Toward Peace

STARTING POINT

Alone among the entire creation, the human being is a thinking, rational creature, endowed with the wonderful powers of Intellect and Will. By means of these two amazing powers, he can decide his fate and determine his path, either choosing the way leading towards happiness or the miserable road of tragedies and torments. He is the only one responsible for his destination, and must therefore think deeply and search for the path of salvation. Reason and ration alone can guarantee the human being salvation, while blind prejudice without contemplating the environment around and heedless of the truth, is a sure path to eternal damnation.

The human race has taken great strides in the spheres of science and technology, and is far too advanced in industrial and productive domains, and in satisfying its material and worldly needs. But unfortunately, the more the progress in industry and technology, the more complicated and miserable life becomes. The truth is, although, science in itself is a great blessing depending on its proper use, material achievements alone cannot grant happiness and spiritual solace which a human soul in essence longs for.

On the contrary, these dizzying heights of progress have brought in their wake, untold miseries such as psychological depression, social breakdown and a tormentful conscience, not to speak of the curse of wars, repression, injustice, apartheid, exploitation and abuse of the sexes In this so-called enlightened age!

Have we ever pondered about our fate? Just where are we headed? Let us draw a picture of contemporary human life and see for ourselves the pathetic state around us. What should everyone of us do to stem this tragedy which has infiltrated all aspects of our life?

ECONOMIC WOES

Researches conducted in America, Western Europe, Soviet Union, Japan and the Third World bring out the following statistics:

A total of 500 million people are plagued with malnutrition. About 40 percent all over the world are deprived of hygienic services, while 30 percent lack healthy drinking water. In addition 100 million people go to bed hungry each night. The infant mortality rate is so high that reports confirm 40,000 children die every day. Out of every 1000 children in the developing countries, 97 die from starvation.

A total of 15 million children, whose ages were less than 5 years, died from starvation in 1978. Compare these pathetic figures, with what the world spends on militarization to kill fellow humans. Statistics reveal that 1 million US Dollars is spent on military industries for every .minute that ticks away

FAMILY DILEMMA

Family is the basic unit of life and the nest which provides happiness and peace. If this is the beautiful image of the family which we aspire to create, the true image is quite different. Statistics depict the dim side and draw the present terrifying picture of family life. For 50 percent of women in the Soviet Union adultery is a way of life, while in U K., official figures showed that one in every 4 children born in 1988 was illegitimate. They will never know what family life means. Figures issued by the British Office of Population Census and Survey Statistics show a provisional U K. total for 1988 of 787,600 live births, of which 198,000 were registered outside marriage. Compared to 1984 the figure showed a 100 percent increase. Polls conducted for the British women in the first six months of 1984, indicated a 27 percent rise in the number of rapes.

A report released by the British Home Office states that 1 in every 5 British children suffers from sexual or physical abuse. These children are victims of the breakdown of family life, marital infidelity and the mounting use of alcohol and drugs. An average of 4 children a week are killed in Britain by their parents or guardians, and about 200 children each year from parental abuse. Besides, every two weeks a child is slain in Britain by strangers or other relatives, in most cases their mothers' live-in lovers. The tragedy of disintegrating family life is not confined to Britain alone, but is widespread in both the East and West.

Recent survey in the U.S. showed that 43 percent of married women are not loyal to their husbands and often indulge in extra-marital affairs. The UNESCO Courier says that the highest percentage of births out of wedlock is in the Caribbean, and in Central and South America, where due to alcohol abuse or the inability of husbands to find work the family breaks up, leaving the children in poverty. Moreover, women lack security, as rape and exploitation of the fair sex are the order of the day in societies where moral values have deteriorated to animal .depths

SEXUAL DISEASES

Inevitably, as a result of the breakdown of the legitimate natural relationship between man and woman and the spread of adultery, sodomy, prostitution and other kinds of sexual perversions, venereal diseases are on the increase, including gonorrhea, syphilis and the latest terror, AIDS.

They have become as dangerous as atomic, chemical and biological weapons. Reports released by the World Health Organization state that 5 to 10 million people around the world are carriers of the virus of AIDS, and the figure is likely to increase to 100 million and even 200 million by the close of this century, unless effective measures are taken.

A report published by a scientist in Boston affirms that 'during the next 3 or 5 years, AIDS will be the prime cause for the death of people in the 20-29 age group'. However, the general estimate is that the number of carriers of HIV, the AIDS virus, is up to 100 times that of the actual cases. The deadly scourge has even penetrated the foetus of the victims, and a report .says that in 1988, 2000 babies in the U.S. were born HIV positive

PSYCHOLOGICAL BREAKDOWN AND DRUGS

The helpless miserable individuals who suffer from vagrancy and chronic psychological and nervous illnesses, resort to drunkenness and drugs to forget the dismal reality. In 1985, figures proved that in the Soviet Union 50 million people were alcoholics. Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev said that alcoholic addiction is one reason behind slowness of production in the Soviet Union.

Alcohol is also responsible for 61 percent of traffic accidents and 40 percent of divorce cases. Drugs are becoming the bane of modern society. Cocaine addicts in the US grew to 5,8 million last year. A report from Japan puts the number of those who committed suicide in Japan in 1986 at 25,524 people.

