

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

—HOLY QURAN, 33 : 4

"There will be no prophet after me."

—PROPHET MUHAMMA

*The*

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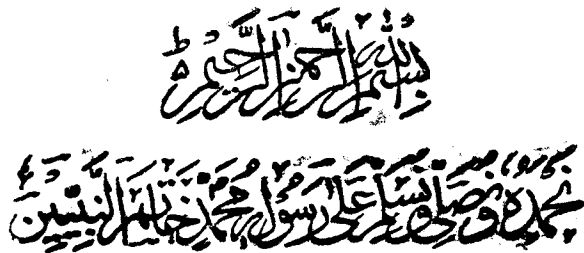
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Acting Secretary



# THE ISLAMIC REVIEW

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## BY THE LIGHT OF THE HOLY QUR'AN

"And when your Lord made it known, If you are grateful, I would certainly give to you more, and if you are ungrateful, My chastisement is truly severe.

"And Moses said: If you are ungrateful, you and those on earth all together, most surely God is Self-sufficient, Praised."

—The Holy Qur'ān, Chap. XIV, vv. 7—8.

## The Purport

Hidden underneath the physical, political and economic causes, work the spiritual laws in the growth and decay of nations. And the supreme spiritual law is the attitude of gratefulness or otherwise towards the unseen source of the myriads of gifts we enjoy in the physical and mental planes of our life.

If we take these as a matter of course and rather than appreciating their unassessable value, try to minimise their worth, we are guilty of ungratefulness. We become cynical and are victims to dissatisfaction with life. Historically viewed this becomes the starting-point of national decay.

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On the other hand, a thankful appreciation of the various blessings of life, great or small, produces an optimistic view of life and this constitutes a signal for national prosperity. So our attitude towards things of life benefits or harms but our own selves, under the law of repercussion.

As for God, He remains absolutely unaffected either by our one attitude or the other.

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### UNITARIAN CONTROVERSY ON ISLAM

BY MAULVI AFTAB-UD-DIN AHMAD

A regular controversy is raging in the columns of *The Enquirer*, the Unitarian weekly of London, on the subject of the relationship between Unitarianism and Islam. We regard this as a progressive step on the part of the valiant Unitarian community. I remember not very happily the days of my first sojourn in England when a circular was sent to all the Unitarian congregations in England by the Imam of the Mosque, Woking, for a closer contact between the Muslims and the Unitarians. The response was signally disappointing. This was in the early 'thirties and the revolutionary changes in the world atmosphere since then seem to have produced a wholesome effect on the religious mind of England in general and the Unitarian church in particular. I myself noticed this change during the latter thirties and proudly recall my close friendship with some of the best Unitarians in England, Rev. Belton of the Golders Green Church, one-time editor of *The Enquirer*, being among them.

Various points have been raised by various correspondents in the course of the present interesting controversy, which seems to have started with a letter of Mr. Phillips Price, M.P., published in January 24 issue of the aforesaid London weekly. Mr. Price appears to have contended that Unitarianism and Islam have many common points between themselves. *Inter alia*, he seems to hold that Islam is very tolerant of and charitable towards other religions. He also appears to believe that the doctrine of the Virgin Birth is no part of the Islamic creed. He seems also to hold that the Muslims "have brought Christianity up-to-date by refusing to accept the extrane-

## UNITARIAN CONTROVERSY ON ISLAM

ous beliefs and dogmas" of Christianity. Needless to say Mr. Price is right in all these three views.

Rev. Griffith J. Sparham, the Director of the Hibbert Houses in the Middle East however points, firstly, to the Muslim belief in the Miracles as an insuperable barrier between Islam and Unitarianism. In fairness to him it must be said that he admits this, to him reactionary tendency, among the Christians as well. But perhaps he expected Islam which appears so rational in many ways to be above this "weakness". We should like to tell Rev. Sparham that Muslims believe in miracles in a way that does not conflict with the uniformity of Nature. It is not by the suspension of any law of nature but by a subtle manipulation of one or more of these laws or by the bringing together of events and chances that are beyond the power of man even to comprehend, that God gives proofs of His living existence to men that care for them. Indeed man's search for God would have remained absolutely futile but for these signs which are natural and supernatural at the same time. They are natural in that they do not violate any law of nature and supernatural in that the multitude of events that combine to bring them about are beyond the powers of man even to apprehend. It is by such miraculous events that the elect ones of God have been systematically protected from the hands of their enemies and it is because of similar events happening even now that even the most sceptic among us is enabled to retain his faith in the existence of a power that controls the affairs of men. For a somewhat detailed discussion of this subject one should read our article "Resurrection or Survival" in our April 1948 issue. In this particular matter as in all others Islam holds to a golden mean between two extremes—the extreme of believing in the suspension of the Laws of Nature and the other extreme of not believing in any manipulation in these laws of Nature by a will higher than the human. As has been discussed in the article just referred to, it was the mysterious coming together of subtle events otherwise quite natural that Prophet Jesus was saved from the intended ignominious death on the cross. His coming down from the cross alive was a miracle but there was no suspension of any law of Nature involved therein. Rev. Sparham needs a correction on this particular point.

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He should know that no enlightened Muslim to-day believes that Jesus Christ "was removed from the cross and another exactly like him was placed upon it." For his information we may tell him that the oldest and the most orthodox institution of the Muslims, the Al-Azhar University, has recently given a clear pronouncement on this subject. The enlightened Muslim view, which is also the Quranic view of the matter, is that it was Jesus Christ himself who was nailed to the cross but that he was taken down from it before actual death could overtake him, was restored to consciousness and health by expert medical attendance, and was advised to quit Palestine and seek shelter in Kashmir the land of the lost ten tribes of Israel among whom he was to live till the end of his life.

The reverend gentleman also raises the question of the tolerance of Islam and opines as follows :

"The ever-riding trend of Quranic teaching can hardly be said to be tolerant and it cannot be too often repeated that for Islam the Quran is the final truth and Law."

He quotes the Quranic verse in which it is said that whoever accepts any faith other than Islam it shall not be accepted of him. Another anonymous correspondent endorses this view of Rev. Sparham and observes as follows :

"Islam is uncompromisingly fundamentalist in its doctrine of revelation. The Quran is *Qaul-ul-lah*—speech of God. The interpretation of this phrase is pushed to an extent that would surprise even many Biblical fundamentalists."

What follows these words of this particular correspondent shows that he is not acquainted with the enlightened Muslim opinion on this subject. This opinion is that the Qur'ān is undoubtedly the revealed word of God. But this only means that the words of the Qur'ān cannot be improved upon both in regard to expression and meaning and likewise unalterable and that they provide all that is necessary as principles of action in the social and moral life of men. Those who would refute this claim, should do so by facts and figures. Both Rev. Sparham and this correspondent have been confusing compromise with toleration. Real toleration is that in which a man shows goodwill and charity even towards those who differ radically from him. To be

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lukewarm in one's own principles does not constitute real toleration. It goes to the credit of Islam that while its adherents stick rigidly to their own principles and believe their religion to be the only true religion they can extend their hand of fellowship to those whom they consider to be definitely on the wrong path. Whatever stiffness a Non-Muslim may experience in the Quranic attitude towards Non-believers he should note as Mr. Phillips Price wants him to note that it is the only book that demands of its followers a belief in the Divine appointment of all the founders of religion. We shall also ask him to note that not content with the laying down of this principle the Holy Qur'ān has prescribed both inter-marriage and inter-dining with the followers of other religions. One should point out even a semblance of these generous measures in the rules and regulations of any other religious community of the world before questioning the unimpeachable character of Islamic tolerance.

We appreciate Mr. Phillips Price's sympathetic attitude towards our faith and assure him that in spite of our rigidity of principles we Muslims experience no "difficulty in meeting the discoveries of the modern-world." We appreciate the spirit of his observations :

"Because in other respects Islam is unencumbered by beliefs which have crept into Christianity, it should have less difficulty in resolving its crisis, through which it, like other religions, is passing."

