

ENGLISH BIMONTHLY ISSUE 107 JULY-AUGUST 2022

SPIRIT OF ISLAM

Towards Global Peace & Spiritual Living



**Peace opens the doors to positive activities
while violence closes the doors to them.**



SPIRIT OF ISLAM

Towards Global Peace & Spiritual Living

ISSUE 107 JULY-AUGUST 2022

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

PROF. FARIDA KHANAM

EDITORIAL DIRECTOR

DR. NAGHMA SIDDIQI

ADVISORS

INAYATHULLAH UMRI
PROF. ZAHEERUDDIN

SUB-EDITORS

DR. MARIA KHAN
MOHAMMAD USMAN

PUBLISHER

FATHIMA SARAH

OFFICE

SPIRIT OF ISLAM
002, HM WIMBERLY, 6
BERLIE STREET CROSS
LANGFORD TOWN
BENGALURU 560025, INDIA

ACCESS ONLINE AT

www.spiritofislam.co.in

CPS INTERNATIONAL

www.cpsglobal.org
www.cpsquran.com



CONTENTS

■ FROM THE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF'S DESK	5
■ PAGES FROM MAULANA'S DIARY	8
■ HISTORY SPEAKS	10
■ THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MAN AND GOD	11
■ TOWARDS GLOBAL PEACE	12
■ CHARACTER BUILDS THE NATION	14
■ ETHICS AND TECHNOLOGY	15
■ ON THE THRESHOLD OF PARADISE	16
■ SEEKING THE RIGHT ALTERNATIVES	24
■ GOD HELPS THOSE WHO HELP THEMSELVES	26
■ AN INTERVIEW WITH MS KAUSER IZHAR	28
■ GIVING AS GOD WILLS	36
■ CPS NEWSLETTER	37
■ CHILDREN'S CORNER	41
■ MAGAZINE REVIEW	43
■ THE WORD OF GOD	46
■ YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED	48

FROM THE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF'S DESK



Prof Farida Khanam is an author, editor, translator, public speaker and former professor of Islamic Studies at Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi. Among her books are 'A Simple Guide to Islam' and 'A Study of World's Major Religions'. She has translated into English many books authored by Maulana Wahiduddin Khan. Currently the chairperson of CPS International, she is a regular contributor of articles to various publications. Prof Khanam has edited Maulana's English translation of the Quran and has also translated his Urdu commentary on the Quran into English. She can be reached at spiritofislamperiodical@gmail.com

LESSONS FROM THE VOLCANIC ERUPTIONS

VOLCANOES are hot matter emanating from the earth or any other planet or planet's surface. It emits molten rock, hot pieces of rock, and hot gases. The US space agency NASA website defines volcano in these words:

A volcano is an opening on the surface of a planet or moon that allows material warmer than its surroundings to escape from its interior. When this material escapes, it causes an eruption. An eruption can be explosive, sending material high into the sky. (Accessed on 15.11.21)

According to *Encyclopedia Britannica*, volcanic eruption is a dangerous manifestation of earth's power.

Volcanoes are one of the natural disasters. Some other natural disasters are: forest fire, dust storms, floods, hurricanes, tornadoes, earthquakes, tsunamis, etc.

These natural disasters affect the environment in such a way that they cause loss of natural resources, economy and precious life. In the face of natural disasters, man and all his developments become helpless. These natural experiences teach that man is not the master of this world. In this world man must lead a life of modesty and humility so that he can keep learning lessons from these experiences.

Volcanic eruptions and the accompanying earthquakes are mentioned as one of the signs of the Doom's Day in the Quran.

The earthquake on Doomsday will be the announcement of the end of the testing period for man. This would mean that the freedom which was theirs on account of their being on trial, has now been taken away from them.

When the earth is shaken with its violent shaking, when the earth shakes off her burdens, when man asks, 'What is happening to her?' (99: 1-3)

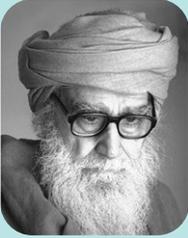
Earth brings out its loads by volcanic eruptions. In the Quran, earthquakes precede volcanic eruptions. The earthquake on Doomsday will be the announcement of the end of the testing period for man. This would mean that the freedom which was theirs on account of their being on trial, has now been taken away from them. Now the time has come when human beings will be recompensed for their deeds. □

Prof Farida Khanam



This beautiful world of nature created by God is well on its way to being ruined by man. Widespread violence, ecological disturbance and global warming are the biggest threats we are facing today. We have to work unitedly and sincerely to save nature in the interest of all of humanity.

IN FOCUS



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

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

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

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

-Maulana Wahiduddin Khan (1925-2021)



PAGES FROM MAULANA'S DIARY

The following is a selection from the diary of Maulana Wahiduddin Khan.

July 23, 1991

I saw many men in my life who possessed tremendous talent. They also received higher education. However, they failed in their practical lives. They died after leading an ordinary life or are now in a state of grief and sorrow as they reach old age. I consider each of these cases as a case of overestimation. The exaggerated assessment of their ability and talent did not allow them to do anything worthwhile. They could not adapt to the tasks they were assigned, because they considered them of lesser status than their exaggerated status.

August 14, 1991

Many years ago, I read an article by a psychologist in *Reader's Digest* magazine. It was titled *Obey that Impulse*. The article summarized that sometimes there is a favourable or opposing impulse that one feels about a task from within. It is a sign of nature. Therefore, it should be followed.

This observation is quite right. I have experienced it many times. Yesterday I took a bath. Then, without wiping the water on the body with a towel, I started putting on clothes. At that moment a feeling emerged from within to wipe the water with the towel and then wear the cloth. But I ignored this impulse and put on a cloth on the still wet body. After a few hours, I started feeling uneasy. Today, when I checked my body temperature with a thermometer, it was about 100 degrees. Nature gives its alarm in every case. This alarm is very accurate. A man should never ignore this alarm of nature.

October 9, 1991

On October 8, I was in Rome. With the help of Dr Leonard, I toured the Vatican and visited the Islamic Centre under construction in Rome. Dr Leonard showed both the places with great interest and guided me at each step. On the contrary, when I reached the Islamic Centre, there was no enthusiasm among the people there. When I asked for an introductory brochure of the Islamic Centre, they had no such brochure to give.

The reason for this difference is probably missionary zeal. Christians have a missionary mind, so they make concessions to other human beings. Muslims don't have this missionary zeal. Therefore, there is no enthusiasm for other human beings.

October 27, 1991

Muhammad Tajuddin Raj is a B.Sc. (Agriculture) student. He said he had an accident in 1985 in which he suffered a severe spine injury. He was treated for two years. During his treatment, he had to sacrifice his studies.

He was bitterly disappointed after the accident. He started thinking that he could no longer study and that his life was over. It was at this time that he started reading *Al-Risala* (Urdu version of *Spirit of Islam*). From its pages, he read that: Don't use an excuse, even if it is a good one; even if a man's past and present are destroyed, his future is still intact.

These insights instilled in him a new determination and courage. He enrolled in the studies. He secured the first rank and then he got admission in B.Sc. Agriculture. He said quite enthusiastically, "*Al-Risala* gave me something that no one else gave me".

January 4, 1992

Time magazine's cover story of December 22, 1991, was about former Russian President Mikhail Gorbachev. On the front page was a picture of Gorbachev and it was captioned: *A Man without a Country*.

When I read it, I thought it was not just the story of Gorbachev, but the story of every man. In this world, every man has a country of which he has become the lord. However, death separates every man from his country. Then he is sent to the Hereafter, deprived of everything, where his eternal fate will be decided. □

HISTORY SPEAKS

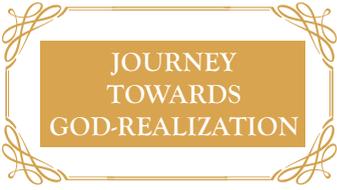
ROGER II (1095-1154), founder of the Norman dynasty in Sicily, holds a distinguished place among medieval European monarchs. He had his capital at Palermo, and is noted for having made Sicily into a prosperous country. He established a strong administration, and constructed a powerful fleet. The success of Roger II, according to a western historian, can be attributed in part to the fact that he "made Sicily a meeting place of European and Arabic scholars."

Al-Idrisi was a contemporary of Roger II. Born in Marrakesh, he was educated in Spanish universities. Later he travelled extensively in Europe, Asia and Africa. He became the greatest geographer of his age, and a close friend and adviser to Roger II, at whose court he served as official geographer. Roger II originally invited Al-Idrisi to Sicily to make a map of the world for him.

Here we can see the cause of the esteem in which Muslims were held in times past. They represented the true Islam to the world not through protests and demands, nor from spreading conflict and terror, but through being useful to the world. By virtue of hard struggle, they established themselves as intellectual community of the world. They had something that others did not have, so people flocked to their sides. That was how Muslims raised their standing in the world in times past. It is by the same method that they can improve their position today, and build a better future for themselves. □



*Historians have generally acknowledged that the Prophet of Islam achieved extraordinary success in his life. For instance, Michael Hart states in his book, **The 100** that Prophet Muhammad was supremely successful on both the religious and the secular fronts, and places him right at the top of his list of most influential people from the human history.*



THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MAN AND GOD

IT is written in the Quran: When My servants ask you about Me, say that I am near. I respond to the call of one who calls, whenever he calls to Me: let them, then, respond to Me, and believe in Me, so that they may be rightly guided. (2: 186) This shows that the relationship between man and God is reciprocal: man offers God what he has, then God bestows His favours in return. Man offers his Lord gift of realization, piety and thankfulness. In return, God provides him with eternal guidance and prosperity.

