

"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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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

نَحْمَدُكَ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدَكَ وَوَلِيَّكَ
وَمَنْ جَاءَكَ مِنْ بَنِي آدَمَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ

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RABĪ' AL-THĀNĪ 1366 A.H.
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BY THE LIGHT OF THE HOLY QUR-AN

If there had been in them (in the heaven and the earth) any gods except Allah, they would both have certainly been in a state of disorder, therefore glory be to Allah, the Lord of the dominion, above what they attribute (to Him).

He cannot be questioned concerning what He does and they shall be questioned.

Or, have they taken gods besides Him? Say: Bring your proof, this is the reminder of those with me and the reminder of those before me. Nay! most of them do not know the truth, so they turn aside.

And We did not send before you any apostle 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 are honoured servants.

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They do not precede Him in speech and (only) according to His commandment do they act.

He knows what is before them and what is behind them, and they do not intercede except for him whom He approves, and for fear of Him they tremble.

—The Holy Qur-án, Ch. XXI, vv. 22-28.

The Purport.

In refuting the doctrine of plurality in the Godhead the first argument advanced here is that in case of multiplicity of control at least occasional clashes of wills are inevitable. What we find, however, is that one law pervades in the whole of the universe and this for all times. Absence of disorder and confusion in the creation indicates one and only governing will and the governing will is what constitutes Godhood. The second argument is that God's will is supreme which cannot be subordinated to any other will. If any one carries out the will of another and is obliged to say—"Thy will, not mine", he cannot be regarded as God. The third argument is that no revelational message has ever proclaimed the plurality of Godhead and that the great and fundamental truth of the Unity of God is common to all religions. The fourth argument is that a careful reading of the utterances of Jesus, even as they are recorded in the Gospels, will show that his actual claim was only that of a prophet of God and a faithful servant of His, and that all his anxiety was to fulfil His High Will in all its details.

'ID-AL-ADZHA (1365 A.H.) AT THE SHAH JEHAN MOSQUE, WOKING

The 'Īd-al-Adzhā festival was celebrated at the Mosque, Woking, on the 4th November, 1946.

The weather was good. The number of people was about 350. The prayers were led by Mr. William Bashyr Pickard, B.A., an English Muslim known for his piety and devoutness.

Considering the cold weather and rise in travel expenses and the fact that in London itself two 'Īd congrega-

'ID-AD-ADZHA (1365 A.H.) SERMON

tions take place—one in the East End and one at Regent's Lodge, London, N.W. 8 (Islamic Culture Centre), the number was more than the Mosque workers expected.

As usual, the gathering consisted of all Muslim nationalities presenting a miniature Hajj spectacle.

The Khutba (sermon) of Mr. Pickard is given below.

'ID-AL-ADZHA (1365 A.H.) SERMON

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

My brothers and my sisters,

To-day is the day of commemoration of an ancient instance of sacrifice—the sacrifice which the Patriarch Abraham set himself in readiness to offer before God—the sacrifice of Abraham's own son, which sacrifice mercy turned aside, accepting the will for the deed and taking in place the customary ram.

So, when we are here gathered together centuries later, in a clime far different, we yet think of these things to-day. We ponder this instance of complete submission to the Divine Will. We ponder this instance of mercy shown by the Most Merciful of the merciful ones.

It may be thought: "This indeed is so; but, in the twentieth century, of what practical benefit to us can be the continuing remembrance of this ancient historical instance? The days of burnt offerings and sacrifice, surely, have passed away. How, then, can the remembrance of Abraham, his son and his sacrifice have any bearing upon our own life—the life we must each one of us live in this after-time, when the centuries have rolled by and, as some great persistent sea, have swept away the ancient days and the ancient ways?

Not so fast! speak not with such assurance of incredulity!

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I will try to make answer, so that you will see the lively bearing of this day of remembrance of the sacrifice of Abraham upon each and all of our lives.

You say, "Centuries ago."

I say, "Shake up your mind! widen your outlook! In this matter the reference is unto God, the Eternal One, the Timeless One; in whose sight a thousand years are but as yesterday, when it is gone. Therefore the passing of a few centuries does not affect the case in point!"

The second point raised is that of sacrifice.

You say, "The days and ways of sacrifice are out of date, demoded. No one to-day would think of sacrificing a son unto God, the sacrifices of God are a broken spirit and a contrite heart."

Let us consider this together. Though the form may have changed, the power of sacrifice is not broken; and by sacrifice shall ye enter into life.

The world is even now emerging from the shadow of a dark and direful war. If the war with its six years of suffering, hardship and rampant terrors has taught humanity anything, is it not that the victory cometh only from sacrifice? The idea of sacrifice is not dead, and I fail to see how ever it can die. Through sacrifice shall ye enter into life.

Let me now make clear the relation of sacrifice to each one of us. How does sacrifice refer to us? What have we to sacrifice? And, if we do sacrifice, what benefit will result to ourselves or to the community?

Let me say to you and lay it before you for your consideration that each one of us is called upon to make a sacrifice verily as great as that which Abraham vowed himself to make. The God of Abraham is the same to-day, the One, the Eternal, and to Him alone can our sacrifice be offered.

'ID-AL-ADZHA (1365 A.H.) SERMON

And what is this sacrifice we must make ?

Assuredly it is the supreme sacrifice, the sacrifice of our own selves.

Recall now the words of Jesus (upon whom be peace and the blessing of God!) : " He that findeth his life shall lose it : and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it ". (*Matthew X 39*).

Of a truth we must submit ourselves entirely unto God. We must be in spirit and in truth Muslims, submitted in all things unto God. For us in this life nothing, nothing, nothing must be dearer to us than God, neither son, nor wife, nor daughter, nor riches, nor ease, nor worldly honour ; but we must make the supreme sacrifice, which is our very selves. Becoming Muslims, submitted entirely unto God, we stand before the gate of the knowledge of God. We pass through, attaining nearness unto God. Yea and verily, even in this life, the bonds of the body are loosed and our spirit is free.

So much for us individually ; let us now turn our thoughts outwards upon the Muslim community in various parts of this troubled world. The solution of all the problems that face Muslims to-day, in whatsoever part of the world they may arise, should be found in the carrying out of Islamic teachings. No doubt patience and perseverance and a brotherly toleration will be called for before the desired solution of the various problems can be achieved, but why hesitate ? Are not patience, perseverance and brotherly toleration truly Muslim qualities ?

There are problems in Palestine, problems in India, in Ceylon, in Indonesia, problems in South Africa—indeed where to-day shall we find a tract of earth or a community that has not its acute problems ?

Let us briefly consider some of these problems in the light of fundamental truth.

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Palestine. The real problem is between Arab and Jew, between blood brothers of Semitic stock, both of whom worship the One God, brothers who have lived side by side for centuries. Surely herein is ample stuff for amity and lasting agreement. Let not outside pressure from powerful but un-understanding nations be exerted unjustly.

India. The outward aspect of the problem is ugly, filled with violence, antagonism and lawless acts of ignorance. But, fundamentally, is there not a broad and permanent basis for security and peaceful living? Let us examine the problem and accentuate whatever of good exists for the building-up of agreement and sincere understanding. Is it not true that Hindus recognize One Supreme? Is it not true that Hindus recognize the Oneness of life, the brotherhood of the creation? And, from the Muslim side, Who, I ask, created the Hindus, save only the One Supreme? How could there be a brotherhood of humanity that did not include Hindus, Muslims, Christians and others of various faiths or of no faith? Do not the Muslims recognize and regard as equals all the prophets from God to whatever nation they may have been sent? *Lā ikrāha fī 'ddīn*: is not this the Quranic word? "There is no compulsion in religion." Where, then, there is tolerance, how can there be discord? Let us brighten with wider use and knowledge the active principles which exist in true Islam, by which may be inaugurated the reign and permanence of peace.

