

Hon. Minister, Your Excellency, Brothers in Islam,

We were reminded by the distinguished President of this function that this is a meeting convened to commemorate the revered memory of a distinguished son of Islam. I hadn't the honour and privilege of meeting him during his life-time, but the amount of work he had done for the rejuvenation of the material and intellectual life of the community of Muslims is so phenomenally great that my not having met him in flesh and blood is of no consequence. Indeed, such persons never die. Those who labour in the name of God to radiate light in the minds of humanity cannot die; they live far more effectively than the so-called persons who pretend to serve but, in fact, are not.

A brief resume of his life has been recapitulated ~~by~~ with masterly eloquence by the distinguished President this evening. I have no intention whatever of going over the facts of his life, his achievements and his ideals because, I assume, those of you who are present here are aware of them.

In delivering the first memorial lecture, I notice, first of all, that you have paid a compliment to my country Pakistan. You have many distinguished scholars in the field of Islam in various parts of the world and I am cognisant of the fact that I am not worth the dust of their feet. But, nevertheless, probably because the Muslims of this country have love for the people of Pakistan, you have singled me out and paid me a tribute which I appreciate most sincerely, with gratitude, for the honour you have bestowed on me.

The second point I would like to make as briefly as to what I am going to say, is that it is a good thing that we should

celebrate the praises of persons such as these, to honour those who are in need of honour. Nevertheless, it is not the magnificence of Mr. Azeez that is involved. We respect great men. ~~But~~, ^{By} gaining inspiration from them we should be able to produce greater men; produce a stimulus to the rising community of men and women in Islam to be able to rival the values that have been achieved, the remarkable consumption of energy in the sphere of rejuvenating the intellectual and moral life for which Mr. Azeez was responsible. We do celebrate these events so that younger men and women would realize them, live them and, may be, rise still higher and become better men and women in this country.

When it comes to the choice of ^a subject on which I shall speak to you, what I ask myself is a very simple question. What was the distinguishing and most paramount feature in the life of Mr. Azeez? What was it that gave him the (inspiration) ~~motivation~~? What constituted the background in terms of his struggle which we all love and respect? The answer is, it is the inspiration he gained from Islam, from the personality of the Prophet of Islam, which was his main driving force which he followed and for which he is remembered. If that be so, what better subject to talk on on this occasion than Islam itself? So, I have chosen a subject, namely, the simple question: "What is Islam?" What does it mean? What are its distinguishing features? In what particular respects Islam makes an effective contribution to the civilization and culture of the human race? We know that it is pin-pointed on some essential features of Islam. I shall be relying on one of the verses in the Qur'an which I read to you, the first Ruku! of Surah Jumma.

In the course of what follows tonight, I shall be able to analyze what God says about Islam rather than quote 'A', 'B', 'C' or 'D' with regard to what Islam is. I would like to quote the verse of the Qur'an which forms the very element of the author, the Creator and Master who has revealed the Book to us through the personality of the Prophet, ﷺ of Islam. The foundation of Islam is the Book, the Qur'an and it is in writing. It is not a set of Codes. It is authentic. There is no dispute raised by any so-called critics of Islam with regard to the text; that it is authentic; that the word we see today is in its original form. There is no possibility of alteration and our faith is in that Book. God says about the Prophets:

هُوَ الَّذِي بَعَثَ فِي الْأُمِّيِّينَ رَسُولًا مِّنْهُمْ

"I am He who sent a Messenger or Prophet to the unlettered (أُمِّيِّينَ) one who is from among them."

هُوَ الَّذِي بَعَثَ فِي الْأُمِّيِّينَ رَسُولًا مِّنْهُمْ

Roughly translated it would mean:

"He it is Who has sent amongst the unlettered an Apostle from among themselves"

to whom no Book had gone before Islam. Before Islam Books had gone to the Christians, to the Jews, to which there are references in the Qur'an, from time to time. They were brought ^{by} Messengers of God as a mercy from God to humanity. But the Arabs, from among whom the Prophet Muhammad is raised, ^{are} described as 'Ummyyoon' because no heavenly message had been sent to them before.

I will come to this point in greater detail later on. For the time being, let me confine myself to this saying. God says he has sent down from among these Arabs who are described as 'Ummiyyoon', who have had no revelation before. What for?

