

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

*The*

# *Islamic Review*

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

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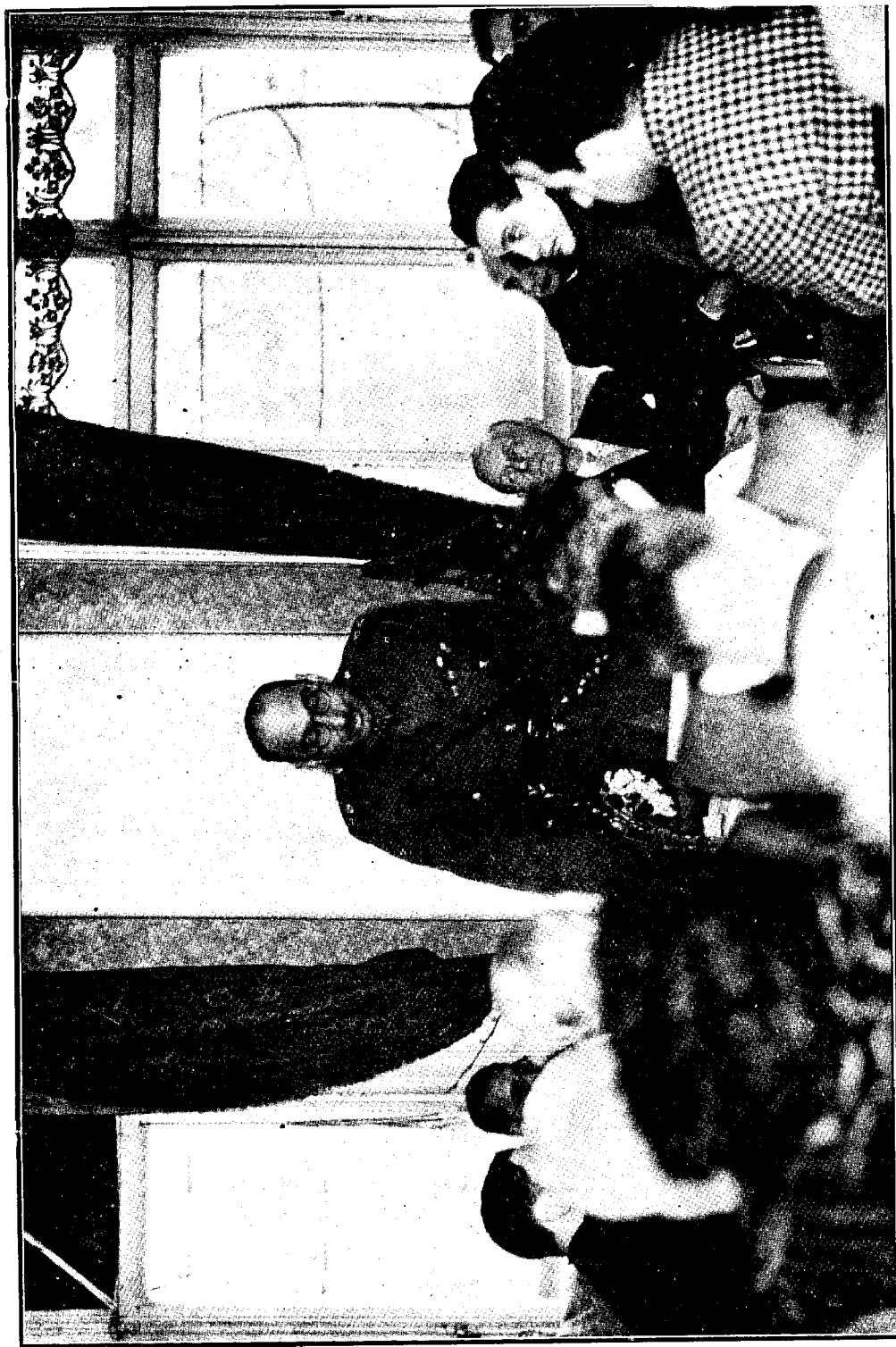
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Major Muhammad Akbar Khan M.B.E. is seen making his presidential speech.



**His Highness Sultan Abdul Hamid Halimshah, K.C.M.G., Ibni Almarhom Sultan Ahmad Taj-ud-Din Mukarramshah (born 4th June, 1864) of Kedah.**

**He ascended the throne at the young age of 19.**

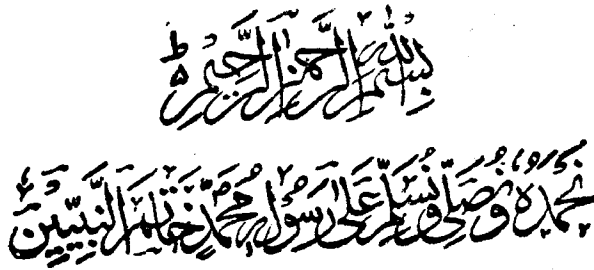
**During his long reign the State has made a steady and continuous progress particularly in the Islamic religious education in which His Highness is specially interested. There are at present eighty seven State Vernacular Schools which confine their afternoon classes to the teaching of religion.**

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**His Highness takes a keen and active interest in the progress of Islam in the West.**

*Ed. I. R.*



# THE ISLAMIC REVIEW

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NOV.-DEC., 1941 A.C. and 12

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## A DECLARATION

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

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

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

31st December, 1940.

JOHN C. DUFFIN.

## ISLAMIC REVIEW

### A HAPPY APPOINTMENT

MR. DAWUD COWAN

Readers have noticed that reports of the Woking Mosque activities are at present appearing in these pages under the name of Mr. Dawud Cowan, M.A. (London). They will be happy to learn that this new Muslim brother of ours is acting as the Assistant Imam of the Mosque, and a few facts about his life will further enhance their happiness. He is a Scotch by nationality and became a Muslim when he was still in his school. His correspondence at the time and his photograph appeared in the October 1933 issue of the *Islamic Review*. Since his conversion to Islam he took up Arabic as a language for his Matriculation. Facilities for the further study of this language, as afforded by London, appearing insufficient, he proceeded to Egypt and became a student in the Al-Azhar University. He came back from there a speaker and writer of the language. Later he took his degrees of B.A. and M.A. from the London University. It is significant that the German Orientalists duly recognised his proficiency in Arabic. He was given the post of a lecturer of the language in Dusseldorf. But his own country was not slow to recognise his merits. A short time before the outbreak of the present war, the London University was pleased to appoint him as a lecturer of the Arabic Language. One should not, however, infer that Arabic is the only foreign language he speaks. He has a gift for languages. He speaks French and German too. He knows something of Persian we suppose. And his casual stays at the Mosque have enabled him to pick up the Urdu language as well. And what is most remarkable, he speaks Arabic with the perfect accent of a member of an Arabic-speaking nation.

## HOLY QUR-AN ON JEWS AND CHRISTIANS

Congratulations are, therefore, due to the Working Muslim Mission authorities on this choice of theirs in filling the post of the Assistant Imam of the Mosque.

May this appointment prove auspicious for the British Muslim congregation.

### THE HOLY QUR-AN ON JEWS AND CHRISTIANS

BY MAULVI AHSANULLAH

*[Continued from page 364 of the current volume.]*

#### SURA BAQARA

*Verse 87.*—“ Wa laqad ātainā Musa-l-kitāba wa kaf-fainā min ba‘dihi bir-rusuli; wa ātainā ‘Īsa-bna Maryama’l bayyināti; wa ayyadnāhu birūhil qudusi,

Afakul-lamā jā’akum rasūlun bimā lā tahwā Anfusukumus-takbartum

Fa-farīqan kaz-zabtum wa farīqan taqtulūn.”

“ We gave Moses The Book

And followed him up

With a succession of apostles ;

We gave the son of Mary

Clear (signs) and strengthened him

With the Holy Spirit. Is it

That whenever there comes to you

An Apostle with what ye

Yourselves desire not, ye are

puffed up with pride !——

Some ye call impostors

And others ye slay.”

*Verse 113.*—“ Wa qālatil Yahūdu laisatin-Nasārā ‘alā Shai’in, wa qālatin-Nasārā laisatil Yahūdu ‘Alā shai’in wa hum yatlūnal kitāba Kazālika qālal-lazīna lā ya‘lamūna mithla-qawlihim

## ISLAMIC REVIEW

Fal-lāhu yahkumu bainahum yawmal  
qiyāmati fimā-kānū  
Fihi yakhtalifūn.”

“ These Jews said : ‘ The Christians  
Have naught (to stand) upon ;’  
And the Christians say :  
‘ The Jews have naught (to stand) upon,  
yet they  
Profess the (same) Book.  
Like unto their word  
is what those say who do not know.  
But God will judge  
Between them in their quarrel  
On the day of judgment.”