The human tragedy does not end there, for man also suffers at the hands of fellow human beings. Injustice and political repressions in the form of racial discrimination and narrow minded nationalist and lingual prejudices are tearing apart the social fabric by dividing human beings into watertight compartments. It is clear that material achievements and worldly pleasures have failed to grant security, happiness and peace. It means that the great technological leap is not just enough and lacks something essential which the human soul and psychology is in dire need of. If so, ration warrants the use of brains, to go to the core of the problem. We, unlike other creatures, are gifted with the amazing powers of Intellect and Will. Then let us use them to find out the Creator, because the major problem of present day man is that he has lost his faith in the Exalted Creator and followed ideas and thoughts which run .counter to existence, universe and human nature

EXISTENCE

Let us search for true happiness. Let us search and think. To start with, let us contemplate on the human existence and the environment around us. How did the world come into existence?

Where are we headed? Is there a Creator who fashioned this wonderful world? If so, is there any relationship that binds Him with His creatures, especially the best of creation, the human race? What shape does this relationship take? Let us think deeply: Since the moment man began to think on earth, he started to find answers to these and other questions arising in his mind. Let us visualize this expanding universe. Let us think of its laws and organization and the aesthetic and organizational aspects of it. Was it created haphazardly? How does the Universe come into being?

Development of the human mind, advance of sciences and the daily observation of life and its sentimental feelings, present us with a rational and scientific explanation of life. Grasp of this truth will lead us to the path of good and happiness and ward off the fits of anxiety, misery and loss. Human mind perceives that every effect has a cause. Surely the universe did not come into existence all by itself. If ever there was a 'big bang', as the theory goes, some power was surely behind it. Does not the systematic orbit of the earth, the moon, the planets, and life on mother earth, speak of precise planning? Everything in the Universe, however big or small, indicates the existence of a power behind. The blazing sun, the serenely lit moon, the majestic mountains, the flowing rivers which end up in the roaring sea, the colourful fauna and flora, the taste of fruits, the fragrance of flowers, and above all the sharp senses of the human being, all vividly express the power of the Creator, Who gave everything form, shape, law and order. Any rational mind can perceive that the universe is created and set in order by a Creator. Organization is the most glorious expression of the existence of the Creator , and His Power and Knowledge.

If we see a beautiful painting within an exquisitely wrought frame, we know there must be an artist behind. If we see an automation that works and produces by itself, we understand that there is a designer behind. If we come across an excellent book on medicine we realize there must be an authority on medicine who compiled it.

The painting could not have been painted without an artist.

The machine could not have been designed without a designer.

The book could not have been written without an author.

Can we say that the book is the result of a freak incidence, and suddenly or gradually evolved by itself? Can one believe if told that the wind scattered the papers and the ink, then the ink was spilled on the papers and, behold, there was a good book on medicine? It is obvious, that any sane mind will never believe such an absurd idea, if not mock at it. The brain admits the existence of the Creator and understands this fact easily and clearly.

Many enlightened scholars of physics, medicine, botany, zoology and other sciences have

covered tremendous facts proving conclusively that the universe was created by a Wise and Powerful Creator, Who brought it into being in this flawlessly perfect shape. The following examples are food for thought:

1. Oxygen is one of the gases forming the atmosphere. It is essential for human life. Without oxygen neither human beings nor animals can survive on earth. It constitutes 21 percent of the atmosphere, that is the most suitable percentage that can allow life on earth. Should this percentage change, decrease or increase a little, the whole life system will go but of order and life will come to an end. Who set this system in order and made oxygen in this perfect percentage to preserve life and prevent its collapse? Could this be the work of chance? No, certainly not. It is the work of the All-knowing, Wise Creator.

2. The temperature at the surface of the sun, the source of light and heat, is 12,000 degrees Fahrenheit (5,700 degree Centigrade). The sun's distance from the earth is approximately 150,000,000 kilometres. This distance is very suitable for the light and heat to reach earth adequately, allowing man, plants and animals to live and flourish. If the heat of the sun doubles, we would burn and change into ashes and if it decreases by 50 percent we would freeze to death.

3. If the waters of the ocean were sweet they would have been bad-smelling and unhealthy, with no chance of life on earth. It is the salt of the ocean which prevents the water from becoming putrid and bad-smelling. Chloride and sodium combine together to form salt, without which life would cease to exist. Who made the water of the oceans salty so that it remains clean? Who combined chloride and sodium to produce the edible salt? 4. The revolving earth takes 24 hours to rotate on its axis. One rotation completes a day and night, and the speed is ideal for plants, animals and the human species to exist on the earth's surface. If the earth was to rotate or revolve faster than its present speed then everything would fold up like a pack of cards.

Who made its motion suitable for the benefit of man and other creatures? Who set all these things in a perfectly balanced order and faultless motion? Could this all be termed haphazardly? Certainly not, because it all speaks of divine planning and evaluation. The above examples are an undeniable proof of perfection, arrangement, and wisdom which wild unpredictable nature cannot by itself design. They point out the proof of a Creator Who is All-knowing, Powerful and extremely Benign.

