

"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

Vol. XXX]

RAMADAN, 1361 A.H.  
SEPTEMBER, 1942 A.C.

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Embraced Islam on 24th June, 1941.



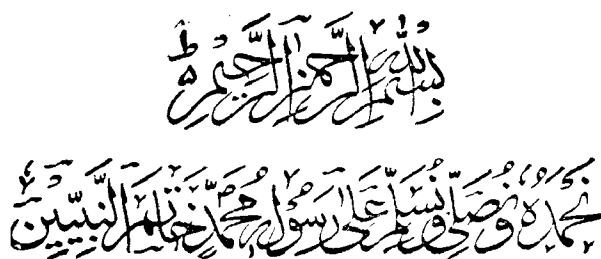
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# THE ISLAMIC REVIEW

Vol. XXX ]

RAMADAN, 1361 A.H.  
SEPTEMBER, 1942 A.C.

[No. 9

## DECLARATIONS

(1)

I, LESLIE WALTER HAROLD SKUSE, of . . . ,  
Ashchurch, nr. Tewkesbury, Glos., do hereby faithfully and solemnly declare of my own free will that I worship One and Only Alláh (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 Alláh.

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

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

*Dated 22nd June, 1941.*

L. SKUSE.

## ISLAMIC REVIEW

I, (MRS.) ETHEL YAHl, of . . . Street, Hull, do hereby faithfully and solemnly declare of my own free will that I worship One and Only Alláh (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 Alláh.

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

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

*Dated 24th June, 1941.*

E. YAHl.

I, (MISS) CLAUDE BEVAN, c/o . . . , Llantrisant, nr. Cardiff, S. Wales, do hereby faithfully and solemnly declare of my own free will that I worship One and Only Alláh (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 Alláh.

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

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

*Dated 29th June, 1941.*

CLAUDE BEVAN.

I, ERNEST PAX TATTON, of . . . , Winchester, do hereby faithfully and solemnly declare of my own free will that I worship One and Only Alláh (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 Alláh.

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

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

*Dated 2nd August, 1941.*

E. P. TATTON.

## DECLARATIONS

(5)

I, (MRS.) EDNA NESRIN DOLAY, of . . . . ., Evesham, Worcs., do hereby faithfully and solemnly declare of my own free will that I worship One and Only Alláh (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 Alláh.

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

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

*Dated 29th August, 1941.*

EDNA NESRIN DOLAY.

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(6)

I, (MRS.) VERA UZER, of . . . . Street, Liverpool, do hereby faithfully and solemnly declare of my own free will that I worship One and Only Alláh (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 Alláh.

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

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

*Dated 8th October, 1941.*

VERA UZER.

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## A CORRECTION

Please read "goods" in place of "gods" in line 21, page 162, in the issue of May 1942.

EDITOR.

## ISLAMIC REVIEW

### IN MEMORIAM

We regret to announce the death of our English Muslim sister Mrs. Nishat Arnold, at Bournemouth, on the 21st of April. She together with her husband embraced Islam only a few years back, but their zeal for their newly adopted faith made them very conspicuous in the British Muslim brotherhood. Her death is thus a great loss to the community.

The death took place very suddenly, her husband Mr. Abdul Latif Arnold informs us, being caused by cerebral hæmorrhage. This together with the fact that she died at a young age, makes this event doubly sad. And yet as Muslims we have to realise that

“For Allah we are and to Him do we return.”

*Innā lillāhi wa innā ilaihi raji‘ūn.*

The body was interred at the Brookwood Muslim Cemetery on April 24, the Salat-al-Janaza being conducted by Maulvi Abdul Majid, the Imam of the Mosque, Woking.

We convey our heartfelt condolence to Mr. Arnold and pray to Allāh that He may sustain him in his bereavement.

May He give the deceased a place in heaven !

## **‘ID-AL-ADZHA (1360) AT WOKING**

On Sunday, 28th of December 1941, the great Muslim festival of ‘Id-al-Adzha (1360) was celebrated with its usual great success at the Shah Jehan Mosque, Woking. The festival falling in the middle of winter, it was very cold for some days before the event and it was feared that snow and frost would prevent many friends from being present. But the Muslim community in Great Britain is generally fortunate on these occasions and the day of the festival was favoured with brilliant sunshine and it was not so cold as to prevent friends from spending some time chatting and conversing in the sunshine before going for prayers into the well-heated marquee which is generally erected for these functions on the lawn before the Sir Salar Jung Memorial House. The guests began to arrive at about half-past ten in the morning and by the time of the prayers which were said at half-past eleven o’clock a congregation of some hundred Muslims with their friends had assembled. The congregation was greatly increased by the presence of thirty officers and men of the Indian contingent in Great Britain who had been enabled to be present through the kindness of their commander, Col. R. W. Hills, M. C. These soldiers were under the command of Risaldar-Major Muhammad Ashraf Khan, I.O.M. As customary, all the Muslim peoples were well represented and Muslims from the East said their prayers side by side with their Muslim brothers of Europe. After the two rak‘ats of prescribed prayer which were led by Maulvi Abdul Majid, M.A., the Imam of the Shah Jehan Mosque, the congregation sat down at his feet to listen to his ‘Id-al-Adzha sermon. This sermon stressed the fundamental equality of man in Islam without distinction of race or colour. This was clearly displayed by the whole course of Islamic history and these principles had been fully understood



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by the many nations of Islam and applied by them in their days of power and glory. An amazing manifestation of the idea of brotherhood, not yet really understood by any of the other religions of the world, was to be found in the glorious institution of the pilgrimage to the Holy City of Makka which reached its culmination that day. In Makka Muslims of all races, dressed in the same simple unsewn garment, met on an equal footing and, getting to know one another, helped to spread the mutual understanding and brotherliness so clearly shown in the religion of Islam. By developing and spreading these ideas Islam could be the saviour of sorely-tried humanity and bring mankind back to a proper appreciation and value of the human being as an individual. Christianity could be a great ally to Islam in this work since they both appreciated the value of the individual. After the sermon the Imam Sahib wished all those present a Happy 'Id and the guests in their turn wished one another the same with the distinctive Islamic embrace. The congregation then repaired to another tent where a delicious Indian luncheon was served. After lunch most of the guests were obliged to depart as they had some distance to go in order to return to their homes. However, some stayed on in pleasant conversation during the afternoon. By five o'clock in the evening all the friends had departed and the everyday routine was resumed after a very happy and successful celebration of 'Id-al-Adzha (1360).