Man can deal with any problem in either of two ways: the pious and morally proper way, or the way in which such values are abandoned. The correct answer to the call of God is for one to use one's intellect to ascertain the right course of action and then follow it, difficult as it may seem. One then automatically avoids the easy, but misguided way.

Sometimes one is faced with the choice between callous and unjust action on the one hand, and righteous, fair treatment on the other. If one answers God's call as it should be answered, one will not flinch from the righteous path and will refrain from oppression and cruelty.

Man is free to consider what he has, within him and outside, to be the result of chance; alternatively he may look at it all as the fruits of his efforts; or he can acknowledge reality and consider it all as having come from God. A person who adopts this latter course will answer the call of God implicit in every blessing by exclaiming, "Lord, You are the bestower and You have given us everything!" When one has offered one's mind and heart to God in this way, then God will provide one with guidance, which means a righteous life in this world and eternal Paradise in the next. □

The correct answer to the call of God is for one to use one's intellect to ascertain the right course of action and then follow it, difficult as it may seem.

TOWARDS GLOBAL PEACE

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



END MISUNDERSTANDINGS THROUGH SOUND ARGUMENTS

How should Muslims respond to Blasphemy against the Prophet of Islam?

In Islam, blasphemy is a subject of intellectual discussion rather than condemnation, protest and retaliation. Several verses in the Quran show that 'abuse of the Prophet' is not a subject of punishment. Instead, sound arguments should be presented to address the mind of people.

God sent more than one lakh prophets to different regions. Their contemporaries almost always responded negatively by using abusive language. (36: 30, 16: 101, 7: 66) However, the Quran does not prescribe physical punishment for them. Rather the Quran commands the Prophet to refrain from using abusive language in retaliation:

"But do not revile those they invoke instead of God, lest they, in their hostility, revile God out of ignorance." (6: 108) There are many such verses in the Quran guiding us that we have to abstain from negative reactions until the last moment in such situations.

Incidents that are termed today as abusing the Prophet were prevalent during the life of the Prophet. When the Prophet presented his message before the Arabs, they misbehaved with him.

Here are some of the epithets given to prophets as mentioned in the Quran: "a liar" (40: 24), "possessed" (15: 6), "a fabricator" (16: 101), and "a foolish man" (7: 66). However, nowhere does the Quran prescribe any physical punishment for these offences.

It clearly shows that 'abuse of the Prophet' is not a subject of condemnation or seeking punishment; rather, it is a subject of removing their misunderstanding through sound arguments in order to address their mind. In other words, peaceful persuasion should be used to help the person understand the truth of the matter rather than trying to punish him.

There is ample evidence that tells us what to do in such cases. For example, once, when the Prophet was in Makkah, a person came to him and told him face to face, "O Muhammad, you are a condemned person". The Prophet smiled. This smile was a moral response and was bound to hit his conscience. So, he fell into introspection and took no time in accepting him as a Prophet and became one of his followers.

It is interesting to note the response of the Prophet and his Companions on such occasions. When such issues arose, they never indulged in aggressive activities against people of other faiths. Instead, they prayed for them and tried to remove their misconceptions by engaging in discussion with them, adopting a peaceful method.

In ancient times, people generally gave expression to their thoughts in poetry. The opponents of the Prophet used to recite abusive couplets directed against him. In order to counter such couplets or poems, the Prophet would ask his Companion Hassan ibn Thabit, whom *Encyclopaedia Britannica* calls 'poetic defender', to counter literary attacks on him in the form of couplets. Hassan was Islam's first religious poet.

We find many such incidents in the life of the Prophet. The Prophet peacefully countered their arguments with arguments. He attempted to satisfy the other party at an intellectual level. With these examples of the Prophet and his Companions, can resorting to violence be justified? Muslims, therefore, must deal with such cases by reasoned arguments rather than seek to mete out punishment.

All Islamic teachings are based on reason and argument. As per this Islamic injunction, if a person commits 'blasphemy', the responsibility of Muslims is to meet the concerned person and try to remove his misunderstanding by peaceful means. If they fail to understand, then according to the teachings of the Prophet, Muslims are left only with one option, that is, to pray for them in all sincerity.

This article appeared in June 10, 2022 edition of SPEAKING TREE of Times of India (<https://www.speakingtree.in/article/end-misunderstandings-through-sound-arguments>). □

CHARACTER BUILDS THE NATION

Fundamental Unit of National Progress

TOYOTA, a Japanese motor company, was founded by Kiichiro Toyoda and incorporated on August 28, 1937. Toyota is one of the largest automobile manufacturers in the world, producing about 10 million vehicles per year. This is only one of the many examples which explains the fast development of industry in Japan. General Motors and the Ford Motor Company of the USA are the biggest motor manufacturing companies in the world. The annual production of these motor companies is much less than the Toyota Motor Company.

Temperament plays the most crucial role in the making of a nation. It is important in nation-building in the way that bricks are important in any kind of construction work.

Considering the non-existence or at least paucity of all the major raw materials of industry in Japan such as coal, iron, petroleum, etc., Japan still manages to surpass all other countries in industrial progress. One might well ask why. A *Hindustan Times* commentator (August 25, 1981) attributes Japan's success to "A national spirit of compromise and co-operation, and a willingness to endure short-term setbacks for the long-term good of the nation, company or family."

It is temperament then which plays the most crucial role in the making of a nation. It is important in nation-building in the way that bricks are important in any kind of construction work. A house made of unfired bricks is unsafe, because any calamity, even a minor one, can bring it tumbling down. A building, on the other hand, which is made of kiln-fired bricks can be trusted to withstand the onslaught of tempests and floods.

A character so tempered that it can be depended upon through thick and thin like the kiln-fired brick is what in the long run builds a nation, for it is only such a temperament which can remain attuned to the more and more complex procedures of industrialization and remain steadfastly geared to national progress. □



ETHICS AND TECHNOLOGY

Finding the Point of Emphasis

SOON after the completion of a multi-storeyed building called Akashdeep in Mumbai, the whole construction collapsed. The engineers said that the reason for its collapse was that less cement had been used than specified by safety regulations.

In another statement the director of a technical institute said, "RCC construction is a scientific process which is excellent in the hands of qualified and experienced people, but dangerous if managed by incompetent engineers and contractors." (*The Times of India*, September 4, 1983)

This appears to be the correct and proper explanation of the matter, but if we really think about the word 'incompetent' as applied to the engineers and contractors concerned, we realize that it needs to be replaced by the more appropriate word 'corrupt'. The truth is that such problems in this country are traceable to excessive greed and corruption, and not to a lack of technical expertise.

The Bhakra Dam being a major government project, the services of the top engineers were obtained for its construction. But, no sooner was it ready than its walls began to crack, costing the government crores of rupees to rebuild.

Such events are frequent in this country. Despite all such ventures being supervised by technical experts, one hears of roads falling into disrepair the moment they are constructed, of buildings needing to be repaired almost immediately after being built, and of plans remaining incomplete even after projects are 'completed.' All this is the result of corruption and has nothing to do with a lack of technical expertise.

Corruption is a psychological evil, while lack of skill is a technical shortcoming. A psychological evil cannot be removed by technical improvement. If we are genuinely interested in making a better society in our country, we shall have to work for the psychological, or moral reform of the individuals who comprise the nation. Merely bringing about an increase in the number of technical courses available will not make them turn over a new leaf. □

If we are genuinely interested in making a better society in our country, we shall have to work for the psychological, or moral reform of the individuals who comprise the nation.

ON THE THRESHOLD OF PARADISE

The Final Phase of Human Civilization

WHAT is Paradise? There is no mystery about Paradise. It is an accepted scientific fact just like any other scientific fact. In reality, it is a transformation of the earth. As, we know, the earth was initially an inchoate, molten mass, then it cooled down to its present state, taking the form of our world as we know it today. In a similar way, another transformation will take place in the future, but to a far greater degree: at that time, our non-paradisical earth will turn into Paradise.

In this present world, many things are brought into existence as a result of conversion. For example, water results from the conversion of two gases. A tree represents the conversion of the soil's nutrients. Machines are a conversion of crude iron into complex mechanisms. The industrial world ensures the conversion of inert materials into socially useful commodities.

In the same way, in the future, conversion shall take place on a far grander scale. At that time, this far from ideal world will change into an ideal world. This in terms of religion would be known as Paradise. This instance of conversion is referred to in the Quran in the following verse: 'when the earth shall be changed into another earth.' (14: 48)

This process of conversion has repeatedly taken place on earth. On our earth, conversion is a known natural process. That is, it is a normal occurrence. This being so, believing in Paradise is just like believing in the continuance of a predictable series of events. It is just like saying of a factory that it has produced 999 items and now the thousandth item is about to be produced.

Paradise is not just a matter of religious belief or dogma. According to the eternal laws of nature, it is a state which is bound to come into existence. A study of the law governing earthly systems shows that the present world is undergoing a continuous evolutionary process, of which, Paradise, logically, is the ultimate phase. Paradise is the natural culmination of a creation which at a certain point in time had a definite beginning.

Astronomical studies show that the universe is so extremely vast, and expanding at such a rate that, even with the use of very powerful telescopes, its total dimensions have yet to be estimated. In this immeasurably vast universe, the earth is an extremely tiny planet. In

comparison to this universe, our earth is even smaller than a grain of sand.

Throughout the entire universe, our earth is a very rare exception, in that it is the only place where exceptional things like water, greenery, air and oxygen are present. If life can prevail on this earth, it is because side by side with it there are life-support systems. On the earth, there exist all those valuable elements by utilizing which man can, if he wills, build a civilization. It is the task of human beings to convert this potential into reality.

