

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.

The **Islamic Review**

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

نَحْمَدُكَ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدَكَ وَنَبِيَّكَ

THE ISLAMIC REVIEW

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BY THE LIGHT OF THE HOLY QUR-AN

“ And this world’s life is naught but a play and an idle sport ; and certainly the abode of the hereafter is better for those who guard (against evil) ; do you not then understand ?

“We know indeed that what they say certainly grieves you, but surely they do not call you a liar, but the unjust deny the communications of Allah.

“And certainly apostles before you were rejected, but they were patient on being rejected and persecuted until Our help came to them ; and there is none to change the words of Allah, and certainly there has come to you some information about the messengers.”

—The Holy Qur’án, Ch. VI, vv. 32-34.

The Purport

What is called life in common usage is nothing but enjoyments that please the senses of the flesh and leaves a man indifferent to the higher demands on our being. It is engrossment with such pleasures that leads one to oppose and use hurtful language against the spiritual teachers like the Holy Prophet Muhammad, whose

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only fault is that they expose the hollowness and wrongfulness of the conduct and way of thinking of these animals of men. In opposing these teachers, these people really oppose all the standards of correct thinking that alone can lead to the attainment of purity and truth. Reformers, however, should not be discouraged by such savage opposition and persecution, because as history bears repeated testimony, the fate of all such opponents of truth has invariably been the same, *viz.*, utter discomfiture and eventual vanquishment in the end. That is the unalterable law of God.

ISLAM'S STRUGGLE IN INDIA

BY MAULVI AFTAB UD-DIN AHMAD

The history of Indian Islam is almost as old as of Islam itself. Its very first advent in northern India, however, was of a political nature. Muhammad bin Qasim's landing in Sind had a political purpose behind it. Spiritual Islam of the peaceful preachers who called men to the way of God were not slow to appear on the scene. Some of them came even without any aid from or association with political Islam, but later generations of Hindus were made to remember the political aspects of Islam's appearance in India to strengthen their sense of exclusive nationalism which had resisted for so many ages all forces of internationalism from within and without. Hinduism had absorbed all outside races that came to this land—Jews, Shakas, Huns and Greeks. It had banished the democratic and slightly international culture of Buddhism from the soil of India. It had reduced the native aborigines that had lived and ruled in this land before its advent into a position of abject slavery and impotency. And it was not slow to resist the march of Islam in this country when it made its appearance, although Buddhism had already prepared the field for the advent of a democratic and universal faith such as the Prophet of Arabia preached. But politically Islam had acquired the position of a world-power and culturally it was far superior to anything that Hinduism could offer. Particular races who had embraced Islam only a short while before their advent in India might not claim a high degree of material culture, but the moral and social culture of Islam inherent in the faith itself coupled with the glory of Saracenic culture which was throwing its

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fascinating lustre on the world outside gave even such races a cultural background which made them free from the need of any cultural impetus and guidance from any other quarter so far as the essentials were concerned. No doubt, Muslims never disdained any cultural assets that might be found within any nation anywhere in the world and this at times to the extent of relaxing their own austere principles, so liberal were they in adaptation and assimilation. But for things that really mattered in the cultural life of a nation they actually needed very little from outside their own religion. Neither did they ever try to force their own peculiar cultural acquisitions on others. Nor did they make even any conscious effort in the manner of present-day Christians to infuse their own culture in others. It is uncharitable, therefore, on the part of such a cultured lady as H. E. Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, the Governor of U. P., to make the following misleading statement in the course of a press conference some time ago :

"Like every other cultural synthesis in the past, it (the present cultural assertion of the Hindus—*Ed.*) will have a background of violence and compulsion. Synthesis is not such a bloodless word as it sounds. Like the dish of mutton on the dining table, it has its blood-soaked origin in the slaughter-house. When one talks of cultural synthesis, the ears echo with the tramp of barbarian feet across the corridors of history, the boom of cannons, the anguished cries of the wounded, the death-rattle of the dying, the humiliation of the living and the conquered. Every culture has come with an invading army, settled in the land of its conquest, has acted upon and has been acted upon by the culture of the conquered and has been transmitted in that process."

In plain English it is alleged that as the Muslims came to this country as conquerors, they imposed their culture on the Hindus by violence. Consequently there is nothing wrong if the Hindus, as they become masters of the greater part of India today, try to impose their own culture on the Muslim minority by violence.

With due deference to the learning and erudition of Mrs. Naidu, both the analogy as well as the logic of this statement is wrong. Both Muslims and Christians came to India as conquerors. They fought with those only who resisted and challenged their political supremacy. But about neither of these it can be said with any justification that they imposed their respective cultures on the Indians by violence. There is no doubt an indirect

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compulsion in the process, as the U. P. Governor rightly observes, but this compulsion never took the form of physical violence in either case. The recent brutalities in the Eastern Punjab and Western U. P. stand, however, on a different footing altogether. Here the Muslim minority had *willingly* accepted the Hindu supremacy in the areas covered by the Union of India. Their leaders gave spontaneous salute to the Congress flag and expressed their anxiety to live peacefully and loyally in the Indian Union. There is nothing to show that they had any desire to rise in revolt against the established Government. And on Mrs. Naidu's own admission, the Hindu violence in this case is not a political offensive but an attempt to thrust the Hindu culture on the Muslims by sheer physical force. As such, it is unprecedented in the history of cultural conquests. Its only parallel in history is to be found in the activities of the Christian institution of Inquisition in the Middle Ages, which resulted in the expulsion of Non-Roman Catholic religions and cultures from Spain. It is a sheer act of vandalism, which the modern world of international outlook and broad view of things can ill-afford to look on with equanimity.

Incidentally, Mrs. Naidu rejects by implication Pandit Jawahar Lal's theory that there is no such two things as Muslim culture and Hindu culture and that what little of these two is left today is being pushed aside by the virile forces of Western civilization. The grim reality of Hindu determination to subjugate Muslim culture and if possible even to crush it for good is, however, too clear for the U. P. Governor to miss and she speaks it out in so many words. "The Boot of History," she says :

"Is now in the other leg. We are now heading for a new synthesis in the culture of U. P., in which Hindu culture will be the dominant partner."

"And now the resurgent culture of those who have 86 per cent. of the votes of U. P." she observes further :

"Is inevitably becoming the culture of the State. So it was that saffron-robed Pandits chanted Vedic hymns from the various corners of the Darbar Hall in U. P's Government House as the clock struck 12 on the night of August 14."

The poetic vision of Her Excellency Mrs. Naidu has, thus, caught sight of a historical phenomenon which missed

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the sceptical philosophical view of Pandit Nehru, the Indian Premier. The Nightingale of India admits in a clear language the spirit of Hindu revivalism lurking behind the so-called national movement in India. She says :

“ When in the later twenties, the tempo of the freedom struggle slowed down, the latent *antagonism of the two revivalisms*, yoked to the national chariot, came to the surface and they broke apart.” (Italics are our own).

Nor is she slow to determine where this spirit of revivalism originated :

“ Then suddenly the non-cooperation movement burst on the Indian scene like a mighty storm. Indian nationalism adopted the culture and the symbols of the community which predominantly manned its anti-British struggles in various parts of India”.

We have already discussed this deep association of Congress freedom movement with Hindu revivalist spirit in our issue for October, 1947. It is gratifying to note that a very important figure of the Congress movement has come out to support us in our contention. And even Pandit Jawahar Lal who persistently refused to see this aspect of Hindu nationalistic aspiration, has been forced to raise an alarm against this resurgent tide of Hindu revivalism which has expressed itself in a gruesome manner immediately on the assumption of sovereignty by the Congress. In the course of a speech delivered in Delhi, on October 2, he observed :

“ The demand for a Hindu State was not only stupid and medieval but also fascist in character. Those who put forth such ideas would have the same fate as Hitler and Mussolini.”

Pandit Nehru's allegation that the Muslim League is responsible for this reactionary spirit in Hinduism falls to the ground in view of what Mrs. Naidu says on this question, and the U.P. Governor is no mean authority. What the Indian Premier needs to understand is that this intolerant and parochial outlook is the very essence of Hinduism. To allow and condone the revivalist movement in Hinduism and to expect it not to exhibit this spirit of intolerance is to ask for the impossible. “ Back to the Vedas” slogan was bound to bring back those days of cultural blackout of which the lynching of the Shudras and burning of the *Sati* (i.e., widow in the pyre of her deceased husband) were but modest examples. Our Hindu

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friends accusing Islam of cultural aggression should do well to remember incidentally that in spite of Islam enjoying sovereign power in India for close upon 700 years, it refrained scrupulously from interfering with such a loathsome practice as that of the *Sati*, just because it happened to be a part of Hindu culture and that they left this savage practice to be stopped later by a Christian power from the West.