## MUHARRAM, 1361

On Saturday, 31st January, 1942, the members of the Muslim Society in Great Britain assembled at their house at 18 Eccleston Square, London, S.W.1, to do honour to the tragic memory of Sayyidina Imam Husain who met such a cruel end on the field of Karbala on the 10th of Muharram A.H. 61 (October 10, 680). The meeting was opened with a recitation from the Holy Qur-án by M. Dawud Cowan, M.A., Assistant Imam of the Woking Mosque. In the chair was Mr. Ismail V. deYorke, Chairman of the Muslim Society in Great Britain, who called upon Dr. Shakir Mohamedi, the principal speaker, to deliver his address. In his talk Dr. Mohamedi gave an account of the tragic events which are so well known to all Muslims and students of Islamic history. He showed the steadfastness of Imam Husain in the face of great adversity and his willingness to die rather than forsake his principles. Therein was a lesson for all Muslims which should be deeply studied and which would enable them to regain their past glory. This eloquent and instructive talk was followed by a *Marthiya* or funeral oration which was read in the Urdu language by the well-known Muslim author and journalist, Sirdar Iqbal Ali Shah, and a few words of appreciation of the nobility and heroism of Imam Husain were said by Maulvi Abdul Majid, M.A., Imam of the Woking Mosque. The proceedings were then brought to a conclusion by M. Cowan leading the congregation in the recitation of 'Darud Sharif' or prayer of blessings for the Holy Prophet Muhammad and his Family. After the meeting tea was served to all present by the Muslim Society in Great Britain and some time was then spent in conversation and friendly intercourse.

## ISLAMIC REVIEW

### THE HOLY QUR-AN AND ITS COMMENTARY

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

(Continued from p. 215 of Vol. XXX.)

It is interesting to note that while issuing instructions for the Hajj rituals, the Holy Qur-án draws our attention to the moral aspects of the institution which are, in fact, the real purpose behind the rituals. The pilgrim is required not to make any arousing reference to sex life, as this is the real meaning of *rafath*, the word translated as foul speech, not to abuse any one nor to quarrel—an injunction fraught with a great prophecy. In spite of various setbacks in the Muslim religious life, this aspect of the Hajj continues to this day with all its glory as I shall show later on. But the Book does not content itself with mere prohibitions. It goes a step further and enjoins us to start doing positive good deeds. Bad feeling and tastes removed, the mind is in a suitable frame to foster the spirit of positive service. A note of warning is also issued against setting out on pilgrimage without sufficient money for the expenses of the journey as this may lead to such degenerate practices as begging and borrowing. And we are sternly reminded that the most indispensable provision for this undertaking is piety. In other words, every moment of this sacred journey should be utilised in growing the sense of piety in us. In passing, we are told that if one finds an opportunity for doing some trade or business on one's way to or even while in the Sacred City itself it is not forbidden—a permission that stresses the principle that there is no fundamental opposition between our worldly pursuits and our quest for God. It is the lack of piety in worldly affairs and forgetfulness of God alone that creates a breach between the human soul and God. If, however, we received our earnings as "bounties

## THE HOLY QUR-AN AND ITS COMMENTARY

from the Lord," they are not at all any hindrance to our life in God.

A further warning is issued against allowing any trace of pride to be left in the mind in the course of pilgrimage. The last pride to depart from our mind is the pride of ancestry, particularly if we belong to a martial race. Usually it is the memory of the glorious deeds of our ancestry that keep up our spirit of chivalry. The Qur-án wants all our pride to be centred in God. Thus does the Book strike at the root of all tribal, national and racial jealousies. Herein is a message for the warring nations of the East and the West to-day. It is only when these nations will begin to glorify God in the place of their respective national heroes that they will see the end of their ruinous national jealousies and not before. Let the British people cease glorifying Nelson, the French Napoleon, the German Bismarck, and so on, and let them celebrate the praises of God for whatever glory He has given them in the course of history, and a new era of peace will be found dawning on the history of Europe.

As we know, there are people who, even in sacred observations, seek nothing but worldly felicity. These aspire after no spiritual progress, the ultimate object of all religious life. There is a rebuke for such people in verses 200 and 201. We are reminded in a plain language that although to pray for worldly felicity in acts of devotion is not forbidden, but to stop at that and not to seek spiritual objects as well through these acts is to defeat the very object of these acts. The Hajj constituting the most arduous and expensive of these acts, it is only proper that the occasion should be utilised in securing protection against the chastisement of hell-fire and "good in the hereafter," side by side with the blessings of the worldly life. It should, under no circumstances, be forgotten that the ultimate

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object of pilgrimage is the achievement of spiritual progress. And we are assured in verse 202 that the slightest effort on the part of man, even an earnest desire, in regard to spiritual progress is taken note of by God. As a matter of fact, no prayer for such a progress goes unheeded by Him. Whereas other prayers may or may not be granted, prayers for spiritual blessings invariably receive the acceptance of God. If we examine the working of the human mind, we shall be able to see readily that earnest prayers for spiritual progress are rather few and far between to go forth from it. While hundreds of prayers are addressed by us to God for the removal of worldly difficulties and for the bringing into being of worldly advantages, it is very rarely that we pray very sincerely for a spiritual enlightenment of the mind.

The concluding words of verse 203—"And know that you shall be gathered together to Him"—are very significant. Our attention is pointedly drawn to the fact that the Hajj gives us a foretaste of the condition that will obtain on the Day of Resurrection. It provides us a faint glimpse of that huge experience which is to come to us in the life beyond death. Indeed, I have no hesitation in asserting that one who observes this institution as a believer, is sure to be convinced of the fact of *Yawmul Hashr*, or the day of final gathering. And even an unbelieving observer will feel the necessity and possibility of that promised gathering in view of the impressive scene which the Hajj presents.

In 1941 I saw nations swarming from the four corners of the world to "the mother of cities," as Makka has been styled from time beyond history. It was the 9th of *Dhul Hijja*, the last month of Hijra era, when some 400 thousands of people who had come there from China, the Philippines, Malaya, Burma,

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India, Afghanistan, Baluchistan, Iran, Turkestan, Mesopotamia, Russia, Syria, Egypt, Turkey, Abyssinia, and even from England, that myself, with two friends, left Makka for the village of Mina, where, as the tradition goes, Ishmael was brought to be sacrificed in the name of God by Abraham. We passed the night there, and after saying our morning prayer we started for the plains of Arafat, and this, as I have said, we had to reach before the sun attained its meridian. A splendid cavalcade which could extend over more than twenty miles, consisting of camels, horses, mules and asses, conveying the pilgrims to their destination, sprinkled with vehicles and coaches here and there, while more than half the number were on foot. They differed in language, colour and race, they belonged to diverse ranks and grades, but all fastened in the strong cord of fraternity and saturated with the true spirit of the belief in the Unity of God and the equality of man. Descent and wealth everywhere claim respect and distinction for their owners if they are known to others, but rich costumes and expensive clothing can command awe and respect even amongst strangers. But the Divine wisdom which wanted to demolish all man-made boundaries of differences in order to create universal brotherhood in man could not suffer even that in that levelling atmosphere of Makka in the days of pilgrimage. Every pilgrim, no matter what was his rank, a king or a plebeian, had to divest himself of his raiment before stepping into the holy precincts of Makka and clothe himself in the two white sheets prescribed for the *Ihram*—one to cover the legs and the other for the rest of the body—thus destroying the last sign of distinction. Picture to yourselves hundreds of thousands of men and women belonging to different ranks and grades of society, clad in one and the same garb of humility, free from all signs of distinction,

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passing days and nights for months and weeks on terms of purest equality in the service of One God. And what was their form of address to each other? Father or mother, sister or brother, son or daughter, as the age and sex allowed. Fair faces with all the charms of their feminine beauty, but no veil to cover them, and yet as safe from stare and glare as when behind the screen, all eyes there being bent down and fixed on the feet of their owners, with minds free from lust and evil desire. One thing which left an everlasting impression on my mind was the chivalrous and orderly behaviour which I observed in that vast flood of humanity. Men, women and children were hastening to the appointed place which they had to reach within a limited time, mostly on foot, yet there was not the slightest sign of pushing, elbowing or shouldering. 'Ladies and children first' was the rule of the day which I saw scrupulously observed even by the most unpolished coming from the heart of Central Africa.

