

INTRODUCTION

Islam, an Arabic word, means submission and obedience. It stands for a complete submission and obedience to Allah, the creator of everything, animate and inanimate. The following quote explains what Islam is and how that notion is to be put into practice by a Muslim in his life.

“Islam is a worldview and an outlook of life. It is based on the recognition of the unity of the Creator and our entire submission to His will. Everything originates from One God, and every one is answerable to Him. Thus the unity of the Creator has its corollary, the Oneness of His Creation. Distinction of race, colour, caste, wealth and power disappear; our relation with other persons assumes total equality by virtue of the Common Creator. Henceforth our mission becomes a dedication to our Creator, Worship and obedience to the Creator becomes our purpose in life”.¹

Islam is not a religion as it has come to be understood. It is at once a faith and a way of life. It is as much a religion as it is a social order. Islam is a doctrine as well as a code of conduct. The fundamental or core around which the religion of Islam has been based is the belief in the

1. Khurshid Ahmed, Introduction, Towards Understanding Islam, By Sayyid Abul A'la Maududi (New Delhi: Markazi Maktaba Islamic Publisher, 1996) P. 10&11.

Oneness of God. A Muslim should believe in the Omnipotence and Omnipresence of God, who is the Creator and the Sustainer of all, and the One who makes everything perish.

God who has created everything in the world from the minute whirling electron to the mighty nebulae, has also formulated laws for their functioning. Matter, energy and life all obey their laws, and grow and change, and live and die in accordance with those laws. Likewise, a set of biological laws regulate the birth, growth, life and death of living beings.

A man leads his life at two levels, unlike all other creations which live at only one level. Physical laws of nature are integral part of a man's life. He is bound to follow them. The second level is his intellectual life. A man is endowed with reason and intellect of the rarest order. He can approve or disapprove of a thing. He can choose or reject. This is so because he has the power to think and he can form judgements.

All human beings, by their very nature, like good things and dislike bad ones. Even those who commit bad actions hate those actions in their heart of heart. A liar does not like to be called a liar, because he knows that lying is a sin. A cheat does not like to be branded as a cheat. On the contrary, he refers to himself as an honest person in his conversation, time and again. Similarly, men love peace and order. Even the most obnoxious person wants to be loved. When men come across any disorder

they either try to escape from it or avoid it totally. As such every man, whatever may be his position in life, wants to lead a peaceful life, and be surrounded by all that is good and orderly.

Is it possible to achieve these two by one's own effort? The answer is an emphatic "yes" provided he submits himself to the authority which is Supreme. That is what Islam teaches. That a man's salvation lies in total surrender to the power which created him. It is the same power which sustains him till he breathes his last. If one has to live in peace, others around him shall also be living in peace, then alone they can establish peace which shall be the result of collective endeavour. Men should follow a common code of conduct. Make all their actions synchronize and believe in a common goal. That is what religion helps men to do.

Islam establishes an order among men which provides the most acceptable environment of love and trust. The bedrock of Islam is the implicit faith in God, and unquestioned total surrender to him. It imposes certain duties on every individual Muslim. These duties and obligations can be divided under three heads. One's obligations to his Creator and Sustainer; one's obligations to all other creatures and creations, and one's obligations to oneself.

Obligations towards the Creator : It is specifically said in the *Quran*:

“It is not fitting for a believer, man or woman, when a matter has been decided by Allah and His Messenger to have any option about their decision: If any one disobeys Allah and His Messenger, he is indeed on a clearly wrong path”. (Al Quran:33:36)².

It means that a Muslim must not put his wisdom in competition with Allah's wisdom.

Allah's decree is often known to us by the logic of facts. We must accept it loyally and do the best we can in our way to carry it out. We must make our will constant to the Allah's will. Further it is essential that one remains thankful to Allah for all the bounties, and turn to Him when placed in adverse circumstances, and seek His help and guidance.

Obligations towards creatures and creation: Firstly a Muslim should believe that all creations are for his good. The Eternal Schemer has a specific purpose behind each and every creation. Having appointed man as vice-regent on the earth, the Creator has bestowed on him a great responsibility, that of looking after them. Taking care of fellow-men is his bounden duty. Parents, neighbours, relatives, children, wives and all other human beings must be properly taken care of befitting their kinship. Everyone among the above has claim over our love and care as well as

2. The English translation of the Verses from the Quran has been taken from the translation by Janab Abdullah Yusuf Ali.

our possessions. The Prophet Mohammed (PBUH) has said:

*"The Muslim who mixes with people and patiently bears their harm is better than the Muslim who does not mix with people nor bear their harm."*³

All the resources at one's disposal and all the possessions are given by Allah. As such others who are as much His creation as one is are entitled to derive benefit from them. Allah 'says in the Quran . . .

"Give what is due to kindred, the needy, and the wayfarer" (Al Quran: 30:38)

In day-to-day life a Muslim shall meet others in all humility, not to talk ill of others or expose their short-comings. He must readily forgive others and forget their misbehaviour, misdeeds and wrongs.

The obligations towards oneself: Islam discourages all forms of extremism. Generally we see people adopting ways of life which are extreme. Very easily they become slaves of their senses. Love of good food leads to too much eating thereby damaging one's own health. Over indulgence in matter of sex ruins a person. The other end is suppression of sexual urge. One retires to the corner of a monastery or a thick forest

3. Dr. Abu Ameena Bilal Philips., The Best in Islam (Sharjah : Dar Al Fatah, 1996), P. 60.

or a tall mountain and starts leading a life which is extremely ascetic.

Islamic way of life establishes a balance. Islam accepts the fact that one's own self also has some rights upon one. Elucidating this idea Janab Maududi writes that Islam.

“forbids the use of all those things which are injurious to man's physical, mental or moral existence. Islam enjoins man to use all clean food, for man's body too has a right on him. The law of Islam forbids nudity, and orders man to wear decent and dignified dress. It exhorts him to work for a living, and strongly disapproves of him remaining idle and jobless. . . .”

“Islam does not believe in the suppression of sexual desire; it enjoins man to control and regulate it and seek its fulfilment in marriage. . . Islam forbids suicide and impresses on men that life belongs to God. It is a trust which God has bestowed for a certain period of time so that you may make the best use of it. It is not meant to be harmed or destroyed in a frivolous way.”⁴

One need not abandon the world to attain salvation in the life to come. A Muslim should live in the midst of all that go to make this world, and follow the way of Allah. A Muslim can be pious, God-fearing

4. Sayyid Abul A'ala Maududi, *Towards Understanding Islam* (New Delhi: Markazi Maktaba Islamic publisher, 1996) P. 106 & 107.

and totally humane by following the Quran and the Traditions of the Prophet Mohammed(PBUH). The love and the peace that a man naturally craves for are attained once all the obligations pointed above are fulfilled.

A Muslim by following the teachings of the Quran and the traditions of the Prophet Mohammed (PBUH) definitely could live at peace with himself, his surroundings and among fellowmen. Yet we come across Muslims who have cast themselves in the mould of non-Muslims which has rendered them ill-suited for a peaceful life, always at war with themselves. It happened previously too, and is happening now. In future also the situation may recur itself.

Fortunately every region has produced selfless personalities who went round preaching what is right, and what is wrong. Many Islamic scholars have willingly imposed upon themselves the task of leading the Muslims to the path of righteousness.

The present day world is so depraved that it has left an impact on the life of Muslims. Many Muslims have been carried away by the current of misdeeds. A few sensitive Muslims who are alive to the present day problems have taken the onerous job of cajoling the Muslims back to the path of life, laid down by the Quran and the Hadith. One such soul is Moulvi P.Zainul Abideen.

Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen was born on 10th Febraury 1953, in a small town THONDI in Ramnad District, Tamil Nadu. He was the second

son of the couple – Janab Peer Muhammed and Janaba Mariyam Beevi. He studied at the local Primary School till his tenth year. He was also taught reading of the Quran while studying in the Primary school. When he completed the reading of the Quran, which he did in his tenth year, he was sent to Jamia Anwarul Uloom, Trichy in 1963. It is a famous centre of Islamic studies. Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen studied for three years, upto 1966, in Trichy and then moved over to Athikadai (Tanjore District) Arabic College for a short period. Then he joined Madrasa Manbaul Uloom, Koothanellore. From 1967 to 1970 he studied at this centre of Islamic higher studies and graduated as an Aalim. During the seven years, between 1963 and 1970, while he was studying in Arabic institutions he had the fortune of being under the tutelage of some of the eminent Islamic scholars of South India, namely Moulana Moulvi Abdus Salam, Moulana Moulvi Abdul Kareem and Moulana Moulvi Abdul Ghani.

An iconoclast to the core, Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen has been nurturing revolutionary ideas since his student days. His desire was to bring back the Muslims to the Islamic fold to where they should feel at home. What rankled him most was the pattern of life of the Muslims which was diagonally opposed to the teachings of Islam. He began taking interest in serving society by undertaking social service. Inadvertently, these essays in the field of social service formed the rungs of the ladder which took him to an enviable height of social reformer, in his own way.

After dabbling in business for a short while without success, he became a lecturer in Arabic at Madrasathul Rahmaniya, Kiliyanur, near Mayavaram. Having served for two years, from 1979 to 1981, at Kiliyanur, he joined his *almamater* Madrasa-e-Manbaul Uloom, Koothanallur, where he served as lecturer. Later he went to Sankaran Pandal, Tanjore Dist, where he was appointed as lecturer in Arabic. Till 1985, he had been a teacher and then he left the teaching profession and became a journalist.

While serving as a teacher, he was contributing to various Islamic Tamil journals and magazines. In 1985, he started a magazine in Tamil from Trichirapalli. Its name was An-Najath. Simultaneously, he edited another Tamil journal with the name "Puratchi Minnal" published from Madurai by I.A.C (Islamic Awakening Centre) Dubai. Later it was renamed as Al - Mubeen. The authentic message of Islam began to be disseminated through these magazines. People began to recognize and appreciate Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen , the spirit behind these magazines.

Severing all connections with An-Najath in 1988, they started a new magazine "Al Jannah" which was published from Nagercoil with its office in Madurai. In 1995 the publication of "Al Jannah" was moved to Chennai, and Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen too got settled in Madras. At Chennai, he was whole-heartedly welcomed by the Ulema who were trying to infuse Islamic spirit in the community which had strayed far off from the pivotal Islamic peg. The arrival of Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen

served as a springboard for the ulema in Chennai to start a religious organization and the result was the establishment of Jamiyyathul Ahlul Quran val Hadees. He himself felt the need of an organization which would guide the Muslims in the fast changing world. In 1995 he along with few other Muslim leaders started a social organization named as "Tamilnadu Muslim Munnetra Kazhagam". In the same year they started yet another Tamil Magazine "Unarvu" which deals with socio-economic and cultural problems of the Muslims in particular. They even started a Tamil fortnightly "Votrumai" which concentrates on scientific research and educational development.

In 2004, an exclusively Tamil journal for ladies was started by Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen. Entitled as "Deen Kula Penmani", this journal deals with all matters pertaining to women. Another religious journal "Egathuvam" a monthly was also started by him at the same time.

The Tamil Nadu Muslim Munnetra Kazhagam was started as a social organization to fight the cause of the Muslims. But in due course its members began to take interest in political affairs. Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen resented this and tried to keep the organization on the right course. Since he was helpless, he parted company and started a new association named as Tamilnadu Tawheed Jamath in 2005. The chief aim of this organization is to teach and make the Muslims follow the teachings of the Quran and Hadith.

Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen is an Islamic scholar par excellence. He is counted as an intelligent and sensitive scholar. As an orator he could convince all kinds of audience. With easily convincing arguments, he could prove his point in any debate. At present many consider him as one of the most learned Islamic scholars of south India. He is respected for his political acumen though he does not belong to any political party. His boldness has earned for him a name held in high reverence even by his detractors.

This thesis entitled '**Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen Ulavi - A Study**' aims at delineating his contribution in the cause of Islam and his services to the community. The thesis does not deal the subject from political point of view, nor is he considered as a leader of an organization. It is a study of the person as an outstanding individual. It is a profile of an unselfish character who is a specimen of rare human qualities.

As most of the contents in this thesis deals with Islam, its teachings, the Quran and the Traditions of the Prophet Mohammed (PBUH) the books read and consulted were on these topics: The Fundamentals of Tawheed by Abu Ameena Bilal philips and The Best in Islam compiled and edited by the same author are of immense help in understanding the teachings of Islam. Sayyid Abul A'ala Maududi's Towards Understanding Islam offers a simple exposition of the essential teachings of Islam, its approach to life, the articles of its faith and the social order which it envisages. "Islam: Beliefs and Teachings" by Ghulam Sarwar

presents a very lucid explanation of basic beliefs in Islam besides the economic and political system of Islam. Additionally all the books written by the subject of the thesis, Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen throw a lot of light upon the subject matter dealt herein. Similarly the video and audio cassettes of his speeches are also of great help. As Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen, himself has insisted no information provided by him has been quoted. Instead much information has been gathered from his admirers. The Dailies - both Tamil and English - have provided much information about the activities undertaken by Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen.

This thesis is divided into five chapters. The first chapter - Introduction - presents a short sketch of Islam, in addition to a limited note on the life of Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen, the subject of the thesis. The second chapter contains a discussion on innovations adopted by the Muslims and the role of Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen as a crusader against those innovations. His contribution in the field of social service is presented in the third chapter the fourth chapter presents short notes on his role as a writer. The whole discussion is summed up in the fifth chapter.