*Verse 114.*—“ Wa man azlamu mimman mana‘a masāji-  
dal-lāhi an-yuzkara fahas-muhū wasa‘ā  
fi kharābihā, ulá‘ika mā kāna lahum  
anyadkhulūha illā khā‘ifina ;  
Lahum fid-dunya khizyun wa lahum fil  
ākhirati ‘azābun ‘azīm.”

“ And who is more unjust  
Than he who forbids  
That in places for the worship  
of God, God’s name should be  
Celebrated ?——whose zeal  
Is (intact) to ruin them ?  
It was not fitting that such  
Should themselves enter them  
Except in fear. For them  
There is nothing but disgrace  
in this world, and in the world  
To come, and exceeding torment.”

*Verse 115.*—“ Wa lillāhi-l-mashriqu wal maghribu  
Fa-ainamā tuwallū fathamma wajhul-lāhi  
Innal-lāha Wāsi‘un ‘Alīm.”



## HOLY QUR-AN ON JEWS AND CHRISTIANS

“ To God belong the East  
And the West : Whithersoever  
Ye turn, there is the presence  
Of God, for God is All-pervading, All-  
knowing.”

*Verse 116.*—“ Waqālūt-takhazallāhu waladan ;  
Subhānahū bal lahū mā fis-samāwāti  
wal-ardzi, kul-lul-lahū qānitūn.”

“ They say : ‘ God hath begotten  
A son : Glory be to Him Nay,  
To Him belongs all  
That is in the heavens  
And on earth : everything  
Renders worship to Him.”

*Verse 117.*—“ Badī‘us-samāwāti wal-ardzi wa-iza qadzā  
amran fa’in-namā yaqūlu lahū kun,  
fayakūn.”

“ To Him is due  
The primal origin  
of the heavens and the earth :  
When He decreeth a matter,  
He saith to it : ‘ Be ! ’  
And it is.”

### SURA “ IKHLAS,”

“ Qul huwallāhu ahad,  
Allāhus samad,  
Lam yalid wa lam yūlad  
Wa-lam yakun-lahū kufuwan ahad.”

“ Say, ‘ He is God,  
The only One,  
God the Eternal, Absolute :  
He begetteth not,  
Nor is He begotten ;  
And there is none  
Like unto Him.’ ”

## ISLAMIC REVIEW

### THE HOLY QUR-AN AND ITS COMMENTARY

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

*(Continued from p. 369 of current volume.)*

It may, however, be urged that when the war is declared following the injunction to that effect, what was the necessity of this special incitement to kill? The killing is to follow as a matter of course; it does not require any detailed instruction. The reply is that the words constitute a psychological prescription for a certain condition of mind. To understand this, we have to remember that a basic religion invariably emphasises on two objectives of life in particular—love and peace. As soon as a mind is imbued with the true spirit of religion it will irresistibly incline to peacefulness and love for others. Rather than cause any injury to any one, such a mind will suffer injuries from others and bestow love in exchange. Suffering and sacrifice become the normal things for such a mind. The holy books emphasise these virtues in clear language. Sacrifice, love, charity and like virtues are common objects of emphasis in all religions. When, to a community psychologically so trained, the injunction comes that it has to take up the sword and wage a war, however defensive in nature and necessary it may be, the mind of the community is bound to react in an unpleasant manner to such an injunction. It would appear inconsistent with the general trend of the kind of life they had been cultivating. At first sight it must appear as running counter to the spirit they had been so assiduously developing. Indeed, it is difficult to reconcile military life with the civility and peaceableness of a truly spiritual existence. By nature the Arabs were a warlike people, but the spiritual culture extending over 13 years under the magnetic leadership of the

## THE HOLY QUR-AN AND ITS COMMENTARY

Prophet had wrought such a complete transformation in them that the Holy Qur-án had to remind them rather sternly :

“ Fighting is enjoined on you, and it is an object of dislike to you ; and it may be that you dislike a thing while it is good for you, and it may be you love a thing while it is evil for you, and Allah knows, while you do not know.”  
(Chapter 2, Verse 216.)

The difficulty of the Muslim mind at this point will not be understood either by individuals and communities who live the life of soldiers and have nothing to do with deeper aspects of religious life, or by those who are mere intellectuals or peaceful mystics having nothing to do with the rough side of human existence. This difficulty was all the more intensified by the fact of the war being a civil one. One has to fight not foreign nationals but one's kith and kin. A similar situation arose, it seems, in the battle of Kurukshetra, when Sri Krishna had to give a long sermon to Arjuna, the field-marshal, so to speak, of the Pandava army, not to hesitate in killing his kinsmen, who had identified themselves with evil and oppression. To a mind initiated to spiritual culture, it needs a violent effort to bring itself in line with such a painful action. The distressing condition of the mind at such a juncture can, perhaps, be fully realised only by such as come to lay new foundations of a totally cankered society. There are reformers and inspired teachers who appear in comparatively easier times, when the moral foundations of a society are still usable and capable of bearing a new structure, albeit through some formidable sacrifices. In their case this painful necessity of killing one's own people does not arise. If the other class of inspired teachers could mend the matter by

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their own suffering and sacrifice, they would certainly be very happy and consider themselves very fortunate. For, after all, it is the love for one's own people that makes these teachers apply themselves so passionately to their mission of reformation—a love far surpassing in intensity any love man knows of. A picture of this love is thus drawn in the Holy Qur-án :

“Then maybe you will kill yourself with grief, sorrowing after them, if they do not believe in this announcement. (Chapter 18, Verse 6.)

It is this love which makes such of the people, as come in any close contact with these personages, fall desperately in love with them. It is a well-known fact of history that the disciples of such masters develop a sentiment which no other sentiment can equal. By the unthinking adversaries this is regarded as an irresistible personal charm which they possess. Is it possible that they can inspire such love in the minds of the disciples without their themselves possessing this sentiment in a surpassing measure? What an agony and struggle it then must be for such minds to have to kill some among the people they love so intensely! Alas! This cruel world, far from showing some sympathy to these minds in excruciating pain, is but too ready to ascribe to them an opposite quality of mind, *viz.*, cruelty! The distress which they feel on such occasions is known only to them and their God. The scriptures retain some account of that feeling, clear enough for seekers of truth to understand, but little does the world in general care for the actual sufferings of those who come to redeem it. These love the world more than their own selves and far, far more than humanity loves itself. In saving humanity from its own folly they have to restrain forcibly some of its members from some acts of madness, a measure which causes more

## THE HOLY QUR-AN AND ITS COMMENTARY

anguish to themselves than to humanity. Ah, if the world but knew !

“Sacred Mosque” stands symbolically for any existing sacred understanding. The principle is more clearly enunciated in Verse 194. The sacred territory, with the Ka’ba as its centre, forming the pivot of Islamic religious life, is no exception to this rule. In other words, sin and aggression should be resisted in any circumstances. Breach of faith should be given no quarter even if the miscreants take refuge in the sacred mosque itself. The Holy Qur-án evidently attaches more sanctity to peace and general safety than even to its holy of the holies, *viz.*, the central mosque at Ka’ba. It does not require any effort to understand that any external symbol of sanctity is useful in so far as it reflects the inner feeling of sanctity. Any such symbol presupposes some common understanding about the inviolability of certain rights. If this inviolability is disregarded by one of the parties in the contract the whole understanding falls to the ground. Thus by a single stroke here the Holy Qur-án steers clear of all fetishism. If the sanctity of the Ka’ba is a relative sanctity and not an absolute one, nothing on earth can be absolutely sacred to a Muslim.

*Verse 192.*—“ But if they desist, then surely Allah is Forgiving, Merciful.”

This means that the sanctity of all obligations is inviolable to a Muslim as long as the other party to the contract observes it, and that even when it has been once violated as soon as the other party returns to the old understanding a Muslim should hasten to recognize the reversion. The external symbols are, after all, helpful and should be maintained as such.

*Verse 193.*—“ And fight with them until there is no persecution and religion should be only for God,

## ISLAMIC REVIEW

but if they desist then there should be no hostility except against the oppressors."

The clause, "religion should be only for God," is the *magna carta* of religious liberty, of which the equivalent is not to be met with in any religious scripture. To enunciate this principle before a nation of soldiers enhances its importance all the more. The expression "for God" is particularly noticeable.

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### THE HOLY PROPHET'S BIRTHDAY ANNIVERSARY

[*Opening speech of MAJOR MUHAMMAD AKBAR KHAN, M.B.E., R.I.A.S.C., as Chairman of the Meeting of the Muslim Society in Great Britain, held at No. 18 Eccleston Square, Victoria, S.W. 1, to celebrate the Holy Prophet's Birthday :*]

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

We assemble here to celebrate the Birthday of the Holy Prophet Muhammad under conditions that are out of the ordinary.

The whole world is in arms. Is it to be guided at this juncture by the Holy Prophet ?

