“You were born for a great purpose at a great time” (Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih IV)
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“Of them there are some who say: ‘Our Lord, grant us good in this world as well as good in the world to come, and protect us from the torment of the fire’ (Al-Baqarah 202)

In this verse God mentions that the class of men whose efforts and wishes are not confined to this world only. They (1) seek the good things of this world, and (2) seek the good things of the next world, and (3) try and be saved from the fire which not only signifies the fire of hell but also everything that is painful and is a source of heart-burning. It may be noted
that here, unlike the preceding verse, God uses the word “Hassana” (good) with this words “Fid-dunya” (in this world), meaning that even virtuous men may seek the things of this world but they should always be good and not bad.

The prayer mentioned in this verse is indeed very comprehensive and may be used by men of all grades in all their spiritual and temporal requirements. The Holy Prophet is reported to have used this prayer very often (Muslim) with a view to teaching his companions that if and when they choose to seek both the good things of this world and of the next, they should pray like this.

This prayer has another significance. The good things of this world and the good things of the Hereafter spoken of in this verse may both stand for spiritual blessings, the good things of this world standing for such spiritual blessings as a righteous man gets in this world and the good things of the next world standing for those which he will get Hereafter. In fact, the very words used in this point to that signification, for the Quranic words “Hasnatun Fil Duniya” do not mean “good things of this world” but simply “good in this world.” In this case Alnar or “the fire” would not stand for Hell, protection against which is, in fact, included in the good things of the next world, but for such trials and hardships as one may come across in this world in the struggle for spiritual advancement or in the effort to benefit others. It was in this sense that the Holy Prophet used this prayer with regard to himself; for personally he never sought even the good things of this world, though he always sought “good in this world.”

The Promised Messiah also admonished that this verse should be frequently recited in the last Rakoooh of every prayer.
SHOW COMPASSION TO YOUNG ONES AND RECOGNIZE THE RIGHTS OF YOUR ELDERS

Narrated by Hadrat ‘Abdullāh Ibni ‘Umar, Allāh be pleased with him: The Prophet of Allāh (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) said: “One who had no compassion for our young ones and did not recognize the rights of our elders was not of us.” (Abū Dāwūd)

Explanatory Note

In this hadīth, a fine Law regarding dynamics of mutual relations has been laid down. Many disputes and causes of ill-will arise in the world, because the elders do not treat the younger ones with compassion and consideration, and the younger ones forget to extend respect to the elders which is their due, and thus a distasteful chain reaction of class struggle is set off. Islām has, on the one hand, recognized equality of rights for all in the assignment of public offices and distribution of the means of earning wealth. On the other hand, by building a bridge of compassion and consideration of dutiful respect, it has linked all in one
chain. Those who get an opportunity to excel others in the struggle of life, they are required to treat their less fortunate brethren with compassion and affection, so long as the latter are in that situation. As for those who lag behind, they are enjoined to pay dutiful respect to those who are ahead of them as long as they continue in the position. By means of this golden injunction, our Lord (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) has cut at the root of unnecessary and unbecoming tension between the different layers of society. But, it is a matter of regret that few care to respect this injunction, and if someone comes into power, because of one thing or the other, he loses his head and loves to crush those who are beneath him. And, if one lags behind in the race of existence, he is jealous of those who have outdistanced him so that he is ever intent on destroying them and bringing them low to earth. Both these types are far gone off the course of Islām. Islām itself certainly does not create classes. But it does not shut its eyes to facts either, and takes due note of the temporary distinctions which arise as a natural phenomenon due to differences in intellectual level or standards of personal industry. It resolves (these differences) in a similarly natural manner and takes proper measures to countermand their unpleasant consequences. This blessed observation of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) is a part of these measures. At the same time, Islām stresses the transitory character of these differences pointing out that a class of people which happens to be at the lower rung today, may very well forge ahead tomorrow. The Holy Qur‘ān says in this behalf, “It is not proper for any section of society to look down upon any other section. For, haply that one may become better in material amenities than this one.” [49[Al-Hujurāt]:12]

It must be borne in mind, that the expression “younger ones and elder ones” in this hadīth apply to all whether they are junior or senior in point of age, or relationship, or wealth, or office, or prestige, or influence. In whatever respect that the difference exists, every senior is required to treat his junior with compassion and consideration, and every junior is required to show due respect and regard to his senior. And whoso does not behave in that manner, our Master (blessings of Allāh be on him and His peace) says about him that he is not of us.
The essence of our faith is that:

Our belief that we profess in this life and with which, through the favour of God Almighty, we shall pass on to the next life, is that our lord and master, Muhammad, the chosen one (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) is the Seal of the Prophets and Chief of Messengers, at whose hands the faith was perfected and the bounty was completed through which, by treading the straight path, a person can reach God Almighty. We believe with absolute certainty that the Holy Qur’an is the last of the heavenly books and that not a word or vowel point of its laws and limits and commandments can be added to or subtracted from. No revelation can now be received from God, which can have the effect of modifying or abrogating the commandments of the Holy Qur’an, or of changing any single one of its directions.

Anyone who thinks otherwise is, according to us, not believer, and is a heretic and kafir. We also believe that even the lowest stage of the straight path cannot become available to a person without following the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) let alone the higher stages of that path. We cannot
attain to any stage of honor and perfection or of nearness to God except through the true and perfect following of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him). Whatever is bestowed upon us is by way of reflection and through the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him). (Izala-e-Auham, Ruhani Khaza’in, Vol. 3, pp. 169-170)

The five pillars on which Islam is based are part of our faith. We hold fast to the Word of God, the Holy Qur’an, to which we are commanded to hold fast. Like Faruq (may Allah be pleased with him), we announce that the Book of Allah suffices us, and like ‘Ayesha (may Allah be pleased with her), when there is a difference between the Qur’an and Hadith, we give priority to the Qur’an. We believe that there is no one worthy of worship except Allah and that our lord and master, Muhammad, the chosen one (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) is His Messenger and is Khatam-ul-Anbiya’. We believe in angels, the true nature of resurrection (spiritual resurrection) of the bodies, the Day of Judgement, Heaven and Hell. We believe that whatever the Glorious and Majestic God has stated in the Holy Qur’an and whatever the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allah be on him] has said, is true. We believe that whoever subtracts the smallest particle from the law of Islam or adds to it, or lays the foundation of neglecting obligations and of indifference towards them, is without faith and is turned away from Islam. I admonish the members of my Community that they should have true faith and that they should die in this faith. They should believe in all Prophets and all books, the truth of which is affirmed by the Holy Qur’an. They should observe the fast and perform the Salat and pay the Zakat and perform the pilgrimage and carry out all that God Almighty and His Messenger have prescribed and should abstain from all that they have forbidden and thus conform in every respect to Islamic commandments. We consider it our duty to accept all that is supported by the consensus of the righteous ones who have passed away and all that is considered as part of Islam by the consensus of the Ahl-i- Sunnat. We call to witness the heaven and the earth that this is our faith. (Ayyam-us-Sulah, Ruhani Khaza’in, Vol. 14, p. 323)
A poem about the status of the Promised Messiah
(translation from Urdu)

It is Thy sheer grace and beneficence that Thou hast chosen me; Otherwise, there was no lack of servants in Thy entourage.

Those who claimed to be my friends have all become my enemies but Thou hast not abandoned me, O Thou Who fulfills all my needs.

O my Unique Friend, O Refuge of my soul, Thou art sufficient for me; I need no other beside Thee.

Had it not been for Thy grace, I would have died in frustration; Only God knows where my dust would have been thrown.
O God, may my body and my soul and my heart be spent in Thy cause; for I find no one else who loves as Thou dost love.

From the beginning, my time was passed under Thy care; I was nurtured in Thy lap like a suckling baby.

I have not seen in mankind the fidelity that Thou hast; there is no comforter like unto Thee.

People say that one without merit finds no acceptance, and yet I have been accepted though I am without merit.

I have been the recipient of Thy numberless favours and bounties which it would be difficult for me to count till the Day of Judgement.

What is my fault that I have received Thy command; who am I to reject the command of the Omnipotent Sovereign?

My duty now is to carry out the command that I have received; though in myself I am weak and feeble and sorrowful.

[Brahin-e-Ahmadiyyah, Part V, Ruhani Khaza’in, vol.21, pp. 127-128]
Bismillahir-Rahmanir-Rahim—In the Name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

Assalamu ‘alaikum wa rahmatullahi wa barakatuhu—peace and blessings of Allah be upon you all.

I would like to first of all take this opportunity to thank all of you for inviting me to your headquarters and giving me the opportunity to say a few words. As the Head of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, I would like to speak to you about the teachings of Islam. However, this is such a vast topic, that to cover it in just one function or in a short time is impossible. Thus, it is necessary that I limit myself to one aspect of Islam to focus on and speak to you about. Whilst contemplating which facet of Islam I should address, I received a request from the National President of our Community here in Germany, Abdullah Wagishauser, in which he asked me to speak about Islam’s teachings in relation to love and loyalty to one’s nation. This helped me make my decision. Thus, I shall now speak to you briefly about certain aspects of Islam’s teachings in this regard. It is very easy to simply speak of, or hear the words, ‘loyalty and love for one’s nation.’ However, in reality these few words encompass meanings that are wide-ranging, beautiful and of tremendous depth. Indeed, to fully comprehend and understand what these words truly mean and what they require is actually very difficult. In any case, in the short time available, I will try to explain Islam’s concept of loyalty and love for one’s nation.

First and foremost, a fundamental principle of Islam is that a person’s words and deeds should never manifest any form of double standards or hypocrisy. True loyalty requires a relationship built on sincerity and integrity. It requires what a person displays on the surface to be the same as what lies beneath. In terms of nationality, these principles are of the utmost importance.

Therefore, it is essential for a citizen of any country to establish a relationship of genuine loyalty and faithfulness to his nation. It does not matter whether he is a born citizen, or whether he gains citizenship later in life, either through immigration or by any other means. Loyalty is a great quality, and the people who have displayed this attribute to the highest degree and best standards, are the Prophets of God. Their love and bond with God was so strong that in all matters they kept in view His commands and strived to
fully implement them, no matter what. This illustrated their commitment to Him and their perfect standards of loyalty. Hence, it is their standards of loyalty that we should use as an example and model. However, before proceeding any further, it is necessary to understand what is actually meant by ‘loyalty’. According to the teachings of Islam, the definition and true meaning of ‘loyalty’ is the unequivocal fulfilment of one’s pledges and covenants at every level and under all circumstances, regardless of difficulty. This is the true standard of faithfulness required by Islam.

At various places in the Holy Quran, Allah has instructed Muslims that they must fulfil their pledges and covenants, because they will be held to account by Him over all undertakings that they have made. The Muslims have been instructed to fulfil all covenants, including those made with God Almighty, and also all other pledges they have made, according to their respective degrees of importance. In this context, a question that could arise in the minds of people is that because Muslims claim that God and His religion are of paramount importance to them, thus it follows that their pledge of loyalty to God will be their first priority, and that their covenant to God will be what they value above all else and which they endeavour to fulfil. Therefore, the belief may arise that a Muslim’s loyalty to his nation and his pledge to uphold the laws of the land will only be of secondary importance to him. Thus, he may be willing to sacrifice his pledge to his country on certain occasions.

To answer this question, I would firstly like to inform you that the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) himself taught that the ‘love for one’s nation is a part of faith.’ Thus, sincere patriotism is a requirement in Islam. To truly love God and Islam requires a person to love his nation. It is quite clear, therefore, that there can be no conflict of interest between a person’s love for God, and love for his country. As love for one’s country has been made a part of Islam, it is quite clear that a Muslim must strive to reach the highest standards of loyalty to his chosen country, because that is a means of reaching God and becoming close to Him. Hence, it is impossible that the love a true Muslim holds for God could ever prove to be an impediment or barrier preventing him from displaying true love and faithfulness towards his country. Unfortunately, we find that in certain countries, religious rights are curtailed or even completely denied. Therefore, another question that can arise is whether those people who are persecuted by their state can still maintain a relationship of love and loyalty to their nation and country. With great sadness, I should inform you that these circumstances exist in Pakistan, where the Government has actually legislated against our Community. These anti-Ahmadiyya laws are practically enforced. Thus in Pakistan, all Ahmadi Muslims have been officially declared by law to be ‘non-Muslims’. They are, therefore, forbidden from calling themselves ‘Muslim’. The Ahmadis in Pakistan are also prohibited from worshipping in the way Muslims do, or acting in accordance with any Islamic practice or custom that could identify them as a Muslim. Thus, the state itself in Pakistan has deprived members of our Community from their basic human right to worship. Bearing in mind this state of affairs, it is quite natural to wonder how, in such circumstances, can Ahmadi Muslims follow the laws of the land? How can they continue to display loyalty to the nation? Here I should clarify that where such extreme circumstances exist, then the law, and loyalty to the nation, become two separate issues. We, Ahmadi Muslims, believe that religion is a personal matter for every individual to determine for himself and that there should be no compulsion in matters of faith. Thus, where the law comes to interfere with this right, undoubtedly, it is an act of great cruelty and persecution. Indeed, such state-sanctioned persecution, which has occurred throughout the ages,
has been condemned by the vast majority. 

