



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

BISMILLAH

Is A Miracle

Beginning 'in the name of Allah' is a miracle

Prophecies of scriptures fulfilled

by Maulana Abdul Haq Vidyarthi

(The Light & Islamic Review : Vol.71; No. 1-2; Jan-Apr 1994; p. 5-8)

Introduction / Conflict about God's name in various religions / God's name in scriptures / God's name among Jews and Christians / "Knowest thou one that can be named along with Him?" -- The Quran 19:65 /

*"I will set him on high
because he has known my name." (Psalms 91:14)*

*"In that day shall there be one Lord
and his name one." (Zechariah 14:9)*

A branch of human knowledge is called *ethnology*, which is concerned with the study of racial groups in their origin, distribution and culture. It does not only cover the details of various branches and tribal groups of these races, but also their relationship to one another and their individual characteristics. The whole of mankind is compared to a tree whose branches have spread all over the earth. The Holy Quran has referred to this basic truth fourteen hundred years ago when it declared:

"Mankind is a single nation." (2:213)

At another place it said:

"Say: O people of the Book, come to an equitable word between us and you, that we shall serve none but Allah and that we shall not associate any with him." (3:63)

An "equitable word", towards which the Quran has called all the nations of the world, is something which is agreed upon by all. The Quran has itself indicated what that equitable word is. It is belief in God and obedience to Him. There can be nothing greater than this just and equitable statement to create goodwill and unity among nations -- that our God and your God is one. This is a great prophecy mentioned in the revealed scriptures of the world in a different form. In other

words, the Prophet who knew the truth about the name of God and revealed it to the world was going to appear at a certain stage in history.

The oneness of humanity is a truth on which the Holy Quran lays the greatest stress (1:1). They are sometimes told that they have been "created of a single soul", again that they are all descended from the same parents (11:13); still again, that they are, as it were, dwellers in one home, having the same earth as resting-place and the same heaven as a canopy (2:22). It thus lays down the principle of the oneness of humanity in the clearest words. All people are but a single nation (10:19). More than that, it emphasises that all the prophets of the world are a single community (21:92).

The basic principle of all religions taught by the prophets has been one and the same in all ages and all countries, that Allah is the Lord of all. He alone must be worshipped. Therefore all prophets are here declared to be one community: they all led people to virtue through service of God. But, as the next verse shows, their followers broke off this unity:

"Surely this your community is a single community, and I am your Lord, so serve Me. And they cut off their affair among them; to Us will all return." (21:92-93)

Those who have studied the religious scriptures of the world and their commentaries know that out of hundreds of names of God there is one truly great and excellent Divine name in search of which Hindus, Jews, Christians and Magians have kept themselves constantly busy. There is no language in the world which does not contain a word denoting the name of God. I have discussed 155 names of God in my book *Muhammad in World Scriptures*. As God is one, His true name should also be one. The languages of the world are different but the Creator and Lord of all of us is one. It was the Last Prophet who told mankind the real name of this Great Being. He not only told His real name but also offered rational arguments in support of his claim and in practice he showed complete reliance on Him and thus achieved all that a human being could possibly achieve in his life. This was a practical demonstration of the truthfulness of the Prophet's mission. Those who opposed him in the name of other than God were completely humiliated in spite of their superiority in number and armaments. Even after the lapse of fourteen centuries the verdict recorded about him in history is that he was "the most successful of all the prophets and religious personalities" (*Encyclopedia Britannica*, 10th ed.). He was helpless and became the master of his country. But that was not his real success. His real success lay in the fact that there were thousands of his opponents who became his friends and accepted the religion he advocated. This was not something sudden and unexpected; the prophets of yore had foretold his success. The prophet David sang:

"Because he has set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him. I will set him on high because he has known my name." (Psalms 91:14)

Conflict about God's name in various religions

There is no language in the world which does not contain the name of God. There are, however, some languages which mention Him as one who is without a name. The Chinese say that God's name is Shang-ti, which means *heaven*. In their opinion, it is not lawful to use the name of Shang-ti lightly. Therefore, they name Him by His residence, which according to them is heaven. This is, in fact, an admission that they do not know God's real name. How could it be a matter of slight if they called God by His real name, if in case such a name was conveyed to them by a prophet? If they themselves have given such a name to God, a better name could be chosen for Him any time. They should bear in mind that God's real name is Allah, which is an indication of His real power and glory. Thus we find in the Quran:

"He is Allah in the heavens and the earth." (6:3)

"He is Allah, the Creator, the Maker, the Fashioner. His are the most beautiful names. Whatever is in the heavens and the earth declares His glory; and He is the Mighty, the Wise." (59:24)

God's name in scriptures

Among Hindus in India the name of God differs from province to province. In Bengal they call Him *Hari*. He is known as *Permatma*, *Permeshwar*, *Eshwar*, etc. among the common people. In their religious scriptures the names Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva are frequently used which indicate His three attributes, viz., creation, sustenance and destruction. In the Rig Veda, which is considered most authentic, the name of a hymn is *Ka*. This is an interrogative word which means "who" or "what". There are ten *mantras* in this hymn which are addressed to the god "who":

He is the Creator of all creation.

