

CHAPTER 4
JIHAAD¹³ IN THE CAUSE OF GOD

The great scholar Ibn Qayyim, in his book *Zad al-Mir'ad*, has a chapter entitled "The Prophet's Treatment of the Unbelievers and the Hypocrites from the Beginning of His Messengership Until His Death." In this chapter, this scholar has summed up the nature of Islamic *Jihaad*.

"The first revelation from God which came to the Prophet — peace be on him — was '*Iqraa*, *bisme Rabbika alladhee* ...' ('Read, in the name of Your Sustainer, Who created ...'). This was the beginning of the Prophethood. God commanded the Prophet — peace be on him — to recite this in his heart. The commandment to preach had not yet come. Then God revealed '*Ya ayyuha al-Muddathir*, *qum fandhir*' ('O you who are enwrapped in your mantle, arise and warn'). Thus, the revelation of '*Iqraa*' was his appointment to Prophethood, while '*Ya ayyuha al-muddathir*' was his appointment to Messengership. Later God commanded the Prophet — peace be on him — to warn his near relatives, then his people, then the Arabs who were around them, then all of Arabia, and finally the whole world. Thus for thirteen years after the beginning of his Messengership, he called people to God through preaching, without fighting or *jizyah*,¹⁴ and was commanded to restrain himself and to practice patience and forbearance. Then he was commanded to migrate, and later permission was given to fight. Then he was commanded to fight those who fought him, and to restrain himself from those who did not make war with him. Later he was commanded to fight the polytheists until God's religion was fully established. After the command for *Jihaad* came, the non-believers were divided into three categories: one, those with whom there was peace; two, the people with whom the Muslims were at war; and three, the *Dhimmi*s.¹⁵

¹³ Literally, 'striving'. This Arabic word denotes any form of activity, either personal or community-wide, of Muslims in attempting to strive for the cause of God and for the sake of Islam.

¹⁴ A tax levied by Muslims on non-Muslim men in areas governed by Muslims, in lieu of military service.

¹⁵ Literally meaning 'responsibility', *Dhimmi*s refers to the non-Muslim peoples residing in a Muslim state for whose protection and rights the Muslim government was responsible.

It was commanded that as long as the non-believers with whom he had a peace treaty met their obligations, he should fulfill the articles of the treaty, but if they broke this treaty, then they should be given notice of having broken it; until then, no war should be declared. If they persisted, then he should fight with them. When the chapter entitled '**Bra't**' was revealed, the details of treatment of these three kinds of non-believers were described. It was also explained that war should be declared against those from among the 'People of the Book'¹⁶ who declare open enmity, until they agree to pay **Jizyah** or accept Islam. Concerning the polytheists and the hypocrites, it was commanded in this chapter that **jihad** be declared against them and that they be treated harshly. The Prophet — peace be on him — carried on **jihad** against the polytheists by fighting and against the hypocrites by preaching and argument. In the same chapter, it was commanded that the treaties with the polytheists be brought to an end at the period of their expiration. In this respect, the people with whom there were treaties were divided into three categories: The first, those who broke the treaty and did not fulfill its terms. He was ordered to fight against them; he fought with them and was victorious. The second were those with whom the treaty was made for a stated term; they had not broken this treaty nor helped anyone against the Prophet — peace be on him —. Concerning them, God ordered that these treaties be completed to their full term. The third kind were those with whom there was neither a treaty nor were they fighting against the Prophet — peace be on him —, or those with whom no term of expiration was stated. Concerning these, it was commanded that they be given four months' notice of expiration, at the end of which they should be considered open enemies and fought with. Thus, those who broke the treaty were fought against, and those who did not have any treaty or had an indeterminate period of expiration were given four months' period of grace, and terms were kept with those with whom the treaty was due to expire. All the latter people embraced Islam even before the term expired, and the non-Muslims of the state paid **Jizyah**. Thus, after the revelation of the chapter '**Bra't**', the unbelievers were of three

¹⁶ Christians and Jews.

kinds: adversaries in war, people with treaties, and **Dhimmites**. The people with treaties eventually became Muslims, so there were only two kinds left: people at war and **Dhimmites**. The people at war were always afraid of him. Now the people of the whole world were of three kinds: One, the Muslims who believed in him; two, those with whom he had peace; and three, the opponents who kept fighting him. As far as the hypocrites were concerned, God commanded the Prophet — peace be on him — to accept their appearances and leave their intentions to God, and carry on **jihad** against them by argument and persuasion. He was commanded not to pray at their funerals nor to pray at their graves, nor should he ask forgiveness from God for them, as their affair was with God. So this was the practice of the Prophet — peace be on him — concerning his enemies among the non-believers and the hypocrites."

In this description we find a summary of the stages of Islamic **jihad** presented in an excellent manner. In this summary we find all the distinctive and far-reaching characteristics of the dynamic movement of the true religion; we should ponder over them for deep study. Here, however, we will confine ourselves to a few explanatory remarks.

First, the method of this religion is very practical. This movement treats people as they actually are and uses resources which are in accordance with practical conditions. Since this movement comes into conflict with the **Jahiliyyah** which prevails over ideas and beliefs, and which has a practical system of life and a political and material authority behind it, the Islamic movement had to produce parallel resources to confront this **Jahiliyyah**. This movement uses the methods of preaching and persuasion for reforming ideas and beliefs; and it uses physical power and **jihad** for abolishing the organizations and authorities of the **Jahili** system which prevents people from reforming their ideas and beliefs but forces them to obey their erroneous ways and make them serve human lords instead of the Almighty Lord. This movement does not confine itself to mere preaching to confront physical power, as it also does not use compulsion for changing the ideas of people. These two principles are equally important in the method of this religion. Its purpose is to free those

people who wish to be freed from enslavement to men so that they may serve God alone.

The second aspect of this religion is that it is a practical movement which progresses stage by stage, and at every stage it provides resources according to the practical needs of the situation and prepares the ground for the next one. It does not face practical problems with abstract theories, nor does it confront various stages with unchangeable means. Those who talk about **jihad** in Islam and quote Qur'anic verses do not take into account this aspect, nor do they understand the nature of the various stages through which this movement develops, or the relationship of the verses revealed at various occasions with each stage. Thus, when they speak about **jihad**, they speak clumsily and mix up the various stages, distorting the whole concept of **jihad** and deriving from the Qur'anic verses final principles and generalities for which there is no justification. This is because they regard every verse of the Qur'an as if it were the final principle of this religion. This group of thinkers, who are a product of the sorry state of the present Muslim generation, have nothing but the label of Islam and have laid down their spiritual and rational arms in defeat. They say, "Islam has prescribed only defensive war" and think that they have done some good for their religion by depriving it of its method, which is to abolish all injustice from the earth, to bring people to the worship of God alone, and to bring them out of servitude to others into the servants of the Lord. Islam does not force people to accept its belief, but it wants to provide a free environment in which they will have the choice of beliefs. What it wants is to abolish those oppressive political systems under which people are prevented from expressing their freedom to choose whatever beliefs they want, and after that it gives them complete freedom to decide whether they will accept Islam or not.

A third aspect of this religion is that the new resources or methods which it uses during its progressive movement do not take it away from its fundamental principles and aims. From the very first day, whether the Prophet — peace be on him — addressed his near relatives, or the Quraish, or the Arabs, or the entire world, his call was one and the same. He called them to the submission to One God and rejection of the

lordship of other men. On this principle there is no compromise nor any flexibility. To attain this purpose, it proceeds according to a plan, which has a few stages, and every stage has its new resources, as we have described earlier.

A fourth aspect is that Islam provides a legal basis for the relationship of the Muslim community with other groups, as is clear from the quotation from **Zad al-Mi'ad**. This legal formulation is based on the principle that Islam — that is, submission to God — is a universal Message which the whole of mankind should accept or make peace with. No political system or material power should put hindrances in the way of preaching Islam. It should leave every individual free to accept or reject it, and if someone wants to accept it, it should not prevent him or fight against him. If someone does this, then it is the duty of Islam to fight him until either he is killed or until he declares his submission.

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When writers with defeatist and apologetic mentalities write about "**jihad** in Islam," trying to remove this 'blot' from Islam, then they are mixing up two things: first, that this religion forbids the imposition of its belief by force, as is clear from the verse, "There is no compulsion in religion" (2:256), while on the other hand it tries to annihilate all those political and material powers which stand between people and Islam, which force one people to bow before another people and prevent them from accepting the sovereignty of God. These two principles have no relation to one another nor is there room to mix them. In spite of this, these defeatist-type people try to mix the two aspects and want to confine **jihad** to what today is called 'defensive war'. The Islamic **jihad** has no relationship to modern warfare, either in its causes or in the way in which it is conducted. The causes of Islamic **jihad** should be sought in the very nature of Islam and its role in the world, in its high principles, which have been given to it by God and for the implementation of which God appointed the Prophet — peace be on him — as His Messenger and declared him to be the last of all prophets and messengers. This religion is really a universal declaration of the freedom of man from servitude to other men and from servitude to his own desires, which is also a form of human servitude;

it is a declaration that sovereignty belongs to God alone and that He is the Lord of all the worlds. It means a challenge to all kinds and forms of systems which are based on the concept of the sovereignty of man; in other words, where man has usurped the Divine attribute. Any system in which the final decisions are referred to human beings, and in which the sources of all authority are human, deifies human beings by designating others than God as lords over men. This declaration means that the usurped authority of God be returned to Him and the usurpers be thrown out — those who by themselves devise laws for others to follow, thus elevating themselves to the status of lords and reducing others to the status of slaves. In short, to proclaim the authority and sovereignty of God means to eliminate all human kingship and to announce the rule of the Sustainer of the universe over the entire earth. In the words of the Qur'an:

"He alone is God in the heavens and in the earth."
(43:84)

"The command belongs to God alone. He commands you not to worship anyone except Him. This is the right way of life." (12: 40)

"Say: O People of the Book, come to what is common between us: that we will not worship anyone except God, and will not associate anything with Him, and will not take lords from among ourselves besides God; and if they turn away then tell them to bear witness that we are those who have submitted to God." (2: 64)

The way to establish God's rule on earth is not that some consecrated people — the priests — be given the authority to rule, as was the case with the rule of the Church, nor that some spokesmen of God become rulers, as is the case in a 'theocracy'. To establish God's rule means that His laws be enforced and that the final decision in all affairs be according to these laws.

The establishing of the dominion of God on earth, the abolishing of the dominion of man, the taking away of sovereignty from the usurper to revert it to God, and the bringing about of the enforcement of the Divine Law (**Shari'ah**) and the abolition of man-made laws cannot be achieved only through preaching. Those who have usurped the authority of God

and are oppressing God's creatures are not going to give up their power merely through preaching; if it had been so, the task of establishing God's religion in the world would have been very easy for the Prophets of God! This is contrary to the evidence from the history of the Prophets and the story of the struggle of the true religion, spread over generations.

