jihad*'. What does the holy book of Muslims say about *jihad*? What place does this word have in the life of a believer? Can the present militancy be termed *jihad*? These and other related questions have been dwelt on in detail in this book by Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, one of the most eminent Islamic scholars of modern times.

The Quran exhorts believers to "strive for the cause of God as it behoves you to strive for it." (22: 78) This earnest struggle is expressed in Arabic by the word '*jihad*', which is derived from the root '*juhd*', which means to strive, to struggle, that is, to exert oneself to the utmost to achieve one's goal. The Maulana writes, "This world has been designed with a view to fulfilling the purposes of the divine trial of man." Any situation that he is faced with is meant as a test for man. For instance, when a matter of truth comes before a person and he fails to acknowledge it for fear of losing his status; when he has someone's wealth or property in his possession, and he hesitates about restoring it to the true owner; when he resents having to place curbs on himself in order to lead a life of modesty as desired by God, when he feels that suppressing his anger and vengefulness in order to be patient amounts to his own negation; when he fails to speak words of truth and stand up for justice for fear of losing his popularity. On all such occasions man has to tread the right path. It is this spiritual struggle within a believer in order

to become God-conscious that constitutes the true spirit of *jihad*. It continues throughout the life of a believer.

If *jihad* connotes inner striving, then what about those activities which use the same word to indulge in violence? Maulana explains that since the early Muslims had to strive hard during wars with aggressors, these wars came, in an extended sense, to be called *jihad*. The actual word for such a war in Arabic is *qital*, not *jihad*. War, in Islam, however, is not the prerogative of the individual but of an established government.

Most Islamic activities are governed by certain conditions, the author explains. The waging of war is also thus subject to certain principles. The Prophet of Islam started his mission in Makkah in AD 610. Several incidents of the Makkan period record the atrocities inflicted on the Prophet and his followers by the opponents to his mission. However, the Prophet never engaged in confrontation. After thirteen years of peaceful dissemination of Islamic teachings in Makkah, when his opponents planned to assassinate him, the Prophet migrated to Madinah. Here, most of the inhabitants embraced Islam, and a city-state was established. Since the opponents in Makkah desired to nip Islam in the bud, they launched armed aggressions against the state of Madinah. It was here then that verses pertaining to war were revealed in the Quran, and the Prophet was enjoined to engage in war in self-defence.

An important principle that can be derived from this early history of Islam is that war can be waged by a state, not by non-state actors. There is no room for non-state warfare in Islam. Also, war in Islam is for defensive purposes alone, when the option of peace and negotiations has failed. The book enumerates various incidents from the life of the Prophet. He always made effort for avoidance of conflict.

“The position of peace is sacrosanct in Islam,” says the author and cites numerous references from the Quran and the sayings of the Prophet of Islam to enlighten the readers on the role of peace in the Islamic doctrine. The Quran avers that “reconciliation is the best.” (4: 128)

Maulana explains that Islam is a mission. As pointed above, according to Islam, in the present world man is being tested by God. God desires that man should know how he has to spend his life on earth and that he would be held accountable for his deeds in the next world. Islam is a spiritual mission which aims to make people aware of their Creator and the Creation Plan by conveying His message to them. “When a state of war and violence prevails, the normal atmosphere is vitiated. Such circumstances as would foster spiritual reformation and intellectual

movements cannot be effectively created.” This implies that peace is actually a necessary prerequisite for the Islamic mission. Besides, all constructive activity—in the field of education, business, industry, even worship—can flourish only where there is peace. How, then, can Islam afford to sanction an activity that puts peace in jeopardy? The author reiterates that Islamic activism is based on nonviolence and *dawah*.

*Dawah* is the peaceful propagation of the teachings of Islam. Maulana advises Muslims of present times to adopt this *dawah* activism and abandon every kind of violence. This will guarantee divine succour, on the one hand, and on the other hand, shall foster among Muslims positivity and well-wishing for people of other faiths. Following this, they can achieve success in this world and in the Hereafter.

Maulana Wahiduddin Khan establishes in this instructive book that it is not reformation of Islam but, rather, a revival of true Islam that is needed today. The original Islam is based on peace, mercy and love for humankind. *The True Jihad* offers a wonderful insight into the ideology of nonviolence in Islam. It serves as a guide for both general readers and students of Islam. □



# CPS NEWSLETTER

Dr. Rajat Malhotra, a CPS International member inaugurated Valecham (The Light) Quran event held in Doha Qatar. He also gave a talk on Quran.

Uttarakhand CPS team member Mr Sarfaraz presented Maulana Wahiduddin Khan's Hindi translation of the Quran to Ms. Bichendri Paul the Everest conqueror.

2 new English books of Maulana Wahiduddin Khan were launched

## **Living in Hope**

### **Sultan and Islam**

You can download these and other peace and spirituality literature from here: <https://cpsglobal.org/books/>

Hindi translation of Maulana's Urdu book *Hadith-e-Rasool* titled *Hadees-e-Rasool Ek Sangrah* launched.

Special edition of the periodical *Al-Risala* was launched. It is an in memoriam issue titled *Man of Mission: Remembering Maulana Wahiduddin Khan*.

