



Almuslim

A monthly newsletter of the Muslim community of Carbondale. Vol. 1 No. 6. Muharram - Safar, 1426, March 2005.

Anas bin Malik (RA) said: Messenger of Allah (pbuh) said, "if a young man honors an older person on accounts of his or her age, Allah appoints someone to show reverence to him in his old age" (At-Tirmidhi)

How and why did the four Madhahib - the Hanafi, Shafi'i, Maliki and Hanbali - emerge and evolve?

Dr. Muzammil H. Siddiqi

As long as the Prophet Mohammed (pbuh) was with the Ummah, he was the Imam. Muslims followed the Qur'an and the explanations of the Prophet (pbuh). Whenever they needed any explanation they went to the Prophet (pbuh) and he either waited for the divine revelation in order to answer them, or gave them his own answers according to the authority that Allah gave him. We, however, know that the Prophet (pbuh) also allowed sometimes the variety of opinions among his Sahabah in certain matters.

After the Prophet's (pbuh) departure from this earth, his Rightly Guided Caliphs (al-Khulafa' al-Rashidun) were the leaders of the Ummah. Unlike the Prophet, they were not the recipients of Divine revelation (wahy), but they had the full authority to interpret the Shari'ah in their time. Their knowledge, piety and religious authority made the people to go back to them for any final decision. The Caliphs used to consult many Sahabah, but then whatever decision they would make, theirs was the final word. In other words, we can say that there was only one Madh'hab (fiqh) during the time of al-Khulafa' al-Rashidun. They kept the unity and uniformity of the Ummah. We know that when Muslims differed on the readings of the Qur'an, the Caliph Uthman -may Allah be pleased with him- sent his authorized copy to all provinces and removed all other copies of the Qur'an from circulation and burned them. Thus he was able to keep the unity of the Ummah.

However, with the emergence of the Umayyad rule, the situation changed. The Umayyad caliphs lacked the religious authority as the previous Khulafa'. Some of them deviated from the true path of Islam. Many Jurists and scholars used to avoid them and they began their teachings independently in their own locations. The great Sahabah and their followers (tabi'un) went to different areas and taught and preached to their local people. There was no central authority that could unite all the opinions at that time. The Islamic State was expanding. This set a trend for the development of various schools of interpretations under various able scholars and jurists.

The Hadith was also not fully collected. So there were two main trends among the early jurists: those who relied on Hadith only, while there were others who frequently used Qiyas and Ra'y. This situation continues throughout the Umayyad period.

After the Umayyad (661-750 CE) came the Abbasids. They were also not the ideal caliphs like al-Khulafa' al-Rashidun, but in comparison to the Umayyads, they were more supportive of Islamic law and its scholars. During their time various scholars were encouraged to write books on Islamic laws. They also patronized the collection of early Fatwas. The Caliphs encouraged religious discussions and debates. Various scholars had the opportunity to debate their positions with others. Due to more discussions and debates, some people changed their opinions. Some schools were eliminated and others merged into major schools. Thus four major schools of Fiqh came about. The crystallization of four major Madhahib of Islamic Fiqh came about by the 3rd century of Hijrah or the 9th century of the Common Era, before this there were about twenty different Madhahib.

Once the Madhahib (fiqh) became established in different areas, the local teacher used them to

teach the Shari'ah to their students. The local courts applied the decisions and Fatwas of their local jurists. Thus in a natural way the Madhabib (fiqh) spread in different areas. Although we do not have uniformity among Muslims at this time, we should still try to unite them with tolerance and broadmindedness. We should unite them as much as possible.

I am pleased to see that the fanatical loyalty to a particular Madh'hab (fiqh) among Muslims is decreasing, alhamdulillah. Now Hanafi, Shafi'i, Maliki and Hanbali pray together and work together. We read each other's books and attend the Islamic conferences together. In North America this is happening much more than in any other place. I hope this trend will continue and our unity as well as the unity of the whole Ummah will increase, by the grace and mercy of Allah. (Ameen).

Significance of the Environment in Islam

Professor Akhtar Mahmood

Over the years, our environment has been facing a severe threat. The rivers are polluted with undesirable chemicals and toxicants; underground water is being depleted and getting polluted. Forests are being lost at an alarming rate resulting in environmental degradation. A balance in oxygen and water in the environment is being lost, which is so important to sustain and preserve the human civilization on the planet earth. For the past century and a half enormous advances have taken place in science and technology to the benefit of mankind. But, these developments have also posed great problems and health hazards, threatening the existence of human life on earth.

Purpose of Human Creation

The question of the creation of human beings is relevant, to understand the role of religion in the environment. The Holy Qur'an states "Blessed be He, in whose hands is all sovereignty. He has power over all things. He created death and life that He might put to test and find out, which of you acquitted himself best. He is Mighty, Forgiving one (Surah -Al-Mulk 67:1-2)".