يَتْلُوا عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِهِ

That is the most important function of the prophet. His function is that he recites to us the verses from God. The Prophet is the channel through whom flows the revelation. That revelation does not come from the brain or reflection of the Prophet, but it comes from on high. He utilizes a channel of communication. Just as you use a telephone and talk through the telephone, you know it is not the telephone that talks, it is you who talk through the telephone. The telephone is a channel. The Prophet too, similarly, is a channel. He recites the verses of the Qur'an. He is the harbinger of God's verses.

يَتْلُوا عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِهِ

I want you to get hold of this most fundamental and distinctive feature of Islam. If you do not get hold of this you can never understand Islam. What is it? If the Prophet is just one wild man amongst other wild men, then like any other wild men, the Prophet can also make mistakes. But a prophet is not to be considered in that light at all. He is not one wild man amongst other wild men, he is an instrument of the Divine word. God's word cannot go by default. This is what is attested by the Human Rights Charter.

My eye can see a beautiful picture with all the colours. I can see you but my ear will not be able to comprehend your presence. If some musician were to sing or if somebody were to

sing, then my ears communicate this message of which I know nothing. In the same human organism there is a specialization of functions. What the eye can see, the ears can hear. What the ears can hear, I know nothing about.

So also, in this whole organism of humanity, God selects some person whom he makes the vehicle for the communication of the Divine Truth, Guidance and Capacity which are not available to the rest. They are singled out. They are the ones who are utilized by God to communicate his Message to mankind. I think this is a very important idea, a fundamental idea without which Islam cannot possibly be understood.

You cannot sit in judgment over what the Prophet says because what he says does not come from him, it comes from above. It has to be believed implicitly, unconditionally, absolutely. If you believe, that is what is called Iman. You cannot treat this belief lightly. If you do, then you are not taking the first step in the direction of entering the whole of Islam. What the Prophet is meant to relieve is not human thinking or reflection which is capable of being changed, but human beings. But it comes from above, it is a utilization of the Divine Truth. Since God is the Creator we are not qualified to sit in judgment. We must believe it to be true.

I can give an illustration of this idea because ^{most} Muslims are not quite clear about the sanctity of the Divine word. A mother carries a child for nine months in her womb. Suppose you and I can talk to that child in the mother's womb - I think it is impossible, but let us assume we can talk - then I am telling you that these tiny holes will become your eyes and you will be able to see with those eyes, some will be blue, some red, some orange

some brown and some green. But if you interfere with these two tiny holes, you will be born blind. You would not see anything. Suppose we can speak to a child in the womb before birth, do you think the child will be able to understand what you speak? Or to discern colour by being blind? That is the condition of the child in the womb of the mother. For, the use of the eye cannot possibly form the idea what seeing is, what colour is, what being blind is, or what ~~interferes~~ with all this.

I ask you to compare the same condition in relation to the Prophet. When the Prophet is talking to you in terms of revelation, he is talking of a situation outside your own growth because we too are growing -- you and I -- like little children not in the womb of the mother but in the ~~womb~~ of time. We all know the faith into which we will grow, it is the path of God and the Book says 'another life' is waiting for you. That (is life) better, it is more enduring. This life that you think is life is no life at all, it is provincial. It is only 'Mata'un hurur' and the life to come is real. That is what the Prophet says.

Then the question arises, in the situation in which we are (is the) what ~~conception~~ of what the future life is like? How can that life be better? How can it be eternal? We cannot possibly understand. When the Prophet, in fact, talks his position is the same as your position when you are talking to the child who is incapable of understanding what you are talking. You know it, the child does not know. Then, this question was told to you by the Prophet. He told you, "I know the condition, fulfilling of the promise given by God to you that if you do this and fulfil the law, carry out the mandate, avoid indecent things, refuse to do them as Satan is suggesting to you", then a higher life is

waiting for you."

Of course, you can turn round and say, 'I do not understand what is meant by a higher life', you will be entitled to say so. But if you are a believer and have Iman (faith) in what the Prophet said, then you will accept it and say, "No, the Prophet says so". Then there is a full-stop. There is no argument about it. A Muslim can take up a position in relation to the Qur'an and say that what the Qur'an says cannot be contradicted. That is the end of the controversy. This is what the Prophet says. There is no argument. Let us go on to believing them. Then you are taking the first step of Iman in relation to Islam without condition. It is unconditional obedience to the authenticity of the Qur'an, to the word of God. Otherwise, you do not take the first step of implicit obedience to what the Prophet said.

