

"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**

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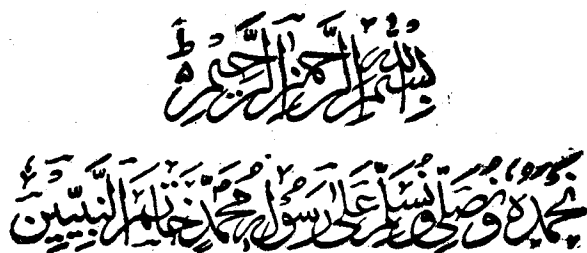
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THE ISLAMIC REVIEW

Vol. XXXII

RABI'UL-THANI, 1362 A.H.
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[No. 4

A DECLARATION

I, (Mrs.) ALICE ELLEN TATTON, of Benenden, near Cranbrook, Kent., do hereby faithfully and solemnly declare of my own free will that I worship One and Only Allah (God), 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-ün-Rasül-Alláh.

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

(MRS.) ALICE ELLEN TATTON

Dated : 29th November, 1942.

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'ID-AL-ADZHA (1361 A.H.) IN ENGLAND

BY MAULVI ABDUL MAJID, M. A.

'Id-al-Adzha was celebrated at the Shah Jehan Mosque, Woking, on December 19, 1942. Weather prospects of the day before were disheartening to the most optimistic-minded. It had been raining incessantly earlier in the week and on the eve of the 'Id showed no signs of stopping. But when the day dawned, as if by a miracle, the rain held off despite ominous clouds in the sky. The visitor on entering the mosque grounds espied a marquee silhouetted in the green lawn in front of the Memorial House and by the side of the railway track. Inside was thronged with about two hundred strong of all nations' civilians in various head-dresses. There was a fairly large representation of Muslims of the Royal Indian Navy in their blue uniforms, and khaki-clad men of the Indian and British Armed Forces. Men in the Royal Air Force blue were also to be seen. The warm and cheery atmosphere inside was enhanced by the bright colours of flags of various Muslim nations hung on the walls of the marquee. When the call for prayer was made, there was silence and the only noises were from the frequent rush of trains and the drone of aeroplanes above. His Excellency Shaikh Hafiz Wahba, the Saudi Arabian Minister, led the prayers. He also delivered the 'Id sermon in Arabic. The speech was as impressive as the speaker himself: notable for its brevity it even retained its eloquence in the English rendering that followed by Mr. Dawud Cowan, M.A. (London), who was until recently the second Imam of the Woking Mosque. Afterwards embraces and handshakes were exchanged among Muslim friends, and all present adjourned to the other part of the marquee where tables were laid, to partake in lunch

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consisting of Oriental dishes catered for by the Shafi India Restaurant. So ended this 'Id in the 4th year of the War.

Among those present were: Sir Aziz-ul-Haque, the High Commissioner for India, the staff of many Muslim Legations in London, Sirdar Ikbal Ali Shah and Mr. Lionel Aird of the East and West Friendship Council.

HOW TO MAKE THE WORLD HAPPY

BY M. A. C. M. SALEH

The world is undergoing vast changes in all spheres of life and the progress of the human society seems to depend upon the economic structure which does not seek to reach beyond the material plane. There is sorrow all over and the world upheaval causes disappointment in the ego. How can peace and happiness be achieved? What is happiness? Where does it begin? Where is peace and what is it? These are a few simple questions that agitate the thinking minds of the world.

The term happiness relates to the success one aims at in the material plane and it is subject to the unaccountable vicissitudes of life. Permanent happiness or permanent peace is desired, but never achieved, which is certainly due to a lack of spiritual awakening and a true appreciation of the value and object of life. Humanity has its ultimate object in the spiritual plane which must be realized in our action. The process of evolution does not limit the growth of the human race but the limitation is set upon it through the want of the spiritual awakening which should be our background for a real approach towards the various stages of human development. The ideals are great and their attainment constitutes the basis upon which society can find expression for lasting happiness and

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peace undisturbed by the caprice of fortune or the buffets of circumstances in worldly affairs.

The divine spark is in man and it requires energy to generate. This can be obtained by means of training the young minds and developing them to accomplish their life-mission during their most impressionable age. Whatever may be the outcome of advanced philosophical researches the fact remains that the weakness of man demands the supremacy of a deity for acknowledgment and submission. It is upon this basis that happiness and peace should be sought for the ultimate salvation of man. The present systems which govern the human race do not give scope to develop the spiritual tendency ingrained in the hearts of men. Whatever men may do, their life seems to have no ambition beyond the realm of the material sphere and the world is engrossed in sorrow, disappointment and misery immeasurably inextricable in effect.

The economic system must be changed to make it the means and not the end and aim of life. To-day if we look through the corridor of history and the vistas of ages we find that the efforts of individuals have borne fruit in art, sculpture, architecture, and the wonders of scientific discoveries and inventions, but they have been inspired in most cases by material gains and monetary glory because the economic pressure seems to be the only inducement. Sympathy, love and mercy are great qualities and whoever possesses them they evoke the highest admiration from all quarters. They who exercise these great virtues in their life are men imbued with divine attributes acquired at great sacrifice and they appear to be more of the exceptions because the scope for spiritual development is sealed under very drastic economic systems which admit of no spiritual awakening in the average mind of man.