Life is thus, a brilliant demonstration of God's wisdom and knowledge. He has shown the humans the right path, to sustain the life on this planet. There is a complete stability and unity in the laws of the universe. The entire cosmos is remarkably homogenous and in balance. Besides, the Creator, there is no one, who has power to interfere with or change this system and its laws, which are based on justice. Man being a part of the whole system must also operate justly in the sphere over which he is given control and power, otherwise, he is working against the natural laws of the Universe, as well as his own nature. The result of which can be alarming calamities and destruction, we may face in the environment. Cleanliness in Islam: Nearest to the human body is its soul, followed by the environment in which a person lives. Thus, Islam addresses itself in considerable depth to the question of cleanliness and purity of both soul and body, since it is the essence of good appearance and health. "Say not equal are things that, are bad and things that are good, even though the abundance of bad may dazzle you. So fear God, O you! That understands so that you may prosper". (Sura Al-Ma'idah 5:100) Also at another place, Qur'an says "Happy shall be the man, who purifies himself, who remembers the name of his Lord and prays to Him". (Sura Al- A'la 87: 14-15).

The holy Prophet (Pbuh) has said, "Cleanse yourself, for Islam is cleanliness". "Cleanliness invites towards faith and faith leads its possessor to the Gardens (Heavens)". Diet also plays an important role in human health. Thus, Islam has prohibited certain foods and allowed others "O people, eat of what is lawful and good on earth, and do not follow the foot-steps of the Evil one for he is your avowed enemy (Sura Al- Baqarah 2:168)". Thus, personal cleanliness and the environment in which a person lives are greatly emphasized in Islam.

Further, all those means, which can lead man to indecency and corruption of the environment are also discouraged in Islam. Thus, drinking and gambling are prohibited in Islam. As the holy Qur'an states "They ask you, (O Muhammad) about drinking and gambling, say there is a great harm in both, though, there is some benefit for

the people, but harm of the sin is far greater than the benefit” (Sura Al-Baqarah 2:219).

Emphasis on Plantation and Agriculture

Forestry and Agriculture form the backbone of human civilization. However, we find in recent times, a large-scale deforestation has occurred all round the world. This has resulted in ecological imbalances in the natural resources of the environment. The Prophet (Pbuh) has said: when a Muslim plants a plant or cultivates a crop, no bird or human being eats from it without it being accounted as charity for him. Messenger of God (Pbuh), once remarked that even if you knew that the world would end tomorrow, you should plant a tree.

Management of Water Resources

There are numerous passages in the Qur’an, which mention the effect of rainwater on the growth of vegetation. In (Surah Al-Nahl 16: 10-11) we read, “God is one, who sends water down from the sky. For you there is a drink and out of it (grow) shrubs in which you let cattle graze freely. There with for you He makes sown fields, olive, palm trees, and all kinds of fruits grow.” Thus, the proper and judicious use of the water resources is of utmost importance to keep the viable environment for the benefit of humanity.

Depletion of resources

Moderation is the most important characteristic of Islam. It is probably how Islam views human nature and the meaning of life. Man is created by God-Almighty and is commanded to be God’s viceroy on earth. Islam discourages luxurious and lavish living. It is a general observation that luxurious life styles lead to weakness among nations, and eventually to their downfall. The existence of luxury is also an expression of social injustice, as few can afford luxurious items at the expense of the deprived masses of people. The holy Qur’an says, “when we intend to destroy a township, we permit its luxury loving people to commit wickedness therein. Then the word is proved true against it and we then destroy it utterly” (Surah Al-Isra 17:16). Prophet Muhammad (Pbuh) was the

perfect example of moderation. He advised his followers to spend within their means, neither to be too lavish as to make themselves destitute nor to hold back their wealth from those who had a claim on their resources.

Corruption, dissolution, nervous and mental disorders, intellectual and sexual perversions are eating away the body of present day civilization by destroying the nations and individuals, by exposing the people to evil and corrupt means of life. However, as long as the human kind follows the laws ordained by the creator, all aspects of his life in the environment of the earth go the natural way. But, if deviations occur from the prescribed path of the Creator (God-Almighty) all the social, environmental calamities that, human beings face today ensue. It is in the fitness of things, that human life styles be programmed according to the laws of the creator to save humanity from environmental disasters.

Sister’s Corner

Wali wa samaki = Fish rice (African Dish)

Ingredients: (Serves 4)

1/2 kilo fish (preferably salmon), half boiled, stripped from the bones and cut into small pieces
1 large fresh minced onion
1/4 cup of vermicelli broken to small pieces
2 medium sized fresh carrots, cut into tiny pieces or grated
1 cube magi soup
2 cups of rice

1 cup of water
1 tea spoon salt

Instructions: Boil the rice well and add some salt to taste. Pour out all the water and leave the rice in a sieve. Stir-fry the fish, onion, vermicelli and carrots in a wide pan until onions get cooked but not burnt. Add 1 cup of water into the frying pan and drop in the magi soup cube. Keep steering until water starts boiling and the soup is fully dissolved. Take the rice from the sieve and put into a medium sized cooking dish, add all the contents from the frying pan and stir gently (with wooden spoon / spatula). Put in a low fire

for 5 minutes. Stir one more time and take off from the fire. Keep to cool a little and serve.