It is quite evident that civilization, passing continuously from one stage of its history to another, is moving on from its initial stage of development to a higher plateau altogether. (For details of this journey of civilization, see the United Nations publication: *The History of Mankind*).

This journey of human civilization has been mentioned in the Quran in terms of the changes that take place on earth from daytime to the night time. In a similar way, a much bigger event shall take place on earth. As the Quran puts it: "You will progress from stage to stage." (84: 19) The evolution of history makes it clear that human civilization is continuously advancing along the path of progress and development. The final model of this progress and development will be that which is called "spiritual civilization", or Paradise.

Today man stands on the threshold of Paradise. The present transitional period is a condition which may be called Paradise-in-the-making.

The history of civilization shows that it has passed through 3 major phases and now all the indications are that it is in the fourth and final stage of its journey. The 3 major phases of civilization are as follows:

1. The Stone Age
2. The Agricultural Age
3. The Industrial Age

It is a matter of common knowledge that these 3 phases of civilization have already taken place. However, Alvin Toffler, author of the bestseller, *Future Shock* says that the fourth phase or probably the last period of civilization will take place in the not too distant future. This author calls this fourth phase the Super-Industrial Age, which, as compared to the previous phases, will be less materialistic. Therefore, it would be more appropriate to equate this fourth phase with spiritual civilization.

Let us take the first period of civilization. It was a time when man could only use whatever material was present on the earth in its original form. Of all the materials, stone was the most readily available and the most useful. Although many other things existed on the earth apart from stone, like wood and animals, and there was even a simple form of agriculture, because stone took pride of place as the most widely used, this phase came to be called the Stone Age. So far as early Homo sapiens were concerned, they possessed the same natural qualities as the people of the present day. For example, the latest research has shown that the human brain during the Stone Age civilization contained around 86 billion neurons, no less than what is contained in the human brain today. It was only because of a lack of education and knowledge that man at that time could not utilize his hidden potential.

Then came the dawn of the agricultural period, during which man discovered more and more ways of harnessing nature. This period saw the development of irrigation, ploughing, the rearing and breeding of animals, and the use of iron and carts with wheels. In this way, it was possible to lead a better life as compared to that of the previous age.

The industrial period began at the point when man moved ahead from animal power and invented mechanical power. Now man converted water into steam power and made steam engines. There was a further leap forward when petrol was discovered and used for propulsion. Similarly, modern methods of communication were developed which converted the whole world into a global village.

In the Industrial Age, by using mechanical power, man engaged in new enterprises such as the building of cities along modern lines, the production of fast-moving vehicles, the rapid communication of news, the setting up of paper mills, radio, television and eventually the coming of the Internet and social media.

In this way, there came into existence a whole new world, both beautiful and meaningful, with a fresh viewpoint on education and learning, which was called the industrial civilization.

The fourth phase of civilization is what Alvin Toffler has called the Super-industrial Age. In his view, the most exceptional aspect of this age will be complete automation, i.e. the use of electronics will be on such a large scale that most jobs will be performed with the absolute minimum of human control or intervention. In a normal situation a man would, ideally, be able, single-handedly, to fulfill all of his own personal requirements.

The advent of automation is an advance intimation of the joys of Paradise. Indeed, of Paradise, the Quran says: "Therein you shall have all that your souls desire, and therein you shall have all that you ask for as a rich provision from One who is ever forgiving and most merciful."

(41: 31-32)

From the scientific and academic standpoint, the above-mentioned facts make the ideal age of the future—the "spiritual civilization"—understandable in terms of being a super-industrial age. This Super-Industrial Age is yet to reach completion, but it is in this fourth phase that the ideal world—in religious terms, Paradise—will probably take shape, in the world Hereafter.

Paradise is the final period of the journey of civilization. Such a world, by the law of nature, will definitely come into existence in due course. Therein, all types of limitations and disadvantages will be brought to an end. There will be no fear or grief, nor will there be any noise or pain. All those potentialities which have been apparent to man from the very first day will be fulfilled in the world of Paradise.

Moreover, the human personality will also attain new heights of development. This for man will be the culmination point: he will become the perfect man. He will find an eternal life in which old age, accidents, disease and death are absent. This will be the ideal world where man will be in a position to utilize the full potential of his personality, thus experiencing complete fulfillment.

Paradise is the final period of the journey of civilization. Today man stands on the threshold of Paradise. The present transitional period can be called, 'Paradise-in-the-making'.

Paradise will be the culminating point of the evolutionary process in human civilization. It will be the dawning of the perfect and ideal world of which man has always dreamt. On reaching there man will be eternally free from all sorrows and hardships. It will be the ideal realm of joy, peace and eternal happiness.

It should be borne in mind though that Paradise is not a place of stagnation. There man will make new discoveries all the time and this series of discoveries will be unending. For this reason there will be no boredom in Paradise, because boredom prevails only where new

***Today our world
is potentially a
Paradise. Tomorrow
this potential will
become a reality and
then the earth will
become a place of
eternal happiness
and joy.***

discoveries do not take place. To man, fresh experience is the greatest source of happiness, and in Paradise, the doors of unlimited truth will continue to open every single day. The pure bliss of Paradise will, therefore, not be fleeting in nature but truly eternal.

The making of Paradise is just as possible as the making of the earth and the development of different civilizations on earth. In the ancient Stone Age, there lay hidden a developed agricultural period, which emerged in due course. Similarly, in the agricultural period, the far more developed industrial period was hidden, and it also emerged at the proper time. We can, by the same token, say that there lies hidden in this industrial period a far more developed and refined spiritual period, which will appear in time for all to see. The emergence of this spiritual, or heavenly period is in practical terms as much of a possibility as that of previous periods of history.

In the industrial period, the earth has once again been beautified. Its construction has been meticulously planned. Developments in science and technology have made the earth, a far better place to live in. Similarly, with the dawn of the final period, the spiritual age, the earth will be further improved and it will then become an ideal world. There are a number of verses in the Quran giving clear indications of this. For instance, verse three of the 84th chapter speaks of the earth expanding, while another verse says; "Praise be to God who has fulfilled His promise to us and made us the inheritors of this land, letting us settle in the Garden wherever we want." (39: 74) Verse 21 of the 57th chapter describes Paradise as being "as vast as heaven and earth, which has been made ready for those who believe in God and His messengers."

Today our world is potentially a Paradise. Tomorrow this potential will become a reality and the earth will become a place of eternal happiness and joy. Events have shown that the present state of the earth is not an ideal one, even though on the earth there exists nature's life-support system in its perfect form. On the earth, this system may be at its best, but there is one thing in all this which is far from ideal. Here, good and evil exists alongside each other.

The misuse of freedom by flawed individuals is the source of all kinds of evil. But when the final phase of civilization approaches, all the evil will be separated from the good. They will be deprived of all the resources of the earth, and the earth will be entrusted solely to the good people. This is the truth which has been mentioned in the following verse; "And indeed We have written in Psalms (*Az-Zabur*) that

My righteous servants shall inherit the land.”(i.e. the land of Paradise) (21: 105) This statement made in the Quran is recorded in detail in the Book of Psalms in the Bible; “The righteous shall inherit the land and dwell in it forever.” (Psalms, 37: 29)

Studies show that in this vast universe our earth is a rare exception. In the vastness of space, there are huge stars in such multitudes that they outnumber the grains of sand on the sea-shore. But many of these stars are only balls of fire. It is a known fact that these stars have remained in the same condition for the last 13 billion years. In this apparently stagnant universe, only our earth is constantly changing and renewing itself. In an exceptional way, an evolutionary process is at work, for the earth continues to witness one stage after another.

Ten billion years ago, the earth was just a fireball. But then it cooled down to become a temperate planet. Subsequently there was a phase of heavy rains which led to the growth of vegetation. Then came the animals. Lastly the humans appeared. After the appearance of human beings, the process of civilization set in on the earth. In the first phase man was only able to build a primitive world. But later, he became more and more successful at constructing a highly developed world. This human success goes hand in hand with a continuous evolutionary process. And it is but natural to believe that one more stage is in the offing—that of a perfect world.

Paradise is the final stage of this evolutionary process, the perfect world where all types of limitations will come to an end. It is the eternal world man has been searching for, for thousands of years, in response to his natural urges.

Paradise is not something mysterious: it is the final stage of the known evolutionary process. So far as animals are concerned, organic evolution is a baseless assumption. But the periodic evolution of the non-living world is a generally accepted fact. According to this natural law, the advent of Paradise is entirely understandable. Studies show that, approximately 10 billion years ago, our earth was a ball of fire, before it became the cool planet on which we live today. Then when man first came to inhabit the earth, there was a period of what we would now

Paradise will only be found in a state of perfection in the world Hereafter. There man will find a life of joy, peace and happiness forever. There will be no necessity for physical labour; pleasant intellectual activities will suffice for the achievement of all desired goals

call under-development. After this came another evolutionary phase in the wake of the industrial revolution—a period of development.

Now according to the evolutionary law itself, the earth is heading towards a superior stage. This will be the last evolutionary stage of the earth which we can call the perfect world. In this ideal world, all types of limitations will come to an end.

By Divine arrangement, justice will prevail in its most perfect form. The wicked will be removed from the earth and only the virtuous will gain entry into this ideal world, where there will be no pollution of any sort. Calamities will cease to occur and all disadvantages such as disease, accidents, old age and death will be eradicated forever.

