

# Common sense in Islam

**T**here is a very significant verse in the Qur'an which states: *"Therefore set your face in devotion to the true faith, the upright nature with which God has endowed man. God's creation cannot be changed. This is surely the true religion, although most men do not know it."* (30:30)

According to this verse, Islam is based on nature. Islam and nature, both are counterparts to each other. What is in nature in an unwritten form is in Islamic scriptures in written form.

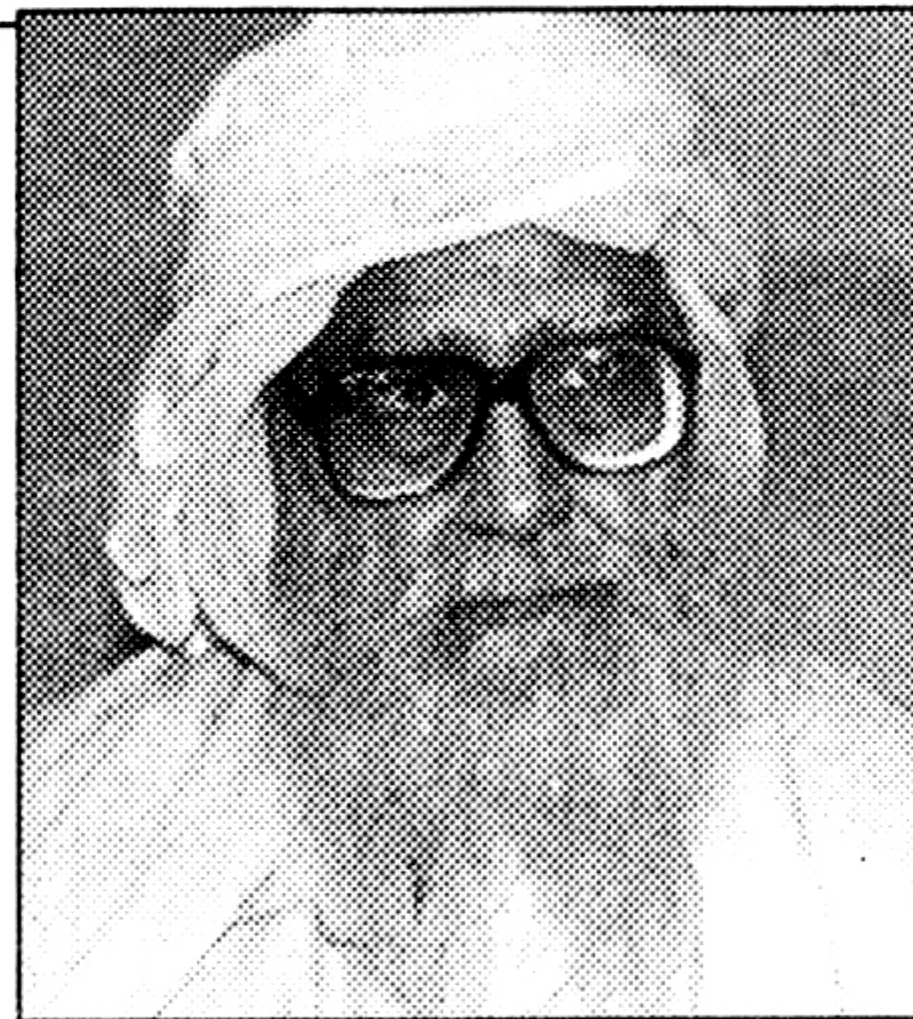
It is because of this that common sense is also a source of Islam. When a right point comes to your mind provided that you are not preoccupied with some artificial ideas, this point is as valid an Islamic teaching as those found in scriptures in a written form. There is no difference between the two except that those written points are certainly true whereas what is derived from your inner nature is probably true.

Once, a man came to the prophet of Islam seeking some advice for his daily life. The prophet said: "Consult your heart..." There is also another saying of the prophet: "Take that which is clear and leave that which seems to you not clear." These kinds of sayings of the prophet tell us that what comes from a non corrupt mind is true, at least in nature. What a man's inner voice speaks is a kind of revelation from God.

The prophet of Islam appointed Mu'adh bin Jabal as the governor of Yemen. When he was leaving to take charge of his post, the prophet asked, "How will you decide matters as a governor?" He replied, "I will decide according to the Book of God — the Qur'an." The prophet then asked: "If you fail to find it in the Qur'an what will you do?" He replied, "I will decide on it according to the teachings of the prophet of God (Sunnah)." Then the prophet again asked: "What if you fail to find it even in my Sunnah, what will you do then?" He replied: "Then I will try to form my own opinion."

This means that a man has a good knowl-

## Horizons



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edge of Qur'an and Sunnah and has also successfully preserved his God given nature in its original form, is in a position to make the right judgement even if it is not directly stated in the Qur'an or Sunnah.

There is a very meaningful and relevant incident in the early period of Islam. The prophet of Islam sent a troop from Madinah to Banu Quraidhah, a Jewish settlement at that time. Bidding them farewell, the prophet said: "None of you should pray 'Asr until we reach Banu Quraidhah."

This troop of Sahaba were on the way when they noticed that the sun was about to set and then a difference arose between the members

of the troop. Some of them said: "We should pray 'Asr before reaching the destination otherwise we won't be able to pray 'Asr on time." Obviously this was against the injunction of the prophet, but they justified it by saying: "What the prophet meant was only rapidity. So some of them prayed 'Asr during the journey while the others adhered to the literal meaning of the injunction and after arriving prayed 'Asr albeit late.

On their return to Madinah, the story was narrated to the prophet who endorsed both practices. From this prophetic precedent, we learn a principle of great significance — that common sense is applicable also to those matters which are clearly described in Shariah, with the only condition that the concerned man is truly sincere.

From these references, it becomes clear that Islam is a religion of common sense. Anyone, literate or illiterate, can follow Islam with the condition that he is sincere, his concern should be only to follow the divine path and not his own whims and desires in the name of Islam.

But it does mean that Man himself is the master of his own destiny. He himself has the right of judge what is or is not good for him. The human nature provided by God is only to facilitate his task and not to make him his own judge.

Even after both these equipment, Man is not free from God's control. In the last resort, it is for God to judge whether he was right or wrong.

Man has to be extremely cautious to read his nature, to save himself from all types of false conviction and self deception and to consult divine scriptures with all seriousness and sincerity.

Otherwise, he will be doomed to failure even if he claims that he always obeys his nature or claims to follow the word of God. Being the victim of one's own falsehood is not an excuse under any circumstances.

**Anyone, literate or illiterate, can follow Islam provided he is sincere and his concern should be only to follow the divine path and not his own whims and desires in the name of Islam.**