CHAPTER II

INNOVATIONS (BIDAATH) AND

MOULVI P. ZAINUL ABIDEEN'S

CRUSADE AGAINST THEM

INNOVATIONS (BIDAATH) AND P. ZAINUL ABIDEEN'S CRUSADE AGAINST THEM

Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen graduated as aalim in 1970 from the famous Arabic college of Koothanallur, Madrasa-e-Manbaul Uloom. Previous to that he had studied at Jamia Anwarul Uloom, Trichy, and in the Madrasa at Athikadai, Tanjore District. He was fortunate enough to study under erudite scholars and pious souls such as Hazrath Moulvi Abdul Salam Sahib, Moulvi Abdul Kareem Sahib and Moulvi Abdul Ghani Sahib. They inculcated in Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen the love for Islam and its way of life. When he came out of the college after his graduation as an Aalim he found that those who claim to be true Muslims in day to day life were following the practices which were un-Islamic and at times, anti-Islamic. That is where innovation come. Referred as bidaath in Arabic, these are acts which are new, introduced by mistake or intentionally, in Islam It is considered as something akin to sin to introduce a practice which neither the Prophet, nor his companions followed. Before looking at the services rendered by Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen for the cause of establishing true Islamic values, let us examine what the Islamic values are and what are un-Islamic.

A Muslim has to believe in the following, without any reservation:

- 1) Belief in God (oneness of God)
- 2) Belief in the angels.
- 3) Belief in the Revealed Books (the Quran, the Bible, the Tora, the Zabur)

- 4) Belief in the Messengers of God.
- 5) Belief in the Day of Judgement
- 6) Belief that the all good and bad come from God.
- 7) Belief in resurrection after death (on the Day of Judgement)

These are the basic articles of Faith. Only those who believe in them are Muslims. Yet more, vocal profession is not enough. Even the repetition of Kalima is not sufficient. Practical proof is needed. A Muslim becomes a complete and true Muslim only when he carries out fully the instructions given by the prophet Muhammad (PBUH).

True belief in God means surrendering to Him in all respects. One who believes in God obeys all His commands. It is rightly said that it is obedience to God which constitutes the religion of Islam and that.

“By this belief you profess that Allah, the one God is your God, and this means that, He is your creator and you are his creature; that He is your Master and you are His slave; and that He is your ruler and you are His subject. Having acknowledged him as your Master and Ruler, if you refuse to obey Him you become a selfadmitted rebel. Along with faith in God, you believe that the Quran is God’s Book. This means that you have admitted all the contents of the Quran to be from God. Thus it becomes your bounded duty to accept and obey whatever is contained in it. Along with that you

have admitted Mohammad (PBUH) to be God's messenger, which means that you have admitted that each and every one of his order and prohibitions are from God. After this admission obedience to him becomes your duty. You will therefore be a fullfledged Muslim only when your practice is consistent with your profession".¹

From the above assertion it becomes clear that Islam is based on the recognition of

- 1) The unity of the Creator and
- 2) Our submission to our Creator's will.

This submission becomes the only purpose of a Muslim's life. Moreover, a Muslim need not grope in the darkness about the aim of his coming into existence, his life and death.

It is clearly said in the Quran that whatever that comes from God in the end returns to Him.

And it is also said in the Holy book "*those who have faith and do righteous deeds, they are the best of creatures*". (Al Quran:98:7)

Yet in another chapter, it is announced,

"It is those who believe and mix not their beliefs with wrong – they are (truly) in security, for they are on (right) guidance". (Al Quran:6:82).

1. Sayyid Abul Ala Maududi, Towards Understanding Islam, ed. Khurshid Ahmad (Delhi : Markazi Maktaba Islami publishers 1996) P. 87.

The word "Wrong" here refers to ascribing partners to Allah as has been stated by the Prophet, (PBUH) in his explanation of the verse. Thus Tawheed (unity of God) is the pivot around which all the actions of a Muslim revolves. Tawheed is defined as "realization of Allah as the Creator and Sustainer of the Universe in all of man's relation with Him. "Further it is never to be forgotten that the creation, maintenance and eventual destruction of the universe and its contents are by Allah's command and both good fortune and bad fortune occur according to Allah's will."²

The companions of the Prophet (PBUH) and their successors carried in their heart the true fire of the Islamic faith. They were true to the teachings of Islam and oblivious of all the un-Islamic practices and beliefs. Their implicit.

Faith in Allah and indomitable determination to be a true follower of Islam kept them away from all those activities which had even a streak of distrust in the unity of Lordship. But theirs was a world imbued with piety and spirituality. They had succeeded in raising themselves above the mundane. Their only aim of life was to live as ordained by the Maker and anxious to return to the Maker.

Now success in life is measured by the yardstick of material gain. No more do many present day Muslims believe that good fortune and bad

2. Dr. Abu Ameenah Bilal Philips, The fundamental's of Towheed (Mumbai: Daar An Naseehah Publications 1985) P. 55.

fortune are after all are what Allah intends for a person. They have started to believe that they could avoid failure and bad luck, and by planning and ingenuity they could ensure goodluck for themselves. That notion has driven them to explore ways and means to know before hand when and how they will meet success and avoid failure. From time immemorial some people have been claiming that they have the knowledge to tell the future in advance. Additionally, they claimed that by their intervention they can forestall bad luck and usher in good luck. In certain cultures they have developed a huge body of knowledge regarding the art of future predictions. It has many branches such as fortunetelling, palmistry black magic and the like.

Wearing arm bracelets, bangles, beaded necklaces, etc. as charms to ward off evil and bring good fortune were some of the practices of the past which are still in vogue. Even among Muslims one comes across not only children but even grown up adults wearing talismans, amulets and other charms.

There had been outright condemnation of this custom by the Prophet (PBUH). Once the Prophet (PBUH) saw a brass bangle on a man's upper arm and asked him what it was. The man replied that it was to protect him from sickness. The Prophet (PBUH) asked the man to cast the bangle off and told that it would only increase weakness. On yet another occasion the Prophet reprimanded another companion for a similar action. The Prophet (PBUH) and his companions were on their way to Hunayn, the site of the last major battle between the Muslims and the pagan tribes of Arabia. They passed a tree on whose branches they

used to hang their weapons for good fortune before their conversion to Islam. A few companions of the Prophet (PBUH) who were new converts requested him to designate a similar tree for them. He praised God and told that it was how the followers of Moses became idolaters. Wearing of amulets was also condemned by the Prophet (PBUH) in very strong terms. He once said May Allah cause failure and unrest to whoever wears a talisman or puts it on others.³

No doubt all talisman, charms and spells are acts of assigning a partner to Allah. The prophet (PBUH) used to pray when he saw some one suffering thus:

“Remove the suffering O Lord of mankind and heal it perfectly as you are the True Healer. There is no cure except your cure; a cure which is not followed by sickness.”⁴

In spite of technological advancement people still believe in charms. Talisman and charms have become so interwoven in everyday life that few people stop to think about them. Yet, when properly understood the shirk which lies at their base becomes quite obvious. Such charms are made to be worn by children, most of the time. During illness like smallpox or diarrhoea, the priest of certain goddesses provide charms which are worn by children till they recover. In some cases the Muslims

3. The fundamentals of Tawheed op.cit., P. 58.

4. Ibid

approach certain Muslim professional provider of charms or talisman. They provide charms which they claim to be *Quranic*. There was no such thing as a *Quranic* charm during the days of the Prophet, not even during the next generation. The text of *Ahadeeth* on talisman and charms do not distinguish between charms containing the *Quranic* text and those which do not. It has to be understood that the Quranic charms are work with the belief that it will avert evil or bring good fortune or do both. A Muslim belief is that all that is good or bad comes from God. Then by wearing a talisman or a charm he is waging a war against the will or wish of God. That is 'shirk' in its naked form.

Practice of reading good and bad omens in bird's and animal's movements was referred as *Tiyarah* among Arabs. This custom prevailed among pre-Islamic Arabs. For example, when one ventured out of his house, and a bird flew over him and turned to the left, it portended failure in his venture and it was a sign of bad fortune. Naturally he would return and postpone his visit. Islam does not approve of this practice. It is an action which is anti-Islamic because of two reasons:

1. Trust in God is replaced by trust in an accidental action of a creature.
2. Prediction of the future happenings is beyond human power, and hence belief in a failure bound to happen in future is akin to shirk.

About such omen, the Prophet (PBUH) has said: "Whoever does '*Tiyarah*' or has it done for himself or has his future prophesied or had some one bewitched, is not one of us." On yet another occasion, one of his companions told the Prophet (PBUH) that there were many among

them who were afraid of bad omens. He replied "It is only something you made up by yourselves. So do not let it stop you."⁵

Fortunetelling is also a great sin according to Islam. Scholars are very clear about this practice. The Islamic ruling with regard to any one who visits a fortuneteller believing that he knows the unseen and the future is act of *kufir* (disbelief). Abu Hurayrah and AlHasan both reported from the Prophet (PBUH) that he said, "Whoever approaches a fortuneteller and believes what he says, has disbelieved in what was revealed to Mohammad."⁶ Such a belief assigns to creation some of Allah's attributes with regard to the knowledge of the unseen and the future. Time and again it is said in the *Quran* that only God knows about the unknown and the unseen:

"With him are the keys to the unseen and none knows it except He alone." (Al Quran:6:59)

In the *Quran* Allah tells the Prophet (PBUH).

"Say! I have no power to bring good to myself not avert harm but it is only as Allah wills. If it were that I knew the unseen, I would have multiplied the good and no evil would have touched me."
(Al Quran:7:188)

5. Abdul Hameed Siddiqi, Sahih Muslim (English translation) Vol. 44 (Lahore: Ashraf publishers, 1987) P. 1209.

6. The Fundamentals of Tawheed, op.cit, P. 85.

In yet another chapter, it is said by Allah.

“Say! None in the heavens nor the earth knows the unseen except Allah.” (Al Quran:27:65)

Whenever a Muslim talks about any future plan or action he adds *Insha Allah* (If Allah so wishes). It is because it is stated in no uncertain terms in the Al Quran that Allah alone knows the future:

“Verily the knowledge of the how is with Allah alone..... No one knows what he will earn tomorrow nor in which land he will die, but Allah is all knowing and aware.” (Al Quran:31:34)

Astrology as a science which foretells the future is unacceptable in Islam. Even learning and believing in astrology is condemned outright by the Prophet (PBUH). He had once said “What I fear the most for my nation after my time is: the injustice of their leaders, the belief in their stars and the denial of divine destiny.”⁷

Reading one’s horoscope is as much a sin as the practice of astrology. It is fortune-telling in advance and hence strictly prohibited. One who seeks his horoscope comes under the rating contained in the Prophet’s statement: any Muslim whoever approaches a fortune teller and asks him about anything will not be accepted for forty days and nights.⁸

7. Ahmed Hasan, sunan Abu Dawud (English Trans) Vol. 3 (Lahore: Ashraf publishers, 1984) P. 1095.

8. Sahih Muslim, op.cit., vol.4, P. 1211.

Only ignorant Muslims would believe that if they knew in advance what was to happen next day they could well be prepared for it. But it is a vain hope. Such a belief is bound to lead a believer in God on the wrong path of sin. It is rightly said that

“..... Rings, chains etc. which have the signs of the zodiac on them should not be worn even if one does not believe in them. They are part and parcel of a fabricated system which propagates kufr and should be done away with entirely. No believing Muslim should ask another what his sign is or attempt to guess his sign. Nor should he or she read horoscope columns in newspaper or listen to them read. And any Muslim who allows astrological predictions to determine his actions should seek Allah's forgiveness and renew his Islam.”⁹

And then there is the grave worship which has become much common among the Muslims. The beginning of this malady was a very harmless and simple practice. As veneration of the dead elders and outstanding Islamic scholars, huge edifices were erected on the graves. It was a custom copied from the followers of other religions, Muslim rulers began to compete with the previous monarchs by erecting more and more edifices. In the beginning it was the graves of *sufi* saints and major jurists which were built as shrines as non Muslim did to their elders. Then it was for community leaders and the teachers who had large groups of

9. The fundamentals of Tawheed op.cit., P. 96.

Islam permits visit to graveyards. A visitor could even recites verses or chapters from the *Quran* standing in the graveyards, but no one could kneel or prostrate in the graveyard. A visit to graveyard is more or less a solemn occasion as one is reminded of his own end and becoming a part of the graveyard. But the visitors to a tomb of the so-called saint counts his visit as nothing less than a pilgrimage. How the visitors to these tombs behave and what they do is summing up thus.

*"Today many ignorant Muslims travel vast distances in order to perform religious rites of Tawaf around these tombs. Some even make prayer inside and outside of them, and others piously bring sacrificial animals to these cursed sites in order to perform the rites of ritual sacrifice. Most of those who perform rites of worship at graves hold the false belief that the righteous among these dead people are so close to Allah that all acts of worship done in their vicinity will more likely be accepted by Allah than if they were done elsewhere..... Their tombs and even the land on which they are built must be permeated with the overflow of their surplus blessings."*¹⁰

Thus many unIslamic beliefs and practices became normal day to day things. The chief purpose for which man was created is for worshipping God. It should also be borne in mind that man's worship of

¹⁰. The fundamentals of Tawheed op.cit., P. 177.

God is for his own benefit, as He is in no need of man's worship. In the worship of God man realizes both his material and spiritual potential of all aspects of goodness and thereby earns for himself the everlasting abode of bliss (the Heaven) at the end of the brief earthly journey. Islam which is the Godly way of life provides a means of turning each and every human act into worship though it may seem insignificant. At the same time each one of the act must be done for the pleasure of Allah, and done according to the way shown by the Prophet (PBUH). The whole life of a man becomes a series of service to Allah. What a Muslim has to say to himself according the Al Quran is:

"Truly, my prayer, my sacrifice, my life and my death are all for Allah, Lord of all the world." (Al Quran:6:162)

Having learnt all those activities which God requires man to do and the wrongs which he should avoid, we can have a close look at the life of a common Muslim to know how far he leads a righteous life as instructed, and how far he has gone astray..

