



The Light — London edition

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The Lahore Ahmadiyya monthly magazine from U.K.

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Assalamu alaikum. Our next meeting:

Date: **Sunday 3rd September 2006**

Time: **3.00 p.m.**

Speaker: **Hazrat Ameer Dr A.K. Saeed**

Regular activities:

Darus-i Quran and Hadith:

Every Friday at 2.30 p.m.

Meetings of the Executive:

First Sunday of every month at 2.00 p.m.

Meeting of the Jama'at:

First Sunday of every month at 3.00 p.m.

Islamic teaching on anger

by **Zahid Aziz**

Recently the subject of Muslim “anger” at the injustices suffered by fellow-Muslims elsewhere in the world has very much been in the forefront of news and discussion. This anger is said to foment extremist groups who vent their rage and frustration by wanton violence with disregard for taking lives of innocent people. If indeed anger is fanning these actions, then the most important question for a Muslim to examine is, what are the teachings of the Holy Quran and the Holy Prophet Muhammad on how to behave when one is angry. In the Holy Quran the believers are instructed as follows:

“And hasten to forgiveness from your Lord and a Garden, as wide as the heavens and the earth; it is prepared for those who keep their duty, those who spend (in charity) in ease as well as in adversity and *those who suppress anger and pardon people*. And Allah loves the doers of good to others.” — 3:133–134.

The words translated as “those who suppress anger and pardon people” (*al-kāzimīn al-ghaiz wal-‘āfīn ‘an-in-nās*) mean literally: “suppressors of anger and pardoners of people”, and the word used for “people” here means mankind in general. This, then, is how Muslims ought to appear in the world, as *suppressors of their anger and pardoners of*

mankind. As the beginning of this passage tells Muslims to rush to seek forgiveness from God, these words indicate that to gain that forgiveness we must suppress our rage against others, forgive them and in fact do good to them. Have we not done things which would make God angry; so do we want Him to display His anger towards us? If not, then we must similarly restrain our anger towards those who have wronged us.

This passage teaches three degrees of response towards those who have wronged us, and we should rise to the level that is most effective in the circumstances. The least which is required is for us to restrain our anger, and that is the minimum that we must do. Any reaction based on anger is bound to be excessive and unjust, and damaging even to the aggrieved party. Therefore our response must be *limited* to being proportionate and rational. Beyond suppressing anger, we may forgive those who wrong us rather than seek their punishment, if that would make them recognise their injustices and mend their ways. Finally, we may even proceed to returning good for evil, again if it would turn them away from their wrongdoing.

According to this passage, *the way to heaven is only through suppressing your anger and forgiving other people*.

In another place, describing the good qualities that believers ought to strive for, the Quran says:

“... and whenever they are angry they forgive. ... And those who, when great wrong afflicts them, defend themselves. And the recompense of evil is punishment like it; but whoever forgives and amends, his reward is with Allah. ... And whoever is patient and forgives — that surely is an affair of great resolution.” — 42:37-43.

This also teaches that there can be absolutely no reprisals fuelled by anger, even in the face of “great wrong”. The utmost action can only be “like” or proportionate to the evil, but forgiveness is here recommended three times, including as an antidote to anger. The word translated here as “amends” in the phrase “whoever forgives and amends” is rendered in various translations of the Quran as “makes reconciliation”, “puts things right”, “makes peace” or “is reconciled”.

Justice above hatred

The Quran instructs Muslims:

“Do not let hatred of a people — because they hindered you from the Sacred Mosque — incite you to transgress.” — 5:2

“O you who believe, be upright for Allah, bearers of witness with justice; and do not let hatred of a people incite you not to act equitably. Be just; that is nearer to observance of duty. And keep your duty to Allah. Surely Allah is aware of what you do.” — 5:8

There may be understandable reasons that make one feel hatred and anger towards another people, but these verses teach Muslims unequivocally that they must not let such feelings provoke them to commit acts of excess and transgression of moral and legal limits. Not only must they refrain from wrongdoing out of hatred against another people, but what is more, they must strictly adhere to treating them with equity and justice. This is emphasised here as part of the Muslims’ basic duty to God, from Whom our actions cannot be hidden.