That we are not uncharitable in accusing Hinduism of unbending intolerance is shown by the startling fact that a Hindu of Mahatma Gandhi's broad outlook is opposed to the freedom of change of faith in Hindu India. If the Mahatma had opposed doubtful cases of religious conversion, we would have been the first to congratulate him on his stand on a righteous cause, but he would not allow any conversion whatsoever and in this his attitude is based on the age-old Hindu theory that religion should be racial and national. India, according to this theory, is the land of the Hindus, otherwise called the Aryan race, and the religion of the race and this land should be only Hinduism, the religion of the early settlers of this race. A chance is given by this theory to subsequent foreign settlers to adopt the Hindu faith and culture and occupy one of the lower social classes prescribed by Hinduism but in no case should an inhabitant of India be allowed to profess and practise a religion which has its origin and connections outside the peninsula of India. The Shuddhi movement which two decades back attempted a mass conversion of Muslims into Hinduism or the reconversion as its protagonists called it, of the straying members of their race back to the religion of their ancestors, was an exhibition of this very old spirit of absorption without any margin for credal or cultural difference. This was the utmost liberalism that Hinduism was capable of showing and had it succeeded in its objective, Indian political situation would have taken a turn very different from the one we have the misfortune of experiencing to-day. Enraged, however, at its failure Hindu racialism or rather tribalism is grimly determined to thrust on Indian Islam a fate similar to that it had thrust on a religious movement which though indigenous in character had once the temerity to challenge the racial character of Hinduism and its steel frame of caste-divisions—we mean Buddhism. Indeed,

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the expulsion of Buddhism from India and its hold on huge masses in the Far East is a melancholy comment on the hopeless cultural rigidity of Hinduism. This cultural intolerance, as was to be expected, would not spare Islam when it came to India. The overwhelming political power of Islam that held the supremacy of the world at that time together with the administrative and cultural superiority of the races that embraced it stood in the way of Hinduism throwing it out of this land by force or even killing it by contemptuous indifference. The milder method of subtle absorption was tried during the early Mughal period and succeeded considerably, but the undying vitality of Islam reinforced by Muslim influence from outside saved it from the fate that had overtaken others that preceded it in the field. It is noteworthy that even during the days of its political fall Indian Islam still exhibited a spiritual vigour characteristic of its best days in history. So vigorous, indeed, Islam here became that not to speak of Hindu influences, even the all-conquering and tactful Christian British rule could only spur it on to an irresistible expansion movement. It is really remarkable that nowhere has Islam been so hard-pressed culturally and politically as here in India and nowhere has it shown its spiritual and cultural vigour so wonderfully as in this land. This speaks a volume about the inner vigour of Islam. The iconoclastic Arya Samaj Movement was the last attempt of Hinduism to create a religious and cultural homogeneity in India by a total absorption of the Islamic population in India. It was a sense of ultimate frustration that goaded Hinduism to organise the Sangathan Movement with its various ramifications under different names. Racial and cultural appeal failing it was determined to use force to crush the existence of Islam in India as a separate cultural entity and a distinct spiritual message.

But the leaders of this movement can spare themselves much fruitless effort if they take a lesson from the facts of history. The closing decades of the nineteenth century was the darkest period of Islamic history when the mighty Western powers were not only in the prime of their power and prosperity but also in a position to unite against the faith and culture of Islam. Theirs was world-wide proselytizing religion, and they had a tradition

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much in common with Islam. Indeed, at one time it seemed as if Islam was actually wiped out of existence as a factor in world culture. But it was exactly at this point that Islam took an indignant stand against the intellectual and cultural onslaughts of the Christian West. The rejuvenated missionary movement of Islam dates from this darkest hour of Islamic history. Looking further back in history one will also notice how the descendants of those unbelievers who sacked Baghdad and who massacred the Muslim Arabs became the champions of Islam for many centuries that followed. Even the expulsion of the Moors from Spain is not without its lesson; for while the degenerate Muslims were being killed in that lovely Western peninsula, and the rest expelled from it, Islam was breaking new soil in the East Indies and adding more to the number of its adherents by peaceful conversion than it had lost in the political struggles in the West. What is more, inspired by the ideas of Islam, Christian West was itself heading for a bloody religious revolution which was to bestow intellectual emancipation to Western Christendom. Indeed, no careful student of history can fail to notice that every temporary set back of Islam has invariably reacted in a longer and more consolidated march forward. Muslim mind everywhere is subconsciously aware of this great fact of history and so it never feels depressed on this account. And added to this is the assurance of the Holy Qur'an :

Say, Truth has come and falsehood vanished ; surely falsehood is a vanishing thing.¹

No Muslim mind can miss the import of this verse. Islam is a message of supreme and uncompromising unity of the Godhead and as such it stands opposed to all forms of polytheism and is determined to wage an unceasing war with these till they are finally vanquished never to raise their heads again. Accordingly if it cannot make a compromise on this question with the manworshipping West, it feels all the more uneasy when it sees a whole population of two hundred million, claiming civilization, prostrating before a cow, a lifeless image and even a pebble. It feels sick at heart at all these loathsome blasphemies but it is confident that by moral persuasion and intellectual argumentation it will one day make these

1. The Holy Qur'an Ch. XXI, v. 18.

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millions of souls realise the folly of their soul-injuring worship. It cannot feel restful in any case. But as has been the misfortune of Islam—rather the misfortune of all reformatory movements, its very expression of sympathy with degraded humanity has been replied by brute force by the very objects of this sympathy. Under the cloak of political struggle the resurgent tide of neo-Hinduism is out to expunge the faith and culture of Islam from the land of Aryavarta and this is a very serious challenge indeed. Alas! these incarnations of foolhardiness are not aware that this action of theirs amounts to a rebellion against the Master of the Universe for whose majesty and unity Islam is a slogan and will end in nothing but destruction for the rebels themselves. As far as the Muslims are concerned they believe it as a matter of faith that the case of India in this age is a fitting culmination to the case of Arabia at the first appearance of Islam. It was in the grossly polytheistic country of Arabia that Islam took its birth. The blood of the believers flowed no doubt to avenge the wrath of the champions of idol-worship, but the ultimate result was the banishment of this loathsome cult from this peninsula for good. Chased through centuries from all quarters of the world the dark forces of rank polytheism seemed to find a secure home in this country of India. It had buttressed itself with a plausible intellectualism and an attractive outward culture of late. But as misfortune would have it, it has chosen at this moment to launch an offensive against the faith and culture of Islam without any provocation whatsoever. And this undoubtedly marks a signal for the final vanquishment of this soul-killing cult at this its last stronghold. Whether Pandit Nehru succeeds or not in his noble attempts to curb this reactionary movement, grim facts of the future will prove to these reckless champions of untruth that ours is a warning of sympathy. India fifty years hence will be as completely a Muslim country as Arabia is today and the progeny of Patels and Savarkars will be as contemptuous of the activities of the Hindu Mahasabha as the descendants of the Prophet's enemies were of the Quraishite opposition. Muslims in thousands have with their blood borne testimony to the grandeur of the faith of Islam. Rather than abjuring this grand faith at the point of guns they have chosen to die under most

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horrible and humiliating circumstances. This has certainly set all sensible Hindus thinking seriously about the real import of this faith and its message to the great Hindu nation and time is not distant when this thinking will burst out into a religious revolution all over Hindu India and that will be the day of the final collapse of idol-worship in this last fortress of gross polytheism—the day which will see the fulfilment, so far as India is concerned, of the Divine promise :

“ He it is who has sent His Apostle with guidance and the religion of truth, that He might cause it to prevail over all religions, though the polytheists may be averse.” *

Whatever Mr. Gandhi and Mrs. Sarojini Naidu may hope about the continuity and prosperity of the current Hindu tradition in the future, they may take it from us that by challenging the faith of Islam in this brutish manner the protagonists of neo-Hinduism have only precipitated its downward course to ultimate ruin. The existing Hindu religion of idol-worship and its myriads of superstitious beliefs and practices have no further lease of life now that it has roused by its indiscrete action the sleeping forces of Islam. The meteoric rise of the iconoclastic Arya Samaj movement and its rapid dissipation in the midst of Hindu polytheism and tradition-worship are indications both of the agitated condition of the Hindu religious mind as well as the impossibility of any successful reform movement from within the Hindu religion. They thus point to the necessity of a fresh, independent and advanced system of religion that can supplant and supplement this religion for the good of the great Hindu nation and India at large. We need hardly point out that such a system can be found only in Islam which has been fighting the maladies of Hindu religious mind in all its various phases for all these centuries, with the patience of a confident physician. The outburst of reactionary Hinduism is only a stern reminder to the Muslims of the huge task that awaits to be performed by them in their capacity as a religious community, and outlines the role that Islam is to play in the future spiritual setting of this great country.

