THE CRITERION REGD. NO. S-2660

**The Road to peace & Salvation**

By Sayyid Abul Ala Maudoodi

Translated & edited by

Khurshid Ahmad

A society based on secularism is bound to lead a miserable life. Only belief in one God and obedience to Divine Guidance can bring real peace to the war torn world.

The author has analyzed the ills of mankind and has forcefully pleaded for the acceptance of Divine Guidance as revealed to the Prophets.

This is a guide book for all who wish to lead a peaceful life.

Pages: 36 Price: 75 paisas 1 sh. 6d.

**The Religion of Islam**

**By Prof. Khurshid Ahmad**

Fundamentals of faith and basic teachings of Islam explained in a simple and easy way.

A very useful book for introducing Islam to non-Muslims and those who have no knowledge of Islam.

Pages: 36 Price: 75 paisas 1 sh. 6d.

ISLAMIC PUBLICATIONS LTD. 13-E, Shah Alam Market, Lahore.

**THE CRITERION**

JOURNAL OF THE ISLAMIC RESEARCH ACADEMY

★PAKISTAN FACES BIG CHALLENGE

-SAYYID MAUDOODI

★JEWISH ORIENTALIST AT WORK

MARYAM JAMEELAH

ISLAM & SIMPLE LIVING

KHURSHID AHMAD

★MUSLIM LIBERATION SOUTH THAILAND STRUGGLE IN

★FATE OF MUSLIMS IN THE USSR

-DR. A.H. SIDDIQI

LIST OF ISLAMIC JOURNALS

-ABDUL BASIT

July Aug. 1970

Stop Abusing the Indonesian People

(P.3)

Chad: French War Against Muslims

===

(98d)

Articles:

Islam and Simple Living

BY KHURSHID AHMAD

SLAM is unique as a religion. It asserts that the proper study of mankind is man-his performance in the rough and tumble of life. It stands, not for life-denial, but for life-fulfilment. It avoids the Scylla and the Charybdis of narrow asceticism and stark materialism. It does not divide life into water-tight compartments-it looks upon it in its totality and provides guidance which comprehends all walks of human existence. It does not admit of any antagonism between the spiritual and the material, the moral and mundane aspects of life. It affirms, on the other hand, that spiritual elevation and moral greatness can be achieved not by life renunciation, but by living in human society and by moulding individual and collective life into the forms and patterns suggested by God and His Prophet. Virtue is not in running away from life, but in making life run along the Right path. And this attitude of Islam towards life constitutes its hall-mark and distinguishes it from other religions and creeds.

Before we embark upon a discussion over the teachings of Islam vis-a-vis 'Simple Living' let us make a little digression to elucidate certain basie concepts which have great bearing upon Islamic approach to life.

Some Basic Concepts

In keeping with the basic attitude discussed above Islam exhorts its believers to live a life of struggle, strife and conquest. It wants them to subdue the forces of nature and to harness them for the good of mankind. It says that all that is in the heavens and the earth is meant for man and he should use that scrupulously and justly. According to the Quran:

He it is who hath made the earth subservient unto you, so walk in the paths thereof and eat of His Providence. (LXII: 15)

"See ye not how Allah hath put under you all that is in the heavens and all that is in the earth, and hath bestowed upon you His favours, both for body and soul"

(ΧΧΧΙ: 20)

"(He hath) created all that is in the earth for you"

(II: 29)

THE CRITERION

"And when the prayer is over, then disperse in the land and seek of Allah's bounty." (LXII:10)

"O' Mankind Eat of that which is in the earth, lawful and wholesome". (II: 169)

And the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) has said:

"To seek wholesome earning is obligatory, next only to obliga- tion of 'Ibadat."

And that:

"God likes every one of his creatures to be engaged in some occupation".

And that:

"The door of sustenance is open up to the very throne of God".

Thus, Islam enjoins upon its followers to take interest in the affairs of the world and to harness its resources for human use. This is bound to result in the conquest of the forces of nature; the exploitation of natural and human resources and the raising of the standard of living.

Secondly, although Islam does want to banish poverty and misery and enjoins the people to avail of the amenities provided by nature, it does not make this the sumum bonum of human existence. To live, men, must have bread, but by bread alone he cannot live a rich human life. All that is in the heavens and the earth is for him, but he is to live for ideals more high and noble to discharge his mission on the earth as the vice-regent of God.

"And seek the good of the Hereafter through that (bounty) which God has given thee and neglect not thy share of the world",

(XXVIII: 77)

"Say: If your fathers, and your sons, and your brothers, and your wives, and your tribe, and the wealth ye have acquired and mere handiest for which ye fear that there will be no sale, and dwellings

ISLAM AND SIMPLE LIVING

ye desire are dearer to you than Allah and His Messenger and striving in his way: Then wait till Allah bringeth His command to pass. Allah guided not wrong doing folk" (IX: 24).

And the objective, according to Islam is the effort to establish virtue and eradicate vice and evil.

