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IS HELL EVER-LASTING?—II

By Hazrat Maulana Muhammad Ali
(God be pleased with him)

Even if *abad* is taken to mean eternity, the abiding in Hell, according to the Holy Quran, must cease at some time, because a limit is placed on it by addition of the words *illa ma sha a Allah*, or except as Allah pleases, which clearly indicate the ultimate deliverance of those in Hell. The following two verses may be noted in this connection :

'He shall say, The fire is your abode, to abide in it, except as Allah pleases, for thy Lord is Wise, Knowing' (6: 129).

'So as to those who are unhappy, they shall be in the fire; for them shall be sighing and groaning in it, abiding therein so long as the heavens and the earth endure except as thy Lord pleases for thy Lord is the Mighty Doer of what He intends' (11:106, 107).

Both these verses show that the abiding in Hell must come to an end. To make this conclusion clearer still, the Quran has used a similar expression for those in Paradise but with quite a different ending:

'And as to those who are made happy, they shall be in the garden, abiding in it as long as the heavens and the earth endure, except as the Lord pleases; a gift never to be cut off' (11: 108).

The two expressions are similar; those in Hell and those in Paradise abide, each in his place, so long as the heavens and the earth shall endure, with an exception added in each case except as thy Lord pleases showing that they may be taken out of that condition. But the concluding statements are different. In the case of Paradise, the idea that those in it may be taken out of it, if God pleases, is immediately followed by the statement that it is a gift that shall never be cut off showing that they shall not be taken out of Paradise; while in the case of Hell, the idea that those in it

will be taken out is confirmed by the concluding statement, that God is the Mighty Doer of what He intends.

This conclusion is corroborated by the Hadith. The Holy Prophet is reported to have said: 'Then Allah will say: The angels have interceded and the prophets have interceded and the faithful have interceded and none remains but the most Merciful of all merciful ones. So He will take out a handful from fire and bring out a people who have never done any good' (Bu. 97:24).

Three kinds of intercession are spoken of in this Hadith; of the faithful, of the prophets and of the angels, and the intercession of each class is undoubtedly meant for people who have some sort of close relation with that class. The faithful will intercede for people who have come into contact with them personally; the prophets will intercede for their followers; the angels, being the movers to good, will intercede for people who are not followers of a prophet, but who have done some good. And the Hadith adds that the Most Merciful of all still remains, so He will bring out from the fire even people who have never done any good. It follows, that, thereafter none can remain in Hell, and in fact the handful of God cannot leave anything behind.

Other Hadith states even more explicitly that all men shall be ultimately taken out of Hell, 'Sirely a day will come over Hell when it will be like a field of corn that has dried up after flourishing for a while' (KU). Surely a day will come over Hell when there shall not be a single human being in it (FBu. IV, p. 372). And a saying of 'Umar, the Second Caliph, is recorded as follows: 'Even if the dwellers in Hell may be numberless as the sands of the desert, a

(Continued on p. 4, col. 3)

WE BELIEVE

(1) After the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) Allah has completely barred the appearance of a prophet, old or new.

(2) After the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) Jibreel can never descend and bring Prophetic Revelation (وحى لئوت) to any person.

(3) If Jibreel were to descend with one word of Prophetic Revelation (وحى لئوت) for any person, it would contradict the two complementary verses :

اليوم اكملت لكم دينكم

(This day have I perfected your *Deen* for you.) (5: 3)

ولكن رسول الله و خاتم النبيين

(He is the Messenger of Allah and the Last of Prophets.) (33: 40)

(4) The Holy Prophet (Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) also said: "I am Muhammad and I am Ahmad and....I am *al'eqib* (the one who comes last) after whom there can be no prophet." (Al-Bukhari : *Kitabul Manaqib*)

(5) The Founder of Ahmadiyya Movement never claimed to be *Nabi*. He exhorted his people to refrain from using the word *Nabi* for him. He further directed them to regard the word *Nabi*, in his writings, as deleted.

(6) He named his followers 'Ahmadi' after the Holy Prophet's *Jamali* (beatific) name 'Ahmad'

(7) He proclaimed that no verse of the Holy Quran has been abrogated nor shall ever be abrogated.

(8) All the Companions of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and the Imams are venerable.

(9) It is spiritually conducive to our Faith to revere the revivalist Islamic missions of all *Mujaddids*.