Remember, this was the argument of the Prophet when he started preaching and the Pagan Arabs turned round and told him: "You are only a man like us and there is nothing on your forehead to show that you are a prophet." What was the answer of the Prophet? It ran something like this:

"You have known me for the last 14 years?"

"Yes".

"During those 14 years have I ever spoken an untruth",

"No."

"Have I ever committed a breach of trust",

"No, we called you 'Al-Amin'."

"Suppose, now I tell you that on the other side of the mountain an army is waiting to strike, will you believe me?"

"Yes, we will believe you".

"Then, I am telling you there is a fire waiting to engulf you

and there is a reward also waiting for you depending on your attitude to the Message I deliver to you"?

That is the foundation of Islam.

هُوَ الَّذِي بَعَثَ فِي الْأُمِّيِّينَ رَسُولًا مِّنْهُمْ يَتْلُو عَلَيْهِمُ الْآيَاتِ وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ

and then, through those verses, to do what? Then the Qur'an follows it up with:

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He recites to these people and purifies.

وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ

He makes them pure. How can the Prophet make a man pure?

This is an important question which a Muslim should be reminded of. The first step is, revealed verses have come which the Prophet is called upon to take note of to secure the salvation of humanity, to purify the believers who have believed in him. What you say is authentic, it is what comes from God and we absolutely accept it.

Then it purifies them. What is the methodology and technique in Islam for securing the internal and external purification? Two institutions have been given by Islam which are calculated to purify us. Do you know them? One is prayer. Prayer in Islam has the function of purifying. It is a kind of internal purification. Of course, externally you perform the Wudhu (ablution). Prayer has the effect of purifying.

Prayer aims at keeping you immune from all kinds of foul and indecent deeds. It is not permitted for you to neglect your inner purity. Just as you use tooth paste to clean your teeth or

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soap to clean your face, prayer has been designed in Islam as a technique or a method of purifying you from the dross of the world of corruption. You go five times a day before God and offer him Sajada, a dedication, an affirmation of His purity. As soon as you say "Allahu Akbar", the light of God begins to play. One method employed by Islam to purify us is prayer.

If you were a student of Latiff, he has an illustration to give regarding the function of prayer. If you have a piece of iron and you think you must keep it under water, you cannot do so because it is impossible to keep iron under water. But supposing you were desirous of avoiding the iron from getting rusty and keep it in water, the next course left to you is to take it out periodically, ~~annually~~ oil it and put it back. Oil will prevent the iron from getting rusty. Likewise, we who are engaged in this five-times ritual prayer, to withdraw ourselves away from the world in the presence of God, are also engaged in an oiling process, in an immunizing process. It is like an injection against cholera. Prayer is a spiritual immunisation against physical things which are contagious and unclean, corrupting and staining their intellect. But the point I am trying to make here is, one of the ways in which the Prophet, God and therefore Islam purify us is prayer.

What is the second method? The second method -- those of you who know Arabic will know -- is Zakat. The Arabic word 'Zakat' 'Yuzakkee' is purification, giving of Zakat to purify yourself. You know that blood accumulates in blood streams. If too much blood accumulates in your blood stream you get blood pressure. In such an instance what the doctors do is to send out the surplus blood that you have accumulated. If not that

blood can become gangrenous. Your excess earnings you are asked to give away as an act of purification. When you give away the excess wealth you have, you are in this life of purification. When you are going before God you would like to carry as light a load as possible. The essential thing is to carry a load and when you go along to sell them or give them away.