Hadith on anger

There are several statements reported from the Holy Prophet Muhammad in all the leading books of Hadith strongly cautioning people against acting out of anger. For example:

1. “A man said to the Prophet, ‘Give me some advice.’ The Prophet said, ‘Do not become angry and furious’. The man asked (the same) again and again, and the Prophet said in each case, ‘Do not become angry and furious’.” — Bukhari, book: ‘Good Manners’ (*Ādāb*).
2. “A judge should not judge between two persons while he is in an angry mood.” — Bukhari, book: ‘Judgments’ (*Ahkām*).
3. “The strong man is not the one who can wrestle well but the strong man is one who can control himself when he is enraged.” — Sahih Muslim, *Kitab-ul-Birr*.
4. “Anger is from Satan, and Satan is created from fire. Only water can put out fire, so when any of you is angry, he should perform his ablution.” — Mishkat, book: ‘Good Manners’ (*Ādāb*).
5. “He who withholds his anger, Allah will withhold His punishment from him on the Day of Judgment.” — Mishkat, book: ‘Good Manners’ (*Ādāb*).

One of his statements relating specifically to war in this context is as follows:

“A man came to the Prophet and asked: ‘O Messenger of Allah, What kind of fighting is in the way of Allah? For some of us fight because of being enraged and angry and

some for the sake of one's pride and haughtiness'. The Prophet ... said: 'He who fights so that the word of Allah should be uppermost fights in the way of Allah'." — Bukhari, book: 'Knowledge' (*ʿIlm*).

Thus, fighting out of anger is not fighting in the way of Allah. Note that the only fighting allowed in Islam is fighting in self-defence. Therefore fighting "so that the word of Allah should be uppermost" means fighting to repel the enemy who has the aggressive object of destroying Islam and the Muslims and to make the cause of Islam prevail over their aims. ■

Founder of the *Daily Mail* and *Daily Mirror* speaks on the Palestine issue in 1922

Foresaw today's Middle East problem

Lord Northcliffe (1855–1922) was the founder of the British daily newspapers the *Daily Mail* and the *Daily Mirror*, and also later became proprietor of *The Times* and *The Observer*. A few months before his death he gave an interview to the *Sunday Pictorial* of London, from which certain extracts were quoted in our own Woking Muslim Mission's monthly *The Islamic Review*, April 1922. We reproduce those extracts below from that issue of *The Islamic Review*, in which we have put in bold the text we wish to note especially:

“Viscount Northcliffe, in an interview with a representative of the *Sunday Pictorial*, made the following observation:-

He (Lord Northcliffe) passed to the Muhammadan question, commenting upon the “extraordinary ignorance” in Britain of what the word “Muhammadan” means. “By this time,” he remarked, “we realize that it is a dangerous thing to insult the Pope. Whatever our personal views may be, we have found that the supporters of the Pope have an unpleasant way of hitting back, whether it be in Ireland or elsewhere. It is true that among Muhammadans there is no one holding the precise position of the Pope, but a great many Muhammadans regard the Sultan of Turkey as their Caliph. The Muhammadans number between 250 million, which is the British estimate, and 400 million, which is the Muhammadan estimate. Why, there are even millions of Muhammadans in China. All the Muhammadans are united by ties of religion. When

you give money to the Greeks to shoot Muslims in Asia Minor, Muslims everywhere snipe you or fight you, rather like the Irish Republican Army. And the Muslim has a wide fighting range. Ireland is by comparison a mere football field. If the British Empire helps the Greeks to kill Muslims somewhere beyond Smyrna in Asia Minor, the Muslim will scupper you on the Indian frontier, snipe you in Bombay and bomb you in Cairo or Alexandria. I do not suggest that we should be in any way intimidated by Muslims or anybody else, but I do urge the makers of our policy to remember that these 250 million people whose faith is in the sword have a horrible opportunity for hitting back.”