We assure him, however, that in the faith of Islam there is that minimum infallibility without which there can be no basis of collective action and social understanding. Unfortunately official Unitarianism has reposed too much faith on human reason and its unending experiments with truths. In doing so it has forgotten that for the sake of determined action a limit must be put somewhere on open-mindedness and decision taken on the basis of certain principles to be regarded as final for all practical purposes. Just as scientists have their axioms which even if they do not prove absolute truths, are yet truths for all practical purposes, similarly moral humanity must have certain invariable principles for social behaviour even if they be liable to misinterpreta-

tion and misuse. Experience has shown that in the absence of such principles of action, no man, however intelligent he may be, is capable of formulating one sure principle of action by the exercise of his own reasoning faculty. The manner in which some of the universally accepted social institutions such as that of marriage, have been challenged of late by the highest intellects of our generation—shows that man's light of reasoning fails him miserably when it comes to formulate social laws. If in view of this a responsible man believes in the necessity of revealed knowledge in this respect can we accuse him of minimising the value of reason? It is really remarkable that all definitions of rights and obligations and propriety and impropriety of actions, have been handed down to us by persons who have claimed to have been recipients of Divine revelation. To allege that all these people were suffering from self-delusion is to assume an intelligence which is not ours. We must remember that with all our claims to evolved reasoning faculty, we, of the present times, by our thoughts and actions, are definitely accelerating the pace of chaos in the social order of humanity, whereas these great minds that we are out to examine, are invariably the people who have created a cosmos out of chaos in their respective ages. We should not belittle our own reasoning power but we should not in our arrogance think too much of it either. In the case of Islam it should be noted that the Holy Qur'ān provides only a bare sketch of an ordered social life and that the Prophet's interpretations and actions provide illustrations of their correct significance and that the learned among the believers are expected to apply the general principles of the Qur'ān as illustrated by the Prophet's actions, to the changing needs of society. The Sudan correspondent of *The Inquirer*, makes an absolutely incorrect statement when he says that :

"The last of the scholars whose interpretations are accepted today died nearly eleven hundred years ago, and since then in the Arabic phrase the door of interpretation is closed."

This statement is wrong in regard to principle as well as to practice. In the absence of any better authority the correspondent could have very well read the views of Dr. Muhammad Iqbal on this subject in his famous book



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*The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam.* To us personally one point in official Unitarianism has always appeared rather as enigmatic. It is that there is a veiled assumption in this creed that there is a finality about the ideal set by the personality of Jesus Christ. To us it appears as dogmatic as the sense of finality in any other religion like Hinduism, Buddhism and Christianity. Claiming to possess an absolutely free reason and open mind and believing in an unending evolution of knowledge why should the Unitarians adhere to this fundamentalist attitude towards Jesus is beyond our comprehension. If they proceed with a scientific attitude towards the question it is quite possible that our Unitarian friends will discover in Muhammad a more evolved character and a more perfect ideal than Jesus Christ. We recommend to them in this connection a perusal of a handy book *The Ideal Prophet* by Khwaja Kamaluddin. We are averse to comparisons inasmuch as they are odious and also because the Holy Qur'ān deprecates such comparisons of religious personalities. But in order to bring a truth nearer to understanding we may just ask ourselves the question—what inspiration for filial duty can one derive from the life of Jesus? What example, one may ask further, is there in the personality of Jesus for a victorious general in occupation of the enemies' capital? And one can go on asking such questions in order to judge the respective values of Jesus and Muhammad as ideals of human conduct and the answers, we dare say, will always be favourable to Muhammad, the Ishmaelite Prophet. In view of this it is nothing but dogmatism and blind following of tradition on the part of official Unitarianism to go on believing in the supposedly supreme idealism of the personality of Prophet Jesus.

## THE SIGNIFICANCE OF 'ID-AL-ADZHA

BY MIZANUR RAHMAN, M.A.

On the 14th of October is to be celebrated this year the great 'Īd-al-Adzḥa, or the Festival of Sacrifices, throughout the Muslim world. In India and Pakistan the festival is generally known as *Baqra-'Īd*, or *Qurbani-'Īd*, or briefly, *Qurbani*. In Turkey, the festival is called *'Īd-i-Bairam*.

It is a great festival with great memories. The origin of the festival is the sacrifice by Prophet Abraham of his dearest son, Ismā'il, (Ishmael) at the command of Allah. The sacrifice was symbolic rather than actual, as the Holy Qur'ān says. The great patriarch sought to sacrifice his great son, who was miraculously saved by Allah. The two great lovers of Allah passed the Divine Test, and have been immortalized not by the Jews alone, whose ancestor Hazrat Abraham was, but also by the Muslims throughout the world. The *Qurbani* is Islam's living tribute to the Great Sacrifice, or rather readiness to sacrifice, of the dearest thing on earth, for the sake of Allah, by Prophet Abraham, whose *Millat* was preached in a Divinely-Perfected Form, by the Holy Prophet Muhammad, (peace and blessings of Allah be on him), as the last Revelation from Allah to Prophet Muhammad says :

*"Al-yauma akmaltu lakum dīnakum wa atmamtu 'alaikum ni'mati wa radzītu lakum-ul Islāma dīnan."*

The Quranic quotation, translated in English literally, means :

"This day have I perfected for you your Religion, and completed upon you My favours, and have been pleased with you to give Islam as your Religion."

Another dictum of the Holy Qur'ān is stated as follows :

*"Innad-Dīna 'indal-lāhil Islam : "*

*"Verily, the Religion to Allah is Islam."*

These are great announcements with great meanings, Divinely vouchsafed to the great Prophet, who is to the

## THE SIGNIFICANCE OF 'ID-AL-ADZHA

Muslims the Last of the Prophets sent down by Allah for the guidance of mankind. But this is not the occasion to discuss the implications of the Divine Declarations in most unambiguous terms. Neither is it possible to do justice to the theme within the short compass of a single article. The ocean cannot be baled out by an oyster, as the Bengali saying goes.

What does 'Īd-ul-Adzha really connote? Does it merely mean the sacrifice of cows, or camels, or goats, as one's means permits, and the eating of flesh with friends or relatives? No. 'Īd-al-Adzha means much more. It means the readiness of man to sacrifice the dearest on earth for the sake of Allah with a view to attain Spiritual Edification or *Taqwa*, as the Holy Qur'ān clearly says :

"The flesh or blood of the animal sacrificed does not go to Allah, but it is your *Taqwa* that reaches Allah."

This leaves no room for doubt or dissertation as to what Allah wants of you on account of this sacrifice on this sacred occasion, commemorating a great father's unhesitating desire to sacrifice his dearest son, and the son's unhesitating readiness to be sacrificed for the sake of Allah.

Then, again, look at the first portion of the *Niyyat* or Ceremonial Intention which has to be recited before slaughtering the sacrificial animal :

"I turn my face to Allah; the Creator of Heavens and Earth, sincerely. I am no polytheist. Surely, my prayers, my sacrifices, my life and my death—all are for Allah. He is Lord of the Worlds. There is no equal unto Him. This is what I am commanded to do. I am Muslim."

The word *Muslim*, or the follower of Islam, means "One Whose Life is Dedicated to Allah." This word itself means a lot, and gives a clue to what Islam really connotes. The Muslims, or Mankind, have yet to realize the meaning of Islam in all its intrinsic implications and potentialities. Islam is *Qurbani* for the sake of Allah, Lord of the Worlds, not of mere animals, cheap or dear, singly or jointly with others, but of one's very Self or the Dearest Thing on Earth, if and when the occasion arises out of Sincerest Convictions and not out of show or conventionality. Insincerity is absolutely out of tune with Islam.

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Islam really connotes (1) submission to Allah, and (2) achievement of peace, having been derived from the word *Salama* meaning peace. Islam is thus the means and the end by itself—the Attainment of Peace through Complete Submission to Allah—Peace with God and Peace with Man. Islam is the Antithesis of un-peace, but is the very embodiment of sacrifice for the sake of Allah. This is what is briefly but forcefully stated in the Holy Qur'ān—

“*Innā a'tainākal-kauthar Fa-ṣalli li-Rabbika wan-har Inna sha'niaka hual abtar.*”

“Verily, have We given you *Kawthār* or Gifts Eternal; so pray to your Lord and sacrifice. Verily, thy enemy is *abtar*, or destined to die intestate.”