There was, however, one thing which my eyes remained searching full three days of the gathering but could not find—that ubiquitous person who graces with his presence every assembly, religious or secular, in the whole world. I mean the policeman. To my surprise I was told that the gentleman has never been in requisition in the days of Hajj (pilgrimage) from the very beginning. Does the kingdom of God come from heaven, I wonder, in these days and bring that heterogeneous assembly under its peaceful arms? Do all criminal and evil propensities in our nature become suppressed, and we become angels for the time being, that the authorities at Makka can so easily dispense with the services of this guardian of the peace and a necessary asset to all order? Interpret it in whatever light you will, but my searching eye failed to find any evidence of any form of evil even in the commonest

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form. I have been to fairs, religious and secular, Muslim and non-Muslim, in different parts of India; I have been to different places of gathering in the Western world as well, but I found no place without a representative of the police force, and their very absence in the holy place in these three days of pilgrimage showed to me that religion, after all, could make angels of men and create that spirit of universal brotherhood and human fellowship which can make sin unknown, as it consists in sacrificing our own needs in the interests of others. This can cement conflicting elements into one harmonious whole. If such a spirit works in man, it is sure to banish evil. All criminal acts and wrong deeds are the shadow of our desire to possess things belonging to others. Covetousness lies at the root of all wrong actions. It prompts all offences and germinates all crimes. Could a desire to possess others' belongings, even in the slightest form, find its way into the mind of one who thinks it his first duty to give his own needful for the benefit of others? This is the basic principle of the whole ethical code of Islam, as the Book of God says: "You cannot attain righteousness unless you spend for the benefit of others, out of what you love to possess." That was the spirit, which I found permeating the atmosphere and which must kill sin, no matter even if it be original, and crush the head of the dragon without going to the cross. Is not a Muslim, therefore, justified in thinking that the holy pilgrimage to Makka washes off his past sins? If a spirit, like the one I have mentioned and saw, becomes prompted in man and takes better of him even for a short time, has he not been purged of his past sins and enabled to enter into new life of righteousness? I wish we Muslims could continue in cultivating that spirit which I experienced in those three most eventful days of my life, and the millennium of the



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days of the Prophet would again be restored to us. Yes, I saw the kingdom of heaven established again at the foot of the Mount of Paran, and it reminded me of, and strengthened my belief in, the coming of the same in the days of the Prophet in Arabia. Can you imagine a government or a rule in any country without having police or other functionaries to keep order? But the world saw that regime in the days of the Prophet at Madina, when crime became extinct, and even those who unfortunately fell prey to some evil propensity could not help making a clean breast of it before the Holy Prophet within a day or two of its occurrence, though unobserved by any other eye. Omnipresence of God became a living reality in the companions of the Prophet which dispensed with police investigation. No one was needed to arrest a culprit. The offender himself was his own captor. Falsehood was unknown, and therefore no case needed this modern rigmarole of judicial procedure. No one stood in need of any evidence to substantiate his proof. There were no allegations of facts or joinder of issues. Statement of charge or claim in their true colour on one side and admission or confession on the other. Thus God seemed to rule everywhere, and "Thy kingdom come"—the dream and prayer of Jesus—became reality at the hand of Prophet Muhammad.

*Sallallah alaihi wa sallam.*

A few words more about the rituals to be observed in the Hajj, and we have finished with this subject. It is with regard to the spiritual significance underlying each ritual. True, most of these rituals were observed by the pre-Islamic Arabs, but they were the creation not of pagan Arabia but of that giant monotheist, Abraham, whose progeny these Arabs were, through his eldest son Ishmael. If they preserved these practices, monotheistic in origin, these did not

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thereby become polytheistic or pagan. Such of the practices as were of pagan origin, such as whistling, the clapping of hands, going naked round the Ka'ba, the aristocracy not going to Arafat but returning from Muzdalifa, and boasting of one's ancestors, were discarded quite unceremoniously. But such of them as dated back to the time of Abraham, were retained. In this Islam showed not only its identity of tradition with Abraham's faith, but its attitude towards all religions in general. It always makes a distinction between good things and bad things in every religion. It always retains all that is helpful in the cultivation of spirituality in man. We have already discussed the inner significance of the *Ihram*, the throwing of stones and the gathering at Arafat. Now let us say a few words on the circumbulation of the Ka'ba called *Tawaf*, on running between the hills of Safa and Marwa known as *Sa'y*, and the kissing of the black-stone. The circumbulation symbolises our spiritual struggle in this life. In every work that we do, in every experience that comes to us, in everything that makes us feel our existence, we shall seek the pleasure of God. And if we fail to realise this of our own choice, circumstances will compel us to do the same. As a stone set in motion while it is tied to a pole by a string, we are to revolve round and round the Will of God. Or like a moth to whom the touch of the lamp is forbidden by a glass, we should go round our shaded Beloved in our desperate anxiety to touch His flames. This latter spirit is a higher type of experience vouchsafed to those souls that have attained to higher levels of consciousness.

The running known as *Sa'y* commemorating, as it does, the running of Hagar in a condition of distress, when the life of her son Ishmael was in danger of perishing for lack of water, symbolises those extreme moments of despair in the course of our spiritual

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struggles when all our efforts appear to be abortive and feel as if we are on the point of a total spiritual wreck. At such moments not a drop of spiritual water seems to be available to moisten our parched soul. The *Sa'y*, or the running, is a reminder to us of the necessity of a keener struggle, of a harder effort even in such moments as these, when one's mind is inclined to be paralysed and disinclined to be up and doing. In the words of the poet :

“ Give harder strokes to the strings of your instrument.

When you find the music dull.”

As for kissing the black-stone, made so much of by non-Muslim critics of Islam, it must be understood at the outset that it is no essential part of the Hajj. One may just make a sign of respect from a distance ; that will suffice for the ritual performance. Nevertheless, it is an act which has the seal of the Prophet's practice. And it has its significance. The black-stone, as the Caliph Umar had rightly said, is nothing more than a stone. But it stands there as a great sign for the believers. It bears the memory of countless ages. That ancient House which was built in an unknown past, that has been sanctified by the prayers and touches of numberless Prophets, has seen so many reverses of fortune, has witnessed the fulfilment of numerous long-term prophecies and has last of all seen the fulfilment of the mightiest prophecy of all ages, *viz.* the birth of the great World Prophet from this most unattractive spot, has only one permanent feature maintained throughout the ages and it is this stone. For countless times has this “ first House built for man's worship (of One God)” been rebuilt, but this stone, which evidently is the foundation-stone of the first house, has survived all the ravages of time. In kissing the stone the pilgrims kiss the whole sacred

## FROM THE CROSS TO THE CRESCENT

memory, the most striking one in the world's history. The stream of events of which this stone is a silent record is a mighty signpost to the existence of the Holy Creator, so deeply concealed in the confusing cross-currents of history.

