

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

—HOLY QUR-AN, 33 : 4.

"There will be no prophet after me."

—PROPHET MUHAMMAD.

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BY THE LIGHT OF THE HOLY QUR-AN

And this life of the world is nothing but a sport and a play and as for the next abode ; that most surely is the life : did they but know !

So when they ride in the ships they call upon Allah, being sincerely obedient to Him, but when He brings them safe to the land, lo ! they associate others (with Him).

Thus they become ungrateful for what We have given them, so that they may enjoy ; but they shall soon know.
—The Holy Qur-an, Chapter XXIX, vv. 64—66.

The Purport

Apparently sufficient and all-comprehensive, the system of cause and effect as operated by the human mind is most insecure and undependable at bottom. But for the mysterious watching and guarding of an invisible world, human life and comfort would have been well-nigh impossible on this planet. Generally unmindful of this reality, it is forced on our attention at critical moments of our life, when the means of the world and our own resources totally fail us, as for instance when we are on the high seas and our boat is overtaken by a storm. The utter undependability of everything material and human is brought home to us in the

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fullest force and we are transported at such moments to a world and a control that lies beyond this world of ours—a world that pre-exists our emergence into this world of matter, co-exists with and lends perfection to this world of ours and which awaits our passing out of this physical existence. To our great misfortune, however, we do not try to avail of these flashes of self-realisation and love to relapse into oblivion only too quickly. But whether or not we are inclined to open our eyes to the reality of things, they have perforce to be opened sometimes either by a general catastrophe in the world or at least at the point of death in the case of the individual man.

A DECLARATION

I, (Doctor) Ahmad Abdullah G. Sompek, of Frantiskovy Lazne (Czechoslovakia), do hereby faithfully and solemnly declare of my own free will that I worship One and Only Allah (God) alone; that I believe Muhammad to be His Messenger and Servant; that I respect equally all Prophets—Abraham, Moses, Jesus and others and that I will live a Muslim life by the help of Allah.

Lá Iláha Illa 'l-láh Muhammadun Rasūlu 'l-lāh.

(There is no god but Allah and Muhammad is His Messenger)

Dated 18th April 1947

A. A. GUSTAV SOMPEK.

IF—

BY MUHAMMAD SADIQ DUDLEY WRIGHT, PHIL. D., F. S. P.

A well-known historical writer has given to the world an interesting book on *The If's of History*, in which he speculates upon what might have happened if certain events had not taken place in the historical drama of the nations or if the principal actors in those dramas had failed to respond to the call or claim made upon them. Such excursions are, of course, purely fanciful, even fantastic, though they may form an interesting background to the novelist, for, at the best, one can only hazard that if the "Ifs" had been transformed into negative the results would have been directly opposite to what really occurred.

But instruction may be gained from curiosity if we extend the "Ifs" to a consideration of what might have happened had the Prophet Muhammad turned a deaf instead of a responsive ear to the call to apostleship which came to him through the angel Gabriel and delivered to him in the cave at Hira; and this can best be imagined by glancing at what were the immediate results of his mission. There are doubtless still some, though an ever diminishing number, who dispute the reality of that call and describe it as imaginative, if ever experienced. Such scepticism comes generally from those who do not find any reason for doubting the verity of the call to Samuel or even to Joan of Arc and to other saints in both pre-apostolic and post-apostolic times and therefore do not demand serious consideration. In Bernard Shaw's play *St. Joan* the following piece of dialogue occurs (the quotation is given from memory).

Squire: What do you mean—"your voices"?

Joan: I hear voices telling me what to do.

Squire: You fool. They come from your imagination.

Joan: Of course, that is how the voice of God comes to us.

But let us consider what were the first fruits of the labours of Muhammad's mission. It would require a good-sized volume to set one in detail the accomplishments of Islam in full down to the present day and so the consideration must be confined and summarized to the work of the Prophet himself. Again it would require a whole volume to set out in detail even the mass of testimony provided by non-Islamic, particularly Christian authorities, to the material beneficial effects of his labours. We will, therefore, be content with the testimony of a very recent witness—the Rev. Charles Winsland, who, writing in the *Church of England Newspaper* for April 3, 1947, takes what he terms "Mohammedanism" in his stride in a series of articles on "The Religions of India." After referring to Shakespeare's description of the Prophet as the "Prince of Darkness" and to Charles Wesley who described him as "a fiend," Mr. Winsland goes on to say:

But, we ask, was Muhammad a fiend? He was a man who uplifted thousands of ignorant savages from the abyss of ignorance and superstition. He was a man who purified those savage minds from awful customs of human sacrifice, the murder of female

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infants, blood feuds, drunkenness and wanton cruelty to slaves. He was a man who abolished polytheism in many lands and taught men to believe in One True God. Not very devilish it must be admitted. He was a prophet who taught men to pray to that One God with a courage and consistency that ought to bring a blush of shame to the cheek of many a Christian. He performed the miracle of getting gluttonous heathen to fast and to show more self-control over their appetites in one month than many Christians show in a lifetime. All this does not savour very much of Hell.

Later, in the same article, he says :

Arabia at this time was not a united nation. It was peopled by a number of wild nomadic tribes with no central organization. They were a united people only in the love of the four W's—Wine Women, Wit and War. Each tribe had its own god or set of gods. Religion generally was a debased form of nature worship: trees, springs, peculiar shaped stones and snakes were revered. All men lived in mortal dread of evil spirits called Jinns. Tribal warfare was frequent. The strongest tie was the tie of blood. If a man was killed in a fracas his fellow-tribesmen were bound to avenge him. So one slaughter led to another and feuds passed from generation to generation.

The result of the mission of Muhammad is summed up by Mr. Winsland in the following words :

The secret of the success and the strength of the whole movement was to be found in the *new unity* that this Arab inspired in his followers. The old tribal feuds had made for constant weakness. Now each Mohammedan was regarded as a brother. Daily that brotherhood grew in strength and numbers.

I think, however, Mr. Winsland has overlooked the principal reason for the success of Muhammad's mission. Was it not to be found in his undeviating trust in God and unquestioning obedience to the divine call? Like many men since his day—Jasmine, Raikes, Pound and a host of others, he set out in full obedience on a path the End of which was not in view. We cannot speculate on the question of what would have happened if he had not been obedient. We thank Allah that he was obedient. We only know that the purposes of Allah can never be frustrated by man's disobedience. The instruments He chooses are the instruments He wants and man may be forced into obedience as Jonah was or spurned because of a half-hearted response as were the Laodiceans, for the purposes of Allah will find complete accomplishment. Muhammad, from the human view-point, seemed a most

unlikely instrument for as stupendous a task ; he was a man unable to read or to write, but,

God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform.

Have you read the story of Genesius the Roman actor ? He went on to the stage one night with the intention of taking the principal part in a play he had himself written with the object of satirizing what was known as the New Faith. Instead, he became inspired to do the exact opposite and instead of satirizing the new faith he proclaimed himself a disciple. The step he took led to martyrdom but he was obedient to the divine call, even unto death.

It is not for mortals to pass criticism upon the nature or character of the particles woven by Allah into His wonderful mosaic. We know that they are varied in form and size and some may be very tiny but they all contribute brilliance, some great, some less. The mosaic is distinctly variegated and it would sometimes appear that the particles are antagonistic, one to another but perhaps, if and when we are permitted to examine the finished work we may discern a gradation of colour which is the basis of the beauty of the whole. One writer has given the following description of the sermon preached by John Henry Newman in his pre-Catholic days :

They are almost homely. They are like those miniatures one may see in antique missals, rich in colour. Wrought with infinite, because loving, care, almost childlike in their simplicity, pictures of holy men and women, of saints and martyrs but, beyond them and above, seem, perhaps, through the open window of a monk's cell the glories of some imagined other world with flights of angels ascending and descending. Such are these sermons. The theme and the treatment of them are so simple that a child, a farm-hand, a shop assistant might understand and profit by them ; yet so profound as to plumb the very depths of the human heart and beyond and around or, rather, suffusing them and shining through as through a tapestry woven with threads of gold or a picture wrought with hues of living light, is the glory and the mystery of the infinite.

We, doubtless, disagree strongly with Newman's theology but it is always well to remember the words of the poet :

God sends His teachers into every age.
To every clime and race of men,
With revelations fitted to their growth

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And shape of mind : nor gives the value of Truth
Into the selfish rule of one sole race ;
Therefore, each form of worship that hath swayed
The life of man and given it to grasp
The master-key of knowledge—reverence
Enfolds same germ of goodness and of right ;
Else never had the eager soul, which loathes
The slothful down of pampered ignorance,
Found in it a moment's fitful rest.