The Quranic dictum was meant for Prophet Muhammad (peace be on him), but applies, *mutatis mutandis*, to his Ummat or the Muslims. The Prophet of Islam died as *Abtar* or without any male issue, to keep alive the direct lineage. That is true. But is Prophet Muhammad a forgotten memory to posterity? Certainly not. In the words of Iqbal:

“’Tis in the forests and the hills,  
And on the tranquil plains,  
On the seas, in the arms of waves,  
In roar of hurricanes;  
A music heard in China’s towns,  
Morocco’s desert-song,  
And hid within each Muslim’s heart  
It makes his faith grow strong.  
Let all the peoples of the world  
See till the end of time,  
How I have made this glorious Name  
Beyond all thought sublime.”

The name is of course the name of Prophet Muhammad, the Blessing for the Worlds. But, alas, the Muslims of to-day with “Apostate hearts and palsied hands, their earthly lives debased, are to their great Prophet bringers of disgrace.” But the Muslims; whose life is dedication or *qurbani* to Allah, and in whose breasts lies the sacred Trust of Tauheed, shall not, and cannot, perish. But the Muslims have yet to “raise, through Love, all humble beings to greatness and to fame, and enlighten the groping world with dear Muhammad’s name.” That is what the “mighty-mouthed organ-

## **‘ID-AL-ADZHA AND HAJJ**

voice” of Islam, Allama Iqbal, said, and let me conclude this little discourse in the soul-stirring words of the Allama :

“Thy shield be wisdom, be thy sword  
The flaming Love Divine,  
My fond Dervish ! does thou not know  
That all the world is sthine ?  
All else but God is at thy feet,  
If sounds thy Takbeer great,  
If thou a Muslim truly art,  
Thy Effort is thy Fate.  
To My Muhammad be but true,  
And thou hast conquered Me ;  
The world is nought : thou shalt command  
The Pen of Destiny.”

The Muslims must be ready to win the love of Allah and to command the “Pen of Destiny”, as indicated in the quotation above. That is my humble appeal to the Muslims on the sacred occasion of Qurbani.

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## **‘ID-AL-ADZHA AND HAJJ**

BY ABDUR RAHMAN

### **Significance and Meaning**

‘Id-al-Adzha is not merely a religious festival : it has become a great social institution—an institution that binds Muslims all over the world in a common tie and escorts them towards their common goal. It infuses into them the spirit of sacrifice and loyalty to God and to quote Iqbal “Since God is the ultimate spiritual basis of all life, loyalty to God virtually amounts to men’s loyalty to his own ideal nature.”

Ibrahim (Abraham), one of the great prophets of Islam and the progenitor of Arab races, had a vision one night that God desired him to offer Him as sacrifice one which was nearest and dearest to him. The most beloved favourite that Prophet Ibrahim had was his first-born son, Ismail (Ishmael). Ibrahim was in a dilemma. At last he bowed before the clarion call of his conscience and chose Ismail for sacrifice. The boy’s face beamed with delight at his father’s decision, for the pleasure of Allah mattered

## ISLAMIC REVEIW

to him more than his own life or his father's happiness. But God accepted the sacrifice without Abraham's actually taking the boy's life. It was just a trial.

The brave act of Prophet Ibrahim evidently pleased immensely the Almighty, who, to express His pleasure over his self-sacrifice and to show the pagans the utter senselessness of human sacrifice, sent Jibrail (Gabriel) the Divine Messenger, to replace Ismail with a ram.

'Id-ul-Adzha commemorates this great sacrifice of Prophet Abraham offered in the name of Allah. As it is incumbent upon every Muslim man and woman to spend a fixed rate in charity before 'Id-ul-Fitr prayers, similarly after 'Id-ul-Adzha prayers, those who can afford to sacrifice animals in the name of Allah should do so that day or on any of the two following days. The poor and needy must get one-third of the slaughtered meat, another one-third to be distributed among the kith and kin and the balance consumed by the sacrificers and their families.

Prior to 'Id-ul-Adzha comes the day of the Hajj—the pilgrimage to Makka. Allah has enjoined upon every Muslim, who has means, to perform the pilgrimage and also to maintain his family at his own expense, while away from his house. Makka is the centre of attraction for myriads of devout Muslims who hail from all parts of the globe, travel thousands of miles, endure great hardships and spend a good lot to invoke the pleasure of Allah and to accomplish the cherished aim of their life-time.

While nearing the precincts of Makka the devout pilgrims exclaim in an ecstatic mood :

ALLAHUMMA LABBAIK, LASHARIKA LAKA LABBAIK !

Here I am, O God, (at Thy service) :

Thou hast no partner.

Here I am, (at Thy service).

The holy mosque of Makka, situated in the heart of the city, contains the serene and simple black cube, the Ka'ba. Every pilgrim goes round it seven times reciting prayers, merely out of love and respect and certainly not with a sense of worship, for the cube possesses no divine attribute. After the *tawāf* or circumambulation, the pilgrim kisses the oval stone, set in silver, placed at a corner of the Ka'ba.

## A MOSCOW MOSQUE

The prayer and other rites of the pilgrimage continue for seven days. The evening of the seventh day sees the pilgrims marching towards Mount Arafat, popularly known as Jabal-ul-Rahma. It was on the summit of this august mountain that Ibrahim prepared to sacrifice his son Ismail for the sake of God and it was on the top of the same mountain that the Holy Prophet delivered his sermon and exclaimed in a moving voice, "Muslims are brothers unto one another; ye are one brotherhood." The ninth day and night are spent on Mount Arafat and its neighbourhood performing prayers and carrying out certain rituals there. On the tenth morning the pilgrims return to Makka to celebrate 'Id-ul-Adzha. They sacrifice a cow or a goat or a camel each according to his means to perpetuate the event of Ibrahim's supreme sacrifice.

'Id-ul-Adzha reminds us once again of the significance of Hazrat Ibrahim's sacrifice. The day of Hajj symbolises the Islamic ideologies of equality and fraternity. And it is a fact that Muslims as a people are an embodiment of self-sacrifice and universal brotherhood.

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## A MOSCOW MOSQUE

MUSLIMS IN MODERN RUSSIA

BY

CANILLE BAIASTAN

Halil Nasretudinov, the officiating Imam of the Moscow Mosque, always has a large congregation. The Mosque is a spacious place with a double row of beautiful columns, and can accommodate about three thousand people. At the feasts of Qurban and Ramadhan, when six or seven thousand gather there, service is held in the large courtyard.

I visited the Mosque one Friday and noticed that the majority of the congregation were Tartars, with a sprinkling of Uzbeks, Kirghis, Kazaks and Turkomen who had come from Central Asia on business. There were also people from the Embassies and Missions of Turkey, Egypt, Afghanistan and other Near Eastern countries.

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Imam Halil Nasretudinov's devotion to the cause of Islam and his broad education help to draw large congregations. The men of the Nasretudinov family have been Imams for generations. Hafizetdin Nasretudinov, the grandfather of the present Imam, was particularly well-known in the Muslim world. He was educated in Kazan, Bokhara, India, Makkah, Cairo and Istanbul. In Cairo the noted Imam Shaikh Muhammad Abduh, known as a commentator of the Qur'ān, was his teacher. Halil Nasretudinov received his preparation for the Mosque at the Kazan Madrassah and the Bokhara Darul Fanoon, a religious university. In the First World War he served as an army Mulla, was wounded three times and suffered from shell-shock.

He is the fifth Imam to conduct service at the Moscow Mosque from its foundation in 1919, since when not a single Friday passed without a service. In October, 1941, the Germans were bombing the adjacent district while the usual Friday service was going on. The worshippers were about to leave their places for the Air-Raid Shelter. But when the level tones of Imam Nasretudinov were heard, they stayed where they were while he led the prayer.

I had the opportunity of speaking to Muslims who were present on that day; they told me that the prayers offered up were passionate and impressive and the whole congregation repeated them. Many members of the congregation had relatives at the front and the Imam's sons, Lieutenants Shawket and Anwar Halilovi, were also fighting against the Hitlerites.