Again, in *South Africa*, we find Muslim and Hindu alike faced with an acute problem—the practice of racial discrimination against them. How should this be, when the white population itself is not indigenous to South Africa? Let us from all parts of the world combine and banish this pernicious folly of racial discrimination! Let us follow the Islamic practice of brotherhood. Let us realize, not only in word but in action that the world is

JD-AL-ADZHA (1365 A.H.) SERMON

one entity, that humanity is one only family, that in affairs the unit of consideration is simply and solely the human being. Not by race, not by colour, not by nationality, not even, where brotherhood is concerned, by religion, but by the solid unshakable humanity that belongs to each and all of us should concord, peace and goodwill be established throughout the earth.

Now, in conclusion, as this annual festival of commemoration of the Patriarch Abraham takes place to-day here, on English soil, let me add a word to English people. If they are already acquainted with Islam, let them ponder in their hearts the many beauties of Islam. Let them recognize and delight in the truth when they behold it, from whatsoever angle the vision come to them. If they, as yet, are not acquainted with Islam, let them take heart to study the Faith and, by dint of knowledge acquired, by truth ascertained, let them disperse the mists of prejudice, ignorance and unfamiliarity which have for so long in the West distorted the lineaments of the noble countenance of Islam, by whose teachings many of the sufferings of Europe and many of the grievances of the world would disappear in sincere unassuming brotherhood.

God will it so !

O you who believe, you who are Muslims, rejoice in the faith as in a great good ! Practise the faith ! Be assiduous in the faith, although you sojourn in Western lands, where stalk towering evils of capitalism, over-industrialization, selfishness and careless ways of life ! These ways are not ways of Wisdom, are not ways of Righteousness, are not ways of Peace ; but the way of Islam is the way of peace.

Follow, then, this way of peace, which assuredly leadeth unto God : but remember, life is often a *jihād* and the prevailing daily peace is often only to be won by a continual effort. Yet Islam will preserve you in peace,

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even in the midst of the stress of action. Remember the Prophet Muhammad himself, who won through to final success, was not permitted a life devoid of hardship and suffering, but often had to struggle hard against adversity and seeming failure and defeat. Always remember, the truth cannot be defeated. It stands invincible. Surely the truth hath come and falsehood is a vanishing thing!

Patience, then, and press on! and pray for the divine aid, by which alone success may be won!

May Peace and the Blessings of God abide with you!

THE DISASTER OF SUPERFICIAL RELIGION

BY A BRITISH MUSLIM

In all times of national or international crises much is heard of the value of prayer. Days or even weeks of prayer are organized. It may be termed superficial prayer for, most frequently, it corresponds to the description given by Shakespeare:

My words fly up, my thoughts remain below,
Words without thoughts never to heaven go.

Again, on occasions of national victories, sometimes for no apparent cause, there are experienced what are called "religious revivals"—the word, of course, means "new life", but if it means that new life is given to religion, that life is always very brief, almost still born. The last great "revival" in England was in the early days of the first decade of the present century, known as the "Welsh Revival" and it was even more ephemeral than any of its predecessors.

What is the reason? The answer for the inefficacy of prayer and the instability of revivals is the same—superficiality. We recall Euclid's definition of a superficies—"A line is length without breadth" and "The extremities of a superficies are lines." There is an absence

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of solidity or substance. An English Midlander would describe it in his colloquial dialect by saying: "There's now in it."

There is an absence of the spirit of true religion in each. Religion must be more than superficial if it is to be an impelling force. Like steam it can only be effective when it is internal and controlled. When steam escapes from the engine it becomes vapourized and fritters away: as a power it is wasted because of its absorption by the surrounding element of air.

Religion, true religion, is very simple, but yet it is difficult to put into daily practice, unless there is the impelling force of surrender to the will of God, which alone makes its practice both easy and delightful. The more the life of the Holy Prophet Muhammad is perused and studied the more is the student impressed with the depth and firmness of his belief. In the preparation for his mission—the nature of which he was then quite ignorant—before the first revelation came to him, he was, led by the Spirit of Allah, in the habit of retiring periodically to the cave at Hira, where, in that secluded spot, he yielded to the impulse—the impelling force—of that Spirit and gave himself over to prayer, meditation and fasting. There, in the month of Ramadân, the angel Gabriel came to him with the first revelation. He had the power to obey the divine call because of the strength he had received in the periods of divine communion he had spent in the cave.

We cannot follow him to the cave, we cannot always, perhaps not often, seek seclusion, but every man has within him a cave of seclusion into which he can retire and by prayer and meditation experience and enjoy the like communion as he did. Seclusion is possible even when walking along the busy street, working in the factory or the office or engaged in public duties.

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Nor can we look for or expect a sudden revelation. Knowledge in both mundane and spiritual matters is rationed. Hence we have to spend years in the attainment of material knowledge, in the school and university. It is a fallacy to suppose that our education is finished when the time spent in those academies has passed into history. If we are not ever learning we have missed one of the great meanings of life. So is it with our spiritual life. We have to grow in Grace and that can only be accomplished by prayer and meditation and the other supports and pillars of the Faith we profess. The progress must be daily, not by spurts :

Lord, for to-morrow and its needs , I do not pray ;
Keep me, my God, from stain of sin, just for to-day.
Let me be slow to do my will, prompt to obey ;
Help me to mortify my flesh, just for to-day

ISLAM THE ONLY SOLUTION OF INDIAN UNTOUCHABILITY

BY M. Y. KHAN

“ O you men ! surely 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 honourable of you with Allah is the one among you most careful (of his duty ; surely Allah is Knowing, Aware.”

—The Holy Qur-án Ch. XLIX, v. 13.

“ It is sometimes supposed that the spread of Islam in India was due to force employed by the conquerors. This view is not correct for there are no instances in history of wholesale persecutions of non-Muslims.¹

To begin with let us examine the conditions prevailing in India early in the 8th century when Islam knocked at her gates. Roy tells us :—

“ In any case it is clear that in the time of Mohammadan conquest, there lived in India multitudes of people who had little

¹ Ishwari Prasad, *A Short History of Muslims in India*, p. 13.

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reason to be faithful to Hindu laws and the traditions of Brahman orthodoxy, and were ready to forsake that heritage for the more equitable laws of Islam which offered them protection against the tyrannies of triumphant Hindu reaction."

Jawaharlal confirms the view in the following lines :—

"The religion he (Muhammad) preached, by its simplicity and directness and its *flavour of democracy and equality*, appealed to the masses in the neighbouring countries. They had been ground down long enough by autocratic kings and equally autocratic and domineering priests. They were tired of the old order and were ripe for a change and it was a welcome change, for it bettered them in many ways and put an end to many old abuses."¹

A contrast of Hinduism with Islam by Nanalal C. Mehta, I. C. S., in his article 'Contribution of Islam to Indian Culture,' makes the position still more clear. He tells us :—

"The essence of Hinduism lay in its social gradation established on the basis of birth. Hinduism could not in practice conceive the equality of a prince and a peasant. The Brahman and the Sudra stood at two opposite and unalterable poles of social gradation. It is true that the voice of poets, saints and reformers was occasionally heard in favour of the outcasts, but the stigma of birth was one that could not be washed away in the present life at all. *The whole conception of Hindu society was and is foreign to the fundamental trend of Islam, which not only proclaims but uncompromisingly insists on absolute equality of all Muslims irrespective of their birth, status or race, in matters social and religious.*

There can be no doubt, therefore, that the conquest of Islam in the religious sphere, were won primarily by voluntary 'allegiance, especially of the poor classes, who naturally saw a new future spreading out before them as members of a virile community, which judged men on merits and ignored accidents of birth or race. The power of the sword and the allurements of social and political preferment as well as the exclusive snobbery of the high, caste Hindus did also contribute to some extent in willing the ranks of the Musalmans. It is, however, probable that but for these adventitious aids the progress of Islam would have been

¹ *Glimpses of World History*, p. 229.