(10) He is a Muslim who recites the *Kalimah*, with sincere belief in *Tauhid* and *Khatm-i-Nubuwwat*.

THE LIGHT

THURSDAY — JANUARY 1, 1976

CHOICE OF MODERN MAN DEMANDS OF BODY OR DICTATES OF SOUL

If we sum up the crowding and crowning problems of the modern age we can correctly say "Tobe or not tobe is the baffling question". Time is out of joint. It has fallen to the lot of the modern man to set it right. He is certainly lost in his furious efforts to normalize his affairs and make good his escape from the escalating crises. Far from achieving any success any where, he has merely landed himself in hot waters. He has learnt to fly more efficiently than the birds of the air. He has flown to the moon. He has fathomed the depths of the seas and has out-matched the "finny creatures of the deep" by his mastery of the oceans. But neither the moon nor the seas are his natural habitats. His native place is the earth. But how to live on earth peacefully, he has yet to learn. In learning this art, he has made his life miserable. It is because he thinks that he is law unto himself. His successive failures to combat his calamities have made him sadder but not wiser. He has not devotedly turned to the divine real source of light and guidance.

On the one hand, scientists and anthropologists are striving to solve the riddles in their own way. On the other hand sociologists and economists are vainly straining every nerve to make the earth flow with honey and milk by their Utopian theories. In their mental exertions they just know more and more about less and less. Thus they accomplish precious little. The tragedy is that they do not see life nor can they see it whole. Every expert in his own sphere thinks that human life has shrunk into his field. The experts and specialists do not realize that

what they deal with is a small part of human life. They have thus turned man into a plaything or a sounding-board of their experiments. The Freudians have concentrated their efforts on sex and have isolated it from ethics and have thus paved the path for sex-orgy. They have promoted mental illness by kindling the flames of sex-anarchy which has degenerated into moral chaos. He who runs may see it in every sphere of life.

Socialists in their campaign against Capitalism have made belly the goal of their activities. They say: belly eats the man. It is not all wrong. But it is also not the whole truth in the sense that if life is made to revolve round the belly, it will lose human dignity and will reduce man to mere "featherless biped." He will descend to sub-human level. Poverty is a cancer, a blight and a mildew on the heart of society. It cannot be eradicated by fomenting class-war. Why and how the ghost of poverty has spread its terrific tentacles? This is the real problem which needs ethico-judicious probe. Socialism is just a fiery reaction against Capitalists' exploitation. It retaliates by 'expropriating the expropriators'. It snatches away the possessions of the wealthy sections and makes them over to the State. Thus in actual fact one big capitalist replaces many capitalists. The Socialist State comprises some top-most pseudo-revolutionaries. They rule the roost. It is State Capitalism, pure and simple. It is deceptively called Dictatorship of the Proletariat, whereas it is Dictatorship over the Proletariat. Millions of workers are consigned to slavery without

refuge or redemption. The present conditions in Russia confirm the truth of this notion. There the Ruling Junta monopolises the entire control and no one can rise in life in accordance with one's talents. The Master Plan is chalked out by the Leviathan State which charts every citizen's course to suit its own sweet will. Thus the Socialists' promises of mundane paradise are like Sodom's apples which turn into dust and ashes in the mouth.

Islam is as intolerant of poverty as it is of riches. As a matter of the fact it is from the riches concentrated in a few hands, that poverty sprouts, spreads and spoils society. Unless a man is fortified by faith in God and is passionately dedicated to the Holy Prophet's divine formula of voluntary poverty, his morals succumb to the diabolic charms of seductive gold. It is wrong to think that wealth brings comfort. Gold may soothe man's body. But it cannot console his soul. It is truly said:

"There is thy gold, worse poison to men's souls, doing more murders in this loathsome world than these poor compounds that thou may'st not sell".

The vital point or the very soul of the Islamic Ideology is enshrined in Iqbal's verse:

کس نباشد در جهان محتاج کس
نسکتہ شرع متین این است و بس

"In this world no one should look to another to meet his needs. This is the blazing core of the radiant Islamic Code".

