

RELIGION

The Science of Life

ISLAM



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PREFACE

Life is the Essence of Ultimate Reality. This was the first link of my thought which form the background of my ideology regarding the origin, aim and ultimate end of life. I have explained this view of mine in my first book "LIFE—The Essence of Ultimate Reality". The second link of my thought is that Religion is the Science of Life. This I have ventured to prove in this book.

Philosophy, Science and Religion are all methods of study. But while the scope of study through Philosophy and Science is limited and the result incomplete, indefinite and not final, the scope of study through Religion is exhaustive and the result complete, definite and final. Philosophy has to deal with limited questions relating to the Ontological and Cosmological problems of the human mind. And all that Philosophy can tell us is that material existence is not real and that reality underlies the Universe; but what is the nature of Reality, how this Universe has come into existence and what is its ultimate end, Philosophy is unable to tell us any thing satisfactorily. Similarly Scientific study deals with the natural phenomena and its use for service of humanity and in its analysis of matter it can only tell us that all that we have in this Universe is a creation; but what is the nature of the Creator and what is the aim and ultimate end of creation, scientific study has no means to tell us any thing. Religion, on the contrary, deals with life as a whole. It tells us with definiteness the nature of the Creator, the aim and ultimate end of life and also gives us ways and means to achieve the betterment of the life in this world as well as in the Hereafter. Furthermore, whatever Religion tells us is not only definite, complete and final but also it is Universal in its application. Religion in its study also

proceeds on the same principles, passes through the same stages and is basically rooted in the same mode of understanding i.e. reason, as Philosophy and Science do. Thus Religion is also a Science and to be more correct, the only Science to study life as a whole and to satisfy the human mind as regards the ultimate problems relating to Reality and provide us with the fundamental principles of passing the life in order to achieve its betterment, perfection and success in this as well as the next world.

Materialism or Anti-Religion movement is in fact a device to acquire power in the mundane and earthly sense. It is basically a political movement based on deception or camouflage. It starts with a seemingly innocuous claim to acquire freedom from exploitation for the masses, but ultimately results in complete exploitation of the wealth and sovereignty of the country, suppression of freedom of the people at large and destruction of the human values in general. It appears to be a paradise in precept but proves to be a hell in practice. It starts its programme under the garb of opposition to capitalism and actually proceeds to undermine Religion, Morality as well as Democracy. It is in fact the worst type of totalitarian monarchy in which a few persons grab the entire power, wealth and means of the country to the total exclusion of all human beings who are also ultimately denied freedom of speech, property, religion, safety of life and even choice of profession.

Ironically, Materialism seems to thrive on the self-conceited notion that there is no Reality underlying the Universe, and life as we see in this world is final and ends with the incident of death. Thus the ideas relating to the Creator, the aim of creation and life after death are baseless, unnecessary and superfluous having no Reality at all. This being the position, the question of satisfaction of the human mind relating to the ultimate problems

concerning the Reality does not arise and Materialism as such cannot help us in any way since the life is not the End-all and Be-all in itself. As regards the betterment and success of life, sensual pleasure or epicurianism is the only criterion which consists in extravagant indulgence in the three Ws, namely, wealth, wine and woman. Therefore, the question of morality, decency and discipline of thought and behaviour have no meaning. But if this is what the materialism tends to imply, nay, it actually does and actually it is, then one can very well ask what difference there remains between the human beings and the beasts?, surely, none. Then why should a man have a mind, a conscience and why should there be a variety of things in this Universe? Similarly, why should there be a change, development and adjustment, and above all why should there be a Universe at all? The changes that take place, the variety of things that we have and the feeling and understanding that we possess point out to some thing beyond the Universe itself and that brings us to the appreciation of the Reality and it is only Religion which can tell us about the Reality and its relation with life in all of its possible necessary details. Thus Materialism and Materialistic movements have no real and genuine foundation and ultimately they all shall have to bow down before Religion.

We always speak of Religions because there is not one but several Religions in the world, but on an analysis of what Religion in fact means, we come to the conclusion that Religion is one and not many. What we call the Religions in the plural sense are actually the fragmentary deviations from the right path or the main channel of Religion adopted by different persons according to their own wishes and understanding and given separate names.

But to lay down a Religion for human beings is never and can never be the function and prerogative of any human being. Only the maker of a thing has the competency to tell us about its reality and use. Religion being the fountain head of principles governing life in all shades, only God the Creator of life has the knowledge and competency to tell all about it. Hence any religion being the result of human mind amounts to transgression of the capacity, competency as well as the right of human beings, which in other words, means the superiority to and subordination of other human beings limited few!

As regards the Revealed Religions we find that Torah and Gospel are not available in their originality. Whatever we have in the form of the Old and New Testaments, is the result of compilations long after Moses and Jesus according to the need of the time and choice of the compilers themselves. Thus Judaism and Christianity are not the same as Moses and Jesus Christ had preached, but what the Synagogue and the Church have made them out,

Religion is not a mere code of beliefs and prayers. It is in fact a complete code of life which satisfies the human mind regarding the ultimate problems relating to the existence and nature of Reality, creation, control and end of the Universe, development of the individual personality and

establishment of social institutions based on principles of morality, decency and discipline. From the teachings of the Holy Books of God as contained in Quran and also the real Torah and Injil, we come to the conclusion that all Prophets of God preached one and the same Religion which is based on the fundamental belief in and exclusive worship of God Who is One, Supreme, Absolute and Almighty, and it has been Islam only. The other Religions are in fact deviations from the main channel of Religion i.e. Islam which is flowing right from Adam down the ages and which has been preached by all Prophets of God upto the last Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H.).

Religion, as already stated, is the Science of Life; and Religion in its real and strict sense is one i.e. Islam. Therefore, to understand life and to achieve its success, the only way is to follow Islam. That is the basic thesis which I have dealt with in this book. Now the next question will be what is Islam?. This I will deal with in my next book "Islam—The Religion", which forms the third and the final link of my thought as regards the nature, aim and ultimate end of life.

While dealing with the Religions other than Islam I have tried to avoid references from Muslim Sources so that there may not be any semblance of prejudice. I have tried to study each Religion primarily with reference to its own literature and subsequently from other sources particularly those of non-Muslim writers, and I have found that none of these Religions stands the test of "Religion" in its strict sense even on basis of its own literature.

The intention of writing this book is merely to put the true facts before the people at large so that they may see for themselves what the right path is to proceed with life in order to achieve its overall success. It has never been the

intention to injure any body's feelings or challenge any body's beliefs, but still if any body feels that his feelings have in any way been injured by this book, I offer my apology with utmost humility and without least hesitation. Never-the-less, the book in whatever form I could present invites an open-minded study from all worthy readers and students of Religion and to judge for themselves how far my sincerity and devotion to the cause of Religion are reflected in it. I would gladly and gratefully acknowledge all suggestions, even fair criticism. in order that the truth may at last emerge and prevail in its quintessential form. This is my humble wish and sincere prayer too.

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Religion—the Science of Life

1. INTRODUCTION

The Universe as we see it is neither real nor permanent. It is not real because it has no existence of its own. It is a creation of God. It is also not permanent because it has to end at some definite point of time. God, Who is One, Absolute and Almighty, is not only the Creator but also the over-all Administrator of the entire universe and all that exists. But He is not subject to our senses. We can only understand Him through His Attributes, the chief among them being that He is All-living. Life is, therefore, the essence of the ultimate reality that underlines the universe as a whole. But how to understand life and how to make it a success? Here comes the role of Religion, because the Science which exhaustively as well as satisfactorily deals with the origin, aim and ultimate end of life as a whole is Religion and Religion alone¹. Philosophers and Scientists will, perhaps, be reluctant to accept this view about Religion, but before they question its validity, I think, I should make it clear that what I mean to say is, first: that Religion is a Science, and second: that Religion is the only Science which tells us all about the origin, aim and ultimate end of life in its reality. Then what is the function of Philosophy and Science? That, I think, will be the next immediate question for me to reply. Therefore, let us first see what is the function of Philosophy and Science.

¹ By Religion I particularly mean the Revealed Religion i.e. the Religion of God which we got through His Prophets. I will give reasons for this view in this book at a later stage.

The simplest, and I think, not the least incorrect reply to this question can be that Philosophy and Science are both methods of study and the common subject matter for both is life as it exists in its various aspects in the material world.

To go into a bit detail, the word "Philosophy" is derived from the Greek word "*Philosophia*" meaning the love or pursuit of wisdom. "*Sophia*" like the English word "wisdom" implies not only wide knowledge but also sound judgment about the values of different things.¹ In its original and wide sense Philosophy means the love, study or pursuit of wisdom or knowledge of things and their cause, whether theoretical or practical². It is a study which deals with ultimate reality or with the most general causes and principles of things³

Philosophy was in origin a very general word for the pursuit of mental excellence. Earlier Greek philosophers did not recognise division of knowledge. Their record contains material of all sorts from speculation about the constitution of the world by condensation and rarefaction of a single stuff to reflections about forms of Government. By 5th Century B.C. Arithmetic, Geometry, Astronomy and Music were recognized as distinct. In 17th Century A.D. the works of Galileo and Newton were called "Natural Philosophy", and Ethics and Politics etc., were known as "Moral Philosophy". Since the middle of 19th Century A.D. it became customary to describe Physics, Chemistry and Biology as "Natural Sciences", Psychology, Economics, Comparative Philology, Social Anthropology

¹ See Encyclopedia Britannica, (U.S.A.—1968) Vol.XVII, P.864.

² A New English Dictionary, 1928 Edition, Vol. VII, part II, P.781.

³ Ibid P. 782.

and the theory of Political Institution are called "Empirical Sciences"¹.

Similarly the word "Science" is derived from the Latin word "*Scientia*" which means to learn, to know or in other words learning or knowing. But in the English language, the term "Science" is used for "Natural Sciences". It may be defined as "ordered knowledge of natural phenomena and rational study of the relations between the concepts in which these phenomena are experienced"². Science is the state of fact of knowing. It is knowledge acquired by study. It is trained skill. In a more restricted sense, it is a branch of study which is concerned either with a connected body of demonstrated truths or with observed facts systematically classified and more or less colligated by being brought under general laws and which includes trust-worthy methods for the discovery of new truths within its own domain³. In modern usage it is often treated as synonymous with Natural or Physical Science and thus restricted to those branches of study that relate to the phenomena of the material universe and their laws⁴.

The figure traditionally associated with the beginning of Science amongst the Greek is Thales of Miletus in Asia Minor who flourished in the first half of 6th Century B.C. The scientific period in the history of mankind is divided into the Greek Science (30 B.C. to 200 A.D.), the Medieval Science (Islamic Period—850 A.D. to 1200 A.D.), the Latin Science (1100 A.D. to 1450 A.D.), the Renaissance and early modern period (1450 A.D. to 1550 A.D.) and the beginning of modern out-look (first half of 17th Century

¹ Encyclopaedia Britannica, (USA—1968), Vol. XVII, P.864.

² A History of Science and its relation with Philosophy and Religion by Sir W.C. Dampier, 4th Edition.

³ A New English Dictionary, 1928 Edition, Vol. VIII, P.221.

⁴ Ibid, P. 222.

A.D.). under the influence of Sir Issac Newteon (1642 to 1727) which prevailed from second half of 17th Century to the end of 19th Century¹.

