

"INSAAN JEE TAAREEKH" PART-I BY DR. HABIBULLAH SIDDIQUI

Manzoor-ul-Haque

The very name of this book strikes one as a paradox for it is universally accepted that to man, the searching questions -right from his beginning, have been "How did life emerge on this planet? How did the first man come into being on this earth? How did this universe see the life of its being? What is the history of human civilizations, of races, of nations, of languages, and of countries? What is his relation with this universe? What is his relation with himself? What is his relation with the man? What is his relation with the Creator of this creation?" These questions have always puzzled man on the face of this earth.

The history of man(kind) makes tragic reading. Down through the ages, we come across a series of sequences of the rise, growth, decline and fall, not only of nations, but even of their civilizations and cultures. No doubt, man -right from his beginning on this planet -has all along shown a remarkable constructive genius, having attained many an awe-inspiring success, now and then, despite occasional setbacks and natural catastrophes. But his constructive genius was always undermined by some inherent weakness underlying his ideals or his way of life, which ultimately brought about a disastrous end to his efforts. Nevertheless, there have been some notable exceptions in the series of sequences when the idea of the universal welfare of mankind took practical shape. But the main characteristics of the type of the society and the history of man in all those civilizations have always been one of frustration and, second to none, of inquisitiveness on his part for

* Retired Professor from the Department of Psychological Testing, Guidance and Research, Faculty of Education, University of Sindh, Elsa Kazi Campus, Hyderabad, Sindh.

the history of his progeny. This is the main theme of Dr. Habibullah Siddiqui's book *Insaan Jee Taareekh* "Part-I."

The focal point of Dr. Habibullah Siddiqui's endeavours-brimmed with boundless energy -is enveloped to dish out the atavistic memories of man's past, swept in the debris-can of history. The more titillating is the title of this book, the more difficult is the treatment to the contents wrought with trials and tribulations. The book is written in Sindhi language, composed by Islamic Computer Centre with Abid Ali Pathan's ostensibly a simple - but thought-providing - Cover Design, has recently been published by Habib Siddiqui Academy, Jamshoro. It opens with prolegomenon (The Word of Teacher): Dr. N. A. Baloch, a renowned scholar, reputed academician, well-known anthropologist, and above all an educationist. Then comes Preface with the pen of the author himself, bridging the interregnum caused by the signs of corrosion and erosion of the time. And the last of this series is Mr. Mohammad Musa Bhutto's blurb abbreviating the munificent implications of the human thought for the humanity; it is his Prelude.

This book, *"Insaan Jee Taareekh" Part-I*, contains 11 Chapters. The First Chapter throws light on The Creation of Universe. Its subtopics are Vedanta, Divine Knowledge, Cosmic Days and Nights, Astronomy, Black Hole Theory, Big Bang Theory, Space, The Process of Creation, and Day of Judgment with Fervid Faith. The Holy Quraan's verses have been adequately quoted in support of the contention the author has put forth in the body of the contents. When one studies deeply the teachings of the Quraan, one comes to know that in contrast to 250 verses of the Quraan, which are legislative in nature, some 750 verses (i.e. nearly one eighth of the Quranic text) refers to Phenomena of Nature. The Quraan repeatedly exhorts the believers to ponder over the creation of the miraculous universe and make strenuous efforts to explore nature; to conquer the forces of nature and then utilize

them according to the values embodied in the Quraan. That is because an insight into the creative acts of the Creator stands as a living proof of the existence of the Creator. The author has properly and profusely made use of this phenomenon.

Chapter Two of this book deals with the History of Earth and the Ages of Life. For the History of Earth, the author has specifically mentioned lead isotopes, pre-Cambrian age, fossils, Paleozoic era, cretaceous age, biological big bang, geological upheavals, the great ice age, Homo sapiens, and Greek astrologer, Aristarchus as the first scientist who put forth the claim that "the earth moves round the sun". The other aspect of this chapter is the burgeoning of life on this globe. The author has made a bid to say very briefly of the initial signs of life on this earth. He has mentioned the role of anthropology, archaeology, and the various evolutionary aspects the life metamorphosed in and on the soil of this earth-whether it is of Darwin's. Or of Neanderthal's or The Naked Ape, where man is depicted to be a creature who can write immortal poetry, raise giant cities, aim for the stars, build an atomic bomb -but he is also an animal, a relative of the apes -a naked ape, in fact. From the brief descriptions that Dr. Habibullah Siddiqui has given, it looks that 'life' is struggling very hard between *Having* and *Being* modes of man's existence on this threatened planet, the Earth. For *Having* he is wanting everything for himself; that possessing, not sharing, gives him pleasure; that he must become greedy because if his aim is *having*, he is more the more he *have*, that he must feel antagonistic toward all others. And for *Being*, he is becoming of what he potentially is created for. This is the " swing the life is in on its various manifestations and stages on the scale of gradual and/or emergent evolution.

