

The background of the entire image is a photograph of a sunset over the ocean. The sky is filled with warm, orange and yellow clouds, and the sun is low on the horizon, creating a bright glow. The ocean in the foreground has small, white-capped waves. A white rectangular text box is positioned in the upper left quadrant, and a smaller white rectangular box is positioned below it, to the right.

THE DAWN OVER KASHMIR

MAULANA WAHIDUDDIN KHAN

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Goodword Books

Translated by Dr. Farida Khanam

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Goodword Books
1, Nizamuddin West Market
New Delhi-110 013
Tel. 9111-4182-7083, 4652-1511
Fax: 9111-4565-1771
email: info@goodwordbooks.com
www.goodwordbooks.com

CPS International
1, Nizamuddin West Market
New Delhi-110 013
Tel. 9111-4182-7083, 4652-1511
Fax: 9111-4565-1771
email: info@cpsglobal.org
www.cpsglobal.org

Islamic Vision Ltd.
434 Coventry Road, Small Heath
Birmingham B10 0UG, U.K.
Tel. 121-773-0137
Fax: 121-766-8577
e-mail: info@ipci-iv.co.uk
www.islamicvision.co.uk

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Foreword

Since its inception in October 1976, the monthly Al-Risala has spread rapidly throughout the State of Jammu and Kashmir. It would be no exaggeration to say that the Al-Risala mission, through the medium of this monthly magazine, has now reached almost every home in the State.

In this connection, three Kashmir Meets were held in Delhi on the subject of *dawah* on the following dates:

Kashmir Meet I -- 5-6 February 2011

Kashmir Meet II – 29-30 October 2011

Kashmir Meet III – 25-26 November 2011

The theme of each of these meetings was the same — the revival of Islamic *dawah* in Kashmir. On these occasions, all the subjects relating to Kashmir came under discussion during the speeches and were also brought up in the course of conversations with the people of Kashmir. The gist of those speeches and conversations are presented here in the form of separately subtitled fragments. It is hoped that this collection will prove to be a booster, Insha Allah, in the promotion of Islamic *dawah* and the establishment of peace in Kashmir.

Wahiduddin Khan
New Delhi, December 1, 2011

Introduction

It is an incontrovertible fact that a new age has set in in Kashmir and could rightly be described as the 'Dawn over Kashmir'. This development in Kashmir is not attributable to any external cause (as was the case in the countries of the former Soviet Union, where communism was forcibly imposed by Russia after the Bolshevick revolution of 1917) but is rather the result of fresh thinking on the part of the Kashmiri people themselves. October 1989 saw the beginning of an armed struggle in Kashmir. The loss of life and destruction that followed in its wake is described in a book titled "Wounded Kashmir". Now the time has come to publish a new book titled "Healthy Kashmir". This book is devoted to the depiction of this new, healthy age in the history of Kashmir.

The law of nature and the experiences of history tell us that, in this world of God, all destructive activities come to a dead end, whereas there is no end to constructive initiatives. After 1947, in the wake of the partition of India, certain unwise leaders, inspired by a self-styled concept of jihad, started a destructive campaign in Kashmir. According to the law of nature, this destructive initiative has reached its limit. Events testify to a new journey having begun in the history of Kashmir. And this constructive journey will certainly continue until it reaches its ultimate destination.

The Prophetic Model

The Prophet of Islam began his *dawah* mission in 610 AD in Makkah, where he found himself facing stiff opposition from the Makkans. He therefore decided in 622 AD to migrate along with some companions from Makkah to Madinah. There, unlike the adverse situation prevailing in Makkah, a favourable environment already existed for the Prophet to carry out his mission. Islam then began to spread rapidly, unhindered by any obstacles in its path. How did this come about in Madinah? We find the answer to this in one of the traditions of Aisha, the wife of the Prophet:

At that time in Madinah, there were two big tribes – the Aws and the Khazraj. Because of tribal traditions, they often came into confrontation with each other and five years before the Prophet's migration, the two tribes waged a bloody battle, known as the Buath war. This battle was a blessing in disguise for the Prophet of Islam (*Sahih* al-Bukhari, Hadith No. 3777), for, in the course of the fighting, a large number of people belonging to both the tribes were killed, and all this carnage caused the Madinahns to engage in some soul-searching. Consciously or unconsciously, they came to realize that they needed an ideology based on peace rather than on war, if they were to ensure an honourable life for themselves. It was at a moment such as this that the peaceful message of Islam was brought to Madinah and it rapidly entered the hearts of the people.

Now, almost the same state of affairs prevails in the state of Jammu and Kashmir. The 'jihad' in Kashmir first started here after the partition in 1947 in the form of large gatherings and agitations. After a period of time this movement took a violent turn. On the one hand, were the Kashmiri Mujahidin and on the other the Indian army. It was an unequal fight. As such, it was but natural that a large number of Kashmiri Muslims were killed. As a result of this armed confrontation, Kashmir suffered great harm in every respect. Education was disrupted, tourism dwindled to almost nothing, important social institutions were destroyed beyond repair and the overall economy was seriously affected. In view of this state of affairs, the conscience of the people of Kashmir was awakened and this has led to a process of rethinking on a large scale.

Consequently, the people of Kashmir have decided to give up

armed confrontation and instead follow the path of peaceful *dawah*.

Today, militancy has almost ceased in Kashmir and now the culture of one man, two missions is being adopted. On the one hand, Kashmiris are seeking a better future in educational and economic fields, and on the other, they are engaged in peaceful *dawah* work as a matter of religious duty.

The Prophet Yusuf, the son of Israel (Jacob) was born in Kana'an (Palestine) 3500 years ago. The circumstances of his life brought him to Egypt, which in those days was ruled by a Hyksos King, who offered the Prophet Yusuf the position of administrator under his rule. According to the Quran this was 'the King's law' and the Bible records this event thus:

'You shall be over my house, and all my people shall be ruled according to your word; only in regard to the throne, will I be greater than you.' (Genesis; 41:40) The Quran calls the story of Yusuf "the best story".

The Prophet Muhammad was an Ismaelite prophet, who lived 1500 years ago. During the Prophet Muhammad's time, an important event took place – the drawing up of a pact known as Sulh-e-Hudaybiya. The Quran calls this a 'clear victory'. (48:1).

These events, relating respectively to two prophets tell us the successful formula for succeeding in the struggle of life, i.e. political 'statusquoism and *dawah* activism'.

Muhammad (PBUH), appointed Prophet in 610 AD in Makkah, concluded a peace treaty with the Quraysh who, in those days, enjoyed the position of leadership in Arabia. This peace treaty, Sulh-e-Hudaibiya, recognized the leadership of the Quraysh, and unilaterally accepting all the conditions laid down by the Quraysh, the Prophet made a 10-year no-war pact with them. By the terms of this treaty, and by accepting the leadership of the Quraysh, the Prophet found ample opportunities for peaceful *dawah* work.

This is the prophetic model for activism at the social level. This is the model which should be followed by the people of Kashmir and by the Muslims of the rest of the world. This is the only model by following which Muslims can achieve success and honour in this world. No other model save this one is practicable.

Accordingly, the Muslims of Kashmir and the Muslims of

the rest of the world are duty-bound to eschew hatred and violence. They should delete the phrase 'armed struggle' from their vocabulary, burn all literature based on hatred and totally renounce the politics of confrontation. As a token of their good intentions, they should throw all weaponry into the river. Instead of becoming the rivals of their fellow men, they should become their well-wishers. They should wholeheartedly foster a culture of human friendliness. In doing so, they will be following the straight path of God, instead of giving in to their own desires. And it is only people who act in such a way who are destined for success in this world as well as in the next.

Going Against the Sunnah (Way) of the Prophet

After 1947 Kashmir was the scene of a turbulent struggle. Initially, this took the form of peaceful gatherings and peaceful demonstration, but when these efforts yielded no result, the Kashmiris turned to violence. In October 1989, they gave up peaceful methods in favour of violent methods. Now the gun and bomb culture became the order of the day.

Just a few months before the Kashmir movement took this new turn, I had gone to Srinagar, where I made a speech in the Tagore Hall on June 29, 1989. (The audio cassette of this speech is still available.)

In the course of this speech, I mentioned an incident relating to the Prophet of Islam in which an Arab Bedouin once came to the Prophet's mosque and defiled it by urinating inside it. The Prophet's Companions wanted to punish him but the Prophet forbade them to do so and told them just to clean the spot with water (*Sahib Al-Bukhari*, Hadith No. 5679).

This behaviour of the Prophet of Islam so impressed the Bedouin that he went to his tribesmen and narrated the whole story. The people were so impressed with this that shortly thereafter the whole tribe entered the fold of Islam. After narrating this incident to them, I pointed out that this was the method of the Prophet and that where the Prophet had achieved his objective by simply pouring water, they, on the contrary, wanted to achieve their objective by shedding blood. I told them that in that way they could never succeed in this world made by God.

Subsequent events have shown that the words that I spoke in Kashmir on June 29, 1989, by the grace of God, became a reality in Kashmir. The armed struggle of the Kashmiris only added to their loss: no positive gain was achieved. Now the crucial moment has come for Kashmiri Muslims to take a U-turn and, to achieve their target, engage in a peaceful *dawah* struggle instead of violent communal strife.

History is waiting

In Chapter 10 of the Quran, God calls mankind to the "home of peace". (10:25) Similarly, chapter three of the Quran has this to say:

Do they seek a religion other than the religion of God, when

everything in the heavens and the earth has submitted to Him, willingly or unwillingly? To Him, they shall all return. (3:83)

This means that God's desired religion is the religion of peace. The whole universe is a universe of peace. Similarly, the culture of peace prevails throughout the animal and vegetable world. It is desirable that this culture of peace be adopted likewise by man. Indeed, the objective of Islam is that human beings should adhere to this peace culture, for a full range of positive activities can blossom only in a peaceful society.

In this age of modern communications, Muslims all over the world have been engaging in an armed struggle in the name of jihad. As a result of the coverage of these negative activities by the global media, Islam has come to be regarded as a religion of violence throughout the world.

This is an extremely serious situation. The greatest need of the hour is to change this negative image of Islam. And it is the global media which should be used to project the correct image. That is, a true picture of Islam should be presented so that Islam may be seen by the people as a religion of peace instead of as a religion of violence.

Now the time has come for a group of Muslims to make an effort towards this end, so that God's religion may be universally accepted as a religion of peace and mercy, instead of as a religion of hatred and violence. In present times this great divine mission has yet to be taken up by any group. Any Muslim group who undertakes this task will receive God's blessing and will undoubtedly be held deserving of His greatest reward in this world as well as in the next. This great task can be effectively performed only by Muslims who belong to a place which is already in the eye of the world media. In present times there are several Muslim majority areas which are so located. But events have shown that there is only one Muslim-majority area which can be truly successful in making this a reality. My estimate of the situation is that this area is that of the State of Jammu and Kashmir. For various reasons, this region is already in the world news. But, so far, it features in the world media as representing violent Islam. Now it is for the people of Kashmir to realize how advantageous their position is, and make use of it along positive lines, for the image building of Islam.

This great blessing can be achieved by the people of Kashmir

only when they throw their weapons into the river and announce to the world loud and clear – that they have abandoned the culture of violence, and that they have opted for a peaceful course of action as a well-considered initiative – something which is entirely in consonance with the method of the true Islam. This decision on the part of the people of Kashmir will immediately become breaking news for the world media. This is potentially a great source of credit which awaits any group who may be held deserving of it. And undoubtedly the people of Kashmir can earn great credit by performing this great task.

In the situation that prevailed after the death of the Prophet (632 AD) the image of Islam became different from what it had been during the time of the Prophet of Islam. At that time, Abu Bakr Siddiq, the first rightly guided Caliph of Islam, rose to the occasion and asked: “Will people make holes in the religion and I am still alive?” (Hadith No. 3031). Then God’s succour came in full force and a situation that had deteriorated was normalized. Now the time has come for the people of Kashmir to rise and say – we cannot tolerate Islam being regarded as a religion of violence. We will make every effort to tell the world that Islam is a religion of peace and mercy. The day the Kashmiri people are united in their resolve upon this, God’s succour will be showered upon them and Islam will regain its place as a religion of peace at an international level.

The Kashmir Explosion

The Prophet of Islam emigrated from Makkah to Madinah in 622 AD. Before this emigration, he said to his companions: “I have been commanded to migrate to a town which will lead all towns. It is known as Yasrib, that is, Madinah (*Sahib* Al Bukhari, Hadith no. 1748).

In other words, it was destined by God for Madinah to become a flash point for the divine call. This did become a reality. After the Prophet’s emigration to Madinah, Islam, the religion of monotheism, very soon became a global religion.