Each individual has a niche in the divine structure and Newman, who arrived at the conclusion that "these Mahomedans seem as good people as Catholics" also wrote at a later date :

The word "God" is a theology in itself, indivisibly One, inexhaustibly various, from the vastness and simplicity of its meaning. Admit God and you introduce among the subjects of your knowledge a fact encompassing, closing in upon, absorbing every other fact conceivable. How can we investigate any part of any order of knowledge and stop short of that which enter into every order? All true principles run over with it, all phenomena converge towards it, it is truly the First and the Last.

Though it is well that we should always be prepared to give a reason for the faith that is within us, our attention should be concentrated less upon the outside of the platter than upon its content. Islam lays particular stress upon the *practice* of the Faith, less upon speculative questions of theology and philosophy. It has no insoluble dogmas or doctrines that demand lengthy or intricate explanations. The Faith is both simple and profound. What is of greater personal concern than the question "what if Muhammad had not been obedient to the divine call?" is the question "Are *we* rendering obedience to the call of Allah?" and "How can we best follow in the footsteps of Muhammad?" Each has to supply a piece of mosaic or coloured glass to add to the beauty of the grand design, to demonstrate by our manner of living our complete submission to the Will of Allah. It can only be done by complete trust in Him. That is the crux and when we put it into practice or try to do so, we seem to take one step forward and slide back twice the distance. But we can never trust Allah too much. No cheque drawn on the Bank of Trust in Allah will ever be dishonoured. Allah's promises are always redeemed. The cause of Muhammad's success was his unbounded trust in the veracity of God.

POLITICAL SCIENCE & GOVERNMENT IN ISLAM

BY S. MAHMUDUR RAHMAN

(Continued from Vol. XXXV, p. 202)

Real unions, federations, confederations, united nations organisations, protectorates and other composite states, which are steadily coming into being as the love of freedom increases in intensity, are the examples of how we can decentralise and distribute the sovereign power of the state to meet the demands of our new consciousness in social life.

We have already seen that Islam propounded the theory of limited and divisible sovereignty many centuries before modern politics was born. Islam imposes clear limitations on the exercise of the sovereign will which the state derives from the willing acquiescence of its people in its authority in the interest of common good. In a sense the state is absolute and despotic, because it has the unfettered authority to issue commands and enforce obedience to them. Islam has tried to curb this absolute will of the state by drawing a clear line of demarcation between the will of the people and the Will of God. The Divine Will works in the form of stable and unalterable laws of God and we realise the importance of these laws when we find them act as effective checks on the arbitrary exercise of sovereignty possessed by the state. The Double Will principle works in a way that needs not to be confusing. The commands or laws which the state should pass in order to meet new circumstances must not be inconsistent with the divine laws. The history of the Early Caliphate tells us eloquently how the principle of two sovereign wills operated smoothly without leading to conflicts, confusion and misunderstanding.

Nationalism

"And all people are naught but a nation." "O you men! We have created you of a male and a female and made you tribes and families that you may know each other; surely the most

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honourable of you with God, is the one among you most careful of his duty.¹

In these words the Qur-ân clearly preaches the unity of mankind. The bond of spiritual affinity and sympathy that exists among different groups of mankind inhabiting different portions of the earth transcends geographical barriers and overshadows political and economic differences. Against this background of universal nationhood, Islam admits that mankind can be divided into nations conveniently for political and administrative purposes as well as for cultural and spiritual growth.

Political writers hold that ethnic and linguistic differences and scattered habitation in non-contiguous territories do not prevent a people being a nation provided that they develop the sentiment of unity in interests and ideals and the consciousness of being held together to attain certain common aims through their own independent political organisation. In contrast to this theory, now-a-days a school of politics stresses common political aspirations as the most important factor in the development of nationalism. Other factors such as community of religious feeling, a common heritage and common traditions in history and literature, common customs and habits are regarded by them as relatively unimportant.

Mankind naturally gets divided into groups according as various conditions of life and climate force them to, and Islam, as we have seen, gives the widest possible scope for their unhampered growth. If we act otherwise to upset nature's work, the theory of nationality becomes dangerous. Instances are not rare that the majority group advanced in cultural and political consciousness often attempts to engulf the religious, cultural and social interests and ideals of the minorities. In India to-day the Hindus uphold the theory that the various Indian communities, differing as they do in language, religion, ethnic origin, heritage, traditions, social ethics, customs and habits as widely as the poles asunder, are a nation simply because they inhabit the territory of seeming geographical unity.

¹ The Holy Qur-an, 49 : 13.

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It is not the definition of nation that really matters ; what really matters is what binds men together. Looked at from this angle of vision, geographical determination is merely of secondary importance. The qualities that make a nation are the real ties and bonds of affection and among these are reckoned a common literature, a common tradition or history, a common custom and a common consciousness of rights and wrongs which originate from the spiritual unity of religion. Affinity of customs and habits and religion generates common sympathies which make the people of a particular group co-operate with one another more willingly than with the people of other groups. Renan beautifully expresses the sentiment of nationality in the following lines :—

“It is not community of language and race which makes a people or nation, but the sentiment of a common heritage of memories, whether of achievement and glory or of suffering and sacrifice, together with the desire to live together in the same state and to transmit their heritage to their posterity.”

“A nation,” says Barnes,

“Is a culturally homogeneous social group which is at once conscious and tenacious of its unity of psychic life and expression.”

Thus Western political thinkers have most of them discarded extreme theories and widened their views so far as to call any homogeneous social group a nation. Turning to Islam we find that Muslims are a homogeneous social group, and by whatever criterion we may judge them, they are a nation with other such groups in the same state. The democracy of Islam, within its more liberal and larger bounds, allows the existence of self-determining nations in the same state on terms of mutual co-operation and agreement.

Much has been said on the two-nation theory in India and it will not be useless to add a few words to it. The Hindus attack the two-nation theory most violently. If we take them at their words, it is reasonable to think that they attach importance to imaginative values much more than to the values of fact and reality just as they speak of the liberal spirit of Hinduism, but keep sixty million human beings in an abject state of social degradation. They forget that, of all the various communities in India, none are so strongly conscious and tenacious of the unity of psychic life and expression as the Muslims. It is on

the strength of this unity that the Indian Muslims demand separate nationhood and consequent right of self-determination.

Lord Acton, one of the famous historians, advocates poly-national states. He says that in true democracy it is necessary that there should be more nations than one in a state. There is no democracy if a people having all the attributes of a nation is denied the right to determine their own position and exercise their own independent will. The majority-group in India refuses to accept this conception of democracy. But fortunately for the Muslims, the British politicians are gradually realising the fact of India's disunity, and attempts are no longer made to harmonise the diversities of Indian social and religious life by artificial means. Recently Professor Coupland has supported the Indian Muslims' claim to separate nationhood. In his opinion it will be a political blunder to try to apply majority rule to India which has more than one vigorous nation—in reality religious communities differing in language, literature, customs and habits and even political aims and aspirations. More harm than good is sure to come from the ignoring of this lack of spiritual sympathies and common consciousness in both social and political life. George Bernard Shaw, the greatest thinker of the present-day world, characterises the Muslim demand as rational and sees in it nothing that is detrimental to the interests of the major community or contrary to the notions of democracy of which he is a convinced supporter. Beverly Nichols, a keen observer who has studied Indian problems at close quarters, brings to clear light in his "Verdict on India," the inner contradictions of India's political unity as pictured in the Congress propaganda. He sees the Muslims, the Untouchables, the Sikhs, the Parsees, the Indian Christians and the Hindus—motley groups of humanity in the same land but very different in cultural ideologies and even in political aims. In his opinion, to try to huddle them all together in the same ship of the state is to cause it to sink. In Mr. Jinnah's words a "ramshackle arrangement like this will cause endless strife."

There is no good denying the fact that several well-defined nations co-exist in India, and that, considering their strongest and most rigid social structure, the

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Muslims, though numerically less than the Hindus, are the most powerful one. Even in the British Cabinet Mission's basic plan which outlines the future constitution of India, we find the British Government have realised this fact and have tried to do some justice to the Muslims. But the intransigence of the caste-Hindu Congress is understandable ; they want to have their own theory of one nation prevail—the theory which is nothing more and nothing less than a wild fancy.

Co-existence of many nations in the Muslim State.

Under the Early Caliphate, Muslims, Christians and Jews—all of them are nations clearly by political canons—lived side by side ; the Christians and the Jews were allowed to retain their distinct national entity. Caliph 'Umar followed a policy of non intervention with regard to them in so far as that policy did not clash with the greater interests of the state. Not only wide freedom was granted to them in all matters relating to their own language, culture, customs and habits, but also protection of their lives and property and of their places of worship was guaranteed. History tells us that in the province of Hims, the liberalism of the Arab rule allowed the non-Muslim subjects all possible rights and privileges. They were free in all respects except that a capitation tax was levied upon them under terms of agreement by which the Muslims were bound to protect their lives and properties, their churches and their culture. When the Muslims failed to defend Hims and it passed out of their possession, the whole amount of Jizia received from its inhabitants was returned.

