

"Muhammad is . . . the Apostle of Allah and the Last of the Prophets . . ."

—HOLY QUR-AN, 33 : 40.

"There will be no prophet after me."

—PROPHET MUHAMMAD.

*The*

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# THE ISLAMIC REVIEW

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## BY THE LIGHT OF THE HOLY QUR-AN

And whoever of you is obedient to Allah and His Apostle and does good, We will give to her reward doubly, and We have prepared for her an honourable sustenance.

O wives of the Prophet ! you are not like any other of the women, if you will be on your guard, then be not soft in (your) speech, lest he in whose heart is a disease yearn ; and speak a good word.

And stay in your houses and do not display your finery like the displaying of the ignorance of yore ; and keep up prayer, and pay the poor rate and obey Allah and His Apostle ; Allah only desires to take away the uncleanness from you, O people of the household ! and to purify you a (thorough) purifying.

Surely the men who submit and women who submit, and the believing men and believing women and the obeying women, and the truthful men and the truthful women, and the patient men and the patient women, and the humble men and the humble women ; and the almsgiving men and the almsgiving women, and the fasting men and the fasting women and the men who

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guard their private parts and the women who guard, and the men who remember Allah much and the women who remember—Allah has prepared for them forgiveness and a mighty reward.

—*The Holy Qur-an, Chap. XXXIII, vv. 31-35.*

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### UPON FAITHFULNESS

BY WILLIAM BASHYR PICKARD, B.A. (Cantab).

Ah ! Faithfulness, I deem thou art the pillar of the world.  
'Twixt man and man thou makest bond and stablishest secure,  
The truest life, the surest rock mid changeful seas of chance.

Now the way of Life, though a pilgrimage into the eternal, is verily a path through this present world. We have, therefore, to live and act and conduct ourselves in the most perfect manner with regard to the everyday affairs of this life. Indeed, without so doing we can make no progress in things divine.

The body must not be despised and neglected, the mind must not be despised and neglected, and it must firmly be remembered that the true growth, ease and beauty of the spirit depends in a very high degree upon the fulfilment of natural duty.

By entering the way we have, by grace, become one of "the faithful". Therefore it is that I put foremost this very quality or virtue of faithfulness, which we must henceforth in no wise let go, neglect, forget or abandon for any personal purpose, motive of convenience or imagined expediency.<sup>2</sup>

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When ye have taken God to witness, then be sure to keep your promises and to observe your agreements. Forswear not yourselves but observe your solemn oaths. God knoweth all that ye do.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Holy Qur-an, XVI : 91.

<sup>2</sup> The Holy Qur-an, IV : 58.

## UPON FAITHFULNESS

To some it might appear that the keeping of our appointments, engagements, promises and the fulfilment of our trusts and the performance of the word we have spoken to our brother or our sister (for, in true view, all men are our brothers and all women our sisters before God) would be a self-obvious necessity, a fundamental rule of life alike for individual or nation.

But in everyday reality the case is far otherwise.

Upon all sides, by individuals and by nations, we find promises broken, agreements abrogated, treaties tossed aside. Faithfulness is abandoned at sight of some new promising expediency. Specious arguments and excuses are hastily and easily summoned to dig a decent grave for inconvenient dead faithfulness.

\* \* \*

"God commandeth you to render up to its owner the deposit confided to you, and whensoever ye be on the judgment-seat He willeth that ye judge your fellows with equity. God enjoineth just and righteous dealing upon you. He heareth and seeth all.<sup>1</sup>

And again :

Amongst those who have received the Scriptures, there are those to whom thou mayest safely entrust a whole talent of money and they will render it to thee whole and untouched. There are also, however, others of a different sort who will not return to thee a deposit of a single dinar, unless thou constrain them by force. They act thus because they say : We have no obligation toward the Gentiles. In so doing they make God a liar, and they know that they do so.

Yea, verily ! he who is faithful to his promises and followeth the true way, he shall know of a truth that God loveth those who respect His commandments.<sup>2</sup>

The importance of this faithfulness, this reliability, is so permanent that it may be illustrated in a surprising manner. Thus we may say that the condition of people at enmity with one another, who yet keep faithfulness to their word, their bond, their agreements, their promises, is even preferable to the condition of people on

<sup>1</sup> The Holy Qur-án, III : 76.

<sup>2</sup> The Holy Qur-án, LXX : 32, 33, and 35.

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terms of peace and friendship with one another, who nevertheless break faithfulness, break promises, break appointments and prove untrustworthy one to another.

In the case of enemies who keep their word and respect pledges one to another, it is as if a man walked on rough hard ground, stony and tying to the feet, yet firm ground that with care might yet be traversed and by labour might bring him at last to his destination.

In the case of friends who yet fail to remember their word, their promises and mutual agreements, it is as if a man were to try to walk over a fair-seeming quicksand. How smooth and easy-so-ever the treading may be to the feet, nevertheless he will not reach his destination, though near, but will flounder to be engulfed at last in dismay.

Therefore, in human associations, let bright faithfulness flourish first and foremost.

The Quranic references to true believers speak as follows :

They keep faithful watch over the deposit entrusted to their care, respect their contracts, and keep their promises.

Nor are they less sincere in bearing witness or in giving evidence.

Such are they who shall rejoice in the blessed life, and be crowned with mercies and benefits, there in the gardens of the blest.<sup>1</sup>

This quality of faithfulness, this truly blessed quality of faithfulness, is the fundamental of all human relationships, whether individual of business and trading, or social of civilization, or international of world harmony and prosperity. It is the very fibre from which is spun the strong garment of human security. It is the ray of hope which lights the path of human progress. It is the sure bond which (inshallah) shall bind the nations of the earth into one orderly brotherhood of peace, friendship and understanding.

<sup>1</sup> The Holy Qur-án, XVII : 34-36

## UPON FAITHFULNESS

Let me turn again to the Holy Qur-án thus :

Take heed that thou lay not thine hands on the property of the orphan, except it be in the way of honest dealing that thou mayest cause it to bear fruit to the end that it may be increased. Be faithful to your obligations and perform your duty. Know ye that a reckoning will be demanded.

Whensoever ye measure, fill the bushel to the top. Weigh with even scales. The substance is there for you, and ye will be the greater gainers in the end.

Enter not on an undertaking of which thou hast no knowledge. Thine ear, thine eye, and thine understanding will be answerable therefor.

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Now there is also that wider faithfulness, from which springeth the continual maintenance of that individual and social faithfulness we have described above. And by that wider faithfulness we mean faithfulness to the remembrance of God, from which spring, as flowers from the bosom of the earth, all those repeated acts of faithful virtue which make a heavenly blossoming by the rugged pathway of life.

Upon this subject let us refer again to the Holy Qurán. Speaking of the houses in which the light of God descends, the Book describes its inmates in the following words :

“ There glorify Him therein in the mornings and the evenings.

Men whom neither merchandise nor selling diverts from the remembrance of Allah and the giving of poor-rate.<sup>1</sup>

Now the faithfulness I have in mind, which should be the bedrock of civilised society is an utter faithfulness, a total faithfulness. Before it, the small things in life (yet indeed who knoweth the small things and who the great things ?) will no longer be mere straws to be blown hither-thither before each breath of passing expediency or changeful desire. Men must be steadfast and women, in so far as they take active part in the social and progressive movements of civilization, should likewise be

<sup>1</sup> The Holy Qur-án, XXIV : 36, 37.

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steadfast to their engagements, agreements, appointments and contracts.

From a glance at the manifestation of contemporary society, it would appear that practically any engagement or pledged undertaking may lightly and whimsically be set aside, postponed or definitely cancelled, provided a little notice is given of such intention, whereas in very truth what justification for failing in one's word can there be apart from illness or some major circumstances beyond one's range of control ?

\* \* \*

So much, then, for faithfulness from the human standpoint.

Yet, there is another aspect of this quality, and that is faithfulness in regard to God. God is *Al-Mu'min* (The Faithful). His laws, His mercies, His bounties, His forgiveness, His promises are steadfast : to Him do we submit and upon Him do we rely.

