

his total personality with the 'color of Allah'. A muslim has been commanded by Allah not only to pray and fast, but also to put in practice His injunctions with respect to the socio-politico-economic aspects of life. Islam does not allow in the least the modern secular approach in which religion is confined to one's private life and modes of worship. On no pretext whatsoever -- economic stringency, difficulties in interest-free monetary transactions, extravagant customary practices on marriage and other social occasions -- can a true and committed Muslim justify himself in indulging in non-Islamic behavior. This is the basic and foremost lesson that comes out so clearly and emphatically from this verse of surah Al-i-Imran for all those who aspire to live as a Muslim and die as a Muslim. (to be continued)

بقیہ: لغات و اعراب قرآن

قَرَفْنَا / يَكُمُ، يَكُمُ / الْبَعْرَ، الْبَعْرَ، الْبَعْرَ / فَأَنْجَيْتَكُمْ،
فَأَنْجَيْتَكُمْ، فَأَنْجَيْتَكُمْ / وَأَغْرَقْنَا، أَغْرَقْنَا،
أَغْرَقْنَا، أَغْرَقْنَا / ال (مثل سابق)، فِرْعَوْنَ (مثل سابق) -
وَأَنْتُمْ، وَأَنْتُمْ، أَنْتُمْ / تَنْظُرُونَ، تَنْظُرُونَ، تَنْظُرُونَ -

بقیہ: معارف و مزامیر کا شرعی حکم

مشغلے میں زیادہ دلچسپی لے وہ احمق ہے، اس کی شہادت رد کر دی جائے۔ تفصیل کے لئے ملاحظہ ہو تفسیر روح المعانی، ج ۲۱، ص ۱۶

اس پوری تفصیل کا خلاصہ یہ ہے کہ قرآنی اشارات، سنت کی تصریحات، آثار صحابہ، اقوال تابعین اور سلف صالحین کا تعامل اس بات پر گواہ ہے کہ غنا اور اس کے آلات سے وابستگی اسلامی مزاج کے یکسر خلاف ہے۔ سوائے دو چار افراد کے ملت کا فیصلہ یہی ہے۔۔۔۔

﴿فَبَشِّرْ عِبَادِ ۝ الَّذِينَ يَسْتَمِعُونَ الْقَوْلَ فَيَتَّبِعُونَ أَحْسَنَهُ ۝﴾

the Quran instructs us to believe wholeheartedly and to bow in submission and obedience to God totally and completely. It allows no fragmentation of life. Taqwa is an all-embracing moral quality of the highest order. It manifests itself in an individual's whole way of thinking and in all his actions. The Quran emphasizes that the guidance given by Him cannot be split into parts -- the peripheral, less important ones to be followed, the fundamental more important ones to be put in cold storage. We can see with our own eyes in the lives of those who often enjoy great fame for their taqwa that they are so particular about the minor details of the Shariah that deviation from the secondary injunctions of their own juristic persuasions is to them tantamount to heresy and threatened with hell-fire. But their neglect of the fundamentals of Islam e.g., prohibition of interest in business and concern for economic exploitation and social injustice in society etc., -- reaches such heights that they have turned the Muslim's entire life into a life of compromise and political expediency. They should be reminded of the warning that Allah gave to the Israelites thus:

Do you believe in a part of the Scripture and reject the other? What else, then, could be the retribution of those among you who do this than they should live in degradation in the present life, and that on the Day of Resurrection they should be sent to the severest chastisement. (Al-Baqarah 2:85)

God-fearing attitude and consciousness must assert itself both in public life and in the inner denizens of private life. In case it is shallow and fake, it will be manifest only in the external veneer of living and conduct. Once the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) pointed to his breast thrice and said that taqwa resides in here. If the heart of a man is enlivened by taqwa, it will permeate his entire being and dye

practise Islam themselves. Their own lives and conduct, far from being based on taqwa and iman, exhibit many deviations from Islamic principles. Unfortunately, they forget that the first thing that Islam demands from them is to lead their own lives as much as possible according to the dictates of the Quran and the Sunnah of the Prophet (peace be upon him).

