

"Muhammad is . . . the Apostle of Allah and the Last of the Prophets . . ."—
HOLY QUR-AN 33: 40. "There will be no Prophet after me."—MUHAMMAD.

The
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FOUNDED BY THE LATE AL-HAJJ KHWAJA KAMAL-UD-DIN

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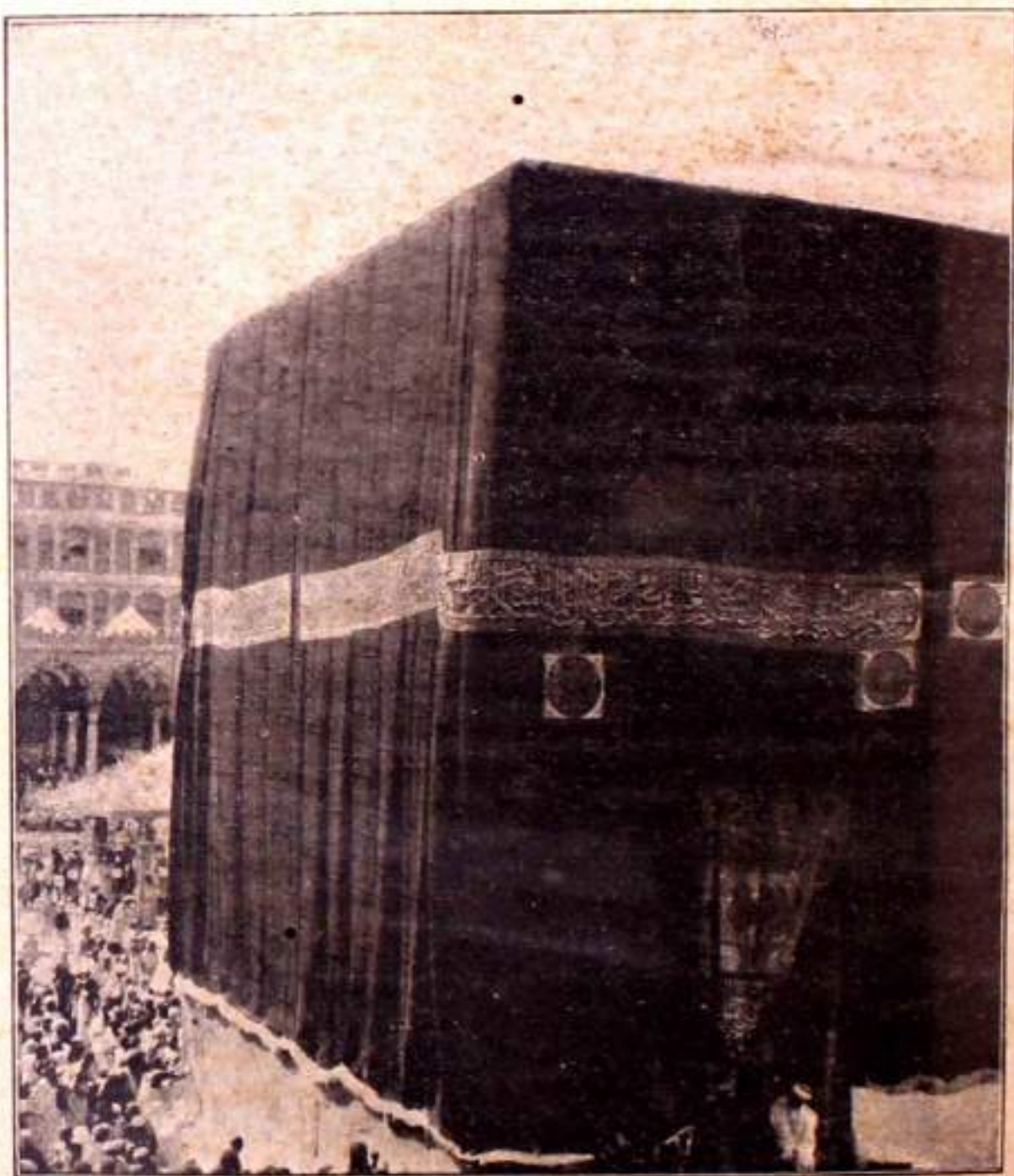
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Mr. ABDUL QADIR PICKARD.



THE KA'BA

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

مَجْلَدٌ فِي رِضَا نَسَائِعِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ وَتِلْكَ النَّبِيِّينَ

THE

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THE RESPECT OF THE KA'BA BY BIRDS

A non-Muslim English writer named Eldon Rutter who, disguised as a Muslim Syrian, went to Makka and Madina in 1925, took part in the pilgrimage ceremonies and stayed there for about a year, has set down his experiences in a book entitled, "The Holy Cities of Arabia," first published in 1928. Mr. Eldon Rutter, by the way, should not be confused with another writer named Mr. Owen Rutter who also relates, in his own words, sometimes absolutely warped, the pilgrimage experiences of an English Muslim, in a book, "The Triumphant Pilgrimage," published in London in 1937.

Both Muslims and non-Muslims will read with interest his observations on the respect which birds show to the Ka'ba at Makka. Mr. Eldon Rutter writes :

"These pigeons are of a pretty blue-grey colour. There are thousands of them in Makka, and an endowment fund exists for supplying them with grain. Two little stone troughs, sunk in the ground of the open quadrangle, are constantly kept filled with water for their use. One

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man holds the office of dispenser of the grain to the pigeons, while another holds that of waterer to them. This gives some idea of the manner in which work is found for the eight hundred servants of the mosque. It has been asserted by the Makkans, in all ages, that neither the sacred pigeons, nor any other bird, ever perches on the roof of the Ka'ba. Sleeping every night for some months on a roof which overlooked that of the Ka'ba, I had a good opportunity of testing the truth of this assertion. I have repeatedly searched the roof of the sacred building, and have never once seen there either a bird or any other living thing. At times, when the roofs of the makâms of the imâms and the ground below them were covered with myriads of pigeons, I have constantly seen the Ka'ba roof bare and silent. The Shaybi, too, informed me that no defilement of birds is ever found there." (Page 376, London 1928 edition.)

The above fact may have some deeper meaning and may be explained scientifically by ornithologists. Birds are known to possess acute vision and hearing. They remember people and how these people treat them and have treated them. They know all their grown-up neighbours. It is also common knowledge that lower animals are endowed with certain capacities and powers that are denied to man and which are, in some cases, far more subtle than, and superior to, those of man. For instance, there are noises above certain frequencies which our auditory apparatus is incapable of registering but the self-same noises are easily heard by such an insignificant being as the ant. Similarly, there are things and phenomena which the human eye cannot perceive but lower animals, birds and dogs can.

A DECLARATION

I, John K. Bonney, of Takoradi, do hereby faithfully and solemnly declare of my own free will that I worship One and Only Allah (God) alone; that I believe Muhammad to be His Messenger and Servant; that I respect equally all Prophets—Abraham, Moses, Jesus, and others and that I will live a Muslim life by the help of Allah.

Lá iláha ill-Alláh Muhammad-un-Rasul-Alláh

[There is but One God (Allah) and Muhammad is God's Messenger.]

31st October, 1939.

(Sd.) J. K. BONNEY.

WHY I BECAME A MUSLIM?

BY ABDUL QADIR PICKARD

I have always been a Muslim. I mean this not only in the sense in which the word is used in the Qur-án *Sharif* to signify an adherent of natural religion, but very early in life I gained some realisation that Islam as generally practised was nearer to that natural religion than were the other great established religions.