* The Holy Qur'an IX : V. 33.

IS ONE RELIGION AS GOOD AS ANOTHER ?

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

A statement frequently heard fall from the lips of both men and women anent the multiplicity and variation of Christian beliefs is "Well, in my opinion, it does not much matter what a man believes, so long as he is sincere." To the Muslim, however, it matters much, for to him Religion is life, a matter of living and practice and if his faith is wrong his life cannot be conducted on right lines. His interest, therefore, in religion outside Islam, though always demanding his attention, is merely academic but always productive of sorrow and regret when he finds men propagating degrading ideas of the Supreme, holding those ideas with tenacity and producing bitterness and even warfare among the followers of one whom they call the Prince of Peace.

At the present moment the Church of England, or one section, is leaning towards a movement for opening its doors by means of its principal sacrament to all sections of Christianity. It is not a novel idea and it was the attitude of Richard Meynell, the Anglican vicar, in Mrs. Humphrey Ward's *Robert Elsmere*; it is an attitude which Wilfrid Ward, the famous Catholic essayist, characterized as "Reduced Christianity." Other writers, also, prior to Mrs. Ward and her distant connexion, had also proposed and written in its favour.

During the past few years also—the proposal has had many undulations—there has been a revival or, should it be said, persistence, of the movement inaugurated by Newman and Keble in the thirties of the nineteenth century to emphasize the dogmatic principle as the only safeguard against a liberal theology elaborated in this country in the same university—Oxford—to which those great thinkers belonged and which, despite strenuous opposition, has spread generally throughout Christendom.

Another effort made by dogmatists has been the spread of what is known as the Reunion movement which aims, on the one hand, at Reunion with Rome and, on the other, Reunion with all dissenting sects. This general

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reunion was satirized in a previous era by Dean Swift in his pamphlet *Reunion All Round*. On one point the former agitators may be certain, they can only unite with Rome on Rome's own terms. Such universal reunion can never, of course, mount higher than a limited co-operation. At the very outset it encounters the brick wall raised by the Roman Church which forbids its members to join even in prayer with Christians outside her communion. Submission is the demand of Rome and submission does away with co-operation. The revival of monasticism is one of the outcomes of this movement and it has been carried to extreme lengths. In one instance, at least, to my knowledge, in one of the monastic communities of the Church of England, the Latin tongue has been adopted for the language of its ritual, as well as the Roman ritual and its members make use of the Roman Breviary at the canonical hours—the whole community is Roman in every respect but one—it is outside the pale of Roman recognition because it has not made submission to the Roman claims.

Rome gives a ready cast-iron answer to the question : "Is one Religion as good as another ?" with an unmistakable negative. Parties in the Church of England, outside the Anglo-Catholics or High Churchmen, that is to say, those who are known as Broad Churchmen and Evangelicals, have registered their protest against this "Catholic" attitude, hence they are generally known as "Protestants", though this, of course, was not the origin of that term. The word is held in utter detestation by Anglo-Catholics as is the term 'State Church' which the Church of England is unmistakably. They claim that they are not Protestants but Catholics, whose ritual and practices they ape. But Laud, whom they claim and venerate, describe the Church of England as Protestant and the 'man in the street' has seldom any explanation for the word 'Catholic' other than one who has submitted to the Roman communion with the Pope as its head.

Unitarianism—orthodox Christianity denies the right of Unitarians to claim the name 'Christian'—has amended the Christian creed by the acceptance of knowledge made manifest by science and biblical criticism. In bygone days the belief in an infallible church was superseded by the belief in an infallible book, but this belief has now also practically disappeared through the strides made by what

IS ONE RELIGION AS GOOD AS ANOTHER ?

is known as the Higher Criticism. Even the college founded by C. H. Spurgeon, the renowned Baptist minister, who led a crusade against what he termed the Down-grade movement, until a few years ago demanded from all entrants into the Pastors' College an unqualified acceptance of the belief in the plenary inspiration of the Christian scriptures but this demand has now been deleted from its prospectus. The guardians of the college which he founded have thus taken a step against which he made a vigorous protest. But even in his lifetime many of his old students had rebelled against the views he held with such firm tenacity. Speaking generally, it may be said that the doctrine of the verbal inspiration of the Bible is now regarded as essential by only a few insignificant sects, such as the Plymouth Brethren, Christadelphians and, perhaps, one or two others, lesser known even than these.

The union of Christendom, though very much in the air to-day, does not, dare not, in fact, attempt to bring into harmony the many varying dogmas and sects which form part of Christendom, which it has been suggested, should be incorporated. It has been suggested that in the new Coventry Cathedral it is proposed to build, there should be one part in which all the sects and denominations outside the Anglican Church should be able to meet for united services, including Holy Communion. It is an Utopian scheme, but unlikely to be realized, because, first of all, the largest Christian body, Roman Catholicism, must, by its constitution, decline any part in the scheme; while, already, the question of the inclusion of the Unitarians has been discussed.

Unitarians have, for many years, been conducting a world-wide missionary propaganda. A few months ago I received some interesting literature from a Unitarian minister who even entered into correspondence with me, but the correspondence came to a sudden end on his part when I told him that, as a Muslim, I had the honour and privilege of being a member of the largest and oldest Unitarian community in the world or that the world had ever known. Unitarianism is spreading continually beyond the confines of the denomination, a fact admitted a few years since by that important annual, *Whittaker's Almanack*. Some members of that sect have questioned whether greater benefit is to be derived from continuing as a

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separate denomination than by its members affiliating with other denominations and there permeating their beliefs.

There is evidence on every hand that liberal doctrinal opinions in all Christian bodies are spreading. During the past few decades the Modernist movement has invaded even the Roman Church, despite the many efforts to prevent its spread. To my knowledge this has not been as openly as once it was, by articles and books, resulting in suspension or excommunication of the writers as in an underground movement with its ever lengthening tentacles, secret meetings and privately printed and styleograph literature. In the Church of England, which has no visible head claiming infallibility and papal powers, it is more open and diversified while it also prevails to a very great extent in Dissenting denominations.

The Creed of Islam, if concise, is irrefragable and stands firm against amendment, extension or reduction. There are Muslims who have beliefs extra to the main creed, Spiritism and other isms, for instance, but such isms, though they may hold them firmly, are not the creed of Islam, which places no embargo upon individual opinions, so long as they do not run counter or contravene the fundamental belief in the Unity of Allah and unqualified submission to His Will. But the Creed of Islam would be weakened were the attempt be made to add to its creed, doctrines and opinions unformed and undeveloped in the seventh century but which, if added now as obligatory upon all True Believers, would form a burden on the revelation of which Muhammad was the medium.

About half a century or, maybe, sixty years ago (I am counting from the time when I first made the acquaintance of the volume) a Catholic priest wrote a book which he called *Indifferentism*, which dealt with the question which I have chosen for the title of this article. The fact that the subject of Religion is receiving such wide and intense consideration is, I think, directly opposed to Indifferentism, but reveals, rather, intense concern. To Muslims it must afford comfort in the fact that Islam has been and must remain unaffected by the consideration of any external influences or opinions. The Faith of Islam is governed only by essentials as its centre and is that centre towards which all outside religions seem gradually to be moving by the shedding of superfluities and reaching out to the basic fact.

THE WAY OF LIFE

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

The Guidance (5)

“ O you who believe ! do not forbid (yourselves) the good things which God has made lawful for you and do not exceed the limits : surely God does not love those who exceed the limits.