Professor Muir, a critic of Islam and its history, cannot help admiring the spirit of toleration and compromise fostered by the early Caliphs. He quotes the words of a Nestorian bishop of the time, who says :

“These Arabs, to whom God has accorded in our days the dominion, are our masters, but they do not combat the Christian religion ; much rather they protect our faith, they respect our priests and our holy men and make gifts to our churches and our convents.”

The treaty of Jerusalem which Caliph 'Umar concluded with the Christian inhabitants shows how the Islamic

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law protects the rights of the other nations. The Muslim code of civil and criminal law was not applied to them except in cases of an intercommunal character ; they had their own church courts and judiciary to try cases according to their laws and customs. They enjoyed complete freedom of worship, culture and development under the jurisdiction of the church which embraced persons and things in their community. The Caliph retained the general administrative control, maintained peace and order and defended the country against foreign aggressions leaving other things to the communities themselves.

It is a well-known fact that in India Muslim despots reigned for over seven hundred years. Even under their despotic rule the Hindus were free to manage the internal affairs of their society. If the fundamental end of the state is to promote civilisation, then the Muslim rulers had every right to impose their advanced code of social laws upon the Hindu subjects, but they did not do so. They never tried to suppress idolatry, temple prostitution, the self immolation of the Suttee, human sacrifice, unlimited polygamy, untouchability and caste-system even though these are decidedly repugnant not only to Islam, but also to the laws of humanity and the notions of civilised government. On the contrary the Hindus enjoyed the perfect liberty of following their religion, keeping up their social institutions and making cultural and intellectual progress on the lines best approved by their conscience. There was not even an attempt to discredit Hindu religion and culture by pacific indoctrination such as has been going on since the first advent of the Western nations in India.

The Rights of Nationalities.

As already pointed out, Islam regards the community of religion as the main test of nationality. There is enough historical evidence to show that no force is so potent and strong as the religious feeling to bind people together and to intensify their desire to have their own organisations for social welfare. On the other hand all other characteristics of nationality are of minor importance. To the people who thus constitute a nationality, Islam accords the right of self-determination subject to certain

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well-defined conditions. We have already seen how the theory of divided sovereignty operates in a polynational state : all the nationalities exist, grow and develop and realise their best individually and collectively. They enjoy a large measure of autonomy and determine, according to their own will, the nature and functions of their institutions within certain limits rendered necessary, because the individual interests of the nationalities must not clash with the common interests of the state.

Since the World War of 1914, there has been a tremendous upsurge of nationalism. Any people with a semblance of national feeling has begun to demand the right to establish an independent state of their own. Many European and American politicians are of the opinion that true democracy requires such rights to be recognised with a view to widening human liberties. President Wilson goes so far as to say that :

"Self-determination is not a mere phase, it is an imperative principle of action which statesmen will henceforth ignore at their peril."

Although modern notions of democracy find the best expression in the words of Wilson, the practical difficulty in applying this theory is very great. Hence Islam carves out a middle path in order to reconcile the rights and claims of different nationalities. Consistent with this idea, Islam definitely rules out the unitary state—the state in which every nationality is subject to one central administrative machinery. What Islam really prescribes for politically and socially conscious groups in the state is that they should have an autonomy in the administration of their local affairs, but that all such groups or nationalities should be federated into a central union with jurisdiction over affairs of common interests such as defence, peace and order, adjudication of disputes between groups, trade and commerce, transport and communication.

We need to consider the difficulties that may arise from the federation of nationalities which vary from one another in degree as regards their notions and ideals of civilisation. There may be uncivilised and semi-civilised nationalities along with those who are highly advanced. Civilisation is largely a matter of social culture which ordinarily falls within the jurisdiction of federating units.

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Since the end of the state organisation is to elevate humanity, the problem does not seem to be so easy of solution. As each of the constituent units of the central union is free to have its own way, the consequent difference will surely retard collateral progress and development. But we should bear in mind that all men cannot make progress at the same speed ; some are rapid and others slow. This is the law of nature everywhere, and true to this natural law Islam advocates the policy of moral persuasion rather than coercion in the eradication of social evils as well as in the inculcation of higher ideals. The influence of the nationality, intellectually and culturally superior, permeates the inferior nationalities in thousand and one subtle and imperceptible ways and raises them gradually in the scale of cultivated citizenship.

Take the case of India where Hindus and Muslims—two well-organised nations—live side by side, but accuse each other of having been an obstruction to the progress of the other. The Hindus who are in the majority naturally feel that by virtue of mere numerical strength they alone are entitled to shape the destiny of the country. Since such an absolute majority domination must be contrary to the modern ideas of democratic constitution the Muslims are opposing it tooth and nail and hence they are called obstructionists. If the Hindus mean to break their archaic social structure and remove the disabilities and inhumanities heaped upon the Depressed Classes and Hindu womanhood, if by progress they mean the abolition of invidious caste system and the giving of equal rights and status to every member of their community, they come nearer to Islam and it is hard to think how the Muslims stand in the way of their progress. It is, however, doubtful if the Hindus want progress of this kind at all. It is naturally suspected that what they really want is to establish the rule of Hindu capital and capture all the material rewards of freedom from the foreign yoke. Under such conditions, in those areas where the Muslims are more numerous than the Hindus, they demand self-governing rights. According to the Islamic sense of justice, the Hindus will have their own ways of life, and there is no need to impose anything upon them because the irresistible forces of modern civilisation will make them realise that it is good for them to reform and recast

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their social and religious life which is so out of date and antiquated. The natural interaction of forces and influences is more powerful than the state-legislation which often provokes opposition and evasion.

The Caliphate was, as we all know, not a unitary state. The vast Arab dominion which grew and expanded after the demise of the Holy Prophet and under his four successors included many semi-independent states and protectorates which were entirely free except in matters of defence, order and security for which the Caliph was responsible.

Theocratic Republican Form of State.

It has already been made clear that one of the fundamental principles of Islamic polity is that the sovereignty of a state is vested partly in God and partly in the people. The Holy Qur-án says :

“And their government is by counsel among themselves.”¹

This bifurcation of sovereignty makes it difficult to determine the category in which the Islamic state should be included. Among political theorists there exists considerable difference of opinion on the principle of classification of states. The Aristotelian classification which is regarded as most scientific by certain political writers has of late been discarded as it is likely to be confused with the classification of government. Jellinek's classification of states into monarchy and republic, according as the sovereign power, rests in a single person or in a group of persons is more logical because it gives a criterion whereby one state can be distinguished from another.

All these, however, fail to help us classify the state from the Islamic point of view. It is paradoxical to speak of theocratic Republic, because theocracy is a state in which the sovereign will rests with God, or a superhuman being or the vicegerent of God ; it is a form of monarchy absolute or limited, whereas the republic, as already said, is the state in which the sovereignty rests with the mass of people composing the state. Although theocracy and republic are opposites, yet in Islam we find a curious blending of the two forms and the form of state which corresponds to the Islamic model is called theocratic Republic.

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The Islamic state is theocratic, because the executive head, even if he is elected by the mass of people, is the vicegerent of Allah and governs the country by the law and jurisprudence contained in the Qur-án. Like an ordinary king he has no physical will, supreme and independent. He must bow to the will of God as well as to the will of the people expressed through the legislative organ of the state. The will of the people is exercised in the election of the Caliph or the President, who has the right to command obedience from them so long as he obeys God and His Prophet and rules the country in conformity to the wishes of the people, which of course must not conflict with the wishes of God. This conception makes the state democratic beyond the shade of doubt, because the body politic of the state have the constitutional right to voice their likes and dislikes in the selection of their executive head as also of their representatives for the formulation and execution of law.

(To be continued).

ISLAM AND JESUS¹

BY MRS. NADIRA FLORENCE IVES-OSMAN (NEW YORK)

(Continued from Vol. XXVIII, p. 470)

B. THE FATHERHOOD OF GOD

In the preceding chapter, we were concerned with New Testament statements that Jesus was "the only-begotten Son" of his heavenly father: how few realise the same description was also applied in the New Testament to Isaac, with regard to his earthly parent, Abraham; "Abraham offered up his only begotten Son".²

But Genesis has already informed us, in several places, that Abraham had other sons beside Isaac who was, instead, his second child. It is quite clear, that this statement made in the "Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Hebrews" was not based upon accuracy. It can be pleaded that in Genesis 22:2, it is declared that Isaac was

¹ We are sorry the series was interrupted by the war—Ed. I. R.

