

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ  
نَحْمَدُهُ وَنُصَلِّي عَلَى رَسُولِهِ الْكَرِيمِ

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## THE HOLY QUR-ÁN

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## NOTES

### Muhammad or Jesus Christ?

It is one of the characteristics of the Christian missionaries that they use emotional expressions in speech or writing words to appeal to sentimentality. They give every point at issue a tinge of sentiment and thus make it difficult, if not impossible, for an average reader to study the question with an unbiased mind. They seek refuge in PERSONALITIES. Instead of discussing the merits and demerits of Christian dogmas, they begin to draw comparison between "Muhammad and Jesus Christ." They begin to propound the formula that the question of Christianity versus Islam is nothing more than the question of Jesus Christ versus Muhammad. Thus we have in the editorial pages of the *Moslem World* for October 1920:—

"To those who know the religion of Crescent, therefore, it is not surprising that there is an Eastern question—many Eastern questions—all summed up, however, in this one: Muhammad or Christ?"

Dr. Zwemer, we are sure, must be knowing this simple fact regarding Islam, that it does not recognize any invidious distinctions between prophets to which he has alluded in those lines. On the contrary, the Muslims are bound to believe and revere Jesus Christ as a true prophet of God, as they do Muhammad (may peace and blessings of God be upon them). Therefore the question is NOT "Muhammad or Christ," but "Church or Christ." The Muslims hold that teachings of the so-called "Christianity" of to-day are quite against the teachings of Jesus Christ. If the editor of the *Muslim World* can prove EVEN FROM THE BIBLE that the dogmas of Crucifixion and Atonement are in keeping with the teachings of Jesus Christ, he will lay the whole Christendom under a deep debt of gratitude.

### Frenzy of a Giddy Head.

It is a matter of common observation that a haughty man in the heyday of his life sometimes loses the balance of his mind and utters such words which indicate that he is posing as one possessing of some higher powers than an ordinary mortal. Some fifteen or sixteen years ago the KAISER, giving his views on divine revelation and manifestation, is reported to have said:—

"To promote man's development, God has revealed Himself in man; whether he be priest or king, whether heathen, Jew or Christian. So in Moses, Abraham, Homer, Charlemagne, Luther, Shakespeare, Goethe, Kant and the Emperor William the Great, whom God thus sought, ought to achieve imperishable results. His grandfather often said that he was an instrument in God's hands."

## SLAVERY

It is evident from these lines, that if the Emperor of Germany had really "achieved the imperishable results" in winning the war, he would have assuredly posed as the Prophet or perhaps the very *incarnation of God*. And in that case the truth of the so many righteous servants of Allah who had declared themselves as the Prophets or messengers of God, would have dwindled away: there would have been no distinction between truth and falsehood, between hallucination of a heated mind and God's revelation.

It is a significant fact that the Emperor of Germany, with all its material resources at his back, speaks out such words, and the result is that his Empire is almost crushed and he himself is reduced to such plight that he is obliged to seek refuge in a foreign country. Whereas, the Prophets who are raised by Almighty God are weak and humble in the beginning of their life, and in that state of helplessness when the opposition is the strongest, they emphatically foretell the success of their cause and the destruction of their enemies; and the things come to pass exactly in the same manner. This is the sure sign of the existence of God and His Apostles' truth.

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## SLAVERY

### III

By KHWAJA NAZIR AHMAD

*(Continued from the December number)*

#### **Position of Slaves under Islam.**

I HAVE traced the position of slaves from the times when humanity had not risen to the full appreciation of the reciprocal rights and duties of man; when might was right; when will of the strong was the rule of life of the weak; when absolute power was granted to the superiors over the inferiors, to the present times when we find ourselves in a more *civilized* world.

Slavery existed among all nations and died away with the progress of human thought and sense of justice among mankind. In spite of its inherent injustice, it is coeval with human existence. Its traces are visible in all the stages of history. It was developed in a savage state of society, and it continued to flourish even when the progress of material civilization had done away with its necessity.

The Greeks, the Romans, the ancient Germans, the Israelites, the people whose legal and social institutions have mostly affected our manners and customs, not only

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recognized, but also practised slavery without the least regard for the servile class.

I have already established that Christianity did neither raise any protest against slavery, nor inculcate any principle for the mitigation of this evil. There are, certainly, in the New Testament a few injunctions to the slave-owners, and certain remarks with regard to the disobedience of slaves.<sup>1</sup> But the Bible does not contain any passage expressing disapproval of bondage. On the contrary, Christianity enjoined on the slave absolute submission to the will of his master. It recognized and adopted the system without any endeavour to mitigate its baneful character, or even to promote the status of slaves. The slaves under the Romans were regarded merely as chattels. They remained so under the Christian domination. Their masters possessed the power of life and death over them. In spite of the changes and improvements introduced by the various Roman Emperors, *before Christianity became the state religion*, the slaves were absolutely subject to the will of their masters. They were tortured and subjected to lashings for the most trivial faults. The introduction of Christianity only affected the institution in its relations to the priesthood. Milman, in his *Latin Christianity*, tells us that a slave could be free, if claimed within three years, by adopting monachism. But in other respects, slavery flourished as much as in the pagan times. He further tells us that the Digest, compiled under a Christian emperor, pronounced slavery to be the law of nature, and the code fixed the price of slaves, according to the professions for which they were bought. Marriages, we are told, between slaves were not legal, and between the slave and the free were forbidden under frightful penalties. One of the various punishments was that if a free married a slave, the person was put to death and the slave burnt alive. *The natural result was the unrestrained concubinage, which even the clergy recognized and practised.*<sup>2</sup>

Later on, besides personal slavery, terrible servitude became general in practice. Stephen's *Commentaries on the Laws of England* clearly show the effect of the various rights of lords over their vassals and serfs to be a frightful picture of moral depravity and degradation. In the custom of *culige*, the lords possessed one of the most disgusting privileges. This custom ultimately gave rise to the law of inheritance prevalent in some English counties, and known as the Borough-English.

Christianity had utterly failed in abolishing slavery or alleviating its evils. The Church itself held slaves, and recognized openly its lawfulness. Under this influence

<sup>1</sup> Ephesians vi. 5; 1 Timothy iv. 1-2, vi. 5; Titus ii. 9; Peter ii. 18, etc., etc.

<sup>2</sup> Also see Du Cange's *Concubina*.

## SLAVERY

the Western civilization has upheld slavery, and has argued for its usefulness in preventing the increase of pauperism and theft.<sup>1</sup> It was this very influence that induced the well advanced and highly cultured Christians of North America to shed torrents of blood for the maintenance of the supply of slaves. It was, indeed, with these high ideas that they practised the grossest inhumanities upon the unfortunate creatures whom they held as slaves. The *white* Christian could never legitimize the issue of his illicit connections with his female slave. With her he could never contract a union. Christianity entirely failed to grasp the spirit of brotherhood of man proclaimed by Jesus. The black co-religionist may be equal to the *white* Christian in the kingdom of heaven, but certainly not in this kingdom of earth.

Let us now see what Islam has done for slaves. To begin with, Islam does not recognize the geographical limits. It condemns the distinction of creed and colour. Wherever the believers are and whatever their occupation is, they stand equal in the sight of God and their co-religionists. May they be prophets, slaves or emperors, they are on the same level. It is only their actions, and the *fruits* they bear, which make any difference in this or the world to come.

Thus Islam dealt a death-blow to, and eventually abolished, the institution of slavery. But for the deep-root it had taken among the surrounding nations and human mind, it would have completely vanished from the pages of the later history.

The period during which the laws, precepts and teachings of Islam were promulgated extended well over twenty years. It has been rightly contended and is naturally to be expected that many of the pre-Islamic institutions, which were ultimately abolished, were at first either tacitly permitted or silently tolerated. Slavery, too, was in one of these categories. It was not considered an evil, but was, on the other hand, thought to be a necessary institution, created by certain social and political conditions of the ancient society. In fact, it was a more humane substitute for the indiscriminate massacre of the vanquished enemy. The sudden abolition of slavery would not only have placed the world in general, and Arabia in particular, in the danger of a social disorder but, also, would have been severely injurious both to masters and slaves. The vast slave population, who had been degraded for generations, would have proved, if suddenly set free, dangerous to society, morally as well as socially. They would have, owing to their poverty, gained nothing from their freedom, but would have turned into vagabonds and beggars. Further, it

<sup>1</sup> Pufendorff's *Law of Nature of Nations* ; Pothier's *Statu Servorum*, etc.

would have produced an utter collapse of the infant commonwealth.

Gradual enfranchisement of slaves was the only course to be adopted. The extinction of this institution was only to be achieved by the continued agency of humane and wise laws, and not by the sudden and entire emancipation of the existing slaves, which was morally and economically impossible. The object of Islam, therefore, was to better the condition of slaves, to educate them, to make them aware of the dignity of human nature; in fact, to bring them to a level with their masters and then to emancipate them. Thus establishing the true and perfect brotherhood of man, Islam uprooted slavery. Even the Christian authorities, as already shown, had to admit that the Moslem brotherhood was real and a living force.<sup>1</sup>

If the main object of abolishing slavery is to lessen the severity of the barbarous actions of masters in exacting service from their fellow-beings and to raise the slaves from the degradation to an equal footing, then, without the least fear of refutation, it can be stated that Christendom has failed to attain these objects. Christianity is decidedly far behind Islam in its realization of the true relations of a master and slave. With the advent of Islam the relations of a master with his servant or slave became those of a brother to a brother. The master, whether of a humbler rank or of the highest dignitaries in the land, shared in his slave's humble services, while the slave participated in his master's dignity. Slavery, with its meaning that it conveys to the West, along with proletarianism, vanished under the wholesome influence of Islam. In the words of a great Eastern poet: there was no slave or master; they were all brothers of one family.

It is strange indeed that in the face of these facts Islam is blamed in the West for upholding the baneful institution of slavery. "It is most unfortunate," says Lake, in his *Islam, its Origin, Genius and Mission*, that "we are still looking at Islam through the spectacles of the Middle Ages. The intermittent efforts that have been made from Maimonides, to illustrate its history and principles, have had but little effect on the general mind, and while some classes are perfectly innocent of any information regarding it, others exhibit towards it all the bitterness of mediæval rancour." That Islam has been misrepresented and deliberately abused for religious as well as political objects, is not a new thing. Slavery, like many other disgusting institutions prevalent in the West at one time or another, has been falsely attributed to Islam by the Christian statesmen and missionaries. Has the Holy Qur-án or Mohammad (may blessings of Allah be upon him) in theory or practice

<sup>1</sup> *Encyclopædia Biblica*.