“Look at Palestine,” exclaimed Lord Northcliffe. “Do you know that we are on the verge of starting a war in Palestine? There is a population of about 700,000 in Palestine, mostly Arab Muslims, with a comparatively small proportion of Christians and Jews. **In former times they all got along very well together, and the Muslims protected the Holy Places of Christ.** During the war the Palestine Muslims assisted us. When I visited Palestine years ago I neither saw nor heard of any friction between Muhammadans, Jews and Christians. When I returned there last month I was met, to my great astonishment, by an armoured car and an escorting party, while overhead flew an aeroplane. I wondered whether I was in Ireland or on the Indian frontier. The reason of the need for these military measures is **the mistake of the British Government in declaring that Palestine is to be ‘a National Home’ for the Jews.** The Muslims simply say: ‘This is our home. We have been here for centuries. We do not want Bolshevik Jews or anybody else in our home.’ There is bound to be an upheaval soon in Palestine. I expect there would be a considerable upheaval in London if some distant Government suddenly announced that London was to become the ‘National Home’ of the Muslims or the Chinese. I imagine that the police force would have to be considerably increased when the immigrants arrived!”

“The Muhammadans,” he proceeded, “belong to many races, but it is probable that collectively their instincts are more warlike than ours. From Java, in the Dutch East Indies, right across the world to Morocco, on the Atlantic, Muhammadans resent what they consider to be the ill-treatment of their brethren in Palestine. Remember that apart from their many newspapers and other forms of propaganda, their missionaries outnumber those of all other denominations. Then about a hundred thousand of them meet every year in their sacred city of Mecca in Arabia. The immediate purpose of

the Mecca pilgrimage is religious, but this immense assembly of Muhammadans from all parts of Asia and Africa talks much of temporal things. They talk about India and Egypt and Palestine, and about Gandhi and other specially British topics, on which **they are much better informed than we are at home.** Don't imagine that because a man wears a turban or a *tarboosh* (fez) he is a fool or slow or unable to combine. **We are gradually learning that these people are not so much unlike ourselves** as we thought they were. They look different, but when they take to golf, lawn tennis, or cricket, they can compete with us on equal terms; and many of them are politicians as acute as the Irish. I release these few opinions in order simply to suggest quite delicately that we ought to be very, very careful in our relations with the great world of Islam."

— *The Sunday Pictorial*, March 5th (1922) "

Our comments

Lord Northcliffe was as much of a stalwart of the British establishment as there could be, and not some fringe figure or dissident. He was also knowledgeable about world affairs. His prescient views therefore should be given the greatest consideration. In any case, what he foresaw in 1922, more than a quarter of a century before the state of Israel even came into existence, has proved astonishingly accurate. His advice of 84 years ago to the government is more valid than ever. ■

Maulana Abdul Mannan Omar

We regret to report the death, in the U.S.A. on 28th July 2006, of Maulana Abdul Mannan Omar at the age of 96 years — *inna li-llahi wa inna ilai-hi raj'un*. He was a son of Hazrat Maulana Nur-ud-Din, on whom be mercy, the first Head of the Ahmadiyya Movement from May 1908 to March 1914, after the Founder of the Movement. Following the funeral prayer in Delaware, his body was flown to Lahore, Pakistan, for burial in the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement's cemetery at Darus Salaam.

The Maulana was a scholar of Islam and produced many important reference works to his credit, among them a Dictionary of the Holy Quran and a compilation of the Hadith collection the *Musnad* of *Ahmad Bin Hanbal*. May Allah have mercy on him and grant him His protection and forgiveness!

Earlier this year, Dr Rashid Jahangiri, our active member in the U.S.A., sent us some photographs of a visit to the grave of the distinguished American Muslim convert Alexander Russell Webb (d. 1916)

by Dr Jahangiri and party, including Maulana Abdul Mannan Omar. Mr Webb was a journalist, newspaper owner, and sometime Consul-General of the U.S.A. in the Phillipines, who embraced Islam in 1887 and was in communication with Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad as well as Maulana Muhammad Ali. He is buried in Hillside cemetery, Rutherford, New Jersey.