In present times, the image of Islam has become one of violence. This negative image spread all over the world in the 19th and 20th centuries. Now the time has finally come in the 21st century for the peaceful image of Islam to be brought before the world. In the age of the media, “breaking news” is required for this purpose. It is only

a piece of superlative “breaking news” which can once again turn the spotlight on Islam as a peaceful religion in the eyes of the world in the 21st century.

If we give this matter serious thought, we shall come to the conclusion that Kashmir is the only place which can be the point from which this “breaking news” can emanate.

The last two decades saw in Kashmir a violent movement in the name of Islam. However, there is a positive aspect to this, because of which Kashmir has come to the fore in the world news in this age of the media.

Now, if the call of the peaceful Islam is raised in Kashmir, within no time, Kashmir will again become a serious issue in world news. Kashmir will become the point from which Islam will be introduced to the world as a religion not of violence, but of peace. Circumstances tell us that this is what is destined for Kashmir. Today, Islam is in urgent need of a peaceful explosion. This is without doubt an event which history has awaited far more than any other event.

The Importance of Peace

Chapter four of the Quran states: “Reconciliation is the best.” (4:128)

What is reconciliation? It is another name for the peaceful resolution of a potentially inflammatory situation: where there is reconciliation, there is peace. Where there is no reconciliation, there is no peace. This being, it would be quite correct to say that peace enjoys the position of the summum bonum in Islam.

Generally, people hold justice to be greater than anything else. Justice is indeed an ideal. But the real question is how to achieve this ideal in our practical life. There is only one answer to this and that is through peace. The advantage of peace is that it opens up opportunities. One does not, however, receive justice automatically. Any given group will receive justice only when it recognizes opportunities and avails of them wisely.

In present times, there are many such places where people are fighting for justice, but they have failed to find it. The sole reason is the choice of a wrong method of achieving it. It is a fact that in this world it is method to which the greatest of importance is attached. Even a right goal cannot be achieved by a wrong method. There is no exception to this principle, be it the people of Kashmir or any others who are concerned.

Any group which desires justice should first of all make efforts to establish peace. The importance of peace is so great that it has to be established, whatever the cost. Peace is seldom established on a bilateral basis. It is almost always established on a unilateral basis. And it is the latter which is the best method of approach.

The system of nature is based on opportunities of which, as a rule, there is an abundance. But the environment of hatred and violence acts as a nullifying factor for these natural opportunities. It is the demand of nature that man should first of all rid the situation of all hatred and violence. The moment this is done, one will see the emergence of innumerable opportunities, both secular and religious.

The optimal secular use of opportunities would be for people to engage in such constructive fields as education and economic uplift and, in so doing, achieve all kinds of progress. The best religious use of opportunities would be for the believers to engage in *dawah* work. And by involving themselves actively in the *dawah* mission, they would be held deserving of God's highest blessings. In this matter the people of Kashmir enjoy a special position. They are blessed with a great opportunity to establish peace in their State, communicate God's message to people and be held deserving of God's great blessings.

The Future of Kashmir

After the partition of the subcontinent in 1947, Jammu and Kashmir became a problem State. The Encyclopaedia Britannica (1984) describes this as an accident of history (9:32). But the truth is that what happened in the State of Jammu and Kashmir in 1947 was not an accident of history in the simple sense. It was rather the verdict of God. It would appear that there was great divine planning behind this 'accident of history'. That is, the State of Jammu and Kashmir is now in a position to demonstrate to the world, in the 21st century, that Islam is a religion not of violence, but of peace, in the full sense.

History shows that problems always play a positive role in human life. Without problems, human life becomes a victim of stagnation, for problems make people creative. They encourage fresh thinking and, as such, are always the harbinger of a better future. Indeed problems are blessings in disguise. In actuality the problems faced by the people of Kashmir were exactly that. The truth of this is now becoming evident.

Events have shown that the problems faced by the people of Kashmir have produced a willingness to make re-assessments. The Kashmiris have started on their new journey from violence to peace. They have left negativism behind, having come to understand the importance of positive thinking. In the light of past experiences, they have abandoned utopian politics and begun their journey anew along a realistic and constructive path. They have left off futile activities, having discovered the secret of result-oriented conduct. Their recognition of positive values without doubt guarantees a bright future for Kashmir.

The Power of Peace is Greater

A few years ago I met a well-educated Muslim, who had lived in Afghanistan for some years, and had a good working knowledge of the local language. He told me that he had once asked some Afghani extremists why they engaged in suicide bombing. They replied that they did not have the weapons to retaliate against the weapons used by their enemies, and so were compelled to opt for suicide bombing. The Muslim gentleman replied that the case was just the contrary. In fact the enemy had no alternative to the weapons they had. Then he went on to explain that they were using the power of violence, whereas according to Islam, the power of peace was greater. The Prophet of Islam once observed: "God grants to peace what He does not grant to violence." (*Sahih* Muslim, Hadith No. 2593) A political example of this is found in the early history of Islam. The battle of Uhud took place in 3 A.H. in which the Muslims were defeated. The Prophet then drew up a peace treaty with the opponents in 6 AH. This was adopting peaceful activism rather than violent activism. The result, in the words of the Quran, was 'a clear victory'. (48:1) This is an example of the superiority of the peaceful strategy over the violent strategy.

The Lesson of the Spring

On one of my trips to Kashmir, I went with a group of Kashmiris to a wide valley outside Srinagar. From the towering peaks rivulets were cascading down the valley. I noticed the way each stream flowed till it arrived at a boulder. It did not try to break the rock to be able to move ahead. Rather, when it encountered the rock, it simply swerved to the left or to the right, around the sides of the rock, and kept on with its journey uninterrupted.

I said to my Kashmiri brothers: “Look, these streams continue their journey without clashing with the boulders. If you want, on the contrary, to achieve your goal through confrontation, you will never succeed. This is a divine law and according to the Quran, “You will never find any change in the ways of God.” (35:43)

Then I said that the divine law in this world is based on the principle of non-confrontation. The law of God for this world is that any constructive goal is achieved by peaceful methods, and not by violent methods. I added that the course adopted by the Kashmiris after 1947 to achieve their goal was one of hatred and violence. Such a course in this world of God is totally unnatural. For any such course, nature’s prior verdict is that it will never meet with success.

Friday—A day of violence

Once a well-educated Hindu pointed out to a Kashmiri Muslim that in his study of the Quran, he had found in the chapter titled ‘Friday’ the following injunction:

When the prayer is ended, then disperse in the land and seek of God’s grace, and remember God much, that you may be successful. (62:10)

The Hindu then went on to observe that although the Quran enjoined Muslims after saying their prayers to go out and distribute God’s mercy to people, he saw that once they had left the mosque after prayers, they took to the streets and shouted slogans, voiced their hatred and hurled stones at others. In doing so they were going against their own religion. This observation could be applied not just to the Kashmiri Muslims but also to the Muslims of the whole world. Today, the Muslims in every country have turned Friday into

a day of hatred and violence. Almost every leader is using the Friday gathering for political ends.

This is a very dangerous sign. This is making use of the religion of God for communal and political purposes. This is exactly what happened in the case of the Jews during their phase of degeneration. According to the Quran, this stand taken by the Jews incurred the wrath of God. If Muslims adopt a similar stand, they will not be able to save themselves from its bitter consequences. No exception is made for any community in this matter.

I wasted the whole of my Life

A well known Kashmiri scholar, who was also called the “Mufakkir” (thinker) of Kashmir, was one of the leaders of the continuing political militant movement launched in Kashmir two decades ago. On December 13, 1990, at the age of 87, he was shot dead in Kashmir by some Muslim youths.

In a meeting on November 28, 2011, a Kashmiri Muslim told me that some time before his death he had given my book, ‘Al-Islam’ to this leader. In a later meeting the leader admitted to him that he was in total agreement with the content of the book. He further said that after reading it, he realized that he had wasted his whole life. With intense regret, he said, “I wish I had found this book earlier.”

These words of the slain leader might be taken as the last word of a dying person. In the lifetime of the scholar, the Kashmiris had taken his advice in the political field. Now they should take his advice in the matter of launching a different kind of Islamic movement. That is, the people of Kashmir should abandon the way of violence and opt for treading the path of peace. They should abandon political activism and opt for engaging in peaceful *darwah* work. In the words of a Persian poet, it is as if the soul of the slain leader is saying to the Kashmiris:

Man na kardam, shuma bazar ba kunaid

(I could not refrain (from politics) you ought to refrain from it).

The Gate of Paradise

Once the Emperor Jahangir (d. 1627) visited Kashmir. On seeing the beautiful scenes of nature in the valley, he exclaimed:

Agar firdaus bar rue zamin ast

Hamin asto, hamin asto, hamin ast

(If there is Paradise on earth, it is here, it is here, it is here.)

This couplet is not applicable in the sense of Kashmir being an actual paradise. However, it is right in another sense, that is, that nature has provided a point of reference in the form of Kashmir, by which one can have an idea of what Paradise is like and work towards being held deserving of Paradise in the Afterlife.

The Quran tells us that whenever the people of Paradise are given fruit to eat, they will say, 'This is what we were provided with before', i.e. they had been given similar things in the world. (2:25)

The present world, in its creation, is an introduction to Paradise (47:6). The world of Paradise is a perfect world, and the present world, although like Paradise, is an imperfect world. This is true for the entire planet earth. However, there are some places on earth which are outstanding in their similarity to Paradise. These places remind us of Paradise more than others. One of these places is, without doubt, the State of Jammu and Kashmir. Kashmir is aptly called *Jannat Nazeer* (similar to Paradise)

When anyone whose consciousness of Paradise is alive sees the beautiful scenes of Kashmir he will exclaim: "O God, you have shown me a scene of temporary Paradise, now let me enter into eternal Paradise." In this respect, Kashmir, without doubt, is a great point of reference. On seeing Kashmir, an aware person can say a prayer which is called in the hadith praying with *Ism-e-Azam*, that is, with the great name of God.

But for such a prayer, a favourable environment is necessary. In an environment of hatred and violence, such divine prayer will not pour out of one's lips. Launching a violent movement based on hatred amounts to depriving the people of Kashmir of this great blessing.

In an environment of hatred and violence, only curses and bad language will fall from one's lips, and certainly not divine words. In such an environment people's minds will become a jungle of negative thoughts, whereas for noble spiritual prayer to be said, it is essential for a man's mind to be full of positive thoughts.

According to the Quran, Paradise is an abode of peace in the full sense of the word (10:25). Paradise -- a garden of peace culture -- has no room for lovers of violence. Violence by its very nature is

an inferno. Those who lead their lives in this world with a violent mentality incur the great risk of being thrown into the pit of fire in the next world.

According to the Quran, the inhabitants of Paradise will be peace-loving in the full sense (36:58). There, everyone's hearts will be imbued solely with feelings of peace and love. This being so, only those will be selected to inhabit Paradise who have proved to have a peace-loving character. The present world is a selection ground. In this world, those people are selected who are peace-loving in the full sense and who deserve to be lodged in the peaceful society of paradise. This is the greatest reality which the people of Kashmir and others are invited to ponder upon.

The Culture of Gratefulness

What is violence? Violence stems from a culture of ungratefulness. Complaints produce violence and violence puts an end to feelings of gratitude in man. At the beginning of life, Satan threw down a challenge to God, saying: "I will surely come upon them from before them and from behind them and from their right and from their left, and then You will find most of them ungrateful." (7:17)

If you look at it from this angle, you will find that violence is not as simple as people imagine it to be. A society vitiated by the culture of violence is quite evidently under the influence of Satan. It is Satan who had first led them into complaining and subsequently into violence. Violence is a Satanic culture: violence opens the door to hell.

We learn from the Quran that when God created man, He commanded Iblis to prostrate himself before man, but he refused to do so. Iblis, the leader of jinns, enjoyed many blessings of God, but on being denied one thing, (i.e. supremacy over man) he deviated from the path of gratefulness. This is ingratitude, and becoming ungrateful is, without doubt, following the way of Iblis.

Whenever an individual or a group deviates from the path of gratefulness, and opts for the path of hatred and violence, the cause is always traceable to some complaint or grudge. Notwithstanding the fact that he enjoys 99 good things, just the deprivation of that hundredth thing is made such a great issue of that it dominates his mind. Despite the plethora of causes for gratefulness, he turns

himself into a jungle of complaint. This way is without doubt the way of Satan, even if it is couched in beautiful language.

In many such places as Kashmir, where Muslims have futilely adopted the path of confrontation, because of some political grudge, there are examples of Muslims who have not been deprived of everything but only of a few things and on this account they have become unnecessarily sensitive. It is this excessive sensitivity which is their real problem. If they could get over the feeling, they would feel all of a sudden that they had already been granted so many blessings that they would do better to launch a movement of gratefulness rather than ungratefulness and complaint.