But this ideal is feasible only when man becomes spiritually aware of the inherent evils of riches and develops consciousness of his accountability in the next world". He should realize that "he that wants money, means and content, is without these three friends". This was the divine philosophy of the Holy Prophet's lofty disregard of wealth and we are told in the Holy Quran that in his life we find the best exemplar:

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The Philosophy of Evolution—I

(Contributed)

The term evolution was introduced by Herbert Spencer (1820-1903) in order to specifically express an idea which, in truth, is as old as human thought itself, namely, the view that all things change. As stated by Saleeby: "This philosophy of evolution teaches that all phenomena change, in accordance with certain laws, and attempts to give these laws expression. It explicitly denies that there are any exceptions. The law applies to stars and souls, to atoms and oak trees, to states and religions alike."

The operation of change, when applied to life, is referred to as organic evolution, or the theory that all plants and animals, as existing species, are evolved from other less complicated forms; when applied to solar and stellar systems, is termed cosmic evolution; when in connection with atoms, is spoken of as atomic evolution.

The term evolution, in Spencer's connotation, is therefore all-embracing in being applicable to "just, dynasties and dogmas alike" whilst emphatically not being synonymous with the idea that man descends from monkey.

The basis of change

All progeny differs from one another in specific parts of their bodies and in their systems as a whole. In commenting on evolution, Charles Darwin notes as follows: "The proportions and forms of every part of the frame, inside and outside, appear to vary in very slight degrees; anatomists dispute what is the 'beau-ideal' of the bones, the liver and kidneys, like painters do of the proportions of the face", He refers to the truth of "the proverbial expression that no two animals or plants are born absolutely alike" and states that "under certain conditions organic beings even during their individual lives become slightly altered from their usual form, size, or other characters," whilst also having observed of "some species varying more than others" and that "single individuals are occasionally born considerably unlike in certain parts or in their whole structure to their parents; these are called by horticulturists and breeders 'sports'; and are uncommon except when very strongly marked."

Individual differences may be expressed biologically or socially with relevance to organic function. The fact of variation or heterogeneity — as embodied in the science and philosophy of selfhood — is not only the basis of all change, but is also — according to von Bear, the great

founder of embryology — the basis of all progress in the universe.

It remains a matter for continued research as to the significances of environment (biological and social) and genetics in the promotion of change. Where some organic evolutionists may find appeal in a purely biological orientation to the problem, others may delight in its religious and social aspects. It accords with the spirit of all embracing enquiry, with a knowledge of the unity of science as religion, that the two aspects of the problem be regarded as compatible, as inter-dependent and as inseparable.

The fact of change

The term *Rabb* is a divine attribute (of God) which occupies first prominence in the Quran, being the name whereby the Almighty, after the name of Allah, is most frequently addressed in prayers and occurring 965 times in the Qur'an. Whilst *Rabb* is translatable as Lord, its true significance, according to Raghib, embodies the ideal of evolution, as the "fostering of a thing in such a manner as to make it attain one condition after another until it reaches its goal of perfection". A similar outlook is conveyed in the Qur'an: "And indeed He has created you through various grades" (71:14) "Glorify the name of thy Lord, the Most High, Who creates, then makes complete, and Who makes (things) according to a measure, then guides (them to their goal)" (87: 1-3).

The goal of perfection may be attained through evolutionary change as being operative within the set limits of "a measure" according to which all things are made. Reference to Divine creation is no testimony on the idea that the myriads of organisms are divinely created by so many distinct acts of creation, whereas its use in the evolutionary context of relevant verses does suggest to the contrary.

The concept of organic evolution need not be incompatible with the idea of a Creator, inasmuch as "the law of gravity" does not refute the act of the Creator. In the words of Charles Darwin: "Doubtless it at first transcends our humble powers to conceive laws capable of creating individual organisms, each characterized by the most exquisite workmanship and widely-extended adaptations. It accords better with (our modesty) the lowness of our faculties to suppose each must require the fiat of a creator, but in the same proportion the existence of such laws should exalt our notion of the power of the omniscient Creator" (p. 87).

"What would the astronomers say to the doctrine that the planets moved not according to the law of gravitation, but from the Creator having willed each separate planet to move in its particular orbit?" (p. 59).

"Although the planets move in courses conformably to the law of gravity, yet we ought to attribute the course of each planet to the individual act of the Creator" (p. 154).

The story of Adam is the story of man in general, since Adam was not a perfected being, created at a particular time in history, nor was he an individual, since "he" is referred to as depicting more than two individuals, whose society comprised of savages initially, later to be guided by prophets and to evolve in mind, morals and behaviour:

"We said: Go forth from this, all, so surely there will come to you a guidance from Me, then whoever follows My guidance, no fear shall come upon them, nor shall they grieve" (2:38).