² Hebrew 11:17

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Abraham's "only" Son. Dramatic justice later singled out a descendant of Judah, in return for the obscuring of the rights of another, by other Jewish historians. Towards the end of their term, as a Jewish state, assertions were thrust upon Jesus, that he was Jehovah's "only begotten Son" The Qur-án declares :

"And the Jews and the Christians say: "We are the sons of Allah and His beloved ones. Say: Why does He then chastise you for your faults? Nay, you are mortals from among those whom He has created; He forgives whom He pleases and chastises whom He pleases." ¹

To those sincere persons who feel it a crushing blow to their most cherished sentiments not to regard Jesus as *the* divine Son of his Father, may they not also be consoled with the thought that Jesus may still be spoken of as *a* son of God, even as it inspired and consoled the ancient Hebrew prophets, long before the time of Jesus a dangerous, poetic description, we must admit, which has brought upon the world, today, a tragic chain of events.

Those who should have known better, have frequently claimed that Jesus brought a revelation of the "fatherhood of God" far in advance of previous Hebrew conceptions. They have urged us to believe that the Israelites worshipped a tribal deity, named Jehovah, who was little better than a tyrant and could only be placated from fear,—and this despite that most tender of religious documents, the 23rd psalm, which is still one of the most cherished of Christian possessions. One of the misconceptions partly responsible for this distrust of Jehovah by Christians, is the misunderstanding of the principle of sacrifice, with which Jehovah is so closely associated in their minds. The intention was never present, that a sacrifice should mollify an angry god: rather the principle that lay behind it was the purification of the human soul by the relinquishment of property, as is so clearly demonstrated in the Qur-án. The greater part of the Jewish offering went to those in charge of the temple, to be used as food for themselves or for the poor. Even the "Old Testament" declared that to do justice is more acceptable than sacrifice, (Ps. 21:3) (1. Sam. 15: 22),

¹ The Holy Qur-án 5: 18

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and in Leviticus 7:12, the people were instructed to "offer sacrifice of thanksgiving". In the Qur-án, the principle of sacrifice has been applied for a commercial people, rather than for an agricultural, as it was in the time of the Hebrews. It was revealed to Moses that mere sorrow for misdeeds was not enough:

If ye will obey my voice, indeed, and keep my covenant, ye shall be a peculiar treasure with me, above all people: for all the earth is mine. And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests and an holy nation."¹

The rite of sacrifice represented the individual, and so it has been continued in Islam. Another outstanding injustice has been done, by certain scholars, in their association of the name Jhwh (or its Latinized form, Jehovah), exclusively with the process of nation-building. It is true that this name of God was first revealed to Moses, according to Biblical account, during the vision given him on Mount Horeb, (Ex. 3:4-15), and we are told that it had been previously unknown (Ex. 6:2, 3). It is, of course, understood, or it should be, that the various names by which the Deity spoke to the Hebrews, did not involve the splitting of the Personality.

The best explanation of the meaning of "Jhwh" is "He lives" or "He is", for the verb has been given in the 3rd person, singular. However, in Exodus 3:14, the verbal name of God has been expressed in the first person, singular: "I am". In both forms, the names are indicative of the Living God, the source of Life. It is the solemn declaration of Being, from which proceeds the constructive might of God's power, which cannot be hindered. No doubt, it had special reference to the coming to life, again, of the Hebrew people, lost and enslaved and without nationhood, under the Egyptian yoke, as God is the "Living" and the Giver of Life, to men and to nations. This same analogy, with regard to nations, appeared in later Hebrew prophecy. The Qur-án refers to this matter in 2:258:

"Have you not considered him who disputed with Abraham about his Lord, because Allah had given him the kingdom? When Abraham said, "My Lord is He who gives life..."":

And in the next verse (2:258) reference is made to Ezekiel's vision (Ezekiel 37), where a promise was given to

¹ Ex. 19:5, 6.

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Ezekiel that life would again be given to the waste places. So, in Islam even today, Allah is known under the name "Al Hayy" (the Living). The Divine Being has used this solemn declaration of being to His favoured one, in many languages. Those who can only look to the definition of "love" as the description of Deity, who cannot enjoy and appreciate other Phases of Reality and Godhead, which are differentiated to us as through a prism, can only be compared to one who prefers his favourite colour to dye all flowers.

With the application of actual fatherhood to God with regard to the human species, and the rebirth of the initiate into the spiritual family of the Church, it was but natural that asceticism should be a logical development out of the contemplation of life. This same process can be witnessed in other religious systems, as with Buddhism, where the desire to become a "Buddha", is the equivalent of the Christian desire to possess the "mind of Christ". But this objective, in its ultimate expression, releases the aspirant from the ties of family life, removing him to that sphere alleged to be superior, of cosmic relationships, to be found more perfectly in a monastery or nunnery. Thus the more spiritually-minded young men and women, born amidst such ascetic systems, have been led away from the state where they might have patterned the most elevated examples of noble living and of parenthood, to pursue lives of rigid self-denial, in many instances, but without leaving behind them patterns of life itself, well-lived. Only those few unable to enter cloister or monastery, from force of circumstances, or who have not felt themselves to be "good" enough, have remained without, with the disastrous result that unmarried women have far outnumbered the men, for maternal instincts are usually cultivated more in female children, than is the cultivation of the paternal, in the male. Thus the whole tone of family life has tended to be lowered. In a Buddhistic country like Japan, the family religion of Confucianism has been the balancing wheel, with the result that strong and spiritual values were attributed to the home.

Certain Christian "metaphysicians" have gone even further, to advise us that as we are indebted to Jesus for that intimate approach to God, so we should be grateful

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to Mary Baker Eddy, their "leader", for her revelation of the "motherhood" of God: "Our Father-Mother God", they pray, or rather "affirm". But this statement has no more of a basis of truth than the former one. The deification of the "mother principle", was also a part of Hinduism, where the Divine Manifestation as the "Mother" is worshipped in "Kali"; and in Buddhism, where a Bodhisatva appears as the "Compassionate Mother", or "Kwannon"; even in "Catholicism", maternal protection is sought with the "Mother of God", Mary. We find that in each of these religions or sects, asceticism is at its core, a state in which the abstract ideal of beneficent womanhood takes its place, a phenomenon not to be found outside of ascetic faiths, even though goddesses are met with in polytheistic religions. Christian Science thus is seen to have more in common with Catholicism than with Protestantism, as asceticism underlies its theory, while it looks, in all other matters besides sex, to material success.

Another later phase of Christian evolution may be observed in those countries where the threat of matriarchalism has been real enough as to have been commented upon freely, notably in the United States. The so-called "emancipation" of women originated in Europe, among freethinkers. It was first advanced by Plato in his "Republic" although in his later life he repudiated it. The "freedom of women" gained its great momentum in the United States, notably under Christian auspices, receiving strong, initial support with the "Young Women's Christian Association". The realisation of God, eclipsing the outline in their minds, by respectable and sincere Christian women, of their own fathers, contributed much towards their self assertion, partly as the result of the jumbled, unhappy, racial and cultural pattern in many parts of the country, that made spinsterhood almost inevitable. Thus their minds were directed to fields of material accomplishment. This now forms the backbone of the Communist system, somewhat resembling the old Spartan state of ancient Greece.

As the more metaphysical forms of Christianity played the predominating role in the sustaining of the women, pioneers in the fields of careers, as they emerged from their state of dependency, a by-product was the

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loss in prestige of the actual male parent. Devoted to the Heavenly Father, the role of the earthly one passed in obscurity, and the more decadent the civilization, the more rapidly did the change manifest itself. The result has been the destruction of the balance of the sexes, rather than increase in the equilibration. The girls of the younger generation no longer look to mystic consolation, but rather are trained in school to face a dual role in life, at the very outset, which includes marriage, home-making, and the career. The result indicates a loss of physical strength, not only in themselves but in their offspring.

Attempts towards readjustment have been made but without the living religious inspiration. Efforts are being made, in many quarters, in the United States, to bring about happier family adjustments and to reinstate the Father of the family in a more appealing role. As the fundamental duties and privileges of the relationship are not restored, disequilibrium and disharmony must continue.

The Qur-án, while casting full light upon the treacherous shoals of the confounding terms of fatherhood, leads us to a logical conclusion as to the vital significance of that state to which a Divine Relationship may only superficially be compared: and it also strikes, at the same time, at another growing evil among us, modern methods of legal adoption:

"God has not made those whom you assert to be your sons, your real sons: these are the words of your mouths. . . Assert their relationship to their fathers . . . But if you do not know their fathers, then they are your brethren in faith, and your friends."¹

THE WAY OF LIFE

BY WILLIAM BASHYR-PICKARD

Of Truth

Having entered upon the Way, we are progressing and our progress undoubtedly is towards some end. We have some goal before us. There is something ahead which attracts us and impels us hopefully forward. 'That

¹ The Holy Qur-án 33 : 4, 5

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something undoubtedly is God. That something undoubtedly is Truth. God indeed is Truth ; and finding Truth, instantaneously we find God.

This knowledge that god is Truth is a tremendous help to us in our search and an infallible criterion to us of what we must hold fast and of what we must eschew.