"You are the best of the people raised unto mankind, you establish virtue, eradicate evil and you are believers in Allah"

This is the objective man is to live for-Acquisition of wealth and riches and power is only means to achieve this end, and not an end in itself.

Thirdly, Islam gives a revolutionary concept as to the nature of the relationship that exists between men and the material and physical resources that are at his command. Whatever man has, whether it is by way of mental, moral and physical qualities or material belongings, is in the nature of a trust. The real ownership of all that is in the universe vests in its Creator-Allah. Whatever has been endowed to an individual is by way of a sacred trust, with clearly defined rights and obligations. Man is accountable for all that has been given to him and if he misuses the resources or abuses the trust he will be brought to book on the Day of Judgement.

"Assuredly ye will be tried in your property and in your persons." (III: 186)

"He it is who hath placed you as viceroys on the earth. and has exalted some of you in rank above others, that he may try you by (the best of) that which he hath given you"

(VII: 186)

"Lo: we have placed all that is in the earth as an ornament thereof, that we may try them (and find out) who of them is best in conduct."

(XVIII: 7)

This concept is a natural corollary of Islamic concept of God and of the Divine law operating in the universe.

Principles of Consumption

If the resources at the disposal of man are in the nature of a trust as we have stated above, then the logical consequence of this is that his power and authority to use the trusted resources become subject

THE CRITERION

to the condition laid by the trust-endower. Islamic injunctions in this respect seem to be quite explicit. We shall try to briefly state the basic principles.

Firstly, Islam enjoins its followers to avail of the amenities of life and to maintain a standard of living in keeping with the resources God has given them. It discourages hoarding and encourages consumption, investment and wholesome expenditure. According to the Quran:

"And let not thy hand be tied to thy neck" (Al-Quran, XVII: 29

"And let not those who hoard up that which Allah hath bestowed upon them of His bounty think that it is better for them. Nay, it is worse for them". (Al-Quran III-180). The Holy Prophet said, "God likes His bounties to be reflected from one's life and be known to others". (Mishkat Vol II No. 4133) "When God has bestowed upon you riches, it is for you to show to the world His bounties unto you"

So Islam does not approve of miserliness or niggardliness in consumption.

Secondly, it forbids extravagance and wasteful expenditure in str- ongest possible terms. The Islamic injunctions are as follows:-

"Eat ye of the fruit there-of when it fruiteth, and pay the due thereof upon the harvest day, and be not prodigal. Allah loveth not he prodigals." (Al-Quran VI: 142) "Eat and drink, but be not prodigal. Lo Allah loveth not those exceed".

(XII: 31)

"Give the kinsman his due, and the needy, and the way-farer and squander not (thy wealth) in wantonness. Lo! the squanderers were ever brothers of the devil, and the devil was ever ungrateful to his Lord". (XVII: 26-27) "And (Muslims are) those who,

when they spend, are neither prodigal and wasteful nor grudging; and there is ever a firm station between the two".

In these verses Israf and Tabzeer have been forbidden. Israf means exceeding the limits on spending beyond the genuine needs. And tabzeer means wasteful expenditure or expenditure on frivolous, sinful or prohibited items.

ISLAM AND SIMPLE LIVING

Mawardi, discussing the two terms says "Israf is exceeding the limits in the quantum of expenditure while Tabzeer is exceeding the limits in avenues of expenditure\*"! Maulana Shabbir Ahmad Usmani, while discussing Tabzeer says:

"Do not fritter away God's bounty unto you. Extravagance means spending money on sinful or frivolous and useless pursuits or over spending money on permitted items so much so that it may result in injuring the rights of others (on your wealth) or paving the way for committing of acts forbidden."\*\*

The Holy Prophet has also given very clear injunctions in this respect. He said:

"Eat whatever you like and drink whatever you like but commit not extravagance and show not pride and greatness"

(Mishkat, No. 4162).

"A Muslim is rewarded for all that he rightly spends on mainta- ining his life, save on that what he spends on dust (i.e. on making houses without need)." (Mishkat No. 4927-28) Similarly use of gold and pure silk is forbidden for men. Thus Islam suggests the middle course. In the words of the Holy Prophet:-

"Middle course is the best in all pursuits".

In the field of consumption this would mean a life of austerity, which constitutes the middle course and avoids both miserliness and extravagance. This is a very wide concept and would influence human consumption in all its fields. Simplicity in dress alone will not do. It must permeate all aspects of living and the entire personal and national budget should be so prepared that no wasteful expenditure is made.

To keep the expenditure within genuine limits certain other instr- uctions have also been given by Islam. The following points deserve special mention.

a) Certain expenses have been forbidden out right e.g. gambling, prostitution, use of alcoholic drinks, gold and silver utensils, silken clothes for men etc.

b) It has been said that all personal expenses should preferably be made out of income and not capital. The principle amount

Lughat-e-Quran Vol 1, p. 90 Ibid. Vol 11, p. 70

THE CRITERION

shouold not be frittered away in every day expenses. There is a very significant Hadith that throws light on this problem. Yahya Bin Adam quotes the Holy Prophet in his Kitabul Kharaj as saying: "If a person has sold a house or property and out of the proceeds has not purchased something similar, God will ont bestow his blessings upon such a deal".