"And they both ate of it, so their evil inclinations became manifest to them, and they both began to cover themselves with leaves of the garden, and Adam disobeyed his Lord, so his life became evil (to him)" (20: 121).

"He said: Get forth you two therefrom, all (of you), one of you (is) enemy to another. So there will surely come to you guidance from Me, then whoever follows My guidance, he shall not go astray nor be unhappy" (20: 123).

All men are created "from dust" (The Qur'an, 18: 37, 22: 5, 32: 7, 40: 67), whereas Qur'anic reference to the creation of Adam truly refers to the certain of man in general: "When thy Lord said to the angels: I am going to create a mortal from dust" (38: 71).

"And when thy Lord said to the angel, I am going to create a mortal of the creation of black mud fashioned in shape" (15: 28).

"And when thy Lord said to the angels, I am going to place in the earth one who shall rule in it" (2:30).

The Maulana Muhammad Ali writes as follows in regard to Adam: "The Holy Qur'an does not state when Adam was born or how he was born; it does not even state that he was the first man. The great Muslim divine, Muhammad Ibn 'Ali al-Baqir, one of the twelve Shi'a Imams, is reported to have said that 'millions of Adams passed away before our father Adam', and Ibn Arabi, the head of the sufis, writes in his great work, the 'Futuhut', that forty thousand years before our Adam there was another Adam. There is also a report accepted by the Imamiyyah

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THE DIVINE DIVAN

W. Bashyr Pickard

O Lord, Thou art my life. No other life
Have I but 'in and from Thee.
To whom else should I submit but
unto Thee?
Thou art the Ruler of the Universe.
Thou art my life.
The sun shines; the rains fall; the
winds blow;
Bathed in Thy Blessedness, where'er
I go,
I feel Thy Peace around me and I
know
Thou art the Ruler of the Universe.
Thou art my life.
Amidst the myriad mazes of the
universe,
From whom should I seek guidance
but from Thee?
Thou knowest all, controllest all.
From harm, or worse,
Thine Ever-Presence is an instant
shield.
In Thee
We find our peace and all around
behold
Bright beauties blossoming. Lo!
delights untold,
Better than gems, before our eyes
unfold
From the illimitable storehouse of the
All-Wise, Supreme,
The One, the Ever-living, Whose dear
Mercies gleam
Around us ever. Yea, the purport of
my days,
Thou One Beloved, still is this—to
sing Thy praise.
Lord of the night!
Lord of all things within our sight,
And of all else that stretches beyond
beyond, beyond
Upon this day,
And upon every day,
Teach us Thy, the only Perfect way,
Now and forever, beyond, beyond!
When I think of Thee, Beloved, how
happy am I!
For why?
Thou art so close me! When as I
sigh.
Behold! Thou art nigh!
When I rejoice,
And notes of singing thrill on my
vice,
Thou hearest, sitting by.
How rapturous, then, is my love for
Thee, Thou Beloved One,
From day break till the day is done,
And on and on, while hours of
darkness run!
Thou knowest O Beloved Lord,
Thou art the One Adored.
Within my heart Thy memory is
stored.
The Beauty is ever before me.
Thy Presence is ever o'er me.
Dear Lord, I adore Thee.
Thou art the One God. Thou art
the Truth.
Thee must we worship, lay hold on
Thy Truth.

