

LOVING THE
PROPHET
AND ITS IMPLICATIONS



Dr. Israr Ahmad

Translated and edited by Dr. Munawwar Haque

Islamic Organization of North America (IONA)

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Hubbe Rasool aur us ke Taqaze (Urdu)
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Editor's Introduction

This book is based on a lecture delivered by Dr. Israr Ahmad on November 14, 1987 in response to an invitation extended to him by the Islamic Students' Association of Allama Iqbal Medical College, Lahore. The original Urdu title of the topic under discussion is *Hubbe Rasool aur us ke Taqaze (Loving the Prophet and its Implications)*.

The book discusses three questions that need to be addressed and understood very clearly: Is Islam merely a proselytizing religion or a revolutionary way of life? What is the objective of the Islamic revolution? Is the use of force justified to bring about an Islamic revolution? A discussion on the issues raised in these questions eventually leads to the proposition that the only way to manifest true love for the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) is to follow him. As mentioned by the author, *ayah* 31 of *Surat Aal 'Imran* makes emulation of the Prophet (SAW) a condition for loving Allah (SWT).

قُلْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ اللَّهَ فَاتَّبِعُونِي يُحْبِبْكُمُ اللَّهُ وَيَغْفِرْ
لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ

Say, if you love God, follow me, and God will love you and forgive you your sins; God is most forgiving, most merciful (Aal 'Imran, 3:31).

Ayah 25 of *Surat al-Hadid* lays down the general purpose for which prophets and messengers have been sent, which among others is to uphold justice.

لَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا رُسُلَنَا بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ وَأَنْزَلْنَا مَعَهُمُ الْكِتَابَ

وَالْمِيزَانَ لِيَقُومَ النَّاسُ بِالْقِسْطِ وَأَنْزَلْنَا الْحَدِيدَ فِيهِ بَأْسٌ
شَدِيدٌ وَمَنَافِعُ لِلنَّاسِ

We sent Our messengers with clear signs, the Scripture and the Balance, so that people could uphold justice: We also sent iron, with its mighty strength and many uses for mankind (al-Hadid, 57:25).

Ayah 33 of Surat *al-Tawbah* lays down the specific purpose of sending Prophet Muhammad (SAW), which is to make Allah (SWT)'s *deen*¹ supreme so that it prevails over all other systems of life.

هُوَ الَّذِي أَرْسَلَ رَسُولَهُ بِالْهُدَىٰ وَدِينِ الْحَقِّ
لِيُظْهِرَهُ عَلَىٰ الدِّينِ كُلِّهِ

It is He who has sent His Messenger with guidance and the religion of truth, to show that it is above all [other] religions, however much the idolaters may hate this (al-Tawbah, 9:33).

I pray to Allah (SWT) to bless my humble effort with His acceptance and grace, and give us all the *tawfiq* to understand what it means and implies to love the Prophet (SAW), as expressed so profoundly by the esteemed author. May Allah (SWT) forgive us our lapses and make us

¹ *Deen* means a way of life. The Qur'an says: *Surely the only deen in the sight of Allah is al-Islam (Aal 'Imran, 3:19)*. In this sense, Islam is not merely a religion as understood in the narrow sense of the term in our present secular world, where religion may affect a religious person's attitude, moral character, and behavior, while the collective affairs of the people are generally devoid of divine guidance. Islam as a *deen* or way of life demands that Allah (SWT) be at the center of all human affairs, the individual or private and the collective or public.

consciously realize the enormity of the day when every soul shall be individually summoned before Him to give an account of its momentary sojourn on earth.

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The Criterion for Loving the Prophet Is to Follow the Prophet

It is to be clearly understood that there are two important terms: *إِطَاعَةٌ* (*ita'a* - obedience) and *مَحَبَّةٌ* (*mahabbah* - love) that are used both for Allah (SWT) and for the Prophet (SAW).

قُلْ أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ

Say, obey God and obey the Messenger (al-Nur, 24:54).

قُلْ إِنْ كَانَ آبَاؤُكُمْ وَأَبْنَاؤُكُمْ وَإِخْوَانُكُمْ وَأَزْوَاجُكُمْ وَعَشِيرَتُكُمْ وَأَمْوَالٌ اقْتَرَفْتُمُوهَا وَتِجَارَةٌ تَخْشَوْنَ كَسَادَهَا وَمَسَاكِينُ تَرْضَوْنَهَا أَحَبَّ إِلَيْكُمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَجِهَادٍ فِي سَبِيلِهِ فَتَرَبَّصُوا حَتَّى يَأْتِيَ اللَّهُ بِأَمْرِهِ وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْفَاسِقِينَ

Say, if your fathers, sons, brothers, spouses, tribes, the wealth you have acquired, the trade which you fear will decline, and the dwellings you love are dearer to you than God and His Messenger and the struggle in His cause, then wait until God brings about His verdict. God does not guide those who break away (al-Tawbah, 9:24).

Obedience to Allah (SWT) and love for Him, together constitute worship (*'ibadah* - عِبَادَة), which is exclusively for Allah (SWT), whereas obedience to the Prophet (SAW) and love for him does not implicate worshipping the Prophet (SAW), rather it means to emulate him (*ittiba'* - اتَّبَاع). The real import of *'ibadah* is to submit oneself to Allah (SWT) and to worship Him with devotional love, while the implication of *ittiba'* is to emulate someone out of passionate love.

Both in terms of comprehensiveness as well as breadth and depth of meaning, emulating the Prophet (SAW) enjoys a higher status than merely obeying him, in the sense that the latter simply implies obeying a command while emulation of the Prophet (SAW) means to follow the example of the Prophet (SAW) in every facet of one's life and feel honored in doing so. The crux of the matter is that in order to love the Prophet (SAW), one is obliged to emulate him.

An Important Facet of Emulating the Prophet

One of the important facets of emulating the Prophet (SAW) is to be cognizant of the goal toward which his life was directed. What did he strive for? What concern engaged him the most? What was his main objective in life? We know that consciously or subconsciously, everyone in this world has an objective for himself and all his effort is then directed toward the achievement of that objective. A professional strives to achieve excellence in his profession. A politician directs all his effort toward attaining a position of power for himself or his party. Likewise, a businessman's skills and energy are expended toward acquiring his desired objective.