The demand of the Quran as explained in the above lines is that **we are required to worship and love Allah with all our heart, and with all our soul, and with all our mind, and with all our strength. In Islam the religious concern is ultimate, it excludes all other concerns from ultimate significance; it makes them preliminary. The concern for Islam is to be unconditional, independent of any condition of character, desire or circumstance. The unconditional concern is total: no part of ourselves or of our world is excluded from it; there is no place to flee from it. The total concern is infinite: no moment of relaxation and rest is possible in the face of a religious concern which is ultimate, unconditional, total and infinite.**

The Quranic Verse:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا ادْخُلُوا فِي السِّلْمِ كَآفَّةً

Believers! Enter wholly in Islam....(Al-Baqarah 2:208) means exactly this. God demands that man should submit, without reservation, the whole of his being and life to His will. Man's outlook, intellectual pursuits, behavior, interaction with other people and all modes of behavior should all be completely subordinate to Islam. God does not accept the splitting up of human life into separate compartments, some governed by the teachings of Islam and others exempt. Whether seen from the point of view of Islam or taqwa (i.e. God-fearing attitude and God-consciousness)

the inner conviction of faith and the practice of Islam are essentially interdependent. God almost invariably mentions faith and righteous conduct together. Verbal profession of Islamic beliefs, though important in its own right, is not sufficient for supporting the edifice of an Islamic morality and way of life and for winning him salvation in the Hereafter. Just imagine the utter misfortune of a person whose soul is overtaken by death while he is committing a grievous sin and no time is left for him to repent and make amends. This situation can only be avoided by a Muslim who makes Islam the ultimate, paramount and all-time concern in his life.

First thing first. This, then, is the foremost and base-line practical step or action which a true Muslim has to undertake most earnestly. Without accomplishing this, he cannot fruitfully move on to the two higher steps of the action-agenda. Allah castigates the religious divines of the Jews with severest reproach on this account thus:

Do you enjoin right conduct on the people, and forget (to practise it) yourselves, and yet you study the Scripture? Will you not understand. (Al-Baqarah 2:44)

This attitude (of double standards) is also conspicuously visible in our own present day Muslim society. Many a people deliver moving and passionate lectures to others on religion and moral rectitude. A large group of spiritual mentors is seen engaged in Islamic dawah activity across the Muslim world. High-quality first-rate academic papers are being written and published by a host of scholars in the Muslim lands. Yet on closer examination one regrettably find that most of these scholars, writers and mentors do not

Moreover the command given in a most emphatic style - and see that you do not die save in the state of Islam -- is very significant and subtle. As a matter of fact no body knows as to how long he is going to live and where and in what conditions his death will take place. We often hear that a person travels in the morning to a certain place on a business or pleasure trip. His family members fondly expect him back after a few days, but instead in the evening of the very same day he left his house, his wife and children receive his dead body. This means that if a man firmly decides that death does not take him except in the state of submission and total surrender to Allah, he will have to be extremely and ceaselessly alert and see that not even a single moment of his life is spent in sinful activities. No body has any guarantee whatsoever that he is not to die at the time of indulging in sin and thus transgressing the limits set by the Quran and the Sunnah. Many Quranic verses and Hadith emphasize that an un-Islamic act cannot co-exist with iman, indeed to the extent that, at least while man is committing a sin, his iman leaves him. Let me here quote a very authentic hadith.

Abu Hurayra, Allah be pleased with him, says: Allah's Messenger, peace and blessings be on him, said: While one is committing fornication, he is not a believer; while one is stealing, he is not a believer; while one is taking liquor, his is not a believer; while one is plundering, as people look on, he is not a believer; while one is committing fraud, he is not a believer; so beware, beware! (Bukhari and Muslim).

Leaving aside for a moment the arguments of the jurists and theologians about iman and its relation to amal (actions), one must try to understand the matter in the light of the Quran. It becomes crystal clear from the Quran that

lives of self-restraint and righteousness to the highest possible degree.' And the Companions of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) amply acted upon this Divine injunction. However, on our part we should not absolve ourselves of this duty by underestimating our own capacities and capabilities. One should not deliberately forego the struggle for restraint and piety on the false (and self-deceiving!) pretext that he has not the required mental and physical strength. The All-Knowing Allah knows well how much strength and capability He has given to a person and he will be judged according to that measure.