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It is incumbent upon us to look to something higher than man for our guidance. Having laid the foundation on that footing school-children all over the world should be made to think that this world is only a transitional stage and the glory and grandeur of the world to come should be our ultimate goal. The mere establishment of this world should not be the last thing in the object of man. He should have a higher and nobler conception of life in the world to come. Honesty is a virtue that all wish to practise but an outward show of honesty merely to escape punishment of this world does not take us far. To have honesty in our hearts there must be systems of governments that would help the growth of the great virtues of honesty in ourselves. We live in this world and we must make it fit and better for the next generation while preparing ourselves for the final departure which must come to pass.

Peace and happiness therefore cannot be found outside oneself. If we train ourselves spiritually no adverse circumstances of the world will ever disturb the tranquillity of our mind. We should implant in the young ones that happiness and peace do not mean one's gain and loss but it is truly the training of oneself to remain calm and collected in the midst of dangers. Nothing can upset the mind if one can cultivate the virtues of feeling confident in himself by translating the great attributes which are 99 in number according to the Holy Qurán into our daily practice. In doing so let us remember the laconic description of the sage of Iran, Imam Ghazzali who likens this world to a camel and the goal is pilgrimage and the pilgrim should realize that by looking after the camel which is only his means of transport he should not forget the goal of his pilgrimage to Makka—the final stage in human perfection.

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THE HOLY PROPHET AS AN EXAMPLE IN OUR PERSONAL LIFE

BY S. M. TUFAIL, M.A.

Personally I would like to be helped in the affairs of my own little world which I have been shaping myself for years. Little fears and cares, apprehensions and anxieties occupy most of my time. Trivial matters—yes they are trivial, but how significant. As the days role by they multiply in numbers fashioning the forthcoming unsuggestive events of my life. Trivial, fruitless talks—amusing they may be—are my pastime. I love to indulge in them and yet they leave me gloomy and cheerless. For a moment I feel inspired by them but afterwards they appear crushing the inner self. They seem real and still they perish into nothingness. For such personal problems—of course for their solution I open the Qurán and there I find—

لقد كان لكم فى رسول الله اسوة حسنة

“Certainly you have in the Apostle of Allah an excellent exemplar.” (Al-Ahzàb 21.)

But I feel that I can pay homage only to that person who is like unto me. That person shall be the captain of my soul with whom there is a kind of sameness in suffering and weariness. And when the Holy Qurán enjoins us to follow the Prophet Muhammad (peace on him !) we must be sure that he is every inch a human being. He must be first of all and above all a Man and he should often pronounce as he actually did, in his life-time: “I am only a man like unto you.” (Bukhári.) No doubt the ideal Man.

My little heart pounds with bliss and joy with satisfaction and comfort when I see a ray of hope amidst the thick fog of super-human wisdom of the huge and bulky reformers of the world. Let me

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repeat: "I am only a man like unto you." Yes that is the man who shall give us personal advice, who shall help us in the affairs of our own little worlds. If he is like unto us we must listen to him.

The trivialities in which our minds revel are of diverse natures. They are the outcome of pretence and imposture, for which the Prophet (peace on him!) had a great aversion. "Whoever makes his actions published to the people," says he, "Allah will convey it to the ears of His creation and He will disgrace and humiliate him." (*Baihaqi*.) Again we find him declaring:

"Verily the slightest show is polytheism"* (*Ibn-Majah*)

The unnecessary idle talks may be given the tinge of spirituality. There can be and there is much nonsensical talk on matters religious. The time spent on them is rendered valueless. We love to talk about ourselves and if we are quick-witted we talk about others and if, we are gifted with more skill we do not hesitate to deceive the Almighty by our absurd talks about religion, or by ludicrous preachings.

There are some friends of mine who would give instructions on all possible problems of my life. They tire me by their imposed counsel, or rather sometimes I tire my friends by forced advice. When we go deep into the matter we find that we pose to be virtuous so as to have a right of condemning others. Such uncalled for and untimely instructions are not sanctioned by the Holy Prophet. He never exhausted his friends by the so-called sermons.

Akrama reported, so goes the Hadith, that Ibn Abbas said: "Deliver sermon once in every week, if that is not enough then twice and even if that is also

*I am indebted for the translation of these sayings of Muhammad (peace on him!) to Al-Hadith by Al-Hajj M. Fazl Karim, though a few alterations have been made here and there.

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not sufficient the sermon may be delivered thrice a week, and do not put men in trouble by the Holy Qur-án."

Too much of every thing is bad. The teachings of the Qur-án must not be made a source of weariness, a cause of laborious drudge. This will ultimately leave a mind withered and pale. All fresh and bright colours of it will grow dim.

When our friends are occupied in other subjects it will be improper to stop them from that and unwillingly divert their attention to some problems of morality. The same Hadith continues: "I (Ibn Abbas) must not see you coming to people and interrupt them while they are engaged in a conversation and, consequently, stop them to deliver a sermon and thus to inflict trouble on them. But keep silence. Deliver sermon to them when they are eager for it." (*Mishkat, Book of Education, ch. III.*)

There is another report by Shaiq that "Abdullah-b-Mas'ud used to deliver sermon on every Thursday. A man told him, 'O father of Abd-al-Rahman! how we would like if you could have delivered sermon every day!' He said; 'Beware! he (the Holy Prophet) certainly prohibited me from that.' I do not like that I should cause hardship to you; and I deliver sermons to you as the Messenger of Allah did so as not to make us feel disgusted." (*Mishkat, Book of Education, ch. I.*) In the above-quoted sayings there are acres of gems for the preachers who only weaken the moral cause by their excessive preachings, overcharged with high-sounding metaphors and similes. And when the Prophet Muhammad (peace on him!) preached, he did it in a plain unadorned language. He also warned his followers against ornamentation in supplication. How I wish that all of us—the enthusiastic supporters of Islam—should

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follow the instance of our beloved Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah may be upon him).

