

strong wall pierced by 20 gates and flanked by 1,030 towers. The castle named Qasba was in the centre of the town and each house of the city had a beautiful garden of its own." On the summit of one of the hills opposite the city, Ibn-ul-Ahmar built the fortress of Al-Hamra, which was capable of holding 40,000 men. Al-Hamra, no doubt, represents the final height of culture and architecture achieved by the Arabs in Spain as some historians call it, "the fabric of the geni". Opposite to the Al-Hamra on the side of a steep mountain stood the celebrated royal villa of Al-Generaliffe (corrupted from the Arabic Jamia al-Arif from an exquisite mosque attached to the villa). It also, to use the words of a clever writer, "was a marvel of beauty with fountains, groves and flowers".

- iii. **At a time when the whole of Europe was plunged in darkness and ignorance, Muslim Spain was glittering with peace and prosperity, administration and agriculture, trade and industry, and on top of all of these, knowledge and wisdom. No town, however small, was without college or schools; whilst each principal city possessed a separate university of its own, those of Cordova, Saville, Granada, Malaga, Saragossa, Lisbon Salamanca among others, occupied the most distinguished positions. The Arabs at the height of their glory revived the sciences and arts as well as philosophy and wisdom of the ancient Greece, added to them the wisdom and knowledge of the East, invented so many sciences and techniques and then passed all this treasure of knowledge to the people of Europe through the universities of Spain. And it was, without any doubt, under their influence that both of the famous movements of Reformation in religion and Renaissance in knowledge and thought, started in Europe.**
- iv. The Muslim scholars of Spain made great strides in medicines, history, geography, mathematics and astronomy in addition to logic, philosophy and various Islamic sciences of Tafseer, Hadith, Fiqh, Kalaam and Mysticism.
- Among the host of historians, the most prominent are Ibn-e-Hayyan, Ibn-ul-Abbar, Ibn-e-Bushkuwal, Ibn-e-Ubaidullah al-Barki, Ibn-ul-Khatib, and last but not the least, the most renowned sociologist and philosopher of history Ibn-e-Khaldoon.
 - Some of those famous for their work in the field of medicine are Ibn-e-Bajah, Ibn-e-Tufail, Ibn-e-Zuhr, Ibn-e-Wafid, Muhammad Tamimi, Dawood al-Aghrabi, Ibn-ul-Awwam and Ibn-e-Baitar.
 - Those famous for their work in the field of geography are Ibn-e-Hameed, Ibn-e-Jubair and Idreesi of Malaga.
 - Those famous in the fields of mathematics and astronomy are Ishbili, Zarqani, Ibn-e-Abi Salat and Ibn-e-Yousuf.
 - And on top of all of these can be counted the three most famous philosophers and theologians that Muslim Spain produced i.e.

Note: Ta-Ha Publishers Ltd. (1, Wynne Road, London SW9) have recently published a book titled "Blood on the Cross", written by Ahmad Thomson which fully describes "the fate of Islam and Muslims in Spain in the light of Christian persecution through the ages". In addition to that, this book gives a historical survey of the sectarian differences and infighting among the Christians which shows that never on the surface of the earth so much blood was split on the basis or religious differences as in the case of Christianity.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

As regards the height of civilization and culture reached by Spain under the Arabs, it will suffice to mention a few things

- i. It requires a lot of imagination to believe that about 1,000 years back in history, Cordova was a city 24 miles in length, 6 miles in breadth with a population exceeding one million, having 3,800 mosques, 60,000 palaces and big mansions, 200,000 houses inhabited by common people, 700 public baths, 80,000 shops, a large number of hostels and sarais, and innumerable number of libraries. The magnificence of Cordova in the days of this glory can be judged by the statement of an old author to the effect that one could travel for 10 miles "by the light of lamps along an uninterrupted extent of buildings". The beautiful mosque of Cordova which became the ornament of Spain attained the status of the "harem" for Western Islam about which Iqbal, the poet-philosopher of Islam says:

ہے یہ گردوں اگر حُسن میں تیری نظیر
قلبِ مسلمان میں ہے اور نہیں ہے کہیں!