Maker of the heaven and the earth.

Master of life.

Giver of power and bringer of death.

The only Ruler over the animate and the inanimate, over animals and humans.

God of all the gods who has no associate.

Who is He whom we should serve and present our offerings to?

Who is He?" (Rig Veda 10:21)

The yearning and restlessness of the supplicant can easily be discerned from this hymn. When we hear someone being highly praised we are keen to know who he is. Similarly, we are anxious to know who this benefactor of mankind is who is being praised so much in this hymn. The word *Ka* has been repeated nine times with the result that this *Ka* (What) has become God's name. When the Israelites

received food from heaven they held it in their hands and asked each other *man*, *man*, i.e. what is this? In Hebrew *man* is used for inanimate objects as well, thus *man* became the name of food from heaven. Similarly *Ka* (Who or What) became God's name among Hindus. Thus it is mentioned:

"The word *Ka* is the Sanskrit interrogative pronoun 'What'. In later times this interrogative was treated as a proper name, the question became assertion. In later Vedic literature *Ka* is a synonym for Prajapati, Brahma, Vishnu and other gods. In the Puranas, *Ka* appears as a recognised god, as supreme god. The Mahabharata mentions *Ka* with Daksha. Bhagvat Purana applies the term to Kashyapa.

"*Ka*, *Kah* (quis) means 'Who?', that is, the unknown god, has been applied as a name of Prajapati and other gods, from the forced interpretation of the interrogative pronoun which occurs in the refrain of each verse of the hymn." (Griffith's translation of the Rig Veda.)

Not only in the Rig Veda, but also in the Yajur Veda God has been called by *Ka* (vide 14:20; 20:22). Although the name of the object indicated by *Ka* has been stated differently, or is not stated at all, still the search of this unknowable and unnamed being has been continued in every age. Sometimes He has been called Prajapathi, Brahma or Vishnu, at others Shiva, Daksha or Kashyap. And when on none of these names agreement was reached, He was just known by a question mark. It has been stated in the Rig Veda:

"All the *mantras* of the Rig Veda are in the high heaven, where all the gods reside. They are condensed and concealed in a single syllable. What good can the Veda do to him who has no knowledge of that syllable, and those who know it are happy and prosperous in this world." (1:164,39)

When we analyse this *mantra* we come to the following conclusions:

- a. This *mantra* is a statement of the Rig Veda itself or its author who is considered to be God.
- b. All the ten thousand *mantras* in the Rig Veda revolve around the syllable mentioned in this *mantra*.
- c. That syllable is still in the High Heaven and not revealed yet.
- d. That syllable is still concealed.
- e. He who does not know that syllable cannot be benefitted by the Rig Veda.
- f. He who knows it is happy and prosperous in the world.

The commentators of the Vedas explained this *mantra* in three ways:

1. The *mantra* under discussion points to the sun and its rays. He who does not know the sun cannot be benefitted by its rays.

2. It may refer to the soul that is concealed in the body. A person who does not know the soul cannot derive any benefit from the body.
3. All the *mantras* are concealed in the word om. What use is the Veda to a person who does not know OM. (Nirukt 3:10)

These three interpretations have been given in the most authentic commentary of the Vedas. Such difference of interpretation about a *mantra* is itself a proof of the ambiguity of the matter under discussion. Nevertheless the third interpretation is more acceptable because in the Upanishads (considered second to the Vedas in authenticity) the greatness and the superiority of the word OM has been mentioned. One is, however, struck by the fact that the word OM does not occur in the four Vedas, but still its mention has been made in the Upanishads in such laudable terms. Prof. Griffith's remark on this point is worth quoting:

"OM is set in the Upanishads as the object of profound religious meditation. The highest spiritual efficacy is attributed to it."