It was, I think, the disparity between the Christian professions of brotherhood and the attitude engendered by the imperialist ideology, the sole glorification of English institutions, colour prejudice and the presumption of two codes of ethics . . . one for Europeans and another for "those lesser breeds without the Law," which first turned my attention to the study of non-European cultures, from, however, a non-religious standpoint. I then discovered that, contrary to what I had been taught, civilisation did not end with Greece, and that, east of Greece existed a culture which had played an important part in the history of the world, a culture which had, in fact, been the means of handing on to Europe that heritage of Greece of which she is

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so justly proud and which had enriched the Grecian heritage by many traits characteristic of that Saracenic civilisation which had preserved the culture of Greece during the period of European barbarism.

It was, strangely enough, the scripture master at school who, by instilling into us the principles of the "Higher Criticism," principles which to him confirmed their truth, awakened in me my first serious doubts as to the authenticity of the Christian scriptures. The simplicity of Islam and the certainty of the basis on which it rested (the Qur-án *Sharif* being recognised even by the most hostile critics as being as surely the word of Muhammad as we recognise it to be the Word of God) presented a strong contrast to the shifting and uncertain character of the Christian scriptures, which come to us in a tongue alien to their first adepts and belonging to a region far removed from their original home. When, in addition, are incorporated in these scriptures things in themselves difficult to accept, things for whose inclusion there is no obvious religious reason, things taken from other sources, whose development, sometimes inside and sometimes outside Christianity, can be explained psychologically by quite human causes, one feels the need for some surer, some simpler basis on which to build one's faith and form one's life.

Islam, with its simple logical scheme of God sending His prophets from time to time to raise humanity, to tell humanity that there was but one God and that consequently humanity was one and that all men were brothers, Islam differing from the original Judaism only in that it teaches that God does not limit His mercies to any one people, supplied that basis.

Although a school-fellow, somewhat older than myself, to whom I probably owe the socialistic trend of my thoughts, did shortly afterwards try to convert

A HUMANE WARRIOR

me to an atheistic position, it seemed to me then, and seems to me still, that Islam does not set for the believer those problems which have been the cause of so many Europeans abandoning all faith, while on the other hand, many things in Islam can only be explained on the assumption of its truth.

A HUMANE WARRIOR

“It was not enough for Muhammad to have an excellent army. It must also be the army of God. In order to make it worthy of his mission, the Prophet instructed it in its duties and obligations.

“The Holy War should not have for its aim destruction.

“Undertaken in the name of the God of justice and mercy, warfare must not be rapacious, revengeful nor cruel. It should be humane.

“So, for the first time, one heard from the mouth of a statesman, the head of an army, exhortations which would seem even to us to belong to some fairy tale or vision, if our acceptance of the ways of “total war” has not stifled our remorse for submitting to it and our hope of delivery.

“Do not use frauds, nor deceptions,” said the Prophet Muhammad to his soldiers.

“Do not kill children.”

“When you fight against the army of an enemy in his own territory, do not oppress the peaceful inhabitants of the country.”

“Spare weak women. Have pity on suckling infants and the sick.”

“Do not destroy the houses. Do not overrun the fields. Do not devastate the orchards. Do not cut down the date-palm trees.”

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And, commenting on these words of the Prophet, his lieutenant Abu Bakr added later for the guidance of his chiefs :

“Do not oppress the populace. Do not provoke them unnecessarily.”

“Be good and just : success will be your recompense.”

“When you encounter the enemy, attack him valorously. If you come out victorious from the battle, do not kill the women, nor the children.”

“Spare the fields and the houses.”

“If you conclude a treaty, keep its clauses.”

“In Christian countries you will encounter on the route holy men who serve God in the churches and monasteries. Do not molest them ; do not destroy their churches nor their monasteries.”

Such are the words, never heard before, words which resounded in the 7th Century, from the courtyards and the Mosque of Madina. The soldiers of the Holy War did not always remember them, but they could not entirely obliterate their impression. Whenever the pure spirit of the Prophet will reanimate their ardour, the far-off voice of that humane warrior will talk to them afresh.

They do not persist relentlessly in odious massacres. In each of the archers whom they see cutting a silhouette on the rampart of the besieged towns, they will recognise a stray brother, ready to march with them in the same path of truth.

And, in fulfilment of the prophecy of Abu Bakr, “success will be their recompense.”—*Vie de Mahomet* by Raymond Lerouge : Paris, 1939, pp. 164, *et seq.*

ISLAM, CHRISTIANITY AND MONOPOLY

BY MAULANA ABDUL MAJID, M.A.

Students of the Gospels know that the Holy Prophet Jesus is silent on practically all the problems of life which concern the average man or the man in the street. Art, science, commerce and labour seem to have found no place with him in his parables and discussions. There may be many reasons to justify this attitude, but the fact remains that such a silence does not help an enquiring mind. If one confronts the Christian clergy, say, the Protestant clergy, with the silence of Jesus on war and slavery, labour and commerce and other major problems of our life, then the answer one gets is, as a rule, more enigmatic than the silence of the Prophet Jesus. We are told that the reticence of Jesus on all those matters is a great improvement on his predecessors and successors for it leads us to evolve ourselves independently and to rise to unbelievable heights in the moral and spiritual plane. We need hardly labour this point. To rise to those heights is more easily said than done. History gives an ample lie to these hopes and expectations in the average man. It is writ large in the pages of history that man requires guidance—either man-made or divine. Man-made guidance always causes and ends in ruin, whereas divine guidance leads to the full fruition of man's manhood in a life of harmony and bliss. The Roman Catholics recognise the necessity of Divine guidance in their mundane matters. In the absence of the mind of Jesus being vocal on the immediate problems of life, they have invented the institution of Popery, claiming infallibility for it and reserving for it the sole domain of the interpretation of the mind of the Master, wherever and whenever it was found to be silent. The history of the Papacy will be enough to bring home the hollowness of this claim to infallibility to every serious student of the

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history of the spiritual education of mankind. As to those who are neither Protestants nor Roman Catholics, or, in other words, those who do not believe in the institution of priestcraft conceived either by the Protestants or the Roman Catholics, *e.g.*, the Non-Conformists, it is expected that they will develop a frame of mind and a moral temper, which will enable them to judge and to act for themselves, independently of the need for any outside help, from the words of Jesus, who is silent on all the problems of life.

Let us, by way of example, find out what the attitude of Jesus is towards the problems raised by monopoly or cornering. In reply to our question, we are referred to the Sermon on the Mount and to the Ten Commandments. But a little thought will make it clear that the rules of morality contained in them are not enough to maintain an equilibrium of the various conflicting interests of our evolved society. The present-day economic chaos (which is but one of the many recurring upheavals with which we are familiar since the rise of the age of capitalism), is due directly to the silence of the Gospels on such institutions as monopoly or cornering. Perhaps our materialistic civilisation and society would have developed in a different direction, if the Church in all its various manifestations had had some clear words from the lips of the Master on monopoly. As remarked, the Sermon on the Mount and the Ten Commandments may be enough to give the leaven of a moral conduct to our daily life, but there is always the possibility of a loophole being left for those who are bent upon indulging their lower nature. We know that there is always an escape for those who wish to have it. But this becomes more serious when there is nothing definite and specific to enable us to control and steady them.

ISLAM, CHRISTIANITY AND MONOPOLY

The thing that differentiates Islam from Christianity is not so much its general principles as its precise expansion of them, so that Islam puts its finger on the disease and names it. All that is mentioned in generic terms in the Sermon on the Mount and the Ten Commandments is further and better evolved in the words of the Qur-án and of Muhammad, wherein it receives a detailed and expansive treatment. The following words on monopoly and cornering which represent an aspect of our economic life will illustrate the meaning of the above observations.

Cornering or monopoly may be regarded as having been indirectly condemned by Jesus, if one were to read his denunciation of the usurpation of the rights of others, but Muhammad condemns not only usurpation of the rights of others in general terms, but condemns monopoly and cornering in explicit terms. The Prophet Muhammad says :

“ One who monopolises and corners foodstuffs for 40 days is removed from the grace of God, and God is away from him. If a stomach passes a night hungry in a small village, then the protection of God is removed from that village.”