"(O Harem of Cordova) Nothing can match you in beauty except the pure heart of a true Muslim."

Its construction was begun by Abdul Rahman al-Dakhil and completed by his son and successor Hishaam I. But it was the 8th king of the dynasty, Abdul Rahman al-Nasir who added new dimensions to its size, beauty, decoration and grandeur.

Abdul Rahman al-Nasir built the palace Al-Zahra 4 miles to the west of the city, about which many old writers admit that it is impossible to give in words a proper description of "the boldness of the design, the beauty of the proportions, the elegance of the ornament and decoration, whether of carved marble or of molten gold, of the columns that seemed from their symmetry as if cast in moulds, of the paintings that equaled the choicest bowers themselves, the vast but firmly constructed lake and the fountains with the exquisite images".

- ii. In the same manner, Granada had a population of 400,000 people in the middle of the 15th century of Christian Era. In the words of a historian, "Granada stood like a watch-tower in a meadow. It was encompassed by

civilizations also grow old and weak with the passage of time just as each human individual passes naturally from youth to old age. But the manner in which a whole nation was exterminated, and a whole civilization washed off is a peculiar phenomenon which displays the deceit and treachery as well as ruthlessness and cruelty of the outwardly religious personalities of King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella and their descendents.

The last king of Granada Muhammad Abu Abdullah, who had himself revolted against his father Ali Abul Hasan and later played as a tool in the hands of Ferdinand and Isabella, had surrendered the town on the terms that he would get an estate in Al-Basharat (Spanish: Al-Pujarras) and all Muslims would be secure in person and property, observing their own laws and absolutely free in the practice of their religion. But, in the words of Professor Hitti.

“Their Catholic Majesties Ferdinand and Isabella failed to abide by the terms of capitulation. Under the leadership of the Queen’s Confessor Cardinal Ximenez de Cisneros, a campaign of forced conversion was inaugurated in 1499. The Cardinal at first tried to withdraw from Circulation Arabic books dealing with Islam by burning them. Granada was the scene of a bonfire of Arabic manuscripts. The Inquisition was then instituted and kept busy. All Muslims were now reminded that their ancestors had been Christians and that they either submit to baptism or suffer the consequences. As a result, many became crypto-Muslims professing Christianity but secretly practicing Islam. Some would come home from their Christian weddings to be married secretly after the Muslim rite, many would adopt a Christian name for public and an Arabic one for private use. As early as 1501, a royal decree was issued that all Muslims in Castile and Leon should either recant or leave Spain. In 1526, the Muslims of Aragon were confronted with the same alternatives. In 1556, Philip II promulgated a law requiring the remaining Muslims to abandon at once their language, worship, institutions and manner of life. The final order of expulsion was signed by Philip III in 1609, resulting in the forcible deportation *en-masse* of practically all Muslims on Spanish soil. Between the fall of Granada and the first decade of the 17th century, it is estimated that about 3 million Muslims were banished or executed.”

I have given this long quotation to show those of you who belong to the Indian subcontinent the picture of the coming events in South Asia if, as I said in the beginning, the direction of the events did not change by Allah’s special Will and intervention which as a rule comes after requisite human struggle and effort. May Allah give us the courage and determination to rise to the occasion and fulfill our duties as defenders of Islam and the Ummah of Muhammad ﷺ. Amen!

After five years of friendship and the game of hide-and-seek, Abdul Rahman succeeded in entering Spain (that is why he is surnamed "*al-Dakhi*" or "the one who entered") and capturing power with the help of Syrian and Yamani Arabs who were settled in Spain, and the Berbers who were his maternal uncles.