Again there are persons who acquire some knowledge to have intellectual combats with learned men. When I glance back over some desolate days of my life I find that I have been doing the same thing, rather more than that, and the Messenger of Allah is reported to have said that "whoso seeks knowledge either to prevail therewith over the learned or to argue thereby with the stupid or to arrest the faces of men towards him Allah will admit him in Fire." (*Mishkat, Book of Education, ch. II.*) Not only intellectual combat is despised but also the imposition of one's learning over the ignorant and the false expectance of holding the faces of men towards oneself is condemned.

But that is exactly what you and I do when we have nothing substantial to do. So much time is rendered fruitless while talking with friends and associates, with poets and verse-makers. Well, a man of that sort Aswad-b-Sari, after having composed a few verses in the praise of God and the Prophet, came to the Messenger of Allah and began reciting them. The Prophet was not discourteous. He would not break the heart of the poor man who would otherwise die for want of a genuine listener. But there came a man on business and the recitation was naturally stopped. When the man went away the poet started again. Unfortunately he was once more interrupted and again to his bad luck the man appeared for the third time and the Prophet once again stopped Aswad from recitation. The half-hearted poet asked in a dismal tone: "Who is this man interrupting me all the time?" The Prophet smiled and said: "He is one who does not like unnecessary idle talk."

Unnecessary idle talk—we like it so much that we cannot live without it. That is a disease slowly

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eating up human vigour. If the devil comes to an idle mind, it comes through idle talk—which brings conceit and vanity.

Yes, the devil captures men through their sense of false pride. Vain as one is, one tries to suppress the shortcomings that are in oneself. As for myself I do conceal all of my faults and the worst of it is that sometimes I magnify them before my friends, unconscious of the fact that they are making an insidious impression on me. This most precious word "I"—that is what makes others tired so soon. And trying to be more sensible sometimes I ostentatiously avoid all kinds of personal references in my talks. The devil has appeared in this subtler form to throw me away from the path of righteousness.

What did the Apostle of Allah do under these circumstances? Every thing is preserved about him. He had no double personality. Simple, straightforward as he was, he had no need to suppress anything about himself. A man of frank disposition, he never boasted of his achievements. He would say directly: "I am only a man, when I bid you anything regarding the affairs of your religion receive it and when I bid you anything from my opinion then I am only a man." ("Mishkat" *Kitab ul Imán, Babul I'tisám Bilkitab wal Sunnat.*) He never thought of inspiring his followers by rich, entrancing metaphors or by false notions about himself. He spoke about himself when the need arose. He shunned listening about himself when somebody indulged in "unnecessary idle talk." "I am a simple warner," he used to say. "I am only a preacher of Allah's words, the bringer of His message to mankind."

He did nothing under the influence of egoism or egotism. He was not self-centred, self-interested or self-conceited. And never he exalted himself in thought, speech or writing. The times of affliction and

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distress, grief and sorrow he passed in patience and fortitude. His worldly triumphs found him more humble and devoted servant of Allah. "And the servants of the Beneficent are those who walk on earth in humbleness" (The Qur-án.) Trivial vanities—having considerable importance for us—never diverts a true Muslim astray ; he is never led into the indecencies of life because "Allah has prohibited indecency." (The Qur-án.) Indecencies of life are of diverse natures. Flattering one's vanity is also indecent.

And there are persons who fortunately know the tact of pleasing everybody by just or unjust praise. Anyone who comes to them gets indiscriminately his share of applause. This kind of innocent gushing sometimes makes me feel miserable. Badly enough the insincerity underlying the tact is instantly detected. There are others who flatter you only to push their own interests forward. They just both prove obstacles in your moral development. They give you false impressions about yourself. They bestow on you their lavish praises undiscerningly. And there are those who withhold all kinds of expressions for the fear of offending you. These are also of no service to you. They mar their own progress as well as the progress of their friends.

The ideal friend I would like to have must be devoid of all these faults. Muhammad (peace on him!) in this respect is a friend and a guide too. He never knew the tacts applied in gushing and flattery. He was above all such indecencies of life. He would never care for so-called etiquettes observed so minutely in modern society—etiquettes which are based on servility, sham and hypocrisy.

Muhammad disliked all gushers and flatterers. When his followers would sing praises in honour of him he would say : "Do not utter such exaggerated words

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of praise for me. . . I am nothing more than a servant of God and His Apostle." In this manner he used to criticise and reform his friends.

And so the pages of the life-history of Muhammad (peace on him !) supply me with innumerable incidents that have been helping me in the little affairs of my own little world.

FROM THE CROSS TO THE CRESCENT

BY ABDUR RAZZAQUE SELLIAH

(Continued from p. 95 of the last issue.)

[The writer of this illuminating article, of which the last instalment is published here below, was last heard of in the middle of the last year. Persecuted by his relatives and the Christian community in Ceylon, his homeland, he came to India to have a first-hand knowledge of the renaissance Islam of which he had heard so much. But the call of a more urgent nature again took him away from us. He joined the army and left India for the Pacific Front in March, 1941. We ask the readers to join us in praying that He may extend to him His special protection and spare him long to continue his services to the cause of Islam.—Ed. I. R.]

But I may be accused of digression from the point in hand, namely, the miracles. As for these words uttered on the cross they shall be commented upon at the proper place. All these miracles that have been ascribed to Jesus are supposed to have been worked by him alone. According to the Church it cannot be otherwise. Let us, however, see what the Bible has to tell us in this respect : "Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which *God did by him* in the midst of you." (Acts : ii. 22.) Among the great miracles that Jesus worked was the raising to life of his friend Lazarus, who was dead in the grave for four days. "Jesus said, Take ye away the stone. Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith unto him, Lord by this time he stinketh, for he hath been dead four days." (John : xi, 39.) However, the stone was removed.