Zakat is not charity. The word 'charity' for Zakat is a silly translation. I do not like that word at all. It is purity; it is an act of love. You are redeeming yourself and giving relief to yourself and you are grateful to the other fellow for helping you to relieve yourself of your wealth. It is not charity. In charity you get the feeling, "I am wonderful, I have a lot of money". And when a needy person comes you throw a few rupees in his face contemptuously, "you are a poor fellow, take what I give you." That is a false pride ^(for humanity). Therefore, the meaning that the Quran has assigned to Zakat is that it is a step in the direction of securing himself in purification. It is too late now to go into the philosophy of Zakat. I am on what Islam is. Islam is what the Prophet is called upon to do. This is what God has called upon the Prophet to do:

يَتْلُوا عَلَيْكُمْ آيَاتِهِ وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ

Why this purification? Why is it necessary is the next question. I would like to answer that question. Without purification there is no possibility of self reform. When you fall ill you go to a doctor. He listens to your complaint and gives you a purgative to rid you of the filth inside. Without purification re-creation of your health, even in the physical sense, is not possible.

Before you stand for prayer you perform Wudhu which is the cleanliness of the body. Why? Unless you purify you cannot receive that which the Prophet has come here to give.

Purification is a pre-condition. Even when we read the Holy Qur'an the first thing we recite is:

أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ

This is an act of purification. You ensure that negative influences do not attack you. This is an act on which the first line says:

لَا يَسُودُ إِلَّا الْمَتَّوْرُونَ

Unless you are a 'Thahir' pure, you cannot touch it. Here 'to touch the Quran' means to understand. You cannot understand unless you have become a 'Saleem', unless you have a pure heart (Taharat). Purity is a pre-condition. Before any condition in the transformation of the human being can take place and since positive results are to be achieved for the formation of Islam, the condition is, the Prophet is called upon to purify the people. His first function is to purify them. Then, after he has purified them:

وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ

That means 'Al Maktubat', that which is written. Man has to be informed what he is going to be of which he has no idea at all. This idea requires a little bit of clarification, again a heart of the matter. Suppose you see the rose plant, you know it is a green plant. We will say you have no previous experience of seeing it. I tell you that out of this green plant a red rose comes out. Not only that, this green plant has been fed on manure which is filthy, which stinks. Then, would you have believed it?

Is it not a miracle of God that out of a green plant a red rose comes out. It is fed out of manure which stinks. Those of you who have done Botany will know, vegetable life has one feature. It grows earth bound. It draws its nourishment from earth or from sun-shine. The animals go about.

So, from the green plant three remarkable things happen. From the green plant comes red rose. The plant contains thorns. They are beautiful too. Look, how that plant which is fed by filthy manure which stinks contributes to the red rose and the plant which is earth bound produces fragrance and goes away.

This is what the Qur'an itself says, "You have no experience of the rose that is coming out". About human life too the Prophet of God says, "If you follow the law and the Message I am going to give, abide by its condition, then another life will grow out of you which is better and eternal." This life is ephemeral. After 60 or 80 years it comes to an end. This life stinks; it is putrid. But nevertheless, out of this life another life will be born which is radically different from this life, which has qualities other than the qualities that are manifest^{ed} by animal life. Only a prophet can give this information. Ordinary human beings cannot. We are changing ourselves into a situation about which we know nothing. Only the person who is outside us can see. This is in keeping with the illustration I gave you about talking with a child inside the womb of the mother. We are from God and to God alone we return. If you obey the law, that is the destiny of man. And when the Qur'an says:

وَبُرُكِيَّهٖ

It is 'Al Qadr', the destiny that they have to be informed about. Whether it is a life of fire or continuance of eternal life, they are remarkable situations and my knowledge alone would not be able to imagine the possibility that may exist. It is

only a prophet who can say all that. After such purification:
 وَيُرَكِّبُهُمْ he gives them this information which they
 will be fit to receive; before the impurities are removed
 they will not be able to touch the Qur'an. What is this
 life? Where are we going? What is our higher destiny?
 These things cannot be understood by us until the Prophet
 informs us: وَالْحِكْمَةَ This is an important word
 not only to teach them the Book or that which is written,
 Al Maktubat, the destiny of man, but also to make them wise.
 I wish the Muslims can really understand the full meaning of
 the word 'Hikmah' as they can understand today. Also, they
 can read tomorrow. This word was understood upto a certain
 time when the Muslims called their university "Dar-ul-Hikmah"
 (Home of Wisdom). What is Hikmah? It is your competence and
 your ability to specific details of life, to the injunction
 which is contained in the Qur'an because this life is valid
 for all time after the Prophet. The Prophet is called the
 agent of revelation. The revelation is over, the work has
 to go on.