Thus the Holy Qur-án :

And give good news to those who have faith that they shall have a great grace from God <sup>1</sup>

And again :

Judgment is only God's : on Him do I rely and on Him let those who are reliant rely.<sup>2</sup>

It is indeed not in God's relation towards man that we can find any lack of faithfulness, but verily rather in man's relation towards God. Those who rejoice walking and progressing in the way of life have thus a double duty of faithfulness to fulfil : upon the one hand towards their fellow men and upon the other towards the One Supreme.

Keeping faith towards mankind has to some extent been stressed above. A few words may now be employed to illustrate keeping faith towards God.

God is to be worshipped and to be served and to be

<sup>1</sup> The Holy Qur-án, XXXIII : 47.

<sup>2</sup> The Holy Qur-án, XII : 67.



## UPON FAITHFULNESS

loved not merely as some transcendence remote, but as a nearness than which nothing else is more near, with a vibrant intensity as if verily we saw Him actually before us ; for He is yet nearer. With a faithfulness that forgeteth not, stumbleth not, He is to be remembered and to be loved with the heart, the mind and the body—yea with the complete strength.

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So as we pursue the pilgrim way of life, we shall keep ever mindful of God. "Remember God and He will remember you." We shall turn towards God faithfully day after day, yea upon every day without exception—even if we fall sick, we have leisure to remember God upon our bed.

When the day uprises, when the time seems to halt in respite at noon and when the sun sinks beneath the Earth and twilight peace steals over the weary creation—at these times unflinching we shall remember God. We shall be found amongst the faithful.

This unflinching remembrance of God will undoubtedly refresh us, and it will further maintain in us a true sense of proportion. We shall be positively and unerringly assured that beneath the temporal lies the eternal ; and that, no matter how bruised and seared we may be by the desperate conflicts and the fiery perils of this mortal life, we are nevertheless unassailably upheld ; for "underneath are the Everlasting Arms."

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Do we not see that a river running freely with untrammelled course is apt to waste itself, to disperse itself, to hollow out a rugged bed amidst the stones, winding with many a shallow meandering which renders its waters unprofitable to humanity, but, when its aimless course is curbed at times with locks and sluice-gates, the river bed is made steadfast, the placid waters flow deeply and calmly, bringing benefit and blessing to humanity.

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Even so the unordered course of human life by the regular Joy of the daily remembrance of God flows calmly and distributes bounty and blessings upon an overwearyed, stricken and saddened humanity, bringing it back once more to joy.

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So, to conclude this stage of our travelling, I cannot do better than complete the earlier quotation, thus :

Ah ! faithfulness, I deem thou art the pillar of the world.

'Twixt man and man thou makest bond and stablishest secure.

The truest life, the surest rock 'mid changeful seas of chance.

Where thou art not respected in the heart, the tighten'd cords,

The iron fetters, and the wordy warfare of the law.

Are but frail props about the walls of tottering polity ;

Are but a spendthrift eating wealth ; a hand that giveth drugs

To a poor prisoner. Ah ! set the prisoner free ! The sun,

The wind, the rain will bring him health, nor ask reward at all.

They are God's gifts, His messengers of healthful life, and He

Likewise by steadfast ordinance hath stablish'd faithfulness.

By faith ye shall be saved from bitter wars. By faith ye shall

Build fair the place of your life and bright success shall smile

Upon the faithful ones, who keep their word, their pledge and

trust.

The tree of faithfulness shall grow, but wither fast the weeds

Of fickleness and falsehood and forgetful indolence.

Shall mere forgetting be excuse for such as promise make,

Then strive not to remember that their word hath gone from

them ?

'I was engross'd', 'I did forget', 'I had no time'—how fast

The weeds upspring and choke our life, and banish faithful-

ness.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Author's 'Layla and Majnoon' Bk. IV : 3.

## MUHAMMAD, THE MESSENGER OF UNITY AND PEACE<sup>1</sup>

BY SALEH M. HAFFAR, B. COM.

Some four hundred million Muslims of all races and colours, spread over the world, celebrate, during the lunar month of Rabīʿ-al-Awwal, the Birthday Anniversary of the Holy Prophet Muhammad. To these he was the Prophet of God and the Messenger of Unity and Peace to all peoples of the earth.

His birthday is reputed to be the 12th day of Rabīʿ-al-Awwal, corresponding this year to the 14th February. This was 1376 years ago, for he was born in 570 C.E. Muslims commemorate the event with reverence and gratitude, with prayers and deep thinking, with joy and rejoicing. One hears on this occasion the voices of the faithful raised in praising the works of their Holy Prophet and they marvel at his unparalleled achievement in raising the Arabs and other races to such heights in spirit and mind within a short period, as remains, even to-day, a mystery to all students of human affairs.

May God reward Muhammad, his Companions and all his true followers for their services to God and humanity!

When it was suggested that I may speak at the Islamic Culture Centre, on the occasion of the Prophet's Birthday, my mind, like many others, was occupied with the problem of unity and peace after the conclusion of the most devastating war. The world is now faced with such scientific development in war weapons and technic, as well as such totalitarian organisations and controls as may well put an end to civilized life on this planet—unless Unity and Peace could be secured among the nations and peoples of the world.

<sup>1</sup> Being the text of lecture delivered on the 14th Feb. 1946 at the Islamic Culture Centre, London, N. W. 8. Al-Hajja Lady Evelyn Cobbold was in the chair.

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I therefore decided to discuss in this talk those principles of the teachings of the Holy Prophet Muhammad that, in my humble opinion, have secured for him the greatest success that any Prophet-Reformer has ever had in history.

I pray that no racial or religious prejudice might prevent peoples of all faiths from considering seriously these principles.

Our aim in life, according to the Holy Prophet, is first to secure harmony within ourselves reconciling our conflicting impulses and desires, then to harmonise our life with our neighbours : *i.e.*, Peace within us first and, then, with the outer world of which we form an integral part.

Let us now proceed to consider the principles preached and practised by the Holy Prophet for Unity and Peace among peoples and nations.

### *The Unity of God*

Know therefore there is one God only.<sup>1</sup>

Muhammad preached the Unity of God as the most fundamental factor in building up the unity and peace among all peoples who were most intolerant to each other. The first article of the Muslim faith was therefore "*La-Ilaha illal-llah* with its corollary *Muhammad Rasul-Allah*. While the Holy Prophet accepted no compromise on the principle of Unity of God, he would not interfere with the Peoples of the Book who have recognised scriptures and codes of morality and could pursue their own way of life and belief. To owe allegiance to one ideal, who represents Perfection as may be conceivable by man, should unite us all in our pursuit of reality and truth.

In the early days of Arabia, nations, tribes and even households, each had his favourite god to worship. These peoples were therefore divided among themselves and in continuous warfare.

<sup>1</sup> The Holy Qur-án, XLVII : 19.

## MUHAMMAD, THE MESSENGER OF UNITY AND PEACE

The Holy Prophet Muhammad succeeded, as no other Prophet-Reformer before him, in winning the Arabs to discard the worship of their multitude of idols and gods and united them to acknowledge and worship only one God, the Creator, Evolver and Sustainer of all the worlds: Allāhu-Rabb-ul-'Ālamin.

The use of arms by the Holy Prophet and his early followers was tempered by the exercise of such forbearance and generosity that his enemies were won over *en mass*.

In his triumph over his enemies who persecuted him and his followers for 13 years and then took up arms against them, he demonstrated to the world that he was truly the Messenger of Unity and Peace.

When Arabia united under one God and one Brotherhood, the Holy Prophet sent his emissaries to the outer world with this message :

Say : O People of the Book ! Come to common terms as between us and you : that we worship none but God : that we associate no partners with Him, that we erect not from among ourselves Lords and Partners, other than God. If then they turn back say ye : Bear with us that we (at least) are Muslims (submitting to God's will).<sup>1</sup>

It is not our purpose here to follow up the succession of events that followed : sufficient to say that the message of unity and peace forged its way in a short period and produced a marvellous society of all peoples and races among whom the greatest unifying factor was the belief in the Unity of God and Brotherhood of man. Toleration was the greatest feature of Muslim society in spite of lapses in certain periods.