In the present world, all tasks are performed by hard work: indeed, hardship and success are inseparable. Such a state of affairs will no longer prevail in Paradise for such refined changes will take place that each activity will be an enjoyable one. As it is said in the Quran: "Truly, the dwellers of Paradise that day (the Day of Resurrection) will be busy in joyful activities." (36: 55)

With the coming of the industrial revolution and the age of consumerism, man actually thought that he could build a Paradise on earth, that the industrial age would culminate into the perfect world that he longs for. The superficiality of the notion that man could make a Paradise on earth was savagely dashed with the coming of pollution, acid rain and global warming. And now the Covid-19 pandemic has made man realize to the last extent that he cannot build a Paradise on earth.

Today we have realized to the last extent that the Paradise on earth that man has been seeking for thousands of years in response to his urges, cannot be built on earth. It will be found in a state of perfection in the world Hereafter.

There man will find a life of joy, peace and happiness forever. There will be no necessity for physical labour; pleasant intellectual activities will suffice for the achievement of all desired goals. Man must realize that he stands on the threshold of Paradise. The present earth is a Paradise-in-the-making, not Paradise. The question is how can man achieve the Paradise of his dreams? To find an answer to this question one must become aware of the Creation Plan of God.

God—the Creator of man, has created man according to His Plan. To become acquainted with this Plan it is necessary for man to have a thorough understanding of himself—just as the workings of a machine can only be understood when we study the drawings of the engineer who made it. Besides the mind of the engineer, there is no other thing that can clarify what the machine is meant for. The case of man is the same. The existence of man is such a unique phenomenon that no other such example can be found throughout the vastness of the cosmos. Man is rightly called the 'best of all creations,' which means the best and most meaningful 'being' among all the things created. Such a 'meaningful being' cannot have been created without a purpose. The Creator of man has created him according to a special Plan. The Quran, the preserved religious scripture, sheds light on this Plan.

Enthroned above the waters, it was He who created the heavens and the earth in six Days [periods], in order to test which of you is best in conduct. (11: 7) We have adorned the earth with attractive things, so that We may test humankind as to which one is best in conduct. (18: 7) He created death and life so that He might test you, and find out which of you is best in conduct. (67: 2) □



USA

Centre for Peace and Spirituality
2665 Byberry Road, Bensalem, PA 19020
kkaleemuddin@gmail.com



If you encounter any issue regarding the presentation of content on the Spirit of Islam website (www.spiritofislam.co.in), please mail in your suggestions or questions to usman_888@yahoo.com.

SEEKING THE RIGHT ALTERNATIVES

Broaden Your Perspective

A LUCKLESS passenger rushed, panting, into the station just as his train was steaming out. His watch unaccountably slow by ten minutes had let him down. "Don't worry, *Babuji*," sympathized a passing porter, there will be another train along in about a couple of hours. Why go away? Just wait here for it on this same platform." The passenger, keen to reach his destination, decided to accept his advice, even if it meant waiting two, long tedious hours. Just getting to where he wanted to go was too important to him to think of expending time and energy coming and going from the station all over again, and perhaps missing his train once again, so he stayed right where he was and catch his train he did.

When we miss a train, there is always the comforting knowledge that there is that next train coming along. That is the lesson that the platform teaches. It is then up to us to make the correct decision about our next move. But it is surprising how many people fail to grasp this reality. They are inexplicably plunged into gloom and depression when they fail initially to grasp an opportunity, and frequently adopt such a pessimistic attitude that they fritter away their precious energies in blaming others for their failures. How much better it would be if they were to make a proper assessment of the situation, taking all possibilities into account, and then seek new ways and means of achieving their goals, even if it means a lengthy wait. This is a matter simply of patience and determination. There is always that 'next train' for them to catch. It is just a question of being properly alert to this, and being ready to avail of that God-given second opportunity.

If, in any given situation, someone with whom you have business or personal relations turns hostile, pursuing a policy of open confrontation seldom reaps rewards. It is almost invariably more profitable to extend courtesy, love and sympathy. That is the way to a person's heart. It is only by pursuing such a course that a formidable foe may be transformed into a faithful friend.

Suppose you work in an office and, for reasons which you fail to comprehend, you are dismissed. In such a situation, if initial attempts to clear your name and have yourself honourably reinstated come to naught, it is seldom worthwhile persisting in your efforts. It is far better to wash your hands of the whole situation and try to break new ground elsewhere. That way you can sometimes do even better than before.

Often when someone does not pay you your dues, your first inclination is to enter into legal battles with him, or wage a relentless psychological war on him. Either course should be eschewed, for the net result is generally wasted time and money. Years can go by without your receiving anything in return for a great deal of energy spent. No, it is better to ignore the injustice done to you, and to put your trust in hard work to get what you want out of life. It is perfectly possible that, through sheer diligence, you will succeed in achieving all those things you wanted others to give you as a matter of right.

Most personal problems are the result of a limited outlook on life. If people were to broaden their perspectives, they would soon realize that there are many different ways of approaching the same problem.

Most personal problems are the result of a limited outlook on life. If people were to broaden their perspectives, they would soon realize that there are many different ways of approaching the same problem. It would, above all, become clear to them that things which are impossible to obtain by direct confrontation can be achieved by the patient fostering of mutual goodwill. Where provocation and retaliation have failed, patience and genuine concern will succeed. □



GOD HELPS THOSE WHO HELP THEMSELVES

A Universal Principle

A YOUNG aspiring Muslim student from Azamgarh, A.M. Khan by name, stood nervously before the Principal of Hindu College. "Sir, I should very much like to be admitted to the B.Sc. course in your college." The reaction was sharp. "The admissions are closed. How do you expect to be admitted in the month of October when you are already several months late with your applications?" Unforeseen circumstances had prevented young Khan from applying sooner, but he simply said, "It would be extremely kind of you if you would help me." Then he added hesitatingly, "One whole year will be wasted for me if I am not granted admission." The Principal's reply was stern. "There is just no question of further admissions."

The principal talked in such an offhand manner that it should have been obvious that there was no point in persisting. Even so the student was determined to try his luck, although all he really expected was to be asked to leave the room immediately. On seeing the insistence of the student, the principal finally asked him rather dryly what his marks had been in the previous examinations. Because he felt certain that he must have failed to get admission elsewhere due to his low marks. If this were the case, the principal would have had good grounds for rejecting his application. But the student's reply was just the opposite of what he expected. He said, "Eighty-five percent, sir."

These words worked like a miracle. The principal's mood changed all of a sudden, and he asked the student to sit down and show him his certificates. When he had seen them and was satisfied that the student's claim was true, he told him to write out an ante-dated application.

Not only was the student then given admission in spite of such a long delay in applying, but he was also granted a scholarship by this very same principal who had been so reluctant even to give him a hearing.

Had the same student approached the principal with a third class degree, and had been refused admission as a result, he would surely have gone away full of hatred for the principal concerned, and would have remarked to his friends that it was prejudice which had come in his way. He would not have admitted that he had been refused admission because of his poor results. He would have publicly understood by aspirants to high positions that the response of the society we live

in is usually an echo of our own condition. We tend to attribute the evils afflicting us to society so that we may shake ourselves free of the blame.

When a man enters life fully prepared to meet its challenges, the world cannot but give him due recognition. Never in any environment does he fail to receive the position of honour which is his due. This results in his being able to maintain high moral standards. His conduct is then marked by bravery, confidence, broad-mindedness, gentlemanliness, acknowledgement of others' worth and a realistic approach to life. He has the will and the capacity to enter into proper human relationships. Society having recognized his talents and he in turn having given due acknowledgement to society, he can rise above the negative attitudes of hatred and prejudice.

The reverse is true when, because he cannot come up to the required standards, he fails to prove his worth; when he enters life with inadequate training he surely fails to find a place of his choice in the world. As a depressed personality, he almost certainly develops a low moral character. He falls prey to negative psychology, anger, complaint, even criminality. Failure in life gives birth to this negative psychology, because it is seldom that the person concerned blames himself for his failure. He almost always lays the blame on others for his own shortcomings. Inadequate preparation for life brings two evils simultaneously: failure on one's own part and uncalled-for complaint against others.

A stone is hard to all and sundry. But it presents no problems to anyone who has a tool which can break it. The same is true of the more complex obstacles that face us in life, for it is only if you enter the field of life equipped with the proper skills, that you feel entitled to claim what is your due. Even after the "last date", you can be given admission to a college without anyone else intervening to help you. But without the necessary skills and ability, you will fail to find the place you truly deserve.

Anyone who wants success to come his way in this world of God will first have to make himself deserving of it. He must know himself and his circumstances. He must organize and channelize his energies properly. He must enter the field fully prepared in every respect, then others cannot fail to recognize his true value. He must be like the tree which forces its way up through the undergrowth to take its place in the sun. □

AN INTERVIEW WITH MS KAUSER IZHAR

Ms Kauser Izhar is an inspiring figure of the CPS USA team. Her enthusiasm, zeal and dedication to spread the message of peace and spirituality is unmatched. Ms Stuti Malhotra interviewed her to bring her inspiring intellectual and spiritual journey to light. She lives in the USA.



Please tell us about your family background and early religious influences?

I was raised in Multan and then in Karachi, Pakistan. My family followed Bareilvi Sunni tradition. We were influenced by Sufism. My father became secular as he did not agree with our family traditions, while my mother stayed attached to the tradition. She tried to influence us towards Islam. When I look back we did not have much Islam in our lives. We were only attached to rituals and cultural traditions in the name of Islam. Our practice of ritualistic Islam increased during the month of *Ramadan*. We also participated in some Sufi practices such as *Na'at* (poetry in praise of the Prophet Muhammad), *Qawwali* (a form of Sufi Islamic devotional singing), and *Quran Khawani* (collective reading of the Quran in Arabic).