There is a change of social, economic and political
 conditions, the way in which we do the job, the biological
 changes brought about, there are set plans and progress in
 life. We go from one condition to another. How is it
 possible? Why is wisdom contained in the Book which is the
 destiny of man? Is the function which the Prophet was
 called upon to fulfil in order to be in step with history
 and not to be left behind. All the Jurists of Islam, Imam
 Abu Hanifa, Imam Malik, Imam Shafii and Imam Hanbali, what
 have they derived? They have derived from the principles
 of the Qur'an the specific rules of conduct regulating man's
 life. What to do? When to do? How to do? What to avoid or

not to avoid? And their capacity to reflect, to understand the course of nature and to take benefit of it. All this and more are implicit in the concept of 'Hikmah'.

Most people have accused Muslims of being backward; their law is static, they take that Book, the Qur'an, which was revealed 1400 years ago. How can it be relevant today? But the fact is, it continues to be relevant. The outer trends are fixed and within that range man has infinite amount of freedom to apply the principles of the Prophet and the growth of science, productive science, explosive science and all other explanations are there. It constantly asks: "Will you not think"? "Will you not ponder"? "Will you not consider"? "Did^{you}/not see this"? "Did you not learn"? All these parables have been used that you may be able to think. All this is implicit in Hikmah. This is the world of wisdom where man is using his thinking faculties in life. Without that framework it is not possible to make Muslims 'Hakims' (wise men), people whose decisions can be depended upon. It is attested by the ministry of Islam. By their effort things happened which I have not the time now to describe to you. The door was closed for certain reasons. The result was that force which impelled the Qur'an, the teaching of wisdom. So, the Prophet is called upon to recite verses of God to purify us, to make us wise.

Now, the factor which helps us to do the job for which we were created has two other aspects to it which are related in the Qur'an. What is the ideal which Islam has placed before us to realize? The answer is simple. It would be the ideal of a 'Muthakeen', to have 'Taqwa'. What is 'Taqwa'? What is meant by 'Muthakeen'? He is one who has acquired mastery. He is the master in the house. He does not listen to the lower

elements that are within him which are taking him away from the direction. He is acquiring control. Within that control he is able to apply wisdom, the injunction of the Qur'an, with a view to regularizing his life.

What helps a man to become a 'Muthakeen'? It is the month of Ramazan in which you and I have to fast. The Qur'an says: "We have ordained fasting for you as we have done for those before you that you may acquire self-control". Nor do you think that we are just animals to eat, to drink, to have sexual relations, which is the only thing that we have in common. Most human beings feel that that is life, to eat, drink, sleep and have children. These are things that animals do for the preservation of animal life. But that is not enough for the preservation of the human race. That is not the purpose for which man has come here. The purpose is, out of the ^(Opportunity) ~~possibilities~~ which the animal life affords us, we might be able to rise above these impulses to have a higher life. This is not possible until and unless you have "Taqwa", until and unless you have control over yourself. How can you be a servant of God? The institution that helps you to do this is fasting. You cut off all enjoyment between sunrise and ^{(sun} ~~set~~. You are aware this is part of the rules of fasting. When the month comes round you have nothing to eat, drink or even sex life during the day. When the urge comes, you think, "I have to do something higher, I have to rise from my lower self". By that the man has been completely integrated, has acquired control and has become a 'Muthakeen'.

Then comes the institution of Pilgrimage. What is the meaning of that? It is that an individual who has acquired mastery over himself can become an element of human brotherhood

If a man is ruled by the forces of lower nature he cannot walk step by step with his brethren to Muzdalifa and come back to Mina. Here the Muslims as a whole are made to act in unison. This is made possible because each individual has acquired mastery over himself. He will not be ruled by lower elements. The integrated community, the brotherhood of Islam, is manifested through "Taqwa".

I must make a small point here. The philosophy of the 20th Century is first, somehow, to unite the people by worship, by related methods, by use of force and then you will advance the society and then all will be wonderful boys. You aim first to do that with a stick, otherwise it is not possible to get together and act in unison.

Islam says first reform yourself as a self-controlled individual, a unison of human elements and then they will be brothers unto each other and then they will be able to walk together in 'Sirat-ul Musthakeen'. That is the concept of Islam.