Below is a photo of the late Maulana Abdul Mannan Omar by the tombstone of Mr Webb (in the bottom right of picture) in January of this year.



Our websites

Please do visit our websites from time to time:

- www.lahore-ahmadiyya.org — a gateway page reflecting our Movement's name with direct links to material inside www.ahmadiyya.org
- www.ahmadiyya.org — containing extensive educational and research material.
- www.aaiil.org — Website of the International Centre of our Movement.
- www.wokingmuslim.org — history and work of the Woking Muslim Mission, 1913–1960s.
- www.berlin.ahmadiyya.org — history and work of the Berlin Muslim Mission. ■

Love for one's parents as taught in Islam

A talk presented at our Family Day

by **Bushra Ahmed**

[*Note:* This talk was presented at our Family Day gathering in Darus Salaam, London, on 6th August, by one of our young, enthusiastic members in the presence of *Hazrat Ameer* Dr A.K. Saeed.]

Who is it that looks after you through thick and thin? Who are they who spend their days working hard to bring in food to fill your stomach and then spending their nights worrying about you?

My parents are certainly devoted to me. I have a lot to be grateful for. Through my personal experience there is no one in life who will love you more than your beloved parents.

It is repeatedly stated in the Quran that we can discover God through His many signs. To me, one of the signs is that even after the severity of birth pain that a mother has to endure, she can still feel bliss at the birth of her child and selfless love all throughout its life. Therefore it is no wonder that it is said in the Hadith:

“Heaven lies beneath the feet of the mother.”

There is a special bonding emotionally as well as physically between mother and child that is symbolised through the placenta which is attached to both mother and child while the infant is in its enclosure. It is such a unique relationship that throughout one's life no other relationship will fall in its category partly due to the unconditional love a mother establishes and also the sacrifices she makes.

It is related in a famous anecdote: A boy was asked by his mother to bring her a cup of water in the middle of the night. As he returned she had fallen asleep. He stayed up by her bedside till she was awake. There is another story where he held a loose door open for her all night because she needed fresh air. This is an ideal type of behaviour.

We know perhaps that we cannot live up to such expectation. But the reason why examples are used where someone acts in the extreme is so that we all strive to reach this potential that we all have inside us. After all he was human, therefore we all have the capacity to be just as good, if only we work towards it.

It is stated in the Hadith that a man asked the Holy Prophet, to whom in this world he should give

the utmost respect? The Prophet replied: “Your mother.” He asked: “Who next?” The Prophet said again: “Your mother.” When asked the same question yet again, the Prophet still said: “Your mother.” When asked a fourth and final time, then the Prophet replied: “Your father.” This means that although the father is the breadwinner and in most cases older than the others in the household, the highest respect in the eyes of children, family and God goes to the mother.

Also respect is given to an aunt. Someone approached the Prophet and told him that during his mother's lifetime he had not shown her respect unfortunately, so how should he make up for it? The Prophet asked: “Has your mother a sister?” When the man replied in the affirmative, he said: “Go and show her all your respect!”

Let us see what the Quran has to say about this:

“And your Lord has decreed that you serve none but Him, and do good to parents. If either or both of them reach old age with you, say no word of frustration to them, nor rebuke them, and speak to them a generous word.” — 17:23

This refers to the general attitude and behaviour of children of whatever age towards their parents, especially the part referring to parents reaching old age. There are various ways of worshipping Allah. Kindness to parents is an individual act of piety. A point to note is that acts of worship can be individual or collective.

However, it is written in one passage:

“And We have enjoined on man goodness to his parents. But if they strive to make you ascribe partners to Me, of which you have no knowledge, do not obey them. To Me is your return, so I will inform you of what you did.” — 29:8

The underlying principle here is that God is above all. Obedience is to be shown only to a limit where it does not override God's injunctions. This means authority can be rejected if it is in stark contradiction to God's commands.