Scientists assert that oxygen levels have remained at roughly 21% of the atmosphere for 200 million years, whereas they should have fluctuated widely according to some geochemical models of the atmosphere. Were oxygen levels to rise above 250/0 , spontaneous fires would

break out; if they dropped below 150/0, many higher life-forms would suffocate. The fundamental unity of the pattern that permeates, the entire universe, is by itself a proof of the fact that the universe, as a whole is the handiwork of the same Designer, Creator or as Voltaire puts it, the Cosmic Mind. It is also a proof of His Omnipotence, how gigantic is the solar system and how tiny is an atom, yet the unity of their design and structure is simply marvellous. In his book 'Introduction to Evolution' Dr. Paul Moody writes: "The more I study science the more I am impressed with the thought that this world and universe have a definite design and a design suggests a designer. It may be possible to have a design without a designer, a picture without an artist, but my mind is unable to conceive of such a situation." The more scientists delve into the secrets of nature, the more they are convinced of the existence of a plan that permeates the universe which ipsofacto implies the existence of a Planner.

Birth of a test-tube baby is no doubt an epoch-making achievement of science; and so is man's landing on the man. The fact however, remains that natural laws have never been transgressed. A child is the by- product of the union of paternal sperm and maternal ova. Thus, the womb was simply replaced by a test-tube as an artificial nursery instead of a natural one. Creation of Adam without parents and the birth of Jesus without a father are yet par excellence marvels of creation. And moreover the fact remains that the moment Armstrong imprinted, amidst the halo of a baffling spectacle, his first step on the moon, he ejaculated: 'I see the .Glory of God.' And he uttered it thrice

DIVINE MESS AGES

So, We are convinced that the universe has a Creator Who is Omnipotent and Possessor of all attributes of perfection. The conviction leads us to the inevitable conclusion that the Creator has a decisive relationship with His creatures. From this bond emerges the fact that the Creator did not create the human race in vain, and nor is physical death the end of life. He, the Almighty had a firm reason for fashioning the human race as the most advanced and excellent form of life, and to this end, endowed them with the amazing powers called Will and Intellect. He desires their good and happiness both in this world and the Hereafter.

To think and discern, to sift truth from falsehood, to choose between transient and eternal pleasures, He left it to the human's free will. Hence man is at liberty either to take the path of salvation or end up in the dismal depths of disaster. But of course, The Benign Creator did not leave the human beings in dilemma, to wander about without guidance. For this would not have been fair. And surely injustice is not one of the attributes of the Almighty. The ultimate objective was reforming man, guiding him and saving him from injustice, misery and loss. To

this end, the Almighty sent Prophets in every corner of the globe as mankind started to spread out in the earth. Their message was the same. They preached love, brotherhood abstinence from evil, and above all how to control and harness will power, and use intellect for the betterment of mankind. Although the medium of the divine messages differed depending on the language spoken by the local people. the main theme was remarkably the same: Submission to none other than the Almighty To suit the stages of progress and the development of intellect, there were some minor differences regarding those messages, but the goal was one, concentrated on Unity of the Almighty, universal brotherhood, and the Day of Resurrection.

As the human race spread out around the furthest reaches of the globe, geographical barriers separated them, making or marring their state of development.

Undeterred, humanity continued its forward march, and in every age and era, the benign Creator made clear His signs of guidance. Those who believed, and used Will and Intellect for the betterment of mankind, attained salvation, while those who misused these powers to pursue their nefarious ends, plunged fellow humans into wars, bloodshed, slavery and all other sorts of oppression, and themselves passed away into eternal damnation. Still there were others, who adhered to religion simply out of superstition or some vested interests, and the likes of these did more harm by their ignorance, distorting the scriptures and the laws revealed to them. However, through a succession of prophets, the Merciful Creator held aloft the bright torch of guidance and repentance. Though each following message was on a higher wrung of ladder than its predecessor, the basic points were remarkably the same. Each stage of progress gave birth to new ideas. Human intellect began to grow , and to keep stride with the development, a more comprehensive message was revealed.

Although it is our firm conviction, that all holy books are monotheist in essence, certain scriptures have been greatly discoloured as a result of human tampering. Even today after centuries of interpolations, the scriptures contain gems of wisdom. It is for us to comprehend the truth, by using our brains and will power, and search for the shores of salvation.

Even today, despite their polytheist way of life and idol worship, passages remain in the Hindu scriptures, or for that matter in the Buddhist books, testifying the Oneness of the Creator. A closer scrutiny of the Upanishad, Vedas and other books held dear by the Hindus, reveal the startling facts that the Creator is One and Only, although the Hindus have conjured up a myriad of gods and godesses. The other passages in these books, giving multiplicity and weird illogical ideas, turn out to be plain fantasies and later interpolations. He, the Creator is One and Alone, otherwise there would have been chaos all around, instead of order. The Almighty is

.Self-existent, Omnipotent, Everlasting and Merciful, and has certainly not created us in vain

UNITY OF THE CREATOR

Let us take a look at the scriptures of the Jews, the Christians and the Muslims to find out what common beliefs they contain about the unity of the Creator. Later we will examine which one of the holy books contains the ultimate Truth and has withstood the test of time.