Say, each acts according to his own way, but God alone your Lord knows whose way is the right one.<sup>2</sup>

There can be no greater basis for unity and peace in society than the respect for individual freedom of thought

<sup>1</sup> The Holy Qur-ān, III : 64.

<sup>2</sup> The Holy Qur-ān, XVII : 84.

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and action as invoked by this verse from the Holy Qur-án.

The cause of all strife is always the disregard of a common obligation under a common Code of Law and Morality. Within a state this disregard is visited by sanctions enforced by courts and police. So far, however, each nation has taken the law into its own hand and submitted to no common law and authority. Individuals have accepted a limitation of their sovereignty for the benefit of all, as nations must accept such limitations even for their own benefit and welfare.

### *The Unity of Mankind and the Brotherhood of Man*

The Holy Prophet Muhammad echoed the voice of God, the voice of Reality, when he called upon mankind to give up claims of superiority based on race or heritage and accept righteousness as the test of superiority.

“Verily”, he would recite from the Holy Qur-án, “the most honoured among you in the sight of God is (he who is) the most righteous of you.”<sup>1</sup>

But in order to avoid self-deception and hypocrisy this verse that I have just cited is immediately followed by the warning that “God is the ultimate judge of our conduct”.

### *Unity of the Universe under the rule of God*

Do not the unbelievers see that the heavens and earth were a unity joined together before We clove them asunder? And We made from water every living thing, will they not then believe?<sup>2</sup>

Imagine the Arabian Prophet over thirteen and a half centuries reciting such wonderful truth about the origin and unity of creation. We attribute to our poets and philosophers inspiration and yet the non-Muslim would deny Muhammad this title! I believe, however, that one day he will be acknowledged as one, if not the greatest benefactor of humanity.

<sup>1</sup> The Holy Qur-án, XLIX : 13.

<sup>2</sup> The Holy Qur-án, XXI : 30.

## MUHAMMAD, THE MESSENGER OF UNITY AND PEACE

The Sufis or Mystics of Islam contemplate on the Unity of God and the Unity of the Universe and develop a sense of unity that raises their souls to beyond the world of senses. Islam, however, warns against the illusion of Incarnation or Nirvana. God is not limited. The illimitable Time and Space are both created and not co-existent with Him. He is absolute and all depends on Him. Scientists see faintly design in things, but ultimates are not their concern. Only the few can have glimpses of the Divine Wisdom in things.

### *Equality of Man before the Law*

The Holy Phophet Muhammad sought the Unity of mankind in their acknowledgment of equality before the Law. None is above the Law. As long as nations do not apply their standards of moral conduct outside their geographical boundaries and have various standards applied to various peoples, there will always be unrest. The Atlantic Charter must therefore be applied everywhere if it were to be taken seriously.

### *Mutual Responsibility and Social Solidarity*

In one of the most significant small chapters of the Holy Qur-án, Muhammad echoed the voice of Reality when he recited this sermon to mankind.

I call upon the witness of Time : Verily man is in loss, except such as have faith and do righteous deeds and join together in the mutual teaching of truth and of patience and constancy.<sup>1</sup>

### *Muhammad the Messenger of Peace*

The first prerequisite condition for Peace is discipline and order beginning within one's own self. Not through repression but by sublimation of our impulses. To attain the stage of the peaceful soul is the ultimate aim of a devout Muslim. It is achieved when conflict between the subconscious and the conscious is no more and harmony reigns supreme. For him who shall attain this stage it is said :

O thou soul in complete peace—come back, thou soul, to thy

<sup>1</sup> The Holy Qur-án, CIII.

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Lord, well pleased and well-pleasing, Enter thou among My devotees—Yes, enter thou My heaven.<sup>1</sup>

*Peace is one and undivided*

Mr. Litvinof is supposed to be the first to have said it in the defunct League of Nations. But the Holy Prophet Muhammad preceded him thirteen and a half centuries ago in the preaching of this unity. We read in the Holy Qur-án the following declaration reaffirming the same message of all former prophets of God—

If anyone slew a person unless it be for murder or for spreading mischief in the land, it would be as if he slew the whole people, and if anyone saved a life, it would be as if he saved the life of the whole people".<sup>2</sup>

*Peace and the problem of Aggression.*

In the first pact the Holy Prophet in Madina signed with the Arabian tribes, Muslims and Jews, mutual defence and the maintenance of order was its only aim. The traditional way of settling dispute in each tribe was acknowledged and the contracting parties were thus autonomous but they had to refer any dispute among them to the decision of the Holy Prophet. This is very great achievement of the Holy Prophet as a statesman and the United Nations Organisation now sitting may well learn a lesson from this earliest of pacts of Unity and Peace.

War in defence of common human rights is permitted in Islam but both excesses and aggression are prohibited. To check evil is the duty of every man and community.

God will certainly aid those who aid His (Cause).<sup>3</sup>

Such people, as are ready to fight in the cause of Truth and Peace and are made victorious, incur a great obligation towards humanity and towards God. They are reminded in the Holy Qur-an thus :

Those whom We establish in authority in the Land maintain regular prayers (*i.e.* maintain their God-consciousness) and give

<sup>1</sup> The Holy Qur-án, LXXXIX : 27-30.]

<sup>2</sup> The Holy Qur-án, V : 35.

<sup>3</sup> The Holy Qur-án, XXII : 40.



## MUHAMMAD, THE MESSENGER OF UNITY AND PEACE

regular charity (*i.e.* acknowledge their obligation to reduce the misery of their fellow men) and enjoin the right and forbid the wrong.<sup>1</sup>

In these and similar principles of faith and action supported by a belief in the Life hereafter, Muhammad the Messenger of God, the messenger of Unity and Peace, has succeeded in welding first the warring tribes of Arabia, then a world community where there is little if any consciousness of race or colour.

For all we, Muslims and the world as a whole, owe to the Holy Prophet Muhammad, let us invoke the greatest blessings of God on this messenger of Unity and Peace and may the work of the United Nations Organisation and other similar bodies succeed in bringing Unity and Peace to a shattered world !

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### ECONOMIC NEEDS

#### Subjective and Objective

BY MAULVI AFTAB-UD-DIN AHMAD

In attempting to solve social problems, a start is often made at the wrong end of things. All factors that exist in the outside world are taken into consideration, but the most potent of all factors, the one that lies within our own selves, is invariably ignored. It is difficult to say whether it is just an oversight or a deliberate evasion of a task which appears insuperably hard. Whatever it be, there is little doubt that it is overlooking a factor which is the most essential of all. Economic needs there undoubtedly are and we appreciate the tacit belief of our communist friends that there is enough in the world for every one to be satisfied with. In a way, it is believing in a wise providence. But there is certainly a world of difference between genuine need and greed. The one can be satisfied but not the other. And so it is our firm

The Holy Qur-ān, XXII : 41.