Kid's Corner

Respect of Elders

Mahmood was a good and well-mannered boy of the age 11. His parents have two more children, Sarah and Hassan. Their parents were not rich and raised them in very content way. They taught them how to be content, respect elders and be good in all manners. Mahmood's father was also very active in local mosque and Islamic community. One day Mahmood and his mother were going to local grocery store. They took the bus and after few stops the bus got full with passengers and there was no vacant seat left. At one stop there was an older lady entered the bus and looked around for any empty seat and then stood by the door with other passengers. Upon seeing this Mahmood immediately offered her his seat. The older lady accepted his offer and thanked him for his kindness and Mahmood said to her you do not have to thank me it is the teaching of my religion to respect elderly. The older lady started asking him about his family, education, school and his hobbies. Since Mahmood was a kid and like other kids he wanted some toys, books and other things for entertainment, but his parents could not afford all these things. The lady asked Mahmood what do you like most and Mahmood replied a video game but it is kind of expensive and my father told me wait for some time than he will try to buy that game for him. The lady asked him have you prayed to your God for that toy. Mahmood said no, then lady asked him why don't you ask God and pray he might do something for you. That night Mahmood asked his father to bring him for night (Isha) prayer and after the prayer Mahmood asked Allah (swt) for that video game and did the same thing before going to bed. Next morning in the class the teacher called Mahmood and gave him a packet and told him this is for you. When Mahmood opened the packet his eyes widened as he saw the video game, which he wanted most with a little note. The note said" it is for a very nice boy who respect his parents, elders and bears good moral character and loves his

religion. Upon seeing this young boy I have started reading about boy's beautiful religion. "From the lady of the bus". That old lady was a CEO in one of the local electronic market.

Children, what we learned from that story? The respect of parents, elders, and good manners liked by Allah (swt) and he rewards his true followers in this life and in the second life, which starts after our death.

MYNA Corner

Jeopardy Tournament

1st Place- Hagar ElSakkary

2nd Place- Qassem Alweh

The Islamic Jeopardy tournament took place February 25th and 26th. It was a great competition, which had contestants and audience members at the edge of their seats! Friday, February 25th was the preliminary rounds. The competition started with 16 contestants and got narrowed down to seven individuals who competed in a final competition on Saturday, February 27th. All MYNA contestants were awarded prizes for their effort and great sportsmanship! **Hagar ElSakkary** was awarded \$50.00 as the 1st place winner and **Qassem Alweh** was awarded \$25.00 as the 2nd place winner.

MYNA members took on various responsibilities for this event. **Sofia Samy** and **Hagar ElSakkary** coordinated the dinner and menu for the evening. **Obaid Khurram** was in charge of designing and distributing the Jeopardy flier, which community members were given at Jumah. **Ali Baig** and **Abeer Khurram** were responsible for the set up grounds. It's encouraging to see the youth taking on responsibilities and fulfilling them Masha' Allah!

MYNA would also like to thank **Lisa Gandy** and **Kaif Mansuri** who supplied the tournament with technical equipment, which made the event a lot more exciting.

Great job to all the MYNA contestants:

Wan Kuzac Wan Kamal, Abeer Khurram, Obaid Khurram, Qassem Alweh, Hassan Butt, Mohammad, Ayha Ibrahim, Sondus Kahil, Hagar ElSakkary, Mostafa ElSakkary, Sofia Samy, Faysal Ibrahim, Haani Kamran, and Ali Baig.

Upcoming event/Seminar/Conference

6th Annual ISNA Education Forum: March 25-27, 2005 Chicago, IL

THEME: Islamic Education in America: A pursuit of Excellence.

Venue: Westin O'Hare
6100 N. River Rd.
Rosemont, IL 60018. For registration and information visit online www.isna.net.

Friday March 18: Live lecture by Prof. Oval Myers Jr. Dr. Myers is an expert of Sustainable Agriculture and is involved with several national and international agricultural development agencies in several countries. He will be talking his work in Afghanistan and Pakistan agricultural development.

Venue: Masjid AnNoor
Time: 6:30 PM

Friday March 25/April 1: Lecture by Prof. John Jackson. Professor John is a Political Science expert and associated with Public Policy Institute of SIU. He will be talking on Current Politics.

Venue: Masjid AnNoor
Time: 6:30 PM

Community News

We would like to extend our heartiest congratulations to Br. Mohammed Pisal and Br. Hiru Morgono for successful completion of their doctor of philosophy degree.

Community news can be submitted electronically at ICC511@yahoo.com or by calling at **457-2770, 457-6522**, no later than 15th of each month.

We also encourage brothers, sisters and young readers to write for Almuslim. The best young writers will be awarded prizes and certificates.

Classified

Recycle helps in cleaning the environment. If you are looking for recycling your office, accounts, personal notes etc., we can help, contact:

For sale: 1988 Lincoln Town Car, low mileage, well maintained, fully loaded, external needs some paint job, \$1200 OBO. 549-7506.

Anas (RA) reported: The Prophet (pbuh) said, no one of you becomes a true believer until he likes for his brother what he likes for himself (Al-Bukhari, Muslim)