

HOLY QUR-AN, 33: 40. "There will be no prophet after me."— PROPHET MUHAMMAD

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

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CONTENTS

	Page
BY THE LIGHT OF THE QUR-AN	253
JESUS THE SON OF MARY. By Khwaja Nazir Ahmad ..	254
THE BREAKING OF THE DAY. By W. B. Bashyr-Pickard	276
AZAN. By Rabi'Al-Karim	277
THE PROPHET ON MARRIAGE	282
WHAT IS ISLAM?	283

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A PAGE FROM THE SOURCES OF CHRISTIANITY

Chapter I

AN ECHO FROM MAKKA

It is disquieting to find that religion, which should be the surest means of adhesion between the various units of humanity, has proved, on the contrary, to be a great factor of discord. Man is a sociable creature; his civilization depends on his living amicably with his fellow men; and yet no one can doubt that the power of unification possessed by religion is far stronger than that which can be claimed by social, colour, or race relations. If religion came from God, it must have been given in the same form to every race; and more especially in those days when there were but scanty means of communication between nation and nation. If the God of the Universe could not well have shown any partiality in His physical dispensation for human sustenance, much less could He have done so in spiritual matters. If the physical requirements of all have been satisfied by the Divine Hand, religion, coming from God, should be given in the same form to the whole world. Many religions are at variance to-day over this simple truth, but the Holy Qur-ān accepts it, and states in the clearest terms that every nationality and race received Prophets and Messengers from God, and were given one and the same religion. A Muslim, therefore, cannot but accept every other religion as coming in its original form from God. If his religion has been named Islam, which means "peace," it has been so named rightly; and, in this way, to acknowledge the Divine origin of every other religion, in its purity, is the best means of securing unity and concord.

All men come from the same source, and must drink from the same fountain; but the pure elixir that descended from Heaven for our spiritual need in the form of Divine Revelation became polluted by human alloy, and has grown to be the chief cause of dissension in the human race. If we came from God, we must needs all have been treated alike by Him. The Holy Qur-ān says:

"By Allah, most certainly We sent (apostles) to nations before you, but the devil made their deeds fair-seeming to them, and he is their guardian to-day, and they shall have a painful chastisement. And We have not revealed to you the Book except that you may make clear to them that about which they differ, and (as) a guidance and a mercy for a people who believe."

(See cover pages 3, 4.)

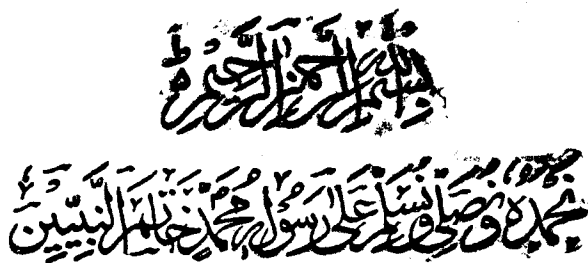
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BY THE LIGHT OF THE QUR-ĀN

“ And certainly We sent (apostles) to nations before *you*, then We seized them with distress and affliction in order that they might humble themselves.

“ Yet why did they not, when Our punishment came to them, humble themselves? But their hearts hardened and the devil made what they did fairseeming to them.

“ But when they neglected that with which they had been admonished, We opened for them the doors of all things, until when they rejoiced in what they were given, We seized them suddenly; then lo! they were in utter despair.

“ So the roots of the people who were unjust were cut off; and all praise is due to Allah, the Lord of the worlds.

“ Say: Have you considered that if Allah takes away your hearing and your sight and sets a seal on your hearts, who is the god besides Allah that can bring it to you? See how We repeat the *arguments*, yet they turn away.

“ Say: Have you considered if the chastisement of Allah should overtake you suddenly or openly, will any be destroyed but the unjust people?

“ And We send not messengers but as announcers of good news and givers of warning; then whoever believes and acts aright, they shall have no fear, nor shall they grieve.

“ And (as for) those who reject Our communications, chastisement shall afflict them because they transgressed.

“Say : I do not say to you, I have with me the treasures of Allah, nor do I know the unseen, nor do I say to you that I am an angel ; I do not follow aught save that which is revealed to me. Say : Are the blind and the seeing one alike ? Do you not then reflect ?” (Ch. VI : 42-50).

JESUS THE SON OF MARY

HIS BIRTH AND DEATH

BY KHWAJA NAZIR AHMAD

(Continued from Vol. XXXIII, p. 227)

THE SOURCES

The sources of the life of Jesus vary as to their origin, language and importance. The primary sources are the Canonical Gospels, Acts and Epistles. The Hebrew sources must, however, come first, since Jesus lived and died among the Jews. And the Canonical Gospels must come last. They sum up the events of the life of Jesus and his teachings. The Pagan sources, the Apocryphal Gospels, Acts and Epistles and the writings of the early Christian Fathers must come in between. I will deal with the facts as given in the Holy Qur-ân and the *Hadis* last of all.

THE HEBREW SOURCES

It might be supposed that the earliest mention of Jesus and his teachings ought to be found in the Talmud. But such is not the case. Except for a few references found in them, which are of a later period, and rather of the nature of vituperations and polemics against the founder of a religion, which the Jews hated the most, we find hardly anything in them. The reason for this silence is not far to seek. Judæa under the Herods and Roman procurators witnessed a period of disturbance and confusion, and the appearance of Jesus was so inconspicuous an event that his contemporaries hardly noticed it ; and by the time the Christians had become a powerful sect, the *sages of the Talmud*, being far removed from the time of Jesus, were content with the popular current stories regarding him and turned them into subjects of ridicule and blasphemy. These Talmudic references, it appears, were deliberately intended to contradict events as recorded in the Gospels. For example, the Gospels said that Jesus was born of the Holy Spirit, the Talmud retorted that he was born without a father but as the result of an irregular union ; for he was, according to the Talmud, a “Sinner in Israel.” In the Talmud and *Midrash* Jesus is identified as *ben Stada* and *ben Pandera*. But now it is admitted on all hands that *ben Stada* was

JESUS THE SON OF MARY

the Egyptian false prophet referred to by Josephus,¹ who is also mentioned in the Acts; and Yeshu *ben Pandera* is the appellation resulting from a calumny which need not be repeated here, though Klausner² gives it in full detail on the strength of Origen and suggests, in a light vain, that it originated from the word *Pantera*, a leopard. Again, reference is made to the "uncleanness" of Mary, which is nothing but a malicious defamation of *Maryam*, the mother of Jesus.

The Toldoth Yeshu, or, as it is sometimes called, *Ma'asch Talui*, is a book which the Christians did their best to destroy. The only reference in it which is worth mentioning is that R. Shemin *ben 'Azzari* speaks of Mary as *esheth ish*,³ a married woman, who had given birth to Jesus.

The silence of the Jewish writers regarding Jesus is still more striking. There is, to begin with, Philo of Alexandria, who interested himself in the welfare of Israel and was born about thirty years before the Christian Era and did not die until fifty-four years after it. Yet in the more than fifty works of his, which have come down to us, it is impossible to find even a single allusion to Jesus or his followers. Justus of Tiberias was himself born in Galilee about the supposed date of the crucifixion, and lived in that country amongst men who, it is natural to suppose, were still powerfully stirred by the Gospel preaching. Yet in his two great works, a history of *the War of Independence* and a *Chronicle of Events from Moses to Agrippa II*, who died in 100 C.E., he did not make the smallest reference to Jesus.

It has been asserted that we are in a better position with Josephus, the great Jewish historian, who was born in 37 C.E. and died towards the end of the first century, and who thoroughly knew the history of Galilee. In his remarkable history of the *Wars of the Jews* he speaks of twelve persons bearing the name of Jesus, who are other than Jesus of Nazareth, but he does not mention him at all. In his Jewish *Antiquities*, however, the following remarkable passage occurs:

At that time lived Jesus, a holy man, if man he may be called, for he performed wonderful works, and taught men, and they joyfully received the truth. And he was followed by many Jews and many Greeks. He was the *Messiah*. And our leaders denounced him. But when Pilate had condemned him to the Cross, those who had loved him at first did not deny him. For he appeared to them after having risen from death on the third day. The holy Prophets had, moreover, predicted of him those and many other wonders. The race of the Christians takes its name from him and still exists at the present time.⁴

In another place he says:

Festus was now dead, and Albious was but upon the road; so he (Annus) assembled the Sanhedrin of Judges, and brought before them the brother of Jesus, who was called *Christ*, whose name was James, and some others, and when he had formed an accusation against them as breakers of the law, he delivered them to be stoned.⁵

¹ Josephus, *Antiq.*, XX: 8; *Wars*, II: 8.

² Klausner, *Jesus of Nazareth*, 23.

³ *Y. b.*, IV: 3, 49.

⁴ Josephus, *Antiq.*, XVIII: 3.

⁵ Josephus, *Antiq.*, XX: 9, 1.

Now Josephus was a Jew, and I have italicized the words which no Jew could ever have written. Was this then a pure Christian forgery? The style, says Moore, is a clever imitation of Josephus, but he points out that in both places there is a short digression.¹

Photius, writing in 860 C.E., referring to these passages, says:

However, I have found in some papers that this discourse was not written by Josephus, but by one Caius, a Presbyter.²

Clement of Alexandria, who cited from the *Antiquities*, never mentioned any of these testimonies. Equally, Tertullian was silent, implying thereby that these testimonies were not in the copies of his age. He had particular occasion, in his disputes with Jews, to quote Josephus, above any other writer, to prove the completion of the prophecies of the Old Testament in the destruction of Jerusalem; yet he never quoted him, though he did refer to other passages in the works of Josephus. But Origen was more definite. He recorded that Josephus did not believe Jesus to be the Messiah. He could not have read the italicized words in his copy of the *Antiquities*. The first ancient author to note these passages was Eusebius, who lived in the fourth century. So the early Christian copyist of the third century, who could not bear the idea that Jesus should find no place in the great works of Josephus, interpolated the passages to glorify their god. Dean Farrar, while admitting that these passages were subsequent forgeries, says:

Josephus, . . . a renegade and a sycophant . . . did not make any allusion to . . . Christ . . . His silence on the subject of Christianity was as deliberate as it was dishonest.³

THE PAGAN SOURCES

Like the Jewish records the lack of Pagan testimony also seems incredible. Only a firm resolve and an intense desire to extract information from a witness who has nothing to tell could discover a few passages from Tacitus, Suetonius, Pliny the Younger and Celcus. They tell us nothing beyond that in Judaea there had existed a Jew named Jesus, sometimes called *Christo*, who taught people and did wonderful works and was killed by Pontius Pilate in the reign of Tiberius and that he had a special sect which also existed in Rome fifty years after his death, and that, because of this community, the Jews were expelled from Rome.