The above discussion shows that although God's real name is not mentioned in the Vedas, the urge to know it and obtain blessings therefrom is found among the Hindu sages. In the Vedic hymns different gods have been glorified. Agni, Indra, Suraj, etc. have been separately praised. Either they should all be considered separate gods or there is One Being who is above them all and is the true object of all praises. That unknown and unnamed Being is Allah. Who or What is He, asks the Veda. The reply is given by the Holy Quran:

"In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful."

Allah is the real and personal name of God, and the names of all other gods are, in fact, His attributive names. It is only in this way that one can truly understand the concept of the Unity of Godhead and accept the whole of mankind, including Brahmins, Kashatriya, Vaishyas and Shudras, as one family and equal in rank in the sight of God. This is the great fact which has been foretold in the Atharva Veda, Allo Upanishad and Bhavishiya Purana as a great prophecy.

God's name among Jews and Christians

While discussing God's names in the Bible, the following passage should be noted:

"And Moses said to God, Behold, when I come to the children of Israel and shall say to them, the God of your fathers has sent me to you, and they shall say to me, What is His name, what shall I say to them? And God said to Moses, I AM THAT I AM, and he said: Thus shall you say to the children of Israel: I AM has sent me to you." (Exodus 3:13,14)

I AM THAT I AM is rather an ambiguous name. This shows that God's real name was not known to Moses and the Israelites, although the desire to know it was embedded in their hearts.

At another place it is stated:

"But as 'Adonay' I was not known to them." (Exodus 6:3)

The above is the Jewish translation of this verse. The Christian translation runs thus:

"By my name Jehovah was I not known to them."

The reason why 'Adonay' has been substituted for Jehovah in the Jewish translation is that the Jews considered it a great sin, punishable with death, to mention God by His real name. It is for this reason that they use the term 'Adonay' instead of Jehovah. A modern Jewish commentator says:

"'Adonay' is the prescribed traditional reading of the Divine name expressed in the four letters yhvh which is never pronounced as written." (J.H. Hertz, Chief Rabbi: *The Pentateuch and Haftorahs*, pp. 66, 67.)

It may be noted here that the violation of the sanctity of God's name falls under four categories:

1. Giving the holy name of God to other beings.
2. Calling on God by names of which the meaning is unknown.
3. Giving God names which do not befit Him.
4. Blaspheming His name.

The word *Adonay*, however, is not expressive of God's greatness and glory. In its plural form, *Adonim*, it is even used for objects which are not even worshipped (see Deut. 10:17, Psalms 136:3, etc.) Thus it is a violation of the sanctity of God's name.

When we come to Christianity we find that even God's name Yehaweh was lost five hundred years before Jesus Christ. In the four Gospels, Yehaweh has not been mentioned at all. In their translation of the Gospels published by the Jehovah's Witnesses they have substituted the word *Jehovah* for *God*. This is not right because in Greek manuscripts Jehovah is not mentioned. Moreover, *Yehaweh* was the correct form and not *Jehovah*, which shows that the very name of their sect is wrong.

Let us find out who was the person who was to convey the real name of God to the world. Let us carefully ponder over the following passages from the Bible:

1. "O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth." -- Psalms 8:9.
2. "They that know thy name will put their trust in thee." -- *ibid.* 9:10.
3. "I will set him on high because he has known my name." -- *ibid.* 91:14.
4. "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord." -- *ibid.* 118:26.
Matthew 21:9, 23:39.
5. "Both young men and maidens, old men and children, let them praise the name of the Lord, for his name alone is excellent." -- Psalms 148:12-13.
6. "And in that day shall you say, Praise the Lord, call upon his name." -- Isaiah 12:4.
7. "My determination is to gather the nations." -- Zephaniah 3:8.
8. "For then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may call upon the name of the Lord to serve him with one consent." -- *ibid.* 3:9.
9. "They shall trust in the name of the Lord." -- *ibid.* 3:12.
10. "They shall call on my name, and I will hear them. I will say, It is my people and they shall say, The Lord is my God." -- Zechariah 13:9.
11. "And the Lord shall be king over all the earth. In that day there shall be one Lord and his name one." -- *ibid.* 14:9.
12. "We will walk in the name of the Lord our God for ever and ever." -- Micah 4:5.
13. "They shall walk up and down in his name." -- Zechariah 10:12.
14. "And I will write upon him the name of my God, ... my new name." -- Revelation 3:12.