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## FROM THE CROSS TO THE CRESCENT

BY ABDUR RAZZAQUE SELLIAH

*(Continued from page 194 of June 1942 issue.)*

The very first words he is to recite when standing for his prayer (and Muslim prayers are begun standing) are :

“ Surely I have turned myself, being upright, to Him, Who has originated the heavens and the earth and I am not of the polytheists. Surely my prayer and my sacrifice and my life and my death are all for Alláh, the Lord of the Worlds, no associate has He, and this am I commanded, and I am of those who submit.”

The words are very significant and it is not difficult to understand the impressions they will create on the minds of the worshipper. Having uttered these words, he softly raises his hands up to his ears, indicating his total dissociation from all the affairs of the world and his completest attention to the Lord of the spirit, and then folds them on his breast. This latter is undoubtedly the best posture one can adopt in approaching one's Creator. It is a mark of attention, respect as well as obedience. The worshipper is sure to feel the reactions that it will produce in him, and he is careful not to treat the matter lightly. He also knows that from the time he has pronounced the Takbir followed by the folding of hands on his breast, and until the end of the prayer is reached, he cannot move an inch (unless his ablutions have become fouled). He is not allowed to give up his prayer to the Almighty, even at

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the point of death. Should an enemy come behind him with a drawn sword, intent on taking his life, even then he should stand firm, and not desert for a deserter is a traitor and a lost man. With these things in mind, and within the precincts of an unadorned and very plain mosque, and standing behind the imam or leader (whoever it be, whether king or beggar), he raises his hands to his ears and folds them on his breast, with the words Allah-o-Akbar (God is the Greatest). Our actions are often an index to our character, and so in the Muslim prayer or worship there are certain actions or gesticulations to be performed which enable the worshipper to more fully realize what he is doing. Thus the raising of the hands to the ear indicates that the worshipper is beseeching God to protect him from the temptations of Satan, whereas by lowering his hands from ears downwards he means that he shuns the Devil, and stands humbly before his Lord with crossed hands, as if awaiting His commands. A very correct and humble position indeed. With the performance of the Takbir, the worship may be said to have begun. From here onwards, he recites the prayer, "Glory to Thee, O Allah, and Thine is the praise, and blessed is Thy name, and exalted is Thy Majesty, and there is *none* to be served besides Thee." The words "... and there is *none* to be served besides Thee" fix the mind of the worshipper to the absolute Unity of God. Having said these words, the worshipper proceeds to recite the Fatiha, a prayer that bears some resemblance to the Lord's Prayer. The only difference is that the Fatiha is more complete in the sense that it wants to convey, than the Pater Noster. Every word of the Fatiha opens the Muslim's mind step by step to the point of true contemplation. It reads: *In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful, all praise is due to Allah the Lord of the Worlds, the Beneficent, the*

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*Merciful. Master of the Day of Judgment. Thee do we worship, and Thee do we beseech for help. Guide us on the Right Path, the path of those on whom Thou hast bestowed favours, not of those on whom Thy wrath is brought down, nor of those who go astray.* The best elucidation which I could offer independently to this beautiful prayer is that, in the first instance, it tells me that whatever a man is about to undertake is due to the Beneficence and Mercy of Allah, inasmuch as it is He Who has given the life itself of which the all in question is an expression and that being so it behoves everyone to express one's gratitude in the words, "In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful" since in this as in every other thing he is blessed to enjoy the fruits of His Goodness. Having recognized this truth, the worshipper says that "All praise is due to Alláh the Lord of the Worlds." To whom else should all praise be due than to the Giver of Beneficence and Mercy? It is also a natural procedure to start our petition with the acknowledgement of Him as the Cause of all blessings, and as one to Whom alone our praise must go. Then follows that grim reminder, "Master of the Day of Judgment." Having realized that He is the Giver of all things, and that all praise should go to Him, we are reminded of the vital fact, that we shall have to be answerable as to how we used His blessings. For if we are not held responsible for our actions, where is the necessity of calling Him the Beneficent, the Merciful, and Master of the Day of Judgment? If we can recognize His attribute of love we must also admit that He is the One Master over us who will judge our actions, and punish or reward us accordingly. He is not merely a Judge but more than that. He is the absolute and sole Owner of the Day of Judgment. You cannot appeal to anyone higher than Him, for He is the Highest. To whom else then should

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we go than to Him to seek guidance and help in this world?—and this is very forcibly realized in the words, “Thee do we worship, and Thee do we beseech for help.” What an absolute and perfect prayer! Our whole existence, we are told, must be sought through Him, and we entirely depend, for our salvation, on His help and guidance. We poor frail beings undeniably want His help, and, this being so, we are made to fully comprehend this ever-living truth by saying, “Our worship is due unto Thee alone, and let Thy Beneficence and Mercy be on us and may our supplications draw Thy guidance and help! Therefore guide us in the right path, the path of those on whom Thou hast bestowed favours, not on the path of those on whom Thy wrath has come down.” This last sentence needs no explanation, for its conclusion is natural and irresistible. But what do the words “on whom Thy wrath has come down” mean? This is a question that may be fairly asked, and must be answered too. There are some people who are known as extremists in all environments of life. This is definitely bad, for Islam always inculcates the *via media* in all matters. At the time this verse was revealed to the Holy Prophet, there was much opposition from the pagan Arabs who persisted in their persecution of the Holy Prophet and resolved on the destruction of Islam. Naturally these persecutors incurred the wrath of God upon themselves, and they were not those who were guided by God, but were the people “on whom wrath had come down.” Moreover there is also a special point that may be noted. The extreme hatred of these idolaters for the Prophet was the result of God’s wrath, and the extreme love of the Christians for Christ was the cause of raising him to the position of a deity from a prophet that he was. Both extremes are bad, and hence the *via media* is the safest course, and this is what Islam

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teaches. The final line in the Fatiha is "nor of those who go astray." Herein the worshipper asks God that he be given the strength to maintain his faith in Islam until death, and should not be like those who, once having known the Truth, had departed from it for worldly gains. I have taken a bit of time to explain this beautiful Prayer of the Holy Qur-án so that by contrast to the Lord's Prayer one could see the gulf of difference that exists between the two and the inspiration one may receive in directing one's worship to the Ever-living God, through the one or the other. A Muslim has to remember all what this prayer means, and not merely to utter its words. Having thoughtfully concluded this prayer, he then bends his body forward resting both hands straight on the knees. In this position he then recites certain other words of praise,—“thus displaying his willingness to bow before His decrees; and last of all he prostrates himself by placing his head, which is the symbol of honour and dignity, on the ground. This action expresses humility in its highest form. It means that we have lost our own entity in complete submission to the Divine Will.” (P. 43: Islam and the Muslim Prayer, by Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din.) Could anyone conceive a truer form of worship to God, self-annihilation, and absolute dependence on Allah—for everything in this world and the hereafter is plainly expressed in this final act. I have never seen the like of it in any other place of worship. No object to bend before, but a mere void, and man bows down submitting his will to that of his Lord who is everywhere. It may be argued that this manner of prostration is noticeable in certain other religions too, but the difference is that such a prostration is not made a living law to be observed, and it is the individual choice of the worshipper that prompts him consciously or unconsciously to follow this particular