I will only mention the alleged report of Pilate which he is supposed to have sent to Tiberius regarding the death of Jesus, and the notorious *Letter of Lentulus*, the so-called *Governor of Jerusalem*, addressed to the Senate and People of Rome concerning the personal appearance and teachings of Jesus. Both these documents are now

¹ Moore, *Judaism in the First Century of the Christian Era*, I: 20.

² Photius, *Cod. Lib.*, XLVIII.

³ Farrar, *Life of Christ*, 46.

JESUS THE SON OF MARY

admitted to be forgeries, and Dobshütz styled the first as "an obvious fabrication" and the second "a preposterous forgery of mediæval origin."

THE CHRISTIAN SOURCES.

The Epistles.

The earliest of all the Christian sources are the Epistles of Paul. Of about the same period are the Epistles of Peter, James and others contained in the New Testament.

The authorship of the Epistle to the Hebrews and the three Pastoral letters (1 and 2 Timothy and Titus) are no longer attributed to Paul, indeed their authenticity is not even maintained. They have been excluded by a majority of the independent critics from the Pauline Canon.

Paul, or Saul, was one of the contemporaries of Jesus, but he did not know him and had not seen him. He, however, testified to having seen him in a vision on his way to Damascus.¹ Three years after, he went to Jerusalem for fifteen days and during this time had met Peter and James, the Just, the brother of Jesus, but did not come in contact with any other of the Apostles.²

It would, therefore, be not difficult to conceive that Paul could, and perhaps did, obtain information concerning the life and teachings of Jesus. He knew, by hearsay, not only of the life of Jesus, and of his death on the cross, but also of his resurrection. Paul, therefore, is a trustworthy witness as to the existence of Jesus, but nothing beyond this. If we bring together all the allusions and references from all his writings, without examining their truth, we learn from him that Jesus was a Jew,³ that he was *made of the seed of David, according to the flesh*,⁴ that he was *born of a woman, born under the law*,⁵ and that he had brothers,⁶ one of whom was James, that he preached only to Israel,⁷ and was an humble and obedient servant of God,⁸ that he chose twelve Apostles,⁹ that he was reviled¹⁰ and crucified¹¹ by the Jews because of their malice against him¹² and finally that he rose again on the third day *according to the Scriptures*,¹³ and showed himself to Peter and the twelve Apostles and others and to Paul himself,¹⁴ and that he now sits on the right hand of God¹⁵ awaiting the great day when he shall come again.

The incompleteness of this reconstructed life of Jesus, as Paul gives us, becomes all the more apparent when we contrast it with the full Christology contained in his Epistles. The conclusion is forced on us that Paul had deliberately sacrificed Jesus to Christ. This will become all the more conspicuous when we realize that he did not only ignore the historical Jesus for the mythical Christ, but that he also maintained his apostolic independence of those who lived

¹ Acts, IX: 2-5.

² Gal., I: 17-19.

³ Gal., III: 16.

⁴ Rom., I: 3.

⁵ Gal., IV: 4.

⁶ 1 Cor., IX: 5.

⁷ Rom., XV: 8.

⁸ Phil., II: 8.

⁹ 1 Cor., XV: 5.

¹⁰ Rom., XV: 3.

¹¹ 1 Cor., XV: 3.

¹² 1 Thess., II: 15.

¹³ 1 Cor., XV: 4.

¹⁴ 1 Cor., XV: 5-8.

¹⁵ Rom., VIII: 34.

with and saw Jesus; and held himself aloof from the teachings of Jesus as contained in the Gospels.¹ What Jesus may have said and done on earth became almost a matter of indifference to him. Brought up and influenced by the syncretistic mysteries of the Pagans, Paul conceived Christ as the saviour god, to whom his followers had been united by a powerful rite—his redeeming sacrifice on the cross. Paul set up a creed, of which Jesus knew nothing. Dr. Arnold Meyer, Professor of Theology of Zurich University, while discussing the original efforts of Paul to reconcile the Gnostic speculations and the Rabbinical arguments, points out that, by gradually developing his doctrine of *Justification*, Paul has for ever shut out the simple faith of Jesus. The Christological and Eschatological system of Paul, he says, has blocked the approach of many simple souls, and for many nations, to the childlike piety of Jesus. Dr. Meyer puts a question to himself: Who is the founder of Christianity? and in unequivocal terms goes on to furnish the answer:

If by Christianity we understand faith in Christ as the heavenly Son of God, who did not belong to earthly humanity, but who lived in the Divine likeness and glory, who came down from Heaven to earth, who entered humanity and took upon himself a human form through a virgin, that he might make propitiation for men's sins by his own blood upon the Cross, who was then awakened from death and raised to the right hand of God, as the Lord of his own people, who believe in him, who hears their prayers, guards and leads them, who, moreover, dwells and works personally in each of them, who will come again with the clouds of Heaven to judge the world, who will cast down all the foes of God, and will bring his own people with him unto the home of heavenly light so that they may become like centre of His glorified body—if this is Christianity, then such Christianity was founded by St. Paul and not by our Lord.²

Dr. Meyer goes on to say that:

Paul, it is true, wrought a work of tremendous historical importance in that he raised Jesus from the position of a Jewish Messiah to that of the Divine Redeemer of the Gentiles and of the whole world.³

Dr. Johannes Weiss, of Heidelberg University, also remarked in a similar strain that to Paul Jesus was not only the prophet but the object of religious veneration, and came to the conclusion:

Hence the faith in Christ as held by Paul was something new in comparison with the preachings of Jesus; it was a new type of religion.⁴

Wrede says that Paul was not the disciple and servant of Jesus, which he professed to be, but of another, the heavenly Christ. He adds:

The teaching of Jesus is directed entirely to the individual personally. Man is to submit his soul to God and to God's will wholly and without reserve... the central point for Paul is a divine and super-natural action. He who believes in these divine acts—the incarnation, death and resurrection of a divine being—can obtain salvation. The point which was everything to Paul was nothing to Jesus.⁵

¹ Gal; I: 11—18.

² Meyer: *Jesus or Paul*, 122.

³ *Ibid*

⁴ Weiss: *Paul and Jesus*, 130.

⁵ Wrede: *Paulus*, 6.

JESUS THE SON OF MARY

But I cannot leave this discussion, like these three eminent scholars have done, by merely pointing out the difference between the teachings of Jesus and the creed which Paul introduced into the world. I must go deeper and probe the basis of his belief, the reasons for it and the extent to which Paul did create it out of his own imagination. Paul himself relied on a vision which he had when he was near Damascus. In his vision, his hallucination as some call it, Paul merely heard a voice¹ saying unto him: "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" In this vision Paul was further asked not to kick against the pricks. The man who was with Paul and the other bystanders saw nothing, heard nothing. So terrified was Paul that he could neither hear nor see anything for three days. To cure him Jesus had to appear to Ananias, and say to him that:

Paul is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles and Kings and the children of Israel.²

It is most extraordinary that neither of these incidents is mentioned by Paul himself. If Paul was in fact the *chosen vessel* surely Jesus could have announced to him at the time he had appeared to him or he should have appeared again. But super-natural events, they say, happen in a manner beyond the understanding of men. This much is certain that Paul never had any direct revelation from Jesus, and such as he claims to have had was merely the result of his own imagination, because he did not see Jesus again even in his dreams. The audacity and shamelessness of Paul has no parallel in history. He resorted to falsehood, and, being conscious of it, protested most vigorously against those who dared charge him with the lies he had told. In his Epistle to the Romans, he wrote:

For through my lie abounded unto his glory, why am I also still judged as a sinner?³

I have intentionally used the text of "the many ancient authorities," which the compilers of the Revised Version quote. But to make the position perfectly clear I also give the passage as it appears in the Authorised Version:

For if the truth of God hath more abounded through my lie unto the glory of God, why yet am I also judged a sinner?

Such, then, is the foundation upon which Paul has built his creed.

From the very beginning the other Apostles of Jesus were all afraid of him and "believed him not,"⁴ but they received him for a short while on the intervention of Barnabas,⁵ whose Gospel, it may be mentioned, the Christians disown to this day.

Paul's character can be judged from the following incidents. In Jerusalem he was attacked by the Jews. To save himself, and

¹ Acts, IX: 3—7.

² Acts, X: 15.

³ Rom., III: 7—Revised Version, 1244.

⁴ Acts, IX: 26.

⁵ Acts, IX: 27.

to win their sympathy, he pleaded that he was a Jew of Tarsus ;¹ but when he was taken in custody by the Chief Captain, who had him bound with thongs and ordered his examination by scourging, Paul, with a view to escape the punishment, did not hesitate to tell him a lie and pretended that he was a Roman.² Later in the day, he addressed and declared to the crowds that he was a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee,³ but, when produced before Festus, he once again urged his Roman citizenship. The Governor had, therefore, to send him to Rome to stand his trial before Augustus.⁴ In Rome Paul was imprisoned twice for misdemeanour.