Objective of the Prophet's Endeavors

What was the main goal and objective of the Prophet's extremely strenuous efforts? Anybody who has studied the Prophet's biography even cursorily will be astounded at the enormous exertion that the Prophet (SAW) had to undergo in order to bring his mission to a successful culmination. If we wish to follow the example of the Prophet (SAW), we will first have to determine what his life was directed toward. What was the objective for the fulfillment of which he strove all his life? Anyone who is clear about his objective has to work very hard and engage himself in different activities to achieve his goal. These actions when looked at in isolation may appear to be different from one another and unrelated to each other but the objective behind these actions binds them together into a coordinated whole.

Importance of Determining the Objective

There are some issues in the Prophet's biography that *prima facie* appear to be discrepant or inconsistent. These seemingly contradictory issues can only be understood and appreciated when we become acquainted with the Prophet's mission and goal. The adversaries of Islam, especially the orientalist, find it difficult to comprehend these apparent discrepancies and raise objections at them. One of these, for example, is the contradiction that appears in the Prophet's strategy in dealing with his enemies in the Meccan² and the Medinan³ eras.

The Meccan period of 13 years witnessed an untold suffering of trials and tribulations, not to speak of

² Meccan period (610-623 CE) lasted for 13 years, from the start of the revelations to the Prophet's migration to Medina.

³ Medinan period (623-632 CE) lasted for 10 years, from the Prophet's entry into Medina until his demise.

inexpressible physical and psychological tortures meted out to the Prophet (SAW) and his companions. However, they faced this inhuman treatment with absolute resignation. Throughout this period, the Prophet (SAW) commanded his followers to exercise total restraint and not to resort to any sort of violence or retaliatory measure, even if it was for defending themselves. In total obedience to his order, the companions, despite their capacity to resist, did not show any resistance to the inhuman treatment that they faced at the hands of the polytheists of Mecca. This is one side of the story. On the other hand, during the Medinan period, the scenario is quite different. Any aggression, oppression, or injustice to the Muslim community is countered with adequate resistance, involving taking up arms in self-defense. In fact, consequent upon the *hijrah* (the Prophet's migration from Mecca to Medina), the Prophet (SAW) not only resisted any incursion upon the life and property of Muslims, but even initiated and embarked upon a strategy of offense rather than defense.

Ever since the European colonization and subjugation of numerous countries of the Muslim world, the leaders of the Western nations have been hurling scathing attacks on Islam and Muslims. They describe Islam as a violent religion that was spread by the sword and Muslims as a bloodthirsty people. This onslaught has been so engineered that even personalities such as the late Allama Shibli Nomani, a profound Islamic scholar, historian and biographer of the Prophet (SAW), took an apologetic stand and wrote in his first volume of the Prophet's biography that neither the Prophet (SAW) nor his companions had ever initiated an offensive campaign or lifted the sword for that purpose except if they were constrained to do so in self-defense. Allama Shibli's stand on this matter can be somewhat condoned given the political and military grasp of the colonial powers over the colonized nations and the dominion they commanded during his time. But it is sad and surprising to learn from reliable sources that recently a

well-known Islamic scholar of an Islamic organization in Pakistan has publicly acclaimed, “War in Islam is never offensive; it is only defensive. The battles that took place during the era of the Prophet (SAW) and the Righteous Caliphs were all defensive.”

In principle, any conflict or confrontation that takes place is invariably initiated by the one who calls for a revolutionary change. We need to reflect on the Prophet’s initial call to the testimony of faith, “There is no god but God.” His addressees were the polytheists of Mecca. He had confronted them by contending against the falsehood of their belief system and by asserting that their way of life and dealings based on polytheism were corrupt. This was a clarion call and a rebellion against a centuries-old tradition. Who raised the banner of insurgence in the peaceful city of Mecca? It was the Prophet (SAW).

After the *hijrah*, it was the Prophet (SAW) who started the offensive movements against the Meccans. During the first six months after the *hijrah*, the Prophet (SAW) worked toward establishing the inner stability of Medina. After this period and prior to the Battle of Badr⁴, he dispatched in succession eight expeditions against the pagan Meccans, four of which were under his direct command. These missions had two objectives: The first was to create an economic blockade of Mecca by making the trade route of Meccan caravans vulnerable to the incursions by the Muslims in Medina. The second was to effectuate the political isolation and containment of Quraish. The Prophet (SAW) entered into alliances with a few tribes living between Mecca and Medina, and drew up an agreement of

⁴ The Battle of Badr, fought in 624 CE (17 Ramadan, 2 AH in the Islamic calendar) in the Hejaz region of western Arabia (present-day Saudi Arabia), was a key battle in the early days of Islam and a turning point in the Prophet (SAW)’s struggle with his opponents among the Quraish in Mecca.

neutrality with other tribes, which meant that in case of war, they would neither support the Muslims nor Quraish.

The Prophet (SAW) dispatched one such mission under the command of Abdullah ibn Jahsh (RA) to the valley of Nakhlah. This valley is situated between the cities of Ta'if and Mecca. The trading caravans of Quraish used this pathway to take them from Mecca right up to the coastal areas of Yemen, crossing Ta'if en route. The Prophet (SAW) had given instructions to keep a close vigil on the movements of Quraish and to keep him current and updated. But it so happened that this band from Medina fell into a skirmish with a trading caravan of Quraish, which was heavily laden with merchandise and composed of five men. One of the five got killed in the scuffle, two escaped and two were captured and brought to Medina along with the loot. It was the Prophet (SAW), who six months after the *hijrah* initiated the offense and the first polytheist was killed at the hands of Muslims.

It is also common knowledge that the Prophet (SAW) after his arrival at Medina engaged in several battles. The Qur'an alludes to this when it says,

يُقَاتِلُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَيَقْتُلُونَ وَيُقْتَلُونَ

They fight in God's way: they kill and are killed
(*al-Tawbah*, 9:111).