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method of worship, as taught by the Holy Qur-án. Such an act is undoubtedly natural, and it is this natural form of prayer that is found among the millions of Muslims the world over. Whether it be the East or West, North or South, the same form of worship is adopted universally in the Muslim world. Just think for a moment what it would mean to bring your head, 'the symbol of honour and dignity' to the level of the common dust. Who does not feel a natural aversion, when doing this to a man? Does the idol-worshipper feel that he has really adored his God by prostrating himself before a thing created by the Living God Himself? He may at best feel half-satisfied, but never have full satisfaction nor a lasting one. Neither is it a pleasant recollection to have after "indignifying" yourself before mere idols of stone and wood. But to a Muslim it is all different. He cannot and will not subject his 'symbol of honour and dignity' to any person in this world, other than his God. The most illiterate Muslim will never do it. *He will not pay this one particular form of homage to anyone but to the One God to Whom it is due.* "Render unto Cæsar that which is Cæsar's, and unto God that which is God's" is more than exemplified in this part of the Muslim prayer. The head which is the seat of "honour and dignity" is by the Creator's plan placed above all other links in the human structure. Submission is signified but by laying low that which is best and highest. And what could be the best and highest but the seat of Wisdom, Power, Dignity and Pride? There are many intellectual and great minds in the world to-day who hold that there is nothing comparable to the simple and lofty worship of the Muslims. No distinction of colour, power, caste, status or any other thing of the kind. A Muslim dare not seek his "place" in the mosque. If the prayer is in progress, and the highest Muslim potentate comes to

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join the worship, he is bound to take his "place" by the side of the beggar in rags who wanders the earth's surface with a bowl in his hand. At moments like this the Muslim realizes that the emperor and the beggar are the same in the eyes of the Almighty Allah. And it is this prayer that has always moved me, so much so that I have never been able to resist it and find its equal or rival. It is the Lord's plan of worship, and immutable are the laws of God.

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## **"THE GARDEN OF PEACE"**

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

*(Continued from page 175 of June 1942 issue.)*

### **XX**

This day the sun has shone merrily, and only a keen wind has restrained our thoughts of spring. But, though the day has been so beautiful and the night so serene and silver, with a great moon lighting the land almost as day, nevertheless now towards midnight the rioting of the wolves of hate is heard and beauty and serenity are overcast by war. To follow Islam is not to perpetrate war save in self-defence. Aggressive war is no part of the panoply of Islam. Islam is the religion of peace. An Islamic world could know no war. For were there no aggression, how could there be any self-defence? But where religion is persecuted, where churches, mosques and synagogues are thrown down, there is good occasion to fight against aggressive persecution. And, mark you, not mosques alone but churches and synagogues—in a word any sacred house of God. Moreover total warfare is no part of Islam, for the destruction of crops and palm-trees is forbidden and prisoners are to be treated humanely. Islam,

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indeed, arose from resistance to oppressive wars of persecution, which in Arabia sought to stamp out the spark of divine light which had shone there, lighting up the grotesque falseness of the old adoration of idols, the hewn stones of error, loved of antiquity. And, in the hour of triumph, what had Muhammad to show but mercy, forbearance and forgiveness! The conqueror of Makka forgave his enemies, when God, in the course of time, brought him up out of persecution and delivered them into his hand.

So, in the night, the Book is read and these are the verses: "Benignant, Hearing, Knowing God. These are the verses of the Book that makes manifest. Perhaps you will kill yourself with grief because they do not believe. If We please, We should send down upon them a sign from the heaven so that their necks should stoop to it. And there does not come to them a new reminder from the Beneficent God, but they turn aside from it. So they have indeed rejected the truth, therefore the news of that which they mock shall soon come to them. Do they not see the earth, how many of every noble kind We have caused to grow in it? Most surely there is a sign in that, but most of them will not believe. And most surely your Lord is the Mighty, the Merciful."

### XXI

How changed is the aspect of nature this day! A chill fog has stolen delight, and instead of the sunny reminder of spring, there is winter's frost over the meadows and upon the house roofs. Yet such a day is well enough for work, and much work is to be done in the strenuous days of war. About sunset, the moon rose full and huge behind light cloud: yet the promise of brightness has not been fulfilled, and dull cloud obscures the midnight heaven. So, amid deep quiet, no sound without and only the tripping feet of the

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hurrying minutes within the hushed household, the garden again is entered, the Book taken from its shelf and these verses spring to life from the page : “ Except the servants of Allah, the purified ones. For them is a known sustenance, fruits ; and they shall be highly honoured, in gardens of pleasure, on thrones, facing each other. A bowl shall be made to go round them from water running out of springs, bright, delicious to those who drink. There shall be no trouble in it, nor shall they be exhausted therewith. And with them shall be those who restrain the glances of their beautiful eyes, carefully protected as fragile eggs. Then shall some of them advance towards others, questioning. One from among them shall speak and say : ‘ Verily, I had a comrade of mine, who said : “ What ! are you of those who acknowledge the truth ? What ? when we are dead and have become dust and bones, shall we then certainly be brought to judgment ? ” It shall be said : “ Will you behold him ’ ? ”

“ Then he looked down and saw him in the midst of hell. He shall say : ‘ By Allah ! you had almost caused me to perish ! and had it not been for the favour of my Lord, I should certainly have been amongst those arraigned !

“ Is it, then, that we are not going to die, except our previous earthly death ? And are we not going to be chastised ? Most surely this is the mighty achievement ! For the like of this, then, let the workers work ! ” (Qur-án, XXXVII, 40-61.)

## XXII

Although in the midst of war, it will not be gainsaid that many people are, in their heart of hearts, weary of war. They bravely face, boldly prosecute and shew themselves doggedly patient in the trials of war, but at times their thoughts and desires stretch out toward

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peace—assuredly the eventual ending of war. They consider what kind of peace will arise from the ashes and mutilation of war, and how such peace can best be preserved and made permanent for the human race. Myself, considering this question of enduring peace, come to the conclusion that Islam offers a very real and substantial foundation upon which a nobly planned and lasting structure of peace may be raised. For what, I ask, is the main cause and root of war, the malignant growth that, as soon as cut down, springs up with new and accursed vigour, the bitter root that must first be eradicated before the good earth can bring forth her blessings in abundance and men may rejoice together therein at peace ?

This root, mistake it not, is race antagonism, national mistrust and jealousy. Now this very curse, this evil spirit of national hatred, has been exercised within the bounds of the Islamic brotherhood, a brotherhood which has triumphed, and still triumphs, over race antagonism and national hatred. In Islam, a man is first and foremost a Muslim and a brother—afterwards he is English, French, German, Chinese, Zulu, Indian or American. He belongs to the great family of humanity. That he is different by many national characteristics matters not. Who would desire all mankind of one pattern ? Who but a race fanatic, meriting the curse of humanity, would desire to supplant his own brothers by their extermination ?