Of course—it must.

Study any phase of his life—domestic, private, public or as a soldier—and you are sure to find guidance and inspiration in it.

It is only in the life of Muhammad that we find a true image of all that is said and preached in the Holy Qur-án. It is in his life alone that we find a true paraphrase of the adage "Example is better than precept," thus illustrating the truth of the verse: "Certainly in the Apostle of Alláh you have an excellent exemplar."

Now I ask Sirdar Iqbal Ali Shah to speak to you to-day on "The Prophet's Message to the Warring World."

# THE MESSAGE OF THE PROPHET TO A WARRING WORLD\*

BY SIRDAR IKBAL ALI SHAH

At a time like the present, when the world is faced with a desperate and seething struggle against vast forces of evil ; when the soulful aspirations of the human race for the equality of mankind are being threatened by tremendous antagonism of brute force ; when racial-worship, economic nationalism and materialistic policies are mightily arrayed against men who believe in God's mercy and guidance ; surely the time has come that on the felicitous occasion of the Prophet's Birthday, we should seek inspiration and direction in these dark days of the war from that which the Prophet exhorted.

What then is the Message of the Prophet to the Warring World to-day ? The Message, of course, is no other than that which is contained in the several divinely inspired Books, like the Torah, the Bible and, as a final word, in the Holy Qur-án. That Message is :  
“ BE IN PEACE ! ”

The Prophet Muhammad's last sermon further enjoins upon us matters of human conduct, whereby peace can be maintained and war avoided. It lays down those irrefutable fundamentals upon which alone Universalism can be lastingly built ; and the equality of man, completely divorcing all racial ascendancy, can effectively check human aggression ; and intolerant nationalism ceases to be the slogan as a fulfilment of a people's destiny.

What exactly are the terms of that celebrated farewell address ? I shall quote only a few of them here :

“ Your lives and properties are sacred and inviolable amongst one another . . . and are sacred to all.

---

\* The text of a speech delivered on Wednesday, 9th April, 1941, at 18 Eccleston Square, London, the occasion being the Birthday of the Holy Prophet Muhammad.

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“Ye shall appear before God, Who shall demand from each of you an account of his actions.

“The aristocracy of old times is trampled under my feet. The Arab has no superiority over him that is not an Arab, and he that is not Arab has no superiority over the Arab. All are children of Adam, and Adam was made of dust.

“All Muslims are brothers, one of another. Ye are one Brotherhood. Nothing which belongs to another can be lawfully possessed by any, unless freely given out of goodwill.

“Guard yourselves against committing injustice . . . .”

From this we conclude that we are expected to :

- (1) Respect another's property, irrespective of the fact that it is an individual's or the state's property.
- (2) Each person is responsible for his actions.
- (3) No racial superiority shall exist.
- (4) We are to be just in our dealings.

Equality, the right of proprietorship and exercise of justice, then, are the key-points of human conduct, which will preserve peace, and whose disregard is certain to precipitate war.

Let us see whether the history of mankind vindicates the truth of these exhortations. If they emerge from the “crucible of stern analysis as radiant gold,” and we find that during various epochs of history their integrity as quellers of discord could have been satisfactorily applied ; and further, that this period of war juxtaposes the like periods of evil passions ; then, of a truth, the Message of the Prophet can be applied to-day in the full hope of defeating that which is not of the spiritual.



## THE MESSAGE OF THE PROPHET

In this study of fact, one might divide the current of human history, so far as it appertains to universalism, into three great cycles. The first of about 1,300 years takes us down to about 1,200 B.C. In it we begin with Sargon of Agade and his extension of the Babylonian Empire from Iraq to the shores of the Mediterranean. During this period great empires rose and perished. The World Empires of Hammurabi and Hittites can be recalled in this regard.

They conceived universalism through what? Through irresistible nationalism based upon military conquest. They, too, endeavoured to build a concept of a single God ; but since the whole fabric was installed upon force of arms and racialism, retrogression set in and so effaced that which might have been mighty and glorious in the material sense, that beyond some ancient relics, they bequeathed little of human achievement and progress to the world.

The Dark Age that descended upon them, according to archæological workers, is directly traceable to the passion of grab and thralldom of the rulers ; and because of the fact that the idea of equality of races had been subordinated to the all-conquering impulse which comes from being smitten by megalomania.

From 875 B.C. the second cycle may be said to begin when the Assyrian, Persian, Grecian and the Roman stars rose and fell.

And whereas it may not be denied that the second cycle which comes to a close in 476 A.D. did produce a conception of cosmos, during it rich philosophies had been popularised, universality of Ultimate Truth having been realised, was enshrined ; so that both Greece and Rome did become the torch-bearers of a less dark age. Empire organisation and administration of those peoples had reached high standards of

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excellence, but it can be disputed whether the military conception of race and nationalistic tendencies had been sufficiently curbed, even by a strong religious feeling, that again and again refulged during the Classical period. Narrowness of vision in exalting one people over the other, on purely materialistic grounds, were dictated to ensure permanency of the empires, so that the mundane interests of a particular nation always tended to produce discord, and destroyed tendencies towards Universalism, which the undeniable culture of Greece and Rome might have left to the succeeding generations.

The religions of Torah and the Bible have those essentials which contribute to a conception of World-Unity on the equality of man ; and when they have been practised in their essential forms as spoken of in the Qur-án, periods of peace have been enjoyed by the world ; but not till these canons, so spiritually conceived, were practised, unalloyed by racial and materialistic aggression, were they successful in that which these Divine Books ordained.

It is so, therefore, because the spiritual sanction upon which alone world peace can be based and upon no other thing can it survive—least of all on provocative hostility towards other peoples on account of their race or tradition—is lacking. That conception has to be recaptured if madness from the world is to be dispelled.

### THE BEACON LIGHTS OF THE FUTURE

In the third cycle of world history, did the Prophet find the panorama of life better than it was before ? The Roman Empire from age to age had progressed, now struggling against dictatorship, now groping for the clearer vistas of democracy ; and ultimately reposing upon the fast-decaying conception of world empireship,

## THE MESSAGE OF THE PROPHET

in which the right of the strong was considered to be the only right conception. The Persian Empire in the East was likewise swaying in the false security of its imperial might, only to stagger and fall at the call of a greater and truer conception of the Brotherhood of Man—a brotherhood in which rank or wealth counted for naught, in which justice had to be writ large upon the conception of law, where the right of ownership of land and property was to be fully acknowledged. That was the Message of the Prophet. And what was the condition of Arabia when the Message was delivered ?

The Arabs of Iraq, Bahrein and Yemen were under the rulership of the Persians, those of Syria acknowledged the Roman overlordship ; and the Beduins who were more or less independent were always at war within themselves when they were not fighting against a common foe in the East or the West.

There was no question of cohesion as understood by a spiritual unity of ideals which invited to Universalism and Brotherhood of Man, much less to the equality between one race and another ; or of the members of one clan to be no better or worse than the members of another tribe. There was appalling disunity. There was warfare mostly on account of property ownership, or due to some fancied slight inflicted by one clan upon another—in short, just for those reasons which the Prophet's sermon forbids, and which had, from the beginning of time, been the source and origin of all wars.

To this moral depravity, wine-bibbing and licentiousness was added the utmost cruelty in waging wars amongst the Arabs. During tribal wars, even women and children had no immunity. There was no consideration given to the keeping of treaty engagements as, for instance, when a tribal deputation came to the Prophet so that a number of Muslims could be sent with

## ISLAMIC REVIEW

them in order to preach Islam, and 70 of such Muslims, entitled *As-hab Suffa*, thus deputed in peace, were assassinated by the unbelieving Arabs of the time. A second instance was that in which a reconnoitring party of the Muslims under Hadzrat Asim was surrounded by the tribes and, when three of them came down the hill to parley for peace, two of them were held prisoners and sold as slaves in Makka whilst the third Muslim was assassinated. The savagery was further exemplified in their conduct when revenge was sought, not only from the enemy but from the relatives and even the neighbours of the enemy. Much of this kind of behaviour could be paralleled by the method of warfare to-day. For instance, throwing a bomb upon a children's home or in a residential area does mean disregard for the life of women and children ; as also, in its literal sense, if a bomb is thrown upon those who reside near a military objective, it does connote taking revenge even from the neighbours, since the military objective is the real enemy. Translated in their original conception of sin, certain of the aerial tactics of the present war differ in no way from the crude methods of pre-Islamic days.

As against all those prevailing evils of pre-Islamic Arabs stand the points made out in the Prophet's sermon ; viz., equality, no race worship, protecting of life and possessions, and the exercise of justice. The result, of course, has been that when these orders were obeyed, as they were devoutly obeyed both in letter and spirit during the 35 years of Islamic Democracy—that is, during Khilafat Ráshida of the time of Abu Bakr, Omar, Osman and Ali—the world can see the most luminous page in human progress and peacefulness.