I was married at the age of 19 and came to US with my husband in 1983. We continued with our traditional/cultural life in the US. I became aware of the life's challenges and sufferings soon after I came to America and looked for spiritual guidance as I failed in dealing with life's challenges.

When did you start looking for more answers to your challenges?

I was enchanted by the West's liberalization, equality and feminist views, but soon learned that women were in the illusion of western "equality" and their feminist views that did not help them. They were as oppressed as I saw them in Punjabi families, but in different ways. A typical American single mother was studying, working two jobs and also raising her kids was beyond fatigued without the help of family system. This reality brought me back to studying Islam. I started studying commentaries of the Quran by noted Islamic scholars like Maulana Maududi (d. 1979), Dr Israr Ahmed (d. 2010). I also enrolled in some courses with Dr Farhat Hashmi. Finally, I was hooked on to Javed Ahmad Ghamidi's books *Al-Meezan* and *Al-Bayaan* and his lectures.

I was then able to understand the concept of Islam, God, rituals, practices, Dos and Don'ts of Islam. I also shed away the previous notion about the concept of being *Khalifah* as the purpose of my life. However, I could never establish my connection with God and I did not know how to do it.

What was your earlier notion about religion?

I was brought up as a traditional Muslim. The empty rituals and cultural practices had no meaning for me. It did not address my mind and certainly did not resolve my problems. I tried old-fashioned ways to force myself and my children to pray, fast and study the Quran, but it backfired and they thought of religion as a burden in their lives.

Also, I thought that the reason women had lower status in society was because of the verses of Quran, and men used these verses to oppress women.

I had no answer towards the life's sufferings and certainly did not know "why bad things happen to good people".

How were you introduced to Maulana Wahiduddin Khan?

I was part of Dr Farhat Hashmi's study group during 2012-13. Through this group, I came across the articles of *Al-Risala* (Urdu version of *Spirit of Islam* magazine) and the book *The Secret of Success*. Someone also sent me selected articles from Maulana's Urdu book *Izhar-e-Deen*. I did not know who was sending me these articles but I was enchanted by the wisdom of the articles and yearned to receive more. I searched and found *Islam: An Introduction* and *The Secret of Success* from Urdu Bazar in Lahore when I visited Pakistan. I saved them to read on my return flight to New York. I remember reading the books while forgetting my fever on a long flight back to America.

I was then introduced to the website www.cpsglobal.org which hosts all books and magazines of Maulana. I downloaded the books from the site and started reading. As I read the books, I was impressed by the style of the writer, contents of each topic and how deep it would go to concoct the root of the spirituality and the essence of the contents. I also learned that the writer was extremely wise and very precise. He used single page to start the topic, explain it with Quran or *Hadith*, then add natural phenomenon and rational reasoning to support the argument, and conclude with a profound lesson. He also used nature & scientific arguments, deeper psychology and biology of the human nature in eloquent manner to explain an idea, an experience, and used

it in a form of story. He seemed to me as the master of extracting wisdom and spirituality for the readers. As I read the books, it created anticipation and yearning for me to study more material especially how he explained the discovery and understanding of God through his experiences and through his study of nature.

Kindly describe your first meeting with Maulana.

On May 2015, I picked up the phone and called CPS International, New Delhi's number, I was connected to Rajat Malhotra. I introduced myself and explained how Maulana's writings had changed my thinking, and had helped me connect to the Creator and explore spirituality. I asked him if the books listed on the website were available in the US or in Pakistan, or if they could be shipped to me and I would pay the shipment charges. Mr Rajat broke the good news that Khaja Kaleem Bhai, the main CPS contact in US resided in Pennsylvania, but he was touring India and other countries and expected to be back in the US in a few months.

Sometime after, Kaleem Bhai returned my call and visited me with boxes of books. I thought it was a miracle that he lived only an hour from my home in Pennsylvania. I tried to pay him for the books but he replied that he would consider the bill paid if I finished reading all these books.

He also informed me that Maulana would be visiting America in August-Sept 2015 to launch his book *The Age of Peace* and he was invited to talk in the US Institute of Peace in Washington DC and also at ISNA in Chicago. He would also be speaking about pursuit of peace in RIS convention in Toronto.

I planned for a two-week vacation from work and anxiously waited for the opportunity to meet my spiritual mentor who had changed my life.

I started crying when I met Maulana Sahib in Kaleem Bhai's home in Pennsylvania. I told him about my journey of seeking and searching for God. I told him that I found God through his writings. He asked questions about my life and what was the takeaway of my learning from his books. I mentioned my learnings from his books and the *Spirit of Islam* magazine I had been reading. I shared how I was able to discover God through the items of gratitude, which also needed to be discovered on daily basis. And how deconditioning my mind from negativity and critical thinking in daily life helped me become spiritual and helped establish connection with God.

It was an amazing experience watching a scholar of Islam while he was engaging in discussions with everyone around us. He was lecturing on Discovery of God, Positive Thinking, Peace, Spirituality, Reality of Life, Introducing the Message of the Quran to people and how to address the mindset of the modern man. These were memorable moments of my life when we all would sit on the floor with Maulana *Sahib* and his team and engage in discussions. I was also impressed by the discipline, dedication, and level of knowledge and simple personalities of the members of CPS who accompanied Maulana. I felt like we were a family.

I learned that the mission of CPS under the guidance of Maulana *Sahib* was to introduce the peaceful message of the Quran to the people. Maulana advised me to become a *dayee* (one who introduces the message of the Quran to the people) when we were having discussions about my future plans. I quickly learned that Maulana was not a traditional scholar and his idea of becoming presenter of Islam came from the deeper study of the Quran and teachings of Prophet Muhammad. I also learned that Maulana had already discovered the value and role of women in spreading the message of God through his own study of Islam's origins and history and analytical study of the life of the Prophet Muhammad. He wanted to rejuvenate the spirit of introducing the message of the Quran to the people in men and women after it was lost few centuries after the advent of Islam.

That meeting with Maulana and the CPS team convinced me that I needed to study more to teach myself in my new role of *dayee* of Islam. I came back with a new vision and mission for my life after meeting Maulana and the CPS team. I studied Maulana's commentary of the Quran in Urdu and English, *Aurat Memar-e-Insaniyat*, *Muhammad, A Prophet for All Humanity*, *Calling People to God*, and *God Arises* and many more.

I noticed how the team members were self-motivated and were busy in their own activities of Quran distribution. I was also advised by Maulana to listen to his lectures and closely work with the CPS USA team for the Quran distribution in America. I discovered my purpose of life to educate myself to deeper understanding of God and prepare for Quran distribution.

As I was changing my mindset and thinking, I felt I developed positive relationship with my children and my relatives. I ensured that I was starting with a clean slate by forgetting and forgiving and making peace with all.

How did Maulana help you to connect with God and understand His Creation Plan?

Maulana's books and his Sunday lectures from 2009-2021 helped me with my discovery of God. My angle of vision changed, I saw how it affected me to look at nature with different eyes. Every experience, every event could be a point of reference to discover God. His explanation of creation plan helped me understand the concept of test in the pre death period, free-will, the positive aspect of suffering, and the concept of developing God-oriented personality by tapping in hidden potential and so on. I learned that a great women in history (Hajirah) was a great *dayee* and missionary leader and I could also follow her footsteps.

How did Maulana influence you?

After meeting Maulana and observing his simple lifestyle and his focused yet fiercely learning spirit, I was convinced it was possible to live in the mission of introducing the message of the Quran. This would keep me inspired as long as I would avoid distractions.

Kindly share the most inspiring teaching of Maulana.

Khuda Tu Kab Ayeye Ga? Mein Tera Kab Tak Intizaar Karon,

Oh God! When will you reveal yourself to me? How long should I wait for you?

These words of Maulana represented his internal promptings of "need" and great "yearnings" to feel and sense his Creator around him. These yearnings became his true guidance to discover God as he studied Quran and nature along with many other writers. He raised himself from the material to spiritual level and deconditioned his mind from all types of negativities and shaped himself to be a positive person. This transformation helped him to be a deserving candidate who was ready to receive God's attention and guidance from every corner of his life.

What inspired you to devote yourself wholly to the mission?

It was an organic transformation for me to dedicate myself to this mission as my true calling. I was journeying through my own discovery of God. After acknowledging all the bounties I had been receiving for my existence unilaterally through my Creator, I felt it would be highly ungrateful of me to ignore my duty of sharing the light of God with anyone who is in the state of unawareness.

What are the activities of Quran distribution that CPS USA is involved in?

I have been actively involved in interfaith activities with Christians and Jews. I regularly visit churches and synagogues. I get involved in multicultural activities where I meet Hindus, Sikhs, and other communities. We plan for bookfairs, interfaith conventions and also visit schools to introduce the message of Islam and distribute Quran and books on the subject of peace.

I have been mailing Quran to the people of all faiths in America and answer their emails in case they have any questions.

Kindly share some responses of people to whom you give copies of the Quran.

We get thank you messages daily from people who are interested in reading Quran. I am mentioning here some of these responses:

Erin Parent: I am very thankful to receive a copy of my Almighty's Holy Quran. You have no idea how much I am grateful to you!!

Phillip Pope: I teach a leadership course every summer where I distribute religious texts as part of our study. We use one main text each year to explore the unique culture and practice of that faith in an attempt to foster a better understanding based on education. If at all possible, I would appreciate 100 copies to distribute to the entire class. If that is not possible, I would be thankful to you for any assistance you could provide. I have 64 students signed up for this year's class.