If we glance at the history of Europe, we find that people in this Continent have also been the victims of religious persecution, and as a result, many thousands of people had to migrate from one country to the next. All fair-minded historians, governments and people have deemed this to be persecution, and extremely cruel. In such circumstances, Islam advocates that where persecution goes beyond all limits and becomes unbearable, then at that time, a person should leave the town or country and migrate to a place where he is free to practise his religion in peace.

However, alongside this guidance, Islam also teaches that under no circumstances should any individual take the law into his own hands and nor should he partake in any schemes or conspiracies against his country. This is an absolutely clear and unequivocal command given by Islam. Despite the grave persecution they face, millions of Ahmadis continue to live in Pakistan. Despite being subjected to such sustained discrimination and cruelty in all aspects of their lives, they continue to keep a relationship of total loyalty and a true allegiance to the country. Whichever field they work in or wherever they are based, they are constantly engaged in trying to help the nation to progress and succeed.

For decades, the opponents of Ahmadiyyat have tried to allege that Ahmadis are not loyal to Pakistan, but they have never been able to prove this or show any evidence to support their claims; instead, the truth is that whenever there has been a need to make any sacrifice for the sake of Pakistan, for the sake of their country, Ahmadi Muslims have always stood at the forefront and been constantly ready to make every sacrifice for the sake of the country. Despite themselves being a victim and target of the law, it is Ahmadi Muslims who follow and abide by the laws of the land better than anyone else. This is because they are true Muslims, who follow true Islam.

Another teaching given by the Holy Quran in relation to loyalty is that people should keep away from all things that are immodest, undesirable and that form any type of rebellion. A beautiful and distinguishing feature of Islam is that it does not just draw our attention to the final point of culmination, where the consequences are extremely dangerous; instead, it warns us about all of the smaller issues as well, which act as stepping stones leading mankind to a path paved with danger. Thus, if Islam’s guidance is followed properly, then any issue can be resolved at the earliest point, before the situation gets out of hand. For instance, an issue which can gravely harm a country is financial greed by individuals. Often, people get consumed by material desires that spiral beyond control, and such desires ultimately lead people to act in a disloyal fashion. Thus, such things can ultimately be a cause of treachery against one’s country. Let me explain a bit. In Arabic the word bagha has been used to describe those people or those acts of people that cause harm to their countries. It refers to those who take part in wrong practices or who inflict harm on others. It also includes those people who commit fraud and so try to acquire things in an illegal or unjust manner. It refers to those people who transgress all limits and so cause harm and damage. Islam teaches that people who act in these ways cannot be expected to act in a loyal manner, because loyalty is intertwined with high moral values. Loyalty cannot exist without high moral values and high moral values cannot exist without loyalty. Whilst it is true that different people may have different views about high moral standards, yet the religion of Islam revolves solely around seeking God’s pleasure. Thus, Muslims are instructed to always act in a manner that is pleasing to Him. In short, according to Islamic teachings, God Almighty has forbidden all forms off treachery or rebellion, whether against one’s country or one’s government. This is because rebellion or acting against the state is a threat to the peace and
security of a nation. Indeed, where internal rebellion or opposition occurs, then it fans the flames of external opposition and encourages outsiders to take advantage of the internal disorder. Hence, the consequences of disloyalty to your nation can be far-reaching and extreme. Thus, anything that can cause harm to a nation is included in the term bagha that I have described. Keeping all of this in mind, loyalty to one’s nation requires a person to display patience, to show morality and to follow the laws of the land.

Generally speaking, in the modern era, most governments are run democratically. Therefore if a person or group wishes to change the government, then they should do so by following the proper democratic process. They should make themselves heard by voting at the ballot box. Votes should not be cast on the basis of personal preferences or personal interests, but in fact, Islam teaches that a person’s vote should be exercised with a sense of 34 should not look at his own priorities and from which candidate or party he can personally benefit; instead, a person should make his decision in a balanced way whereby he assesses which candidate or party will help the entire nation progress. The keys to government are a huge trust and thus they should only be handed over to the party who the voter honestly believes is best suited and most deserving. This is the true Islam, and this is true loyalty.

Indeed, in Chapter 4, verse 59 of the Holy Quran, Allah has commanded that a person should only hand over trusts to those who are entitled, and that when judging between people, he should make his decision with justice and honesty. Thus, loyalty to one’s nation requires that the power of the government should be given to those who are truly entitled to it, so that the nation can progress and come to stand at the forefront amongst the nations of the world. In many parts of the world we find that members of the public take part in strikes and protests against government policies.

Furthermore, in certain Third World countries, the protesters vandalise or damage possessions and properties belonging either to the state or to private citizens. Though they may claim to be acting out of love, the truth is that such acts have nothing to do with loyalty or love for the nation. It should be remembered that even where protests or strikes are conducted peacefully, without recourse to criminal damage or violence, it still can have a very negative effect. This is because even peaceful protests often result in a loss of millions to the economy of the nation. Under no circumstances can such behaviour be considered to be an example of loyalty to the nation. A golden principle taught by the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama’at was that under all circumstances, loyalty and love for his country. A person’s vote should be cast with the betterment of the nation in mind. Therefore, a person we must always remain obedient to Allah, to the Prophets and to the rulers of our nation. This is the same teaching given in the Holy Quran. Hence, even where a country permits strikes or protests to take place, they should only be conducted to the extent where they do not harm or cause damage to the nation or to the economy.

Another question that often arises is whether Muslims can join the military forces of the Western countries, and if they are permitted to join, can they then partake in military attacks on Muslim countries? One underlying principle of Islam is that no person should assist in acts of cruelty. This key command must always remain at the forefront of any Muslim’s mind. Where a Muslim country is attacked, because it has itself acted in a cruel and unjust manner and took the first step of aggression, then in such circumstances the Quran has instructed Muslim governments that they should stop the hand of the oppressor. This
means they should stop the cruelty and endeavour to establish peace. Thus, in such circumstances to take action as a means to end cruelty is permissible. However, when the nation which transgresses reforms itself and adopts peace, then that country and its people should not be taken advantage of or be subjugated on the basis of false pretences or excuses. They should instead be granted normal state freedom and independence once again. The military ambition should thus be to establish peace, rather than to fulfil any vested interests. In the same way, Islam permits all countries, whether Muslim or non-Muslim, the right to stop cruelty and oppression. Thus, if necessary, non-Muslim countries can attack Muslim countries to achieve these genuine aims. Muslims in those non-Muslim countries are allowed to join the armies of those non-Muslim countries and prevent the other country from cruelty. Where such circumstances truly exist then Muslim soldiers, whichever Western army they may be part of, must follow orders and fight if required in order to establish peace. If, however, a military makes a decision to attack another nation unjustly, and thus becomes the oppressor, then a Muslim has the option to leave the army, because then he would be assisting cruelty. By taking this decision it would not mean that he is being disloyal to his country. In fact, in such circumstances, loyalty to his country would demand that he should take such a step and counsel his own government that they should not allow themselves to fall to the same depths as those unjust governments and nations that act in a cruel way. If however, joining the army is compulsory and there is no way to leave, but his conscience is not clear, then the Muslim should leave the country, but cannot raise a voice against the law of the land. He should leave because a Muslim is not permitted to live in a country as a citizen, whilst at the same time, acting against the nation or siding with the opposition.

Thus these are just a few aspects of Islamic teachings, which guide all true Muslims towards the real requirements of loyalty and love for one’s country. In the time available I have only been able to briefly touch upon this topic.

Thus in conclusion, I would like to say that today we observe that the world has become a global village. Mankind has become very closely knit together. The people of all nations, religions and cultures are found in all countries. This requires that the leaders of every nation should consider and respect the feelings and sentiments of all people. The leaders and their governments should strive to create laws that foster an environment and spirit of truth and justice, rather than making laws that are a means of causing distress and frustration to the people. Injustices and cruelties should be eliminated and instead we should strive for true justice. The best way to do this is that the world should come to recognise its Creator. Every form of loyalty should be linked to loyalty with God. If this occurs then we will come to witness with our own eyes that the very highest standards of loyalty will be established by the people of all countries and new avenues leading us to peace and security will open throughout the world.

Before ending, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of you once again for inviting me today and for listening to what I have said. May God bless you all; and may God bless Germany.

Thank you very much.
The issue of destiny is a very complicated one, which has been debated through the ages by philosophers and divines alike. In almost every religion there is some reference to the nature of destiny.

We can divide those who believe in destiny into two major categories. Those with the commonly held blind belief in destiny portray it as predetermination by God of everything big and small. This view is popular with some cryptic sects of Sufis, who live a life apart from the common people. They claim that man has no control over anything. Everything is predetermined. As such all that happens is the unfolding of the grand plan of destiny, known only to God. This is a very problematic concept of the plan of things and inevitably leads to the question of crime and punishment, penalty and reward. If a man has no choice, then there should be neither punishment nor reward for his actions.

The other view is that of free choice, with destiny playing practically no role in whatever man decides and executes.

During the discussion on destiny, another important philosophical issue finds its way into the debate, adding further complications, and that is the question of pre-cognition. What does the pre-knowledge of God have to do with the things to come? That is the question, the answer to which has been rather poorly handled by both parties in the debate. We do not propose to enter into a lengthy review of the comparative merits of the arguments.
of the believers and unbelievers of destiny, but would only attempt to portray the Islamic viewpoint.

Destiny has many categories, each playing a distinct role in their respective spheres of operation, working simultaneously. The laws of nature reign supreme, and none is above the influence of them. This is the general plan of things which can be referred to as the widest concept of destiny. Whoever follows the laws of nature with a profound understanding of them, will gain some advantage over others who do not. Such people are always destined to benefit and to shape a better life for themselves. But none of them is predestined to belong to any specific grouping in relation to their being on the right or wrong side of the laws of nature.

There was a time in the era just preceding the Renaissance in Europe, when the Muslim world of the orient was far more advanced in its understanding of the laws of nature. The Muslims consequently were in a position to draw benefits attendant upon this knowledge. When, later on, this unprejudiced and open minded study of nature shifted to the West, it ushered in a new day of light of knowledge for the West, while the East began to plunge into a long, dark night of wishful thinking, superstition and dreaming. This is destiny of course, but of a different type. The only law which is predetermined in relation to this destiny is the unchangeable command that whoever studies nature without prejudices, and permits himself to be led to wherever the laws of nature would lead him, he would tread the path of eternal progress. This is the general and all-pervasive category of destiny which transcends everything, except the laws of destiny relating to religion.

Before taking up the discussion of destiny in application to religion, we should further explore some areas of this universal destiny of the laws of nature; in their larger global applications, they exhibit some features of predetermination, but of a different type than commonly understood. In this sense we are speaking of such seasonal or periodic changes in atmospheric balances, which represent a very complicated ecosystem in which even distant events such as sun spots play a role. Similarly, the meteoric invasion of planets, bring about certain changes, which are reflected upon the earth through corresponding variations in weathers, climates etc. These larger influences, together with periodic alterations in climates (which are caused by various factors, many of which are as yet undetermined), sometimes bring about subtle changes in the growth patterns of vegetative and animal life on earth. Again there are factors responsible for droughts or shifting of seasons from one part of the earth to another. Ice-ages and global warming, in alternation, are but some consequences of various cosmic influences. However, these larger influences do not specifically effect an individual’s life on earth, but in the final analysis, as individuals are all members of the Homo-Sapiens family, they are effected to a degree.