Beautification of Violence

Violence is a destructive activity, in its full sense. The whole of history tells us that no individual or group has ever achieved any positive success through violence. Whenever an individual or a group has opted for the way of violence, it has been requited only with destruction and there has been no constructive outcome whatsoever.

Then, why is it that people repeatedly resort to violence? The reason is the beautification of Satan. We learn from the Quran that the way of Satan is to present a wrong act in beautiful words, thereby representing the work of evil as a kind of reform: "I shall make the path of error seem alluring to them on the earth and shall mislead them all." (15:39)

In this way Satan influences people's minds, giving them a false sense of conviction that their activities are not acts of violence, but rather acts of pious jihad; that it is the way of martyrdom which will lead them straight to heaven.

In this way by falling under the influence of satanic beautification, they engage in violent activities. They are in error but Satan tells them that they are working in the right direction.

There is only one way to save oneself from satanic beautification, and that is, to judge one's actions by their results. The destruction which ensues from violent acts and the closing of all doors to opportunities should be enough to convince us that such acts are the result of satanic beautification. As such, those who engage in such activities should offer their sincere repentance to God, and sedulously abstain from all such wrongdoing.

The truth is that violence in itself is undesirable. It never brings about any reform. It only makes matters worse. It is animal-like behavior.—it is inhuman. Violence invariably stems from hatred and enmity. Put an end to thinking based on hatred and enmity and then Satan will never be able to exercise any control over you again: you will be fully safeguarded from indulging in violent acts.

The Story of the Queen of Sheba

Chapter 27 of the Quran gives an account of the Queen of Sheba, a contemporary of Solomon (932 BC), the latter being both a king and a prophet. Her kingdom lay in the coastal area of ancient Yemen; while Solomon ruled Syria and Palestine. Solomon wrote a letter to the Queen of Sheba asking her either to surrender to him or face his army. In answer to this letter, the Queen chose to surrender, reasoning that “surely, when mighty kings invade a country, they despoil it and humiliate its noblest inhabitants — these men will do the same.” (27:34)

This story of the Queen of Sheba teaches us that whenever one is faced with a situation, in which the options are either destruction or adjustment, then adjustment will be preferable to destruction. In such a situation that would likewise be the Islamic solution.

The Queen of Sheba looked at the situation in a purely realistic way. She came to the conclusion that if she opted for the path of confrontation, she would most likely be defeated and in that case her people would be treated just as any conqueror treats the conquered. On the contrary, she said that if she surrendered, her people would be saved from destruction and all their interests would be safeguarded.

This incident has a lesson for all those Muslims who are faced with situations such as are prevalent in Kashmir. It indicates what the political policy of the Muslims should be in such situations, i.e. Muslims should clearly save themselves from futile confrontation in order that they may make full use of all opportunities for progress. Their case should not become that of one who loses what is already available, because he is launched on a futile quest for something which is unattainable.

The End of the Age of Violence

During the Second World War (1939-45) several countries opted for the path of violence, namely Britain, Germany, Japan, Italy, Russia and the U.S.A. But when the war was over, all these countries abandoned the path of confrontation in favour of a peaceful struggle. This was not a simple matter. It was in actual fact, a declaration that human history had reached the stage when the age of violence had come to an end forever. Now man had only one option and that was of adopting peaceful methods.

Before engaging in any activity, the results of that activity must be considered. Any act which will not produce positive results is surely unfit to be considered as an option. The results of the Second World War made this quite evident. All those nations which participated in this war made innumerable sacrifices in terms of lives and possessions but, in terms of any positive results, these sacrifices proved futile.

It should be borne in mind that modern-day weapons have become a deterrent rather than an incentive to waging war. For instance, Germany and Japan incurred great losses in treading the path of war, so in the light of this experience, they opted for the way of peace. Consequently, the two countries rose to great heights of success. They did so, even after having lost a part of their countries, Germany losing the eastern part of it and Japan losing the large Island of Okinawa.

Kashmir and other regions where Muslims have launched violent movements ought to take a lesson from these experiences. These events have resonated far beyond the countries in which they took place. Indeed, they illustrate the law of nature, according to which those who take to the path of hatred and violence will suffer only deprivation as their lot in life, whereas those who take to the path of peace and love, will have all kinds of success awaiting them.

Destructive Politics

A well-known Muslim speaker of the West once addressed a conference attended by Muslims and quoted the maxim: "Rebellion to a tyrant, obedience to God".

This saying is typical of the mindset formed under the influence of a political interpretation of Islam. The present generation of Muslims has been particularly affected by this interpretation. Agitations in the name of Islamic revolution at many places in the world of today are the result of this political thinking.

This kind of so-called politics is by no means Islamic in character. If a strong word may be used, it would be right to say that this is a brand of satanic politics in the name of Islam, the founder of which is Satan himself. All those who have hoisted the flag of such politics are without doubt following Satan, and not Islam.

The Quran tells us that before the creation of Adam, two creatures existed—angels and jinns, whom God commanded to surrender before Adam. The angels obeyed the command but Iblis (the leader of jinns) refused to obey the command and he turned into a rebel against God.

In human history, this was the first incident of rebellion against authority. Proceeding without clashing with authority is the way of angels. But indulging in agitations, launching movements of opposition, and clashing with authority is the way of Satan. Strangely indeed, this negative politics of Satan has continued throughout the whole of human history, amongst believers as well as non-believers. It is the result of this that human history has become a tale of destruction rather than of construction.

Against nature

The movements launched to bring about changes in human life fall into two categories—those which target the mind and those which target a system.

Such movements as are in accordance with nature seek to win over minds. Such movements as aim at breaking down or altering a system run counter to the creation plan of nature. The latter will always be a failure, while the former will always succeed. The hatred and violence rampant in today's world are only the result of a general unawareness of this law of nature.

None of the movements launched in Kashmir and in other places in present times have targeted the mind. All of them have targeted the system. This is why all these movements have resulted in destruction. Centuries-old traditions have been destroyed, mutual hatred has been engendered and this has

ultimately led to violence. The environment of mutual well-wishing has come to an end.

Any movement which sets itself up against the prevailing system is unnatural. The right kind of movement is one which is based on the reform of the mind.

In fact, the system has no separate existence. The system is put in place by virtue of the thinking and organizational skills of a group of people. If the human beings, the individuals who make up the group are reformed, the system that will emerge as their social mainstay will naturally be a reformed system. According to the law of nature, the movement of reform begins from the individual and not from the system. Any movement which is set in motion in the name of the reform of the system will, at the very outset, produce confrontation between two or more groups of people. And where there is hatred and confrontation, all possibility of reform is nullified.

Virtuous Movement, Non-virtuous Movement

A satan is latent within every person. This satan is a hate bomb. Everyone potentially carries this hate bomb within him. This hate bomb, in normal situations, lies dormant, but if it is awakened, it flares up beyond all limits and then it wreaks havoc. Events tell us that there are no men and women in this world who are an exception to this rule.

This state of affairs means, in other words, that man is made of a highly inflammable material. If there are 10,000 men in a society, this means that society is made up of 10,000 highly combustible components. It is, in fact, personal interest which compels man, in spite of being violent in nature, to keep the peace. In such a situation the task of leadership is very difficult. The leader who has nothing to offer but slogans, voicing complaints and protests, should never enter this field, for negative slogans will only provoke people to the point where society will be turned into a mass of highly inflammable material which could burst into flames at any moment.

It is incumbent upon the leader to launch his movement in society, only if he has slogans of love with which to inspire his followers. If all he has to offer is hatred and complaints, then he had much better not attempt to lead any social movement. He should rather confine himself to his home, thereby at least ensuring his own salvation.

There are two kinds of social movements — the positive and the negative. A positive movement is one which is based on duty. Such a movement has definite virtues. A negative movement is based on the demand for rights and the voicing of protests. Such a movement has no virtue whatsoever.

The former is invariably positive in outcome, while the latter can end only in calamity.

The Starting Point of Reformative Action

When political decline set in in ancient times, the Jews conceived of the idea that they should revive their political power in Palestine by force. At that time, according to the biblical record, the Jewish Prophet Jeremiah said to them: “Say to the king and to the queen mother, ‘Humble yourselves; sit down, for your rule shall collapse, the crown of your glory.’” (Jeremiah, 13:18)

This example of the Jews shows that nations rise and then fall, suffering from decline. After political dominance, they undergo political subjugation. This is the law of nature. At such times, the people ought to accept this change in their circumstances. For failure to accept it amounts to leading the community further down the path of destruction.

The truth is that political power is not the monopoly of any nation or community. The acquisition of political power depends upon the capability of any given group to wield that power. Where a community has this capability, it may be granted the blessing of political power. Once a community loses this capability, its political power is taken away from it. In such a case, the group concerned should concentrate on developing the necessary capability rather than on waging a futile war against opponents.

The Quran tells us that any change in the community is the result of a change in the individual. (13:11) Therefore, whenever any community suffers from decline at the social level, it should search for its cause at the individual level. For a community’s social condition can change only when change takes place at the individual level. Thus the starting point of an action is at the individual level and not at the congregational level. To start an action by addressing the crowd can only bring cheap popularity and nothing else.

A Return to Kashmiriat

What is Kashmiriat (Kashmirness)? Kashmiriat is, in fact, another name for Sufism. Kashmiri culture means Sufi culture. Kashmir is perhaps the only place in the world where Islam was spread only through the Sufis. As such, a revival of Kashmiriat in Kashmir would in fact mean revival of Sufism. Sufism and spirituality are synonymous. Sufism is based wholly on peace and love. Indeed, Sufism is only another name for a culture of peace and love.

What is Sufi culture? In the words of the Sufis, it is peace with all. This Sufi culture is desirable as creating a bond not only between Muslims, but also between Muslims and Hindus.

The people of Kashmir have followed this Sufi culture for several centuries, thus ensuring that the whole environment of the state is based on the principle of peace, love and social harmony.

The people of Kashmir were totally innocent of hatred and violence. But some external elements misled them into deviating from this Kashmiri culture. This breeding of hatred and violence, far from giving them anything positive, took away their most precious asset, and that was the Sufi culture which had always been a symbol of Kashmir — that is, the culture of peace and love.

It was the good fortune of the people of Kashmir that the Muslim Sufis who came from outside in the last few hundred years, and those Sufis who were born in Kashmir, all communicated the message of peace and love. This brought about a tremendous revolution in Kashmir, where Islam spread far and wide.

For instance, Shaykh Nooruddin Noorani (d. 1439) one of the great Sufis of Kashmir, symbolized the true Kashmiriat. He was known as Alamdar-e-Kashmir, and was greatly respected also by the Hindus, who called him Nand Rishi. He was equally popular among Hindus and Muslims.

Shaykh Nooruddin Noorani once observed: “If you are wise, do not differentiate between Hindus and Muslims. This is the way to find God.” He was also a poet. His poems, titled *Rishi Nama* and his writings show that, to him, there was only one sure way of acknowledging man, and that was for man to love man. To him loving man was the way to realize God.

One of the precious sayings of Shaykh Nooruddin Noorani is as

follows: "I broke the sword and made a sickle from it." This saying expresses the essence of his thoughts. This means that though God created iron with exceptional strength, iron is not meant to be used for violence. It should rather be used for constructive ends in the service of humanity. If instead of a sword, you make sickle from the iron, it will be of use in agriculture. But since October 1989 such people in Kashmir have emerged who believe in converting their sickles into swords. In the name of jihad, they have been spreading the culture of hatred and violence throughout the whole of the State.

From day one, I have regarded this so-called Kashmiri movement as being without foundation. I have to say that any progressive happenings emerge in the process of a long history rather than through the present kind of movement. I believe that the fate of Kashmir was already decided upon with the end of British rule in 1947. Now neither an all-out war nor a guerilla war can change the fate of Kashmir. All such efforts to do so have totally failed. Repeating such initiatives again and again only worsens an already bad situation.

Experience shows that India's progress is far greater than that of Pakistan in every respect. In such a situation the best choice for the Kashmiris is India, not Pakistan. The truth is that remaining part of India is to be a part of a developed country, whereas associating with Pakistan is throwing in one's lot with a country which has yet to start its journey towards progress.

Before the start of militancy in 1989, Kashmir was called 'Pirwar', meaning in Kashmiri language, the land of Sufis. A Kashmiri Muslim once told me with great pain that, prior to this, Kashmiris had not even known how to kill chickens, but after 1989, they began to slaughter human beings. The Sufi culture that prevailed in Kashmir owing to the untiring efforts of Sufis like Bulbul Shah and Shah Hamadan, etc., was totally a culture of peace. The Kashmiris by temperament were totally non-violent.