“ The importer is fortunate but the monopolist is accursed.”

“ The monopolist and the killer of a human being will be resurrected in the same stage in hell. May God prostrate in hell him who enters into the markets of the Muslims intending to force prices up !”

It is related about ‘Umar ibn al-Khattab, the Second Caliph, that, as he came out of a mosque, he found some foodstuff. He said, “ Who has imported this foodstuff ? May God bless it and may He increase his means !” Someone standing by answered, “ O Leader of the Faithful ! This has not been imported,

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but such and such persons have cornered it and intend to sell it to-day. 'Umar the Great said, "Bring both of them to me." When they came, 'Umar said to them, "May he who monopolises food from Muslims be afflicted with poverty and leprosy!"

It is reported that one of the men promised 'Umar never to corner food and the other opposed and said, "I bought it with my money." It is reported that after the death of 'Umar the fellow was seen to be afflicted with leprosy.

A detailed discussion on this problem will be found in al-Háfiz al Munzirí's book *At-Targhīb wa 't-Tarhib*.

THE QUR-AN AND THE GOSPELS

THE STORY OF ZACHARIAS

The Third Gospel, after a few dedicatory words, opens with an account of the annunciation of the birth of John the Baptist, who is represented as being the son of a priest named Zacharias by a wife named Elizabeth; and we are told that when the story opens they were both old and childless.

The story then runs that on one occasion Zacharias was burning incense in the sanctuary, while many people were praying outside, when an angel appeared to him and said, "Fear not, Zacharias, for thy prayer is heard; and thy wife Elizabeth shall bear thee a son and thou shalt call his name John." The angel also foretold what John should do. Then Zacharias said, "Whereby shall I know this? For I am an old man, and my wife is well-stricken in years." Thereupon the angel told him that he should be dumb until the prediction should be fulfilled, because he believed not the angel's words. Meanwhile the people outside were waiting for Zacharias, and, when he came out, he beckoned to them and could not speak. They thus

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perceived that he had seen a vision in the sanctuary. Then, when the days of his ministration were over, he went home and his wife conceived, and in due course she gave birth to a son : and Zacharias wrote that his name should be John. Thereupon he recovered his speech.

The prayer of Zacharias, alluded to in the first speech of the angel, has not been previously mentioned, but the context shows that the prayer was for a son, and, if Zacharias prayed for a son, he must clearly have thought that he might possibly have one. Nevertheless his question which follows provokes the angel's wrath, and calls down on him a severe sentence of dumbness for at least nine months.

Other difficulties are found in the story, with the result that modern critics all agree in regarding it as unhistorical. The other Canonical Gospels contain no mention of the parents of John the Baptist. Neither do we find the story in any of the existing apocryphal Gospels, although there is an allusion to it in the Protevangelium, where we hear a good deal about Zacharias (Chapters VIII, X, XII, XXII and XXIII) and in Chapter X we read : " At that time Zacharias became speechless, and Samuel was in his stead until Zacharias spoke."

A ray of light, however, is thrown upon this subject by some passages in the Qur-án, although that source of information has remained unnoticed in many critical works (see *The Bible for Young People*, Keim's *Jesus of Nazareth*, Strauss's *Life of Jesus* and Scott's *Life of Jesus*). The story of Zacharias is mentioned three times in the Qur-án. One allusion is found in Sura XXI, Sale, p. 272 ; Rodwell, LXV, 89, 90), where we read :

" And (remember) Zacharias when he called upon his Lord, saying, O Lord, leave me not childless ;

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yet Thou art the best heir. Wherefore We heard him, and We gave him John and We rendered his wife fit (for bearing a child) unto him. These strove to excel in good works, and called upon us with love, and with fear; and humbled themselves before us."

The two other allusions are longer. One occurs in Sura XIX, Sale, p. 248, Rodwell LVIII, 1—12. Here we read in Sale's translation :

"A commemoration of the mercy of thy Lord (towards) His servant Zacharias. When he called upon his Lord, invoking (Him) in secret, and said, 'O Lord, verily my bones are weakened, and my head is become white with hoariness, and I have never been unsuccessful in my prayers to Thee, O Lord. But now I fear my nephews, who are to succeed after me, for my wife is barren, wherefore give me a successor (of my own body) from before Thee, who may be my heir and may be an heir of the family of Jacob; and grant, O Lord, that he may be acceptable (unto Thee).'

"(and the reply came) 'O Zacharias, verily We bring thee tidings of a son, whose name shall be John: We have not caused any to bear the same name before him.' Zacharias said, 'Lord, how shall I have a son, seeing my wife is barren, and I have now arrived at a great age (and am) decrepit?' He said, 'So shall it be, thy Lord saith; this is easy with Me; since I created thee heretofore, when thou wast nothing.' Zacharias answered, 'O Lord, give me a sign.' He said, 'Thy sign (shall be) that thou shalt not speak to men for three nights, although (thou be) in perfect health.' And he went forth unto his people, from the chamber, and he

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made signs unto them (as if he should say),
'Praise ye (God) in the morning and in the evening.'"

The other reference to the story of Zacharias in the Qur-án is in Sura III; Sale, p. 38; Rodwell XCVII, 33 to 36. We there read: "Then Zacharias called on his Lord, and said, 'Lord, give me from Thee a good offering, for Thou art the 'hearer of prayer,' and the angels called to him, while he stood praying in the chamber (saying), 'Verily God promiseth thee (a son named) John, who shall bear witness to the word (which cometh) from God; an honourable person, chaste and one of the righteous prophets.' He answered, 'Lord, how shall I have a son, when old age hath overtaken me and my wife is barren?' (The angel) said, 'So God doth that which He pleaseth.' Zacharias answered, 'Lord give me a sign.' (The angel) said, 'Thy sign shall be, that thou shalt speak unto no man for three days, otherwise than by gesture; remember thy Lord often, and praise Him evening and morning.'"

The story thus told by the Qur-án on two occasions is evidently incomplete, even if we combine the two versions together. It is only at the close of it that we gather that Zacharias had a vision in some chamber, outside of which there were a number of people, whom it was natural for him to address on his coming out. The writer of the Third Gospel has evidently given us a more perfect story. Nevertheless, if we compare the two accounts, we shall find good reason for believing that the Quranic one is the earlier version. We can see how his story might have been converted into the form found in Luke; but no good grounds for converting Luke's story into the form found in the Qur-án. In the Qur-án we have first, what we have not in Luke, a prayer of Zacharias for a son; and this is certainly the natural order in which to narrate the events. The

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prayer is answered by an angel or angels promising him a son. He then asks how he is to have a son, since he is old and his wife is barren. This speech of his is treated as merely a natural remark or an enquiry for directions. The angel answers that God can do whatever He pleases. Zacharias then asks for a sign. The angel answers that the sign shall be that he shall be dumb for three days. The dumbness is inflicted not as a punishment but as a mercy; and he is told to praise God morning and evening; and he beckons to the crowd outside to do so. The story was written, handed down and repeated by Muhammad as an instance of the mercy of God towards His servant Zacharias. God is not represented as being angry, nor Zacharias as being refractory.

The incident of Zacharias asking for a sign is in accordance with a Jewish idea that, whenever God commissions a man to give a message to another, He provides him with a sign as a proof of his Divine commission. (See Isaiah, VII: 11 and Deuteronomy, XIII: 17.) In Judges, VI: 17, we find Gideon asking for a sign from an angel; and in Verses 36 to 40 he asks for two more signs from God Himself and receives them.