“ And eat of the lawful and good (things) that God has given you, and be careful of (your duty to) God, in whom you believe.”¹

Life is not a miserable, morbid, shrinking affair. Good things are made and good things are to be enjoyed—good gardens and innumerable other mercies. In enjoying the good, the excellent way is one of moderation. Moderation preserves the beauty and intrinsic value of good things. To go to excess, to exceed the limits, destroys beauty and goodness and the intrinsic value of all the fair and natural enjoyments of life. Preserve thy power and discretion over what is good. In surfeit there is no savour. Avoid what is forbidden. Forbidden foods are the flesh of swine—all bacon, pork and ham and mixed meats wherein is an admixture of swine’s flesh. This for thy health’s sake, as pork is an unwholesome food. Wine is forbidden, for in wine lurks much mischief. And a little mischief maketh much sorrow.

“ O you who believe ! Intoxicants and games of chance and (sacrificing to) stones set up and (dividing by) arrows are only an uncleanness, the devil’s work. Shun this, therefore, that you may be successful.

“ The devil only desires to cause enmity and hatred to spring in your midst by means of intoxicants and games of chance and to keep you away from the remembrance of God and from prayer. Will you then desist ?”²

These are important words and worthy of much consideration. Intoxicants, wine and stupefying drugs and all narcotics are placed under a ban.

Wherefore so ?

To avoid evil.

¹ The Holy Qur’ân, V : 87, 88.

² *Ibid.*, V : 90, 91.

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Many people, when truly themselves, would easily discern evil and readily shun it in all its varying forms. Intoxicants are forbidden just because they blur the clarity of discernment and blunt the edge of good intention, by which humanity in its normal condition would observe and shun the evil thing when it presents itself.

For think, if the committing of wrong is made easier by intoxicants, the punishment and penalty inextricably bound up with evil is no less sharp and no less an enduring remorse. Is it any alleviation to say afterwards: "Had I been in my right senses, verily never had I done this thing! It was the wine that did it."

Without doubt the wine committed the fault, but not the wine can be punished: the punishment and remorse fall inevitably upon the human agent.

Therefore beware.

Of a surety, if evil and the cause of evil and the punishment of evil be found in anything, is it not more efficacious to avoid that thing completely rather than to take hazard and play chance with so insidious a foe, pleasant in the approaches, bitter in the eventual consequences?

Even as wine to the physical overthrow, so comes the spirit of gambling to overthrow the mind and to let loose the emotions. Gambling is the lurid fire fed by molten greed.

Do we not see that gambling and betting and sweepstakes and raffles are each and all destructive of the intrinsic value of money, which should be either a payment for definite services rendered, the purchasing of a definite commodity, or some good-will gift or present? The winner of a lottery gets false money, unearned money, tainted money. Surely how transparent is their greed who put their hopes upon the many means of gambling that spring up as the insubstantial mushroom in these days of want, distress and flashy pleasure! Think they for a shilling to obtain a thousand by unreasoning 'luck'? Have they never tasted the sweetness of earned money to know the difference? Can they not deliver their own minds from the bondage of incessant brooding over easy

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and gigantic gains ? Better seek solid contentment on real earnings with an easy mind than endure the restless fever of a greed that seeks ever a false gain amidst a thousand disappointments.

“ Say : The bad and the good are not equal, though the abundance of the bad may please you ; so be careful of (your duty to) God, O men of understanding, that you may be successful.”³

So, therefore, remember : Not the amount of your wealth but the quality of your wealth.

“ O you who believe ! take care of your souls : he who errs cannot hurt you when you are in the right way : to God is your return—all (of you), so He will inform you of what you did.”⁴

Here is a point which may often escape men's notice. Strictly speaking, other people cannot harm us. Our heaven or hell is made by ourselves, by our own actions. Violence, malice and injury from without do not essentially harm us. Our harms or contentments are generated from within us. Essentially, we suffer for what we ourselves do, not for what other people do. Would that this were realized ! If we wrongfully harm another person, then the punishment and the expiation is upon our own head. If another person wrongfully harms us, then upon his head (not upon ours) rests the punishment and expiation.

And God is Just.

“ And this world's life is nought but a play and an idle sport ; and certainly the abode of the hereafter is better for those who guard (against evil) ; do you not, then, understand ?”⁵

The last word is important. “ Do you not then *understand* ?”

Compared with the hereafter and the preparation for the hereafter, this world's life is but a gossamer fantasy. Viewed as an end in itself, this world's life is worthless, too brief, too uncertain, too evanescent. But viewed in conjunction with the hereafter, this earthly life is highly important and by no manner of means to be despised.

³ The Holy Qur'an, V : 100.

⁴ *Ibid.*, V : 105.

⁵ *Ibid.*, VI, 32.

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And why?

This life is the seed-time for the harvest of the hereafter. Act rightly, sow well, be assiduous in the well proclaimed way of virtue, and you need have no fear, any more than the farmer, sowing his fields well with good seed in just season and keeping patience and abandoning sloth, need fear for the reaping of due harvest.

So, of the two ways in life, it is incumbent upon the pilgrim to choose ever, not the easy, the pleasant, the sweet, the comfortable, but, of a verity, the right, the just, the hard way of the painfully bright imperishable virtue, which bringeth him the protection of an eternal garment of gladness that weareth not out, neither suffereth decay.

"And with Him are the golden keys of the unseen—none knows them but He; and He knows what is in the land and the sea; and there falls not a leaf but He knows it, nor a grain in the darkness of the earth, nor anything green or dry but it is all clearly recorded.

"And He it is who takes your souls at night (in sleep), and He knows what you acquire in the day, then He raises you up therein that an appointed term may be fulfilled. Then to Him is your return. Then He will inform you of what you were doing."⁶

These two verses form a detailed picture of reality. God holds completely the knowledge of the unseen and of the seen, what is manifest and what is hidden, what is present and what is absent. As of things so of actions, all doth He behold both by day and by night. The past is not lost, neither the future.

Listen again, and see whether this shining passage from the Qur'ān brings no gleam of imperishable truth to you, and whether, with the recognition of that truth, there spreads not over your heart a peace divine and a solace unassailable.

"Say: Surely the guidance of God, that is the real guidance! and we are commanded that we should submit to the Lord of the worlds:" (And to Him verily we do submit).

"And that you should keep up prayer and be careful of (your duty to) Him. And He it is to whom you shall be gathered.,

⁶ The Holy Qur'ān, VI, 59, 60.

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“ And He it is who hath created the heavens and the earth with truth ; and on the day He says, Be ! it is.

“ His word is the truth and His is the kingdom.”⁷

And a warning against hasty and presumptuous action, a plea for good-tempered tolerance. If anything is displeasing unto God, with Him is the power of punishing (or of forgiving). It ill becomes any of us to lift up violent hands against the cherished belief of others. Witness these two Quranic versets that follow :

“ And if God had pleased, they would not have set up others (with Him) and We have not appointed you a keeper over them and you are not placed in charge of them.

“ And do not abuse those whom they call upon besides God, lest, exceeding the limits, they should abuse God out of ignorance. Thus have We made fair-seemin ; to every people their deeds ; then to their Lord shall be their return, so He will inform them of what they did.”

In the turmoil of daily life, forget not to keep thy Qur’ān by thee, so that, in a moment of leisure, some relief of things divine, of things eternal, of an abiding bliss, may descend with refreshment upon thee. Afterwards thou shalt re-enter the turmoil, even rejoicing in the tumult and the buffeting, as the strong and healthy welcome the buffets of the surf-waves, rejoicing.

For these scattered moments, the guidance must be clear and ready. Therefore again would I say (as has been said before), mark with elegant care those Quranic verses that so have delighted thee. How can that well-spring, once found, become exhausted ? Also, in these present pages some bright verses are culled from amongst many that these imperishable flowers may bloom in thine own garden, always ready to delight thine eyes, to solace thy heart.

“ Come ! I will recite what your Lord hath forbidden you. Do not associate anything with Him. Show kindness to your parents. Do not slay your children for (fear of) poverty—We provide for you and for them. Draw not nigh to indecencies, neither to those which are apparent nor to those which are concealed. Kill not the soul which God hath forbidden save for

⁷ The Holy Qur’ān, VI, 71, 74.