## SLAVERY

encouraged or permitted slavery in any form? No! On the other hand, it is explicitly laid down that the then existing slaves should be emancipated for certain sins of omission.<sup>1</sup>

The question that strikes an impartial mind at the very beginning is: whether or not Islam enjoined slavery as a permanent institution? If not, then what has it done to abolish it? It has often been erroneously said by the opponents of Islam that since the Holy Qur-án enjoins kind treatment to slaves and their emancipation, the necessary inference is that slavery is a permanent institution in Islam. But they forget the simple truth that the commandments of Islam were revealed gradually, in keeping with the different stages of society. In the first the kind treatment of slaves was enjoined, and then the entire abolition of slavery was effected. Such is the case with regard to the prohibition of wine. Islam did not "consecrate" slavery, but provided in every way for its abolition and extinction by circumscribing, not only the powers of masters to next to nothing, but also the means of possession within the narrowest limits. Islam cleared the way for the abolition of slavery, and allowed its continuance for some time, as its sudden abolition was fraught with evil consequences. Karmath, who flourished in the tenth century of the Christian era, was the first to proclaim to the world that Islam forbade slavery.

The statement that Islam, in spite of ordaining the emancipation of slaves, did not put a check to the sources of slavery or prohibit making new slaves is without any foundation. As regards the war prisoners, it has been admitted even by the adverse critics to be an absolute necessity for the safety of the Muslim Commonwealth. There is not any provision sanctioning any free man to be enslaved, or to purchase or kidnapping of a free man with the object of enthralling him. On the contrary, the Holy Qur-án not only encourages but ordains the emancipation of slaves. Mohammad (may blessings of Allah be upon him) himself was the first to put an end to this baneful institution. He not only enfranchized the fugitives of other countries, but also in most cases set free his deadly enemies, who, if it had been in their power would have slain him brutally.

The emancipation of slaves and the enslaving of free men are entirely two different things. One is opposed to the other. The Holy Qur-án has most clearly supported the former, and thus by so doing has condemned the latter. Slave-lifting and slave-dealing, sanctified by Judaism and patronized by dominant Christianity,<sup>2</sup> was absolutely for-

<sup>1</sup> Lane's *Arabian Nights*; Hugh's *Dictionary of Islam*.

<sup>2</sup> The English Protestants sold the Irish, after the massacre of Drogheda by Cromwell, and the suppression of the insurrection in Ireland, men and

bidden by Islam. Men who dealt in slaves, according to an authentic and well-known tradition from Imam Jaafar-as-Sadiq, were declared to be the outcast. It was forbidden in absolute terms to reduce Muslims to slavery. In the Holy Qur-án it is clearly laid down that robbing a man of his liberty, or an orphan or a poor man of his food, is a transgression of commandments.<sup>1</sup> It is also mentioned in various other places that it is an act of charity to "give away wealth out of love for Him to the near of kin and the orphan and the wayfarer and the beggar, and for the emancipation of the *captives*, and keep up prayers, and pay the poor-rate; and the performers of their promise when they make a promise, and the patient in distress and afflictions. . . ." Thus, according to this passage, the Muslims are explicitly ordained to spend a part of the poor-rates for the emancipation of captives. Therefore, in the sight of God, according to the Holy Qur-án, it is a good deed to free slaves; and consequently to enslave free men is a sin. That the reducing of free men to slavery was strictly forbidden by the Muslim law is pre-eminently borne out by the most authentic traditions. In the *Bukhari*, the only chapter dealing with slavery is entitled: "The Emancipation of Slaves and its Excellence." Abu Huraira, reporting the following saying of the Holy Prophet, throws further light on the subject: "Almighty God says that there are three sorts of men whose adversary He will be on the day of Judgment, *viz.*, the man who makes an agreement in God's name and breaks it; and the man who sells a free man and appropriates his price (and, according to the report of Abdullah, son of Omar, the man who enslaves a free man), and the man who employs a labourer to do some work and when he has done it withholds payment of his wages."

From all that I have said it is quite clear that Islam condemns the practice of slavery. The Holy Prophet had to fight many battles in his life-time. The passages in the Holy Qur-án referring to these incidents are the only cases where prisoners of war are allowed to be taken. Here we are told that the prisoner of war could only be taken after meeting the enemy in a regular battle. The Holy Qur-án always speaks of "slaves" as "those whom your right hand has acquired," indicating thus the only means of acquisition of slaves. It recognized, in fact, only one kind of slavery—that of men made captives in *bona fide* lawful warfare. "So when you meet in battle, . . . then make (them) prisoners, and afterwards set them free as a favour or let them ransom (themselves) until the war terminates."<sup>2</sup> Here the Holy

women to the colonists in Virginia, Pennsylvania, and other places. The same fate befell the vanquished of Monmouth's rebellion.

<sup>1</sup> The Holy Qur-án, xc. 11-15.

<sup>2</sup> The Holy Qur-án, ii. 177.



## SLAVERY

Book states in clear words a comprehensive rule that the prisoners of war are *not* to be reduced to everlasting servitude, but are to be set free either as an act of generosity or on receipt of a ransom. The Book does not theorize or deal in vague platitudes, but lays down strict rules. It, if these means fail to secure the eventual enfranchisement of the captives, appeals to the pious feelings of the Muslims and attaches onerous responsibilities to the possession of captives. There is not a single passage which the adverse critics can point to which may lead to the conclusion that the prisoners of war were to be at once reduced to slavery. It was the former alternative, i.e. setting free of the captives, that the Holy Prophet adopted in most cases; e.g. after the battle with Bani Mustaliq, one hundred families were set free. In the case of Hawazin six hundred prisoners of war were set at liberty merely as an act of favour. When Islam was in its infancy, redemption was taken from the prisoners taken at the battle of Badr. All that can be asserted with any degree of certainty is that out of about nineteen battles and skirmishes which the Holy Prophet had to fight, the prisoners of war were set free on all but two occasions. On both these occasions the Holy Prophet had to deal with the Jews. Gibbon, in his *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, while commenting on the fairness of the treatment of the Holy Prophet to the Jews, says: "Mahomet might appeal with more propriety to the example of Moses, of the judges, and the kings of Israel. The military laws of the Hebrews are still more rigid than those of the Arabian legislator.<sup>2</sup> The Lord of Hosts marched in person before the Jews; if a city resisted their summons, the males, without distinction, were put to sword; the seven nations of Canaan were devoted to destruction; and neither repentance nor conversion could shield them from the inevitable doom that no creature within their precincts should be left alive. The fair option of friendship, or submission, or battle, was proposed to the enemies of Mahomet . . . he seldom trampled on a prostrate enemy; and he seems to promise that, on the payment of tribute, the least guilty of his unbelieving subjects might be indulged in their worship, or at least in their imperfect faith."

The first of these two cases was that of the Korezites of Medina, who had twice treacherously betrayed the Muslims. They were reduced, according to their own choice, to a state of subjugation which I am compelled for want of a

<sup>1</sup> The Holy Qur-án, xlvii. 4.

<sup>2</sup> The tenth and twentieth chapters of Deuteronomy, with the practical comments of Joshua, David, etc., are read with more awe than satisfaction by the pious Christian of the present age. But the bishops, as well as the rabbis of former times, have beat the drum-ecclesiastic with pleasure and success (Sale's *Preliminary Discourse*).

better name to term as slavery. They, having failed to acquit themselves of the charges, relied on the judgement of Sa'd, son of Ma'az, and were dealt with in accordance to his verdict. In the other case, several prisoners were made from the Jews at Khaiber, who had been guilty of similar offences, and reduced to "slavery," but those who could pay ransom were made free. The Christian critics, in outraging Islam, forget that the Jews had rendered themselves culpable, and the punishment given to them was in accordance with their own laws. But why should the Christians make this occasion a cause of uproar when they themselves have butchered hundreds of thousands of innocent Jews all over the world?

The Muslims had never any "slaves." The very fact that when the Quresh besieged Medina to crush the Muslims, "the Holy Prophet (may peace and the blessing of Allah be upon him) went out to the place where the ditch (for their safety) was being dug, he saw the Muhajirs (the Refugees) and the Ansar (the Helpers) digging in a cold morning. For they had no slaves who should have done this work for them,"<sup>1</sup> speaks a lot more in contradiction of the vehement and prejudiced outcry of Christendom. I will quote another testimony of an English writer about the abolition of slavery by Islam. Mr. J. Thompson, writing in the *London Times* of November 14, 1887, says: "I unhesitatingly affirm, and I speak with a wider experience of Eastern Central Africa than any of your correspondents possess, that if the slave-trade thrives it is because Islam has not been introduced in these regions, for the strongest of reasons, that the spread of Mohammedanism would have meant the concomitant suppression of the slave-trade." His description of "the peaceful and unassuming agencies" by which Islam has been spread in West Africa and Central Sudan deserves the attention of every reader. "Here," he says, "we have Islam as a living, active force, full of the fire and energy of its early days, proselytizing too with much of the marvellous success which characterized its early days."

*(To be continued.)*

<sup>1</sup> *Sahih Bukhari.*

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## CONCEPTION OF GOD IN ISLAM

# CONCEPTION OF GOD IN ISLAM

(FRIDAY SERMON)

BY MARMADUKE PICKTHALL

Say : Who is Lord of the Heavens and the Earth ? Say : Allah.

Say : Do you then take apart from Him protectors who of themselves have neither power to help nor hurt ?

Say : Are the blind men and the seer alike ? or is the darkness equal to the light ? Or do they ascribe to Allah partners who have created the like of that which He created, so that the two creations seemed to them the same ? Say : Allah is the Creator of every thing. He is the One, the Supreme.

He sends down water from the sky, and valleys flow according to their measure. The torrent bears along the swelling foam, and from that which they melt in the fire for making ornaments or utensils, there rises a scum like unto it. Thus does Allah propound truth and vanity. As for the scum, it passes as a thing of nought ; but as for that which is of use to men, it remains in the earth. Thus Allah speaks in parables.

Many people seem to think that so long as men express a belief in Allah, it does not matter what ideas they have concerning Him, nor what may be their form of worship. I have heard it said by persons who thought themselves exceedingly enlightened that it is wrong for monotheists to condemn idolatry, because those whom we call idolaters have some idea of one God at the root of their belief; and merely look upon their other gods as intercessors, intermediaries. In the same way the same persons think us very narrow-minded to regard with horror the adoration paid to our lord Jesus (upon whom be peace) and saints and angels in the Christian Church. There is only one God, one object of worship, whose providence is over all mankind. So what does it matter how men worship, or with what ideas ? Allah will make allowance for their ignorance and imaginative errors, which can only be pathetic in His sight.