There is no evidence to indicate that each man’s life is pre-ordained, and that he has no choice or option in choosing between good and bad, right and wrong. The Holy Quran categorically rejects the concept of compulsion, and clearly states that every human being is free to choose between good and evil:

"There shall be no compulsion in matters of faith. Surah Al-Baqarah" (Ch. 2: V.257)
And:

لا يجلب الله نفساً إلا وسعها وما كسبت
وعليها ما كسبت

“Allah burdens not any soul beyond its capacity. It shall have the reward it earns, and it shall get the punishment it incurs. Surah Al-Baqarah” (Ch. 2: V.287)

And again:

وأن ليس للإنسان إلا ما كسب

“And that man will have nothing but what he strives for. Surah Al-Najm” (Ch. 53: V.40)

However, in relation to religion, there are some spheres of destiny which are predetermined and unchangeable. They are referred to in the Holy Quran as the Sunnah of God. One such Sunnah is the destiny that God’s messengers will always be victorious, whether they are accepted or not. If they are rejected, it is the opponents whose designs are frustrated. The prophets, their messages and mission must always prevail, regardless of how powerful their enemies may be -- a few examples in the living history of man are the confrontations between Moses (as) and Pharaoh, between Jesus (as) and his opponents, and between Muhammad (saw) and his adversaries. The triumph of religion is what remains as the legacy of past struggles between prophets and their adversaries. Abraham (as) and his faith, and those who uphold him and his message, predominate the world. Moses (as) and those who revere him, Jesus (as) and his message, and the Prophet Muhammad (saw) and what he stood for, almost dominate the entire world. But none is found today who uphold the cause and values of their opponents. This destiny does not come into play in other confrontations between men and men. The general rule there is that the strong will annihilate the weak. In religious destiny, it is the converse which becomes an inviolable principle.

Although the laws of nature run a smooth course and one does not normally find exceptions to the general rules, but according to the plan of things inferred from various verses of the Quran, the laws of nature known to us belong to many categories and spheres. They do not clash with each other within their spheres, but when they stand at cross-purpose with other laws, the laws which possess greater force always prevail over the weaker ones. Even a law of the widest and farthest influence can be defeated within a small sphere by a more powerful one operating against it. Thermodynamic and electromagnetic laws in opposition to the laws of gravitation can win in limited areas of influence. However, the gravitational law is much wider in its influence, and more far-reaching. As man’s understanding of nature develops from age to age, things which would have been rejected as impossible are becoming conceivable and matters of commonplace observation.

In view of this introduction, according to Islam, if God decides to favour a special servant of His with a special manifestation of some hidden laws, such manifestations are regarded by the onlookers as miracles and supernatural events. But these things happen in accordance with the laws of nature, which are subtly controlled to bring about an amazing effect. Here, destiny plays a specific role in the life of a special servant of God.

Similarly, destiny can also be understood in relation to the genetic, social, economic or educational background of the individual,
who seems to be a helpless product of circumstances. This helplessness of the individual makes his destiny, over which he has no control. Thus it is said that a rich man’s child is born with a silver spoon in his mouth.

The circumstances in which a person is born, the society in which he is grown, the day-to-day game of chance which plays a role in everybody’s life, the strikes of so-called luck in favour or against one, the accidents which one may escape or fall prey to, are all such areas where the individual has very little choice. Yet it may not be assumed that he was particularly targeted for such events or accidents which play an important role in the making or unmaking of his life.

Individuals who are born in homes riddled with poverty are far more likely to fall prey to petty or even serious crimes. Poverty is the most compulsive force of all factors which create and promote crime. If this is understood to be destiny, then it will cast a grave reflection on the Creator. So, first of all it should be clearly understood that destiny is only part of a grand scheme of things which does not issue particular edicts against people in particular families. In a larger economic plan, there are bound to be more fortunate and less fortunate people with relative advantages and disadvantages. It is wrong to say that they were individually stamped by a maker of destiny, even before their births, to be born under certain specific circumstances. Yet, there are other questions to be answered. How would they be treated in relation to the crimes committed by them, as against those who are born in comparatively healthier circumstances, and who have very few, if any, background factors to egg them onto crime? If the crime is the same, shall they be treated alike? The Holy Quran answers this intricate question in the following verse:

لا يجعل الله نَفَسًا إِلا وَسْمَاهُا

“No soul will be burdened beyond its capacity”. Surah Al-Baqarah (Ch. 2: V.287)

This means that background factors, social and other, that surround a person, will certainly be taken into account, and he will be judged accordingly. In the sight of Allah, it is not just the crime itself which is mechanically punished, but all factors which go into the making of the crime are also brought into consideration, with the ultimate result that justice will be done. The fortunate and the unfortunate will not be judged with equal severity, and most certainly, license will be given to the environment and the background of a person who commits crime. Likewise, acts of goodness will be rewarded far more in the case of a man whose circumstances are likely to discourage him from doing good, than a man whose environment is one in which acts of goodness are taken for granted.

Thus the issue of destiny is highly complicated, but as the ultimate decision lies in the hands of the All-Knowing, All-Beneficent, All-Powerful and All-Wise God, in the final analysis, the dictates of justice will indeed prevail.

There are certain areas in which man is free to exercise his will, where he can choose between good or bad, right or wrong, and for which he will be held responsible. On the other hand, there are areas in which man has little choice of his own, and appears to be a pawn in the hand of the mover. The general plan of things in nature, which covers and controls the destinies of nations and people is one such area. The circumstances of a wider application make an individual of society
completely helpless; he has no choice but
to move along like a straw being carried
by the waves of a river in spate.

The subject of destiny is a very complicated
and vast one, and requires a separate and
fuller treatment. So, with these few hints,
we would like to bring this discussion to
an end.

**LIFE AFTER DEATH**

The question of life after death has always
agitated the minds of people belonging to
all religions and all ages alike. There is also
the atheistic view which totally denies the
possibility of life after death. The religions
which believe in life after death can be
divided into two categories.

1. Those which believe in the
reincarnation of the soul of a dead person
into a new human or animal form of
existence.

2. Those which believe in an
otherworldly state of existence after
death.

The atheistic view is outside the domain
of this discussion. As far as Islamic
doctrine is concerned, Islam belongs to
that category of religions which totally
rejects all possibilities of reincarnation in
any form. But those who believe in some
otherworldly form of spiritual or carnal
existence are divided among themselves
on so many planes. Within each religion
the understanding differs. Hence, with
reference to the views held by the
followers of various religions, no belief
can be attributed to them without fear of
contradiction.

In Islam itself there are different views held
by different sects or Muslim scholars. The
general understanding tends to perceive
the otherworldly form as very similar
to the carnal one here on earth. The
concept of heaven and hell consequently
present a material image rather than a
spiritual image of things to be. Heaven
is presented, according to their concept,
as an immeasurably large garden literally
abounding in beautiful trees casting
eternal shadows under which rivers will
flow. The rivers would be of milk and
honey. The garden will be fruit bearing
and all man may desire of fruits would be
his at his command. The meat would be
that of birds of all sorts; it is only for one
to wish which meat he particularly craves.
Female companions of exceeding beauty
and refinement would be provided to the
pious men, with no limit imposed on the
number, which will be decided according
to their capacity. As many as, they can
cope with will be theirs. What would they
do? How would they relate with each
other? Will they bear children or lead a
barren life of enjoyment? These are all
the moot questions. The enjoyment, as
it is conceived, is intensely sensual. No
work to be performed, no labour to be
wasted, no effort to be made. A perfect
life (if such life can be called perfect) of
complete and total indolence, with the
option of overeating and over-drinking,
because also wine will be flowing close
to the rivers of milk and honey. No fear
of dyspepsia or intoxication! Reclining on
heavenly cushions of silk and brocade,
they will while their time away in eternal
bliss -- but what an eternal bliss!

In Islam, there are others who categorically
reject this naive understanding of the
Quranic references to heaven, and prove
with many a reference to verses of the
Holy Quran that what it describes is
just metaphorical imagery which has no
carnality about it. In fact, the Holy Quran
makes it amply clear that the form of
existence of the life to come will be so
different from all known forms of life
here on earth, that it is beyond human
imagination even to have the slightest glimpse of the otherworldly realities.

"We will raise you into a form of which you have not the slightest knowledge."
Surah Al-Waqiah (Ch. 56: V.62)

This is the categorical statement of the Quran on the subject. In recent times, the founder of the Ahmadiyya Community, Hadrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (as) of Qadian, presented this view of spiritual existence as against carnal existence in his unique and outstanding treatise entitled ‘The Philosophy of the Teachings of Islam’. All views propounded in the book are well documented with Quranic references and traditions of the Holy Founder of Islam. A brief account is reproduced here.

According to his profound study, the life in the hereafter would not be material. Instead, it would be of a spiritual nature of which we can only visualise certain aspects. We cannot determine precisely how things will take shape. One of the salient features of his vision of the hereafter concerns the soul giving birth to another rarer entity, which would occupy the same position in relation to the soul as the soul occupies in relation to our carnal existence here on earth. This birth of a soul from within the soul will be related to the sort of life that we have lived here on earth. If our lives here are spent in submission to the will of God and in accordance with His commands, our tastes gradually become cultured and attuned to enjoying spiritual pleasures as against carnal pleasures. Within the soul a sort of embryonic soul begins to take shape. New faculties are born and new tastes are acquired, in which those accustomed to carnal pleasures find no enjoyment. These new types of refined human beings can find the content of their heart. Sacrifice instead of the usurpation of others’ rights becomes enjoyable. Forgiveness takes the upper hand of revenge, and love with no selfish motive is born like a second nature, replacing all relationships that have ulterior motives. Thus, one can say a new soul within the soul is in the offing.

All these projections regarding the development of the soul are inferences drawn from various verses of the Holy Quran, yet the exact nature of future events cannot be precisely determined. One can only say that something along these lines would take place, the details of which lie beyond the reach of human understanding. There are certain aspects of the new life which need to be discussed. The concept of hell and heaven in Islam is completely different from the normally held view. Hell and heaven are not two different places occupying separate time and space. According to the Holy Quran, the heaven covers the entire universe. ‘Where would be hell then?’ enquired some of the companions of the Holy Prophet. ‘At the same place’, was the answer, ‘but you do not have the faculty to understand their coexistence.’ That is to say in ordinary human terms, they may seem to occupy the same time-space, but in reality because they belong to different dimensions, so they will coexist without interfering and inter-relating with each other.

But what is the meaning of heavenly bliss, the tortures of the fire of hell? In answer to this question, the Promised Messiah (as) has illustrated the issue in the following terms: If a man is almost dying of thirst, and is otherwise healthy, cool water can provide him such deeply
satisfying pleasure as cannot be derived from the ordinary experience of drinking water, or even the most delicious drink of his choice. If a man is thirsty and hungry as well, and he needs an immediate source of energy, a chilled bunch of grapes can provide him with such deep satisfaction as is not experienced by the same in ordinary circumstances. But the pre-requisite for these pleasures is good health. Now visualise a very sick man, who is nauseating and trying to vomit whatever liquid is left in him, and is at the verge of death through dehydration. Offer him a glass of cool water, or a chilled bunch of grapes, then not to mention his accepting them, a mere glance of them would create a state of revulsion and absolute abhorrence in him.

In illustrations like these, the Promised Messiah (as) made it clear that hell and heaven are only issues of relativity. A healthy soul which has acquired the taste for good things, when brought into close proximity of the objects of its choice, will draw even greater pleasure than before. All that a healthy spiritual man was craving was nearness to God and His attributes and to imitate divine virtues. In heaven, such a healthy soul would begin to see and conceive and feel the nearness of the attributes of God like never before. They, according to the Promised Messiah, would not remain merely spiritual values, but would acquire ethereal forms and shapes, which the newly born heavenly spirit would enjoy with the help of the erstwhile soul, which would function as the body. That again would be a matter of relativity. The converse will be true of hell, in the sense that an unhealthy soul would create an unhealthy body for the new soul of the hereafter. And the same factors which provide pleasure to the healthy soul would provide torture and deep suffering for this unhealthy entity.

When we refer to mind or soul in comparison to our carnal body, there is a vast difference in the nature of their existence, which is almost inconceivable. Every part of the body is alive and is throbbing with life, not only in material terms but also in awareness. Every particle of the human body is gifted with some sort of awareness. Scientists try to express that awareness in terms of electronic pulses, but that is a very crude way of describing the overall awareness of the conscious and subconscious mind and the immune system and other independent functions of the human body, which still lie far beyond our power of comprehension.