Thus it is clear that Philosophy and Science are both methods of study, but the main difference that lies between them is that while the former proceeds purely on theoretical premises the latter aims at deriving truth through practical experiments. The one is hypothetical and the other, experimental. But the fact remains that the aim of both is nothing but rational understanding of all that exists in this universe. The impulse which invokes the act of understanding through both these channels of learning is something like this: apart from his own existence, a man also realises the existence of and a kind of inherent inter-relationship with the universe as a whole. He also sees the beginning as well as the end of all that materially exists. The "beginning" and the "end" invoke in man's mind a sort of inquisitiveness regarding the how and why about existence. Man thinks about these problems and forms some ideas on the basis of data which he collects in his mind through observation and understanding of the various phenomena of this world, which crystalise in definite points of view and ultimately form the philosophical aspect of understanding.

With the development and advancement of learning, experiments in the laboratory become standard technique of investigation and gradually overshadow imaginative methodology. The striking success of Practical or Natural Sciences on account of their systematic modes of study, provide them with a prestige far greater than that given to Philosophy or Religion; in fact often at the cost of Catholic Cosmology.

¹ Encyclopedia Britannica, (U.S.A.—1968), Vol. XX, P.7.

Philosophy and Science are in fact the off-shoots of one and the same process i.e. understanding, and from the very beginning both proceed side by side in one or the other form. Science deals with practical and experimental understanding of natural phenomena and in its present form it owes its existence to the recent past whence it has taken a definite and separate position of its own¹. Although originally 'understanding' proceeded purely on theoretical considerations because facilities for practical experiments were not available, still we cannot entirely deny the existence of practical experiments even in the most primitive Societies because experiments were carried out by thinkers among them in whatever form it was possible, especially in the understanding of diseases and their cure. In modern civilization, however, experimental understanding has developed to such an extent that whenever we talk of Science we have also to specify the name of particular Science we are referring to, because now we have not one but a number of Sciences, which are distinctly distinguishable on account of their exclusive fields of specialization. There are different Sciences dealing with different things existing in this universe and even for different aspects of one single object there are different Sciences to deal with. Take for example the man himself: to study his mental activities, there is Psychology, to study his intricate physical structure there are Biology, Anatomy and Physiology and to know about his diseases and their treatment there are the Sciences of Medicine and Surgery.

¹ For the Greeks, Philosophy and Science were one. In Middle Ages both were bound up by Theology. Experimental method of studying nature developed after Renaissance to lead a separation. Natural Philosophy came to be based on Newtonian Dynamics. The followers of Kant and Hegel led Idealist Philosophy away from contemporary scene Evolutionary Biology and Modern Mathematics and Physics deepened scientific thought and forced Philosophy to take account of Science (A History of Science and its relation with Philosophy and Religion by Sir W.C. Dampier, 4th Edition).

Similarly there is Botany to study plants and vegetables, Zoology to study the life and behaviour of animals, Astronomy to study the heavenly bodies, Metreology to study seasons, Geography to study the landscape, Chemistry to study chemicals, Micro-Biology to study the micro-organisms, so on and so forth.

Scientific study as stated earlier, proceeds on understanding through experiments. Therefore, physical existence of the subject matter for study is the basic condition for it. Problems the subject matter of which has no physical existence are totally outside the scope of Science as such. Take for example the problem-solving ability of the human mind: it cannot be the subject matter of laboratory experiments and explanations. Similarly, there can be no laboratory explanations for many other inner manifestations of the human life such as consciousness, feeling, sentiment, emotion, memory, beauty, love and hate. Then there is the problem of Reality in its quintessence form. Sooner or later rational understanding brings man to realization of the existence of a super-natural, supreme, almighty power which is the creator and the over-all administrator of all that exists. Whether there is such a power, what exactly is its nature and how has it created this universe? These are the basic problems which every thinking mind has to face in the realm of Reality. But being purely abstract in nature none of these problems can be solved by Practical Sciences. They call for abstract treatment only and as such Philosophy has to play its role. But Philosophy inspite of ceaseless efforts has not succeeded and in fact cannot succeed to provide us with a rational explanation of universal application relating to the exact nature of Reality because of its own inevitable limitations. It subsists on its two main principles, namely deduction and induction, that is, coming from general to particular and from particular to

general principles of universal application. Its foundation lies in sense data, and out of the facts gathered from sense data, results in the form of ideologies are drawn through logical inferences. This is possible only so far as the subject matter is directly or indirectly associated with any of our Senses. This means that things which are incapable of being seen, heard, touched, tasted or smelt, are totally outside the scope of Philosophy. Reality as an abstract transcendental phenomenon is as such beyond the scope of philosophical studies. On account of idealistic imagination, no doubt, a thinking mind can weave a sort of net-work regarding the possible explanations relating to Reality but due to doubts, wonder, indefinite and incomplete knowledge about the "non-material existant", the thinking mind itself gets entrapped in the net-work of fallacies woven by it and no clear, definite and satisfactory guidance can be provided through it to the human understanding.

Philosophy can at best bring us to an understanding that there is some supernatural Power which is One, Real, Ultimate and Absolute, and which is the real cause of all that exists in this universe. But what is the exact nature of this ultimate power and how it works? Philosophy cannot give us any satisfactory and comprehensive answer to it. Here comes the role of Religion. It is only the Religion which can and does guide us in this realm of study and can satisfactorily as well as comprehensively tell us as to what is the exact nature of Reality, how the universe has come into existence, what is the aim and ultimate end of life and how we can achieve its perfection and betterment in this as well as the next world.

In other words, Practical Sciences can only help us in comprehending things which are subject to observation and experiment, while Philosophy can help us in studying things which, though not subject to experiment, are at least

subject to any of our senses, but Religion guides us in the understanding of Reality. To put it otherwise: where Science fails, Philosophy can still help us in knowing the truth but where Philosophy also fails, it is only the Religion which can be our guide. In short, it is only the Religion through which we can correctly and satisfactorily know and understand the Ultimate Reality. Religion in this sense, therefore, is a science. This is one aspect of my view. The other aspect is as follows.

Philosophical as well as scientific methods of study are particularized ones i.e., they study fragmentary aspects of life and not life as a whole¹. To go into a bit detail, let us see what is the subject matter of Philosophical study. Philosophical problems are ontological i.e., problems concerning the essence of reality, as well as cosmological i.e., problems relating to the parts with the whole. In other words what is the essence of ultimate reality and how is it that universe has come into existence: these are the only two problems which Philosophy deals with. The consideration of these two problems proceeds on purely hypothetical bases. In its attempt to solve these problems, Philosophy can only obliquely offer suggestions that reality is something which exists apart from the material world: that every corporeal body is the bearer of an inner life, and that the inner life is the world of unity. It is Real, Absolute, Almighty and the Cause of all that exists. In one word the problem which Philosophy deals with is: whether the universe is a creation? and all that Philosophy can tell us about it is that this universe is not real in itself, rather, it is the reflection of the reality, and that it has been created by some Being who is Real. But what is the exact nature of

¹ In his Gifford Lectures, "The Modern Predicament (1955), H.J. Paton writes, "Religion is concerned, not with some special aspect or manifestation of life, but with the life or with life as a whole." (See Religion and Modern Man by J.B. Magee, 1967, P.28).

that which is Real, what is the process of creation, what was the aim of creation and what will be the ultimate end of creation: Philosophy cannot say anything about these problems.

Coming to Science once again we find that the scope of scientific study is to tell us about the constitution, function and use of things that exist materially. But why things exist, what is the aim and ultimate end of creation: Science or Sciences even collectively have nothing to say at all. Furthermore, there is no explanation regarding the inner, spiritual or psychical activities of life in the scientific studies except that they are the natural result of the functions of the Nervous System. But this explanation has no definite and strong function to stand against Idealistic views according to which Dogmatic Materialism is totally overcome by Epistemology which enunciates that bodies far from being the only absolute reality have no absolute existence at all. They have relative existence i.e., phenomenal existence. According to Idealistic view the nature of reality, as it exists in and for itself, manifests itself in the inner world which is immediately given to us in self-consciousness. The reason why Practical Sciences are unable to satisfy us regarding the problems about Reality is mainly this that Sciences can only study things which have material bodies and nothing beyond. Reality, being something quite abstract, cannot be the subject matter of study for Practical Sciences at all. Science also, like Philosophy, can only help us in realising that all that exists has not come into existence by itself, as in this world nothing can happen by itself, and that a design necessarily presupposes the presence of a designer. In the same way the creation implies the existence of its creator, and that nothing in this universe is without any aim, and further, that the aim naturally and inherently refers to some Intelligent Being under Whose Will and Command the universe has

come into existence with some definite aim and that on achievement of the aim underlying the creation of the universe, the latter must necessarily come to an end. Therefore Natural Sciences too can only bring us to an understanding that there is a beginning, an aim and ultimately an end of material existence and that all that exists in this universe points out to us the existence of a Supreme, Super-Natural, Ultimate and Absolute Power responsible for the creation and over-all control of the universe.

Religion on the other hand provides us with the study of life as a whole¹. It tells us what is the beginning, the aim and the end of life. It also tells us what is the nature of the Ultimate Supreme Power, the Cause of all causes and the Creator and Administrator of all that exists. In other words, Religion comprehensively tells us all about the outer as well as the inner phase of life as a whole. It has perhaps been correctly said that subject matter of Philosophy is the individual mind while that of Religion is the collective mind.

The third aspect of my view is that whatever Religion has to tell us it tell us with full faith, conviction and definiteness and the principles laid down by it are fundamental as well as unchanging. On the other hand philosophic as well as scientific studies are based on presumptions, surmises, inferences, doubts, and indefinite

¹ Science may transcend its own natural sphere and usefully criticism some other modes of contemporary thought and some of the dogmas in which theologians have expressed their beliefs. But to see life steadily and see it whole we need not only Science, but Ethics, Art and Philosophy; we need the apprehension of a sacred mystery, the sense of communication with a Divine Power, that constitutes basis of Religion. (History of Science and its relation with Philosophy and Religion by Sir W. C. Dampier, 4th Edition).

principles which are always subject to change and modification. Through rapid developments in the ways and means of study, new ideas take the place of old ones and thus there is a continuous development and change in the scientific theories with the result that today we do not have exactly the same views about the structure and even shape of the earth or the heavenly bodies or the psychic process, soul or matter as they were in earlier stages of human understanding. For example, as Dr. Ansari points out, "Sir Issac Newton affirmed and proclaimed to the world that the Universe was three-dimensional and that Space and Time were two different and independent entities. The entire scientific progress after him proceeded on this assumption. It was held by scientists to be an infallible truth, which they defended and by which they swore day in and day out. But then came Einstein who proved, again scientifically, that the Newtonian Physics was all wrong in its foundation, that the universe was not three-dimensional but four-dimensional, that time was the fourth dimension of space and not an independent entity, that instead of immutability (on which Materialism had thrived) there was indeterminacy in the universe (which renders the affirmation of the existence of God necessary) and Science has proceeded since then, to show that matter itself is unreal"¹. This proves that human views are subject to change either through personal experiences or under the influence of the others. Therefore, the Scientific theories, howsoever startling and revealing, can never be accepted as final, especially when the very fundamentals are challenged and even discarded. Who can say that the theory of Relativity propounded by Einstein which has revolutionised the world, will stay eternal, or that there is no room for further development. But this is not so with Religion. The

¹ Through Science and Philosophy to Religion by Dr. F.R. Ansari, (1962) P. 12-13.

basic principles of Religion are Divine Revealed and therefore are unchangeable till Eternity.