At the same time it is clear that the story in the Qur-án is capable of suggesting other thoughts to a reader less versed in Old Testament literature. It is well enough to ask a man for a sign when he pretends to convey a message from God (Matt., XII: 28; Mk., VIII: 11), but it is a different thing to ask an angel for a sign. The appearance of the angel is in itself a sign. Then, when Zacharias appears to be presumptuous in asking an angel for a sign, his first question, being an inquiry how the angel's prediction was to be fulfilled, appears to imply disbelief also. The frame of the story then readily suggested the expedient of converting the three days' dumbness sent as a mercy

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into nine months' dumbness inflicted as a punishment. It was also natural to represent the anger of the angel as being aroused by the first question from Zacharias. His two questions in the Qur-án are therefore rather clumsily rolled into one. We read, "Whereby shall I know this? For I am an old man, and my wife is well-stricken in years." Then, when the Lukian editor has recast this portion of the story and stigmatised Zacharias as incredulous, he naturally omits the prayer of Zacharias at the commencement, which implied that Zacharias thought that he could have a son. Fortunately, however, he has made a slip in his education. He has left the allusion to the prayer of Zacharias in the first speech of the angel: and that allusion lets out the truth and shows that the Lukian account is an adaptation of an earlier story and as we find in the Qur-án.

There is also one other circumstance which favours the view that the writer of the Third Gospel had read the story of Zacharias as told in the Qur-án. It may be taken as settled that the Third Gospel and the Acts of the Apostles were written by the same man (*see* Zeller's "Acts of the Apostles," Part III, B-2), and we find that in the Acts of the Apostles the author represents Saint Paul as being blind for three days on his conversion (Acts, IX : 9). That statement is analogous to the three days' dumbness accorded to Zacharias in the Qur-án. Altogether the story of the birth of Saint John the Baptist may be compared with the stories of the births of Samson, Ishmael, Isaac and Samuel in the Old Testament, and with the stories of the birth of Jesus in the New Testament, and of Mary in the Apocryphal Gospels. We find similar stories in heathen legends also, and see that it was natural to invent such a story in the case of any remarkable character.

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SLAVERY AND ISLAM

BY MAULVI AFTABUD DIN AHMAD

“It is not fit for a Prophet that he should take captives unless he has fought and triumphed in the land ; you desire the frail goods of this world, while Allah desires (for you) the hereafter ; and Allah is Mighty, Wise.” (Ch. 8 : 67.)

Much discussion has raged round the question of slavery as provided for in Islam. Our Christian adversaries have pointed at this as one of the most serious blots on our religion. This has been rebutted by some of our own savants in a forceful manner. It has been rightly pointed out that the first and the last religion that has anything to offer in the mitigation of the rigours of slavery is Islam and that the history of Christianity offers but a poor comparison with that of Islam in this matter. Some have even gone so far as to say that the Muslims could have forestalled modern Christians by abolishing this system altogether if they had continued the spirit of the Prophet Muhammad's legislation. In explaining the retention by the Qur-án of this system, they say that an immediate abolition of the system would have caused an economic unsettlement which would have proved an unbearable burden to Society. On the other hand, the judicious among Christian writers have admitted that the system which passes for slavery under Muslim governments has none of the rigours, not to speak of the horrors, associated with the term in the minds of civilised humanity. And it is exactly here that the central point of the question lies.

As in many other things, Islam retained the term slavery, but gave it a new connotation and legislated accordingly. Unfortunately for the religion and its founder, in the confusion of political changes on the

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advent of Islam and during the period of its material wane, the distinction between the system as upheld by Islam and its counterparts in other religions, was lost sight of and the tangle thus created is still holding the Muslims under its sway.

To get back to the source of the confusion, we must realise that the system known as slavery that existed before Islam and continued alongside with Islam, recognised the capturing of human beings to be sold as slaves. Brigandage and the marauding expeditions of military adventurers found in this a profitable business. Considered philosophically, it would appear to be a perverted form of something which had a moral sanction behind it. And this is another step towards the disentanglement of the issue of slavery in Islam. It is rather striking that some of the best established religious systems of which humanity holds record have sanctioned slavery. So much so that even Christianity, under whose name this system was abolished, found nothing wrong in it so long as it was a living force in the world of religion. There is something in it, and this something is brought within the purview of common understanding by a saying of the Prophet Muhammad in which he invokes the curse of God on the buying and selling of slaves. As in many other things, the Prophet Muhammad seems by this one utterance to have redeemed the traditions of past Prophets with regard to this question of slavery. His utterance, however, should not, as usual, be understood in its absolute sense. He seems to have in his mind a particular kind of dealing in slaves. That he did not mean to abolish the whole system of slavery by this denunciation is shown by the fact that the Qur-*anic* legislation provides for it. Certainly the Prophet could not step beyond the limitations imposed by the Qur-*án*.

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A careful examination of the question will lead us to the conclusion that slavery in some form (*i.e.*, the deprivation of private rights of citizenship) is not only permissible in religion but even a necessity. Maulana Muhammad Ali renders great help to the solution of the question when he suggests in his English Translation of the Qur-án with Commentary, that, when the Qur-án treats the question of slavery, it regards it as a form of war-imprisonment. Now the question arises: If war imprisonment is given the colour of slavery in one age and the Qur-án provides for it, should it not be allowed to exist in subsequent ages? Realising the position of the Qur-án, one should rather think so. Going back to our foregoing findings, we should be inclined to the view that slavery has been sanctioned by religion only in this sense and in no other, and that the irregular capturing of men and women or the selling of stray, stranded and unclaimed individuals as slaves are only a perverted licence of this religious sanction which belongs to all religious communities prior to Islam.

What about the moral justification of this provision then? Has or has not humanity outgrown this necessity? What will be the boundaries within which warfare will justify treating prisoners of war as slaves?

As for the moral justification, to begin with, whatever may be the sentimental attitude of modern humanity towards it, it is a far safer and healthier step than huddling the prisoners together in a prison house. The purpose of all punishments, as we know, is reformation. If you place several criminals together, it never makes for any reformation; it does the reverse. To rectify a perverted mind it must be placed in a healthy surrounding. It is for this reason, it seems, that no religion officially encourages imprisonment even for civil crimes.

SLAVERY AND ISLAM

Unprovoked attack on a peaceful nation is, after all, a political crime upon an international scale. It is a criminal mentality that prompts such an action. Just as there are hardened criminals who create trouble for the nation within which they live, so there are undoubtedly criminals who direct their criminality against those peoples who live outside the pale of their nation. At certain points in history they seize powers of government and compel the nation to support them in their criminal activities against an unoffending nation or nations lying across their borders.

Now, if the nation attacked is strong enough morally and physically to inflict a defeat on these international criminals, the question that remains to be solved is, How to cure this malady of criminality in these aggressors? After all, like all diseases, it must be the product of a certain atmosphere helped by some kind of predilection within these miscreants. Some kind of punishment is needed to remedy this latter malady and some counter-balancing atmosphere for the former. The punishment of any crime, as the Qur-án wisely legislates, should be an evil equal thereunto. If a person or group of persons set out on an adventure to destroy the liberty of others without any provocation, it is only proper that their punishment should be the deprivation of their own liberty. After their capture, if they are kept together, their criminal tendency will tend to continue unabated. One criminal in constant sight and company of many others like himself will never attain to a change of mind. Secondly, deprived of the outside healthy atmosphere of the civil, peaceful and peaceable normal life of the world, the prisoners have no opportunity of absorbing healthier feelings. Thirdly, consigned to the abnormal condition of life in prison houses, their criminal feelings are bound to intensify. The remedy for all this lies in the scattered imprisonment, so to speak,