So what is that awareness? How can it be defined and explained -- that Ultimate ‘I’ in every living thing. Can we refer to it as ego in psychological terms? But never has a psychologist succeeded in defining the ego. It is that something which in religious terms is described as the soul. There is no way we can measure the distance between the soul and the carnal body. In terms of rarity, the soul even in our crudest perception, is so rare and ultra-refined that in no way can it be likened to the body that it occupies. Now try to conceive the scenario of the birth of a soul within the soul over a period of billions of years. At the end of a long day, we find a soul within a soul, which would have the same comparison in terms of rarity as a human soul here on earth has with the human body. Something similar to this will take place, and in relative terms, the future existence of life would also have two states combined into one entity. In relative terms, one state would be like body and the other like soul. In comparison to our bodies, our soul would appear like a body to the newly evolved essence of existence.

For further details, readers are advised to
read the full treatise, which deals not only with this subject, but also discusses some other very interesting topics which agitate the minds of people the world over.

In short, each individual creates his own hell or his own heaven, and in accordance with his own state each heaven differs from the other person’s heaven, and each hell differs from the other person’s hell, though apparently they occupy the same space and time in otherworldly dimensions.

What happens to man’s soul between the time of his carnal death and his resurrection on the Day of Judgement? The Holy Prophet (saw) is reported to have said that after our death windows will open up in the grave; for the pious people, windows open from heaven, and for the wicked people they open towards hell. However, if we were to open up a grave, we would not find any windows! So, literal acceptance of these words will not convey the true meaning of this subject. It is impossible that the Holy Prophet (saw) should ever misinform us, hence here he had to be speaking metaphorically. Had it not been so, then every time we dig up a grave, we should find windows, either opening into hell, or letting in the fragrant and pleasant air of paradise. But we witness neither of these. So what do the Holy Prophet’s words mean?

The grave is actually an intermediary phase of existence between this life and the life to come. Here, spiritual life will progress gradually through many stages until it reaches its ultimate destiny. Then by the Command of Allah, a trumpet will be blown, and the final spiritual form will come into being. In this interim period, different souls would pass through a semblance of heaven or hell before reaching their final stage of perfection, fit and ready to be raised into a completely transformed entity. The Quran illustrates this concept beautifully:

ما خلق أن تبتسم وأن تبكي لا كنفيس واحد

“Your first creation and your second creation will be identical.” Surah Luqman (Ch. 31: V.29)

Pondering over the birth of a child from a single cell, one finds the following Quranic statement:

هو من ذى يصوونكم في الأرحام كيف

“See how God gives you various shapes in the womb.” Surah Al-Imran (Ch. 3: V.7)

Now, this subject is related to the subject of the two identical creations mentioned above. Take for example the case of such children as are congenitally ill. They do not suddenly contract illness at the time of delivery, rather they gradually develop into a state of morbidity which is progressive and which starts from the time of their early embryonic stage. Similarly, the soul of a person who is spiritually diseased, in that embryonic stage before its final resurrection on the Day of Judgement, will suffer through a semblance of hell and will remain uneasy in that period of the grave as does an unhealthy child in the womb of its mother. The ways of a healthy child are totally different, even his kicking is appreciated by the mother.

The question that now arises is: Will the soul also progress as does the child in the mother’s womb, and will it pass through all these stages? The answer
to this can be found in the very same verse of the Quran: ‘Ma khalakum wa ma basukum illa ka nafsin wahidin’ -- your first creation and your second creation will be identical.

To understand the second creation, we need to understand the way a baby takes shape in a mother’s womb. These forms apparently only take nine months to develop, while in reality the creation of life is spread over billions of years. Going back to the beginning of zoological life, the baby passes through almost all the stages of the evolution of life. From the beginning of the pregnancy, through to its culmination nine months later, the development of the child reflects all the stages of creation. In other words, all the phases of evolution are being repeated in those nine months, one after the other, and at such great speed that it is beyond our imagination. It keeps alive the stages of the system of evolution, and presents a picture of it.

The creation of life underwent a long period of development to reach the form that we witness in nine months. This sheds light on the fact that the period of our first creation was very long, and our second creation will also span a long period. By studying these nine months we can learn something of the billions of years of the history of life, and also about the evolution of souls in the next world. It is perhaps safe to infer that the time from the early origin of life to the ultimate creation of man, would perhaps be needed once again for the development of the soul after the death.

In support of this reasoning, the Quran categorically declares that when the souls are resurrected they will talk to one another, trying to determine how long they tarried on the earth. Some will say, ‘We tarried for a day’ while others will say ‘for even less than a day.’ Allah will then say: ‘No, even that is not correct.’ In other words, Allah will say that ‘You tarried on earth for much less than what you estimate.’ In reality, the relationship of one life-span to a small part of the day is more or less the same ratio that the time of the soul’s resurrection will have to its previous entire life. The further away something is, the smaller it appears. Our childhood seems like an experience of just a few seconds. The greater the distance of the stars, the smaller they appear. What Allah is trying to tell us is that we won’t find ourselves being judged the very next day after we die. Instead, judgement will take place in such a distant future that our previous lives will seem like a matter of a few seconds to us, like a small point a long way away.

In short, man’s resurrection is described as a transformation that he cannot envisage and an event that is as certain as his existence here on earth. All these subjects have been explained in detail in the Holy Quran.

**CONCLUSION**

We draw the attention of the audience to a grave injustice done to Islam by the Western world. As has been well demonstrated, with reference to the teachings of the Quran and the injunctions of the Holy Prophet, Islam can only be described as a religion of peace. It covers all aspects of human life and delivers a message of peace to its adherents in their relationship to fellow human beings as well as in their relationship to God. Without prejudice
or fear of contradiction, we can assert that no other religion emphasises peace even a part as much as Islam does. Although, followers of many religions do make similar claims, here we are talking of a claim which should be fully supported by injunctions contained in the divine scriptures. If however, every religion emphasises to the same degree the role of peace in human affairs, it is a most welcome gesture, which we do appreciate, and on which one can build hope for the future of mankind. In that case, it should be the prime responsibility of the religious leadership of all religions of the world to bring out the precious message of peace so much needed by mankind today.

Tragically, however, even the adherents of Islam present it as a threat to international peace by promoting terrorism in the name of God and in the name of the Holy Prophet (saw) of Islam, who was a living paragon of peace. If the West presents Islam as a religion of terror and denial of fundamental human rights, the fault is not entirely theirs. It is largely shared, to say the least, by the clergy of various Muslim denominations. To talk of religious supremacy in all other areas of human interest, and to maintain at the same time that Islam emphatically denies the internationally accepted concept of human rights, is enough in itself to blemish the image of Islam.

Irrespective of whether the divine scriptures of other religions have presented the ideal of universal peace or not, it can be said without fear of contradiction that all religions seem to be inclined to such an ideal. This lays the foundation for a concerted effort on the part of the religious leaders of the world to work jointly for global peace. Instead of playing up our differences, it would be far more advisable and advantageous if the religious leadership highlighted points of agreement. This we are certain would be accepted as the binding factors between all religious denominations. Consequently, it could lead to the bringing together of the entire human race, regardless of country, creed or colour. If religions do not undertake this work, none else can, because this is the only force capable of transcending national, geographic and racial barriers.

With this earnest appeal to the leadership of the world religions, we bring this short treatise to a close, hoping for the best. The quest for peace is a matter of human survival, and as such should not be taken lightly.
Wherever we look today we see information media and technology holding sway in all respects. On television, on the airwaves and in the print, we have information on all subjects available. Indeed, the whole world is awash with information and all that information and knowledge is available to any one who desires to gain and advance in any field.

In this age, when, on the one hand, world is moving to explore the vast heavens as well as the very depths of the earth, we feel the total absence of Muslim contribution in the advancement of a society. Why is it so?

Islam is the one religion that lays great emphasis on acquisition of knowledge – all knowledge. Indeed, it is a religious duty of a believer to seek knowledge. The Holy Quran enjoins us in Chapter 96 (AL-ALAQ)

“Proclaim! And they Lord is the Most Bounteous, Who Taught by the pen. Taught man what he knew not. Nay! Man is indeed transgressor, because he thinks himself to be independent”.

Again, in chapter 2 (AL-BAAQARA), Allah reminds us:

“He knows what is before them and what is behind them and they encompass nothing of His Knowledge except what He pleases. His knowledge extends over the heavens and the earth and the care of them wearies Him not; and He is
High, the Great”.

We learn three cardinal points that we must always remember;

• The source of all knowledge is with Allah the Almighty
• Mankind knew nothing and it was He who taught them the knowledge
• He gives mankind all the knowledge that He considers is sufficient for them to understand

Islam also lays emphasis on learning by one’s own efforts. Time and again in the Holy Quran, Allah the Almighty has made comparison between the learned and the ignorant

“Is he then who knows that what is revealed to thee from thy Lord is the truth, like the one who is blind? But only those gifted with understanding take heed”

(13, 20) Al-Ra’d

“Are those who know equal to those who know not? Only those who are given understanding will pay heed!”

(39, 10) Al-Zumar

Some commentators think that Allah only enjoins on His believers to seek religious knowledge. In my opinion, this is not so. As Allah the Almighty says in the Holy Quran

“And in like manner, there are men and beasts and cattle, of various colours. Only those of his servants who are endowed with knowledge fear Allah. Verily Allah is Mighty, Most Forgiving.”

35, 29 (Al-Fatir)

Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih II (ra) comments on this verse, that the Commentators refer to the words of man, beasts and cattle as representing men of different capabilities, disposition and natural aptitudes. The words ‘Those who are endowed with knowledge fear God’ gives weight that these words stand for three different classes of men. Also knowledge here does not mean only spiritual knowledge but also knowledge of the Laws of Nature. The deep study of nature, its laws, its symmetry, its beauty and its regularity and precision, leads one to appreciate the Creator of this whole system. Only then it gives one the true reverence and comprehension of The Lord who created all this.

It is generally accepted that knowledgeable and scholars will always be superior and will be given more honours than those with less or no knowledge. This is generally accepted by the world as a norm. Allah the Almighty also tells us in Chapter 58, (AL-MUJADILLAH)

“To whom knowledge is given have a degree of rank. (over others)"

Our beloved Holy Prophet of Islam (saw), the last of the Prophet has also put great emphasis on acquiring knowledge. He is quoted in one famous hadith, enjoining the believers to

“Seek knowledge though it may be found in a country as far away as China”.

Here, China is used only as an emphasis that even if you have to travel to the end of the earth for gaining knowledge, you should not hesitate. This also refers to seeking knowledge of all kinds and not only religious knowledge.

We must remember that knowledge is of two kinds. That which is given to man through revelation and that knowledge
has found its perfect manifestation in the Holy Quran and the other knowledge that man acquires by his own efforts and labour although that knowledge is also given only by the Grace of Allah the Almighty.

Over the centuries, Muslim have forgotten these cardinal instructions that have been given to us by Allah the Almighty and by His beloved Prophet (saw). As a result there are no more Al Farabis, Al Kindis, Al Razis, Ibne Sina, Ibne Rushd or Ibne Khaldun to mention a few of the Islamic scholars, philosophers, physicians or historians.

Where are the mathematicians of the stature of Al-Khawarzimi or Abu Kamil who gave world the algebraic methods or Omar Khayyam or Al Haytham who gave world the mathematical solutions?

On this dark horizon of the Muslim world, we find only one recent star shining like a beacon to others and that is the late Prof. Abdus Salaam. Alas! Out of bigotry and prejudice, the Muslim world refused to recognise this great servant of Islam. Never the less the world will remember him and we should use him as our role model because Prof. Salaam was a practising and devout Muslim who prayed regularly and quoted profusely from the Holy Quran. He always maintained that because of Unity of Allah the Almighty, there can only be one force and not many diverse forces. When he won the Nobel Prize for Physics, it was for his theory uniting two basic forces of nature into one – the ‘weak’ and ‘electromagnetic’. When he was asked what he wanted to do next, his famous quote was that he now wants to unite the third force of nature to prove the Unity of Forces flowing from the Unity of God.

The modern science claims to be secular but when we look at the lives of the individual scientists, we notice that many of them are deeply religious who are impressed by the purpose, the order and the precision of the universe. I will name only two men considered to be the founders of modern science, Galileo and Newton. They were great believers of Christian faith.