If you look at the life of a Muslim from cradle to the grave, we are struck with wonder at all the non-Islamic practices that have crept in. A Muslim parent owes the following duties to his child. He must give a good name to the child, bring him up in the right way by inducing him to do good and preventing him from bad action, and provide religious and moral education. If the child is a girl she must be given in marriage to a pious suitable match at the proper age. Ill-treating a child is prohibited. If

it is male child the father should get rid of the responsibility of performing circumcision as soon as he can.

If we look at the duties of the parent there is nothing which demands him to be ostentatious. But many Muslims now-a-days spend a lot on circumcision of sons and on the daughters coming of age. Initiating a child into studies does not require a ceremonial treatment. But may celebrate even this mundane incident. Once the child starts schooling importance is given to children studying in schools where children are taught to read and write fast like machines but not taught how to behave like a man. Children are not taught how to love but how to fight by making them participate in numerous competitions.

Islam wants every Muslim to acquire knowledge even if one has to cross seas in its pursuit. But the knowledge which it wants a man to acquire is the positive aspect of human life. If knowledge fails to make a man morally strong, it is no knowledge but its negation. In addition to this, a Muslim could be easily recognizable by his appearance. A Muslim should have such manners and ways of behavior that he could be easily known as a Muslim. Now-a-days both the above commitments are conveniently forgotten. "Many Muslim do not have the basic knowledge of Islam. More than most people have such an appearance that one has to ask them whether they are Muslims.

Belief in auspicious occasion and days have become a part and parcel of daily life. Like any non Muslim they too have started believing in *rahukalam* and *yemagandam*. Before starting a venture or buying a

property or entering into contract, many Muslims consult astrologer or elders who know something about astrology. Faith in Allah has been replaced by faith in astrology so much so that success or failure is not attributed to Allah.

As far as the life cycle is concerned certain happenings acquire much importance, such as birth, wedding, death and in case of girls coming of age. Islam attaches no importance to these. They are to be treated as normal day to day happenings. But the present day Muslims have come to treat these happenings as something of much importance. This they have picked from the non-Muslims who outnumber Muslims. Parents are forced to spend heavily if a daughter attains puberty. Excepting making neighbours and relatives aware that the girl has attained marriageable age, the ceremony serves no purpose. It makes the girl become self-conscious and parents burdened with debt.

As regards to wedding, the occasion does not demand the amount of attention which is paid to it. In Islam it is a simple ceremony which needs the presence of the bridegroom, the bride's guardian and two witnesses. If the groom wants to have his close relations or friends on the occasion it is permitted. It is only the bride groom who has to look after the expenses of extending hospitality. *Mahar* is to be paid immediately after the wedding contract is signed or agreed upon. This money depends on the social standing of the bride. If the bride or her parent agrees on deferred payment, *mahar* could be paid later but it must be paid at all cost.

The present day weddings among Muslims are an elaborate affairs spread over many days. The bride's parents are made to pay through the nose and yet the groom's parents are not satisfied. That has resulted in making many a parent sell their property. In many cases girls of marriageable age remain unmarried because the parents cannot meet the demands of the greedy parents of eligible boys. Moreover, the grooms pester the in-laws to extend financial help. Sometimes the demand may be genuine but most of the time it is due to the instigation of parents and others. This life-long torturing makes the life of the wife as well as her parents intolerable. This ruinous practice was unknown to Muslims, but of late, they too have started making such demands.

Many rites and customs have come to be practised when a married girl is on her family way. Bringing the expecting daughter to the parental residence has come to cost a lot. Further, bearing all the expenses of the child birth and then offering presents to the son-in-law force the parents spend more than they could afford. It is not only for the first child but also for all subsequent deliveries. In the name of providing moral support of the parent's brothers and sisters for each child birth, the daughter is sent to her parents. The parents out of sheer attachment to the daughters bear all the expenses.

Then there is the ear-boring ceremony for the girl-child and the circumcision ceremony for the male-child. All such ceremonies are performed in the grand parent's home among Hindus. That has been the custom among them since ages. The root cause for the prevalence of such customs is denial of any share in the parental property. Till the end of the

previous century when law was enacted making daughters in Hindu families also the shareholders in parental property, the daughters did not inherit anything. To compensate that loss they had adopted such customs, which made the daughters enjoy at least a part of parent's wealth.

But this is not the case with Muslims. A Muslim woman does not forfeit her familial identity after marriage. All connections with her parents are cut once a Hindu woman gets married. She even has to adopt the initials to her name after her husband. It is not the case with a Muslim woman. She maintains her identity as a member of the family in which she is born. She has a share in parent's property and in the property left behind by members of her father's or mother's family who does not leave behind any heirs. As such blindly copying the customs and ceremonies of the other communities is not only wrong but also un-Islamic.

Previously, in spite of all the understanding, Muslims and Hindus lived apart in separate localities. It is the usual practice among Hindus to live in localities where people of one's own community lived. It helped them professionally. Moreover, they believed in social stratification and such segregation did not look wrong or artificial. But situations have changed. There is pressure, both social and political, to erase the lines that divided people into communities. No more do people strictly follow their ancestral profession or trade. Many trades have come into existence. Education has become common. Children of a single couple take to different trades. Economic division replaced social division in most of the cases. There are people very rich and wealthy and some nominally rich. Thus there is a higher middle class and a lower middle

class. Even among the poor there are many divisions. Nowadays people live in places suitable to their economic status. More than religion it is the economic position that counts. As such families belonging to different castes and religions have started living in proximity. This closeness has resulted in one accepting the way of life of others.

Such and similar circumstances have created a new sensibility among Muslims. In spite of knowing that it is an un-Islamic action or belief, one does or believes in it because of persuasion or sheer despair. Generally it happens that people aim at two things in life. First to get what one wants, and then enjoy it. If one wants to live peacefully within his means one can lead a peaceful life. But mostly one aims in getting a thing which is beyond his means. Mostly it is ambition or envy which drives a person to exceed his limit. For ways to achieve success at all costs. When he faces a failure he looks for ways to achieve success at all costs. And here comes all un-Islamic and anti-Islamic practices. A Muslim visits the tomb of some saint and prays at the tomb, supplicating the entombed saint to see that his objectives or demands are fulfilled.

The process begins on a simple note but in due course it becomes damagingly anti-Islamic. Going round the tomb, offering covering to the grave and prostrating before the tomb are some of the revolting and disgusting rituals performed at the shrines. Many saints came and settled on the eastern and the western coasts of south India hundreds of years ago. It is they who were responsible for spreading the message of Islam in this part of the country. They established monasteries and hermitages and lived apart with their followers and disciples. Generally

they would live in a separate corner or in a room of their hermitage spending all their time in prayers, addressing the collected people or teaching. When they died their graves would be dug in the room where they had spent their time. Thus tombs of these teachers and preachers in due course became sacred sites. In due course many miracles came to be attached to each of such departed souls and ultimately people began to call them as saints. It is a custom among non-Muslims to visit shrines to have their desires and ambition fulfilled. As thanks-giving on the attainment of a desire, sacrifices would be offered. It may vary a humble offering in a hundi to sacrificing many animals. Some devotees undertook erecting buildings. Many devotees got attached to a particular saint so much that they would visit the tomb and offer prayers before starting a transaction, and again at the end of the transaction.

Having lived amidst the non-Muslims, and seen them doing things in a particular way, many Muslims have started repeating their actions. The only difference is the Non-Muslims go to some shrine and perform many rituals to win over the deities and have their desires granted, and the Muslims go to the tombs of the Muslim saints to perform similar rituals. There is no dearth of such tombs. Every big Muslim settlement, every town and city has such tombs and the Muslims who are ignorant of Islamic teachings converted the tombs of the pious departed souls into shrines.

An important role was played by sufism in establishing the situations mentioned above. Sufism was there neither during the days of the Prophet Mohammed (PBUH) nor during the period of his companion

or the next generation. Sufism came into existence as a school of thought when Greek books on philosophy and moral sciences were translated into Arabic.

All the practices enumerated above and the social behavior mentioned earlier have made the common Muslims vulnerable to all materialistic influences. Every age and every group among Muslims had created a crusader among Muslims who undertook onerous job of pointing the right path of Islam, and preventing them from falling prey to irreligious activities. Being away from religion is as much sinful in Islam as being anti-Islamic. The ulema come forward to wage a war against disbelief in Allah and against all irreligious practices. At times they have to face stiff opposition due to the ignorance of the followers of Islam. Mostly the common man is instigated by selfish pseudo-scholars of religion. Yet the real fighter rises with a sense of commitment and goes around doing his job of pointing the mistakes and setting the people right.

Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen, being an erudite scholar of Islam, its teachings, theology and its values, has read the interpretation and comments on the Quran by all outstanding scholars of different schools of Islamic thought. He knows the nuances in the interpretation of the Quran and the hadith. As such he is in a position to talk authoritatively on all matters relating to the way of life in Islam.

As a student and later in life, he saw the wrong roads that have been taken up by Muslims. Whenever he got a chance he would boldly point out the un-Islamic and anti-Islamic practices that crept into

Muslims' life. In day to day life, the Muslims have taken to many new practices which neither the Prophet Mohammed (PBUH) nor his companions, nor their successor ever did. Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen became an iconoclast as far as waging a battle against innovations in customs and habits of Muslims was concerned.¹¹ Not satisfied with just delivering lectures on the topic, he wrote a book entitled Bidaath-Oor Aaivu.¹² He openly criticised the Muslims for taking to strange practices, mostly copying the non-Muslims.

Generally lectures are attended by men and women do not attend such meets in as large a number as men. This book had a good reach as far as educating the women folk is concerned. Mostly social customs, habits and practices are safeguarded by women. Even where men are ready to forgo certain practices, women are not. As such it is the latter who have to be educated. This book has reached them and the result has been encouraging. Besides this book, there has been many compact disks of lectures delivered by Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen. Picking new customs and habits and adopting social practices is a long process. It takes time to follow certain customs. Most of the time it is the novelty which attracts the attention of the people. If any custom has novelty and appeals, it is adopted like a new fashion in clothing and dressing. The new customs become a normal thing after several repetitions and passage of time.

11. Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen Islam and today's Muslims C.D. Chennai, 1993.

12. Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen, Bidaath oor Aaevu (Riyadh: Islamic Cultural center, 2007).

Discarding such customs, habits and practices is very difficult but not impossible. When it is told time and again that a particular practice is unwanted, people try to disown such practices, and succeed in doing so. The case with belief is quite different. Once people start believing in something it becomes a part of their psyche in due course. They are ready to listen to any of their practices being disparaged, but they are not ready to listen to a single word uttered against anything which is a part of their belief. Any criticism of what a man believes drives him mad, and he reacts violently whenever he is told not to do what he has been doing as an article of faith. The same thing happened with Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen.

When he criticises non Islam and un-Islamic day-to-day habits of the Muslims, they listened to him. Some went to the extent of showering encomiums on him. When he began pointing out their actions which magnify their rebellion against Allah, the Lord of the universe: Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen told that charms, talismen, omen, fortune telling are connected activities make a muslim a non-believer in Allah. Those who indulged in these practices became the enemies of the Moulvi. When he told that visiting a grave or a tomb and offering prayers and sacrifices was a great sin, those who performed these became his enemies. Wherever he went there were groups of Muslims who tried to create problems for the organizers of the meet. It was open persecution and Moulvi P. Zainul Abiden had to face it. He has been facing it since decades. Boldly he would say what is stated in the Quran.

"Most of them claim belief in Allah, while committing shirk.

(Al-Quran:12:106)

It goes to the credit of Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen that he has succeeded in spreading the message of real Islam. Islam, practised hundred of years by countless generations, has lost its pristine sheen. In South India it has given much less to other religions but has absorbed more of the practices of other religions. Unless one tells that he is a Muslim it is not possible to know him as one. Dressed in the most un-Islamic way a Muslim can be found at a place as one among the wrong less. He can be found even prostrating at the tomb of a so called saint.

Every age produces its reformer as does every community, the need of every period and age changes, and the men who imposes upon themselves the onerous job of reforming have to choose their own technique. The same technique cannot be adopted by succeeding reformers for all times. Moulvi P.Zainul Abideen has evolved his own technique to spread the message of true Islam in his own way. Besides writing books on topics concerned, he is using electronic media as an effective tool to drive home his message. More than lectures delivered on selected topics it is the question and answer sessions which convey the message to the targeted group. He has the knack of dealing with unquestioned belief, unchallenged conventions and arrogant convictions. He is credited with the bold stance in his fight against all innovations thrust on Islamic way of life. No doubt he has succeeded in achieving much.

Any man in the position of Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen would rest on his laurels, but he is not such a person. As it is said that one should hitch his wagon to a star, he has set his right on total overhauling of the society of which he is also a member. He has rendered invaluable social service which would place him on a high pedestal as a social reformer. The next chapter deals with his services to his community in particular, and to society in general.

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best service. There are very few who render such selfless service. Moulvi

P. Zainul Abideen has been rendering such a service since the 1950s. His

CHAPTER III

To understand the kind of life expected of a Muslim, one has to

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which are also referred to as pillars of Islam.

MOULVI P. ZAINUL ABIDEEN'S

SERVICE TO COMMUNITY

AND SOCIETY

The declaration of faith is called Kalimah Tayyibah. It summarizes

the whole of Islamic belief. The first part is about the oneness of Allah

and the second part concerns the prophethood of Mohammed (PBUH).

The other four pillars form the main core of Ibadah. Ibadah, an Arabic

word, includes an activity which is done to gain Allah's favour. Salah,

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MOULVI P.ZAINUL ABIDEEN'S SERVICE TO COMMUNITY AND SOCIETY

Service to humanity without expecting anything in return is the best service. There are very few who render such selfless service. Moulvi P.Zainul Abideen has been rendering such a service since decades. His major service is to induce Muslims to follow the path of Islam and live as Muslims according to the teachings of the *Quran* and the instructions of the Prophet (PBUH) of Islam.