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belief that all attempts at an equitable and satisfying distribution of life's provision must be frustrated so long as the greed in man remains uneradicated. If you analyse jealousy, the basic element in class struggle or class war, you will find it nothing but a kind of uneasiness arising out of a sense of scantiness of one's provision. This sense, of course, is awakened in man through a comparison with the possessions of others, but its source lies within his own self. And this sense of scantiness should not be regarded a limited or a conditional thing. Left to itself, it brooks no limitation and suffers no condition. Lack of self-culture has produced a class of people in our modern civilization who are jealous almost of every one. They are jealous not only of those who are better off than themselves but also of those who are on the same level *with* themselves. So even if a complete equality of possession and amenities be brought about—a consummation still an elusive dream—the feeling of jealousy, from a psychological calculation, will be rampant all the same. Nay, if we go deeper we may discover that it is the very same feeling that causes what we call the exploitation of the weak and the simple-minded by the strong and the resourceful. The spirit of grabbing is only the ugliest form of jealousy. The velocity of what is called struggle for existence, accelerated beyond a certain point makes one feel jealous of the very existence of others. To such a perverted man the only justification for any other person's existence is the latter's abject subservience to his own existence and comfort and power. So the root cause of all injustices and iniquities is this feeling of jealousy which again has its source in the greed of the human mind. This does not mean that man is by nature greedy. Greed is only a perverted form of the urge of acquisition and love of possession. In its original uncorrupted form it is the mother of all earnings, enterprises, and inventions. It is the indiscriminate

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and unregulated exercise of this faculty that produces greed. The true urge of acquisition is judicious. It knows what things can be acquired without disturbing the social peace as also what is really useful to himself and to others. And if it falls in its objective it feels neither any dejection nor any annoyance. Whereas greed is rash and desperate and when baffled it becomes either down-hearted or furious. Preponderance of greed in a man or a society shows that there is lack of guidance or training in the exercise of this very fundamental and beneficial urge of the human mind. It makes the individual or the society not only unfit to earn fairly but also a stranger to the art of spending. The needed training in this respect can be provided by religion alone. One need enter a sound religious system to prevent the wholesome faculty of acquisition from turning into greed. The system of Islam had a very successful experiment carried out in this respect at the hand of the Holy Prophet Muhammad.

Islam created a society of people who not only scrupulously maintained in the course of their economic activities, the distinction between what is lawful and wholesome and what is not but also were "neither extravagant nor parsimonious and (kept) between these the just mean".<sup>1</sup> By a persistent self-culture described in the words :

And the servants of the Beneficent God are they who walk on the earth in humbleness, and when the ignorant address them they say "peace" :

And they who pass their night prostrating themselves before their Lord and standing :

they had freed their minds from the contamination of greed. They were a people of vigorous action, self-reliant and enterprising, a fact which shows that they had a keen sense of economic needs. But they were neither marauders nor pirates nor imperialists, because they

<sup>1</sup> The Holy Qur-ān, 25 : 28.

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successfully banished all greed from their minds. In other words, they were aware of the distinction between a true sense of need and the false craving called greed. Guided by the prophetic genius of their master they realised that the subjective aspect of man's economic life was even more important than the objective one. And if we of this age, with all our sincerity, leave this fact out of consideration and confuse genuine need with the greed of man, we shall never satisfy his economic needs and banish either individual or class jealousy. There can, then, be no peace on this score anywhere at any time in the world.

To be clear, the sense of need in an imaginative mind is more often a mental phenomenon than a physical fact. It hardly needs any pointing out that civilized existence makes one aware of ever newer "needs" and lack of a corresponding moral culture aggravates this awareness to a degree that if one man is given the wealth and comfort of the whole world, to the exclusion of all others, one will still need more. The most sensible attitude should, therefore, be to be satisfied with the actual necessities of physical existence and, if anything more, whatever may fall to one's lot without much craving for it. But this needs a self-culture, that comes only through devotional practices. It is only through such a culture that a man can confine his sense of need to the things actually needed for his physical existence and to what may come to him without being jealous of others. It is to this moral attainment that the Holy Quran refers when it says :

And whoever is saved from the greediness of his soul, these it is that are the successful.<sup>1</sup>

It is exactly here that our economists have blundered. In the beginning of their speculations they just evaded this subjective aspect of economic needs. But as they

<sup>1</sup> The Holy Qur-ān 164 : 16.

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proceeded in formulating their theories they came positively to repudiate the claim of inner culture on the peaceful settlement of the economic demands of man. The result is before us. The economic classes are engaged in a war of mutual annihilation. Not able either to hide or avert this unpleasant fact these economists and social thinkers have come forward to console us by their specious dictum that this horrible state of things is a necessary stage in the social evolution of mankind, as if burning hatred from both sides has by itself ever given birth to love and amity between two contending parties. A more depressing and hopeless philosophy cannot be imagined. Possibly it is a logical conclusion to the theory of "the survival of the fittest" deduced from a mal-observation of the animal world. Man is but too apt to read facts in the light of his own predilections. Civilized humanity, however, is getting tired of these "theories," advanced as principles of social action. It is coming gradually to realise that it is not for the scientists and economists to adumbrate rules of social behaviour and that a higher type of people is needed to handle this rather delicate and responsible task. It is dawning on thinking humanity that questions of social relationships can be properly solved by leaders who have an understanding of the power of the mind over matter. It is being increasingly appreciated now that the so-called needs of man are more often unreal than real and that they can be considerably reduced by a suitable culture of the mind. Such a reduction, if it comes to be accomplished, will not only facilitate an equitable distribution of wealth but also give man that inner happiness which he actually seeks through his passionate pursuit of worldly comfort and possession. Given a correct vision of the subjective aspect of our economic needs, we shall be able to distinguish between the real needs and the artificial ones, as also between the right means of their satis-

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faction and the wrong ones. The effort for the supply of real needs to every one born of human parents is undoubtedly a praiseworthy one. But unless due attention is paid to the subjective aspect of the question, artificial needs unleashing the unbounded greed of man will defeat the very object of this noble effort. As we have already remarked, it is the uncontrolled greed in man that lies at the root of all exploitation. If, therefore, we are able to create a standard of culture that makes it dishonourable to give expression to the weakness of greed in a man, we shall have stopped the tyranny of exploitation at its origin. Neither is it an impossible task to attempt. All prophets,—the founders of religion—have attempted it and have succeeded in their attempt. It is all a question of determination and a vigorous action on such a determination. It is, moreover, the only correct way to achieve the object in view.

Unfortunately the rules of our current civilization not only condone the exhibition of greed but even regard it as quite decent to arouse and excite greed in others under cover of art, entertainment, business propaganda and the like. We all own and even admire misguided people who misguide a whole world by an appeal to its fancy for economic needs. We concede that in the course of this avalanche of debasing propaganda, certain things are introduced in the everyday life of man, which are truly beneficial to him and have accordingly a really economic value. But their proportion is ever so small compared to those numerous other things of which the value lies only in the fancy of man. As a matter of fact, it may be truly said that a modern man is overwhelmed with his sense of "needs," thanks to the insidious and licensed propaganda of those who control and manage our civilized life through thoughts and suggestions as much as through manufacture. And while this state of things continues to exist, we in our simplicity still hope to

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bring satisfaction to the mind of man in respect of his economic needs through outside regulation and management of things. Surely this is nothing better than running after the will-o'-the-wisp.

Analyse a modern mind and it will be found to consist principally of two things : (1) An extreme dissatisfaction with life owing to unfulfilled "economic needs"; and (2) a dread of poverty, in the sense of the lowering of the standard of life.

Whether at any time in the future, the state will be in a position to enforce the rule "to each according to his needs" is yet a question of speculation. Far from approaching that ideal state of things, we find a contrary tendency in states that profess a faith in this ideal. The reason is not far to seek. To ascertain individual needs in all their details is a task too stupendous to be undertaken by a human state at any time in history.

And unless and until this ideal is attained, the external arrangements cannot bring any relief to the mind of man on these two scores if the collective mind of society is not instructed to look down upon any expression of or any appeal to the greed in man. In the absence of this training the raging dissatisfaction on the basis of fancied economic needs together with the dread of poverty will paralyse the urge of civilized existence and letting loose anti-social feelings in the minds of men will disrupt even social life itself. Rightly has the Holy Quran called the latter disease, *i.e.*, dread of poverty, the work of the devil :

The devil threatens you with poverty.<sup>1</sup>  
Indeed, if the chief function of the devil is to jeopardise the prospects of man through wrong suggestions, this dread of poverty must be regarded as the most potent of its weapons in accomplishing its object in these days. This dread chases a modern man all throughout his life

<sup>1</sup> The Holy Qur-ān 2 : 269.