This universal declaration of the freedom of man on the earth from every authority except that of God, and the declaration that sovereignty is God's alone and that He is the Lord of the universe, is not merely a theoretical, philosophical and passive proclamation. It is a positive, practical and dynamic message with a view to bringing about the implementation of the **Shari'ah** of God and actually freeing people from their servitude to other men to bring them into the service of God, the One without associates. This cannot be attained unless both 'preaching' and 'the movement' are used. This is so because appropriate means are needed to meet any and every practical situation.

Because this religion proclaims the freedom of man on the earth from all authority except that of God, it is confronted in every period of human history — yesterday, today, or tomorrow — with obstacles of beliefs and concepts, physical power, and the obstacles of political, social, economic, racial and class structures. In addition, corrupted beliefs and superstitions become mixed with this religion, working side by side with it and taking root in peoples' hearts.

If through 'preaching' beliefs and ideas are confronted, through 'the movement' material obstacles are tackled. Foremost among these is that political power which rests on a complex yet interrelated ideological, racial, class, social and economic support. Thus these two — preaching and the movement — united, confront 'the human situation' with all the necessary methods. For the achievement of the freedom of man on earth — of all mankind throughout the earth — it is necessary that these two methods should work side by side. This is a very important point and cannot be over-emphasized.

This religion is not merely a declaration of the freedom of the Arabs, nor is its message confined to the Arabs. It addresses itself to the whole of mankind, and its sphere of

work is the whole earth. God is the Sustainer not merely of the Arabs, nor is His providence limited to those who believe in the faith of Islam. God is the Sustainer of the whole world. This religion wants to bring back the whole world to its Sustainer and free it from servitude to anyone other than God. In the sight of Islam, the real servitude is following laws devised by someone, and this is that servitude which in Islam is reserved for God alone. Anyone who serves someone other than God in this sense is outside God's religion, although he may claim to profess this religion. The Prophet — peace be on him — clearly stated that, according to the **Shari'ah**, 'to obey is 'to worship'. Taking this meaning of worship, when the Jews and Christians 'disobeyed' God, they became like those who 'associate others with God'.

Tirmidhi has reported on the authority of 'Adi bin Hatim that when the Prophet's message reached him, he ran away to Syria (he had accepted Christianity before the Prophet's time), but his sister and some of the people of his tribe became prisoners of war. The Prophet — peace be on him — treated his sister kindly and gave her some gifts. She went back to her brother and invited him to Islam, and advised him to visit the Prophet — peace be on him. 'Adi agreed to this. The people were very anxious to see him come to Medina. When he came into the presence of the Prophet, he was wearing a silver cross. The Prophet — peace be on him — was reciting the verse. 'They (the People of the Book) have taken their rabbis and priests as lords other than God'. 'Adi reports: 'I said, 'They do not worship their priests.' God's Messenger replied, "Whatever their priests and rabbis call permissible, they accept as permissible; whatever they declare as forbidden, they consider as forbidden, and thus they worship them."

This explanation of the above verse by the Prophet — peace be on him — makes it clear that obedience to laws and judgments is a sort of worship, and anyone who does this is considered out of this religion. It is taking some men as lords over others, while this religion has come to annihilate such practices, and it declares that all the people of the earth should become free of servitude to anyone other than God.

If the actual life of human beings is found to be different

from this declaration of freedom, then it becomes incumbent upon Islam to enter the field with preaching as well as the movement, and to strike hard at all those political powers which force people to bow before them and which rule over them, unmindful of the commandments of God, and which prevent people from listening to the preaching and accepting the belief if they wish to do so. After annihilating the tyrannical force, whether it be in a political or a racial form, or in the form of class distinctions within the same race, Islam establishes a new social, economic and political system, in which the concept of the freedom of man is applied in practice.

It is not the intention of Islam to force its beliefs on people, but Islam is not merely 'belief'. As we have pointed out, Islam is a declaration of the freedom of man from servitude to other men. Thus it strives from the beginning to abolish all those systems and governments which are based on the rule of man over men and the servitude of one human being to another. When Islam releases people from this political pressure and presents to them its spiritual message, appealing to their reason, it gives them complete freedom to accept or not to accept its beliefs. However, this freedom does not mean that they can make their desires their gods, or that they can choose to remain in the servitude of other human beings, making some men lords over others. Whatever system is to be established in the world ought to be on the authority of God, deriving its laws from Him alone. Then every individual is free, under the protection of this universal system, to adopt any belief he wishes to adopt. This is the only way in which 'the religion' can be purified for God alone. The word 'religion' includes more than belief; 'religion' actually means a way of life, and in Islam this is based on belief. But in an Islamic system there is room for all kinds of people to follow their own beliefs, while obeying the laws of the country which are themselves based on the Divine authority.

Anyone who understands this particular character of this religion will also understand the place of **Jihaad bis saif** (striving through fighting), which is to clear the way for striving through preaching in the application of the Islamic movement. He will understand that Islam is not a 'defensive move-

ment' in the narrow sense which today is technically called a 'defensive war.' This narrow meaning is ascribed to it by those who are under the pressure of circumstances and are defeated by the wily attacks of the orientalist, who distort the concept of Islamic **Jihaad**. It was a movement to wipe out tyranny and to introduce true freedom to mankind, using resources according to the actual human situation, and it had definite stages, for each of which it utilized new methods.

If we insist on calling Islamic **Jihaad** a defensive movement, then we must change the meaning of the word 'defense' and mean by it 'the defense of man' against all those elements which limit his freedom. These elements take the form of beliefs and concepts, as well as of political systems, based on economic, racial or class distinctions. When Islam first came into existence, the world was full of such systems, and the present-day **Jahiliyyah** also has various kinds of such systems.

When we take this broad meaning of the word 'defense', we understand the true character of Islam, and that it is a universal proclamation of the freedom of man from servitude to other men, the establishment of the sovereignty of God and His Lordship throughout the world, the end of man's arrogance and selfishness, and the implementation of the rule of the Divine **Shari'ah** in human affairs.

As to persons who attempt to defend the concept of Islamic **Jihaad** by interpreting it in the narrow sense of the current concept of defensive war, and who do research to prove that the battles fought in Islamic **Jihaad** were all for the defense of the homeland of Islam — some of them considering the homeland of Islam to be just the Arabian peninsula — against the aggression of neighboring powers, they lack understanding of the nature of Islam and its primary aim. Such an attempt is nothing but a product of a mind defeated by the present difficult conditions and by the attacks of the treacherous orientalist on the Islamic **Jihaad**.

Can anyone say that if Abu Bakr, 'Umar or 'Othman had been satisfied that the Roman and Persian powers were not going to attack the Arabian peninsula, they would not have striven to spread the message of Islam throughout the world? How could the message of Islam have spread when it faced

such material obstacles as the political system of the state, the socio-economic system based on races and classes, and behind all these, the military power of the government?

It would be naive to assume that a call is raised to free the whole of humankind throughout the earth, and it is confined to preaching and exposition. Indeed, it strives through preaching and exposition when there is freedom of communication and when people are free from all these influences, as 'There is no compulsion in religion; but when the above-mentioned obstacles and practical difficulties are put in its way, it has no recourse but to remove them by force so that when it is addressed to peoples' hearts and minds they are free to accept or reject it with an open mind.

Since the objective of the message of Islam is a decisive declaration of man's freedom, not merely on the philosophical plane but also in the actual conditions of life, it must employ **Jihaad**. It is immaterial whether the homeland of Islam — in the true Islamic sense, **Dar ul-Islam** — is in a condition of peace or whether it is threatened by its neighbors. When Islam strives for peace, its objective is not that superficial peace which requires that only that part of the earth where the followers of Islam are residing remain secure. The peace which Islam desires is that the religion (i.e. the Law of the society) be purified for God, that the obedience of all people be for God alone, and that some people should not be lords over others. After the period of the Prophet — peace be on him — only the final stages of the movement of **Jihaad** are to be followed; the initial or middle stages are not applicable. They have ended, and as Ibn Qayyim states, 'Thus, after the revelation of the chapter '**Bra't**', the unbelievers were of three kinds: adversaries in war, people with treaties, and **Dhimmies**. The people with treaties eventually became Muslims, so there were only two kinds left: people at war and **Dhimmies**. The people at war were always afraid of him. Now the people of the whole world were of three kinds: one, the Muslims who believed in him; two, those with whom he had peace (and from the previous sentence we understand that they were **Dhimmies**); and three, the opponents who kept fighting him.'

These are the logical positions consonant with the charac-

ter and purposes of this religion, and not what is understood by the people who are defeated by present conditions and by the attacks of the treacherous orientalists.

God held back Muslims from fighting in Mecca and in the early period of their migration to Medina, and told them, "Restrain your hands, and establish regular prayers, and pay **Zakat**". Next, they were permitted to fight: "Permission to fight is given to those against whom war is made, because they are oppressed, and God is able to help them. These are the people who were expelled from their homes without cause. The next stage came when the Muslims were commanded to fight those who fight them: "Fight in the cause of God against those who fight you." And finally, war was declared against all the polytheists: "And fight against all the polytheists, as they all fight against you;" "Fight against those among the People of the Book who do not believe in God and the Last Day, who do not forbid what God and His Messenger have forbidden, and who do not consider the true religion as their religion, until they are subdued and pay **jizyah**." Thus, according to the explanation by Imam Ibn Qayyim, the Muslims were first restrained from fighting; then they were permitted to fight; then they were commanded to fight against the aggressors; and finally they were commanded to fight against all the polytheists.

With these verses from the Qur'an and with many Traditions of the Prophet — peace be on him — in praise of **Jihaad**, and with the entire history of Islam, which is full of **Jihaad**, the heart of every Muslim rejects that explanation of **Jihaad** invented by those people whose minds have accepted defeat under unfavorable conditions and under the attacks on Islamic **Jihaad** by the shrewd orientalists.

What kind of a man is it who, after listening to the commandment of God and the Traditions of the Prophet — peace be on him — and after reading about the events which occurred during the Islamic **Jihaad**, still thinks that it is a temporary injunction related to transient conditions and that it is concerned only with the defense of the borders?

In the verse giving permission to fight, God has informed the Believers that the life of this world is such that checking one group of people by another is the law of God, so that the earth may be cleansed of corruption. "Permission to fight

is given to those against whom war is made, because they are oppressed, and God is able to help them. These are the people who were expelled from their homes without cause except that they said that our Lord is God. Had God not checked one people by another, then surely synagogues and churches and mosques would have been pulled down, where the name of God is remembered often." Thus, this struggle is not a temporary phase but an eternal state — an eternal state, as truth and falsehood cannot co-exist on this earth. Whenever Islam stood up with the universal declaration that God's Lordship should be established over the entire earth and that men should become free from servitude to other men, the usurpers of God's authority on earth have struck out against it fiercely and have never tolerated it. It became incumbent upon Islam to strike back and release man throughout the earth from the grip of these usurpers. The eternal struggle for the freedom of man will continue until the religion is purified for God.