By Islamic preaching, the entire destiny of the human race was altered, vice was eliminated, evil was

## THE MESSAGE OF THE PROPHET

dispelled ; a unity and brotherhood was an established fact when the Prophet died in 632 A.D. His message continued to guide men's actions till the next 35 years, when the four Great Caliphs served the cause of humanity on the lines of human equality, and what did we see ? Iraqi-Arab had joined the Muslim fraternity ; Syria had also come in ; the bowing of the Sasanid dynasty to the superior spiritual force had also brought proud Persia within the Islamic fold ; the torch of real democracy was being borne in 661 to Afghanistan and onward to the banks of the Indus. Only eleven years after this, the star shone in Bokhara and two years later in Samarkand. Westwards, too, after the Khilafat Ráshida, the spirit of the Prophet's teaching, awakening the people to the birthright of man, was spreading, for in 641 it reached Egypt and, six years later, the gates of Roman Carthage were reached on the Barbary Coast. In the North, in 700 A.D., the wave surged up to Erzurum ; thus the Commander of the Faithful—the real Servant of God and only an elected head of the Great Confederacy of Islam—served the people from the Caspian to the Nile, from Sind to the shores of the Atlantic.

These men of Islam—the four major Caliphs, the fourteen Omayyad Caliphs and 37 Abbasid dynasty—tended the Faithful with unswerving belief in the democracy which the Prophet enjoined upon us ; they were imbued with the fundamental idea that peace can only be preserved if nationalism is subordinated to greater issues of human universalism, and that race worship and disregard for man's elemental rights is always the cause of war and disruption.

And, indeed, it is to be noted that when, even amongst the Muslims, extreme vagaries of personal ambition have not been restrained, and zest for victory and exaltation of racial factors have been laid over the

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guiding spirit of Islam, their rule has been upset, and the Truth and Reality of the Prophet's Message, receiving a challenge, has compelled the people to destroy the untruth and establish once again that "you are brothers unto one another, that your property is sacred, that you do justice in the world."

No war in history has ever been fought or shall ever be fought to victory by any other mandate than these four tested canons. The progress of man's activities both in Asia and Europe gives some startling proof of the fact that universalism, equality, justice and protection of what one has—to paraphrase the Prophet's Address—must be the beacon lights for the prosperity of mankind and of peace in the world.

### DOOM OF RACE WORSHIP

The development of European history in relation to the conception of universalism shows a curious blending of sentiments—that is to say : nowhere could it be said that democracy, as understood by the words of the Prophet, was obtainable, more especially during the Middle Ages, in Central Europe.

In the first instance, one finds a struggle between the old and the new order of things ; because with the progress of economic prosperity the Barons clashed against the Church, the King taking a neutral position. Soon we find the birth of a merchant class, who rightly thinking order and peace of the realm to be conducive to the flourishing of trade and industry, began to help the Crown. Of this, the Crown took due advantage, for both the Barons and the Church had been challenging his position. The King triumphed, but he did so at the expense of the liberty of the people, for as often as not he ended up by becoming an autocratic power.

We have this phenomenon rather well illustrated in French history, for how true it is that "the

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development of absolute monarchy," as Lord Acton observes in his book entitled "History of Freedom and other Essays," by the help of democracy is one constant characteristic of French history.

It was not till the Revolution of 1688 that a proof was forthcoming that the power of the people became greater in England; and in France it was manifested almost a hundred years after that date. Then Napoleon came to complete the test of national unification, but ended by making himself a dictator, and finally by becoming an absolute monarch.

To go back a little into the earlier periods of European history, it is to be observed that in France, the home of European Democracy, in the tenth and eleventh centuries, the word "Patria" was used of each individual province, and not of a whole country; indeed, whenever men of different origins came into contact, strife was likely to result. But the most remarkable of all the proofs of exaggerated nationalism which was sweeping across the face of Europe was furnished in 1279 A.D. when a commissary of a French abbey, who was sent to visit "daughter foundations" in England, reported about one of them: "the Prior is a good, wise, humble and discreet man, albeit an Englishman!"

Citations of these facts show that the idea of nationalism, which is opposed to universalism, and so contrary to the Islamic spirit and the Last Sermon of the Prophet as a message of peace to the warring world, could be found even in the cradle of European democracy in the earlier period of this epoch. When Western Europe showed this aspect, it is surely begging the question to add that the aggressive mind of Germany could not even conceive the ideals of the unity of mankind, even if the people there could have spared a thought from battling against the Popes of Rome.

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“Partisan loyalty, love of the familiar and the hatred of the stranger,” says the author of *Nationalism*, “were at work throughout the Middle Ages to produce sentiments towards the various units which were remarkably like those now felt towards a nation.”

The result of this nationalism was that it gave a chance to the arising of dictatorships. If one may retrace one's steps further back into history, one does find instances that, even in the time of the Classical days of the Roman Republic, dictators had made their appearance. The names of Sula and Cæsar might be mentioned. As an excuse of national aggrandisement, it is often said that, because the establishment of strong central government produced better economic conditions, therefore a unit tended to look after its own affairs and to recede from the common polity. The advancement of material prosperity exaggerated national feelings, and dictatorships are nothing but the natural concomitants of such nationalism, the more particularly when any weakening of central government threatened the safety of the prosperous conditions of a people.

If that were true, then how is it that the same sort of phenomenon operated in different manner amongst those who acted upon the fundamental order of the Prophet? Taking the period of Harun-ul-Rashid and even the time of the Omayyad Caliphs, we notice that the prosperity—material prosperity, if you like—of the Faithful could be envied by the greatest of all Western nations; no aggressive nationalism as such arose amongst them. The fact is that the index of life's values was differently oriented in the countries where the equality of man was not understood in the same spiritual sense as in the World of Islam.

The true conception of Equality of Mankind, which is the Message of the Prophet to the Warring



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World, is contained in the Qur-án saying: "Every one comes from Adam and Adam was created of dust; the most honourable is one most pious"—Qur-án, 49:13—which has killed for all times ideas of race superiority and national aggrandisement, and thus banished once and for all one of the greatest causes of war; indeed, which is the reason of the origin of this war, and shall be instigator of all future wars.

In the traditions of the Prophet, too, we find an echo of the same command, for Abu Hurairah reported that the Messenger of God was asked: "Who amongst men is the most honourable?" He replied: "The most honourable of them to Alláh is one who is the most pious of them . . . ." (The Holy Qur-án, 99:13.) Another *Hadis* from *Muslim* has it that Iyaq bin Himar reported that the Messenger of Alláh said: "Verily Alláh revealed to me that you shall be modest towards one another till nobody can boast over another, and nobody can make oppression upon another."

Does it not conclusively prove that nationalism, which Central Europeans proclaim as almost a biological phenomenon, and from which human mind has no escape, is a false conception; and that nationalism, which again and again has sapped the vitality of the West, to which the vain conception of racial ascendancy has added not a little in destroying the peace of the world, finds no place in the spiritual consciousness of the people of the Qur-án; and, therefore, the pride is justifiably held that we are the real pioneers of world brotherhood, where race and nation means nothing; where democracy is the *summum bonum* of life; and that the Message of the Prophet to the Warring World may again be repeated in terms: "You shall be modest towards one another till nobody can boast over another, and nobody can make oppression upon another?"

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What is the world fighting for to-day, if it is not to see that no one government, no one set of people, no one race shall have ascendance over the other, and no one shall oppress the other? Is it, therefore, not exactly for those values which the Prophet, holding so dear, had pronounced to us now more than thirteen hundred years ago? And true indeed it is that a thousand or even more years from now, the peoples of the world will be faced with the same evil as they face to-day, if racialism, particularisation and race-worship is to continue to hold them in thrall.

### THE HOPE OF THE WORLD

In our own half-lived age, "the civilised world" has been sorely disappointed that the hopes engendered in the bosoms of soulful men and women by the establishment of a League of Nations at Geneva have been shattered. It was a hope which had emerged from the working of no less than 33 international peace organisations in Europe since 1815. It was a hope which had been nurtured by the blood of millions of men who laid down their lives during the Great War. It was a hope the fulfilment of which would have made the pronouncement of President Roosevelt unnecessary when he asked for the Four Essential Freedoms—freedom of speech, freedom of religion, freedom from want and freedom from fear. But what a look of disappointment has crossed the face of Europe like an evil shadow, till the cold truth has doused their ardent dreams!

And the truth?

Let me give it in the words of Dr. Garnett, one of the greatest workers for the League of Nations in England:

"It is not, however, to these minor difficulties that the League's failure was due," he says in

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his book called *World Unity*. "It was due to the governments of the League Powers lacking any adequate collective sentiment, to the feebleness of their world-loyalty, to their narrow conception of national interests as something different from (and more vital than) the interests of the world at large . . . .