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and haunts his mind perpetually like the proverbial sword of Damocles. It paralyses all his energy for good and noble deeds. It makes him self-centred and cowardly. Above all, it makes him dissatisfied with his fellow beings and even with his own self. And what is poverty to the vast majority of these people? It is mostly a fall in the existing standard of living. What a boon of our much vaunted civilization! Indeed, we have mistaken the weed for the plant and are frightened by a ghost of our own creation. It is obvious, that freedom from this false fear will make mankind healthier economically as well as morally. It will be ridding humanity of an evil spirit, so to speak. But this cannot be accomplished but through a sound religious culture of the mind.

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### THE DECLINE OF CHRISTIANITY

BY DUDLEY WRIGHT (MUHAMMAD SADIQ), Phil D., F.S.P.

It is singular—were the subject mundane it would be amusing—to observe the alacrity with which Christian apologists enter the arena of debate with new explanations to account for the decline in church attendance and of belief in the Christian religion, a decline which has become so conspicuous that it is no longer debated exclusively in the columns of the religious press but is forced upon the consideration of readers of the ordinary newspapers.

The latest to enter the field is Dr. W. R. Inge, one of the most learned philosophers in the Church of England, better known as Dean Inge, from his twenty-three years' occupancy of the Deanery of St. Paul's. The explanations generally offered as a solution of the problem of decline have hitherto been the Sunday opening of cinemas, the radio, railway and general travelling facilities and, sometimes, loss of interest in sermons occasioned by the disappearance of popular preachers. Dr. Inge,



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however, has now come forward with a fresh explanation—the boom in music. Every Sunday, he says, London has three and, often, four symphony concerts and he enumerates nine orchestras which are in full swing. Wireless facilities do not lower the attendance at these various performances for he tells us that 300,000 people attended last season's promenade concerts and one company—Sadler's Wells—have taken opera to 57 cities and towns.

Imitation, we are often told, is the most sincere form of flattery and the newspaper that contains Dr. Inge's explanation also records that some churches are using both music and drama to attract congregations in the hope that some people who come to listen to the music will come back to the services. It is explained that the loss of religion has led to people unconsciously seeking something to fill the gap in their lives.

Now, if Dr. Inge and the other apologists would put on their thinking-caps for a few minutes, they would, I think, find the real cause for the present decline in religion. Jesus was a prophet sent by God to the lost sheep of the House of Israel. He delivered the Word of Truth and he supplied the Key to Freedom. But his message is not preached today by those who call themselves his followers, disciples and apostles. The Word is not lost but it has been smothered by the Christian Church, which is a human and not a divine institution. The Truth, as preached by Jesus, is not to be found in the Christian Church but it is to be found outside Christianity—in Islam, in the Mosque.

Music has always been regarded as a valuable auxiliary to Christian worship, particularly in Roman Catholic Churches. It has now become a substitute for worship. I remember well how, half a century ago, St. George's Cathedral at Southwark was thronged at High Mass every Christmas when the great attraction used to be Mozart's

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*Twelfth Mass*, sung by professionals to the accompaniment of organ and string band. Another famous musical church was the Jesuit edifice in Farm Street, to which every Sunday and Holy Day large congregations were attracted by elaborate musical programmes.

Professional singers would be engaged regularly at other churches, particularly St. Joseph's Highgate, known locally as "Holy Joe's," for it was common knowledge that Charles Santley was frequently in the choir loft. Many churches of the Establishment had like reputations, notably St. Anne's Soho, while among the Non-conformist establishments, many, like the City Temple and Westminster Chapel, won renown by their trained choirs. There was one exception—Spurgeon's Tabernacle. It had not even an organ. There was a leader of the singing—Turner was his name. I knew him more than seventy years ago : he struck his tuning-fork after Mr. Spurgeon had announced the name of the tune and the congregation became the choir. One favoured tune was that sung to the hymn : "Grace, 'tis a charming sound." The tune was a haunting one but I did not know for many years why it haunted, when, by accident, I discovered that the tune was identical with that of the song : "On Ilkley Moor 'baht 'at." Was it John Wesley or General Booth who said that Christians did not want the devil to have all the good tunes ? But to one who has found and embraced the True Faith in Islam it still seems to be a strange and incongruous mixture of sacred and secular.

Not more strange and incongruous, perhaps, than some of the hymns that used to be warbled by our grandparents, hymns that were certainly, as many of the present-day hymns are, dishonouring to Allah. Here is a verse from one :

Ye monsters from the mighty deep,  
Your Maker's praises shout ;  
Up from the deep ye codlings peep  
And wag your tails about.

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One minute the "pastor," the self-constituted "shepherd of souls," would be discoursing eloquently and at length upon the love and mercy of God and a few minutes later the congregation might be heard singing with gusto such words as

We are God's elected few,  
All the rest are damned ;  
Hell is good enough for you,  
We won't have Heaven crammed.

But there were no prosecutions for blasphemy : they were reserved for those outside the fold.

Music is not to be heard in the mosque, but harmony is ever present. There can be, indeed is, devotion without any auxiliary urge, such as cinema performances, theatrical stage-plays, florid music : they have no place in worship, where true devotion should reign supreme.

Dr. Inge says that music is an escape to dream-land, but we live and work in a land of reality, not make-belief and if the Church is to recover her lost prestige, a radical change is essential. Christians must get back to the foundation and seek out the *teaching* of Jesus, the teachings of the prophets who preceded him and of the Prophet Muhammad, who succeeded him. May I commend to Dr. Inge and to those who follow him the words of a Bishop (Boyd-Carpenter) of the Church of England :

In the great world aching with many needs,  
We often dream ;  
And our fond hearts imagine dazzling deeds ;  
And in our dreaming everything succeeds,  
The mountains topple over at a touch ;  
To cleave the seas for us is not too much ;  
Lord ! wake us from our dreams !  
Lord ! Wake us from our dreams to see  
Things as they are—  
The lowly place where humble duties wait,  
God-given duties at our very great,

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The work which makes for service, not for fame ;  
Which buries self and setteth forth Thy Name,  
Deeds near—not dreams afar.

We want no coward's escape to a dream-world, but we need to pray for strength to cope with the difficulties which beset us on our pilgrimage and that strength will be given us not in the cinema, even though that cinema may for the nonce be in a church or chapel. The strength can come only from Allah through prayer and supplication and by conformity to His Will.

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### JESUS THE SON OF MARY HIS BIRTH AND DEATH

BY KHWAJA NAZIR AHMAD

(Continued from Vol. XXXIV, p 184)

#### THE DAVIDIC DESCENT

The first and the third Gospels, which give details of the virgin birth, are also designed to exhibit the descent of Jesus from David. They contain two genealogies of Jesus. The belief that the blessed son of Jehovah, the Messiah, had to be from the *seed* of David was a religious postulate based on some Biblical prophecies.<sup>1</sup>

Joseph, the humble father of Jesus, was made to be in a direct line to the King chosen of old by Jehovah. There was no question of finding out if such a relationship did exist, or could be proved to exist, or even made to appear plausible. The hagiographers did not trouble themselves with such details or scruples. They had to establish that the prophets of old were not false and did not take the trouble of verifying whether they did really say what was being attributed to them. The prophecies were found in the "Old Book" and had to be fulfilled. Jesus was the Messiah and evidence of his descent from

<sup>1</sup> Ps., CXXXII : 11 ; Isa., XI : 1, Jer., XXIII : 5.

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David was created. The sceptics demanded proof, and as there was none in existence, they put forward the two genealogies, taking names of generations, as far as they could, from the "Old Book" and where it would not help them, they resorted to their own resourceful imagination.