What does it matter ? Is the blind man equal to the seer ? Or is the darkness on a par with light ? It does not matter to Allah, if we suppose—as the people who thus argue do suppose—that Allah takes no interest in the life of this world, or in the progress of humanity on earth ; that His Kingdom is of another world than ours. But the Holy Qur-ān makes it perfectly clear that Allah is the Lord of the Heavens and the Earth ; that Allah's purpose is in this world just as much as in the other ; and that the proper goal of man's endeavour is to serve His holy purpose in this world intelligently, not as a blind, helpless puppet, but as a khalifah, " viceroy " possessing judgment and responsibility in all things which concern him in that office. And only by success in Allah's service here can man attain to Paradise hereafter. His behaviour cannot in any way affect Allah, but it affects himself.

"He who strives, strives only for his own soul's good, for Allah has no need of the creatures."

How can man be an intelligent viceroy of Allah when he does not know that Allah is the ruler of this world? How can he serve the purpose of Allah intelligently when he does not know what is the purpose of Allah for men?

Do they ascribe to Allah partners who have created the like of that which He created, so that the creations were confused to their intelligence? If that were the case there might be some excuse for them. But it is impossible for any thinking man to confuse the works of nature with the works of man, or to ascribe the works of nature to more than one creative principle. The conflict in the works of nature is in the forces of nature a part of nature, therefore part and parcel of Allah's creation. To worship such conflicting forces is to take, apart from Him, protectors who have no power of themselves to help or injure, mere instruments of the almighty purpose of Allah. Then there are some who deify men who have been benefactors of their kind. The Greeks deified one Prometheus, who showed to men the use of fire, and thereby earned, so it was said, the anger of the gods, who wished to keep men small and impotent. Others have considered that the powers of evil had gained so great a mastery of human-kind that it was necessary for the Lord of heaven and earth to send His son to be a sacrifice for sin. In that case an attribute of Allah was separately deified and poetically described as His son; and a Prophet of Allah, who spoke of himself and every good man as the "Son of God" was identified with that attribute—the loving-kindness of Allah. Poetic fancies, to begin with; but they led men far astray.

How can men who cherish such false notions of Divinity, who have no inkling that Allah has a purpose in this world other than the selection of a chosen few from among men, to triumph in a world to come—how can they serve Allah, how can they serve His purpose in this world—which is the progress of the humanity as a whole—intelligently? They blind themselves. They choose the darkness. And they cannot be accounted on a par with those who see and know, and glory in the light. They mar the effort due from man as God's Khalifah.

You are not Allah's vicegerent on earth, no more am I, but mankind as a whole is Allah's viceroy upon earth. It is one of the wonders of the Qur-án that it shows us mankind as a whole, and not any single race or sort of people as the object of Allah's mercy and benevolence. There is a text which more than once occurs in the Qur-án. It always struck me as exceedingly significant, one of those phrases which so far surpass all human knowledge that one cannot

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hope to understand them perfectly, though they resound in one's brain like the sound of a gong.

It is this :

“ And know that you will not be raised (for judgment) save as a single soul.”

I have not found any explanation in the commentators which seems to me at all adequate. The words are on the face of them mysterious, for no one knows what will take place hereafter. We know that each individual human soul can reach communion with Allah on earth by following the path of duty, and by the same path can reach paradise hereafter. So that the being raised as a single soul cannot mean the loss of individual personality. What do you think it means ?

I think it means that at the Last Judgment we shall not be judged separately in our relation to Allah, but all together in our relation to His purpose in this world, that is in our relation to the soul of all humanity which should be brought to the knowledge of Allah and to communion with Him. According as we did good or evil to the single soul of all humanity, we shall be accepted or rejected. Woe, in that day, to those who practised tyranny towards their fellow-men. Woe, in that day, to those who conquer and enslave the subjects of Allah for selfish ends. Woe to every-one who practises injustice, or who cherishes unreasoning hatred for any of the human creatures of Allah. In that day we are told, in allegory, the unhorned cattle will take vengeance on the horned cattle, the weak will have redress against the strong. How many horrors, how much evil in the world would disappear if all men realized that some day they would have to meet the Lord of the heavens and the earth ; and that in that day they would be judged, not as Englishmen or Frenchmen, or Indians or Egyptians, but as members of one single soul—the human race, which Allah cares for. It is over the development and evolution of that single soul, its guidance upward to communion with Allah, that man is God's Khalifah here on earth. That is the meaning which has come to me after much pondering those words : “ one single soul.”

“ He sends down water from the sky ; the valleys run with it according to their measure. The torrent bears along the swelling foam ; and from that which they melt in the fire for making ornaments and tools there rises a scum like it. Thus does Allah propound truth and vanity.”

The rain sent down from the sky. That is Allah's guidance, which at various times and in all countries has been given to men. The valleys are the natural bounds of man's intelligence and man's endeavour, in which the waters of religion have to flow. “ The torrent bears along the swelling foam.” The foam is the vain superstition, the false

doctrines cast up by the clash of men's ideas. That is one parable of the history of this world. You will observe that the process described is constantly renewed. The rain from heaven may be withheld for a season, but it is sure to fall again upon the heights and fill the valleys once more with the roaring floods which rush into the deep, calm sea, for ever calm beneath its surface waves. Thus it may chance that for a time one nation or another may contribute nothing to the welfare of the universal soul, but none are in reality cut off from it. Again the revelation will be brought to it, and it will once more flow with water according to its capacity. For the sea, the shower, the river are three parts of a single process. And every man and woman, every nation, is part of the great single process of humanity, which Allah guides to an appointed end.

What are the proudest works of men, the greatest empires, the most awful dogmas? Mere swelling foam upon the surface. Allah propounds them as a parable of vain and empty things which pass away. "From that which they melt in the fire for making ornaments or tools arises a scum like unto it." Foam or scum. It always is upon the surface of all ebullitions.

We often say that things are in the melting-pot; but have you ever come across a more illuminating guide to the meaning of all human history than is contained in these parables, and in the Qur-án as a whole? And how do you account for such tremendous knowledge proceeding from the lips of an unlettered Arab of thirteen hundred years ago, except by inspiration from Allah? The Arabs were great at poetry before the advent of the holy Prophet, but there is not the slightest hint of such ideas in all their poetry; nor is there anything in any literature which could account for the clear vision of humanity as a whole, of the whole of history as the process by which Allah is making humanity into an ornament or an implement for His transcendent purpose. Humanity is always in the melting-pot. At times it boils up, the ingredients mingle and the scum, the elements which cannot be assimilated, the dross comes to the surface, rests there for a moment and is cast away. We have all been acting and re-acting on each other since the world began, but the only actions which have lasting fruit are those which tend, however feebly, towards the evolution of that single soul of which I spoke, towards human brotherhood. Think how the East and West have been re-acting on each other.

The Roman Empire conquered a large part of Asia, and Asia conquered the Roman Empire not by arms but by religion. Christianity, many people now forget, is not of European origin. Jesus Christ (on whom be peace) was an Oriental dervish. Then Europe altered Christianity,

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obscured the teaching of the Prophet with a lot of scum, and preached it as a new religion to the East. Then came Muhammad and the scum was thrown away, altogether by the Muslims, and to a great extent by Christians too ; for the onrush of Islam, it is admitted, did destroy the worst superstitions and excesses which existed at the time in Christendom, and these have never reappeared. Islam became the faith of half the world. It penetrated Europe, and its influence on Europe cannot be over-estimated. From the influence of the Spanish universities and the intercourse of the Crusaders with Muslims in Syria and Egypt was derived the impetus of all this modern civilization which we now see. The Islamic Power declined, and Europe came again in the ascendant by sheer weight of energy. The first European conquests in the East were marked by terrible injustice, awful cruelties. If you wish to read of horrors greater than we could even dream of at the present day, committed without any pretext of justice or excuse of anger, read the history of the expeditions of the Portuguese in India and the Persian Gulf. Then came the Dutch and French, and then the English. All of them, in rivalry with one another, had very little consideration for the rights, the feelings or the lives of Orientals. That was the scum. It passed away.

Some of you will tell me that the European domination in the East has not been of the smallest benefit to Orientals. On the authority of the Qur-ân—that is, the word of Allah—I assure them they are wrong. The East was all disintegrated when the Europeans came there. It is now united. It had no general consciousness, no common conscience or public opinion. Now it has both. It was asleep, and it is now awake. The very animosity which nowadays I hear expressed against the very thought of foreign rule, the bare idea of India—that half-continent—as a nation having rights and personality, is the result of English teaching, the reaction and retort of Asia to the action and the words of Europe. And no one can doubt but that the change is in the direction of the universal human soul, that single soul of which we all are part whether willingly or unwillingly, and as part of which we shall be judged at the last day.

In this tremendous ebullition we are traversing, the scum is thick upon the surface, but it must not blind us to the process going on beneath, the useful process of uniting and assimilating. Never before, in the whole history of the world, have so many men been conscious of that single soul of humanity, or been consciously at work to bring it forth and to develop it. The scum is on the surface. Europe's greatest scoundrels think themselves supreme, and are behaving like a gang of robbers, shamelessly, with no thought of Allah and of their duty towards humanity.

with no thought of the Judgment which awaits them. They think themselves the lords. They are, in truth, the scum. But underneath the purpose of Allah is working surely to the appointed end. Never has progress towards the goal of human brotherhood been so rapid, never have so many human beings, of different races and beliefs, been conscious of it as their goal. And now once more the East is rising and, having been influenced by Europe, will influence Europe in its turn. Will there be still more cruelties, still more injustice? Probably, but as the melting process nears completion, there is less and less scum. When the process is complete there will be none at all. When we know that all mankind is in truth a single soul, and act accordingly, there will be no longer cruelty and injustice from one race to another or from man to man. "As for the scum, it passes as a thing of nought; but as for that which is of use to men, it remains in the earth. Thus Allah speaks in parables."

Remember that human life is not of value in itself; its value is in its relation to humanity, which relation cannot be complete save in the knowledge of Allah and by His guidance.

## II

"Does not man see that We have created him from a drop of seed? Yet lo! he dares to be contentious.

"And he coins similitudes for Us, and he forgets the fact of his creation, saying: Who shall revive these bones when they have crumbled into dust?

"Say: He who brought them into being in the first place shall revive them, for His is the whole art of creation.

"He who has given you fire from the green tree, and lo! you kindled from it.

"Is not He who created the heavens and the earth able to create other bodies like unto them? Indeed He is, for He is the all-wise Creator.

"But His way, if He desires a thing, is only to say to it: Be! and it is.

"Therefore glory be to Him in whose hand is the dominion over all things. Unto Him you will return."