This Sufi couplet speaks of the peaceful temperament of the Kashmiris:

Ma qissae sikandar o dara na khwanda eim

Az ma bajuz hikayat e mehro wafa mapurs

(I have not read the stories of Sikandar and Dara, ask me only about stories of love and compassion)

But human beings are fallible and prone to human weaknesses,

so that when certain people, serving their own personal interests, wanted to mislead the Kashmiris, they were able to provoke them into aggression. But this was a temporary phase. Events tell us that now people are returning to their true nature.

Now the final hour has come for the Kashmiris to return to their past, to revise their forgotten lesson, to reshape their lives again in line with Sufi traditions, to make Kashmir once again a region of peace and love as it had always been in the past. This is Kashmiriness. A return to this Kashmiriat holds the key to progress in Kashmir.

Refusal to Accept the Reality

I have been writing about Kashmir since 1968. My first article was published in the Urdu Weekly, *Al-Jamiat*, in its issue of June 8, 1968, (p. 4). One part of this article about the politics of Kashmir is quoted here: "The time for receiving one's rights is when the decision is in one's own hands. But our leaders come to the realization of this fact only when their case becomes a moral one. I have this feeling when I read the speeches of Shaykh Abdullah, the leader of Kashmir. His present political campaign is nothing but the refusal to accept the reality of having lost the war.

In 1947 he was in such a position that, had he opted for a realistic policy, he could have succeeded in deciding the matter according to his choice. But he missed the bus by indulging in unrealistic dreams.

In national matters, when the time for decision has slipped from one's hands, the problem becomes much more complicated and difficult to resolve. National leadership is a task which can be performed only by those who can envision the future in the present. Those who can see only the present and the past cannot lead a nation. Indeed, by their unwise steps, they can certainly complicate matters."

These words were penned forty-five years ago. The reality of these words has now become a proven fact. The Kashmiris must learn a lesson from this experience. They should never repeat the mistake of continuing the failed politics of the past under new names. Now the final hour has come for the people of Kashmir to take a fresh look at the whole matter of the construction of their future, and, taking realities into consideration, reconstruct their national policy. A viable policy is only that which is sustainable. An unsustainable

policy is no policy at all. Implementing a policy which is not result-oriented is just a waste of time and energy.

Anachronism

The goal of the movement launched after 1947 in Kashmir was to make Kashmir into a separate pocket. This was plainly an anachronism. The present age is one of international relations. In such a situation, the making of separate pockets is an irrelevance.

In this connection, one lesson-giving example is that of Pakistan. The formation of Pakistan was based on this same concept of a separate pocket. Prior to 1947 the theory advanced by the Muslim leaders who advocated the creation of Pakistan was that creating a separate pocket was a must for the survival of their national identity. Yet, once Pakistan had been brought into existence, the majority of the educated people of Pakistan opted to go to Europe and America and abandoned Pakistan, the God-given country, as they called it – '*Mamlekat-e-Khuda dad*'. Earlier these leaders had insisted on Muslims being a separate nation, but then they adopted the nationality of other countries — America, France, Britain, Germany, etc. They preferred to live in these countries rather than in Pakistan.

Now the Kashmiris, who are trying to form a separate political pocket, should learn a lesson from this sorry state of affairs in Pakistan. They should refrain from basing their movement on unrealistic objectives and then later going against their own stand under the pressure of circumstances.

The Loss of the Ghetto Mentality

The state of Muslims today is that almost all of them indulge in negative thinking. Both religious and secular Muslims, men and women, suffer from having this negative frame of mind. Talk to any Muslim, attend any number of their gatherings, visit any Muslim institution, read any Muslim newspaper or magazine and you will find no constructive approach to any of the problems of the Muslim community. Although negative thinking is invariably directed against others, it is a very unfortunate fact that negative thinking does harm to the negative thinker himself, and not to those who are the subjects of his negative thought. This is the law of nature, and this law is unchangeable.

Negative thinking implies the prevalence of a ghetto mentality. This way of thinking is bound to create a separatist mentality. Those with this mindset start living in their own cells, they do not interact with others, and the baneful result of this ghettoized thinking is the kind of backwardness which causes them to lag behind others.

The secret of a worthwhile life lies in interaction, not in separatism or ghettoism. It lies in coming closer to people, not in distancing oneself from them. It lies in becoming their well-wisher and not in harbouring hatred for them. It lies in positive thinking. Negative thinking leads only to destruction, not construction.

Changing the Verdict of History

The Kaaba was built in Makkah by Abraham about four thousand years ago. At that time the Kaaba was rectangular in shape. It was rebuilt by the Quraysh before Muhammad (pbuh) was appointed Prophet. At that time they constructed it in the form of a cube, shortening its length. This square Kaaba remains cuboid in shape till today.

According to the traditions, the Prophet of Islam told his wife, Aisha, that he wanted the Kaaba to be rebuilt on Abraham's rectangular base. But the Prophet did not have this done, for this, for certain practical reasons, would have proved to be a greater evil (*Sahih Al-Bukhari*, Hadith No. 1583)

From this narration, we learn of a very important principle, that

is: the wheel of history cannot be put into reverse gear. This is no simple matter. From this decision made by the Prophet we learn a law of nature, i.e. the journey of history is always headed from the past to the present and from the present to the future. It is not possible to take a U-turn in history. It is beyond the genius of human beings to conduct the journey of history from the future to the present and from the present to the past. In the matter of the course history will take, planning has to be done by accepting the status quo and not by denying it.

The history of the Kaaba is a case in point. The Prophet of Islam accepted this law of nature and did not attempt to re-build the Kaaba on top of the base laid down by Abraham. Later, Abdullah ibn Zubayr (d. 692 AD) demolished the walls of the Kaaba and re-built it in alignment with the Abrahamic foundations, but immediately after the death of Abdullah ibn Zubayr, Hajjaj ibn Yousuf As-Saqafi (d. 714 AD) raised it and rebuilt it on its previous base. The Muslims of the present day are totally unaware of this sunnah of the Prophet. That is why they repeatedly go against it and, as a result, they further add to their woes.

The Khilafat movement in the first quarter of the twentieth century, the Palestine movement in the second half of the twentieth century, the Kashmir movement in the twentieth century, and all other such movements are a proof of this. The leaders of these movements wanted to change the verdict of history, but it could never be changed. And such unwise politics only aggravated the situation of the Muslims. When the verdict of history is about to be passed, you can at that moment influence the decision by adopting a wise policy, but, once the decision has been made, any attempt to change the decision is little better than committing suicide.

The Politics of the Impossible

The Muslim leaders of the present times have engaged in turbulent politics wherever there is a sizable Muslim population. But all these political agitations have proved to be totally futile. The common reason for this is that all these Muslim leaders are engaged in the politics of the impossible. That is, their campaigns are conducted in the name of something which is totally unachievable. Such politics cannot culminate in anything fruitful.

In present times this kind of politics can be seen in every

Muslim majority area. The objective in Palestine is to end Israeli occupation and replace it with Arab rule. The aim of politics in Kashmir is to end the domination of India and make Kashmir a part of Pakistan. Similarly, in regions such as Xinjiang (China) and the Philippines, there is a demand to establish Muslim rule once again as it was before. All initiatives of this kind are but the politics of the impossible. Such action can never yield any positive result. The only outcome of such politics is the loss of even what is already in the possession of the agitators and getting nothing in return. This politics of the impossible is not just unwise: it is against Islam. In the field of politics, the demand of both wisdom and Islam is one and the same—that actions should be result-oriented. Where there is no hope of gaining anything, one has to remain content with what one already has. It is only the leaders who benefit from politics. The people have nothing to gain by it.

The politics of the impossible is engaged in by exploitative leaders. For the common man to follow such leaders, it is the crassest foolishness. The politics of the impossible is best described as suicidal. Nothing less than suicidal can express the destructive effect of such politics. Furthermore, this kind of politics leads not only to the suicide of the individual: it leads to the suicide of the whole community.

Ideal and Practical

It is the case with the majority of the people that when a realistic suggestion is made to them, they immediately respond with idealistic notions, such as a demand for justice; or they quote the law of human rights and say things should be like this, or like that, and so on. All utterances of this kind are utopian. In this world, idealism never works. In this world we have to be pragmatic and aim at what is achievable.

What the state of affairs should be by our lights is hardly worthy of consideration. What is actually worthy of consideration is what the state of affairs should be according to the creation plan of God. This is not an issue of arriving at an ideological criterion. This is an issue relating entirely to what is practically achievable and what is not. According to the creation plan of the Creator, every man in this world is given freedom of action and that is something which cannot be cancelled out.

In view of this, the only course that is practicable is that, in

planning our actions, we should make concessions to others, so that in doing so, we may ourselves have the opportunity to act.

This is life's wisdom. Peace is established in the world by applying this wisdom. Failing to coordinate with others will only breed hatred and violence; and these evils only add to the problems of social co-existence rather than reduce them.

This is an eternal principle of nature. It is without exception. Those who go against this law of nature can expect nothing but destruction in this world, even if they have given beautiful names to their unnatural actions (i.e. activities which go against the principles of nature.)

The Guidance of the Prophet

Ali ibn Abi Talib (d. 661), the fourth rightly guided caliph, was succeeded by his son, Hasan ibn Ali, on whose hands people took the oath of allegiance. But the Muslims of those times had divided into two groups, one supporting Hasan, the other Muawiya. The difference between the two groups escalated to such an extent that they almost went to war with one another. At that time Hasan had an army of 40,000. Had a war been started, most of them would have been killed. But Hasan did not approve of a course of clash and confrontation. Therefore, by his own decision, he stepped down from the post of caliph, surrendering it to Muawiya. This stand taken by Hasan was disapproved of by his own Muslim people, and they started to speak out against him. One Muslim addressed him thus: "O, one who is a shame for Muslims!" Hasan said in reply: "Humiliation is better than fire." (Al-Bidayat wan Nihaya, vol.8, pp. 18-19)

This constructive stand taken by Hasan was not liked by the common Muslims, for to them this reeked of humiliation and surrender. But the Prophet of Islam had foreseen that he would take this stand and he approved of it. According to traditions, when Hasan was young (he was the Prophet's grandson) the Prophet had made this prediction: "This son of mine is a leader. God may reconcile two large warring groups of Muslims through him."

This incident tells us of a very important reality of life. We learn from this that a stand which the common Muslims viewed as one of humiliation and surrender, was in the eyes of the Prophet an excellent example of the right kind of leadership. The truth is that in such matters such terms of opprobrium—humiliation and surrender—belong to the days of ignorance (prior to Islam). The Islamic way is to look upon such matters in terms of their result. According to the teachings of Islam, in controversial matters only that way is the right way which keeps one from stooping to confrontation and violence. The way which leads one to war and violence is indubitably the way of ignorance. In such matters, it is incumbent upon believers to opt for the way of avoidance rather than confrontation, even if that may, to the shallow-minded appear to be one of humiliation and surrender.

In this historic event there is a great lesson for all those Muslims who are living in the present situation in Kashmir. In present times there are many such places where Muslims are faced with similar situations. This tradition indicates the right course of action for all these Muslims. They must, without delay, abandon any ideas of community prestige, and, under the guidance of the Prophet of Islam, they must resolve that at all events they will opt for the way of peace and reconciliation, rather than that of clash and confrontation. In the words of Hasan, in such cases, the way of violence leads straight to hellfire, whereas the way of peace leads straight to Paradise.

We learn from history that in later times Hasan ibn Ali became unpopular with the Muslims. What was the reason? The reason was that, when he spoke, he kept a low profile. Those who regard one who behaves in this way as a degraded person are of a very strange mentality. The decree of both Islam and reason is that those who keep a high profile can expect only destruction in this world of God, whereas those who keep a low profile are destined for success. Those who follow such leaders as keep a low profile tread the straight path of Islam. Divine succour is destined for such people.

In the Footsteps of the Jews

Zionism in the present times is the biggest movement of the Jews. This movement, launched in 1897, is political and cultural and seeks to re-establish a Jewish national State in Palestine.

In other words, Zionism is another name for land-based politics. Today, the Jews are expending all their energy, wealth and resources towards this end. They are ready to make any kind of sacrifice to achieve their goal.

The Muslims of present times, according to the prediction made in the Hadith, are treading the same path as Jews. The activities of present-day Muslims, directly or indirectly, are an example of a land-based movement. Muslims have launched a number of movements to enable them to occupy particular lands and establish their rule over them, e.g. in Pakistan, Palestine, Kashmir, Bosnia, Chechnya, Arakan, the Philippines, Sinkiang (China), etc. Muslims all over the world are either actively taking part in this land-based politics or they theorize along the same lines, expressing their thoughts on this subject in their speeches and writings.