These two genealogies, considered each in itself or both together, afford so important a key to the character of the evangelic records that a close examination of them is rendered imperative. A moment's scrutiny of the genealogy of Matthew will reveal its artificiality, in fact, it is naively exhibited in the last verse :

So all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations ; and from David until the carrying away into Babylon are fourteen generations ; and from the carrying away into Babylon unto Christ are fourteen generations.<sup>1</sup>

In other words, for reasons unknown, the author has constructed a framework which has no historical basis and thus made it as he thought fit. If the number of names given is computed, it would be found that the last division, from Jechonias to Jesus, comprises only of thirteen generations. It has been suggested that one of the names in the third division had been dropped by an error of a transcriber ;<sup>2</sup> but this cannot be a sound explanation because the deficiency was mentioned at an early stage by Prophecy.<sup>3</sup>

If we compare this genealogy with the corresponding passages in the Old Testament, we discover many discrepancies ; many names there recorded are omitted by Matthew. The series of generations from Abraham to Judah, Pharez and Esron (Hezron) are sufficiently well known from the Book of Genesis ; and from Pharez to David are to be found at the end of the Book of Ruth,<sup>4</sup> and from David to Zerubbabel in the third Chapter of the same Book.

<sup>1</sup> Matt., I : 17. '

<sup>2</sup> *Hezron in Danial*, 145.

<sup>3</sup> Paulus, *Comm : Matt.*, 292.

<sup>4</sup> Ruth, IV : 18-22.

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Now the first division of fourteen of Matthew is identical with the names of *men* given in the Old Testament. But many discrepancies are found in the second division. Firstly, according to Matthew, "Joram begat Ozias ;"<sup>1</sup> whereas we know that Uzziah was not the son, but the grandson of Joram, and that three kings—Ahaziah, Joash and Amaziah occur between them—and then come Uzziah.<sup>2</sup> Secondly, Matthew says : "Josias begot Jechonias and his brethern,"<sup>3</sup> but according to the Old Testament the son and the successor of Josiah was Jehoiakim,<sup>4</sup> after whom comes his son and successor Jeconiah, and no mention is made of his brethren. Jehoiakim, however, had brethren. This is not a case of accidental forgetfulness or casual inaccuracy ; Matthew has simply cut out anything which interfered with his plan. Thirdly, Zorobabel is described as a son of Salathiel,<sup>5</sup> but according to the Old Testament he descended from Jeconiah, not through Salathiel, but through his brother Pedaiah.<sup>6</sup>

It is, however, the omission of the three names which, for it falls in so happily with the threefold fourteen generations, forces us to believe, with Jerome, that it was made with a definite purpose.<sup>7</sup> Olshausen is unconvincing when he conjectures that the number fourteen was specially chosen as being the numerical value of the name of David. Fritsche attributes it to a desire to repeat the number fourteen which had accidentally presented itself, since it was a notion of the Jews that signal divine visitations, whether of prosperity or adversity, recurred at regular periodical intervals. De Wette and Schneckenburger agree with this conclusion of Fritsche and the latter points out that the most ancient

<sup>1</sup> Matt. I : 8.

<sup>2</sup> I Chron., III : 11-12. Here as in 2 Kings, XIV : 21 Uzziah is called Azariah.

<sup>3</sup> Matt., I : II.

<sup>4</sup> I Chron., III, 15.

<sup>5</sup> Matt., I : 12.

<sup>6</sup> I Chron., III : 19.

<sup>7</sup> Bible Common., 4 n

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genealogies in Genesis exhibit the same uniformity. The conclusion is irresistible that it is not a case of accidental forgetfulness or casual inaccuracy.

The author of the First Gospel has deliberately cut out anything that interfered with the symbolic structure of fourteen generations into the second and third divisions, irrespective of the fact that he was introducing falsehood into a *Gospel*.

The author of Luke is equally indifferent to facts of history. His genealogy comprises of seventy-seven names, with God at one end and Jesus at the other. This genealogy cannot, unfortunately, be tested so minutely; for, from David to Nathan, the line traced by Luke has no corresponding table in the Old Testament; and we do not know from where he got these names. With regard to the only two names—Salathiel and Zorobabel—there is a contradiction, Luke styles Salathiel as the son of Neri<sup>1</sup> while he is actually the son of Jeconiah.<sup>2</sup> Luke mentions Rhesa as the son of Zorobabel<sup>3</sup> a name which does not appear in the Old Testament amongst the children of Zerubbabel.<sup>4</sup> These two names could not be omitted either by Matthew or Luke because they were indissolubly connected with the Return. Again, Luke inserts in the series before Abraham one Cainan<sup>5</sup> who is not to be found in the Hebrew text of Genesis<sup>6</sup> though he is shown as the son of Ham in another place<sup>7</sup> that is the third series from Adam and appears to have been transplanted at this place by Luke from the Greek Bible.

On comparing the two genealogies together some remarkable discrepancies appear on the face of them; some of which are due to the fact that Luke carries the line back to Adam and even beyond. This seems to

<sup>1</sup> Luke, III : 27.

<sup>2</sup> Luke, III : 27.

<sup>3</sup> Luke, III : 36.

<sup>4</sup> Gen., IX : 22

<sup>5</sup> 1 Chron., III : 17.

<sup>6</sup> Chron., III : 19.

<sup>7</sup> Gen., X : 24 (Revised Version).

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have been done to make it more consonant with the doctrine of Paul. If we consider the generations between David and Jesus only, the number of generations according to Luke is forty-one whilst according to Matthew twenty-six. From Jesus to Abraham, Luke enumerates fifty-six generations ; Matthew gives only forty.

Again, in the two Gospels totally different individuals are made ancestors of Jesus. Further, except for the fact that both trace the descent of Jesus from David through Joseph, described as the *father* of Jesus, the entire names given by the two between David and Joseph are different—the only exceptions are Salathiel and Zorobabel, which as already pointed out, could not be omitted. In Matthew the father of Joseph is Jacob, in Luke—Heli. In Matthew the son of David is Solomon ; in Luke Nathan, and so on.

The most strenuous efforts have been made to reconcile the two genealogies. It would serve no useful purpose to discuss or examine in detail the various solutions so far put forward.

Julius Africanus suggested a Levirate marriage between the parents of Joseph ; Augustine, the adopted father theory ; but later on he gave up his own theory for that of Africanus.<sup>1</sup> Schneckenburger in rejecting both these theories rightly pointed out that the wording, used in the genealogies excluded all possibility of either of the two suggestions. The Levirate marriage, he contended, could only be possible if both Heli and Jacob had been real brothers. They must, therefore, have the same lineage, but this is not borne out by the genealogies. Eusebius had put forward a really clever solution. He asserted that Jacob and Heli were half-brothers.<sup>2</sup> If this were so, the paternal grand mother of Joseph must have married twice : once with Matthan of Matthew, who had descended from David through Solomon ; and her second hus-

<sup>1</sup> *Retract*, 11 : 17.

<sup>2</sup> Eusebius, *H.E.*, 1 : 7.



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band must have been Matthat of Luke—a descendant of David through Nathan. If this be so, the untoward agreement occurring midway, regarding Salathiel and Zorobabel, cannot be accounted for without introducing another Levirate marriage at these two junctures. This has only to be mentioned to be rejected and thus this theory also falls to the ground. It was not until the 15th century of the Christian era that it was thought that the knot could be loosened in a much easier way by supposing that in one of the Gospels the genealogy of Mary is given.<sup>1</sup> This theory was based on the idea that in Jesus the priestly and the kingly dignity ought to unite, and advantage was taken of the relationship of Mary with Elizabeth who was of the daughters of Aaron<sup>2</sup> and thus an effort was made to blend, in the family of Joseph, the races of Judah and Levi. It was, therefore, put forward that Jesus derived his royal lineage from Joseph and priestly race through Mary.<sup>3</sup> But it was soon realized that an insurmountable obstacle—the Jews did not take account of the female line in their genealogies<sup>4</sup>—prevented any fruitful discussion, particularly when the thirty-four preceding generations, which are well known to us from the Old Testament, demonstrably indicate throughout the precise relationship of a *father*. A further difficulty, as already mentioned, is encountered in the occurrence of the two names of Salathiel and Zorobabel. Moreover, in no other part of the New Testament can any trace be found of the descent of Mary through David. On the contrary, passages directly opposed to this theory can be found in Luke.<sup>5</sup> It is, therefore, impossible to apply either of the genealogies to Mary.