But, leaving these considerations aside, if Paul did wrongly attribute to Jesus a religion other than that which Jesus preached, we ought to find some Apostolic denunciation of the Pauline creed, or, at least, some indication that the Apostles did disapprove of his ideas. If we wade through the Epistles for such information we shall not look in vain. Therein we will find a triangular fight going on between James, the brother of Jesus, Peter and Paul in which Jude also takes a part. Of course, as fellow-workers in the same cause, they objected, in the first instance, to each other's viewpoint and did not mention any names. Gradually, however, not only names were mentioned but the opposite view was styled as heretical. When, however, the Apostles failed to check, by these methods, the activities of Paul, they actually, after fourteen years, summoned him to a Council, held at Jerusalem, to explain his conduct and to account for his misdeeds. He attended with his supporters but defied them. They had no control over him, their appeals in the name of Jesus failed, and they were left with no alternative but to disassociate themselves from him. Thus came about the first dissolution of the integral faith, and different sects of Christianity, each diametrically opposed to the other, saw the first light of the day.

Paul did not believe in the observation of the law⁵ for he said that if righteousness come by the law then Christ died in vain.⁶ Paul pointed out that those who were of the *Works* of the law were under a curse.⁷ The propagation of these views had a three-fold object. First, to preach that a man is *justified* by faith alone, without the deeds of the Law⁸ and secondly, it was a gibe at James, the brother of Jesus, who held the opposite view, and, thirdly, it won, on the Greek soil, many licentious adherents to the Pauline creed, for they were assured of salvation without any good deeds. In fact to such, by way of encouragement, Paul had said—

Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die.⁹

And Paul also told them :

A man was not *justified* by the works of the Law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ. . . for by the works of the law no man shall be *justified*.¹⁰

¹ 1 Acts, XXII : 3.

² Acts, XXII : 25.

³ Acts, XXIII : 6.

⁴ Acts, XXV : 10-11.

⁵ Rom., II : 14.

⁶ Gal., II : 21.

⁷ Gal., III : 10.

⁸ Rom., III : 28.

⁹ 1 Cor., XV : 32.

¹⁰ Gal., II : 16.

JESUS THE SON OF MARY

In the same Epistle he further encouraged his followers to stand fast to the liberty for which Christ had made them free, and he advised them to "be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage."¹ Paul boasted that he had neither written any Gospel, nor had he used any of those which had been written.² Nay, to the contrary he boldly asserted that :

I give my own judgment as one that hath obtained mercy of the Lord.³

Paul, it is true, did claim inspiration in a round-about way. He claimed that he had it from the Holy Spirit,⁴ but he also claimed that it had been given to many, nay, to most of the Apostles, though in different degrees.⁵ But no one else claimed it. Paul, however, at places spoke of his own judgement and also of what he said *on authority*, which he predicated with the assertion : "The Lord says, not I." He also distinguished his judgement by phrases like : "I, not the Lord" or "this I give by permission, not commandment." It has, therefore been construed that all his writings which are not thus qualified are inspired. But Paul naively pointed out that his *Gospel* was something different from "the preachings of Jesus Christ."⁶ He never stressed these preachings, but at times expressly, though falsely, declared himself to be "speaking by the word of the Lord," when he manifestly was giving out his own ideas only. To give but one example, Paul, while expressing his own belief regarding the approaching end of the world, falsely alleged that he was "speaking by the words of the Lord."⁷ We do not, therefore, know which portions of his Epistles are the result of a revelation from Jesus and which are his own inventions and blunders. How can we be certain that the very texts, on which the Christians rest their dogmas, their faith and their hopes, are not the human and uninspired portions? This is one of the reasons why the early Christians rejected the Pauline Canon.

In these circumstances, and the doctrines of Paul being against the teachings of Jesus, the other Apostles, as already mentioned, denounced Paul and his views. Thus James, the brother of Jesus, the head of the Church at Jerusalem, was the first to challenge the views of Paul. We find in his Epistle :

Whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a *doer of good works*, this man shall be blessed in his deed.⁸

James further pointed out⁹ :

¹ Gal., V : 1.

² 1 Cor., IX : 15.

³ 1 Cor., VII : 25.

⁴ 1 Cor., II : 10—16; Gal., I : 10-11; 1 Thes., IV : 8; 1 Tim., II : 7.

⁵ 1 Cor., XII : 4—12.

⁶ Rom., XVI : 25.

⁷ Thes., IV : 15.

⁸ Jas., I : 25.

⁹ Jas., II : 10.

For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.

He raised the question: Whether faith alone, without deeds, could save a man? ¹ And himself gave the answer that:

Even faith, if it hath not works, is dead being alone.²

Then we come across James polemics against Paul:

Thou believest that there is one God: thou doest well, the devils also believe and tremble. But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead.³

And condemned the Pauline creed of *Justification*.

Ye see then how that by works a man is *justified*, and not by faith only.⁴

And finally, he said to Paul:

Ye rejoice in your boastings; all such rejoicing is evil.⁵

I now turn to Peter. His character is well depicted in his denial of Jesus thrice in one night before the cock crew. Likewise, here we find him adopting the line of least resistance. In his Epistle he advised his "beloved brother" Paul to be sober in habits and to "watch unto prayer" and be charitable. For such meek attitude James had to dub Peter aptly as "double-minded." But as Paul began to exceed all limits Peter had to style him, of course, not by name, as a "false teacher," who had introduced into the faith "damnable heresies," and "pernicious ways." But when the divergence of their views became too apparent Peter not only attacked his "dearly beloved brother Paul" but also warned his followers against him. Referring to the Epistles of Pauls he said:

As also in all his Epistles speaking in them of these things; in which are some *hard to be understood*, . . . Ye, therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also being *led away with error of the wicked* fall from your own steadfastness.⁶

Jude was equally vehement in his denunciation of Paul. He said:

For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God unto lasciviousness. . . . These are murmurers, complainers, walking after their own lusts; and their mouth speaketh great swelling words, having men's persons in admiration because of advantage. . . . These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the spirit.⁷

There is another incident which throws some light on the subject. The original name of Mark was John, and he is, as such, referred to in the Acts. Paul and Barnabas had taken him⁸ from Jerusalem to Antioch, to act as their minister and scribe. After passing through Cyprus Mark suddenly left them⁹ because of his dislike of Paul's inclination towards preaching to the Gentiles.¹⁰

¹ Jas., II: 14.

² Jas., II: 17.

³ Jas., II: 19-20;

⁴ Jas., II: 24:

⁵ Jas., IV: 16.

⁶ 2 Pet., III: 16-17.

⁷ Jude, 4, 16, 19.

⁸ Acts, XII: 25.

⁹ Acts, XIII: 13.

¹⁰ Dummelow, *Commentary on the Holy Bible*, 722.

JESUS THE SON OF MARY

In the opposite camp were John, the Evangelist, and Paul. John, who always was a step ahead of Paul, was the first to attack those, Corinthus in particular, who did not believe in the son-god theory. He wrote :

Who is a liar, but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ ? He is anti-Christ that denieth the Father and Son.¹

Referring to those who held the opposite view he said :

And this is that spirit of anti-Christ whereof you have heard that it should come and even now already is it in the world.²

Now let me turn to Paul in this connection. He, as one would expect, could not stand this onslaught quietly. In the first instance he contented himself by a simple warning.

Let no man deceive you with vain words. . . Be not ye, therefore, partakers with them.³

As a result of these divergent views divisions arose, and in Corinth a sect came into being, and its followers rejected Paul. He styled them as "thorn in the flesh," "the messengers of Satan," and wrote :

For it hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren. . . . that there are contentions amongst you. . . I thank God that I baptised none of you. . .

To the Galatians he said :

I marvel that ye are soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto *another* Gospel.⁵

To the Romans he appealed :

Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learnt ; and avoid them. For they that are such, serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly ; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple.⁶

In another place he questioned his disputants :

Am I not an Apostle ? Am I not free : Have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord ? . . My answer to these that do examine me is this : Have we not power to eat and to drink ? Have we not power to lead about a *sister*, a wife, as well as other Apostles, and as the brother of the Lord and Apostles ? Or I only and Barnabas, have not we power to forbear working.⁷

I have already mentioned that, after fourteen years, when matters reached a climax James, as head of the Church at Jerusalem, summoned a Council. The proceedings of this meeting are detailed in the Acts and Paul's version is to be found in his Epistle to the Galatians. Paul tells us that on this occasion he was accompanied by Barnabas and Titus. He was taken to James who was sitting in company with the Elders. James charged him with preaching to the Gentiles and for forsaking Moses, *i.e.* the Law. They asked him to refrain in future from doing so. Paul says that their appeals

¹ I John, II : 22.

² I John., IV : 3.

³ Ephes., IV : 6-7.

⁴ I Cor., I : 11-14.

⁵ Gal., II : 6.

⁶ Rom., XVI : 17-18.

⁷ I Cor., IX : 1-6.

ISLAMIC REVIEW

were so forceful that even "Barnabas was carried away with their dissimulations."¹ But he goes on to say :

When Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed.²

Paul concluded his version of the meeting at the Council, by saying :

But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the Gospel, I said unto Peter before them all. . . . Complainest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews ? . . . Knowing that a man is not *justified* by the works of the Law. . . . But if while we seek to be *justified* by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners. . . .³

Paul then rebukes the Galatians :

O foolish Galatians who hath bewitched you that ye should not obey the truth,⁴

Thus, Paul tried to impress the belief on others, that his creed was more important than that of James or Peter. To Paul's mind the centre of interest was not the teacher, the worker of miracles, the companion of publicans and sinners, the opponent of Pharisees, but it was the crucified son of God raised from the dead and none other.

Paul, therefore, is the least valuable for our knowledge of the real life of Jesus. Similarly, the remaining Epistles of James, Peter, John and Jude do not add anything of importance to our knowledge, except that Peter makes Jesus descend into hell to preach to the dead⁵ and the Transfiguration is recalled.⁶

The Acts.