So the dichotomy between the Prophet's Meccan and Medinan eras are well known and a recorded fact of history. The illustrious historian, Arnold J. Toynbee, an authority on the Philosophy of History summed up his thoughts in one sentence full of venomous censure, "Muhammad failed as a Prophet but succeeded as a statesman." What Toynbee is insinuating is that the Prophet's life at Mecca portrayed a

semblance of Prophethood. The Prophet's preaching, sermons, admonition, forbearance, patience in the face of adversity, and his not retaliating against the enemy, even in self-defense, were reflective of this. The Christians' ideal is Prophet 'Isa (Jesus – peace be upon him), who had trodden the same path—he had never lifted the sword and had never governed a state. The same was the case with Prophet Yahya (John, the Baptist – peace be upon him). Even though Toynbee did not recognize the Prophethood of Prophet Muhammad (SAW), he saw the Prophet's life at Mecca to generally resemble the characteristics of prophets. However, according to him, the Prophet (SAW), who had to flee from Mecca to save his life, had miserably failed at Mecca. He sees the Prophet (SAW) in Medina in a completely new hue—governor, judge, commander, arbitrator, politician, a statesman par excellence, but not a Prophet; and hence his conclusion.

William Montgomery Watt, another renowned historian has authored two separate books on the Prophet's biography entitled: *Muhammad at Mecca and Muhammad at Medina*. He has bifurcated the Prophet's life—one at Mecca and a diametrically opposite one at Medina. This plausible dichotomy has become a target of condemnation and disparagement at the hands of the antagonists of Islam. It shall be explained later how the two sides of the Prophet's life are related to each other to form an organic whole.

In the sixth year of *hijrah*, there was a treaty of peace signed between the Prophet (SAW) and the Quraish of Mecca in a place called Hudaibiyah. This treaty has come to be known as *Sulh Hudaibiyah* (Treaty of Hudaibiyah) in the books of *sirah* (the Prophet's biography). The conditions stipulated in this peace treaty were clearly one-sided in favor of Quraish, but the Prophet (SAW) had still yielded to accept the treaty in toto. This stance of the Prophet (SAW) even made his faithful companions feel fidgety and uneasy. They contended that there was no need to stoop down to

sign the peace treaty when they were right and when they had pledged to fight unto death if the need arose. Among the clauses of the treaty was a clause that debarred the Prophet (SAW) and his companions, who numbered about 1400, from performing *Umrah*⁵, the very purpose for which they had undertaken the journey from Medina to Mecca. They were also required under the treaty to take off their *Ihram* (the ritual attire of pilgrimage), and go back to Medina without performing the *Umrah*. Another clause stipulated that anyone who embraced Islam in Mecca and fled to Medina without seeking the permission of his master or guardian would have to be extradited. The Muslims had to return back this person to the Quraish of Mecca. However, the Quraish would not return back to the Muslims any Muslim who after having forsaken his *deen* had fled to Mecca from Medina.

Notwithstanding these conditions, the agreement was signed by the Prophet (SAW). He asked his companions to take off their *Ihram* and to offer their ritual sacrifices without performing the *Umrah*. The blatantly unjust provisions of the agreement signed with the pagan Quraish had so infuriated and enraged the companions of the Prophet (SAW) that they could not bring themselves to abide by his instructions. They were feeling utterly humiliated and let down. When the Prophet (SAW) noticed that his order had not been complied with even after his repeating it three times, he walked into his tent, saddened and depressed. Generally, one of the wives of the Prophet (SAW) used to accompany him on his journeys. It was Umm

⁵ The Umrah is a pilgrimage to Mecca, Saudi Arabia, performed by Muslims that can be undertaken at any time of the year. As a technical term used in the *Shariah*, *Umrah* means to perform *Tawaf* round the Ka'ba and *Sa'i* between Al-Safa and Al-Marwa, after assuming *Ihram* (a sacred state). It is sometimes called the 'minor pilgrimage' or 'lesser pilgrimage,' the *Hajj* being the 'major' pilgrimage. *Umrah* is not compulsory, but highly recommended.

Salmah (RA), the Prophet's wife, who was accompanying him in this particular trip. On hearing from the Prophet (SAW) about the non-compliance of his orders, she prudently advised him not to say anything further to his companions but to offer his ritual sacrifice himself and to get out of the state of *Ihram*. The Prophet (SAW) did exactly what she said. He came out of the tent, offered the ritual sacrifice, had his head shaved, and got out of the state of *Ihram*. The companions immediately followed suit. It is to be appreciated that all along the companions were in a state of waiting and abeyance, hoping that a fresh revelation might be revealed to resolve the problem. But when they saw the Prophet (SAW) do what he had ordered them to do, they complied immediately. It cannot even be conceived that the earlier non-compliance to the Prophetic command was a show of disobedience or intransigence. The purpose of stating this incident in some detail is only to expound that despite the agreement being one sided in favor of Quraish, the Prophet (SAW) opted to sign it for the establishment of peace.

After a lapse of two years from the signing of the treaty, it so happened that Quraish acted in violation of one of the clauses of the agreement. When the Prophet (SAW) directed their attention toward this breach of contract, they unilaterally declared the termination of the agreement, and hence the pact of peace with the Muslims was abrogated. It dawned upon Abu Sufiyan, the chief of the tribe of Quraish, that their unilateral act of nullifying the peace treaty with the Muslims had been an egregious blunder on their part. It had been more of an emotional decision than a rational one. He realized that the peace treaty of Hudaibiyah was a source of protection for the Quraish as well. After realizing the folly of Quraish in nullifying the treaty, he travelled to Medina and made his best efforts to renew the treaty, but to no avail. The Prophet (SAW) did not accede to his request. Here also, there appears to be an apparent dichotomy between the Prophet's stance while signing the peace treaty

with Quraish, on the one hand, and his outright refusal to renew the same even when requested to do so by the Head of the Quraish tribe two years later.

These dichotomies can only be explained and understood by determining the goal and objective of the Prophet (SAW), for which he strove since the beginning of his Prophethood. It should be unequivocally clear that the goal and objective of the Prophet's mission was "to establish the *deen* of Allah (SWT)." To achieve this objective, there is a time when peace and non-violence have to be observed, even when encountered with violence, inequity, and oppression. No resistance is to be offered even in self-defense. At this juncture, it is peace that is sought for, with no trace of egoism coming in the way. There is another time when entering into a treaty of peace is not desirable to achieve the same objective. This dichotomous facet of the Prophet's strategy can thus be understood only if we understand the goal and objective of the Prophet's life. It is this that the orientalist have not been able to comprehend, and hence their objections.

The Purpose of God's Messengers

The basic purpose for which messengers are commissioned by Allah (SWT) is mentioned in the 25th *ayah* of *Surat al-Hadid*.

لَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا رُسُلَنَا بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ وَأَنْزَلْنَا مَعَهُمُ الْكِتَابَ
وَالْمِيزَانَ لِيَقُومَ النَّاسُ بِالْقِسْطِ

*We sent our messengers with clear signs, the Scripture and
the Balance, so that people could uphold justice
(al-Hadid, 57:25).*

What is the kind of social justice that this *ayah* refers to? There is a form of justice which man contrives by his own rational mind to bring about some sort of system of social justice. There is a concept of social justice which is found with the communists. There is another type of social justice found in the western world. All of them try to arrive at some form of social justice. However, all manmade ideologies and conceptions are deficient and wanting in one respect or another. In fact, the real social justice is the one that Allah (SWT) has granted to humanity through His messengers, and which is known as the *deen* or *shari'ah*⁶ (divine injunctions and guidance). This *shari'ah* was given to humanity in its completed and perfected form through the Prophet Muhammad (SAW). It has laid out the precise rights and duties of every one. It has specified as to who is to be given what and what is owed by whom. A balanced and equitable approach covering all aspects of life determines the rights and obligations of each segment of the society. It embraces the social, political, commercial, and economic dimensions. It is to establish this just social order for which messengers were commissioned. This is what is mentioned in the 25th *ayah* of *Surat al-Hadid*.

Who can possibly be an obstacle to the establishment of such a social system? Naturally, the oppressed, the weak, and the ones whose rights have been infringed upon would want an end to an unjust system and the establishment of a just system. What about the tyrants and the oppressors who

⁶ The word *shari'ah* comes from the Arabic root letters (ش ر ع *sheen-ra-ain*) from which we have its verbal noun (ش ر ع *shar'un*), which literally means a way or path, and by extension, the path to be followed. The usage of the term originally meant "the path that leads to water" since water is the source of all life. Hence, *shari'ah* metaphorically may be understood as the path or the way to the source of life. The *shari'ah* actually refers to the sum total of Islamic laws and guidance, which were revealed to the Prophet Muhammad (SAW), and which are recorded in the Qur'an as well as deducible from the Prophet's divinely guided lifestyle (called the *Sunnah*).

have imposed their so-called “just rule” on others? They have created an unjust economic system, which makes them perpetually grow richer even though other humans may starve. Would they ever want to end such an exploitive and unjust system and substitute it with a just and equitable system—a system based on *shari’ah*? Their majority will never wish this to happen. But even among these categories of people, there are some who by their inward disposition are conscientious. They become conscious of the falsity of this unjust system. It is a historical fact that some among the followers of Pharaoh had become believers as a result of the preaching and teaching of Prophet Musa (peace be upon him). In *Surat al-Mu’minun*, the Qur’an vividly records the speech made by one of the believers from among the followers of Pharaoh.

وَقَالَ رَجُلٌ مُؤْمِنٌ مِّنْ آلِ فِرْعَوْنَ يَكْتُمُ إِيمَانَهُ

And a believing man from among Pharaoh's people, who had concealed his belief, said: (Ghafir, 40:28).

He was one of the high ranking courtiers of Pharaoh, but a conscientious person who had become a believer. This goes to illustrate that even among those who are tyrants and oppressors; there are a few who possess a natural disposition to truth and respond to the call of truth when it comes to them. But such people are very few. The majority always wants the status quo to be maintained, so that their interest is not hurt in any way. A feudal lord will never wish feudalism to go away. A capitalist will never desire to do away with capitalism. A high caste Brahmin in Hinduism will never like to dispense with the caste-system that places him on a higher pedestal than those born in lower castes. So, whether the injustice is on a social, economic, or political level, the majority of those who are unjust are always at the forefront to defend and protect

their unjust systems and ideologies. This is the reason that the next portion of the *ayah* of *Surat al-Hadid* goes on to say,

وَأَنْزَلْنَا الْحَدِيدَ فِيهِ بَأْسٌ شَدِيدٌ وَمَنَافِعُ لِلنَّاسِ وَلِيَعْلَمَ اللَّهُ
مَنْ يَنْصُرُهُ وَرُسُلَهُ بِالْغَيْبِ

And We sent down the iron, wherein there is great strength as well as many benefits for mankind, that Allah may test who it is that will help Him and His messengers in the unseen (Al-Hadid, 57:25).

Iron is used in making armaments. It also has numerous other benefits for people. However, this *ayah*, when read contextually, implies that the chief purpose of iron is to uphold justice. All those who strive to establish justice may even put to use the strength of iron in confronting and punishing those who are obstacles in the path of justice. In the next portion of the same *ayah*, Allah (SWT) calls this phenomenon a criterion of faith (*Iman*) and a means of knowing those who without seeing Him help Him and His prophets by striving to establish His *deen*. The last portion of the *ayah* reads,

إِنَّ اللَّهَ قَوِيٌّ عَزِيزٌ

Truly Allah is powerful, almighty (al-Hadid, 57:25).

This means that the great strength of iron has not been bestowed upon you to uphold justice and establish Allah's *Deen* because Allah (SWT) is in need of your help – no! He is powerful, almighty, and self-sufficient. This is only a test of your faith and loyalty. This *ayah* of *Surat al-Hadid* is very revolutionary and lays down in general terms the objective

of commissioning messengers, the purpose of giving them the book, and the balance and the significance of sending down iron.

Objective of the Prophethood of Prophet Muhammad (SAW): Supremacy of *Deen*

The same discourse has been dealt with more specifically in *Surat al-Tawbah*, *Surat al-Fath*, and *Surat al-Saff* regarding the distinctive purpose of the Prophethood of Prophet Muhammad (SAW).

هُوَ الَّذِي أَرْسَلَ رَسُولَهُ بِالْهُدَىٰ وَدِينِ الْحَقِّ لِيُظْهِرَهُ عَلَى
الدِّينِ كُلِّهِ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ الْمُشْرِكُونَ

It is He who has sent His Messenger with the guidance and the true deen (Islam) that He may make it prevail over all other systems of life, however much the polytheists may detest this (at-Tawbah, 9:33).

Here, the Messenger is referred to in the singular whereas in *Surat al-Hadid*, the plural form (messengers) is used. The above *ayah* of *Surat al-Tawbah* speaks about the commissioning of the Messenger (Prophet Muhammad - SAW) by Allah (SWT) and he being sent with “the guidance” – the Qur’an – the eternal guidance. The Prophet (SAW) was not only given the guidance but also “the true *deen*.” This is the *deen* which is based on justice and equity. Allah (SWT) sent down the last and final *shari’ah* to humanity.