THE OLD TESTAMENT

"And he said, that thou mayest know that there is none like unto the Lord our God!" Exodus (8:16) "Ye shall not make with Me gods of silver neither shall ye make unto you gods of gold." Exodus (20:23) "Hear, therefore, O Israel, the Lord our God, is one Lord." Deuteronomy (6:4) "Unto thee it was shewed, that thou mightest know that the Lord He is God; there is none else beside Him." "Know therefore this day, and consider it in thine heart, that the Lord He is God in heaven above, and upon the earth beneath, there is none else." Deuteronomy (4:35-39) "Thus saith the Lord...I am the first, and I am the last; and beside Me there is no God" Isaiah (44:6) "For thus saith the Lord that created the heavens; God Himself that formed the earth and made it; He hath established it, He created it not in vain, He formed it to be inhabited, I am the Lord: and there is none else."

Isaiah (45:18) "To whom then will ye liken God? or what likeness will ye compare unto Him?" Isaiah (40:18) "I am the Lord, and there is none else, there is no God beside Me; I girded thee though thou hast not known Me". "That they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the (west, that there is none beside me. I am the Lord, and there is none else." Isaiah (45:5-6

THE NEW TESTAMENT

"And Jesus answered him, the first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; the Lord our God is one Lord." Mark (12:29) "And the scribe said unto him, Well, Master, thou hast said the truth: for there is One God; and there is none other but He." Mark (12:32) " ...and there is none other God but one." 1 Corinthians (8:4) "For there is one God."

(1. Timothy (2:5

THE HOLY QUR'AN

"Allah is He besides Whom there is no god, save Him, the Everliving, the Eternal." Holy Qur'an (2:255) "His is the creation and the command; Blessed is Allah, the Lord of the worlds." Holy Qur'an (7:54) "Allah - there is no god but He; His are the very best names." Holy Qur'an (20:8) "...nothing is like unto Him and He is the Hearing, the Seeing." Holy Qur'an (42:11) "He is the First and the Last, and the Manifest and the Hiddenmost and He is Cognizant of all things."

Holy Qur'an (57:3)

"And He made subservient to you whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth, all, from Himself, most surely there are signs in this for people who reflect." Holy Qur'an (45:13) "And (remember) when your Lord brought forth from the children of Adam, from their loins, their descendents and made them bear witness against their own souls (saying) Am I not your Lord? They said yes: We bear witness; lest (that was) you say on the day of resurrection, ('Surely we were unaware of this." Holy Qur'an (7:172

TAMPERINGS WITH THE SCRIPTURES

We have seen the remarkable unity of message in the scriptures of the Jews, the Christians and the Muslims. But the question is why different creeds, or set of beliefs, when the source of origin is One and the Same. To find out the answer we have to delve deeper and scrutinize the texts concerned, whether or not ignorant human hands had dared to tamper with their contents. Which of them embodies the ultimate truth and speaks as the final word of the Almighty for humanity as a whole? Which one is more comprehensive in view of man's multidimensional personality, and is universal in character transcending barriers of race, class, language, geographical factors and...etc.? And how does it back up its claims? Reason and ration should be the criteria for arriving at the ultimate truth. Earlier, we had left out books of other major world religions, like the Buddhists and the Hindus, for their mythological and polytheist character, and no pretensions whatsoever to speak for humanity as a universal whole. These are more or less regional in outlook, while the inhuman caste system preached by the idol-worshipping Hindus is an absolute mockery of human values and nature itself. To the above three, we can safely add Judaism and its chauvinistic preference for only the children of Israel as the chosen of God, which shows the havoc played by the Jews with the heavenly scriptures reducing them to mere national sagas.

The absurdity of the Torah is all the more evident. Chapter XIX of the Book of Genesis ascribes a serious crime to Prophet Lot, in a bid to give the Ammonites and Moabites an illegitimate origin. "And the firstborn said unto the younger, Our father is old, and there is not a man in the earth to come in unto us after the manner of all the earth: Come let us make our father drink wine, and we will lie with him, that we may preserve seed of our father. And they made their father drink wine that night: and the firstborn went in, and lay with her father, and he perceived not when she lay down, nor when she arose. And it came to pass on the morrow, that the firstborn said unto the younger, Behold, I lay yesternight with my father. let us make him drink wine this night also, and go thou in, and lie with him, that we may preserve seed of our father. And they made their father drink wine that night also: and the younger arose, and lay with him,

and he perceived not when she lay down, nor when she arose. Thus were both the daughter of Lot with child by their father. And the firstborn bare a son, and called his name Moab: the same is the father of Moabites unto this day. And the younger, she also bare a son, and called his name Benammi: the same is the father of the children of Ammon unto this day." Genesis (19:31-38) Even David and several other upright god-fearing figures are not spared by the Old Testament. which depicts them as weaklings succumbing to wanton desires.

The question which arises is, if the Creator was perfect, and precisely planned the intricate Universe, was He not capable of choosing people with firm will power and higher intellect as bearers of His message. An analaysis reveals that He, the Glorious, did just that. but it was human envy and racial hatred, which tried to discolour the Messages and the Messengers. Quite evident is the contradiction, between Monotheism and the text of these scriptures. Let us take a look at the Evangel or the collection of books by different authors, which the Christians call the New Testament.