The command to refrain from fighting during the Meccan period was a temporary stage in a long journey. The same reason was operative during the early days of **Hijra**, but after these early stages, the reason for **Jihaad** was not merely to defend Medina. Indeed, its defense was necessary, but this was not the ultimate aim. The aim was to protect the resources and the center of the movement — the movement for freeing mankind and demolishing the obstacles which prevented mankind from attaining this freedom.

The reasons for refraining from fighting during the Meccan period are easily understood. In Mecca preaching was permitted. The Messenger — peace be on him — was under the protection of the Banu Hashim and hence he had the opportunity to declare his message openly; he had the freedom to speak to individuals as to groups and to appeal to their hearts and minds. There was no organized political power which could prevent him from preaching and prevent people from listening. At this stage there was no need for the use of force. Besides this, there were other reasons and I have detailed these reasons in my commentary, **In the Shades of the Qur'an**, in explanation of the verse, "Have you seen the people to whom it was said, 'Restrain your hands, and establish regular prayers, and pay **Zakat**?' (3:77) it may be useful to reproduce

parts of this explanation here.

"A reason for prohibiting the use of force during the Meccan period may have been that this was a stage of training and preparation in a particular environment, for a particular nation and under particular conditions. Under these circumstances, an important factor in training and preparation was to train the individual Arab to be patient under oppression to himself or to those he loved, to conquer his pride, and not to make personal revenge or revenge for one's dear ones the purpose of one's life. Training was also needed so that he could learn control of his nerves, not lose his temper at the first provocation — as was his temperament — nor get excited at the first impulse, but so that he could develop dignity and composure in his temperament and in his action. He was to be trained to follow the discipline of a community which is under the direction of a leader, and to refer to this leader in every matter and to obey his injunctions, even though they might be against his habit or taste. The aim was to develop individuals of high character who would constitute the Muslim community, who would follow the directions of the leader, and who would be civilized and progressive, free of wild habits and tribalism.

"Another reason for it may have been that the Quraish were proud of their lineage and honor, and in such an environment only persuasion could be most appealing and effective. At this stage, fighting would have resulted in kindling the fires of revenge. There was already much tribal warfare based on blood feuds, such as the wars of Dahis, Gabra and Basus, which continued for years and annihilated tribe after tribe. If blood feuds were to become associated in their minds with Islam, then this impression would never have been removed. Consequently, Islam, instead of being a call toward the true religion, would have become an unending sequence of tribal feuds and its basic teachings would have been forgotten at the very beginning.

"Another reason may have been to avoid sowing the seed of discord and bloodshed in every household. At that time, there was no organized government which was torturing and persecuting the Believers; the Believer was persecuted, tortured and 'taught a lesson' by his own patrons. Under

these circumstances, permission to fight would have meant that every house would have become a battlefield. The people would have said 'So, this is Islam!' In fact, this was said about Islam, even though fighting was not permitted. During the season when the people of Arabia came to Mecca for pilgrimage and commerce, the Quraish would have gone to them and would have said, 'Muhammad is not only dividing his nation and his tribe; he is even dividing sons from fathers! What kind of a thing is this which incites the son to kill his father, the slave to kill his master, in every house and in every locality?'

"Another reason may have been that God knew that a great majority of those who persecuted and tortured the early Muslims would one day become the loyal soldiers of Islam, even its great leaders. Was not 'Umar Ibn al-Khattab one of them?

"Another reason may have been that the sense of honor of the Arabs, especially in a tribal framework, comes to the help of the person who is persecuted yet does not concede defeat, especially if the persecuted are honored by the people. Several such incidents can be quoted to support this thesis. When Abu Bakr, who was an honorable man, left Mecca in order to migrate to some other place, Ibn al-Daghna could not bear it and restrained him from leaving because he considered it a disgrace to the Arabs; he offered Abu Bakr his own protection. The best example of such an incident is the tearing up of the contract under which the Banu Hashim were confined to the Valley of Abu Talib when the period of their hunger and privation seemed unreasonably long. This chivalry was a peculiarity of the Arabs, while in ancient 'civilizations' which were accustomed to seeing people humiliated, those who suffered and were persecuted were laughed at, ridiculed and treated with contempt, and the oppressor and the tyrant were respected.

"Another reason may have been that the Muslims were few in number and they lived only in Mecca, as the message of Islam had not reached other parts of Arabia or had reached only as hearsay. Other tribes considered it as a domestic quarrel of the Quraish; they were watching for the outcome of this struggle. Under these circumstances, if fighting had been allowed, this limited warfare would have resulted in the

complete annihilation of the Muslims; even if they had killed a great number of their opponents, they would still have been completely annihilated. Idolatry would have continued and the dawn of the Islamic system would never have arrived and would never have reached its zenith, while Islam is revealed to be a practical way of life for all mankind".

In the early Medinite period fighting was also prohibited. The reason for this was that the Prophet — peace be on him — had signed a pact with the Jews of Medina and with the unbelieving Arabs in and around Medina, an action which was necessary at this stage.

First, there was an open opportunity for preaching and persuasion. There was no political power to circumscribe this freedom; the whole population accepted the new Muslim state and agreed upon the leadership of the Prophet — peace be on him — in all political matters. In the pact it was agreed by all parties that no one would make a treaty of peace or declare war or establish relations with any outsider without the express permission of the Prophet — peace be on him. Thus, the real power in Medina was in the hands of Muslim leadership. The doors were also open for preaching Islam and there was freedom of belief.

Secondly, at this stage the Prophet — peace be on him — wanted to conserve all his efforts to combat the Quraish, whose relentless opposition was a great obstacle in spreading Islam to other tribes which were waiting to see the final outcome of the struggle between the two groups of the Quraish. That is why the Prophet — peace be on him — hastened to send scouting parties in various directions. The first such party was commanded by Hamza bin Abdul Muttalib, and it went out during the month of Ramadan, only six months after the Immigration.

After this, there were other scouting parties, one during the ninth month after **Hijra**, the next in the thirteenth month, the third sixteen months after **Hijra**, and in the seventeenth month he sent a party under the leadership of Abdullah bin Jahash. This party encountered some resistance and some blood was shed. This occurred during the month of Rajab, which was considered a sacred month. The following verse of Chapter **Baqara** refers to it:

"They ask you about fighting in the sacred months. Say: Fighting in them is a great sin, but to prevent people from the way of God, and to reject God, and to stop people from visiting the Sacred Mosque, and to expel people from their homes are a much greater sin, and oppression is worse than killing." (2:217)

During Ramadan of the same year, the Battle of Badr took place, and in Chapter **Anfal** this battle was reviewed.

If this stage of the Islamic movement is viewed in proper perspective, then there is no room to say that the basic aim of the Islamic movement was 'defensive' in the narrow sense which some people ascribe to it today, defeated by the attacks of the treacherous orientalisists!

Those who look for causes of a defensive nature in the history of the expansion of Islam are caught by the aggressive attacks of the orientalisists at a time when Muslims possess neither glory nor do they possess Islam. However, by God's grace, there are those who are standing firm on the issue that Islam is a universal declaration of the freedom of man on the earth from every authority except God's authority, and that the religion ought to be purified for God; and they keep writing concerning, the Islamic **jihad**.

But the Islamic movement does not need any arguments taken from the literature, as it stands on the clear verses of the Qur'an:

"They ought to fight in the way of God who have sold the life of this world for the life of the Hereafter; and whoever fights in the way of God and is killed or becomes victorious, to him shall We give a great reward. Why should not you fight in the way of God for those men, women and children who have been oppressed because they are weak and who call 'Our Lord! Take us out of this place whose people are oppressors, and raise for us an ally, and send for us a helper'. Those who believe fight in the cause of God, while those who do not believe fight in the cause of tyranny. Then fight against the friends of Satan. Indeed, the strategy of Satan is weak." (3: 74-76)

"Say to the unbelievers that if they refrain, then whatever they have done before will be forgiven them; but if they turn back, then they know what happened to earlier nations. And fight against them until there is no oppression and the

religion is wholly for God. But if they refrain, then God is watching over their actions. But if they do not, then know that God is your Ally and He is your Helper." (8: 38-40) "Fight against those among the People of the Book who do not believe in God and the Last Day, who do not forbid what God and His messenger have forbidden, and who do not consider the true religion as their way of life, until they are subdued and pay **jizyah**. The Jews say: 'Ezra is the Son of God', and the Christians say: 'The Messiah is the Son of God'. These are mere sayings from their mouths, following those who preceded them and disbelieved. God will assail them; how they are perverted! They have taken their rabbis and priests as lords other than God, and the Messiah, son of Mary; and they were commanded to worship none but One God. There is no deity but He, glory be to Him above what they associate with Him! They desire to extinguish God's light with their mouths, and God intends to perfect His light, although the unbelievers may be in opposition" (9: 29-32)

The reasons for **Jihaad** which have been described in the above verses are these: to establish God's authority in the earth; to arrange human affairs according to the true guidance provided by God; to abolish all the Satanic forces and Satanic systems of life; to end the lordship of one man over others, since all men are creatures of God and no one has the authority to make them his servants or to make arbitrary laws for them. These reasons are sufficient for proclaiming **Jihaad**. However, one should always keep in mind that there is no compulsion in religion; that is, once the people are free from the lordship of men, the law governing civil affairs will be purely that of God, while no one will be forced to change his beliefs and accept Islam.

The **Jihaad** of Islam is to secure complete freedom for every man throughout the world by releasing him from servitude to other human beings so that he may serve his God, Who is One and Who has no associates. This is in itself a sufficient reason for **Jihaad**. These were the only reasons in the hearts of Muslim warriors. If they had been asked the question, "Why are you fighting?" none would have answered, "My country is in danger; I am fighting for its defense" or "The

Persians and the Romans have come upon us", or, "We want to extend our dominion and want more spoils."

They would have answered the same as Raba'i bin 'Amer, Huzai'fa bin Muhsin and Mughira bin Sh'uba answered the Persian general Rustum when he asked them one by one during three successive days preceding the battle of Qadisiyyah, "For what purpose have you come?" Their answer was the same: "God has sent us to bring anyone who wishes from servitude to men into the service of God alone, from the narrowness of this world into the vastness of this world and the Hereafter, and from the tyranny of religions into the justice of Islam. God raised a Messenger for this purpose to teach His creatures His way. If anyone accepts this way of life, we turn back and give his country back to him, and we fight with those who rebel until we are martyred or become victorious".

These are the reasons inherent in the very nature of this religion. Similarly, its proclamation of universal freedom, its practical way of combatting actual human conditions with appropriate methods, its developing new resources at various stages, is also inherent in its message from the very beginning — and not because of any threat of aggression against Islamic lands or against the Muslims residing in them. The reason for **Jihaad** exists in the nature of its message and in the actual conditions it finds in human societies, and not merely in the necessity for defense, which may be temporary and of limited extent. A Muslim fights with his wealth and his person "in the way of God" for the sake of these values in which neither personal gain nor greed is a motive for him.

Before a Muslim steps into the battlefield, he has already fought a great battle within himself against Satan— against his own desires and ambitions, his personal interests and inclinations, the interests of his family and of his nation; against which is not from Islam; against every obstacle which comes into the way of worshipping God and the implementation of the Divine authority on earth, returning this authority to God and taking it away from the rebellious usurpers.