Jesse Perman: I greatly appreciate for a copy of Quran and it continues to enlighten my mind. Thank you for all the work you are doing to help connect people to the wisdom of God!

Stacy Fredieu: Hi, I am the Warden at the Angelina County Jail in Lufkin, Texas. Can you please send 100 paperback Quran? We'll keep in our library for all the inmates at the Angelina County Jail who are requesting them and intend to study. Any help would be greatly appreciated.

Vanessa Lopez: Thank you so much for offering this, I've always been interested in reading the Quran, even willing to learn the language to read whatever original material I can get my hands on. You've really made a dream come true. I appreciate and respect your culture very much. Thank you again & sending you all the wonderful & healing & loving vibes to you always!

What are some of the activities of CPS Ladies group in the USA?

Initially Zeba and I started study circles with core CPS members in 2016. We still host the study circle on Friday nights. Zeba was already teaching Maulana's commentary of the Quran and Quranic Wisdom to women and youth. She asked me to start my own study circles. I learned from her and started with two women and a couple of children and praise be to God it grew.

- 4 times a week—Women study circles of Maulana's commentary of the Quran and other books
- 2 times a week—Study circles with teens and children ages 6-12
- Once a month—intermittent sharing of scriptures with seekers from interfaith community
- Twice a month—Interfaith meetings on Zoom
- Once a month— Civic meeting with multicultural group
- Gifts sharing on Christmas, Thanksgiving, *Eid* and *Ramadan*. The gifts contain candies and copy of Quran.

What inspiration do you draw from Prof Farida Khanam?

Prof Farida Khanam's lifelong work shows she is indeed an intellectual partner of Maulana *Sahib*, she has dedicated 100% of her creativity and intellect as a creative writer of numerous books. She has organized the CPS mission, she is a living example of a woman who is humbled to her core. I felt she is giving me a message that when a woman is truly inspired for God's mission, God makes her a super woman whose work can exceed all. She is indeed my inspiration.

What is your message to the women members of CPS in particular?

I would like to address my sisters from the CPS mission directly.

Sisters! The mission of introducing the Word of God to people is our mission. It suits our nature. It is a special blessing, a source of life and source of all goodness. God Almighty has empowered us to assist our generation towards knowledge and wisdom through this mission. Since it is interwoven in our nature, it becomes a very easy task.

What are your future plans?

Introducing the Word of God is my responsibility. The plans revolve around looking at myself, not at others for the task. I have to strive and measure my own progress through daily discoveries. I should train

myself constantly and learn new things. I have a long way to go as I need to be consistent.

What do you think is the legacy of Maulana Wahiduddin Khan? How can we strive to take it forward?

Maulana's legacy includes intellectual discovery of God, positive thinking, discovering the positive role of the Prophet Muhammad, proving the average person's relevance to the task of calling people to God's mission, presenting the true Islam from its original sources in the modern idiom and showing its relevance to the present world, and establishing the fact that Islam is a religion of peace.

Maulana discovered the new role of Muslims. We need to study his books and let's not stop there. We must study the writings of the scholars of different faiths who are specialist in their area of social sciences and religion and then expand this work. There are huge challenges as the society is changing fast, we must be aware of the new challenges and able to learn new ideas to strengthen our activities of calling people to God. We need to learn to present Islam in modern times and address the minds of the seekers by our presentation and delivery of Quran and peace material by enrolling in technical, media/communications. We should be able to present the peaceful message of Islam as explained through the CPS mission in such a way that addresses the recipient successfully.

Also, just like Maulana trained us as *dayee*, and empowered us, we must also train others to become *dayee*. For this, we must be able to humble ourselves, and able to understand their difference of opinion and be able to adopt their views if they are better than us. □



Peace is essential for a better way of living—peace of mind, peace in the family and peace in nature.

GIVING AS GOD WILLS

Everything is from God

MAN'S life and property are gifts of God. He owes everything he possesses to God alone. The only way to give thanks for these innumerable gifts is to dispose of them as God wishes. Such expenditure of one's wealth is symbolic of one's complete trust in God.

Man owes whatever he earns in this world to the fact that God has given him hands and feet to use for this purpose. He has endowed man with eyes and a tongue with which to see and speak. He has blessed him with an intellect which enables him to think and plan. At the same time God has made the world subordinate to man. If the world and that which it contains had not been placed at man's disposal, his physical and mental capabilities alone would never have enabled him to derive any benefit from the world around him.

Real charity is that which is given for God's sake alone, not for fame, self-esteem or worldly reward.

If the wheat grain had not grown in the form of a crop but had stayed lying on the ground like a pebble, it would have become impossible for man to harvest grain from the land. If the powers of nature had not performed their specific functions, electricity could not have been produced, and vehicles would not have been able to move. Whatever man earns in this world is a direct favour from God. In return, man should spend his earnings in a way which would meet with God's approval. He should use his money to help the poor and spend of the wealth which God has granted him in the ways that God has specified.

Real charity is that which is given for God's sake alone, not for fame, self-esteem or worldly reward. Wealth saves one from worldly hardship; that which is given away for God's sake saves one from the hardships of the life after death. □



Willingness to keep the peace—a matter of conscious decision-making—is a noble human quality.

CPS NEWSLETTER

THE QURAN SPEAKER ON GOOGLE ASSISTANT

- A smart speaker is a voice command device. It offers interactive actions such as asking questions, setting up alarms and reminders, and listening to music and books, just by our voice command. Some of the smart speakers are Amazon Echo, Apple Homepod, and Google Nest.
- The functions of smart speakers are available on smartphones through apps like Google Assistant, and Amazon Alexa. We use these services simply by voice commands such as Hey Google, Hey Siri, and Alexa.
- **CPS International, New Delhi** is launching **THE QURAN SPEAKER** on Google Assistant. You can access it by asking your smartphone **HEY GOOGLE, TALK TO THE QURAN SPEAKER**. This will start Maulana's English translation of the Quran. It has many amazing features. One very unique feature is **Wisdom of the Day**. You can ask your Google Assistant to play Wisdom of the Day, then it will play audio of one article from Maluana's book **Quranic Wisdom**.
- Now, Maulana's English translation of the Quran is available on every Android device on this planet. Kindly provide your feedback after using this feature.



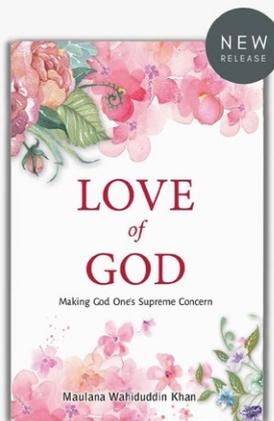
Kindly click this link to watch an insightful video message by Dr Maria Khan that sheds light on what the Prophet Muhammad did when he was disrespected. Relying on the Quran and *Hadith* reports, she has brought, with total clarity, guidance to the Muslims when they feel that the Prophet Muhammad has been disrespected.



Three English books of Maulana Wahiduddin Khan were released.

The book explains that belief in God begins with the discovery of God. When this happens, all those high and noble manifestations expressed in such words as love, gratitude and remembrance of God come into evidence.

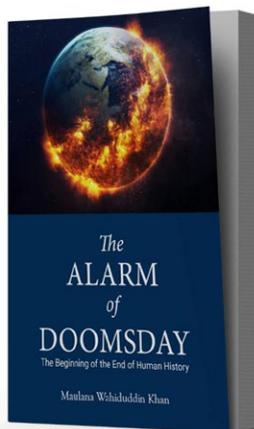
DOWNLOAD YOUR FREE COPY AT
www.cpsglobal.org/books/mwk/english



**NEW
RELEASE**

The book explains that we are standing on the threshold of Doomsday. The Creator is declaring in a silent language that the present world has come to its end. It is high time for man to awaken himself and discover the Creator's creation plan, and base his life accordingly.

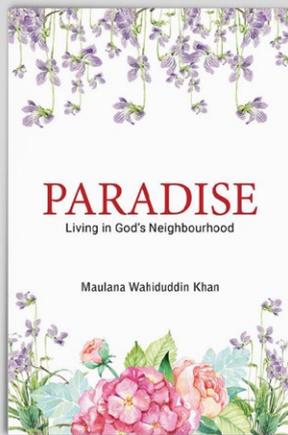
DOWNLOAD YOUR FREE COPY AT
www.cpsglobal.org/books/mwk/english



**NEW
RELEASE**

The book explains that in the present world those people are being selected who are worthy of being lodged in the neighbourhood of God, i.e., Paradise.

DOWNLOAD YOUR FREE COPY AT
www.cpsglobal.org/books/mwk/english



Dr. Saniyasnain Khan has started Stories of the Prophets series on YouTube. Watch here: youtube.com/CPSInternational/videos

MAULANA WAHIDUDDIN KHAN'S
OFFICIAL YOUTUBE CHANNEL

NEW VIDEOS EVERYDAY! SUBSCRIBE

#GrowWiser

Centre for Peace and Spirituality International
70K subscribers

HOME VIDEOS PLAYLISTS COMMUNITY CHANNELS ABOUT

Uploads SORT BY

CPS Mission | January 7, 2007 | Maulana Wahiduddin...
221 views • 15 hours ago

The Real Alhamdulillah #shorts
641 views • 16 hours ago

Capital Punishment for Blasphemy is based on...
1K views • 3 days ago

Ignore Remarks against the Prophet
3.7K views • 4 days ago

Blasphemy—An UnIslamic Concept #shorts
643 views • 4 days ago

Mohammad Asad Pervez, a CPS USA member attended an interfaith event at a Mosque in the USA where translations of the Quran were gifted to the visitors

CPS member Ms Fathima Sarah, on behalf of CPS International, participated in and addressed a workshop on **“Celebrating Religious Pluralism in India”** on May 20, 2022. It was organised by St. Joseph’s College, Bangalore.