This Omayyad period of Spanish history can be further sub-divided into two parts. During the first part, extending from 755 to 929 C.E., although the Omayyad ruled Spain absolutely independently but they did not assume the title of Caliph or Ameer-ul-Momineen. It was in the year 929 that Abdul Rahman The 3rd assumed the title of "*Al-Khalifah al-Nasir li-deen Allah*", that is why he is surnamed "al-Nasir". But after the death of his successor al-Hakam in the year 976, the Omayyad caliphs of Spain were more or less nominal rulers, confined mostly to the palaces. During this period, which ended in 1031, the real authority was in the hands of their chamberlains or the Hajibs who ruled in the name of the caliphs. The first Hajib named al-Mansoor is counted among the greatest generals and military leaders of human history. In 1031, the rule of Hajibs as well as the caliphate of the Omayyads came to a sudden end.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

The 3rd period of the history of the Muslim Spain, although the longest i.e. from 1031 to 1492 C.E., was actually a period of continuous and steady decline and downfall during which the Muslim Spain was divided in as many as 26 petty states quarrelling and fighting with one another whereby encouraging rather inviting, the neighbouring Christian rulers to increase their zones of influence by helping one Muslim ruler against the other at one time and reversing the sides on another occasion, with the result that these petty Muslim states started falling one by one into the hands of the Christians. This process reached its zenith by the middle of the 13th century of the Christian Era when the Muslim rule was reduced and confined to Kingdom of Granada only. This last Muslim kingdom of the Iberian Peninsula withstood the Christian onslaught for no less than two centuries, but at last, succumbed to the invasions of King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella and came to a final end with the fall of Granada in the year 1492 C.E.

This process of decline and downfall would have been much faster, and the final end of the history of Muslim Spain would have come much earlier, had there been no fresh injection of the nascent human potential and reinforcement and revival of religious fervor by two Muslim reformist and revivalist Berber movements of North Africa under the titles of Al-Murabitun and Al-Muwahhidun during the 11th and 12th centuries of the Christian Era.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

As regards the reasons of the downfall of the Arabs in Spain, even Spengler's view of history can be an enough explanation, that is to say that nations and

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Some historians say that Musa bin Nusair had crossed the Pyreneese Mountains into France while others say he was just planning for it when recalled. But it is agreed that Musa bin Nusair wished to conquer the whole of Europe and shake hands with the caliph at Damascus reaching there via France and Rome. Professor Hitti has mentioned this rather jokingly, but looking at the conditions prevailing in Europe at that time and keeping in view the great momentum of the Arab-Berber wave of conquest, it was definitely possible, had there been no internal strife at the heart of the Arab empire.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

The history of Muslim Spain is divided into three periods: the first extending from 712 to 755, second from 755 to 1031 and the third from 1031 to 1492 C.E.

During the first period, Spain was a sub-province under the Omayyad governor of West Africa. For the first 33 years, it was actually controlled by the centre, but during the last 10 years, it was nearly autonomous under Ameer Yousaf al-Fahri. During these 43 years, no less than 23 governors or ameers ruled Spain, the longest tenure being that of the above-mentioned Yousaf. Nevertheless, this was the glorious period of conquest and extensions during which Muslim armies comprising of the Arabs and the Berbers crossed the Pyreneese and reached the heart of France, capturing Narbonne in the south of France, and Bordeaux and Poitiers in the south-west, reaching as far as Tours merely 180 miles south of Paris which was the farthest point of the Muslim advance from where they were repulsed in 732 C.E. (exactly 100 years after the death of the Prophet ﷺ). About this battle of Tours, Professor Hitti says, "Gibbon and after him other historians would see in Paris and London mosques where Cathedrals now stand, and would hear the Quran instead of Bible expounded in Oxford and other seats of learning, had the Arabs won the day".

But even after that, Muslim advances continued elsewhere and reached even Lyon, about 300 miles to the south-east of Paris. This means that approximately half of France was trampled under the feet of Muslims. Moreover, it seems that the victory of Islam reached farther than the victory of the Muslims, because Emperor Hoffa, the greatest King of England during the 8th century is said to have embraced Islam and got the words لا اله الا الله وحده engraved on his gold coins preserved to this day.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

The second period of the history of the Muslim Spain consists of an independent Omayyad Kingdom which lasted for two and three-quarter centuries. This kingdom was established by Abdul Rahman, a lone prince of the house of Omayya and the grandson of Hishaam, the 10th Omayyad caliph, who escaped the massacre after the Abbasid Revolution of the year 750 C.E.