The authorship of the Acts of the Apostles has long been in question. Eusebius placed them among his third class of spurious literature. The authorship of the Acts of the Apostles is attributed to Luke, the companion of Paul, and although this assertion has been only recently confirmed by the Papal Biblical Commission of 1913, yet, it is curious that we find him totally ignorant of the Epistles of Paul. He even contradicts them. The truth is that we do not know who wrote them, and when they were written. The first edition might have been written by Luke, but the various mutilations, interpolations and dislocations, which it subsequently suffered at the hands of the unscrupulous early Fathers of the Church, have altered it to such an extent that it is impossible to pick out the original portions.

The *Codex Bezae*, and certain other ancient authorities generally called the *Western Manuscripts* exhibit a text so different from that of the Canonical Version that they may almost be said to constitute a different edition of the Acts.⁷

¹ Gal., II: 13;

² Gal., II: 11;

³ Gal., II: 14—17.

⁴ Gal., III: 1.

⁵ 1 Pet., III: 19.

⁶ 2 Pet., I: 17.

⁷ Dummelow, *Commentary on Holy Bible*, 815-816.

Loisy places the Acts in the second century of the Christian Era. Harnack dates them back from 78 to 93 C.E. Whatever the date be, the Acts tell us little, or nothing, about Jesus except that he had a human existence, both before or after the resurrection. The author is totally ill-informed. He hardly mentions Jesus, an omission for which he excuses himself at the outset. However, the few references which he makes, in the course of his narrative, to Jesus are not without significance. He says that Jesus, the *Nazarene*, was a *man* approved of God among the Jews to be a *man chosen of God*¹ and that Jesus was born of the *seed* of David,² i.e., the fruit of his loins according to the flesh.³ Later he describes the punishment meted out to Jesus by his enemies. The main emphasis, however, is laid on the resurrection, and it is mentioned that Jesus thereafter did eat and drink.⁴ It is evident that the author, under Pauline influences, believed that the Messianic elevation of Jesus had been made manifest by his resurrection. Luke, however, dates it back to his baptism, and, even earlier still, before the birth of Jesus in his account of Annunciation.⁵

In the Acts the whole career of Jesus from the baptism to his crucifixion is summarised in three verses. No spoken words of Jesus are recorded anywhere except in one verse.⁷ The Acts, therefore, do not give us any help in reconstructing the life of Jesus.

The Apocryphal Gospels, Acts And Epistles.

There were many ancient "Lives of Jesus" which have been excluded from the New Testament. They have survived in fragments, and sometimes little is known of them except their title. But this much is certain that most of them had arisen contemporaneously with the New Testament and some are admitted to be even older. Paul was the first to convey the information that even in his time some Gospels had already been written.⁸ The first Canonical Gospel, that of Mark was, however, written after the death of Paul. Therefore, the Gospels to which Paul had referred must have been among those which had been rejected by the Church.

Of all the Apocryphal Gospels, the *Gospel according to the Hebrews* and the *Gospel of the Ebionites* are of particular importance and claim our special attention. They were, according to Harnack, written about 65 C.E. They are, therefore, not later than the Canonical Gospels; and can rank with them. Nay, in many respects, they are superior to them. They were written in Palestine, in Aramaic, for the benefit of the Jewish Christians, who were still alive to the spirit of Jesus and knew details of his life. These Gospels were rejected by the Church and consequently they retained their originality

¹ Acts, II: 22.

² Acts, XIII: 23.

³ Acts, II: 30.

⁴ Acts, X: 41;

⁵ Luke, III: 22.

⁶ Acts, X: 37-39.

⁷ Acts, XX: 35.

⁸ 1 Cor., IX: 15.

to a very large extent. It has, sometimes, been asserted that one is only another edition of the other. They, however, seem to have suffered the disadvantage of being in a language which Jesus spoke. They were, therefore, used in the first instance in congregations in Syria only. Subsequent translations did not suit the growing needs of Christianity and they were rejected. They portray the earthly life of Jesus and speak of him as a *man*.

The other Apocryphal books also rehearse in their own way the deeds and words of Jesus. Unlike the Canonical Gospels, they do not betray a constant desire to interpret anew, to different groups of readers and to varying types of minds, the latest interests of the expanding Christianity, and rarely contain argumentative material, which was obviously inserted in the Canonical Gospels as a reply to the sceptics of their time. Further, lack of Canonical dignity does not prove their worthlessness, and these books must be judged by the character of their contents.

Tradition has handed down twenty-six Apocryphal Gospels, seven Acts and ten Epistles.¹ Some of these are admitted to be forgeries.² Some have been rejected by the Church as heretical and as the works of Satan: others have just been brushed aside as they did not suit the new tendencies of the Church. The uncanonical Gospels, however, were accepted by, and read in, various Churches. Of these, apart from the two already mentioned, we know the *Gospel of Barnabas*, the *Gospel of Peter*—the *Preachings of Peter*, as it is sometimes called, the *Gospel of the Egyptians* etc.

I have already mentioned the *Gospel of the Ebionites*, whose leader was James the Just, the brother of Jesus. The Ebionites, believed Jesus to be a *man* born, in a normal manner, of Joseph and Mary. From these Gospels, as also from compilations like *Protogospelium Jacobi*, generally known as the *Gospel Relating to the Birth and Infancy Christ*, the *Evangilion de Nativitate de Maria*—the *Gospel of the Nativity of Mary*, the *Gospel of Mary*, the *History of Joseph the Carpenter*, etc., we gather some important material to check and compare the facts and the legends contained in the Canonical Gospels. The first mentioned is sometimes called: The *Gospel of James*, or the *Book of James*. In it the birth, education and marriage of Mary and birth of Jesus are described in some details.

The Apocryphal narratives were for a long period held as historical by the Church, and were explained equally with those of the Canonical Gospels. These Gospels "continued to be used, some in outlying communities in public worship, and in some ordinary

¹ For their names and full particulars the reader is referred to Hastings' *Dictionary of the Apostolic Church*, and James's *Apocryphal New Testament*.

² For example: the Acts of Andrew, the Acts of John, the Acts of Paul, the Acts of Peter, the Acts of Thomas, and the Acts of Paul and Thesla.

JESUS THE SON OF MARY

church circles.”¹ They are, therefore, entitled to share with the New Testament the benefit of natural explanation.

It is true that they also show traces of the Pauline creed and at places give way to imaginary and fantastic legends contained in the Canonical Gospels; but the additions and interpolations are so obvious that they can be easily distinguished and separated from the original texts. The early Fathers were too much concerned with putting the Canonical Gospels in order to suit their own views; they, therefore, were not very artistic in committing forgeries in the Apocryphal Gospels and for this reason they can be detected very easily.

In reconstructing the life of Jesus from these sources, we have to be very careful, for we have to distinguish the facts from the legends which prevailed among the Christians of those days; and also to pick out the original pieces. In drawing from these sources, I will follow the same lines which I will indicate at the close of this discussion. I have, however, ignored the Gnostic Gospels, such as the *Gospel of Phillip*, and the *Gospel of Eve* of which in any case we have only a few scattered fragments.

The Agrapha, the name given in 1776 by Körner to the uncanonical sayings of Jesus, at the most give us an occasional light on the details of the teachings of Jesus. They make no contribution to his biography. It is now almost universally admitted that they are not genuine.

I must also mention here the writings of the early Christian Fathers, who wrote before the Canonical Gospels became the prevailing standard. They to some extent aid us in tracing the history of the Canon and of the legendary life of Jesus. Justin Martyr composed his *Dialogue cum Tryphoe Judae* in about 135 C.E. In this we find a statement about “Jesus, the son of the Carpenter, making ox goads and ploughs.”² The statements of Papias, the Bishop of Hierapolis, who wrote his *Exposition of the Oracles of the Lord* about 140 C.E., are also of some help. They survive only in fragmentary quotations of Origen and Eusebius.

The Canonical Gospels.

These Gospels, “good news,” were written in Greek and were in existence, in some form or another, in the second century of the Christian era: Mark about 65—70 C.E., Matthew about 85 C.E.; Luke about 90—95 C.E., and John about 110 C.E.³ The early Christians believed that the end of all things was at hand, and this belief, for a considerable time, prevented them from setting up any written standard of authority. So much so that Papias, writing in

¹ Tucker, *History of Christians in the Light of Modern Knowledge*, 321.

² *Dial.* 88.

³ These dates are taken from Peake's *Commentary on the Bible*, 681, 700, 724 and 744.

the middle of the second century expressed his preference for the spiritual gifts of Jesus as superior to any written testimony. Justin Martyr also, about the same time, only speaks of the *Memories of the Apostles*, but nowhere does he refer to them as Gospels. Gradually, however, a lot of material was reduced to writing¹ for the benefit of rich patrons, and not for humanity at large; and a good deal of spurious material was introduced. Eusebius, writing about 325 C.E., divided the New Testament into three classes: those acknowledged with authority, those whose authority was disputed and the spurious. He included the Acts and a few other books of the New Testament in the third class. In the East opposition to the Revelations lingered even in the fourth century; while in the West the books whose authority was challenged included Paul's Epistle to the Hebrews. The subject was much discussed at many councils of the Church, and it was not till the Third Council of Carthage, at which Augustine was present, in 397 C.E., that the Canon of the New Testament was finally settled. The naive impudence with which the proceedings of this Council are described provokes a smile. The Church Bishops, gathered at this Council, in spite of many prolonged and devotional prayers and concentrations, could not get the Divine blessing of a united decision. As a last resort, at the suggestion of one of them, all the books were placed under a table and the Fathers sat round it, with closed eyes, invoking Divine guidance in the name of their Lord Jesus Christ. And when they had finished their prayers, they, on opening their eyes, beheld on the table the four Canonical Gospels and other books now found in the New Testament. Someone in the room must have performed the miracle in the name of Jesus Christ; and so the Canon of the New Testament became settled.

The system of chapters of the New Testament, now in use, was invented by Cardinal Hugo de S. Caro in 1236 C.E. The Cardinal also divided each chapter into paragraphs marked by letters, but this was superseded by the Verse-System introduced by Robertus Stephenus in 1551 C.E.