Those who say that Islamic **Jihaad** was merely for the defense of the 'homeland of Islam' diminish the greatness of the Islamic way of life and consider it less important than their 'homeland'. This is not the Islamic point of view, and

their view is a creation of the modern age and is completely alien to Islamic consciousness. What is acceptable to Islamic consciousness is its belief, the way of life which this belief prescribes, and the society which lives according to this way of life. The soil of the homeland has in itself no value or weight. From the Islamic point of view, the only value which the soil can achieve is because on that soil God's authority is established and God's guidance is followed; and thus it becomes a fortress for the belief, a place for its way of life to be entitled the 'homeland of Islam', a center for the movement for the total freedom of man.

Of course, in that case the defense of the 'homeland of Islam' is the defense of the Islamic beliefs, the Islamic way of life, and the Islamic community. However, its defense is not the ultimate objective of the Islamic movement of **jihad** but is a means of establishing the Divine authority within it so that it becomes the headquarters for the movement of Islam, which is then to be carried throughout the earth to the whole of mankind, as the object of this religion is all humanity and its sphere of action is the whole earth.

As we have described earlier, there are many practical obstacles in establishing God's rule on earth, such as the power of the state, the social system and traditions and, in general, the whole human environment. Islam uses force only to remove these obstacles so that there may not remain any wall between Islam and individual human beings, and so that it may address their hearts and minds after releasing them from these material obstacles, and then leave them free to choose to accept or reject it.

We ought not to be deceived or embarrassed by the attacks of the orientalists on the origin of **jihad**, nor lose self-confidence under the pressure of present conditions and the weight of the great powers of the world to such an extent that we try to find reasons for Islamic **jihad** outside the nature of this religion, and try to show that it was a defensive measure under temporary conditions. The need for **jihad** remains, and will continue to remain, whether these conditions exist or not.

In pondering over historical events, we should not neglect the aspects inherent in the nature of this religion, its declaration of universal freedom, and its practical method. We ought

not to confuse these with temporary needs of defense.

No doubt this religion must defend itself against aggressors. Its very existence in the form of a general declaration of the universal Lordship of God and of the freedom of man from servitude to any being other than God, and its organizing a movement under a new leadership other than the existing **jahili** leadership, and its creating a distinct and permanent society based on the Divine authority and submission to One God, is sufficient cause for the surrounding **jahili** society, which is based on human authority in some form or another, to rise against it for its own preservation and for the suppression of Islam. Clearly, under these conditions, the newly-organized Islamic community will have to prepare itself for defense. These conditions inevitably occur and come into existence simultaneously with the advent of Islam in any society. There is no question of Islam's liking or disliking such a situation, as the struggle is imposed upon Islam; this is a natural struggle between two systems which cannot co-exist for long. This is a fact which cannot be denied, and hence Islam has no choice but to defend itself against aggression.

But there is another fact which is much more important than this fact. It is in the very nature of Islam to take initiative for freeing the human beings throughout the earth from servitude to anyone other than God; and so it cannot be restricted within any geographic or racial limits, leaving all mankind on the whole earth in evil, in chaos and in servitude to lords other than God.

It may happen that the enemies of Islam may consider it expedient not to take any action against Islam, if Islam leaves them alone in their geographical boundaries to continue the lordship of some men over others and does not extend its message and its declaration of universal freedom within their domain. But Islam cannot agree to this unless they submit to its authority by paying **jizyah**, which will be a guarantee that they have opened their doors for the preaching of Islam and will not put any obstacle in its way through the power of the state.

This is the character of this religion and this is its function, as it is a declaration of the Lordship of God and the freedom of man from servitude to anyone other than God, for all people.

There is a great difference between this concept of Islam

and the other, which considers it confined to geographical and racial limits, and does not take any action except out of fear of aggression. In the latter case, all its inherent dynamism is lost.

To understand the dynamism of Islam with clarity and depth, it is necessary to remember that Islam is a way of life for man prescribed by God. It is not a man-made system, nor an ideology of a group of people, nor a way of life peculiar to a given race. We cannot talk about external reasons for **Jihaad** unless we overlook this great truth and unless we forget that the fundamental question here is the sovereignty of God and the obedience of His creatures; it is impossible for a person to remember this great truth and still search for other reasons for Islamic **Jihaad**.

The true estimate of the difference between the concept that war was forced upon Islam by **Jahiliyyah** because its very nature demanded that **jahili** societies would attack it, and the concept that Islam takes the initiative and enters into this struggle, cannot be made in the early stages of its movement.

In the early stages of the Islamic movement it is difficult to discriminate between these two concepts, because in either case Islam will have to do battle. However, in the final stages, when the initial battles are won, the two concepts make a great difference — a great difference in understanding the purposes and the significance of the Islamic message. And here lies the danger.

There is also a great difference in the idea that Islam is a Divinely-ordained way of life and in the idea that it is a geographically-bounded system. According to the first idea, Islam came into this world to establish God's rule on God's earth, to invite all people toward the worship of God, and to make a concrete reality of its message in the form of a Muslim community in which individuals are free from servitude to men and have gathered together under servitude to God and follow only the **Shari'ah** of God. This Islam has a right to remove all those obstacles which are in its path so that it may address human reason and intuition with no interference and opposition from political systems. According to the second idea, Islam is merely a national system which has a right to take up arms only when its homeland is attacked.

In the case of either concept, Islam has to strive and to struggle.

gle; but its purposes and its results are entirely different, both conceptually and practically.

Indeed, Islam has the right to take the initiative. Islam is not a heritage of any particular race or country; this is God's religion and it is for the whole world. It has the right to destroy all obstacles in the form of institutions and traditions which limit man's freedom of choice. It does not attack individuals nor does it force them to accept its beliefs; it attacks institutions and traditions to release human beings from their poisonous influences, which distort human nature and which curtail human freedom.

It is the right of Islam to release mankind from servitude to human beings so that they may serve God alone, to give practical meaning to its declaration that God is the true Lord of all and that all men are free under Him. According to the Islamic concept and in actuality, God's rule on earth can be established only through the Islamic system, as it is the only system ordained by God for all human beings, whether they be rulers or ruled, black or white, poor or rich, ignorant or learned. Its law is uniform for all, and all human beings are equally responsible within it. In all other systems, human beings obey other human beings and follow man-made laws. Legislation is a Divine attribute; any person who concedes this right to such a claimant, whether he considers him Divine or not, has accepted him as Divine.

Islam is not merely a belief, so that it is enough merely to preach it. Islam, which is a way of life, takes practical steps to organize a movement for freeing man. Other societies do not give it any opportunity to organize its followers according to its own method, and hence it is the duty of Islam to annihilate all such systems, as they are obstacles in the way of universal freedom. Only in this manner can the way of life be wholly dedicated to God, so that neither any human authority nor the question of servitude remains, as is the case in all other systems which are based on man's servitude to man.

Those of our contemporary Muslim scholars who are defeated by the pressure of current conditions and the attacks of treacherous orientalists do not subscribe to this characteristic of Islam. The orientalists have painted a picture of Islam as

a violent movement which imposed its belief upon people by the sword. These vicious orientalists know very well that this is not true, but by this method they try to distort the true motives of Islamic **Jihaad**. But our Muslim scholars, these defeated people, search for reasons of defensive with which to negate this accusation. They are ignorant of the nature of Islam and of its function, and that it has a right to take the initiative for human freedom.

These research scholars, with their defeated mentality, have adopted the Western concept of 'religion', which is merely a name for 'belief' in the heart, having no relation to the practical affairs of life, and therefore they conceive of religious war as a war to impose belief on peoples' hearts.

But this is not the case with Islam, as Islam is the way of life ordained by God for all mankind, and this way establishes the Lordship of God alone — that is, the sovereignty of God — and orders practical life in all its daily details. **Jihaad** in Islam is simply a name for striving to make this system of life dominant in the world. As far as belief is concerned, it clearly depends upon personal opinion, under the protection of a general system in which all obstacles to freedom of personal belief have been removed. Clearly this is an entirely different matter and throws a completely new light on the Islamic **Jihaad**.

Thus, wherever an Islamic community exists which is a concrete example of the Divinely-ordained system of life, it has a God-given right to step forward and take control of the political authority so that it may establish the Divine system on earth, while it leaves the matter of belief to individual conscience. When God restrained Muslims from **Jihaad** for a certain period, it was a question of strategy rather than of principle; this was a matter pertaining to the requirements of the movement and not to belief. Only in the light of this explanation can we understand those verses of the Holy Qur'an which are concerned with the various stages of this movement. In reading these verses, we should always keep in mind that one of their meanings is related to the particular stages of the development of Islam, while there is another general meaning which is related to the unchangeable and eternal message of Islam. We should not confuse these two aspects.

CHAPTER 5

LA ILAHA ILLA ALLAH — THE WAY OF LIFE OF ISLAM

'**La ilaha illa Allah**' — "There is no deity except Allah" — is the first part the Islamic declaration of faith, meaning that there is no one to be worshipped except God; "**Muhammadar Rasul Allah**" — "Muhammad is the Messenger of God; — is the second part, meaning that this worship is to be carried out according to the teaching of the Prophet — peace be on him.

A believing Muslim is one into whose heart this declaration has penetrated completely, as the other pillars of Islam and articles of faith are derivatives of it. Thus, belief in angels and God's Books and God's Messengers and the life hereafter and **al-Qadr** (the measurement of good and evil), and **al-Salat** (prayers), **al-Siyam** (fasting), **al-Zakat** (poor-due) and **al-Hajj** (pilgrimage), and the limits set by God of permissible and forbidden things, human affairs, laws, Islamic moral teachings, and so on, are all based on the foundation of worship of God, and the source of all these teachings is the person of the Prophet — peace be on him — through whom God has revealed to us.

A Muslim community is that which is a practical interpretation of the declaration of faith and all its characteristics; and the society which does not translate into practice this faith and its characteristics is not Muslim.

Thus the declaration of faith provides the foundation for a complete system of life for the Muslim community in all its details. This way of life cannot come into being without securing this foundation first. Similarly, if the system of life is constructed on some other foundation, or if other sources are mixed with this foundation, then that community cannot be considered Islamic. God says:

"The command belongs to God alone. He commands you not to worship anyone except Him. This is the right way of life." (12:40)

"Whoever obeys the Prophet obeys God" (4:80)

* * *

This concise and decisive declaration guides us in the basic questions of our religion and in its practical movement. First,

it guides us to the nature of the Muslim community; second, it shows us the method of constructing such a community; third, it tells us how to confront **jahili** societies; and fourth, it determines the method by which Islam changes the conditions of human life. All these problems have always been and will remain of great importance in the various stages of the Islamic movement.

* * *

The distinctive feature of a Muslim community is this: that in all its affairs it is based on worship of God alone. The declaration of faith expresses this principle and determines its character; in beliefs, in devotional acts, and in rules and regulations this declaration takes a concrete form.

A person who does not believe in the oneness of God does not worship God alone.