Has the world changed at all since the Qur-án was revealed? Do not we see men still forgetful of the fact of their creation, forgetful of the marvel of their birth, which they cannot explain except by calling it a natural process, which means a process governed by a law without exceptions, a law which no man made, which no man has the power to alter, a law which, if it does not make men conscious of God's sovereignty, must surely make them conscious of their own subjection. But no, they think



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they rule the world in their short day, they forget the fact of their creation which should make them humble, they think that they are not accountable to any higher power for what they do; and if one spoke to them of Allah's judgment they would say: "Who shall revive these bones when they have crumbled into dust?" just as the idolaters in Mecca said of old. Is it not curious that people who were so profoundly superstitious as the pagan Arabs, people who were always looking for the miraculous, the same people who said in scorn of our lord Muhammad: "What sort of a Prophet is this? He eats food and walks in the streets! Why has not an angel been sent down to support him in his admonitions?"—the same people who were always asking the holy Prophet for a miracle were the people who did not believe in a future life and Allah's judgment. Their superstition was upon their own account and in this life, they performed certain actions, muttered certain charms, bowed down to certain idols, in the hope to postpone the hour of death, or to escape misfortune, each for himself or his tribe. Their public spirit never got beyond the tribe. Their superstition was an affair of this world only, a fear of their own shadows. They scoffed at the notion of a future life.

And it has always been so. It is so to-day, and here in England. Have you never noticed that people whose behaviour, by its disregard of Allah's laws, shows that they have no belief in a Last Judgment (I am not speaking of avowed agnostics or professed believers. It is an affair of conduct; and many an avowed agnostic here in England is guided in his conduct by the laws of God, while many a professed believer flouts those laws); have you never noticed how ruthlessly ambitious and intensely selfish people, who know no other law than their own will to power or pleasure, put faith in talismans and charms and mascots, how they look out for omens and consult fortune-tellers, entirely through concern for their own life or health or fortune? And their human outlook is as narrow as was that of the idolaters of old in Mecca. They have no sympathies beyond their tribe.

A Muslim—a true Muslim—cannot be like that. He sees the light of day, the darkness of the night, the growth of plants and trees, the life of beasts, the wonder of the heavens, all subject to one law to which man too is subject, as evidence that man is part of a tremendous plan, and that the power of choice which has been given to him, his little lordship in this world, is not for nothing. The Muslim knows his place and duty in the scheme of things. He knows that Allah is the ruler of this world just as much as of the next, that there is in truth one kingdom everlasting and secure; that the mercy of Allah is over all alike, and He will surely punish those among us who seek their own

advantage to the detriment of others ; and that if we are his loyal subjects and obey his law of kindness one to another, He will befriend us. It is all in this Qur-án. "It is a promise of Allah who never breaks His promise, but the majority of men do not perceive. They perceive only the externals of the life of this world, and are forgetful of the other life."

Brethren, as Muslims, we should be so penetrated by remembrance of Allah, who is "the other life" for all of us in this world and the next, that we feel no need to talk about the future state, or even think about it in a speculative way. It is not our affair. We gave up concern with it the moment we became true Muslims, that is to say, surrendered to the will of God. But we believe in it implicitly, upon the word of God. We are surprised to hear people of other ways of thought discussing it minutely, even quarrelling about it and about the nature of Allah, which no man can so much as guess, much less define. It seems to us a shocking waste of time. For we are Allah's servants in the kingdom of this world. We have His orders, a whole host of duties to perform, interesting, useful duties which bring happiness in their performance, making us independent of the externals of this life because of the inward peace which comes to us from knowing that, whatever happens, we are moving in the right direction towards the end for which man was created, at one with Allah's purpose in the world. There is so much to do, and time is short for all of us. We cannot waste our time in idle speculations, which lead nowhere. We have our orders which it is our happiness to obey. Enthusiastic obedience to a higher law than that of men, the law of the Creator and the King of men, that is the keynote of our Muslim life. Other people have been told to believe only. We have been told to do.

We are not exiles, sighing in a wicked world for a Heaven which we regard as our real home. If the world is wicked, pray, who made it so? Not God, but men—men who rebelled against "the King who sleepeth not nor dieth," men who forgot the fact of their creation. Men made it wicked, and men can make it good. How? There is only one reply. By doing good, without stint or reservation, to everyone with whom they come in contact. That is why we are Muslims ; that is why Islam exists. We must bring all men to the knowledge of God's kingship over earth. And how can we do that save by the power of righteousness, of good example? How can we do that if we do wrong to any creature? It is all laid down for us in this Qur-án. The Kingdom of Allah is not imaginary, it is real. The laws of nature—Allah's laws—are upon all of us. The laws, less generally recognized, which govern human conduct—

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that of States no less than that of individuals—are actually, and have always been, in force. We see them working all around us, quite inexorably. The person or the power which does evil consciously is certain to be punished in the end. We saw the other day the fall of Czardom, a downfall as complete and terrible as was the judgment of Allah on any empire which we read of in the Scriptures. We too, the Muslims of the world, are subject to those laws, and we are suffering to-day for our shortcomings. But we know the way of sure success : Obey the sacred law, do good to others, strive for good, organize good, not alone as individuals but as a brotherhood and as an army.

When you heard just now our good Muezzin crying, in the call to prayer : “ Come to success ! Come to success ! ” what do you suppose was meant ? Personal success ? Yes, if by that you mean the highest possible use and development of personality. But selfish success ? No, most certainly not. When the Muezzin calls from every minaret in the world : “ Come to success ! ” the call is to success in that which until now has been a failure, the progress of humanity as a whole. The freedom of God’s Kingdom is not for any class or group of classes, or any race or group of races ; it is for all alike. There is neither priesthood nor police in Allah’s kingdom, for all alike are servants of the King who is accessible to all His faithful servants, and all are alike enthusiastic in obedience to the sacred law. Nationality, in the aggressive sense, has no existence. Hatred by the people of one country of the people of another country, whom they do not even know by sight, cannot be in the Kingdom of Allah. Where you see nation trampling upon nation, wherever you see manifest injustice being done and publicly applauded, you may be quite sure that Allah’s kingship is not recognized.

“ Does not man perceive that We have created him out of a drop of seed ? Yet lo, he dares to be rebellious ! ”

The law of Allah is a law of justice and of mercy, and it is the duty of us all to make it known, and to endear it to mankind by our example of complete obedience, by our righteousness. To lead a righteous life is the affair of everyone of us individually, and the spread of that complete theocracy, which is Islam, is the affair of everyone of us collectively. Collectively we have our discipline and public acts as a community, binding us together like an army for the cause of good. Cheerful acceptance of that discipline, and performance of those public acts, does good to the soul of every individual one of us and helps it with the sense of comradeship. They are part of our obedience, and they bring us nearer to Allah than to each other, for as I said to you last week, the only perfect brotherhood that men can know is in Allah, the end and object of our service.

Next Friday, when we meet together, we shall be in Ramadan; the month devoted to self-discipline and the remembrance of the mercy of Allah in giving to mankind this guidance by the final prophet. It is thirteen hundred years since men were shown the way of progress, the only way to happiness and true success. Why is the kingdom of Allah not yet complete? Because the Muslims lost the vision of its universal nature, and kept it to themselves. Instead of the one true religion they made it a religion like the others. Is that the reason? Not entirely, but in part it is. The Western world was never ready to receive the message until now. But now, I think it would receive it gladly if Muslims could but show a good example. The evil conduct of a Muslim, which always comes from his indifference to his religion or his ignorance of it, is the worst enemy that Islam has now to fear. Let us think upon these matters in the month of Ramadan, and let us all renew our action of Islam—of self-surrender to the will of Allah—preparatory to such a true Islamic effort as has not been made since the days of Muhammad himself (God bless and keep him). I shall be here on Wednesday evening—Lailatul Ramadan—the eve of Ramadan, to inaugurate the evening prayers which will be kept up, we hope, throughout the sacred month. Do come to them as often as you can, and tell every Muslim of your acquaintance to come to them as often as he can. This month of Ramadan has a special meaning and a special sanctity for the whole Muslim world.

We are ordered to do, and not to dream; and we have so much to do, that we cannot waste time on idle speculations on the future state. Then people come and wish to argue with us or to find fault with our beliefs. They ask us "What is the Islamic teaching with regard to Hell?" They object to the allegorical pictures of Paradise in the Qur-án. They say: "You believe in the resurrection of the dead, in the resurrection of this very body which is ageing now, which, being buried, will soon crumble into dust. How do you reconcile that with reason, since you say that reason is the judge of true belief? How can the dead be raised?"

What does it matter? When we are in Allah's hand, when we possess the consciousness of His protecting friendship and free access to His mercy in this world. Do they not forget the fact of their creation, which means that they are altogether at the mercy of Allah, and that their reason cannot, in its highest flights, surpass the limits which He has assigned to it. We can only answer in the words of my text. "Is not He who created the heavens and the earth able to create other bodies like unto them? Indeed He is, for He is the all-wise Creator.

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"But His way, if He desires a thing, is only to say to it: Be! and it is.

"Therefore glory be to Him in whose hand is the dominion over all things. Unto Him you will return."

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## THE MESSAGE TO MANKIND

By MR. KHÁLID SHELDRAKE

"And the Jews and the Christians say: We are the sons of Allah and His beloved ones. Say: Why does He then chastise you for your faults? Nay, you are mortals from among those whom He has created."