The reality of the universe is God, and this reality we must seek, we must find, we must dwell in and we must rejoice in.

Let us, therefore, at once as a first step turn aside from everything that we know is false. Let us make a clean sweep of all outworn fancies, of all pleasantly deluding dreams, of all wished-for refashionings of fact, and let us face reality ; let us love reality !

Our attitude of mind must be, not, 'is it pleasant or comforting to believe this ?' not 'do we want things to be like this ?' but, 'is this true ? are things actually like this ?'

Truth indeed is the only foundation on which we can build with any assurance of ultimate satisfaction.

Read the Qur-án, and how many gems of truth will you find in your perusal ! One of the names of God is Al-Haqq (The Truth). Let us quote a few versets :

"Who is more unjust than he who utters a lie against God and and he who gives the lie to the truth !"

"The truth has come and falsehood has vanished ; surely falsehood is a vanishing thing."

And what is truth ? Should we not proclaim the truth that God is One, All-embracing, that we dwell in Him and that He (whether recognized or unrecognized) dwelleth in each one of us ? So verily in the deepest truth are we thus each and all truly brothers.

Let us therefore abandon our partial affection and realize, wherever we move or in whatever activity we may be engaged, 'This man is my brother : this woman is, with me, bearer of the light divine.'

¹ The Holy Qur-án XXIX : 32.

² *Ibid.* XVII : 81.

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But it may be urged: "This is a difficult saying, and we know not how to accept it. There are the good; there are the bad; there are the spiritually indifferent, the spiritually dead. Can God be also with them?"

In reply let me state: "The good and the bad and the slothfully indifferent are human beings, of the same creation and endowed with the same possibilities of emergence into the divine."

How can this be?

The good recognize God and follow His pathway, striving therein. The bad turn away from God, yet God is still there dwelling within them, in no wise to be ejected except with life itself. The indifferent are merely not God conscious, yet God dwelleth in them also.

This is the great bond, the great hope for humanity, that he who liveth hath God and, would he but lay hold on God, would emerge from the darkness of flesh into the radiance of the light of the Spirit.

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. Consider the Quranic versets:

"Surely those who prefer the lie against God shall not prosper."¹

"Avoid the uncleanness of idols and avoid false words."²

"O you who believe! be maintainers of justice, bearers of witnesses for God's sake, though it may be against your own selves or your parents or near relatives . . . and if you swerve or turn aside, God is surely aware of what you do."³

.

Now just why should we be so insistent upon truth and the all-importance of truth?

How many answers might we find to this one question! Verily, they are innumerable as the sands of the sounding sea-shore, as the drops of the plashing ocean, as the leaves of the green and quiet forest. If we give a few answers, a thousand will remain. Nevertheless let us give these few.

Truth is the foundation of the universe. Truth is the one reality—the one thing which cannot fail. But falsehood is a vanishing thing, a quicksand, a shadow that flitteth deceptively. If we assert the truth, we can

¹ The Holy Qur'an XVI : 116.

² *Ibid.* XXII : 30.

³ *Ibid.* IV : 135.

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be steadfast and need not shift our ground. If falsehood cometh from our mouth or heart, to what myriad devices must we afterwards have recourse to make that false seem true. Thereby in the attempt we make our minds crooked in invention and we open the door upon a hundred fears lest that false be found and we ourselves be made ashamed openly (for already we are ashamed inwardly).

Truth also is beauty and gives a delight that satisfies. Remember Keats' words:

"Beauty is truth, truth beauty.

That is all ye know—or need to know."

Truth goeth in the glory of the sunshine and feareth not. But untruth and deceit creep like cowards, seeking the cloak of obscurity and desiring darkness that they may not be found.

Truth is one, even as God is one. But falsehood is like a buzzing swarm of pestilential flies or twilight-fluttering bats.

Truth giveth peace and leadeth to life eternal. Falsehood stumbleth unsteadily, need many inventions to prevent her fall. Her existence is torment continually and her end open shame.

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Remember the Qur-án, where it says :

"As for those who say, Our Lord is God, then continue in the right way, the angels descend upon them, saying : 'Fear not, nor be grieved, and receive good news of the garden which you were promised.

"We are your guardians in this world's life and in the hereafter, and you shall have therein what your souls desire and you shall have therein what you ask for :

"An entertainment by the Forgiving, the Merciful."

"And who speaks better than he who calls to God while he himself does good, and says : I am surely of those who submit ?

"And not alike are good and evil. Repel (evil) with what is best, when lo ! he between whom and you was enmity would be as if he were a warm friend.

"And none are made to receive it but those who are patient and none are made to receive it but those who have a mighty good fortune."¹

¹ The Holy Qur'an XLI : 30-35.

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And of the Qur-án itself :

"Most surely it is a Mighty Book.

"Falsehood shall not come to it from before it nor from behind it: a revelation from the Wise, the Praised One." ¹

As God is Truth, our religion must be one of truth. It will not do to say: "This is not our religion, therefore this is not true, therefore we will have none of this."

No, of a surety, but rather must we now say in whatever place we have recognized a truth: "This indeed is true and belongs to the truth, therefore this must be a part of our religion, which, being the truth, embraces all truth. Let us welcome this aspect of truth and give it due consideration."

Thus we shall find that all religious truth, all economic truth, all social truth, all personal truth and all scientific truth is but a part, and an ineradicable part, an indissoluble part, of the completeness of our religion of truth.

Verily, God is Truth. (*Alhamdu lilláhi-l Haqq!*)

So we shall find that our religion, even Islam, being submission to the will of God, is an inexhaustible treasure-house of truth, of the ramifications of which, of the scintillating gems of which, of the myriad unfading delights of which, we, perchance, as yet are unaware.

Yea, for eternal truth holdeth an eternal joy, which fadeth not.

Let us become more aware: let us increase our knowledge: let us increase the extent of our abiding delight!

Let us turn to the Qur-án and read again these versets of truth:

"Man is in loss . . . except those who enjoin truth upon one another." ²

And,

"God will say: This is the day when their truth shall

¹ The Holy Qur'an, XLI : 41-42.

² *Ibid.*, CIII : 23.

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benefit the truthful ones; they shall have gardens beneath which rivers flow to abide in them for ever. God is well pleased with them and they are well pleased with God, this is the mighty achievement."¹

And also:

"O you who believe! be careful of your duty to God and be with the truthful ones."²

And reflect upon the versets:

"Now surely to God belongeth what is in the heavens and the earth; now surely God's promise is true, but most of them do not know.

"He gives life and causes death and to him you shall be brought back."³

"And you are not engaged in any affair, nor do you recite concerning it any portion of the Qur-ân, nor do you do any work, but we are witnesses over you when you enter into it, and there does not lie concealed from your Lord the weight of an atom in the earth or in the heaven, nor anything less than that nor greater, but it is in a clear book.

"Now surely the friends of God, they shall have no fear nor shall they grieve.

"Those who believe and guard against evil.

"They shall have good news in this world's life and in the hereafter; there is no changing the words of God; that is the mighty achievement."

So, as we love God, we shall love the truth. So, as we fear God, we shall fear and respect the truth. So, too, as we have put our trust in God, we shall unflinchingly put our trust in the truth. In God can we rest: in nothing else can we rest secure but in the very truth.

We shall not, with ingenuity and much effort, seek to bolster up some pleasant-seeming structure of inherent falsehood or finely cloaked essential untruth, which could bring us nothing but a temporary and uneasy happiness.

Nay, we shall accommodate ourselves to what in our hearts we discern as truth, even though that truth accord not with our wayward desires and our fond wishes.

Yea, that is the very way. Commence at the foundation of the truth in our heart and build upwards;

¹ The Holy Qur'an V : 119. ² *Ibid.*, IX : 119. ³ *Ibid.*, X : 55-56.

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not, from love of fancied delights and things seeming pleasurable, build downwards and with unstable props of falsehood seek to wrest awry the true foundation.

An ounce of truth is worth a mountain of falsehood. If we have the ounce, we can well dispense with the crumbling mountain of deception.

Again we have recourse to the Qur-án, and we read :
"And God will show the truth to be the truth by His words, though the guilty may be averse to it."¹

And,

"Therefore to God is due all praise, the Lord of the heavens and the Lord of the earth, the Lord of the worlds.

"And to Him belongs greatness in the heavens and the earth, and he is the Mighty, the Wise."²

And,

"Say : Praise be to God and peace on His servants whom He has chosen : is God better, or what they associate with Him ?

"Nay, He it is, Who created the heavens and the earth and sent down for you water from the cloud : then We cause to grow thereby beautiful gardens : it is not possible for you that you should make the trees thereof to grow. Is there a god with God ? Nay, they are a people who deviate.

"And He it is, Who made the earth a resting-place, and made in it rivers and raised on it mountains, and placed between the two seas a barrier. Is there a god with God ? Nay, most of them do not know !