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“And when he had spoken thus, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus came forth. And he that was dead came forth bound hand and foot with grave clothes : and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go.” (John : xi. 43, 44.) The strangest part of this miracle is that Lazarus comes forth from the grave, bound hand and foot and with his grave clothes, together with a napkin bound about his face, after he had been in the grave for four long days, by which time, according to Martha, he was decomposed. As if the assertion that the miracles were worked by Jesus during his lifetime was not enough, we have the further story of a miracle immediately after his alleged death on the Cross. “ And behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom, and the earth did quake and the rocks rent ; And the graves opened and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, and came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many.” (Matt : xxvii. 51, 53.) This wonderful miracle passes all imagination. Think of those who were dead for years together, and whose very bones nature must have reduced to dust, should arise from their graves and appear to many in the city. This is incredible, beyond all understanding, for the very fact that it is against the law of nature, and also because it is too fantastic a story to be believed. One wonders how these skeletons were altered when they went about the city. Again we have the story of Jesus stilling or calming the tempest. “ And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and saith unto the sea : Peace, be still. And the wind ceased and there was a great calm.” (Mark : iv. 39.) These few miracles picked at random are only taken to show by way of contrast that Jesus was not the only person accredited with such marvellous powers and singular

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miracles such as the raising of the dead, etc. I shall now quote from the Old Testament some of the mighty wonders displayed by the prophets of old. We have the story of the Prophet Elisha who restored a child to life. "And when Elisha was come into the house, behold, the child was dead. He went in therefore and shut the door upon them twain, and prayed unto the Lord. . . ." and the child sneezed seven times, and the child opened his eyes. (2 Kings : iv. 32—35.) We have also another story of the Prophet Elijah who worked a similar miracle. "And he stretched himself upon the child three times, and cried unto the Lord, and said, O Lord my God, hast Thou also brought evil upon the widow with whom I sojourn, by slaying her son ? . . . I pray Thee, let this child's soul come into him again. And the Lord heard the voice of Elijah ; and the soul of the child came into him again and he revived." (1 Kings : xvii. 19, 22.) In another instance we see that even the dead and dry bones of Elisha gave life to one who was dead. "And it came to pass as they were burying a man. . . . and they cast the man into the sepulchre of Elisha, and when the man was let down and touched the bones of Elisha, he revived and stood up on his feet." (2 Kings : xiii. 21.) There is also the miracle of how Joshua commanded the Sun and Moon. "Then spake Joshua. . . . and he said in the sight of Israel, Sun stand thou still upon Gibeon, and thou Moon in the valley of Ajalon. And the Sun stood still and the Moon stayed, until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies. . . . So the Sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and hasted not to go down about a whole day." (Joshua : x. 12, 13) Obviously this miracle of Joshua commanding the very solar system to stand still, without chaotic results is absolutely incredible and bewildering. Modern science has proved beyond

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any doubt that such a thing can never happen. It is absurd that the whole planetary organization could thus be brought to a standstill without causing the most disastrous consequences. And yet, the calming of the tempest by Jesus is nothing in comparison to this astounding miracle of the Prophet Joshua.

For other miracles see :

2 Kings iv. 1—7. Where Elisha tells a woman to fill several pots with one pot of oil.

2 Kings : iv. 14—17. An old woman conceives a son through Elisha's prayer.

2 Kings : iv. 40—44. The poison in the herbs is made harmless by Elisha.

2 Kings : ii. 8. Elijah divides the water for a dry passage.

2 Kings : ii. 14. Elisha divides the water's with Elijah's mantle.

2 Kings : ii. 21. Elisha cures the water.

2 Kings : vi. 6. An axe recovered by making it float.

Joshua : iii. 17. Israelites pass dry shod across the River Jordon.

Ezekiel : xxxvii. 7—10. An army of dry bones resurrected.

And lastly we have the significant words from the mouth of Jesus when he says, "I can of myself do nothing. . . ." (John : v. 30.) What interpretation other than his own denial to Divinity is contained in these words ?

If miracle-working and the extraordinary birth of Jesus is further advanced as a claim to Divinity, then without much ado I can only quote the Book of Hebrews as saying : "For this Melchisedec, King of Salem, priest of the Most High God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the king and

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blessed him. . . . without father, without mother, without descent, knowing neither beginning of days, nor end of life, but made like unto the son of God ; abideth a priest continually." (Heb : vii. 1—3). It would be futile to contend that because Melchisedec's parents are not mentioned in the Bible, it does not mean he had no parents. The words "neither beginning of days nor end of life," are too plain to allow a play of words. From this it is clear that neither the miracles nor even the miraculous birth can entitle Jesus to Divinity.

In view of all these facts as taken from the Bible itself, I could not understand how divinity could be exclusively claimed for Jesus because of the miracles supposed to have been worked by him. I have shown that in this matter the Prophets of the Old Testament are in no way second to him. If divinity is ascribed to Jesus because of his miracles, why should it be denied to the other miracle-workers ? The simple truth that emerges out of these facts is that because those who worked the great miracles in the Old Testament were men and humble servants of God, Jesus Christ must also be a human being. He was neither the Son of God and nor God, but a man having perfect human nature.