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the requirements of justice. All this He hath enjoined upon you, that you may understand.

“Do not approach the property of the orphan except in the best manner, until he obtains his maturity. Give full measure and weight with justice—We do not impose upon any soul a duty except to the extent of its ability. When you speak, then be just, though it be (against) a relative. Fulfil God’s covenant. All this He hath enjoined upon you that you may be mindful.

“(Know) that this is My path, the right one. Therefore follow it, and follow not (other) ways, for they will lead you away from His way. All this He hath enjoined upon you that you may guard (against evil).”

When you have considered the above injunctions and prohibitions, then hear this subsequent verset expressive of the goodness of God :

“Whoever brings a good deed, he shall have ten like it, and whoever brings an evil deed, he shall be recompensed only with the like of it ; and they shall not be dealt with unjustly.”⁸

Herein verily is the mercy of God made manifest. A good deed shall bring increase of good, but an evil deed shall but be recompensed with its like. We see indeed that this arises from the very nature of good and evil, good being life and evil death, good bringing forth abundantly, but evil cut off and withering and uprooted. Verily we have heard the wages of sin is death, and indeed the reward of virtue is life.

⁸ The Holy Qur’an, VI, 161.

EXALTATION OF JESUS

By Prof. Mahmud Shaltut¹

A letter was received by the Professors of the Great Azhar University of Cairo from Abdul Karim Khan working under the command of the Allies in the Middle East containing an inquiry: Is Jesus dead or alive according to the Qur'an and the Holy Traditions of the Holy Prophet? What do you think of a Muslim who does not believe that he is still alive and what about one who disbelieves in him in case he comes to the world for the second time?

This question was referred to the Senior Professor Shaikh Mahmud Shaltut, a member of the Senate of the learned Professors who replied as follows:

1. In the chapter *The Family of Amran* where it is stated: But when Jesus perceived unbelief on their part, he said: Who will be my helpers in Allah's way? The disciples said: "We are helpers (in the way) of Allah: We believe in Allāh and bear witness that we are submitting ones: Our Lord! We believe in what Thou hast revealed and we follow the apostle, so write us down with those who bear witness. And they planned and Allah (also) planned and Allah is the best of planners. When Allah said: O Jesus! I will cause you to die and exalt you in My presence and clear you of those who disbelieve and make those who follow you

رفع عيسى...

للاستاذ محمود شلتوت

ورد الى مشيخته الازهر الجليلية من حضرة عبدالكريم خان بالقيادة العامة لجيش الشرق الاوسط سؤال جاء فيه: "هل "عيسى" حي او ميت في نظر القرآن الكريم والسنة المطهرة؟ وما حكم المسلم الذي يذكر انه حي؟ وما حكم من لا يؤمن به اذا فرض انه عاد الى الدنيا مرة اخرى؟" وقد حول هذا السؤال الى فضيلة الاستاذ الكبير الشيخ محمود شلتوت عضو جامعة كبار العلماء فكتب ما ياتي.

... أما بعد، فإن القرآن الكريم قد عرض لعيسى عليه السلام فيما يتصل بنهاية شأنه مع قومه في ثلاث سور:

١- في سورة آل عمران قوله تعالى: "وفلما أحس عيسى منهم الكفر قال: من أنصاري إلى الله؟ قال الحواريون: نحن أنصار الله آمنا بالله، واشهد بأنا مسلمون: ربنا، آمنا بما أنزلت واتبعنا الرسول فاكتبنا مع الشاهدين- ومكروا و مكرا الله والله خير الماكرين؛ إذ قال الله: يا عيسى، إني متوفيك و رافعك إلى و مطهرك من الذين

1. This is a translation by Shaikh Muhammad Tufail of a Fatwa which appeared in the Arabic weekly Al-Risalah of Cairo (Vol. 10. No. 462 at p. 515). The references in the footnotes are being given for easy reference.—Ed. I. R.

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above those who disbelieve to the day of resurrection ; then to Me shall be your return, so I will decide between you concerning that in which you differed.¹

2. In the chapter *The Women* Allah says : And their saying : Surely we have killed the Messiah, Jesus son of Mary, the apostle of Allah ; and they did not kill him nor did they crucify him, but (the matter) was made dubious to them, and most surely those who differ therein are only in a doubt about it ; they have no knowledge respecting it, but only follow a conjecture, and they *know* it not for sure ; Nay : Allah exalted him in His presence ; and Allah is Mighty, Wise.²

3. And in the chapter *The Food* says Allah : And 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 it, Thou wouldst indeed have known it ; 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

كفروا' و جاعل الذين اتبعوك فوق الذين كفروا إلى يوم القيامة، ثم إلى مرجعكم فأحكم بينكم فيما كنتم فيه تختلفون“ : ٥٢-٥٥

٢- وفي سورة النساء قوله تعالى :
”وقولهم : إنا قتلنا المسيح عيسى بن مريم رسول الله، وما قتلوه وما صلبوه، ولكن شبه لهم، وإن الذين اختلفوا فيه لفي شك منه، ما لهم به من علم إلا اتباع الظن، وما قتلوه يقيناً، بل رفع الله إلية، وكان الله عزيزاً حكيماً“ : ١٥٤-١٥٨

٣- وفي سورة المائدة قوله تعالى : ”وإذ قال الله يا عيسى ابن مريم : أأنت قلت للناس اتخذوني وأمي إلهين من دون الله ؟ قال : سبحانك ما يكون لي أن أقول ما ليس لي بحق، إن كنت قلته فقد علمته، تعلم ما في نفسي ولا أعلم ما في نفسك، إنك انت علام الغيوب-

1. *The Holy Qur'an*, III 52-55.
2. *Ibid.*, IV 157. 158.

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unseen things. I did not say to them 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.³

These are the verses of the Holy Qur'ān wherein all that Jesus experienced at the hands of his people is related

In the last verse (verse from *The Food*) there is a mention of an incident of the hereafter when Allah will ask Jesus concerning he and his mother being worshipped in the world. And Jesus in reply would say that he did not say aught to them except what God commanded him, viz., Worship Allah who is your God and my God; and he kept a watch over them during the period of his stay among them and that he did not know what they did after "Allah caused him to die."

ما قلت لهم إلا ما أمرتني به : ان
اعبدوا الله ربي وربكم، و كنت
عليهم شهيدا ما دمت فيهم، فلما
توفيتني كنت انت الرقيب عليهم
وانت على كل شيء شهيد، :

١١٦-١١٤

هذه هي الآيات التي عرض
القرآن فيها لنهاية شأن عيسى مع قومه،
والآية الأخيرة (آية المائة) تذكر
لنا شأنًا آخر ويا يتعلق بعبادة قومه
له ولأمه في الدنيا وقد سأله الله عنها
وهي تقرر على لسان عيسى عليه
السلام انه لم يقل لهم إلا ما امره الله
به : "اعبدوا الله ربي وربكم" : و
انه كان شهيداً عليهم مدة إقامته
بينهم، وانه لا يعلم ما حدث منهم
بعد ان "توفاه الله" !

3. *Ibid.*, V : 116-118.

The word *tawaffa* is used in so many places of the Holy Qur'ān in the sense of death that it has become its foremost meaning. This word is used in a different sense only when there is a clear indication as to this other meaning: "Say: The angel of death who is given charge of you shall *cause you to die*";¹ "Surely (as for) those whom the angels *cause to die* while they are unjust to their souls";² "And *had you seen* when the angels will *cause to die those who disbelieve*";³ "Our messengers *cause him to die*";⁴ "And of you is he who is *caused to die*";⁵ "Until death takes them away."⁶ "Make me die Muslim and join me with the good."⁷

The word *tawaffa'tani* in this particular verse primarily means 'natural death' which is known to everybody. The Arabic-speaking people understand this and only this

وكلمة ،توفى، قد وردت في القرآن كثيراً بمعنى الموت حتى صار هذا المعنى هو الغالب عليها المتبادر منها، ولم تستعمل في غير هذا المعنى إلا و بجانبها ما يصرحها عن هذا المعنى المتبادر: "وقل يتوفاكم ملك الموت الذى وكل بكم- إن الذين توفاهم الملائكة ظالمى انفسهم- ولو ترى إذ يتوفى الذين كفروا الملائكة- توفته رسلا- و منكم من يتوفى- حتى يتوفاهن الموت- توفى مسلماً والحقنى بالصالحين،،

و من حق كلمة ،توفيتنى، في الآية ان تحمل على هذا المعنى المتبادر وهو الا مائة العادية التى يعرفها الناس، ويدركها من اللفظ

1. The Holy Qur'ān, XXXII : 11.

3. Ibid., VIII : 50.

5. Ibid., XXII : 5.

7. Ibid., XII : 101.

2. Ibid., IV : 97.

4. Ibid., VI : 61.

6. Ibid., IV : 15.

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meaning of the word with reference to the context. Therefore, had there been nothing else to indicate the end of Jesus in this verse even then it would have been improper and wrong to say that Prophet Jesus was alive, and not dead.