Now let us discuss the second injunction contained in the verse: 'and see that you do not die except in the state of Islam.' What does 'Islam' literally mean? It means submission and surrender to God. Islam implies belief in the unity of God and the prophethood of Muhammad (peace be upon him). Anyone who testifies to this belief fulfils the legal requirement for entry into the fold of Islam. And this belief has very significant practical ramifications. The edifice of a complete Islamic life can only be built on a belief in God's unity (Tawhid) that permeates a man's entire personal and social life, and which is so strong that he considers himself and all that he possess as really belonging to God; he accepts Him as the sole rightful Owner, Object of worship, Receiver of obedience and Law-giver for himself as well as for the rest of the world; he considers Him the fountain-head of guidance, and is fully aware that disobedience to God or indifference to the divinely revealed law constitutes deviation from the right path of Islam. Indeed, controlling the baser promptings and desires of the self and always striving to act according to the dictates of the Quran and Sunnah of the Prophet is what Islam essentially means.

a Muslim is that he should have taqwa. Not only a person with taqwa scrupulously avoids things which are explicitly prohibited; he also hesitates from getting involved in affairs which are in any way dubious or worthless. His sense of duty makes him fulfil God's commands in a spirit of total submission. His fear of God causes a feeling of deep anxiety and agony whenever there is a possibility that he may be in danger of exceeding limits prescribed by God. Ensuring the discharge of his obligations towards God and towards his fellow-beings becomes his way of life; he shudders at the very thought of doing anything unjust and against the Islamic Sharia. He keeps a vigil on whatever his bodily limbs (arms, legs, eyes, ears, sexual organs) perform. He thinks himself accountable for all voluntary acts performed through them. Since, according to the Quran an angel always records whatever a man speaks out, a God-fearing man is vigilant about what he utters. This vigilance, control, concern and caution are the hall-marks of the taqwa-based attitude in life.

Again, the words which accompany and qualify the commandment for taqwa are immensely noteworthy: '..... as He should be feared.' While reciting this verse we generally take a cursory and cavalier view of these. How radically different was the attitude and response of the Companions of the Prophet when they came to know of this challenging demand! They became extremely perturbed by this and thought that it was impossible for one to fear God Almighty to the highest degree due Him. They, therefore, enquired the Prophet about this and got consolation from the words of Allah, Most Merciful and Most Compassionate: 'So fear God as much as you can' (Taghabun 64:15). On hearing this they were relieved of a terrible anxiety. 'Fear of God' combined with 'as much as you can' obviously means: 'lead

Ubai bin Kaab as to how he will define taqwa and what its essences is. Ubai bin Kaab, acclaimed by the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) as a great scholar and reciter of the Quran, explained it in such a convincing and graphic manner that everyone of the Companions sitting in that meeting appreciated it favorably. The explanation given by him may be paraphrased like this: if a man has to cross a jungle with thorny bushes on both sides of the narrow track, he will take extreme care and tuck up his garments in order to avoid any harm to his clothes or to himself. This attitude of caution and care is to be called *taqwa*. Keeping this connotation of taqwa in view, let us first understand what iman or Islamic religions belief is. Iman signifies that a person has acknowledged the unity of Allah and believed in Him as the Creator and the Sustainer of the universe, one has testified the Day of Judgment, and finally, believed the messengership of Muhammad (peace be upon him). This tripartite belief entails crucially important practical imperatives, which are in the words of the Quran:

- (i) So, obey Allah, and obey His messenger; but if you turn back, the duty of our messenger is but to proclaim the message clearly and openly. (Taghabun 64:12)
- (ii) So take and put in practice what the messenger assigns to you and deny yourselves that which he withholds from you... (Hashr 59:7)
- (iii) Then guard yourselves against the Day when one soul shall not avail another; nor shall compensation be accepted from her, nor shall intermission profit her, nor shall anyone be helped. (Baqrah 2:123)

In a nutshell, the first and foremost demand of iman on

second may be necessary. But even here it is both fear and reverential awe of Allah. The first, on the other hand, is a feeling of which anyone should be ashamed. To respond to the call of Allah and His Messenger even after one has been smitten by injuries indicates that one fears God. Taqwa is indeed God-consciousness that makes a man righteous and pious. Steadfastness and perseverance in obedience and loyalty to God necessarily characterize the pious (i.e., a muttaqi). According to the Quran, taqwa is an all-embracing moral-cum-spiritual quality of the highest order: the inner driving force that keeps a Muslim on the right track.