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of the Qur-ánic system of slavery. The persons concerned are not huddled together in the same stinking moral atmosphere. After all, they are criminals of a higher type and should not be treated like ordinary thieves and swindlers. They are respectable persons in many ways. Their only crime is their raid against the liberty of an innocent people. If they are denied their individual liberty of action, that is punishment enough. Besides, their criminality is mostly the effect of an unhealthy atmosphere. If they are scattered all over a big country, that atmosphere is automatically dispersed around them, and, instead of their persisting in their own vicious outlook on life, they are now exposed to a corrective influence, which it is difficult to resist, unless one be of a most perverse nature. Then come the further incentives to correction in the form of Qur-ánic provisions. Apart from the forfeiture of their private freedom of action, slaves are to be treated as members of the family and to be fed and clothed as such. This shows that their respectable status in their own society is recognised and that they are not to be treated as inferior persons, far less as beasts of burden. Then they can marry and enjoy the blessings of home life. The law in this matter again comes to their help. When married, the wife cannot be separated from the husband and *vice versa*. Further—and this is most important—there is the law of manumission. This provides for the liberation of a slave by his own good conduct and his own efforts. By a very interesting process the so-called slave emancipates himself by earning money with the permission of the master. This in itself is a great incentive to the correction of the culprit. On the top of all comes the recommendation to Society for buying the freedom of deserving persons from private and even state funds. For many a sin and offence the only atonement is the liberation of a deserving slave. So there is

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a perpetual effort on the part of the enslaving nation to liberate these culprits undergoing just imprisonment. This cannot fail to create a corresponding desire for change in the minds of the culprits themselves. The process, however, is effective in absorbing that vicious mentality which makes for aggressive wars which keep the nations of the world in constant danger of being attacked by some such mad group of persons. Like the germs of an epidemic, this tendency of playing havoc with the liberty and prosperity of a nation, is the product of a certain environment and the gathering together of persons with the same kind of susceptibilities. Unless effective measures are taken to disperse that atmosphere, the peace of humanity will be in constant jeopardy. As, however, the formation of this malady is a recurring phenomenon, the steps to fight it must be continuous also. Just as you cannot do away with hospitals, so you cannot do away with the system of humane war-slavery as provided for by the Holy Qur-án.

ISLAMIC REVIEW

RIGHTS OF SMALL NATIONS AND ISLAM

BY SIRDAR IKBAL ALI SHAH

The Muslims have always respected and acknowledged the rights of small nations whether within or without the ambit of their Empire. The time of the Caliph 'Umar the Great, whose rule illustrates so many other facets of Islamic international dealings, is also exemplary in this respect.

In the early part of his reign, the Caliph 'Umar signed a treaty at Jerusalem which is an enlightening example of respect for other people's rights.

"There will be peace and protection," wrote the Caliph, "to the body, soul and property of all men and women of Allah; to the ailing and the physically unfit, to their Crosses and Churches. Their places of worship shall neither be demolished, nor commandeered nor their pious funds touched . . ."

Security of their person and property were guaranteed to them with the same earnestness as it was to the Muslims; so that even a Muslim who might have murdered a non-Muslim had to pay the death-penalty; for it is on record that a Muslim, who had killed a Christian of Hira, was given over to the heir of the murdered man, and paid the penalty.

In regard to the revenue of the land from the smaller non-Muslim States, the Caliph took particular care that the taxes were never more than the capacity of the people to pay, nor were the sums raised by any harsh measures. Every year, ten men from Basra and ten from Kufa were summoned and had to declare upon oath that the rents and taxes had not been collected unjustly.

In the government of the realm, too, the representatives of various smaller nations were enrolled as a matter of justice. When consideration about any

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matters relating to Iraq was undertaken, representatives from non-Arab countries were always asked to give their advice. The same process was adopted concerning Egyptian affairs, when Muqawkas was frequently consulted.

The rights of property and the free existence of a nation were once rigorously emphasised when the peasants of Syria complained that some of their crops had suffered at the hands of the Muslim soldiers. According to the *Kitabul Kharaj* the State had ten thousand dirhems paid to those whose crops had thus suffered.

Once, when the Caliph was returning from Syria, he noticed that two defaulters were being punished. 'Umar had them released immediately saying, "The Muslims are prohibited from maltreating non-Muslim nationals: and they are to abide by the conditions of pacts which have been made with them." In regard to religious worship, the non-Muslims had complete liberty. Their religious leaders had full rights. The Egyptian Patriarch, who, while being hunted by the Byzantines, had no fixed refuge for more than thirteen years, was invited by the Muslims to come back to his country, and the Muslim Commander Amru 'bin al-'As gave him his personal help against the Romans. The Patriarch's throne was installed once again, and the Muslim sword guaranteed its security.

In status, both Muslim and non-Muslim nationals were upon a footing of perfect equality; in fact, the Muslims had to pay much higher taxes. In respect of the payment of old-age pensions both had the same money.

But, perhaps, the most remarkable single token of the regard bestowed by Muslims upon non-Muslim nationals is to be seen in the forbearance shown even

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in cases of revolt or disloyalty of non-Muslims towards the Muslim State. An example of this is furnished by the case of the recalcitrant people of Arbasus, who always intrigued with the Romans against the Muslims. The highest punishment imposed on them was that they were asked to leave and migrate to some other country, while their lands and belongings were bought by the State at double their real value.

The consistent policy of good-neighbourliness and consideration, which the Muslims practised towards the non-Muslim nations, had the desired effect; for there were few, if any, instances in which such small nations failed to help the Caliph's forces in their many battles. No historian can deny that during the battle of Yarmuk, when the Muslim troops left Homs, the Jews held the Torah in their hands and swore upon it saying, "By this we take solemn oath that while we are alive no Romans shall enter here." Likewise the Christians attested, "By God we swear that we love you more than the Romans."

It is, therefore, obvious that, had the treatment of the Muslims not been inspired by the greatest consideration towards non-Muslims, such voluntary expressions of cordiality and practical help would have been impossible.

All this unimpeachable international behaviour of the Muslims is based upon the very definite rules laid down by the Qur-án. "O you who believe," commands the Book, "be upright for Allah, uphold goodness and justice. Hatred towards any nation should not deviate your conduct from justice, for that is the way of righteousness" (Chapter V : 8.)

The commandment enjoins the Muslims to act justly always towards all manner of men—even those not in good accord with them, justice being the supreme key-note of all their dealings with the nations of the

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world, big or small. The several instances already quoted from Islamic history in this review amply prove the contention that Islamic law has ordered a just treatment towards all nations. The leaders of the Faithful have always acted both in the spirit and in the letter of the law.

Having such instances in Islamic history, it is really begging the question to suppose that the Muslim peoples can remain unaffected by the sad fate of the many smaller nations, which have recently suffered at the hands of aggressors.

Had a Muslim king been faced with the same situation as that which confronted the Allies after Munich, his reaction could not have been different from the steps taken by England and France. A Caliph, in such circumstances, would have been compelled, even as the Allies are compelled, to bear the sword, however reluctantly, till the threat to all small nations had been fought out and destroyed: for to protect the rights of small nations has always been the moral duty of Muslims throughout their long history; and, whenever such an occasion has forced them to battle, they have always been strengthened by the knowledge that the cause is just.

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THE MUSLIM STATE IS DEMOCRACY AT ITS BEST

BY SIRDAR IKBAL ALI SHAH

From the beginning to the end of all his actions, a Muslim's life is guided by the Quranic commandment :

“ O ye who believe ! enter into complete submission.” (II : 208.)

This cardinal idea makes the whole world of Islam akin, in the ranks of which no distinction exists in regard to colour, race or material status. Every one is equal in the sight of God. A brotherhood which is based upon no loyalty other than a surrender to Allah is reduced to a perfect uniformity of purpose, all bowing to no law but God's.

But, whereas this principle fixes Islamic Society upon its only pivot, thus producing a unity, the confederacy of Islam is composed of free men as individual units. That they are entirely free is made known to them by the words of the Qur-án saying :

“ Every man is responsible for what he shall have wrought.” (II : 286.)

The policy of Islam, therefore, consists of a system based upon submission to the law, which submission invests the believer with the unlimited prerogatives of a free man. It is but natural that free men should obey that law in order to retain their own liberty of action and thought.