To understand the kind of life expected of a Muslim, one has to understand the purpose of each of the below mentioned articles of faith which are also referred to as pillars of Islam.

1. Declaration of faith (There is no Divinity outside the only Divinity. And Mohammed (PBUH) is the envoy of the Divinity.)
2. Five compulsory daily prayers (salah)
3. Paying poor-due (Welfare contribution / Zakath)
4. Hajj (pilgrimage to Makkah)
5. Fasting during the month of Ramadan (Saum)

The declaration of faith is called Kalimah Tayyibah. It summarizes the whole of Islamic belief. The first part is about the oneness of Allah while the second part concerns the prophethood of Mohammed (PBUH). The other four pillars form the main core of Ibadah. Ibadah, an Arabic term, includes an activity which is done to gain Allah's favour. Salah, Zakah, Saum and Hajj are the main forms of worship or Ibadah. If we

perform them regularly and correctly we come closer to Allah, our Creator and Sustainer.¹

The four basic duties of praying, paying the poor-due, fasting and going on pilgrimage to Makkah comprise the training programme which has been designed for us by Allah so that we can shape our life around our Faith in the Oneness of God. Every Muslim is a true servant of God. And as such he must follow His command faithfully. These four duties contribute towards making a Muslim a real servant of God. While praying five times a day a Muslim prostrates before Allah in all humility. He declares that he worships Him alone and seeks only His help. The most powerful, the tallest among his brethren as well as the weakest and the meekest all have to submit themselves to Allah. All social and economical differences are shed once Muslims enter the prayer house. The ill-clad beggar stands next to the best-clad rich Muslim shoulder to shoulder to be led in the prayer by the leader, namely the Imam. This drives home the point that differences of all kinds are superficial, and before Allah all are equal.

The other pillar the payment of the poor due is also an act of worship. According to Islam everything belongs to Allah. In fact we and our wealth belong to Allah. He is the real owner and we are merely trustees of His wealth. We do our duty as trustees when we pay the poor-due (Zakath). It provides us with the opportunity of sharing our excess

1. Gulam Sarwar, Islam-Beliefs and teachings (Delhi: markazi maktaba Islami, 1983) P. 31

wealth with those who are less fortunate than ourselves. We pay zakath to gain Allah's favour.

Fasting is also a way of worship and obedience. A Muslim must fast from pre-dawn hour to sunset, abstaining from eating, drinking, smoking and conjugal relations. Such abstinence develops our feeling for the poor and the hungry people. This kind of fasting teaches us to control the love of comfort. Hunger, thirst, comfort and sex must be kept under control to behave as Allah's servants. The very purpose of fasting is to enable a Muslim to control his passions so that he becomes a person of good deeds and intentions. Anger and arrogance, two very common human weaknesses, can be brought under control by fasting. A Muslim gets trained to remain away from all bad actions such as talking a lie, breaking a promise, committing any deceitful act or abusing a person.

Hajj is compulsory as zakath for those who can afford it. It is a pilgrimage to Makkah to visit Kabah. Every Muslim who can afford to under take the journey and who is physically fit should perform Hajj once in his lifetime. During the Hajj, barriers of language, territory, colour and race disappear and the bond of faith is held uppermost. Everyone has the same status as that of His servant dressed in two sheets of white cloth similar to the shroud drapping the dead, the male pilgrim performs the Hajj with all piety and humility. The women also perform as men do but they wear the dress which they use in day to day life and which covers their body from head to toe leaving the face and palms uncovered. Such dress reminds the pilgrims of their position in relation to Allah that they are after all very humble servants of Allah.

If one looks at the pillars of Islam one could recognize a pattern, that of humble submission to one's Maker. In the last sermon Prophet Mohammed (PBUH) proclaimed:

"Verily you will soon meet your Lord and you will be held answerable for your words, and deeds, beliefs, faculties, potential feelings, ideas and intentions....."

*"Behold! Worship your Lord. Offer five times salath (Prayer) daily, observe one month fast in the month of Ramadhan every year, pay readily zakat (poor-due) on your property and perform pilgrimage to Makkah, which is made conditionally essential once in life and obey your religious authorities."*²

Praying regularly, fasting in *Ramdan*, paying poor-due yearly and undertaking pilgrimage to *Makkah* (once in life time, economic resources permitting) are the most important and essential acts. These acts would determine be the character of a Muslim and place him beyond the reach of sinful activities. Yet these acts alone do not make a Muslim a true humble servant of Allah. He has to possess many more attributes. Adam and his progeny are the vicegerents of Allah on the earth. A vicegerent is not an ordinary person. He has a responsible position and should ensure that other creations get chance to flourish. Towards his peers he should behave as he would towards his own brothers and sisters.

2. Abdul Rasheed Khan, *The character that Islam Builds* (Solapur. Najmus Saqib Islamic Publications, 1990) P. 153-154.

The social obligations of a Muslim are many. The foremost among them is the duty to parents. There are many instructions by the prophet of Islam in this respect.³

- a) *A man asked the Prophet "O messenger of Allah! Who deserves the best care from me? The Prophet said: "Your mother". The man asked "Who then?" The Prophet said "Your Mother" the man asked once again who then? The prophet said "Your mother".*
- b) *Paradise lies at the feet of your mother.*
- c) *"A father's pleasure is Allah's pleasure, a father's displeasure is Allah's displeasure.*

It is said in the Quran:

- a) *"The Lord hath decreed that ye worship none but Him and that ye be kind to parents. Whether one or both of them attain old age in the life, say not to them a word of contempt, not repel them but address them in terms of honour. And out of kindness... say: "My Lord bestow on them the mercy even as they cherished me in childhood (Al Quran: 17:23-24)*

And we have enjoined on man to be good to his parents. In travail upon travail did his mother bear him. And in years twain was his weaning (hear the command). Show gratitude to Me and to thy parents... (Al Quran: 31:14)

3. Gulam Sarwar, Islam-Beliefs and teachings (Delhi: markazi maktaba Islami, 1983) P. 140-141.

There is no room for a Muslim to be harsh towards his wife. A wife is a part of one's life and life is no doubt very precious. The prophet has said:

"The most perfect of the believers (Muslim) is the best of you in character and the best of you are those among you who are best to their wives".

In Islam children are a cherished lot. The prophet has said:

"Be careful of your duty to Allah and be fair and just to your children, and again he is not of us who has not compassion for our little ones."

As regards to daughters, the Prophet Mohammed (PBUH) extols a parent for bringing up daughter. He has said:

*"Whoever properly brings up two daughters until they reach maturity, that man and myself (the Prophet) will be so close in paradise as two adjacent fingers."*⁴

It is obligatory on the part of a Muslim father to give a good and meaningful name to a daughter when she is born, teach the right Islamic values and then give her in marriage to a matching noble groom. Teaching good manners to children is also needed of every Muslim parent. The Prophet Mohammed (PBUH) has said that no father could

4. Gulam Sarwar, Islam-Beliefs and teachings (Delhi: markazi maktaba Islami, 1983) P. 132-136.

give his child any thing better than good manners. Taking good care of the neighbors is a Muslims' duty. The Prophet said that he is not a Muslim who ate his fill while his neighbor remained hungry, and that a person whose neighbors were not safe from his wickedness was one who had no faith. He was very concerned about the orphans. Even in his last sermon he made special mention of the orphans as those who should be nicely taken care. He has said that the best house of the Muslim is the house in which an orphan is well treated and the worst house among the Muslims is the house in which an orphan is ill treated.

Among all others the needy must be treated nicely by the Muslims. It is said in the *Quran* that one who tries to help the widow and the poor is like a warrior in the path of Allah. And as regards to guests the Prophet said that he who believed in Allah and in the day of judgement should honour a guest. As regards to the treatment to be meted out to the relatives, neighbours and the needy, it is said in the *Quran* thus:

a) *And do good to parents, kinsfolk, orphans, those in need, neighbours who are of kin, neighbours, who are strangers the companion by your side, the wayfarer (ye meet) (Al Quran:4:36)*

b) *And render to the kindred their due rights as also to those in want and to the wayfarer; but squander not (your wealth) in the manner of a spendthrift. (Al Quran:17:26)*

c) *Allah commands justice, the doing of good, and giving to kith and kin (Al Quran:16:90)*

As far as the present day Muslim is concerned, the spirit of Islam is absent in his life as well as in his activities.

Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen has come down heavily on those who pray but the real purpose behind their praying all the five times is to impress the common man and the urge to be called pious. In his lecture as well as books he points out the true spirit of praying and how the Muslims have come to use prayer as a stepping stone to gain popularity. In his book *Kolgai Vilakkam* he has dealt in detail about the method, purpose and goal of the prayer.⁵

Compulsory payment of poor due (*Zakath*) is the sure way of making wealth flow from have to have-nots. It is not charity which is more or less optional. There are certain formulae to calculate the portion of wealth with which a Muslim has to part and give to the needy. In the early days of Islam Muslims use to compel others to accept *zakath* as they were conscious of their obligation.

Nowadays distribution of poor-due has become more of a ritual. The rich do not give away as much as they should. Some try to earn name by distributing *zakath* in such a way that others come to know of it. Just a fraction of what is due is distributed.

Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen has taken special note of the situation. In his lectures he has explained how the poor-due has become the victim of

5. Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen. *Kolgai Vilakkam* (Madurai: Sajida Publications, 1999).

the people's fancy and how the obligation remains unexecuted. He has written a book on *zakath* which explicitly delineates the method to be adopted while calculating the poor-due and the selection of the right beneficiaries.⁶

As regards to Hajj it is observed that the sanctity and fervour attached to this pilgrimage have lost much of their sheen. Previously for a south Indian going on Hajj was not less than an ordeal. But many changes in the mode of transport has made the journey enjoyable. Even stay during the Hajj has been made comfortable. Nowadays it has become more or less a fashion to go on the Hajj. Instead of being more concerned about performing the several obligations with piety in all humility, many spend more time on shopping and bringing home as much yellow metal as possible. That irritates a true Muslim who thinks the Hajj as a singular opportunity to reap goodness and return as innocent as a child having washed off his sins. Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen is highly critical of the present trend. The casual and lackadaisical approach to one of the pillars of Islam rankles him. Whenever he is requested to felicitate the pilgrims on their way to *makkah*, he exhorts them to perform the Hajj in the real spirit and leave the mundane things behind. His concern in this regard is reflected in his book written on the Hajj. He delineates how the Hajj was performed by the Prophet of Islam so that those who are bound for *Makkah* to perform it become acquainted with the content and the spirit

6. Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen, *Zakath Ooru Aaivu* (Chennai: Nabila Publications, 1998).

behind the pilgrimage.⁷

Before discussing the ills that have crept in social life which Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen has been trying to eliminate with his efforts relentlessly, a few short comings in economic life can be dealt with.

It is clearly said in the *Quran* that Allah has permitted trade and forbidden usury. Usury is condemned in Islam in the strongest terms. It is prohibited at all costs. The commentary on the use of the word usury in the revised and edited edition of the Holy *Quran* reads.....

“whereas legitimate trade or industry increases the prosperity and stability of men and nations, a dependence on usury would merely encourage a race of idlers, cruel blood-suckers, and worthless fellows who do not know their own good and therefore akin to madmen. According to the Islamic teachings usury (interest) is diagonally opposed to charity, it is inimical to unselfishness, welfare of needy fellowmen and going of ourselves in the service of Allah. Every Muslim is warned: Devour not usury, doubled and multiplied, but fear Allah, that you may (really) prosper”. (Al Quran:3:130)

It all goes to mean that real prosperity consists, not in greed, but in giving, the giving of ourselves and our substance in the cause of Allah and Allah's truth and in the services of Allah's creatures.

7. Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen, *Nabivazhiyel Nam Hajj* (Chennai: Nabila Publications, 1996).

Credit entails interest. In today's business world every merchant is forced to borrow and consequently has to pay interest. Any money paid over the borrowed amount is interest and Islam is against paying and receiving interest. It allows sharing of profit by the lender provided he shares the loss as well. This condition places a Muslim in a disadvantaged position. Yet most of the merchants among the community raise loans and pay interest. P. Zainul Abideen admonishes the Muslim to avoid as far as possible raising loans for which interest has to be paid. Worse still is the case of those Muslims who either become partners of those commercial institutions which lend money on interest, or they themselves lend money on interest.

A few hypocrites among Muslims citing religious restriction as reason do not lend money to Muslims to avoid collecting interest from them. In many of his lectures Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen came down heavy on those who are in one way or other connected with lending money on interest. One of his C.D.'s exclusively deals with it which contains the best warning possible.⁸

Just telling people not to indulge in usury does not solve the problem. Whereas rich can avoid borrowing money on interest the poor have to go for borrowing at times for their basic needs. Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen advocated establishing of Baithulmal. It is an organisation at a small level which lends money to the needy. Interest free poor-due from

8. Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen, Vaddi Naraga Padukozhi, CD Rom, 2 Discs (Chennai, 1996).

the rich and any amount offered as charity are collected and pooled. The needy can approach "Baithulmal" and receive loans repayable in easy installments. These Baithulmal (the word can be roughly translated as treasury) extend loans to petty merchants, hawkers and the like and help them by advancing loans without much fuss. Generally an ornament is handed over as pledge as it is done while borrowing money from a pawnbroker. The only difference is that only borrowed amount has to be returned as no interest is charged. Moulvi P.Zainul Abideen has been instrumental in establishing nearly one hundred such Baithulmals all over Tamil Nadu.⁹ Even some men who are not the admirers of the Moulvi has come forward and established such lending-units, which are of great help specially to the economically backward and small traders.