These considerations of the insurmountable difficulties, which defy every attempt to bring these genealogies

<sup>1</sup> Olshausen, *Bible Comm.*, S. 48, Epiphanius, Grotius, S., 97.

<sup>2</sup> Luke, 1 : 5.

<sup>3</sup> Comp. Thilo Cod. Apocr. N. T., II S. 374.

<sup>4</sup> Juchasin, F. 55 : 2 ; Lightfoot, S. 183.

<sup>5</sup> Luke, 1 : 27, 11 : 4-5.

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into harmony with one another, force one to the conclusion that they are irreconcilable, and consequently that both cannot be true. For reasons already given Matthew must be rejected as false. Luke, however, must be scrutinized more carefully inasmuch as it was written with a view to glorify Jesus and trace his descent from God Himself. It is incredible that the genealogy of an insignificant and obscure family like that of Joseph through Nathan, could have been preserved, during all the confusion of the exile, for so long as a series of generations. Add to this the frequent recurrence of the same names and the conclusions of Hoffmann become irresistible that the genealogy of Luke is equally fictitious.

In fact the two genealogies remain self-contradictory and irreconcilable, resembling each other only in their common indifference to historical truth and the object of proving that Joseph, the *father* of Jesus, had, as was expected by Israel, descended from David.

It is significant that we find in the texts no indication that Messiahship of Jesus was ever deduced from his Davidic descent. The process was just the reverse ; the disciples first believed that Jesus was the Messiah and then made him a descendant of David by forging these genealogies. Thus an obscure Galilean, for such was Jesus, whose lineage was utterly unknown and of whom consequently no one could prove that he had or had not descended from David, had acquired the reputation of being the Messiah. It was natural, therefore, that by slightly different material, the two evangelists should have succeeded in realizing the same purpose, namely, to vindicate the Messianic status of Jesus by proving that he, through his *natural father* Joseph, was a member of the house of David. The belief in this illustrious descent was very old. Even Paul knew and accepted that Jesus was born "of the seed of David, according to the flesh".<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Rom., 1 : 3.

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He had to be "the fruit of loins of David."<sup>1</sup>

But the Davidic descent of Jesus can be impugned on other grounds. Jesus never boasted of it ; nor did his disciples regard him as such. Neither the appeal of the blind man of Jericho : "Son of David, Jesus, have mercy on me,"<sup>2</sup> nor the acclamation on his entry to Jerusalem,<sup>3</sup> can have the least weight against this double silence of Jesus and his companions. Another, and even more important, objection is that the author of the fourth Gospel does not accept the descent of Jesus from David. The objections raised about the Davidic descent are not answered or refuted by this evangelist,<sup>4</sup> and this fact proves that he did not think either of these things to be true. But these considerations did not weigh with the other two evangelists.

The Ebionites, the ancient Judo-Christians, rejected these genealogies<sup>5</sup> and their opinion appears to be justified by the oldest traditions.

It is, therefore, evident that the belief in the Davidic descent of Jesus found acceptance only amongst a few of the early Christians.

The only fact which stands out signally in the two genealogies, and which remains uncontradicted, is that Jesus was the son of Joseph and his *espoused* wife Mary. I will presently show that this fact finds ample support in the Gospels and the rest of the New Testament.

*(To be continued.)*

<sup>1</sup> Acts, II : 30.

<sup>2</sup> Mark, XI : 9-10.

<sup>3</sup> Epiphanius : *Haer* ; 30 : 14.

<sup>4</sup> Mark, X : 47.

<sup>5</sup> John, VII : 40-42.

## ESPERANTO AND ISLAM

BY IVAN COLIN EVANS (QASSIM ISMAIL), B.A.

Three-quarters of a century ago, the young son of a Polish Jewish professor of languages learned at his mother's knee that all men were brothers, all humanity one family. In autobiographical letters he quoted words of his mother's that are, though neither he nor she knew it, textually identical with words of God in the Holy Qur-án, on this subject. But when he looked out on to the streets of his own city through the windows of his father's house, he saw Poles, Russians, Germans, and Hebrews, all natives of the same town: yet all regarding one another as hateful foreigners, fighting, exchanging insults, persecuting and attacking one another each group against the other three groups. Then the little boy conceived a dream which never left him, but through over half a century was his one great inspiration, to which he devoted his life: the dream of bringing people of different racial and language groups to mutual understanding and brotherhood. That boy was Ludovik Lazarus Zamenhof (originally spelled Samenhof). Two forms of practical expression his dream took, eventually. The invention and development of an International Auxiliary language, neutral and simple, learnable easily by non-linguists, flexible and expressive enough for all conversational, scientific and technical, philosophical, and literary, as well as commercial uses, not associated with any particular nation, land, religion, or party, so that all men could meet on neutral ground, linguistically, in its use for complete mutual comprehension and fraternisation; that was one form it took. The other was, much later and never as successful, the movement he called (in Esperanto, "*Homaranismo*"—a word almost untranslatable; its component parts are

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*hom* (human being), *ar* (complete collection), *an* (adherent), *ism* cult or system *o* (grammatical termination for any noun); hence *homo*, a human being; *homaro*, the complete collection of human beings, mankind; *homarano*, member of mankind, hence "human being regarded as one member of a collective unity," *homaranismo* the cult or system or doctrine of man as member of a world-wide mankind; "human-being-ism".<sup>1</sup>

The international auxiliary language, afterwards called Esperanto (the pen-name he used in his first book about it, "Dr. Esperanto" = "Dr. Optimist") rapidly won adherents and users, and within a few years a million people all over the world used it. There are to-day probably three to four million Esperantists in all countries (though possibly only a quarter million who are members of active Esperantist organisations). A literature of between six and seven thousand books and booklets of all kinds, including some hundreds of substantial and important literary works, and one or two hundred periodicals, have appeared. Interrupted only twice by two big wars, a series of International Esperanto congresses have been held, each year in a different country ever since 1905, attended by up to 4,000 people from over a hundred countries, using only Esperanto as their common language, besides hundreds of other congresses. A few universities in different countries (one in England) and a number of schools include Esperanto in their curriculum, and before the war twenty countries regularly used it for broadcasting (which a few have now resumed).

One sometimes hears English people and Americans say, "English is sufficiently understood all over the world," and I have heard two of my brother Muslims, one an Englishman and one an Indian, say "Arabic is our 'Esperanto' ". But the fact remains that UNO, meeting in London, and every important inter-

<sup>1</sup> We believe this achievement is reserved for Islam.—Ed. I.R.

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national gathering, unofficial or official, except those of Esperantists, wastes time and energy and brain-power and opportunities through language difficulties, through the majority not understanding anything anyone is saying and through the necessity of multiple slow and unreliable translating, and that the brotherhood of Islam has often, when Muslims of different lands meet, to express itself by "Assalamu 'alaikum!" and smiles and stammered words of bad English, worse Urdu, halting Egyptian colloquial Arabic, broken Turkish that is almost an atrocity, and illiterate Persian.\*

*"And We made you nations and tribes that you might know (i.e., understand) one another" (Qur-ān xlix : 14.)*

Muslims have not been absent from the Esperanto movement. One English fellow-member of mine in the London Esperanto Club is a Muslim. Muslims are among the local delegates of the International Esperanto League (which has about two thousand delegates in different towns all over the world, who give free and enthusiastic information and help to an Esperantist wanting to get into touch with local people or things for business or pleasure or any other purpose, or be introduced to local Esperantists by corresponding or when travelling).

But the active part taken by Muslims as Muslims in the Esperanto movement is not a conspicuous one, nor has Esperanto been used adequately up to now for Islamic purposes in particular. The Quakers, the Roman Catholics, the Bahaists, the Labour Party and Communists and even Fascists, have all made great use of Esperanto, with their own Esperanto societies and publications, and propagandist activities in the language. But not Islam, the one community that is in reality as well as in theory a worldwide brotherhood, transcending all boundaries

\*This is because European political and cultural domination has shattered the world Muslim solidarity and the unity of Muslim culture through the Arabic language. A Muslim has now to learn a European language where he used to learn Arabic before.