[*Al-Anbīya*: 111] which mean “I don’t know whether, what is promised to you has come near or is still at some distance” and “I don’t know, there might be some further period of testing and hence a fresh lease of existence for you for some while”

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

There are many similarities between the history of Muslim Spain and that of Muslim India. The most conspicuous and striking of these similarities is that Islam entered the European continent through Spain and the Indian continent through Sindh at exactly the same time in history i.e. the years 91 to 94 of the Hijri calendar, corresponding to the years 710 to 714 of the Christian Era. It was a time when 80 years had passed after the death of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and even the pious Caliphate had come to an end no less than half a century ago, with the result that the grace and the blessings of the days of the Prophet ﷺ and even those of the pious Caliphate never touched the lands of Europe as well as of South Asia, and although the practice of Islam and the religious fervor of Eman, as well as the missionary zeal of *Dawat Ilal Allah* and the spirit of *Jihad fi Sabeel Allah* were still intact in the personal character of many Muslims, the pristine purity of the true Islamic faith and the republican character of the Islamic state had been replaced by the curse of monarchy and the accompanying tribal and regional struggle for power and ascendancy, and at least at the collective and state level the missionary zeal of Islam had largely been replaced by the lust for conquest and hegemony.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Waleed bin Abdul Malik bin Marwan was the sixth caliph of the Omayyad dynasty and it was during his reign that in the year 92 A.H. (711 C.E.), Sindh was invaded by Muhammad bin Qasim al-Saqafi under the command and control of the governor of Eastern province, Hajjaj bin Yusuf, so notorious for his tyranny and cruelty. Spain was invaded by Tariq bin Ziad, a Berber by descent and a freed slave of Musa bin Nusair, the governor of North Africa west of Egypt. And, due partly to the local conditions in Sindh as well as Spain, that is the tyranny of the rulers and infighting of the religious sects, especially the persecution of the Jews in Spain and the lower castes in India, and partly to the zeal and fervor of Jihad in the Muslim soldiers, so lightening and astonishing were the victories achieved by both these Generals that nearly whole of the valley of Sindh upto the foot-hills of Kashmir as well as a big chunk of Rajputana and almost whole of the Iberian Peninsula, were occupied by the Muslims in no time. But, alas, due to the palace intrigues and the struggle for power and ascendancy as well as mutual contempt and enmity among the ruling elite in the heart land of the Muslim empire, on the one hand Muhammad bin Qasim was recalled and murdered and on the other hand, firstly Musa bin Nusair reprimanded and punished Tariq bin Ziad and then Musa bin Nusair himself was recalled by Waleed and later humiliated by Sulaiman, his brother and successor.

A BRIEF SURVEY OF THE HISTORY OF MUSLIM SPAIN AND IT'S SIMILARITY WITH THE HISTORY OF MUSLIM INDIA

[Text of the speech delivered by **Dr. Israr Ahmad**, Ameer Tanzeem-e-Islami Pakistan, as Chief Guest Speaker at the 1st International Convention of the Islamic Medical Association of North America, held at Hotel Monica, Nerja, Spain from 22nd to 25th of June, 1990]

Dear brothers and sisters in Islam, and the very dear youth!

السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته

It is indeed a great pleasure and honour to be here with you and address so many Muslim physicians and surgeons working mostly in North America and having a religious orientation. But, at the same time, my heart is bleeding with grief and sorrow, and I am sure that hearts of all of you must also be bleeding, because at the moment we are in a country where Muslim power, civilization and culture flourished for no less than eight long centuries. Then they were wiped out in a manner that has no parallel in the known history, with the result that a whole nation was exterminated by either mass killings or forced evacuations and expulsions. And so in this way, the Muslims of Spain --- the Arabs, the Berbers as well as local converts --- met the same fate as befell the people of Nooh, Hood, Swalleh, Loot and Shuaib عليهم السلام. In the words of the Quran **كَانَ لَكُمْ بَعَثْنَا** [Al-A'raf: 92, Hood: 68, 95] and **لَا تَرَىٰ فِيهَا** [Al-Ahqaf: 25] meaning "As if they never lived there" and "only the dwellings can be seen, none of the dwellers".

