



# Al-Risala 1988

September

## Editorial

*The need of the hour is to bring about unity among the peoples of the world, and what better way could there be than to establish that all men are brothers, not just in a figurative sense, and not just in the religious sense – as is taught by Islam – but in the strictly literal, biological sense? Islam, of course, has consistently taught us that all men, being the offspring of one and the same set of parents, are indeed, each other's brothers. Until very recently, the question of world interrelationship was on the whole a matter of purely religious belief. But now, the findings of modern biological research bear out this ancient concept as a physical and historical reality. What had formerly been accepted as part of a time-honoured if unsubstantiated tradition has now become a sharply defined scientific concept.*

The task of discovering man's common ancestry was undertaken by American geneticists who, for years, carried out their research on 147 donated placentas in specially air-conditioned laboratories. They went on examining an inter-racial assortment of genes until they picked up a DNA trail that led them to a single woman from whom we all descended. (They opted to study the female line of descent, because it is so difficult to establish paternity.) According to these expert micro-biologists, this woman lived on the earth 200,000 years ago and, by a rough estimate, is our 10,000th great grandmother.

These discoveries have also shown that apparently inherent and ineradicable human traits are actually subject to change from one generation to the next and, as such, are no longer acceptable as the basis of the caste system, which, of all the social systems of the world is unparalleled in its rigidity. In the earliest period of our history, a natural division of labour had taken place on the basis of the human talents available to society at that time. Then, with the passage of time, the mistaken concept of the unalterability of human characteristics from one generation to the next caused what has formerly been a loose-knit and open society to crystallise into a self-perpetuating hierarchy of almost total inflexibility. Hence a caste system which fixed a man's profession and status for life without the slightest reference colour, for instance, is a minor adaptation to climate – black in Africa for protection from the sun, white in Europe to absorb ultra-violet radiations that helps produce vitamin D. It takes only a few thousand years of evolution for skin colour to change" (p. A2).

Genetic evidence has likewise contradicted the more recent notion that the human race has come from various separate branches. It has proved beyond all doubt that human beings are members of a biological brotherhood. Stephen Jay Gould, the Harvard paleontologist and essayist says:

"This idea is tremendously important. It makes us realize that all human beings, despite differences in external appearance, are really members of a single entity that's had a very recent origin in one place. There is a kind of biological brotherhood that's much more profound than we ever realized" (p. 39).

This brotherhood, which already exists at the biological level, needs most urgently to be adopted on the social level: herein lies the key to unity and harmony throughout the world. When the most natural formula for social integration is already pointed to by our biological structure, why cannot universal brotherhood be proclaimed as our birthright? It is only if we accept this formula that we shall achieve that global peace which is the goal of all right-thinking men and women on this earth.

3 September 1988

### What really matters is the man within:

A complaint was made to the Prophet about the behaviour of Abdullah ibn Hudhaifah. It was said that he joked and played the fool too much. "Let him be," said the Prophet, "for, deep down, he has great love for God and His Prophet."

(Ibn Asakir)

3 September 1988

### Extending unstinted support:

Abu Bakr called together the Companions and told them of his intention to send an expedition to Syria. "God will surely grant the Muslim, His succour," he told them, "and exalt His word." In the consultations that followed, some of the Companions opposed certain of Abu Bakr's ideas. Even so, after brief discussions, all of them – without a single voice of dissent – urged Bakr to do as he thought fit. "We shall neither oppose nor blame you," they assured him.

(Ibn Asakir)

## The Integrity of the Witness

*The gods to whom they pray besides Him have not the power to intercede for them. None can intercede for them save him who knows the truth and testifies to it (Quran: 43:86).*

The Quran tells us that on the Day of Judgement the only people who will be called as witnesses will be those who speak the truth, and who are fully in possession of all the facts:

*The gods to whom they pray besides Him have not the power to intercede for them. None can intercede for them save him who knows the truth and testifies to it (43:86).*

In worldly matters, the requirements for giving testimony are equally exacting. The Prophet Mohammad made this clear to a potential witness in a case which had been brought before him when he said: "If you saw what happened as clear as daylight, then give evidence; if not, you had best not be a witness."

It is on the basis of the Prophet's dictum that Muslim jurists have made factual knowledge a basic condition of eligibility as a witness. Unless an individual has first-hand knowledge of the case in hand, he should not appear as a witness. If he does, his testimony will carry no weight in the eyes of the Islamic *Shari'ah*.

In stressing this point, the Islamic *Shari'ah* encourages the greatest integrity in human affairs. It lays down a principle which is a guiding light to an individual in his social dealings in that it clarifies when he should come forward and speak up, and when he should remain in the background and hold his peace.

When about to voice an opinion on another's character or conduct, one should first of all ask oneself: "Am I in possession of all the necessary information? Is my knowledge first-hand and, therefore, likely to carry weight?" If one's knowledge of the matter in hand is, in fact, based on direct, personal experience, one can, with a good conscience, speak up; if not, one should remain silent.

Sometimes one merely has the impression of being fully informed, and it is only after further investigation, or deeper reflection, that the gaps in one's knowledge come to light. Before bearing witness one should feel absolutely certain that what one has to offer as testimony is actual fact and not just opinion; that it is verifiable data and not just hearsay. If one neglects to put oneself through these mental processes before appearing as a witness, one is likely to do incalculable damage to the life of another human being – albeit unwittingly. It is even worse if one scrutinizes one's 'evidence and finds it wanting in substance or veracity, but nevertheless proceeds in court to offer it as testimony. In that case even if it is accepted in the law courts of this ephemeral world, it will be summarily rejected in the divine court of Almighty God, and cause one to be cast out forthwith among the guilty and the damned.

5 September 1988

## Go Out and Work For It

'No steam or gas ever drives anything until it is confined. No Niagara is ever turned into light and power until it is tunneled. No life ever grows until it is focussed, dedicated, disciplined.'

This assertion made by Harry Emerson Fordick in his book, *Living Under Tension*, is of equal relevance to those at the outset of their careers, to the drifters of this world and to those who are suffering from a sense of defeat.

Anyone who has just found work for himself – and this applies to everyone from the common labourer to the highly placed professional – would do well to reflect upon the necessity for dedication, discipline and the proper channelling of his energies. A lackadaisical, care-me-not attitude will not only achieve nothing in terms of work output, but will lead to professional failure and possibly loss of the job. No manager wants to have lazy, unwilling employees work under him, and no such employees can ever hope to rise to a managerial position.