Why was the Prophet (SAW) sent? Why was he bestowed with the true *deen*? This *ayah* answers these questions. Reflecting on the Prophet’s life, we observe that

he not only called others to Islam and preached, but was also a mentor and spiritual guide. However, the main goal and objective of all his striving and struggle was to make Allah's *deen* dominant so that it prevailed over all other ways of life. Anyone whose goal in life is different from this goal gets oriented and directed toward something else. If one's objective in life is other than to emulate the Prophet (SAW) totally and completely, then there is hardly any significance of a partial emulation of only some aspects of his exemplary life.

The Prophet's Methodology of Establishing the Just Islamic Order

What is to be done to achieve this goal? Here also, we get guidance from the Prophet's life. It should be clearly understood that there is a particular way of doing a particular thing. It is not feasible to do anything in any manner one likes. There is a particular climatic condition in which the land is tilled to plough the seeds of the wheat crop to be able to reap the harvest of wheat. Noncompliance of this methodology will only be an exercise in futility.

Likewise, the methodology of bringing about a just and equitable system as was established by the Prophet (SAW) will have to be the same as the methodology adopted by him. A person, who, with all his sincerity embarks upon an erroneous methodology to bring about an Islamic revolution based on justice and equity may be awarded by Allah (SWT) for the sincerity of his intentions. However, there is no way that the desired change will ever come to fruition. Therefore, as a first step, we should consciously decide to become aware of the methodology by which the Prophet (SAW) brought about the profound Islamic revolution. How did he supplant a system based on oppression and exploitation with a system upholding justice, equity, and probity? Next, there will be a need to engage upon a deep study of the *sirah* to know the method the Prophet (SAW) employed to achieve the desired goal, because every method adopted to bring about a change in a society may not be feasible or fruitful.

The method to be employed depends on the nature and type of revolution that is desired. The communist revolution, for example, has its own methodology. The

comrades and the ardent followers of this ideology create a class consciousness in a society between the haves and the have-nots, between the bourgeois and the proletariat, between the oppressor and the oppressed, and between the one who exploits and the one who is exploited. Until such time that this class distinction takes roots in the minds of the oppressed class, the first step forward in the onward march to the communist revolution cannot be taken. Initially, it is the class consciousness that has to be created. The next step is to bring about a class struggle. Without doing this, the communist revolution cannot take its second step. Other than this, the communists have other ploys—to create disruption, disorder, and prejudices among people based on grounds of their geographical locations, races, tribes, languages, cultures, and traditions. Using such tactics to foment hatred, tension, and strife among people is a new technique and strategy of the communists. This may even involve women, children, the old, and other numerous innocent people becoming targets of bomb blasts and other mischievous and wicked activities. Nevertheless, all this is a part and parcel of the process of the communist revolution and within the purview of its agenda.

Let us take the case of a conscientious person who mistakenly subscribes to the communist ideology. He becomes a Marxist, but is not prepared to participate in disruptive activities. In this case, he is not a communist in real terms. This is because a communist revolution cannot be brought about without participating in such activities. It has a certain set pattern and paradigm. As far as we are concerned, it is only the methodology that was employed by the Prophet (SAW) that will be conducive to bringing about the Islamic revolution. Our intellectual effort and inquisitiveness should be directed toward undertaking an objective study of the Prophet's noble life in order to acquaint ourselves with his methodology of bringing about revolution.

The Different Stages of Revolution

A deep study of the noble biography of the Prophet (SAW) in order to understand his methodology of revolution provides a clear blueprint of the different stages of the revolution brought about by him. It also makes the various incidents and occurrences in his life appear to be strongly and meaningfully connected. Basically, there are six stages of revolution.

The First Stage: Da'wah

The first stage is *da'wah* (calling people) – calling people to the Islamic concept and worldview of *Tawhid* (oneness of Allah). The concept of *Tawhid* is extremely revolutionary and has far reaching effects. *Tawhid* in the social and societal fields implies that all humans are equal. They have all been created by the One – Allah (SWT). They are all born equal. No one is high or low on the basis of birth. Divisions created on the basis of religion, race, and social status are negated. One of the corollaries of *Tawhid* is that sovereignty belongs only to Allah (SWT). Man is only a trustee, entrusted with the responsibility of establishing Allah's sovereignty on earth. Man can legislate, but strictly within the parameters of the divine injunctions and guidance (*shari'ah*). The political realm can have no bigger or more powerful revolutionary worldview than the worldview of *Tawhid*. What is the implication of *Tawhid* in the field of economics?

لِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ

*Whatever is in the heavens and in the earth belongs to God
(al-Baqarah, 2:284).*

Man owns nothing. Whatever he has or possesses is by way of *amanah* (trust). The real owner is Allah (SWT).

Ownership connotes unlimited right of disposal. But this cannot be done with things kept in trust. Disposal of things kept in trust can only be in accordance with the wishes of the owner. If done otherwise, it shall amount to betrayal of trust. So we have three implications emerging out of the worldview of *Tawhid*—the complete equality of humans on the social level, the sovereignty of Allah (SWT) and the concept of *khilafah* (vicegerency) of man on the political level, and the concept of trusteeship as against ownership on the economic level.

The Second Stage: Organization

The second stage in the revolutionary struggle is organization. Those people who consciously accept the revolutionary call of *Tawhid* should then be organized because merely inviting toward a worldview and propagating it cannot bring about a revolution unless backed up by an organization made up of zealous and devoted members. Let us take a look at the communist revolution. It only materialized when people holding the communist worldview filled the prisons and even gave their lives to uphold their views and their cause. Likewise, to bring about an Islamic revolution, a dedicated Islamic organization is indispensable. It should be comprised of highly organized and devoted members, who conduct themselves with military discipline in obeying their superior and are ready to lay down their lives, if need be, for their mission and cause. A loose and lax administration cannot bring about a revolution.

The Third Stage: Self-Purification

The third stage is that of *تربية* (upbringing) and *تزكية* (purification)—to live by the teachings of Allah (SWT) for whose sake the struggle is being undertaken and to instill in

one a burning desire to emulate the Prophet (SAW) in all aspects of life. Unless this is done, no amount of effort will bear fruit. Supposing there is a very active person, well-grounded and keenly involved in social and organizational activities—this individual, however, shows sluggishness and reluctance when it comes to abiding by the teachings of *deen*. Such persons are not fit for the job. They will prove useless in times of test. Therefore the third stage of upbringing and purification of the self is most crucial.