I have talked about four things, the foundation of Islam, the word of God. We are not Mohammedans, we are Muslims. For a Muslim, all that Muhammad says is:

أَنَا أَوَّلُ الْمُسْلِمِينَ

(He is the first Muslim). We are following what he followed; Islam is the Will of God. It is the revealed word which has been revealed to us. Unless we believe in that we do not go forward in the direction of Islam.

The second is to obey the law. Then you become a Muslim. What is Islam? Islam is law, order, Will of God. It takes the form of order first. If it says this has to be done, it has to be done. The whole of Islam can be reduced to a state of

injunction, of an act which is submitted. Doing that is Islam. Islam is not at the level of the law, but even higher faith of Islam is Ehsan. When the higher excellence still further expresses itself, so pray, says the Prophet, as if you see God for, if you do not see God, God sees you. Suppose a man were to pray with the feeling that God is seeing or He is aware of his response that God is his Lord and Master, then that prayer is elevated to the level of Ehsan. The Law of God revealed to us in the revealed word is to be manifested. There is an ideal integration of a 'Muthakeen'. There is an ideal that all Muslims and Christians stand shoulder to shoulder and march together like an army. In that idea lies the redemption of man.

First of all improve the individual conscience, purify them, then you will be able to be of service to the society. You cannot do it the other way about. There they first of all train them, put them in the socialist method, train the whole society and after that they are humble, wonderful boys. This is a method that is **adverse** to Islam. In Islam, it is the other way about. The last two lines in this verse are very important. These are two wonderful lines in the Qur'an:

وَأَنْ كَانُوا مِنْ قَبْلُ لَفِي ضَلَالٍ مُّبِينٍ

God says, before revealing these words, "Reveal these to the Arabs, indeed they were in manifest ignorance". If you can understand the particular verse appearing in the Quran, the Pagan world of the Arabs till the revelation of the Quran was known as "Ayyamul Jahiliyyah". And then the light of God dawned on the dark world and the word of God was born:

وَالضُّحَىٰ
وَالْبَيْتِ إِذْ أَسْرَأْ
سَجْر

Here the Qur'an offers Shahadat. It offers the best evidence of the condition before these words were revealed to Muhammad:

وَإِن كَانُوا لَفِي ظُلْمٍ مُّبِينٍ ۝

The Prophet is chosen from among the Pagan Arabs. He receives the further information:

وَآخِرِينَ مِنْهُمْ لَمَّا يَلْحَقُوا بِهِمْ ۝

This dispensation which is now given to the Pagan Arab is available to those who come after this. Jesus Christ was sent only for the Jews. This was admitted. Muhammad was not sent only to the Pagan Arabs:

وَآخِرِينَ مِنْهُمْ لَمَّا يَلْحَقُوا بِهِمْ ۝

So, the Message of Islam, even though it arose in the time of the Prophet which was available to his people, is available to those who will come later on and join the people. This is the universal aspect of Islam. Some people have interpreted it to mean that this is a reference to the Persian society and Persia was to join. We have come after the Prophet and accepted the message. The Prophet in his last Haj (Hajjat-ul Wida) said: "I am leaving behind two things for you, one is the Qur'an and the other my sayings, (Hadées). That will bring about all the relief you need." You do not need anything else. We are the 'Akhareens'. To us also his teaching is as much relevant as it was to the Pagan Arab.

Then comes the most important line in the Qur'an. You can go on reading and re-reading this verse. To me it is a very important verse. I have read, re-read, contemplated and cried

over it. The last line says:
 ذَلِكُمْ فَضْلُ اللَّهِ يُؤْتِيهِ مَن يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ
 ذُو الْفَضْلِ الْعَظِيمِ ۝

This remarkable revolution which God has brought about by revealing to the Prophet the verses which ~~he~~ has revealed to us and purified us and knitted us into one Ummat (brotherhood) is not available only to the Arabs, but also to all those who came after. By the Grace of God He gives his benefits to whom he likes. When a man becomes a Muslim I always tell him, that is the Grace of God. What else do you want? It is a Grace and He gives that Grace to whom he likes.