So take heed. However nagging, annoying and irritating your parents may seem, they have been placed on this earth for your benefit. So grit your teeth, control your anger, and strive to learn the art of patience. We cannot all be ideal human beings as prophets and imams before us, for they have been made that way, we have to work at it. But I believe we can all reach that potential with some effort in the right direction. Show obedience and kindness to your parents, but beware, not over and above God.

How Muslims preserved the historical record of Islam

by Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din

[Note: This is taken from an article in *The Islamic Review*, September 1929, pages 311–313. The author explains how the record of the early history of Islam was preserved by Muslims savants.]

No pre-Islamic religion in the world has succeeded in maintaining the purity of its record; and if corruption had crept into Islam it would not have been astonishing. But Islam in its very early days produced a band of seekers after truth who at once set to work to forestall and remedy the evil. The Holy Quran, in alluding to human interpolation in other religions, warned Muslims against the possibility of such an occurrence in theirs. It put them on their guard. They became alive to the situation, especially when they beheld an extraordinarily huge influx of non-Arab races into Islam. This occurred towards the end of the first century of the Muslim era, and seemed to them to suggest a possibility of the corruption against which they had been warned. They therefore set themselves at once to fortify Islam against any such unnatural growth. They lost no time in locating the possible channels of corruption and made every possible effort to stem it. For brevity's sake I will content myself with the mention of two things in which they detected a special menace to the purity of Islam.

First, the language itself — the vehicle of human thoughts; and secondly, the Traditions of the Holy Prophet. The changing nature of almost all the languages of the world has injured the integrity of ancient records more than anything else. Words in a language are constantly undergoing an imperceptible but rapid change — rapid-seeming, perhaps, because so imperceptible both in form and meaning, in the course of time, and thus their original meanings are lost. Sometimes, too, new significance is given to them by succeeding generations — at least, the 'process of generalization or particularization in the connotation of words goes on incessantly. We may possess an original record of ancient days — in the very language of the time when the text was composed — but no one can be sure of the meaning he gives to the text in after days. Hindus assert that the Holy Vedas have reached them in the very language in which they were written by the ancient Rishis. It may be so; but there are several translations of the Holy Vedas which differ diametrically from each other, and all because of the change of meaning which the Vedic words have undergone. Though Arabic is the most

conservative language in this respect, yet the early Muslims began to raise a bulwark against this subtle attack. They began to prepare Arabic lexicons; in fact, herein is the genesis of all Arabic dictionaries. Among the lexicographers, Jauhari, a great scholar of the day, set himself to compile a dictionary of the Quranic vocabulary, and today we possess a standard work on the subject in his book *Sihah-i-Jauhari*. All these lexicographers adopted one principle in ascertaining the meanings of words. They would give them only such meanings as they received in the works of ancient writers and poets. In selecting these authorities the compilers of the Arabic dictionaries confined their research only to authors living either before Muhammad or contemporaneously with him. It is chiefly for this reason that the words of the Quran, as well as of the Traditions, are understood in the same sense which they conveyed in the days of the Prophet — a thing unique and unparalleled in the history of Religion.

In collecting the Traditions the early Muslims were not less vigilant in ascertaining their genuineness. They evolved a science of criticism for testing the trustworthiness of the various recorders of the Prophet's sayings and doings. In the first place they would very rarely accept a tradition which had only one authority to support it. They would not rely on the report of any person who had been known to have made a false statement in his life, no matter how trivial the matter. They went farther than that; they declined to accept the authority of one who was known to have deviated once from the Quranic moral standard even in other respects. They would make long journeys to ascertain the genuineness of one tradition. It would need a volume to tell adequately of the arduous methods which they adopted to achieve their high purpose. I will here allude only to one or two books of traditions, and the labour which the writers undertook in their preparation. Imam Malik, the first writer on the subject, was born in 93 *Hijra*, in Medina. In his very early days he had meditated collecting the traditions. He sat at the feet of nine hundred masters for this object, and then he produced a collection of somewhat above one thousand traditions as the fruit of his life. He got seventy of the best scholars of his day in Medina to attest the correctness of his book, and named it *Mu'atta*. At the end of the second century (A.H.) another great traditionist, Muhammad son of Ismail, was born in Bukhara. After finishing his course of studies he spent sixteen years in the work of collecting, and collected more than six hundred thousand traditions; but of these he chose only four thousand for his famous book *Sahih Bukhari* — a work that has won an ever-lasting fame for its genuineness. The beginning of the third