Similarly there are vast differences in the theories propounded by Philosophers right from the days of Plato and Aristotle upto the present day regarding God, Man and the Universe. For instance, essence of Ultimate Reality consists, according to Plato, in the idea of Good; to Aristotle, in Pure Form; to Spinoza, in Substance; to Liebnitz, in Monade; to Hegel, in Reason; to Bergson, in Elan Vital; to White Head, in Actual Entities, and so on. The various views about the Reality can be classified in two big categories viz: Materialism and Idealism. According to Materialists, Reality is body. Its attributes are Extension and Impenetrability and its primary and essential form of activity is motion. They regard psychical processes as functions of the nervous system. According to them sensation is nothing but the nervous processes produced in the central organ by the peripheral excitation. But Dogmatic Materialism, as stated earlier, is overcome by Epistemology which says that bodies far from being the only absolute reality have no absolute existence at all. They have relative existence only i.e., phenomenal existence. The Idealists plead that every corporeal body is the bearer of an inner life like the one we experience in ourselves. The nature of reality as it exists in and for itself manifests itself in the inner world which is immediately given to us in self-consciousness.

Then as regards the existence of the universe, here too views differ widely. For some it is the result of mere chance with no purpose, no beginning and no end; for others it is the result of creation by some ultimate power; while there are others who do not think this universe to be having any reality at all. For them it is only an illusion. There are philosophers who think that emergence of

universe is on account of rarefaction and condensation (Anaximander), or the result of a chance combination of Atoms (Democritus), or due to working of a Being (Parmenides), or working of four primary substances (Empedocles), or the inter-action of Form and Matter (Aristotle), or the activity of Monade (Liebnitz), or of Reason (Hegel), or continuous flow of the Elan Vital (Bergson), or of the Will (Al-Ghazali), and so on.

The reason for this seemingly unbridgeable gulf between Philosophy and Science on one hand and Religion on the other, is mainly this that whatever Religion teaches us comes out from the absolute knowledge of One Who is Real, Almighty, Creator and the Knower of all, and whatever Philosophy and Science tell us is the result of observation, thinking, presumption and logical inferences of the human mind. It is in fact the result of a sort of speculation of the thinking mind and not on account of a definite and unchallengeable source of knowledge. Its starting point, according to Aristotle, is "wonder." And according to Descartes, "doubt". In other words the knowledge provided by Philosophy and Science is the product of inquiry proceeding from the thinking mind which inspite of its vast capabilities, is always subject to inevitable limitations.

Thus the knowledge provided by Religion is definite and unchanging while that provided by Philosophy and Science merely subsists on probability and therefore it is always subject to change. Principles laid down by Religion, have stood and can always stand the test of the time, while the principles deducted by Philosophy or introduced by Science cannot always do so. They are based on trial and error basis and as such some times they prove to be true and some times they do not. The obvious reason is that in scientific observation there are three factors which mainly

work. One is the observer, second is the subject matter, and third is the conditions under which observation is made. On further analysis of these factors we find that due to different powers of observation into different persons, observation varies from individual to individual. For instance, a person may be sharp, intelligent, dull or idiot. He may be colour-blind or myopic or normal-sighted. He may be hard of hearing or even deaf. He may have a faulty sense of smell, or discrimination for taste or touch. Therefore, observation of all persons can never be same or even similar. As regards the subject matter of observation the more immediate, concrete and apprehensible an object is, the more is the possibility of correct observation. Similarly the more remote, subtle or ungraspable the object is, the less is the possibility for its correct observation. We can have more or less correct observation of things which are within our reach, physically or sensually rather than the heavenly bodies, the stars and the sun etc. Similarly the third factor is also liable to variation or deception. The common example of this is observation of a mirage in the desert or meeting of the ends of two parallel lines at a long distance ahead. Thus it is not incorrect to say that Science cannot provide us with an all-accurate knowledge of all objects and in all circumstances. It varies with differences in factors of observation¹. It is perhaps rightly said that "Science is the tested knowledge, but it is still subject to human vagaries, illusions and inaccuracies. It is legitimate only within the confines of its own areas. It is rigidly restricted to quantitative data for description and prediction. It begins and ends with probability, not certainty. Its results are approximations subject to "probable error", especially in measurements and correlations. Its products are tentative

¹ See *Through Science and Philosophy to Religion* (1962) by Dr. F. R. Ansari, P. 8-12.

and are modified frequently by new data. There is no finality in scientific inferences".¹

Therefore, in so far as the fundamental problems of human mind i.e. problems relating to Man, Universe and God are concerned, Philosophy as well as Science cannot help us to our entire satisfaction. The reason is that due to their own limitations, neither Philosophy nor Science can tell us with accuracy the reality of even concrete objects before us, what to say of things which are far remote or are abstract and beyond the scope of senses. These modes of study cannot even satisfy our craze of knowledge as regards man himself. The reason is that a man is not really the "absolute whole". He is only a part of the Universe i.e. a *microcosm* in the *macrocosm*. Similarly the Universe also is not the "absolute whole" in itself. In its turn, it is also a part of the Creation in which numerous universes like it form part. Now to understand reality of a part, it is always necessary to understand the whole. But for the human mind it is not at all possible to apprehend the entire creation as a whole, and therefore obviously it is next to impossible for a man to know all even about himself. This means that human mind by itself has no power at all to give accurate reply to our problems relating to the nature of reality that underlines the Universe. Thus, I think, it has been rightly said that "Natural Science is utterly unable to deal directly with problems which are largely devoid of entities susceptible of quantitative analysis and synthesis. The question "Is there a personal God"? is *prima facie* such a problem."² Mason says that "we began our era of scientific efficiency confident that materialistic triumph would solve life's problems. We are finding we were wrong. Life is not

¹ The lesson of the Rose Bush by Merritt Stanley Congdon—See Evidence of God in the Expanding Universe, P. 34.

² Ibid.

as simple as that”¹. Einstein is of the view that “by painful experience we have learnt that rational thinking does not suffice to solve the problems of our social life”². He further says “Science can only ascertain what is, but not what should be, and outside of its domain value judgments of all kinds remain necessary.....Representatives of Science have often made an attempt to arrive at fundamental judgments in respect of values and ends on the basis of Scientific methods and in this way have set themselves in opposition to Religion. These conflicts have all sprung from fatal errors.....For the Scientists, there is only “being”, but no wishing, no valuing, no good, no evil, no goal”³.

Comparing Religion with Art, Philosophy and Science, J.B. Magee⁴ writes. “Art deals with the values that men experience by embodying them symbolically in such media as sound, plastic or paint.....Science has only a minor interest in values. Its chief purpose is to describe the connections between events in the empirical world.....Philosophy in its classical meaning is the attempt to see life critically and whole. Its goal is to relate various fields of human’s knowledge and experience as closely as possible to a single coherent perspective.....Religion has interests that overlap each of these three fields. Like Art it is concerned with values; like Science it longs for the truth about the structures of existence; like Philosophy it seeks a coherent perspective. Religion is, however, unlike Art in that it is not satisfied with the mere contemplation of value; it seeks a union of life with the value contemplated. It is unlike Science and Philosophy in that it seeks understanding in order to relate existentially to Reality.

¹ Creative Freedom, by J.W.T. Mason, P. 183-4.

² Out of My Late Years. by Albert Einstein, P. 152.

³ Ibid, Pages 25, 114.

⁴ Religion and the Modern Man, by John B. Magee, P.37-38.

'The Religious consciousness seeks being', writes Leuba¹, 'the Philosophic consciousness seeks knowledge'. Science, to be sure, appears to do the same thing, but whereas Science seeks relationship with life through control, Religion seeks a new quality of being through obedience to the ultimate order of things".

The over-all result of what I have said so far is that the main function of Philosophy and Science is to provide us with study of the various problems which arise in our mind regarding the things that exist, so also Religion provides us with a study of the problems relating to the Reality, Creation, Aim and End of life as a whole. Therefore Religion is in fact a Science in the sense that it teaches us about life and Reality and that in contrast to Philosophy and Science, Religion is the only Science which exhaustively, satisfactorily as well as definitely deals with the questions relating to the beginning, the aim, the end and the betterment of life par excellence as a whole. Religious knowledge, as Magee says "determines the meaning of man's existence as a man. Its goal is to comprehend the meaning of one's self and one's relationship to reality as a whole"².

2. RELIGION IS A SCIENCE

Every one possesses a faculty of thought and an impulse to act or experiment but every one is neither a philosopher or a scientist nor every thinking or experiment is Philosophy or Science in the real sense. The reason is that philosophical and scientific studies have their own set spheres and well defined rules to deal with. There is no such thing as astray thinking or baseless experiments within

¹ A Psychological Study of Religion, by James Leuba (1912), P.31.

² Religion and Modern Man, by Magee, P. 393-395.

the meaning of Science and Philosophy. The foundation of philosophical and scientific studies is rational understanding which necessarily implies purpose, procedure, possibility, criticism and universality. First there is a definite purpose of study; second, there is consideration and analysis of precedents i.e., material or results already available from previous work done; third, there is possibility of achievement of new ideas or development of the older ones; fourth, there is the test of criticism which every new result has to pass through; and fifth, there is need to see that the principles arrived at are of universal application. Then all this require a proper and specialised training. It needs formation of a suitable atmosphere and availability of necessary material and above all there must be a competent and experienced guide, a teacher, without whose guidance every thing will prove to be useless. After all things cannot speak, they cannot tell us how to proceed with and harness them to discover the utility latent in them. This is because for every work proper and specialised training is needed. That is the reason why nearly all great scholars have unhesitatingly attributed their success and reputation to their learned teachers or predecessors. According to an article published in the Quran Edition of Sayyara Digest,¹ Nobel Prize winner scientist in Chemistry Mr. H.A. Krebs says that he could not have gained so much interest in Science had he not been under the training of famous scientists like Otto Warburg; and Otto Warburg for himself claims his success as a scientist due to the training of Emil Fisher who in his turn was proud of his teachers Jacques Monad and Otto Locwi. According to these scientists although the company of great scholars does not provide any material relating to studies but it creates a sort of scientific spirit which is the fountain-head for a research scholar. It creates a sort of scientific attitude which helps a

¹ Vol.III, P. 135 (April 1970).

man to become a scientist. This attitude always consists in Humility and Enthusiasm which form a key towards success as a scholar. It is, I think, correctly said by the great Mystic poet Maulana Rumi, in one of his famous couplets, that all that he achieved in spirituality was due to his spiritual teacher namely Shams of Tabrez.

Amongst the Muslim mystics there is a definite and compulsory code of training consisting of rigorous spiritual exercises which help a mortal being to attain communion with Divinity, step by step, each of which needs vigilant guidance from the "Murshid" (Spiritual Guide) and for which complete subordination and obedience of the pupil to his teacher is absolutely necessary.

Coming back to Religion, we find that religious knowledge also proceeds on very well defined principles of universal application. There is no such thing as blind faith or abstruse thinking in Religion. The knowledge which Religion provides us with is in fact deeply rooted in reason and the teaching of Religion relating to even most abstract problems are always based on rational understating, of course, under qualified guidance and training. Even a cursory analysis of religious study shows that it also proceeds through the same stages as any other science or methods of study does. It has a definite purpose. It takes into consideration the precedents i.e., religious material already available. There is also no restraint to deduce new principles to bring them in conformity with changed circumstances or development of the old ones provided they are not inconsistent with the fundamental principles which form the very basis of Religion. Its principles also stand the test of criticism and effectively meet all challenges. Finally it also aims at universal application of its principles.

Religion also fulfils the need of a teacher through the Prophet who gets his own training direct from the Supreme Almighty God through Revelation which may be through the angel or by direct communion. He first infuses a sort of religious attitude and enthusiasm amongst his disciples or followers and thus prepares the right atmosphere for religious understanding. The principles enunciated by him invoke fierce opposition from the non-believers but on account of their inherent righteousness ultimately prevail over all opposition and thus the religious movement gathers momentum and help expand the Religion. After the Prophet his trained disciples take up and continue with the task of interpreting and disseminating the principles laid down by him and thereby endeavour to universalise his teachings for the common good.