Let us try to understand taqwa a little further. Taqwa does not merely imply any particular form, appearance or life-style. Rather, it is a state of mind and heart which no doubt does reflect in every aspect of life. It permeates the whole being of a true believer; it is not a mere veneer or outward show. Essentially it can be termed God-consciousness: man's awe of God, consciousness of his duty towards Him and an awareness of his accountability to Him: that the world is a phase of trial where God has sent man for a specified period of time; that God's decisions on the Day of Judgement on an individual's future in the Hereafter will depend on how he makes use of his energies and capabilities in the given period of time at his disposal in this world, how he deals with his fellow beings. A conscience which is fired by consciousness of God becomes alive. Man's sensitivity becomes sharp under this influence and avoids every thing that is against God's will. He starts examining his own thoughts and feelings to see what tendencies are being nurtured within him. He begins to scrutinize his life to find out what activities he is spending his time and energy in.

Once Hazrat Umar Farooq, the second Caliph, asked

and hypocrites are all mixed up. However, on the Day of Judgment, Almighty Allah will make a clear division between them and every body will be rewarded on the basis of his belief and deeds (:). In other words, in this world a man's being Muslim (i.e. his verbal attestation of the basic beliefs of Islam and outward actions) is all that matters; but in the Hereafter only true and sincere belief --'iman'-- and deeds performed solely for the pleasure of Allah will save one from the torments of hell-fire.

Turning now to the meanings of the verses, one notes that they address all who claim themselves to be believers and the first demand that is made is: 'Believers! fear Allah as much as He should be really feared'. This means that people with Islam are being commanded to be true believers and to have fear and awe of Allah to the utmost degree. The Arabic word taqwa is very meagerly transliterated in the English word 'fear'. Fear is obviously of many kinds:

- (i) the abject fear of the coward;
- (ii) the fear of child or an inexperienced person in the face of an unknown danger, more properly called dread;
- (iii) the fear of a reasonable man who wishes to avoid harm to himself or to people whom he wishes to protect;
- (iv) the reverence which is akin to love, for it fears to do anything which is not pleasing to the object of love.

The first is unworthy of man; the second is necessary for one spiritually immature; the third is a manly precaution against evil as long as it is unconquered; and the fourth is the seed-bed of righteousness and piety. Those mature in faith cultivate the fourth; at earlier stages, the third or the

Muslims in the legal sense in an Islamic state as they profess the oneness of Allah and prophethood of Muhammad (peace be upon him). That is why in the whole of the Quran we do not read even once the words **يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ نَافَقُوا** even though a complete Surah entitled 'Al-Munafiqun' (the hypocrites) deals with the wiles, plots and false pretexts of the dissemblers, whom the Holy Book likens to propped-up timbers. At other places the hypocrites and faint-hearted and weak-willed believers are described as a menace to military discipline, quislings under pressure and vacillators always guessing at their shifting fortunes. All those who profess to have *iman*, the Quran says, do not necessarily truly believe: many have diseases of weakness, feebleness or hypocrisy in their hearts:

And some men there are who say: We believe in God and the Last Day; but they are not really believers in their hearts is disease. (Al-Baqarah 2:8-10)

The beduins say, We believe. Say: You do not (truly) believe, rather say, 'We have (outwardly surrendered) -- for faith has not yet entered your hearts. (Al-Hujurat 49:14)

O Messenger, let them not grieve you those who vie with one another (in the way of) Kufur, from among those who say with their mouths 'We believe' while their hearts believe not. (Al-Maida 5:41)

So here in the world true staunch believers, weaklings

Surahs and not even once the expression

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا --(O Believers!--) has been used in these Surahs. This way of address was employed in the Medinan period in which Muslims formally became a community. Thus this expression marked the formation of Muslim Ummah and Allah Almighty used these words while addressing all the members of the Islamic polity.