Thus the concept of the Muslim State is the purest form of democracy ; it is a society that operates under a Divine law, and is composed of free men who stand on an equal footing with one another.

The essentials of democracy have been fully preserved even in selecting the leaders of the faithful for acknowledgment of leadership is subject to proper nomination and the approval of the community.

The first Caliph's election was not regarded as

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complete, even though such a pillar of Islam as the Caliph 'Umar had accepted him as leader, till the general following declared their approval the next day. The elective character of the leadership of Islamic democracy was so jealously guarded that, when appointing a Council of Regency, the second Caliph had strictly forbidden his own son's candidature as the third Caliph.

Although the right of nomination of a successor was at a later stage conceded to the Leader of the Faithful, as, for instance, in the case of Harūn-al-Rashid, who named his three sons to succeed him one after the other, yet such a nomination was definitely subject to an election. Even with the might of the Omayyads behind the nomination, it is noteworthy that, out of fourteen Leaders of that dynasty, only four were the sons of those who had themselves been Leaders of the Faithful. It was to defend this very ideal that Sa'id bin Musayyab, an important jurist, refrained from voting in favour of the Caliph Abdul Malik's son during the lifetime of that Leader, lest by so doing he might wrongly influence the free exercise of voting.

The Leader was thus no more than a trustee, installed to safeguard the interests of a democratic government. He had no power to interfere with or alter the law. These limitations of his powers were a complete negation of all dictatorial policy. The leader could be impeached and removed. He must take advice about which the Qur-án lays down a clear injunction :

“ . . . and take counsel with them in the affair . . . ” (III : 158.)

In his discourse to the faithful, Yazid III said :
“ . . . If I do not keep my word, you are free to depose me . . . Should you, however, know a man of tried judgment who willingly offers you what I have

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offered, choose such a one ; and if you so desire, I shall be the first to do him homage, and to render him obedience."

Many of these points are clearly illustrated during the term of office of 'Umar, the second Caliph, who indeed doubtless laid the foundation of Islamic Statecraft, for the very sufficient reason that expansion of the Muslim State, during his time, required much larger practical measures.

The three large Arab (Yemen) principalities of Lakhm, Himyar and Ghassan, then existing, had tribal governments more or less on an elective basis ; but, as the traditional method of electing only the well-established tribal leader had been maintained amongst them, they could not be called truly representative. The Iranian and Roman Empires—the immediate neighbours of the growing Islamic State at the time of 'Umar's Caliphate—were also autocratic and dictatorial. It is, therefore, plain that what 'Umar pursued was neither a reformed version of the pre-Islamic Arab-tribal custom nor a copy of that which obtained near at hand amongst his neighbours ; but 'Umar held out a pure system of democracy on the definite basis of equal partnership in the government of the people by the people.

He recognised only the parliamentary system based on the Quranic injunction : " There can be no Leadership without Council " The procedure was simple. After a special prayer, the faithful assembled at a mosque and, after 'Umar's discourse, discussions on matters of State were freely held. If more important affairs demanded a larger representation—as for instance after the conquest of Iraq and Syria—the assemblage was greater and the sessions considerably prolonged.

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On this occasion the Caliph, addressing the representatives of the people, laid down the limitations of his powers as the Leader in these words: "I do not wish to overburden you with continuing to do what I have asked you to do. I am only as one of you; and I do not desire you to carry out my wishes merely for the reason that they are my wishes."

Further, to define the thoroughly democratic principle of Islamic leadership, 'Umar had proclaimed in an address: ". . . . I have no more right upon your wealth than a guardian of an orphan has upon the wealth of his ward;" which once again emphasises the fact that, in Islam, leadership is a trusteeship on democratic lines, as opposed to dictatorial powers.

"You have rights upon me," continued the Caliph 'Umar, "and you are entitled to demand fulfilment of them from me"

On one occasion a voice of protest resounded in the Assembly, crying out: "Fear God, O 'Umar!" The interrupter was about to be reprimanded for his interruption, when the Caliph intervened remarking:

"Let them lift their voices. If they did not do so, then they would be unappreciative of their free rights. If we did not take notice of their protests, then we should not be doing our duty"

From the foregoing observations it will be seen that the cardinal factor of Islamic teaching is a brotherhood of equality. The progress of Islamic Statecraft for more than a millenium has been on that idea of democracy. That that institution of free thought and action has always been defended by Muslims is a historic fact. Also that its enemy, the institution of dictatorship, has never enjoyed acceptance in Islam is

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likewise true to the extent that autocratic leadership has, time and again, been likened to tyranny—*zulm*—which is tantamount to withholding from man that individual liberty which the believer possesses as his birthright, in virtue of his belief in the Qur-án; for one inalienable attribute of a Muslim citizen is that he is a free man in every possible respect.

A Muslim is a democrat and a defender of the liberty of mankind; he owes allegiance to no dictatorship in any form whatsoever. Whereas democracy to him is an acceptable thing, despotism stands condemned in his eyes as an evil and a sinful practice. He can wish for others no better government than that democracy, which he prefers for himself; for the Holy Prophet Muhammad has said:

“None will be a devout believer till he desires the same for his brother which he desires for himself.”

OBITUARY

We regret to record the death of our Syrian brother, Mr. Selim Kassar, which took place at Lagos, Nigeria.

“Innā lillāhi wa innā ilaihi rāji‘ūn.”

The deceased was one of the early supporters of the Woking Muslim Mission in England and had a business in Manchester. He did not forget his duty to the cause in his last words even and provided £25 for the Mission in his will. May his soul rest in peace! *Amen.*

We desire to express our deepest sympathy and that of the Muslim Community in Great Britain with Mrs. Kassar and other members of the bereaved family.

EXOTERIC AND ESOTERIC SIGNIFICANCE OF
PRAYER IN ISLAM

BY KHAN BAHADUR HAJI B. M. K. LODI

PART III

SURA AL-FATIHA

(THE "OPENING" CHAPTER OF THE QUR-ÁN)

[Continued from Vol. XXV, page 427.]

In the first part of this article (*vide* Vol. XXV, pages 293—301 and 336—339 of the *Islamic Review*), we endeavoured to show what "Prayer" is and ought to be, generally, and we have dealt, in the second part (*vide* Vol. XXV, pages 379—387 and 421—427 of the same), with certain distinctive characteristics of a Muslim's prayer—"Saláh." Yet we feel that no explanation of the subject will be complete without a reference to *that* Prayer with which the Qur-án begins its weighty pages, and with which starts a Muslim's *Saláh* as well. It is this:

"(All) Praise be to Allah, the Lord of the worlds,
The Beneficent, the Merciful.
Owner of the day of Judgment;
Thee (alone) we worship; Thee alone we ask
for help.
Show us the right path,
The path of those whom Thou hast favoured;
Not (the path) of those who earn Thy anger,
nor of those who go astray."*

In these seven verses lie dormant the essential elements of Prayer—*viz.*, (1) Adoration, (2) Submission, (3) Supplication. Speaking of the Prayer as a whole, its outlook is broad, cosmopolitan and universal, its structure and language simple, but pregnant with meaning. It is most beautiful, most sweet, and ideal, a model prayer for all—Muslims and non-Muslims

* Translation by Marmaduke Pickthall.

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alike. We shall search in vain for a more sublime prayer either in the Qur-án or in any of the foreign Scriptures of the world. There is no doubt that, in every theistic creed, there is a prayer addressed to God, and He is addressed in some form or other, but let the readers compare the Quranic prayer with any other, for instance the well-known Lord's Prayer, and see for themselves if the Islamic would not "get the palm of victory."* We shall deal with the Christian prayer in detail on a future occasion. The Prayers in the remaining religions are, as far as we have ascertained, of quite a different character, not capable of admitting any useful comparison with the Quranic prayer.