While the representatives of the governments were talking internationalism at Geneva, they were mostly thinking undiluted nationalism."

And the result ?

Aggressive racialism was soon to make its appearance, for Hitler said in *Mein Kampf* :

"Education in the racial state attains its crowning perfection . . . in firing young hearts and minds with racial feelings. Systematically, the curriculum must be built up along these lines and education so handled that the youth, on leaving school, is neither a semi-pacifist, a democrat and the like, but a wholehearted German."

To which Rosenberg added : "The racial idea must dominate completely every kind of internationalism," and gives the final touches to a challenge to all conception of international brotherhood with : "Freedom means to be bound by the ties of race ; a people of brothers is a Utopian idea and not even a pleasant one."

Both he and his master had chosen to ignore the lessons of history ; and had certainly disregarded the brightest days of Islamic history when Persians, Yemenites, Hedjazis and the Egyptians and Turks, pulling their weight together and acting upon the Message of the Prophet, had filled the world with boundless hope and poured its glory like a flood of light into the life-stream of nations.

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Acting upon the injunctions of the Farewell Address of the Prophet, the soul force of the Muslims, reposing its trust upon God, had humbled the evil of race predominance. Then we note that the Omayyads have contributed in no small measure to the wealth of world culture and refinement; for who first started the departmental organisation of the state if they did not? The four *Diwans* are a monument of their administrative skill—the *Diwan Kharaj*, the *Diwan Khatum*, the *Diwan Rasail* and the *Diwan Mustaghillat*. Who built the beautiful city of Damascus with its rich public palaces and kiosks, the Green Palace, the Kasr Ghazara which was erected in green colouring and ornamentation and was considered a jewel of architecture? What also might be said of the theological college, the Pride of the East, which Hurr built at Mosul as the Governor of Caliph Hisham, or the Mashuka, the painted Palace? There were, too, gifted women and women of learning during the period of that dynasty, for who can challenge the scholarship of As-Syedda Sukaina, or the Saint Rabia, or that astonishingly learned Caliph Khalid, a great master of medicine and chemistry?

The same progress we note under the Abbasids, for the rule established by the Message of the Prophet for popular representation in the administration was exemplified by the conduct of the Caliph Mamun. During the time of these Caliphs, the policy was that which characterised the political outlook of Caliph Omar in not engaging in any wars of territorial expansion; for had not the Prophet said: "Nothing which belonged to another can be lawfully possessed by any, unless freely given out of goodwill . . . ."?

Also, in deference to the Prophet's Message to do justice, was not scrupulous care exercised in appointing

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governors? For, if a prince of royal blood was deputed to a high position, another—a man of the people—was always attached to his staff as the adviser.

To take the matter of justice to its final conclusion: Was not each province raised to the state of a self-governing unit of the Muslim Confederacy? And were not all matters relating to the civil rights of non-Muslims decided by the courts of non-Muslims? In what better way could the idea of the Prophet's Last Message be applied in regard to justice than the above-mentioned examples show?

And, finally, the system of clientage, called *Wala*, did actually destroy the last vestige of racial feeling, for anyone coming within the pale of Islam could be adopted as one of the members of the families of the Muslims, and forthwith become almost their blood brother.

So strict indeed is the conception of Islam against the racial prominence, that even such a fundamental point of religion as *Jihad*—or the Holy War—cannot be waged in the name of nationality alone: it must have a spiritual sanction; it must be *Fi-sabil-Alláh* (for the service of God), in which the right of free worship is the cardinal stipulation.

All these factors, therefore, go to emphasise that the Message of the Prophet to a Warring World is to desist from exaggerating the nationalistic tendencies, to respect our engagements, to covet nobody's property, and to do justice. Whenever these injunctions have been disobeyed, war has occurred; and history bears witness to the fact that a country can only reign supreme if spiritual vision is the only guide of mankind, when the conviction of the oneness of Adam's family is translated into reality, when black, white and bronze complexioned men and women are considered members of one great unity, when obstinate disbelief, which

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arises in brute force, is eliminated ; it is then and then alone that the world can save itself from the ravages of the frequent challenge and attack of evil forces. Otherwise, like Noah, we might cry to God for help against the deluge of sin and iniquity which surrounds us to-day ; and Alláh's help will come to us and to everybody, if our minds are once again focussed on things of the spirit and not on those which pass and fade away ; for our spiritual vision must revert to the teaching and the Message of the Prophet, because we believe in the purest form of democracy, in the right of proprietorship and in an uncompromising sense of justice—canons whose triumph is promised to us by the Qur-án in “ He it is who sent His Apostle with guidance and the truth . . . . ” (Qur-án : 9, 33.)

*Remarks of the Chairman on concluding the Meeting.*

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

In 1927 the late Lord Headley, when he was in this very chair, expressed a feeling of great disappointment that London did not possess a place of worship befitting the dignity of Islam. To-day I rejoice with you that by the most gracious act of their Majesties we shall have one !

I offer you no apology when I remind you of this most terrible war which the Nazis and his gangsters have waged on the world. I am not talking about war because I am a soldier by birth and by choice or because people say we soldiers like war and love talking about war, but for the fact that we all are in the front line.

The aged, the cripples, women and children, have been killed and mutilated. Churches and homes have been burnt, bombed and destroyed.

Any student of comparative religion will be aware of the fact that the Muslims accept Christ as a prophet

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of Alláh, as they also do the Hebrew prophets. In fact they are all "people of the Book."

Let us see what were the instructions invariably given by our great Prophet to his Commanders. This is what he said to General Khalid :

"March in the name of Alláh and by His aid. Do not kill an old man who is not able to fight nor young children nor women and do not kill a labourer."

Let us find guidance in the Holy Qur-án which says (2 : 190) :

"Be not aggressive. Fight in the way of Alláh with those who fight with you. Surely Alláh does not love the aggressor. And fight with them until there is no persecution. But if they desist, then there should be no hostility except against the aggressor."

A Muslim is fully aware of his debt of gratitude to the Prophets who had preceded his own. Nazism threatens the destruction of all our foundations, including his own. Therefore, it is perfectly obvious to a Muslim where his position is in this conflict. The Holy Prophet states :

"He is noblest who serves mankind."

There is a lovely story from the childhood days of the Holy Prophet. When his uncle tried to persuade him against his will he turned round and replied :

"Uncle dear, even if someone were to place the Sun in my right hand and the Moon in my left and ask me to give up what I have undertaken to do, I will not pause till the Lord carry my cause to victory, or till I perish therein."

The Prophet's faith in God was steadfast. What he displayed when hiding in the Cave in Mount Thaur ran all through his life.

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Abu Bakr, on hearing the footsteps of the enemy at the very mouth of the Cave, said :

“ We are but two and the enemy are many.”

To this Muhammad replied :

“ We are but two, but God in our midst is a third.”

Remember, the Holy Qur-án tells you :

“ He who helps his fellow-creatures in the hour of need and he who helps the oppressed, him will God help in the time of difficulty.”

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### THE GARDEN OF PEACE

BY W. B. BASHYR-PICKARD, B.A. (CANTAB.)

*(Continued from p. 373 of the current volume)*

#### IV

Early upon the following evening, when I had set aside the weariness of the world and had refreshed myself with food and washing, I took down the closely printed copy of the Book, the Qur-án, and, having turned its stiff and slightly musty pages (so little had it been opened hitherto), I came upon this passage : “ Indeed there have been examples before you; therefore, travel in the earth and see what was the end of the rejecters. This is a clear statement for men and a guidance and an admonition to those who guard against evil. And be not infirm and be not grieving and you shall have the upper hand, if you are believers.”—*Qur-án*, III : 136—8.

Now I had “ travelled in the Earth ” widely, both in Europe and in Africa, but further yet had I pursued my travels along the ancient roads of history. Therefore, I found this passage impressive.

Recalling the downfall of the proud and unbelieving nations, I reflected that pride of temporal power was as nought before the Eternal Majesty of God. I



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remembered, too, the punishments of the Egyptians and the chastisements of the Hebrews at times of unbelief. And I thought, if God can so easily punish whole nations and cast down the pride of empires, how much more easily subject to his correction is the unbelieving individual! And I said: "Save me then from unbelief, O my Lord!"

Then I read again the passage from the Qur-án, and I said within myself: "Truly this is so. The Qur-án is a clear statement for men and a guidance and an admonition to those who guard against evil. How excellent is this! The Qur-án is a guidance pointing out the path of guarding against evil. The best guidance is a clear guidance. The Qur-án is a clear guidance making definite and clear statements such as appeal to reason and may be understood by normal human intelligence. Now indeed I see clearly. The case is this. If anyone wishes to guard against evil, then he will readily apprehend the best method of so doing by a perusal of the Qur-án. But be not deceived. Unless this will and desire to guard against evil is vividly present in the breast of the reader, the guidance will not be apparent to him."