As pointed out earlier, in Islam marriage is a contract between the bridegroom and the bride with the full knowledge of the society. It is to safe guard the interest of the lady and the children born of the marriage that the society should be aware of the wedlock. At the time of marriage a fixed amount has to be paid to the bride, better before the consumation of the marriage. The volume of amount to be paid which is referred to as "*Mahar*" in Islamic parlance, depends on the bride, her family background and social status. During the life time of the Prophet (PBUH) it was a simple affair and he was not in favour of a big amount as *mahar*. In due course it became a fashion to fix large amount as *Mahar*. In addition to it, the practice of paying the amount immediately after

9. Interview with Janab A.S. Alauddin on 25th June 2007.

marriage was discontinued. The husband continues to owe a large amount to his wife till he died. And then when the dead body is about to be carried to the graveyard the wife is coerced to announce that she is condoning the *Mahar* the amount payable. Actions done under duress have no legitimacy. In some cases the wife gets the amount when the husband has left behind cash or property.

Much worse than this is the demand of dowry. The prophet (PBUH) gave dowry to his daughter Fathima. It consisted of a few mud pots, a grinding stone and a mat. In India giving dowry is compulsory, among non-muslims. The dowry offered is the indicator of brides father's economic and social position. Further the groom's parents demand cash. The amount may run into thousands or lakhs depending on the employment of the groom or his qualification. In spite of anti-dowry laws this custom flourishes.

In Islam demanding and receiving dowry in material form or as cash is not permissible and yet the cases of bride torture due the prevalence of this cruel custom. Moulvi P.Jainulabideen has made it one of the missions of his life to preach against this loathsome and detestable customs. Wherever he got an occasion to talk about how a muslim should marry he has taken to task the perpetrators of these near sinful activities. He has influenced many and has made the youth among his admirers marry in the strict Islamic fashion. He has written a book on marriage in Islam. Till date many editions of that book 'Islamiah Thirumanam' have

been printed.¹⁰ Some of his lectures on the topic have been brought as CDs.¹¹ All Un-Islamic customs and ritual as well as pomp and showiness are condemned out right by him. He is for making marriage a simple affair as it was during the lifetime of the Prophet (PBUH) and of his, companions.

Having considered the hurtful and ruinous economic malignancy, let us find where Muslims stand in Education, a barometer for measuring developments. Justice Rajindar Sachar Committee has this to say about education among the muslims.

.....Muslims are in a double disadvantage with low levels of education combined with low quality education; their deprivation increases manifold as the level of education rises. In some instances the relative share of Muslims is lower than even the SCs who are victims of a long standing caste system. Such relative deprivation calls for a significant policy shift in the recognition of the problem and in devising corrective measures, as well as in the allocation of resources.¹²

In a nut-shell the report presents the deplorable educational condition of the Muslims in the country. The situation in Tamil Nadu is not different. Muslims are far behind the schedule castes in both primary and higher education. Though utmost importance is given to education in

10. Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen, *Islamiya Thirumanam* (Madurai: Malick Publications, 1992).

11. Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen, *Islamiya Thirumanam CD-Rom 2 Discs*. *Islamiah Thirumana Ozanguagal CD-Rom 2 Discs* (Chennai).

12. India cabinet Secretariat: Government of India, *Social Economic and Educational status of the Muslim community of India, A Report by Justice Rajindar Sachar Committee*. (New Delhi, November, 2006) P. 50

Islam, infact the Muslims lag behind. Dropouts are the maximum among Muslims at primary and secondary level. Consequently those Muslims who join institution of higher learning are very few. There are a handful of arts and science colleges run by the Muslims. Even in those institutions the number of Muslim students is just around ten percent of the total strength. A couple of engineering college, and half a dozen industrial schools exist but with the minimum required qualification candidates belonging to the community are very less, so much that the real purpose of establishing these institutions is not served. Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen for the past two decades, has been exhorting the youth and parents of the community to go all out in pursuit of knowledge and education. One of his CD '*Sathiya Pracharamum Kalviin avasiyamum*' drives home this point explicitly. Generally Ulema would tell the parents to send their children to religious institutions. Though Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen is an *aalim*, he encourages those who plan to pursue technical education. He is not averse to secular education like other religious scholars. His advice to the youth is to keep pace with the time and remain abreast of modern technical advancements helpful for humanity.

If one looks at the Muslims of the day having read about the way of life shown and lived by the Prophet (PBUH) and his companions, one would harbour doubts about the faith of the present day Muslims. Many ills have crept in the social life of the Muslims. Unity and brotherhood is the bedrock of the Islamic society. It is said in the *Quran*. "*The Believers (Muslims) are but a single brotherhood*"¹³. This unity and sense of

13. (Al-Quran: 49:10)

brotherhood leads to co-operation in all worldly affairs. The *Quran* says:

*“And hold fast, all together, by the rope which Allah stretches out for you, and be not divided among yourself”*¹⁴

*“The believers, men and women, are protectors to one another; they enjoying what is just and forbid what is evil.”*¹⁵

Thus it is to be understood that the enforcement of Muslim brotherhood is one of the foremost social ideal of Islam. Islam cannot be completely realised until this ideal is achieved. In his last sermon the prophet (PBUH) laid most stress on this brotherhood.

If we look at the Muslims living in Tamil Nadu, we find them divided, mostly on political lines. The brand of democracy that has been hoisted on us divides the populace. Generally it is the ideology that divides the people politically. What is seen today is a very hilarious situation. People believing in this same ideology are divided. They count one another as sworn enemies. The only point of difference between two parties is the leaders. There is seldom an ideological divide. On the contrary one leader interprets against the other leader, and the two might have been bedfellows for decades. The leaders make their personal enmity percolate upto the grass root level workers. The result is meaningless enmity among the followers of one leader with those of

14. (*Al-Quran:3:103*)

15. (*Al-Quran,9:71*)

other leader Muslims too have fallen a prey to this tendency. To raise his party men to a high pedestal, a Muslim is ready to call a fellow muslim by names, and is even ready to take an action which may be unwarranted.

Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen has been much concerned about the prevailing disunity among Muslims, Everywhere he goes he advises Muslims to remain united and extend co-operation to other Muslims. His CDs bear witness to his deeply felt pain on this account and his vision of Muslim brotherhood.”¹⁶ The principles of brotherhood and co-operation are discussed in some of his books especially Islam ‘*Oru Iniya margam*’ and ‘*Kolgai Vilakkam*’ (2 Vols).

Tolerance and politeness are the principles around which all activities of the Muslims should revolve. According to one of the sayings of the Prophet (PBUH) Allah is polite and he likes politeness. Similarly tolerance and deliberation in undertakings have to be the part and parcel of day-to-day life of a Muslim. Yet the present day Muslim does not pay heed to cultivate these qualities. There is widespread intolerance among Muslims. Brothers forget to be kind to their younger brothers and respectful to elder ones. Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen has been dealing with these shortcomings in his speeches as well as books. Under the heading Islam and Today’s Muslim he asked the Muslims to be one and not to follow the lead of the heathens. The foot prints left by the companions of

16. Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen, Otrumaikku Aetra Vazhi CD-Rom 2 Discs

Sathiya Paracharamum Samudaya Otrumaiyum. CD-Rom 2 Discs

the Prophet (PBUH) when the persecuted Muslims of *Makkah* migrated to *Madeena* along with the prophet are still there, inscribed on the pages of history. The Muslim need not go in search of new remedies to treat their ailing souls. The examples left behind are more than enough.¹⁷

The intolerance has taken an ugly shape. The terrorism prevalent among the Muslims is said to be the result of the intolerance. It is the general belief of the present day world that the present day Muslim is intolerant of the material and technological progress of the world. As more than half of the world's population comprises Christians, it is said that the Muslims are intolerant of the progress achieved by the Christian world. The Muslims to put the clock back and take the world to sixth century AD. Only a minority among the world population know the real pain of the Muslims. They know how Muslims, their faith, their governments, their statesmen and their ways of life are looked down upon. And only they know that the so called terrorism is not an action but a reaction, and those who indulge in it are convinced that there is nothing wrong in what they are doing. As they have been cornered they do not have any way to escape are acting and in desperation.

Yet one thing is clear, intolerance is not the creed of a Muslim. It is his duty to dauntlessly carry a moral battle against suppressions of all kinds. Terrorism begets terrorism of a ruthless quality. Creating faith in peace among the adherents of terrorism is a very difficult task. Not all

17. Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen, *Islamum Inraiya Muslimgalum* CD-Rom 2 Discs.

Navina Prichinogalum *Theeruvgalum* (Chennai: Nabeela Publications, 1995)

would accept orientation towards this objective. Frustration and illogical victimization are instrumental in grading one to take extreme steps, when one is forced to live with his shattered dreams. Usurpation of one's rights results in making one desperate and loses his cool. Those who organize the terrorists groups collect all such disgruntled and frustrated souls and cast them in a mould which would yield a mentality conducive to the formers need.

Moulvi P.Zainul Abideen has warned the youth time and again, through his writings and lectures not to fall a prey to frustration and despondency. He has told them forcefully that the best aspect of faith is patience as well as tolerance. Though the fundamentalists talk of "Jihad" they cite the word out of context. Moulvi P.Zainul Abideen has dealt in detail what Jihad is and when it shall be undertaken. His aim has been to distance the youth from the malign influence of the champions of violence and show them the right way.¹⁸ When ever he gets a chance he tells the youth to follow the teachings of the Prophet (PBUH) to avoid falling into the pitfalls of wrong teachings.¹⁹

There are many bad ways of conducting oneself which are strictly forbidden in Islam. Some of them which were condemned outright by the Prophet (PBUH) are as follows: "Lying, back-biting, suspicion, jealousy, anger, pride, hypocrisy, taunting". Unfortunately all these have become

18. Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen, Jihad Yenral Yenna CD-Rom 2 Discs

Jihad Yein? Yeppadi? Yetharko? CD-Rom 4 Discs

19. Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen, Islamum Inriya Muslimalum, CD-Rom 2 Discs

ingrained in the conduct and character of some of the Muslims. In his lectures Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen lays much stress on avoidance of all these bad ways. The Prophet (PBUH) warned us to beware of suspicion, for suspicion may be based on false information, and not to spy on others and not to disclose the defects of others compared to fire which burns wood, jealousy is said to consume all good action. Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen reminds all the Muslims about their teaching of the Prophet (PBUH) and advises them to desist from all these besides other ills which have crept into their character. Some of the Cassettes which contain his admonitions are '*Iduthan Islam*', '*Tawheed wadigalin panbugal*', '*Islam Enral Enna*', '*Nanmaiai Avi Thimaiai Thaduththal*', '*Ellai Meeradey*', '*Immai Vazhkai Marumai Vetri*'.

It is to the credit of Moulvi P.Zainul Abideen that like a true conscious keeper he has persuaded, taught and compelled the Muslims as the occasion demanded to be true Muslims. He has the knack of calling a spade without making any one feel offended. Besides these he has been alive to all problems facing the people anywhere. He is not a political figure nor does he belong to any political party or outfit. This has provided him with a level to raise his voice against all atrocities. He raises his lone voice fearlessly when any instance of injustice against Muslims comes to his notice or any of their rights is trampled.

Police excesses have become very common. Whenever such excesses are pointed out a commission is appointed to look into the affairs or happenings. At times the government itself comes forward with the announcement regarding appointment of a judicial enquiry or a

commission. More often than not such enquiries or commissions serve as means to exonerate the police and give them a clean chit. Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen has stood boldly against all atrocities committed against Muslims in particular. Muslims in *Muthupettai* and in *Nagore* were dealt with harshly by the police. Muslim youth as well as respectable elders were arrested and kept in lock up just to satisfy the whims of the majority community. P.J. and his band of admirers brought those happenings to the notice of the Government taking out procession and reaching the higher ups.²⁰

To put down terrorism with an iron hand the draconian POTA Act was passed. The provisions of this Act were ruthlessly employed by each state government and the central government to terrorize the Muslims in particular.

There is already TADA which is a vengeful tool in the hands of the governments. Police took advantage of both and filled jails with Muslim youth, in Tamil Nadu. Once considered a state free from religious fanaticism also sent behind bar hundred of Muslims and made them live under inhuman conditions without framing any charges. Conditions similar to state of emergency prevailed. Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen was not the one to remain a ringside spectator. He boldly came down forcefully on the state government. Processions were organized and demonstrations were conducted. He met the chief minister of Tamil Nadu

20. Interview with Janab S.M. Backer on 25th June 2007.

and brought to his notice the horrible state of affair, providing²¹ a list of innocent detainee, and making an earnest plea to set free those who had nothing to do with terrorism. He met successive Chief Ministers time and again and fought for those who were languishing in Jails for the simple reason that they were Muslims.

At times it happens that the most dependable supporter turns hostile. The victims of atrocities not only suffer at the hands of those who inflict all conceivable harm but also are let down and made to suffer further neglect by the authorities. Mostly it happens in the political field. Whenever such situations arise Moulvi P.Zainul Abideen raises his voice along with his supporters. In coimbatore the whole Muslim Community was made the target when there were bomb blasts in the town. The police, anti-social elements and the anti-Muslim citizenry joined hands and systematically undid the whole economic edifice of the Muslim. It was made to appear as mob fenzy but actually every move was meticulously planned. There was method in madness, shops, market and stores belonging to the Muslim community were vandalized. The loss exceeded one thousand crore rupees. Eighteen Muslims were killed and many mosques were desecrated. Some of them were set on fire. The police pretending to bring the situation under control arrested Muslim Youth in large number thereby depriving the community from being rescued. There was no succor of help forthcoming from any quarter. All political

21. Interview with Janab Moulvi M.I. Mohammed Sulaiman on 20th Dec 2007.

leaders were making statements comprising well chiseled words so as not to antagonize the perpetrators, Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen and his supporters stepped forward and did as much as they could.²² They helped in raising funds and running relief centers. He boldly condemned the apathy of the government machinery, and the partisan ways of the police. When the Tamil magazine "Unarvu" raised relief fund for the victims of the Kovai riot he goaded many to contribute as much as they could. The magazine managed to raise two and a half crore rupees.