This first redaction must have undergone many changes. There are three ancient manuscripts, the *Codex Sinaiticus*, otherwise known as the *Alpha*, found by Tischendroff on Mount Sinai in 1859, said to be of the fourth century; the *Codex Alexandrinus* known as A found by Cyril Lukar, Patriarch of Constantinople in 1621, which is traced to the fifth century and, the third, the *Codex Vaticanus*, otherwise known as B, is said to be of the fourth century. It need hardly be mentioned that they are incomplete and differ with each other inasmuch as some contain such portions of the New Testament as are missing in the others. The Manuscripts now known as *Codex Ephraemi Syri* (C) and *Codex Bazaë* (D) merely complicate matters further, for they also differ in material particulars.

¹Gal., I: 6, Luke, I: 1—4.

The *Latin Versions*, including the Vulgate, fall into two main groups, African and European. *Codex Bobienseis*, *Codex Palatinus* and *Codex Floriacensis*, along with the *Catholic Epp* and *Speculum*, are conspicuous among the African group. The European group includes, among others, *Codex Vercellensis*, *Codex Veronansis*, *Codex Monacensis*, *Codex Amiatinus* and some 8000 MSS. The *Syriac versions* are known chiefly through MSS.—the *Curetonian*, the *Sinaitic*, the *Philoxenian* and the *Harklean*. The *Egyptian Versions* have *Bohairic* and *Sahidic* divisions. There are other numerous versions like Armenian, Gothac, Ethiopic, etc.

The New Testament in Greek was not printed till 1514 C.E. This was the work of redactors working under Cardinal Ximenes. Erasmus produced in 1516 a different edition, and the so-called revised text with verses was the work of Stephenus in 1551 C.E. It was printed in 1624 C.E. Then started a search for the ancient manuscripts and apart from those already mentioned, two more manuscripts saw the light of the day; that of Westcott and Host (1881) and that of Nestle (1901): and they caused all the more confusion.

The first English translation by Wycliff appeared in 1382 C.E. He based his translation on the Latin Vulgate. Various other versions also appeared. In 1604 C.E. a conference was called by James I at Hampton Court "to set in order *things amiss in the Church*," and one of the things which had to be put right was the Bible. The Authorised Version thus appeared in 1616 C.E. The appearance of the various manuscripts rendered a revision necessary. The work was taken in hand at the suggestion of the Convocation of Canterbury and the Revised Version appeared in 1884. In it such changes were introduced in the text as were required by the new sources of information that had come to light.

The Gospels are entitled "according to Matthew," "according to Mark," and so on. From the time of St. Augustine, some people have interpreted this "according to" as if the books were the work of unknown authors merely utilizing information handed down from and traced to Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. This "according to" is now admitted as coming from some copyist or other. The clue, it has been suggested, is given by the second line of the *Canon of Muratori*, which runs: "The third book of the Gospel according to Luke." Thus it is said that there was only one Gospel, though the traditions in the four parts differed *according to* alleged original source. Tucker, relying on the Greek Papyri of Oxyrhynchus, says that the Gospels were written by so and so on behalf of so and so, as most of the alleged authors did "not know letters."¹ He refers, by way of illustrations, to the fact that all Epistles of Paul were written by others and Paul merely "set his hand"² to authenticate

¹ Tucker, *The History of Christianity in the Light of Modern Knowledge*, 252, 277.

² 1 Cor., XVI: 21; Col., IV: 18; 2 Thes., III: 17-18.

ISLAMIC REVIEW

the Epistles ; and that when Paul did not set his hand the name of the scribe was mentioned .¹

No one can deny that the early Christians treated the Gospels alike with the Epistles and the Acts, that is, as mere narratives and expression of opinion of authors, and not at all as sacred. Nor even in the later centuries do we find any scrupulous regard for the word of God. Prof. Dummelow of Combridge, in his *Commentary on the Holy Bible*, a work for the preparation of which forty-two Christian divines and scholars of fame assisted, while commenting on the authenticity of the text of the New Testament says :

A copiest would sometimes put in not what was in the text, but what he thought ought to be in it. He would trust a fickle memory, or he would make the text accord with the views of the school to which he belonged. In addition to the versions and quotations from the Christian Fathers, nearly four thousand Greek MSS. of the New Testament were known to exist. As a result the variety of reading is considerable.²

I have already quoted Tucker. In another place he says :

Thus Gospels were produced which clearly reflected the conception of the practical needs of the community for which they were written. In them the traditional material was used, but there was no hesitation in altering it or making additions to it, or in leaving out what did not suit the writer's purpose. An excellent example of such amended Gospel is found in the Gospel of Marcion, which apart from minor changes was the narrative of Luke, with everything omitted that revealed the true humanity of our Lord and his connection with the religion of the Old Testament.³

I refrain from citing many other authorities to show how the early Christians changed the original texts to suit their purpose. The object of some of the glaring but pious forgeries will be made clear when I deal with the subject-matter of this article.

The chief and also the most difficult question connected with the Synoptic Gospels is their relation to one another and to their original source. The prolonged investigation of modern critics extending over more than a century, has not yet reached any final results. Mark is said to be the oldest of the Synoptists. It is also now settled that Matthew and Luke borrowed freely from Mark, and put forward their Gospels according to their beliefs. These conclusions are chiefly based on the fact that Eusebius has preserved to us the following words of Papias, which are the earliest testimony regarding Mark :

And the Presbyter said this : Mark, the interpreter of Peter, wrote down exactly, but not in order, *what he remembered* of the acts and sayings of the Lord, for he neither heard the Lord himself, nor accompanied him. ⁴

Papias goes on to say :

As for Matthew, he made a collection in *Hebrew* of the sayings and *each translated them as best he could*.

¹ Rom., XVI: 22.

² Dummelow, *Commentary on the Holy Bible*, XVI.

³ Tucker, *The History of Christianity in the Light of Modern Knowledge*, 320.

⁴ Eusebius, H. E. 3, 39, 15-16.

JESUS THE SON OF MARY

Papias was quoting John, the Presbyter, who was certainly not referring to "the Gospel according to Matthew" which was written in Greek. So it has been construed that he must either be referring to "the Gospel according to the Hebrews" or something else.

Prof. Weiss agreed that Mark was the oldest of the Synoptic Gospels, but he refused to style Mark as "the original source," and remarked: "it is not a source, but a basin into which other sources flow."

Mark certainly contains some material which is not found in the other two. Besides, though Matthew and Luke contain all the essentials of Mark, yet they also contain, in common and otherwise, considerable fresh material not to be found in Mark. It must accordingly be concluded that if they did not copy one from the other, they must have borrowed from a common source. This source has been distinguished as the *Logia*, or Discourses or Sayings of Jesus, since its contents are more didactic than narrative. The *Logia* is usually referred to as "*Q*" from the word *Quella*—source. Another source is named the *Urmarcus*. It is now almost universally admitted that the Synoptic Gospels drew freely from these sources and in the words of Papias "each translated as best as he could."

Dummelow after taking these facts into consideration, and dealing with the authorship of Matthew says:

It is evident that the direct authorship of this Gospel by the Apostle Matthew is impossible. If St. Matthew had been the author, he could have probably given his own account of the transactions, and not have laboriously occupied himself with collecting and transcribing from other sources.¹

If Matthew, the evangelist, was the Apostle he could not have recorded many events, which he does for he was not present. Such are the stories of the Magi, the Temptation, the Transfiguration, the prayer on the Gathesemane, the denials of Peter, the dream of Pilate's wife, the conversation between Judas and the priests and that between Pilate and the priests and finally the talks at the trial and at Calvary.

Matthew alone could have claimed to have seen and heard Jesus, but he is not the author of the First Gospel. The other three Gospels really lose their importance because Mark was converted by Peter, and Luke, a native of Antioch, was a Gentile and was converted by Paul, and neither of them saw or heard Jesus. Of John no one knows who he was or wherefrom he came. He has been, no doubt, confused with one of the disciples and there are passages in it which lend support to this inference. But why should he have kept his identity a closed secret and styled himself as one "whom Jesus loved"? The Christian writers are compelled to say that the fourth Gospel was, "by whomsoever written, composed in the end of the first century."

¹ Dummelow, *Commentary on the Holy Bible*, 620.

All the Synoptic Gospels have their doublets: Matthew, the Gospel according to the Hebrew; Mark, the Gospel of Peter and Luke, the Marcoin edition mentioned by Justin Martyr; they all have their editorial additions which reveal mutilations, modifications and dislocations of the main traditions: a peculiar circumstance which is unexplainable save on the theory of two sources in each case giving in substance the same account in different forms.

Be that as it may, I have yet to explain the existence of so many Gospels and Epistles. I have already referred to the internal struggle, which started soon after the crucifixion, between James and Paul, and between Peter and Paul, a struggle which left its everlasting mark on Christianity. As a result of this struggle the Ebionites, under James, set themselves against the Samaritans and the Gentiles, the followers of Paul. Thus the Gospel to the Hebrews, which is attributed to Matthew, was written for the Jewish Christians. The Gospel of Luke was written for the followers of Paul and Mark for the followers of the "Double minded" Peter. When the Ebionites succumbed to the opposing and increasing influence of the Gentiles, the Gospel according to the Hebrews, with a good deal of modifications, alterations and additions, became the Gospel according to Matthew. Similarly, the Gospel of Peter became the Gospel according to Mark. Jesus, the *Nazarene* was thus sacrificed for the glorified Christ; Jesus, the man, disappeared and gave place to Jesus, the son of God. Thus the first Christians, who thought it necessary to put the Gospel in writing, had to diminish the traditions in one direction and to enlarge in another. Their motives were not historical, but rather cultural and ethical. The necessity of extreme precautions for correctness of the texts was not felt. The copyists and writers, who had less scruples about altering them and fitting them to suit their own views, had a free hand.