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Personally for me, there is an additional factor of grief and concern because for the last five years or so I have been observing that the events in the Indian sub-continent i.e. Bharat and Pakistan are moving in a direction which, if not turned by Allah's Special Grace and Mercy, may lead to the same fate for the Muslims of that region. To some it might appear as fantastic and a very far-fetched idea, but to me it appears to be inevitable, unless some dramatic and miraculous change occurs due to some special Divine Will and intervention. The only solace that I can get is from the Ayat at the end of Surah *Al-Ambiya* **وَإِنْ أَهْرَىٰ نَعْلَهُ فَبَتَّ نَعْمٌ وَمَتَّ إِلَىٰ حَيْبٍ** [Al-Ambiya: 109] and **وَإِنْ أَهْرَىٰ نَعْلَهُ فَبَتَّ نَعْمٌ وَمَتَّ إِلَىٰ حَيْبٍ** [Al-Ambiya: 109] and **وَإِنْ أَهْرَىٰ نَعْلَهُ فَبَتَّ نَعْمٌ وَمَتَّ إِلَىٰ حَيْبٍ** [Al-Ambiya: 109]

The Jews and the Christians recognized the virtues of the believers and their Prophet (SAW) and knew that they were on the right path but because of their envy and selfishness, they wanted them to be deprived of the blessings of Allah (SWT) and renounce the truth after they had believed.

وَكَيْفَ تَكْفُرُونَ وَأَنتُمْ كُنتُمْ عَلَىٰ عِلْمِكُمْ أَنَّ إِلَٰهًا وَفِيكُمْ رَسُولًا مَّن يَلْتَمِسْهُ فَبِإِلَٰهِ فَقَدْ خَسِرَ إِلَىٰ جَهَنَّمَ
مُسْتَقِيمًا ﴿١٠١﴾

(101) And how would you disbelieve while revelations of Allah are being recited to you, and among you is His Messenger. And whoever holds firmly to Allah, will indeed be guided to the right path.

i.e. why do you not believe in Allah (SWT) when His Messenger is present amongst you and he recites and conveys to you His *ayaat* and calls you to faith with clear proofs and evidences which confirm the truth. "And whoever holds firmly to Allah, will indeed be guided to the right path." i.e. whoever devotes himself to Allah's obedience, trusting and relying on Him, will indeed achieve guidance and the truth. He that holds fast to Allah (SWT) shall be guided to the right path.

From here begins the second half of this *surah*. In this section, instructions have been given to the Muslim *Ummah* about the reformative work they had to perform. They have also been taught how to deal with the People of the Book and the hypocrites. This section also gives a commentary on the Battle of *Uhud*. The first three *ayaat* are very important and describe the methodology according to which each Muslim must perform his duties.

End Notes

- [7] Surah At-Taubah (9): 31.
 [8] Musnad Ahmed 4: 378, Tuhfat-ul-Ahwadhi 8: 492, At-Tabari 14: 210.
 [9] The Arabic word 'Hanif' denotes a person who denounces all other paths in order to follow one particular course.
 [10] Sahih Bukhari 9: 17.
 [11] The word Gentile has several meanings but in the most common modern use it refers to a non-Jew. In their scriptures they define it as "a pagan or a heathen or someone who is not a Jew or a Christian." Sometimes they also use the term Goy as a disparaging term for one who is not a Jew.
 [12] The Talmud is a rabbinic discussion on Jewish law, Jewish ethics, customs, legends and stories, which Jewish tradition considers authoritative. It expands on the earlier writings in the Torah in general and in the Mishnah in particular and much of rabbinic literature. (Wikipedia)
 [13] Yebamoth 98a
 [14] Sanhedrin 57a.
 [15] cf. Ibn Kathir.

★ ★ ★