A matter very close to the heart of Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen is separate reservation for the Muslims in educational institutions and government employment. Time and again he had been laying stress on this. Many processions were taken, and numerous demonstrations and meetings were held to press this demand. Since the middle of the last decade this demand has gained momentum. Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen had been inviting all leading political leaders – those in power and those out of power to the gatherings and meetings conducted by him and made them commit to this demand. Ironically the print and electronic media were suspicious of such mammoth gatherings and the disciplined way in which the participants conducted themselves. These gatherings were called as terrorists meets Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen and his supporters and had to wage a separate war against TV channels such as the Sun.²³

22. Unarvu Tamil Weekly on 27th Nov - 3rd Dec 1998.

23. Kumudam Reporter (Tamil Weekly) on 5th Feb 2006.

Malai Malar (Tamil Daily) on 4th Feb 2006.

The Hindu (English Daily) 5th Feb 2006.

Malai Murasu (Tamil Daily) 4th Feb 2006.

Though all these activities were connected with the political situation, he did not hesitate to stage a battle to offset the ill effects of these developments. Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen's first love was Islam and the propagation of its message. So he attended a number of meetings organised by his admirers. The most note worthy among such meetings were those conducted with the theme, "Islam oru Iniyamargam". There would be lively and thought provoking discussions in these meets. The special feature of these meetings are the question and answer sessions. Mostly it would be the non-Muslim audience who attended these meets in large numbers to listen to the elucidation and explication of Islamic principles and concepts. Such meets are regular features and are valued for the valuable content of speeches and answers. They have become so popular that such meets have been held in the states of Kerala and Puduchery. Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen had been invited to foreign countries like Sri Lanka, Singapore, Dubai, Malaysia also. These are all the places where Tamilians live in good numbers. Such meetings were successfully organised even in non-Tamil areas such as Mumbai.

For the past few decades ladies have started going to the countries in the Middle East as house maids, cooks and servants. Men too go over to work as car drivers, camel drivers, gardeners, stable boys, servants and the like. They are ill treated by their employers who make them do all unimaginable dirty jobs. They are captive-laborers solely dependant for their sustenance and survival on their employers. Added to this is their ignorance of Arabic language. Women really suffer but it is the dire need of money that forces them to stay put in their position, tolerating all the

ignominy heaped upon them. Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen, with the help of his followers and well wishers in the countries of Middle East tries to extend a helping hand to those whose lives have become intolerable.²⁴ In case of death of an Indian in these countries the same persons arrange for the transmit of the dead body to the native place. This help is extended to all irrespective of religion.²⁵

The Muslims believe in a common brotherhood. The Muslims living all over the world are bonded together which cannot be severed, in spite of different nationalities, Even racial differences cannot break that bondage. For the perpetuation of this bond, there is the fifth tenet of Islam, the Hajj when Muslims from all over the world reach *Makkah*. Rubbing shoulder to shoulder clad in unstitched two-piece cloth, millions of Muslim circumambulate *Kaba*, the first shrine of the formless God, reciting His name. They are children of the same parents-Adam and Eve-praying in a similar vein in the same language. As such at the back of every Muslims mind, there dwells a concern for the Muslim living anywhere. This sense of fraternity of is the second nature of most of the Muslims, and the followers of other father do not understand this fraternal attachment. Some even go to the extent of calling Muslims undependable nationals of a country.

24. Interview with Janab S.M. Backer on 25th June 2007.

25. Dinamani (Tamil Daily) 18th May 2006.

Deccan Chronical (English Daily) 18th May 2006.

Whatever might be others opinion, it is a fact that Muslims feel for other Muslims who are suffering, wherever they may be Palestine's hellish conditions are well known. Bosnian problem had engaged the attention of the Muslims till date. Afghanistan became an Islamic republic from a monarchy. The ensign bearer of enlightened democracy could not tolerate the Islamic form of government. Under some pretext, Afghanistan was attacked. Then there was Iraq, politically stable, economically vibrant and militarily the third strongest country in the world. It came to be believed as a threat to the hegemonic aspirations of the self-appointed guardians of democracy. Consequently an attack, as ferocious and barbarous as it could be was launched.²⁶ Millions were killed and its leader was hanged. Though the Indian government did not react to this atrocity to keep a few nations in good humour, the Indian Muslims did.²⁷

On all these occasions, Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen with his admirers and supporters, staged demonstrations. He conducted meetings to inform the general public the real reasons behind the atrocities.

Similarly, wherever there was a need to render service, and a situation cried for immediate help Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen was in the forefront in offering unsolicited services with his admirers and followers on their toes. The state of Gujarath needed such attention on two

26. Interview with Janab Moulvi M.I. Mohammed Sulaiman on 20th Dec 2007.

27. Tamil Osai (Tamil Daily), Dinamani (Tamil Daily), Dinakaran (Tamil Daily), Dinattanthi (Tamil Daily) on 31st Dec 2006.

occasions. First, it was an earthquake and second, the engineered communal riots to teach Muslims a lesson by liquidation of a few thousand among them Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen went about finding means and material help to the victims of the earthquake when the catastrophe struck killing and rendering homeless thousands. He joined hands with organizations which were engaged in rendering help. That shows he is not for fame or self-glorification.

When the chief minister of Gujarath, Narendra Modi, labeled the massacre of the Muslims as the logical reaction, he stood and boldly proclaimed that it was a "Programmed action" instigated and abetted by the department of police and the Government machinery.

He raised funds to help the victims who were not even properly accommodated in relief camps. While extending material and financial help he was most concerned about target group. At state level he was the first one to rise against the holocaust.

Then it can be seen that Moulvi P. Zainul Abdideen has been born with an innate urge to go the needy wherever he is and provide succor. His endeavour has been to eradicate all the ills that are prevalent among Muslims. His service to the community is immense. His message is follow the footsteps of the Prophet Mohammed (PBUH) and his companions to lead a peaceful life. It is the borrowing and adopting of customs and habits from non-Muslims that has rendered the Muslims ineffective and encumbered with a zeal which is infectious, Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen goes around pointing at the mistake and correcting them.

The Muslim community owes to this bold son many changes for the good in social setup.

To Usher in a change in society and make it follow the road laid down more than four hundred years ago, and make the Muslims see and realize that they have taken the wrong road. Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen has used his pen besides using his tongue. He has written books on almost all aspects of Islam. In the succeeding chapter an attempt has been made to have a cursory look at some of the books written by him.

MOULVI P. ZAINUL ABIDEEN
AS A WRITER

As pointed out earlier Moulvi P. Zainulabideen is a multi-faceted personality. He is as much a grand orator and persuasive speaker as he is a prolific writer in Urdu. Being an erudite scholar he has written many

CHAPTER IV

MOULVI P. ZAINUL ABIDEEN

AS A WRITER

1. Sunan Ithnashari - Tareef translation
2. Sunan Nasai
3. Explanation of the Holy Quran
4. Expansion of Islamic principles part I
5. Expansion of Islamic principles Part II
6. Myths in the name of Islam
7. Prophet Muhammad (P.B.C.H.) the outstanding personality
8. Meaningful Islam
9. Islam the best way of life
10. Meaningful Questions and Intelligent Answers

MOULVI P. ZAINUL ABIDEEN AS A WRITER

As pointed out earlier Moulvi P. Zainulabideen is a multi-facted personality. He is as much a grandiloquent and persuasive orator as he is a prolific writer in Tamil. Being an erudite scholar he has written many books specially on religious topics. Clarity of thought and lucidity of expression are his hallmarks. One laudable aspect of Moulvi Zainulabideen as a writer is that he has never entered in controversy. Whatever is written by him carries a stamp of conviction. Even while dealing with contentious issues he presents his view point succinctly without causing any inconvenience. He leaves it to the reader to draw his own conclusions. Some of his remarkable books on the Holy Quran and the principles of Islam are mentioned below:

1. The Holy Quran's Tamil translation
2. Sunan Thirmizhi – Tamil translation
3. Sunan Nasai – Tamil translation
4. Explanation of the Holy Quran
5. Explanation of Islamic principles part I
6. Explanation of Islamic principles Part II
7. Myths in the name of Islam
8. Prophet Muhammed (PBUH), the outstanding personality.
9. Meaningful Islam
10. Islam the best way of life
11. Meaningful Questions and Intelligent Answers.

THE HOLY QURAN'S TAMIL TRANSLATION

The Holy Quran has been translated into almost all languages of the world. After the Bible it is the most translated book. As it is a revealed book, it cannot be understood as other books. It contains 6666 verses divided into 114 chapters, and again divided into nearly thirty equal parts. To understand a verse fully one should know where when and under what circumstances it was revealed. As such exegesis (Tafseer) is a special branch of study, and writing exegesis of each verse demands the highest attainments of Islamic studies. Though there are many translations of the Holy Quran in Tamil, written by great scholars, Moulvi P. Zainalabideen has worked very hard over it which has made this translation unique. Besides recording the proof needed to prove the Holy Quran as a revealed book he has dug deep into its text and has presented its meaning with rare exactitude and accuracy. Besides he had delved deep into the implication of the revelation as well as the time, circumstances and place of revelation of each verse. This book is considered as bench mark as regards to the translations of the Holy Quran.¹

THIRMIZHI

Next to the Holy Quran the traditions of the Prophet (PBUH) are the foundation on which the edifice of Islam stands these Prophetic

1. Moulvi P. Zainulabideen Thiru Quran Tamizhakkam (Trans) Chennai: Moon publication, 2002)

traditions are called Ahadeeth (Singular Hadees). They are statements, acts and approved practices attributed to the prophet Muhammed (PBUH) by his companion.² There are many compilations of the Ahadees. The most authoratative among them are: Saheeh Ul-Bukhari, Thirmizi, Ibn Maajah, Abu Dawood, Saheeh Muslim, and Sunan Nasai.

All these collections has been already translated into Tamil with relevant commentaries and explanations. There has to be convergence of what was said or done or explained by the Prophet (PBUH) and the teaching of the Quran. What was believed to have been said or done or explained must have to be authenticated according to the tenets laid down for acceptance of a tradition as credible. As far as Thirmizi is concerned it is one of the most authorative compilations. Moulvi P. Zainulabideen has translated it into Tamil with an eye to make it easily comprehensible. The reader could easily understand the idea underlying in each of the tradition (hadees). For the convenience of the reading public the book is published in three volumes.³

Sunan Nisai

One of the most quoted and authoratative books on the traditions of the Prophet (PBUH). Sunan Nasai has also been translated into Tamil before Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen ventured to present a fresh Tamil

2. Dr. Abu Ameenah Bilal Philips, Ed... The Best in Islam (Sharjah: Dar Al Fatah, 1996) P. 7.

3. Sunan Thirmizee, 8 Vol., (Madurai: Nabila Publication, 1993)

translation. The book was serialized in the Tamil monthly magazine 'Al Janna'. When the whole book was published it was released in parts. This translation completed by Maulavi P. Zainulabideen is prescribed for study in all Arabic colleges of TamilNadu.⁴

Explanation of the Holy Quran

The revelation of the Holy Quran commenced in the month of Ramadan. As such this ninth month of Islamic calendar is the month given to piety and fasting. Special prayers (Taraveeh) and extra charity (Fifthra) mark this month. The commencement of the revelation of the Holy book adds to sanctity and piety of the month. Maulavi P. Zainul Abideen had explained the text of the Quran in a lucid way so as to bring out the piety and sanctity of the month of revelation. He has taken care to make the explanation easily understandable even where the original text does not yield to easy explanation. These two books are considered as very useful by the author.

Explanation of Islamic Principles (in two parts)

Islam like Judaism and Christianity is a revealed religion. In its early days it remained very true to nature of man and the cosmos. A Muslim owes duty to the creator on one hand and on the other to the creation around him. Self-surrender and self-effacement are the mainstay of his existence. But unfortunately things did not stay in its pristine state.

4. Sunan Nisai- Ist Vol, (Nagerkoil : Heera Publication, Nov 1989)

In the name of novelty much heresy has come to be associated with Islam. Some of the Muslims in their zeal to keep pace with the modern world have come to adopt ways of life which are anathema to the beliefs and teachings of Islam. Moreover, the followers of other religions have also left an impact on the Muslims. As a result of all these what is now practiced as Islam is not the religion taught by the Prophet (PBUH). Many scholars of Islam have taken up the cudgels against the heretic ways and have come out with many books which aim at weeding away the anti-Islamic way of life among Muslims.

Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen undertook the task of setting things right by pointing out the Islamic principles and how they have been abandoned. He has written two volumes which are counted as very useful books on the principles of Islam.⁵

Myth in the name of Islam

Time leaves its imprint on everything and as such religion cannot be an exception to this rule. As time passed after the death of the Prophet Muhammed (PBUH) many changes took place in Islam, both in belief and day to day activities. The most crucial of these changes was the birth of *sufism*, around eighth century *Hijra*. In course of time many schools of Sufism were found. In the hands of superficially knowledgeable pedagogues Sufism became a ritualistic exercise. One misguided faith led to

5. Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen, Kolgai vilakkam, vol. I (Madurai: Sajida Publications, 1993), Kolgai vilakkam, vol. II, 2nd edn. (Chennai: Nabila Publications, 2000)

other and the cumulative result was a set of beliefs diagonally opposed to the tenets of Islam.