"Allah commands you not to take two gods. God is only One; hence fear Me. Whatever is in the heavens and the earth belongs to Him and follows His way. Will you then fear anyone other than God?" (16: 51-52)

Anyone who performs devotional acts before someone other than God — in addition to Him or exclusively — does not worship God alone.

"Say, my **Salat** (prayers), my acts of devotion, my life and my death, are for the Sustainer of the Worlds; He has no associate. I have been commanded this, and I am the foremost to be among the submitters." (6: 162-163)

Anyone who derives laws from a source other than God, in a way other than what He taught us through the Prophet — peace be on him — does not worship God alone.

"Are there associates of God who have made permissible for them in their religion that which God has not permitted?" (42:21)

"Whatever the Prophet gives you, accept it, and whatever he prohibits you, refrain from it." (59:7)

This is the Muslim society. In this society, the beliefs and ideas of individuals, their devotional acts and religious observances, and their social system and their laws, are all based on submission to God alone. If this attitude is eliminated from any of these aspects, the whole of Islam is eliminated, as the first pillar of Islam — that is, the declaration, 'there is no deity

except God, and Muhammad is the Messenger of God' — becomes eliminated.

Thus, and only thus, can this group become a Muslim group and the community which it organizes be Muslim. Before adopting this purity of attitude no group can be a Muslim group, and before organizing its system of life on this principle no society can be a Muslim society. The reason for this is that the first principle on which Islam is based, that is '**La ilaha illa Allah, Muhammad Rasul Allah**', is not established in respect to both its parts.

It is necessary, therefore, before thinking of establishing the Islamic social system and organizing a Muslim community, that one should give attention to purifying the hearts of people from the worship of anyone other than God, in the way we have described above. Only those whose hearts are so purified will come together to make a group, and only such a group of people, whose beliefs and concepts, whose devotional acts and laws, are completely free of servitude to anyone other than God can start a Muslim community. Anyone who wants to live an Islamic life will automatically enter into this community, and his belief, his acts of worship and the laws which he follows, will also be purified for God alone. In other words, he will be an embodiment of "**La ilaha illa Allah, Muhammad Rasul Allah**".

This was the manner in which the first Muslim group was formed which eventually developed into the first Muslim community. This is the only way in which any Muslim group is started and a Muslim community comes into being.

A Muslim community can come into existence only when individuals and groups of people reject servitude to anyone except God — in addition to Him or exclusively — and come into submission to God, Who has no associates, and decide that they will organize their scheme or life on the basis of this submission. From this a new community is born, emerging from within the old **jahili** society, which immediately confronts it with a new belief and a new way of life based on this belief, presenting a concrete embodiment of the creed, 'There is no deity except God, and Muhammad is the Messenger of God'.

The old **jahili** society may become submerged into the new Islamic society or it may not, and it may make peace with

the Muslim society or may fight it. However, history tells us that the **jahili** society chooses to fight and not to make peace, attacking the vanguard of Islam at its very inception, whether it be a few individuals or whether it be groups, and even after this vanguard has become a well-established community. From Noah to Muhammad — peace be on them — without exception, this has been the course of events at every Islamic call.

It is clear, then, that a Muslim community cannot be formed or continue to exist until it attains sufficient power to confront the existing **jahili** society. This power must be at all levels; that is to say, the power of belief and concept, the power of training and moral character, the power to organize and sustain a community, and such physical power as is necessary, if not to dominate, at least to hold itself against the onslaught of the **jahili** society.

* * *

But what is the **jahili** society, and by what method does Islam confront it?

The **jahili** society is any society other than the Muslim society; and if we want a more specific definition, we may say that any society is a **jahili** society which does not dedicate itself to submission to God alone, in its beliefs and ideas, in its observances of worship, and in its legal regulations.

According to this definition, all the societies existing in the world today are **jahili**.

Included among these is the communist society, first because it denies the existence of God Most High and believes that the universe was created by 'matter' or by 'nature', while all man's activities and his history has been created by 'economics' or 'the means of production'; second, because the way of life it adopts is based on submission to the Communist Party and not to God. A proof of this is that in all communist countries the Communist Party has full control and leadership. Furthermore, the practical consequence of this ideology is that the basic needs of human beings are considered identical with those of animals, that is food and drink, clothing, shelter and sex. It deprives people of their spiritual needs, which differentiate human beings from animals. Foremost among these is belief in God and the freedom to adopt and to proclaim

this faith. Similarly, it deprives people of their freedom to express individuality, which is a very special human characteristic. The individuality of a person is expressed in various ways, such as private property, the choice of work and the attainment of specialization in work, and expression in various art forms; and it distinguishes him from animals or from machines. The communist ideology and the communist system reduces the human being to the level of an animal or even to the level of a machine.

All idolatrous societies are also among the **jahili** societies. Such societies are found in India, Japan, the Philippines and Africa. Their **jahili** character consists first of the fact that they believe in other gods besides God, in addition to Him or without Him; second, they have constructed an elaborate system of devotional acts to propitiate these deities. Similarly, the laws and regulations which they follow are derived from sources other than God and His Law, whether these sources be priests or astrologers or magicians, the elders of the nation, or the secular institutions which formulate laws without regard to the Law of God, and which attain absolute authority in the name of the nation or a party or on some other basis, while absolute authority belongs to God alone, and this can be brought into action only in the way shown to us by the Prophets of God.

All Jewish and Christian societies today are also **jahili** societies. They have distorted the original beliefs and ascribe certain attributes of God to other beings. This association with God has taken many forms, such as the Sonship of God or the Trinity; sometimes it is expressed in a concept of God which is remote from the true reality of God.

"The Jews say: Ezra is the Son of God", and the Christians say: "the Messiah is the Son of God." These are mere sayings from their mouths, following those who preceded them and disbelieved. God will assail them; how they are perverted." (9:30)

"They rejected the truth who said; 'God is the third of three'. Indeed, God is but One God. If they do not desist from what they say, the disbelievers among them will be met with a painful chastisement' (5:73)

"The Jews have said: 'God's hand is limited in what it can do.

Limited are their hands, and they are cursed for what they have said. Indeed, His hands are open; he expends how He wills." (5:64)

"The Jews and Christians say: 'We are God's children and His favorites.' Say: 'Why then does He punish you for your offences? In fact, you are people just like others.'" (5:18)

These societies are **Jahili** also because their forms of worship, their customs and manners are derived from their false and distorted beliefs. They are also **jahili** societies because their institutions and their laws are not based on submission to God alone. They neither accept the rule of God nor do they consider God's commandments as the only valid basis of all laws; on the contrary, they have established assemblies of men which have absolute power to legislate laws, thus usurping the right which belongs to God alone. At the time of Revelation, the Qur'an classified them among those who associate others with God, as they had given their priests and rabbis the authority to devise laws in whatever way they pleased.

"They have taken their rabbis and priests as lords other than God, and the Messiah, son of Mary; and they were commanded to worship none but One God. There is no god but He, glory be to Him above what they associate with Him!" (5:31)

These people did not consider their priests or rabbis as divine, nor did they worship them; but they gave them the authority to make laws, obeying laws which were made by them not permitted by God. If at that time the Qur'an called them associators of others with God and rejectors of truth, then today they are also the same, because today this authority is not in the hands of priests and rabbis but in the hands of individuals chosen from among themselves.

Lastly, all the existing so-called 'Muslim' societies are also **jahili** societies.

We classify them among **jahili** societies not because they believe in other deities besides God or because they worship anyone other than God, but because their way of life is not based on submission to God alone. Although they believe in the Unity of God, still they have relegated the legislative attribute of God to others and submit to this authority, and from this authority they derive their systems, their traditions and customs, their laws, their values and standards, and almost

every practice of life. God Most High says concerning rulers: "Those who do not judge according to what God has revealed are unbelievers," and concerning the ruled: (5:44)

"Have you not seen those who assert that they believe in what has been sent down to you and what was sent down before you, desiring to take their disputes to idols, while you were commanded to reject them?" (4:65)

"But no, by your Lord, they have not believed until they make you judge regarding their disputes, and then do not find any resentment in their hearts against your verdict, but submit in full submission." (4:65)

Before this, God accused the Jews and Christians of committing **Shirk**, (association of other gods with God) and of unbelief, and of taking priests and rabbis as lords in addition to God, only because they had given certain rights and privileges to their priests and rabbis, which today those who call themselves 'Muslims' have given to some people among themselves. This action of the Jews and Christians was considered by God in the same category of **Shirk** as that of the Christians' making Jesus into the Son of God and worshipping him. The latter is a rebellion against the Oneness of God, while the former is a rebellion against His prescribed way of life and a denial of "There is no other deity except God".

Among Muslim societies, some openly declare their 'secularism' and negate all their relationships with the religion; some others pay respect to the religion only with their mouths, but in their social life they have completely abandoned it. They say that they do not believe in the 'Unseen' and want to construct their social system on the basis of 'science', as science and the Unseen are contradictory! This claim of theirs is mere ignorance, and only ignorant people can talk like this. ¹⁷ There are some other societies which have given the authority of legislation to others besides God; they make whatever laws they please and then say, "This is the **Shari'ah** of God". All these societies are the same in one respect, that none of them is based on submission to God alone.

After explaining these facts, the position of Islam in relation to all these **jahili** societies can be described in one sentence:

¹⁷ Refer to the discussion in Volume 7 of **Fi-Thilal** in explanation of the verse: "He has the keys to the Unseen; no one knows it except Him".

it considers all these societies unIslamic and illegal.

Islam does not look at the labels or titles which these societies have adopted; they all have one thing in common, and that is that their way of life is not based on complete submission to God alone. In this respect they share the same characteristic with a polytheistic society, the characteristic of **Jahiliyyah**.

* * *

We have now come to the last of the points mentioned in the beginning of this chapter, and that point concerns the method which Islam adopts — today, tomorrow or in the remote future — in confronting actual human conditions. This method has been described in our discussion on the nature of the Muslim society, which is, in summary, that a Muslim society bases all its decisions on submission to God alone.

After defining this nature, we can immediately answer the following question: What is the principle on which human life ought to be based:— God's religion and its system of life, or some man-made system?

Islam answers this question in a clear cut and unambiguous manner: The only principle on which the totality of human life is to be based is God's religion and its system of life. If this principle is absent, the very first pillar of Islam — that is, bearing witness to — "**La ilaha illa Allah, Muhammad Rasul Allah**" — will not be established nor its real influence felt. Unless this principle is accepted without any question and followed faithfully, the complete submission to God as taught by the Messenger of God — peace be on him — cannot be fulfilled.

"Whatever the Messenger gives you, accept it; whatever he forbids you, refrain from it." (59:7)

Furthermore, Islam asks: "Do you know better, or does God?" and then answers it: "God knows and, you do not know", and "You have been given only a little of the (true) knowledge".

The One Who knows, Who has created man, and Who is his Sustainer must be the Ruler, and His religion ought to be the way of life, and man should return to Him for guidance. As far as man-made theories and religions are concerned, they become outmoded and distorted, as they are based on the knowledge of men — those who do not know,

and to whom only a little of the true knowledge is given.