RESURRECTION

Nevertheless the greatest argument advanced for the Divinity of Jesus is that he rose from the dead after his crucifixion. His resurrection is supposed to be the greatest miracle. On a closer scrutiny of the events of the supposed resurrection, I was forced to draw a different conclusion altogether. If Jesus is supposed to have worked such great miracles as the stilling of the tempest and raising the dead, I cannot understand why his greatest miracle of having risen from the grave, where he was laid after his death, should not have been manifested to all the people, especially the unbelievers, as were his other miracles.

FROM THE CROSS TO THE CRESCENT

He is stated to have foretold his resurrection on the third day after his death, though in a symbolical manner, but the people who heard this quite understood his meaning and that is why the Jews set up a guard over his sealed sepulchre. It would have been but quite natural that some people at least would have assembled to have witnessed this incident in view of the foreknowledge he gave them. But we see that there was no such gathering at all, because they probably did not believe that such a marvellous occurrence could happen. "The first day of the week cometh Mary Magdalene early, when it was yet dark, unto the sepulchre, and seeth the stone taken away from the sepulchre. Then she runneth and cometh to Simon Peter, and saith unto them: They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid him. . . . And he stooping down and looking in, saw the linen clothes lying; yet went he not in. . . . Then cometh Simon Peter following him, and went into the sepulchre, and seeth the linen clothes lie, And the napkin that was about his head, not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself." (John: xx. 1—7). Prior to this we have that ". . . . Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James and Salome, had bought sweet spices, that they might come and anoint him." (Mark: xvi. 1.) As the story appears to me I cannot see the necessity of Mary Magdalene and the others bringing spices to anoint him, after he had been placed in the sepulchre over which a great stone had been rolled over, and where a guard was also placed that none might steal him. It is rather difficult to understand how under these circumstances, Mary and the others could have had access to the dead body of Jesus. On the other hand we find that they were astonished to see the stone rolled away, and that the linen clothes

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which had wrapped his body lying in the sepulchre, together with the "napkin that was about his head, not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself." There can be no doubt that Jesus when brought into the grave was not dead but in a state of perfect exhaustion and swoon, as otherwise there would have been no sense in having brought spices to anoint the wounds that had been inflicted on his person when on the Cross. We must remember that immediately after Jesus was taken down from the Cross he was wrapped in linen clothes with the spices which Nicodemus had brought. His wounds having thus been attended to, and being refreshed he awakes from the deep swoon and pains that he had sustained, and probably there being none about the place he gets away after leaving the linen that had wrapped him. Moreover care had been taken to wrap the napkin separately and lay it aside of the other linen. It can also be possible that certain of his disciples could have removed him by stealth, and in their great fear for the Jews, they had dressed him up quickly, placing the napkin separately which they intended to remove, but forgot in the excitement of the circumstances, and left behind. All this could have been done in the utmost secrecy. Either of the two occurrences are possible for the mere fact that after his resurrection, Jesus never showed himself to the Jews, but went about with the greatest fear and secrecy, clandestinely meeting his disciples here and there. "And when she had thus said, she turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus. She supposing him to be the gardener, saith unto him, Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away. Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself and saith unto him, Rabboni: which is to say Master". (John :

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xx. 16 17.) The concluding words of Mary “ . . . Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away,” more than indicate that she knew Jesus was alive when laid in the sepulchre. She was one among the many who knew of the place where Jesus was laid. If she had known for a certainty that he was indeed dead, why this request and anxiety to take him away? The disguise in the gardener’s dress was so complete, and his recent sufferings had brought about such a great change in him, that even Mary who had known him so well could not recognize him, until his familiar voice was heard. How much more difficult would it have been for others who had less acquaintance or companionship with him. This manner of disguise Jesus had to adopt for fear of the Jews once more recognizing him and giving him further trouble. “The same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for *fear* of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you.” (John : xx. 19.) Here again we have Jesus secretly meeting his disciples, the very doors being shut for fear of the Jews. Prior to his crucifixion he had preached to them openly in the synagogues and other places ; but after his resurrection he takes care to meet them in secret only. The irresistible question, “ why ? ” cannot be resisted, in view of the fact that the resurrection is supposed to have been Jesus’ greatest miracle, and manifestation of his power and Divinity. There is absolutely no grounds or reason to believe why such fear and caution should have been displayed if he was indeed God himself. The greatest proof of his divinity had been let slip in this “ glorious ” resurrection, which had not been witnessed by anybody. There could be no doubt that if he really was what the Church claims for him, he certainly would not

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have failed to manifest, in his resurrection, that power which would have been the crowning truth of all his ministry. Although the Catholic Church conveys his resurrection in pictures and statues, as rising with all the splendour and glory of a triumphant deity, with the guard being dazzled by his godly splendour, yet when we look to the actual circumstances of its occurrence, we find a sad and dreary picture indeed. I need not delay on this subject too long for if one cares to read and understand how this miracle took place I am sure he too would like me find a very "disappointing" manifestation of the Divinity of Jesus in his resurrection as claimed by the Church. It is not possible for me to comment on all the miracles and show their similarity to those worked by other prophets of old, as it would then require a much larger volume ; but what I desire to make plain is that whatever be the greatness of the miracles wrought by Jesus, yet there is much in them that stands in the way of our accepting his exclusive right to Divinity. Most of these miracles that have been adduced as proof of his being the Son of God are undoubtedly later inventions, which were apparently indispensable to capture the minds of ignorant people, and to present to them that Jesus was no ordinary human being but something supernatural. A careful perusal of the Gospels will bring any reader to this inevitable conclusion.