What I want to emphasis is that religion does not forbid anyone from seeking knowledge in any field. Remember the prayer that is taught to us in the Holy Quran:

“Lord! Bestow on me increase of knowledge”. 20, 115 (TAHA)

Where ever we go, whatever we seek, the knowledge of all that is encapsulated in the Holy Quran because that is the font, the source of all knowledge. The Holy Quran does not lay down the laws of Biology, Astronomy, Physics or Chemistry, but it does give us the guidance and pointers to seek and define the forces that govern these sciences. In other words, the Holy Quran contains the essence of all orders of reality.

Allah says in the Holy Quran: Chapter 3, verse 191 (AL-IMRAN)

“In the creation of the heaven and the earth and in the alteration of the night and the day there are indeed signs for men of understanding”.

Immediately in the next verse, Allah the Almighty reminds us:

“Those who remember Allah standing, sitting and lying on their sides and ponder over the creation of the heavens and the earth and say, ‘Our Lord! You have not created this universe in vain. Holy are you; save us, then, from the
punishment of the Fire”.

This Universe, the symmetry, the order and the precision is inviting us to go forward and unearth the secrets of Nature. The verses above tell us that the universe having been created to serve man, the creation of man must have a greater purpose. Here we have the physical phenomenon of the creation of nature and the spiritual implication of this creation. When we think and think deeply, we cannot help but be impressed by the great wisdom of the Creator and it is only then that from the very bottom of our hearts, we cry out

“Our Lord, You have not created this universe in vain”.

Our beloved Khalifa has lately been laying great emphasis on the study of the Holy Quran. In his Friday Sermon, he has emphatically emphasised that we should not only recite the Holy Quran, but we should also try to understand the meanings of the message contained in the Holy Quran. It is only by penetrating deep into the meanings of what is in the Holy Quran that we can acquire true knowledge of the Universe.

The world today stands at the very crossroads of civilization. With all the scientific knowledge, it can either destroy itself or it can bring about remarkable change in the lives of the people by using the knowledge properly.

The modern knowledge today is claimed to be ‘secular’ knowledge. How can it be when the source of all knowledge is Allah the Almighty? As Allah says in the Holy Quran:

“He knows what is before them and what is behind them and they encompass nothing of His Knowledge except what He pleases. His knowledge extends over the heavens and the earth and the care of them wearies Him not; and He is High, the Great!” 2, 256 (Al-Baqarah)

The fact is that the world has forgotten the spiritual dimension. Human being is a spiritual being and we forget that at our peril.

To all, young and old, advice is to go forward in the world and seek knowledge, excel yourself in whatever you do. Set yourselves the highest standards of achievement. But never for a moment forget that you a Muslim – An Ahmadi Muslim. Whatever knowledge you may acquire, never forget your soul, your spirituality and your real purpose in this life. Your theomorphic nature will only be satisfied by the deeper study and understanding of the Holy Quran. That will also give you the balance between the physical and the spiritual world. It will also make you feel humble when you understand the miracles of God Almighty. It will open more vistas in your mind to appreciate the true wonders of this world.

May Allah enable us all to excel in both temporal and spiritual knowledge and make some memorable contributions in our lifetime.
The concept of Democracy, despite its Greek origin, is based on Abraham Lincoln’s brief definition of ‘government of the people, by the people, for the people.’

According to the Holy Quran, people have a free choice to adopt any system of rule which suits them. Democracy, sovereignty, tribal or feudal systems are valid provided they are accepted by the people as the traditional heritage of their society. However, it seems that democracy is preferred and highly commended in the Holy Quran. The Muslims are advised to have a democratic system though not exactly on the pattern of Western style democracy.

Islam does not present a hollow definition of democracy anywhere in the Holy Quran. It only deals with principles of vital significance and leaves the rest to the people. Follow and benefit, or stray and be destroyed.

There are only two pillars to the Islamic concept of democracy. These are:

1) Democratic process of elections must be based on trust and integrity.

Islam teaches that whenever you exercise your vote; do it with the consciousness that God is watching over you and will hold you responsible for your decision. Vote for those who are most capable of discharging their national trust and are in them selves trustworthy.

Implicit in this teaching is the requirement that the ones entitled to vote, must exercise their voting right unless there are circumstances beyond
their control or impediments exist in the exercise of that right.

2) Governments must function on the principle of absolute justice.

The second pillar of Islamic democracy is that whenever you make decisions; make them on the principle of absolute justice. Be the matter political, religious, social or economic, justice may never be compromised. After the formation of government, voting within the party should also always remain oriented towards justice. Hence no partisan interest or political consideration should be permitted to influence the process of decision-making. In the long run, every decision taken in this spirit is bound to be truly of the people, by the people and for the people.

The substance of democracy is very clearly discussed in the Holy Quran and as far as the advice to Muslims is concerned, though monarchy has never been ruled out as an irreligious and ungodly institution, democracy is most certainly preferred to all other forms of government.

Describing the ideal Muslim society, the Holy Quran declares: (42:39)

The Arabic words amruhum shura bainahum (whose affairs are administered by mutual consultation) relate to the political life of the Muslim society, clearly indicating that in matters of government, its decisions are made through mutual consultation, which, of course, reminds one of the first part of the definition of democracy i.e. government of the people. The common will of the people becomes the ruling will of the people through mutual consultation.

The second part of the definition of democracy relates to by the people. This is clearly referred to in the verse:

Allah commands you to make over the trusts to those best fitted to discharge them. (4:59)

This means that whenever you express your will to choose your rulers, always place the trust where it rightfully belongs.

The right of the people to choose their rulers is of course mentioned but incidentally. The real emphasis is on how one should exercise this right. The Muslims are reminded that it is not just a question of their personal will which they can exercise in any way that they please, but far more than that, it is a question of national trust. In matters of trust, you are not left with many choices. You must discharge the trust with all honesty, integrity and a spirit of selflessness. The trust must repose where it truly belongs.

Many Muslim scholars quote this verse simply to indicate that Islam propounds the system and theory of democracy as understood in the Western political philosophy, but it is only partly true.

The system of consultation mentioned in the Holy Quran has no room for the party politics of the contemporary Western democracies nor does it give licence to the style and spirit of political debates in democratically elected parliaments and houses of representatives.

According to the established norms of democracy, the voter can cast his vote in favour of a puppet, or spoil or toss his ballot paper in a dustbin instead of the ballot box. He could remain irreproachable, nor can he be censured
for violating any principles of democracy.

According to the Quranic definition, however, a voter is not the absolute master of his vote, but a trustee. As a trustee, he must discharge his trust fairly and squarely and place it where he feels it truly belongs. He must be vigilant and aware that he will be held responsible for his act in the sight of God.

In view of this Islamic concept, if a political party has nominated a candidate who an individual party member considers will fail to discharge his national trust, that member should quit the party rather than vote for someone who does not merit the trust. Loyalty to a party is not allowed to interfere in his choice.

Again, a trust must be discharged in good faith. Therefore, every voter must participate fully in exercising his vote during the elections unless he is unable to do so. Otherwise, he will have failed in the discharge of his own trust. The concept of abstention or refraining from exercising the vote has no room in the Islamic concept of democracy.

It is becoming popular among Muslim political thinkers of the contemporary age to claim that Islam stands for democracy.

According to their political philosophy, God being the ultimate authority, sovereignty belongs to Him. Absolute sovereignty belongs to God. The Holy Quran sums up His domain in the following verse:

Then exalted be Allah, the True King. There is no god but He, the Lord of the Glorious Throne. (23:117)

The fundamental principle, that ultimately all rights to govern belong to God and He is the Lord of Sovereignty, is mentioned in different ways in the Holy Quran of which the above verse is but one example.

This in fact is part of the larger scheme of the human rights as mentioned in the holy Quran and demonstrated by the Holy Prophet of Islam.

When we make a comparative study of human rights as prescribed by Islam and those found elsewhere, we are at once impressed by three facts:

Firstly, for Islam the question of human rights is part of a much wider question of rights of all creation of God, and for that matter the rights of the creator itself. We cannot separate the question for human rights, from the question of, say, the rights of animals. If we do so the very rationale of human rights would collapse.

Secondly, all kinds of rights as prescribed by Islam derive their significance from the moral and spiritual values of Islam in which they are firmly embedded and on which they are founded. These values are, in turn, based on the concept of the unity of God. No other view of rights has ever been able to provide such secure foundations for them. The assumptions and the principles on which secular doctrines base the concept of rights are, on examination found to be either outright untenable or inadequate and flimsy.

Thirdly, Islam deals with all kinds of rights, including human rights in such profound depth and in such wide range that no secular view has ever been able to cover them in such depth and in such range.

To expand on, and elaborate all these points, doing full justice to the subject
is not possible in the short time available. So I shall mention just one very significant and important principle.

In Surah Rahman (chapter 55, verse 10) of the Holy Quran, God Almighty says:

“And weigh all things with justice and fall not short of the measure.”

That is, God has set up the measure and balance so that order and harmony pervade and govern the entire universe. It is the right of every creation of God that its order and balance should not be disturbed at any cost. We are enjoined to weigh all things with justice and not to fall short of the measure.

Thus justice – the very principle and basis of all rights – is in inexorably joined with measure, balance and order of the universe. The fabric of rights surrounds the entire universe and is bound up with God created order, harmony and measure of the universe; violate rights in one area and you not only violate rights in other areas but also disturb the balance and order of the universe. As there is an all comprehensive harmony in the whole universe, man, the crown and the object of creation is enjoined to maintain a just balance in everything and treat with equity and justice his fellow beings giving everyone his due and to avoid extremes and discharge his duties to his creator and his creations.

Thus, the Islamic view of human rights is pivoted on the overall view of justice, harmony and order in the universe. This is the prime foundation on which the entire edifice of human rights is built in Islam.

In the running of political affairs, God’s sovereignty is expressed in two ways:

1. The Law (shariah) as derived from the Holy Quran, the conduct of the Holy Prophet of Islam and also from the established traditions attributed to him by early Muslims are supreme. They bear essential guidelines for legislation and no democratically elected government can interfere with the express Will of God.

2. No legislative process would be valid in contradiction of the aforesaid principle.

Unfortunately, however, there is no unanimity among the scholars of various sects of Islam as to what are the clear cut Laws (shariah). On this, all the scholars are agreed that legislation is the prerogative of God and that He has expressed His Will through the Quranic revelation to the Holy Founder of Islam.

Regarding the manner in which Muslim governments should be run, the popular idea is that in the day to day administrative matters, affairs and measures, the government, as representatives of the people, becomes instrumental in the expression of God’s Will. As sovereignty belongs to the people by way of delegated power, therefore, such a system is democratic.

This is the rigid view of the so-called orthodoxy who would come to an understanding with the modern democratic tendencies of the Muslim populace only on the condition that the mullah be granted the ultimate right to judge the validity of democratic decisions on the basis of shariah.

If accepted, this demand would be tantamount to placing ultimate legislative authority not in the hands of God but in the hands of the orthodox or some other school of clergy. When you consider the awesome power
placed in their hands in the background of fundamental differences prevailing among the Muslim clergy itself regarding their understanding of what is and what is not shariah, the consequences appear horrendous. There are so many schools of jurisprudence among the orthodoxy. Even within each school of jurisprudence, the clergy is not always unanimous on every edict.

Again, their position regarding what the actual Will of God as expressed in Islamic shariah is has been changing in different periods of history.

This presents a complex problem to the contemporary world of Islam which still seems to be in search of its true identity. It is gradually becoming more apparent to Muslim intellectuals that the only meeting point amongst the clergy is their uncompromising demand for the enforcement of shariah.

The fact is that by and large, the Muslim intellectuals are inclined ever more towards democracy. They love Islam but are afraid of theocratic rule. They view democracy not as an alternative to Islam, but genuinely believe that as a political philosophy, it is the Holy Quran itself, which propounds democracy, as Allah says:

“Those who hearken to their Lord, and observe Prayer, and whose affairs are decided by mutual consultation, and who spend out of what we have provided for them.” (42:39)

“And consult them in matters of administration; and when thou art determined, then put thy trust wholly in Allah. Surely, Allah loves those who put their trust in Him.” (3:160)

As a net result of this tug of war between various factions, young Muslim countries, like Pakistan, find themselves in rigmarole of confusion and contradiction. The electorate is temperamentally averse to the return of the mullah to the constituent assemblies in any sizeable number.