Thus, like any other Science, religious knowledge is also centralised in some personality through whom it is imparted to other persons and whose interpretations of the commandments of God are taken to be final and exhaustive of the ideology and objectives underlying them. Without such a personality exercising supreme authority we cannot even imagine of any Science, Philosophy or Religion to establish and flourish. Perhaps one may say that there is a large number of books containing wealth of knowledge on each and every subject and we can go through them to acquire knowledge. But this is a mistaken notion. The books that are available are the result of some body's writing them and others preserving them as such. Think of the day when Adam was the only person on the surface. Who taught him and his subsequent generations to speak, understand, read and write, and so on. There were certainly no books available on any subject what-so-ever. Books are, in fact, the result of knowledge of persons themselves. Knowledge is not basically the result of books at all. Books are, speaking practically, only sources of communication

and enlightenment of views and ideas of their authors or compilers. Even this needs a medium (person etc.,) to transmit its contents. Books by themselves do not teach. For obvious reasons, if an illiterate man enters into a library, he would not return a learned scholar by simply glancing over the book shelves and turning the pages. He would be as blank as ever. Man will learn to speak even his own mother tongue if, as an experiment, he is kept aloof from his near and dear ones since his earliest childhood. It is only through contacts with others that one knows how to speak and how to live. It is really the mother who is the first and foremost teacher of a child.

The personality in whom Philosophy, Science or Religion is centralised is not and can never be an ordinary and unenlightened one. It is always the personality of a genius having extraordinary qualities of mind and soul. A dull-headed or a person of ordinary intelligence cannot aspire to become a philosopher, scientist or a Prophet. To become a philosopher or scientist higher qualities of mind and soul are required and for a Prophet, even still higher or to be more correct, the highest qualities of humanity are required because the subject matter which he deals with and the Divine Mission which he fulfils are not mundane and of common level, but abstract and super-natural. He is a man, no doubt, but the faculties endowed to him far surpass the common place. His vision and intelligence are of the highest order and he knows how to mould mentality of mankind. He also knows how to meet with problems placed before him at their best. It is for this reason that Maulana Rumi says that to sit in the company of a "Wali" i.e. spiritual guide for a moment is better than hundred years of sincere prayers. This is because he (the Wali) is gifted with the super powers to transmute the base of any individual. Under his divine influence even non-believers become believers within no time. He can make even lay-

man to think and understand things in a far better way than an educated man with sceptic mind can do. But the personality through whom Religion is introduced has to be and has always been the personality of a human being; because he has to deal with human beings throughout. He has to lay down the rules for the human beings to act upon, and he, himself as a human being, illustrates those principles by personal examples and thus presents a symbolic interpretation of the same for the human beings at large for all times to come. Therefore from the point of view of having a centralized personality, Religion is a Science.

The other basic requirement of a philosophical or scientific study is that there should be a subject-matter or a problem to deal with and the problem must be one which can in fact be a problem worth studying and interpretation. Every problem of our routine life need not be the subject-matter of a philosophical or scientific study. The requirement for any problem to become the subject-matter of philosophical or scientific study is: first, that it should be rational; and second, that it ought to be a worthy one to be investigated upon. With the advancement of philosophical and scientific studies down the ages, these modes of study have already very well settled and defined the problems which form their respective subject-matter. Thus, questions relating to the presence of the inner self, explanation of multiplicity and reality of the world form the subject-matter of Philosophy; and questions relating to the constitution and functions of material objects and practical application of their results for the service and betterment of human beings form the subject-matter of Natural Sciences. Similarly Religion also has its own well defined and set problems to deal with. As already previously stated, the subject-matter for Religion is life as a whole in all of its shades and projections. Religion tells us what is the origin,

aim and ultimate end of life and it also gives us the ways and means through which we can attain perfection and success of this life as well as the life to come. It gives us exact and forth-right answers to questions relating to God, Universe and Man.

Another fundamental requirement of philosophic and scientific study is that the problems should be such that could be dealt with on basis of rational understanding. To proceed with any problem in a rational way means that the study must be systematic, clear, comprehensible, disciplined, according to the principles applicable, to the point and purposeful, so that the results achieved may stand the test of intelligence, common sense and practical application. When we come to Religion we find that study through the media of Religion also proceeds on rational basis. To say that Religion thrives on blind faith or unintelligible principles is, in fact, a blame, and an insult to Religion, and speaks of the total ignorance and absurdity of one who dares make such baseless allegations against Religion.

The teachings of Religion are deeply rooted in intelligence. They are basically supported by and themselves support reason. They are never opposed to common sense. If Religion says that the Creator of this universe is God who is One, Almighty, Absolute, Eternal and Over all Administrator of all that exists, this saying can not be attributed to an insane or immature mind. It is something which has come from the Ultimate and Absolute God Himself¹. On one hand, it elicits a sort of inherent appreciation of truth from every mature and intelligent

¹ "A Comprehensive and coherent grasp of reality as a whole could be known only to God alone—to a Being which embraces directly the whole of reality spirit and matter, ideal and fact, past and future—Religion and Modern Man, by J.B. Magee, P. 395.

mind and every living conscience, and, on the other hand, it is also a challenge to every other mode of study and way of thinking to disprove it, if it can. The long history of intelligence and understanding down the ages is itself the biggest testimony to show that each and every attempt, however systematic, organised and forceful it might have been to disprove this proclamation of Religion, has utterly failed. Now we have arrived at a point when even the most advanced scientific studies and practical experiments of worldly phenomena have confirmed the view that all that materially exists is not real, absolute, everlasting and final by itself and that there is some Supernatural Supreme Power Which is responsible for the creation of this universe and that Supreme Power is none else but God¹.

Similarly, if Religion asks us to obey the commandments of God, this asking is not the outcome of an immature, impatient or irrational will. It is in fact the directive from One Whose knowledge is absolute, exact and final and the direction given is exactly in accordance with the necessity and for the betterment and perfection of life itself. When an engineer invents a machine, why does he also supply us with a specification giving therein the guide lines of its use?, simply because if that machine is not used as per its specification, there is no guarantee that it will work well or work at all. Similarly when a pharmaceutical company discovers a new medical formula and prepares a new medicine, why does it also issue directions for its use?, simply because if that medicine is not used for the disease it is meant for, or it is not used in the manner prescribed, there is danger that it may cause adverse affects which might result even in death. In the same way, we can easily realise that the Creator of this

¹ In this respect the readers may see the views of forty distinguished scientists published in the book "Evidence of God in the Expanding Universe".

Universe and all that it contains has provided through Religion a sort of “specification” or “direction for use” according to which we can pass our life in a perfectly accurate manner and achieve its perfection and derive the fullest possible benefit out of it. Just like the use of a machine contrary to its specification or that of a medicine against the directions for its use, results in failure of the machine or death of the patient, the use of life in disregard to the commandments of God also results in disaster to life itself. Instances of total annihilation of the once flourishing communities of Aad, Samood, Pharoah, and those of Prophets’ Loot, Shuaib and Noah are already on the record of history.

The teachings and commandments of Religion, therefore, are all based on rational understanding. Further on, Religion itself repeatedly appeals to the human mind to observe and understand that all that exists in this universe is not in vain. It has a definite aim and object and if properly made use of, every thing proves to be of immense and unimaginable benefit for the humanity at large. Religion has been defined by philosophical thinkers to include a world vision, a daring belief, a set of absolute obligations, a range of imaginative, emotional and practical experience that is denied to the non-religious mind. It is an interpretation of the universe, of both Nature and History; it is an answer in ultimate terms to the torturing difficulties which we compendiously call problems of life; and it is a way of living which with that interpretation is both noble and rational and both theoretical and practical. How theoretical it can be is evident from the volume and difficulty of Theology. How practical it can be is evident from History”¹.

Foundations of Faith, by Dr. F.R. Ansari, P. 1-2.

3. RELIGION IS THE ONLY SCIENCE TO STUDY LIFE AS A WHOLE

To start with a concrete example: supposing there is the Radio Transmission and also the Receiver Set to catch and make possible for us to understand and enjoy the transmission, but neither the Transmission, nor the Receiver Set, singly or jointly can be of any use to us unless we know how to properly connect the Receiver Set with the Transmission. In other words there should be and in fact there is a definite Science which tells us all about the Transmission, the Receiver Set and their proper use. Similarly, this galaxy of stars, this rising and setting of sun, this waxing and waning of moon, this thick and heavy cloud, this rainfall and drizzle, this thunder and lightning, this up-right mountain, this flowing river, this huge ocean, this growing plant and blooming flower, this flying bird and grazing animal, this handsome, intelligent master-piece of creation, that is, the man himself—his childhood, youth and old age, this coming and going, this beginning and end, this life and death, what is it, how is it, and why is it? These are but a few from amongst the vast multitude of problems which every thinking mind has to face. The reply, however, is not very difficult. Our life with all its plethora of problems is in fact a continuous wireless transmission of the invisible Broad Casting Station of Nature. Then, what about the Receiver Sets? Well: they are the watching eyes, listening ears, thinking minds, live hearts and awakening conscience of human-beings, and to tell us how to connect these Receiver Sets with the Broad Casting Station of Nature, there is the knowledge provided by Religion. Imagine again and again and the only reply will be that even though the eyes see yet in fact they are blind, even though the ears listen yet they are in fact deaf, even though the minds think yet they are in fact dull, even though the hearts pulsate yet they are in fact dead and even though the

conscience feels yet it is in fact sleeping, unless Religion comes in and tells us that all that is in this universe is not a chance affair, having no purpose or a beginning or an end. On the contrary, as Religion tells us unambiguously, all that exists materially is not real, ultimate, eternal and absolute, in itself, that every thing points at its Creator—the One, Absolute, Ultimate, Everlasting and Almighty God and that perfection of this as well as the life to come can only be achieved through unreserved obedience to His commands.

Can you imagine if any Philosophical theory has ever told or can even now tell us what is the real aim and ultimate end of this universe? Can any Practical Science tell us why and how this universe has been created and what is the exact nature of the Ultimate Reality and through what means perfection and betterment of life as a whole can be achieved? Or can any other mode of study tell us that life does not end with the incidence of death, that beyond the Tomb-stones there is yet another life which is real and eternal, that on the Day of Judgement there will be a total and exact evaluation of what we have done in this world, that virtues will be rewarded with Paradise and vices punished with Hell, and what are the ways and means to obtain perfection and betterment of this as well as the life after death. The reply will be that with the exception of Religion, there is no other mode of study to exhaustively as well as satisfactorily tell us all about it.

The conclusion, therefore, is that Religion is the only Science which deals with life as a whole i.e. in all its manifestations. It is only Religion which tells us that life is the creation of God—The Ultimate, Absolute Reality having no material body like that of ours and as such is not subject to limitations of vision, touch, taste or smell, but we can no doubt understand Him through His attributes the

most obvious of which is Creation itself. This only Religion which tells us that this universe is not only the creation, but it is also always subject to an overall and fullest control of God. It is only Religion which tells us that all objects of creation including mankind are living and functioning merely because God has made them all do so and they shall immediately come to a sudden and inexplicable stop as soon as God wishes them to stop. It is only Religion that tells us that every thing of the universe is for the service of human beings and that human beings, in order to achieve perfection of their life, must obey the commandments of God. It is Religion only which asks us to study each and every phenomenon of this universe and endeavour to make the best use of every thing for ourselves. In this sense Religion is in fact the Pioneer Science which originally invoked in man a sort of interest of observation, understanding and practical experience which later on gave rise to a huge number of Philosophical theories and Practical Sciences. Religion, as such, is not only a Science in itself but also the Mother Science or Science of Sciences in its real sense.