People who drift through life, going from one job to another with either very mediocre success, or no success at all, and sometimes not even working for long periods, need to think even more of the beneficial results of devotion to duty. They may initially feel happy in their lethargic aimlessness, but they are no boon to society, can never properly support a family, and eventually become a burden to themselves, others and the government.

As regards those who have attempted to succeed in life, but who have suffered from some major setback, they must realize that one setback, or even a series of setbacks, is not the end of life. One can always make a new beginning, even with very meagre resources. It is a question of seriously focussing the attention on the actual problems, leaving all regrets and protests aside and disciplining oneself into making the efforts that it requires to pull oneself out of the slough of despondency. Once out of it, it is a sense of dedication that will speed one onwards to success.

Never just dream of success. Go out and work for it.

## Crime and Conscience

*If we are effectively to eradicate criminality, we must never lose sight of the fact that if a man resorts to crime, it is not because he has been deprived of material wealth, but because he has never known what it is to have spiritual wealth.*

A variety of explanations are offered by social workers and psychologists for the increasing manifestations of criminal tendencies in the human species, the most frequently invoked of these being the baneful influences of poverty. But we need only look at the alarming increase in the crime rate of the world's affluent countries to realize that the cause lies much deeper. Nor can we blame inadequate legislation, poor law enforcement or insufficient means of punishment and/or rehabilitation of criminals, for both the western and Islamic worlds are fully geared on all counts to place at least some serious constraints on criminality.

When a man commits a crime, he does so because he wants to. To him, it is his own will that counts. He commits his crime in defiance of the law, and the threat of police action which will lead to imprisonment. He does so in spite of all the moral condemnation which society will heap upon him. Sometimes there is even no premeditation of a crime, and therefore no prior thought of social reprisal. Take the case of a High Court Judge of Japan, a Mr. Matsunaga, who was caught shoplifting two books worth 15 dollars. When asked at his trial why he had done so, when he could easily have paid for them, he said that he had acted "on impulse." Even the solemnity of his high office could not restrain him from stooping to petty thievery.

What then *will* prevent a man from committing a crime? It will be his own conscience, and nothing else, for crime is a human activity which is controlled by personal moral sense or not at all.

From what do we derive this inestimable virtue—moral sense? We derive it from the type of social conditioning which instills in us the fear of God. It comes from the expectancy that in the afterlife we shall be reward rewarded for our good deeds and punished for our misdeeds. Once one begin to feel accountable to God rather than to some man-made system, one realizes that there is no escape for the transgressor from divine retribution; that God's justice is absolute. With this also comes the realization that we have our freedom in this world not just to do as we please, but to make a reasoned choice of good and right action. Then, not only do we avoid the path of wrong action, but we even banish unworthy thoughts from our minds. No legal system or law enforcement agency can of its own achieve a moral triumph of this nature.

If we are effectively to eradicate criminality, we must never lose sight of the fact that if a man resorts to crime, it is not because he has been deprived of material wealth, but because he has never known what it is to have spiritual wealth.



## The Wonders of Creation

*To be able to enjoy God's creation to the full, man must shed his indifference. He must look at the sunrise with the eyes of the very young, and listen to the glad outpourings of the birds as if they sang for the first time in creation.*

"When opened it was like a small tent, and when shut, it was all curiously jointed and would fold up to the length of a man's hand." Nowadays we would have some difficulty in recognising the ubiquitous umbrella from this description, but that is how it appeared to an early observer when it was first invented in London in 1749. When a hand pump was first installed in an Indian village at the beginning of the century it was likewise an object of great astonishment and curiosity. One old woman, on seeing it, exclaimed: "Only death has defeated man!"

So many years ago, when first conceived of, the umbrella and the handpump appeared quite extraordinary. Nowadays, however, they have become so commonplace, that people do not even give them a second glance. Regrettably, our attitude to the objects of God's creation is very similar. They had lost their novelty for us even before the handpump and the umbrella had come on the scene. Yet everything that exists in this world, be it the budding trees or the birds on the wing, is quite wonderful beyond words. Because man sees these lovely things day in and day out, he ceases to have any regard for their beauty and he loses his sense of wonder at their very creation. But, were he to see them for the first time, like a blind man who has suddenly regained his sight, his amazement would be unbounded. He would marvel at every leaf and every petal, and at every little feather on the wings of the birds.

To be able to enjoy God's creation to the full, man must shed his indifference. He must look at the sunrise with the eyes of the very young and listen to the glad outpourings of the birds as if they sang for the first time in creation.

## Less Speech, More Silence

*A wise man, once asked why he was so miserly with words replied: "The Creator of the world has given man two ears, but just one tongue. This is so that we may listen more than we speak, not so that we may speak more than we listen."*

Listening more than speaking is certainly the most prudent course to adopt, for in doing so we increase our own knowledge, we give ourselves the opportunity to have a better understanding of the other man's viewpoint and, by our silence we encourage in the speaker a greater receptivity to what we shall have to say when finally it is our turn to hold forth. When we speak, it is not generally sufficient just to utter the truth. We have to be able to talk persuasively if our listeners are to be convinced. This is where our having listened carefully to what they have to say is an advantage, for then we know in advance what misapprehensions we have to sweep aside, what illusions we have to dispel and what emotional barriers we have to break down. If we continue to speak without ever listening to others, we shall always find ourselves in a weak, uncertain, ill-informed position.

Sometimes we voice opinions which are not so well supported by facts as we imagine, and we save ourselves embarrassment by first hearing the subject discussed from different angles by different speakers. It is only after mature reflection upon what they have to say that we should venture to air our own views. And even then, they should be aired with full consideration for the feelings of our listeners.

The propensity to talk too much is often a sign of being more interested in singing one's own praises than of getting to the heart of the matter, and shows a lack of seriousness in one's general attitude to others. The effect of this is to be seen at its worst when the flow of talk is based on insufficient or superficial knowledge. What it most obviously betrays is a lack of character.

The practice of listening more than speaking is not just the external expression of one isolated personality trait; it reflects rather a whole state, of mind. Indicative of sincerity and humility, it is the essence of a fine character.

## Help God and He Will Help Us

*The Palestinian question, as well as other problems affecting the Muslim community can be resolved only if the realization comes to the Muslims that they must once again take up their duty as a community. 'Only if they struggle for God's cause, will God give them divine succour' (Quran 47:7).*

When Palestine was partitioned in 1947, the world media proclaimed the readiness of all of the world's 40 billion Muslims to recover the Holy Land from Israel. Today, forty years later, there is over double that number of Muslims in the world, yet the Palestinian issue has still to be resolved. The borders of Israel, instead of being pushed back, have expanded on every front, and Jewish influence extends far beyond them. The PLO, on the other hand, has been banished from the territory surrounding Israel and has thus lost all influence over current events in West Asia. This is in spite of innumerable Muslims having sacrificed their lives, and in spite of millions of petro dollars having been donated to the PLO cause.