—Ed. I.R.

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of race and land and colour. For local use in daily life, each one of us has a local vernacular—English, or French, or Russian, or Bengali, or Turkish, or Malay, or Swahili, or what not. For Prayer in congregation, and for our sacred literature, the one unchanging language in which the last re-revelation to the world, the often revealed, and constantly mutilated and lost, religion was finally again given by God. Arabic can never be displaced by any other tongue. But how many Muslims in non-Arabic speaking lands can easily hold a casual conversation on daily affairs in Arabic, or write a business or friendly letter without great effort in it? Can the average Indian Muslim, the average Turkish Muslim, the average Malayan Muslim, the average Somaliland Muslim, the average English or Dutch or Swedish Muslim? To learn the prayers in Arabic, to recite and understand them, is possible for the average child after a month's teaching, to read the Holy Qur'án in Arabic with understanding, helped by vernacular explanations, is less easy, but is a religious necessity for all Muslims, for which sacrifices must be made. But even so, that achieved, will not make all Muslims of all lands able to discuss daily matters fluently when they meet or why discourses in other tongues in our mosques?

And what right have we, as Muslims (traitors to Islam, to God, to His Prophet, to the Qur'án, to our own brothers, if we treat any Muslim as a "foreigner") to require our brother Muslims of other lands to learn any national language except their own, before they can converse with us? Or what right have they to make me learn theirs? And what right have we to remain isolated from them, unable to converse as members of one family?

Thank to God (al-hamdu lilláh!) the Muslim world is beginning to re-awaken again to its missionary duty and we Westerners are being led back to the faith of

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Islam. But if (please God !) we live to see "mankind entering the religion of God in troupes" in Western lands, what hope or likelihood is there that current colloquial fluency in Arabic will ever be attained by one per cent even of stay-at-home Englishmen, Welshmen, Frenchmen ? Yet Islam must never become a number of separated communities - we are one people ; any visiting Muslim from any other land must be made to feel at home, one of the family, with the co-religionists he finds in the land of his sojourn. How can this be done, without either being an obviously "foreign" mutilator of the other's mother-tongue (in which he is sensitive to every trace of foreigners' idiom and accent) except by a neutral auxiliary language ? And even if that neutral auxiliary language were one peculiar to Muslims, Arabic, it would be of no help in bringing the non-Muslim world under the influence of Islamic ideas, in making converts (our bounden duty).

Esperanto offers the solution, as the THIRD language for every Muslim (his first, the language of his religion, Arabic, his second the mother-tongue of daily life in his home, whatever it may be), and the SECOND language for the non-Muslim world. And there is this important point : a great obstacle of hide-bound insular conservatism has to be overcome before the average man in the street will consider Esperanto seriously ; the same obstacle has to be overcome before the average man in the street in a non-Muslim land will consider embracing Islam. The Esperantists in every country are people who have already overcome this obstacle as far as adopting Esperanto is concerned. They are therefore more ready to ignore that hide-bound insularity and conservatism that holds back their neighbours, in any other connection. Speak in Esperanto of Islam to an Esperantist and you will, on an average, find a much readier hearing than if you raise



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the same subject in talk with a non-Esperantist in his own language.

“Not with a national creed,

Not with dogmas of bigoted zeal,”

wrote Zamenhof, in his “Prayer beneath the Green flag”. The hunger for true internationalism, true racial equality, true human brotherhood united in the worship of “That Great Power, incomprehensible to me, who is the First Cause of all Causes” (words of Zamenhof) is there, in the heart of the Esperantists, waiting for us, Muslims, to point out its fulfilment.

The average working man of no education and knowing no language but his own, and the average school-child, can become a fairly fluent Esperantist in three or four months, giving only a little spare time daily to it; an educated man who has some experience of linguistic study and can speak more than one language already, can do the same in from a week to four weeks. Japanese and Chinese, and Turks and Indians and Egyptians, have made their own contributions to Esperanto literature, and found the language easy, as well as Europeans.

An Islamic Correspondence Circle in Esperanto is being organised in London at 10, St. Philips Place, London, England, with the following aims :—

1. To spread correct knowledge of Islam among Esperantist non-Muslims.
2. To spread the knowledge of Esperanto among Muslims of all lands.
3. To put Muslim Esperantists of different lands in touch with one another by post.
4. To arrange for Muslims to have (as have members of other religions and parties) their own meetings at Esperanto congresses.
5. To publish literature on Islam in Esperanto.

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6. Perhaps when possible to organise a group Pilgrimage of Esperanto-speaking Muslims to Makka.

7. To put Muslims ignorant of Esperanto, into contact by post with Esperantists able to correspond in the former's languages, if they are interested in the Esperanto movement.

The Circle's first publication will be on sale before these words can be in print :

ISLAMO ESPERANTISTE RIGARDATA (Islam through Esperantist eyes).

It contains a comparative study of Esperanto classics and passages from the Qur'án, in support of the contention that Islam is the only religion that fulfils the internal idea and the ideals of the Esperanto movement, a summary of Islamic doctrine and duties, and some "clearing up" of popular anti-Islamic errors. In its preparation I received help willingly given by non-Muslim Esperantists, and its publication has been financed by non-Esperantist Muslims. The price will be 9d. The number of eager applications I have received in Esperanto from various countries for some information about Islam shows how such an introduction is wanted.

# بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

## ZAKAT

And whatever you give in charity (Zakat) desiring Allah's pleasure it is these persons that shall get manifold.

—*The Holy Qur-án*, 30 : 39.

Rajab, the month of *Zakat*, corresponds with June this year. *Zakat*, as the word implies, purifies the possession of a man. It is an economic ablution so to say. What bath and washing means to the physical body, *Zakat* means to one's economic existence. One may feel that one is saving money by not paying *Zakat* but in actual fact he is jeopardising his economic destiny, and that of the nation by this delinquency. This is one aspect of the question.

Then the *Zakat* money belongs to the state or the institution which represents the community on its religious side. It is not left to the individual to spend it in any way he likes. It should first go to the *Baitul Mal* before it can be disbursed. Hazrat Abu Bakr, the first Caliph, declared war against those believers who refused to send their *Zakat* money to the State-fund.

Further, the Defence of Islam has the first claim on the *Zakat* money. The nature of this defence varies from age to age. The enemy's attacks on Islam are carried out on intellectual lines in these days. The Defence of Islam should, therefore, take the line of intellectual and literary propaganda. That this is the only right course is proved by the achievements of the Working Muslim Mission. If Muslim national life is founded on religious convictions, it cannot be gainsaid that no other institution has done a fraction of the work done by this Mission in establishing Islamic ideas in the minds of believers and non-believers alike. Indeed, no truer and more solid defence of Islam has ever been contemplated and carried out within recent times.

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At least half, if not the whole of the Zakat money, should, therefore, come to the funds of this mission.

We must further remember that *Zakat* is no charity in the ordinary sense of the term. It is a kind of tax levied by God on the believers, a license-fee so to speak, as a test of their *bonafide* in Islam. We must bear all this in mind while taking stock of our possessions at the behest of the Qur-án during the current month.

The obligatory nature of *Zakat*, the needs of Islam at this moment and the service of the Working Muslim Mission to the cause of Islam—all these must be taken into consideration while carrying our accounts forward into the new financial year of Islam.

Let us be faithful to the injunctions of Islam to their very letter, if we are to see the lost glory of Islam restored to us.

The world is in turmoil. It is heading for a great change. Let us make sure that this change becomes a change in favour of Islam and its principles and institutions, by our own faithful adherence to its commandments.

The serious nature of the institution of *Zakat* has been made plain in the Qur-án, in words that almost strike terror in the hearts of a believer :

And woe to the polytheists, (to) those who do not give alms (*Zakat*) and they are unbelievers in the hereafter (41 : 6-7).

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