4. RELIGION AND OTHER SCIENCES

In the concluding lines of the last preceding paragraph I have said that Religion is the Mother Science or Science of Sciences. Before proceeding further, I think, it will also be of interest to examine this view and see how far it is sustainable.

If we look to the history of Natural Sciences, we can only go as far back as the 17th century because prior to this there was no separate scientific study as it is today; or taking a broader view of the matter, we can at the most go upto the period of Muslim thinkers in the Medieval Ages (700 A.D. to 1300 A.D.) because it is mainly in this period

that the huge tree of scientific studies which has spread its branches all over the present day world, has its roots deeply and firmly embedded. But then that will be the final point of our approach as prior to Muslim Scientists there is no such thing as Science in the strict sense of the term¹.

As regards Philosophy, the starting point is the Greek period which begins from about 600 B.C. The first philosopher that we have on record is Thales of Miletus in Asia Minor, who flourished in the first half of 6th century B.C. and the first philosophical theory which was advanced by him is that essence of reality consists in water. Prior to it either there was no philosopher at all or if there was any, he has not been considered worth mentioning in the history.

In any case, we know that there was a pre-civilization period and earlier to it the stone age in the history of the universe and finally there was also a pre-historic period of which we know nothing at all. Thus it is clear that Philosophy as well as Science owe their existence to a very late and known point of time in the history of mankind. But as regards Religion the position is quite different. Religion is based on commandments of God and therefore without going into extraneous details it can be safely said that Religion has its existence from the very day Adam was created. At least one commandment of God to Adam is undisputedly on the tongue of every human being that after being created Adam was ordered not to taste the fruit of a particular tree of the Paradise. Adam could not restrain himself when the Satan, the Archetype of Evil, tempted him to eat the forbidden fruit and as a result had to leave the Paradise with Eve. This incidence took place thousands of years ago of which we have no actual date on record.

¹ I have dealt with the contribution of Muslim Scientists to Modern Science in the next Chapter: "Misunderstanding about Religion".

There was definitely a point of time when Adam and Eve were all alone on the earth. There was no house to live in, no field to grow, no kitchen to cook, no cart to travel, no looms to weave, no needle to stitch, no lamp to lit, no books to read, no teacher to guide, no subject to study, no medicine to cure, and so on. Now think how Adam learnt to secure shelter and food, how he came to know about the nature and use of things available and above all how to live in and make use of the company of Eve. The only reply will be through the commandments of God. Quran tells us that before sending him to earth God taught Adam the names of all things. The things were then presented to the angels asking them whether they could tell their names, but they could not. Then God asked Adam to tell their names which he did¹.

Then generation of Adam increased and spread all over the earth. With the growth of population, needs of daily life also increased and measures to meet the growing needs were discovered. First there were the basic needs of food and shelter and upbringing of children in their most primitive and simple form. Then by and by and after a long endeavour and continuous struggle for centuries together we arrived at the age of civilization and ultimately the sun of learning and scientific understanding rose on the horizon of the modern ages when the nature and reality of things were better understood and made use of for the service and betterment of the humanity at large.

Throughout this continuous and unbroken travel of human understanding, learning and achievements, new ideas, experiments, and results took the place of the old ones and after occupying the field for some time the so-called new ones lost their usefulness and gave way to the

¹ Quran: Baqara 2: 31-33.

still newer ones. With the growth of scientific learning and under the impact of swift developments this process was being repeated a bit swiftly as compared to the pre-scientific age. Yet one thing is clear and it is that every new thing had its importance and significance at some definite point of time, and in this respect it may be said that the invention of a stitching needle at its time was no less important and astonishing than the invention of a rocket in the present day world. But the question still remains as to how human beings came to know to invent or discover objects of utility at various facets of history? Some might say that human beings learnt all these things through instinct and self-understanding. But from where instinct and self-understanding came, and if instinct and self-understanding are the only and real source of learning, then why systems of instruction and teaching were at all needed? The reply would be that human beings cannot but learn through instructions and training, aided, no doubt, by natural gifts of instinct and understanding. I have already said that definitely there was a point of time in the history of the universe when Adam and Eve were all alone on the earth and the only source of instructions and training to them was through the commandments of their creator—the God. Then from time to time Messengers of God came and taught human beings how to live and how to make use of and draw maximum and correct benefit from things. The root of all Scientific and Philosophical studies, research and developments, therefore, in fact, lies in the understanding of the nature and use of things which human beings have learnt through the commandments of God or in other words through Religion. Thus basically the knowledge about the nature of things came through Religion and further developments resulted through Philosophical and Scientific methods of study. Religious bias in human thought and feeling purified and chastened the intellect and this quickened the pace of developments and progress. Hence

Philosophy and Science are the offshoots of understanding provided by Religion and in that sense Religion is the Science of Sciences or the Mother Science.

5. MISUNDERSTANDING ABOUT RELIGION

Religion is understood to be a mere code of instructions relating to worship. But that view about Religion is basically mistaken. Religion is in fact a Code of life. It consists of instructions and teachings relating to belief, prayer, morality, understanding and activities in general. Religion teaches us what should be our belief relating to our Creator, the universe as well as ourselves. Religion provides us with the principles of offering our prayers and the manners how to behave with each other. Religion also provides us with a sort of understanding of ourselves as well as the worldly phenomenon and invites us to think, observe, understand and make use of the things available. It is only Religion which tells us that nothing in this universe is useless or a waste. It is Religion which tells us that everything in this universe is for the benefit and use of human beings¹. It is Religion which asks us not to sit idle on mere hopes but to endeavour and use our mental as well as physical capacities to understand what we have around us and draw maximum benefit out of the same. Religion not only tells us that we should understand and make use of things available but also lays down the principles on which we should proceed to do so. Religion also tells us what is virtue or vice and good or bad.

Thus Religion is in fact a complete Code of life as a whole. It never proceeds on blind beliefs but each and every command, instruction and teaching of Religion is

¹ "It is He who hath created for you all things that are on earth." Quran; Baqara—2 : 29.

based on rational understanding and is meant for practical purposes in order to pass an overall successful life in this as well as the next world.

What has been said above can also be confirmed from the Holy Books as well as the life of Holy Prophets. The Apostles of God were not mere saints passing their lives in seclusion on hills or in jungles. They lived like human beings amongst their own country men, offered and taught others how to offer prayers, enjoyed and taught others how to enjoy family life, earned and taught others how to earn their livelihood, took regular meals, used proper clothings made business transactions, fought battles, entered into treaties, established military and police forces, run the administration of states, grew crops, kept animals and property, undertook journeys, took rest, cured diseases, held discussions, established teaching centers, expanded knowledge, borrowed and lent money, provided help to the poor, widows and orphans, taught manners to deal with each other, told about the nature of things, the Creator and the Universe, explained spiritual problems, decided disputes, awarded punishments, so on and so forth.

The source of all learning and all activities, as we have already seen, is Religion and I am prepared to go to the extent that if we eat, it is because Religion taught us to eat; if we wear clothes, it is because Religion taught us to wear; if we understand and take benefit out of things, it is because Religion guided us to do so, of course when I say so I am in the pre-historic period and to be more correct at the point of time when Adam and Eve were all alone on the earth. While we are in the present day world surrounded by a huge number of scientific inventions in the form of aeroplanes, rockets, railways, automobiles, space crafts, radios, televisions, films, photography, medicine, surgery, learning and research, it is really difficult for us to accept

that the root of all inventions, discoveries and developments in fact lies in the teachings of Religion and that our knowledge and activity basically owe their existence to Religion and Religion alone. This is because we are ignorant of the fact that after creating Adam, it was God Himself who first taught Adam the nature of all things¹, and the use of the pen², and taught the man that which he did not know at all³.

There are persons who plead that Religion is out-dated. It is a fraud. It is a sort of opium to intoxicate the human mind. They think that in this ultra-sophisticated period of life there is no need of Religion at all. They claim to have gained the entire knowledge through Science and Technology. Perfection and betterment of life, according to them, consist in development and advancement of scientific and technical knowledge. They propagate that the ideas regarding the creation and the Creator of this universe, prayer and worship, heaven and hell are all mere figments of imagination. According to them there is no resurrection and yet another life to come. The life as it is in this world is final and it ends with death. They as such do not believe in the commandments of God, right or wrong and there is no such thing as morality to them. Enjoyment, in whatever form it be possible, is the ultimate aim of life for them.

It is really difficult to deal with such persons. They brazen-facedly deny what they really feel and understand. In the words of Quran, "They have hearts wherewith they understand not; eyes wherewith they see not; and ears wherewith they hear not. They are like cattle—nay more misguided: for they are heedless⁴." According to Quran

¹ Quran: Baqara - 2 : 31.

² Quran: Alaq - 96 : 4.

³ Quran: Alaq - 96 : 5.

⁴ Aa raaf - 7: 179.

those who say, "we hear, but listen not" are the worst of beasts in the sight of God¹. Their example is like a person who during his childhood learns the first lesson of ABCD from a primary teacher, but when he reaches the stage of university education, forgets all about his first lesson, becomes unthankful to his first teacher and goes to the extent of point-blank denial of any gain of knowledge from him. Although the foundation stone of his knowledge is in fact the first lesson taught by the primary teacher yet on account of advanced knowledge subsequently acquired by him, he feels ashamed of honestly admitting that the roots of whatever he has gained now lay embedded in the primary lesson taught to him while he was a child and a beginner in education. There is yet another example of a man who on attaining the age of majority does not even remember that at one stage he was a newly born baby when he could neither eat nor wear nor even move by himself. He was taught each and every thing and brought up by his parents and therefore instead of being unthankful to his parents he should have bowed with respect before them and served them as they served him during his age of inability. Similar is the position with these so called modern materialist scientists and technologists. They have totally forgotten that learning and understanding is in fact a continuous and constant flow starting from the point of elementary education upto the stage of advanced knowledge, at the one end of which is the pre-historic age where there are no scientific, philosophical or literary material available and no laboratories established, there is no teacher to teach and no book to read and at the other end there are very well-established libraries, institutions, laboratories and great scholars and teachers of all subjects and branches of knowledge. Although this is a fact yet they will never admit that the source of their advanced upto-date

¹ Anfaal – 8: 21-22.

knowledge, which they are very much proud of, is the first lesson which was taught by Religion at a time when they could not even dream of Philosophy or Science at all.

From another angle, it may also be seen that whatever the modern scientists possess in the form of knowledge, a greater part of it is in fact on account of inheritance from the ancestors, and if we trace back the history of inheritance and acquisition of knowledge by the ancestors, we will ultimately come to the age when there was no Science and Philosophy in the modern sense, no books and libraries and no teachers and institutions. The present day scientists may choose to say that they have learnt nothing from Religion, but can they also deny that even their ancestors did not do so. If they dare say so, what will they say about their first and the foremost father Adam. What was the source of his knowledge? The reply will only be that the only source of instruction and guidance for him was the Creator Himself who taught Adam how to live in this world and then even subsequently He has been teaching the human beings through His Apostles and Holy Books how to lead their life and how to achieve its betterment and perfection. Then persons trained by the Prophets took the torch of learning down the ages and with the advancement of learning we have reached upto the present day stage of development and advanced modes of studies in the form of Science and Technology. But on reaching this stage and on account of undreamt success, unfortunately, the vanity of 'EGO' prevailed over the sincerity of the soul, and the honesty of the conscience, and instead of being thankful to the first primary and real source of knowledge, the materialists started thinking that all their knowledge and achievements are the result of their own endeavour and labour and that they can pass their life with success without the need of any guidance, instruction or commandment of Religion.