Even at the height of shariah fever, hardly five to ten percent of the mullahs succeed in winning elections. Yet, having committed themselves to the Law of God in return for additional support from the mullah, the politicians find themselves in a very unenviable position. Deep within, they are fully convinced that the acceptance of shariah is in reality paradoxical to the principle of legislature through a democratically elected house of representatives.

If the authority for legislation lies with God, which a Muslim cannot deny, then, as a logical consequence, it is the divines and the mullahs who possess the prerogative of understanding and defining the law of shariah. In this scenario, the whole exercise of electing legislative bodies would become futile and meaningless. After all, members of Parliament are not required to sign only on the dotted lines where the mullah so indicates.

It is rather tragic that neither the politician nor the intellectual has ever genuinely attempted to understand the form or forms of government, which the Holy Quran really propounds or recognises.

There is no contradiction between the Word of God and Act of God.

There is no clash between loyalty to one’s state and religion in Islam. But this question does not relate to Islam alone.
There are many episodes in human history where many an established state was confronted with this question.

The fact is that on all matters affecting the rights of humanity, the Holy Quran deals with the subject of government without making any distinction whatsoever between a Muslim and a non-Muslim state.

The instructions on how a state should be run are common to humanity though it is the believers who are primarily addressed in the Holy Quran. The Holy Quran speaks of statecraft equally applicable to Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, Confucians, Christians, Jews and Muslims.

The essence of this instruction is contained in Holy Quran and also in the traditions of the Holy Prophet of Islam. The Holy Prophet of Islam holds every ruler and anyone in authority over another, in the way he treats his subjects or those under his authority, as being directly answerable to God.

But as far as relations between man and God are concerned, it is an area exclusive to religion and the state has no right to interfere. There is total freedom of mind and heart in the affairs of belief and profession of faith. It is a fundamental right of man not only to believe in anything, which he so pleases, but also to worship God or idols as dictated by his religion or pagan belief.

According to Islam, therefore, religion has no right to interfere in areas exclusive to the state nor has the state any right to interfere in areas commonly shared by them. Rights and responsibilities are clearly defined in Islam such that any question of a clash is obviated.

The Holy Quran mentions the responsibilities of government towards people, the provision of food, clothing, shelter and the basic needs of its citizens.

In a true Islamic system of government, it is the responsibility of the government to be watchful so that people do not have to resort to strikes, industrial strife, demonstration, sabotage or cause of complaint, to get their rights.

Those who govern may not govern in a manner so as to promote disorder, chaos, suffering and pain but should work diligently and effectively so as to establish peace in every sphere of society.

This then concisely is what could be said on democracy and human rights in Islam in this brief presentation.

Let me conclude with a short quote from the writings of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian – the founder of the Ahmadiyya Muslim (Community) Jama’at which indeed is a guide principle for both democracy and human rights. He said:

“Be the true well wishers of everyone. There should be nothing inside you except truth and there should be nothing outside you except truth and sympathy for mankind. If you desire that God should be pleased with you in Heaven become to each other like real brothers. It is our principle to have sympathy for the whole of mankind.”

(Malfoozat, volume 8, pg 26, 27)
More than 14 centuries ago, when the whole of Arabia was in chaos oblivious to etiquettes of living in a society, there came to them a Prophet amongst themselves. Muhammad(saw) (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), the Seal of the Prophets, was commissioned by the one and only God, Allah, to recite onto the swayed people the signs of His might and oneness: “In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful. Say, He is Allah, the One! Allah, the Independent and Besought of all. He begets not, nor is He begotten. And there is none like unto him.” (The Holy Quran, 112: 1-5) Unlike the previous Prophets, his message was directed towards the whole of mankind, which is why his coming was described as a mercy for mankind.

Historical evidence bears witness to the account of the pristine life of Prophet Muhammad(saw). Before his(saw) claim to prophet hood, the Arabian people described him(saw) as the most Trustworthy and the True. People used to hail his strict adherence to the three creative principles of life; absolute justice, kindness and kinship - “Verily, Allah requires you to abide by justice, and to treat with grace, and give like the giving of kin to kin; and forbids indecency, and manifest evil, and transgression. He admonished you that you may take heed.” The Holy Quran (16:91) That is why the whole of Arabia involved him in crucial as well as trivial matters. However, as soon as Allah revealed to Prophet(saw) that he(saw) was to carry the message of Islam, most except for a few met him(saw) with profound enmity from the outset. The Meccan chiefs dissuaded him(saw) from his(saw) noble pursuit of spreading Islam merely to retain their positions as heads of the community and to continue the long borne practises of their ancestors. Islam taught that every human being, be it black or white, Arab or non-Arab, master or slave, was equal in the eyes of Allah. Numerous chiefs of Mecca met Prophet(saw) privately to come to a compromise so that his message could be intercepted. Although the Quraish leaders did not accept Islam at that specific point in time, nevertheless they were pleased by the flawless character of the Prophet(saw) and by the beauty and the underlying physiology of his message. As the Quran most fittingly states: “The Arabs of the desert are the worst in disbelief and hypocrisy, and most apt not to know the ordinances of the Revelation which Allah has sent down to His Messenger. And Allah is All-Knowing, Wise.” (The Holy Quran, 9:
The verse being discussed here clearly implies that the disbelievers were driven by hypocrisy to oppose Prophet(saw) message despite knowing that the message was a noble one. Despite the increasing animosity directed towards him(saw) and his(saw) meagre followers in the early years, his worst enemies succumbed to the peaceful message of Islam. This is because Allah Himself became his(saw) light and guided His most sincere and humble servant(saw) to graciously overcome all the trials and tribulations heavily sprinkled in his(saw) path. History teaches us that whenever a Prophet is handed Allah’s command, the Prophet’s very own people become his worst enemies and drive him out of the land. As can be observed in the case of Prophet Muhammad(saw), when Allah revealed to him(saw), he(saw) related the experience to Hadhrat Khadijarah. Upon hearing the whole incident, she took Muhammad(saw) to her cousin, Waraqa bin Naufal, who had discarded paganism and had become a Christian and had some knowledge of the Scriptures. He was now old and almost blind. Khadijarah asked him to hear what Muhammad(saw) had to say. Having heard him(saw), he read out the following verse from Deuteronomy (18:18): “I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their fellow Israelites, and I will put my words in his mouth. He will tell them everything I command him”, and said, “The angel who used to descend upon Mosesas has descended upon thee. Would that I were stronger and could survive till thy people will expel thee from thy home.” Muhammad(saw) was surprised and exclaimed, “Will they indeed expel me?” Waraqa replied, “There has been no messenger who has not been opposed by his people. If I survive till that time, I shall help thee(saw) with all my strength.” However, he lived only a short time thereafter.1 Make no mistake, a true Prophet of Allah cannot be defeated and his message is always fulfilled because it is free of errors. On the contrary, false claimants of Prophet hood always fail because they are not appointed by God. Recalling the past history, it can be observed that following the demise of Muhammad(saw), at the time of Hadhrat Abu Bakarra brief tenure of Khilafat, many people claimed Prophethood, so much so that even some women claimed to be Prophetess. These liars were put to shame and crushed by the forces of Islam and their false hood was made apparent to all their followers.

Let’s take a walk back in history and consider the events where lessons should have been learnt, yet we observe today that people remain defiant and do not take heed from past events. They continue to repeat the same mistakes, one reason why the world we live in is not living in peace and harmony. The consequences are grave and often lead to world wars and again history bears witness to the amount of damage caused due to the occurrence of these avoidable events. Problems occur when of the three creative principles of life (namely absolute justice, kindness and kinship: (The Holy Quran 16: 91), often the first stepping stone i.e. absolute justice is perturbed. If justice is not prevailed, chaos and destruction follows, as is evident from the two great world wars namely World War I and II. Consider for a moment the example of Christians, they believe that God forbid, Jesusas died on the cross, was resurrected and taken alive in his bodily form to the heaven. Is this scientifically possible, the answer is simple, it’s not. How can Allah act against the laws of nature which He Himself set in motion,
how can the Supreme Being contradict Himself: “Who has created seven heavens in harmony. No incongruity canst thou see in the creation of the Gracious God. Then look again, Seest thou any flaw? Aye, look again, and yet again, thy sight will only return unto thee confused and fatigued, having seen no incongruity.” The Holy Quran 67:4-5

Prophet Jesusas clarified the situation regarding the ascension of a Jewish Prophet Elijahas. Jewish people firmly believed that an Israelite Prophet, Elijahas, had ascended in his bodily form to heaven and before the advent of the Messiah, he will descend from heavens in his chariot, and prepare grounds for the advent of the Messiah and soon after, the Messiah will appear. So when Jesusas made a claim to Messiah-ship, they rejected him fervently saying we did not see Elijahas descending from heavens. When Jesusas claimed that Johnas the Baptist is the Promised Elijah, Jews insisted that he should have descended from heavens if he was Elijahas and so they rejected both Jesusas and Johnas the Baptist. Most grievously though, Christians believe that Jesusas also ascended to heaven and will descend in the latter days to take part in Armageddon (the final battle before the world comes to an end). This clearly shows that they did not follow the teachings of Jesus Christas, instead, made the same mistake Jews had originally made. Clearly, they did not pay much attention to the past to rectify their present, and lay stronger foundations for the future to come. Hence, they also became indulged in manifest error. Ironically, Jesusas who removed the misconception regarding Prophet Elijahas would himself be indulged into it by his believers. In other words, it seems as if the label of ascension was inherited by Jesusas from Elijahas, a thoughtless allegation indeed!

Unfortunately, the conditions of today are akin to conditions of the past. At the advent of Promised Messiahhas as prophesized by Prophet Muhammad(saw), people rejected him despite the pristine nature of hisas message. Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad(as) Qadiani was sent by God to rejuvenate the message of Islam and be the source of spiritual regeneration for the spiritually dead. Heas was the moon, who reflected the beautiful light radiating from the source, the sun, Prophet Muhammad(saw).

There is another point in connection to the truthfulness of the Promised Messiah(as). Just as there was a conspiracy to kill Jesus, and for this propose the chief priests and the scribes assembled together at the palace of the high priest called Caiaphas to devise a plan to kill Jesus, so there was a conspiracy to murder Moses, and, likewise, there was a secret consultation in Mecca at the place called Dar-ul-Nadwa to murder our Holy Prophet(saw) (peace and the blessings of God be upon him). But the powerful God saved both these great prophets from evil designs. The conspiracy against Jesus was, in point of time, in between the other two. Then, why was not Jesus saved when he had prayed more vehemently than either? Why Jesus’ prayer was not heard, when God hears the prayers of His beloved servants and frustrates the plans of the wicked? All the righteous know by experience that the prayer of the distressed and the afflicted is accepted; nay, the hour of affliction, for a righteous person, is the hour for a sign. Promised Messiahhas had personal experience of this. A false charge of attempt to murder was brought against himas by one, Dr Martin Clark, a Christian, residing at Amritsar in the Punjab, before a court in the District of Gurdaspur, alleging that Promised Messiah(as) had sent one, Abdul Hamid by name, to murder the said doctor. It so happened that heas was opposed in this case by several scheming persons
belonging to the three communities, namely Christians, Hindus and Muslims; they tried their best to prove the charge of attempted murder against him. The Christians had against Promised Messiah(as) the grievance that he was trying -- and is trying even now -- to rescue humanity from the false ideas which Christians entertain regarding Jesus; and this was the first taste of the treatment that he had from them. The Hindus were displeased with him(as) because he(as) had made a prophecy regarding the death of one, Lekh Ram, a Pandit, and the prophecy was fulfilled within the appointed time -- a terrible sign from God. Likewise, the Muslim Maulvis were angry because Promised Messiah(as) was opposed to the idea of a bloody Messiah and to the doctrine of Jihad as understood by them. So, some important personages of these three communities counselled together with a view to proving the charge of murder against him(as), so that he should either be hanged or imprisoned. They were thus an unjust people in the sight of God. God informed him(as) of this before the hour of their secret consultations. God gave him(as) the tidings of ultimate acquittal. These pure revelations from God were announced beforehand to hundreds of people; and when after the revelation, Promised Messiah(as) prayed: ‘Lord! save me from this affliction’; it was revealed to him that God would clear him of the charge brought against him(as). This revelation was verbally communicated to more than three hundred persons. It so happened that his(as) enemies produced false witnesses in court, and nearly ‘proved’ the case -- witnesses of the three communities mentioned earlier, deposing against himas. Then, it so happened that the facts of that case were disclosed in various ways by God to the magistrate before whom that case was pending, whose name was Captain W. Douglas, the Deputy Commissioner of Gurdaspur. He was satisfied that the case was false. Then, caring not for the doctor who was also a missionary, his sense of justice caused him to dismiss that case, and thus whatever Promised Messiah(as) had proclaimed about his(acquittal) on the authority of divine revelation to hundreds of people, and in public meetings turned out to be true notwithstanding the dangerous trend of the attending circumstances, which served to strengthen the faith of many people. Not only this. More charges of this kind and accusations of a criminal character were preferred against Promised Messiah(as) on the above grounds, and cases were taken to court but before he could be summoned by the court, God informed him(as) of the origin and the end of the whole affair, and in every serious case he was given the glad news of acquittal2.