As I reflected thus, I heard an outward shattering causing the windows and doors of the house to rattle in trembling protest. And, even in that moment, the upper air shrieked horridly with wailings as of the damned; and I heard my wife's voice amid the uproar, calling out to me: "Are you there, dear?" So I prepared to set aside my reading of the Book. Yet still vividly in my mind were the concluding words of the verses I had read: "And be not infirm and be not grieving, and you shall have the upper hand, *if you are believers.*" So I said, "Certainly, I believe." And with a good heart I went to comfort my wife.

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### V

The day has been calm, the weather mild. A gentle breeze has blown from the south-west. Though as yet in mid-winter, one is reminded that the world is turning steadily and joyfully towards the spring. Even so to-day I have thought much about the springtime of peace being hidden in the heart of the winter of war. I have wondered that this should be so and that one might walk through the alarms, the distresses, the brutalities, the restrictions, the deprivations, the sacrifices of war under the shadow of the ever-impending horror of war, and yet possess an inward peace unassailable. To-day I have with surprise found this so.

Therefore, when I returned to my little home, cosy and comfortable, though tiny and without pretence, the thought of this peace was still insistent with me. In a little while, refreshed and at leisure, I took up the copy of the Qur-án I had recently been reading. I was determined to read further, for I said within myself: "Of course, this must be so. Only from a knowledge of God, from inclination to the way of God and from obedience to the will of God can peace come.

"The Book, the Qur-án, makes clear that God controlleth every affair, that God is merciful, that God is completely aware of everything, whether in the past, the present or the future, and that He is the Altogether-Wise. How then can one worry in the least over any affair, how find trouble in any hardship or trial or misfortune? Assuredly, then, it behoves me to lay hold on this knowledge, to acquire this perfect submission unto God and to walk ever in this way of peace. I will now do so."

I immediately opened the Qur-án and, with a prayer for guidance, I read: "And a sign to them is the dead earth: We give life to it and bring forth from it grain,

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so they eat of it. And We make therein gardens of palms and grape-vines, and We make springs to flow forth in it, that they may eat of the fruit thereof, and their hands did not make it; will they not then be grateful?"—*Qur-án*, XXXVI: 33—35.

Then I laid aside the Book, for a light of illumination had shone upon me. In the verses I had read a secret had been laid bare before me. "Will they not be grateful?" That was the significant sentence. Gratitude—surely that was the root of peace, that was the seed of contentment.

Yes, suddenly I saw that ingratitude and unbelief and transgression were all one and the same thing, a manifestation of wrong, of blindness, of discontent, and an aberration leading through darkness unto death. While, on the other hand, gratitude to God signified a knowledge of the bounties of God, an appreciation of His abounding mercy, a recognition of the way of joy leading through light unto life.

Praise then to Him who revealed to me the sharp difference of these two states, of these two ways, and the shining excellence of gratitude over the base ignorance of ingratitude. "Will they not, then, be grateful?"

### VI

Following those days, I began to love the *Qur-án* and to read it progressively. I often found that, taking up the Book, I would read a few verses and then lay it aside, charmed by I know not what sweet perfume that exhaled therefrom. So I would, with the Book at my side, meditate in a calm rapture that threw a light of understanding upon things previously dark and perplexing. The meaning of the universe became apparent to me—for was it not His handiwork throughout?—and, with a delight that hardly dared to look upon itself but which went forward accompanied by

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fear and trembling, I felt I had progressed a span nearer to God. And I recollect reading this passage: "O you who believe! Let not people laugh at other people. Perchance the latter may be better than the former. Neither let women laugh at other women. Perchance the latter may be better than the former. And do not find fault with your own people, nor call one another by nicknames. Evil is a bad name after faith and whoever does not turn (towards righteousness), these indeed are the unjust."—*Qur-án*, XLIX : 11.

Meditating upon this verse, I rejoiced in the prohibition of a spiteful tongue, and against pointing the finger of ridicule at one's brother or one's sister. I was glad that the warning had been expressed alike to men and to women. That injunctions in the faith should be stated for women equally with men, that women should have an equal share in the faith and that warnings should come to them side by side with their brothers in the faith—so equally would they share in the blessings of the faith and live upon a plane of equal companionship with men.

With such meditations I took up the Book again and continued reading thus: "O you who believe! Avoid for the most part suspicion: for surely suspicion in some cases is a sin, and do not spy, neither let some of you backbite others. Does any one of you like to eat up the flesh of his dead brother? No, you abhor it. And be careful of your duty to Alláh—surely Alláh is Oft-returning to mercy, Merciful."—*Qur-án*, XLIX : 12. Again I rejoiced at what I had read; for, I thought, how excellent is the warning! Is there any blight, any bane more poisonous than suspicion? And how often proved unjust and baseless! While as for spying and backbiting, has the devil any more deadly secret weapon than these whose action is unperceived, but whose effect is manifest in destruction? Far be such

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cowardly, sneaking vices from the society of the faithful ! So I delayed not, but continued reading in the next verse : “ O you men ! Surely We have created you of a male and of a female, and made you tribes and families that you may know each other. Surely the most honourable of you with Alláh is the one among you who is most careful of his duty. Surely Alláh is Well-knowing, Aware.”—*Qur-án*, XLIX : 13.

Here, envisaging a perfect state of society in which the most righteous were ever the most honourable, sleep overtook me, for the hour was late.

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## THE OXFORD GROUP MOVEMENT

[AS A MUSLIM SEES IT]

BY MAULVI AFTAB-UD-DIN AHMAD

(Continued from page 393 of the current volume.)

### “ LISTENING-IN ”

As we proceed in the discussion, it will become more and more evident that there is much that is common between the general outlook of an Oxford Grouper and that of a Muslim revivalist. A deep-thinking Muslim friend of mine, who is by nature suspicious of all Western movements and who had accompanied me to a meeting of this Movement in Lahore, came out of the meeting room, very impressed with the grasp of reality which the talks of its sponsors revealed. I, therefore, earnestly wish that the leaders of the Movement had come out of the mental groove created for the Westerners by traditional Christianity and received all that may be helpful to the realisation of their noble ambitions in the religion of Islam. Boldness, after all, is the preliminary requisite of any genuine search for truth.

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If the Oxford Groupers will just take courage for a free investigation they will be surprised to find some of their struggles to be so strikingly Islamic. An instance of this will be found in what is called "listening-in" in the language of the Oxford Group. To begin with, we must remember that to rise above the voices of the material world and to enable the mind of man to hear the still, small voice coming to the heart of man from the world beyond is the common objective of all religions. Some form of meditation, as it is called, is prescribed in every religious system, not excluding Christianity. It is difficult to say, however, if it is so well systematised in any religion other than Islam. It is noteworthy that the Muslim Prayer is said mostly in silence. Non-obligatory prayers, called *Sunnah*, are all said in silence. Among the obligatory prayers it is the two morning genuflexions, two early evening genuflexions and two late evening genuflexions that are accompanied by articulate prayers. The concluding parts of the latter two prayers are performed in silence. The two afternoon prayers are said entirely in silence. It will be interesting for an Oxford Grouper to reflect that in Islam the "quiet hour" comes five times during the day and night, besides the special midnight prayer recommended for the more advanced minds. This regularised time-table of silent prayers has been rightly termed "timed ordinance" by the Qur-án. A Muslim, whether he be in a tempestuous sea or in a burning desert or in an infested forest, immediately one of these "quiet hours" arrives, is seen touching the humble earth with his forehead in silent and humble prostration before the Lord of his soul and body and of the whole creation. I wonder if the "quiet hour" of our Oxford Group friends is as well enforced and as attended by the spirit of humility as marks the

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performance of Muslim obligatory prayers. It cannot be too much emphasised that for a proper listening of the Grand Universal Voice, we humble human beings should exhibit the uttermost humility that we are capable of. Seen from this point of view, Islamic prayers would appear best to fulfil the qualifications for an effective mode of "listening-in."

Passing from the mode to the objective of "listening-in" we find that it is obviously necessary in view of the awful insufficiency of human knowledge and of the awful immensity of human destiny. It is a happy sign of the time that in the midst of a feeling of the all-sufficiency of human understanding in the present-day West an enlightened section of the Westerners, as the Oxford Groupers are, should realise the tremendous handicap from which the human intellect suffers. The realisation that man's understanding of life and its problems has not attained the status of an autonomous province, as dawning upon the Western nations through this very beneficial movement, cannot be too highly prized. It really will gladden the heart of a Muslim to learn that there is a party of Europeans who seriously think with him that we are in need of light from Heaven in every step of our life.