Falsehood is frail, but strong is the
truth.
He cannot fail who is set in Thy
Truth.
Teach us Thy Truth!
The life of the universe lives in Thy
Truth!
The water from the duck's back glides.
See! how he plunges head and
sides
Carelessly, even joyfully, into the
brimming tide!
Then rises scratchless, swimming over
the waters wide.
So may it be with thee mid affliction's
waves.
From sorrow, suffering, know the
power that saves
Streams from the Beloved's Beauty in
thy heart enshrined.
Keep fresh thy Lord's remembrance;
thou shalt surely find
Thou voyagest through life in a bar-
que of mirror'd peace.
Know that the Beloved's Beauty shall
thy soul release
From pain's oppression, anguish and
all-fluttering fears,
That hover o'er th' unwary, set thee
free from tears,
When sudden losses fall, black disaster
nears.
Sorrow and fear are for the forgetful.
A heart by actions made regretful.
But ever, ever keep the Beloved's
Beauty fresh before thee.
At all times remember the words:
"Dear Lord, I adore
Thee".
So shalt thou never cease
To dwell in peace.
At all times He is at thy side.
It is for thee to remember Him,
Remember Him and love Him, when
thou dost
Remember Him then seek His Guid-
ance, for thou must
Walk warily within thy path,
And praise His Name,
Who doth proclaim
That path.
Love Him, where'er thou art,
With all thy heart,
And, loving Him, thou soon shalt
find
Love of humanity closely entwined
Within thy heart.
He who readeth these words, blessed
is he!
Remember the One Lord, remember
the Merciful.
Remember the words of the Scrip-
tures, sent by the One
Lord,
Sent by the lives of the prophets sent
by the Merciful
So having remember'd, then ponder
The Guidance. So shall thy steps
never wander.
The One Lord, the Merciful, the
Guide and the Guardian,
The Mighty-Forgiver—
For all thy sins past the Lord can for-
give thee.

So that the past dead and done with,
arising, thou goest
With shining bright countenance.
Always thou knowest.
Deep in thine heart unassailable peace.
He who readeth these words, then,
having ponder'd,
Acts on the Guidance his Lord ever
giveth,
Blessed is he! blessed is he! Yea,
thrice blessed is he!
Tasting the peace unassailable,
Grateful for all God's Bounties avail-
able,
He liveth rejoicing, yea, and rejoic-
ing, he ever liveth!

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day will come when they will be taken
out of it' (Fbn. IV, p. 372). A
similar saying is recorded from Ibn
Maşud: 'Surely a time will come over
Hell when its gates shall be blown by
wind, there shall be none in it,
and this shall be after they have
remained therein for many years'
(LJ-C. XII, p. 66). Similar sayings are
reported from many other Companions,
such as Ibn 'Umar, Jabir, Abu Sa'id,
Huraira, etc., and also from the
Tabi'in (Fbn.). And later Imams,
such as Ibn 'Arabi, Ibn Taimiya, Ibn
Qayyim and many others have held
similar views (Ibid). Thus there can
be but little doubt left that Hell is
a temporary place for the sinner,
whether Muslim or non-Muslim, and
this also supports the view that the
chastisement of Hell is not for torture,
but as a remedy, to heal the spiritual
diseases which a man has incurred
on himself and by his own negligence,
and to enable him to start again on
the road to the higher life. The truth
of this has already been established
from the Holy Quran, but a Hadith,
also may be quoted here which
expressly speaks of inmates of the
fire as being set on the road to the
higher life: 'Then will Allah say:
Bring out (of the fire) every one in
whose heart there is faith or goodness
to the extent of a mustard seed, so
they will be taken out having become
quite black; then they will be thrown
into the river of life and they will
grow as grows a seed by the side of a
river' (Bu. 2:15). This Hadith is
conclusive as to the remedial nature of
Hell, and establishes beyond all doubt
that all men will ultimately be set on
the way to the higher life.

ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF SAHIH AL-BUKHARI

Part III

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لقد كان لكم في رسول الله أسوة حسنة

“You have in the Prophet of Allah an excellent exemplar” (33:22). But this luminous fact is more on our lips than in our actions. This is an utter blasphemy to talk glibly of the Holy Prophet's plain living and his aversion of riches and not follow in his footsteps. His sublime example of being Empty-Purse-Proud is a fatal blow to every concept which exhorts wealth and incites lust for it.

If the modern man's life has gone out of gear, it is because he is not taught to maintain balance between genuine hunger and sinful over-satiety. But it is a matter of real shame for the Muslim Society not to strike a middle course when it has before it the lustrous example of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him).

In assessing the dictates of the belly vis-a-vis the true needs of a God-fearing mind, Iqbal said :

دل کی آزادی - شمشاهی - شکم سامان موت
فیصلہ تیرا ترے ہاتھوں میں ہے دل یا شکم

“A free mind makes a man monarch of all he surveys, while an insatiable belly hastens him to a ignominious end. Thus the choice lies with man. Let him opt for mind and acquire moral ascendancy or choose belly and court utter disaster.”

(Continued from page 3 col. 1.)

according to which there were thirty Adams before our Adam, and this earth remained a waste after them for fifty thousand years, then was Adam created.”