Generally any one who preaches or writes against this state of affairs is called names and condemned as a heretic. Very few have the knack to point out the basic mistakes without ruffling the feathers of the pedagogues and their bands of blind followers. Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen has succeed in pointing out the dichotomy between true faith and the falsified practices. This books serves as a beacon in the surrounding darkness.⁶

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) – the outstanding personality:-

From the day Adam was created to this day billions and billions of people were born. Among them thousands have been great personalities who could be counted as the cream of the humanity, down the ages. Michael Heart wrote a book in which he enumerated on hundred great personalities of all times. Among those hundred he named Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) as the most eminent person of the world, of all times. There have been people who have been Multi-faceted. But a single person being the best human being, peerless leader, immaculate companion, most appealing teacher, unsurpassed commander of troops, compassionate husband, exemplary neighbour and forbearing and charitable opponent, is rarest of the rare happenings. The writer throws light on every aspect of the Prophet (PBUH)'s life so as to drive home the

6. Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen, Islathin Peyaral Karpanai Kadaigal (Madurai: Malick Publication, 1992).

point that he was the best among all men. This book written in a captivating style is one of his best.⁷

Meaningful Islam:-

A Muslim has to follow the *sunna* (the Ahadees) in every act he performs. His is a programmed life. Whether one is a caliph or a most humble among his brothers, one has to live according to the teachings of the *Quran* and the Prophet (PBUH). As such every action of a Muslim has its meaning and significance with which he should have to be conversant. Or else the action repeated without being understood becomes a ritual and rituals lead a person no where. Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen in his book 'Meaningful Islam' brings out the real meaning of every action which a Muslim is required to perform. Such a knowledge enlightens the path of one's life, thereby making life meaningful as well as really purposeful.⁸

Islam – the best way of life

Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen is an orator par excellence. He uses this gift in the service of Islam. Wherever he goes to address the public a number of non-muslims come to listen to him. At the end of each lecture he would invite questions from the audience, which he would answer. This book is the compilation of such questions and answers. This book

7. Moulvi P. Zainulabideen, Mamanithar Nabigal Nayagam, 4th edn. (Chennai: Moon Publication 2005).

8. Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen, Arthamulla Islam, 4th edn. (Chennai Moon Publication, 2005).

contains only those question which were asked by the non-Muslim audience. Commencing form 1990 the book covers a decade. The author had logically presented the teachings of Islam in their real perspective. It is to the credit of the author that he has been able to bring round agnostics round to his point and has driven home the true message of Islam without yielding any quarter. More than other things this book reveals the personality of the persons who answers such a plethora of multifarious questions.⁹

Meaningful Question and Intelligent Answers:-

In spite of scores of book available in Tamil on all aspects of Islam, many still need clarification as regards to onething or other. A few are also bent on creating confusion by their ambiguous questions, Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen receives many such questions, such correspondents and querry makers are some time under the delusion that they had cornered an erudite scholar. The writer has selected all confusing queries and written convincing replies. Besides the teachings of Islam, the topics covered in this book pertain to such subjects as creation of the universe, origin of man, death, and the like. The book reveals the encyclopaedic range of the writer's understanding.¹⁰

9. Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen, comp and ed., Islam Oor Eniya Margam (Chennai: Moon Publications, 2006).

10. Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen compl. and ed., Arthamulla kelviagal Arivuppurvamana Badilgal (Chennai: Nabila Publication, 2006)

Accusation and Answers

Right from the days Islam crossed the borders of the Arabian Peninsula and entered the Middle East, there had been a spate of accusations against Islam and the Prophet (PBUH). Mostly it was due to the prompting from priests and rabbis. They would induce people to arrange debates on religious topic to which religious scholars would be invited. Polemical in content these debates would rather raise more questions than settle controversies. This tradition is carried even to this day when accusations are flung at other religions or schools of thought. Many such accusations need replies which are not only elucidative but also make the questioners see reason. This books answers to all cunning vituperation of the biased as well as be benighted common man.¹¹

Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen has not only written on Islam to make this religion easily understood by one and all, he has also answered almost all questions raised by the non-Muslims as regard to Islam, its teaching and the tradition of the Prophet Muhammed (PBUH). A sensitive soul that he is he has observed many short comings among Muslims regarding their faith in Allah and the activities of day to day life. He has utilized every opportunity to point out the wrong-doings of Muslims and has also written books on topics covering the day-to-day life of a Muslim. Some such books are:

11. Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen, Kutrathattugalum Badilgalum, com and 4th ed, (Chennai: Nabila Publication, 2006).

Grave worship

Still asleep?

Fasting

Our Hajj

Zakath

Funeral Rites of a Muslim

Islam and witchcraft

Bidaath (Innovations)-A study.

Grave worship

Much of mankind has become involved in some form of grave worship. Venerating elders after death by decorating their graves and celebrating their days of birth and adoring their graves on their death anniversary are customs found every where. Islam forbids all these. Yet the detestable custom of grave worship has crept into religious practices. Paying visits to grave of the so called saint paying obeisance and praying to them to grant some request or to intervene with God on their behalf are some very common practices among a section of Muslims. In fact such Muslims could not be counted as real Muslims. Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen has presented in this book what the prophet (PBUH) told about graves and grave yards. He writes of true Muslims who turn only to God under all circumstances, and never approach any saint in a grave seeking his recommendation to have his plea granted by Allah.¹²

12. Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen, Dargah vazhipadu, 2nd ed. (Chennai: Nabila Publication, 2005).

Still Asleep

Islam strictly prohibits squandering of money. A Muslim should spend only when it is essential. The only occasion when he can be open handed is while offering charity. Spending too much on occasions like festivals, Marriages, social get together, and on foods and costly clothing has become normal among Muslim. In fact according to Islam, a rich Muslim is only a trustee of the wealth which he has come to possess and he should share it with his relatives and needy. Such an approach towards wealth and possession needs an awareness about the teachings of Islam. This book tries to create that awareness among Muslim and shows the right path.¹³

Fasting:-

Fasting is the third pillar of Islam, the first being belief and oral admission of the oneness of God and the prophethood of Mohammed (PBUH) and the second being Namaz (Prayers according to the teachings of the Prophet) among the forms of prayers performed by the true servant of Allah, fasting is the best. Abstaining from all carnal and sensual pleasures (like eating, drinking) from nearly an hour before sunrise to sunset, a Muslim has to go without seeking any pleasure excepting performing acts of piety such as praying, reading the Quran and the like. Many due to ignorance just go about without eating and drinking. They are unaware of the ways a fasting Muslim should follow. This book

13. Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen. Innuma Urakkam, ed. (Madurai: Sun Publications, 1994).

presents in simple language how fasting is to be observed by a Muslim. ¹⁴

Our Hajj:-

Hajj the pilgrimage to the holy city of Mecca, is the fifth pillar of Islam. Every rich Muslim should perform Hajj at least once in his life time. This pilgrim entails many prayers and other procedures. This book deals in detail how the Prophet (PBUH) performed the Hajj. All his actions are minutely recorded for every Muslim to become conversant with the procedure of the Hajj, thoroughly. ¹⁵

Zakath (Poor-due) a study

Zakath (Poor – due) is compulsorily payable by every Muslim of means, once he comes to possess wealth in any shape for twelve months continuously. It is the fourth pillar of Islam. There are many conditions as to how the due is to be calculated. Similarly there are conditions to be a recipient of zakath. A thorough discussion of all these aspects are presented in this book written in an easy to understand language. ¹⁶

Funeral Rites of a Muslim

The Prophet (PBUH) has not only taught the Muslims how to love day-to-day life paying attention to the minutest of actions, but he has also taught what to do and how to do when one dies. Washing the body,

14. Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen, Nonbu, 5th ed. (Chennai: Nabila Publication, 1996).

15. Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen, Nabi Vazhiyil Num Hajj, 2nd ed. (Chennai: Nabila Publication, 2006).

16. Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen, Nonbu, Zakath oru Aaivu, 2nd ed. (Chennai : Nabila Publications, 2006).

covering it with shroud in a particular way, laying the body in the grave, Closing it and the like have been taught by the Prophet. This book contains all information regarding the funeral rites from the time one breathes his last till the corpse is entombed. It is a very helpful handy book on the subject. ¹⁷

Islam and Witchcraft

Witchcraft is supposed to be a technique with which one is made to suffer in the worst possible way or a sufferer is relieved of his suffering. This concept is anathema to Islam as a Muslim believes that all good and bad, all sufferings and pleasures are God-given. Man cannot do any harm to anyone nor can one bring fortune to a person unless God wills. Due to laxity in faith and desperation in life some Muslims have started believing in witchcraft, they expect good to happen because of certain occultism. The writer has dealt in detail the teachings of Islam in this respect and has tried to dispel the wrong belief. Besides creating resolute belief in God, the book helps to gain confidence in oneself and repose full faith in God. ¹⁸

Bidaath (Innovations) – A study

The Prophet (PBUH) warned Muslims to be aware of deviations from the path of life he has shown. He had shown how life is to be led according to the teaching of the *Quran*. But when Muslims come into contact with people practising other faiths they inadvertently took to

17. Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen, *Janaza vin Chattangal*, (Chennai : Moon Publications, 2007).

18. Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen, *Islathin Parvail billi sooniyam*, (Chennai : Moon Publications, 2007).

certain ways of life which are not the Islamic. Mostly they do it out of sheer ignorance.

The writer examines the way the Muslims live and points out the innovations that they have accepted in day-to-day life which drive them away from the path of Islam. One of the most useful books for the Muslims from theological point of view, this book is cherished very much.¹⁹

Books on Jesus

According to the revelation in the Quran, Jesus is also a Prophet of God sent to lead his people on the right path – the path of total submission to God. Muslims believe that the birth of Jesus itself was a miracle. God ordained that Jesus should be born of Mary, a virgin. The Muslims also Believe that Jesus was lifted to heaven and not crucified as such the belief of the Christians that he was the son of God is not accepted by the Muslims. Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen has written a book in Tamil Presenting the Islamic view on Jesus.²⁰

It deals with the basic concept of the Christians that he was God's son and proves that he was not the son of God. This book has been translated into English by H. Abdu Samad and several editions have been published till date.²¹

19. Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen, Bidaath- Oor Aaevu. (Riyadh : Islamic Cultural Centre, 2007)

20. Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen, Yesu Erai Magana?, 10th ed. (Chennai : Moon Publications, 2006).

21. Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen. Translated by H. Abdus Samad (Chennai : Nabila Publications, 2000).

The Bible is believed by the Muslim as a revealed holy book as the Quran. They also believe that the text of the Bible had been revised to such an extent that its content is no more original. Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen has discussed the text of the Bible and has proved the text had been amended at will so much so that it is not the real revealed text any more. He has thoroughly discussed all aspects to prove his point. Originally written in Tamil with the title "Idthuthan Bible" it has been translated into English under the title "This is the Bible."²²

The Muslims believe that every people have been sent a messenger of God, from the days of Adam, the father of mankind. Each such messenger received revelation as regards to the way of life man should adopt and faith in God. Such revealed books and booklets also contained hints about the future messenger. As such the original Bible which was revealed to Jesus, a messenger of God, contained information about the future messenger who happens to be the Prophet (PBUH). In spite of many alterations the Bible still contains many pointers about the Prophet (PBUH), according to the Muslim scholars. Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen delineated all those writings which prove this point. It is considered as a meticulously written book after much research.²³

Books on General Topics with reference to Islam.

Moulvi P. Zainulabideen has written many books on topics connected with the teaching of Islam. Some such books are as follows:

22. Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen, Iduthan Bible 6th edu. (Chennai : Nabila Publications, 2006).

23. Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen, Baibilil Nabigal Nayagam, 4th edn., Chennai : Moon Publications, 2005).

Prophecy of Islam

Dreams in the light of Islam

Marriage in Islam

Forbidden Food Items

Modern Problems and their Solutions

Prophecy of Islam

Generally religions are named after their founders such as Buddhism, Jainism, Zoroastrianism, Christianity and the like. The founders spread their teachings and people accept and follow those teachings. All such teachings vary from one founder of a religion to another. It is unambiguously expressed in the *Quran* that the true path of peace has been shown to every people in every age by the messengers of God. All their teachings are one and the same. What was taught and preached by Noah or Abraham or Jesus or the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) was one and the same. As such what the Prophet taught and the *Quran* shows was the same message which has been conveyed to men from the days of Adam. The book about prophecy of Islam deals with this aspect in detail.²⁴

Dreams in the light of Islam

In simple terms a dream is a series of events or images that occur in ones mind when one is sleeping. Freud and Jung have bestowed sheen to the dreams. Now we have dream analysis, dream interpretation and dream

24. Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen, *Varum Mun Uraitha Islam* (Chennai : Nabila Publications, 2006).

therapy. Psychoanalytic interpretation of dream is used to gain insight into a person's unconscious intentions or conflicts, "Dream interpretation is a psychoanalytic technique in which client report their dreams as accurately as possible and the therapist interprets of the element of the dream as symbols of desires and conflicts."²⁵. In Primitives and ancient cultures, dream played an extensive role in myth and religion. Islam looks at dreams as visible content. The Prophet Sal 'am has interpreted dreams of his companions. They in turn listened to his interpretation and learnt how to do it. In these books the way dreams are to be interpreted is presented in an appealing way.²⁶

Marriage in Islam

Of late marriages have become means to show off ones wealth. For the rich it is an occasion to show off their splendorous wealth. But when the middle class tries to pass muster, it becomes an unbearable burden .In Islam marriage means entering into a contract. There should be safeguard for the Lady and the children born out of that wedlock. The girl's guardian, the groom, two male witnesses or one male and two female witnesses and a *khazi* (official) are all the people needed at the time of signing the marriage contract. All others assembled for marriage are nothing but a crowd .The marriage of the Prophet (PBUH), his daughters

25. Louis Smith, comp and ed., Illustrated Dictionary of Psychology (New Delhi: Lotus Press, 2004) P. 72.

26. Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen, Islathin Parvayil Kanaugal, 9th edn., (Chennai : Nabila Publications, 2005).

and his companions were very simple. The present day marriages among Muslim are parades of pomposity. In this book, the writer exhorts the Muslim to follow the model set by the Prophet (PBUH) and companions.²⁷

Forbidden food items

A Muslim is required to do only what is permitted and eschew that which is forbidden in day to day life. For example a male is not allowed to wear gold or jewellery and silk. Similarly among edible items blood in all forms is forbidden. Every animal or fowl's vein is to be cut in such a way that all blood gets ejected from the body. Then only, it could be eaten. Then there are many animals and birds which are forbidden such as pig, parrot, crow and the like. Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen has explained in detail all those food items that are forbidden in Islam, and the reason for forbidding.²⁸

Modern Problems and its Solutions

Science and technology has hijacked day-to-day life, life is moving at reckless speed. With multifarious inventions entering the daily life's arena, one is bewildered. Islam has prescribed the dos and don't in life. The present day Muslim is confused as to whether to count a new thing as one among the dos or among the don'ts. The writer has analysed

27. Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen, *Islamiya Thirumanam* (Madurai : Malick Publications, 1992).

28. Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen, *Vilakkap Patta Unavugal*, 5th edn., (Chennai : Nabila Publications, 2005).

reasons for the acceptance and rejection of actions in Islam. This has made possible finding solutions to mind bogelling modern problems. The author has proved beyond doubt that the teachings of the Prophet (PBUH) and that of the *Quran* as regards to facing life's problem, are for all times and climes.²⁹

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was born in the month of Rabbiul Awwal, the third month of Islamic (lunar) calendar. A majority among the historians believe that he was born on the 12th of that month. It is a custom among Indians, particularly among the south Indian Muslims, to hold a gathering daily from the first to the twelfth of the Rabbiul awwal to conduct assembly and recite panegyric poems to commemorate the birth of the Prophet (PBUH). The poem or the poems would cover the period from his birth to death. Similarly in the fourth month of the Islamic Calendar the birth of Sheik Abdul Khadir Jeelani, believed to be the chief of Muslim saints is celebrated. He was born on the eleventh of the month. From the first moom till the eleventh panegyric poems would be sung with all reverence.

It is a unique custom, nowhere practiced only in India. The poets composing these panegyric poems extol their subjects in such a way that at times they exceed the limit, and erase the dividing time between the Maker and the made. 'Subhan Maulood'³⁰ is the panegyric in praise of the

29. Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen, *Navina Prachanaigalum Theervugalum* (Chennai: Nabila Publications, 2006).

30. Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen, *Subhan Maulood*, 5th edn., (Chennai : Nabila Publications, 2004).

Prophet (PBUH) and 'Mohideen Maulood'³¹ composed in praise of Shaik Abdul Khadir Jeelani. Exaggeration is the hall mark of both, bordering on heretical assertion.

Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen has pointed out all the passages which are against the belief of Islamic monotheism and strongly advocated each Muslim to refrain from reading such books or reciting such poems.

Apart from these books, he has written several books on Islamic topics. All along his writing career his sole aim has been to point the right path. The road laid and taken by the Prophet (PBUH) as required by the teachings in the Quran. That is he has been doing since his student's days.

As a student he started contributing articles to Islamic Tamil magazines. After his graduation as an 'aalim' he tozed with the idea of starting a Tamil magazine. After quitting the post of lecturer in 1985, he started a magazine, AN. Najath – from Trichy. Later he edited many magazines. Their names are given below:

- 1) Puratchi Minnal from Madurai later renamed as Al Mubeen
- 2) 'Al Jannah' from Nagerkoil
- 3) 'Unarvu' from Madras
- 4) 'Otrumai' from Madras

31. Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen, Mohideen Maulood, 18th edn., (Chennai : Nabila Publications, 2006).

- 5) 'Deen Kula Penmai' (a magazine for Muslim ladies) from Madras
- 6) 'Egathuvam' from Madras

All these magazines contained articles written by Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen in a lucid style. In fact the south Indian Muslims came to know of this ardent soul, firstly, only through the articles in the magazines. His style and way of dealing with the subject earned him many admirers.

The books, the articles and the cassettes all have been tools in the hands of Moulvi P. Janulabideen. He has been using them enormously to achieve his aim which is very close to his heart to awaken the slumbering Muslims of south India. And no doubt, he has achieved much success. This has spurred him to raise the bar of his endeavour aiming at bringing the community on 'Sirathul musthaqem (righteous path)'.

CONCLUSION

CHAPTER V

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CONCLUSION

P. Zainul Abideen, who was born more than five decades ago in a small town, was bound to make waves in the fields of social service and community welfare, like any other child of his age he attended a primary school near his home. Later he went to study in an Arabic School as his father wanted him to become an Islamic scholar. His elder brother, Moulvi P. S. Alauddin, had also studied the Aalim course and was a respected Aalim. Fortunately he was brought up in a religious environment. He had very good teachers who inculcated in him love for Islamic values. Even as a student he made a mark as a persuasive speaker with clarity of thought and felicity of expression. It was during his student days that he started taking interest in journalism.

P.Zainul Abideen's first love is Islam and the second books. He studied almost all books on Islam, its teaching and jurisprudence. As he studied these books with an open mind, he was able to understand the nuances that divide scholars into different schools of Thought. Even today he remains unbiased in matters related to schisms.

Having studied in depth about Islam, he diverted his attention to finding ways to make Muslims follow the right path. The Muslims living in the region are socially and culturally a class apart. The percentage of Muslim population in Tamilnadu is around seven. It means each Muslim is living amidst twelve non-Muslims. As such the Muslim is bound to adopt all the social habits, customs and cultural practices of non-Muslims. That is what has happened. But for their names, the Muslims are carbon copies of non-Muslims in matters related to their dress, mode of living, rituals and the like. Moulvi P. Zainul

Abideen was deeply agonized at this state of affairs. He decided to go to the Muslims and persuade them to mend their ways.

Through his articles in Tamil Islamic magazines he had addressed the Muslims. So when he came face to face with the public he was sure to win over them. But he had to face bitter opposition. He had less of admirers and more of detractors. In the beginning he met with much hostility. The Muslims have adopted many innovations in religious affairs which they were not ready to discard. Moreover, there were many selfish "learned scholars" among Muslims who depended on the perpetuation of innovations for their sustenance. The moral support extended by his brother Moulvi P.S. Alauddin and Moulvi Kamaluddeen Madani stood him in good stead. He continued to spread his message uncurbed and undeterred.

It is said that perseverance pays if the cause is good. Youth became attracted towards Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen as his message appealed to them and many became his staunch followers. He was for the spread of education for Muslims. He began taking interest in economic aspects of the Muslims' life. In their respect, the establishment of Baithul Mal was an epoch-making step. Many Baithul Mal were established which extended financial help to the poor and the needy without charging any interest. His being instrumental in establishing Baithul Mal made him much lovable.

This kind-hearted gentleman feels for those who leave behind their spouses and young children and go to foreign countries as servants, and work under trying conditions. Such persons, mostly being illiterate, are being exploited. Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen has persuaded many of his admirers and

followers to keep track of such unfortunate persons, and help them when they are in dire situations. If one such person dies in a foreign country and the body is to be brought to India, the required help is provided. For such arrangement Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen deserved all our praise.

Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen is not only an orator par excellence, but also an effective writer. The topics on which he has written cover the whole gambit of Islam. Hundreds of CDs have been released which contain his speeches on all conceivable religious and social topics. As a debator he has few equals. Standing on podium he is always ready to answer any question. He needs neither a prompter nor an autocue to answer even the most ticklish question. Mostly it is the non-Muslims who attend his special meetings of questions and answers or of debates.

It is not easy to evaluate his achievements. Among the present day reformers, among the South Indian Muslims he stands tall. He started his crusade against innovations, and has succeeded in persuading many to discard such practices. Many youth under his influence have married on Islamic pattern. After listening to him many have come to realize that tombs are just graves and nothing more. His exhortons have induced many to seek education. His message he has carried beyond the Indian shores. Many followed his teaching. A few worked against him. His recent arrest in Malaysia and realease after the Indian government's intervention is a good example in this regard.

Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen's popularity won him many friends and also many enemies. Many politicians tried to court him but were spurred by him. He loves not status and position but truth and righteousness. His one point

programme is service to his community. He would have been the happiest man in Tamil Nadu when the Act reserving 3.5 percent of the jobs and seats in higher educational centres was passed, as he has been demanding for it since a decade.

In the Tamil newspaper Dinamani, Dated 14th Oct. the editor has summed up Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen's T.N.T.J as follows:

“Tamil Nadu Tawheed Jamath is a Muslim organization which has created a great impact among the Muslims of Tamilnadu. The massive rally it had organized in favour of reservation at Kumbakonam is considered to be one of the largest rallies in independent India. The organisation's leader has to be considered as a social reformer than as a Muslim separatist leader. The way he takes Islam to non-Muslims in Tamil Nadu can be considered, as a by product of Tamil Nadu Tawheed Jamath's "Jail Bharo" programme. The way he clarifies doubts on Islam is really appreciated. He is convincingly fit to lead the Muslims of Tamil Nadu as he has been highly regarded even by Non-Muslims, but he has no liking for politics.”

Moulvi P. Zainul Abideen's dream is to see Muslims follow the path of the Prophet Mohammed (PBUH) and his companions. It cannot happen in a decade. It would require time, yet as long as crusaders like him, continue to work dauntlessly to achieve that goal, it shall be achieved. Till then let him pursue his ideal of translating his dream into reality. His is an indomitable spirit, and such spirits never fail in their mission.

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2. THIRMIZHI NABI VAZHI THOGUPPU	MADURAI: NABILA PUBLICATION, 1993.
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9. NABIGAL NAYAGAM PALA THIRUMANANGAL SAIDADU YEIN?	CHENNAI: NABILA PUBLICATION, 2006.
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28. ISLAM OOR ENIYA MARGAM
29. JANAZAVIN SATTANGAL
30. INNUMA URAKKAM
31. IDU THAN BIBLE
32. YESU IRAI MAGANA?
33. BIBULIL NABIGAL NAYAGAM
34. IS JESUS THE SON OF GOD? English version)
35. ISLATHIN PARVAIYIL BILLI SUNIYAM
36. BIDDATH OOR AAIVU
37. NERCHAIYUM SATHIYAMUM
38. VILAKKAPPATTA UNAVUGAL
39. ISLATHIN PARVAIYIL KANAVUGAL
40. ISLAMIYA THIRUMANAM

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4. SATHIYAME VELLUM	1
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10. SHIFA NOAI NIVARANAM	1
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13. URUDHIYANA NAMBIKKAI	1
14. ISLAMIYA THIRUMANAM	1
15. IRUBATTI ONRAM NOOTRANDIL ISLAM	2
16. SUYA PARISODHANAI	2
17. VADDI NARAGA PADUKUZI	2
18. MANITHAKULA VAZIKATTI NABI (SAL)	2
19. HAJ SEYMURAI VILAKKAM	3
20. BOOGAMBAM OOR AAIVU	1
21. OTRUMAIKKU YETRA VAZI	2
22. MEELADHIN VILAKKAM	2
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24. NABI (SAL) IRUDHI PERURAI	2
25. SHIRK KULA PERUMAI THAGARTHA ISLAM	3

26. BAI ATH OOR AIVU	3
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30. THAWHEEDUM THAKLEEDUM	2
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35. PERUMPAVAM (RAMNAD)	2
36. PERUMPAVAM THANDANAIGAL	2
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58. NANMAI YEAVI TEEMAIYAAI THADUTHTHAL	1
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91. NERCHAI	1
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103. IMMAI VAZHKAI MARUMAI VETRAI	1
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106. SAHABAKKALIN DIYAGA VARALARU.	1
107. THOLAIKATCHI IN THEVAIYUM ATHAN ASINGAMUM.	1

Glossary

Aalim	-	Islamic Scholar
Aayat	-	Verses
Ahadeeth	-	Plural of Tradition
Al-Jannah	-	Paradise or Heaven
Allah	-	God
Al-Mubeen	-	Right Path
An-Najath	-	Relieving
Baithul Mal	-	Public Treasury
Bible	-	Religious Book revealed to Prophet Jesus.
Bidaath	-	Innovations
Egathuvam	-	oneness
Fitra	-	Amount given to the needy in the morning of Muslim festival, Id-ul-Fitr.
Hadith	-	Tradition
Hijra	-	Islamic Era
Hijrath	-	Migration
Ibadah	-	Worship
Imam	-	Religious Leader
Janab	-	Mister
Janaba	-	Madam
Jihad	-	To Strive for the Protection of Islam
Kafan	-	Shroud
Kalima Taiyyibah	-	Declaration of Faith
Khazi	-	Judge
Kufr	-	Disbelief
Madrassa	-	Arabic School
Mahar	-	Brides Money
Manbaul Uloom	-	Treasure of Education
Moulana	-	Learned man
Moulvi	-	A person who knows about the religion of Islam
Nikah	-	Marriage
PBUH	-	Peace be upon him
Quran	-	Religious Book revealed to Prophet Mohammad (PBUH)
Rahukalam	-	Inauspicious time

Salah	-	Prayers
Saum	-	Fasting
Sermon	-	Religious Speech
Shirk	-	To associate with Allah
Sirathul Musthaqem	-	Right path
Tafseer	-	Exegesis
Taraveeh	-	Night Prayers specially conducted during the month of Ramzan
Tawaf	-	Circumambulation
Tawheed	-	Unity of God
Tiyarah	-	Bad Omen
Tora	-	Religious Book revealed to Prophet MOSES
Ulavi	-	Person Studied in Madresa-e-Mambaul Uloom, koothanellofe, Tanjore Dist.
Ulema	-	Religious scholars
Yemagandam	-	Dangerous time
Zabur	-	Religious Book revealed to Prophet DAVID
Zakath	-	Paying Poor-due

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END :

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