Why is it that despite all this financial and human support, the Muslims have never succeeded in freeing the Holy Land? The real reason for this is that Muslims have not performed the most important of all the tasks set for them by God: they have not communicated the divine message to all nations of the world. This is not something which is supposed to be carried out as a matter of natural duty. Its performance must spring from the depths of every individual's consciousness. It must be done for the sake of God and for the reward in the life after death. God has created a world system in which man, time and time again, must be put to the test, and we have only the short span of our lives on this earth in which to prove ourselves.

The Muslims' real shortcoming has been to forget their true mission in life, and to fail to present themselves to others as God's witnesses on earth. If the Muslim world is to have justice, then it must itself bear witness to the truth. If Muslims do not fulfill this role, then they lose their place in God's scheme, and become relegated to the position of offenders in God's eyes. How then can they expect Him to come to their assistance?

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## Our Book of Cosmic Knowledge

*“It was He who spread out the earth and placed upon it rivers and immovable mountains. He gave all plants their male and female parts and drew the veil of night over day. Surely in these there are signs for thinking men” (Quran : 13:2).*

Life, burgeoning on every side of us, manifests itself in multiple forms. Atoms dance around within matter, the stars go hurtling through space, a tiny seed is transformed into a magnificent tree, the sun rises in all its glory. Whether on earth or in the outer reaches of the universe, there are always great masterpieces of creation which are perpetuating, transforming, or reproducing themselves. But neither the wonders of nature nor the events taking place in the cosmos ever define themselves for our benefit. They never communicate with us to reveal their inner significance.

It is here that the Quran comes to our rescue, for it is truly a book of cosmic knowledge, a kind of dictionary which defines the true meaning of all that we see around us. “It was God who raised the heavens without visible pillars. He ascended His throne and forced the sun and moon into His service, each pursuing its appointed course. He ordains all things. He makes plain His revelations so that you may firmly believe in meeting your Lord.

*“It was He who spread out the earth and placed upon it rivers and immovable mountains. He gave all plants their male and female parts and drew the veil of night over day. Surely in these there are signs for thinking men” (13:2).*

However, one may look at the universe and imagine that its existence came about by mere chance. But the Quran tells us that “to God belongs the kingdom of the heavens and the earth. He has power over all things.

*“In the creation of the heavens and the earth, and in the alternation of night and day, there are signs for men of sense: those that remember God when standing, sitting and lying down, and reflect on the creation of the heavens and the earth, saying: ‘Lord, You have not created these in vain. Glory be to You!’”*

Again, one may imagine, judging by the infallibility of the system of cause and effect which is operative in the universe, that our world is little better than an automatic machine which has no need of an operator. But the Quran tells one that it is God “who makes the lightning flash upon you, inspiring you with fear and hope, as He gathers up the heavy clouds. The thunder sounds His praises, and the angels, too, for awe of Him. He hurls His thunderbolts at whom he pleases” (13:11).

Looking at the similarities between the successive forms of life, one might fall into the error of believing that all species are the result of an evolutionary process. But the Quran sets one right on this point: “He

created for you all that the earth contains; then, ascending to the sky, fashioned it into seven heavens. He has knowledge of all things” (2.29).

“It was He who created the heavens and earth in all truth. On the day when He says: ‘Be,’ it shall be. His word is the truth” (6.73).

After reading the Quran one can no longer look at the wonders of the universe as a collection of mute and inscrutable masterpieces. Nor can one regard them as just so many parts of a vast automation. In reading the holy scriptures we shall come to understand the divine significance of everything on which we gaze. We shall at last accept that the universe is the work of an all-powerful Being, and that “it has not been created in vain.”

11 September 1988

## Bowing before the commandments of God

There was a family of the Thaqeef tribe of Taif, named Banu Amr ibn Umair, and another from the Banu Makhzoom, named Banu Mughirah who, during the Period of Ignorance (that is, before Islam) used to conduct usurious transactions amongst themselves. After the conquest of Mecca, both families accepted Islam, but, at that time, the Banu Mughirah still owed a certain amount of money to the Banu Amr ibn Umair, who demanded repayment of the debt. The Banu Mughirah conferred amongst themselves and decided that they would pay no interest (on any loans made to them) from the earnings they made after their acceptance of Islam. This naturally caused much dissension. Allab ibn Usayd as a representative of the Prophet in the area, informed the latter of the situation. In reply, the Prophet recited this verse of the Quran: "Believers, have fear of God and waive what is due to you from usury, if your faith be true; or war shall be declared against you by God and His Apostle" (2: 278-279). The attitude of the Banu Amr ibn Umair immediately changed when they heard this verse and they said, "We turn to God and waive the interest still due."

*(Tafseer Ibn Kathir)*

12-13 September 1988

## Looked At From On High

Pick up any physical map of the world and you will see vast plains, lofty mountains, lakes, rivers, oceans, etc, each of whose features stands out quite clearly with little or no reference to national boundaries. A long mountain range, or a mighty river often spans several countries, while the oceans lap the shores of all continents alike, regardless of the human beings who claim to be their separate possessors. There is a lovely and awesome grandeur in this free-ranging pattern, but this promptly disappears when we take out a political map and try to discern nature's free-flowing lines through the zig-zag maze of political boundaries which impose themselves artificially over the earth's natural features, chopping up the world's terrain into unequal blocs which seldom reflect the true needs and aspirations of the ordinary people within them. The indelible stains of the clashing colours of the political map are constant glaring reminders of the lamentable separateness of the countries of the world. It is sad that they are separate, not just in terms of terrain, but in ways of thinking and in ways of living.

It is only when we look at our planet from far out in space that the world looks like one harmonious whole. Squadron Leader Rakesh Sharma, the first Indian astronaut who, along with Soviet crew members, circled the earth in April 1984 in the Indo-Soviet spacecraft, Salyut II, was interviewed from the earth by an Indian journalist when he was far out in space and able to look back at the earth and see it just as we can look up at the sun and the moon and see them as shining orbs from where we stand on the earth. Asked what the earth looked like from space, Squadron Leader Sharma replied that looking at the earth from space was a beautiful experience and that it was difficult to understand why there should be so much tension on the planet. From above, no borders could be seen: the whole world looked like a single peaceful, harmonious entity.