There is no room for the view that the word *wafāt* here means the death of Jesus after his descent from the heavens—a view held by some who think that Jesus is still alive in the heavens and would come down from there in the latter days. For, this verse clearly denotes the relation of Jesus with his own people and not with any other people of the latter days. The people of the latter age would be admittedly the followers of Muhammad and not of Jesus.

However, in the chapter *The Women* the words: "*Nay: Allah exalted him (Jesus) in His presence*" have been interpreted by some, nay most of the commen-

ومن السياق الناطقون بالضاد- و
إذن فالآية لو لم يتصل بها غيرها في
تقرير نهاية عيسى مع قومه لما كان
هناك مبرر للقول بأن عيسى حي
لم يميت

ولا سبيل إلى القول بأن الوفاة
هنا مراد بها وفاة عيسى بعد نزوله
من السماء بناء على زعم من يرى أنه
حي في السماء، وأنه سينزل منها آخر
الزمان. لأن الآية ظاهرة في تحديد
علاقته بقومه هو لا بالقوم الذين
يكونون آخر الزمان وهم قوم
محمد باتفاق لا قوم عيسى

أما آية النساء فإنها تقول "بل
رفعه الله إليه"، وقد فسر لها بعض
المفسرين بل جمهورهم بالرفع إلى
السماء، ويقولون: إن الله القي على

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tators, as "raising him up to the heavens." They observe that Allah cast his likeness on someone else and Jesus himself was lifted up to the heavens, with his body. He is alive there and will descend therefrom in the latter ages. Thereafter he would kill the swine and break the cross. And they base their theory :

Firstly, on those reports in which the descent of Jesus is mentioned after the (appearance of) Anti-Christ. But these reports are at variance with and contradictory to one another in their words and meanings. The difference is so great that there is no room for any reconciliation among them. The scholars of *Hadith* have plainly stated this fact. Moreover they are reported by Wahab bin Munabbih and Ka'b Ahbār, who were converts from the people of the Book. And their status is well known to the critics of traditions.

Secondly, on a report by Abu Huraira that mentions

غيره شبهه، ورفع مجسده إلى السماء، فهو حي فيها وسينزل منها آخر الزمان، فيقتل الخنزير ويكسر الصليب، ويعتمدون في ذلك :

أولاً: على روايات تفيد نزول عيسى بعد الدجال، وهي روايات مضطربة مختلفة في الفاظها ومعانيها اختلافاً لا مجال معه للجمع بينها؛ و قد نص على ذلك علماء الحديث-و هي فوق ذلك من رواية وهب بن منبه وكعب الأحبار وهما من أهل الكتاب الذين اعتنقوا الإسلام وقد عرفت درجتهم في الحديث عند علماء الجرح والتعديل-

وثانياً: على حديث مروي عن أبي

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the descent of Jesus. If this report is proved to be true, even then it is only an isolated report. And there is a consensus of opinion of the scholars of *Hadith* that such isolated reports can neither be made the basis of a doctrinal belief, nor can they be trusted with regard to the things unseen.

Thirdly, on the report about *Mi'raj* (i.e., the Ascension of the Holy Prophet to the heavens) which narrates that when the Holy Prophet went up and began to have the gates of the heavens opened one after another and entered them as they were opened, he saw Jesus and his cousin John on the second heaven. For us, it is enough to prove the weakness of this evidence, that many interpreters of the traditions have taken this contact of the Holy Prophet with other prophets to be a spiritual phenomenon and not a physical one (vide *Fathul-Bāri*, *Zād-ul-Ma'ād*, etc.)

هررة اقتصر فيه على الإخبار
بنزول عيسى؛ و إذا صح هذا
الحديث فهو حديث آحاد- وقد
اجمع العلماء على أن أحاديث الآحاد
لا تفيد عقيدة ولا يصح الاعتماد عليها
في شأن المغيبات.

و ثالثاً: على ما جاء في حديث
المعراج من أن محمداً صلى الله عليه
وسلم حينما صعد إلى السماء واخذ
ليستفتحها واحدة بعد واحدة فتفتح
له ويدخل، رأى عيسى عليه السلام
هو وابن خالته يحيى في السماء الثانية
ويكفينا في تو هين هذا المستند بما
قرره كثير من شراح الحديث في
شان المعراج وفي شان اجتماع محمد
صلى الله عليه وسلم بالأنبياء وأنه كان
اجتماعاً روحياً لا جسمانياً،، انظر
فتح الباري وزاد المعاد وغيرهما“

Strangely enough they interpret the word *rafa'* in this verse in the light of the report concerning the *Mi'rāj*, and deduce therefrom that Jesus was also bodily raised up. And there are others who regard the meeting of the Holy Prophet with Jesus to be a physical one on the basis of this verse. (*Nay! Allah exalted him in His presence.*) Thus when these people interpret the *hadith* they quote this verse to support their imaginary meaning of the *hadith*; and while interpreting the verse they cite this *hadith* to support their imaginary explanation of the verse.

When we turn to the revealed words of God, "*I will cause you to die and exalt you in My presence,*" in the chapter *The Family of 'Amrān* along with the words "*Nay, Allah exalted him in His presence,*" in the chapter *The Women*, we find that the latter verse fulfils the promise that was made

ومن الطريف انهم يستدلون على ان معنى الرفع فى الآية هو رفع عيسى بجسده إلى السماء بحديث المعراج بينما ترى فريقاً منهم يستدل على ان اجتماع محمد بعيسى فى المعراج كان اجتماعاً جسدياً بقوله تعالى: (بل رفعه الله إليه) وهكذا يتخذون الآية دليلاً على ما يفهمونه من الحديث حين يكونون فى تفسير الحديث، ويتخذون الحديث دليلاً على ما يفهمونه من الآية حين يكونون فى تفسير الآية!

ونحن إذا رجعنا إلى قوله تعالى: "إني متوفيك ورافعك إلى"، فى آيات آل عمران مع قوله: "بل رفعه الله إليه"، فى آيات النساء وجدنا الثابته إخباراً عن تحقق الوعد الذى تضمنته الأولى، وقد كان هذا الوعد

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in the former one. This promise was about the death and exaltation of Jesus Christ, and his purification from the false charges of disbelievers. Thus even if the latter verse had mentioned just his *rafa'* towards God and had no reference to his death and purification from the false charges even then it should have been our duty to take note of all those matters that are referred to in the former verse; so that both the verses might be reconciled.

The actual meaning of the verse therefore is that Allah caused Jesus to die and exalted him and sanctified him from the charges of his enemies. *Allama* Alwasi has interpreted this verse (*inni-mutawaffi-ka*) in many ways. The clearest of these interpretations is that 'I will complete the lease of your life and will cause you to die and will not let those people dominate over you who try to kill you.' For, completing the period of his

بالتوفية والرفع والتطهير من الذين
كفروا، فإذا كانت الآية الثانية قد
جاءت خالية من التوفية والتطهير،
واقصرت على ذكر الرفع إلى الله
فانه يجب ان يلاحظ فيها ما ذكر في
الأولى جمعاً بين الآيتين.