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even more rapid than it was. *Hindu society maintains such an immense reservoir of the socially depressed classes with no apparent future within the Hindu fold that any creed which offers them a hope of human equality and some social rise is bound to make a powerful appeal to them.*

‘It is from these classes that all the new creeds such as Islam, Sikhism and Christianity have drawn their greatest support.’²

“Havell”, says Roy, “is a famous eulogist of Indo-European culture which he considers to be the noblest product of the creative genius of man.” On the other hand, he has a bitter antipathy against the Muslims. As a matter of fact, he may be said to have a bias in favour of the Hindus. So, if a historian like him found unpleasant things happening in India in the past, conditions must have been very deplorable indeed. He writes :—

‘But the victorious progress of Islam in India is not to be accounted for by external reasons. It was mainly due to the political degeneration of Aryavarta which set in after the death of Harsha. The social programme of the “Prophet.....gave every true believer an equal spiritual status.....made Islam a political and social synthesis and gave it an imperial mission.....Islam was a rule of life sufficient for the happiness of average humanity content to take the world as it is.....Islam reached the zenith of its political strength at the critical period when the conflict between Buddhist philosophy and that of orthodox Brahmanism was a potent cause of political dissension in Northern India.”¹

It was under circumstances such as these that the Muslims under Muhammad bin Qasim appeared on the scene. Dr. Ishwari Prasad speaking of this event tells us :—

“Besides these Arab troops, Muhammad bin Qasim enlisted under his banner a large number of the discontented Jats and Meds who had old account to settle with the Hindu Government which had inflicted great humiliations upon them. They had been *forbidden to ride in saddles, wear fine clothes, to uncover the head, and this condemnation to the position of mere hewers of wood and drawers of water had embittered animosities to such an extent that they readily threw in their lot with the foreigner.*”²

¹ *Contribution of Islam to Indian Culture*, pp. 19—21.

² *A Short History of Muslim Rule in India*, p. 43.

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The Arabs ruled in India for about 40 years, say roughly about 752 C.E. and even afterwards till the invasion of Mahmud of Ghazni. Northern India was ruled by the Hindu Rajputs.

Buddhism perished because of its corrupt and illiterate priests, loss of royal support and continuous persecution of Buddhists by the Brahmins during the struggle for existence of the two religions which lasted for centuries until Shankracharya gave a death-blow to the final hopes of founding Buddhism as the universal religion of the people.

Hinduism lost its adherents to Islam because of the purity, piety, simplicity and vitality of this creed against the soulless religion of the Vedas, and their cankered civilisation and also because of the deplorable condition of untouchables under the oppressive laws as enunciated by the Vedic Religion which denies in theory and in practice all human rights to the Depressed Classes to which they belong in India. Tracing the history of untouchables in India we read that these distinctions in rank existed from the very beginning when the Aryans invaded India. The conquerors gave to the conquered people the titles of Dasyu (dacoit). Then these Aryans played the part of tyrants and prevented the untouchables now, Aborigines then, from listening to the Vedas, their religious books or anything conducive to their growth as a nation. Consequently a large section of God's noblest creatures was turned into helots and slaves whom they named as Sudras. Their condition is a disgrace to other peoples in India.

This social degradation in practice may be traced in the following passages in the Vedas by Manu Maharaj:—

“O God! Create in this world Brahmin to preach Vedas; Rajputs to govern, Vaish for farming and cattle-rearing, Sudras (untouchables) for troubles and difficulties.” It is their religion to serve the people of high class.”

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"The name of Sudras should be such as would indicate slavery." Ch. 2, V. 31.

"Rotten and old clothes, old utensils and stale food should be given to untouchables." Ch. 1, V. 12.

"Sudras (untouchables) should not be allowed to amass money though they might have capacity; if they do so, it behoves a Brahmin to take away from them by force."

"If Sudra happen to listen to Vedas, pour into his ears melted lead."

"If any Sudra calls any Brahmin by name, penetrate into his throat a rod red and hot."

"If Sudra read, cut off his tongue."

"If Sudra calleth anybody belonging to high class make hole into his tongue."

The social condition of untouchables as these Sudras are called is vividly described by Prof. Arnold. I quote below three passages relating to the miserable plight of the low caste Hindus in the U. P., Bengal and South India. Facts such as are depicted here may be witnessed all over the country. The Professor says:—

"The lowest depth of misery and degradation is reached by the Koris and Chamars, the weavers and leather-cutters to the rest. Many of these in the northern districts are actually bond slaves, having hardly even the spirit to avail themselves of the remedy offered by our courts, and descend with their children from generation to generation as the value of an old purchase. They hold the plough for the Brahmin or Chattari master, whose pride of caste forbids him to touch it, and live with pigs, less unclean than themselves, in separate quarters apart from the rest of the village. Always on the verge of starvation, their lean, black and ill-formed figures, their stupid faces, and their repulsively filthy habits reflect the wretched destiny which condemns them to be lower than the beast among their fellow men, and yet that they are far from incapable of improvement is proved by the active and useful stable servants drawn from among them, who receive good pay and live well under European masters. *A change of religion is the only means of escape open to them, and they have little reason to be faithful to their present creed.*

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*It is this absence of class prejudices which constitutes the real strength of Islam in India, and enables it to win so many converts from Hinduism."*¹

So much for the inhabitants of the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh.

"Such movements and efforts," says Arnold :

"of individual missionaries are, however, quite inadequate to explain the rapid increase of the Muhammadans of India, and one is naturally led to inquire what are the causes other than the normal increase of population, which add so enormously to their numbers. The answer is to be found in the social conditions of life among Hindus. The insults and contempt heaped upon the lower castes of Hindus by their co-religionists, and the impassable obstacles placed in the way of any member of these castes *desiring to better their condition, show up in striking contrast the benefits of a religious system which has no outcasts, and gives free scope for the indulgence of any ambition.....* But in Bengal the Muslim missionaries were welcomed with open arms by the aborigines and the low castes on the very outskirts of Hinduism, despised and condemned by their proud Aryan rulers. To these poor people, fishermen, hunters, pirates, and low-caste tillers of the soil, Islam came as a revelation from on high. It was the creed of the ruling race, its missionaries were men of zeal who brought the Gospel of the Unity of God and the equality of men in its sight to a despised and neglected population. The initiatory rite rendered relapse impossible, and made the proselyte and his posterity true believers for ever. In this way Islam settled down on the richest alluvial province of India, the province which was capable of supporting the most rapid and densest increase of population. Compulsory conversions are occasionally recorded. But it was not to force that Islam owed its permanent success in Lower Bengal. *It appealed to the people, and it derived the great mass of its converts from the poor. It brought in a higher conception of God, and a nobler idea of the brotherhood of man. It offered to the teeming low castes of Bengal, who had sat for ages, abject on the outermost pale of Hindu community, a free entrance into a new social organisation."*

So much for the inhabitants of Bengal.²

(To be continued)

¹ *The Preaching of Islam*, pp. 239-40.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 236-37.

FIVE PILLARS OF ISLAM

The Third Pillar—Fasting.

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

Fasting as a religious act is not commendable to all people, however pious they may profess or even desire to be. It is more in practice among Catholic and Jews than it is among Nonconformists, whose aim seems generally to be to enjoy as many as possible of what they call "the good things of life", particularly if the aim can be reached without restraint. Among Catholics, some monastic orders, particularly the Trappists and Carthusians observe what may be described as a life-long fast and, to judge from appearance, their life does not appear to be an unhappy one. Muslims, though they may not unreservedly welcome the ninth month of the Islamic year, the fasting month of Ramadhan do, in general, keep it strictly.