Before the materialist thinkers are warned that their unthankfulness to Religion will ultimately prove fatal to their own destiny, let us first try to remind them that the fountain-head of their knowledge which they have forgotten, is Religion and Religion alone.

The history of scientific learning as already stated is only of a few hundred years past. We can find out its starting point somewhere in the medieval ages. Philosophy dates back to 600 B.C. only when Greek Philosophy took its start. Earlier than that there was neither Philosophy nor Science, but we see that Religion was there, Apostles and Books of God were there and all that was being learnt was through the Apostles and the Books of God. In the tenth century B.C. there were David and Solomon who established a religious kingdom, preached the supremacy of and complete obedience to God, established military forces, taught the use of iron for battle and other purposes, developed the systems of deciding disputes and sending written messages from one place to another, showed that all animals, birds, ants, mountains, landscape and even air and wind are subordinate to human beings and that they all bow before and pray to God the Almighty. Solomon was a great intellectualist and learned man of his time. He knew languages of the birds¹. He had control over the wind and the Jinns,² and in his days divers plunged in deep waters to search pearls etc. and hunted sea animals. He was also a well-known Prophet. In his days Saba (Biblical "Sheba") community³ of South Arabia had established a very good

¹ Quran: Naml: 27: 16. Also see Jewish Encyclopaedia Vol. XI, P. 339.

² Quran: Naml: 27:17. Saba: 34: 12. Swad: 38: 36; Also see Jewish Encyclopaedia, vol. VII, P.24.

³ Saba is identical with the Biblical Sheba (I Kings: 10: 1-10). It was a city in Yaman and was famous for the dam of Maarib which made the country very prosperous and enabled it to attain a high degree of civilization. Bilqis was the queen of Sheba in the days of Solomon and

system of irrigation by collecting rain water through big dams and using it for purposes of growing gardens.

In 15th to 16th centuries B.C. there was Moses (1540—1400 B.C.) who for the first time gave us the idea of nationality based on Religion and demonstrated an organized national challenge to the biggest and the strongest state of that time. Through Moses we got the first written Commandments of God bearing instructions to worship God, respect parents, offer prayers, serve the needy persons, abstain from adultery, fight against the forces of vice, migrate to get rid of vicious forces and so on.

During 19th to 20th centuries B.C. there was Joseph (1910—1800 B.C.) who interpreted dreams, took measures to preserve and control supply of food-grains for use in time of natural calamities, such as draught, famine etc. In his long and moral-bearing story of forcible abduction by his own step brothers, being sold as a slave in the hands of Egyptian Minister Aziz, unsuccessful romantic overtures through persuasions by Zulekha, imprisonment for several years for no fault of his own and finally coming into power and pardoning of his enemies, we have symbolic demonstration of how a noble soul should behave in the midst of pettiness, jealousy, spite, hatred, injustice and lower propensities of human life and how to create awakening at the expense of over all suffering to himself.

ancient religion of the people of Sheba consist in the worship of the heavenly bodies, sun, planets and the stars. Solomon had sent his message through Hoopoe to Bilqis queen of Saba, who later on came to Solomon and embraced Islam at his hands. The Saba community flourished between 1100-1115 B.C. when it was over-powered by Hameer community. The Greek historians recognized Saba community to be the richest of the world. (See Quran—Translation by Abdullah Yousufali, voll.II, P.983-988 N. 3263-3281, and Tashimul Quran by Maulana Maududi, Vol.III, P.568-569).

Similarly his father Jacob (2000—1853 B.C.) throughout the story of how he lost and found his beloved son Joseph, teaches us the lesson of complete patience, forbearance, hope, attempt and forgiveness even in the most adverse and impatient circumstances. He also like his grandfather Abraham left, as his legacy, the advice to his sons “die not except in the faith of Islam”¹. He asked his sons not to worship idols and not to insult God².

Shoaib also preached the belief in and worship of God the Almighty. He asked his people to give just measurements and weights and not to withhold from the people things that are their due and not to do any mischief on earth. In fact credit of establishing the system of correct measurements and weights goes to Shoaib³.

In the 20th to 22nd centuries B.C. there was Abraham (2160—1985 B.C.) who taught us not to bow before the idols, sun, moon, stars but only before God the Almighty. He taught us to think and understand the nature and reality of things on earth as well as the sun, the moon and the stars in the sky. In his life we find that if a man is true to his God, even ferocious devouring fire can change into sweet cool breeze, and the burning heaps into garden for him; desert can turn into population and grannery, rocks can supply water of unimaginable quantity, and so on. He demonstrated in actuality the belief of life after death by killing four birds, throwing their pieces on different mountains and when he asked them to return, they

¹ Quran : Baqara : 2 : 132 - 133.

² Jewish Encyclopaedia, Vol.VII, P.24.

³ Shoaib was the great grandson of Madyan son of Abraham. He was sent as a Prophet to the Midianites. The people instead of following him, threatened him to drive out of the city and the result was that they were destroyed by a terrible earthquake—See The Quran, Translation by Abdullah Yousuf Ali, Vol. I, P. 365, Note 1054.

immediately came flying to him. He was the first Prophet of God to establish a sort of International Institution of teaching the Absolute Oneness of and complete obedience to God, by fixing centers at various places under the leadership of different Prophets with a center at Jerusalem.

In 29th to 39th centuries B.C. we have Noah (3800—2850 B.C.) who for the first time prepared and gave us the idea of preparing a sailing boat for purposes of voyage over the sea and used greeze to keep safe the outer side of the boat from erosion by water. Noah's sons prepared pucca bricks for building houses.

In 31st to 33rd centuries B.C. Enoch (Idrees) (3284—3017 B.C.) started the art of script, Astronomy and Arithmetic. He is said to be the originator of stitching clothes.¹

Then there was Adam himself who ploughed the fields, grew crops, got fire through fire stone, grinded wheat and cooked bread, used bullock for ploughing, and so on.

In short right from Adam all the Apostles of God preached the Absolute Oneness and exclusive worship of God, told human beings to understand the nature and reality of things on earth as well as in the sky, taught the correct use of things available, laid down principles to pass our lives in this universe and with the development of society and its needs, discovered and made use of different things. By growing crops Adam opened the way to studies in Agriculture, and by getting fire through fire-stones he laid down the foundation stone of creating and making use of fire and light. By preparing sailing boat, Noah gave us the idea of possibility of voyage over the sea, and all further

¹ He was the elder son of Cain (Qabeel) Genesis: 4—17.

developments in this respect in fact owe their existence to the idea originally given by him. By denying the status of Deity to idols, the sun, moon and the stars, Abraham made us to think and realise that nothing in this universe is real, supreme and self-dependent, that all are the creation of God and therefore we should not respect or bow before things of this universe at all whatever their appearance and power be. They are meant for the service of human beings. By organising his community into a Nation and demonstrating a successful resistance to the autocratic and self-proclaimed godhood of Pharaoh, Moses gave us the idea of establishment of Nationalist states having their foundation in Religion and as institutions organised to struggle against the forces of vice. He gave us the first written Commandments of God and established a society of followers of those Commandments. By melting iron and using it for purposes of battle, David and Solomon opened the doors of use of iron for extensive purposes of peace and war. They also developed a system of deciding disputes between rival parties. Then, Jesus demonstrated the possibility of curing even the incurable diseases and the life after death.

In other words, developments in agricultural knowledge and knowledge about fire and light as well as food owe their existence to Adam; use of stitched clothes, Mathematics and Astronomy to Enoch; Navigation and Voyage over the sea, to Noah; reality of things on earth as well as in the sky, to Abraham; cultivation and preservation of crops as well as nature of dreams and their meaning to Josef; the concept of nationality and uplift of societies to Moses; use of iron which later developed into heavy industrial complex, to David and Solomon, and so on.

Now we come to the Greek period when philosophical understanding flourished. If we analyse the philosophical

theories of the Greek period we find that all these theories are centralised in two basic and fundamental problems viz. what is the essence of ultimate reality and to what power the universe owes its existence? If we look into the source of these problems, we will find that in fact it lies in the teachings of the Apostles of God who had been preaching through out that this universe has no existence of its own, it is a creation of God and that God alone is the Real, Absolute and Almighty and that all should bow to God and follow His Commandments. It is really from these teachings that questions relating to the nature of reality arose and this was the natural result of the fact that the ultimate reality was not subject to sight, touch, taste or smell. It would only be understood through feeling, reason and intuition. This in fact is the source of all sophisticated discussions which we find in the Greek Philosophy and on this account it can be safely said that Greek Philosophy owes its existence to teachings of Religion from Adam to Moses.

Then came the last Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H.) and the last Book of God i.e. the Holy Quran. The Quran in its very first revealed verses commands the Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H.) to "read in the name of thy Lord and Cherisher and the most Bountiful, Who taught man the use of pen, and taught him what he knew not¹". It advises him to pray "O my Lord: Advance me in knowledge²". It says that those who have knowledge and those who have no knowledge are not equal³, that those who do not observe and understand are worse than cattle⁴, that whosoever has been given wisdom has indeed been given over flowing

¹ Alaq 96 : 1—5.

² Taa-Haa, 20 : 114.

³ Zumar, 39 : 9.

⁴ Aaraaf, 7 : 179.

benefit¹, that none will grasp the Message but men of understanding², and that of all things it is knowledge by virtue of which man is superior to angels and is the vicegerent of god on the earth³. It teaches man to reflect on the phenomena of nature, the creation of the heaven and the earth, the changes of seasons, rotation, of day and night, the sea, the clouds, the winds, the sun, the moon, the stars and the laws they obey. It bids to ponder over the mysteries of death and birth, growth and decay of men and nations and to contemplate the sun-sets, dawns, hills, streams, ravines, vine yards, gardens of palms, cattle going out to pasture and returning home, The canopy of the starry heavens, the ships sailing on the sea, and the beauties of the soul more than those of the sense⁴. It declares that it is God who created the heavens and the earth, and sends rain from the skies which brings fruits to feed you, it is He Who has made the ships subject to your will so that they may sail through the sea, and has made subject to you the rivers, the sun and the moon, the night and the day, and has given you all that you ask for⁵. He has created for you the cattle, and horses, mules and donkeys and things of which you have no knowledge. He produces for you corn, olives, date palms, grapes and every kind of fruit. He has made subject to you night, day, sun, moon and the stars and the things on earth, as well as the sea, mountains, rivers and road⁶.

Coming to the saying of the Holy Prophet, Muhammad (P.B.U.H.): he says: Seeking after knowledge is an

¹ Baqara, 2 : 269.

² Baqara, 2 : 269.

³ Baqara, 2 : 30.

⁴ See Baqara, 2 : 164; Imran, 3 : 190; Yunus, 10 : 6; Ra'd, 13 : 2; Nahl, 16 : 78; Momin, 40 : 67, Jasiah, 45 : 5.

⁵ Ibrahim, 14 : 32—33.