The Third Chapter deals with The Creation of Hazrat Adam (AS). Some call Adam as the archetype of man on this land, some as the Messenger of Allah (SWT), and some as an allegorical story of Adam, which means that man has been endowed with the capacity to subdue and conquer the forces of nature. In this sense

Adam typifies *Man* in general. The author has provided the Biblical version of Adam and Eve as well as the Quraanic depiction of the story of Adam. The quintessence of this chapter has been drawn from the ancient religions of the world, traditions, rituals, ancient religious belief systems, historico-scientific view points/appraisals, and verses from the Holy Quraan. In this manner this chapter has depicted a conglomeration of the scenario that outwardly appears to be conforming to the belief systems of the followers of these various religions: Judaism, Christianity, Manichaeism, idol-worship, star-worship, nature-worship and superstition. The trend that has reflected is towards religion or mysticism among thinkers and scientists, especially in their old age; it is yet another form of search for human survival and Dr. Habibullah Siddiqui has operated upon this contention.

The Fourth Chapter pertains to The History of Civilization and deals with different periods of the humanity burgeoning from the genesis of Hazrat Adam (AS) to Assyrians, Babylonians, signs of Mycenae, Byzantine, to the Modern Western Civilization, both pre-and-post historic Civilizations. It reflects thousands of sorties that the world probably found its first form of writing (cuneiform). Cultivated crops, canals, dams, irrigation and animal husbandry originated in what was known as the Fertile Crescent between the Euphrates and the Tigris rivers. Greek thinkers drew inspiration from the mathematicians of Mesopotamia, the land that is now Iraq. It was here that algebra and geometry were developed. Mesopotamia gave us the first metal working, architecture, city building, urban planning, legal system, medical writings, cobblestone streets, pottery and even beers, about 6000 years ago. The process of thesis and antithesis, of revival and decadence, appears to be going on for ages -and Dr. Habibullah Siddiqui, very meticulously, keeps on ostensibly projecting this process on the projectile of time as recorded in the can of history.

The title of the Fifth Chapter is The Evolution Process of History, Religion, and Civilization. The gist of its sub-contents is

religion, soul, materialism, ancient civilization and history of Egypt. This chapter reminds the readers that history is replete with such stories of the rise and growth and the ultimate decline and fall of several human civilizations. Ancient Babylon, Egypt, Greece, Iran, Rome, India and even some parts of the New World are now graveyards of glorious old civilizations. These stand as living testimony to the story of man's tragic failures. They induce a thoughtful mood in sensitive spectators and caution them to pause for a while and reflect over this warning of the Quraan:

**Mind! Be ye not like the old woman who laboured
hard to spin her yarn and then pulled it to pieces
(16: 92).**

Without getting bogged down in detail, Dr. Habibullah Siddiqui provides quotes from the relevant literature to establish authenticity of what he pens down to gang up against the antagonists reflecting variance in synchronization of views. To stare decisis. Chapter Six provides matter about Ancient Races, Nations, Countries and Civilizations. In races, he has selected two: Semitic and Aryan. From Semitic Races, he has selected Arabic, Hebrew, Ethiopic, Akkadian, and Aramaic. He has dealt with Babylonian Civilization and Messengers of Allah, their nations along with their historic periods up to Hazrat Jesus (AS). Frequent references have been made from the verses of the Holy Quraan, The Old Testament and The New Testament. This chapter reminds one of Plutarch's knowledge of a queer phenomenon that had operated through out the syllable of the recorded time:

In wandering over the earth, you can find cities without walls, without science, without rulers, without palaces, without treasures, without money, without gymnasium or theatre, but a city without temples to gods, without prayers, oaths and prophecy, such a city no mortal has yet seen and will never see. (W. M. Urban's book: Humanity and Deity, p.15)

It is, in deed, a happy augury that Dr. Siddiqui has reserved Chapter Seven for the study of Sindhu Valley, Sindh, and Sindhi Nation. Against all odds, he has described Sindhu Valley, Moenjodaro and Harappa archaeological sites of the Indus Valley Civilization (c. 2500 - 1500 B. C.). He has delineated succinct periods of its various rulers, contemporary civilizations, social, political and economic developments, spread of Islam in Sindh, prediction of the revolution, British period, history of recent Sindh and establishment of independence in the Indo-Pak Subcontinent. By *pari passu*, this is the longest chapter and has been documented with historical references to make it contiguous to reliance. It makes mention of archaeological sites in the country: Harappa in Punjab, Mehrgarh in Baluchistan and Rehman Dheri in NWFP. Currently, six archaeological sites in Pakistan are on the list of UN World Heritage Fund, including Moenjodaro, the historic monuments in Thatta, the archaeological remains in Taxila, the Buddhist ruins of Takht-i-Bhai, the city remains at Sehri Bahlol, Rohtas Fort and the Lahore Fort/Shalamar Bagh.