The Arabic version of Maulana Wahiduddin Khan's translation and commentary of the Quran launched.

Dr Maria Khan conducted two live sessions with Dr. Mona Mehta (Editor, The Speaking Tree, *The Times of India*) and Marya Shakil (Political Editor and Anchor *CNN-News18*).

The English translation of the Quran is now available on the Amazon Echo voice assistant devices and app Alexa with amazing features. Here are the links:

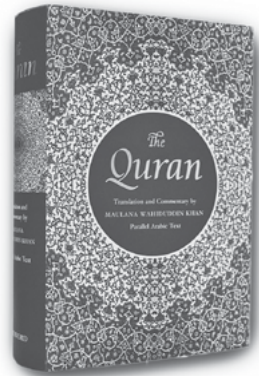
- i. Amazon India: <https://amzn.to/3yKiuZW>
- ii. Amazon US: <https://amzn.to/3mZRbIC>
- iii. Amazon UK: <https://amzn.to/2WGu2jo>
- iv. Amazon Canada: <https://amzn.to/3mXG96z>
- v. Amazon Australia: <https://amzn.to/3jBLJtf>

# THE WORD OF GOD

*From The Scriptures*

*The Quran is the book of God. It has been preserved in its entirety since its revelation to the Prophet of Islam between CE 610 and 632. It is a book that brings glad tidings to humankind, along with divine admonition, and stresses the importance of man's discovery of the Truth on a spiritual and intellectual level.*

Translated from Arabic and commentary by  
**Maulana Wahiduddin Khan**



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In the name of God, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

***All that is in the heavens and on the earth extols the glory of God. To Him belongs the Kingdom and to Him all praise is due. He has power over all things. It was He who created you; and some of you are those who deny this truth, and some who believe [in it]. God sees everything you do. He created the heavens and the earth for a purpose. He formed you and gave you the best of forms. To Him you shall all return. He knows whatever is in the heavens and the earth. He knows all that you conceal and all that you reveal. God is aware of what is in your hearts.*** (64: 1-4)

This means the universe is singing the praises of God; that the reality which is revealed in the Quran, is testified to by the entire universe. In its silent language, it confirms this to the extent of singing praises. Notwithstanding this two-fold declaration those who do not become believers, shall have to wait for the third announcement, when people will be gathered before God, so that they may hear the decision about themselves directly from the Lord of universe.

***Have you not heard about those who denied the truth before you and tasted the evil consequences of their conduct? They will have a painful punishment. That was because their messengers came to them with clear signs, but they replied, 'Shall mortals be our guides?' And so they rejected the truth and turned away. God has no need of such people; God is self-sufficient and worthy of all praise. Those who deny the truth claim that they will never be raised up again. Say, 'By my Lord, most surely you will be raised up again and then you will be told of all that you have done; and that is easy enough for God.' Believe then***

***in God and His Messenger, and in the light which We have sent down. God is fully aware of all that you do.*** (64: 5-8)

The history made by the prophets in ancient times is an eternal source of admonition. For example, prophets appeared among the 'Ad, the Thamud, the people of Madyan, and the community of Lot. These prophets did not possess any supernatural powers to prove their veracity. They had only reasoning in their favour. Rejection of the Truth in spite of its being backed by reasoning made the doubters liable for punishment. This shows that in this world a man is tested by his ability to recognize the Truth on the basis of reasoning. One who fails to do so will always remain deprived of the Truth.

***When He shall gather you all for the Day of Gathering, that will be the Day of loss and gain; and whoever believes in God and does good deeds shall be forgiven their sins and admitted to Gardens through which rivers flow, where they shall dwell forever. That is the supreme triumph. But those who denied the truth and rejected Our signs shall be the inmates of the Fire, there to remain—what an evil destination!***

***No affliction can befall man but by God's permission—He guides the hearts of those who believe in Him: God has knowledge of all things—Obey God and obey the Messenger; but if you turn away, remember that Our Messenger is only responsible for clearly conveying the message.***

***God! There is no god but He, so let the faithful put their trust in Him.***  
(64: 9-13)

People take the world to be a place of winning or losing (*taghabun*). One who is successful here becomes very happy, but one who meets with failure is looked upon with contempt. In this world, however, success is as valueless as failure is.

The place of true success or failure is the Hereafter. One is a failure if he fails in the Hereafter and successful if he is successful in the Hereafter, and the criterion of success or failure there is entirely different from that of this world, where it is based on outward materialism: success or failure in the Hereafter will be on the basis of divine moral values. At that time, people will be surprised to see that the whole complexion of things has completely changed. Gaining, which was considered as such will actually turn out to be losing, while what was considered as losing will turn out to be gaining in the real sense. Failure on that Day is real failure and success on that Day will be real success.

No trouble arrives of its own accord. Every tribulation comes from God, and it afflicts man so that, through it, he should receive guidance. Trouble softens a man's heart and jolts him out of his moral slumber. Trouble prods and sharpens a man's mind. If he refrains from negative reaction, then trouble will become the best divine instruction for him. □



## **SPIRIT OF ISLAM**

Towards Global Peace & Spiritual Living

We wish to inform our readers that *Spirit of Islam* bimonthly is being published in digital format only. We have stopped publishing the printed copies of the magazine.