Looking at the world from an aeroplane, one has much the same experience: towns blend into the surrounding countryside as if they were integral features of it; there is no visible clash between the world of man and the world of nature; the tensions which divide man from man are nowhere apparent. It is only when one comes down to earth that the scenario changes – and not for the better. One re-enters the world of self-made political entities with relationships scarred by hostility and suspicion. It is a world in which man despoils nature and does little to make reparations to the environment. In short, it is a world in which the motto is 'Every man for 'himself!'.

From space, all seems right with the world, but the moment one sets foot on terra firma, the deficiencies of the human species loom large on the horizon. It is here that all the meanness and pettiness of everyday life overshadow the natural bounties of the world around us. It is sad that the remedy for this is so close at hand and yet so few of us go in quest of it. The remedy, of course, is true belief in God. Once one has reposed one's trust in the Almighty one is able to soar high above the baseness and

friction of everyday living; one is able to surmount the barriers of political confrontation; one is able to lead a good, upright, natural life even in an environment which has been rendered artificial by the selfishness and greed of those who have seized power. Only by God's grace can we live in such a world, but be not of it.



## The Best News Ever

The human desire to communicate has always been strong, but in modern times, it has been imbued with an increasing sense of urgency that the old-fashioned letter or post card no longer satisfies it, and a whole array of 'high-tech' devices – telephone, telex, TV, fax, etc. – have had to be brought into existence in order to expand and accelerate communications. A kind of vicious circle has now been set up in which the more such gadgetry proliferates, the more we want to communicate, and the more we have to invent new and faster means of communication. No one seems very much concerned about the content or quality of the messages conveyed. It is enough to have a shiny new telephone at one's elbow to feel inspired to ring up our friends – even if we have nothing very much to tell them.

Even if no means of communication are at hand, the urge to communicate is so strong, that people will walk miles just to convey a good, intriguing or disastrous piece of news. For example, I came home one day, after being out for the whole day, and was told that a friend had come not once but several times to see me. Just as I was wondering what the matter could be, there he was on the door-step again. "Your phone was dead," he announced by way of explanation, "so I just had to come over to tell you the glad news. I've been promoted, to a higher scale and it means a difference of two hundred rupees a month to me."

It is natural for friends to share their sense of jubilation over normal human satisfactions such as a step up in-life, the birth of a son, the acquisition of a new house or car, or a happy betrothal, etc. But what has happened to the keen desire, which the true believers of former times used to have, to convey the divine message of truth? What has happened to the urge to communicate the realities of the life of trial in this world, and the consequent rewards and punishments of the afterlife? The early Muslims used to be as eager to pass on the revelations that God had made to His Prophet as people are nowadays to trumpet their acquisition of purely material things like land, gold and other property.

In the early days of Islam, believers and those who were still in quest of the truth would travel long distances to hear the sayings of the Prophet, either directly from him, or from his Companions. They were then happy to travel many more miles to convey them to others. They had none of the means of communication – except for the letter – which we have at our command nowadays, but their burning desire to convey God's message caused them to brave all hazards in reaching out to the uninitiated. In fact, they considered that their most important task in life was to make others aware of the eternal world which awaits all mankind.

If one knows that a volcano is about to erupt, or a tidal wave is about to inundate a whole coastal plain, one drops everything and sends out the news of impending disaster by the fastest means possible. Individuals will promptly convey the news by telephone, while government agencies will broadcast the

news by radio and TV. It is regrettable that nowadays there is no parallel sense of urgency in spreading the news of an event which is much more apocalyptic in dimension – the coming of man before his Lord to be judged. Not only do present-day Muslims make no effort to spread the word of God on the subject of this awesome occasion, but they seem even to have forgotten that there will be such an event as the Last Day of Judgement.

15 September 1988

### Thinking of God In moments of crisis:

Ali, the son of Abu Talib, relates how Fatima, his wife, and also daughter of the Prophet had to do all the housework herself. Her hands used to become blistered from working a millstone, her clothes became dirty from sweeping the floor, and having to bring water from outside in a larger leather bag had left a mark on her neck. On one occasion when the Prophet had had an influx of servants, Ali suggested to Fatima that she go and request her father to give her one of them to help her in her work. She duly went to see him, but there were many people gathered at his house, and she returned home, without having been able to meet him. The next day the Prophet came to the house of Ali and Fatima and asked what it was she had wanted to discuss with him, but Fatima remained silent. Then Ali told the Prophet the whole story. The Prophet did not, however, accede to their request for a servant. "Fear God," he said, "and fulfill your duty to the Lord. Continue to do your housework and, when you go to bed at night, glorify God 33 times, praise Him the same number of times and exalt him 34 times. That makes 100 times altogether. That will do more good than a servant will."

*(Al Targheeb wa al Tarheeb)*

## Just Short of the Summit

### Climax and Anti-Climax

A veteran of World War I, Maurice Wilson had always cherished a dream of standing on “the roof of the world”— the top of Mount Everest (at 29,028 feet, the highest peak in the world.) His keenness to realize this ambition was so great that he walked out of a successful family business spent all his money on a second-hand aeroplane and flew the six thousand miles from England to India, finally touching down at Purnea on the borders of Nepal. Having been refused permission to proceed beyond this point in his aircraft, he sold it, and approached Everest by way of Darjeeling and Tibet.

On the last leg of the journey, he carried with him only a small tent, some rice, an automatic camera a few other small items. He planned to stand on the summit on his 36th birthday, April 21, 1934, but, when he was just a few days away from making this birthday the most memorable one ever, he was overtaken by a violent Himalayan storm and was forced to descend to his previous base. A year later, the now famous Sherpa guide, Tenzing Norgay, found Wilson’s body and next to it, his diary in which he had written, “only 13,000 feet more to go. I have the distinct feeling that I’ll reach the summit on April 21”. He had hoped that his automatic camera would record his moment of triumph for posterity. But that moment never came. And no one was ever able to find out the actual cause of his death.