The *sahaba* (companions of the Prophet (SAW)) were the embodiment of the teachings and mentoring of the Prophet (SAW). They are our ideal. And it is a fact that the mentoring and the process of self-purification they underwent at the hands of the Prophet (SAW) have no parallel in history. Even those antagonistic to Islam are witness to this. It so happened that during the caliphate of Umar (RA), when the Muslim army was positioned against the Persian army, Rustum, the commander of the Persian army assigned some of his undercover agents to reconnoiter their movements and activities. Camouflaging themselves, they scouted the Muslim camps for a few days. On their return, they informed Rustum about what they had witnessed during their mission and said, “They are amazing people – monks by night and knights by day.”

Monks and knights are two distinct categories of people with different traits and lifestyles. This was well known at that time. There were a large number of sincere and devoted Christian monks. The story of Buhaira, the Christian monk who had recognized the Prophet (SAW) in his childhood, is well known. There is also the story of the monk who had informed Salman al-Farsi (RA) that the time was mature for the advent of the seal of the messengers in the land of the date-palm trees. What a great learned monk he must have been to have predicted this on the basis of his knowledge and farsightedness. It should be noted, however, that those who were monks were just monks and nothing else; they

were monks by night and monks by day. They did not wield swords. On the other hand, there were also the armies of the Roman and Persian empires. A soldier in the army was a soldier by day and by night. The camping of soldiers at any place during the night meant that the modesty and chastity of women in the vicinity would be jeopardized. Nights in the camps were meant for indulging in wine, women, and revelry.

In contrast to this, the amazing feat of the Prophet (SAW) was to harmonize the best attributes of these two polarized groups into one organic whole. The upbringing and mentoring of the companions at the hands of the Prophet (SAW) had edified them to the point that they could synthesize the asceticism of the monk and the valor of the knight into one. There can be no better description about the character of the Prophet (SAW)'s companions than to say, "They are monks by night and knights by day." During the night, they prayed, prostrated, and supplicated to God. During the day, they fought dauntlessly.

The Fourth Stage: Passive Resistance

As mentioned above, the three initial stages of any revolutionary struggle are: *da'wah* (calling people), setting up an organized body, and the upbringing and self-purification of its members. The bottom-line is to create a revolutionary party which becomes a forceful power to be reckoned with. What is the purpose of this power? Until such time that this power is growing, it should through its own internal resources, associations, and connections strengthen and stabilize itself on solid foundations. It should struggle to make the organization get stronger by broadening its base. Until such time that it is not strong enough to confront falsehood directly, it should, according to the Qur'anic injunction, "withhold your hands" (*al-Nisa'*, 4:77), take recourse to passive resistance only.

In the initial stages of any revolutionary struggle, the concept of passive resistance has extreme significance. If the revolutionary movement were to resort to any violent means, then the existing prevalent system in the society that is based on falsehood would get a justification and valid excuse to crush this budding movement. On the other hand, if this revolutionary movement adopts the policy of passive resistance and bears the excesses inflicted upon it by the oppressors, then the public opinion in the society would start building up gradually in favor of this movement. It is natural that the public in general will get curious to know the reasons why these people were being tormented. What is their crime? Have they committed theft or burglary? Have they encroached upon the right of someone? Have they resorted to any immoral practice? Their only crime is that they believe in Allah (SWT) and remain clung to Muhammad (SAW). This is the reason why the injunction in the Meccan era was to "withhold your hands." There was no permission even to raise hands in self-defense. Thus, the disbelievers inflicted brutal atrocities upon the Muslims who bore all the afflictions with amazing patience. Naturally, all the people of Mecca were not harsh and hard hearted. There was a silent majority who saw the unjust and unprovoked torment being meted out to the Muslims. This was in fact the moral victory of the Muslims, which later became manifest in the Battle of Badr, when a small contingent of 313 barely armed Muslims routed and decimated a strong troop of 1000 disbelievers, armed to the hilt.

Passive resistance is a very crucial stage in this revolutionary movement and may be sequentially considered its fourth stage. Factually, however, this stage commences from the very inception, i.e., from the day the *da'wah* starts and may be considered juxtaposed or hand in hand with the other three stages of *da'wah*, organization, and education.

The Fifth Stage: Active Resistance

To display patience and perseverance and remain resolute on one's stand in the face of persecution and oppression is extremely difficult. This patience has to be endured until such time that the movement is strong enough to confront the status quo. It should be quite clear that no revolution takes place without a confrontation. No revolution comes about merely with preaching and sermons. But to confront without being duly prepared for it is always futile. It has been mentioned earlier in this discourse that despite being persecuted and tortured by the polytheists for twelve years in Mecca, the Prophet (SAW) did not allow the Muslims to retaliate. Every agony and suffering had to be endured and taken lying down. This was both a trial as well as a process of training and purification for the believers.

It is only when the revolutionary movement garners enough strength to make it capable of openly confronting the system based on falsehood that the fifth stage of the revolution—the stage of active resistance starts. In our times, if any such Islamic revolutionary movement was to come into existence, then to decide whether or not the movement had acquired the required strength to embark upon active resistance would depend on the *ijtihad*⁷ and assessment made by the *Ameer* (Head) of that movement. For the Prophet (SAW), this decision was based on divine guidance. It was during the *hijrah* that this *ayah* was revealed:

⁷ In Islamic legal thought, *ijtihad* is understood as the effort of the jurist to derive the law on an issue by expending all the available means of interpretation at his disposal and by taking into account all the legal proofs related to the issue.

أُذِنَ لِلَّذِينَ يُقَاتَلُونَ بِأَنَّهُمْ ظَلِمُوا وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ
عَلَىٰ نَصْرِهِمْ لَقَدِيرٌ

*Permission to fight is given to those who are fought against
because they have been wronged – truly Allah has the power
to come to their support (al-Hajj, 22:39).*

This decision to fight and retaliate came from Allah (SWT) through revelation. Now there is no more revelation that is going to come. Therefore, any such decision has to be made through *ijtihad*. All faculties of intellect and reasoning have to be used to decide whether enough strength had been wielded to confront the unjust system or not. After due process of consultation, in case the *Ameer* of the movement decides that there are a sufficient number of members who are well organized, who listen and obey, who have strong connections with Allah (SWT), who have been Islamically grounded in education, upbringing and purification, who consider dying in the path of Allah (SWT) as their greatest success, who are ready to get killed rather than retreat, and who are ready to get incarcerated rather than appeal for clemency, then alone an offensive step can be undertaken.