And, He it is, Who answers the distressed one when he calls upon Him and removes the evil, and He will make you successors in the earth. Is there a god with God ? Little is it that you mind !"³

Verily indeed, what is better than truth ? and in what else can a man or a woman put their trust ?

The establishment of the universe, the remote ages of the past, the expansive present and the wide-waiting future alike are fixed in truth. What greater joy can come to a man than to be a living particle of truth ?

"And the truthful men and the truthful women—God has prepared for them protection and a mighty reward."⁴

Praise be to God, the Truth !

¹ The Holy Qur-a'n X : 82.

³ *Ibid.*, XXVII : 59-62.;

² *Ibid.*, XLV : 36-37.

⁴ *Ibid.*, XXXIII : 35.

JESUS, SON OF MARY HIS BIRTH AND DEATH

BY KHWAJA NAZIR AHMAD

(Continued from Vol. XXXV, p. 214)

Some Fundamental Quranic Principles

In considering the various verses of the Holy Qur'an we should not ignore the rules of interpretation, which I have already discussed,¹ I nor indeed should we overlook the fundamental and basic principles laid down by the Holy Qur'an itself. I will confine myself here to some of these basic principles which are relevant to the subject under discussion.

I. All Prophets of God (including Jesus) were human beings.

Says the Holy Qur'an :

And We did not send before you (Muhammad) any but men to whom We had sent revelation. And We did not make their bodies not eating the food, and neither were they to abide (for ever).²

All Prophets according to the Holy Qur'an were, therefore, human beings, with human bodies. The reformation of men, according to the Holy Qur'an, was entrusted to men, because a man only could serve as a model for mankind. The Holy Qur'an asserts in the clearest possible terms that men only, to whom God revealed His will, were sent as His Messengers, and supports his assertion by pointing out that all Prophets did require and eat food and that they did not live for ever. In response to a question : " What ! has Allah raised up a mortal to be an apostle ? " The Holy Prophet is made to reply :

Say : Had there been in the earth angels walking about as settlers, We would have sent down to them from heaven an angel as Messenger.³

In another place the Holy Qur'an states that Noah was sent from amongst themselves,⁴ that is from

¹ *Islamic Review*, November, 1945.

² The Holy Qur'an, XXI: 7, 8.

³ The Holy Qur'an XVII: 95.

⁴ *Ibid*, XXII: 32.

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amongst his tribesmen, and it is recorded that the chiefs of his tribes while addressing their people raised a similar objection :

This (Noah) is nothing but a mortal like yourselves, eating of what you eat from and drinking of what you drink.¹

Again, Pharaoh and his chiefs also objected to Moses and Aaron in the same terms :

What ! shall we believe in two mortals like ourselves, while their people serve us.²

After referring to these incidents and while speaking of the various Prophets of God as mortals, the Holy Qur'án introduces Jesus in verse 50 of the same chapter. The Book, in many other places also, asserts the humanity, and challenges the divinity, of Jesus. Thus we read :

The Messiah, son of Mary, is but an apostle ; apostles before him have indeed passed away, and his mother was a truthful woman, *they both used to eat food*. See how We make the communications clear to them (the Christians), then behold, they are turned away.³

The prayer of Jesus : " Give us this day our daily bread " ⁴ is alluded to in the Holy Qur'án in the following terms :

Jesus, son of Mary, said : O Allah our Lord ! send down to us food...and grant us means of subsistence and Thou art the Best of providers.⁵

This verse also proves that Jesus was not the son of God or an incarnation of God, for he felt the necessity of asking for food for his very subsistence.

II. All Prophets of God (including Jesus) were servants of God.

Says the Holy Qur'án :

And We did not send before thee any messenger but We revealed to him that there is no God but Me, therefore serve Me. And they say : the Beneficent God has taken to Himself a son ; glory be to Him ! Nay, they (the Prophets) are *honoured servants*. They do not precede Him in speech and (only) according to His commandments do they act.⁶

To emphasize that Jesus was not a son of God, the Holy Qur'án speaks of him as one of the Messengers of

¹ The Holy Qur-an, XXXIII: 33.

² *Ibid.*, XXIII: 47.

³ *Ibid.*, V: 75. This seems decidedly to point to Matthew, XI: where Jesus is spoken of as a man who came eating and drinking.

⁴ Matt., VI: 11.

⁵ The Holy Qur-an, V: 114.

⁶ *Ibid.*, XXI: 25-27.

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God,¹ an *apostle and a servant of God* and makes the position perfectly clear in the following words :

O followers of the Book ! Do not exceed the limits in your religion, and do not speak (lies) against Allah, but (speak) the truth ; the Messiah, Jesus son of Mary, is only an apostle of Allah and His word which He communicated to Mary and an inspiration from Him. Believe, therefore, in Allah and His Apostle and say not Three. Desist it is better for you ; Allah is only One ; far be it from His glory that He should have a son ; whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth is His, and Allah is Sufficient for a Protector.²

Again :

Certainly they disbelieve who say, Surely Allah is the third (person) of the Three : and there is no god but One God ; and if they desist not from what they say, a painful chastisement shall befall those among them who disbelieve. The Messiah, son of Mary, is (naught) but an apostle.³

And again :

And when a description of the son of Mary is given, lo ! your people raise a clamour thereat...he, was naught but a servant, on whom We bestowed favour and We made him an example for the children of Israel.⁴

Then certain sayings of Jesus are recorded :

He (Jesus) said : Surely, I am a servant of Allah. He has given me the book and made a Prophet.⁵

And finally :

When Allah will say : O Jesus, son of Mary : did you say to men : Take me and my mother for two gods besides Allah, he will say : Glory be to Thee, it did not befit (me) that I should say what I had no right to (say) ; if I had said, Thou wouldst indeed have known. Thou knowest what is in my mind, and I do not know what is in Thy mind. Surely Thou art the Great Knower of the unseen things, I did not say aught save what Thou didst enjoin me with : That serve Allah, my Lord and your Lord : and I was a witness of them so long as I was among them but when Thou didst cause me to die, Thou wert the Watcher over them, and Thou art Witness of all things.⁶

Thus the Holy Qur'an proclaims that Jesus was a man, a human being who ate and drank and was a mortal, who did die. The Book points out these facts to refute his divinity.

¹ The Holy Qur'an, IV : 163.

² *Ibid.*, V : 73-75.

³ *Ibid.*, XIX : 30.

⁴ *Ibid.*, IV : 171.

⁵ *Ibid.*, XLIII : 57-59.

⁶ *Ibid.*, V : 116-117.

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III. *The Law of Procreation.*

The Holy Qur'ân repeatedly points out that the Law of Procreation is the union of a male and a female of the same species, that there is no exception to this rule and that, therefore, the Universal Creator in His All-Wisdom created pairs of all species. Says the Holy Qur'ân :

Glory be to Him Who created pairs of all things, of what the earth grows, and of their kind and of what they do not know.¹

And He Who created pairs of all things.²

And of everything We have created pairs that you may be mindful³

In these verses the word used is either *zaujain* or *azwajan*. These words signify kinds, species or pairs. In these verses it is, therefore, asserted that the vegetation, the minerals, the animals, the human beings, the entire creation was made in pairs. It was only in the beginning of this century that the researches of great scientists proved that all vegetation, plants and trees included, had two kinds: males and females. But the Holy Qur'ân had disclosed this fact some thirteen hundred years ago in the following terms :

And of the fruits He has placed it in pairs (male and female).⁴

Again :

Then We have brought forth species of various vegetation.⁵

Dealing with animals, the Holy Qur'ân says :

And (of) beasts and cattle are various species of it likewise.⁶

The Originator of the heavens and the earth : He made mates for you from among yourselves, and mates of the cattle too.⁷

Dealing with the creation of mankind the Holy Qur'ân states the same principle in very clear terms The Book says :

O ye men ! surely We have created you of a male and a female and made you tribes and families that you may know each other⁸

And We created you in pairs.⁹

¹ The Holy Qur'a'n, XXXVI : 36.

² *Ibid.*, XLIII : 12.

³ *Ibid.*, LI : 49.

⁴ *Ibid.*, XIII : 3.

⁵ *Ibid.*, XX : 54; Translation by Hafiz Ghulam Sarwar.

⁶ *Ibid.*, XXXV : 28.

⁷ *Ibid.*, XLV : 11

⁸ *Ibid.*, XLIX : 13.

⁹ *Ibid.*, LXXXVIII : 6.