THE verse which is quoted above from the Holy Qur-án is one that calls for great attention, not only on the part of Muslims, but rings out in clarion notes to all followers of a revealed religion. The Holy Qur-án was revealed by Allah through the blessed lips of our Holy Prophet (on whom be Peace and Eternal Felicity) as a guide and warning, not to a particular tribe or race, but to humanity at large. It is necessary to remember that, in spite of false teaching on the part of certain religions, Allah is not the tribal or racial deity of a selected few, but He is the Creator, Evolver, Sustainer and Cherisher of all the worlds. In days past it was the custom of the people to revere a deity who was merely one amongst many, who was the patron of a particular tribe or race, and was a jealous deity who was merciless in punishment and fierce in warfare. Read the book which is in the hands of the various divisions of Christendom to-day and note carefully how petty were the minds of the writers of the various books dealing with the history of the Israelitish tribes. Their Deity is simply a narrow partisan of the Jews who would slay and exterminate all other races of the earth. He is pictured as singing "Slay ye every one of them, take not one of them alive," as if the earth were merely the garden of the Jews, and other races were not created by the One Supreme Being, but were alive through some other agency. This entry into Palestine of an alien horde of nomads from Egypt was resisted by the sword of the inhabitants of the country, and it is as well to-day to remember that those pre-Israelite peoples of Palestine were such brave warriors that they were enabled to hold out against the invaders until the time of King David, but they were not exterminated, and to-day their descendants reside in the land of their fathers from which the Israelites were driven out by the sword, as previously they had entered sword in hand. In those days the writers of the Old Testament merely regarded the non-Israelitish peoples as slaves fit only to labour for the "Chosen People;" and so a bad and false idea became firmly rooted in the minds of the

Israelites that God cared for them alone. As it is often said that a new idea was born into the world at the advent of Christ, that the Deity was the "Universal Father," we would expect to find something in the pages of the New Testament to support this view, but cannot. We do find, however, according to the writers, that the mission of Jesus was purely a local one, that he sends his disciples and commands them:—"Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: But go rather to the lost sheep of the House of Israel"; again, when talking to the woman of Samaria, he said, "Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for *salvation* is of the *Jews*." In St. Matthew's Gospel, Chapter 15, we find that a non-Jewish woman asks Jesus to heal her daughter, and verse 24 reads—"But he answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the House of Israel," further verse 26, "But he answered and said, It is not meet to take the children's bread and cast it to dogs." We must say that it is impossible to find any advance upon the old idea of the tribal deity as held by the Jews, and may I venture to remind my Christian friends that they should study this point and ask themselves upon what authority they base their claim that the mission of Jesus was to any other race than the Jews. Another point is that, curiously enough, Jesus is referred to by even learned writers as "*The Prince of Peace*." May I ask the reader to go to the Bible and turn to St. Matthew ch. 10, v. 34 and read the words of Jesus, which run as follows: "*Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword.*"

In studying the question of the mission of Jesus we are compelled, if we rely upon the Bible, to come to the following conclusions:—

1. His mission was that of a teacher sent to the Jews alone.

2. That as a Jew he regarded all non-Jews as "*dogs*," and thus deliberately instructs his disciples to preach *only* to the Jews.

3. That they were even forbidden to enter the cities of the Samaritans, who worshipped God as the Jews did, but differed in certain details, thus showing that Jesus was an orthodox Jew by faith.

4. That he had no conception of God as the Cherisher of the human family.

5. He realized that, far from uniting even the Jews, he would bring only bloodshed upon earth.

Some may object that after the "*Resurrection*" he sends his disciples to preach to all nations, but may I venture to raise the following points. If Jesus did so preach *after* his entombment—and yet, all his previous utterances were absolutely opposed to any such idea—are we to believe that

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a *new message* was delivered to him *during the period that he occupied the tomb*? Are we to forget all his previous doctrine of *salvation for the Jews only* and believe that Jesus was simply a reformer and teacher holding fast to Jewish orthodoxy, and having no conception of a dispensation of Providence outside Jewry, who suddenly, whilst in the tomb, is enlightened to the fact that God cared for all mankind? According to the Bible this is the *only conclusion possible*, but there is another explanation, as it is admitted by Christian critics that considerable doubt is attached to the authenticity of any post-resurrection utterance of Jesus. It is now universally admitted that the concluding fragment of the Gospel of St. Mark is a forgery; and this contains the command "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." So that we are compelled to revert to our former idea that the mission of Jesus was a purely *local* one and *only to the Jews*, if we accept as the actual sayings of Jesus the words quoted in above verses from the Bible. May I ask Christians if they have fully understood the significance of these verses? Jesus *forbids* his disciples to give his doctrine to the Gentiles, then why to-day is Europe following a doctrine which was *never intended for them*? Another point is that Jesus has been deified by non-Jews and is worshipped by the very people whom he regarded and spoke of as "dogs." This may be unpalatable, but let us be honest and admit that at least it is the truth. All you good people who go to Church and Chapel and pray to Jesus and call yourselves "Christians" must remember that, according to the Holy Bible, Jesus *forbade you to have any part in his teaching*, that you were *not to be allowed to listen to the message* he came to deliver to the Jews alone, and that in the sight of Jesus, not being born of the Jewish race, you are "dogs." There is no choice for you, *if you believe the Bible*. To you I put one question—is there any conception of God as the Universal God, the Helper of all mankind, contained in the verses quoted as falling from the lips of Jesus? You must admit that there is not. Let us turn again to the verse quoted from the Holy Qur-án and investigate the words therein. The Jews and Christians hold even to-day the same old narrow idea of God as the patron of themselves alone and deny any message of salvation to others, that they are "His beloved ones;" there is no improvement, neither is there any new idea of the relations of mankind as a whole with God. The truth of the following words will be felt by all "Say, why does He then chastise you for your faults," and then comes the firm denial of partiality on the part of God for any particular race, which brings into the world a new outlook: "You are mortals from among those whom He created." Here we are taught to regard mankind as being "mortals" and not to arrogate to ourselves any

peculiar idea of sonship or relation with God from which our fellow man is excluded. Jesus said, according to the Bible, "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the House of Israel." Muhammad said "I am not sent but as a blessing to mankind." Here is the *New Idea*, here is the conception of a Universal Deity, of a Creator who cares for all mankind, who sends a Teacher to the World instead of to a small nation, and we must realize that, whilst we fail to find in the Bible that the message of Jesus had anything to do with the world at large, yet the message delivered by the Prophet of Arabia is for *us*, was revealed by Allah for *all men* at a time when narrowness of vision prevailed, when men were still living in ignorance of the reality of the Mercy of Allah. The period before the advent of our Holy Prophet, called "The Days of Ignorance," is well named. Muhammad (on whom be Peace and Eternal Felicity) brought to the world the Message it waited for, the burning words which swept across a desert, quickening to life all it touched, which changed the hearts of mankind and brought the idea of brotherhood and the full conception of the Universal Family united under the One who cares for all creatures and whose mercy is extended over all parts of the world. Christians study the Bible and read the Holy Qur-án. Read of Jesus and his mission in the pages of the Holy Qur-án and compare it with that contained in the Bible and you will find that in reality you do *not* follow the narrow view presented by the Bible, but unconsciously follow and believe the mission of Jesus as taught by the Holy Qur-án. On the threshold of a New Year it is our duty to be honest with ourselves, to fling aside prejudice and narrow views and study truth. The New Idea of the Universal Deity was the original doctrine, but hidden under a mass of dogmas and superstitions so that it was concealed from the hearts of men until the advent of our Holy Prophet (on whom be Peace) who restored the doctrine to the knowledge of mankind. In the Holy Qur-án we read "Truth has come and falsehood vanished to return no more," and it is our duty to-day to follow truth and reject falsehood. Muslims, as well as others, must realize that this Word of Allah—the Holy Qur-án—is for all peoples, and it is our duty to tell mankind the glorious Message and take our share in enlightening those who still remain in ignorance. Let the New Year be one of continued effort for Islam; and we must all determine that there shall be no narrowness of vision on our part, that we will not regard ourselves as the "favoured few," but labour to bring to others the glorious Message revealed through the life of Our Holy Prophet (on whom be Peace) to the human race from the Creator and Sustainer of the Universe.



## THE EXCELLENT NAME OF ALLAH

### THE EXCELLENT NAME OF ALLAH

By PROF. H. M. LÉON, M.A., PH.D., LL.D.

(Continued from November number)

According to some Arabic traditions and literature, Sarah was the sister of Lot and the daughter of Haran (or Aran), the paternal uncle of Abraham; other traditions state that she was a female cousin of Abraham, and that her father's name was also Haran, but that he was not the same individual who was the father of Lot, while yet another set of traditions assert that she was the daughter of Zuq, the then King of Haran, and her mother was daughter of Kutba, King of Babylon. She is said to have been not only one of the most intelligent women of that period, but also the most beautiful woman of her time and to have possessed a perfect figure. By some she is said to have been the first woman, since the expulsion of Adam the Pure (upon whom be benediction and peace!) and Eve from the Garden of Eden, who was as beautiful as that first created of women, to whom Allah gave two-thirds of all her beauty.<sup>1</sup> Indeed, she was so beautiful that Abraham transported her in a chest. When, on entering Misr (Egypt), Abraham was obliged to give a tithe of all his goods as a tribute to the monarch of that country on entering his territory, he at first refused to open the box wherein Sarah was secreted, and when he was eventually compelled so to do, one of the officials ran and told the King. That monarch took the woman into his palace, designing to marry her; when, however, he sought to embrace her, Sarah prayed Allah to wither up his hand; and when the King promised not to place hands upon her she prayed Allah to restore it. Despite his promise, the King approached her once more and his hand again became *zābil* (withered). This was repeated thrice, but on the third time not only were both his hands withered but *ra'shat* (paralysis) seized upon his lower limbs, and he became rooted to the spot on which he stood. Abraham was a witness of this interview, as by an *Ajībat* (miracle) the walls of the house became *shaffāf* (transparent) so far as Abraham was concerned, during the happening of these events.

<sup>1</sup> In the Arabian astronomical (astrological) books it is stated that the soul entered the body of Adam on a Friday, on the tenth of the month of Moharram (the first month of the Muslim year), wherefore that day is called *a'ashura* (Arabic, *asharat*, decade). It happened at a time when the first degree of *Burj ajjudi* (Capricorn, a sign of the *Mantakat al buruj*, Zodiac) was on the eastern horizon, *Zahal* (Saturn) in the sign of *Ajjawza* (Gemini), *Al Mushtarī* (Jupiter) in *Samak* (Pisces), *Al Kahir* (Mars) in *Burj al-hamal* (Aries), *Kamar* (the Moon) in *Burj al asch* (Leo), *Shams* (the Sun) and *Utairid* (Mercury) in *Azra* (Virgo), and *Zuhrah* (Venus) in *Burj al Mīzān* (Libra).

Finally the monarch restored Sarah with many apologies to Abraham, whom he loaded with presents, and presented Sarah with one of his own daughters, the princess Hajar, as a handmaiden, saying, "It is better for my daughter to be a servant in the family of a man and wife so beloved of God than to be a princess in Egypt." One version of this curious story is given at considerable length in the *Rauzat-us-Safa*, or "Garden of Purity," of Muhammad Bin Khavendshah Bin-Mahmud, commonly called Mirkhond, who gives as his authority for his statements "The author of the *Tarikh-uz-zamān*." Other authors, and particularly Muhammad Bin-Jarir Tabari, and Qitby, in his *Ma'arif*, also give lengthy detailed accounts of the history of Abraham and Sarah.