Once given this acquiescence in the diversity of mankind and the vision of the mutual service nation may tender to nation, half at least of the causes of hatred, the causes of the outbreaking of war, vanish from the face of the earth. In mutual assistance, in complementary fulfilment in diversity, the fair path of peace is thrown open to the feet of humanity now and for the future.

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### XXIII

To-night the intermittent rumblings of warfare and the dronings of planes have disturbed the serene air of early night, but the interior of the household has been but little ruffled, just as in time of storm some stout breakwater preserves the peace of a sheltered harbour, though the hissing waves dash angrily without. At such times, thoughts arise that others may be less fortunate, may be bearing the brunt of violence and devastation, may be hurled rapidly from this life to the next, or left shuddering and maimed upon the brink. Yet at all times, especially in matters that are outside our power of amendment, it is well to remember the words of the Qur-án that “God hath power over all things.”

At no time, not for one instant, is any affair outside His cognizance. At no time, not for one instant, is any affair outside His complete control.

How then can peace be shaken, the true peace of the submissive heart? While anything remains to be done to better the lot either of ourselves or of others about us, our efforts will be used ungrudgingly, and from this very state of action a covering of peace will be about the heart, knowing that what can be done is being done.

So on no side will the heart be disturbed which is set towards the eternal and which keeps ever mindful of Him. Ah! how can the lover ever forget, even for an instant, the Belovéd, whose image remains impressed on the heart's mirror, whose name throbs ever to the beating pulse!

And now the Qur-án is taken down from its accustomed shelf and these words leap again to life •

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“Praiséd, Glorious, Knowing, Hearing, Powerful God ! Thus does Allah, the Mighty, the Wise reveal to you, and thus He revealed to those before you. His is what is in the heavens and what is in the earth, and He is the High, the Great. The heavens may almost rend themselves asunder from above them and the angels celebrate the praise of their Lord and ask forgiveness for those on earth—now surely Allah is the Forgiving, the Merciful.” (Qur-án, XLII, 1—5.)

### XXIV

To marry is part of the faith. Nay, is it not said : “Who marries fulfils half his religion” ? And the meaning of this is obvious. By marriage the root of selfishness is cut off. A thousand opportunities arise for self-sacrifice, kindness, tenderness, patience and therein is the sublimation of human love. Never may the celibate life be placed above true married life. As man is incomplete without woman and as woman is incomplete without man, so the highest ideal of human life can never be that of the celibate.

If, by self-torture and a thousand anguishes and the cravings of natural instincts unfulfilled, the celibate may win through to some restless activity avoiding vice still it is a question whether society is not endangered rather than benefited. Would the world be at war and humanity wading through blood and desperate days if Hitler had married ? Does mankind benefit by the emphasized oddity, the freakish brilliance and waywardness of some solitary soul seeking for a contentment which it cannot find—a meteor hurling itself athwart the settled course of planet and star ? And if any seeks solace outside marriage still more is the social structure menaced.

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Let it not be thought that abstemious celibacy brings either man or woman nearer to God. How can this be aught but a precious delusion? Should the Creator be well pleased at the despising of His creation and the manner thereof? Hath God made the continuance of the human race to rest upon fundamental wickedness? Perish the baseness of such thought!

So Islam has recognized the way of human happiness and has made marriage to be part of the faith. Hath not also the Holy Prophet Muhammad said: "I keep fast and I break it, I pray and I sleep and I am married. So whoever inclines to any other than my practice, he is not of me." And again, "O assembly of young people! whoever of you has the means to support a wife he should get married, for this is the best means of keeping the looks cast down and guarding chastity: and he who has not the means, let him keep fast, for this will act as castration." And also, "There is no monasticism in Islam." And yet again, "Marriage is incumbent on all who have the means and the ability." And is it not written in the Qur-án, "And let those who do not find the means to marry keep chaste until God makes them free from want out of His grace"?



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### THE FUTURE OF RELIGION

Professor Joad is known all over the world for his easy mastery of the knowledge of philosophy. A typical Britisher, he has brought the intricacies of philosophy, ancient and modern, within the range of commonsense understanding. Guided by the strong practical sense of his race he follows convention only so far as it does not obscure the practical side of the issue. By his penetrating analytical intelligence he seems at times to understand the minds of the various theorists better than they themselves would do. He, more than any one else, therefore, is competent to voice the philosophical mind of Europe just at this moment.

His own genius apart, the time factor is also very helpful for the Professor to take a very realistic view of the present situation. In easy and peaceful times a philosopher runs the risk of being led away by the appearances of things to channels of thought divorced from reality and may indulge in speculations that have no bearing on the practical life of man. But at a time such as the present, the philosopher has perforce to be realistic. And the Professor has indeed been very realistic in his broadcast lecture the other day. He very rightly diagnoses "as the peculiar disease of our civilization a gulf,—a gulf between our power and wisdom."

We have a perfect mastery over the means of existence but are absolutely ignorant of its end. We produce first-rate machines, while we ourselves possess only second rate characters, and thus use these machines for despicable purposes. The reason is that for want of any higher purpose of life suggested to us we take the satisfaction of our gross animal desires as the end of our existence. We are, so to speak, suffering from a repressed spiritual urge. Out of touch with the real God, we have created false gods for our worship—science, economics, politics, sex, speed and so on, which

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nevertheless leave our inner urge of worship unsatisfied, with the result that the instinct of worship getting horribly perverted creates hideous channels of self-expression. "As the God above the skies grows dim, an all too human figure complete with raincoat and moustaches or stomach and row of medals, arise to take His place. This is not the first time in history that men deprived of God have dressed up men in the attributes of God to take His place. I am suggesting then that the worship of the State and of the dictator as the embodiment of the State is a direct by-product of the decline of religious belief." "We greet the leader each morning and we thank him each night that he has provided us officially with a will to live." Such is the first of the ten Commandments issued to the workmen of Nazi factories. The Professor rightly apprehends a similar catastrophe for his own people, if some outlet is not soon found for "the accumulated fund of unexpended seriousness" from which the nation is suffering at the moment. On the basis of personal experiences with the British people we can personally testify to the truth of the Professor's statement, that "the stage is set at the moment for the re-entry of religion from the wings; set as never before." But when it comes to the question, "Which religion or what kind of religion is it that is going to take the field?" we find the Professor making suggestions not very clear to the average mind. He says, for instance, that the revived religious emotions of man will flow "into channels of Christianity, which are also the channels of all the great religions of the world. For they all, do they not, teach the same basic truth?" This is rather confusing. The Professor cannot be unaware that Christianity as it is known and preached in the world, is a religion avowedly antagonistic to all other religions of the world. Even an orthodox lay Christian, not to speak of the clergy and

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the Missionaries, will tell the Professor that all other religions of the world must have to be false, the devil's work, to make Christianity a true religion. To be fair to the Professor he acknowledges this difficulty in a suggestive manner. He remarks, "Will this newly fermenting wine of the spirit pour itself into the old bottle of the Churches? . . . I am inclined to doubt it." Evidently the Professor suggests a reconstruction of the Church, a thorough overhauling of the system, allowing for a play of the spirit of universalism that must characterise any religious movement that can hope to succeed to-day. But in that case, the Church may rightly apprehend that nothing will be left of Christianity. It is no exaggeration to say that the existence of Christianity depends on narrowness and exclusiveness. Remove these time-worn barriers and Christianity can hardly stand as a separate religion. As a matter of fact, people will not know why they should any longer stick to Christianity.