For several years I had a literary connexion with the late George Griffith, the well-known traveller and novelist, who, incidentally, though an Agnostic (he was at one time secretary of a local branch of the National Secular Society) was greatly in sympathy with Islam. He had travelled much in the East and he had a great admiration for the Muslims he met there because of their strict observance of their religious duties, which they regarded as part and parcel of their daily life. I remember one instance he related in particular. He and a fellow-traveller had engaged the services of a baggage-man. This man, Griffith told me, was so thin and frail that they hesitated to tax him with two heavy portmanteaux, but he insisted that he was well able to carry them and carry them he did without seeming exertion. For several days he

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acted as their burden-bearer, but what distressed Griffith and his companion was his refusal to eat or drink anything, although he was invited to partake of any refreshment, liquid or solid, of his own choice at their expense. It was not until the last day of his engagement that they discovered he was a Muslim and that the reason for his persistent refusal to eat or drink in the daytime was because his engagement had fallen within the month of Ramadhan, when fasting from all food, even from a glass of water, from sunrise to sunset, is obligatory upon all followers (with certain exceptions) of the Prophet Muhammad.

But fasting under Islam, as under Judaism, means much more than abstaining from food and drink. Muhammad called it the "fourth part of Faith" and "The Gate of Religion" and he said that "the odour of him who fasteth is more graceful to Allah than that of musk." The Fast is threefold in character. It includes :

1. Restraint of the appetite ;
2. Abstinence of *all* the members of the body from indulgence ;
3. Withdrawal of the heart from worldly cares and of the thoughts from everything save Allah.

Smoking is prohibited as is the use of perfumes.

It should, perhaps, be emphasized that there is no asceticism in the Islamic idea of fasting, no despising of the body on the ground that all matter is evil. Appetite and sense-enjoyment are restrained in order that the Muslim may contemplate more definitely and realize spiritual ideals more fully, seek contact with the spiritual world in an impassioned imagination and feel his own soul to be in direct contact with a spiritual world.

The Fast of Ramadhan lasts for thirty days generally, from one new moon to the advent of its successor. If the new moon is visible on the 29th evening the fasting

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month is reduced by one day. Failing this the period is to terminate in any case on the 30th day.

Muslims recognize the necessity of using the month of Ramadhan for spiritual discipline. "God cares not," say the *Mishkat*, "that a man leaves off eating and drinking, if he does not therewith abandon lying and detraction."

Dr. Marcus Dods, in *Muhammad, Buddha and Christ* (pp. 32-33), says :

The attachment of the Muslims to their religion is put to a severe test by the fast of Ramadhan. This fast is no make-belief—no abstinence during a hot month from the heavier articles of food to whet the appetite for the lighter effects of cookery ; but it is a *bona fide* total abstinence from food, drink and smoking from sunrise to sunset of each day throughout the whole month of the Muslim Lent. From half-past two in the morning, or whenever the gun gives the signal in the larger cities, till the happy and eagerly-looked-for release of the sundown, nothing may pass over the throat. The hard-wrought labourer in the burning street or under the terrific blaze of the Eastern noon, must endure his faintness and misery, unrelieved by a single mouthful of water. The traveller in the desert may be blinded with the glare of the brazen sky above and the glowing sand beneath, he may fall from the back of his camel or sit insensible in the saddle, but he may chew nothing, taste nothing if possible, not even smell what might for the moment revive his failing energy. Even in illness this fast is kept even though it is not then obligatory.

Sir Richard Burton, in his *Pilgrimage to al-Medinah and Meccah* (Bohn edition, I, 74) says :

I found but one patient who would eat even to save his life. And among the vulgar sinners who habitually drink when they should pray, will fast and perform their devotions during the Ramadhan.

Lane also, in *The Modern Egyptians* (Dent, p. 93), says that :

The modern Muslims seem to regard the fast of Ramadhan as of more importance than any other religious act; for many of them keep this fast who neglect their daily prayers.

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In sura ii, verses 179—283 of the Qur-án, we read :

O believers ! the Fast is prescribed to you as it was prescribed to those before you, that ye may fear God.

For certain days. But he among you who shall be sick, or on a journey, shall fast that same number of other days ; and as for those who are able to keep it and yet break it, the expiation of this shall be the feeding of a poor man. And he who of his own accord performeth a good work, shall derive good from it ; and good shall it be for you to fast—if ye knew it.

As to the month Ramadhan in which the Qur-án was sent down to be man's guidance and an explanation of that guidance and of that illumination, so soon as any of you observeth the moon, let him set about the fast ; but he who is sick or upon a journey, shall fast a like number of other days. God wisheth you ease, but wisheth not your discomfort and that you fulfil the number of days and that you glorify God for His guidance and that you be thankful.

And when My servants ask thee concerning Me, then will I be nigh unto them. I will answer the prayer of him that prayeth, when he prayeth unto Me ; but let them hearken unto Me and believe in Me that they may proceed aright.

You are allowed on the night of the fast to approach your wives ; they are your garment and ye are their garment. God knoweth that ye defraud yourselves therein, so He turneth unto you and forgiveth you ! Now therefore go in unto them with full desire for that which God hath ordained for you ; and eat and drink until ye can discern a white thread from a black thread by the daybreak ;¹ then fast strictly until night and go not in unto them but rather pass the time in the mosques. These are the bounds set up by God ; therefore come not near them. Thus God maketh His signs clear to men that they may fear Him.

The following is an extract from the writings of Muhammad, a Moor, on the month of Ramadhan :

First, then we are entirely to govern and keep in absolute subjection our Tongues, or Senses and all our Faculties, deporting ourselves in such manner that we may give apparent indications of the Contrition and Purity of our *inward* and *outward* Man.

O ! may the Lord of all Knowledge, who is thoroughly acquainted with our Frailties and Who alone sustaineth and supporteth

¹ Meaning when the whiteness of the dawn is clearly discernible the background of the darkness of the night.—Ed. I. R.

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both us and everything which He has created, so guide and direct us and so enable us to walk in the paths of His Divine Law that even the misbelieving infidels themselves may, by our laudable example, be encouraged and induced to embrace a Faith of such irreproachable purity.

Let not any imagine that this solemn Fast of ours consisteth only in a strict obligation wholly to abstain from eating, drinking and the like, from before dawn until after sunset ; not all our faculties and senses must partake of the abstinence ; our eyes, our tongues, our ears, our hands, our feet, nay, our very thoughts must be bridled with strong reins. They must all be absolutely resigned to obedience to that All-Potent Sovereign to Whom they are indebted for their existence and entirely employed in His service. At this time, much more than at any other all their natural impulses must cease ; or, at least, be vigorously resisted ; all vicious inclinations must be strenuously repelled ; no avaricious thoughts, no thirsting after what belongs to another must find the least corner in a believer's breast ; all disputes, quarrels, animosities, resentments, envy, hatred, malice, enmity, ambition, violence, partiality, controversies and parties must wholly be laid aside and buried in utter oblivion. Our souls must groan at the remembrance of our omissions, sins and inequities and with contrite hearts, we must resolve upon future amendment. We must set Satan at defiance and, by so doing his torments will be increased at which every good Muslim ought to rejoice and render praise and glory in abundance to Him who hath been so gracious as to endow him with the prudence to become sensible of his errors to his own unspeakable benefit and at his implacable enemy's cost.