The process of mental, moral and behavioural evolution, whilst being paralleled by the fact of concurrent social and ecological change, is concomitant with the evolution of anatomical structure and physiological and pathological function in the sense that we could only fully conceive, for example, the act of hearing in terms of an auditory mechanism, of vision by way of a visual apparatus, or of the emotions in terms of the brain and of the body as a whole, whereas clinically, for instance, memory is improved by the bodily-occurring substance, ribonucleic acid (R.N.A.), which, when administered to sickly

children, will promote an improved appetite and a friendlier, livelier, talkative and more agile disposition. It would be interesting to follow up

subsequent research on the transforming properties of this nucleic acid on human personality.

BANKING IN ISLAM-III

BY MAHMUD AHMAD

To Herodotus “the whole of Arabia exhales a most delicious fragrance, the only country which produces frankincense, myrrh, cassia, cinamon, and ladanum.” The classical writers praise the wealth of the South Arabians. Strabo writes of cities “adorned with beautiful temples and palaces”. Pliny and Aelius Gallus agree. “The Greeks and Romans”, writes Hiiti, “evidently presumed that all the commodities in which the Arabians dealt were native products of their own land, so jealously did the merchants guard the secrets of their other sources in Abyssinia and India and so strict was the monopoly”.

Though this monopoly of international trade between India and East Africa on the one side and Mediterranean ports and Egypt on the other, was broken by the Romans in the 1st century A. D., the bulk of international trade continued to pass through Arabia, with Mecca one of the most important centres on this trade. We have the testimony of the Quran (106:2) and history that the caravans of the Quraish went in winter to the ports of Yemen and in summer to Syria.

It was natural for Mecca to develop as a commercial exchange and credit centre for these two-way caravans. Lammens and Wensink, in the article on Mecca, in the Encyclopaedia of Islam on the authority of Sira and Hadith, attest to “intense business activity bursting out of the narrow and sterile valley of Mecca”. They regard it “difficult to imagine a society in which capital enjoyed a more active circulation” The trader “had a blind faith in the unlimited productivity of capital, in the virtue of credit. Brokers and agents, the bulk of the population, lived on credit”.

A detail of remarkable relevance in this context is the etymology of the English word cheque. Its ultimate origin is the Arabic work Sakk.

It is possible that in such a society an occasional consumption loan may also have been given, but the preponderance of loans must be of the commercial variety. That is why when the Quran prohibited interest the audience could not readily see the difference between profit and interest and found itself forced to exclaim :

“Trade is like usury.”

Yet in spite of taking a note of their reason the Quran declares:

“God hath permitted trade and forbidden usury”.

The Nature and Dimension of the Exploitative Function of Interest :

Why is it, one may ask, that Islam while approving trade and profits of trade, take so serious a view of interest as to regard it “a declaration of war against God and His Prophet?” There is no phrase like this used anywhere in the entire corpus of religious literature. Nor is there anything so abhorrent as the seventy times of repetitions of incest, than which the Holy Prophet has regarded interest as more abominable. Why indeed? We get no answer in our traditional literature which meets the depth and dimension of the question, nor in later-day attempts, which fail to dig deep enough into economic theory to be able to bring forth an adequate explanation.

We are, therefore, left to construct a reply as well as we can ourselves. We all know that natural resources are virtually unlimited. New sources are tapped long before earlier ones have dried out. Nor is there any dearth of men willing to work on these resources. Yet if we look around we find men unemployed or under-employed while natural resources lie unexploited. In the so-called free economics, it is the entrepreneur whose job it is to engage men and exploit the natural resources. Why does he not go all the way? The reason is that before an entrepreneur engages himself in an act of production he calculates costs of production and probable return that he can expect. If the cost of production is higher than the probable return, he will abstain. If the probable return is higher than the cost of production he will go ahead and invest. Now interest enters into the calculation of the entrepreneur at both these crucial points. It increases the cost of production on the one hand and decreases the probable return on the other.

The increase in cost of production is not only occasioned by the rate of interest in the shape of annual interest payments which have to be included in the production costs, but also its projection on profit considerations which at every step tend to harden up at the level of the interest rate. If the rate of interest is 10 per cent then the net profit expected will not

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THUS SPOKE THE HOLY PROPHET

(peace and blessings of Allah be upon him)

Abu Huraira reported God's Messenger as saying, "Men are of different origins just as gold and silver are; the best among them in the pre-Islamic period are the best among them in Islam when they are versed in the religion." Muslim transmitted it.