WHO FOUNDED CHRISTIANITY

Christian historians and researchers themselves assert Christianity to be the religion imagined, conjured up and written by Paul the hellenized Jew. The creed known as Christianity they say, was emptied by Paul of the true teachings of Jesus. For example, the doctrine of trinity can be found in the beliefs of the pagan Persians and Indians. Thus the religion invented by Paul, and named Christianity by him has nothing to do with The Messiah, as is evident by the following facts: "If by Christianity we understand faith in Christ as the heavenly Son of God, who did not belong to earthly humanity, but who lived in the Divine likeness and glory, who came down from Heaven to earth, who entered humanity and took upon himself a human form through a virgin, that he might make propitiation for men's sins by his own blood upon the cross, who was then awakened from death and raised to the right hand of God, as the Lord of his own people, who believe in him, who hears their prayers, guards and leads them, who, moreover dwells and works personally in each of them, who will come again with the clouds of heaven to judge the world, who will cast down all the foes of God, and will bring his own people with him unto the home of heavenly light so that they may become like His glorified body- IF THIS IS CHRISTIANITY, THEN SUCH CHRISTIANITY WAS FOUNDED BY ST PAUL AND NOT BY OUR LORD" (Jesus or Paul, p.122 Dr. Annold Meyer, Professor of Theology, Zurich University).

The idea of Trinity was started by Paul, but was given a final shape by Athanasius in about 325 A.D. Trinity is not mentioned at all in the Bible. The Catholic Encyclopedia says: "The Trinity is the term employed to signify the central doctrine of Christian religion.... in the unity of Godhead

there are three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, these three persons being truly distinct one from another. Thus in the words of Athanasian Creed; the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God. And yet there are not three but one God. This doctrine was not clearly grasped even by Athanasius. He says at another place that whenever he forced his understanding to mediate on the divinity of Jesus his toilsome and unavailing efforts recoil on themselves, that the more he wrote the less capable was he of expressing his thoughts. This confusion is explained away as "Mystery", yet the Bible says "God is not the author of confusion"

(Corinthian (14:33

FACTS ABOUT GOSPELS

"The speeches in the Fourth Gospel (even apart from the early messianic claim) are so different from those in the Synoptics, and so like the comments of the Fourth Evangelist himself, that both cannot be equally reliable as record of what Jesus said Literary veracity in ancient times did not forbid, as it does now, the assignment of fictitious speeches to historical characters; the best ancient historians made a practice of composing and assigning such speeches in this way". (C.J. Cadoux - The Life of Jesus. P. 16). "The Gospels which were produced clearly reflected the conception of the practical needs of the community for which they were written. In them the traditional material was used, but there was no hesitation in altering it or making additions to it, or in leaving out what did not suit the writer's purpose. (T.G. Tucker The History of the Christians in the Light of Modern Knowledge, P. 320). "A copyist would sometimes put in not what was in the text, but what he thought ought to be in it. He would trust a fickle memory, or he would make the text accord with the views of the school to which he belonged. In addition to the versions and quotations from the Christian Fathers, nearly four thousand Greek MSS of the Testament were known to exist. As a result, the variety of reading is considerable." (Prof J. R. Dummelow Commentary on the Holy Bible, P.16). Another major defect of the Christian creed, is the belief that Jesus is the begotten son of God. It is claimed that Jesus was one of the Trinity because he was the only son of God, but there are other sons of God mentioned as well in the Bible. About David the Bible says :

"...the Lord has said unto me Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee." Psalm (2:7) "...thus saith the Lord, Israel is my son, even my firstborn." Exodus (4:22) "Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God." Mathew (5:9) "But as many as received him, to them gave he the power to become the sons of God..." John (1:12) "...son of Adam, which was the Son of God." Luke (3:38) "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God they are the sons of God." Romans (8:14)

"The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may also be glorified together." Romans (8:16-17) In addition to the above mentioned discrepancies, the Old and the New Testaments are at variance with proven scientific facts. Thus, reason dictates us to give up the hope for our quest for truth in these two scriptures. So what should we do? Where should we turn to? But wait, there is no need for despair. We have yet another divinely revealed book called the Our'an. Let us examine it. To our amazement, as the next chapter will help unfold, the Qur'an does not contain a single statement assailable from a modern scientific point of view.