والمعنى ان الله توفي عيسى و رفعه
إليه وطهره من الذين كفروا- وقد
فسر الألوسي قوله تعالى : (انى
متوفيك) بوجوه منها وهو اظهرها
"إنى مستوفى اجلك و مميتك حتم
انفك لا اسلط عليك من يقتلك؛ و
هو كناية عن عصمته من الأعداء و
ما هم بصدد من الفتك به عليه
السلام لأنه يلزم من استيفاء الله

life and causing him to die a natural death indicates that Jesus was saved from being slain and from the mischief of his enemies. Obviously *rafa'* after death cannot mean any physical ascension, but only exaltation in rank, especially when the words "*I will clear you of those who disbelieve*" are present along with it. This shows that it is a question of spiritual honour and exaltation. The word *rafa'* has occurred many a time in the Holy Qur'ān conveying this sense: e.g. "In houses which Allah has permitted to be honoured (*turfa'a*)",¹ "We exalt in degree (*narfa'u*) whom We please,"² "And exalted (*rafa'nā*) for you your eminence,"³ And We raised him (*rafa'nāhu*) to an elevated state ;"⁴ "Allah will exalt those of you who believe....."⁵ etc. Thus the expressions "*I will exalt you in My presence*" and

اجله وموته حتف إلفه ذلك، و
ظاهر ان الرفع الذى يكون بعد
التوفية هو رفع المكانة لا رفع
الجسد خصوصاً وقد جاء بجانبه
قوله: (ومطهرك من الذين كفروا)
مما يدل على ان الأمر امر تشريف
وتكريم- وقد جاء الرفع فى القرآن
كثيراً بهذا المعنى: وفى بيوت اذن
الله ان ترفع- ترفع درجات من
نشاء- ورفعنا لك ذكرك- ورفعناه
مكاناً علياً- يرفع الله الذين آمنوا،
الخ... و اذن فالتعبير بقوله: "و
رافعك الى"، وقوله: "وبل رفعه الله
إليه"، كالتعبير فى قولهم: "لحق

1. The Holy Qur'ān, XXIV : 36.

3. Ibid., XCIV : 4.

5. Ibid., LVIII : 11

2. Ibid., VI : 84; XII : 76.

4. The Holy Qur'ān. XIX : 57.

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'Nay! Allah exalted him in His presence" would yield a sense similar to the one when we say "So and so met the companion on High," or "God is with us," or "With the Powerful King." All these expressions signify only shelter, protection and coming under His holy care. So one fails to understand how the word *heaven* is deduced from the word *towards Him* (*ilaih*). By God! it is an outrage on the plain exposition of the Holy Qur'ān. And such an offence is committed simply on account of belief in such stories and narratives as are devoid of accuracy not to speak of their established authenticity.

Moreover, Jesus was merely an apostle and apostles before him had passed away. When the people of Jesus became hostile to him, he like other prophets, turned towards God and He saved him by His power and wisdom, and frustrated the

فلان بالرفيق الأعلى، وفي "إن الله معنا"، وفي "عند ملك مقتدر"، وكلها لا يفهم منها سوى معنى الرعاية والحفظ والدخول في الكنف المقدس. فمن أين تؤخذ كلمة السماء من كلمة (إليه)؟ اللهم إن هذا الظلم للتعبير القرآني الواضح خضوعاً لقصاص وروايات لم يقيم على الظن بها فضلاً عن اليقين برهان ولا شبه برهان!

وبعد فما عيسى إلا رسول قد خات من قبله الرسل، ناصبه قومه العداء، وظهرت على وجوههم بوادر الشر بالنسبة إليه، فالتجأ إلى الله شأن الأنبياء والمرسلين فأنقذه

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plans of his enemies. The same point has been elaborated in the following verse: "When Jesus perceived unbelief on their part, he said: Who will be my helpers in Allah's way...." i.e. in this verse God says that His plans were more subtle and effective than the plans of the disbelievers. As against the measures of protection and security from God, the attempts of these people against the life of Jesus were frustrated. In the verse: "When Allah said: O Jesus! I will cause you to die and exalt you in My presence and clear you of those who disbelieve" Allah gives the glad tidings that He will save Jesus from the machinations of his enemies and that ultimately their plottings will end in futility and that He will complete the period of his life till he dies a natural death neither being slain nor yet crucified and then He will exalt him in His presence.

These verses which relate to the fate of Jesus at the

الله بعزته وحكمته وخيب مكر أعدائه وهذا هو ما تضمنته الآيات

"فلما احس عيسى منهم الكفر قال

من انصارى الى الله، الى آخرها،

بين الله فيها دقة مكره بالنسبة الى

مكرهم، و ان مكرهم في اغتيال

عيسى قد ضاع امام مكر الله في

حفظه وعصمته "اذ قال الله يا عيسى

انى متوفيك ورافعك الى ومطهرك

من الذين كفروا" فهو يبشره

بانجائه من مكرهم ورد كيدهم في

نحورهم، وانه سيستوفي اجله حتى

يموت حتف انفه من غير قتل ولا

صلب، ثم يرفعه الله اليه. وهذا هو

ما يفهمه القارئ للآيات الواردة

في شان نهاية عيسى مع قومه متى

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hands of his people will invariably yield this meaning to their reader provided he knows the practice of Allah to which He resorts for the protection of His prophets at the time of the aggression of enemies, and provided his mind is free from all those fictitious reports that can in no case be placed as an authority over the Holy Qur'ān. Now, I cannot understand how the snatching of Jesus from the hands of his enemies and lifting him up to the heavens can be called a subtle plan and a better one when neither it was in their power nor in the power of anybody else to counter it. In fact, there can be one "plan" (*makr*) as against another plan when it is contrived in a parallel manner not deviating from the natural course of Allah in such matters. We have a parallel instance in what is said by the Qur'ān with respect of the Holy Prophet :

And when those who disbelieved devised plans against you that they might confine you or slay you or drive you away and

وقف على سنة الله مع انبيائه حين
يتألب عليهم خصومهم، و متى
خلاذهنه من تلك الروايات التي لا
ينبغي ان تحكم في القرآن ولست
ادري كيف يكون إنقاذ عيسى
بطريق انتزاعه من بينهم و رفعه
بجسده إلى السماء مكرآ؟ وكيف
يوصف لانه خير من مكرهم مع إنه
شئ ليس في استطاعتهم ان يقاوموه،
شئ ليس في قدرة البشر! إلا إنه
لا يتحقق مكر في مقابلة مكر إلا إذا
كان جارياً على اسلوبه غير خارج
عن مقتضى العادة فيه - و قد جاء
مثل هذا في شان محمد صلى الله عليه
وسلم 'و إذ يمكر بك الذين كفروا
ليثبتوك او يقتلوك او يخرجوك و

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they devised plans and Allah too had arranged a plan and Allah is the best of planners."

يَمْكُرُونَ وَيَمْكُرُ اللَّهُ وَاللَّهُ خَيْرُ
الْمَاكِرِينَ

To sum up :

والخلاصة من هذا البحث :

1. There is nothing in the Holy Qur'ān, nor in the sacred traditions of the Prophet, which authorises the correctness of the belief to the satisfaction of the heart that Jesus was taken up to the heaven with his body and is alive there even now, and would descend therefrom in the latter days.

١- انه ليس في القرآن الكريم و
لا في السنة المطهرة مستند يصلح
لتكفين عقيدة يطمئن إليها القلب
بان عيسى رفع بجسمه إلى السماء
وانه حي الى الآن فيها وانه سينزل
منها آخر الزمان إلى الأرض

2. The Qur'ānic verses about Jesus show that God had promised to cause him to die a natural death, then to exalt him and save him from the mischief of the disbelievers and this promise had certainly been fulfilled. His enemies could neither kill him nor crucify him, but God completed the span of his life and then caused him to die.

٢- ان كل ما تفيد الآيات الواردة
في هذا الشأن هو وعد الله عيسى بانه
متوفيه اجله و رفعه إليه وعاصمه
من الذين كفروا، وان هذا الوعد
قد تحقق فلم يقتله اعداؤه ولم
يصلبوه، ولكن وفاه الله اجله و
رفعه إليه

3. Any person who denies his bodily ascent and

٣- ان من انكر ان عيسى قد رفع

1. The Holy Qur'ān, VIII : 30.

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his continuance in physical existence in the heavens and his descent in the latter ages, does not deny a fact that can be established by clear conclusive arguments. Thus he is not outside the faith of Islam and it is absolutely wrong to consider him an apostate. He is perfectly a Muslim. If he dies he dies the death of a believer and like believers his funeral prayer must be said and he must be buried in the Muslim cemetery. His faith is decidedly faultless in the eyes of God. And God knows the condition of His servants.

And as to the other part of the question (that is supposing Jesus returns to the world then how should a disbeliever in him be regarded) after the above statement of ours—this question does not arise at all. And God is the Best Knower.