God's religion is not a maze nor is its way of life a fluid thing, as the second part of the declaration of faith, "Muhammad is the Messenger of God", clearly limits it. It is bounded by those principles which have come from the Messenger of God — peace be on him. If there is a clear text available from the Qur'an or from him, then that will be decisive and there will be no room for **ijtihad** (using one's judgement). If no such clear judgement is available, then the time comes for **ijtihad** — and that according to well-defined principles which are consistent with God's religion and not merely following opinions or desires.

"If you have difference of opinion concerning something, refer to God and His Messenger." (4:59)

The principles of **ijtihad** and deduction are well known, and there is no vagueness or looseness in them. No one is allowed to devise a law and say that it is according to the Law of God unless it is declared that God is the Legislator, and that the source of authority is God Himself and not some nation or party or individual, and a sincere attempt is made to find out the will of God through reference to His Book and the teachings of His Messenger — peace be on him. But this right cannot be delegated to a person or persons who want to establish authority by taking the name of God, as was the case in Europe under the guise of 'the Church'. There is no 'Church' in Islam; no one can speak in the name of God except His Messenger — peace be on him. There are clear injunctions which define the limits of the Divine Law, the **Shar'ah**.

"**Al-din lil-waq'i**" ("the religion is for living") is a statement which is quite misunderstood and which is being used in a wrong sense. Certainly this religion is for living, but for what kind of life? This religion is for a life which is based on its principles, which is developed according to its methods. This life is completely harmonious with human nature and satisfies all human needs, needs which are determined only by the One Who creates and Who knows His creatures:

"Does He Who created not know His creatures? He is the All-Subtle, the All-Aware." (67:14)

It is not the function of religion to provide justification for

whatever kind of life someone is leading and to bring an authority which he can use to justify his actions. Religion is to be a criterion, to approve what is good and to discard what is evil. If the whole system of life is against the religion, then its function is to abolish this system and to construct a new one. This is the meaning, according to Islam, of the saying "religion is for living"; one ought to understand this with its correct meaning.

The question may be asked, "Is not the good of mankind the criterion for solving actual problems?" But again we will raise the question which Islam raises itself, and which it answers; that is, "Do you know better, or God?" and, "God knows, and you do not know."

The good of mankind is inherent in the Divine Laws sent down by God to the Prophet — peace be on him — which have come to us through his life. If at any time men think that their good is in going against what God has legislated, then first of all, they are deluded in their thinking.

"they follow but speculation and their own desires, although guidance has come to them from their Sustainer. Or shall man have whatever he fancies? And to God belongs the first and the last." (53: 23-25)

Second, they are unbelievers. It is not possible for a person to declare that in his opinion good lies in going against what God has legislated, and simultaneously be a follower of this religion, or be considered its scholar, even for a single moment.

CHAPTER 6 THE UNIVERSAL LAW

Islam constructs its foundation of belief and action on the principle of total submission to God alone. Its beliefs, forms of worship and rules of life are uniformly an expression of this submission and are a practical interpretation of the declaration that there is no deity except God. The details of life are derived from the practice of the Messenger of God — peace be on him — and are a practical consequence of the declaration that Muhammad is the Messenger of God.

Islam builds its entire structure in such a way that these two parts of the declaration determine its system and its characteristics. When Islam builds its structure in this manner, giving it a separate and unique position among all other systems known to man, then Islam actually becomes harmonious with the universal law, which is operative not only in human existence but throughout the whole universe as well.

According to the Islamic concept, the whole universe has been created by God. The universe came into existence when God willed it, and then He ordained certain natural laws which it follows and according to which all its various parts operate harmoniously: "When We wish to bring something into existence, We say to it, 'Be', and there it is." (16:40)

"And He created everything, and measured it in due proportion." (25:2)

Behind this universe there is a Will which administers it, a Power which moves it, a Law which regulates it. This Power keeps a balance between the various parts of the universe and controls their motions; thus they neither collide with each other nor is there any disturbance in their system, nor do their regular motions come to a sudden stop, nor do they become disorganized. This will continue as long as the Divine will wishes it to continue. The whole universe is obedient to God's Will, His Power and His Authority; it is not possible for it to disobey the Divine Will and its ordained law for a single moment. Due to this obedience and submission, the universe continues to go on in a harmonious fashion, and no destruction or dispersion or disturbance can enter into it unless God wills it.

"Indeed, your Sustainer is God, Who created the heavens

and the earth in six periods and then established Himself upon the throne of sovereignty. He causes the night to cover up the day and the day to follow the night. The sun and the moon and the stars are controlled by His command. The creation and the command are for Him alone. Glorious is God, the Sustainer of the worlds." (7:54)

* * *

Man is a part of the universe; the laws which govern human nature are no different from the laws governing the universe. God is the Creator of the universe as well as of man. Man's body is made of earthly material, yet God has bestowed upon him certain characteristics which make him more than the earth from which he is made; God provides him according to a measure. In his bodily functions man involuntarily follows the same laws of nature as other creatures. His creation is according to the will of God rather than of his father and mother. The father and mother are able to come together; yet they are not able to transform a sperm into a human being. Man is born according to the method of development and the method of birth which God has prescribed for him; he breathes God's air in the quantity and fashion prescribed by God; he has feelings and understanding, he experiences pain, becomes hungry and thirsty, eats and drinks — in short, he has to live according to the laws of God and he has no choice in the matter. In this respect there is no difference between him and other inanimate or animate objects of the universe. All unconditionally submit to the Will of God and to the laws of His creation.

He Who has created the universe and man, and Who made man obedient to the laws which also govern the universe, has also prescribed a **Shari'ah** for his voluntary actions. If man follows this law, then his life is in harmony with his own nature. From this point of view, this **Shari'ah** is also a part of that universal law which governs the entire universe, including the physical and biological aspects of man.

Each word of God, whether it is an injunction or a prohibition, a promise or an admonition, a rule or guidance, is a part of the universal law and is as accurate and true as any of the laws known as the "laws of nature" — the Divinely-ordained laws for the universe — which we find to be operative

every moment according to what God has prescribed for them from the dawn of creation.

Thus the **Shari'ah** which God has given to man to organize his life is also a universal law, as it is related to the general law of the universe and is harmonious with it. This obedience to the **Shari'ah** becomes a necessity for human beings so that their lives may become harmonious and in tune with the rest of the universe; not only this, but the only way in which harmony can be brought about between the physical laws which are operative in the biological life of a man and the moral laws which govern his voluntary actions is solely through obedience to the **Shari'ah**. Only in this way does man's personality, internal and external, become integrated.

Man cannot understand all the laws of the universe, nor can he comprehend the unity of this system; he cannot even understand the laws which govern his own person, from which he cannot deviate by a hair's breadth. Thus he is incapable of making laws for a system of life which can be in complete harmony with the universe or which can even harmonize his physical needs with his external behavior. This capability belongs solely to the Creator of the universe and of men, Who not only controls the universe but also human affairs, and Who implements a uniform law according to His will.

This obedience to the **Shari'ah** of God is necessary for the sake of this harmony, even more necessary than the establishment of the Islamic belief, as no individual or group of individuals can be truly Muslim until they wholly submit to God alone in the manner taught by the Messenger of God — peace be on him, thus testifying by their actions that there is no deity except God and that Muhammad is God's Messenger.

Total harmony between human life and the law of the universe is entirely beneficial for mankind, as this is the only guarantee against any kind of discord in life. Only in this state will they be at peace with themselves and at peace with the universe, living in accord with its laws and its movements. In the same way, they will have peace of mind, as their actions will agree with their true natural demands, with no conflict between the two. Indeed, the **Shari'ah** of God harmonizes the

external behavior of man with his internal nature in an easy way. When a man makes peace with his own nature, peace and cooperation among individuals follow automatically, as they all live together under one system, which is a part of the general system of the universe.

Thus, blessings fall on all mankind, as this way leads in an easy manner to the knowledge of the secrets of nature, its hidden forces, and the treasures concealed in the expanses of the universe. Man uses these for the benefit of all mankind, under the guidance of the **Shari'ah** of God, without any conflict or competition.

In contrast to the **Shari'ah** of God are men's whims: "Had the truth followed their opinions, the heavens and the earth and whosoever is in them would surely have been corrupted." (23:71)

From this we come to know that the truth is one and not many. It is the foundation of this religion, the heavens and earth are based upon it, all the affairs of this world and of the next are settled by it, man will be accountable to God on the basis of it, and those who deviate from the truth are punished by it, and people will be judged by God according to it. Truth is indivisible, and it is the name of that general law which God has ordained for all affairs; and everything in existence either follows it or is punished by it.

"We have sent to you a Book which speaks about you; do you not then use your reason? Many a wicked town have We destroyed and have replaced them with other people. When they felt Our Might approaching, they started to run. (It was said to them), 'Do not run; return to the luxury that you gloated in and to your homes; maybe you shall be questioned'.

They said: 'Woe upon us! We have been evil-doers'. So they did not stop crying until We made them stubble, silent and still. We did not create the heavens and the earth and whatsoever is between them as a sport. Had We desired to adopt it for Us as a diversion, We would have taken it to Us from Ourselves, had We done so. Nay, but We held the truth against falsehood, and it prevails over it, and behold! falsehood vanishes away. Then woe to you for what you ascribe (to God). To Him belongs whatsoever is in the heavens and the earth, and those who are with Him do not be-

come too proud to worship Him; neither do they grow weary of glorifying Him by night and by day and never failing." (21: 10-20)

Human nature in its depths has full awareness of this truth. Man's form and body, and the organization of the vast universe around him, reminds him that this universe is based on truth, and truth is its essence, and it is related to a central law which sustains it. Thus, there is no disturbance in it, no conflict between its parts; it does not move at random, nor does it depend on chance, nor is it devoid of an overall plan; neither is it a sport in the hands of human caprices, but runs smoothly on a precise, detailed and prescribed course. Conflict begins when man deviates from the truth which is hidden in the depths of his own nature, under the influence of his desires, and when he follows laws based on his own opinions instead of following God's commandments. Instead of submitting to his True Master along with the rest of the universe, he rebels and revolts.

When this conflict between man and his own nature, and man and the universe, spreads to human groups, nations and races, then all the forces and resources of the universe are utilized not for the benefit of all mankind, but for its destruction and for violence against others.

It becomes clear from the above discussion that the purpose of the establishment of God's law on earth is not merely for the sake of the next world. This world and the next world are not two separate entities, but are stages complementary to each other. The law given by God not only harmonizes these two stages but also harmonizes human life with the general law of the universe. Thus, when harmony between human life and the universe ensues, its results are not postponed for the next world but are operative even in this world. However, they will reach their perfection in the Hereafter.

* * *

This, then, is the foundation of the Islamic concept of the universe and of human life as a part of this universe. By its very nature, this concept is different from all other concepts known to mankind. This is why this concept implies certain responsibilities and obligations which are not found in other concepts of life.