Speakers included:

1. Dr Jeevan Kumar (Hinduism)
2. Ms Fathima Sarah (Islam)
3. Mr Siddartha (Buddhism)
4. Prof Ricky Wilfred (Christianity)

Author, speaker and CPS member, Dr Maria Khan’s lectures are now broadcast on Tedx Talk (<https://youtu.be/BbwUGlpPWJU>)

Yashwantrao Chavan Academy of Development of Administration, Pune conducted a training session where translations of the Quran and Maulana’s books were gifted to Director of Health, Head of NIV (where Covaxin was made), State surveillance officer and other prominent doctors. Dr Junaid Shaikh participated and represented the CPS Mumbai Team.

CHILDREN'S CORNER

Quran Dictionary for Kids

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



Dear kids,

Goodword Quran Dictionary for Kids is an ideal first reference book for children who are curious to know about the Quran. Designed especially for children, this unique treasury of Quranic words guides them through over 350 essential names, terms and concepts mentioned in the Quran.

Alphabetically arranged, words are clearly defined and are accompanied by charming illustrations and pictures that make it fun for children to find the words and understand them. The book is authored by Dr Saniyasnain Khan. He is an award-winning author and also recognized as one of the world's most influential Muslims¹.

Here, we reproduce some entries from the book.

Name of the Book: Goodword Quran Dictionary for Kids

Author / Translator: Saniyasnain Khan

ISBN: 978-81-7898-859-7

Page: 80

Binding: Hardbound

Availability: www.goodwordbooks.com

C

Camel

The camel is an animal that lives in the desert. Camels have one or two humps on their backs. It is one of Allah's great works. He says in the Quran, "Do they never reflect on the camels and how they were created" (Al-Ghashiyah, 88: 17). In the time of the Prophet Muhammad people travelled on camels. The Prophet's she-camel's name was Qaswa.

¹The World's 500 Most Influential Muslims 2022, Royal Islamic Strategic Studies Centre, Jordan.

P

Palace

A palace is a very big house where a king or queen lives. Pharaoh commanded Haman to build a lofty palace for him so that he could see Allah.

Palm tree

The palm tree grows particularly in hot countries. Before the birth of the Prophet Isa or Jesus, the pain of childbirth drove Maryam, or Mary, to take shelter under a palm tree.

Parable

A parable is a story that teaches something. Allah set forth many parables for mankind but only those who understand them can attain wisdom.

Paradise

Paradise is a very happy place which Allah made for the believers. They will live there forever and enjoy Allah's blessings. They will have there everything their hearts desire.

Prayers from the Quran

My Lord, inspire me to be thankful for the blessings You have granted me and my parents, and to do good deeds that please You; and include me, by Your grace, among Your righteous servants. (Al-Naml 27: 19)

T

Tawhid

The declaration of the oneness of Allah. This is one of the most fundamental doctrines of Islam. The Quran mentions this doctrine a number of times.

Tawrat

The Tawrat or Torah is one of the divine scriptures sent down to the Prophet Musa

Tayammum

An alternative way of performing *wudu*, done with sand, in case water is not available, or the person is so sick that the use of water would be harmful to his health.

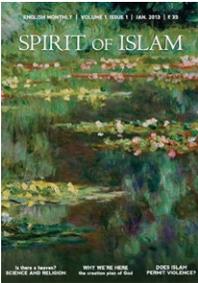
Temptation

Temptation is the feeling of being drawn to something which it would be more proper to avoid. Satan (Iblis) tempted Adam and Hawwa and they ate the fruit Allah had forbidden them to eat. □

Kindly scan this QR Code to watch an animated introductory video of this book on the YouTube channel WiseWord Books:



MAGAZINE REVIEW



A SPIRITUAL MAGAZINE WITH A DIFFERENCE

Suleiman Khan

It's almost the only magazine that I read these days. The English monthly ***Spirit of Islam***, published from Bengaluru, is a treasure-trove of wisdom, a real blessing for spiritual seekers. Its first editor-in-chief was the well-known New Delhi-based Islamic scholar, Maulana Wahiduddin Khan. Most of its articles are by the Maulana himself, who has been one of the most prolific writers on Islam at the global level.

Spirit of Islam is a spiritual magazine with a difference. For one thing, unlike most other 'Islamic' magazines, it is not linked to any particular Muslim sect. Discussions about minor details of jurisprudence and rituals and debates about external forms of piety, such as about dress and deportment, may be a major focus of many other 'Islamic' magazines—but these do not find any space in ***Spirit of Islam***, whose focus, its masthead announces, is 'global peace and spiritual living'. Absent, too, from its pages are heated polemics seeking to prove the veracity of one Muslim sect and the falsity of the rest, hagiographical accounts of Muslim religious and political figures, past and present, uncritical laudatory accounts of Muslim history, diatribes against so-called 'enemies of Islam', lamentations about the supposed pathetic conditions of Muslims today, accusations against non-Muslims for allegedly conspiring against Muslims, and so on—issues that are the staple fare of much of the Muslim media.

If many other Muslim-run magazines are narrowly Muslim-centric and are geared essentially to a Muslim readership, ***Spirit of Islam*** is refreshingly universal in its outlook and approach and characterized by very obvious goodwill towards people of all faiths. It is concerned with the most fundamental task of all—of making people, irrespective of religion, aware of God's Creation Plan.

Applied Islamic spirituality in an idiom suited to the modern age is the focus of ***Spirit of Islam***. It seeks to provide rational evidence for Islam, communicating ancient wisdom in a mode and idiom intelligible and acceptable to the modern mind. Many articles in the magazine take the form of short, incisive reflections on a particular Quranic verse or a *Hadith* (a report attributed to the Prophet Muhammad), bringing out its implications and continuing relevance in our times. Other articles seek to draw lessons from everyday happenings, reflecting an understanding of spirituality as being the ability to convert daily events into spiritual learning experiences. This spirituality is one that is inseparable from intellectual enquiry and serious engagement with the real world.

Spirit of Islam stays clear of specifically Muslim community-related issues. The spiritual insights and lessons it provides are universal in their relevance. Issues that it focuses on, such as the purpose of life, life after death, religion and science, evidence for God in nature and in our selves, personal transformation, handling negative emotions, the need for positive thinking, dealing with life's myriad challenges, negotiating relationships and so on, would be of interest to just about anybody searching for meaning and purpose in life beyond material gratification. Not surprisingly, the magazine has a fair number of readers from other faiths.

Maulana Wahiduddin Khan is one of the foremost proponents of interfaith dialogue and understanding at the global level, having written numerous books and many times that number of articles on the subject. Deeply concerned with the brutal terrorism in the name of Islam that continues to devastate large parts of the world, which he regards as completely anti-Islamic, he has made promoting peace one of his foremost priorities. This is reflected in the pages of ***Spirit of Islam***, which regularly carries insightful articles on the importance of peace in Islam and on the need for Muslims to relate with love, peace, well-wishing and compassion among themselves and with others.

Muslims are constantly reminded of their duty to convey God's message to others, for which they are told that they must build bridges with them and live together with them in harmony. The magazine devotes considerable space to critiques of the hate-driven ideology of terrorists parading in the guise of champions of Islam and their erroneous interpretation of the concept of *jihad*. Linked to this are articles that seek to counter the political interpretation of Islam, which the Maulana regards as a wrongful innovation and as at the root of the phenomenon of terrorism in the name of Islam today. Other articles underscore

the need for transformation of the individual, and rebut, using solid Islamic arguments, the notion, so forcefully championed by advocates of 'Islamism', of a 'total Islamic system' that they insist Muslims must establish at any cost if they are to be able to practice their faith.

You can't judge a book by its cover, they say—and the same, one supposes, applies to a magazine, too. But the cover of ***Spirit of Islam*** conveys a vital message, reflecting the magazine's understanding of Islam that transcends cultural forms and readily appeals to just about everyone, including people of other faiths. In place of Arabic calligraphy or pictures of mosques or Muslim shrines or people in stereotypical 'Muslim' attire—as is the case with many Muslim magazines—its cover page sports a painting of a scene from nature, each issue bearing a different image—of a lotus-filled pond, a cloud-filled sky, or a field festooned with poppies by Vincent Van Gough. Islam is not limited to any particular language or cultural tradition, and nor is it for Muslims alone—that's what the magazine possibly seeks to convey through its cover.

The magazine is available in digital format, and it can also be freely downloaded from its website www.spiritofislam.co.in. The publishers offer a free email delivery of the digital copies. Once you start reading one issue, you might well be determined not to miss a single issue in the future! □



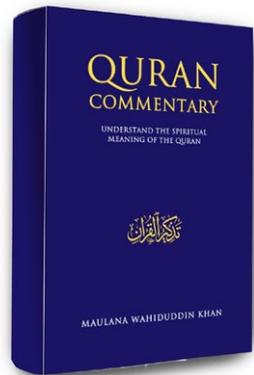
*The only formula to attain peace is:
Take your share without usurping
that of others. Fulfill your needs
without depriving others of theirs.
Solve your problems without creating
problems for your fellow creatures.
Peaceful coexistence is the only way
of existence in this world.*

THE WORD OF GOD

From The Scriptures

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

Translated from Arabic and commentary by
Maulana Wahiduddin Khan



How many a town rebelled against the commands of its Lord and His messengers and We called them sternly to account and punished them severely, so they tasted the evil consequences of their conduct and the result of their conduct was ruin. God has prepared a severe punishment for them. So, fear God, O men of understanding, who have believed. God has sent down to you a Reminder and a messenger who conveys to you God's clear messages, so that he might lead those, who believe and do good deeds, out of darkness into light. God will admit those who believe in Him and do good deeds into Gardens with rivers flowing through them, where they will remain forever. God has indeed made excellent provision for them. (65: 8-11)

'So, fear God, O men of understanding.' This statement indicates that the fountainhead of piety (*taqwa*) is the mind. Only by using his wisdom and consciousness does a man achieve that status which is called (*taqwa*) in the Islamic law.