To have leverage of his book, Dr. Habibullah has prescribed Chapter Eight for Aryans, their religions, their odd historic episodes, and their philosophy, Hindu political and socio-historical periods. Extending the history of the Aryans further on the scale of time, Dr. Habibullah jots down Chapter Nine exclusively on Iranians, their history of the ancient religion, politics, and their languages (old and new both). He also describes history of ancient Persia, age of Achaemenian, ins and outs of Cyrus, Gog and Megog, plodding of Scythians, Kudrahas and ululating of the numerous rulers during the pre- and -post era of its history. The end of imperialism, the advent of Islam in Iran, and the emergence of democracy and the rise of Islamic revolution have been elaborated in this chapter. Its ancient Palmyrene Civilization has also been allotted enough space.

To put a gloss on reality, Dr. Siddiqui has honed Chapter Ten on the study of Bani Israel Nation (The Jews). From the fourth century B. C., he started this chapter from the son of Rebekah, Hazrat Jacob (AS) on whose appellation of honour his followers were called Bani Israel. The other topics of this chapter are Hazrat Yousuf (AS), his bon voyage to Egypt, his slavery, imprisonment and freedom, migration to Egypt, Madians, their Messengers, Hazrat Sho'eb (AS), the people of Rass, the other nations, Hazrat Moses (AS), his brother Aaron (AS), and The Jews. It also includes laws of slavery and freedom, Judaism, Mosaic Law, history of the Jews, Greeko-Roman Period, Zionism, and the successors of the Moses (AS).

Since vying for convoluted approach in historical orientations brings the relics, the vestiges of the companions of the Messenger, Dr. Siddiqui has penned down the history of the Arabs (Bani Isma'il) in Chapter Eleven, the last chapter in this book. Keeping brevity as the soul of wit, he has mentioned the salient features of the life of Hazrat Isma'il (AS). He took start from his birth, he passed onto the important cities, to Minaean Kingdom (1200 B.C. to 560 B. C.), to the influence of the Church through Theophilus Indus. to Nabataeand Period and Lakhmids. Elaborating a summary of ancient history, he has led his readers to the last of the series of the *Rusul*, the Messengers in the chain of those who were sent to deliver the Revelation of Allah (SWT). It is Hazrat Muhammad (pbuh) through whom the complete and final version of the Guidance was revealed to the mankind. This Guidance has been preserved for all time in the Quraan. Each of the *Anbiya* who preceded Muhammad (pbuh), says Dr. Habibullah Siddiqui, appealed to a particular group. Muhammad (pbuh) alone was the bearer of a message for mankind as a whole. Says the Quraan:

O Mankind! I am the messenger of Allah to you; all, the messenger of Him unto Whom belongeth the sovereignty of the heavens and

the earth. There is no Sovereign Authority
save Him (7: 158).

At the end of each chapter, Dr. Habibullah Karim Bux Siddiqui has given a complete list of references pertaining to that chapter. Bibliography in Sindhi and English has also been given at the end of the book. Facilitating the readers, the author has also provided an exhaustive index, which is spread over 176 pages of this book.

Dr. Siddiqui has put forth the best of his potentials in getting and sorting out the relevant material by synthesizing and analyzing the relevant facts and then giving a shape for the convenience of his readers in Sindhi language. He has tried his utmost to make his book a compendium of knowledge: both of ancient and modern. Using Sindhi language, he has made a meaningful bid to enrich the component of language with modern scientific knowledge, as well as with technical terms he has coined in Sindhi. He could have written this book in English profitably for a larger number of readers, but the development of Sindhi to embody the historical and scientific body of knowledge had apparently remained his preference. In some cases the author has given secondary sources. It is because he knows little of Sanskrit. In Biblical references he has not used English version. The book has been published in two types of papers and little care has been given to the English spellings of the terms, names and technical words he has profusely used in the text.