According to this concept, obedience to the **Shari'ah** of God is actually a consequence of the need to harmonize human life with that law which is operative within man himself and in the rest of the universe. This need demands that the law which governs the social affairs of human beings should be in accordance with the general law of the universe; it demands that man submit to God alone, with the rest of the universe, and that no man should claim lordship over others.

A suggestion of this need for harmony which we have been talking about is found in the conversation between Abraham — peace be on him — the father of the Muslim community, and Nimrod. This man was a tyrant and claimed absolute sovereignty over his subjects; yet he did not claim sovereignty over the heavens, the planets and stars. When the Prophet Abraham — peace be on him — put forward the argument that He Who has authority over the universe is the only One to have authority over human beings too, he became speechless:

"Have you considered the case of the man who argued with Abraham concerning his Sustainer, because God had given him rule over a country? When Abraham said: My Lord is He Who gives life and Who gives death,' he replied: 'I give life and I give death.' Abraham said: 'Indeed, God brings out the sun from the east. Then do you bring it out from the west?' Then the unbeliever became speechless. And God does not guide the evil-doing people". (2: 258)

"Do they seek a religion other than the religion of God, while whatever is in the heavens and the earth submits to Him willingly, and will return to Him?" (3:83)

CHAPTER 7

ISLAM IS THE REAL CIVILIZATION

Islam knows only two kinds of societies, the Islamic and the **jahili**. The Islamic society is that which follows Islam in belief and ways of worship, in law and organization, in morals and manners. The **jahili** society is that which does not follow Islam and in which neither the Islamic belief and concepts, nor Islamic values or standards, Islamic laws and regulations, or Islamic morals and manners are cared for.

The Islamic society is not one in which people call themselves 'Muslims' but in which the Islamic law has no status, even though prayer, fasting and **Hajj** are regularly observed; and the Islamic society is not one in which people invent their own version of Islam, other than what God and His Messenger — peace be on him — have prescribed and explained, and call it, for example, 'progressive Islam'.

Jahili society appears in various forms, all of them ignorant of the Divine guidance.

Sometimes it takes the form of a society in which belief in God is denied and human history is explained in terms of intellectual materialism, and 'scientific socialism' becomes its system.

Sometimes it appears in the form of a society in which God's existence is not denied, but His domain is restricted to the heavens and His rule on earth is suspended. Neither the **Shari'ah** nor the values prescribed by God and ordained by Him as eternal and invariable find any place in this scheme of life. In this society, people are permitted to go to mosques, churches and synagogues; yet it does not tolerate people's demanding that the **Shari'ah** of God be applied in their daily affairs. Thus, such a society denies or suspends God's sovereignty on earth, while God says plainly:

"It is He Who is Sovereign in the heavens and Sovereign in the earth." (43:84)

Because of this behavior, such a society does not follow the religion of God as defined by Him:

"The command belongs to God alone. He commands you not to worship anyone except Him. This is the right way of life." (12:40)

Because of this, such a society is to be counted among **jahili**

societies, although it may proclaim belief in God and permit people to observe their devotions in mosques, churches and synagogues.

The Islamic society is, by its very nature, the only civilized society, and the **jahili** societies, in all their various forms, are backward societies. It is necessary to elucidate this great truth.

Once I announced as the title of a book of mine which was in press, **The Civilized Society of Islam**; but in my next announcement I dropped the word 'civilized' from it. At this change, an Algerian author (who writes in French) commented that the reason for this change is that psychology which operates in a person's mind while defending Islam. The author expressed regret that this was an expression of immaturity which was preventing me from facing reality!

I excused this Algerian author because at one time I myself was of the same opinion. At that time, my thought processes were similar to his thought processes of today. I encountered the same difficulty which he is encountering today; that is, to understand the meaning of 'civilization'.

Until then, I had not gotten rid of the cultural influences which had penetrated my mind in spite of my Islamic attitude and inclination. The source of these influences was foreign — alien to my Islamic consciousness, — yet these influences had clouded by intuition and concepts. The Western concept of civilization was my standard; it had prevented me from seeing with clear and penetrating vision.

However, later I saw very clearly that the Muslim society was the civilized society. Hence the word 'civilized' in the title of my book was redundant and did not add anything new; rather it would have obscured the thinking of the reader in the same way as my own ideas had been obscured.

Now the question is, what is the meaning of 'civilization'? Let us try to explain it.

When, in a society, the sovereignty belongs to God alone, expressed in its obedience to the Divine Law, only then is every person in that society free from servitude to others, and only then does he taste true freedom. This alone is 'human civilization', as the basis of a human civilization is the complete and true freedom of every person and the full dignity of every individual of the society. On the other hand, in a society in which some people are lords who legislate and some others

are slaves who obey them, then there is no freedom in the real sense, nor dignity for each and every individual.

It is necessary that we clarify the point that legislation is not limited only to legal matters, as some people assign this narrow meaning to the **Shari'ah**. The fact is that attitudes, the way of living, the values, criteria, habits and traditions, are all legislated and affect people. If a particular group of people forges all these chains and imprisons others in them, this will not be a free society. In such a society some people have the position of authority, while others are subservient to them; hence this society will be backward, and in Islamic terminology is called a '**jahili**' society.

Only Islamic society is unique in this respect, in that the authority belongs to God alone; and man, cutting off his chains of servitude to other human beings, enters into the service of God and thus attains that real and complete freedom which is the focus of human civilization. In this society, the dignity and honor of man are respected according to what God has prescribed. He becomes the representative of God on earth, and his position becomes even higher than that of the angels.

* * *

In a society which bases its foundation on the concept, belief and way of life which all originate from the One God, man's dignity is respected to the highest degree and no one is a slave to another, as they are in societies in which the concepts, beliefs and way of life originate from human masters. In the former society, man's highest characteristics — those of the spirit and mind — are reflected, while in a society in which human relationships are based on color, race or nation, or similar criteria, these relationships become a chain for human thought and prevent man's noble characteristics from coming to the fore. A person remains human regardless of what color, race or nation he belongs to, but he cannot be called human if he is devoid of spirit and reason. Furthermore, he is able to change his beliefs, concepts and attitudes toward life, but he is incapable of changing his color and race, nor can he decide in what place or nation to be born. Thus it is clear that only such a society is civilized in which human associations are based on free choice, and that society is backward in which the basis of association is something other than free

choice; in Islamic terminology, it is a 'jahili society'.

Only Islam has the distinction of basing the fundamental binding relationship in its society on belief; and on the basis of this belief, black and white and red and yellow, Arabs and Greeks, Persians and Africans, and all nations which inhabit the earth become one community. In this society God is the Lord and only He is worshipped, the most honorable is the one who is noblest in character, and all individuals are equally subject to a law which is not man-made but made by their Creator.

* * *

A society which places the highest value on the 'humanity' of man and honors the noble 'human' characteristics is truly civilized. If materialism, no matter in what form, is given the highest value, whether it be in the form of a 'theory', such as in the Marxist interpretation of history, or in the form of material production, as is the case with the United States and European countries, and all other human values are sacrificed at its altar, then such a society is a backward one, or, in Islamic terminology, is a 'jahili society'.

The civilized society — that is, the Islamic society — does not downgrade matter, either in theory or in the form of material production, as it considers the universe in which we live, by which we are influenced, and which we influence, to be made of matter, and it considers material production to be the backbone of the vicegerency of God on earth. However, in the Islamic society material comforts are not made into the highest value at the expense of 'human' characteristics — freedom and honor, family and its obligations, morals and values, and so on — as is the case in jahili societies.

If a society is based on 'human values' and 'human morals' and these remain dominant in it, then that society will be civilized. Human values and human morals are not something mysterious and undefinable, nor are they 'progressive' and changeable, having no roots and stability, as is claimed by the exponents of the materialistic interpretation of history or of 'scientific socialism.' They are the values and the morals which develop those characteristics in a human being which distinguish him from the animals and which emphasize those aspects of his personality which raise him above the animals;

these are not such values and morals which develop and emphasize those characteristics in man which are common with the animals.

When the question is viewed in this manner, a fixed and well-defined line of separation is obtained which cannot be erased by the incessant attempt of the 'progressives' and the scientific societies to erase it. According to this view, moral standards are not determined by the environment and changing conditions; rather they are fixed criteria above and beyond the difference in environments. One cannot say that some moral values are 'agricultural' and others 'industrial', some are 'capitalistic' and some others 'socialistic', some are 'bourgeois' and others 'proletarian'. Here, the standards of morality are independent of the environment, the economic status, and the stage of development of a society; these are nothing but superficial variations. Beyond all these, we arrive at 'human' values and morals and at 'animalistic' values and morals, this being the correct separation or, in Islamic terminology, 'Islamic values and morals and 'jahili' values and morals.

Indeed, Islam establishes the values and morals which are 'human' — those which develop characteristics in a human being which distinguish him from the animals. In whatever society Islam is dominant, whether it is an agricultural or industrial society, nomadic and pastoral or urban and settled, poor or rich, it implants these human values and morals, nurtures them and strengthens them; it develops human characteristics progressively and guards against degeneration toward animalism. The direction of the line which separates human values from animal-like characteristics is upward; but if this direction is reversed, then in spite of all material progress the civilization will be 'backward', 'degenerative', and 'jahili'!

* * *

If the family is the basis of the society, and the basis of the family is the division of labor between husband and wife, and the upbringing of children is the most important function of the family, then such a society is indeed civilized. In the Islamic system of life, this kind of a family provides the environment under which human values and morals develop and grow in the new generation; these values and morals cannot exist apart from the family unit. If, on the other hand,

free sexual relationships and illegitimate children become the basis of a society, and if the relationship between man and woman is based on lust, passion and impulse, and the division of work is not based on family responsibility and natural gifts; if woman's role is merely to be attractive, sexy and flirtatious, and if woman is freed from her basic responsibility of bringing up children; and if, on her own or under social demand, she prefers to become a hostess or a stewardess in a hotel or ship or air company, thus spending her ability for material productivity rather than in the training of human beings, because material production is considered to be more important, more valuable and more honorable than the development of human character, then such a civilization is 'backward' from the human point of view, or '**jahili**' in the Islamic terminology.

The family system and the relationship between the sexes determine the whole character of a society and whether it is backward or civilized, **jahili** or Islamic. Those societies which give ascendance to physical desires and animalistic morals cannot be considered civilized, no matter how much progress they may make in industry or science. This is the only measure which does not err in gauging true human progress.

In all modern **jahili** societies, the meaning of 'morality' is limited to such an extent that all those aspects which distinguish man from animal are considered beyond its sphere. In these societies, illegitimate sexual relationships, even homosexuality, are not considered immoral. The meaning of ethics is limited to economic affairs or sometimes to political affairs which fall into the category of 'government interests'. For example, the scandal of Christine Keeler and the British minister Profumo was not considered serious to British society because of its sexual aspect; it was condemnable because Christine Keeler was also involved with a naval attaché of the Russian Embassy, and thus her association with a cabinet minister lied before the British Parliament! Similar scandals come to light in the American Senate. Englishmen and Americans who get involved in such spying scandals usually take refuge in Russia. These affairs are not considered immoral because of sexual deviations, but because of the danger to state secrets!