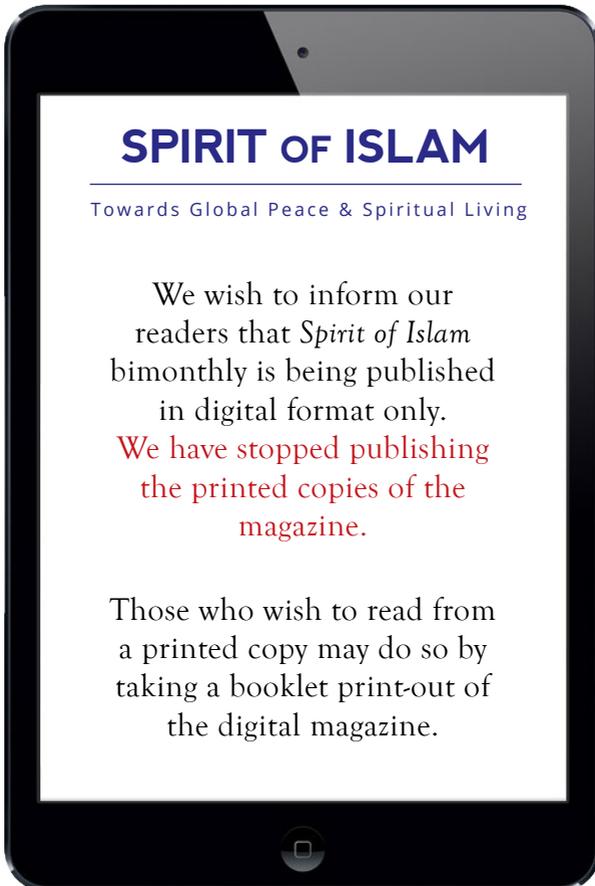
God sent His messenger 'so that he might lead those, who have attained to faith and do good deeds, out of darkness into light.' This statement at this juncture relates to family laws. In ancient times, superstition prevailed throughout the world. Different types of superstitious beliefs had caused the relations between man and woman to rest on an unnatural basis. The Quran banished these superstitions, and re-established the relations between men and women on a natural basis. Despite this, there are people who do not adopt the way of reform, and who can, therefore, expect nothing but loss on God's earth.

It is God who created the seven heavens and the same number of earths. His commandment descends among them, so that you may

know that God has power over all things; and that He encompasses all things with His knowledge. (65: 12)

'It is God who created the seven heavens and the same number of earths'. This statement may refer to seven earths, but astronomy has not been able to discover this number. According to human knowledge (till the date of this writing) the present earth is an exception in this whole universe. Therefore, God knows the real meaning of this verse.

'So that you may know that God has power over all things'. This indicates that what God truly requires of man is 'knowledge' i.e. the consciousness of God's Being. This vast system of the universe has been brought into being in order to make man recognize the Creator through it and have a deep and inner realization of God's immense Power. □



YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED

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

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

What does Islam say about inherited religiosity?

Religion is a matter of free choice. One must adopt self-discovered religion rather than inherited religion.

In general, the present Muslims are following an inherited religion. But following this kind of religion is not enough. They must rediscover their religion by re-studying the Quran and *Sunnah* (practical model of the Prophet). This principle is given in the Quran in these words: "The Arabs of the desert say, 'We have believed.' Say to them, 'You have not believed yet; say rather, "We have submitted," for faith has not yet entered into your hearts.'" (49: 14)

What, according to you, are the reasons why people might believe in a religion simply because they are born into it?

This is due to conditioning. Everyone is born in a particular family, society or culture. One keeps getting conditioned in the environment in which one is born. It is a social phenomenon and perhaps no one is exempted from this social conditioning. This social phenomenon is referred to in the Quran in these words: When it is said to them, 'Come to what God has sent down and to the Messenger.' They reply, 'The faith we have inherited from our fathers is sufficient for us'. (5: 104)

What does this mean for the search for Truth and the purpose of life? Are these compatible with inherited religiosity?

It is common experience that every person applies his reason in matters related to him. For example, a person uses his reason to select the job or business best suitable for him. The same is required in the case

of religion. Truth is the greatest concern of every human being. Every human being is born as a seeker of truth. A person who adopts his ancestral tradition and fails to apply his reason while doing so, leaves his natural spirit of enquiry unaddressed. Due to this failure one ends up living in dissatisfaction and despair because, it is impossible to have a peaceful mind without the self-discovery of truth.

Some people who are born into families that call themselves 'Muslims' may believe in, or have an emotional connection with, Islam simply because of being born and socialized in a 'Muslim' family, and not because of any inner realization, reflection, realization or comparative study.

What do you have to say about this khandani mazhabiyat or family-based religiosity of theirs?

These kind of emotions are community-related emotions, they are not Islamic emotions. These emotions are manifested only in cultural matters. I call it cultural religiosity. These people have never experienced love of God or fear of God. Their religion is community religion, and not divine religion.

What exactly do you mean by cultural religiosity?

By cultural religiosity, I mean that religion which is based on the culture of the community. Every religion begins as an ideology but after some generations it gets reduced to a culture, and this is the case of present Muslims. There may be some individual exceptions, but the masses are living on cultural religiosity.

How is this against true Islam?

True Islam is that which is discovered through the Quran and *Sunnah*. Cultural religiosity is that which one finds through community traditions. The first is based on intellectual discovery, while the second is based on community culture.

Is cultural religiosity adequate for salvation?

Not at all. Salvation is not a mysterious word. Salvation is based on *tazkiya*, that is, purification of one's soul. It requires a purified soul to achieve salvation. No other thing can make one attain salvation.

Can you please share your thoughts on how the cultural religiosity approach makes Muslims confine their love and concerns only to fellow 'Muslims', and makes them indifferent, if not hostile, to the rest of humanity? How does this relate to the true teachings of Islam?

You are right. A verse in the Quran says: "God has not placed two hearts in any man's body." (33: 4) This verse refers to an aspect of human psychology. If a person makes his community his concern, he won't be able to make humankind his concern. When this happens, he will think on the lines of "Muslim empowerment" but will not be concerned about being well-wishers to the entire humankind.

Many of those who follow the 'cultural religiosity' understanding of Islam think non-Muslims are 'enemies' of Islam/Muslims. It views others as enemies who have to be defeated through polemics and even war, and not as potential friends who have to be reached out to with the message of love and respect. What do you have to say about this attitude?

This kind of mentality is quite un-Islamic. It is not acceptable to God or His Messenger. This kind of mentality develops false pride and there is no room for false pride in Islam. It is this that is mentioned in the Quran as *amani*, or wishful thinking. (2: 111).

What dua (supplication) should a Muslim do for people of other faiths?

We should pray for all on an equal basis. The Quran refers to God as the "Lord of the Worlds" (1: 2) and not as "God of Muslims". This fact has been declared in the very first chapter of the Quran. Also, the Prophet is called in the Quran *rahmatul lil-alamin* (21: 107), that is, a mercy for all humankind. The Quran doesn't say that the Prophet is only "*rahmat* for Muslims". □



Spirit of Islam web version now available with AUDIO feature

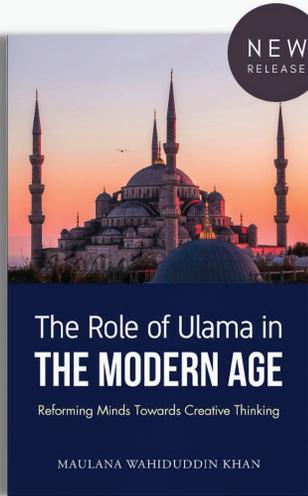


Listen to soul-nourishing articles while on the go.

A great companion for study groups and collective reading exercises.



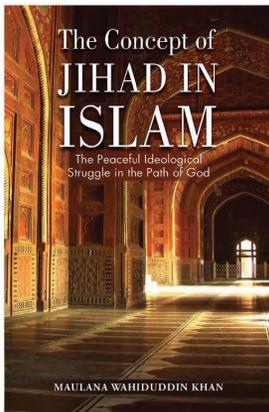
www.spiritofislam.co.in/spiritnew/



The author advises the Ulama to completely dissociate from practical politics, reform the minds of the Muslim ummah on positive lines and convey God's message to humanity using the opportunities presented by the modern age.

DOWNLOAD YOUR FREE COPY AT
www.cpsglobal.org/books/mwk/english

**NEW
RELEASE**



The book explains that jihad is not synonymous with war or violence; the term for war is qital. Jihad is to remain steadfast on the path pleasing to God and conveying the message of God to all humanity in every generation.

DOWNLOAD YOUR FREE COPY AT
www.cpsglobal.org/books/mwk/english



Published & owned by: Fathima Sarah, 002, HM Wimberly, 6 Berlie Street Cross
Langford Town, Bengaluru - 560025 | RNI No: KARENG/2012/46265