It would be extending the scope of this article if I were to point out the innumerable discrepancies of the four Gospels. I will content myself by mentioning two significant facts only. Whatever is attributed to John by the Synoptic Gospels is omitted by John himself in the Fourth Gospel. Secondly, although churches have been named and festivals kept in honour of the twelve Apostles, and although bishops and priests have all along professed to derive special authority from the first ministers of the Church, yet an effort has to be made, by the Christians themselves, to reconcile and harmonize the original lists containing the names of the Apostles as given in the Gospels.¹ John, however strikes an entirely discordant note by making the first nucleus of these Apostles as having been furnished by the followers of John the Baptist.²

¹ Cp. Matt., X: 2—4; Mark, III: 16—19 and Luke, XIV: 16.

² John, I: 40.

JESUS THE SON OF MARY

It is legitimate, therefore, to question the trustworthiness of the letter of the text of the Gospels. We do not possess the originals, not even the text of the Canon; we know them only as copies of copies. The accuracy of the manuscripts is doubtful, and the carelessness, the ignorance, the conceit and the deceit of many a copyist worked havoc with the texts. We must not overlook the mischief done by the intentional "corrections" of the texts made by those who deliberately, under this pretext, modified them, in one direction or the other, to suit, and advance, their religious beliefs. The redaction of the most important episodes of the Gospels, the Passion for example, was especially influenced by cultural conditions. As soon as Jesus became Christ, an object of worship, a cultural legend regarding his virgin birth and resurrection became necessary, and the Gospels show a steady progress towards this end; and every attempt was made to establish the fulfilment of all the prophecies of the Old Testament in the person of Jesus. The Gospels were rewritten to serve the purpose of instructions of controversial apologetics, and of organised worship, and, strictly speaking, it is to these matters that they owe their birth. The development of Christology raised problems concerning the relations of Jesus to God and to the Cosmos. They had also to meet and counteract the vigorous Jewish revival resulting in calumnies heaped against Jesus and his mother: thus were set forth with a complete absence of restraint or good taste, the edifying legends of popular beliefs.

It is evident that the attempt to adopt the Gospel tradition to the liturgical requirement have most effectively contributed to the introduction of the mythical and the suppression of the historical elements. What is surprising is not that the Synoptics contain so little of the actual life and authentic teachings of Jesus, but that they appear still to preserve some fragments of it. Perhaps this was due to the rivalry, already indicated, of the three Apostles and their followers. And to this must also be attributed the fact that we have three Gospels instead of one blended Gospel, like that of John which really is a religo-philosophical book, which likewise is of little help in reconstructing the life of Jesus. The object of John was to interpret Jesus as *Logos*¹ the "*Word of God*" in its extreme philonic sense. The value of the Gospel is more theological than testimonial. Referring to this aspect Wernle says:

The fourth Gospel derived its importance, lasting long beyond the time of his birth, from its having bridged over the chasm between Jesus and Paul, and from its having carried the Pauline Gospel back into the life and teachings of Jesus. It is only through this Gospel that Paulinism, attained its absolute dominion in the theology of the Church.²

¹ The origin of *Logos* is attributed by Justice. Martyr to mythus.

² Wernle, *Beginning of Christianity*, Vol. II, 262.

And he goes on to say :

The significance of the fourth Gospel consists in the fact that it refers the teachings of Paul back to Jesus Himself. This constitutes its value and its worthlessness, its force and its fatality.¹

The more thoroughly we study the historicity of the Gospels the least we are certain about their authenticity ; but in spite of it we cannot cast wholesale doubt about them. If we study the Gospels with full knowledge of the mythical and dogmatic atmosphere in which they were written, we can know what in the Gospels to accept and what to reject ; what is early and what is late ; what they attribute, under influence of Pauline creed, to Jesus, and what they have unconsciously preserved of the real Jesus. Only after such a process of selection and elimination can we come to recognise the historical Jesus, the *son of man*, the Prophet of God, who was born, lived and died like any other man.

This, then, is the history and worth of the New Testament which "containeth the Infallible Word of God, nay, is the word of God."² The claim that it was revealed and, therefore, infallible or was inspired has no foundation or justification. Rev. Professor J. W. Donaldson, after discussing the various arguments in support of this claim, comes to the conclusion :

We see, there, by a mere statement of the reasoning used in support, that the hypothesis of an infallible literature is as baseless as the fabric of a dream. . .³ The question of inspiration of the New Testament is of dogmatic, not of historical import.⁴

The very idea of God having inspired four different men to write different and irreconcilable records of the same events, or rather of many different men having undertaken to write different records of whom God inspired *four only* to write, let me suppose, correctly leaving the others to their own unaided resources and giving us no test by which to distinguish the inspired from the uninspired, certainly appears to be unbecoming of God and anything but natural. Where was the necessity, one might ask, for God to have inspired four different men *to differ* and cause confusion ? And in view of the notorious differences only one of them can be correct, and, perhaps inspired, and which one ? Further as William Greg has pointed out in his *The Creed of Christendom* :

The Gospels nowhere affirm or even intimate their own inspiration, a claim to credence which had they possessed it, they assuredly would not have failed to put forward. Nor do the Apostolic writings bear any such testimony to them.

I will close this rather a long discussion by mentioning that the New Testament presents the paradox of a literature, born of a protest against the tyranny of a Canon, yet ultimately canonizing

¹ Werule, *Beginning of Christianity*, Vol. II, 276.

² Revised Version, XV.

³ Donaldson, *The Christian Orthodoxy*, 156.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 165.

itself. Jesus set himself to free religion from the deadening influence of the Scribes. Little did he know that his followers in name would create a worse system whereby a new set of Scribes would attribute to him discourses and acts which he never dreamt of saying or doing.

I have so far endeavoured to discuss the Christian sources for the biography of Jesus. I have examined the New Testament and rejected its authority as an authentic or a contemporary record. I have enquired into the origin and history of the Acts and the Epistles and shown that they hardly contain any element of truth. I have referred to those early biographical compilations which can alone be regarded as worthy of some attention; and have pointed out that they also cannot be accepted in their entirety. I have ventured to indicate how genuine passages can be picked out and separated from the innumerable forgeries and how facts can be distinguished from the legend and fiction. It would perhaps be safe to accept all such passages, found in the New Testament and other early Christian literature, as go against the popular Christian dogmatic beliefs. If we follow this and the other rules of caution already indicated, with sagacity, perseverance and impartiality, we will be able to arrive at a fair approximation of the real facts. Thus the ground work of the career of Jesus will be laid with some confidence and the leading features of his life will become discernible, though many problems will still remain unsolved and many paradoxes will vainly excite curiosity and baffle explanation.

Before dealing with the Islamic sources I would like to quote a few verses from the Holy Qur-ān which disclose the real worth of the Bible. It is very significant that what modern researches have only recently established was in fact disclosed by the Holy Qur-ān about fourteen hundred years ago. The Holy Qur-ān has repeatedly exposed the corruption of the Biblical texts. There are numerous such references but I will quote only a few of them.

Addressing the Muslims and speaking of the Jews, the Holy Qur-ān says :

Do you then hope that they would believe in you, and a party from among them indeed used to hear the Word of Allah, *then altered it after they had understood it, and they know (this).*¹

Referring again to the Jews, the Holy Qur-ān says in another place :

This is because they say : The fire shall not touch us but for few days ; and what they have *forged deceives* them in the matter of their religion.²

Speaking of the Jews and the Christians alike, the Holy Qur-ān says :

And most surely there is a party of them *which lie about the Book, that you may consider it to be (a part) of the Book while it is not (a part) of the Book, and they say it is from Allah, while it is not from Allah ; and they tell a lie against Allah whilst they know.*³

¹The Holy Qur-ān, II : 75.

²*Ibid.*, III : 23.

³*Ibid.*, III : 77.

ISLAMIC REVIEW

And again :

But on account of their breaking the Covenant, We cursed them and made their hearts hard ; *they altered the words from their places and they neglected; a portion of what they were reminded of* ; and you shall always discover treachery in them excepting a few of them ; so pardon them and turn away ; surely Allah loves those who do good to others.

And with those who say we are Christians, We made a covenant, *but they neglected a portion of what they were reminded of* ; therefore, We excited among them enmity and hatred to the day of resurrection ; and Allah will inform them of what they did.

*O Followers of the Book ! indeed Our Apostle has come to you, making clear to you much of what you have concealed of the Book, and passing over much ; indeed there has come to you light and a clear boon from Allah.*¹

And finally :

Woe, then, to those *who write the Book with their own hands and then say : This is from Allah*, so that they may take for it a small price ; therefore, woe to them *for what their hands have written*, and woe to them for what they earn.²

(To be Continued.)

THE BREAKING OF THE DAY

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

The world to-day needs Islam. An aimless complication of effort and energy, aided by such great and new and life-condition-transforming inventions and discoveries as radio-communication, have combined to produce an ebullient phase of world-feeling, which unconsciously calls for a guiding, sobering and consolidating force, which force exists nowhere but in Islam.

The blind turmoil and effervescence of activities, which arise nowadays and waste themselves in heated, yet aimless, conflict, must be endued by sane direction and harmonious correlation with a sense of unity of purpose and a well-understood and easily recognisable object of endeavour. This direction, this correlation, this unity of purpose can alone be given to the world, to the sum-total of humanity, by Islam.

The world is now linked together, region with region, place with place, to such an extent that it is a conscious whole. As regards life and thought, there has arisen a world-sensitiveness. At present this world-consciousness, this world-sensitiveness has not produced a harmonious whole—far from it : the immediate phase is quite in the opposite direction. A jarring, a discord, a disturbance in one quarter of the world travels apace and registers itself with its mark of strife over the whole world. Formerly many of such disturbances would have arisen and remained purely local affairs, leaving the rest of the world out of touch and untroubled ; but to-day the world is

¹ *The Holy Qur-an* V:13. -15.