HARMONY BETWEEN SCIENCE AND QUR'AN

In his book 'La Bible, le Coran et la Science' translated into English under the title 'The Bible, The Qur'an And Science', Dr. Maurice Bucaille, an eminent French surgeon, devoted himself to a thorough, examination of the scriptures in the light of modern scientific knowledge'. In the course of his study, he has made a valuable contribution to the understanding of the verses of the Holy Qur'an , His observations about the authenticity of Qur'an, deserve a special mention as it will go a long way to despel the prevailing doubt about the compatibility between religion and science. He tells us: "It was a totally objective spirit, and, without any preconceived ideas that I first examined the Qur'anic Revelation. I was looking for the degree of compatibility between the Qur'anic text and the data of modern science. I knew from translations that the Qur'an often made allusion to all sorts of natural phenomena but I had only a summary knowledge of it. It was only when I examined the text very closely in Arabic that I kept a list of them at the end of which I had to acknowledge the evidence in front of me. The Qur'an did not contain a single statement that was assailable from a modem scientific point of view. "I repeated the same test for the Old Testament and the Gospels, always preserving the same objective outlook. I n the former I did not even have to go beyond the first book, Genesis, to find statements totally out of keeping with the cast-iron facts of modem science. "On opening the Gospels, one is immediately confronted with a serious problem. On the first page we find the genealogy of Jesus, but Mathew's text is in obvious contradiction to Luke's on the same question.....the latter's data on the antiquity of man on Earth are incompatible with modem knowledge. "The Biblical data concerning the antiquity of man are therefore inaccurate. "...Mathew's phantasms, the flat contradictions between Gospels, the improbabilities, the incompatibilities with modem scientific data, the successive distortions of the text - all these things add up to the fact that the Gospels contain chapters and passages that are the sole product of human imagination. These flaws do not, however, cast doubt on the existence of

Jesus' mission: the doubt is solely confined to the course it took. "The Old Testament represents a vast number of literary works written over a period of roughly nine hundred years. It forms a highly disparate mosaic whose pieces have, in the course of centuries, been changed by man. Some parts were added to what already existed, so that today it is sometimes very difficult indeed to identify where they came from originally. "The inevitable result of the multiplicity of sources is the existence of contradictions and oppositions: many examples have been given of these. The authors of the Gospels had (when talking of Jesus) the same tendency to magnify certain facts as the poets of French Medieval literature in their narrative poems. The consequence of this was that events were presented from each individual narrator's point of view and the authenticity of the facts reported in many cases proved to be extremely dubious.

"It must be stressed that when scientific data are discussed here, what is meant is data definitely established. "Subsequent to the first trials of ballistic missiles, people imagined a day when man would perhaps have the material possibility of leaving his earthly habitat and exploring space. It was then known that a verse existed in the Qur'an predicting how one day man would make the conquest. This statement has now been verified. "...if you can penetrate the bounds of the heavens and the earth, then do penetrate (them). (But) you cannot penetrate except with (Our) authority." Holy Qur'an (55:33)

"... in the West, Jews, Christians and Atheists are unanimous in stating (without a scrap of evidence however) that Muhammad wrote the Qur'an or had it written as an imitation of the Bible. It is claimed that stories of religious history in the Qur'an resume Bible stories. This attitude is as thoughtless as saying that Jesus Himself duped His contemporaries by drawing inspiration from the Old Testament during his preachings; the whole of Mathew's Gospel is based on this continuation of the Old Testament... What expert in exegesis would dream of depriving Jesus of his status as God's envoy for this reason? This is nevertheless the way that Muhammad is judged more often than not in the West. It is a summary judgement that does not take account of the fact that the Qur'an and the Bible provide different versions of a single event. "The above observation makes the hypothesis advanced by those who see Muhammad as the author of the Qur'an quite untenable. How could a man, from being illiterate, become the most important author in terms of literary merit, in the whole of Arabic literature? How could he then pronounce truths of a scientific nature that no other human being could possibly have developed at the time, and all this without once making the slightest error in his pronouncements on the subject? For me there can be no human explanation to the Qur'an." Surgeon Maurice has made extensive studies in various fields covered by the Qur'an e.g.

Creation of the Heavens and the Earth, Astronomy, Water Cycle, Earth's Relief, Earth's Atmosphere, Animal and Vegetable Kingdoms, The Flood, Exodus and above all, Human Reproduction. His views on human embryo after he quotes relevant verses of the Qur'an are summed up as under:

"...As for observed facts such as the evolution of human embryo, it is quite possible to confront different stages described in the Qur'an with the data of modern embryology and find complete concordance between modern science and verses of the Qur'an referring to this subject." "He created man from (small quantity of) sperm..." Holy Qur'an (16:4) "The Arabic word nutfa has been translated by the words 'small quantity (of sperm)' because we do not have the terms that are strictly appropriate. This word comes from a verb signifying 'to dribble, to trickle'; it is used to describe what remains at the bottom of a bucket that has been emptied out. It therefore indicates a very small quantity of liquid. Here it is sperm because the word is associated in another verse with the word sperm. (see Holy Qur'an 75..37-39) "Another verse indicates that the small quantity in question is put 'in a firmly established lodging' (qarar) which obviously means the genital organs. (see Holy Qur'an 23:13)

"...the adjective which in this text refers to 'the firmly established lodging' is, I think, hardly translatable, It expresses the idea of a firmly established and respected place. However this may be, it refers to the spot where man grows in the maternal organism. "Once the egg is fertilized in the Fallopian tube it descends to lodge inside the uterus; this is called the 'implantation of the egg'. The Qur'an names the lodging of the fertilized egg (as) womb. (see Holy Qur'an 22:5) "The implantation of the egg in the uterus (womb) is the result of the development of villosities, veritable elongations of the egg, which, like roots in the soil, draw nourishment from the thickness of the uterus necessary to the egg's growth. These formations make the egg literally cling to the uterus. This is a discovery of modern times.