Formally the Christian Church has, no doubt, been preaching all along the necessity of receiving light from Above but, for all practical purposes, the whole of Christendom, since it has begun to take an active interest in the material welfare of humanity, has been a disbeliever in any outside light. We, Muslims, were the only people so far who stuck, in principle and practice, to the theory of Divine guidance not only in the major affairs of human society but in the smallest details of our private life. We would not so much as take a morsel of food without invoking the name of

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God. We would not make any appointment without asking for the help of God in the matter. We have been ridiculed by our energetic and smart fellow-beings from the West as a hopelessly pessimistic lot on this account. We have been stigmatised as fatalists, not relying on our own powers to shape our destiny. We have borne all that taunt and contempt and ridicule with patience and not without some measure of heart-ache. It is not a little encouraging, therefore, to find a batch of intellectual and serious-minded people in the West believing in the necessity of "listening-in" as we do. It is, at bottom, the same God-reliance in action which permeates the whole fabric of the Islamic system of life.

Agreeing, however, as we do, in the principle of God-reliance or "God-guidance" as an Oxford Grouper would call it, it has yet to be decided how the entire process of Divine guidance works in human life. I understand the Oxford Group recognises the more or less precarious nature of the guidance received through private "listening-in" by an average member of the human society. Here we are one with them. Howsoever universal and ready the light from Above, it makes a lot of difference in what stage of development or clearness a particular receiving mind is. The capacity and efficiency of the receiving set is the most important factor in the reception of any distant message, physical or spiritual. Masters of spirituality in Islam are, accordingly, never tired of warning us against confusing "revelation" with what they call *hadith-al-nafs*, i.e., with the voice of the animal self echoing back from outside. Countless have been the people who have ruined their own spiritual prospects as well as those of others by not keeping this distinction in view. In their uncritical enthusiasm they have mistaken the



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promptings of their sub-conscious mind to be the voice of God. We are glad the members of the Oxford Group recognise this danger and have provided a safeguard against it in their doctrine of "continuance" which means, we are told, a corporate life in "God-guidance," *i.e.*, a life of consultation in acting upon the inspiration received through "listening-in." Here, quite unconsciously, the Oxford Group adopts a principle laid down in the Qur-án. The Book says :

"And their rule is to take counsel among themselves." (42 : 38.)

The object of this Quranic provision is the same as in the Oxford Group principle. However clear-headed and clear-hearted a person may be and however devoted he may be to the seeking of light from Above, the light of his own individual soul will prove a very meagre guidance unless, of course, he be a God-appointed person enjoying the special support and protection of God. It is here that we are faced with a problem which an ardent movement like the Oxford Group can ill afford to shelve. A collective effort to live a clear life is, no doubt, more dependable than a private individual effort in the same direction, but shall we regard even this free from all dangers ? By no means. So many times in history has a whole religious community gone far away from the path of rectitude in spite of a revealed guidance in its possession and the example of an inspired personality to guide its footsteps. How can then we, uninspired persons, ever hope to march persistently along the right course where even such a light is absent ?

No sensible student of religion will deny to-day that the existence of so many religions in the world is the result of God's repeated intervention in the moral struggle of humanity. They indicate neither any chaos in the spiritual experiences of humanity nor any

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unnecessary duplication of a phenomenon. They constitute an appropriate supply of a recurring demand. And this demand is that it is not enough for man to "listen-in" to the ordinary universal voice of God and that it is necessary for God, at times, to speak out in a special and positive manner so as to compel man to "listen-in" and receive in an unambiguous language the eternal rules of human regeneration. The advent of original Teachers of religion with their revealed Dispensations, as they are called, is in fulfilment of this demand in the spiritual life of man on this earth. This special active revelation of God to humanity has had to be in instalments and by stages in view of the gradual development of human social consciousness. Successive revelations were no mere repetitions but attended invariably with elements of progress. Thus in following the latest of them, one may be regarded as following all the previous ones. In any case to go by one such revealed guidance is essentially necessary in arriving at a dependable chart for our spiritual life. As a matter of fact, in the chartless ocean of our moral struggles, even the most defiled and out-of-date of these revealed Dispensations will be a safer guide than the collective wisdom of the whole of humanity earnestly "listening-in" in the usual way. If the ambitious mind of Western humanity finds its own Scripture not progressive enough they are welcome to try a fresher and a fuller revelation in the shape of the Holy Qur-án, but they shall be simply courting disaster for themselves if they depend entirely on the usual inspirations of their own minds, however earnest their concentration, for a progressive guidance of an unerring nature. That people have deteriorated in spite of revealed Testaments should cause no confusion on this score. People have failed not because of these Testaments, but because of

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their unfaithfulness to them and also because they did not accept a fuller revelation when any such came. The ordinary "listening-in" must go on by all means; but the special "listening-in" of the active voice of God at each turn of history must be called in to supplement it if we are at all to reach the goal.

### THE RELIGION OF GOD AND THE RELIGION OF MAN

We have already seen how the ambitions of the Oxford Group Movement can be better fulfilled through Islamic teachings than otherwise. It must be said to the credit of the promoters of the Movement that they have very well grasped the spiritual needs of modern minds. But mere grasp is no guarantee of the realisation of the dream. People that dream of an ideal society must have the necessary moral and spiritual equipment to make a considerable section of humanity to think and feel in the way they themselves do. They must have an unflinching faith in the ultimate success of the cause. But this, as we know, is possible only if the persons concerned are inspired persons not in the ordinary commonplace sense of the term but in that special sense in which the founders of religion are inspired. The fact is that the rise of religion is, so to speak, the reserved subject of God. The way to Him must have an express sanction and approval from Him. Really speaking, man cannot make a religion, however earnest his efforts may be to produce one.

No doubt there have been so-called religions, or to be clearer still, religious movements, produced by men whose sincerity is unquestioned. But then they have never improved matters. Take the case of the Protestant Movement. How much blood has been shed to see it just partially established in Christendom! But what has it led to? To gross materialism and

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disruption of social and moral ties. With all its anachronisms and superstitions, Roman Catholicism has a far better hold on the religious impulses of its followers. Rationalism and Science, the twin products of Protestantism, have done more harm than good. The approach to a truer religion which was its main objective has, all throughout, remained beyond the reach of its sponsors. Far from bringing God nearer the human mind it has removed Him farther still, so much so that even the leadership of the Church has fallen in the hands of persons almost agnostic in their religious ideas. As for worldly unhappiness and social chaos, which it has brought in its train, no one need be told of them in so many words. And all this in spite of the fact that the first generation of Protestants possessed a devoutness and a zeal which can hardly be exhibited by any person or persons working for a religious cause anywhere to-day in the civilised world !

I do not suggest that religions established by God do not degenerate in course of time. What I mean is that confusion brought about by man-made religions gives nothing in compensation whereas, even in its most degenerated form, a real religious movement retains some redeeming features. Instances of this are to be found in the solidarity of the social systems of Hinduism and Judaism to take two very extreme cases. The constancy of their founders can still be seen impressed in the lives of the people still clinging to these worn-out religious systems.

Compare this with the brief history of the Oxford Group Movement. Not to speak of other additions and alterations, it has had to change its very name thrice already. In the beginning it called itself "First Century Christian Fellowship." Then it was changed for another name, "Oxford Group Movement." Perhaps,

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because this savoured of localism, lacking a universal appeal, it adopted the present name:

### THE "MORAL REARMAMENT."

Evidently this shows a lack of decision. And if so much indecision is shown in naming the Movement, how can we expect firmer decisions in the deeper and wider affairs of the Movement?

I, however, do not blame the sponsors for this kind of shortcoming. It is inevitable in such cases. The firmness and constancy of purpose which has been exhibited by the founders of religions has not been their own. It has been the result of a special protection from on High. The Holy Ghost, which has always appeared an enigma in the Christian theology, has its explanation here. The Holy Spirit of God, called in Arabic *Rûh-ul-Qudus*, which is persistently spoken of in the sacred records as having filled in the minds of holy founders of religions, is a fact of supreme importance in ensuring the course of a religious movement. It is this active inflow of the strengthening and sanctifying power of God which keeps the chosen ones of God steady in the course of their struggles against the forces of evil.

If a religious regeneration is willed by God, it is He Who is to invest the proper man with the necessary authority and impart the necessary strength to his heart through which he is to break all opposition of matter and mind. An unauthorised person's case is different. Lacking in the Divine sanction behind him, his movement goes on changing position and principle and is moulded by circumstances to any and every shape.

# ISLAMIC REVIEW

## THE FIRST WRITTEN CONSTITUTION OF THE WORLD

BY DR. MUHAMMAD HAMIDULLAH

*(Continued from p. 384 of the current volume.)*

### **A Translation of the Constitution of the City-State of Madina in the Time of the Prophet**

[I have tried to make the translation very clear so as not to require any marginal notes for its understanding. The clauses have been numbered, to facilitate easy reference. Since this numbering has been agreed upon and is the same in Germany, Holland, Italy and other places, so whenever I have had to differ I have indicated my difference by subdividing the clause into (a), (b), etc., so as not to interfere with the international numbering.]