This was the first serious attempt to conquer Mount Everest, and it ended in failure. The saga of Maurice Wilson, divested of its elements of high drama, is, if we could but realize it, the saga of many of the world’s less illustrious, less daring millions. There are few of us who do not, in a lower key, strain after some cherished dream, some gilded ambition, full of thoughts of the happiness that awaits us at some imagined point in the future. But death can come at any moment, and may forestall the ripening of well-laid plans. This is an eventuality, which, in the struggle to achieve an ambition, many of us completely lose sight of. Yet it is an ever-present reality, for which all of us must prepare ourselves, sooner or later. We must never lose our awareness of the fact that our ultimate destination lies not in the realization of dream, but in the abode which we finally take up in the after life. We shall the better be able to come to terms with the anti-climactic nature of human existence, if we keep our minds firmly fixed on the notion that the greatest climax lies beyond the grave.

## The Test of Faith

*To believe in God is to accept Him as the Supreme Being. To acknowledge him as such means owing one's allegiance to Him alone. Whether one is sincere in one's faith or not can be ascertained only under conditions which put it to the test.*

The Quran makes it clear that the test of a real believer does not just involve the testimony of faith by word of mouth, but his staunch adherence to his faith throughout all the subsequent periods of trial which he must undergo as part of God's scheme for mankind. It is only if he remains true to his faith in testing circumstances that his testament of faith will be valid in the eyes of God. Only then will he be reckoned worthy to take his place in the heaven God has prepared for the true believers of this world.

To believe in God is to accept Him as the Supreme Being. To acknowledge him as such means owing one's allegiance to Him alone. Whether one is sincere in one's faith or not can be ascertained only under conditions which put it to the test. Then it becomes clear whether one has really accepted God as supreme, or whether one is only paying lip-service to His almighty power, and has allowed others to occupy that special place in one's life which should be reserved for God alone.

Time and time again in this life, one is faced with the alternative of obeying the will of God, or the will of others. On the one hand, there is God and the path he has laid down for man, while, on the other hand, there are worldly enticements such as material gain, social interests, family requirements, sensual pleasures and all kinds of egoistic urges which demand satisfaction. All of these factors loom large on the human horizon and when a man has to make a choice between them and the path of God, he finds himself in a dilemma. But it is only when he is faced with such dilemmas that he can have the opportunity to prove his mettle. In God's eyes, His truest servants are those who put all other considerations aside and hold fast to the commandments of God, no matter if personal interests have to fall by the wayside, if the desires of their near and dear ones have to be curbed, or if the idol of their own ego has to be shattered. If, in spite of all these deterrents, they steadfastly pursue the path that represents the will of the Almighty, they cannot but find eternal favour in His eyes.

18 September 1988

## The Rarest of Gems

Imagine an artist devoting all his talents and energy to the creation of a masterpiece only to have it destroyed by a vandal before his very eyes. How hateful the destroyer would appear to him. He would seem the most despicable creature in the whole wide world. So would one who snatched a rare blossom from a bush which had taken years to flower simply for the pleasure of crushing it under his heel. The gardener who had sweated and toiled for years to bring the plant to a peak of perfection could be forgiven for feeling that the destroyer deserved to be crushed in exactly the same way.

Just as the painting and the flower were wonderful creations which took time, patience, skill and effort to produce; so is the preacher of God's word, a gem of creation which took not only all of these factors to bring it into existence, but the interplay of the divine forces of the entire cosmos. The preacher of God's word is the creation of the Almighty Himself. He came into being at His behest. But the innumerable factors which serve to constitute one who calls mankind to God come together only once in many hundreds of years. That is why the true preacher of God's word is such rarity, such a priceless jewel in society.

How then should society look upon one who plots the ruin of God's preacher so that God's message may never reach mankind? He should be made to understand that it is no ordinary, insignificant human being whom he calumniates, or even physically injures, but the chosen representative of the Maker of mankind. In showing disrespect to God's messenger, he not only defies the whole vast universe, but rebels against God Almighty Himself, for it is He and none other who has nurtured this flower, created this masterpiece on earth for the divine purpose of conveying His word to mankind. If He sees His preacher destroyed He will wreak upon the destroyer the most terrible vengeance.

God has pledged that the evil designs of such wrongdoers will never prosper, and that the preacher of God's word will inevitably fulfill his mission, no matter how others may attempt to smother his voice. By performing the tasks set him by God on this earth, he can be certain of God's protection in this world and in the next. No mortal being can ever triumph over one who enjoys divine protection.

Those who seek to defeat the preacher of God's word should appreciate that their adversary is not just the preacher, but God Almighty Himself.

## Undaunted by Pain

*Her story was one of shamefully poor medical attention, which resulted in her leg being infected with gangrene. By the time this was discovered, it was too late to save her leg, and it had to be amputated three inches below the knee. A dancer to the very marrow of her bones, she used to cry out in anguish, "Will I ever dance again?"*

On the 1st of April, 1984, eagle-eyed dance critics of Bombay watched Sudha Chandran, a nineteen-year-old dancer from South India, who was giving a performance after a long gap of three years. They scrutinized every movement she made, every posture she held, not just to evaluate her virtuosity as a dancer, but to see if they could make out which of her legs was artificial. Later, they said that it had been almost impossible to tell which one it was, and that her dancing was even better than it had been three years ago, before she had broken her right leg in an accident.

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Eventually she was fitted with a modern, artificial leg known as the "Jaipur foot." One day, its inventor, Dr P.K. Sethi, happened to meet Sudha's teacher, who told him of his pupil's fervent desire to be able to dance again. Dr. Sethi was of the view that Sudha would be able to dance like anyone with normal limbs provided she was "tough enough to put in the extra effort and bear initial pain."

When Sudha was given this ray of hope – that she would once again be able to dance – she prepared herself to bear that "initial pain" and bear it she did, putting in such determined efforts to regain her former level of excellence that soon she was ready to go on the stage again. With the critics acclaim at her first performance she set her foot once again on the ladder to success. Sudha Chandran's handicap was of the most serious nature, but she overcame it by sheer grit and determination. There are many similarly handicapped in this life who would do well to take courage from her example.

## Hitting Balls at the Moon

*Once a poor caddy at Pedereda in Spain, the now world-famous golf champion, Severiano Ballesteros has won millions of dollars by winning tournaments on both sides of the Atlantic. To achieve such proficiency he had to practice very hard and as he once told Frank Keating of the Guardian, he used to get up at night to hit a hundred or so balls" at the moon." He could not see them but "I can tell how good and straight I hit them by the feel in hands and the sand."*

The intensive preparation which leads us to success in worldly pursuits is, in the single-minded concentration which it requires, on a parallel with dedication to religious goals. The highest levels of such dedication is indicated by the individual's willingness to miss his sleep so that his performance should improve. Indeed, the Quran lays emphasis on the virtues of keeping an all-night vigil:

You that are wrapped up in your mantle, keep vigil all night, save for a few hours; half the night or even less; or a little more – and with measured tone recite the Quran" for We are about to address to you words of surpassing gravity. It is in the watches of the night that impressions are strongest and words most eloquent; in the day time you are hard-pressed with work. Remember the name of your Lord and dedicate yourself to Him utterly (73:1-8).