In Nonconformity there is no law, decree or even recommendation as to fasting because there is no authoritative body to decree. There is a singular absence of voluntary fasting, notwithstanding the strong recommendation of the practice in the New Testament, on which Nonconformity professes to take its stand. It must have been a Nonconformist who uttered the words (possibly apocryphal), " My religion is a religion of beef-steaks." The like latitudinarianism seems to prevail among the Low Church members of the Established Church, who generally claim the exclusive right to the

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term " Evangelical " though by what right has never been explained. In my earlier days I mingled much with Non-conformists and even partook of some of the fine spreads arranged for special occasions. I remember one well-known Baptist minister, with whom my parents were on close terms, who kept his carriage but rested his horses on Saturdays because he said it was right that even animals should have one day's rest in the week. He was averse from Sunday cooking in his own house ; so on that day he used to drive to the house of one or other of his intimate friends (and there was never a lack of invitations) where there were no scruples as to cooking on Sundays and by the time of his arrival he had forgotten about his objections to Sunday labour in the kitchen. I remember some of the annual suppers of the Pastors' College in Newington, a college established by C. H. Spurgeon for the training of Baptist ministers who were intended to perpetuate in various pulpits the views of that famous preacher. Many of the students, however, were caught up in the " Down Grade " movement and I am told on good authority that in that college to day it is no longer essential for students to assert their belief in the Plenary or Verbal inspiration of the Christian scriptures. I was once taken, as a boy, to see the tables laid out for that annual spread. I was an abstainer from intoxicants and wondered at the number of wine glasses by the side of each plate for the consumption of wines, which Muhammad the Prophet has condemned in the Qur'án. It is only fair to say that this was prior to the days of the Blue Ribbon Movement which came to be vigorously advocated by Nonconformists of every colour and brand. To-day it would be rare to find a Nonconformist who is not a total abstainer. But, speaking generally, to recommend fasting as a religious observance to Dissenter would be equal only to the commotion caused in the animal world by displaying a red flag in front of a vicious member of the bovine species.

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THE BIRTH AND DEATH

BY KHWAJA NAZIR AHMAD

(Continued from Vol. XXXV, p. 76)

THE PASSION

The Burial

According to the custom then obtaining in Judæa, the body of Jesus should have remained suspended on the cross until it was consumed by the weather, or the birds of prey. But according to the Jewish Law, it should have been removed in the evening and interred in the place of infamy assigned to the executed. The Roman Law provided for delivery of the body to those who claimed and paid for it. Consequently, we are told that Joseph of Arimathea (Ha-Rama-Thain), a *secret* disciple of Jesus,¹ a seeker after the kingdom of God,² a friend of the Lord,³ and a member of the Essenes Order,⁴ asked Pilate to deliver him the body.

In passing, I may point out that all the evangelists introduce this Joseph here for the first time. He must have been an important man to obtain access to Pilate. His description by John shows that Jesus had some *secret* friends, the Essenes, unknown to his disciples or other people. I will have to refer to this secret organisation in some detail later on. I will, however, quote a passage from the *Crucifixion* :

Joseph Arimathea... was a member of our sacred Order and lived in accordance with our laws. His friend Nicodemus

¹John, XIX : 38.

²Mark, XV : 43 ; Luke, XXIII : 51.

³The Gospel of Peter II : 28.

⁴*The Jewish Ency.*, Vol. IV : 250.

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was a most learned man and belonged to the highest degree of our Order.¹

To resume the narrative, Pilate granted the prayer of Joseph Arimathea. The Eye-Witness gives, in the *Crucifixion*, details of the conversation which took place between Joseph and Nicodemus in consequence of which Joseph went to arrange for the linen etc., and Nicodemus to fetch "the herbs which were useful in such cases."² There was thus a sudden rush and activity in which the women also joined, for getting the spices.

According to John, Nicodemus came *secretly* by night to the sepulchre and brought spices, it is said, for the embalming of the body of Jesus, a mixture of *Myrrh and aloe*; in the quantity of about a hundred pounds in weight.³ I quote again the Eye-Witness:—

Thereupon Nicodemus spread strong spices and healing salves on long pieces of "byssus" which he had brought and whose use was known to our Order.....Nicodemus spread balm in both nail pierced hands.⁴

I may mention here that Jesus, as a member of the Essenes Order, knew of this treatment and had himself given its indication to his disciples in the parable of the man who had gone from Jerusalem to Jericho and who had fallen among thieves and had been wounded by them. Then, according to Jesus, a Samaritan came there:

And bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine.....⁵

This is exactly what was done in the case of Jesus. Dummelow, describing the manner in which the body of Jesus was treated, says:

The Myrrh and aloe wood were reduced to powder and inserted between the bandages which were wound fold upon fold.⁶

The body of Jesus was thus "wound" in linen.⁷ To use the words of Dean Farrar, they rolled "the fine linen

¹The *Crucifixion*, 66.

²*Ibid.*, 75.

³John, XIX: 39.

⁴*Ibid.*, 74.

⁵Luke, X: 4.

⁶Dummelow, *Commentary on Holy Bible*, 808.

⁷*Ibid.*, XIX: 40.

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round and round the wounded limbs.”¹ The “*neck and face* of the body were doubtless left bare,”² and the body was laid in a sepulchre which was hewn in stone.³ All this was done before the sunset, that is, before the Sabbath drew on.⁴

We are further told that the women were also anxious to provide “spices and ointment for the same purpose.”⁵ They came to the sepulchre in the end of the Sabbath,⁶ *i.e.*, late on the Sabbath day (between midnight and dawn) to embalm his body.⁷

The supply having been found insufficient the women had to bring more on the morning after the Sabbath when it was still dark.⁸ The constant application of this ointment, the famous *Marham-i-Isa*—the Ointment of Jesus—to the body of Jesus healed the wounds and caused the blood to circulate freely in the body.

It may be mentioned here that this *Marham-i-Isa* is not an imaginary thing. Its prescription has been known to history and it has been mentioned by this very name in numerous ancient oriental medical treatise. It is stated therein that it was applied to the wounds of Jesus when he was taken off the cross. I have come across some thirty-six such books; and there may be many more which I have not seen. I will, however, mention only a few, the most important of them : *Qānūn-i-Bū ‘Alī Sīna* (the world-renowned *Canon of Avicenna*),⁹ *Sharḥ-i-Qānūn* by ‘Allāma Qutb-ud-Dīn Shīrāzī,¹⁰ *Kāmil*.

¹Farrar, *Life of Christ*, 429.

²Dummelow, *Commentary on Holy Bible*, 808.

³Isiah, XXII : 16 is an appropriate parallel : “Thou...that giveth an habitation for himself in a rock.....”

⁴Luke XXII : 53-54.

⁵Mark XVI : 1 : Luke XXIII : 55 ;

⁶Mark XVI : 1.

⁷Dummelow, *Commentary on the Holy Bible*, 719.

⁸John, XXIV : 1.

⁹Vol. I : 138.

¹⁰Vol. III : 75.

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us-Sanā'ah by 'Alī Ibnul-'Abbās Al-Majūsi,¹ *Majmū'a-i-Baqāi* by Mahmūd Muhammad Isma'il Mukhatib Khāqānī,² *Tazkira-i-ulul-Albāb* by Sheikh Dawud uz-Dzarīr-al-Antākī,³ *Qarābādīn-i-Rūmī*⁴ which was translated into Arabic from the original Greek in the reign of Caliph Ma'mun, *Umdatul-Muhtāj* by Shaikh Ahmad bin Hasan-ur-Rashīdī al Hakīm.⁵

These women, to resume the subject, could not have been preparing for a separate ritual, as has been alleged by some, in ignorance of the action of Joseph and Nicodemus, because they were present when these two men embalmed the body of Jesus.⁶

I have already mentioned that contrary to all Jewish practice the neck and face of Jesus was left uncovered. The tomb was not filled in or covered with earth, as was usually done by the Jews under the belief that their so doing kept away the evil spirits from the dead body, but only a stone, *Golāl*, was rolled over the sepulchre. Why? The *secret* friends wanted to avoid suffocation of Jesus. There was another reason also. To resuscitate Jesus, they would have had to open the tomb at short intervals. Apart from being cumbersome the digging operations would have been an open challenge to the Jews. To avoid all possibilities of any such detection a stone only was rolled over the sepulchre. The Eye-Witness gives another reason :

They then smoked the grotto with aloe and other strengthening herbs..... and they placed a large stone in front of the entrance so that the vapours might better fill the grotto.⁷

It was for these reasons that a private garden was selected.⁷ The pre-arranged plan was well thought of and succeeded in the end.

¹Vol. II : 602.

²Vol. II : 497.

³Page 303.

⁴Vol. IV : 511.

⁵Page 189.

⁶Matt. XXVII : 67.