Those who wish to read from a printed copy may do so by taking a booklet print-out of the digital magazine.



# YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED

***The remedy for ignorance is asking questions. (Prophet Muhammad)***

***The spirit of enquiry is the hallmark of an open society and the above saying of the Prophet aptly illustrates this principle. A culture of curiosity and open-mindedness will foster development in any society by motivating its members to learn enthusiastically and enrich their knowledge. This is because awareness of one's ignorance is half of knowledge, as it becomes a stepping-stone to seeking and finding answers. A questioning mind is like a flowing river that is replenished with fresh thoughts and ideas and continues on its journey.***

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***According to Islam, what is the response that is expected of us in the face of afflictions such as the present pandemic?***

We must never forget that this world is meant for test. We are placed on earth to undergo a test. The Quran says: We shall certainly test you with fear and hunger, and loss of property, lives and crops. Give good news to those who endure with fortitude. (2: 155)

When natural calamities strike human beings, they are reminded that many people in the past had suffered and had their faith tested. The present-day people, too, will be tried and tested in their lives. A problem-free world does not exist. The present world is part of the divine test. We will find ourselves in certain situations to test us. It is our response that is of paramount importance.

As for the current pandemic, we must remember a *Hadith* of the Prophet Muhammad: There is no disease that God has sent down, except that He has also sent down its treatment. (*Sahih al-Bukhari*) It means we should never despair of health hazards. There are remedies for every health problem. We should keep investigating nature to find out a cure for diseases while exercising patience. The Quran says: Truly, those who persevere patiently will be requited without measure. (39: 10)

***There appears to be some kind of hesitation and reservation in people about the vaccination against Coronavirus. What does Islam say about using novel methods to treat an illness?***

The Prophet is reported to have said: Treat with the Indian incense (Indian Aloeswood), for it has healing for seven diseases.

It means in the world of medicine, there is no concept of 'ours' and 'theirs'. The whole of humanity should come together to alleviate the sufferings of health hazards. Medical findings of one nation should be used without reservation by other nations.

It is also reported that the Prophet took medicine sniffed by nose. (*Sahih Muslim*) It means medicines can be administered through various routes. One should not make it an issue if the route of administration is new.

***To prevent the spread of highly communicable diseases, people are advised to follow social distancing and living under quarantine. Is it against the spirit of religion and humanity?***

The Prophet Muhammad once said: Whoever hears that there is an outbreak of plague in some land, he should not go to that land, and if the plague breaks out in the land where one is already present, one should not run away from that land, escaping from the plague. (*Sahih Muslim*)

If a person is living in the area of the plague or pandemic, he should stay united with his people. He should not behave selfishly. He should not think of just his well-being. He should not forsake his people for his safety. On the other hand, if one hears of such a situation in any other place, then it would be unwise to travel there. This will increase the burden of that place which itself is suffering. One should do one's utmost to provide aid to that place.

According to another *Hadith*: The sick should not mix with the healthy. (*Sahih Muslim*)

The method of putting the sick in quarantine is a time-tested and scientific approach to prevent people from getting infected. One should follow this practice in cases of rampant infection.

In the delegation of Thaqif, a man who was infected by leprosy was intending to give pledge to the Prophet, but the Prophet told him: "Go back; we have accepted your pledge."

This was a religious event. Still, the Prophet thought of the prevention from disease. He followed no-contact protocol.

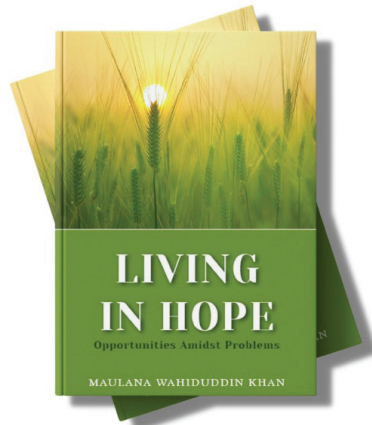
***Is there any special supplication that we can read in such times?***

For such trying times, the Prophet asked us to pray this: Remove the harm O Lord of the People! You are the one who heals and there is no healing except Yours, heal us with a healing which does not leave any disease behind. (*Sahih al-Bukhari*) □

NEW  
RELEASE

The book explains that according to the creation plan of God, this world is a world of possibilities and not a world of frustration. In the events of the life of man, from every failure emerges the chance of new success.

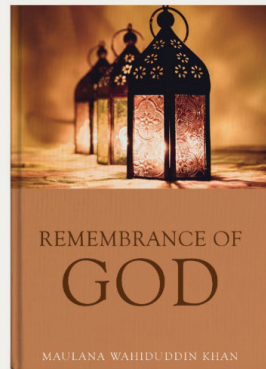
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**MAULANA WAHIDUDDIN KHAN'S**  
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NEW  
RELEASE

Remembrance of God is the greatest form of worship. Remembering God means that whatever a person sees or whatever he experiences, he should make it a point of reference for the remembrance of God.

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