Moral of the whole story in the words of the spiritual reformer of this era, the Promised Messiah(as): ‘God Almighty undoubtedly accepts prayers especially when His trustful servants, go to His door oppressed; He attends to their plaints, and helps them in strange ways.’ There is warning to be issued to the disbelievers that God would bring their malicious schemes to naught, and they will an everlasting defeat in this world and the hereafter. May God enable us to follow the path of those on whom He bestowed his mercy and not of those who were led astray and were the recipients of His displeasure, Ameen.

Jurisprudence is the study and theory of law in hope to obtain a deeper understanding of the nature of law. Law and justice are often seen together in sentences and almost described synonymously, but what exactly do we mean. “It is what we should and should not be doing” immediately springs to mind as a definition, however, this is a very simplistic, almost incorrect way of looking at either one of the two words. Law unto itself is meaningless without justice, and justice cannot exist without some law for it to govern.

Law can be thought of as “A code of conduct dictating the actions to be taken when a certain situation is called into question”, and justice can be thought of as “the unbiased application of actions to a given scenario”. As such the key word in all of this is unbiased and equates to “Fairness” or “equity” is commonly seen in the Quran when describing the actions to be taken. The law by itself can be manipulated, the words twisted to make a specific scenario seem more or less punishable. This has led to great injustice in the world and many actions have been sanctioned that were in themselves unlawful and therefore deserving punishment, but is it really for man to decide the right course of action? Is man himself not subject to the twisting of words and actions when we are thrust into inconceivable scenarios? Surely there is a universal right and wrong, a “code of conduct” revealed to mankind by Allah through His Prophets and His Books.

In Islam this is known as Fiqah and it comes from 3 sources:

- Quran
- Ahadith (oral traditions of the Holy Prophet pbuh)
- Sunnah (ways of the Holy Prophet pbuh)

As the Quran is the perfect Book without doubt, any references are therefore, considered absolute whereas Ahadith and Sunnah are subject to authenticity testing; the simplest of which is that a Hadith or Sunnah is rejected if it is not in accordance with what is in the Quran because the actions (whether direct of spoken) cannot be in conflict with the Divine principles outlined in the Quran. Therefore, the Quran outranks both the Ahadith and the Sunnah (1).

Interpretation of the Holy Quran and Sunnah through the use of Ijtihad and Ijma gives rise to Islamic Fiqah (Islamic jurisprudence). Under the concept of Ijma, when a particular Fiqah ruling has been unanimously agreed upon, it becomes part of Shariah (1). Ijtihad is the use of reason and judgment to decide which course of action mostly reflects the spirit of Quran and Ahadith, whereas, Ijma refers to the collective judgments and consensus of Muslim scholars. The very basis for ijtihad is derived from a Hadith regarding a conversation between the Holy Prophet (saw) and Hadhrat Muadh ibn Jabal(ra) upon his appointment in Yemen as a judge:

Prior to his departure, the Holy Prophet (saw) asked him, “According to what shall you judge?” Hadhrat Muadh(ra) replied, “According to the Book of God.” The Holy Prophet (saw) then asked, “And if you find nothing therein?” Hadhrat Muadh went on, “I shall judge according to the Sunnah of God’s Messenger.” The Holy Prophet (saw) further asked, “And if you find nothing therein?” Hadhrat Muadh answered, “I shall not fail to strive (ajtahidu) to reach
an opinion.” Satisfied, the Holy Prophet concluded, “Praise be to God who has guided God’s Messenger’s messenger to what pleases God’s Messenger.” (1)

Ijma can be loosely described as using one’s common sense to apply the teaching of the Quran, Ahadith and Sunnah to situations that are not described exactly, for example if alcohol is forbidden in Islam then a question on the source of alcohol should not arise, whether it be from fermented grapes, dates or any other source. Islam teaches that alcohol is forbidden and common sense dictates that it does not matter from what source the alcohol is derived. Similarly, there is no argument regarding quantity of alcohol as is shown in the Hadith narrated by Hadhrat Jābir bin ‘Abdullāh (ra)

“If the larger dose of a thing causes intoxication, its small quantity is also unlawful.” (2)

In this way, Islamic jurisprudence can be unanimously agreed upon as it draws upon knowledge of educated individuals but does not rely purely on the judgement of others as its root lies within The Book and the judgment is only used when determining whether something is in keeping with it.

This thinking has allowed the Shariah to be flexible based on the times but has also left doors open for those who wish to use it for personal gain or power, as is the case in some countries where the Shariah law is seen as a tool instead of a code of conduct to be observed without bias as stated in the Quran

“O ye who believe! be steadfast in the cause of Allah, bearing witness in equity; and let not a people’s enmity incite you to act otherwise than with justice. Be always just, that is nearer to righteousness. And fear Allah. Surely, Allah is aware of what you do”. (5:9)

The former of the two verses stated is a cornerstone in Islam and preaches true tolerance towards other religions, there should be no forced conversions or looks of disdain upon other religions, conversions should be through your actions as examples of the beauty of the religion you are preaching.

Despite all this, there are still those who preach hatred against those who have not yet discovered the love and purity of Islam, all in the name of peace and twisting the words of the Quran to suit their purposes. Similar teaching are shown in Christianity in the famous “Turn the other cheek”, if all Christians truly followed such teaching then I am certain the world would look different.

The second verse shown is of fairness regardless of the person in question. This follows on directly from the previous verse pertaining to compulsion. One should not be forcefully converted and if they choose not to convert then this is not a permission to abuse others.

There is also evidence of direct laws that should be observed and often it is found that these coincide with teaching brought by all Prophets of Allah and, therefore, should be followed by all of mankind without any distinction. A Hadith narrated by Hadrat Abū Hurairah (ra) elaborates this:

“Abstain ye from seven destructive evils.”

They (the companions) asked ‘And what are they, O Prophet of Allāh?’ He said:
“Shirk (i.e., association of someone with God as a partner or an equal or ascription to Him of a spouse or a son or adviser), preoccupation with illusory objects and deceptive things, slaying any man without just and good cause, usury, consuming the property of orphans, turning tail to the enemy in battle and accusing falsely innocent believing women.” (2)

From this it can be clearly seen that many of the atrocities we hear about today are disregarding fundamental teachings which are outlined clearly.

However, besides mere right and wrong, the Quran and Ahadith also contain information pertaining to more worldly matters such the handling of finance, specifically the nature of inheritance. “Allah commands you concerning your children: a male shall have as much as the share of two females; but if there be females only, numbering more than two, then they shall have two-thirds of what the deceased leaves; and if there be one, she shall have the half. And his parents shall have each of them a sixth of the inheritance, if he have a child; but if he have no child and his parents be his heirs, then his mother shall have a third; and if he have brothers and sisters, then his mother shall have a sixth, after the payment of any bequests he may have bequeathed or of debt. Your fathers and your children, you know not which of them is nearest to you in benefitt, This fixing of portions is from Allah. Surely, Allah is All-Knowing, Wise”. (4:12)

A clear divide is given with regards to inheritance, it does give precedence to male children, however it should be remembered that males exist to support and look after their families and as such the wealth they gain is not for personal use necessarily. It is often these types of verses that are used by non-believers to try to justify their point of view that Islam oppresses women. It is often seen that when they themselves do not fully understand the religion they attempt to combat.

Such verses and other injunctions allow Muslims to clearly dictate the distribution of their worldly possession, knowing fully well that it is in a manner prescribed by Allah and such will allow one to please Him. How can a mere person know the impacts of their allocations, but Allah is the All-Knowing and knows fully well the impact this will have on other. Similarly, another example can be drawn upon from the Quran in regard to interest or usury

“Those who devour interest do not rise except as rises one whom Satan has smitten with insanity. That is because they say: ‘Trade also is like interest;’ whereas Allah has made trade lawful and made interest unlawful. So he to whom an admonition comes from his Lord and he desists, then will that which he received in the past be his; and his affair is with Allah. And those who revert to it, they are the inmates of the Fire; therein shall they abide. (2:276)

From this verse, we can see that we are presented with a possible counter argument that could be used against the Muslims who try to use the Quran as their guide, and even then Allah has given the answer; trade is lawful as it is a mutual understanding by both parties in the transaction regarding the fairness and value, however, interest is asking more from someone who (in examples of finances) may have less than you. For example, lending £100 and asking back for £120 afterward, is an example of interest.

Such divine guidelines from Allah directly allows the Shariah law to be rooted far deeper in the realms of fairness as there is no better source of knowledge than Allah Himself. May Allah allow us all to be just and fair in our actions and act in accordance with His Divine teachings, Ameen.

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**DEATH OF HADHRAT ISA (AS)**

In 1890 God Almighty revealed to him that Hadhrat Isa ibn Maryam (AS) had passed away like all previous prophets. The belief that he is alive in Heavens, is false and against the teachings of the Holy Quran. Also he proclaimed that the Messiah whose advent was foretold by Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace & blessings of Allah be on him, has appeared in his person. God has sent this Promised Messiah to reform the world and to spread the pristine teachings of Islam.

His announcement and claim to be the Promised Mahdi and the Messiah brought him numerous converts, but there were some that turned against him. Erstwhile friends became his foes. Some Muslim divines declared him a heretic. The Christians did not lag behind either as they raised a fierce storm of opposition. The reason Christians opposed him was the fact that Jesus Christ’s death dealt a fatal blow to the very foundation of Christianity. They believed Christ to be their Lord, but this claim made him a dead god.

This intense opposition resulted in many debates between him, the Muslim divines, and the Christian missionaries. For instance, in 1891 he held debates with Maulvi Muhammad Hussain Batalvi, Maulvi Sayyed Nazeer Hussain Dehlvi and Maulvi Muhammad Bashir Bhopali. In 1892, he held debates with Maulvi Abdul Hakim Kalanauri. In 1893, he held a famous debate with Christian missionary Abdulla Athim. These debates brought him many pious & devoted converts.

**FIRST ANNUAL CONFERENCE**

Under Divine inspiration, Hudhoor(as) announced in May 1891 that he was the Promised Mahdi awaited by the Muslims.

Later on, the same year, the Promised Messiah(as) decided to hold the first Jalsa Salana. Accordingly the first Annual Conference was held from December 27th to 29th at the Aqsa Mosque in Qadian. Only 75 members attended that year, next year 327 members attended the Jalsa, and the last Jalsa Salana attended by the Promised Messiah (as) in 1907 there were two thousand participants. The last annual gathering that was held in Rabwah in 1983,
more than two hundred thousand attended the blessed meeting.

With a few exceptions it has been held since then every year in many countries of the world like the UK, Germany, India, Canada, & the USA. Over 32,000 members took part in the Jalsa Salana held in Germany in August 2000. The UK Jalsa Salana attracted 22,000 members in July 2000, while 12 thousand members took part in the Canadian Annual Conference in 2003. The attendance of Jalsa Salana held in different parts of the world continues to grow.

**DEBATE WITH ATHAM**

In 1893, Hudhoor (as) held a written debate from May 22nd to June 5th, in Amritsar against the famous Christian missionary Abdullah Athim. This debate was later on published under the title Jange Muqaddas (The Holy War). God Almighty showered him with so much success during the debate that many people took the pledge of allegiance and joined the Ahmadiyya Muslim Jamaat.

An amusing incident took place during the course of the debate. The Christians brought forth three lame, blind and dumb persons and argued that since our Messiah used to cure the lame and the blind, let this Messiah do the same.

The Christians were confident that they had him nailed. When the handicap people were brought before Hudhoor, he pointed out that only the Gospels had mentioned such miracles of Jesus, not the Quran, therefore we did not believe in this. Hudhoor (as) continued that the New Testament also states that if your faith is as much as a grain of mustard, you could perform such miracles or even greater wonders. Therefore he presented those invalids back to them, and said if you possess little faith then cure them with your touch of hand. If you can cure them then we will believe that you are on the right path, if you do not then we must conclude that you do not possess faith as much as a grain of mustard.