In the following narrative care has been taken, as far as is possible in a translation, to render the same in the words of the original:—

When Ibrahim (upon whom be peace) was delivered from the fire of Nimrud, a number of the inhabitants of Babel, such as Lot, the son of Haran, Suil, the son of Bajur, and Sarah, the daughter of the uncle of Ibrahim (Abraham), had believed in his words, a disturbance arose in the Kingdom of Nimrud, the number of Muslims increased, and the tenets of Ibrahim, having found their way among the people, gradually settled in their hearts. Nimrud, therefore, secretly sent for Ibrahim, and when he arrived he said to him: "Because of thy mission this religion which thou hast proclaimed has brought confusion into my kingdom, and has excited and aroused the imagination of my subjects. Arise, therefore, and leave my realms with thy family, thy companions and thy adherents: because the God, who is thy nourisher, having undertaken to afford thee His protection, and pledged Himself to further thy prosperity, will be thy helper and thy defender." Perceiving that by refusing to obey this injunction he might place his friends and adherents in jeopardy and that the wrath of Nimrud might be kindled against them, Ibrahim obeyed this command, and took his departure from the land of Babel, and bent his steps towards Syria.

There are some historians, however, who assert that Sidna Ibrahim left the land of Babel without the knowledge or consent of Nimrud, he (Ibrahim) having been warned, by Allah, in a dream so to do.

On the other hand, Ibn Juzi states the flight of Ibrahim took place after the death of Nimrud. Hence it will be seen that the traditions differ upon this point. As to which of them is correct, who can say? That is known only to Allah, for He knoweth all things!

When Ibrahim took the resolution to leave the land of Babel, he started from thence in company with his cousin,

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Lot, the son of Haran, with his female cousin, Sarah, who was one of the most intelligent women of that period, whose father's name was likewise Haran, and with other companions and adherents and servants. After travelling for some time, he arrived in the country of Haran, and thither he tarried for the space of some weeks, and while there he espoused Sarah, and, after his espousals, he renewed his journey and travelled, his wife accompanying him, to Egypt, for the King of Haran, being a Wasani (an idolater), and an enemy of those who worshipped Allah, it was not wise for a True Believer to remain within his territory.

It was at this time that the prophet Lot separated himself and his house from his cousin, Ibrahim, on account of the advice of Ibrahim, sustained by a *Wahī rabbānī* (a revelation) from the Most High. Lot then took his departure and went towards the Mutafakat.<sup>1</sup> His story (Inshallah!) will be narrated hereafter.

After Ibrahim had sojourned several days in Egypt the following *khābar shāyi* (news, or rumour) was circulated in the city<sup>2</sup>: "Behold, a man from a distant land has arrived among us, and has a beautiful wife, the like of whose beauty, before this, never has been seen." This news having reached the ears of Sanan, the son of A'Van, Governor of Egypt,<sup>3</sup> he sent for Ibrahim, and demanded of him: "Who is this woman that is with thee, and in what manner is she related to thee?" Ibrahim, fearing that in case he openly acknowledged Sarah to be his wife, the monarch of that country would either compel him to divorce her or cause him to be put to death, said, "She is my sister" (*ukht*), meaning thereby that she was a Muslima and his sister in the Faith most excellent. On receiving this reply, the King of Egypt sent a confidential person with Ibrahim to his tent, and this official conveyed, with every form of decency and respect, Sarah to the royal palace, where she was asked, "What is this man, Ibrahim, to thee?" Fearing for her husband's safety, she replied, "He is *akh* (brother) to me." "Then thou shalt be my wife," exclaimed the King, and intoxicated by her ravishing beauty, and filled with shameless *fāsik* (lust), he lost the reins of self-possession, and, stretching out his arms, he rushed towards her, with the intention of embracing her; but Sarah had recourse to Allah, the Helper of the otherwise helpless, and she prayed to the Preserver of His creatures to protect her from this sin, and, behold, the Hearer of prayers at once responded to her appeal and the arms of the lustful monarch became *zābil* (withered) and

<sup>1</sup> Mutafakat is the name usually given by Muslim historians to the place termed "the cities of the plain," in Genesis xix. 29.

<sup>2</sup> The name of this city is not mentioned.

<sup>3</sup> In Qitby's narrative the name of this king is given as Sarug. In Turkish Muslim narratives he is sometimes styled Zanan Zarug.

all use departed therefrom, and the King said, "Oh woman! How hast thou bewitched me so that my hands have become *zābil*?" Sarah replied, "Hanaza! (*Behold!*) O King, this is a manifest sign of the power of Allah, the One and Only God, whom I worship and serve, and who is my Protector!" Whereupon the King began to implore Sarah to supplicate the Almighty Orre (whose name be ever exalted!) again to restore his hands to their former state, faithfully promising that he would not lay a hand upon or even touch her. Believing his word, Sarah accordingly lifted her hands in prayer to the *Bayt min Kudrat*, the Mansion of Omnipotence, and Allah, the Clement, the Merciful, granted her request, and the hands of the King *muntashī lilsahhat*, were restored to health. But *Shaitan al āsī* (the rebellious Satan) again inflamed the King with the fire of filthy lust, and, perfidiously disregarding his solemn promise, he again rushed forward exclaiming, "*Amraah* (Woman), thy name is not Sarah, but Sahirah,<sup>1</sup> for thou art a witch, and thou enslavest me with thy *husn mālāho nazir* (incomparable beauty), so that I have become *āshik majnūn* (so deeply enamoured) of thee by thy *azāyim* (enchantments) that nought but possession of thee can satisfy my desire."

Then Sarah again supplicated Allah, and cried, "Oh, Allah! Hafiz! Hamid! who didst save thy servant Ibrahim from the fire of Nimrud, protect me from this lustful man! Amin!" And Allah, as-Sami, again responded to her appeal, her petition was *istama wa muta'* (heard and granted), and the outstretched hands of the lecherous monarch again became *zābil*, and his *akdām* (feet) became as if rooted to the ground.

Then the King again supplicated Sarah to beseech Allah to once more restore his arms to health, promising that if this was done, he would set her free *at once*, without further molestation. Sarah once more yielded to his petition and accepted his promise, and again petitioned *Allah ta'āla'*, the Most High God, to restore the King's arms to health, and her prayer was again answered.

When the King was thus restored to his normal condition then Sarah said, "Now, O King, prithee keep thy promise and set the door of this chamber open, in order that I may depart." But the King replied, "O fairest of thy sex, rest here, I pray thee, for one hour more, so that I may sit and feast my eyes upon thy loveliness." Then Sarah said, "O King, it is not *lāyik* (fit) for any virtuous woman to expose the beauty with which the Giver of all good has endowed her to any man, other than her husband, nor is it *wājib* (proper) for any man to look with admiring eyes upon any woman, who is not his wife, for should he so do, then

<sup>1</sup> This is a play upon the two words, *Sahirah* meaning a witch.

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Iblis, the accursed, will thereby tempt him, so that he will lust after the woman and his heart will incline to evil, and he will long *irtakab khatiyat azzina* (to commit sin). I pray thee, therefore, let me go."

Then the King, forgetting all that had passed before, gave license to his passions and let loose again the reins of his desire, and said, "Nay, I swear by all the gods of Egypt that thou shalt be mine!" And once more he rushed forward with outstretched arms towards the woman. And again Sarah had recourse to Allah, and once more her petition was heard, and not only did the arms of the King become *zābil*, but his legs were seized with *ra'shat*, and a burning pain shot through his *sadr* (breast), as if the point of a *sayf sārīm* (sharp sword) had pierced him to the *kalb* (heart). Then the wicked King became as one *kalb maksūr* (heart-broken), for he deemed that his last hours had come, and that while he remained thus as one petrified, Sarah would escape from the palace, and finding Ibrahim, would inform him of his wretched powerless condition, and that Ibrahim would come and slay him there, without *bi nafsihu* (he himself) being able to raise a hand to defend himself, and then that Ibrahim would seize the kingdom and reign there in his stead; *abarāt*<sup>1</sup> gathered in his eyes, and with tremulous voice (*sawt murtaish*) he again besought Sarah to intercede with Allah on his behalf.

"*Limā za?* Why should I intercede again for thee, thou wicked one, whose word cannot be trusted?" was Sarah's reply.

"Because thou art a woman, and because it was on account of thy ravishing beauty, thy *jazibiyah*, thy attracting power, that I forswore myself. Surely thou hast a woman's heart and would not doom a man to sickness and to death, simply because he became *āshik maftūn* (distractedly in love) with thee?"

"*Mumallik* (flatterer), think not to cajole me by thy specious *tamalluk* (flattery). The burden of thy sin be upon thine own shoulders." So saying Sarah advanced towards the door of the room, and perceiving a richly ornamented *kashaf* (cloth) lying on the ground, she picked it up and made a *nikāb* (veil) thereof. Then *hawl muhul* (grim terror) smote the craven *kalb* (heart) of the miserable man, and the fountain of his eyes opened and like a never-ending stream the *dumū* (tears) coursed down his pallid cheeks, and with a groan of deepest misery he again besought Sarah to forgive him and to intercede with Allah on his behalf.

"Thou hast sworn by all thy gods, *Sharū*, wicked one,

<sup>1</sup> The use of this word is an excellent example of the rich copiousness of the Arabic language: the word for tear is *damah*, pl. *dumū*; but a tear just starting is termed *abarāh* (pl. *abarāt*).

that thou wouldst possess thyself of me, against my will, and in defiance of the holy laws of Allah; now implore of those same gods to assist thee!"

"'Twere useless so to do," replied the King, for the Lord thy God is more powerful than they."

"Then thou dost acknowledge, O King, that thy gods are vain things, which can avail thee nothing, and that Allah is *al-malik al-mutāl*! The Most High King, *ar-rabb ul ālamīn*, the Master of all the worlds!"

"I do, I do," exclaimed the miserable monarch.

"Then repeat after me *Lā illah illā Allah*, There is no god but God!"

The King complied, and even as he did so, his legs, which were still in a state of *ra'shāl* (paralysis), partially recovered, so that he sank down on his knees, and his *ayadi zābil* (withered hands) were extended as if in supplication.

"Swear now by Allah that thou wilt let me go from hence, and that thou wilt permit my husband and I and all our servants to depart from thy land without hindrance or molestation."

"*Kasam billah*! I swear by God, that all shall be as thou demandest. Nay, more, that I will give thee whatever thou desirest of my possessions, even to half of my kingdom, if thou wilt but intercede with Allah for my forgiveness and my restoration to health."

"*Al hamdu illah! Allah jalla jajulaho*! Praise be to God, God the glorious and most high,"<sup>\*</sup> exclaimed Sarah, and once more laid her petition at the foot of the throne of the Most Merciful.

The Lord of glory and of power heard her petition, and not only restored to health the afflicted monarch, but, what was even better, bestowed upon him a penitent heart, which the evil Shaitan then perceiving he uttered a scream of terror, and with many *zafrāt* (groans) fled from the palace of the King, nor did he dare even to visit the land of Misr (Egypt) for the full space of three months from that date, so that during that period no sin or evil was committed in the land, and the fruits of the earth were multiplied and increased tenfold. Of such is the power of the prayer of a good and virtuous woman (*Ridwān Allah Alīhim ajmain*! May the blessing of Allah be upon them all!).