Imam Halil Nasretudinov is greatly looked up to by his parishioners. He is in close contact with all the leaders of Muslim religious communities in the Soviet Union. His closest friends are the Mufti Abdur Rahman Rasulov, who also studied under the noted Imam Shaikh Muhammad Abduh, in Cairo, and Ziatdin Ihsan Babahanov, son of the Head of the Central Asian Muslim Theologians. Imam Nasretudinov attends all the conferences of the Muslim religious communities of the Soviet Union; he went to Ufa, Tashkent, Baku and Temir-Han



## A STUDY OF JUDAISM AND CHRISTIANITY

Shurah. On his return from these conferences, Imam of the Moscow Mosque never fails to acquaint his congregation, before beginning the service, with the resolutions passed by Muslim religious communities.\*

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## A STUDY OF JUDAISM AND CHRISTIANITY

BY MAULANA ABDUL HAQ VIDYARTHI

(Continued from vol. XXXVI, p. 299)

### Conception of the Terrible God

The conception of the Jews about God was that of a Superman. He, when enraged, not only devastated a whole nation for being rebellious and disobedient, but killed even the birds and the animals. Then he could also repent and be sorry.

He would then seek penitence for the future and say that He would never do such an act again, just as every human being does while repenting for and grieving over a hasty act. His anger was a state in which He had no control over His passions. Losing His temper He would do things which He ought not to do. Thus according to the Old Testament, God was grieved and He repented when He saw the wickedness of man.<sup>1</sup> Although He made man of His own image still He destroyed not only men but the birds and the insects as well.<sup>2</sup> Then God repented for this dreadful act of His and placing the rainbow upon the sky He gave a promise to man that He would never do such an act again. The sons of Noah after his death wanted to build a tower. The whole earth was of one language, and of one speech, the people were one, and they had all one language and only one

\*We Muslims living in an atmosphere of full religious freedom can not fully appreciate the difficulties of the Muslim leaders of religion in Soviet Russia—how cautious, restrained and wide-awake they have always to remain. To organise and maintain the spirit of religion in a state whose attitude towards religion in general is hostile must need an extraordinary measure of wisdom and sagacity in the leaders. We think Muslim leaders of the Indian Union have a great deal to learn from these Russian Ulama.

—Ed. I. R.

<sup>1</sup> Genesis, 6 : 5-6.

<sup>2</sup> Genesis, 1 : 26, 4 : 22, 5 : 13, 9 : 6, 7 : 21-23 and The Acts 17 : 26-29.

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aim—to build the tower. God sensed a danger, lest they should reach Him upon the heavens. So He came down upon the earth and confounded their language.<sup>1</sup> Difference in language and nationality, breach of promise and, now, mutual quarrels and bloodshed, grew from this very seed and spread all over the world. And the Lord smote all the first-born in Egypt from the first born of Pharaoh unto the first-born of cattle.<sup>2</sup> The following passages deal with the outrage of God and of His being repentant and grieved after destroying nations.<sup>3</sup>

And the following references show Him to be like man :

- (1) His wrestle with Jacob.<sup>4</sup>
- (2) Israelites being graven upon the palms of His hands.<sup>5</sup>
- (3) God gave a bill of divorcement to his wife.<sup>6</sup>
- (4) Wives of God.<sup>3</sup>
- (5) God's faithlessness and breach of promise.<sup>8</sup>
- (6) God vows in anger.<sup>9</sup>
- (7) Then He vows against it and repents.<sup>10</sup>

### Angels and Jewish and Christian Scriptures

The Bible has given the angels a higher position than man. It has given them the following epithets worthy of superhuman beings.

- (1) Sons of God.
- (2) Gods.
- (3) Saints or Sons of God.
- (4) Hosts of God.<sup>11</sup>
- (5) Ministers of God.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Genesis, 11 : 1-9.

<sup>2</sup> Exodus, 12 : 29.

<sup>3</sup> Exodus 32 : 10-12, Numbers 11 : 1, 23 : 21 : 6, 25 : 6, 8, 11, 12 : 9, 10, 16 : 31, 34. 1 Samuel 6 : 19; 11 Samuel 6 : 7, 24 : 1 : 16, Leviticus 10 : 2. 1 Chronicles 21 : 15, Jeremiah 23 : 6; Ezeiel Ch. 2 and 21...etc.

<sup>4</sup> Genesis, 32 : 24-29.

<sup>5</sup> Isaiah, 49 : 16.

<sup>6</sup> Isaiah, 50 : 1.

<sup>7</sup> Jeremiah, Ch. 3, Ezekiel, Ch. 16 and 23.

<sup>8</sup> Jeremiah, 14 : 21, 18 : 4-10, 26-3.

<sup>9</sup> Numbers 11 : 23; 28 : 30; Psalms, 95 : 11; Epistle to the Hebrews 3 : 11, 18; 4 : 3-5. Numbers 32 : 12.

<sup>10</sup> Exodus, 13 : 5; 6 : 8.....etc.

<sup>11</sup> Psalms, 103 : 21, 148 : 2.

<sup>12</sup> Genesis, 3 : 2, 22 and 11 : 17.

## A STUDY OF JUDAISM AND CHRISTIANITY

(6) Reveal to men the will of God.<sup>1</sup>

(7) They act according to the will of God.<sup>2</sup>

(8) Execute the commandments of God.<sup>3</sup>

With all this it is dangerous for the angels to see God.<sup>4</sup>

There is a section of the angels who are wicked.<sup>5</sup> These angels became sinful and thus were made inferior to men. Men will judge them.<sup>6</sup>

It is written about Satan that "Thou art the anointed cherub and I have set thee so, thou wast upon the holy mountain of God, thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire. Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee."<sup>7</sup> Thou hast defiled thy sanctuaries by the multitude of thy iniquities, by the iniquity of thy traffic (Angels).<sup>8</sup>

Christ will say, "Depart from me, ye cursed, unto everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels."<sup>9</sup>

According to the biblical phraseology the angels have been given the name *teghalim* and their sons as cruel and tyrant.<sup>10</sup> Those angels who could not keep their rule firm but left their special position, He kept them in a dark and eternal prison till the Day of Judgment.<sup>11</sup> "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against towers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places."<sup>12</sup> These were the bad spirits whom Christ took out from among men and once he made them enter a herd of swines and he did not preach to them.<sup>13</sup>

### The Jewish Conception of the Day of Judgment.

The Jews believed in the Day of Judgment but the Sadducees denied it. So it is written in the Book of Daniel:—

"And at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book and many of them that

<sup>1</sup> Daniel, 8 : 16-17, 9 : 21, 23, 10 : 11, 12 : 6, 7.

<sup>2</sup> Psalms, 103 : 20.

<sup>3</sup> II Samuel, 24 : 16, II Kings, 19 : 35, Psalms, 35 : 5, 6.

<sup>4</sup> Judges, 5 : 22-23 ; 13 : 6, 22, Isaiah, 6 : 5.

<sup>5</sup> Genesis, 6 : 2-4.

<sup>6</sup> Job, 4 : 18 : 15 : 15. I Corinthians, 6 : 3.

<sup>7</sup> Ezekiel, 28 : 14-15.

<sup>8</sup> Ezekiel, 28 : 18

<sup>9</sup> Matthew, 25 : 41.

<sup>10</sup> Numbers, 13 : 33.

<sup>11</sup> Jude, verse 6.

<sup>12</sup> Ephesians, 6 : 12.

<sup>13</sup> Mark, 1 : 32, 25, 34, Matthew, 8 : 29-31.

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sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake and come to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.”<sup>1</sup>

“For I know that my redeemer liveth and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth : and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God.”<sup>2</sup>

And there is also a mention of it in :

Psalms, 17 : 15, Isiah, 26 : 19, Psalms 9 : 7. Daniel 7 : 9, 10, Ecclesiastes 11, 9, 14.....etc., etc.