ATONEMENT

The whole religion of Christianity centres round and concentrates all its belief on the doctrine of the atonement or the reparation Jesus made for the redemption of mankind from sin. Were there no atonement, all other practices and rituals of the Catholic Church and Christianity in general would never have been known to us to-day. The Christian

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religion would be undoubtedly different, and perhaps the simple and genuine teachings of Christ would be still in existence. But since the incorporation of the doctrine of the atonement the entire feature of the Church changed. In short the real personality and teachings of Jesus were perfectly obliterated when the Church dressed Jesus in the mask of atonement. This doctrine was the cause of mutilating the simple and loving teachings of Jesus, and its results could be compared to the awful consequences that entirely removed all vestige of a once fair and beautiful city, subjected to a very severe and appalling earthquake. So disastrous has been this doctrine and so firmly has it taken root, that centuries have passed away without seeing any unhinging of this absolutely irrational belief. In view of the sins that man had committed, nothing could appease the wrath of God unless His only begotten son was sacrificed to repair the great injury that man had done. No human being was ever considered perfect enough to make this reparation, and it was therefore necessary that Almighty God should be incarnated into this world and under the unapproachable title of the "Son of God," should offer Himself by dying on the cross to redeem humanity from sin. The case for the Catholic Church may be something like this. If a man offends another person of a very high dignity, it is considered that a third person equal in dignity and power to the person offended is only capable of intervening and asking for the pardon of the offender. The man who offended the person of high dignity is considered as perfectly unworthy and unqualified, in view of the difference in social status to beg for pardon, and therefore a person of equal position to that of the offended is needed to fulfil the task. Such in brief is the position of man who has offended God by his sins. As he is not worthy to

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repair the offence, some other person equal to the Majesty of God must make good the injury, and therefore a Son of God is indispensable. Before I came to a final conclusion on this doctrine, I calmly thought over its many aspects. The thought struck me that should I ever offend the person of His Majesty the King, it would undoubtedly be more advantageous and surer if I could get his pardon through the services of the King's nearest and best friend, of whom the King in his great affection and attachment would not be able to refuse the request. Again, should I offend my father to such an extent, that all my repentance is deemed insufficient to repair the crime committed, and finding no way to approach him with my prayer for forgiveness, I hit on the idea, that should I succeed in asking my mother to intervene, it is quite possible that my father would forgive me, as he would be unable to reject her prayer and persuasions on my behalf. This manner of approach may undoubtedly be worthy and successful, but yet the whole affair lacks completeness, as the two chief persons concerned, *i.e.* the man and the king in the former case, and in the latter the son and the father, or to be more precise the offender and the offended have not exchanged and felt the greatest of all things, *viz.* the virtue of granting forgiveness, and the act of sincere repentance. The third person can only move in the matter, but the third person is absolutely incapable of stirring the offended as the offender would do. Also the offender cannot fully appreciate the forgiveness as he has not directly felt that quality of forgiveness working him into sincere regret. Having these examples in mind let us see what effect the doctrine of Atonement could leave on us or in what manner this could enable man to achieve his moral and spiritual progress. To say that God in the person of Jesus died for our sins would

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simply be absurd for the very fact that in the first instance God is Eternal and can never die. This doctrine, therefore, as is evident, denies eternal existence to God. To say that He died as a human being or anything else, would imply that he is liable to a severance from life. And if God is an Eternal and Living God, it will be most vexatious to make one believe that He ever died. And if it is said that Jesus' death on the cross was only an apparent death, then why propound the doctrine that he actually died? A thing must either be denied or affirmed, as there can be no third way to deal with it. To say that he died and lived at the same time would only betray the height of insanity that could overtake the mind. No, there can be no way out of it. What is more we are told that God died for our sins. The natural inquiry as to why this great sacrifice was needed cannot be withheld. Man, we must understand, has been equipped with all the necessary faculties to enable him to progress in this world. God has given him the necessary guidance and shown him through the great teachers of the past the path he must take to attain salvation. He gave man a Law in the shape of the Commandments, and others pertaining to his orderly conduct in this world. The observance of these laws to the letter was said to have been sufficient for our salvation. We have the instance when the young man asked Jesus what was needed for eternal life, and the master answered him saying that he should keep the Commandments. . . . what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life? . . . if thou wilt enter into life, keep the Commandments." (Matt. xix. 16.17.) In the succeeding three verses Jesus even makes the Commandments plain by telling them what they are. We do not see Jesus annulling the Commandments and asking him to be of comfort, as he would redeem

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him by his own personal sacrifice from all sin and secure for him eternal life. Neither does he require him to believe in his atonement which shall have taken place for the redemption of all sinners. No, he plainly tells the young man to observe the Commandments, and practise them if he wants life and salvation. There is no room for assuming here that he was teaching men individually, on the contrary, whatever he taught was in a general way. He had to do so, if he was teaching mankind the path that must be followed to salvation. As I have already stated God has provided man with all that was necessary for him to work out his salvation, and therefore he must reap what he sows in the form of his actions. Where then is the necessity of somebody atoning for the sins that man commits? Can any one tell me, what is this *great sin*, that is unpardonable by the Merciful God? We have instances where Jesus himself has in his supposed rôle of Divinity forgiven the greatest of spiritual crimes. Again, there is the incident where the adultress is brought before him and accused in the very commission of the act, after which he asks those that were without sin to cast the first stone at her. But being confounded the Jews go away leaving the adultress and Jesus alone. "And the Scribes and the Pharisees brought unto him a woman taken in adultery; and when they had set her in the midst, they say unto him, Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act. Now Moses in the Law commanded us, that such should be stoned; but what sayest thou? . . . He that is without sin let him cast the first stone at her" (John. viii. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7.) Further he asks her after her accusers had gone away, "Woman, where are those thine accusers? Hath no man condemned thee? She said, No man, Lord, And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more."