⁷*The Crucifixion*, 75.

⁸John XIX : 41.

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Now Matthew, alone, says that on the following day the sepulchre was sealed and watch¹ was placed before it. It is not clear whether the guards were within or without the garden. Then an angel appeared, clad in *white shining garments*, and rolled the stone away. The guards became so terrified that they became as dead² and fled to the city and gave an account to the chief priest, who, after deliberations in an assembly with the elders, decided to bribe the soldiers to tell a lie and say that the body of Jesus had been stolen by night by the disciples of Jesus.³ But this narrative is ridiculous on the face of it. To begin with, no mention is made anywhere else in the New Testament of the report of the soldiers to the chief priest, and in any case the soldiers ought to have reported to Pilate in the first instance. Secondly, it is unimaginable that the Sanhedrin in assembly, most of whom were Sadducees, would have believed the information so credible as to act on it. In the first instance, they would not have believed it, and secondly, they would not have taken any action without verifying the truth of this highly suspicious report. If they on enquiry had found the report to be true they would have charged the soldiers before Pilate for having allowed the body to be so stolen. It is impossible to believe that a college of seventy men would have officially decided on suggesting a falsehood and rewarding the persons agreeing to tell a lie.

Again, it is not possible to imagine that Pilate would have readily accepted the representation of the Jews. Indeed, for what little we know of him from the Gospels he must have remained unmoved. The Roman soldiers knew too well the strictness with which discipline was administered and the promises to obtain immunity would have made no impression on them. They knew that the penalty for dereliction of duty was death. In the Acts,

¹ Matt. XXVIII : 4.

² Matt. XXVIII : 12-14.

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we actually find Agrippa I sentencing to death the soldiers who had allowed Peter to escape from prison.¹

The whole story is plainly absurd and a result of pure invention, and it was concocted to create evidence of the resurrection. Matthew in fact betrays himself by explaining that the bargain which was thus concluded in secret was not kept a secret for he alleges that

This saying is commonly reported among the Jews until this day.²

Peake in his *Commentary on the Bible* says :

The story arose as a reply to Jews who averred that the disciples had removed the body of Jesus.³

The compilers of the *Encyclopædia Biblica* say :—

The sealing and watching of the sepulchre is now very gradually given up even by those scholars who still hold by the resurrection narrative as a whole.⁴

And they come to the final conclusion that :

The whole story is a very late production.⁵

I have already referred to the prophetic comparison made by Jesus himself to the fate which befell Jonah. This indeed was a true comparison : Jesus was buried *alive* and he came out of the tomb *alive*. Nowhere in the New Testament is Jesus represented as asserting his resurrection in the sense Christianity understands it to be. He prophesied that he would "rise again" and so he did : for he did "rise again" out of the very jaws of death.

Before dealing with the question of the resurrection, there is one fact which I must mention : the whole of Christian antiquity was ignorant of this tomb of Jesus until it was rediscovered in Palestine under Constantine in 326 C.E. "by the inspiration of the Saviour and the result of a Divine revelation".⁶ I have mentioned this

¹ Acts, XII : 19.

³ Peake, *Commentary on the Bible*, 722.

⁵ *Ency. Biblica*, Col. 4065.

² Matt, XXVIII ; 15.

⁴ *Ibid*, Col. 4066.

⁶ Eusebius, *Vita Const.*, III : 26.

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fact as it has a bearing on the resurrection of Jesus from this tomb.

The Resurrection

The resurrection of Jesus is the miracle to which Christians turn with the most cherished eagerness. It is the foundation on which their hopes depend, on which their faith is fixed. If the ordinary doctrine of the Bible being Divinely inspired had to be given up, the Christians felt relieved of a burden often too great for them to bear. If the complete verbal accuracy of the Gospel narrative was disproved, it was orthodoxy and not Christianity that suffered because it was only the more minute and embarrassing tenets of the creed that found its foundation swept away. If the Biblical miracles were shown to be untenable, the Christian theologians were comforted for having one less weak and vulnerable outpost to defend. But if the resurrection of Jesus should be proved to be a myth and the Christians are compelled to expunge it from their creed, they will feel that the very pivot of their faith has vanished, the very basis of their hopes has disappeared and the entire foundation of their religion has been uprooted. Says Paul :

And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain ; ye are yet in your sins.¹

Thus even if there be no truth in the assertion, yet according to Paul, Christ must *be raised*. It is for these reasons that it has been said that Christianity, in all its forms, nay, the entire faith of the Church, has as its pivot the resurrection of Jesus. It is accepted as a reality without appreciating the unreality upon which it rests. We are told that the evangelists "were not recording facts", as to them

¹ I Cor. XV : 17.

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"historical accuracy was neither of importance nor of consequence".¹ I, for somewhat different reasons, entirely agree. But I do question the assertion that "it did not please God to cause to be written a biography of His Son".² It is the old old story. Man committed a sin, and blamed Satan for it. The Christians went a step further. They played havoc with the texts and blamed God for it. No ! had a true account of the life of Jesus been handed down to us, there would have been no Christianity, as it is known to us to day. The needs of the Church, changing with the growth of Christology, had eliminated most of the authentic but inconvenient details ; and introduced into the Gospels certain incidents and even whole episodes, which were more appealing than historical facts. What should have happened, was made to happen ; what should have been said, was represented as having been said.

The rapid expansion of, and accretions to, the Christian faith created a self-contradictory fabric of traditions wholly foreign to historical reality ; but this entire fabric so laboriously built collapses in face of an honest enquiry. The Christian apologists are perforce reduced to a bare assertion like the one we find in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*.

The earliest and the strongest evidence for the Resurrection is provided by the Acts of the Apostles and the Epistles of St. Paul...that it was believed and preached from the beginning.³

This statement is as ridiculous as it is groundless. We know that idol-worship has been believed and preached from time immemorial ; would this fact establish the truth of the cult ? Further, most of the early Christians did not believe in the resurrection.. Can any one, in view of the irreconcilable discrepancies, have the audacity to say, honestly, that the factum of the resurrection stands

¹ Scofield ; Reference to the New Testament, 125.

² *Ibid.*, iii.

³ *Ency. Brit.*, 14th Edn : Vol. 13 : 20.

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established. It is obvious that the Gospels are at variance with one another. The only two facts common to all are the empty tomb and the presence of someone in *white garments*.

Denials of the resurrection are as old as Christianity itself. Even Paul asks his followers :

Now if Christ *is preached* that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection ? ¹

Thus while meeting an objection to the resurrection of Jesus, Paul asserted that it should be believed because it *was preached*, and made it depend upon the correctness of the resurrection of mankind generally. Many of the episodes related and many of the details given in the New Testament owe their origin and arrangements to the necessity of countering Jewish scepticism. At the same time Christian apologetics had to reply to Pagan sceptics. Thus Celcus asked whether the story of resurrection could not be explained by the vision produced from the strong imagination of and the agitated brain of an hysterical woman, Mary Magdalene, or of the disciples.²

The discovery of the empty tomb created an unforeseen difficulty in the way of the evangelists. The resurrection of Jesus was their solution, and his "appearances" and "ascension" were logical sequences, and the "testimony" of his resurrection.

I must make a departure from the usual process of explaining the alleged *facts* by way of a reasonable and critical examination of the narratives and must predicate it with a statement of the various irreconcilable discrepancies in the evagelic record.

The Gospels exhibit contradictions of the most glaring kind. Peimerus enumerated ten such contradictions ; but in reality their number is much greater :

1. The "seal and watch" set upon the sepulchre and

¹ I Cor. XV : 12 ; see R. V. p. 1272. ² Origen, C., Celcus, II, 55.

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of the bribing of the soldiers of the watch occurs only in Matthew.¹ In Mark, Luke and John these features are not only missing, but they are excluded by the representation of women as intending to apply ointment to the body of Jesus ; and in Mark at least as foreseeing the only difficulty in the weight of the stone ; whereas Matthew has to make their object as only seeing the sepulchre.