² *Ibid.* II : 79.

like a sick man, awake and fully in possession of vigorous faculties. A pain in the foot or hand or eye affects him instantaneously, and sharply troubles the harmony of his whole being. This is the first phase of the awakened correlated world, a phase which of its very nature cannot be permitted to endure for long.

And the second phase (we venture to state) is in the following manner. The sick man, feeling pains in various parts of his body, takes action against them ; he will not with equanimity endure their continuance ; he will seek the remedy for each and all. So with the world : it appears that an intolerance with the present condition will arise, a strong determination to end wasteful discord, to banish by the cleansing wind of truth the fumes spreading from the pestilential marshes of hate, to end for ever the antagonisms and jealousies of local ignorances by the calm world-rhythm of brotherhood.

The Light will then break upon the restless night of darkness ; falsehood will disappear and Eternal Truth, made manifest, will (*inshallah*) establish the world-brotherhood of man in the rational practice of Islam.

When the Day dawneth surely the shadows of the night must flee ! And when the Truth shineth, falsehood can no longer endure.

Praise be to Him, the One, the Lord of the worlds, and blessings upon the Messenger of the Way, even Muhammad !

AZAN

BY RABI'AL-KARIM, M.Sc.

Have you ever listened to the great message of the *Azan*—the Call of the Lord of the Universe ? Have you heard that great sound—that solemn swelling in mosques and houses, that great chant of *Allaho-Akbar* (God is the greatest) in the morning, noon, afternoon, evening and night ? If you have not, you have heard nothing.

In the elusive human life *Azan* is the message of awakening, the call to prayer, the incantation of blessings and the inspiration to meditation. With every call of *Azan*, day in and day out, the existence of the Supreme Lord becomes vivid, with its sweet melody the mind is filled with an ecstatic delight, with its message charming rhymes swell in the heart for prayer and the soul is filled with a restless expression of the deepest reverence. The famous Bengali traveller, Mr. C. S. Sen, Bar-at-Law, heard this great call when he was standing by the Sultan's Palace at Constantinople one morning and he was charmed and bewildered with the solemn and sweet ringing of the *Azan*. If you have not heard this all-captivating sound, if you have not for once in life thought of the great significance that lies in it, you have heard nothing—you have understood nothing !

ISLAMIC REVIEW

The sound of the *Azan* is solemn and serene, heart-rending as well as heart-captivating. It not only agitates and swells the innermost province of the heart but also fills and saturates the whole mind with a unique delight. When the calls of the *Azan* are uttered one after another in slow and solemn degrees, resounding the space above, the sweet lures of sleep fade away like a dream and the jaded mind awakes to a sense of reality—the worldly ties of self-interest and motive are lulled to forgetfulness, the Universe, with its various charms and illusions, beauties and decorations, recedes far away from the vision, the only ringing that resounds in the mind of the devoted is “*Allaho-Akbar! Allaho-Akbar!*” (God is the greatest.) Then an infinite beauty envelops earthly beauties, eternal peace covers our restless mind and, before our mind’s eyes and ears waft only “*Allaho-Akbar! Allaho-Akbar!*” And man, pure and calm hurries to his place of devotion to dedicate himself to meditation for divine blessings. That is why the *Azan* is the message of self-realization and inspiration to devotion.

The call of the *Azan* repeats, once and again, night and day, this news—it brings to the door of the heart the same message—Oh ye forgetful men, ye who have sunk deep in the self-seeking worldly struggle, ye who have lost yourselves and have been enticed by earthly lures, forgetting the Infinite Self—ye who have gone astray and are wandering far away leaving your own homes—come back, come to your own selves and return! Return to your own abode! The call of the Infinite Self is come—arise out of the lulling illusive sleep. The Lord is the Most Supreme, and He alone is to be desired. Come back to Him!—Come, leaving behind your past attractions, pretensions and untruth—come to have eternal blessings, herein is your existence! Ah ye sojourner! Come to your own residence, come back from untruth to Truth, from far to near, come back from finite to Infinite and be holy, enlightened and free by dedicating yourself!

In the *Azan* at the time of *Zohr* (noon) this message is clearly expressed. At that time not only the worldly affairs are in full swing, not only the sun is at the highest blaze, but then the human life is also at its prime. Even the atoms of the universe are resonant with the sound of work on all sides. Man’s mind is restless like the surface of the dancing river. Lo! How busy the world is! What restlessness, what business prevail everywhere! In fields and court-yards, in markets and shops, everywhere you will find work and for this man is moving, running, attempting tirelessly. Nowhere is there leisure to think or to be sensible. Man is wholly immersed in the incessant tide of work. The midday heat does not slacken the physical body only, but absorbs his mental faculties in worldly affairs as well. Man loses his self in those affairs and his spiritual consciousness his dormant. Just then, like a trumpet sound, comes

the clarion-call of "*Allaho-Akbar ! Allaho-Akbar !*" The busy and noisy world is, as it were astounded. It was not prepared to hear such a sound. It has no consistency with the worldly affairs ; it is rather converse to the noonday business and earthly interest that are now flowing. It is like a volcanic eruption coming out of the deep ocean with a thunderous roar or like a message from high resounding the whole of the visible horizon. The tide of work ceases to flow and man hears "*Allaho-Akbar Allaho-Akbar,*" "*Allah is the Greatest.*" There is no superior to Him, there is no higher than Him. The universe is His, His is work and beauty, happiness, riches, glory, fame and knowledge. Everything belongs to Him. He is the Creator. He is Father. He is Supreme. He is Eternal. Then again comes the great sound silencing the tumult and noise around, "*Ashhaddo an la Ilaha ill-Allah, Ashhaddo an la Ilaha ill-Allah*" : I bear witness that there is none other to be worshipped save Allah ! As if the dazed soul of the universe was restored to its consciousness and gave vent to its innermost voice ! "I bear witness that there is none other to be worshipped save Allah." O ye charmed men ! in what service have you lost your own selves ? Where are you drifting along, leaving Him ? He is the King of all Kings. Whom do you worship forsaking Him ? He is the Giver of all fortune. What wealth do you seek forgetting Him ? He is the Lord of all glories. What honour are you hankering after without praying to Him ? O ye truthful, frail are those wealth and honour, trifle are those glories and power ; do not run after those shadows and lose yourselves thereby. Do not ruin yourselves in quest of these transitory things. The Eternal and Infinite Supreme Being alone is true and He alone is to be worshipped. He alone is to be adored and meditated. Then comes the sound "*Ashhaddoanna Muhammadar Rasul-Allah*" twice (I bear witness that (Hazrat) Muhammad is the Apostle of Allah). It is Muhammad, the Holy Prophet, who has brought for us the divine elixir ; it is he who has shown us the way to righteousness, the way to merge our own selves in the Eternal Infinite Self, he is the chosen one and leads us through dark and dismal path to salvation. Then was resounded "*Haia alas salah, Haia alas salah,*" (come to prayer). Come ye, O men, to the meditation of truth, to the worship of the Supreme Being. "*Haia alal falah*" (come to salvation) uttered twice completes it by saying 'come for blessings and salvation.' There is no blessing in the worldly affairs that are raging around and near you. Those are vain glories, those are empty honours, those are self-concentred interests. Those are like the tinge of the setting sun on bubbles of water, having no real existence. These illusions are all passing like shadows. Blessing lies in the service of the Lord, in it is existence, in it lies purity, and from it comes salvation. Prayer will lead to salvation. He will come and serve, will find infinite pleasure, he

will gain eternal life and enjoy divine peace. Then the final call of *Allaho Akbar, Allaho Akbar, La Ilaha ill Allah* (Allah is the greatest and there is none other to be worshipped except Allah) terminates the grand message. To those who listened to this call and grasped its meaning, the work tide of the universe seemed an illusive shade, and leaving behind everything they turned their course and ran to gain the eternal blessing in prayer.

Have you ever heard such a delightful, hopeful message of blessing and consciousness? Has any one called you so cordially towards devotion and wellbeing in this transitory and selfish world? No, it is not found in the sound of the conchshell, nor in the ringing of the metal bell, nor in the tuning of the harmonium.

Azan is the hymn of union, it is the inspiration of love. The sweet melody of the lute charms the snake, the distant roars of cloud delight the peacocks, the refreshing drops of rain enliven the skylark—likewise the call of the *Azan* fills the human mind with an ecstasy and man hurries to the path of Allah. When the clarion calls of *Azan* sound forth, when this divine message fills all directions, then there remains no time to think of other things, there is no time for any other work, the devoted runs to meet his Lord, as the stream runs to the sea, and merges himself to the infinite self.

In *Azan*, save and except this glorious call of union, there is another tune which is also fine and full. When the *Azan* is sounded, no separate prayers can be conducted. The rich and the poor all come to the same place of worship, leaving behind their worldly pomp or craving and in the communication with the Lord they mingle in the same flow of fraternal unity. And a unique divine wave of love and delight merges every soul.