- (ii) A major portion of Surah Al-i-Imran was revealed in the third year after Hijra, immediately after the battle of Uhud (Shawwal, H.3). If one tries to visualize, with the help of authentic historical accounts, the state of the Muslim Community at that time in Medina, one sees that the faith and belief of the community presented a wide spectrum. At the one end of that spectrum were true and staunch pious believers (among both Ansars and Muhajirs) the depth of whose inner certitude, unflinching belief and iman was fathomless, whereas at the other extreme were those who lacked firm commitment and dedication to Islam -- the vacillating and faint-hearted among the Prophet's followers. The highest degree of this attitude was exhibited by those whom the Quran terms as 'Munafiqun'-- (منافقون) people who had rancor or hate against the true Muslims and suffered from incredulity, impiety, shiftlessness and dissimulation. The important point to note, however, is that these people were never treated as a separate group: rather they were included among the Muslims and the address starting with the expressions يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا (O believers!) also covered them. This point has far reaching implications. Even hypocrites are to be treated as

thus:

افراد کے ہاتھوں میں ہے اقوام کی تقدیر
ہر فرد ہے ملت کے مقدر کا ستارہ

How can a group or a collectivity proceed in the right direction unless its individual members act and behave in the right manner? If individuals do not conduct themselves on the prescribed lines, how can the group as a whole work appropriately and achieve its envisaged targets? It is quite logical therefore that in organizing a collective effort the individual person himself comes first. In the context of Islamic ummah's mission and goal, the first and foremost point is that an individual Muslim should realize as to what his religious obligations are. He should be quite clear as to what Islam demands and requires him to do: indeed, how to live his life on earth. Let me illustrate this point with the help of an example. Suppose a person has to ascend a platform which has three steps. The surest and safest way for him will be first to rise up to the first step, then to the second and finally to the last. If, on the other hand, he tries to jump at the top, he is most likely to fall down thus failing to achieve his target. The verses cited above similarly unfold before us three steps or stages through which Muslims should pursue their ummatic goal.

So let us then focus our attention on the first verse that reads:

Believers! Fear Allah as He should be feared, and see that you do not die except in the state of Islam.

Here two points are noteworthy before we embark upon an in-depth analysis of the contents of the verse:

- (i) Almost two-third of the Quran consists of Makkan

verses too have philosophical points of wisdom or theoretical hikmah, I shall mainly dilate upon the practical guidance provided by them. I personally believe that pure academicism or too much philosophical or critical acumen exercised in understanding a particular point quite often hide from the scholar the concrete and practical guidance contained therein. Moreover, what the Muslim Ummah as a whole needs today is a clear and precise perception of the religious obligations and imperatives and a resolve to act upon them in the right earnest.

- * The first verse tells a Muslim very precisely and yet very comprehensively the obligations and duties which he has to fulfil and perform as a member of the Muslim Ummah: the priorities in the conduct of life and value-structure to be upheld during the course of life on earth.
- * The second verse enlightens them about the thing which unites Muslim as a group and welds them into an Ummah (a religious fraternity): the instrument which turns them into a disciplined hizbullah i.e., the party of Allah.
- * The third verse delineates the objective or goal of the Muslim Ummah in general and the aim or objective of the activist Islamic group or hizbullah in particular. In other words what is the mission and the target towards which it has to strive?

One can very easily see that there is a strong logical relation between these three points. Every organizational effort or collectivity depends ultimately upon the individual members: his existential commitment to the group's world-view and determination to act accordingly. Allama Iqbal has very forcefully expressed this very idea in a poetical verse

THREE-POINT ACTION-AGENDA FOR THE MUSLIM UMMAH

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Three Verses (102-104) of Surah Al-i-Imran are of immense significance as they contain in a nutshell the comprehensive three-point plan of action Muslims are commanded to undertake in order to attain terrestrial success and salvation and felicity in the Hereafter. English translation of the verses reads:

102. Believers! Fear Allah as He should be feared, and see that you do not die except in the state of Islam.

103. And hold fast, all together, to the Rope which Allah (stretched out for you), and be not divided among yourselves; and remember with gratitude Allah's favour on you, for you were once enemies and then He joined your hearts in love, so that by His Grace, you became brethren; and you were on the brink of the pit of fire, and He saved you from it. Thus does Allah make His Signs clear to you: that you may be guided to the right way.

104. Let there arise from among you a band of people (i.e., a party) who invite people to all that is good and enjoin the doing of all that is right and forbid the doing of all that is wrong. It is they who will attain true success and felicity.

These verses occur almost in the middle of the Surah Al-i-Imran and as such occupy a pivotal position in the numerous themes with which the Surah deals. As is commonly believed by Muslims, every single verse of the Quran contains both theoretical wisdom and practical guidance. Similarly, though the above mentioned three