century saw the birth of another Imam, Imam Muslim by name. He also produced a collection, in which he gave twelve thousand traditions out of one hundred thousand which he had collected before he even began to write the work. There are four other books, the preparation of which entailed similar labour and pains. These six books besides *Mu'atta* are called *Sihah Sittah* and are passed as standard works on the subject. ■

A Wedding Sermon

by Nasir Ahmad, B.A., LL.B.

[Note: The wedding of Romana Abdullah, daughter of the late Dr Farooq Abdullah, with Taarkan Akdam took place on 14th July near Stevenage, Hertfordshire. The *nikah khutba* was delivered by Mr Nasir Ahmad. After reciting the customary verses of the Quran for such occasions, he gave the following address.]

The four verses of the Holy Quran that I have just recited were taken from various chapters. The Holy Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) invariably recited these verses on the auspicious occasion of marriage. In these verses, emphasis has been laid on fulfilling one's duty to Allah as well as to one's fellow beings and they also outline the main objectives of married life. Again, attention has been drawn towards safeguarding the rights of two weak sections of the society, viz., women and orphans. And lastly, the need to deal with one's kith and kin with love and affection has been reiterated. These verses also point out that both men and women are equal in rights and rewards, and in order to provide a congenial atmosphere and a happy domestic life it is essential that husband and wife should respect each other and fulfil their mutual obligations sincerely. Again, while fulfilling one's obligations one should be straightforward and truthful so that domestic life is not marred by mistrust and misunderstanding.

Marriage in Islam is a solemn social contract which consists of three basic requirements:

1. Free and mutual consent.
2. Announcement about it in public.
3. A gift mutually agreed upon from the bridegroom to the bride. In Islamic terminology it is called *mahr* or a nuptial gift. It can be in ready cash or a valuable thing equivalent to it or a promise to pay it on demand of the bride. It is a symbolic gesture by the bridegroom of taking care of the bride and making her partner in all his life affairs and ownership.

There are no elaborate ceremonies attached to it. Of course this contract should be witnessed both by the witnesses of the bride and the bridegroom.

The marriage ceremony is indeed an important and a most solemn occasion in our social life, when two persons enter into an agreement and decide to start a new life together. This beautiful union ushers in a new era of happiness, bliss and mutual relationship, and is also the starting point of taking on new responsibilities and building new relationships based on bonds of love and companionship.

The Holy Quran has repeatedly stressed the need of fulfilling one's promises and commitments and says that Allah loves such a person. The Divine words in the Holy Quran are:

“Whoever fulfils his promise and keeps his duty – then Allah surely loves the dutiful.”
— 3:76

In Islam, marriage is not only a solemn covenant between two persons witnessed by people, and which they are bound to fulfil, but every Muslim is also answerable to Allah, the Being Who not only knows the innermost intentions of man, but Who also has the power to take him to account for all omissions and wrong commissions. Therefore a Muslim should be more faithful and careful in fulfilling his promises and commitments.

The third verse recited in the beginning provides a significant guideline with regard to fulfilling one's promises. It says:

“O you who believe! Keep your duty to Allah and speak straight words.” — 33:70

That is, when saying something or making a commitment, one should make sure that one's intention and action co-relate. In other words, one's intention and action should not be different from the contents of the agreement or be contrary to it. That is why Allah enjoins here that a true and straightforward statement will not only remove complications, but it will bring credibility in our affairs, and further, Allah will shower His grace and blessings on us. In the last verse Allah has given the glad tidings in this regard:

“And whoever obeys Allah and His Messenger, he indeed achieves a mighty success.” — 33:71

The Holy Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), by his meticulous example, emphasised the importance of showing kindness and affection to one's wife, children and near relations as it generates an atmosphere

of peace and cordiality at home and in the society at large. He is reported to have said:

“O believers, the most perfect among you in faith is one who is best in morals, and the best among you are those who treat their wives and children in the kindest manner.”