A question will then arise : What are the distinctive features of the Quranic prayer which distinguish it from those of all other systems and make it unrivalled and unassailable ? The answer will be found in the following paragraphs and let the verdict be held in abeyance until the last word of this article is read.

The Prayer under discussion is the *first* chapter of the Qur-án ; it is its basis ; it is its "opening," it opens the entire contents of the Book. It is its essence, quintessence contained in a nutshell, which, when unfolded, represents the Qur-án itself. So it is called in Arabic : *Fátihat-ul Kitáb, Ummul Kitáb*, and so on. It is, in other words, so comprehensive, so all-embracing in significance, that it reflects by itself the spirit of the Qur-án. To put it in another way, the purport of the 6,666 verses, which the Qur-án contains, remains condensed in the *seven* verses of its first chapter. Only he who has read the Qur-án can appreciate this fact. For others, we will briefly explain what the Qur-án stands for. It is devoted mainly :

- (1) To declare the Unity, Greatness and Glory of God ;

* *Christianity* by B. C. Bose, Calcutta.

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- (2) To inculcate the worship of that *one* God, and of no other ;
- (3) To explain the fundamental principles of faith in God, and of entire submission to His will ;
- (4) To the exposition of the relationship that exists between man and God ;
- (5) To emphasise the existence of a life beyond the grave, when the results of the present life will be unfolded individually before each and every soul, and reckoned, weighed and suitably requited, subject to the dispensation of the merciful aspect of the Requirer—an oft-repeated chorus in the Qur-án ; and
- (6) In the interests of man's final salvation, to show him the "right path" that he may reach his *summum-bonum* with ease. Thus the end and aim of the Qur-án are to define the principles and prescribe the law of Rectitude and its first chapter is only an epitome of all these themes, is a signpost to the right path and points to that path.

It is not only an epitome, but it is an *advance* summary as it were ; that is, it is not a summary of the Qur-án which concludes its teachings and exhortations, but it precedes them. It is one of the earliest Meccan revelations and it was revealed at a time when its Revealer thought it fit to subject the Muslim community even from its infancy to a strict spiritual discipline, and when prayer was accordingly systematised and made compulsory. Can any non-Muslims lay their hands on their religious literature and point out a single other instance in which a true summary of the voluminous work, whether Divine or apocryphal, that was to appear later on, was ever issued in advance, and in a nutshell ? If not they have to acknowledge without any reserve that no human brain, much less that of unlettered Arab

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of the 6th century A.D. (Muhammad) could have conceived and composed an advance summary of the Qur-án, like that which lies latent in its first chapter.

It is, again, a summary that suggests, when unfolded, expanded and properly interpreted, as it has been by certain erudite Islamic Theologians and Savants like Imam Fakhruddin Razi, as many as 10,000 metaphysical questions. Hazrat Ali, son-in-law of the Prophet Muhammad, said that he could write 70 camel-loads of commentary on this chapter; and, in fact, volumes have been written, and could still be written, on the exegesis of each of the verses of the Prayer and of each of its words. Every word would appear as if it was weighed before it was used, and every word is "marvellously terse and comprehensive," and every word is pregnant with meaning.

Non-Muslims will ask, and naturally, too, if the above statements are true and can be substantiated, or if they are not merely an exaggeration by a Muslim "having all the predilections and inclinations which his mind must possess for the religion in which he was born, and for the religion he advocates." Far from it; but we will ask for an open-mind and a dispassionate consideration of the following facts before they come to a conclusion.

The very structure of the Prayer would disclose certain extraordinary beauties which would compel an unstinted admiration and appreciation at the hands of its readers. First of all, they will notice on a mere cursory reading that the seven verses when read together form a complete unity by themselves. The next is, as appreciated by a foreign translator and critic of the Qur-án (Rodwell), the peculiar and uncommon characteristic of its composition in *rhyming prose* with which the Qur-án is replete. That the Qur-án is "the masterpiece of rhymed prose" is the

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uniform opinion of both the Eastern and Western writers (*vide* "History of Arabic Literature," by Clement Huart). The rhythmic fall of the voice at the end of sentences, or what they call "the cadence of sentence" in composition, is gracefully acknowledged by Sale in the following words: "He must have a very bad ear who is not uncommonly moved with the very cadence of well-tuned sentences."

(Preliminary Discourse to his Translation.)—"The symphony is inimitable, the very sounds of which move the readers to tears and ecstasy." (*Marmaduke Pickthall*.) This rhythmic, symphonious, and touching composition of the Qur-án is reflected in its entirety in its very first chapter; else it would be failing to serve as its "opening," a worthy opening of a worthy Book.

Let us next cast a bird's-eye-view on the general contents of this Prayer. It starts with a *praise* of God (Verse 1), as the first words of a prayer must necessarily consist of "praise," though God—the Immortal—is beyond the praise of a mortal. Nor will any amount of praise of His glory and greatness, nor any amount of tribute of gratitude to His bounty and grace, be adequate and perfect. The human language is weak, and human expression limited; but never is God in need of praise. He is "self-sufficient" (*Al-Ghani*). Praise or no praise is all the same to Him; and yet we praise Him. Man is by *nature* religiously constituted, he is created to worship (Qur-án, LI: 56); he is "an animal of worship"; and it is, therefore, in his inherent nature to praise and pray to God; he does so in his own interest, for his own spiritual salvation. His future (eternal) concerns him more than his present (temporal).

The remaining ideas in the Prayer, that follow the "Praise of God," run through it in a logical sequence.

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The praise of God brings the praiser a step nearer to the Prayed, and impels him to think at once of His great and glorious attributes. But they are many, and it will be no exaggeration to say that they are as many, if not more than, the sands of a seashore, or the drops of an ocean. While they are thus too numerous to count, the magnitude of each attribute is so inconceivable that it deceives and escapes the finite intelligence of man. A few, however, are uppermost in his mind, as covering the entire sphere of God's activities and as constituting the all-compassing nature of Providence, with care, beneficence and unbounded love for all His creation, and calculated, as well, to meet the ends of man—material and spiritual. They are: (1) His Lordship (end of Verse 1); (2) His Beneficence; (3) His Mercy (both in verse 2); and (4) Requit (Verse 3). The remembrance of God and of God's attributes leads the man so remembering to the next higher step, *i.e.*, a craving to *worship* Him (Verse 4), and he accordingly assumes a worshipful attitude. At the same time, he realises and acknowledges the truth that there is only *One* Supreme Being worthy of worship, and *none else*, as emphasised in Verse 4. He also realises that his self is only a humble and needy creation indispensably depending on the volition of that Being for help, and he therefore seeks His aid and *His aid only* (as is again emphasised) in things that matter to him (Verse 4, 2nd part). Finally, he prays for guidance—to be guided along the "right path" (Verse 5) that he may not wander about aimlessly. With a mere knowledge of the right path, he is not satisfied; he is anxious to be kept up in, and led along, that path alone, and he prays accordingly.

(*To be continued*).

CORRESPONDENCE

MORE DEMANDS FOR THE HOLY QUR-AN

ORPINGTON, KENT.

December 26, 1939.

THE IMAM,

THE SHAH JEHAN MOSQUE, WOKING.

REVEREND SIR,

It is some time since I wrote to you last and, in the meantime, I have been turning over in my mind the idea of Islam being the Faith which I stand in this life.

When I think of Islam, it creates in the mind a picture of religion as it should be, but not, unfortunately, in this country.

I have also read the booklet you sent me, "What Is Islam?", and have attempted to reform myself. So far I am only in the initial stage, but I mean to continue trying.

As to reading the Holy Qur-án, I have possession of a translation by G. Sale, but I should much prefer a translation by a Muslim, and if you would be good enough to name a few titles in your next letter, I should be much obliged.

