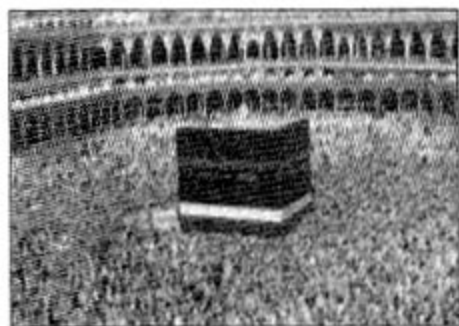


Mission and profession

By Maulana Wahiduddin Khan



The Book of God is a book of guidance. It gives people the kind of guidelines that make them able to receive the blessings of God when they follow them in letter and spirit. But in the latter days the divine book has become the central symbol of a religious community. With this second phase, a new dimension has been added to the divine book, that is, the commercial factor.

For the generation of latter times, the Book of God has become a source of pride—a kind of market commodity, an easy device to secure the respect of others. In the first period the Book of God was strictly a book of guidance but, in the later period, it became a book of material interest.

Taking the book of God in its first sense then is a mission. It means that you do

not attach any material interest to the book of God and do not want to derive any commercial benefit from it.

But if your main concern is your own agenda, you have never studied the book sincerely to find out what the Quran really requires, and are simply following what was in your mind and doing so in the name of the book of God, then it is a profession.

It is this latter use of the Book of God that is mentioned in the chapter entitled Al-'Imran:

God made a covenant with those who were given the Book to make it known to people and not conceal it. But they cast it behind their backs and bartered it for a paltry price: what an evil bargain they made! Those who exult in their misdeeds and love to be praised for what they have not done should not suppose that they are secure from punishment; they shall suffer a grievous punishment (3: 187-188).

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