"The act of clinging is described five times in the Qur'an..." "Something which clings is the translation of the word 'alaq'. It is the original meaning of the word. "The original sense of something which clings 'corresponds exactly to today's firmly established reality. "Chewed flesh' is the translation of the word mudhgha; 'intact flesh' is Lahm. This distinction needs to be stressed. The embryo is initially a small mass. At a certain stage in its development, it looks to the naked eye like chewed flesh. The bone structure develops inside this mass in what is called the mesenchyma. The bones that are formed are covered in muscles; the word Lahm applies to them. "It is known how certain parts appear to be completely out of proportion during embryonic development with what is later to become the individual, while others remain in proportion. "This is surely the meaning of the word 'mukhallaqa' which signifies 'shaped in

proportion' as used in verse 5 sura 22 to describe this phenomenon. "We fashioned.....into something which clings....into a lump of flesh in proportion and out of proportion. "More than a thousand years before our time, at a period when whimsical doctrines still prevailed, men had a knowledge of the Qur'an. The statements it contains express in simple terms truth of primordial importance which man has taken centuries to discover." The thesis of Surgeon Maurice which covers more than 250 pages, may perhaps be summed up in a few words: Changes made by men in the Old Testament and the Gospels are responsible for contradictions, improbabilities and incompatibilities between the scriptures and the modern scientific knowledge. This view is shared by some other eminent scientists and writers. The Qur'an made a pointed reference to it but Christendom refused to accept it century after century.

Such flaws in the scriptures need not detract men from the existence of God or the mission of Jesus. The Qur'an is, historically speaking, the most authentic Book of Revelations; nothing in it is incompatible with the modern scientific data which has been definitely established. When statements contained in the Qur'an about this life are factually true, would not the statements contained in it about the Hereafter be taken to be equally true? In short, the Qur'an contains many other scientific facts, which modern knowledge is just beginning to unravel. Even its literary aspects are beyond the reach of the best of Arabic literati, as the following challenge stands eternally supreme today nearly a millenium and a half after its revelation. "Or do they say, he (the Prophet) invented it? Bring then a Surah (chapter) like it, and call (to your aid) anyone you can other than Allah, if you be truthful." Holy Qur'an (10:38)

ISLAM PROPHESIED

Thus as is clear, The Almighty never leaves a people without guidance, and never does the message come to an abrupt end upon the passing away of a prophet. For in such a case, the very truth would be open to doubt. As a matter of fact, every divine message has foretold in explicit terms about the coming of the last divine message, and the final prophet, whose mission will be universal lasting till Doomsday. In the Holy Qur'an, The benign Creator gave us the most comprehensive law dealing with shaping of an embyro to the mysteries of space. But it is we who are groping in the dark. We ourselves are to blame for our misery. The Jews stopped obeying the Creator more than two milleniums back. Instead of propagating the truth they disobeyed the Creator , falling headlong into the narrow depths of nationalism and turning chauvinists. It was a great crime indeed, for they breached the covenant and sowed discord among the human race.

Jesus Christ came, preaching the divine message and giving glad tidings of the final

messenger to come, but he met a stormy reception at the hands of the Jews, who mocked at and ridiculed him. His message also met a tragic end as analyzed earlier. No sooner, had he departed, Paul, the hellenized Jew distorted the whole contents, transforming the divine truth into the creed called Christianity today. The few true followers of the great messenger were persecuted and for centuries havoc was wrought with his teachings, resulting in the numerous Gospels which are in circulation today. None could be considered as the Almighty's own word, and are more or less books of tradition of a very brief period of the last days of Jesus. But even despite these distortions, some fragments remain in them, which direct any discernible reader towards the ultimate truth. The same is true of other religions, which contain, truth peeping out from underneath the centuries old pile of interpolation. Let us summon our Intellect and Will power and embark on a search for truth. Let us sift through the huge stack and cast an analyzing glance at the parchments of truth waiting to be discovered. They are there in the sacred books of all religions, eager to guide us to the straight path, provided we are sincerely after the rationale truth.

The following passages leave no doubt, as to where the ultimate truth lies, and who, we are commanded by the Creator to follow: According to the Old Testament, God tells prophet Abraham: "And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing. And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee; and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed." Genesis (12:2-3) And to Hagar:

"...I will multiply thy seed exceedingly, that it shall not be numbered for multitude. And the angel of the Lord said unto her, Behold, thou art with child, and shalt bear a son, and shalt call his name Ishmael, because the Lord hath heard thy affliction." Genesis (16:10-11) And regarding Ishmael the elder son of Abraham; in whose direct lineage Prophet Muhammad was born, the Old Testament says: "As for Ishmael, I have heard thee: Behold I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly. twelve princes shall he beget, and I will make him a great nation." Genesis (17:20) And about the right of the firstborn:

"If a man have two wives, one beloved another hated, and they have born him children, both the beloved and the hated; and if the firstborn son be hers that was hated; Then it shall be, when he maketh his sons to inherit that which he hath, that he may not make the son of the beloved firstborn, before the son of the hated which is indeed the firstborn: But he shall acknowledge the son of the hated, by giving him the double portion of all that he hath; for he is the beginning of his strength; the right of the firstborn is his." Deuteronomy (21:15-17) Note: Ishamel was 14 years old when Isaac was born.