Thus according to the Jewish beliefs the Day of Judgment and the Day of Justice will come no doubt and the people will be judged according to their deeds but the Israelites have neither any personal nor moral relationship with God Jehovah but only a national one. And only Israel is His son even His first born son. So both the good and bad ones of the Israelites will receive salvation and their enemies will receive an eternal punishment. This is the doctrine which created hatred, prejudice and enmity in the hearts of the Jews against other nations.

### **Rights of men and the Jewish religion.**

Next to the beliefs, what comes up for consideration in the Old Testament, is the question of the rights of men. There is no doubt that there are excellent principles regarding rights of men in the ten commandments of Prophet Moses. Thus it is written :

“Honour thy father and thy mother that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God has given thee. Thou shalt not kill. Thou shalt not commit adultery. Thou shalt not steal. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his man-servant nor his maid-servant, nor his ox, nor his ass nor anything that is thy neighbour's.”<sup>3</sup>

But the Jews have attributed such things to their elders from this very Testament in order to make dishonesty lawful as run counter to these noble teachings. As we say there is the seamy side of things. The national history of the Israelites begins from Prophet Jacob. According to the Hebrew Dictionary the meaning of Jacob is “One who usurps another's property by deceiving him.” Thus in the Genesis it is written :—

“And he (Isaac) said, Thy brother came with subtlety and hath

<sup>1</sup> Daniel, 12 : 1, 2.

<sup>2</sup> Job., 19 : 25, 26.

<sup>3</sup> Exodus, 20 : 21-17, Deuteronomy 5 : 16-21.

## LEAVES FROM THE TREE OF LIFE

taken away thy blessing. And he said, Is not he rightly named Jacob? for he hath supplanted me these two times, he took away my birthright.<sup>1</sup>

Even before this, Jacob had supplanted Esau in his mother's womb.

"And Rebekah his wife conceived and the children struggled together within her.....And when her days to be delivered were fulfilled, behold there were twins in her womb. And the first came out red all over like a hairy garment; and they called his name Esau. And after that came his brother out and his hand took hold of Esau's heel; and his name was called Jacob."

Why was Jacob's hand holding Esau's heel? Because both of them struggled in their mother's womb. The custom was that the child which was born first of the twins was called the first-born and was heir to his father's property. Therefore the words of the Bible indicate that both of them tried to get born first. And Prophet Hosea also says :

"He took his brother by the heel in the womb, and by his strength he had power with God."

To supplant his brother in his mother's womb, was the first act of Jacob to deprive him of his birth-right. His second act of this kind was when he deceived his father due to his weakness of sight and took away his blessing intended for the elder brother, simulating the latter's identity.

*(To be continued)*

## LEAVES FROM THE TREE OF LIFE

### II

BY WILLIAM BASHYR-PICKARD

Again the hand descended, bearing leaves from the tree of life, glowing with blessing : and I rejoiced. Eight were they and attentively I perused them.

\* \* \*

So I set them forth.

"O you who believe, spend out of what We have given you before the day comes wherein there is no bargaining nor any friendship nor intercession. The unbelievers are the unjust;"<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Genesis, 27 : 35-36.

<sup>2</sup> Genesis, 25 : 22, 24, 26.

<sup>3</sup> The Holy Qur'an : II, 254.

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If this verset from the Holy Qur'ān were completely understood and practised by mankind, then, quite simply and naturally, a Golden Age of economic prosperity and freedom from want would dawn with gentle light, and the gross, pungent darkness of selfishness would vanish from the earth.

For what indeed is the true implication wrapped around in sacred word? Is it not roughly thus :

All your possessions and whatever you delight in, saying, 'This wealth is mine, mine! belonging to me personally! and not in the least to other people!'—all indeed that you have, has been given to you by the one Possessor.

Realize this truth, and be not niggardly of giving again what has first been given to you.

One must remember also the time-limit. Whatever worldly wealth has been given to you is not an eternal possession. Even if you do not lose it or spend it, you will have to part with it; for it is no integral part of yourself. At death it will slip away from your powerless hand. You will find no voice to say, 'This is mine! touch not!'

So, then, simplify matters. Realize at once this clear truth. Hold lightly what you hold. Be not grieved at its presence or absence. If another hath greater need, let it go gladly to him. At all hazards keep yourself from unjust actions in respect of this world's goods; for unjust actions are the marks of unbelievers.

\* \* \*

"And they ask you what they should spend. Say, What you can spare. Thus does God make clear the communications that you may ponder."<sup>1</sup>

If we read and consider this verset in conjunction with the preceding verset from the same Quranic surah ("The Cow"), we find a possible error corrected. To give is good, but not necessarily is all giving good. Indiscriminate giving may be a fault. To give a great quantity without consideration may truly have less merit than to give with moderation, having regard to lawful claims, all and sundry, which by our possessions alone

<sup>1</sup> The Holy Qur'ān : II, 219.

## LEAVES FROM THE TREE OF LIFE

we can fulfil. Therefore the golden rule is still, 'what you can spare.' Fulfil the needs, but don't pile up idle surpluses. The gist of the injunction is that you should ponder, should give the question of giving due consideration. It may be that, after a little thought, one can give much more than one at first imagined.

\* \* \*

"No soul shall have imposed upon it a duty but to the extent of its capacity."<sup>1</sup>

Herein is the charter of the soul's freedom. Unto all and sundry is it possible to be perfect, to fill up with gladness the full measure of their duty. What is beyond one's power and means is also outside one's duty. We can each one render unto God (by His grace and the expression of His mercy) the complete and perfect gift, which is the glad-hearted fulfilment of our duty to capacity. When we have, by God's help, accomplished this, then we may rejoice in the possession of the wonder of the universe.

\* \* \*

"Attend constantly to prayers and to the most excellent prayer and stand up truly obedient to God."<sup>1</sup>

Every word of this verset sparkles with brilliant light. It shines as a steadfast beacon of guidance to voyagers in worldly stress or storm.

*Attend*, not simply *come* to prayers, *go* to prayers or *say* your prayers, but pay attention, concentrate upon your prayers. The power of concentration is unlimited. Directed towards God, who or what can withstand it?

Prayers, too, is plural, implying frequency. Repeated blessings are better than rare and occasional blessings. So to be in the presence of God often is better than seldom.

All prayers are not equal. There is one prayer that excelleth—the prayer that rises from the heart as the tear falls from the eye at the thought and in the presence of God.

When you present yourself for prayers, stand up truly obedient unto God with mind and spirit flexible,

<sup>1</sup> The Holy Qurān II : 233.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, II : 238.

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humble, hearkening, for perhaps you will hear the command of God, and, if you have cast out all pride, will recognize the voice of God that you may be obedient.

\* \* \*

"Who will offer God a good gift? God will multiply it to him many times. God both straightens and multiplies. And you shall be returned to Him."<sup>1</sup>

What is the good gift that may be offered to God? At certain times the good gift may comprise money, produce, property or various other forms of worldly wealth, but let us stay for a moment: Are these things of the world, though valuable, the highest or the best offerings that could be made to the Possessor of all? It occurs to me that there are yet higher and yet better gifts that, if offered, would be found acceptable unto God. Let us give unto God our talents, our time, our devotion. And of these, no less than of worldly goods, the truth of the verset remains—surely you will find these higher things also multiplied to you. And unto Him shall you return.

\* \* \*

And another verset is there upon this same subject, making the divine law of acceptance and multiplication yet clearer. Even this:

"The parable of those who spend their substance in the way of God is as the parable of a single grain growing into seven ears with a hundred grains in each ear. God multiplies for whom He pleases. God is Ample-Giving, Knowing."<sup>2</sup>

God (praised be His Name!), in whose hand is the power and ordinance by which the produce of nature multiplies continually before our very eyes, has clearly the power by which, by a relatively similar process, our small gift is transmuted into a thousand bounties.

\* \* \*

Turn we now from a bright picture to a dark one, from a life of health and light to an existence diseased, sordid, dark, going down unto death.

Consider the verset:

"Those who devour usury cannot arise, save as those whom the devil has prostrated, arise. That is because they say in, excuse,

<sup>1</sup> The Holy Qur'an, II : 245.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, II : 261.