The present writer has been surprised on some occasions to see the most enlightened Church-leaders quite shamelessly proclaiming before a mixed gathering that the light of revelation came exclusively to the Israelites and that the same light was denied to every other nation of the world. It is this Jewish parochialism that stands in the way of Christian co-operation with other religions and it is this which is maintaining the Official Christianity and its directors, the Church, in existence and dignity. The moment, therefore, it is taken away, Christian people will find, to their surprise, that a greater and a better Christianity is to be found in Islam. For what is Islam but a rationalised, universalised and perfected form of Christianity?

The Professor makes a very sympathetic appeal to the Church. "The thaw presents the churches

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with an opportunity such as they have not had for a hundred years. Can they take it?" We pray the appeal enters the hearts of those for whom it is meant. Vanity has stood in the way of many noble enterprises and salutary changes in the world. The Church has long since realised the untenability of its position. It is vanity that is responsible for their sticking to a system which was called to existence in a dark and ignorant age by the remote ancestors of the present generation. It needs just a little moral courage to shed that vanity and thus spare humanity the tribulations which beset it at the moment. It may upset the interests of some people, but those who are sincerely religious will find themselves better off in every way, with a truer set of beliefs and a fuller code of life. Strange as it may seem, this adaptability can be best manifested by the Anglican Church among all the existing Churches of the world. The present writer has ample evidence of this from his long associations with the religious circles of Great Britain.

We cannot, however, close this criticism of the Professor's lecture without saying something on a point raised by him in connection with sin and evil. In this, we are afraid, the Christian tradition prevents his arriving at the right conclusion. He is right in denouncing his own generation that was brought up to "think of evil as a by-product of circumstances, of poverty for example or of psychological maltreatment and miseducation in childhood. It followed that evil was something that could be cured by social and political action." But when proceeding on this line he comes to support the new attitude to evil, "an attitude which is prepared to accept it as something real and primitive, something perhaps irremediable in the heart of man . . . something fundamental arising in man, perhaps in the universe" he is swayed by emotional reactions peculiar to Christianity.

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In fact, it has been the misfortune of Christendom, its greatest thinkers not excepted, to oscillate between extreme views and not to enjoy the safety of the golden mean, in every affair of life. It must believe in Christ as God Himself or reject him as a mythical figure ; it must have either capitalism or communism, either absolute pacifism or total war. It forgets that all life lies in reconciliation between two opposites. Its attitude towards evil is only another example of this extremism. It can either consider it as irremediable in the heart of man or regard it as a mere by-product of external circumstances.

But it could have easily done credit to its newly developed scientific attitude towards life and its problems, if it had adopted the Islamic view (1) that evil is no fundamental part of human nature but only an accident in the process of its functioning, (2) that this accident is avoidable through proper safeguards both in the inner nature of man as well as in his surrounding.

The Christian view of life, *viz.* that evil is a mighty force at the very bottom of the creation, practically invincible, is not only untrue from a scientific point of view, but casts a very dark shadow of despair on man's general outlook on life. It is scientifically incorrect because nothing has been found fundamentally evil in the world just as nothing has been found absolutely good in it. Potentially, therefore, everything can be regarded as good. It is our use or misuse of a thing that makes it either good or bad. The most essential need of physical existence such as food, if used in a wrong measure and on the wrong occasion, may prove fatal to life, whereas the deadliest poison, when used on the proper occasion, becomes the greatest life-saving agency. Following the same line of thought in the moral plane, we find that the instinct of sex which is the sole basis of the continuity of our species, becomes

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the vilest of sin when satisfied in an improper manner, that the great virtue of chivalry is only a sublimated form of the instinct that otherwise expressed is known as anger, that even killing may be an act of virtue if done under given circumstances.

Nor is such a view helpful to man's moral struggle in life. No student of psychology will deny that the doctrine of Original Sin or of man's being fundamentally evil, is bound to bring despair to the mind of men. We do hope the Professor will not insist, like a clergyman, on the argument that the psychological stunt of the "grace of blood" will relieve this gloom. History bears testimony that the gloom has been never relieved in the Christian mind. Orthodox Christianity has never been able to manfully fight the evil either on the cultural or on the moral plane. The Professor can easily understand that a belief in this Christian doctrine is, in the last analysis, putting a premium on moral indolence. We wish he had known the solution of the question as presented by Islam.

Islam admits that the environment is partially responsible for the appearance of evil, but only partially. It, accordingly, addresses itself to the proper ordering of the social system. For centuries the Christians sneered at Islam on account of its entering into the details of man's worldly life. But hard facts of life have now compelled them to admit that social surrounding has much to do with our moral outlook on life. Islam, however, does not agree with these modernists that a proper surrounding is all that is necessary to make a morally healthy society. The inner nature of man is a far greater factor. As a matter of fact, the vitiated mind of man will frustrate any system, however carefully designed.

Thus the appearance of evil is both a subjective as well as an objective phenomenon and both these

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aspects of it have to be attended. Hence it is that at the end of every regulation which the Qur-án issues for man's guidance in worldly affairs, it recurrently refers to God's omnipresence, omniscience, omnipotence and all those qualities of His that may inspire us to be good and virtuous inwardly—and further prescribes methods to keep inwardly pure. The Qur-án is never tired of reminding us that the Devil is our greatest enemy and gives us the details of his machinations. Indeed, there is no other book in the world which provides man with an equally elaborate system of inner purity in the midst of our struggle for existence. But all these instructions of purity presuppose the potential goodness of human nature. If, however, evil is inherent in human nature, all talk of sublimating this nature becomes meaningless. The Holy Qur-án beautifully summarises the actual position in the following words:

“Certainly We have created man in the best make.

“Then We render him the lowest of the low,

“Except those who believe and do good.

“So they shall have a reward never to be cut off . . . . . ” (Ch. 95).

It is clear from this passage that according to the Book, man is created with very great possibilities and a high destiny, but he has also the tendency of sinking to the lowest depths of degradation, and that it is to check this latter that the system of Divine guidance by revelation has been designed. Evidently, the mistake of Christianity lies in mistaking a controllable tendency for a basic urge that cannot be redeemed.

The Professor cannot be unaware that just a slight change of attitude on the part of a people towards a certain thing can sometimes change the very course of its history. Who knows the adoption by the Christians of the Islamic attitude towards the problem of evil, may not change the course of European history?

# ISLAM AND THE WORLD CRISIS

BY M. R. ZAHEDI

The world is now passing through a crisis—a most terrible crisis. The modern civilization of the West is now on its trial and on the crossroad. The “new order” foreshadowed by Hitlerism may mean the death-knell of many cherished ideals of humanity, if the “new order” really dawns on the war-worn world.

The modern civilization is mostly of the Christian pattern. The real teachings of Christ, the Apostle of Peace, are practically thrown overboard, or the Christian Powers would not have been involved in this sanguinary war initiated by one of the greatest Christian Powers. In other words, Christianity seems to have failed, as it has failed to keep peace in its own spheres of influence. On the other hand, the Christian Powers have imperilled the world's peace.