(Quoted, Dr. Yusufuddin, "Doctrines of Economics of Islam" (Urdu Vol II, P, 570)

c) The first claim upon ones income is of ones own self. Every- one should meet his basic necessities and maintain an average standard of comfort in keeping with his needs and status. The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) is reported to have said:

"Spend on your own self" "Begin with your own self"

d) After meeting one's personal needs next is the claim of the relatives, the neighbours and the poor and the needy. Accor- ding to the Quran :-

"They ask thee, (0 Muhammad), what they shall spend. Say that which ye spend for good (must go) to parents and. near kindred and orphans and the needy and the wayfarer". (II: 215)

"And in their riches the needy and the destitute have a right (i.e. their due)".

And the spirit of Islam is that the entire surplus should be volun- tarily spent in the name of Allah.

e) Certain specific rights have been created in the wealth of an individual by way of Zakat and Sadagat and they are to be paid through the organization created by the Islamic State, if there is any, otherwise by the individual himself.

f) Although spending of the surplus in the name of Allah has be en encouraged it has been clearly stated that a man should not give away all his belongings aud should save something for him self and his family. On several occasions the Holy Prophet said that "Save something for yourself-this would be better for you".

ISLAM AND SIMPLE LIVING

When a companion offered to the Prophet in the way of Allah all that he had the Prophet suggested that he should save something for himself and said:

"Some one of you offers as Sadaqah all that he hasand after making that donation he (being impoverished) extends his hand before others to meet his own needs. (Do not do this). That 'Sadsqah' is the best which after it has been made, leaves the giver rich".

(Abu Daud, Kitabuz Zakat).

If these principles are observed, a simple but balanced life is bound to develop. And this is what Islam wants.

DANGERS TO SIMPLE LIVING

Simple living is the ideal. But there are certain forces that detract from it and Islam has taken due notice of them.

i) First thing in this respect is what is called greed and envy. Islam condemns it in strongest terms. This is an outcome of a purely materialistic attitude towards life and cuts at the roots of the Islamic concept of balanced life. This results in a craze for artificially raising the standard of living.

ii) Secondly, conspicuous consumption is an important source of extravagance. This has very pernicious 'demonstration effect' upon other sections of the society. Islam checks it, and what is more impo- rtant, channelizes it into the direction of 'sadaqat' so that even this kind of expenditure may result in prosperity. According to the Quran:

"Compete with each other to excel in virtue".

iii) Gross inequalities of income also result in wasteful expenditure on the part of the upper classes and their effect upon the low-income groups, as Duesenberry and Alfred Bonne have convincingly dem- onstrated, is pernicious. Islam tries to reduce inequalities, thro- ugh zakat, sadaqat, inheritance and other taxes and measures. Red- uction of inequalities is a step towards fostering simple living.

These are some of the measures which Islam has adopted to fo- ster simple and moderate living. But what is most important is the basic attitude according to which greatness and honour lies not in rich or pompous living but in austere and virtuous living. And that all 12

THE CRITERION

that man has is in nature of a trust which has been endowed upon him and for which he would be accountable. If he makes this trust his exclusive preserve and does not fulfil the rights and claims of others, his duties and obligations as a member of society, this would be a usu- rpation pure and simple and he will have to bear its consequences in this world and in the life-Hereafter. And if this attitude is developed- which in fact is the essence of religion-then of course man would be able to live a life worthy of his noble stature.

(end)

THE LOT OF MUSLIMS IN U.S.S.R.

(continued from page 17)

there is no legislation forbidding worship, yet worship is hindered and discouraged in the following ways:-

(i) "Societies of the Godless" are at work to destroy religion in all Turk Muslim lands in Soviet Russia. Among other things soc ieties are engaged in intimidation, insult and discouragement of those who practise religion.

(ii) Every individual is compelled to work. Rules are so rigid that one cannot leave one's job even for short intervals needed for prayer. The defaulter is dismissed to starve with his family.

All religious leaders with the exception of a few agents in disguise have been executed or deported to Siberia.

V. Pressure against naional culture

Education has been completely Russified. As pointed out earlier, religious education has been legally banned. The new system of edu cation is so arranged that it detaches the young from their national environment; they memorise principles of Communism and are steadily dragged towards Russification.

Communist administration has denied to the people freedom of speech, freedom of press, gathering and travel.

It the end, it may be concluded that it seems impossible to save the culture and religion of Muslims who live under the Communist re- gime which is deadly against religion particularly Islam. In such cir- cumstances it is imperative on all Muslims to close their ranks and un- ite themselves in a third block which may be in a position to act as a deterrent to the aggression of the two antagonistic blocks viz. Capita- lism on one hand and Communism on the other.

-Based on an article in monthly Voice of Islam, Karachi