2. In Luke the women get ready the spices before sunset on Friday ;² in Mark they did not buy them till after sunset on Saturday ;³ in John, Joseph and Nicodemus had already embalmed the body ;⁴ while according to Matthew,⁵ Mark⁶ and Luke⁷ Joseph had simply wrapped the body in a fine linen cloth.

3. The persons who came to the sepulchre on the morning of the resurrection were : in Mark, Mary Magdalene and some other women ;⁸ in Matthew, only the two Marys ;⁹ in Luke, the two Marys and also other women ;¹⁰ in John only Mary Magdalene, to whom, however, are added Peter and the *beloved disciple*.¹¹ In Luke, Peter alone went to the sepulchre.¹² This passage is spurious and is interpolated to harmonize with Paul.¹³

4. The time of the visit of the women to the sepulchre is : in Mark, when the sun was risen ;¹⁴ in Luke, in early dawn ;¹⁵ in John, early (it was yet dark) before sunrise ;¹⁶ but according to Matthew half a day earlier.¹⁷

¹ Matt, XXVII : 62, 66, XXVIII, 11-15, 41.

² Luke, XXIII : 54-56.

³ Mark XIV : 1.

⁴ Matt, XXVII : 59.

⁵ Luke, XXIII : 53.

⁶ Matt, XXVIII : 1.

⁷ Luke, XXIV : 10.

⁸ Luke, XXIV : 12.

⁹ Mark, XVI : 2.

¹⁰ John, XX : 1.

¹¹ John XIX : 38-40.

¹² Mark, XV : 46.

¹³ Mark, XIV : 1.

¹⁴ John, XX : 1.

¹⁵ I Cor. XV : 3-8.

¹⁶ Luke XXIV : 4.

¹⁷ Matt, XXVIII :

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5. In Mark,¹ in Luke² and in John³ those who came to the sepulchre found that the stone was already rolled away ; in Matthew it was rolled back by the angel in the presence of the women.⁴

6. In Mark⁵ as in Matthew⁶ there was only one angel ; and in Luke there were two, who are described as men in *shining garments*.⁷

7. In Mark, the one angel sat within the sepulchre,⁸ in Matthew, the one sat without the sepulchre upon the stone,⁹ in Luke, the two come up to the women.¹⁰ The appearance, however, was not until they had left the sepulchre.

8. As to what was seen in the sepulchre: in Mark, it was only the angel ;¹¹ in Luke, at least when the women entered it, there was nothing,¹² in John, the *beloved disciple* saw the linen clothes lying¹³ and Peter saw the clothes neatly wrapped up and also the napkin.¹⁴

9. In the Synoptic Gospels the angels informed of the resurrection ;¹⁵ in John, they merely questioned Mary Magdalene " why weepest thou ?" ¹⁶

10. The discrepancies regarding the instructions given to the women are amongst the most vital in the whole account : in Mark¹⁷ and Matthew,¹⁸ they were directed to inform the disciples that Jesus had gone before them to Galilee ; in Luke, there is no such injunction at all, and in John, we find no words which could even seem to answer to the command in Mark and Matthew.

¹ Mark, XVI : 4.

² John, XX : 1.

³ Mark, XVI : 5-7.

⁴ Luke, XXIV : 5.

⁵ Mark, XVI : 5.

¹⁰ Luke, XXIV : 5.

¹² Luke, XXIV : 3.

¹⁴ John, XX : 7.

¹⁶ John XX : 13.

¹⁸ Matt. XXVIII : 7.

² Luke XXIV : 2.

⁴ Matt, XXVIII : 2.

⁶ Matt, XXVII : 2-7.

⁹ Matt, XXVII : 2.

¹¹ Mark, XVI : 5.

¹³ John XX : 6.

¹⁵ Matt, XXVIII : 7 ; Mark XVI : 6 Luke, XXIV : 6.

¹⁷ Mark, XVI : 7.

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11. No less marked are the differences as to the message given by the women to the disciples ; in Luke, they reported to the disciples ;¹ in Matthew, they merely intended to do so ;² in John, Mary Magdalene reported what she had seen ;³ and in Mark, the women out of fear said nothing at all to anyone.⁴

12. The communication by the women produced different results : in Luke, it merely produced the unbelief of the disciples ;⁵ and in John, Peter and the *beloved disciple* went to the sepulchre and came away *wondering*.⁶

13. In John, Jesus appeared to Mary Magdalene who was not allowed to touch the body ;⁷ in Matthew, he appeared to the two Marys who embraced his feet.⁸

14. In Matthew, Jesus confirmed the information, which had already been given by the *angels*, to direct the disciples to proceed to Galilee ;⁹ in John, Mary Magdalene was simply asked to inform his brethren that he was ascending to heaven.¹⁰

15. The appearance to the two men of Emmaus is known only to Luke,¹¹ although they had immediately after returned to Jerusalem and informed the disciples of it.¹²

16. An appearance to Peter before the evening on the same day is known only to Luke.¹³

17. None of the Gospels record the appearance of Jesus to James his brother or to Paul though Paul mentions these both.¹⁴

18. In Luke, Jesus appeared to the disciples and drank and ate with them.¹⁵ They were commanded to

¹ Luke, XXIV : 9.

² John, XX : 14.

³ Luke, XXIV : 11.

⁴ John, XX : 14 : 17.

⁵ Matt, XXVIII : 10.

⁶ John, XX : 17.

⁷ Luke, XXIV : 33-35.

⁸ 1 Cor., XV : 7-8.

⁹ Matt., XXVIII : 8

¹⁰ Mark. XVI : 8.

¹¹ John, XX : 10.

¹² Matt, XXVIII : 2.

¹³ Luke, XXIV : 13-15.

¹⁴ Luke, XXIV : 34.

¹⁵ Luke, XXIV : 33, 36-39.

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remain in Jerusalem till the Pentecost (See contra 10 above). In John, the same incident is narrated without Thomas.¹

19. Luke makes no reference to the circumstances that the doors were shut when Jesus entered, any more than he does to the conferring of authority spoken of by John.² John, on the other hand, knows nothing of Jesus having eaten anything.

20. John alone mentions the second visit, eight days after, to the disciples with Thomas.³

21. In Matthew⁴ and in John⁵ appearance of Jesus at Galilee is recorded, though at different times.

It may be mentioned here that the Apocryphal Gospels contain nothing of consequence beyond the Canonical Gospels except that an interval of eight days is placed between the resurrection and his first appearance.

It is obvious, therefore, that the Gospels agree in two facts only : the empty tomb and the presence of someone in *white garments*, and in nothing else.

If we believe the Gospels, the disciples expected the resurrection, because, we are told, the Old Testament and Jesus⁶ had predicted it. No one has yet been able to point out to a single passage in the Old Testament which foretold the resurrection of the Messiah. The Jews never held any such belief. It is true that there are passages in the New Testament⁷ which attribute such predictions to the Old Testament, and Paul also speaks of the resurrection as being "according to the scriptures."⁸ But these are mere assertions without the least justification.

¹ John, XX: 18-26.

² John, XX: 19.

³ John, XX: 26.

⁴ Matt, XXVIII 16-20.

⁵ John, XXI: 1.

⁶ Matt., XII: 40; XVI: 4, 21; XVII: 9, 23; XX: 19; XXVI: 32.

⁷ Matt., XII: 40; Luke XXIV: 27.

⁸ I Cor. XV: 4.

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In any case, it will have to be admitted by all that at the time of the Passion, the disciples behaved as if they had never heard anything of the resurrection. The first and the second Gospel narrate the dispersal of the disciples at Gethsemane in very clear terms.