We are too much in the crisis now to think and ponder deeply over the cause and consequences of the catastrophe, as we are much too preoccupied with self-preservation and national existence. But even in these terrible worries, some retrospection may be considered worth the while.

The world needs peace and preservation. But how can peace come? I think it is Islam and the message of Islam that can save humanity. What does Islam stand for? Islam stands for universal brotherhood of mankind under the omnipotent fatherhood of One and Only One God. This is the marrow and message of Islam. If this message is accepted and acted upon by the nations of the world, or if mankind all over the world consider themselves as units of the same universal brotherhood, then and then alone can the world be saved.

The powers-that-be will perhaps laugh at the idea. They are much too infatuated with the powers and privileges born of their so-called superiority and



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man-killing armaments to consider this humble but humane message of Islam which is not in a position to enforce its claims or message on the mad and maddening crowds out for the blood of one another like blood-thirsty hounds. But to-day or to-morrow, this message of universal brotherhood of mankind must be accepted or the world is doomed. The armageddons can only destroy but not save the world.

Islam's message is not mere theoretical. It is practical and dynamic. Imagine for a moment that the world consisted of Muslims alone, worshipping one Allah with their faces towards one *Qiblah*. I do not think the different units of this vast brotherhood would then have rushed at one another's throats, as the present world is doing. The "Believers are one Brotherhood," said the Prophet of Islam. It is not mere lip-deep assertion: it is in the blood and vein and marrow of the Muslim. Left to themselves, I am sure, the Muslims of one country will not cut the throats of the Muslims of other climes and countries.

I do not mean to say that the Muslims have not killed Muslims. Bloodshed is not unknown in the Muslim world. But history does not record this kind of bloodshed in the Muslim world. Islamic history is not besmeared with bloodshed of the kind now noticeable. Christianity, with all its vauntings of civilization, has presented a spectacle never before witnessed. Its failure is now writ large in letters of blood and bombs. Peace must remain an illusive dream unless the message of the universal brotherhood of mankind is accepted by the different powers and units of mankind. That is accepting Islam, the chosen religion of Allah for mankind.

## WHAT IS ISLAM?

[The following is a very brief account of Islam, and some of its technique. For further details, please write to the IMAM of the Mosque, Woking, Surrey, England.]

**ISLAM: THE RELIGION OF PEACE.**—The word Islam literally means: (1) Peace; (2) the way to achieve peace; (3) submission, as submission to another's will is the safest course to establish peace. The word in its religious sense signifies complete submission to the Will of God.

**OBJECT OF THE RELIGION.**—Islam provides its followers with the perfect code, whereby they may work out what is noble and good in man, and thus maintain peace between man and man.

**THE PROPHET OF ISLAM.**—Muhammad, popularly known as the Prophet of Islam, was, however, the last Prophet of the Faith. Muslims, *i.e.* the followers of Islam, accept all such of the world's Prophets, including Abraham, Moses and Jesus, as revealed the Will of God for the guidance of humanity.

**THE QUR-AN.**—The Gospel of the Muslim is the Qur-án. Muslims believe in the Divine origin of every other sacred book, inasmuch as all such previous revelations have become corrupted through human interpolation, the Qur-án, the last Book of God, came as a recapitulation of the former Gospels.

**ARTICLES OF FAITH IN ISLAM.**—These are seven in number: Belief in (1) Allah; (2) Angels; (3) Books from God; (4) Messengers from God; (5) the Hereafter; (6) the Premeasurement of good and evil; (7) Resurrection after death.

The life after death, according to Islamic teaching, is not a new life, but only a continuance of this life, bringing its hidden realities into light. It is a life of unlimited progress; those who qualify themselves in this life for the progress will enter into Paradise, which is another name for the said progressive life after death, and those who get their faculties stunted by their misdeeds in this life will be the denizens of the Hell—a life incapable of appreciating heavenly bliss, and of torment—in order to get themselves purged of all impurities and thus to become fit for the life in Heaven. State after death is an image of the spiritual state in this life.

The sixth article of Faith has been confused by some with what is popularly known as Fatalism. A Muslim neither believes in Fatalism nor Predestination; he believes in Pre-measurement. Everything created by God is for good in the given use and under the given circumstances. Its abuse is evil and suffering.

**PILLARS OF ISLAM.**—These are five in number: (1) Declaration of faith in the Oneness of God, and in the Divine Messengership of Muhammad; (2) Prayer; (3) Fasting; (4) Alms-giving; (5) Pilgrimage to the Holy Shrine at Mecca.

**ATTRIBUTES OF GOD.**—The Muslims worship One God—the Almighty, the All-Knowing, the All-Just, the Cherisher of

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All the Worlds, the Friend, the Guide, the Helper. There is none like Him. He has no partner. He is neither begotten nor has he begotten any son or daughter. He is indivisible in Person. He is the Light of the Heavens and the Earth, the Merciful, the Compassionate, the Glorious, the Magnificent, the Beautiful, the Eternal, the Infinite, the First and the Last.

**FAITH AND ACTION.**—Faith without action is a dead-letter. Faith by itself is insufficient, unless translated into action. A Muslim believes in his own personal accountability for his actions in this life and in the hereafter. Each must bear his own burden and none can expiate for another's sin.

**ETHICS OF ISLAM.**—"Imbue yourself with Divine Attributes," says the noble Prophet. God is the prototype of man, and His Attributes form the basis of Muslim ethics. Righteousness in Islam consists in leading a life in complete harmony with the Divine Attributes. To act otherwise is sin.

**CAPABILITIES OF MAN IN ISLAM.**—The Muslim believes in the inherent sinlessness of man's nature, which, made of the goodliest fibre, is capable of unlimited progress, setting him above the angels, and leading him to the border of Divinity.

**THE POSITION OF WOMAN IN ISLAM.**—Man and woman come from the same essence, possess the same soul, and they have been equipped with equal capability for intellectual, spiritual and moral attainments. Islam places man and woman under the like obligations, the one to the other.

**EQUALITY OF MANKIND AND THE BROTHERHOOD OF ISLAM.**—Islam is the religion of the Unity of God and the equality of mankind. Lineage, riches and family honours are accidental things; virtue and the service of humanity are the matters of real merit. Distinctions of colour, race and creed are unknown in the ranks of Islam. All mankind is of one family, and Islam has succeeded in welding the black and the white into one fraternal whole.

**PERSONAL JUDGMENT.**—Islam encourages the exercise of personal judgment and respects difference of opinion, which, according to the saying of the Prophet Muhammad, is a blessing of God.

**KNOWLEDGE.**—The pursuit of knowledge is a duty in Islam, and it is the acquisition of knowledge that makes men superior to angels.

**SANCTITY OF LABOUR.**—Every labour which enables man to live honestly is respected. Idleness is deemed a sin.

**CHARITY.**—All the faculties of man have been given to him as a trust from God, for the benefit of his fellow-creatures. It is man's duty to live for others, and his charities must be applied without any distinction of persons. Charity in Islam brings man nearer to God. Charity and the giving of alms have been made obligatory, and every person who possesses property above a certain limit has to pay a tax, levied on the rich for the benefit of the poor.