Among **jahili** societies, writers, journalists and editors advise

both married and unmarried people that free sexual relationships are not immoral. However, it is immoral if a boy uses his partner, or a girl uses her partner, for sex, while feeling no love in his or her heart. It is bad if a wife continues to guard her chastity while her love for her husband has vanished; it is admirable if she finds another lover. Dozens of stories are written about this theme; many newspaper editorials, articles, cartoons, serious and light columns all invite to this way of life. From the point of view of 'human' progress, all such societies are not civilized but are backward.

The line of human progress goes upward from animal desires toward higher values. To control the animal desires, a progressive society lays down the foundation of a family system in which human desires find satisfaction, as well as providing for the future generation to be brought up in such a manner that it will continue the human civilization, in which human characteristics flower to their full bloom. Obviously a society which intends to control the animal characteristics, while providing full opportunities for the development and perfection of human characteristics, requires strong safeguards for the peace and stability of the family, so that it may perform its basic task free from the influences of impulsive passions. On the other hand, if in a society immoral teachings and poisonous suggestions are rampant, and sexual activity is considered outside the sphere of morality, then in that society the humanity of man can hardly find a place to develop.

Thus, only Islamic values and morals, Islamic teachings and safeguards, are worthy of mankind, and from this unchanging and true measure of human progress, Islam is the real civilization and Islamic society is truly civilized.

* * *

Lastly, when man establishes the representation of God on earth in all respects, by dedicating himself to the service of God and freeing himself from servitude to others, by establishing the system of life prescribed by God and rejecting all other systems, by arranging his life according to the **Shari'ah** of God and giving up all other laws, by adopting the values and standards of morality which are pleasing to God and rejecting the all other standards and, after this, when he investigates the laws governing the universe and uses them for the benefit

of all mankind, applies them to resources hidden in the earth in accordance with the obligation imposed on him by God as His vicegerent on earth, unearths the treasures and resources of food and raw materials for industries, and uses his technical and professional knowledge for the development of various kinds of industries, doing all these things as a God-fearing person and as a representative of God; and when his attitude toward the material and moral aspects of life is infused with this spirit, only then does man become completely civilized and the society reach the height of civilization. In Islam, mere material inventions are not considered as civilization, as a **jahili** society can also have material prosperity. In many places in the Qur'an, God has described societies of this kind, which have attained material prosperity while remaining **jahili**.

(Hud said to his people): "What is the matter with you that you make a memorial at every high place and build palaces as if you are immortal? When you deal with others, you are tyrants. Then fear God, and obey me. Fear Him Who gave you whatever you know. He gave you animals, children, gardens and rivers. I fear for you the day of a severe chastisement." (26: 128-135)

(Salih said to his people): "Will you remain secure here among these things — among gardens and fountains, the farmland and palm trees with juicy fruit? You build houses skillfully out of the mountains. So fear God and obey me, and do not obey the advice of the wasteful, those who make corruption in the earth and do not set things right." (26: 146-152)

"So when they forgot what they were reminded of, We opened to them the gates of everything until, when they rejoiced in what they were given, We seized them suddenly, and behold! they were greatly confounded. So the last remnant of the people who did evil was cut off. Praise belongs to God, the Sustainer of the Worlds." (6: 43-44)

"When the earth has taken on its glitter and has adorned itself fair, and its inhabitants think they have power over it, Our command comes upon it by night or by day, and We make it as stubble, as if yesterday it had not flourished." (10:24)

But as we have said earlier, Islam does not look with con-

tempt on material progress and material inventions; in fact, it considers them when used under the Divine system of life, as God's gifts. In the Qur'an we find that God promises His bounty to people when they are obedient to Him.

(Noah said): "I said to my people, 'Ask forgiveness from your Sustainer; indeed, He accepts repentance. He will send upon you rain from the sky continuously and will make you powerful through wealth and children, and He will raise for you gardens and make streams for you.'" (71:10-12)
"Had the people of those towns believed and feared God, We would have opened blessings upon them from the sky and the earth, but they rejected the truth, so for their evil deeds We took them to account." (7:96)

But the important thing is that foundation on which the industrial structure is built, and those values which bind a society, and through which a society acquires the characteristics of the 'human civilization'.

* * *

Since the basis of the Islamic society and the nature of its growth, which give rise to its community, have a unique character, one cannot apply to it those theories which can explain the establishment and growth of **jahili** societies. The Islamic society is born out of a movement, and this movement continues within it; it determines the places and positions of individuals in the community and then assigns them roles and responsibilities.

The origin of this movement, from which this community is born, is outside the human sphere and outside this world. Its source is a belief which has come from God to mankind, and which gives them a particular concept of the universe, of life of human history, of values and purposes, and which defines for them a way of life reflecting this concept. Thus the initial impetus for the movement does not come from human minds, nor from the physical world, but, as we have stated before, it comes from outside the earth and outside the human sphere; and this is the first distinctive feature of the Islamic society and its organization.

Indeed, the origin of this movement is an element outside the sphere of man and outside the physical world. This element, which comes into existence from God's will, is not something

expected by any human being or taken into consideration by anyone, and in the beginning, no human endeavor enters into it. This Divine element sows the seed of the Islamic movement and at the same time prepares the human being for action — prepares the one who believes in the faith which reaches to him from the Divine source. As soon as this single individual believes in this faith, the Islamic community comes into existence (potentially). This individual does not remain satisfied at having this faith, but stands up to give its message. It is the nature of this faith that it is a virile and dynamic movement; the power which lights up this faith in this heart knows that it will not remain concealed but will come out into the open and will spread to others.

When the number of Believers reaches three, then this faith tells them; "Now you are a community, a distinct Islamic community, distinct from that **jahili** society which does not live according to this belief or accept its basic premise." Now the Islamic society has come into existence (actually).

These three individuals increase to ten, the ten to a hundred, the hundred to a thousand, and the thousand increase to twelve thousand — and the Islamic society grows and becomes established.

During the progress of this movement, a struggle would already have started within the **jahili** society. On the one side is this new born society, which in its belief and concepts, values and standards, existence and organization has separated itself from the **jahili** society, from which the Islamic society absorbs individuals. This movement, from the moment of its inception until the growth and permanent existence of its society comes about, tests every individual and assigns him a position of responsibility according to his capacity, as measured by the Islamic balance and standards. The society automatically recognizes his capabilities, and he does not need to come forward and announce his candidacy; in fact, his belief and the values to which he and his society subscribe compel him to keep himself concealed from the eyes of those who want to give him a responsible position.

But the movement which is a natural outgrowth of the Islamic belief and which is the essence of the Islamic society does not let any individual hide himself. Every individual of this

society must move! There should be a movement in his belief, a movement in his blood, a movement in his community, and in the structure of this organic society, and as the **Jahiliyyah** is all around him, and its residual influences in his mind and in the minds of those around him, the struggle goes on and the **Jihaad** continues until the Day of Resurrection.

The ups and downs through which the movement passes determine the position and activity of every individual in the movement, and the organic body of this society is completed through the harmony between its individuals and their activities.

This kind of beginning and this method of organization are two of the characteristics of the Islamic society which distinguish it from other societies in respect to its existence and its structure, its nature and its form, its system and the method of regulating this system, and make it a unique and separate entity. It cannot be understood by social theories alien to it, nor can it be taught by methods foreign to its nature, nor can it be brought into existence by ways borrowed from other systems.

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According to our unvarying definition of civilization, the Islamic society is not just an entity of the past, to be studied in history, but it is a demand of the present and a hope of the future. Mankind can be dignified, today or tomorrow, by striving toward this noble civilization, by pulling itself out of the abyss of **Jahiliyyah** into which it is falling. This is true not only for the industrially and economically developed nations but also for the backward nations.

The values to which we referred above as human values were never attained by mankind except in the period of Islamic civilization. We also ought to remember that by the term 'Islamic Civilization' we mean that civilization in which these values are found to the highest degree, and not a civilization which may make progress in industry, economics and science but in which human values are suppressed.

These values are not idealistic but are practical values which can be attained through human effort, by applying the teachings of Islam correctly. These values can be attained in any environment, whatever the level of industrial and scientific progress may be, as there is no contradiction; in fact, material progress

perity and scientific progress are encouraged by the teachings of Islam, as they pertain to man's role as the representative of God on earth.

Similarly, in countries which are industrially and scientifically backward, these values teach people not to remain just silent spectators but to strive for industrial and scientific progress. A civilization with these values can develop anywhere and in any environment; however, the actual form it takes is not one, but depends on the conditions and environment existing in the society in which these values develop.

The Islamic society, in its form and extent and its way of living, is not a fixed historic entity; but its existence and its civilization are based on values which are fixed historical realities. The word 'historical' used in this context only means that these values took concrete form in a particular period of human history. In fact, these values, by their nature, do not belong to any particular period; they are the truth which has come to man from the Divine source — beyond the sphere of mankind and beyond the sphere of the physical universe.

The Islamic civilization can take various forms in its material and organizational structure, but the principles and values on which it is based are eternal and unchangeable. These are: the worship of God alone, the foundation of human relationships on the belief in the Oneness of God, the supremacy of the humanity of man over material things, the development of human values and the control of animalistic desires, respect for the family, the assumption of being the representative of God on earth according to His guidance and instruction, and in all affairs of this vicegerency the rule of God's law (**al-Shari'ah**) and the way of life prescribed by Him.

The forms of the Islamic civilization, constructed on these fixed principles, depend on actual conditions and are influenced by and change according to the stage of industrial, economic or scientific progress. These forms are necessarily different and are a consequence of the fact that Islam possesses sufficient flexibility to enter into any system and mold that system according to its purposes; but this flexibility in the outward forms of Islamic civilization does not mean any flexibility in the Islamic belief, which is the fountainhead of this civilization, nor is it to be considered as borrowed from outside, for it is the

character of this religion. However, flexibility is not to be confused with fluidity. There is a great difference between these two.

When Islam entered the central part of Africa, it clothed naked human beings, socialized them, brought them out of the deep recesses of isolation, and taught them the joy of work for exploring material resources. It brought them out of the narrow circles of tribe and clan into the vast circle of the Islamic community, and out of the worship of pagan gods into the worship of the Creator of the worlds. If this is not civilization, then what is it? This civilization was for this environment, and it used the actual resources which were available. If Islam enters into some other environment, then its civilization will also take another form — but with values which are eternal, — based on the existing resources of that particular environment.

Thus, the development of the civilization, according to the method and manner of Islam, does not depend on any particular level of industrial, economic or scientific progress. Wherever this civilization is established, it will use all the resources, will develop them, and if in a certain place these resources are non-existent, then it will supply them and will provide the means for their growth and progress. But in all situations it will be based on its immutable and eternal principles, and wherever such an Islamic society comes into existence, its particular character and its particular movement will also come into existence, and will make it distinguished and distinct from all **jahili** societies.

"The baptism of God — and who can baptize better than God?" (2: 138)