## LEAVES FROM THE TREE OF LIFE

Usury is simply trading. But God has allowed trading and forbidden usury."<sup>1</sup>

Far from offering a gift unto God, takers of usury prey upon the substance of their poorer fellow men, fattening themselves in this life upon their enmeshed victim, even as a spider might enwrap a fly and draw out its life-blood. Woe, then, to takers of usury! creators of misery! tasters themselves of slow poison! amplifiers of their own selfishness! obstructors of their own happiness!

\* \* \*

And now, in conclusion, the last verset of this same sura "The Cow" proclaims again, while adding prayer:

"God does not impose upon any soul a duty but to the extent of its ability: for it is the benefit of what it hath earned and upon it is the evil of what it hath wrought. Our Lord, do not punish us, if we forget or make a mistake: Our Lord, do not lay on us a burden as Thou didst lay on those before us: Our Lord, do not impose upon us that which we have not the strength to bear; and pardon us and grant us protection, and have mercy on us. Thou art our Patron, so help us against the unbelieving people."<sup>2</sup>

Herein we have comforting assurance. As commented upon above, no duty is imposed greater than ability to perform. But now we are assured that, by the workings of divine justice, if we earn anything, we shall not be defrauded but shall benefit by its fruits. From wrongful actions, no less, that we may have done, upon our own heads shall be the penalty and punishment.

Our happiness is, therefore, from a combination of these three statements, clearly and unshakeably in our own hands. We have but to earn and act with rightness, not go about seeking a vague happiness unsuccessfully by questionable measures. Often to seek happiness is but to destroy it.

Now, over and above the great principle enunciated above that our happiness is surely in our own hands, is added the safeguarding mercy and forgiveness of God who is the Great Forgiver. By the mercy of God we may be protected from the harm that might otherwise

<sup>1</sup> The Holy Qur'an, II : 275.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, II : 286.

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descend upon us from our human forgetfulness or inadvertent mistake.

\* \* \*

How multiple and multiform, how multifarious in blessing are the leaves of the tree of life !

An ensample of eight have we portrayed above ; but others, evergreen, undying, grow yet by the grace of God for the refreshment of the weary multitudes.

Go and gather ! None can cast you out. Surely ye are in the hand of God the Eternal. And to Him ye shall return.

Alhamdulillah !

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### JESUS SON OF MARY HIS BIRTH AND DEATH

BY KHWAJA NAZIR AHMAD

*(Continued from vol. XXVI, p. 324)*

#### The Land of Promise

Palestine, often called the Holy Land,<sup>1</sup> was the land of inheritance of the Hebrew nation. This land was promised to them through Abraham :

And the Lord appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land.<sup>2</sup>

And " this land " was particularly indicated and specified as the land where Abraham had

built an altar unto the Lord and called upon the name of the Lord.<sup>3</sup>

It was, consequently, at one time deemed to be the birth-right of Hebrews to possess this land and to live in it, and that is why it was styled as " their own land,"<sup>4</sup> for it was the land of their inheritance.<sup>5</sup> The Hebrew nation was, therefore, described as the people of inheritance.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Holy Qur-an, V : 21.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> *Jd.*, XX : 6.

<sup>4</sup> Gen., XII : 7.

<sup>5</sup> 2 Kings. XVII : 23.

<sup>6</sup> Deut., IV : 20.

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The boundaries of this land were described in the promise to Abraham :

In the same day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates.<sup>1</sup>

The "river of Egypt" does not refer to the Nile, but to a brook, now identified with the Wady el-Arish, flowing into the sea about twenty miles south of Gaza.<sup>2</sup> The borders of this land are again given in greater details in the Fourth Book of Moses.<sup>3</sup> But these borders are ideal rather than actual, for the area described there never wholly belonged to the Hebrew nation. It is noteworthy that the eastern border runs in an easterly course to the eastern margin of the sea of Chinnerath (Gennesaret) and thence follows the Jordan to the Red Sea. The eastern border here indicated was really the left bank of the Jordan, while, as already mentioned, Euphrates is mentioned as the eastern limit in another place. The Biblical phrases : "On this side of Jordan" and "beyond Jordan" thus became intelligent as representing the point of view of the writer or in other words the standpoint of Canaan and, therefore, both these phrases mean on the east side of Jordan,<sup>4</sup> i.e., beyond the eastern border of the Holy Land.

Moses, after bringing them out of Egypt, had to take the Hebrews to this land so that they may possess it and live in it.<sup>5</sup> He exhorted his followers to enter this land, but they refused to go any further and wished to return to Egypt,<sup>6</sup> and it was, therefore, ordained :

Doubtless ye shall not come into the land, concerning which I swear to make you dwell therein, save Caleb the son of Jephunneh, Joshua the son of Nun.<sup>7</sup>

The "little ones" of the Hebrew nation were, however, the only other exception.<sup>8</sup> Moses himself was forbidden from entering it<sup>9</sup> and he was directed to appoint Joshua as his successor,<sup>10</sup> so that he could lead the next

<sup>1</sup> Gen., XV : 18.

<sup>2</sup> Dummelow, *Commentary on the Holy Bible*, 120.

<sup>3</sup> Nu., XXXIV : 1—12.

<sup>4</sup> Dummelow, *Commentary on the Holy Bible*, 123. See also Peake, *Commentary on the Bible*, 229.

<sup>5</sup> Deut., III : 10.

<sup>6</sup> Nu., XIV : 30 ; Deut., I : 35.

<sup>7</sup> Deut., I : 37.

<sup>8</sup> Nu., XIV : 1—4.

<sup>9</sup> Deut., XIV : 31.

<sup>10</sup> Deut., XXXI : 14.

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generation to the land,<sup>1</sup> and then divide the inheritance among the tribes.<sup>2</sup>

It was because of the iniquities of the Hebrew people that Moses was denied an entry into this land of inheritance.<sup>3</sup> Moses, however, prayed for permission to enter the land.<sup>4</sup>

But the Lord was wroth with me (Moses) for your sakes and would not hear me, Let it suffice thee, speak no more unto me of this matter.<sup>5</sup>

Again,

Furthermore, the Lord was angry with me for your sakes and swore that I should not go over Jordan, and that I should not go in unto that good land, which thy Lord thy God giveth thee for an inheritance.<sup>6</sup>

Moses then prophesied :

I call heaven and earth to witness against you, this day, that ye shall soon utterly perish from off the land where unto ye go over Jordan to possess it ; ye shall not prolong your days upon it, but shall utterly be destroyed. And the Lord shall scatter you among the nations and ye shall be left few in numbers among the heathens, whither the Lord shall lead you.<sup>7</sup>

Moses prayed for the deliverance of his people and he was made to convey a message of hope :

When thou art in tribulation, and all these things are come upon thee, even in the latter days, if thou turn to the Lord thy God, and shall be obedient unto his voice. (For the Lord thy God is a merciful God ;) he will not forsake thee, neither destroy thee.<sup>8</sup>

And Moses himself was ordered to take a journey in the opposite direction beyond the Jordan ; and if we take the eastern border, to be the eastern bank of the Euphrates,<sup>9</sup> the journey must be towards the east beyond the Euphrates.

And the Lord said unto Moses, Get thee unto the *Mount Abarim*, see the land which I have given unto the Children of Israel.<sup>10</sup>

I pause to observe that this land was meant for the *Children of Israel* and not for the entire Hebrew nation. On entering this land, "over against *Bethpeor*," Moses

<sup>1</sup>Deut., XXXI : 23.

<sup>2</sup> Nu., XXVI : 53.

<sup>3</sup> Deut., I : 37.

<sup>4</sup> Deut., III : 25.

<sup>5</sup> Deut., III : 26 ; Nu., XXVIII : 12.

<sup>6</sup> Deut., IV : 21.

<sup>7</sup> Deut., IV : 26-27.

<sup>8</sup> Deut., IV : 30-31.

<sup>9</sup> Gen., XV : 18.

<sup>10</sup> Num XXVII : 12.