These guidelines are reflected in and derived from the biography of the Prophet (SAW). The Prophet (SAW) did not take a respite at Medina. The orientalist and the historians of the West have mistranslated *hijrah* as “Flight to Medina,” implying flight to mean escaping to seek refuge somewhere in order to save oneself from an ordeal or suffering. Muhammad (SAW) did not take refuge in Medina. Through the *hijrah*, Allah (SWT) enabled Muhammad (SAW) and his companions to establish a base from where the movement of the Islamic revolution could be launched and brought to culmination. After arriving at Medina, the Prophet (SAW) invested only six months toward working for internal stability. During this period,

the Prophet (SAW) undertook three projects: first, the construction of the Prophet's Mosque and Center at Medina; second, the fostering of brotherhood between the *muhajirun* (emigrants from Mecca) and the *ansar* (helpers from Medina), and third, the entering into alliances with the three Jewish tribes in Medina. Pacts signed with the Jews stipulated that they were free to practice their religion. All their civil rights would be honored. If, however, Medina came under attack, they would side with the Muslims or would remain neutral.

The Sixth Stage: Armed Conflict

After the initial six months, the Prophet (SAW) began to dispatch raiding parties. This was an assault on the life-line of the trading caravans of Quraish which had now been made vulnerable as a result of these missions. This triggered an attack from Quraish who came forward with a contingent of one thousand strong, armed to the hilt. And this initiated an armed conflict—the sixth and final stage of the Prophet's revolutionary movement. This sixth and final phase is covered over a period of six years, which saw many ups and downs. Seventy disbelievers were killed in the Battle of Badr, while fourteen Muslims were honored with martyrdom. Seventy companions were martyred in the Battle of Uhud⁸.

⁸ The Battle of Uhud was fought in 625 CE (3 Shawwal 3 AH in the Islamic calendar) in the valley located in front of Mount Uhud, in what is now northwestern Arabia. It occurred between a force from the Muslim community of Medina led by the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) and a force led by Abu Sufiyan ibn Harb from Mecca, the town from which many of the Muslims had previously emigrated. The Battle of Uhud was the second military encounter between the Meccans and the Muslims, preceded by the Battle of Badr in 624 CE, where a small Muslim army had defeated the much larger Meccan army.

يُقَاتِلُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَيَقْتُلُونَ وَيُقْتَلُونَ

*They fight in the cause of God so they kill and are killed
(at-Tawbah 9:111).*

There had to be ups and downs. There was no guarantee given by Allah (SWT) to the believers that no harm shall be inflicted on them while they engaged in combats with the disbelievers. In fact, they had to lay down their lives to prove their allegiance and loyalty to Allah's *deen*. Let alone the believers, even the Prophet (SAW) was not granted any sort of guarantee. During his mission to Ta'if, the Prophet (SAW) bled after stones were thrown at him. In the heat of battle in Uhud, his tooth was smashed following a deadly stroke of sword on his face, and he bled profusely. His cheeks got pierced with two rings of his own helmet. After having gone through all these tests and trials and after having given away everything in the path of Allah (SWT), there comes a stage when Allah's help and victory has to arrive. Allah promises that believers will be victorious.

وَلَا تَهِنُوا وَلَا تَحْزِنُوا وَأَنْتُمْ الْأَعْلَوْنَ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ

*Do not be weak, and do not grieve, for you will have the
upper hand, if you are believers (Aal 'Imran, 3:139).*

Islamic Revival in Contemporary Times

The revolutionary process involving six stages of the Islamic revolution described above can only be inferred and understood through the Prophet's biography. It is worth mentioning that the first four stages of the revolutionary process will remain exactly the same as they appear to us in the Prophet's noble life.

The first stage in this process will be calling and preaching and will involve propagation of the revolutionary worldview of *Tawhid* as depicted in the Qur'an and not as discussed in the polemics of some Muslim sectarian schools of thought like the *Barailwi*⁹ and the *Ahl al-Hadith*.¹⁰ *Tawhid*, as a matter of fact, is the foundation of a holistic social and cultural system based on justice and equity.

The second stage is that of organizing. Here also we have to completely adopt the Prophet's model that is derived from his *sirah*. As far as organizing is concerned, the guidance which the Prophet (SAW) has given to the *ummah* (community of believers) is one of taking an oath of allegiance (*Bai'ah*) and the *Bai'ah* shall form the basis of the collectivity. One may have a different opinion on this issue, but the fact is that the only guidance we get from the

⁹ *Barailwi* is the name of a sect among the sects of the Indo-Pak subcontinent belonging to the Hanafi school of thought. It derives its name from the founder and promoter of its principles, Ahmad Rida, who was born in Bareilly, a city in the province of Uttar Pradesh in India.

¹⁰ *Ahl al-Hadith*: The name given to early scholars who preferred to avoid excessive reasoning and instead relied heavily upon the literal interpretation of sayings and actions of the Prophet (SAW). In more recent times in India and Pakistan, it became a derogatory term used for those who opposed the blind following of any *madhhab* (legal school of thought).

Prophetic *sirah* as regards establishing and organizing a party to bring about an Islamic revolution is that of the system of *Bai'ah*. There is no other alternative to the *Sunnah* of *Bai'ah*. There is an authentic hadith reported by both al-Bukhari and Muslim and narrated by 'Ubadah ibn as-Samit (RA). The words of this hadith are very comprehensive and reflect the entire constitution and manifesto of an Islamic revolutionary movement. The hadith is: 'Ubadah ibn as-Samit (RA) narrates, "We made an oath of allegiance to the Messenger of Allah (SAW) that whatever you order us, we will listen and obey, whether in ease or in difficulty; whether it is easy on our souls or we are constrained to do it; even if you prefer another over us. Whomsoever you appoint head over us; we shall obey his orders and will not dispute with him. We shall, however, advance and make known our opinion, which we deem to be true, wherever we are. And we shall never fear any blame that is hurled on us because of saying the truth in matters pertaining to Allah."