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And that He it is Who created (you) in pairs ; the male and the female, from the small life-germ when it is transmitted (into the womb).¹

Then He made of him two kinds, the male and the female.²

And Allah created you of dust, then of the life-germ, then He made you (in) pairs.³

And among His signs is this, that He created for you mates from among yourselves.⁴

The law of procreation is made still clearer in the following verse :

And God makes for you mates from among your own selves and through your mates He gives you sons and grandsons.⁵

This verse, and also the one I will next quote, refers to 'the wonderful mystery of sex. Children are born out of the union of sexes. And it is always the female sex that brings forth the offspring, whether male or female. And the father is as necessary as the mother for bringing forth children. This is explained thus :

And it is He Who has brought you into being from a single kind, then there is *a resting place* and *a depository* : indeed We have made plain the communications for a people who understand.⁶

This verse refers to our creation from *a single kind*. The word used is *nafs* ; which means a soul, or a thing, or an essence, or a kind. The learned authors of *Taj-al-'Arūs*, *Tafsir-i-Kabir* and *Bahr-ul-Muhit* explain this word as signifying *Min Jinsihā*—of the same kind. The Arabic words which have been translated as *a resting place* and *a depository* in the verse are *Mustaqarr* and *Mustauda'* respectively. The *Imam* Asir-ud-Dīn Abu 'Abdullah Muḥammad bin Yusuf bin Abu Hayyān who flourished (654-754 A.H.) in Cordova, in Spain, explains in his well-known commentary, *Bahr-ul-Muhit*, that these words respectively mean *the loins of the father and the womb of the mother*,⁷ and thus these words really stand for a male and a female.

It is evident, therefore, that according to the Holy Qur'ān no procreating is possible without the male and

¹ The Holy Qur-a'n, LIII : 45-46.

² *Ibid.*, LXXV : 39.

³ *Ibid.*, XXXV : 11.

⁴ *Ibid.*, XXX : 21. See also VI : 1.

⁵ *Ibid.*, XVI : 72. Translation by Hafiz Ghulam Sarwar.

⁶ *Ibid.*, VI : 99

⁷ Abu Hayyan, *Bahr-ul-Muhit*, Vol IV : 188.

JESUS SON OF MARY

the female agencies. The Holy Qur'ân lays so much stress on this Law of Procreation that it advances this very Law as an argument to refute the Divine sonship of Jesus :

And they falsely attribute to Him sons and daughters without knowledge: Glory be to Him, and highly exalted is He above what they ascribe (to Him). Wonderful Originator of the heavens and the earth. *How could He have a son when He has no consort?* and (He) Himself created everything and He is the Knower of all things.¹

Again :

And that He—exalted be the Majesty of your Lord—has not taken a consort, nor a son.²

The Holy Qur'ân does not leave the matter here. It refers to the uniting of the male and the female, to the intermingling of the male spermatozoon with the female ovum neither of which can be fertilised without the other. The Book then refers to the development of this admixture in the womb. In the following verses the word *nuṭfa* has been translated as *life-germ*, but it really signifies the male sperm. Says the Holy Qur'ân :—

Does not man see that We have created him from a small life-germ?³

Was he not a small life germ in the seminal elements, then he was a clot of blood, so He created (him), then made (him) perfect?⁴

Further, the Holy Qur'ân also makes it clear that in the creation of man the male agency plays a far more important part than the female :

And that He created pairs, the male and the female, from the small life-germ when it is transmitted (into the womb)⁵

Surely, We have created man out of a mixture of a (male and female) small life-germ uniting itself.⁶

Did We not create you from an insignificant water? Then We placed it in a secure resting place (womb) till an appointed time.⁷

So let man think from what he is created. He is created from a drop emitted, proceeding from between the backbone and the ribs.⁸

¹ The Holy Qur-a'n, VI: 101-102.

² *Ibid.*, XXII: 3.

³ *Ibid.*, XXXVI: 77.

⁴ *Ibid.*, XXV: 37-38.

⁵ *Ibid.*, LIII: 45-46.

⁶ *Ibid.*, LXXVI: 2.

⁷ *Ibid.*, LXXVII: 20-22.

⁸ *Ibid.*, LXXXVI: 5-7 Translation by Yusuf Ali.

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Thus, according to the Holy Qur'án, the birth of man cannot take place without the uniting and interaction of a pair resulting in the intermixture of the male sperm and the female ovum. To place the matter beyond all possibility of any shade or shadow of doubt the Holy Qur'án gives the elements from which, and the numerous physical stages through which man is created. We read :

O people! if you are in doubt about the raising; then surely, We created you from dust, then from a small life germ, then from a lump of flesh, (sometimes) complete in making and (sometimes) incomplete, (in order) that We may make clear to you; and We cause what We please to stay in the wombs till the appointed time, then We bring you forth as babies.¹

In this verse God's creative work, so far as man is concerned, is stated. It explains that inorganic matter becomes organic and living matter; the inorganic constituents of the earth having been absorbed into living matter by way of food, the living matter reproduces itself by means of *sperma genital* of the male sex. It is deposited in the ovum and fertilises it and rests for a time in security in the mother's womb. The first stage in the fertilised ovum is its conversion into a sort of clot of thickly congealed blood; the zygote cells grow by segmentation, then the mass gradually assumes shape in its growth as a foetus. From the lump develop bones and flesh and a nervous system. Then what is called by the Holy Qur'án the *breathing of God's spirit* or *inspiration* into him takes place,² and, after the appointed time, the child is born. The subject is again recapitulated in the following words :

And certainly We created man of an extract of clay, then We made a small life-germ in a firm resting place (womb), then We made the life-germ a clot, then We made this clot a lump of flesh, then We made (in) the lump of flesh bones, then We clothed the bones with flesh, then We caused it to grow into another creation, so blessed be Allah, the Best to create.³

Again :

He it is Who created you of dust, then from a small life-germ, then from a clot, then He brings you forth as a child.⁴

¹ The Holy Qur-a'n, XXII : 5

² *Ibid.*, XV : 29.

³ *Ibid.*, XXIII : 12-14.

⁴ *Ibid.*, XL : 67. See also XXXV : 11.

JESUS SON OF MARY

In another place the Holy Qur'án explains, rather more precisely, how the conception takes place :

He it is Who created you of a single kind and of the same (kind) did He make his mate, that he might incline to her ; *so when he covers her* she conceives a light burden, then moves about with it, but when it grows heavy, they both call upon Allah, their Lord ; if Thou givest us a good one (child), we shall certainly be of the grateful ones.¹

The italicised words make it perfectly clear how a conception takes place, to wit, the male agency must play its part. In the beginning the "burden" of the mother is light but with the quickening it becomes heavy. The birth of a child is fraught with hope as well as much suffering and unforeseen risk to the mother herself ; and it is explained that the parents in their anxiety turn to their Lord.

IV. The Laws of God are Immutable

I have so far set out the various Laws of God, mentioned in the Holy Qur'án, which are relevant to the subject under discussion. Does the Holy Qur'án contemplate any exception of or change in any of these laws ? In most emphatic terms the Book itself gives the answer in the negative.

If we look to nature itself we find that the laws of God are fixed and We do not find any change in its course, on the other hand a wonderful regularity and uniformity is disclosed all through the universe. To use the words of the Holy Qur'án, we find that each one of the creations of God pursues its course to an appointed time.² There is no chaos, no disorder, no incongruity. It is obvious that things belonging to the entire creation are subject to, and must follow, the same Laws. It has been well said that our human will may falter or turn away from its course, but God's Will ever follows its course and cannot be turned away by any cause whatever. In fact, this uniformity points to the One Universal Designer, Fashioner and Creator Whose Will is exercised according to, and becomes manifest in, His Laws. Consistency is His Will and His Will is the Law itself and a Law unto itself. Says the Holy Qur'án :—

Then set your fact upright for religion in the right state—the

¹ The Holy Qur'a'n, VII : 189.

² *Ibid.*, XIII : 2.

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nature made by Allah in which He made men : there is no altering of Allah's creation, that is the right religion ; but most people do not know.¹

Again :

You see no incongruity in the creation of the Beneficent God ; then look again, can you see any disorder ? Then turn back the eye again and again ; your look shall come back to you confused while it is fatigued.²

The immutability of the Laws of God is stressed over and over again in the Holy Qur'ān :

And you shall not find a change in Our course.³

And you shall not find any change in the course of Allah.⁴

And you shall not find a change in Allah's course.⁵

For you shall not find any alteration in the course of Allah ; and you shall not find any change in the course of Allah.⁶

If we apply the foregoing basic principles of the Holy Qur'ān to Jesus, we are forced to believe that he was a human being, a mortal, a servant, a Messenger, a Prophet of God, and *a fortiori* he must have been conceived, born and died on this earth in the normal and usual way. No change in the Laws of God can even be contemplated much less considered unless the contrary is stated, in the Holy Qur'ān itself in very clear and unambiguous terms. It is urged that God Almighty being All-Powerful could have changed His Laws and could have caused the birth of Jesus to be immaculate and could have spared him an earthly physical death.