If you have not heard such a message of blessing what have you heard then? If you wish to know, of which great thought *Azan* is the echo, is the tune of solemn consciousness, is the message of sweet divine elixir, rise up at dawn, when the night merges into the day at that blend of light and darkness, awake from slumber and listen to the call of the early morning *Azan*. The rays of light have not yet dispelled darkness from the face of the earth, the life of the earth has not yet manifested in all its phases, yet it is the end of subconsciousness—the extreme limit of darkness. The whole creation is silently awaiting the coming of new life. Trees and houses, men and beasts are all silent, this vast universe is lying in deep and silent embrace of the limitless blue firmament and in this silence is vibrating the pulse of a new life—the refreshing sweet elixir of a new birth. Harken—in this great moment! what a grand message!—the message that is dispelling darkness and radiating life with light—the message that is vibrating “*Allaho Akbar, Allaho Akbar!*”—“God is the greatest”, listen with rapt attention, listen with all your heart this sweet lure of music, this divine call of “*Allaho Akbar, Allaho Akbar!*” the first message of life after the paralytic silence,

the melodious sweet voice of delight and gratefulness as if peace and perfume awakening out of elixir of sanctity and dedicating itself to the Lord, the devotee is saying with his mind full "All glories to Allah the Lord of the universe, the Glorious, the Merciful, the Giver and, the Sustainer of life, all glories to Him." Through His mercy darkness has receded and the light of life come out of it, and expressing itself out of death like slumber. "*Ashhadu an la Ilaha ill Allah, Ashhadu an la Ilaha ill Allah*"—"My evidence is—the glorious Lord and Sustainer only is to be worshipped—He is alone to be adored." Hark the rhythm of the message of life in this dawn of awakening—Hark the evidence of man in the presence of The King of all Kings—his evidence of his life-long meditation—his allusions have vanished, his past life is totally forgotten and in his beginning of a new life he declares: "I will adore only my Lord—Him will I crave, Him will I meditate. I witness that there is none other whom I will worship." Such a great evidence has never been uttered in this world. In such an auspicious moment no other evidence can be recited. That is why this message soothed the ears and the sweet morning Zephyr re-echoed "*La Ilaha ill Allah, La Ilaha ill Allah*," Once again that wave resounded "*Ashhaddo anna Muhammadar Rasulullah*" twice. I bear witness—Verily Muhammad was sent by God as His Apostle, Muhammad is the merciful blessing of The Almighty, he is the donation of affection of The Lord—the Creator, the Sustainer and the Beneficent. He who will come to this shade, will take this gift, will bathe in this fount of mercy, will have his life fulfilled. Hear, O ye vicious or afflicted, hear whose light of leading has extinguished—hear this message of hope and joy—this great news of comfort and peace—this grand evidence: "Verily Muhammad is the sent-one of God. Verily he has been sent to the world as Allah's blessings of mercy to redeem the suffering humanity and give light and life, come to his shelter and you will find The Lord." Then rang the sound "*Haia alas salah, Haia alas salah*." "Come ye to pray, come to Allah's worship" Hasten to pour down your heart to the Giver of your life at this morn of life and receive His blessings. These were followed by "*Haia alal falah, Haia alal falah*!" Who is there who wants peace of life after slumber, who seeks for eternal life and perpetual happiness, come, run to get this blessing, to have this salvation. Then filling the whole firmament rose the rhythm "*As salato khairum menan naum, As salato khairum menan naum*." Listen! ye sleepy and amused mankind: "Prayer is better than sleep." Hear ye luxurious rich, hear ye young lovers, ye children or adult, listen to this call of consciousness—Prayer is better than sleep. Why do you waste your precious time after temporary illusions? Regain your self and come to salvation, you will taste the elixir—you will receive infinite peace. Shake off your momentary shadowy dreams and you will receive here eternal delight. Come to His prayer. "*Allaho Akbar, Allaho Akbar, La Ilaha*

ill Allah." 'Allah is the greatest, He alone is the highest', Only He is to be worshipped, terminates this grand message.

Thus the sweet solemn rhythm of the *Azan* vibrated and swelled the silent bosom of the universe and radiated new energy, life and consciousness to the call of Allah's prayer. And man fresh and frank from his night's rest and sleep, hurried with a serene and calm conscience to answer the Call—the whole universe pulsed with a new light, delight and cheerfulness.

THE PROPHET ON MARRIAGE

'Alqama said : While I was going along with 'Abd Allah, he said : We were with the Prophet, (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) and he said : "He who is able to marry should marry, for it keeps the eye cast down and keeps a man chaste ; and he who cannot, should take to fasting, for it will have a castrating effect upon him." (Bukhari. 30 : 10).

'Ali reported : The Messenger of Allah, (peace and blessings of Allah be on him), forbade temporary marriage with women. (Bukhari, 64 : 40).

Mughira reported : He made a proposal of marriage to a woman, and the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) said : "See her, for this is more likely to bring about agreement between you." (Tirmizi. 9 : 5)

Abu Huraira reported : The Prophet, (peace and blessings of Allah be on him), said : "The widow shall not be married until she is consulted, and the virgin shall not be married until her consent is obtained." (Bukhari 67 : 42)

Khansá reported : Her father gave her away in marriage, and she was a *thayyib*,¹ and she did not like it. So she came to the Messenger of Allah, (peace and blessings of Allah be on him), and he annulled her marriage. (Bukhari, 67 : 43).

Abu Huraira reported : The Prophet, (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) said :

"A woman is married on account of four things ; on account of her wealth, and on account of (the nobility of) her family, and her beauty, and on account of her character, so attain success with the one possessing nobility of character." (Bukhari, 67 ; 16).

Uqba said : The Messenger of Allah, (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) said : "The conditions which are most worthy that you should fulfil are those with which you legalize sexual relations." (Bukhari 54 : 6)

Aisha said : The Messenger of Allah, (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) said : "Make the marriage publicly known, and perform it in mosques, and proclaim it with *duff* (a kind of drum)" (Tirmizi-Mishkat. 13 : 3).

¹*Thayyib* means both a woman whose husband has died and a woman who has been divorced.

WHAT IS ISLAM?

[The following is a very brief account of Islam, and some of its teachings. For further details, please write to the IMAM of the Mosque, Woking, Surrey, England, or to the Editor, *The Islamic Review*, Lahore, India.]

ISLAM: THE RELIGION OF PEACE.—The word "Islam" literally means: (1) Peace; (2) the way to achieve peace; (3) submission, as submission to the Master's will is the only way 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-ĀN.—The Gospel of the Muslim is the Qur-ān. 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-ān, 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 a counter-part 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 Premeasurement. 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) Almsgiving; (5) Pilgrimage to the Holy Shrine at Makka.

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

Founder of the Woking Muslim Mission, England.

It is the masterpiece of the late Khwaja Sahib—which has done more than any other book to expose and dispel superstitions that have surrounded pure religion. The late Khwaja Sahib in his masterly way has collected together the ancient beliefs which were the direct precursors of some of the notions of Christianity. Quoting several authorities, he shows how the ancient deities were sun-gods born of virgin mothers near about the winter solstice and were called saviours and deliverers. They descended into the under-world and rose again from the dead.

He has shown in it how the Christian doctrines had a very close similarity with those of Mithraism, which had been flourishing in Iran from about 500 years before Christ. Remains of Mithraic monuments have been discovered in England. "Mithra was believed to be a great Mediator between God and man. His birth took place in a cave on December 25th. He was born of a virgin. He travelled far and wide: he had twelve disciples: he died in the service of humanity. He was buried, but rose again from the tomb. His resurrection was celebrated with great rejoicing." Similar legends were current regarding other sun-gods, particularly Baal of Babylon and Buddha of India. But the Holy Qur-ān proclaimed, "Say He is God, the One and only, God the Eternal, Absolute: He begetteth not, nor is He begotten; and there is none like unto Him."

The book has given the most violent shake to Christian mind since the time of Martin Luther. If Luther set the Roman Catholic Church on its guard, the author of the *Sources of Christianity* has made the whole Christian Church recede before the onslaught of Islam. Christ is not the only Saviour of his kind, he is only a replica of ancient pagan gods and as such liable to be regarded as a mythical person, a figment of Roman pagan imagination. Thus the book is a challenge to and a direct hit at the complacency of Christianity and as such very devastating. Not only have the beliefs of Christianity been traced to pagan origin but even its holy institutions designed to secure salvation to their observers. But it does not stop at mere destruction. It has a very charming constructive appeal also towards the end. As characteristics of his genius, the Khwaja is as ruthless in pulling down as he is ingenious in constructing anew. Like his beloved master the Holy Prophet Muhammad, in whose services he laid down his very life, he destroys and builds at the same time. As such the book provides an absorbing study to all students of religion.

CONTENTS

Prefatory note.

Preface to the Second Edition.

CHAPTER I. AN ECHO FROM MAKKA. An emphasis on the points of similarity between Islam and Christianity and a closer understanding of the Muslim point of view by the Christians is the first requisite of world peace.

CHAPTER II. THE MODERN MIND IN THE CHURCH. Revolt of the Modernist Church against the basic doctrines of Christianity—Jesus no longer believed as God but a human being in every sense of the term—Bible no longer regarded as the revealed words of God—anxiety to condemn many things written in the Bible, even utterances ascribed to Christ—Disruption of Christianity under the light of enlightened criticism.

CHAPTER III. THE CHURCH MYSTERIES AND THE ANCIENT LEGENDS. The Sources of Christian Superstitions against which the modern mind revolts are to be found in the Sun worshipping cults that prevailed in the world when Christianity appeared—The spread of Christianity among the pagans had to be brought about by indiscriminate assimilation of their superstitions—Striking similarities between the Christian Stories and observations and those of contemporary pagans.

[Overleaf.]

was losing what little truth was left in the philosophy of the term "word"—are undigested thoughts of pre-Christian philosophers, Jewish and Greek—Striking similarities between the phraseology of Philo the Jewish philosopher and that used by St. Paul in his Epistles—Shorn of myths and legends teachings of Jesus would appear to be same as that of Muhammad—Reformation of corrupted religion should be done by God without waiting for man to do it.

CHAPTER V. RELIGION OF LOVE—COSMIC CONSCIOUSNESS. Which one is the religion of love, Islam or Christianity? Religious feelings supplanted by political ones in the constitution of the Church—"Love thine enemy" is demonstrated by Prophet Muhammad—racialism and nationalism are antithesis of religious love of man—so the idea of "Survival of the fittest"—From self-consciousness to world consciousness and then to cosmic consciousness otherwise known as God-consciousness—Anger, another expression of love, supplements it in sublimer form—a systematic practical code is needed for this evolution—Quran supplies this need.

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We have been sending copies of this monthly to some important foreign libraries. The readers in these libraries are requested to make a dispassionate study of the thought-provoking articles contained in these pages. And if they find them useful in the interests of their religious knowledge, they should do well to ask their respective authorities to make this journal a regular feature of their Reading Table.

—Manager.
The Islamic Review.

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