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(John. viii. 10, 11.) Here was one of the best opportunities of his life if he was to have preached to the Jews the doctrine of the Atonement. He may have turned upon them and said, "Do not burden yourselves with the sin of this woman, and let the law of Moses alone, for I am come for the Redemption of such like sinners and shall make good their sins before God by my death." It is quite reasonable to believe that such a reply would have been forthcoming, but for the fact that Jesus never intended to preach such a demoralising doctrine. I call it demoralising for more reasons than one. To think that God should be born into this world and suffer for the sins, which he did not commit, that he should give up his life for the sake of others' sins is indeed a violence to the cause of justice. There is absolutely no sense in this and the source of this doctrine could be traced to the heathen times when there existed the belief that the sinners could only be saved through the death of some extraordinary person appeasing the wrath of God and gaining a general amnesty for the sinners. There is absolutely no necessity for another man to suffer for the crimes I commit. I alone am and should be held responsible for my actions. To shift my crimes on to the shoulders of another person especially one innocent of such crimes is possible by people who are criminally-minded to the extreme. Where, on the other hand, is the living proof that mankind is redeemed from the bondage of sin by such a vicarious atonement? Since the time of Adam and throughout the centuries that have passed until this very day, people go on sinning without a stop, and are expected to go on doing so till the end of time. If the redemption meant that mankind was released from the bondage of sin, it would mean that Satan has been vanquished and once this is done the whole of humanity would be in a state of sinlessness. If this

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is supposed to have been achieved by Jesus, where, then, is the necessity of any Book from God to guide us? We shall neither need books from God, nor Prophets from Him, because there is no Evil to ensnare us, and we should be living in paradise itself. Setting this part of the question aside, I should like to ask any man if it ever makes any sense for God to *die* for our sins? Can it ever be believed that God who is the Eternal, should be incarnated into this world and after the utmost humiliation and suffering should calmly lay down his *life* for the sinners of this world? We wish such things really could and should happen, but the grim fact is that such things are believed to have happened in the religions or cults that existed in the pagan times wherein it was the popular belief that a redeemer could be the only person who could free man from Sin. Such were the beliefs of the Pagans, and such is the belief of the Paganized Christians of these days. It is strange, indeed, to note that the Ten Commandments which were given to Moses by God, and were thought a sufficient code of guidance for the Salvation of mankind, should later on be substituted by the Atonement of His only begotten Son on the Cross. The only inference one can draw from this is that the God of the Christians later on perceived that the 10 commandments alone were not enough to save mankind from the temptations that beset it and had to seek a new remedy to save His creatures. Now this alleged amendment of His Law can only prove His failure to see the future events. Is it admissible that God should have no foreknowledge and it is necessary for him to make amendments and alterations in His All-Knowing Will? Did God lack foresight of the future? Unfortunately this substitution of the atonement for the Ten Commandments can mean nothing else but this! Can this ever be

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attributed to an All-Knowing God, much less to an Ever-living God? Certainly not. It is a people who have not the real conception of God that can frame such fantastic doctrines. A God to be caught like a thief, mocked at, spat at, flogged, and after a hundred other forms of humiliation to be led like a criminal and done to death is, to say the least, opposed to the very idea of the Sacred personality of God. If the Christian God can be brought to this low level, it may as well look upon one of the prophets of old who had a less humiliating life and worship him as God.

(Concluded.)

THE CROWN OF HUMANITY

BY RABI'AL KARIM, M.Sc.

(Continued from page 230 of the July, 1942 issue.)

IN QUEST OF TRUTH AND ITS ATTAINMENT

A simple sweet loving face flashes before our mind's eye in all its beauty and glory whenever we think of a great man. Miseries and sufferings of mankind bring tears to his eyes; his very touch relieves and redeems the vicious and the sinful; he is even seen to offer his own head in exchange for the life of the kid to be sacrificed at the altar—such like touching scenes have all along charmed men. But however charming may be the love and pity of a superman, the core of his self is Truth. Truth is his glory and expression. And his success depends on the Quest of Truth and in its attainment.

The first thought that rises in the mind of man when he reads about Hazrat Muhammad is his great and deep love for Truth. He strived his utmost for gaining it. And in attaining the same he has ascended the highest pinnacle of glory with all the beauty and radiance of the achievement. He not only preached

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Truth but practised the same with the fire of love of his heart and illumined his own life with its flames.

"There is none to be worshipped except Allah." He preached this great message of Truth with such a force and vigour that his whole life became a harmonious blend of all that is best and noblest and turned to be the fountain-head of all the rivulets and springs that water and fertilise the better faculties in man through love, work, action and devotion. He had loved Truth most affectionately and searched for it most passionately. He proceeded in quest of Truth and burnt down all the superstitions heaped through ages with the fire of his devotion and kindled thereby the light of Truth.

He felt the glory of the Eternal Being in the cloudless, limitless blue canopy of heaven. From the far-off horizon of the great boundless sandy stretch reached him the call of the Infinite Self wafted by the breeze laden with the perfume of thousand flowers. The solemn hills in prostration called him to meditation and he devoted his time to the same in the forlorn cave of Hira to find out and bring forth the radiant rays of the Absolute Truth from the innermost heart of Nature.