This is undoubtedly similar to following the path of the Jews.

Such communal and political rivalries, even if they are in the name of Islam, are not Islamic. This amounts to engaging in non-Islamic politics in the name of Islam. It means carrying out non-religious activities in the name of religion. It is high time that Muslims realized that it is incumbent upon them to totally abandon such communal and political activities, and plan anew their approach in order to build a bright future for generations to come. The kind of communal politics Muslims are engaged in have not shown any positive results so far, nor is this going to show any such results in the future.

A Comprehensive Concept of Islam

There are some who present a comprehensive concept of Islam. They insist that Islam is a complete system and includes not only beliefs, worship and ethics but also a political system without the establishment of which Islam remains incomplete. This would appear to be a comprehensive concept of Islam. But, in reality, it is a purely destructive concept. It is this so-called comprehensive concept of Islam which has lead directly to the Muslim militancy of the present day.

If you believe in Islam, worship according to the Islamic way and observe the ethical principles of Islam, this all relates to your personal life. In doing so, you do not come into confrontation with anyone. But the moment your target is to establish Islamic rule over some land, political power being almost always in someone else's possession, this immediately sets your foot on the path to confrontation. This political goal thrusts you into thinking that it is right and proper to occupy those seats of power -- which are seldom vacant -- and take the reins of power into your own possession. Such thinking naturally takes one on to a collision course, causing two groups to unnecessarily clash with one another. The Muslim militancy affecting different parts of the world today is directly the result of this so-called "complete" concept of Islam.

The truth is that Islam, in actual fact, consists of following the commands of God in letter and spirit. In so far as the enforcement of the political and legal commands of Islam in society is concerned, the prevailing circumstances must first be taken into account. If the society in question is willing to accept these commands, then through peaceful efforts these commands may be enforced -- otherwise not. The principle of Islam is: responsibility is according to one's capacity (2:286)

Chapter 24 of the Quran states this command regarding social life:

“God has promised to those among you who believe and do good works that He will surely grant them power in the land as He granted to those who were before them; and that He will surely establish for them their religion which He has chosen for them. He will cause their state of fear to be replaced by a sense of security. Let them worship Me and associate no other with Me. Whoever still chooses to deny the truth is truly rebellious.”

This verse of the Quran clearly shows that the position of political power on this earth is that of a blessing from God rather than a desired goal. The only target of the Muslims’ activities should be to embody in themselves the qualities of faith and virtuous action; they should focus all their attention on this internal goal.

So far as political domination on the earth is concerned, this is entirely in the hands of God. According to the Quran, any decision about who has political domination on the earth is taken solely by God. It is God who bestows sovereignty on whom He wills and He takes it away from whom He pleases. (3:26)

This shows that making the establishment of a political system one’s goal is not in accordance with the teachings of the Quran. It is in fact irreligiousness in the name of religion. It is a case of deviation from Islam in the name of Islam. Such efforts can never bring divine succour, this being so, such efforts can never succeed.

One-sided Reporting

Chapter 83 of the Quran states that giving short measure is a criminal offence: “Woe to those who give short measure, who demand of other people full measure for themselves, but when they give by measurement or weight to others, they give them less.” (83:1-3)

The moral shortcoming alluded to in this verse of the Quran, does not have the limited sense of giving short measure only in dealings. It relates rather to all social matters. In present times, one destructive form of giving short measure is what is referred to as one-sided reporting.

This evil is commonplace among the Muslims. Many of the Muslim writers and speakers describe only the action taken by the non-Muslims. They totally omit to mention the action of the

Muslims which was the initial cause of the retaliation by the non-Muslims.

The Muslims do not tell of how their own actions affect others. They only tell of the reaction by the other party. In such matters, they defend their case by asking, if a thief breaks into your home, what ought to be your response? This is a one-sided argument, because it labels the opposite party a 'thief' without there being any genuine reason to do so. The truth is that Muslims provoke others into reaction and retaliation. First of all, such provocation has to be stopped. There is no use in weeping and crying out against others when one's own behavior is provocative. The Prophet of Islam once made an observation on how to deal with such situations: Fitna (evil) is dormant, God's curse is upon those who awaken it. (*Al Jame As Saghir* Lis Suyuti , Hadith No. 5975)

Due to the baneful result of this one-sided reporting, Muslims all over the world have come to regard themselves as the oppressed and others as the oppressors. It has made the Muslims develop a negative cast of thinking. They hold those belonging to other communities to be their enemies and so they hate them. Their lives are full of hatred rather than of love.

The evil of biased reporting is not simply that it is not factual. It lies rather in the fact that it has turned the Muslims of present times into hypocrites. It is not possible for Muslims to build their lives by separating themselves from other communities. They have to make compromises again and again to further their material interests. As such , in spite of their negative thinking based on hatred, they are compelled to establish social and economic relations with other communities. In spite of harboring hatred in their hearts, they have to extend the hand of friendship to others. This is undoubtedly living by a double standard, and another name for this double-standard is hypocrisy.

One-sided reporting, that is, describing only one aspect and hiding another, is not to be glossed over. It is indeed very harmful in that it encourages shallow thinking, to the point where the ability to differentiate between truth and falsehood is lost. The reader of such reporting comes under the influence of communal prejudice. He is no longer a realist in judging matters of moral importance. He becomes devoid of any feeling of well-wishing for others. He suffers from negative thinking. In the first stage, he voices complaints about others but, at a later stage, this develops into hatred. In the ultimate stage, he comes to regard violent activities against others as lawful. If,

for our bodies, drink is the mother of evil, for our thinking faculties, the mother of evil is biased reporting. It corrupts our thoughts with negative ideas and then one evil follows another.

Pervasive Evil

Chapter 8 of the Quran states:

Beware of an affliction that will not smite exclusively those among you who have done wrong. . (8:25)

In this verse of the Quran *fitna* (affliction) does not mean divine *fitna*, but human *fitna* . That is, the provocative situation (*fitna*) which is produced on account of the unwise actions of one man or of a group. When such a situation prevails in a society, then the brunt of the resultant anarchic situation will have to be borne not only by those members who were responsible for it, but by the whole of society in general.

Let us take the example of a place of worship belonging to non-Muslims where they organize a programme in which a loudspeaker is used. Now if some Muslims disapprove of this, they approach the organizers and ask them to switch off the loudspeaker. But the organizers do not listen to them. This refusal angers the Muslims and they destroy the loudspeaker system. In this and other such cases, the story will not end there. Such news spreads like wildfire, and the whole community thus affected, reacting violently, will turn against the Muslim community. Now their violent retaliation will be directed against not only those who destroyed the loudspeaker, but also against every member of the whole community.

Here is another example to illustrate this point. Let us suppose some non-Muslims lead a procession through a locality which houses a mosque. Now a group of Muslims gather to demand that the route of the procession be changed, so that the mosque will not be dishonoured. When the non-Muslims refuse to do so, the Muslims demand that the police intervene and get the route changed. But the police fail to do so. This further angers the Muslims and they hurl stones at the police. Provoked, the police open fire to scatter the Muslims. This shooting affects both kinds of people, those who took part in throwing stones at the police, and also those who did not.

The same is the case in those places where a similar situation

prevails, but on a large scale, for instance, in Kashmir, Palestine, etc. There also the Muslims first throw stones at the police or the army. Then the police or the army shoots at them or bombs are dropped on them from aeroplanes. In such cases what happens, in effect, is that even those Muslims who are not directly involved also become the targets of retaliatory violence.

The verse quoted above applies to all such cases. Therefore, protesting by referring to such cases where, in the retaliatory action of the other party, both kinds of Muslims — those involved in violence and those who were innocent -- were the object of retaliation and, as such, holding that this was against human rights, is totally wrong. This method of protest is alien to Islamic norms. It is but natural in such matters that the innocent are also killed along with the guilty.

According to the Quranic principle, in such cases those who are held guilty are those who initiated the provocation (9:13). In the light of this verse, Muslim leaders, rather than protest against retaliatory action, should be extra careful to refrain from creating any provocative situations in Muslim society. Taking such a stand is doubly harmful. One, such people may face God's wrath, second, their condition never improves because the situation is never rectified and they remain forever in a state of humiliation.

Reaction is Un-Islamic

Many are involved in war and violence, both at the individual and the social levels. If they are told to refrain from involving themselves in such destructive activities, their answer will be that it is a natural reaction: any group faced with suppression and injustice will certainly react. It will take to using guns and bombs, and will ultimately resort to suicide bombing. They will say that if you want us to stop violent reaction, you shall have to put an end to the oppression and injustice perpetrated by the other party, otherwise our violent activities will go on. If you want to put an end to reaction, you shall first have to end action. Unilateral advice is not going to serve any purpose in this matter.

This philosophy of reaction is wholly unnatural and results from a wrong conception of what is justifiable action. The right criterion for any action is its being productive of useful results. Any action which does not produce beneficial results is fit only to be rejected.

It is an obvious fact that an action either produces a good result

or it proves counterproductive for the doer. Only that practical step is right which is result-oriented. A practical step which is not result-oriented only aggravates a problematic situation. And no wise man will seek to further vitiate an already bad situation.

An emotional reaction to any action is no answer to it. The real answer to an action is first to review the state of affairs in the prevailing situation, and then result-oriented planning should be done in a positive frame of mind. Then any action that has to be taken should be started bearing in mind the principle of construction, rather than engage in confrontation. This is the right Islamic way.

The Second Forbidden Tree

Adam was the first man. After he was created, he was placed in paradise where he enjoyed all kinds of freedom. But in paradise there was one tree which was forbidden. Adam was told that he could live freely in paradise, but that he was not allowed to go to this forbidden tree that if he failed to obey the commandment, he would be expelled from paradise. In a similar way, there is also a forbidden tree in this world, and that is violence. Those who act with violence, shall have to pay a heavy price for this crime and that is, being barred from entering paradise. We learn from the Quran that when Adam and Eve were settled on earth, a tragedy took place in the very beginning. Two sons of Adam, Cain and Abel, became involved in a confrontational situation, which ended with Cain killing Abel. Citing this incident as a bad precedent, God made the following revelation:

“That was why we laid it down for the children of Israel that whoever killed a human being ---except as a punishment for murder or for spreading corruption in the land---shall be regarded as having killed all mankind, and that whoever saved a human life shall be regarded as having saved all mankind” (5:32). Such strong words have not been revealed for any other crime in the Quran. This shows that the gravest crime in the eyes of God is one man taking the life of another. The only exception in this matter is for a court or other authorized body under an established government, when it enforces the rule of justice. There is no exception to this rule for the common man.

This strict forbidding of violence is essential, because violence goes against the natural system. The natural system established by the Creator is one according to which every man and woman receives the full opportunity to work in freedom. But violence and aggression disturbs this whole natural system. Violence is an intervention in the natural system of the Creator. And, without doubt, such an intervention is a very serious crime.

How can we bring about an environment free from violence and aggression in this world? The answer is only one---the God-fearing have to bear the responsibility of exercising patience unilaterally: even if they are provoked, or are subjected to violence, they must

not retaliate. It is only exercising such restraint that a world free from violence can be brought into existence. The perfect example of unilateral patience in the face of violence is given by Abel, the son of Adam, in his response to his brother Cain: "If you raise your hand to kill me, I will not raise mine to kill you. I fear God, the Lord of the Universe." (5:28)

According to a Hadith, the Prophet of Islam observed: "In later times political corruption will set in, but you must never engage in confrontation with your rulers. One of his companions asked, 'If they come to our homes to kill us what shall we do?' The Prophet replied: 'Be the better son of Adam', that is, don't kill others, even when they attempt to kill you. (*Sunan* Abi Dawood, Hadith No 4259)

There are two kinds of violence, the one passive, the other active. Passive violence is evinced in your hatred for others, and calling them oppressors. Active violence is not just your calling them oppressors but also engaging in aggressive actions against them. Both these forms are sinful to the same degree: whatever the kind of violence you opt for, you will be held guilty of eating the fruit of the forbidden tree. Both kinds of violence only appear to be different: in reality, there is no difference between the two.

Forgetting the Past

The Quran attaches great importance to forgiveness. It states: "Whoever is patient and forgiving, acts with great courage and resolution." (42:43) What is forgiveness? It means forgetting the past and eschewing negativity. Remembering whatever happened in the past means keeping alive the bitterness felt about past events. This is against Islam as well as against reason.

Muslims are engaged in present times in violent activities at different places, but despite repeated sacrifices, they have failed to achieve the desired result. Such failure has not, however, deterred them from further violence.

What is the reason for this? It lies in their reluctance to forget the bitter memories of the past. These Muslims keep talking and writing about past happenings and that is why their feelings are constantly ruffled.