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was made to see this Land of Promise :

Get thee up unto the top of *Pisgah* and lift up thine eyes, westward and northward and southward and eastward and behold it with thine eyes, for thou shalt not go over this Jordan. <sup>1</sup>

The eastern border of Palestine, at that time, touched the river Jordan, or, if the description in Genesis is to be considered, the river Euphrates. Moses had not entered the land and, therefore, in either case he must be deemed to be standing on the eastern bank of Jordan or Euphrates. The direction to see eastward excludes Palestine entirely and, therefore, it was not the Holy Land which Moses was made to see.

If we follow the trend of the Discourses of Moses we find that the burden of the first discourse is about the deliverance of the Hebrews from Egypt, their being led to the land of their inheritance, their possession of it and ultimately their dispersion from it. The second discourse begins with verse 44 of Chapter IV of Deuteronomy. In this Moses mentioned many more "testimonies" and the first one referred to the Land of Promise which God *shall* give them after their deliverance from captivity. Three places are mentioned in this connection : *Bethpeor*<sup>2</sup> *Heshbon*<sup>3</sup> and *Pisgah*.<sup>4</sup> In another place *Mount Nebo*<sup>5</sup> is also mentioned in conjunction with Bethpeor. The location of these four places would enable us to ascertain the Land of Promise. All the Biblical commentators have to confess that the sites of these places are still unidentified and that they combined the literal with the metaphorical and, therefore, they cannot be located now. Peake contents himself with the remarks that "the sites are unknown."<sup>6</sup> The reason why these scholars have been unable to trace the location of these places is because they were looking for them in Palestine. They should have studied the history of the Lost Ten Tribes and searched for these places in the land where these tribes had settled. I will take these places one by one.

*Bethpeor* means the house (or place) of gaping or opening.<sup>7</sup> Jhelum River in ancient days was called *Behat* in Kashmir and Bandipur, in tehsil Handwara (Kashmir),

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

<sup>2</sup> Deut., IV : 46.

<sup>3</sup> Deut., XXXIV : 1

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> Deut., IV : 49.

<sup>6</sup> Peake, *Commentary on the Bible*, 235.

<sup>7</sup> Cruden's Concordance, 578.

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was called *Behatpur*. It is "the place of gaping or opening" in more than one sense. From this place the Kashmir valley opens out; the river Jhelum also gaps into Wullar Lake. *Bethpur*, therefore, really stands for *Behatpur* (Bandipur).

*Heshbon* is known by the Biblical reference to the pools of Heshbon. Tristran believed the reference to have been to the pools or streams running in the valley.<sup>1</sup> And we find that about twelve miles south-west of Behatpur (Bandipur) in Kashmir is *Hashba*, a small village, famous for its pools of fish. It adjoins the spot near *Auth Wattu*—the eight ways—which is locally known as *Maqam-i-Musa*, the Place of Moses.

*Pisgah* according to Dummelow is "probably the general name for the mountain range which in Deuteronomy (XXXII: 49) is called Abarim."<sup>2</sup> It is a pity that in religious matters and questions of faith probabilities have had to play a great part. *Pishga* is a place in Kashmir three miles north-east of *Hashba*.

*Mount Nebo* is a single peak of mount Abarim.<sup>3</sup> It signifies "a lofty place."<sup>4</sup> Moses died there<sup>5</sup> and was buried<sup>6</sup> there "over against Bethpeor." *Baal Nabu* is a peak of a range about eight miles north-west of Bethpeor (Bandipur).<sup>8</sup> From it Bandipur is visible and so is the entire Kashmir valley. There is a tomb on top of this peak which is known as the sepulchre of Moses. Mount Abarim is the same as Pishga of Kashmir.

How is it that all these different places in Kashmir, geographically placed within a range of a few miles of the spot said to contain the sepulchre of Moses, bear the very Biblical names which are connected with the place where, according to the Bible, Moses was buried? Is this a mere coincidence? There are various other common features which I will discuss when dealing with the Sepulchre of Moses. But even these facts, I think, are sufficient to establish that Kashmir is the Land of Promise which God had promised to Moses for the Children of Israel. The matter can, however, be taken further. The

<sup>1</sup> cf. Cant., VII: 4.

<sup>2</sup> Dummelow, *Commentary on the Holy Bible*, 115.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> Cassel's *Concise Bible Dictionary*, 524.

<sup>5</sup> Deut., XXXIV: 5.

<sup>6</sup> Deut., XXXIV: 6.

<sup>7</sup> Deut., IV: 21, XXVIII: 64.

<sup>8</sup> Newall, Maj.-Gen. D. J. F., *The Highland of India*, 87

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Children of Israel were destined to serve other gods of wood and stone.<sup>1</sup> Nowhere, except in Kashmir, was this prophecy fulfilled. In Kashmir the Kashmiri Pandits worship idols of wood and stone. It can legitimately be contended that the land promised to the Children of Israel, through Moses, must have been some land other than the Holy Land: firstly, because Palestine was never exclusively assigned to the Children of Israel inasmuch as this land was given as an inheritance to the seed of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, *i.e.* the twelve tribes. Secondly, the followers of Moses from Egypt were the progeny of only a few of the original inhabitants of Palestine and the greater part of the Hebrew nation, having remained behind, was already in possession of the *good land*. Thirdly, the Children of Israel, having been driven from *their own land*, never returned to it from their captivity. A promise to them that they would possess certain land could only be about a land which they had neither seen before nor possessed at all. But we need not conjecture or speculate as to where this Land of Promise was located, for the Lord Himself has given us sufficient indications of its distinctive features, whereby we can fix its location with almost certainty.

The Land of Promise was to be a "heaven on the earth"<sup>2</sup> towards the sun-rising,<sup>3</sup> and was:

a land of hills and valleys that drinketh water of the rain of heaven.<sup>4</sup>

The rains shall fall in this land in due season<sup>2</sup> and this land will extend "even upto *the sea of the plain*, under the springs of the Pishgah."<sup>5</sup>

Palestine cannot answer this description. Dr. G. W. G. Masterman, writing on the General Physical Features of Palestine, says:

Then the climate, in its broad features, is the same everywhere. A short wet winter is followed by a dry summer season with perhaps no drop of rain for five or six months.....and the hot dry summer soon withers the spring's glorious promise of verdure. Miles of country in the later summer produces nothing but a few

<sup>1</sup> Deut., XI: 21.

<sup>2</sup> Deut., XI: 11.

<sup>3</sup> Deut. IV: 49.

<sup>4</sup> Deut., IV: 41.

<sup>5</sup> Deut., XI: 14.

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scanty prickly weeds. The scarcity of timber is marked all over the land. Springs are usually small and infrequent, and not a few become intermittent, or dry up altogether, after the summer draught.....the dry and parching south-east wind (the sirocco) from the desert spoil so much of the otherwise pleasant weather in spring and autumn.<sup>1</sup>

Peake, as a contrast to this Biblical description of the Land of Promise, points out that a plentiful supply of rain was always a necessity in Palestine.<sup>2</sup> Again, watering of lands by foot was common in ancient Egypt and Palestine<sup>3</sup> This was necessary to meet shortage of water at higher levels. But in the Land of Promise irrigation was to be done by natural streams. These descriptions do not apply to Palestine. Of course, the past associations of Kashmiris, being Children of Israel, with Egypt and Palestine, would sometimes make them resort to this kind of device.

But, is there any other country, east of Jordan or Euphrates, except Kashmir, which is famous for its springs, streams and rivers ; for its abundance in food and fruits ; for the charms of its valleys and meadows ? The Land of Promise was to contain a *sea of the plain*, a huge lake of fresh water. Kashmir has its Wullar Lake. Again Kashmir has actually been described as the Paradise on Earth by many famous writers. The Kashmiri historians call it *Bagh-i-Jannat*—the Garden of Paradise and *Jannat-ud-Dunia*—the Paradise of the World. Saadi, the great Persian poet, sang its praise thus :

If there is a heaven on earth,  
It is this, and it's this, and it's this.

I have already mentioned that under Divine Command Solomon visited the *blessed land* by air,<sup>4</sup> and have given many reasons for holding that Kashmir was that blessed land.