He had no precedent of Truth before him to guide him. He did not gain knowledge from outside by reading. Around him men had shut all the doors of free thinking and he sat within the walls so to speak. His playmates, relations, neighbours and his dear and near ones—all were traversing the same path of the world. The day-to-day life of his grandfather worshipping idols, the feudal bloodsheds of the Quraish clan, the love offerings of the young lovers, vices and sins of all orders in all places—such was their life and this life he witnessed for years on end.

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Yet he did not follow the beaten track anywhere in his life. He searched for a new path leaving behind that of his ancestors. He rose above the plane where other people thought and loved and saw life anew and proclaimed a wonderfully new message to mankind.

He not only freed his mind from the lure of falsehood but he stood and revolted against it and fought like the bravest hero with the noblest chivalry against the age-long beliefs and superstitions of the world. The whole world was then under the sway of idolatry. The throne of Allah was not in the human heart nor did the human mind swell in chanting the praises and glories of the one and only Supreme Being. Arabia was then the worshipper of idols and its great influence even affected the Jewish and Christian religions. Men of Allah hid themselves in caves so to speak. Moses' followers had extinguished the radiant glow of Mount Sinai and taken to cow-worship; the followers of Christ had forgotten his unique teaching and placed the image of Mary in the churches; in Persia the flames of fire had obscured the flames of soul and in the far-off shores of India the hymns of the Vedas had long ceased to be recited. And Muhammad it was, who broke this mesmeric ominous paralytic silence and fainting fit of the soul with his divine message of the Oneness of God, the fountain-head of all that is good, noble and kind. He spoke of this Supreme Lord setting it against all the customary rites of the world. That was the greatest revolt the world had ever seen and the greatest struggle to place Truth in its most blazing colour. And in this he triumphed—and triumphed most gloriously.

Generations of great men, one after the other have since broken the barriers of man's meaningless

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conventions and rites of dark superstition and thus moved forward to the ultimate goal of humanity. They have revolted from century to century inspired by his example, to clear the road to salvation for mankind. And that is why we find Islam to-day established and established for ever through the struggling efforts, enthusiastic zeal and the strongest attachment to Truth of Hazrat Muhammad.

Hazrat Muhammad struggled hard through all sorts of sufferings and persecutions for the sake of Truth. When he came out of the cave of Hira to preach the Truth, he had no other strength except the Truth in his heart. As regards his relations with men he was all by himself. He had not the energy of vigour, force of strength, pride of power characteristic of a young man. He was of an age when man keeps aloof from worldly strife and stays at a safe distance from dangers and turns his face away from all quarrels seeking for peace and comfort at home. In that natural peace-loving age he came out of his peaceful home and faced the active world and preached what he thought and found right and true to a vicious world and thus brought upon himself an endless train of miseries and oppressions.

At the time he had no want of peace and comfort of life. After his marriage he had not to think for his livelihood. He had his queen-like and devoted wife, house and a peaceful hearth. If he would, he could spend his life in affluence like a king. But he did not do so. The love of Truth and its preaching made him leave these aside and withstand the struggle.

Of course, he did not renounce a kingdom but the dignity of a king was waiting before him. His amiable behaviour had attracted the hearts of all the Quraish. For his love of justice, equity and truth every man of every community and clan respected him, and gave

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him the honourable title of 'Al Amin'—The Trustworthy—a singular honour never bestowed on any one before or after him by the people. His restraint and culture, his labour and activity was leading him to leadership gradually and steadily. Besides these, his fine appearance, his sweet words, and his charming behaviour captivated all hearts. Had he lived in accordance with the then Arabian life he might have been the Dictator of the whole nation. By his personality, genius, sweetness, intelligence, power, service and honesty he had influenced the Arab mind so greatly that there was none to contest with him for supremacy. Had he not chosen the way he took, all the people of all clans would give him the kingly throne of their own accord. But for the sake of Truth he chose the way of difference and strife—he flung away the royal crown and wore the crown of sorrow instead—which in later years glowed and is still glowing as the crown of humanity.

He has become immortal not by dying for Truth in a moment, but has suffered the agonies of death for many long years, has felt the oppression of the pangs of sorrows and miseries every moment of his life and thereby has established Truth on the most solid foundation. The thunderous roars of the waves of perils have swept over his body, danger after danger have struck him with all their might, blow after blow has tried to crush him to atoms but nothing has been able to force him away from preaching the message of Truth—the mission of his life. What he said was strange and puzzling to others—the human mind was not prepared to hear and entertain his message. His countrymen worshipped idols in the place of God, they could not even think of One Supreme Being without any form, and were engrossed in every kind of vice, staining the world with their bloody feuds in which they

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found their greatest delight. As by a storm he proposed to destroy their beliefs and superstitions of so many ages by proclaiming the Oneness of the Most High, and became the target of all sorts of persecutions and oppressions for his striking at the roots of all their rites and rituals, customs and usages. The men against whose beliefs he preached this most ancient yet ever-new Truth were as cruel and hard as the bare sandy desert itself and their nature was as fiery and severe as the rough desert gale. He knew that they would blaze with the fire of anger and turn demons if any one spoke against what they did, and would not hesitate even for a moment to tear him to pieces or kill him brutally. Yet he was not frightened—nor did he count upon the help of his own relations. He did not keep silence in spite of the love and affection he bore towards his relatives, nor did he make peace with them to save his life and cease to express what in his innermost consciousness he felt to be true. The extent of opposition and the amount of danger were clear before his eyes, but he did not shrink back even for a moment to preach the true message. He expelled corruption, denied falsehood and proclaimed the Truth. He made the human mind pure and free from all other thoughts by weaning it from worshipping other deities and placed therein the holy throne of Allah in all its radiance and glory.

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