According to Matthew :

Then *all* the disciples forsook him and fled.¹

And Mark says :

And they *all* forsook him and fled.²

Luke has carefully omitted this incident, no doubt to keep his witnesses at hand. But the earliest tradition considered that the disciples were no longer at Jerusalem at the time of resurrection ; and had returned to Galilee.³ There can be no doubt that the wretched disciples driven by fear and despair recalled to mind the words of Jesus :

All ye shall be offended because of me this night ; for it is written, I shall smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered.⁴

They fled because they were "of little faith,"⁵ "fools and slow of heart,"⁶ and "hypocrites."⁷ Jesus had truly described them in these terms and had also scornfully said of them :

Ye seek me not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves and were filled.⁸

Knowing their real character, Jesus himself had advised them :

Let them which are in Judæa flee to the mountains.

When Jesus is alleged to have spoken of resurrection they did not understand him.¹⁰ We catch a glimpse of the wretched fugitives with "heavy hearts and streaming eyes"¹¹ at their hope of the expected Kingdom being

¹ Matt, XXVI : 56

² The Gospel of Peter, cf. Huck, *Synopse*, 22.

³ Mark, XIV : 27.

⁴ Luke, XXIV : 25.

⁵ John, VI : 26.

¹⁰ Luke, XVIII : 33-34.

² Mark, XIV : 40.

⁵ Matt, IX : 26.

⁷ Luke, XIII : 56.

⁸ Luke, XXI : 21.

¹¹ The Gospel of Peter.

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shattered to pieces. Their comparison of the tragedy with their unrealized anticipations is portrayed in the words of the two pilgrims of Emmaus :

But we trusted that it had been he, which should have redeemed Israel.¹

We know that whenever Jesus is alleged, in the Gospels, to have tried to explain the resurrection to them in advance they did not understand him.² The first announcement of the resurrection found them sceptical. From these facts, unless we admit the absurd, we must conclude that Jesus predicted nothing of the kind ; but that later when faith found it impossible that Jesus should have been unaware of the fate awaiting him, it could find no better way of declaring that he had known of it, than by making him predict it.

In any case, the idea of resurrection to them would have been quite different. To them the resurrection expected at the end of the world was expected to take the form of a material restoration of the body and to be a renewal of earthly life. The resurrection of Lazarus represented their conception.

If the disciples who had "witnessed" the resurrection had written down their impressions from day to day, and their records had come down to us, much that remains obscure would have become clear. The earliest testimony available, that of Paul, was written about twenty-five years after the event and is much too vague. But the first conceptions changed rapidly, involving equally swift changes in the original reminiscences. Very soon the disciples, confused by the growing Christological distortions of their testimony, became incapable of restoring it to its original form. It cannot be too often repeated that what we find in the Gospels is the conviction of those who thought they have established the truth of facts, and *not the facts themselves*. And this

¹Luke, XXIV : 21.

²Matt., VIII : 31 ; IX : 10, 32.

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unshakable conviction should not be confused with the legendary form in which it was subsequently clothed by the redactors. Says Loisy :

The accouts in the Canonical and Apocryphal Gospels do not represent the original appearances, but the way in which the belief in the resurrection of Christ became conscious, took shape and justified itself half a century and more after the birth of Christianity.¹

The earliest source to mention the appearance of Jesus is Paul. He says :

For I *delivered* unto you *first of all* that which I also *received*, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures, and he was buried ; and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures : And that he was seen of Cephas, then of *the twelve* ; after that he was seen of about five hundred brethren at once ; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep. After that, he was seen of James ; then of all the apostles. And last of all he was seen of me also ; as of one born out of due time.²

Paul has no personal knowledge and he is delivering *first of all* what he *received* at Jerusalem from James and Peter.³ The list of appearances seems to be in a chronological order, for the words *after that* suggest it. It is noteworthy that Paul does not mention any appearance to Mary Magdalene or any other women. Nor does he mention the appearance to Ananias.⁴ He would not have omitted to mention this proof in support of the fact of resurrection if he had known of it, for he was out to establish this fact. He makes his views clear by saying :

If Christ be not risen, then is our preaching in vain, and your faith is also vain.⁵

It follows, as a matter of course, that James and Peter must also have been ignorant of these facts. Again, Paul speaks of Jesus having appeared to Peter by

¹ Loisy, *La Le'gende de Jesus*, 467.

² I Cor., XV : 3-8.

⁴ Acts, IX : 10 : 15.

³ Gal., 1 : 18.

⁵ I Cor., XV : 14.

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himself, but about this the Gospels are silent ;¹ and then to the twelve apostles. Judas Iscariot having killed himself, only eleven were left, as we know that the twelfth apostle, Matthias, was selected, by the remaining eleven apostles by lots long after these appearances of Jesus.² Again, there is no reference to the appearance to the two men of Emmaus.³ So evidently, Paul is wrong again in his narrative. He does not give any details of the various appearances mentioned by him. It is difficult to understand why he should not have done so, if he knew of them. He only speaks of Jesus having been *seen* and uses the same word regarding himself. He does not assert that he saw Jesus in person on the road to Damascus. It is now, almost universally, admitted that what Paul saw was a vision only ; a vision to Paul alone of all the bystanders, and therefore subjective or mental only. Are we, then, to suppose that the other appearances mentioned by him were also in vision only ? Further, Paul does not mention any time or place of these appearances. Had they any connection with the resurrection or ascension of Jesus, he would not have failed to specify the time and place.

Paul, therefore, is not a safe guide, for at best his knowledge is confined to hearsay, or, as he puts it, to what he had *received*.

We know that none of the evangelists witnessed the resurrection of Jesus. We have Epistles of Peter, James, John and Jude, all of whom are said by the evangelists to have *seen* Jesus *after* he rose from the dead. In none of their Epistles is the fact of the resurrection even stated, much less that Jesus was seen after the resurrection by any one in general or the

¹ The only reference is found in Luke, XXIV : 34, but it is not from Peter himself.

² Acts, I : 26.

³ Luke, XXIV : 15.

⁴ I Peter, III : 18-23.

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writers of these Epistles in particular. The reference by Peter in his first Epistle does not meet the case. It in fact proves the contrary. He speaks of the resurrection as *quicken*ing of the spirit with a definite view to preach unto the spirits in hell. Nowhere does he assert that he saw the Risen Lord. And it is noteworthy that the Gospels do not cite anyone saying : "I saw the Risen Lord."

(To be continued.)

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London, S.E. 3
26th November 1946

Dear Sir,

Will you kindly send me copies of your propaganda literature in English, and a specimen of any periodical published by you.

Your faithfully,
J. J. H.

Copenhagen, Denmark.
26th September 1946

Dear Maulana Abdul Majid Sahib,

As I have had some talks with Mr. Khuda Bakhsh about Islam and he recommends me to you, I take the liberty to ask you to do me the very great favour to send me an extract from the Qur-ān (in English or German) and other Islamic literature which you might have.

Thanking you beforehand.

Sincerely yours,
P. P.

East Horsley.
24th November 1946

Dear Sir,

There are several points on which I want advice from you and I will ask one question now. Will you please tell me exactly how one makes the act of embracing Islam? Is there any sort of baptismal ceremony as in the Christian Church or is it a matter of personal faith changing with no outward ceremony of the change?

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I am afraid, I am very ignorant of such details, although have a fair knowledge of the broad principles of Islam and I should appreciate your advice.

I should also be obliged if you would tell me of any Islamic literature, in English, suitable for reading by a child of about seven years of age.

Yours very sincerely,
J. E. R.

London, W.C. 1
27th November 1946

Dear Sir,

May I, if it is convenient to you visit you, again on Monday December 2nd? Would you please let me know the best time to arrive?

I have studied the literature you gave me and find myself becoming more and more interested.

I remain,
Yours sincerely,
P. K. M.

The Rifle Brigade
B. A. O. R.
20th November 1946

Dear Sir,

My friend and I are interested in Mohamedanism and we would appreciate it if you would be good enough to send us two copies of the Qur-ān, and any other literature that would be of interest for us to study further.

Thanking in anticipation.

I remain,
Your faithful servant,
F. B. B.

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