From these verses it is clear that God requires His servant to be so devoted to divine service that they should rise at night in order to perform their duties to the Lord. One reason for adopting this nocturnal habit is that people are too preoccupied with mundane matters during the day to find the time or the solitude in which to perform their religious duties effectively, and another is that the impact of religious words and thoughts is greater at night, because the mind is free then of daytime concerns. And just as Ballesteros considered the winning of a golf tournament an objective worth missing his sleep for, so should the good Muslim feel that his religion is worth keeping a night vigil for. The true Muslim should so identify himself with Islam, that religious devotions at night should seem to him to be the most obvious and the most natural way to prepare himself for the great task of spreading its message to the four corners of the earth.



## An Envoy's Immunity

*In the name of God, the Beneficent, the Merciful. From the Prophet of God to Musailma, the liar. May Peace be upon him who follows divine guidance. The earth is God's, He gives it to those whom He chooses of His servants. Happy shall be the lot of the righteous.*

In the year 10 A.H. two men appeared before the Prophet one day, saying that they were the emissaries of one Musailma ibn Hubaib of Yamama. They handed over to him a letter in which Musailma addressed Mohammad as the Prophet of God, but in the same breath arrogated to himself that same privilege. The text of the letter ran:

"Peace be upon you. I have been made your partner in prophethood. Half of the country of Arabia belongs to us, and half of it belongs to the Quraysh but the Quraysh tend to encroach on our territory." After the letter had been read out, the Prophet asked them what they had to say. They replied that they had nothing further to add to Musailma's letter. The Prophet then told them that if there had been no unwritten law that envoys must never be harmed, he would have had them put to death. He then dictated the following letter to Musailma:

In the name of God, the Beneficent, the Merciful. From the Prophet of God to Musailma, the liar. May peace be upon him who follows divine guidance. The earth is God's, He gives it to those whom He chooses of His servants. Happy shall be the lot of the righteous.

If we compare the two letters, it is easy to see which has been written by the true and which by the false prophet of God: Musailma's letter spoke of nothing but material claims, whereas the Prophet's letter spoke only of God's will and man's duty to obey it.

The greatest lesson that we learn from this episode is that the envoys of other nations should not be killed, or even harmed. In this the Prophet set a fine example. Although he was seriously perturbed by the contents of the letter and by the effrontery of these two men in bringing it to him, he allowed them to go on their way unharmed. Islamic convention in such affairs is now a matter of international acceptance.

## Confusing Truth with Falsehood

*The Jews have been admonished in the Quran for their habit of confusing truth with falsehood. "Do not confound truth with falsehood," says the Quran, "nor knowingly hide the truth" (2:42). As Abdullah ibn Abbas, the first commentator of the Quran has noted, the phrase, "confounding truth with falsehood" means adulterating the former with additions of the latter.*

In ancient Arabia, the Jews were considered the greatest religious authorities, so that when people wished to enquire into anything connected with religion, it was to the Jewish theologians that they turned. When the Prophet of Islam was sent to the world, people went, therefore, to the Jewish scholars, and asked them for their opinion on the validity of his prophethood.

Now, the Jews realized that acceptance of the prophethood of Muhammad would mean the end of their religious hegemony, so they opposed the Prophet tooth and nail. They launched a whole campaign against him by spreading false propaganda about him, and whenever anyone asked them their opinion on Muhammad, they would raise issues which bore no relation to the question, thereby sowing the seeds of doubt in people's minds, and swaying public opinion against him. One recent Quranic commentator, writing in Urdu, observes: "They made every questioner nurture misgivings about the Prophet, his followers and his mission. At times they levelled accusations at the Prophet, or else they raised some irrelevant issue designed to make people doubt the validity of his claim to prophethood."

These are the tactics resorted to by people who do not wish to acknowledge a properly substantiated truth. By raising questions which are quite unconnected with the central issue, they do their utmost to mislead people. Unable to find any reasonable accusation to level, they take to making false accusations. Such action, however, far from achieving lasting and positive results, serves only to underscore their own despicable culpability.

22 September 1988

### Faith attaches one to God

Bara' ibn Azib reported the Prophet as saying:

The strongest knot of faith is living for the sake of God and animosity for the sake of God.”

*(Hadith)*

## A Journey

*On August 23, 1986, a conference on Communalism and National Integration was held in the Dr. Alma Latifi Hall of Bombay. A wide range of religious and social organisations, including the Al-Risala Friends Circle of Bombay, co-operated in the organization of this Conference, and the Chief Editor of Al-Risala, Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, was himself among the participants. Impressions of his journey, which lasted from the 22nd to the 24th of August, 1986, first appeared in the Urdu Al-Risala in October 1986. Continuing our series on recent journeys undertaken by Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, we publish here an abridged, translated version of that account.*

### Bombay – Venue of Conference on Communal Harmony:

I arrived in Bombay on the 22nd of August and stayed for two nights at Land's End Guest House on Malabar Hill. It was appropriate that a Conference on Communal Harmony should be held in Bombay for, besides being the seventh largest city in the world and the commercial capital of India, Bombay is a truly cosmopolitan city. People belonging to every religion live there. Hindus make up approximately fifty per-cent of the population, while Muslims, Christians, Buddhists, Jains, Sikhs, Parsis and Jews constitute the remainder. Here, every language of India is spoken and even some foreign languages are in evidence. The most commonly spoken language, however, is Marathi.

### The Conference Opens:

The Conference began on the morning of August 23, at 10 a.m. On reaching the Dr. Alma Latifi Hall, I noticed that the place was swarming with men in uniform. Some armed guards were even stationed on the roof. The reason for this was that the Chief Minister of Maharashtra, Mr. S.B. Chavan, was to open the Conference, and a number of other central and state ministers were present along with him on the stage. Before 1947, our leaders told us that it was only foreign rulers who required security arrangements. When India became free and representatives of the people took over the reins of power, there would be no further need for police and para-military forces to provide security, and the nation would be spared the undue burden of paying for such precautions. However, it would appear that the need for security is greater now than ever before. As one police officer put it: "Nowadays, work in the field of crime detection is negligible. All our efforts are channelled into providing security".