He also reported God's Messenger as saying, "If anyone removes one of the anxieties of this world from a believer, God will remove one of the anxieties of the Day of Resurrection from him; if one smooths the way for one who is destitute, God will smooth the way for him in this world and the next; and if anyone conceals the faults of a Muslim, God will conceal his faults in this world and the next. God helps a man as long as he helps his brother. If anyone pursues a path in search of knowledge, God will thereby make easy for him a path to paradise. No company will gather in a mosque to recite God's Book and study it together without calmness descending on them, mercy covering them, the angels surrounding them, and God mentioning them among those who are with Him. But he who is made slow by his actions will not be speeded by his genealogy." Muslim transmitted it.

He also reported God's Messenger as saying, "The first person to be judged on the Day of Resurrection will be a man who died as a martyr. He will be brought forward, and after God has reminded him of the favour He showed him and the man acknowledges it, He will ask, 'What did you do to show gratitude for it?' The man will reply, 'I fought for Thy cause till I was martyred.' God will say, 'You lie. You fought that

people might call you courageous, and they have done so.' Command will then be issued about him, and he will be dragged on his face and thrown into hell. Next a man who has acquired and taught knowledge and read the Qur'an will be brought forward, and after God has reminded him of the favour He showed him and the man acknowledges it, He will ask, 'What did you do to show gratitude for it?' The man will reply, 'I acquired and taught knowledge and read the Qur'an for Thy sake.' God will say, 'You lie. You acquired knowledge that people might call you learned, and you read the Qur'an that they might call you a reader, and they have done so.' Command will then be issued about him, and he will be dragged on his face and thrown into hell. Next a man whom God has made affluent and whom He has given all kinds of property will be brought forward, and after God has reminded him of the favour He showed him and the man acknowledges it, He will ask, 'What did you do to show gratitude for it?' The man will reply, 'I have not neglected to give liberally for Thy sake to all the causes approved by Thee for this purpose.' God will say, 'You lie. You did it that people might call you generous, and they have done so.' Command will then be issued about him, and he will be dragged on his face and thrown into hell." Muslim transmitted it.

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be less than 10 per cent the risk of unforeseen hazards will not be counted at less than 10 per cent and if the investment calls for indebtedness to the very limit of credit capacity, and if gestation period be particularly

long, another 10 per cent will be charged for the risk of bankruptcy. So, if an investment is undertaken when the rate of interest is 10 per cent should be available as profit (excluding taxes).

Now if this impact of interest on the level of profit be even broadly correct, this makes ridiculous all our exhortations to the traders and industrialists to lower their levels of profit. We first force them to think in a predetermined manner through the compulsive reality of the rate of interest and then without removing the compulsion we want them to think in a manner as if the compulsion did not exist.

If this reflex action of interest on the profit level had been grasped, men would never have reason to turn to the half-baked Labour Theory of Value for their salvation.

If economics was not dazed and strangled by the power of high finance, it could give unmistakably firm expression to the theoretical consequences involved in this relationship and thus provide depth and dimension to the Keynesian concept of "the euthanasia of the rentier". However, awareness of this relationship is not entirely absent in economics. Writes Martin Bronfenbrenner:

"When the pure or economic rate of interest approximated 5 or 6 per cent, a profit rate of 15 to 20 per cent may have been required to entice risky investment, with all the resulting inequality in the personal income distribution. But when the pure interest rate falls to 2 or 3 per cent, under the influence of banking monetary and fiscal measures, it is possible for collective bargaining or direct controls to cut the gross profit rate to 5 or 10 per cent."

BOTTLED SUNSHINE

Signs of Decadence

Islam is a true religion based on Truth: and this truth was revealed to all previous nations who tampered with it and went astray. The signs of Gnosis, Sufism and Monasticism are the signs of decadence which crept into all religions including Islam—even Muslims have gone astray in their belief and are taking shelter behind false stories in their history or concocted sayings attributed to the Holy Prophet (OWBP). They have already forgotten the teachings of the Holy Quran, and are trying to justify their mystical leanings by the life of a few holy men who never even professed or practised what their followers now tell us. Their autobiographies do not refer to any such occurrences. And so is the life of the first Four Khalifas.