⁶ Nahl, 16 : 5—15.

ordinance obligatory upon every Muslim¹. Seek knowledge even as far as China². Seek knowledge from the cradle to the grave. Whoever follows a path in search of knowledge, God will guide him into a path leading into Paradise³. The learned men are the heirs of the Prophets⁴. The angels bow low to the seeker after knowledge⁵. What is in the heavens and in the earth intercedes for the learned men⁶. The angels offer their wings to the seeker of knowledge⁷. Wisdom adds honour to the noble and exalts the slave until he attains to the level of Kings⁸. The learned man is a trustee of God on earth⁹. The superior rank that the learned man holds in relation to the worshipper is like the superior rank I hold in relation to the least of men¹⁰. Whoever has a knowledge but conceals it, will, on the day of resurrection, be bridled with a bit of fire¹¹. God was not worshipped with anything better than learned religion. Verily a single jurisprudent is more formidable to Satan than a thousand worshippers¹². The learned believer holds a rank seventy degrees higher than that of the ordinary believer¹³. Between the learned and the worshipper are a hundred degrees each two of which are separated by the extent of a racing horse's run in seventy

¹ Ibn-Majah, Intro. 16 : 9.

² Book of Knowledge P. 18 (Ahya-ul-Uloom, Vol. I, P. 14).

³ Muslim, al-Zikr-w-al-Dua-II., Ibn-Majah, Intro. 17 : 14.

⁴ Ibn-Majah, Intro. 17 : 1; Bukhari, Ilm, 14.

⁵ Ibn-Majah, Intro. 17 : 4.

⁶ Masabih, Vol.I, P. 14; Ibn-Majah, Intro. 17 : 4, 20 : 1.

⁷ Majah, Tirmizi, Mishkat, P.64. Ahya-ul-Uloom, Vol. I, Page 14.

⁸ Book of knowledge, P. 11 (Ahya-ul-Uloom, Vol. I, P. 14)

⁹ Ahya-ul-Uloom, Vol. I, P. 11.

¹⁰ Masabih, Vol. I, P. 14; Book of Knowledge, P. 13 (Ahya-ul-Uloom, Vol. I, P. 14).

¹¹ Ibn-Majah, Intro. 24 : 1.

¹² Ibn-Majah, Intro. 17 : 3; Ahya-ul-Uloom, Vol. I, P.14 – Book of Knowledge, P. 13.

¹³ Book of Knowledge, P. 13 (Ahya-ul-Uloom, Vol. I, P. 14).

years¹. To rise up before day break and learn but a section of knowledge is better than prostrating your self in prayer a hundred times².

It is after the spread of these teachings of Holy Quran and Ahadith (Traditions) of the Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H.) that we find a sort of out burst of the fountain of learning resulting in the world wide expansion of scientific researches and studies, and considering the impact of these teachings, it will not be an exaggeration to say that all the present day Sciences owe their origin and sustenance to the Holy Quran as further elaborated and interpreted by the Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H.) In fact it were the Muslim Scholars who took the torch of learning and spread its light throughout the European countries and dominated the world in science and learning for centuries together.

I do not want to increase the bulk of this book by giving a history of Muslim Scientific Period which spreads over the 8th to 13th centuries A.D. in the history of mankind, but merely to prove what I have said in the preceding paragraph, I would like to mention that it were really the Muslims who first of all took up the task of translating Philosophic, Scientific and Literary works of great importance from Sanskrit, Pehlavi, Greek and other languages into Arabic. The task, noble and stupendous, was undertaken in seats of learning established by Al-Mansoor, Al-Mamoon and other Abbasid Caliphs at Baghdad and other places. It was in those days that Hajjaj Ibne Yousuf³ first translated the Elements of Euclid; Thawafil Ibne Tuma⁴ translated some parts of Homer's Illiads and Abu

¹ Al-Darimi, Sunnan, Intro. 32; Ahya-ul-Uloom, Vol. I, P. 14—Book of Knowledge, P. 13.

² Ibn-Majah, Intro. 16 : 9.

³ Hajjaj Ibne Yousuf, 786—833 A.D.

⁴ Thawafil Ibne Tuma, 785 A.D.

Yahya¹ translated the major works of Galen and Hippocrates, Quadripartitum and Almagest of Ptolemy and the Elements of Euclid. In 832 A.D. Caliph Al-Mamoon founded an Academy with an Observatory, a Library and a Translation Bureau at Baghdad. Here Hunayn Ibne Ishaq² with the assistance of a number of collaborators translated the books of Euclid (ca. 300 B.C.), parts of Galen, Hippocrates, Archimedes and Apollonius, the Republic, Laws and Timaeus of Plato; the Categories, Physics, Magna Moralia and the spurious Meteorology of Aristotle; and the commentary of Themistius on Book XXX of the Metaphysics, the Old Testament and medical pandects of Paul of Aegina (ca. 650 A.D.). His son translated the Sophist of Plato, the Metaphysics and other works of Aristotle and commentaries of Porphyry, Alexander of Aphrodisias, and Ammonius. Younus³ produced the Arabic version of Aristotle's *Analytica Posteriora* and *Poetica*. Qurrah⁴ translated the major part of Greek Mathematical and Astronomical works. In the second half of 10th Century rose the School of Jacobite translators prominent among whom were Adi⁵ and Zurrah⁶ who revised many early translations of Plato's and Aristotle's works. All this shows that the range of Arabic translations of the Philosophical and Scientific classics were so extensive that within a short period the Arabs were in possession of greater works of Greek philosophers. All this was done when the Greek thought was almost unknown in the West.

¹ Abu Yahya, 796—806 A.D.

² Ishaq (L. Joannitius) 809—873 A.D.

³ Abu Bishr Matta Bin Yunus (D. 939 A.D.)

⁴ Thabit Ibne Qurrah (836 A.D.) the leader of Sabian group of workers from Harran.

⁵ Yahya Ibne Adi (974 A.D.)

⁶ Abu Ali Isa Ibne Zurrah (1008 A.D.)

Besides the work of translations, Muslims contributed handsomely towards the expansion of education. There was no village without a mosque and schools of elementary and secondary education. For higher studies the first College was established by Al-Mamoon in Baghdad. The second which was also founded in Baghdad in 1065 A.D. was the well-known Madresa-e-Nizamia founded by Nizamul Mulk. It was a residential college in which theological studies had the same place which at a later stage classical studies occupied in European Universities. The great Muslim Philosopher Al-Ghizali was the Head of this Institution. It was later on merged with Mustansiriyyah Institution which was the first educational institution to have hospital attached to it. It was more or less on the pattern of modern Medical College. Other well-known colleges were Al-Rashidia, Amaniyyah, Tarkhaniyya, Khatuniyya, and Sharifiyyah in Syria, and Rambiyah, Nasiriyyah and Salahiyah in Egypt. By and by Nizamia type of Colleges spread all over the Abbasid Empire, thirty being in Baghdad, twenty in Damascus, thirty in Alexandria, six in Mawsil and one at least in Cairo, Nayshapur, Samarkand, Isphahan, Merv, Bulkh, Aleppo, Ghazni, Lahore and so on. In Spain, Cordova alone had several hundred colleges, in some of which Philosophy, Literature, History and Science were taught. In Spain there were what we now call the Universities at Sevilla, Malaga and Granada.

Besides what has been said above it is also worth mentioning that during this period paper manufacturing became an indigenous industry. Books began to be written and sold. Libraries were established. Some libraries also used to lend Books. There were twenty public Libraries in Spain alone. The library of Cordova in 10th Century possessed about four hundred thousand books at a time when there were probably not even ten thousand books

anywhere in Europe. A Baitul Hikmat in Cairo is said to have had two million books and that of Tripolis in Syria contained three million books of which fifty thousand were copies of Quran and its commentaries. In the library of Al-Hakeem books were arranged in forty chambers each containing about eighteen thousand books. The Khazinatul Kutub at Sheraz founded by Adud-Al-Daulah,¹ was surrounded by parks and had three hundred and sixty rooms and pavilions and it is also remarkable that all the books in it were in manuscripts. Besides these important libraries, there were several famous libraries in Baghdad, Ram Hur-Muz, Basra, Ray, Merv, Bulkh, Bukhara and Ghazni. Besides this all over the empire mosques also served as repositories of books.

Coming to the valuable and unprecedented contributions made by the Muslim scholars, we find that as regards Jurisprudence they were the first to recognise the personal liberty and rights of women and children, and establish equality of all from the crown head to the meanest subject in the eye of law, and introduce a new branch of Science which is known as Applied Science of Testimony which resulted in the use of precedence in the courts of law. In this respect valuable compilations of sayings (Traditions) of the Prophet (P.B.U.H.) were undertaken by Imam Bukhari, Muslim, Mālik and other compilers of Ahadith. It were the Muslims who first laid down the principles of "Ijma" for deciding the disputes by consensus of opinion wherein each individual had the right to exercise his or her own judgment. As regards History and Sociology after Herodotus the Muslims were the first great historians of the world who also undertook long journeys to collect the material and testify their veracity as for instance Ibne

¹ A Persian King, (D. 984 A.D.)

In Chemistry Al-Razi¹ was the first great Muslim worker. His work "Kitabul Asrar" translated into Latin by Gerard and Cremona was the chief source of chemical knowledge till it was superceded by the works of Jabir² which after the 14th century were the most influential treatises in the East and the West. Jabir described scientifically the processes of calcinations and reduction, improved the methods of evaporation, sublimation, melting and crystallisation; prepared acetic acid, sulphuric acid, nitric acid and the mixture of the last two, *aqua regia*, in which gold and silver could be dissolved; discovered several chemical compounds and separated antimony and arsenic from the sulphides. His theory of the constituents of metals superseded the theory of Aristotle and was with slight modification accepted in the West till the 18th century. Al-Jahiz³ obtained ammonia from the offals of animals by dry distillation.

As regards Physics the books written by Al-Kindi in the 9th century on Optics were extensively used in East and West and influenced even Roger Bacon. Ibnul Hasheem,⁴ in opposition to Euclid and Ptolemy, rightly held that vision did not result from the emission of rays from the eyes, but from the objects. He discovered that a body would weigh differently in a rare and a dense atmosphere. He understood the weight of atmosphere five centuries before the Europeans. He anticipated the discovery of magnifying lenses which was made in Italy three centuries later. Muslim scientists improved the Water Wheel and

¹ (L. Rhazes, D. 923 A.D.)

² (D. Gaber, 766 A.D.)

³ (868-9 A.D.)

⁴ (L. Alhazen, 1039 A.D.) He was, besides being one of the most important mathematicians and philosophers, the chief Muslim physicist and student of optics. He was the author of about two hundred works on different subjects.

discovered the Wind Mill and the glass mirror and passed their use on to Europe. Ibne Sina's treatise on Mineralogy became a source of geological knowledge in the West.

Muslims laid out Botanical Gardens in Baghdad, Fez, Cairo and Cardova for Botanical studies. They observed and described sexual differences in plants. On Agriculture, Yahaya's¹ work "Al-Filaha" is an outstanding work of the Medieval Ages. Ibnul Baytar² described two hundred plants which were unknown to his predecessors. Arabs made an addition of about two thousand plants to botanical knowledge.

In medicine we have the earliest available text books on Ophthalmology by Yahaya Ibn-Masawayah³ and his pupil Hunyan Bin Ishaq Al-Ibadi⁴. Al-Razi⁵ produced more than two hundred medical books, and he is considered to be the greatest and most original of all the Muslim Physicians⁶. His "Kitabul Mansoori" is a monumental work in ten volumes which was translated in Milan in 15th century and some of its parts have been rendered into French and German. His monograph "Al-Judari-Wa-Hasbah" was the first to give a clinical account of small pox and measles accurately, which was translated into Latin in 16th century and then in other European languages and in English in 1847. He had the reputation as one of the greatest clinicians of the Middle Ages. His encyclopaedic work "Al-Hawi" which welded into one system the Greek,

¹ Abu-Zakariya Yahaya.

² The most famous botanist of Islam. He traveled extensively in search of herbs and left two celebrated works.