It is an acknowledged fact that history of man, for acts, omissions, and commission by various research scholars, has remained rather a debatable issue on this threatened planet. While some think it inspires fanaticism and violence, others maintain it is a system of life that depicts peace and deep rendezvous stride for harnessing the universe to be utilized for the greatest benefit of the greatest number at par with the divine laws enshrined in the Quran.

This book provides such a nutrition to the readers, who are impelled to peep deep into the very enshrines of History for drawing sound conclusions. For details of availability of this book costing Rs.300/- Pakistan Study Centre, Institute of Sindhology, and Habib Siddiqui Academy Jamshoro can be contacted.

Insaan Jee Taareekh (History of Man) Part-I is a startlingly novel idea, brilliantly executed, and dexterously communicated. The book projects two views in terms of man's relationship with nature. Some modern thinkers stoutly defend these two views. According to one of these, nature is definitely hostile to man and takes a fiendish delight in bringing to naught his noblest enterprises. Hardy and Shopenhauer took a gloomy view of life and felt that men could enjoy peace, the peace of insensibility, only when they ceased to exist. The other view is apparently more compatible with the findings on modern thought. According to it, nature is completely indifferent to man and his ideals. It simply does not care whether man succeeds or not. Human history may well prove to be a brief episode in cosmic evolution; so **Insaan Jee Taareekh** is a startling novel idea. With these two views in mind, to read Dr. Habibullah Siddiqui on habit writing of **Insaan Jee Taareekh** is disconcerting, to say the least. Here the detail is specific and critical and the Insaan (man) comes out of it looking very curious indeed. You read on with the mixture of discovery and embarrassment, an enlightening, entertaining, disturbing, discomfoting, ego-shrinking experience. Hence we need not dwell on this nightmare that the possibility of Insaan's becoming a reality is remote. We are, despite all our great technological advances, still very much a simple biological phenomenon. Despite our grandiose ideas and our lofty self-conceits, we are still humble animals at physical level, subject to all the basic laws of animal behaviour. By gradual and/or emergent evolution, we have broken so many of the rules that govern our biological nature that we shall have collapsed as a dominant species. Hence do not hesitate to miss this book. The author has not taken purely a negative attitude

of man's frustrating efforts. He has very lucidly explained what History of Man is, and how it offers the most convincing and enduring answers to those eternal questions, which every thinking man asks about the meaning and purpose of life and how it can be achieved. The book is thus a unique attempt at the rediscovery of man: scholarly written and cutely presented. Frequent quotations from the Quraan bring forth the idea of the author that the Quraan presents nature as friendly to man, responsive to his intellect and sympathetic to his moral endeavour. Both nature and man have been created by a wise and benevolent God and fundamentally there is no conflict between them. Man can develop only with the help of nature. This help can be obtained provided he acquires knowledge of nature and utilizes it for the achievement of his moral ends in the light of Divine Guidance embodied in the Quraan. Indirectly the author leads his readers to this point.

But the strange paradox is that the same dismal spectacle is repeated age after age. We see a people incessantly striving towards the creation of a great civilization, digging deep into the historical genesis of his genius, which became the focus of their desires and ambitions, hopes and aspirations. They looked upon their success as the apogee of human endeavour. This civilization, they hoped, would finally liberate mankind from the clutches of tyranny and slavery, and usher in an era of eternal peace, security and contentment. They remained lost in the illusion of having built up an unparalleled civilization whose growth was always a source of pride and happiness for them. Every step they took for its progress kindled a new ray of hope in their hearts for ultimately attaining human welfare and advancement. But the process never reached the desired culmination, and the main objective ever remained a mirage. Long before the goal was reached, invariably an anti-climax set in and man himself became instrumental in pulling down the imposing edifice that he had raised through the ages, shattering all his hopes, ideals and aspirations. This, in nutshell, is **Insaan Jee Taareekh (History of**

Man), which Dr. Habibullah Siddiqui has never forgotten to bring to the forefront of his readers.

We are a society of notoriously unhappy people: lonely, anxious, depressed, destructive, dependent -people who are glad when we have killed the time we are trying so hard to save. Dr. Habibullah's efforts do not sock here. He is writing the Second Part of this book. When completed will lead to fruition for those who are fond of his writings; for those who feel reluctant to concede to what he portrays, reflects and analyzes: for those who find no book written in Sindhi language to satiate their thirst of knowledge on the history of man; for those who are keen to trace out the genesis of his genius scientifically-without projecting the man's boggling of the debris held so scrupulously. And last but not least, for those who do not agree to the way of his writing for such a thought-provoking phenomenon of **Insaan Jee Taareekh (History of Man)**. Really man is a challenge!