بجسمه إلى السماء وإنه فيها حي إلى
الآن وإنه سينزل منها آخر الزمان
فإنه لا يكون بذلك منكرا لما ثبت
بدليل قطعي فلا يخرج عن إسلامه
وإيمانه ولا ينبغي أن يحكم عليه
بالردة، بل هو مسلم مؤمن، إذا
مات فهو من المؤمنين يصلى عليه
كما يصلى على المؤمنين، ويدفن في
مقابر المؤمنين ولا شبهة في إيمانه
عند الله والله بعباده خير بصير

إما السؤال الأخير في الاستفتاء
وهو (ما حكم من لا يؤمن به إذا
فرض أنه عاد مرة أخرى إلى الدنيا)
فلا محل له بعد الذي قررناه ولا
يتجه السؤال إليه والله أعلم

CORRESPONDENCE

[The following letter has been addressed to the late Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din under the impression that the author of *The Sources of Christianity* is still alive.—Ed. I. R.]

Princes Gardens, Acton
London, W 3
15th November 1947

The Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din
The Mosque
Woking
Surrey.

Dear Sir,

During my war service in India and Ceylon, like so many other servicemen, I was impressed by the apparent simplicity and common-sense outlook of the Muslim faith. I read all I could on the subject and your writings were amongst those I was able to read.

Your book 'Sources of Christianity' impressed me most of all since it explained so many things that had always puzzled me, and I tried hard to purchase a copy but was never able to find a book-seller who had one in stock. Since my return to this country I have again tried to obtain a copy but so far without success.

I am therefore writing to you to ask if you can tell me where it can be purchased. If it is not available here may be you can say if it can be obtained by writing to the publisher in India.

I am most anxious to add your book to my library so I hope you will forgive my presumption in writing to ask your help in my search.

Yours sincerely
G. Lowery

Ideford Arch,
Chudleigh,
Devon,

8th December 1947.

My Dear Imam,
Salam-o-Alaikum.

My wife and I are very perturbed by the conditions now prevailing in Palestine and we are considerably perturbed to observe that we Muslims here in England appear to be doing nothing to show solidarity with our brethren in that unhappy country.

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As far as my wife and I are concerned, we intend, being trained nurses, to offer our services to whichever Muslim Army is the first to enter active services in the struggle against this grave injustice of Partition, (it would appear from current events that Syria will have that great honour) and, therefore I ask you to assist me to contact the relevant Syrian Minister in this country immediately.

The above, however, does not dispose of the fact that Muslims in England as a whole must organise to show most firmly their intense disapprobation of this latest accursed injustice which Christians hope to inflict upon us.

You, my dear Imam, being one of the great leaders of Islam in England, will I am sure give us lead in this matter.

I would venture the opinion that we should adopt no soft methods. Iron is needed here and the cause is first. Action in this country would serve the double purpose of:—helping our brethren in Palestine and of showing the world that the unity of Islam is a great reality.

I shall be grateful for your comments.

With Salam,
Sincerely yours,
M. A. WARREN.

Polish Camp,
Petworth. Sussex,
4th June, 1947.

To
The Chief, The Muslim Mission,
The Shah Jahan Mosque,
WOKING, Surrey.

Dear Sir,

I have the honour to thank you again in the name of the whole party for your hospitality and kindness you have shown by inviting us to tea after showing and explaining us all about the basis of the Muslim Religion.

Sending my best wishes for the future of your Nation and Church,

I am,
Yours sincerely,
E. BOBA,
For the Camp Council.

CORRESPONDENCE

Buny Road,
Stow Market,
Suffolk,

10th November, 1947.

Dear Sirs,

Would you care to send me some literature on Islam. I was brought in touch with Islam by a lady by the name of Mrs. Panker who has since gone abroad to Africa. It was through her that I used to have the copy of the Islamic Review to read. But I should like to know more about Islam. My thoughts go out to-day to India and Palestine where the Muslims are suffering great hardships. I can assure you that it is painful to many like myself that so great a body of people who as I see it are striving very hard to preach the brotherhood of man, should suffer in this way. I as a Catholic feel that at the moment all the other religious communities have failed during the war. Thus we saw Catholics fighting Catholics and Protestants doing likewise and how much better off are they and still there is hatred amongst the races. I have been given to understand that in Islam it is not so. Would you kindly send me some literature along to enable me to make a further study of the subject?

Yours sincerely,
STAN, H. LAMBERT.

Maryland,
Stratford,
London, E. 15.
30th October, 1947.

To

The Imam,
The Mosque, Woking.

Dear Sir,

Last week, following your much-appreciated invitation to last Saturday's festival, I received your request for a contribution towards it, and, although I am rather late, let me hope that 'late is better than never', therefore please find a humble donation enclosed with this letter. I really do value, more than I can say, your continued goodwill and friendship towards me, because, although I realise now that I am only just beginning to really understand my own peculiar path through the wilderness I have been given a bond with the soul of Islam, which it is not possible that anything could destroy or even harm. Do please believe that these words are not written for their fair appearance on paper—I feel the bond every waking moment of my day.

Sincerely,
G. E. SMITH.

THE PROPHET'S PRECEPTS AND EXAMPLES

Rules of Interview

Abu Sa'id -al Khudriy reports : Abu Musa came to us and said : Verily Umar sent a message to me that I should see him. Accordingly I went to the door of his house and greeted him thrice¹ but he did not return the greeting to me, so I came back. He enquired (later) : What prevented you from coming to us ? I said : I did come and greeted you thrice at your door, but you did not return the greeting to me, so I returned, because the Messenger of God has said : When any one of you seeks permission for interview thrice and it is not given, he should return. Umar said : Produce satisfactory evidence (in proof of this injunction of the Prophet). Abu Sa'id says : I got up with him (Abu Musa), went to Umar and bore witness (in confirmation of what Abu Musa had stated about this particular saying of the Prophet). — *Agreed.*

Jabir reports : I went to the Holy Prophet in connection with a debt outstanding against my father. I knocked at his door and he asked : Who are you ? I said : "I". He said "I, I ? ", as if he did not like it (*i.e.*, reply).²

— *Agreed.*

Abu Huraira reports : I once entered (the house of the Prophet) with the Messenger of God, and he found some milk in a cup. So he said to me : O Abu Huraira, go to the inmates of Suffa and bring them to me. So I went to them and called them. They proceeded and sought permission for interview. He gave them permission. Then they entered.

— *Agreed.*

Kaldah Ibn Hanbal reports : Safwan ibn Umayya sent some milk and a saddle-cushion and silk clothes for the Prophet who was at the top of the valley. I went to him,

¹ O you who believe ! do not enter houses other than your own houses until you have asked permission and saluted their inmates ; this is better for you, that you may be mindful.

But if you do not find any one therein, then do not enter them until permission is given to you ; and if it is said to you, Go back, then go back ; this is purer for you ; and Allah is Cognizant of what you do.

—The Holy Qur'an Ch.'XXIV., vv. 27-28.

² The full name of the person calling was obviously expected by the Prophet.

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but did neither greet nor seek permission. So the Prophet said : Go back and say : Peace be on you ! May I come in ?

—*Tirmizi, Abu Dawūd.*

Abu Huraira reports : The Messenger of God said : When any one of you is sent for and he comes with the messenger, verily that is permission for him.

Abu Dawud narrated it, and in his narration added : The messenger of a man to a man is his permission.

Abdullah-ibn-Busr reports : When the Messenger of God came to the door of any one, he never approached it from the straight front but either towards its right or left, and would say : Peace be on you, Peace be on you ! And this is because in those days doors had no screens.”¹

—*Abū Dawūd.*

‘Atá ibn Yásir reported : A man enquired of the Messenger of God : Shall I seek permission from my mother to see her ? He said “Yes”. The man said : Verily I live with her in the same house. The Messenger of God said : Seek her permission to see her. The man said : I serve her. The Messenger of God said : Seek her permission to see her ; do you like to see her undressed ? “No”, said he. The Prophet said : Then take her permission to see her.

—*Mālik.*

Jābir reports : The Holy Prophet said : Don’t permit any one (to enter your house) if he does not begin with the greeting of peace.

—*Baihaqi.*

¹ In this way the Prophet avoided the inmates of the house catching his sight unawares.

MUHAMMAD :

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(W. Pakistan)

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