This runs counter both to Islam and to human reason. These Muslims should feel duty-bound to try to forget these negative events entirely. They should leave their that to God. In this way they

will be enabled to think realistically about their affairs and plan their actions in a far better and result-oriented way.

Chapter 2 of the Quran tells us of the way of God for man. It reads: "We shall certainly test you with fear and hunger, and loss of property, lives and crops. Give good news to those who endure with fortitude, who say, when afflicted with a calamity, 'We belong to God and to Him we shall return,' They are the ones who will have blessings and mercy from their Lord: it is they who are on the right path!" (2:155-57)

The system of the present world is designed in such a way that here man suffers all kinds of losses. These losses are apparently occasioned by the wrongdoings of others. That is why it generally happens that those afflicted by loss hold some person or group responsible and then make them the objects of their hatred. This hatred sometimes escalates into violence. But such thinking is against the way of God, that is why violence born of hatred does not yield any positive result to the perpetrator.

The right way to deal with this situation is not to lay the blame for loss at the door of others. Instead, one should engage in introspection. When reflecting upon the losses of this world, the Hereafter must also be remembered. Indeed, these losses should be taken as a divine warning and an attempt should be made to reform oneself. If such losses are seen and accepted as parts of the system of nature established by God Himself, then positive thinking will ensue. Man will be saved from falling a prey to frustration because of any adversity he suffers, and he will plan his future anew, learning lessons from past events instead of becoming embittered by them.

Everyone may be born to die, but it is a must for the living to keep thoughts of death in abeyance. Every gain at some time or the other turns into loss. In such matters it is necessary for man to forget whatever has been lost, just as he keeps thoughts of the dead out of his mind.

This is no simple matter. It is a fact that when one thing is lost, hundreds and thousands of things are still available to man. In such a situation, man pays a very heavy price for not forgetting what is lost: that is, he is deprived of the true feeling of gratitude. He tends to forget that sorrowing for what is lost is responsible for depriving him of true gratitude for the things he already has. By giving importance to the small loss of this world we run the risk of incurring a very great loss in the Hereafter. By allowing temporary loss to suppress

all feelings of gratitude, we risk eternal loss. And, no believer can possibly afford to adopt this counterproductive attitude.

Living in God

The case of Muslims in present times is that, while believing in God, they have allowed their focus upon Him to become diminished. This is the sole reason for Muslims suffering from negative thinking. This is so common in Muslims of the present day, that we can hardly find an exception, whether among men or among women. Their writing and speeches are all expressions of negative thinking.

What is the reason for this negative train of thought? In actual fact, it is the result of some grievance. Every Muslim harbours some grievance against someone or the other. Some have usurped their land, others have attacked their country, yet others have made derogatory remarks on Islam, someone has denied justice to them, others try to discriminate against them, etc. Today all the Muslims give voice to such complaints. It is their grievance which has turned almost every Muslim negative. But negative thinking should be seen in the context of making something other than God one's main concern.

Finding God is to find the greatest thing. One who has discovered God becomes so highly elevated in his thinking that all else pales into insignificance. Finding or losing something material is of no consequence. He starts living by the maxim: you can take away from me whatever you want, but you cannot take away God.

This attitude turns a believer into a positive thinker to the ultimate extent. He harbours not even one iota of hatred for anyone, nor does he fall a prey to despair or frustration.

Do not waste time

What is the reason for man coming to the world? Has he come here to establish the rule of his choice on earth? No, He has come here to develop himself according to the will of the Lord. Man has been granted a very limited period of time in this world, during which engaging in anything which is of no avail in the Hereafter is to destroy oneself forever. Only that person will be held successful after death who has developed his personality in accordance with the will of the Lord.

What does God desire from us? A region like Kashmir provides a living example. The flowing springs in the valley of Kashmir clearly testify to what our Lord approves of and likes. The verdure of the trees tells us in silent language what pleases the Creator. The birds flying in the air sing the praises of Almighty God. The beautiful mountains echo the songs dear to the Creator. The entire captivating environment reflects glimpses of God's glory. The various beautiful aspects of Kashmir are like the words used by the Creator in the language of creation. Indeed, in the environs of Kashmir, man experiences the proximity of his Lord.

Everyone born in the land of Kashmir is duty-bound to read this living book of God and build his life accordingly. Those who fail to do so will face such consequence after death that they will suffer remorse for all eternity. In sheer desperation they will say: "Mine was a case of missed opportunities!"

The only task for man to perform in this world is to develop a heavenly personality, one which is fit to be lodged in Paradise, so that he may gain entrance to the eternal Paradise in the Hereafter. The present world is not meant for building a paradise: it is meant rather for building a heavenly personality. In this world, the building of a heavenly personality is the work to which man must devote himself. The Quran says: "It is for the like of this that all should strive."(37:61)

From Stones to the Quran

In the course of our conversation, a Kashmiri Muslim once said: “We have travelled a long way from October 1989 to October 2011. Formerly, we used to throw stones at the soldiers. Now, we present them with the Quran.” These words tell us of the new revolution commencing in Kashmir. It is a sign of a new beginning. When a healthy process sets in in history, it goes on uninterruptedly until it reaches its destination.

The words of the Kashmiri Muslim denote that earlier the Muslims in the valley were living in a state of unawareness. Now they have learnt to live in a state of awareness. Kashmiri Muslims at first regarded others as their rivals. Now they have come to regard them as *madu*. The Kashmiri Muslims never used to stop short of violence, but now they have discovered the secret of living in peace. Having adopted a satanic culture earlier, the Kashmiri Muslims have now decided to follow the culture of the angels.

What is satanic culture? When God created Adam, He told Satan to acknowledge man. Satan refused to do so on the pretext of a self-styled excuse but the angels, in accordance with the command of God, immediately acknowledged Adam. It is as if Satan threw stones at Adam, while the angels heeded the command of God.

This is the test of man in this world. Those who throw stones at others have failed in the test, while those who obey the word of God and welcome others, have been successful, for they have trodden the path of the angels.

This new decision by the Muslims of Kashmir is the beginning of a new phase for Kashmir. It is the declaration of the dawn of a bright morning following upon a dark night.

The Power of the Quran

The Quran is a book which conquers hearts. There are a great number of examples in history of the Quran bringing about a revolution in individuals or groups with its ideological power. The Quran is the book of God. It is this holy authorship which has produced in the Quran the capacity to conquer man, who is God's creature. One example of this is recorded in the history of Egypt. When the

Muslims of the first phase entered Egypt, the Egyptians at that time spoke the Coptic language and practiced idol worship. Under the influence of the Quran, they not only changed their religion, but they also adopted the language of the Quran.

A British Egyptologist, Sir Arthur Keith, puts this development in a nutshell when he says: "The Egyptians were conquered not by the sword, but by the Quran."

The Quran once again can play this effective role, provided that the believers in the Quran abandon non-Quranic activities and convey the peaceful message of the Quran to the world.

The Spring of Islam

On a visit to Kashmir in June 1989, I was reminded by a Kashmiri of how I had once said at a meeting in Srinagar that I could envision the spring of Islam in Kashmir. I had not made this remark in view of the actuality of Kashmir but rather in terms of its potential.

Certain unwise leaders have caused a flare-up of negative feeling in the Kashmiris and have then engaged them in emotional politics. But this has never been in line with the actual temperament of the Kashmiris, who are by nature a peace-loving people. If the Kashmiris can be given right guidance, then certainly the 'autumn' will be replaced by 'spring'. The hot air of violence will give way to the cool, pleasant air of peace. Here, once again, political Islam will be replaced by Rabbani Islam.

There is full potential for unleashing a *darwah* revolution in Kashmir, but this potential cannot become a reality on its own. As such, what is required is that the peaceful teachings of Islam should be spread in this region. A movement of intellectual re-engineering should be launched to bring about awareness among the people. They have to be made to understand that hatred and violence are not an option for them. Their only option is love and peace. Therein lies for them success in this world and the next.

The Dream of Kashmir

In August, 2008 a young Muslim from Delhi went to Kashmir, where he stayed for three weeks. During his stay he kept a diary to record his daily experiences. When he came back from Kashmir, he showed me the following entry in his diary: On August 4, 2008 I

stayed for one night in a students' hostel in Kashmir, where I shared a room with one of the students. When I woke up in the morning, this student told me he had had a dream relating to the monthly *Al-Risala*. He said 'I saw an old man with a grey beard. He was not educated, but was crying out loudly, asking repeatedly to be enrolled as a member of the Al- Risala. In this dream, it appeared as if the old man symbolized the soul of Kashmir. The soul of Kashmir was screaming out that it was sick of the negative thoughts that were being spread across the valley. It totally disapproved of this and said, "Spread the monthly Al-Risala and its positive thoughts instead."' "

The militant movement started in October 1989 in Kashmir, during which Kashmir suffered immeasurable losses of life and property. The self-styled Jihad brought to Kashmir nothing but destruction.

Now there is only one way to rectify matters, and that is to spread constructive thinking in Kashmir. Only the message which has been repeatedly conveyed in the monthly *Al-Risala* can bring back normal life to Kashmir. Anything other than this can spell only death and destruction. The so-called Kashmir militant movement may benefit certain leaders, but Kashmir and the Kashmiri people have nothing to gain from it. Now, the final hour has come to review this whole situation. Emotionalism must be abandoned in favour of realism.

Dawah Thinking

A certain Kashmiri Muslim who is associated with our dawah mission, told us over the phone that on September 23, 2010, a programme had been organized by the government with the theme, 'Public Interaction'. Senior Officers of the Indian army and local Muslims were present on this occasion. The chief guests were Mr Gurdeep Singh, General Commanding Officer (G.C.O) and Brigadier Anil Pandey. This member of our mission said that, a Kashmiri Muslim, who attended this function, criticized the government for having commercialized the problem of Kashmir. He maintained that the concerned persons were only engaged in political trading in the name of Kashmir. Upon hearing this, the member of our mission who was present on the occasion said to the complaining Muslim, 'We have also started fruitful trading' (as per the Quran, 61:10-11). After saying this, he and his companions started handing out the English translation of the Quran and other *dawah* literature as gifts to those present. They gave copies of the English translation of *The Prophet of Peace* and other such books to General Gurdeep Singh and Brigadier Anil Pandey. General Gurdeep Singh later made the observation in his speech that in recent years, the Kashmiris had staged a great agitation on the issue of Quran burning. Consequently, in its wake, 17 youths had been killed. Then General Gurdeep Singh took the Quran in his hand and said, "You engage in violence in the name of the Quran. Now tell me which verse of the Quran commands you to engage in violence?" At this, the entire Muslim audience remained silent.

When one is oriented towards *dawah*, one will avail of all such opportunities to do *dawah* work. On such occasions, one will gift the book of God to God's servants. On the contrary, one who is not so oriented will consider all such *dawah* opportunities merely as a stage in "politics". Hence he will bring only the gift of hatred not of love.

The Modern Age: the Age of the *Madu*

There was no concept of global tourism in ancient times. For in those times the means of travel and communication we have nowadays simply did not exist. But now we live in the modern age of communication, and with an in-depth knowledge of geography,

people are able to undertake journeys on a large scale. The whole world has, in fact, become a global village.

From the point of view of *darwah*, easy access to facilities for travel has facilitated its performance. It is not just the passengers who have become mobile, it is the *madu* who are on the move everywhere. Prior to the age of modern communications, there was an unbridgeable distance between the *dayee* and the *madu*. Now with speedy transport systems, the *madu* himself is coming to the *dayee*. And for a variety of reasons, many gaps have been bridged between the *dayee* and the *madu*. In this respect, we can aptly call the modern age the age of the *madu*.

While this state of affairs prevails all over the world, it is more common in tourist spots. One of these is the State of Jammu and Kashmir. It is estimated that the number of tourists in J&K is almost equivalent to its population. Therefore, this State has a special opportunity to communicate the divine message to its visitors. The easiest way is to give them copies of the Quran and other books on Islam. The tourists, that is, the *madu*, are approachable in every part of the State. If the spirit of *darwah* is alive in the Kashmiri Muslims, they will find innumerable opportunities for *darwah* work in their own immediate vicinity.

One of the two best things

The mission of calling people to God is a divine mission. The Quran describes such a mission as “one of the two best things.” (9:52). That is, such a mission is destined to achieve “one of the two best things”. The first “best thing” is ideological, while the “second best” is practical. In other words, the true divine mission will surely meet with one success or the other – either success in *darwah* work, or success in bringing about a revolution.