Elsewhere the Old Testament foretells to Moses the coming of a great Prophet: "I will raise them up a Prophet from amongst their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my word sin his mouth and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him." Deuteronomy (18:18) "Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring judgement to the Gentiles. He shall not cry nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street. A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking-flax shall he not quench: he shall bring forth judgement unto truth. He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgement in the earth: and the isles shall wait for his law. Isaiah (42:1-4) "Let the wilderness and the cities thereof lift up their voice, the villages that Kedar doth inhabit: let the inhabitants of the rock sing, Let them shout from the top of the mountains. Let them give glory unto the Lord and declare His praise in the islands." Isaiah (42:11-1 2)

Note: Kedar was Ishmael's eldest son and the ancestor of Prophet Muhammad. "...The Lord came from Sinai, and rose up from Seir unto them; He shined forth from Mount Paran (Faran in Arabic), and He came with ten thousands of saints, from His right hand went a fiery law for them." Deuteronomy (33:2) "And Jacob called unto his sons, and said, Gather unto yourselves together, that I may tell you that which shall befall you in the last days... The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until SHILLOH come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be." Genesis (49:1&10)

Shilloh means peace, or Islam in Arabic. In other words, the prediction may well be about the Almighty's final message to mankind - Islam. About Jesus, who was but a Prophet only: "And the multitude said, This is Jesus the Prophet of Nazareth of Galilee." Mathew (21:11) "And they said unto him, concerning Jesus of Nazareth, which was a Prophet mighty in deed and word before God..." Luke (24:19)

"We know that thou art a teacher come from God." John (3:2) "Then those men, when they had seen the miracle that Jesus did, said, This is of a truth that Prophet that should come into the world." John (6:14) The following passages of the New Testament lend further proof to the Prophethood of Muhammad (s.a.w.) as the final Messenger of the Almighty: "And this is the record of John (the Baptist) when the Jews sent priests and levites from Jerusalem to ask him, who art thou? And he confessed, and denied not; but confessed I am not the Christ. And they asked him, what then? Art thow Elias? And he saith I am not. Art thou THAT PROPHET? And he answered, No. And they asked him, and said unto him, why baptizest thou then, if thou be not the Christ, nor Elias, neither THAT PROPHET." John (1:19,21,25)

"But when the comforter is come, whom I shall send unto you from the Father, even the spirit

of the truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me." John (15:26) "Nevertheless I tell you the truth; it is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you. And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgement: Of sin, because they believe not on me; Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; Of judgement because the prince of this world is judged. I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you unto all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, t hat shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall she wit unto you." John (16:7-14) It is admitted that if the correct word in the original Greek version of the New Testament was 'Proclete' then it means "AHMAD" in Arabic from the semitic root H M D. After centuries the translation was changed into 'Proclytos'. The translation of this Greek word was supposed to be 'Comforter' or 'Advocate'. However it was not realised that both the terms are the titles of Prophet Mohammed, as shown below: Rahmat-ul-Lil-Alameen which means the 'Comforter of this world and the next'. Shafı-ul- Mudhnibeen which means 'Advocate of sinners'. To sum up: The prophet after Jesus would be: God's Elect (Mustafa). Inhabitant of the villages of Prince Kedar son of Ishmael, from Arabia. His religion will be known as Shilloh that is peace or Islam. His light will shine from Mount Faran in Mecca. The sceptre of Judah will pass on to him. God will put his words in his mouth. He shall not fail. He shall be known as Ahmad, Comforter, or Advocate. How explicitly, the holy Qur'an corroborates these facts, when it says:

"Those who follow the Messenger-Prophet the Ummi, whom they find written with them in the Torah and the Evangel; he commands them good and forbids them evil, and he made lawful to them the good things, and prohibits to them the bad (impure) ones, and he removes from them their burden and the yokes which were upon them. So those who believe in him and honour him, and help him, and follow the Light which has been sent down with him: These are they the (successful." Holy Qur'an (7:157

CONCLUSION

Thus dear readers, in the light of these undeniable facts, it is clear that we and the wide universe have been created by the All-wise and Omnipotent Creator Who sees and watches our every minute act. We have a destination, and our deeds in this life span will be judged in the Hereafter, where due retribution awaits us. Each and every sign in this wonderful universe indicates to us the straight path of guidance, and only by using our powers of Will and Intellect, we can reach the garden of salvation. Our main goal is to make our readers aware of the

significance of independent, objective and rational thinking, and awaken in them the quest for truth. We do not want, by these few pages to close the subject. What we want is to stir up the human mind and conscience to obvious facts. This book is only the beginning of the road, and by sifting chaff from grain, we discovered the eternal truth about Islam, which has a comprehensive set of laws for each and everything.

Therefore, in order to make peace prevail and help build a harmonious society, it is incumbent upon us to glean at the wonderful code of human behaviour called 'Sharia'. Please look forward to our next Book 'The Meaning of Islam' which will help you discover that Islam is a complete way of life. Praise be to Allah, Lord of the worlds.