A message from Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi was read out, in which he said that communalism posed the greatest threat to our country. The same theme was taken up by various participants in their speeches. One speaker said that it was in this month of August, here in the city of Bombay, that the cry,

"Quit India," was first raised. Now, in this very same city, it was for us to utter another cry: "Communalism quit India." Everyone condemned communalism and violence out of hand. Some expressed the fear that, should the present situation continue, the country was likely to disintegrate.

It is interesting to note that the courage of communalism, violence and discrimination have become objects of universal condemnation. It is quite another matter that people may or may not be sincere in their condemnation, and may have no positive remedy to offer but because of the pressure of International situation, no one will stand up and advocate communalism today. In days gone by, this was not the case. This goes to show that if one adopts a tactful approach and a large-hearted attitude, there is no reason why any community, including the Muslims, should not be able to live with honour in this country.

### Addresses to the Conference:

I delivered two addresses to the Conference, one half-way through the proceedings, and one at the closure. In addition to the fifteen minutes allotted to every speaker, (including myself) a further period was allotted to me one evening, from 6 p.m. onwards, so that I could elaborate further upon how communal harmony was to be achieved. This meeting, at which I was the sole speaker, lasted one hour. It was well attended by both Hindus and Muslims, most of whom expressed their agreement and approval.

In my fifteen-minute talk during the course of the Conference, I mentioned that, to me, the greatest irony of modern Indian history was that a country which had won its independence through non-violence should adopt the path of violence once independence had been gained.

The history of the freedom struggle, I said, began in 1857. Until Mahatma Gandhi's entry into Indian politics in 1919, this movement followed – without success – a course of violent struggle. When Gandhiji entered politics, he decided that the freedom movement should be conducted on a non-violent basis. There is an amusing story that highlights the difficulties posed by this policy. A certain District Collector, baffled as to what measures could be taken to counter non-violence, wired the following message to the Secretariat: "Kindly wire instructions how to kill a tiger non-violently". In fact, by adopting a policy of non-violence, Mahatma Gandhi made it normally indefensible for the British to suppress the freedom movement by force. Governing India, had been easy for them up till then, for it had been a matter of suppressing force with force. There was no such weapon in their arsenal, however, with which to combat non-violence.

What was needed now in India, I continued, was a "reverse course" policy, similar to that adopted in post-war times by Japan. Until the Second World War, Japan was set on a course of violence. After the end of the War, however, it changed course and began advancing by leaps and bounds on the course of non-violence, with the result that Japan's destiny has undergone a complete change in just forty years.

After giving other examples from modern history on how people have changed course from violent confrontation to non-violent construction, and with highly successful results, I pointed out that it was the Prophet of Islam who first showed the world the effectiveness of such a policy. In the context of the conditions prevailing in Arabia at the time, the peace treaty of Hudaibiyyah amounted to just such a “reverse course” policy on the part of the Prophet, he being the first to formulate a policy of this nature. All we have to do is follow in his footsteps, a much easier task than having to chalk out an unknown path of our own.

What is needed in India today is for us to adopt a reverse course. There must be love instead of hate, non-violence in place of violence. Rather than being suspicious of one another, we must cultivate an atmosphere of mutual trust. Confrontation must be set aside, leaving us free to tackle the task of peaceful reconstruction. This reverse course, as soon as it is adopted, will lead us on the path to prosperity. Today we have lost our way and are a long way adrift from our true destination, so that whichever community first takes the initiative in adopting a reverse course will be one to take the lead over other communities in every walk of life in the days to come.

### **The Secular and Non-Secular Approach:**

Our evening meal was taken at the residence of Dr. Naik, where there was a group of newsmen from the newspaper *Blitz* waiting to interview me. This was one more experience which confirmed my view that journalists who call themselves “Islamic” suddenly become “un-Islamic” when it comes to interviewing somebody, while those who are labelled “secular” adopt a more intelligent approach.

The thing about these Islamic persons is that they have put human beings into two different categories: those in agreement and those in opposition. On the one hand, there is their ‘own’ group, while the others are regarded as outsiders. While addressing the former group, they adopt a moderate tone, but with people whom they consider antagonists they lose all sense of balance in their manner of address.

People who are secular in their outlook, on the other hand, adopt quite a different approach. They have not placed other people in separate compartments in their own minds and for this reason they maintain their equanimity when conducting an interview. *Blitz* is counted amongst our country’s secular newspapers. My interview by its correspondents took place therefore in a very cordial atmosphere. Questions and answers were exchanged in a balanced and moderate tone.

Their final question was: “Could you give us a summary of your opinion on the Muslims of today?” I answered: “The Muslims have lost all sense of forbearance. Unless one learns to put up with things which are not to one’s liking, one will be unable to retain any position in this world. If one loses this capacity, one loses everything. If the Muslims can only learn to take the rough with the smooth, they will surely regain all that they have lost.”

## Observations on Urdu Journalism:

During my brief stay in Bombay, I had the chance to meet a number of people. Generally, conversations centred on the current state of affairs affecting Muslims. In certain gatherings, I noted that Muslims, both in India and elsewhere in the world, are always complaining about their treatment at the hands of others, whereas in fact, in this world one gets no more than one deserves. The difficulties faced by Muslims today are not the result of oppression by others, but stem rather from the Muslims' own backwardness.

I gave one example of this, namely the present-day state of Urdu journalism. So inferior is Urdu journalism in India, where it is largely in the hands of Muslims, that it cannot really be called journalism by modern standards. Indeed, sad to say, judging by the material it prints, it must be said that Urdu journalism is little better than "yellow journalism", a term first coined in America towards the end of the nineteenth century. (The term "yellow journalism" is applied to journalism which is sensationalist in character.) Whereas in other countries this form of journalism has faded into obscurity, it must be said that it is still alive in its worst form in the pages of India's Urdu newspapers.

Why is it that this sick form of journalism has been so quick to take root amongst the Muslims? I ventured the opinion that this could be traced firstly to educational backwardness and, perhaps less obviously, to the minimal participation of Muslims in the national industrial scene. Today Muslims do not possess even a one per cent share in the nation's industry. This is a serious disadvantage from the point of view of Urdu journalism, for it cannot avail of the financial backing, largely through advertising, which comes automatically to other sections of the media.

In order to compensate for this lack of a steady income from industry, Muslim newspapers try to increase their readership by printing articles of a sensational and emotionally charged nature. Were Muslim newspapers assured of regular income from industrial advertising, they would not have to resort to this "yellow" form of journalism, in the same way as a person with high qualifications in medicine or engineering does not have to resort to criminal means of making a living. It is people who have remained uneducated through neglect or deprivation who stoop to such extremities. If Urdu journalism has become jaundiced in India it is precisely because it has been deprived of the healthy living which only industrial underpinnings can provide.