I do not for a single moment hesitate to concede to this proposition. Undoubtedly God could have done all this, and much more, even beyond our comprehension. To urge otherwise, I frankly admit, would be a sin. But this is really begging the question. Did He do it ? Did He violate any of His Own Laws ? The theories of Immaculate birth and Ascension of Jesus cannot be proved on this theoretical hypothesis. It must be established from the Holy Qur'ān itself that God, having admittedly the absolute and unfettered power to do so, did actually do these things or caused these things to happen. Sir

¹ The Holy Qur-ān, XXX : 30

² *Ibid.*, XVII : 77.

³ *Ibid.*, XLVII : 23.

⁴ *Ibid.*, LXVII : 3-4.

⁵ *Ibid.*, XXXII : 62.

⁶ *Ibid.*, XXXV : 43.

CORRESPONDENCE

Syed Ahmad Khan, while discussing the question, rightly points out that miracles were wrought to establish the claims of a prophet of God, and therefore miracles before the stage of prophethood, like the immaculate birth of Jesus, would not only be devoid of any such significance but this would also fail to achieve the desired result.¹

(To be continued)

CORRESPONDENCE

Cardiff, 10th February, 1947

Dear Sir,

I have inquired of your friends in Cardiff for a copy of the Qur-ān in English.

They gave me your address to write to.

Would you please be good enough to let me know if you have one and the price.

Thanking you in advance for this great favour,

Yours truly
P. BALDWIN

Jubbulpore,
2nd April, 1947

Dear Sir,

My friend, Mr. M. A. Samad has very kindly lent me some really very fine and illuminating books on Islam published by the Woking (England) branch of your Mission. I have very carefully and devotedly read through them. Some even twice and thrice. Islamic way of life, as I have understood it, is that of right and true belief, and fruitful action based on such a belief. This is we call Karma-Yoga or the path of action in Hindu philosophy. But this cannot be said to be the only way leading to salvation. There are in the world people of various dispositions and temperaments and so it is only right that the means of achieving 'Mukti' or realization of one's goal should be different for people of different dispositions. Hinduism has taken account of these differences in the disposition of men and has recognized two other ways in addition to the Karma-yoga—the Jnana Yoga and the Bhakti Yoga. Mankind can be roughly divided into three groups on the basis of differences in dispositions—the workers, the philosophers and the artists. The path of salvation of each one of these must be different, being in harmony with the natural inclinations of the group concerned. For the worker, or a man of action, we prescribe Karma-Yoga, by which he learns to perform action as duty without desire of fruit. The philosopher can best realize his salvation by

¹ Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, *Khutabat-i-Ahmadiyya*, Vol II, 24,

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becoming an initiate into Jnana-Yoga or the path of renunciation and meditation...the recluse and the homeless man. The Bhakti Yoga is practised by the artist, he in whom emotions predominate—whose affections are drawn towards some manifested aspect of God, and he gives expression to his love through decoration, ceremonies and rituals.

The Islamic way of life is good, and is perhaps the best and the most complete expression of the Karma Yoga; but then is it suited to men of all dispositions—to the artist and the mystic as well? A Hindu or a Buddhist having in him an urge for action will benefit most by embracing Islam; but will it not be right for a Hindu with a philosophic or artistic bent of mind to stick on to Hinduism and practise Jnana Yoga or the Bhakti Yoga? Islam, therefore only complements Hinduism and cannot claim to replace it.

Mr. M. A. Samad has been telling me that it would be wrong to identify the Islamic way with the Karma-Yoga exclusively. He tells me that the Islamic 'Siratul Mustaqeem' (the right path) is a sort of synthesis or an ideal blending of all the three yogas. The Islamic way of life, he says, takes account of every talent or side of man and leads to the most harmonious and beneficial development of the whole, both in the individual and the society.

Even supposing that his interpretation of Islam is correct (and I have no reason to suppose that it is not, for I have not yet studied the Holy Quran), I think my question still remains unanswered; for it does not take account of man as he is, but deals only with the ideal man. In reality we find that a man in whom the philosophic disposition predominates can have nothing to do with the artistic way, and can realize his 'mukti' only by seclusion and meditation and not by a way which is a blending of all the three yogas, and *vice versa*. Will he not reach his highest point only if he develops the disposition which is natural to him? If there can be a division of labour in the spheres outside, why cannot there be such a division and specialization within a man? And if exclusive specialization in the world outside leads to the most efficient and best results and the highest output of energy, then why cannot a similar specialization in spiritual spheres produce similar results in man's relations to God? Bhakti or artistic adoration and meditation lead as much to God as right and beneficial actions do. Then why not allow each one to realize 'mukti' and find God in a way which is suited to him? Why not let there be many paths leading to the same Goal?

Can you please enrich me with your views on the subject? I shall be highly obliged if you can give an exhaustive answer to my questions. I know that a true Islamic missionary, as you are, you will not mind the trouble to which I am putting you. You may publish my letter and the reply thereto in the *Islamic Review* if you think that it will be useful to your other readers as well.

Thanking you,

Yours faithfully,
S. N. SANGHI

CORRESPONDENCE

[The analogy of division of labour in a society is a little misapplied here. Man is a full organism like a society. Just as if a society produces nothing but, say, engineers, it cannot exist, similarly if a man develops nothing but the faculty of meditation, he cannot attain to true spiritual consciousness. Just as a progressive social life must have in it all the various faculties of body and mind developed in it, so should it be in the case of the individual man. Just as in a particular nation, a particular efficiency is more marked than the others, so it may be in an individual. But total neglect of other faculties is as detrimental to the individual as to the nation. As a matter of fact, as in the nation, the different faculties in the individual man are inter-connected one acting as a test for the right development of the other.

For example, if we want to ascertain if a man has developed true love for God, which you call “*Bhakti*” and which is called *Hubbullah* in the Qur-ān, we shall see if he exhibits active love and sympathy for his fellow creatures. If you find the absence of the latter in a man you may be sure that what he calls *Bhakti* in him is a deceptive emotion.

Thus the Holy Prophet Muhammad says:

“Do you love your Creator?—Love your fellow creatures first.”

We must remember that the function of religion is to direct man in his self-realisation. If man follows his own fancy he will never attain God-consciousness. In the development of every faculty—moral, intellectual and spiritual, he needs guidance from Above. Otherwise he will be misguided and misdirected by the evil in him. Even his well-meaning efforts will lead him to discomfiture. The Qur-ān emphasises the need of all the three faculties mentioned by you. It appeals to the feeling of love for God reposed in the depths of human heart. For instance:

“And there are some among men who take for themselves objects of worship beside Allah¹ and those who believe are stronger in love for Allah.

But it also appeals to the faculty of contemplation in the human mind:

“Most surely in the creation of the heavens and the earth and the alternation of the night and the day there are signs for men of understanding.¹

“Those who remember Allah standing and sitting and lying on their side and reflect on the creation of the heavens and the earth. Our Lord! Thou hast not created this in vain! Glory be to Thee! Save us then from the chastisement of the fire.”²

And finally it appeals to man's faculty of action. For example.

“On that day men shall come forth in sundry bodies that they may be shown their works. So he who has done an atom's weight of good shall see it.

¹ The Holy Qur-ān 2: 165.

² The Holy Qur-an 3: 189, 190.

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"And he who has done an atom's weight of evil shall see¹ it."

The book wants man to be vigilant of all these three aspects of human consciousness. It is true all men are not capable of being equally attentive to all these aspects. Some men are more contemplative than devotional, others more vigorous and quick in action than given to contemplation and so on and so forth. But as we can well understand, if a man becomes absolutely unthinking he is not expected to be a rightly acting man. Similarly a philosopher devoid of a spirit of devotion is bound to be a barren rationalist ending his life, for all we know, in rank agnosticism.

Again, your man of Bhakti, if he altogether neglects both contemplative as well as practical virtues, he may have paroxysms of ecstasy like some so-called dervishes and sanyasis but he will remain as far removed from God-consciousness and true spirituality as professional spiritualist trance mediums of the West. Such people benefit neither themselves nor the world at large and humanity becomes not a whit better morally by their contact but worse.

By its insistence on the simultaneous development of all the aspects of human consciousness, the Qur ān wants to produce not only the ideal man like the Holy Prophet but also the normal man of spirituality, because however small the success, it is only through an attempt to blend these three that true spirituality in man is evolved—Ed. I. R.]

BOOK REVIEW

Glory of Islam : By Muhammad Amin, Bar-at-Law. Madina Publications, Lahore, 1946, pp. 248. Price Rs. 3/-/- Like many other books by this author it is a collection of well-chosen articles on Islam and its Founder from the pen of eminent persons in the East and West, largely non-Muslim in their religious persuasion. The meed of praise coming as it does from those having no traditional allegiance to Islam, makes it considerably effective in its missionary value. The selection shows the wide range of study the author commands on the subject of his discourse. But for the mistakes of printing with which almost every page bristles, the book makes an attractive reading for any one who desires to understand Islam in all its several aspects.

¹ The Holy Qur-ān Ch. 99:

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