On his recovery the King sent for his own and only daughter, who was then but 14 years of age and a virgin, and said to her, "Hanaza, behold, daughter of mine! *haze amraah* (this woman) for the future is thy *khātūn* (mistress), and thou art her servant. It is better for thee to be a servant

<sup>\*</sup> *Jalla*. Literally, "He shone in majesty or glory," an epithet frequently used in conjunction with the name of God. *Jalla-jajulaho* might be rendered, "The one who shines in majesty and glory above all others who shine."

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in the house of a pious woman, who is beloved and protected by God, than a princess in a palace." Then turning to Sarah he said, presenting his daughter to her, *Hā ujaraki!* "This is thy reward."

Sarah accepted the present, and in memory of the event called the princess, who had thus become her slave, Hajar, by which name ever after she was known.

Now, behold, such are the wondrous ways in which Allah bestows blessings on all who trust Him and obey His commands, that the princess, who thus, obedient to her father's command, became a slave, subsequently also became the wife of Ibrahim, Khalid-Ullah, Abraham, the friend of God, and the mother of Ismail (upon whom be peace), who was the ancestor of the glorious light of prophecy, Muhammad rosul-Allah (upon whom be peace), the last and greatest of the prophets.

They who obey their parents shall be blessed of God,  
For they who honour their parents are belov'd of God.

Then the King of Egypt, humble and contrite in his mind, sent Sarah and his daughter Hajar, with many rich and valuable gifts, under a suitable escort, back to Ibrahim and besought Ibrahim to depart from his country and take his wife and possessions with him, "Lest the Devil (accursed be he for ever!) again tempt me, and I forget all the mercies of Allah and again fall into sin!"

When Sarah met her husband she narrated the whole affair to him; but he was already fully acquainted therewith, because Allah, the Lord of Magnificence (*jalal*), had removed all the veils of secrecy from before him, and he had been enabled to see everything, just as though he had been present as an eye-witness in the chamber of the King, when that monarch sought to lay impious hands upon Sarah. Then Ibrahim and Sarah, his wife, and Hajar, the young Coptic maiden, and his servants and followers, gathered together all their possessions and departed from the land of Egypt, and journeyed from thence to the country of the Filisteen, which is situated in the province of Damascus. And they were ten weeks on the journey, and Ibrahim (upon whom be peace) rode upon a camel, and Sarah and Hajar rode upon another camel, and the heart of Sarah, who had never given birth to a child, warmed towards Hajar, and she said to her, "Hajar, thou wast *bint al-malik* (the daughter of a king), but though thou hast lost thy father, in me shalt thou find a mother, and thou shalt be my daughter, and I will call thee *bint* (daughter)."

And Allah was merciful to Hajar and she was comforted.

(To be continued.)

## THE PARACLETE : HISTORICAL EVIDENCE

THIS article is to be read in continuation of what Maulvi Mohammad Yakub Khan wrote in August-September issue of the *Islamic Review* under the title *Paraclete or Muhammad*. The question as to whether the prophecy of Jesus pertaining to the advent of Paraclete was fulfilled in the person of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, cannot be settled simply by a reference to the Gospels as we have them now. Several other circumstances must be taken into consideration before we can definitely say what Jesus really meant.

The first consideration is that the Greek writer of the "Gospel according to St. John" and his Greek and Latin copyists could not be expected to be very accurate in reporting the actual words of their Master, whose very name they did not correctly know. The Greeks and Latins gave him the name of *Chrestus*, which means anything but Messiah, but which rather suggests a sun-god. When they could make such mistakes about the name of their own Master, how much more liable would they not be to make a similar mistake of a vowel or so about a certain name occurring in one of the prophecies made by that Master? Certainly the name of the Master was of much greater moment to them than of anybody coming after him. I do not mean that they did it dishonestly. I only mean to suggest that, with the best of intentions in the world, they were quite liable to make such a mistake with respect to the name *Periclytos*.

The second consideration is that the authenticity of the text of the Gospels is not beyond doubt. The Christians of the early centuries of their faith did not attach the same importance to these records as was attached to them by people of later ages. They freely indulged in making interpolations and additions to these narratives. This is a fact which cannot be denied by any sensible person in this twentieth century. Is it not possible, then, that they might have made an alteration in the spelling of this word also?

In order, therefore, to know exactly what this prophecy of Jesus means, we shall have to appeal to history and enquire what beliefs the early Christians themselves held with respect to this utterance of their Master. They were the first recipients of the word. They were far less removed in point of time from their master than the editor of the *Moslem World* and his coadjutors. They had far better opportunities to learn the truth. Religion had not yet been institutionalized, and trade concerns such as the modern Christian missionary has in view had not yet sprung. Their minds were not yet clogged with those prejudices which



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weigh so much in the modern mind. And they were the first ministers of the gospel. An appeal to them, therefore, must decide the point beyond dispute.

It can be readily admitted that Jesus Christ left his teachings incomplete. We have his own admission in this behalf (John xvi. 12). Christians of the early centuries were particularly conscious of it, and even to-day the larger portion of Christendom—I mean the Roman Catholics who have a decided majority—holds that teachings of the Bible are incomplete. Early Christians, therefore, lived in immediate expectation of a divine messenger who should “guide them into all truth,” for “all truth” they had not had. This belief appears to have been widely prevalent among them, for we find false pretenders rising up among the Christians claiming, every one of them, to be the Paraclete whose advent had been foretold by Jesus Christ. The names of two of these have been handed down to us in history. The first of them was Montanus, who founded his sect in the third quarter of the second century A.D. A native of Phrygia, of obscure origin and talents, with no claim to literary or philosophic acumen, he claimed to be the Paraclete foretold by Jesus. His message spread like wild-fire, and he had a large following. The very fact that he could bring any considerable numbers of Christians to believe in his claims shows that all of them were waiting for the Paraclete. What is more, these Montanists also believed that the Holy Ghost had appeared to the apostles on the day of the Pentecost as narrated in the “Acts of the Apostles.” But they made a distinction between the Holy Ghost and the person of the Paraclete, whom they regarded as a totally distinct person.

But the non-belief of other Christians in his claims does not necessarily mean that they held different notions about the Paraclete. We possess historical evidence, direct and indirect, to the fact that the belief was very common, that a divine Teacher according to the description given in the prophecy about the Paraclete would come. Here is what the English translator and annotator of Dr. Mosheim's *Ecclesiastical History* says in a footnote on Montanus: He (Montanus) “made a distinction between the Paraclete promised by Christ to his apostles, and the Holy Spirit that was shed upon them on the day of Pentecost, and understood by the former a divine teacher pointed out by Christ, under the name of Paraclete, or Comforter, who was to perfect the Gospel by the addition of some doctrines omitted by our Saviour, and to cast a full light upon others which were expressed in an obscure and imperfect manner, though for wise reasons, which subsisted during the ministry of Christ; and, indeed, Montanus was not the only person that made this distinction. Other Christian doctors were of

*opinion, that Paraclete promised by Christ to his disciples was a divine Ambassador, entirely distinct from the Holy Ghost which was shed upon the Apostles."* (Italics are mine.) It was due to this wide prevalence of the expectation of a divine messenger, apart from the effusion of the Holy Ghost, that the followers of Montanus were shown so much toleration. They were not declared heretics as others had been on minor differences, and they were not excommunicated till half a century later. Tertullian, whose is a most honoured name in the annals of Christianity, the "Father of Apologetics" as he has been truly called, was of the same persuasion. Being in the communion of the Church of Carthage, he embraced Montanism long after the death of the founder. He already believed that the Paraclete was a different person from those cloven tongues of fire that had appeared to the apostles on the Pentecostal feast, and no sooner did he learn of Montanism than he gave his adherence to that doctrine. He wrote as strongly in favour of this sect as he had done in favour of Christianity in general against paganism. But the Church did not interfere with his beliefs till several years after, when the Church proscribed Montanism, and he seceded from the Church.

But the proscription of Montanism did not mean that the Christians gave up the belief that a divine messenger was to come. The Church had not yet the power of enforcing its dogmas at the edge of the sword. That was the age of free thought among Christians. The idea lived, and out of the ashes of Montanism arose Manichæism in the third century.

As age after age passed upon Christianity, the necessity of a divine Teacher, who should "guide them into all truth," was brought home to the Christian mind even more strongly. The history of no faith, indeed, presents such a scene of sectarian struggles and religious confusion as that of Christianity. The master had scarcely departed from among his disciples, when they began to quarrel among themselves. Every generation witnessed the rise of new sects. This hopeless muddle of ideas and opinions led people naturally to hope that the Teacher prophesied by their Master would come to create order out of the prevailing chaos. It was due to this reason that whenever any pretender rose, people flocked to him. Māni (Manes) was one of these.

He was a man of remarkable talents and energy, and, whether the Christians would admit it or not, he has left an indelible stamp on Christianity of his own stupendous genius. A Persian magi by birth, he was brought up as a Christian from his early boyhood. Endowed with a piercing, uncommon intellect, his keen discernment pointed out to him early in life the glaring defects of Christianity. He rejected the authority of the Gospels as nursery tales meant

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to lull little babies to sleep. He "maintained that the four Gospels which contain the history of Christ were not written by the apostles; or, at least, that they were corrupted and interpolated by designing and artful men, and were augmented with Jewish fables and fictions." He, therefore, made a gospel of his own which is known to the Persian scholars as *Arzhang-i-Máni*.

This man claimed to be Paraclete, and founded a sect which is known after him as Manichæism. The success he achieved was stupendous. The sect spread rapidly in the East and the West. Hundreds of thousands flocked to his colours. His followers could be found in far-off China in the tenth century A.D., Asia Minor, Egypt, the whole of Northern Africa, Spain, Gaul, even Italy, had swarms and hordes of Manichæans. The well-known St. Augustine, of universal ecclesiastical fame, was at one time a believer. A "war of extirpation" was no doubt waged against them, and Christian kings and emperors came out with their edicts and laws to extirpate this sect root and branch; but the sect rose up ever and anon. Tyranny and persecution have never been able to kill thought. The messengers die, but the message lives. There were Manichæans even in Italy as late as the thirteenth century A.D. Did they not believe that the Paraclete was to be a divine Teacher and Messenger, a mortal, apart and contradistinct from the Holy Ghost? And they were all Christians.