In present times, in all those places which have been the hub of the culture of violence in the name of Jihad, people are duty-bound to make every effort to rectify the situation, that is, to make those who stoop to violence aware of their error, to call upon them to shun violence and adopt a peaceful course, to tell them that their actual duty is to convey to people the message of truth and not to engage in confrontation with them; to impress upon them the fact that their duty, being believers, is to treat non-Muslims as *madu* and not as enemies; and wherever they live, to work towards promulgating the

culture of peace, and not that of hatred and rivalry. Such a campaign is necessary not only in Kashmir but also in other Muslim areas.

We can start this kind of campaign with conviction, for such a campaign is destined for success. For those who engage in such a mission are destined to achieve one of two objectives; either they succeed in making people accept their message, so that they are willing to make practical changes in their lives, or they manage to convey their message to people and receive a great reward from God for this work. This is what has been called in the Quran one of the two best things, that is, either success in *dawah* work in the ideological sense or success in bringing about a revolution in the lives of the people in the practical sense.

***Madu*, not ‘others’ -- not ‘they’**

People generally divide human beings into ‘we and they’, but this is not the way of Islam. The way of Islam is to look at non-Muslim human beings as *madu*. When we divide people into ‘we and they’, “we” become objects of love, while “they” become objects of hatred. This is the real problem of present-day Muslims. They have forgotten the reality that ideologically they are *dayees* and all other human beings are their *madu*. No one is “they”; all human beings must become “we”, i.e. their own. Muslims regard other nations as their rivals, whereas if they regarded other nations as *madu*, they would feel that all human beings are their own. Once the Prophet, seeing the funeral of a Jew, observed: “Jews are also human beings like us.” (*Sahih al- Bukhari*, Hadith No.1312).

If Muslims adopted this Sunnah of the Prophet, they would look upon all as their own. The Kashmiris would find the Hindus to be their own, the Arabs would find the Israelis to be their own, the Muslims residing in Western countries would find the Christians to be their own.

Regarding others as their own means becoming their well-wishers. A businessman sees everyone as his customer. Due to such thinking, friendly behavior comes naturally to every businessman. Similarly, if Muslims regarded themselves as *dayees* and others as *madu*, a feeling of well-wishing would be engendered in them. A friendly culture would be fostered among them for all human beings, as a result of which their worldly

interaction would also be set right and, in the Hereafter, they would be held deserving of God's blessings.

The Power of Ideology

In 1917 a socialist revolution was brought about in Russia. Prior to this, Russia had been ruled by monarchs called Czars. The communist party at that time waged an ideological war against the ruling Czar, which spread rapidly all over the country. Britain regarded this as a dangerous trend. Therefore, a British delegation, headed by colonel FM Bailey, was sent to Russia. This delegation, in the guise of a group of merchants, reviewed the situation in Russia, and on its return presented a report to the British government, one of the sentences of which was as follows:

“Communist ideas are far more dangerous than the entire army of the Czar.”

There are a number of events of this kind in history which show that the power of ideology is far greater than military power. The history of Islam is a clear example of this reality. In ancient history the success of Islam has always been attributable to its ideology rather than to the sword or military power.

For instance, in the thirteenth century, the onslaught by the Tartars vanquished the Abbasid empire. This onslaught was so severe that the military power of the Muslims proved totally ineffective against it. From that moment onwards the ideological power of Islam grew in strength, and within half a century the majority of the Tartars had accepted Islam; the erstwhile enemies of Islam then became the friends of Islam.

This ideological power of Islam has been described thus by an orientalist: “The religion of the Muslims has conquered where their arms had failed.”

The Call to Truth

Bearing witness to God's oneness is the key which unlocks the door to Islam. When a person discovers the truth of Islam, and when this feeling is awakened within him that on the Day of Resurrection he will appear before God as a Muslim, he utters these words: 'I bear witness that there is no god but the One God, I bear witness that Muhammad is God's servant and His messenger.'

There are two aspects to these words: Shahadah and applied shahadah. The primary meaning of Shahadah is that which relates to the self. The individual declares that the Creator and Lord of this universe is only one God, and he becomes a witness to this higher reality. Applied Shahadah is another aspect of this reality. That is, making people aware of this reality by making an effort to convey to people the truth which he has discovered. It is this task which is called *darwah*, that is, calling people to God. When *darwah* work is performed in the ultimate sense, the other name for this is 'shahadah' or 'witnesses'.

Calling people to God is not something separate from faith (*imaan*). When a person truly finds faith, he naturally desires that the truth he has discovered should come to the knowledge of others, and the purpose of life that he has discovered should become a discovery for others too, and the door to the blessing of this world and the Hereafter that has been opened to him, should also be opened to others. The truth is that if shahadah is a matter of personal discovery, then applied shahadah is a matter of including others in this discovery.

The Prophet of Islam gave a historic address, making his companions witness on the occasion of Hajjat ul-Wida on the plains of Arafat. The Prophet's address was directly meant for his companions and indirectly for the entire Muslim *ummah*. The Prophet said in this address: "God has sent me as a blessing for the whole world, so convey my message of blessing on my behalf to all human beings."

These words of the Prophet of Islam have continued to reverberate throughout world history, reaching all Muslims across the centuries. Similarly, it addresses the people of Kashmir: "O Muslims of Kashmir, fulfill my mission and be my supporters in

conveying my message to all human beings.” Will the Muslims of Kashmir give a response to the call of the Prophet of Islam?

Shah Hamadan Mission

In the State of Jammu and Kashmir, Mir Syed Shahabuddin Ali Hamadani (d.1384) holds the position of the spiritual founder of Kashmir. The Muslims of Kashmir generally call him Amir Kabir. He came to Kashmir from Iran in 1379. The present religious ideology of Kashmir is largely the result of his *dawah* efforts, for the people of Kashmir followed his mission to the fullest extent. But, in 1947, in the wake of the revolution on the subcontinent, a reactionary political movement was launched in Kashmir. Subsequent events have shown that this political movement only proved destructive for the Kashmiris. However, there is one positive aspect to this and that is, that the negative outcome of aggressive politics has proved to be a form of shock treatment for the Kashmiris. Now the Kashmiri Muslims are thinking of returning to their past, by opting for the target of peaceful *dawah* like that carried out by Shah Hamdan. This new thinking may be seen as a revival of the mission of Shah Hamadan.

Mir Sayyed Ali Hamadani, born in Iran, was a contemporary of the Iranian emperor Taimur Lang(d.1405 AD) . For some reason, Shah Taimur became angry with him and ordered him to leave Iran. Now Amir Kabir, having a number of followers, could have launched a movement in opposition to the king but he totally shunned any kind of political confrontation. Instead of this, he left Hamadan, his home town, with 40 of his companions and travelled to Kashmir via Afghanistan, reaching there in 1379.

The programme of Amir Kabir was neither made in reaction to Shah Taimur's orders, nor did it come under the influence of the immediate circumstances of the Kashmiri Muslims. At that time Kashmir was ruled by a Muslim King, Sultan Qutbuddin. His rule was flawed by many ideological and practical evils, which Amir Kabir sought to rectify by writing spiritual letters to him to draw his attention to the factors in the situation prevailing there, which went against the spirit of Islam. He did not launch any movement to oust the ruler from power and replace him with a just ruler. Amir Kabir instead rose above all negative factors and formulated a programme based on his own positive thinking. This was a totally silent and practical venture, to further which Amir Kabir and his companions spread throughout different parts of the State and began peacefully conveying the message of Islam among the inhabitants. For this

they learnt the Kashmiri language and, adjusting to the prevailing circumstances, they took pains to find a place in this alien land. In this way, leading a life of patience and forbearance, they continued their peaceful *dawah* mission.

Discussing this with an educated Kashmiri Muslim, I told him that the right path for the Kashmiris to follow was to recall the peaceful *dawah* mission of Shah Hamadan in Kashmir. If Shah Hamadan achieved extraordinary success in Kashmir, it was because *dawah* was his sole mission. Many kinds of problems existed in the times of Shah Hamadan, both political and non-political. But, ignoring all these problems, he made *dawah ilallah* (calling people to God) his sole target. Consequently, he achieved tremendous success in Kashmir.

This Kashmiri I was in conversation with, said that a large number of non-Muslims formerly lived in Kashmir, whereas today only Muslims lived there. Then to whom should they direct their *dawah* efforts? I said that Kashmir afforded opportunities for international *dawah* work. A case in point was the Indian army which was there in Kashmir in full force. All of its members were in the position of being *madu*. Besides, as is well known, Kashmir is a tourist spot, and therefore receives tourists from all over the world. Furthermore, a number of Hindu Pundits are still living there. Then a large number of pilgrims visit its ancient mandirs (shrines) the whole year round. All these people are *madu* for us. If *dawah* consciousness is awakened within one, one will find that there are *madu* all over Kashmir in large numbers.

Similarly, there is another field of *dawah* work in Kashmir— that of Muslims who are suffering from intellectual discontent regarding Islam, due to their exposure to modern thought. These people also have the status of *madu* for you. For non-Muslims, Islam has to be made a matter of discovery, while for Muslims Islam has to be made a matter of re-discovery.

It is a fact that the Muslims of Kashmir are twice blessed. Firstly, Kashmir is called Jannat Nazir (similar to Paradise), which means that God has given the Kashmiris the paradise of this world. Secondly, God has sent to Kashmir *madus* from all over the world in order that the Kashmiris may secure the paradise of the next world by performing *dawah* work. The present world is the world of the printing press. This, in present times has rendered *dawah* work extremely simple. The translation of the Quran, and other books on Islam are all available in print. You can keep these books with you and give them to people on all occasions. Similarly, use all opportunities for the peaceful propagation of Islam, especially, by distributing the

translation of the Quran, so that you may receive the reward for your *dawah* work from God. Shah Hamadan achieved success in Kashmir through *dawah*. Now, once again, you can achieve success in *dawah* work in Kashmir.

Not a Case of Non-fulfillment of a Promise

After the death of the Prophet of Islam in Madinah differences arose between the Emigrants (from Makkah) and the Ansar (the people of Madinah) on the issue of Khilafat. The stand of the Ansar was: one leader from amongst the emigrants and one from amongst the Ansar. Finally Umar's suggestion was accepted. It was to the effect that they (the emigrants) would be holding the political office while the Ansar would be the advisors. But later on it was not possible to put this promise into practice. Umar Faruq in his later years once observed: we had promised the Ansar that in the matters of Khilafat we would make the Ansar our advisors, but we failed to do so. (*Musnad Al-Bazzar*, Hadith No. 291)

It was not a case of breaking a promise; it was rather a matter relating to collective wisdom. It is desirable in Islam that a promise should be fulfilled, but this command relates to individual cases. In individual matters one individual has the power to fulfill his promise without any obstacle, therefore it is incumbent upon an individual to fulfill his promise at all costs. He should never go back on his words on any pretext. But the case of social matters is different from this. A promise related to political and social life is not a promise in the general sense. Since, in reality, social matters are not in a uniform state, different kinds of demands come to bear upon the making of the relevant decisions. As such, promises of this kind can never be absolute in nature. They change with each new situation. It is, therefore, essential for both the parties to understand the demands of the situation. Instead of insisting on the initial wording of the promise, they should be willing to cooperate in terms of the changed situation. Social matters are always governed by practical wisdom rather than ideal wisdom. This is the demand of Islam as well as the demand of reason.

From Collision Course to Acceptance

Two recent news items have been reported in the media, one titled: "Pakistan may junk Kashmir issue temporarily", indicates that Pakistani leadership has temporarily put the Kashmir agenda on hold (*Times of India*, 27 Feb, 2012).

The other news item relates to the secret high security around the house of Osama bin Ladin in Abbottabad (Pakistan). On May 3, 2011 America had Osama bin Ladin killed in a targeted attack. Now, according to the news published in the *Times of India*, dated February 27, 2012 (p. 18) the Pakistani government itself had the residential complex of Osama bin Ladin demolished on 25 Feb 2012. The remains of this demolished house were taken to some distant place.

Both the news items show that the violent movement started in Kashmir in the name of Jihad has reached its natural end. In news item, the words 'for the time being' are purely diplomatic. In the true sense, they only mean that Pakistan has permanently abandoned this futile issue. It has finally decided that even the signs of violent struggle have to be obliterated from Pakistan. A case in point is the demolition of the residence of Osama bin Ladin in Pakistan.

The so-called Kashmir war was not the voice of the Kashmiri people: it was a war which was totally exported from Pakistan. Now Pakistan, under the compulsion of the situation, states that it has ceased its Kashmir agenda. In such a situation, there is neither any justification for nor any possibility of continuing the so-called Kashmir war. Now the Kashmiris do not have a number of options before them. Now there is only one course for them to follow and that is to put an end to the use of weapons and the continuance of militant politics and to build their future through a peaceful struggle.