You remember the remarkable conversion of Umar to Islam. He was trying to stop many people from listening to the word of Muhammad. His sister had already embraced Islam. Somebody then told him, "Before you do that, why do you not go and see what your own sister has done"? So, he, in anger, ran towards the house of his sister. His sister was at that time reciting the Quran. He knocked on the door and entered the house. He raised his sword in anger to smite her, but the magnifying words of the Qur'an fell in his ears. He asked his sister to see what it was. She wanted him to purify himself first and come. When he took it and read, God cast a light into his breast. He told her, "I came to kill you with this dagger, but I have changed my mind." He went straight to the Prophet and told him, "This is dagger I had to kill you, but I have changed my mind now, here is the dagger, you can kill me with that." The Prophet laughed and told him, "I don't have to kill you, I have prayed to God that of the two Meccans, either ^(Umar) ~~Abu Jahl~~ or ^(Abu Jahl) ~~Umar~~ should be turned towards Islam and Allah has been pleased to turn your heart towards Islam". After that almost always Umar used to cry, "It is a happy augury that in making your request to God you took my name first, if you had not taken my name first, your prayer may have been accepted and I may not have got this reward".

When the Meccans often asked the Prophet, "Could not God have anybody else in mind to make him a prophet"? What was the answer of the Prophet? ^(His answer) was what was given in Sura 'Nahl'. I want to make a remark here. The Prophet of God (May God's Peace be on him) in Sura 'Nahl' has advanced a fantastic answer. 'Nahl' is a bee that collects honey from flowers. It is a tiny, contemptuous creature. In the Qur'an we have seen the revelation about the 'bee'. What is the power given to the bee? It goes to various flowers, the sweet flower, the bitter, pungent odour, all kinds of seeds and it takes something out from them and vomits it. We collect it and when anything went wrong they use honey. If somebody had indigestion honey was given. Honey was the pharmacopoeia of the Arabs. And so the argument runs: "Oh, you pagan Meccans, what is wrong with you that you raise this question"? "You do not ask the other question regarding the creature which stings, a tiny existence called 'bee'?" "We have given all kinds of flowers regardless of nature. It sucks out something which it vomits and which you use. Why do you ask this question from the Prophet. Why do you ask this question of Muhammad as not being the fit person to have become the Prophet"?

Similarly, there is also a reference to milk. What is milk? It is blood. If pure blood gets on to your clothes you cannot say your prayer, it is Najs. But some transformation takes place in the stomach of the animal that gives milk, it turns blood into milk. Why do you not ask those questions? Why has God given an animal the power to turn blood into milk? You do not ask those questions. Instead, you ask the question, why was Muhammad selected as a prophet. The answer is:

ذَلِكَ فَضْلُ اللَّهِ يُؤْتِيهِ مَن يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ
ذُو الْفَضْلِ الْعَظِيمِ

I think I have attempted to communicate to you the wonderful Message of Islam. Believe me when I say in all seriousness, in all solemnity that till today all the forces that have contributed to the decisive growth of human resources have been contributed by the personality of the Prophet as demonstrated in the Verse of the Quran, all the values which today dominate the world have come from the Quran. There is no value which is dominating the world which is not found in the Quran. It is not in the negative side, it is in the positive side as:

رَبُّ الْمَشْرِقِ وَالْمَغْرِبِ

He has God's servants everywhere. Only the Muslims think if they have said the five times prayers, given Zakat and observed fast, they think the job is over. These are pre-conditions to help them to do that for which they were created. Man was created to serve God and you serve God by turning brown earth into green, you serve God by cleaning the streets, you serve God by spreading education. That is the way you can reform the people. The pre-conditions are there to help you to do that. Today Muslims are not doing that. They are content with the rituals, they are content with going into the Book.

The first word revealed to the Prophet is "Iqra'" (Read). Is this not a miracle to this man who is said to be one of the UMMIYYOONS?

Another verse of the Quran is 'Noon Wal Qalami Wa Ma Yasthuroon'. All along it says, "Please think", "please look", "Look again", "Do you see any flaw in nature"? A tremendous spiritual, moral, mental and intellectual revolution was brought about ^{by} the Book. But the Muslims did not do the job,

somebody else is doing the job. They ran over us. To some extent they are doing the job of God.

Why are the Muslims ignorant today? Why are they not playing an effective role? It is because Islam is in the BOOK and MUSLIMS are in the grave. Thank you.