But this man's history throws another light on the much-mooted point as to whether the word in the prophecy was originally *Periclytos* or what. *Máni* is a title by which he is generally known. His real name is doubtful. Perhaps it was *Shuraik*. Anyhow, he assumed the title of *Máni* as a synonym for Paraclete. Now "*Máni*" does *not* mean "the Comforter." It means "The Illustrious." Evidently he could not assume this name unless he knew that the original word in the prophecy was *Periclytos* and not *Parakleton*. And the millions of Christians could not accept his claim unless they were quite sure of this fact. So they believed century after century.

But these were not the only people who believed that the Paraclete was a divine Messenger to come in later times. The belief lived among other Christians too. We have abundant testimony to the fact that the Nestorians, at any rate, lived in expectation of a divine Teacher. The story of the Nestorian monk who saw the Holy Prophet Muhammad in Syria when he was a boy of eleven—the story of which the Christian critics of Islam have made so much capital—amply supports my contention. He, too, was expecting "The Illustrious"—Muhammad. *Salmān* the

\* Mosheim: *Ecclesiastical History*, vol. I, c. III, ch. v.

\* *Catholic Encyclopædia*, Art. "Manichæism."

Persian, disgusted with the corrupt magianism of his day, embraced Christianity, of which he soon got tired. It was again a Nestorian monk who directed him to seek light elsewhere, for, he told him, the Lord had shone on the heights of Paran, and "the Illustrious" had appeared to bathe the whole world in his lustre. And as the conquering wave of Islam advanced towards the East and the West, the Nestorians everywhere entered bodily the fold of Islam. For the Spirit of Truth had come, and falsehood was bound to vanish before it.

The Gospel of St. Barnabas is not, therefore, the only support for the Muslim's contention. The history of Christian belief in its first centuries affords abundant testimony to the truth of our claim. There is one thing very remarkable—and most important to be noted in this connection—in the discussions that sprang up among the Christians on the rise of Montanism and Manichæism, that all controversies centred themselves round other teachings and doctrines that distinguished these sects from the rest of the Christian body politic, and it was due to those doctrines that open schisms and excommunications took place. But there was no controversy about the person of the Paraclete. This shows that there was a general unanimity among the Christians that the Paraclete was a divine messenger to come in later times, contradistinguished from the Holy Ghost that had been shed on the apostles on the Pentecostal feast. The disappearance of the idea from among the Christians of later ages may be ascribed to two causes, the constant and persistent persecutions by the Catholic Church, which killed all free thought and independent opinion for several centuries to come, and the advancing tide of Islam that took into itself all those who were waiting for the advent of the Paraclete.

FAZAL KAREEM KHAN.

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## THE PROPHET IN WAR-TIME

V

By MAULVI MUSTAFAKHAN, B.A.

*(Continued from December Number.)*

### THE BATTLE OF THE MOAT.

We have already seen that the Jews were doing their best to bring about the downfall of the rising power of Islam. The banishment of Bani Nazir opened a new phase of hostility. Some of their leading chiefs, after their deportation, went to the Quraish of Mecca and held conference with them about the plans to be adopted to direct a united assault against the Muslims. The idolaters of Mecca were already too eager for the destruction of Islam. They readily

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consented to render every possible help in achieving this common end. The Jewish deputation then approached another tribe called Ghatfan, who were also prevailed upon with their allies, the Banu Asad, to join the war. The tribe of Banu Saleem was already an ally of the Quraish, and therefore promised to help the latter with men and money. Thus, in a word, the whole of Arabia rose against Islam, and a formidable army of the allied forces, numbering about twenty-four thousand men, advanced against Medina.

This army was divided into three battalions with their respective commanders. The *Ghatfans* were placed under *Uniat-bin-Hasan*, *Fazari*; *Banu Asad* under *Talha*; and the Quraish under their famous leader, *Abu Sufyan*, who was also the commander-in-chief of the whole army. Meeting no opposition on their way, the allied troops soon encamped within a few miles of Medina. Hearing the news of this attack, the Holy Prophet convened a conference of his companions to discuss the methods of defence. The strength of the enemy was decidedly great, and the handful of Muslims could not possibly meet the foe on an open battlefield. Therefore *Salman*, the Persian, suggested that the town of Medina should be defended from within, and a ditch should be dug all round it. This suggestion was readily adopted. The women and children were sent in fortified houses, and the Muslim army, three thousand in number, undertook the hard task of defence against such odds. The trench was dug expeditiously, the Holy Prophet himself taking active part in it.

*Banu Quraizah*, a famous tribe of the Jews, were so far neutral, but the Bani Nazir were trying their best to persuade them to violate their pledge and join this big coalition against Islam. They first hesitated, but at last gave way. When the Holy Prophet learnt about it, he at once deputed *Sad-bin-Muaz* and *Sad-bin-Ahada* to verify this news, who came back with its confirmation. These envoys of the Prophet entreated the Banu Quraizah to return to their compact. But the reply was very defiant. "Who is Muhammad, and who is the Apostle of God," said they, "that we should obey him? There is no bond between us and him."

This defection and treachery of Banu Quraizah at such a critical time apparently seemed to be very disastrous to Islam, and increased the number of the hostile forces considerably. The Muslims were reduced to a very serious position. The Holy Qur-án has depicted their plight in these words:

"When they (enemies) came upon you from above and from below you, and when the eyes turned dull and hearts rose up to the throats, and you began to think diverse thoughts of Allah.

There the believers were tried, and they were shaken with a severe shaking" (Holy Qur-án xxxiii, 10-11).

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As the Jews were well acquainted with the locality, and therefore could materially assist the enemies by telling them weak points of the city, the consternation among the Muslims was very great, while the danger was still aggravated by the disaffected element of the Hypocrites or "Mundfiqien."

The hostile forces could not fall upon Medina, as the trench round it prevented them from doing so. They, however, besieged the town, to compel the Muslims to surrender. The siege lasted about a month; and the Muslims had to starve, for the want of provisions. But each of them was firm, and underwent these hardships bravely "in the way of Allah." Great efforts were made by the enemy to cross the trench, but every attempt was repulsed by the Muslims. The besieging army was now tired on account of the longevity of the siege. The elements seemed to combine against enemies of Islam. Their horses were perishing fast, and the provisions were becoming scanty. In the darkness of night a storm came, which overthrew their tents and put out their lights. The idolaters thought it to be a curse from the gods, and decided to withdraw forthwith. Thus suddenly the vast coalition, which seemed to annihilate the Muslims, vanished into the air.

*Abu Sufyan* and the majority of his army fled, while the rest took refuge with Banu Quraizah. The Holy Prophet had already foretold the dispersion of the enemy at the previous evening. In the morning the Muslims saw the enemy flying, and the prophecy of the Prophet fulfilled. They returned in great joy to the city.

### THE END OF BANU QURAIZAH.

Although the Muslims achieved the miraculous victory, yet the menace of Banu Quraizah was still remaining. They had proved themselves traitors in spite of their sworn pledges; and the Holy Prophet could no longer rely upon them. The Muslims, therefore, thought it inevitable for the safety of their commonwealth to strike a blow before the Jews could renew their machinations. They immediately marched upon the Jewish fortresses, and after a siege of twenty-five days Banu Quraizah offered to surrender on the terms imposed upon them by *Sad bin Maaz*. The offer was accepted, and *Sad bin Maaz* passed a sentence to the effect that all the fighting men should be put to death, and that women and children with all their belongings should become the property of Muslims. This sentence was carried out; and the number of the men executed was, according to the most trustworthy reports, about four hundred people. Among these was a woman, who was put to death because she had killed a Muslim soldier by rolling down a heavy stone upon his head. The bravery with which she met her fate is very romantic. She knew that the death

## THE PROPHET IN WAR-TIME

sentence was passed against her, but she did not mind it at all. The men were put to death before her eyes one by one, while she was laughing and talking with Aisha, the wife of the Prophet, having least regard of the ill fate that was waiting for her. At last her name was called, and she got up calmly. "Where are you going to?" asked Hazrat Aisha. "I have committed an offence," she rejoined, "and now I am going to be executed for it."

The opponents of Islam have made much of "the severity of this sentence," and have dilated upon its "cruelty" with their wanton relish. No doubt the sentence from our point of view was very severe. But we must bear in mind the crimes of which Banu Quraizah were guilty—their treachery, their open hostility, their defection from an alliance to which they were bound by every sacred tie. They were, as a matter of fact, bent upon the destruction of Islam, and if they had succeeded they would have massacred Muslims without compunction. If they had been put to death even without the judgment of SAD, it would have been entirely in agreement with the principles of warfare obtaining in those days. Even in our modern times we find General Dyer at Amritsar massacring about six hundred peaceful people, including boys of very tender age, simply to maintain order and peace. Then, there appears no reason why Banu Quraizah, who actually waged war against the Holy Prophet while they had pledged neutrality, should not have been put to death. But I should say they were treated more humanely. They brought their fate themselves. They had themselves chosen SAD as their sole arbitrator and judge; they knew his judgment was not at all contrary to the Old Testament and the received notions, and therefore never murmured.

In regard to the number of the men executed I should like to quote a passage from the Right Honourable Syed Ameer Ali's *Life of Muhammad*. I have already given the number at four hundred, and this is according to the reliable historians of Islam. But Mr. Ameer Ali has got another version of this question, and I will quote his very words on the point:

"Passing now to the number of men executed, one can at once see how it has been exaggerated. Some say they were four hundred; others have carried the number even up to nine hundred. But Christian historians generally give it as varying from seven hundred to eight hundred. I look upon this as a gross exaggeration. Even four hundred would seem an exaggerated number. The traditionists agree in making the warlike materials of the Banu Quraizah consist of 300 cuirasses, 500 bucklers, 1,500 sabres. In order to magnify the value of the spoil, the traditions probably exaggerated these numbers. But taking them as they

stand, and remembering that such arms are always kept greatly in excess of the number of the fighting men. I am led to the conclusion that the warriors could not have been more than two hundred or two hundred and fifty. The mistake probably arose from confounding the whole body of prisoners who fell into the hands of the Muslims with those executed."

(To be continued.)

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## REVIEW

*The Life of Mohammad the Prophet of Allah*, by E. Kenet and Sliman Ben Ibrahim. (The Paris Book Club, 11 Rue De Chateaudien.) Price: 1st quality, on Imperial Japanese vellum, £18; 2nd quality, hand paper, £8.

This book is unique in its character so far as the general get-up and the beautiful illustrations are concerned. The style is simple and impressive, but the writers ought to have been more careful in attaching authenticity to traditions. For instance, it has been stated in it that the marriage of the Holy Prophet was solemnized with Khadija, while her father was senseless in drink. It is not true, and the tradition is universally rejected by the reliable historians.

At any rate, the book is a beautiful and ornamental production, and can well be placed in every decent study for the sake of decoration.