Hadhrat Ahmad’s reply made them speechless. They thought that they had succeeded in their planning to humiliate him, but it only brought shame on them. During the course of the debate, Hudhoor (as) made the following prophecy:

“that out of the two parties in this debate the one who was deliberately following a falsehood and abandoning the true God and transforming a weak mortal into a God shall, within the days since the debate, i.e. one month since this day till fifteen months thereafter, be thrown into hawiya (hell) and will be greatly disgraced provided it is not inclined towards the truth”. (Proceedings of the debate, June 5th, 1893. Jange Muqaddis pages 291-292.)

The above prophecy made it clear that if Athim did not repent then he will be thrown into hell. Upon hearing the wording of the prophecy, Athim was deeply alarmed and scared. He started shaking, and turned pale. Contrary to his habit, he refrained from uttering anything objectionable against Islam or the Holy Prophet (saw). He was restless and moved from town to town in absolute terror. It seemed he had recanted. God Almighty granted him respite in the face of his changed attitude, but the opponents alleged that the prophecy was false.

Hudhoor (as) announced that if Mr Athim would declare on oath that he had not inclined towards the truth, he would pay him a sum of Rs. 1000/- provided he survived for one year after taking the oath. Later the sum was increased to Rs. 4000/-. Athim did not take the oath, had he taken a false oath, he would have been punished within one year. Furthermore, Hudhoor emphasized that even if he did not swear on oath, God Almighty will not leave him unpunished as he had tried to deceive the world by concealing the truth.
Since Athim refused to swear on oath, he died on July 27th, 1896 exactly as foretold by the prophecy. This was indeed a glorious sign on the truthfulness of Hadhrat Ahmad (as).

**ARABIC - MOTHER OF LANGUAGES**

In 1893, Hudhoor(as) invited Muslim divines to hold an essay competition with him in Arabic. Hudhoor (as) revealed that God Almighty has bestowed upon him a perfect command of Arabic language. Therefore no one can compete with him. No one accepted the invitation despite the fact that he gave this challenge many times over.

Hudhoor(as) made it known in 1895 in his book “Minan al-Rahman” that all the languages of the world have originated from Arabic language. Therefore Arabic is the mother of all languages. He also asserted that Arabic is the language of God Almighty. He offered a cash prize of Rs. 5000 to anyone who could disprove this claim.

This was an amazing discovery as scholars have been investigating for a long time to find out the most original language. European scholars had pointed to either Sanskrit or Pahlvi. The latest research however, indicates that Arabic is the most original language, all others derived from it. (M. A. Mazhar has traced 13 languages to Arabic in his book: Arabic, the mother of all languages).

**SIGN OF THE ECLIPSES**

Hadhrat Ali bin Umar al-Darqutni (918-995) has recorded a tradition (Hadith) of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessing of Allah be on him, in his book Sunan Dar Qutni, as reported by Hadhrat Imam Baqar, regarding the appearance of Imam Mahdi. It states that one of the signs for the appearance of the Mahdi will be that the Moon will be eclipsed on the first night of the three possible nights of an eclipse. And the Sun will be eclipsed on the middle day of the three possible days of an eclipse. Both will occur in the month of Ramadhan.

This heavenly sign occurred during the month of Ramadhan in April 1894 when Hudhoor had already declared that he was the Mahdi Mauood (Promised Mahdi). There was an eclipse of the Moon on the first night of the three possible nights i.e. the 13th Ramadhan, 1311 Hijra (March 21st, 1894) and there was an eclipse of the Sun on the middle day of the three possible days i.e. 28th Ramadhan 1311 Hijra (April 6th, 1894). Next year in the western hemisphere, the Moon was eclipsed on March 11, 1895 and the Sun was eclipsed on March 26th, 1895.

This great sign is referred to as Sign of the Eclipses. This sign has been pointed out in Chapter Al-Qiyama (75:9) of the Holy Quran also. In the Bible (Mark 13:24) it is also stated “But in those days, after that tribulation, the Sun shall be darkened, and the Moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall be falling from the heaven and the powers that are in heaven shall be shaken”.

This was another glorious sign manifested by Allah the Exalted to prove the truthfulness of His servant the Promised Messiah (as).

**BABA NANAK**

In 1895, Hudhoor(as) made known the outcome of his research regarding the religious beliefs of Founder of the Sikh religion. Hudhoor (as) stated that although Hadhrat Baba Nanak was born in a Hindu household, he had later on accepted Islam.

Hadhrat Baba Nanak (1469-1539) was a righteous person who meticulously followed all the teachings of Islam, so much so that he traveled to Mecca for the purpose of performing pilgrimage to the House of Allah. One of his holy gowns contained Islamic declaration of faith, as well as many verses of the Holy Quran inscribed in Arabic.
ALL RELIGIONS CONFERENCE

In 1896, a conference was convened in Lahore in which representatives of various religions were invited to explain the beauty of their religion so that people could judge and compare the teachings for themselves. Top leaders of many faiths spoke on this occasion and explained the teachings of their faiths.

The Promised Messiah (AS), as representative of the Islamic faith, authored a compelling and scholarly treatise for this occasion outlining the excellencies of Islamic teachings. He was assured by God Almighty that his treatise would be acclaimed as far superior to all the others that would be presented at the gathering.

He made known this Divinely assurance well before the start of the conference. And so it happened, the audience numbering over 7000 was spellbound and everyone admitted that his submission was overwhelmingly superior. Proceedings of this conference were published in the newspapers; it was admitted that Hudhoor’s discourse was indeed far superior to all the others. It was later published under the title The Philosophy of the Teachings of Islam.

LAW SUIT BY DR CLARK

Christian missionaries had their hearts aching at the phenomenal success of his divine mission. No one could rebut his strong and winning arguments. So they decided to resort to sleazy tactics.

In 1897 they plotted to file a lawsuit of attempted murder against him. Dr Henry Martyn Clark, a notable medical missionary stationed in Amritsar filed a complaint in the court of District Magistrate Captain William Douglas in Ludhiana.

The charge laid against Hudhoor was that he conspired to have Dr Clark assassinated by a man named Abdul Hameed, God forbid. God Almighty assisted Hudhoor (AS) miraculously in this lawsuit so that he was not detained by the police. Rather he was honorably acquitted once the official investigation was over. Muslims as well as Hindus helped the Christians in this insidious plot to have Hudhoor (AS) convicted but God Almighty failed their plans miserably.

The District Magistrate offered to grant leave to Hudhoor (AS) to sue the plaintiff for malicious prosecution. Hudhoor (AS) declined to do so saying Dr Clark would have to answer one day to a higher court. Abdul Hameed was sentenced to nine months imprisonment with forty-four days in solitary confinement.

Years later during the time of his retirement in London Captain Douglas observed: “I was certain that a man with such a good face could not have committed the deeds that he was accused of. He was a smiling, open countenance”.
First national Ijtema was held in Dublin, Ireland on Saturday 14th September 2013. The Ijtema was a daylong event planned and organised by Waqfe Nau department Ireland.

This Ijtema provided the Waqfin in Republic of Ireland with an opportunity to meet and know each other. Two sessions were held during daylong event. Arrangements were made to relay Talawat, Nazam and speeches from main hall to the Lajna hall. Waqifeen were invited after each session to express themselves or present any item of their choice.

Inaugural sessions commenced by recitation of Talawat and Nazam. Later on, Waqifeen had their examination on their syllabus according to their age group.

An inspirational Inaugural address in the first session was made by Imam Ibrahim Noonan, missionary in charge and Niab National President, Ireland in which he explained and emphasised the importance of the Waqf. In the second session, secretary Waqfe nau Major Shahid Ahmed presented the report of Ireland’s first Ijtima. The concluding session was addressed by a stimulating speech by M. Anwar Malik, National President, who highlighted the purpose of the Waqf-e-Nau Scheme and the responsibilities of Waqfeen He also addressed the parents and stressed on the role they need to play in inculcating the true spirit of dedication and also helping in the moulding of the child into a dedicated devotee.

Total attendance on the Ijtema reported was 32 Waqfeen out of a total tajneed of 47.

In the light of this first Ijtema, various suggestions and proposals have been made and Waqf-e-Nou department plans to implement those over the next year, Insha Allah.
By the grace of Allah, national Waqfe Nau Ijtema for boys was held on the 5th of May 2013 at Baitul Futuh. The Ijtema was aimed at all Waqfe Nou boys above the age of 7; our records indicate that we have a total of 1347 boys in this age group. Lot of efforts were put to inform all Waqifeen to participate. The registered attendance was a total of 883 Waqfe Nau boys with an increase of 181 boys as compared to the last Ijtema.

The opening session was chaired by Imam Sahib. He gave an inspiring address on his early life and the life of his father, Hadhrat Abul Atta. He gave a full account of the sacrifices his father made for the Jamaat. He impressed upon the point that the spirit of sacrifice that the boys need to instil in themselves to serve the Jamaat and fulfil their waqf.

The first event of the day was a presentation by MTA International; they gave the boys a detailed insight into the workings of MTA. This was followed by a careers seminar for the 15+ age groups. Following stalls were organised to guide about various professions: MTA International, MKA Research Association, Jamia Ahmadiyya, UK, Teachers Association, Medical Association, Lawyers Association and IAAAE. The aim was to introduce the Waqifeen to various Jamaat associations to meet them and learn about various professions.

At the same time, another session was held in a separate place to introduce the younger age group to a number of elders and office holders in the Jamaat.

We had a very interesting session in the morning that MTA international filmed as “real talk” programme with selected elder Waqfe Nau children; the focus of the programme was on choice of professions and career guidance for the Waqifeen. Dr Shamim Ahmad, Incharge Waqfe Nau, Rehan Sayed, a recruitment consultant and Nadim Ahmad, a member of the Waqfe Nau team and also the teachers association were on the panel.

The afternoon session started with a syllabus exam for each age group. The exam was a written for all boys aged 10 and over. The younger age group had a verbal exam. The exams form a central part of the Waqfe Nau syllabus and they are held each year at the Ijtema. This was followed by question and answer session chaired by Muhammad Akram, missionary. Many Waqifeen participated and it covered a variety of topics.

Another session was held to discuss with the senior Waqf-e-Nou boys about their experiences in education and how they would serve the Jamaat. The advisory panel included Lord Tariq Ahmad and Dr Shamim Ahmad who gave their invaluable advice to the Waqifeen.

The final session was chaired by Rafeeq Ahmad Hayat, Ameer UK. He addressed the boys on the importance of their waqf and explained the future sacrifices that the boys would have to make. He reiterated the need for a top level education and also highlighted the expectations that he had of the boys.
The National Waqfe Nau Ijtema for girls was held on 4th May, 2013 at Baitul Futuh. A total of 631 Waqifaat attended the Ijtema. The morning session began with the recitation of the Holy Quran followed by the Lajna pledge. Mrs. Zahida Ahmed then delivered her opening address. Her address focused on truthfulness, the importance of prayer and following Nizam-e-Jama’at.

This was followed by an interactive presentation entitled ‘The True Spirit of Waqf.’ The focus of the presentation was the lives of pioneering missionaries who came to UK. These included Hadhrat Chaudhry Fateh Muhammad Sial (ra) and Hadhrat Maulana Abdul Raheem Dard (ra). These waqfeen-e-zindagi were specifically selected as the UK Jamaat is celebrating 100 years of the establishment and they played a vital role in it. The aim was to learn from their noble qualities of simplicity, humility, steadfastness, sacrifice and obedience of Khilafat.

Another important event of the Ijtema was the syllabus tests. Each age group was allocated different locations on the premises in Baitul Futuh. All Waqfaat-e-Nau attending the Ijtema participated in the syllabus tests.

The afternoon session started with brief presentations on ‘Careers’ especially aimed for the senoir Waqfaat and the ‘Dangers of Facebook’ - this presentation was selected so the younger Waqfate Nau also become aware of the problems that arise from using social websites.

A question and answer session was held chaired by respected Sadr Lajna Imaillah UK, Mrs.Nasira Rehman. The Ijtema concluded with an address from chairperson Ijtema who spoke on the importance of reformation and Tabligh for all Waqfate Nau. Sadr Sahiba concluded the Ijtema with silent prayers.