³ (D. 858 A.D.) He was a renowned Nestorian physician of Baghdad under the rule of Haroon Al-Rashid.

⁴ (L. Joannitius, D. 873 A.D.) He wrote commentaries on Hippocrates and Galen. His books were translated in Latin.

⁵ (L. Rhazes, D. 923 A.D.)

⁶ Arabian Medicine, 1921, P. 44, by Edw. G. Brown.

Persian and Hindi in twenty volumes was translated into Latin in 13th century. Ali Ibnul Abbas¹ wrote a standard work entitled "Kitabul Maliki" which was more than once translated into Latin. The best parts of this book consisted of *Materia Medica* and *Diatetics*. He contributed an early conception of the capillary system and proved that in parturition the child does not come out itself but is pushed out by the muscular contraction of the womb. The book of Ali of Baghdad and Ammer of Moosal on the diseases and treatment of the eye were translated into Latin and used as text books in Ophthalmology till 18th century. Al-Hasheem's² work became the basis of Western Optics. The book of Ibnul Baytar³ was also held in Europe to be standard *materia medica* for centuries. Its Latin translation was printed in twenty six editions during and after the 15th century and was used in the formation of the first London Pharmacopoeia issued by the College of Physicians in the reign of James I. "Al-Tasreef," a Medical Encyclopaedia by Abul Kasam Al-Zahrawi⁴ was for centuries a standard authority on surgery in Europe. It illustrated surgical instruments and helped in laying the foundation of western surgery. It introduced the ideas of cauterization of wounds, the need for vivi-section and dissection and crushing the stone in the bladder. Ibne-Rushd for the first time stated the fact that no one is taken ill twice with smallpox and described the true function of the retina. The works of Ibne-Sina⁵ eclipsed and superceded those of Hippocrates and Galen⁶ and were used as text books of medicine in the Universities of Europe. His "Qanun" from 12th to 17th

¹ (L. Haly, 994 A.D.)

² L. Alhazen, D. 965 A.D. De Boer regards him as superior to Vittelo (13th century A.D.) in keenness of observation.

³ (D. 1248 A.D.)

⁴ L. Abulcasis (10th or 11th century A.D.) of Gardova.

⁵ L. Avicenne, D. 1037 A.D.

⁶ Sir Thomas Clifford Albutt, Encyclopaedia Britainica, 11th Edition.

century served as a chief guide to Medical Science in the West. It remained a medical bible for a longer period than any other work¹. Ibne Zuhr² was the first to discuss the questions of feelings in bones. Ibnul Khatib wrote on infection through contact with the afflicted and their garments, vessels and ear-rings. The work of Hizam³ contains the rudiments of the veterinary art.

The Arabs knew a process by which blood could be infused into veins and they used silver tubes for rectal feeding. They employed opium for the purposes of dentifrice and tare for inducing sleep for operational purposes. They produced the first pharmacopoeia and established the first apothecary shops and mobile hospitals and introduced the system of daily visits to jails and medical examinations. In Chemistry they prepared many compounds which even today hold the field. The names rob, juleb, syrup, soda, alcohol, alembic, alkali, antimony, aludel, realgar, tutty owe their existence to similar Arabic names used by the Arabs.

Briffault observes "although there is not a single aspect of European growth in which the decisive influence of Islamic culture is not traceable, nowhere it is so clear and momentuous as in.....natural science and scientific spirit". According to him, "science owes its very existence to Arabic culture. The ancient world was pre-scientific. The Greeks systematized, generalized and theorized, but the patient ways of investigation, the accumulation of positive knowledge, the minute methods of science, detailed and prolonged observation and experimental inquiry were altogether alien to the Greek temperament. What we call Science arose in Europe as a result of new spirit of inquiry,

¹ The Evolution of Medical Science by Willaim Osler.

² Avenzoar or Abumeron, 12th century A.D.

³ Yaqub Ibne-Akhi-Hizam (D. 902 A.D.)

of new methods of investigation, of the method of experiment, observation, measurement, of the development of the mathematics in a form unknown to the Greeks. That spirit and those methods were introduced into the European world by the Arabs"¹.

All that has been stated above is merely a glimpse² of what, in fact, requires not one but several volumes to be written in detail. As I have already said, I did not want to write down the history of Muslim Scientists and their achievements in the scientific field. I simply wanted to show that the entire modern scientific development owes its existence to the Muslim Scientists and whatever the Muslim Scientists themselves did, they did because Quran, unlike Christianity³ asked them and guided them to do, and

¹ Making Humanity by Briffault. (See Muslim Thought—Its Origin and Achievements by M.M. Sharif (1951 Edition) P. 66-67).

² For a bit detailed study of what has been said above in this respect, the readers may see the book "Muslim Thought—Its Origin and Achievement" by M.M. Sharif (1951 Edition).

³ Christianity from a fairly early date waged a war against all Philosophic and Scientific learning with the result that the ages between the introduction of Christianity in Europe and the establishment of the Renaissance are unanimously declared by the historians of the West as the dark ages.....Renaissance was actually a severe shock to Catholic Christianity. And as Papacy wielded political power, it reacted with all the venom at its command. The leaders of the Renaissance were persecuted to the extent of burning some of them alive. They were forced to recant their views and those who did not do so had to suffer. A regular department of the infamous Inquisition was instituted. The ultimate consequence of all this was that the leaders of the Renaissance became sworn enemies of the Christian Church. This enmity towards the church soon transformed itself into enmity towards Christianity and that ultimately culminated in hatred and antagonism against all religions and finally against God Himself". (See also Islam and Western Civilization by Dr. F.R. Ansari 1963 Edition P. 4-5). Catholic Thinkers confess that officials often acted hastily in the rejection of scientific discoveries, only to retract later, Galileo was forced to recant his Copernican views, and his predecessor

as such the real fact is that Science, as it is, owes its existence to Quran or in other words to Religion.

To Quote Deutsch, "The Quran is the Book by the aid of which the Arabs.....came to Europe as Kings to hold up the light to humanity while darkness lay around, to raise up the wisdom and knowledge of Hellas from the dead, to teach Philosophy, Medicine, Astronomy and the golden art of song to the West as to the East, to stand at the cradle of Modern Science and to make us latecomers for ever to weep over the day when Granada fell"¹. In the words of Dr. F.R. Ansari, "it was the Muslim Scholars who unearthed the treasures of knowledge from under the debris of the dead civilizations of Greece and Rome, Babylonia and Iran, India and China. They unearthed these treasures and classified them, cultivated them, developed them and transmitted them to Europe from the universities in Baghdad, Cairo and Spain and thus the founder of the European Renaissance was really the Muslim learning and Muslim teachers through whose teaching arose men like Roger Bacon, Pope Sylvester II and others"².

Let us now revert to the point whether departure from Religion will prove to be fatal to human life. Firstly, keeping Religion aside, there remains no morality at all. The moral law depends upon the principles of good and bad or virtue and vice laid down by Religion. Apart from Religion there is no sanction for respect of parents, service to the needy persons, morality, chastity, shame,

Giordano Bruno was burned at the stake. (See Religion and Modern Man, by J.B. Magee, P. 188).

¹ Muslim Thought—Its Origin and Achievements by M.M. Sharif (1951 Edition) P. 21.

² Islam and Western Civilization by Dr. F.R. Ansari, P. 4 (1963 Edition).

hospitality and without these things there remains no check against drinking, adultery, robbery and desecration of values of decent life. This is really what we are witnessing painfully in societies which have given up Religion and spurned with vanity the moral principles. Thus there is the total loss of character, honesty, sincerity, truth, respect and humanity. Around such an environment there is abject submission to ulterior motives and self-aggrandisement only.

Secondly, if there be no Religion, there remains no question of life after death. A man passes his life like an animal. In that event his entire goal becomes happiness, prosperity and enjoyment of this life which is no doubt transitory and subject to an inevitable end. The entire background for a better "future" goes away and all ideas, views and principles of virtue against vice, good against bad, and truth against falsehood, lose their sanctity once for all. A man is free to do whatever he likes in order to attain pleasure of a passing life, Satisfaction of a momentary desire, sometimes, rather always, is sought to be fulfilled at the cost of his own conscience, character and peace of mind, as well as trouble and destruction of others. He feels no prick of conscience to commit robbery in order to gain wealth, incest to satisfy lust, murder to evade opposition and resistance, destroy others to satisfy jealousy, deceive to gain confidence, drink and dance for pleasure, adopt nudity to whet lust and inducement. But when this stage is reached, it is obvious, that personal ends take the place of morality, selfishness supersedes charity, enmity ousts brotherhood and man becomes a beast in toto.

By discarding Religion, in fact, we discard the idea of future. The idea of future is firmly and wholly based on the idea of life after death which is real as well as eternal. The idea of future has no application to wordly life which is

momentary, because something which is passing cannot be said to have any future at all. Therefore so far as this material life is concerned, it has no future in itself. Its future lies outside its own span and starts when life gets out of the confines of this corporeal and passing world. It is only in a sort of permanent, constant and continuous life that we can have what we call "future" in the real sense. This is what we observe even in the affairs of our daily life. We do not build any house or establish any business at a place where our stay is only for a short period and our visit momentary. We do not also, except for a timely need, enter into any service which has no future scope. Even in education we always think of future prospects. Therefore all our endeavours, ideas, wishes and desires recoil round the axis of future prospects necessarily implying a sort of permanency, constancy and continuance for a longer duration. Similarly the future of this life cannot lie in itself. It can be and in fact is, out of the bounds of this life. It is in the life after death which is real, everlasting, and the link between the two lives i.e. life before and life after death according to Religion is like this that the latter is the eternal life of reward in the form of Paradise with all its comforts and ease for the good deeds done, or the eternal life of punishment in the form of Hell with all its sufferings for the misdeeds committed in the former. The discrimination between Good and Evil has been clearly defined by Religion and it is only Religion which gives us the guarantee for reward and warning for the punishment. Therefore success of the life after death depends upon unstinted adherence to Religious injunctions only.

We may consider the above proposition yet from another point of view. Supposing there is no life after death and the life of this world is final and complete in itself. Then, if we still follow Religion, do we lose any thing? After all what Religion wants us to do is nothing but that

we should follow virtue against vice, good against bad, truth against falsehood, respect against humiliation, peace against disturbance, help against neglect, chastity against immorality; in short, a life of human being against the life of a beast. The over all result of leading such a life is nothing but peace, comfort, and prosperity in general. Therefore the answer is that even if the ideology of life after death is false or fictitious, by following Religion we lose nothing but gain the betterment, happiness and success of life itself as the principles laid down by Religion are nothing short of blessings, and they are based on material good as well. On the contrary, if the idea of life after death is correct, and no doubt it is, then one can very well imagine the consequences of discarding the Religion. The pleasures of infidal life would appear nothing but momentary ones at the cost of all virtues of life and also total deprivation of the blessings of the life after death.

But Atheists, I suppose, will still be unwilling to accept this argument to justify the necessity of Religion. They will come forward with a counter argument viz.:, why should one sacrifice his own choice of the moment merely on presumption of a life after death? After all to follow Religion means to check and curb many of the urges, wishes and desires of the human heart e.g. lust for wine, woman and wealth, desire to live and enjoy according to one's own liking and dis-liking, make use of the things available as one chooses for himself, and so on. The argument no doubt appears to be still more forceful when we realize that after all this life is momentary and every thing of this universe is under the control of and for the enjoyment of man. Therefore, why should not a man be free to enjoy life to its entirety without any check particularly from Religion which on each and every step asks man to do this or not to do that. In other words why should not one be allowed to pass his life on the principle

RELIGION
The Science of Life

BY

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