It has been conceded that the war of Kashmir waged by Pakistan has been entirely counterproductive. In this war Pakistan has lost much but has failed to achieve its goal. For Pakistan to disengage from the destructive war, a decision based on realism shall have to be taken. What Pakistan most urgently needs is a change in thinking; that is, to abandon negative thinking and opt for positive thinking. As such it is a must for Pakistan to openly declare that waging war on the Kashmir front was a fatal misadventure. Without openly admitting this, Pakistan is not going to benefit in any real sense. Admission of one's mistake would start off positive thinking in Pakistan. The people of Pakistan had become the victims of unrealistic thinking due to their negative psychology. A declaration of this kind would give them a new lead. They would start experiencing the benefits of positive thinking. Their national policy, which has so far been based on unrealistic thinking, would then be based on realistic thinking. If this could happen, it would without doubt be a revolutionary event for Pakistan as well as for its allies.

Not Committing Another Mistake

Yousuf Raza Gilani, the Prime Minister of Pakistan, made a statement in Islamabad on February 6, 2012, to the effect that 'Kashmir can no longer afford any other war with India for Pakistan. He said that he had fought four wars with India for Kashmir (1948, 1965, 1971, 1999) but that had yielded no gain, and that the issue of Kashmir can be settled only through negotiation.

This statement made by Prime Minister of Pakistan, reported by both the print and electronic media is adding one mistake to another. Going to war was Pakistan's first mistake. The second mistake is that of offering to enter into negotiations after vitiating the relationship of mutual trust to the ultimate extent. War is not a simple event. War is a step of the utmost negativity, almost always resulting in an increase in feelings of hatred and a widening of the distance between the two sides. Furthermore, a region which had earlier been of purely geographical significance, now becomes a prestige issue. And when the result of war takes the form of unilateral defeat, it only adds greater conviction to the stand adopted by the victor.

The results of these futile wars of the past have now become a stark reality: the normal atmosphere that prevailed between the two countries prior to the wars has now been totally destroyed. In such a situation there is no further possibility of negotiations bringing about any fruitful result. A normal atmosphere is a must for negotiation; but such an environment no longer exists.

The truth is that, owing to the unwise policies adopted by Pakistan, the path of negotiation is no longer an option. Now what Pakistan must do is to cast the issue of Kashmir into oblivion. It should plan the building of Pakistan without Kashmir. It should erect the edifice of Pakistan's progress on what it already has in its possession. This is the only wise course for Pakistan to follow.

Peace and Progress

A religious scholar of repute who lives in Islamabad (Pakistan) came to India in February 2012, at which time he visited many Indian cities. In the course of his travels, he had the opportunity to observe Indian Muslims from close quarters. When he met me on February 7, 2012,

he expressed his astonishment at how peaceful a country India was and how great the progress Indian Muslims were making. For the Pakistani scholar this was totally unexpected, because through the Pakistani media, he had come to regard Indian Muslims as suffering in every respect, having neither freedom nor any opportunity to make any progress, etc.

The truth is that progress is not related to carving out a separate block for the Muslims, or being highly vocal in launching movements in the name of Nizam-e- Mustafa. Such movements are totally irrelevant to progress. Only two things are required for progress—peace and freedom, both of which exist in India. These are the things that have given the opportunity to Indian Muslims to make progress.

Progress is possible only in normal circumstances, and such circumstances are called peace. The secret of securing peace, in one word, is “status quoism”. Those who want to make progress should never adopt the way of so-called revolutionary movements. They should accept the status quo for whatever it is. They should make peaceful use of the available opportunities, and leave all other things for the future.

Another name for this constructive method is wise planning. Any result-oriented goal can be achieved in this world through wise planning, and not through movements driven by emotion. Emotional politics only exacerbates the situation; it is not going to yield any positive result. The observations of the Pakistani visitor to India should be taken seriously by the people of Kashmir.

The Double Standard of the Leaders

Osama bin Laden, who was killed in Abbottabad in Pakistan on May 3, 2011, had always figured as a dire enemy of the West, and the greatest champion of violent activities directed against the West in the name of jihad. Such was his character as a leader. But his character as a father was totally different.

Zakaria al- Sadah, brother-in-law of Osama bin Laden, stated in an interview with the *Sunday Times* (London) which was reproduced in the *Times of India*, New Delhi, February 14, 2012, p.20, that he (Osama bin Laden) had told his own children and grandchildren, ‘Go to Europe and America and get a good education, and live a good

life. You have to study, live in peace and don't do what I am doing or what I have done.'

This is not just an individual case. The same is true of all Muslim leaders of the present times. They teach others to hate the West; they lead the children of their community to the path of violence in the name of jihad, but they want their own children to receive a modern education and settle in Western countries, and lead peaceful lives there. Giving any advice to such leaders will yield no result, for they will never change their stand. But those who support their leaders in ignorance should adopt the way of wisdom. They should never listen to the emotional speeches they make. They should be guided by their reason, and adopt the way of peaceful construction for their children.

The Loss of Emotional Politics

In the wake of 1947, the state of Kashmir became a controversial issue between India and Pakistan. Now after innumerable losses, Pakistan has adopted a wiser policy on this issue, i.e. the Pakistani government has unanimously decided that India should be given the status of the Most-Favoured Nation. This development has been extensively covered in the media (*Hindustan Times*, New Delhi, March 1, 2012, p.15)

According to this report, India had given the status of Most-Favoured Nation to Pakistan in 1996. In response to this, Pakistan should have followed suit, but Pakistani leaders delayed doing so. They were afraid that the Pakistani people, being sensitive about Kashmir, would react strongly against such a stand.

There is a great lesson for any leadership in this incident. Leaders should never on any issue be guided by their emotions. Adopting a high-profile stance is a very unwise approach for any leadership. For when the public is once provoked by emotional speeches, it loses all sense of realism; however the situation deteriorates, they are not ready to make a U-turn. Their thinking is – they will shed their last drop of blood, but they will not be willing to make any adjustment.

This kind of thinking is anathema to the progress of a nation. In social life, emotionalism never succeeds. The whole equilibrium of life depends upon successful adjustment between one's own thinking and the thinking of the other party. Matters in social life are not decided on a unilateral basis. They are rather decided on a multilateral basis. It is a fact that in social matters, allowing emotion

to direct politics poses an extremely serious obstacle to peaceful living. In social life, matters have to be solved by making concessions to the opposite party, or they are never solved at all.

No Unprincipled Stand

An unprincipled stand should never be adopted in controversial matters, for such a stand inevitably proves counter-productive.

Pakistan provides a recent example in this case, having adopted an unprincipled stand in its “war” with India. It gave weapons to non-governmental organizations, and trained them so that they might wage a proxy war with India. This was done in Pakistan on a large scale. There was a general awareness of this fact in Pakistan. But, according to my knowledge, no individual or organization has condemned it publicly. No one performed the duty of *Nahi anil Munkar* (forbidding the evil) in this matter. Now after a period of 60 years, this policy has proved destructive for Pakistan. The media have borne witness to this on innumerable occasions.

This course of action was against all principles. According to established principle, the use of weaponry is permissible only for an established government. On no pretext are NGO’s allowed to take up arms. So far as NGO’s are concerned, they have only one of two options: either they confine themselves to working towards achieving their goals in an entirely peaceful sphere or they opt to remain silent. Apart from this, the taking up of arms or engaging in violence means a third option for them. And in this case going for a third option is a crime in itself; it is not at all an act of reform.

In social life, one should be extremely cautious in taking any serious step and only such steps should be taken as are rationally justified. Man should take only lawful steps but if taking lawful steps is not possible, then he should refrain from taking any steps whatsoever. He should rather pray to God to rectify the situation.

Non-Islam in the name of Islam

In March 2012 a Hindu extremist leader on a visit to a prominent Indian city, made a speech in which he said that the Kabah in Makkah had in actual fact been a mandir with idols, but that Muslims had occupied it and turned it into a mosque. Muslims found this speech so outrageous that they marched in a procession through the streets,

shouting provocative slogans. Predictably, the situation escalated to the extent of causing Hindu-Muslim riots. People suffered greatly in terms of the loss of life and property.

This reaction on the part of the Muslims was a wholly communal one, and had nothing to do with Islam. Had these Muslims been truly religious, they would have remembered that when the Prophet of Islam started the mission of monotheism in 610 AD, there were several hundreds of idols in the Kabah, but the Prophet was not provoked by this, and continued to call people, peacefully, to accept the message of monotheism.

In such a case, bearing in mind this example set by the Prophet, Muslims should refrain from being provoked by such baseless speeches, and should simply ignore them. They should rather take it as an opportunity to convey to people the message of Islam, just as the Prophet did.

This is an example which shows how present-day Muslims are engaged in non-prophetic activities, ostensibly in the name of following the way of the Prophet. They launch such movements in the name of Islam, as have nothing to do with Islam. Such Muslims must learn that the matter is not going to end in this world itself. They will be questioned in the Hereafter as to how they invented a religion which God had not revealed to His Prophet.

Violent agitation is, without doubt, against the spirit of Islam. Its instigators are never going to receive God's blessings for such action.. This is the reason why such agitations in present times only aggravate bad situations rather than improve them.

The People of Kashmir on the Day of Resurrection

During one of my journeys to Kashmir I came to know of a significant incident concerning one Mirza Mohd Azam, who worked as a forester in Jammu. It is as follows: whenever he went home after his day's work (See *Al Risala*, July, 1978) he would take some sweets or other eatables for his children. One day in September 1975, for some reason, he reached home without taking anything for his children. As usual, the children gathered around him when he arrived. When they did not receive anything from their father, one of his children, a 6-year old called Arshad Mahmud Tariq, said in his local dialect: "Agar tusan asan waste kujh ni anda phir tus kumhane waste aaye?" (If you did not bring anything for us, why did you come here?) The

forester was shocked at what his son said. He began to think: Soon I will leave to appear before God. What if God says: "If you have not brought anything for Me, why did you come here?" Then what answer would I have to this question? (p.22)

In this true story there is a great lesson for the people of Kashmir. Kashmir is a region to which people flock from the outside world—tourists from the west and other parts of the world, Hindu pilgrims, Indian soldiers, etc. Their total number is put at about 30 lakhs annually. These people are like *madus* sent to them by God. They come to the people of Kashmir in order that the latter may convey to them, the message of God and tell them of His creation plan.

This is an extremely delicate situation. The time for Doomsday to come is not far off: then all the people of Kashmir will be brought before God on the Day of Resurrection. If at that time, God asks them -- in the context of His having sent to them such large numbers of people, who were unaware of the truth, and their having His book, the Quran in their possession -- what they had done to make those people aware of the truth, and if the people of Kashmir have no positive answer to this question, and then God asks them: "When you did not do My work, then why did you come here?" --- Then what will be the plight of the people of Kashmir? This state of affairs demands that they think over this question more than anyone else, and without a moment's delay, begin to perform *dawah* work in order that the message of God may reach everyone before they die.

The Valley of Peace

There is beautiful natural scenery all over Kashmir—green trees, flowering shrubs, springs, lake and flowing rivers, and with the chirping of birds, and the abundance of fruits and flowers, the whole of Kashmir seems like a garden. This environment of nature is calling out in silent language that here there is no room for hatred or enmity. Engaging in the culture of violence here is totally against the creation plan of God and something which goes against it, can never meet with success in this world of God. In the winter of 2012, Kashmir had a snowfall which was much heavier than usual. Snowfall is a beautiful natural phenomenon. Someone has rightly remarked that it looks like spiritual rain. On February 13, 2012, a Kashmiri Muslim sent the following sms to one of the Cps members: "Kashmir has

become white due to snowfall today. White is the symbol of peace. This is the lesson from nature, and violation of the law of nature always leads to destruction.”

This message by a Kashmiri Muslim is like a call from the soul of Kashmir. The soul of Kashmir is calling out in the language of nature that Kashmir, by its very creation, is a valley of peace. Kashmir has been selected by its Creator to convey the message of peace to the world. It is a cradle of nature from which God’s servants may receive the message of peace and humanity. This is the actual role of Kashmir. The secret of success and progress for the people of Kashmir lies in their recognizing this role bestowed upon them by God, and then performing their role in the fullest sense.



THE DAWN OVER KASHMIR

MAULANA WAHIDUDDIN KHAN

It is an incontrovertible fact that a new age has set in Kashmir and could rightly be described as the 'Dawn over Kashmir'. This development in Kashmir is not attributable to any external cause but is rather the result of fresh thinking on the part of the Kashmiri people themselves.

The law of nature and the experiences of history tell us that, in this world of God, all destructive activities come to a dead end, whereas there is no end to constructive initiatives. According to the law of nature, this destructive initiative has reached its limit. Events testify to a new journey having begun in the history of Kashmir. And this constructive journey will certainly continue until it reaches its ultimate destination.

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