In the middle of August, 1986, a Muslim Urdu newspaper brought out a special issue in celebration of Eid al-Adhha, the front page of which carried a picture of human corpses. These were the corpse of Muslims who had been burnt or slaughtered in the communal riots which took place in Ahmedabad on July 9, 1986. There can be no doubt of the painful nature of the event which this photograph depicted but what is equally noteworthy is that the inside pages of the newspapers were printed in black-and-white, an ordinary news sheet, while this picture of burnt and mutilated corpses was in colour, and printed on art paper. One was left with the impression that the editorial staff of the newspaper

considered this scene to be the most interesting item available to them. It was for this reason that they had accorded it such a high degree of prominence.

The printing of pictures of corpses in this way amount to using them and the sentiments they arouse for commercial ends. Of course it is quite true to say that what keeps most of our newspapers in circulation is communal rioting. Were communal riots not to take place in India, these newspapers would lose their lifeline. Can one imagine anything more stupefyingly vulgar than the commercialization of burnt and mutilated corpses in this way?

### Recording Session with Bombay Radio:

While I was in Bombay, the local radio-station recorded a talk of mine, which was broadcast at a later date. The subject of the talk “The Universal Principles of Islam” – was chosen by the radio authorities and as I had been informed of the programme in advance, I had ample time to prepare a fifteen-minute talk on this subject.

### A Lesson from a Taxi-Driver:

One of the more memorable of my experience in Bombay concerned a taxi-driver, called Heera Lal, with whom I travelled on one occasion. As we drove along, I put a few questions to him about his profession. When I asked him how he avoided accidents in this busy metropolis, he gave me an answer which exceeded for sheer practical wisdom anything I have heard from great present-day Muslim scholars. “We have to make allowances for the mistakes of others,” he said, explaining that the streets of Bombay are full of reckless drivers who show scant respect for the rules of driving. “If we were to drive like them, sooner or later we would surely be involved in an accident. So what others fail to do, we have to do for them. That is, when they make a mistake, we have to cancel out their mistake by taking evasive action.”

It is not worth a driver’s while to stop and argue with everyone who crosses his path as to who is in the right and who is in the wrong. By doing so, he is only putting himself in a vulnerable position. So, instead of adopting a rigid, rational posture, he is pragmatic in his approach; rather than argue about the rights and wrongs of some untoward incidents he concentrates on saving himself from the dire consequences of other’s mistakes. By unilateral action, he rectifies the mistakes committed by others. He does not even wave an accusing finger at them. Conciliatory action of this nature is called *iradh* (avoidance) in the Quran, which stresses that Muslims should adopt this policy on the highways of life.

And this was the thought that dominated my mind after my conversation with Heera Lal. “What he said about driving on roads,” I thought, “is true also of life. The tactics adopted by a taxi-driver as he goes on his way along the roads of a busy city should be adopted by all individuals as they proceed on the road of life. In other words, we have to make allowances for the mistakes made by others. That is how a taxi-driver avoids accidents and, in the same way, we can avoid clashes in our dealings with others”.



How extraordinary it is that an ordinary taxi-driver realizes this secret of life, which has eluded the great Muslim leaders, who are in control of the steering-wheel of the Muslim *Ummah*. Perhaps Muslim leaders are not as serious in the performance of the task entrusted to them – the guidance of the Muslim community on its course through life – as a taxi-driver is in the steering of his vehicle. A taxi-driver really feels for his car and for this reason he knows, without being told, exactly how he should look after it, while one who does not share such feelings cannot understand, even after being told, how he should go about looking after that which has been entrusted to his care.

### Final Address to the Conference:

In accordance with a previously arranged programme, I delivered an address at the end of the Conference. This talk lasted for one hour and I began it with these words:

“What is success? To live in accordance with realities.

What is failure? To defy them.”

I gave a number of examples from the Quran and *Hadith*, aimed at illustrating the pattern on which the world has been created. Here, mankind is constantly involved in rivalry and competition with his fellows. Some emerge as winners in the race of life, while others lag behind; some come out victors, while others taste the bitterness of defeat. This is a fact of life, one which is in exact accordance with the laws of creation. It is a situation which will be with us until the end of time. Accordingly, we should seek to resolve problems by diplomatic means and by constructive strengthening of our position. Complaining about our situation and protesting over our lot in life will do us no good whatsoever.

Due to other commitments, I was unable to accede to the many requests I received to prolong my stay in Bombay. I returned to Delhi as scheduled on the morning of the 24th of August.

30 September 1988

## LETTERS

*Recently I saw two issues of AL-RISALA that your office very kindly sent to the Islamic Society of Orange County. I am very impressed with the content and style of AL-RISALA. This is, to my knowledge, one of the best Dawa magazines published anywhere in the world. May Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala bless you and your efforts.*

*Please continue sending this magazine to the Islamic Society of Orange County. We would like to place it in our library for the benefit of many Muslims who come here. Also permit us to publish articles from your magazine in our NEWSLETTER, of course with due acknowledgement.*

DR. MUZAMMIL H. SIDDIQI

Director

The Islamic Society of Orange County

California

US.A.

*After reading the book GOD ARISES, I wasn't the same as before: It made a thought-provoking perusal. No doubt, it is a good addition to Islamics.*

DR. MOTILAL JATWANI

Head of Sindhi Department

University of Delhi

New Delhi

*Kudos to you for coming-out with a classic publication, KHATOON-E-ISLAM. Its perusal proved quite interesting and enlightening besides opening up new vistas to knowledge and veracity of Islamic injunctions vis-a-vis woman.*

TARIQ A. SHAH

Sopore

(Kashmir)

*I was fortunate enough to read a few copies of your AL-RISALA. Your writing greatly impressed me. Thereby, I would like to become a subscriber to the English version of AL-RISALA so that my family and friends could benefit from this good work.*

SARA BAIG

Reisterstown

USA

*Recently I read AL-RISALA and found myself liking it. Since it's contents are a source of guidance in every body's daily life, I convinced my many friends to be the regular reader of this journal.*

BASHIR AHMED

Bilasipara, Assam

*I congratulate you on having brought out AL-RISALA which contains excellent reading material relevant to the requirements of the society in today's context.*

B.K. Srivastava

Gandhidham, Kutch