In the meantime,

I remain,
Yours faithfully,
(MR.) T. WAGON.

WEST KENSINGTON,

LONDON, W. 14.

December 31, 1939.

THE IMAM,

THE MOSQUE, WOKING.

DEAR SIR,

Yesterday, at the reception at 18 Eccleston Square, you very kindly promised to loan me a copy of the Holy Qur-án.

I should be greatly obliged if you would be able to do so.

Yours sincerely,
F. TOYNTON.

NEW ZEALAND.

10th January, 1940.

THE IMAM,

THE MOSQUE,

WOKING, ENGLAND.

DEAR SIR,

Will you please post me "The Religion of Jesus and Traditional Christianity," also booklet, etc., to the value of 2/6, dealing with Islam and Jewry, and Islam and Christianity?

Myself I do not believe that the Christian religion as taught has any resemblance to the teachings of Jesus. The so-called Christianity is the upshot of the teachings of Paul, a well-meaning but fanatical Jewish convert. The teachings of Jesus became perverted immediately upon his death—and much since—deliberately. It was the leaders of Jewry against whom he rebelled and sought to turn the Jewish masses, who caused the Romans to crucify him. He knew too much concerning their devilish power which shews itself to-day in the International Usury System which they operate as against their enemies—Muhammadans, Christians and Jewish masses alike. Their Capitalism breeds Communism—which is a wolf in sheep's clothing.

ISLAMIC REVIEW

Are you acquainted with any secrets of the Talmud? If so, will you kindly send me a few (authentic) extracts therefrom—particularly with reference to the Ark of the Covenant and Usury?

I am full of sympathy for the Arabs and know of the enormous principle underlying that for which they are fighting. We English are but the stupid pawns of the Jews and it will be fatal for the world if they regain their Zion. The Houses of Judah (and Benjamin) are the very Devil (John, 8:44). I do not think salvation will come from Fascism any more than Communism—it will come only from obedience to the true teachings of Jesus which are, I hope, those of Muhammad. There should be no conflict between the true Muhammadan and the true Christian. The latter is so hard to find, I know, because, as I say, the teachings of Jesus have become so permeated with, and perverted by, Judaism, that an altogether different religion, called "Christianity," has sprung up.

I would sincerely ask you to make yourself acquainted with the philosophy of Social Credit as laid down by Major Douglas. I feel that you would soon agree with me that in it lies the way out of the impasse of which the world is a victim and for which the leaders of the Jewry are responsible.

Yours truly,
H. S. N.

EAST CANNINGTON,
WESTERN AUSTRALIA.
10th January, 1940.

THE SECRETARY,
THE MOSQUE, WOKING, SURREY.

DEAR SIR,

In the "Enquirer," the London English Unitarian paper, I have seen your advertisement offering free literature to those interested. I would appreciate it if you would send me some of this literature.

I am a Congregational Minister and I preach also for a little Unitarian Fellowship in Perth. I seek to worship God and serve my fellowmen according to the teaching and example of Jesus, but I do not accept Orthodox Trinitarian Theology. I believe that we of the various faiths have much to share with one another, and that we can learn from all the great Prophets of religion. I believe that we should all be loyal to the truth as we understand it, but we have enough in common to appreciate and help the work of all who are fellow-worshippers of God.

Any literature you can send will be appreciated, and will be passed on to others who may be interested. As I have said, I believe we of the various faiths should work together to witness for God, truth and brotherhood.

Please accept my sincere good wishes, in which our Unitarian Fellowship here would join.

I am,
Yours very sincerely,
R. H. F.

[To this gentleman, a copy of the Islamic Review for December, 1932, in which an article "What Does Muhammad Say About Jesus?" by Earle Power appeared, and a copy of "Religion of Jesus and Traditional Christianity," by the late Al-Hajj Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din, were sent.—Ed., I. R.]

CORRESPONDENCE

SOUTHAMPTON,
14th January, 1940.

THE IMAM,
THE MOSQUE, WOKING.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I am so sorry I cannot find your last letter at the moment, and I have forgotten how to spell your name—please forgive me.

It is indeed good of you to invite me to join in your festival—but since Christmas I have been laid up with a sprained ankle and cannot even get to work—but I shall be with you in spirit as I was on the 13th November—I felt I was in your prayers—and I was happy.

Will you do me a great favour, please? I wonder if you would send me The Koran—just a little one—one that I can carry in my handbag—you see I can read and study it quietly now that I am laid up—also I have a great urge to have it—and will you please write in it for me and ask Allah to bless me?

The other day I had a letter from an old friend—he is a very good man—over 70—and has been a Roman Catholic for 40 years—he is so happy in his Faith—he was very severe with me and said that I was unhappy because I would not receive the Holy Sacrament and said I deserved to be miserable—and called me wayward and said I preferred my own way to God's—and I know if I took the Sacrament it would only soon be a piece of bread to me—I don't want to eat God—the whole idea to me is horrible—indeed a blasphemous act—I do not say that people who do take it in reverence do not get a special blessing—I only know I should not—I did not argue with him—but, being not well I suppose, I felt crushed—for it was rather like shouting angrily to a dog saying: "You bad dog, come in at once!" The next morning your invitation came—and I felt comforted—my friend is good and kind—but his religion terrifies me—and I do feel that the Jesus Christ whom I love is much more likely to be found in your company than in the church they name after Him.

Will you please give me a list of the names of the books I ought to get from the Library to study? I want a life of your Prophet—and to know all about your Feasts and Fasts and everything—please!

I know you won't mind my asking you all this—and I hope you are well.

With all fragrant thoughts,

Yours sincerely,
E. W.

HORNSEY ROAD,
LONDON, N. 19.
23rd January, 1940.

THE IMAM,
THE MOSQUE, WOKING.

DEAR SIR,

Seeing your advertisement in the "Enquirer," I shall be pleased if you will send me some information such as "What is Islam?" I am interested in the various forms of Religion. I have been a member of the Highgate Unitarian Church for some years.

Yours respectfully,
F. LAMBERT.

ISLAMIC REVIEW

ABBAY HOUSE,
2 TO 8 VICTORIA STREET,
LONDON, S.W.1
23rd, January 1940.

THE IMAM,
THE MOSQUE, WOKING.
DEAR IMAM SAHIB,

We are so very grateful to you for your address yesterday afternoon. You showed most admirably how Islam could help forward the object the Congress has in view—the promotion of the spirit of fellowship.

With many thanks,
Believe me,
Yours sincerely,
(SIR) FRANCIS YOUNGHUSBAND,
President,
The World Congress of Faiths, London.

GUILDFORD:
22nd January, 1940.

THE IMAM,
THE MOSQUE, WOKING.
DEAR IMAM SAHIB,

I feel I must write you a few lines to thank you for Miss Arlette and myself for your most kind invitation; we are most glad to have been present at such a wonderful gathering, and we thank you again for all your kindness.

Most sincerely yours,
ELSWIN MONTGOMERIE.

THE IMAM,
THE MOSQUE, WOKING.

SOUTH CROYDON,
SURREY.
23rd January, 1940.

YOUR EMINENCE,

May I take this somewhat belated opportunity of expressing my gratitude to you for having allowed me to be present at the Festival on Saturday? Not only was it a unique and extremely interesting experience for me, but your allowing me to be there was an honour which I appreciate very much.

Yours sincerely,
HUGH R. LEECH.

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"The Madras Mail," Madras—

"Articles of 'Al-Hadis' with English translation side by side dealing with reasonable exposition of Sharia are excellent. Introduction dealing with origin, collection and brief history of Hadis literature is most valuable. The translation will be of inestimable value to the English knowing world. This is an important book also for students of Arabic literature and for those who wish to know Arabic and English combined and comprehend Islamic principles. The author, a great Arabic Scholar, has travelled the holy places of Islam in connection with his work and consulted the leading Ulama. The book is his life's work."

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