This is the Prophetic *Sunnah* to be followed during the formulation of the stage of organizing. The only thing to be kept in mind is that the oath of allegiance to the Prophet (SAW) was absolute as every word uttered by him was law. After him no *Ameer* (Head) will enjoy unconditional obedience, but will be obeyed only as long as his orders are strictly within the parameters of the *shari'ah*. We will also have to follow the Prophetic model in matters of upbringing, the most significant part of which is to adhere to the compulsory rituals of worship with utmost consistency. Additionally, recitation of the Qur'an and performance of the *Tahajjud* (night prayers) have to be undertaken diligently in the best possible manner.

The third stage of passive resistance will also have to be adopted on the identical pattern that appears in the Meccan era of the *sirah*. This would mean remaining steadfast, displaying patience and withholding our hands when faced

with oppression and persecution, while striving to preach, propagate, and establish the *deen* of Allah (SWT). These are the four initial stages in which the Prophetic methodology has to be followed exactly as it is.

While dealing with the fifth and sixth stages of the Islamic revolutionary struggle involving issues of offense and armed conflict, the prevailing conditions and circumstances will have to be taken into account and suitable modifications to the methodology may be necessitated. This requires taking recourse to *ijtihad*. It is well known that the Prophet (SAW) had to deal with a society that for all practical purposes was steeped in polytheism and unbelief. In contemporary times, if this revolutionary struggle was to take place in any Muslim country, then matters would have to be dealt with the Muslims, even though the rulers and the majority of Muslims of that country may be comprised of sinful and rebellious individuals. Although they subscribe to the secular worldview, they are still considered Muslims as they declare the testimony of faith. This is one reason why there is a change in the circumstances from that of the Prophetic era. Another point to be noted is that even though there was a disparity in terms of the quantity of arms and ammunition used by the Muslims and their antagonists – the disbelievers and the polytheists – there was no difference in terms of the quality of the weapons used. The same weaponry was used by both contending forces.

In present times, the prevalent exploitive system, whether it is capitalist or feudalist, is protected by the ruling government run by the same class of people, and its interests are linked strongly with the dominant system. This means that it is the government, wielding enormous strength, that has to be encountered. Therefore, to embark upon an armed conflict is very difficult in present times. Alternative methods have to be explored. These have come about with the evolution of culture: peaceful protests,

demonstrations, picketing, resisting, and challenging the implementation of systems and activities that are repugnant to the spirit of Islam. These are ways that have come down to us with the evolution of culture. Until such time that this phase comes about, all efforts have to be made to express disapproval of activities that are against the Islamic law and ethics. At the same time, promotion of Islamic values based on righteousness has to be done through speeches and writings.

Once a stage is reached when the Islamic revolutionary movement considers itself strong enough to compel the polity to desist from implementing policies antithetical to Islam, then it can take up the challenge by taking a stand that it will not allow the status quo to continue. There will be peaceful demonstrations, picketing, and strikes. This will trigger baton charge by the police force and people will be arrested. The government may even resort to shooting and shelling. At this juncture, the members of this movement who are already committed to lay down their lives will not retreat. They will be ready for the showdown—either the government succumbs to their demands or they attain martyrdom in the path of their Lord and attain absolute success.

In contemporary times, it is the Iranians who portray an example of this even though effort of the desired degree was lacking in the first four stages of the revolution in Iran. There were numerous shortcomings, discussion of which may be shelved for now. But they did display one phenomenon. They did not rebel against the Shah in an armed conflict. They came out on the streets to lay down their lives. They were killed in thousands. But their sacrifices brought about a change of hearts. The police felt constrained by their conscience to take action. The army refused to shoot the protesters. The Shah had to flee. He was the chief ally of America in the region. He sought refuge in the USA but his request was met with a blunt refusal. What

was the force that impelled the Shah to abandon his dominant kingship and flee? It was the sentiments of the masses and their willingness to sacrifice their lives. A system does not change without this. Therefore, under the prevailing circumstances and after exercising *ijtihad*, we have to move ahead while adopting a policy of passive resistance.

Conclusion

The gist of the message is that the fundamental implication of loving the Prophet (SAW) is to follow him. This should be well absorbed. This emulation is desirable and worthy of blessing in our daily lives. However, it is all the more significant that we follow in the footsteps of the Prophet (SAW), who constantly and tirelessly strived to make Allah's *deen* supreme so as to establish and implement a system based on justice and equity. It was for the fulfillment of this objective that the Prophet (SAW) expended the entire twenty three years of his Prophethood. The companions followed suit, expending their entire lives for this cause. They encountered untold suffering and persecution and even sacrificed their lives in the way.

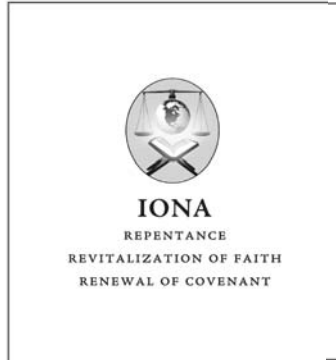
Directing our lives toward emulating the way of the Prophet (SAW) and his companions and molding our interests and concerns in the pattern of the characters of the Prophet (SAW) and his companions is in fact the implication and the criterion of loving the Prophet (SAW).

And all praise is due to Allah (SWT), the Lord of the worlds.

Notes

About the Author

Dr. Israr Ahmad was born on April 26, 1932 in Hisar (a district of East Punjab, now a part of Haryana State) in British India. He graduated from King Edward Medical College (Lahore) in 1954 and received his masters in Islamic Studies from the University of Karachi in 1965. As a high school student, he briefly worked for Muslim Students Federation; and, following the creation of Pakistan in 1947, he became actively involved with the Islami Jam'iat-e-Talaba and subsequently became a member of the Jam'at-e-Islami Pakistan. After resigning from the Jama'at in 1957 due to irreconcilable differences, Dr. Israr Ahmad continued to serve the Holy Qur'an in his personal capacity. He gave up his thriving medical practice in 1971 in order to launch a movement for the revival and renaissance of Islam. As a result of his efforts, the Markazi Anjuman Khuddam-ul-Qur'an Lahore was established in 1972 while Tanzeem-e-Islami Pakistan was founded in 1975. After a long and active career of public speaking, writing, and organizing, Dr. Israr Ahmad passed away on April 14, 2010.



IONA is a nonviolent movement whose aim is to promote and struggle for Justice.