In the name of God, the Beneficent and the Merciful.

(1) This is a prescript of Muhammad, the Prophet and Messenger of God (to operate) between the faithful and the followers of Islam from among the Quraish and the people of Madina and those who may be under them, may join them and take part in wars in their company.

(2) They shall constitute a separate political unit (*Ummat*) as distinguished from all the people (of the world).

(3) The emigrants from the Quraish shall be (responsible) for their own ward ; and shall pay their blood-money in mutual collaboration and shall secure the release of their own prisoners by paying their ransom from themselves, so that the mutual dealings between the believers be in accordance with the principles of goodness and justice.

(4) And Banu 'Awf shall be responsible for their own ward and shall pay their blood-money in mutual

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collaboration, and every group shall secure the release of its own prisoners by paying their ransom from themselves so that the dealings between the believers be in accordance with the principles of goodness and justice.

(5) And Banu Al-Harith-ibn-Khazraj shall be responsible for their own ward and shall pay their blood-money in mutual collaboration and every group shall secure the release of its own prisoners by paying their ransom from themselves, so that the dealings between the believers be in accordance with the principles of goodness and justice.

(6) And Banu Sa'ida shall be responsible for their own ward, and shall pay their blood-money in mutual collaboration and every group shall secure the release of its own prisoners by paying their ransom from themselves, so that the dealings between the believers be in accordance with the principles of goodness and justice.

(7) And Banu Jusham shall be responsible for their own ward and shall pay their blood-money in mutual collaboration and every group shall secure the release of its own prisoners by paying their ransom so that the dealings between the believers be in accordance with the principles of goodness and justice.

(8) And Banu an-Najjar shall be responsible for their own ward and shall pay their blood-money in mutual collaboration and every group shall secure the release of its own prisoners by paying their ransom so that the dealings between the believers be in accordance with the principles of goodness and justice.

(9) And Banu 'Amr-ibn-'Awf shall be responsible for their own ward and shall pay their blood-money in mutual collaboration and every group shall secure the release of its own prisoners by paying their ransom, so that the dealings between the believers be in accordance with the principles of goodness and justice.

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(10) And Banu-al-Nabit shall be responsible for their own ward and shall pay their blood-money in mutual collaboration and every group shall secure the release of its own prisoners by paying their ransom so that the dealings between the believers be in accordance with the principles of goodness and justice.

(11) And Banu-al-Aws shall be responsible for their own ward and shall pay their blood-money in mutual collaboration and every group shall secure the release of its own prisoners by paying their ransom, so that the dealings between the believers be in accordance with the principles of goodness and justice.

(12) (a). And the believers shall not leave any one, hard-pressed with debts, without affording him some relief, in order that the dealings between the believers be in accordance with the principles of goodness and justice.

(b) Also no believer shall enter into a contract of clientage with one who is already in such a contract with another believer.

(13) And the hands of pious believers shall be raised against every such person as rises in rebellion or attempts to acquire anything by force or is guilty of any sin or excess or attempts to spread mischief among the believers ; their hands shall be raised all together against such a person, even if he be a son to any one of them.

(14) And no believer shall kill another believer in retaliation for an unbeliever, nor shall he help an unbeliever against a believer.

(15) And the protection of God is one. The humblest of them (believers) can, by extending his protection to any one, put the obligation on all ; and the believers are brothers to one another as against all the people (of the world).



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(16) And that those who will obey us among the Jews, will have help and equality. Neither shall they be oppressed nor will any help be given against them.

(17) And the peace of the believers shall be one. If there be any war in the way of God, no believer shall be under any peace (with the enemy) apart from other believers, unless it (this peace) be the same and equally binding on all.

(18) And all those detachments that will fight on our side will be relieved by turns.

(19) And the believers as a body shall take blood vengeance in the way of God.

(20) (a) And undoubtedly pious believers are the best and in the rightest course.

(b) And that no associator (non-Muslim subject) shall give any protection to the life and property of a Quraishite, nor shall he come in the way of any believer in this matter.

(21) And if any one intentionally murders a believer, and it is proved, he shall be killed in retaliation, unless the heir of the murdered person be satisfied with blood-money. And all believers shall actually stand for this ordinance and nothing else shall be proper for them to do.

(22) And it shall not be lawful for any one, who has agreed to carry out the provisions laid down in this code and has affixed his faith in God and the Day of Judgment, to give help or protection to any murderer, and if he gives any help or protection to such a person, God's curse and wrath shall be on him on the Day of Resurrection, and no money or compensation shall be accepted from such a person.

(23) And that whenever you differ about anything, refer it to God and to Muhammad.

(24) And the Jews shall share with the believers the expenses of war so long as they fight in conjunction.

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(25) And the Jews of Banu 'Awf shall be considered as one political community (*ummat*) along with the believers—for the Jews their religion, and for the Muslims theirs, be one client or patron. He, however, who is guilty of oppression or breach of treaty, shall suffer the resultant trouble as also his family, but no one besides.

(26) And the Jews of Banu-an-Najjar shall have the same rights as the Jews of Banu 'Awf.

(27) And the Jews of Banu-al-Harith shall have the same rights as the Jews of Banu 'Awf.

(28) And the Jews of Banu Sa'ida shall have the same rights as the Jews of Banu 'Awf.

(29) And the Jews of Banu Jusham shall have the same rights as the Jews of Banu 'Awf.

(30) And the Jews of Banu al-Aws shall have the same rights as the Jews of Banu 'Awf.

(31) And the Jews of Banu Tha'laba shall have the same rights as the Jews of Banu 'Awf. Of course, whoever is found guilty of oppression or violation of treaty, shall himself suffer the consequent trouble as also his family, but no one besides.

(32) And Jafna, who are a branch of the Tha'laba tribe, shall have the same rights as the mother tribes.

(33) And Banu-ash-Shutaiba shall have the same rights as the Jews of Banu 'Awf; and they shall be faithful to, and not violators of, treaty.

(34) And the *mawlas* (clients) of Tha'laba shall have the same rights as those of the original members of it.

(35) And the sub-branches of the Jewish tribes shall have the same rights as the mother tribes.

(36) (a) And that none of them shall go out to fight as a soldier of the Muslim army, without the permission of Muhammad.

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(b) And no obstruction shall be placed in the way of any one's retaliation for beating or injuries ; and whoever sheds blood shall be personally responsible for it as well as his family ; or else (*i.e.*, any step beyond this) will be of oppression ; and God will be with him who will most faithfully follow this code (*sahifah*) in action.

(37) (a) And the Jews shall bear the burden of their expenses and the Muslims theirs.

(b) And if any one fights against the people of this code, their (*i.e.*, of the Jews and Muslims) mutual help shall come into operation, and there shall be friendly counsel and sincere behaviour between them ; and faithfulness and no breach of covenant.

(38) And the Jews shall be bearing their own expenses so long as they shall be fighting in conjunction with the believers.

(39) And the Valley of Yathrib (Madina) shall be a *Haram* (sacred place)\* for the people of this code.

(40) The clients (*mawla*) shall have the same treatment as the original persons (*i.e.*, persons accepting clientage). He shall neither be harmed nor shall he himself break the covenant.

(41) And no refuge shall be given to any one without the permission of the people of the place (*i.e.*, the refugee shall have no right of giving refuge to others).

(42) And that if any murder or quarrel takes place among the people of this code, from which any trouble may be feared, it shall be referred to God and God's Messenger, Muhammad (on whom be God's peace and blessings) ; and God will be with him who will be most particular about what is written in this code and act on it most faithfully.

(43) The Quraish shall be given no protection nor shall they who help them.

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\*That is, a secure place.

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(44) And they (*i.e.*, Jews and Muslims) shall have each other's help in the event of any one invading Yathrib.

(45) (a) And if they (*i.e.*, the Jews) are invited to any peace, they also shall offer peace and shall be a party to it; and if they invite the believers to some such affairs, it shall be their (Muslims) duty as well to reciprocate the dealings, excepting that any one makes a religious war.

(b) On every group shall rest the responsibility of (repulsing) the enemy from the place which faces its part of the city.

(46) And the Jews of the tribe of al-Aws, clients as well as original members, shall have the same rights as the people of this code: and shall behave sincerely and faithfully towards the latter, not perpetrating any breach of covenant. As one shall sow so shall he reap. And God is with him who will most sincerely and faithfully carry out the provisions of this code.

(47) And this prescript shall not be of any avail to any oppressor or breaker of covenant. And one shall have security whether one goes out to a campaign or remains in Madina, or else it will be an oppression and breach of covenant. And God is the Protector of him who performs the obligations with faithfulness and care, as also His Messenger Muhammad (on whom be blessings and peace).

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