How important is the role of husband and wife in creating such an atmosphere at home and elsewhere has been beautifully alluded to in the following words of the Holy Quran:

“And of His signs is this, that He created mates for you from yourselves that you might find quiet of mind in them, and He put between you love and compassion. Surely there are signs in this for a people who reflect.” — 30:21

In this verse, two points deserve our special attention. Firstly, that although from a tiny particle to the huge planets in the universe, such as the sun and the moon, and also the air, water etc., all have been created for the sustenance of human beings and other creatures and are evident signs of Allah’s power of creation, yet the creation of husband and wife has been specially mentioned as His sign. It has further been emphasised that whoever will reflect over this phenomenon will discover the deeper wisdom and the more significant role a husband and wife are destined to play in the evolving of a congenial and happy life.

Secondly, Allah considers love and compassion between husband and wife and the spirit of sacrifice for each other and for other relations as His special sign. There is no doubt that union between husband and wife is the closest and most intimate and exotic relationship in the physical sense and that is why Allah has regarded it as His special grace. But the words, “*you might find quiet of mind in them,*” cannot mean getting just physical satisfaction, because that is something that is very obvious and both derive it in any case. Hence there was no need of specially pointing it out.

The peace and tranquillity towards which Allah wishes to draw our attention here refers to mental and social peace and harmony and it is in this regard that the woman, as compared to the man, plays an important role. A loving and caring wife is like an anchor in the life of a husband, as she keeps the domestic life at home on an even keel and protects it from the rude shocks of misfortune and the vicissitudes of life, and she, like an anchor lying at the bottom of the sea, keeps on providing silent service to the welfare and happiness of the family life.

This is why Allah has taught us a prayer for thanking Him for this bounty and for its continuation in the following words of the Holy Quran:

“Our Lord, grant us in our wives and our offspring the coolness of our eyes and make us leaders for those who guard against evil.” — 25:74

The words “*coolness of our eyes*” reminds me of a beautiful parable of Prophet Jesus (peace be on him), mentioned in the Gospel of Matthew. It says:

“The lamp of the body is the eye. If therefore your eye is good, your whole body will be full of light. But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness.” — Matthew, 6:22–23

We have all gathered here this fine evening to celebrate **the happy union of Romana Abdullah and Taarkan Akdam**. It is a unique family get-together. Romana’s uncles and aunts from Pakistan, Wales and elsewhere and also nephews and nieces have come all the way to participate in the rejoicings.

But, brothers and sisters, **we will miss today a very noble soul, Romana’s father, the late Dr. Farooq Abdullah**. He was a highly qualified person, a popular teacher, an affectionate father, a caring husband, a sincere friend and above all a very fine gentleman. We were almost neighbours to the Abdullah family in Lahore and often played together and enjoyed picnics. Right from his childhood Brother Farooq was considerate and friendly. May Allah shower His choicest blessings on the departed soul. *Amen*.

Marriage is a most fascinating partnership but with no strings of obligations and formalities. It is simply a labour of love. Love does not mean just hugs and kisses and the exchange of good gifts. These are just symbolic gestures. It has to grow. It has to be nurtured with a deep sense of commitment and sincerity, a high sense of responsibility, selfless sacrifice, and, above all, courage to forgive and appreciate each other.

In the end, I would like to wish the couple a very happy and joyous married life. May Allah be with them always, and may He grant them protection against all evils and evil inclinations and keep them in continued health and happiness. And, finally, I bless the couple in the words of the Holy Prophet of Islam:

“May Allah shower His blessings on you and may He bless you and unite you two in goodness.” ■