The above references nos. 3, 4, 6-14 indicate that these are prophecies about the future. These references also show that the excellent name of God is one in all the earth (no. 1); those who know His name, i.e. Muslims, will put their trust in Him (no. 2,9). He who will know His name will be given a rank of honour (no. 3), i.e. he will be the greatest of all the prophets who will continuously praise God and call upon His name. That Prophet will be blessed and will convey God's name to young men and maidens, old men and children, and will make everyone remember it (nos. 4,5). He will teach them to start all their undertakings in the name of God, contrary to the teachings of the rabbis, priests and pundits. That Promised Prophet will teach people how to praise God, the Lord of all the worlds (no. 6). God will bring all the nations of the world under one flag and purify them so that they will serve Him with one consent and will call upon Him as their Lord (nos. 7,8). And in that day, i.e. the time of the advent of Islam, there will be One Lord and His name One, i.e. Allah (no. 11). The followers of Islam will walk in the light of this new name for ever and ever (no. 12). How great are these prophecies which are fulfilled by the Holy Prophet and by his message in the form of Islam!

"Knowest thou one that can be named along with Him?" - - The Quran 19:65

The Quranic assertion is that in all the languages of the world there is not a word which conveys the full significance of the word *Allah*. It does not have a plural or a dual or a feminine gender. It is not applied to anyone except God. E.W. Lane, in his classical *Arabic-English Lexicon*, explains it as "comprising all the attributes of perfection". This most excellent and perfect name was taught by an unlettered Prophet. He did not only teach his people about this Great Name but also laid his complete trust in Him. The Prophet was neither a king nor a king's son, but only an orphan in his childhood, and became a helpless and friendless person when he claimed to be the saviour of humanity. In spite of these hardships, he was able to weld together the most disunited people in the world. Those degenerate people were set on high as it was foretold by the prophet David centuries before. It was the Prophet Muhammad who was blessed and whom his followers bless all over the world. The Name which was concealed from the world, the Name which was the most precious gift sought after, the knowledge about that Name was given to mankind by the Prophet Muhammad. He taught this Name about which the prophet Zechariah said:

"They shall call on my name, and I will hear them. ... And the Lord shall be king over all the earth. In that day there shall be one Lord and his name one." (13:9 and 14:9)

This miracle happened among a people who worshipped different gods. However, what was foretold by the prophets Isaiah and David was fulfilled:

"And in that day shall you say, Praise the Lord, call upon his name." -- Isaiah 12:4.

"Both young men and maidens, old men and children, let them praise the name of the Lord, for his name alone is excellent." -- Psalms 148:12-13.

Jehovah cannot be the real name of God. Firstly, as has been discussed earlier, this name is not correct. Secondly, the punishment of uttering this name was death. Thirdly, in the above references, quoted from the writings of the prophets who appeared after Moses, the mention has been made of a *new* name of the Lord. And that new name has only been given by the Prophet Muhammad. The first revelation given to the Holy Prophet was:

"Recite in the name of thy Lord Who creates." (Holy Quran 96:1)

In compliance with this injunction, every chapter of the Holy Quran starts with the words:

"In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful."

This also shows the fulfilment of David's prophecy, quoted above: "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord." The expression "*in the name of the Lord*" in the Psalms is similar to the first Quranic revelation "*recite in the name of thy Lord*".

In the Gospels the same prophecy has been repeated (Matthew 21:9, 23:39. Mark 11:9. Luke 19:38, 13:35. John 12:13.) which shows that this prophecy was not fulfilled up to the advent of Jesus Christ. And because Jesus did not tell the real name of God (he did not mention Yehaweh even once in his utterances), therefore this prophecy cannot be said to have been fulfilled in his person.

The prophecy of Zephaniah, "My determination is to gather the nations, for then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may call upon the name of the Lord to serve him with one consent", was also fulfilled by the Holy Prophet. The Christian missionaries do not gather and baptise people in the name of God but in the name of Jesus Christ.

It should also be borne in mind that the name of God which the Holy Prophet revealed to the world comprises *all the attributes of perfection*, as stated earlier. Besides the name Allah, all the other Divine names are attributive. This only proves that there is only One Being towards whose *real* name all the other attributive names refer. Thus it is a great blessing for the world that the Holy Prophet has brought mankind together under one banner which is engraved with the words: *la ilaha ill-Allah*, i.e. there is no god except Allah. And in this name *Allah* all the other Divine attributive names have also been comprised.

This is not, however, an abstract discussion about the name of God. In previous times, the lands of Asia, Africa and Europe echoed with the shouts of *Allah-u-Akbar* (Allah is the Most Supreme). The future of mankind will also see that the nations of the world, however strong they become, will one day learn to praise the name of Allah, the Lord of all the worlds.