Again, the Children of Ham, son of Cush, were to migrate to a land of :

Fat pastures and good, and that land was wide and quiet and peaceable.<sup>5</sup>

I have yet to come across a better description of Kashmir than this Biblical one.

<sup>1</sup> Masterman, Dr. E.W.G., *The Holy Land*, 7, 12.

<sup>2</sup> Peake. *Commentary on the Bible*, 236.

<sup>3</sup> Deut. XI : 10.

<sup>4</sup> The Holy Qur-ān, XXII : 81. <sup>5</sup> 1 Chron., IV : 40.



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This land was to be the valley of *Charashim*—the valley of *Craftsman*.<sup>1</sup> It goes without saying that the only valley in the world which is famous for its craftsmen is Kashmir.

Prophet Isaiah has described the Land of Promise as :

A place of broad rivers and streams wherein shall go no galley with oars, neither shall a gallant ship pass thereby.<sup>2</sup>

Both these conditions are inapplicable to Palestine because of its sea-coast, but they befit Kashmir. The reference to the absence of "galleys with oars" and "gallant ships" signifies that no enemy fleet can attack, and none will be needed for defence. The rivers of Kashmir are steady, but as soon as they leave the valley they follow a circuitous route through mountains and their beds abound with submerged rocks. The rapids thus formed in the rivers make them unfit for navigation, and even a small canoe cannot pass through them.

The Prophet Isaiah had also foretold regarding the Children of Israel and about their sufferings in their captivity. He said :

Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken ; neither shall thy land any more be turned Desolate ; but thou shalt be called *Hephzibah* and thy land *Beluah* ; for the Lord delighteth in thee, and thy land shall be married.<sup>3</sup>

The words *hephzibah* and *beulah* respectively mean : *she in whom is my delight* and *married* ; but they really are allegorical names applied by Deutero-Isaiah to Israel. It has been suggested that *Hephzibah* is a distortion of the name of a *Hephzibaal*—delight of the Baal *i.e.* delight of the husband, and that Jehovah is the Baal or the husband "who delights over the bride of Zion."<sup>4</sup> The idea underlying these expressions is that people of the land as well as the other fruits<sup>5</sup> arise from the fertilising influence of the land's *Baal i.e.* the Divine Husband.<sup>6</sup>

The Mishna and the Talmud have always drawn a distinction between lands artificially irrigated and land naturally watered, calling the latter the house of *Baal* or the field of *Baal*, or the land of *Baal*.<sup>7</sup> Thus lands ferti-

<sup>1</sup> 1 Chron., IV : 14.

<sup>2</sup> Isa., XXXIII : 21.

<sup>3</sup> Isa., LXII : 4.

<sup>4</sup> *Ency. Biblica*, col: 2017, *c.f.* Isa., LXII : 4 ; Mal., III : 12.

<sup>5</sup> Deut., XXVIII : 4.

<sup>6</sup> *Ency. Biblica*, col. 569.

<sup>7</sup> *Rel. Sem.*, II : 97.

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lized by natural streams, springs and subterranean water, and not by artificial irrigation, were called the lands of *Baal*.<sup>1</sup>

In short, the prophecy of Isaiah simply foretold that after their sufferings in captivity, the Children of Israel shall come to a land which shall not be desolate but shall be fertilized by natural streams and springs and that this land shall be married to them or, in other words, they shall possess it and live in it.

The Lost Ten Tribes never returned to Palestine. Therefore, Isaiah could not have had the Holy Land in his mind at the time he made this prophecy. On the other hand Kashmir does answer the description. The Lost Tribes did go there and are till today to be found there. In Kashmir, except when water is lifted, by a local contrivance by foot, up to a short height of about six feet, lands are irrigated by natural streams and springs. Indeed Kashmir is a land of valleys and springs. It is very significant that *Baal* in the Kashmiri language means a spring.

The word translated as *valleys* in Deuteronomy really stands for meadows. The Holy Qur-ân, in another connection, describes the Promised Land in the following terms :

And We made the son of Mary and his mother a sign ; and We gave them shelter on lofty meadows and springs.<sup>2</sup>

Truly in Kashmir are lofty meadows and natural springs to be found in numbers beyond measure. The term *land of Baal* if applied to Kashmir becomes literally applicable since many places are known as Bal. I give but a few names :

<i>Meadows :</i>	<i>Springs :</i>
Ainamargh <sup>3</sup>	Achabal <sup>4</sup>
Astanmargh	Aharbal
Chandansarmargh	Aishabal
Gokalmargh	Chattabal
Gulmargh	Gagribal
Karmargh	Gandarbal
Khilanmargh	Gungbal
Mahleshamargh	Hazratbal
Nandimargh	Khanabal

<sup>1</sup> Hastings, *Dictionary of the Bible*, 209-210.

<sup>2</sup> The Holy Qur-ân, XXIII : 50.

<sup>3</sup> *Margh* means a meadow.

<sup>4</sup> *Bal* means a spring.

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Nandsarmargh  
Shafimargh  
Shajimargh  
Sonamargh  
Tangmargh  
Zonamargh

Khwajayarbal  
Marbal  
Manasbal  
Teraghibal  
Yarbal

### The Sepulchre of Moses

Get thee up into this Mountain Abarim, unto mount Nebo . . . and die in the mount whether thou goest up . . . yet thou shalt see the land before thee ; but thou shalt not go thither unto the land which I give to the Children of Israel.<sup>1</sup>

So Moses the servant of the Lord died there . . . and he buried him in a valley in the land of Moab, over against Bethpeor : but no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day.<sup>2</sup>

These verses record that in obedience to the Divine command Moses ascended to the top of Mount Nebo and from there he viewed the Land of Promise and thereafter he died at the spot and God buried him. But according to the Christian belief God not only buried him but buried his sepulchre also. The words *unto this day* indicate that the writer, of the account lived and wrote at a much later date.

The Jewish legend surrounds the death of Moses with mystery. It is asserted in Jewish history called the *Assumption of Moses* that Michael came into conflict with Satan as to the disposal of the body of Moses. This legend is also referred to in the Epistles of Jude.<sup>3</sup> But according to the eastern Jewish legends Moses was suddenly surrounded by a cloud and he disappeared and thus God had taken him alive into heaven on account of his piety.<sup>4</sup>

The first correct note was, however, struck by St. John Chrysostom. In a passage from Homily 26 in the Epistle to the Hebrews (Ch. III), he wrote :

But tell me, do not the bones of Moses himself lie in a far off land in the East.

But ignoring the Jewish traditions and Christian beliefs, it is obvious that, if Kashmir was the Land of

<sup>1</sup> Deut., XXXII : 49-52.

<sup>2</sup> Deut., XXXIV : 5-6.

<sup>3</sup> Jude, V : 9.

<sup>4</sup> *Jewish Ency.*, Art, *Moses*, IX : 53.

Promise, Moses must have visited the place and his sepulchre must be somewhere in Kashmir. There can be no possibility of any doubt if it is established that Moses did die in Kashmir.

The traditions of Kashmir, written and oral, assert that Moses did visit Kashmir and died there. Let me quote a few of the historians of Kashmir. Abdul Qadir bin Qazi-ul-Quzat Wazir Ali Khan, in his *Hashmat-i-Kashmir*, writes :

Moses came to Kashmir and people believed in him. Subsequently they continued to believe in him, others did not. He died and was buried here. The people of Kashmir call his tomb the Shrine of the Prophet of the Book.<sup>1</sup>

In *Tarikh-i-Azami* the following passage occurs :

And this Sang Bibi was also a renowned hermitess and excelled men in meditation and prayer. Near to her tomb is a place which is known as the sepulchre of Moses, the Prophet of God (may our salutations be on him), and people who know assert that many benefits are derived from that place.<sup>2</sup>

In *Guldasta-i-Kashmir* it is recorded :

Muslims call this land a replica of heaven on earth and also named it the Garden of Solomon. There are many shrines in the land. They say that *Hazrat* Sulaiman came here and that *Hazrat* Moses passed through the land.<sup>3</sup>

Similar references are to be found in *Wajeez-ut-Tawarikh*<sup>4</sup> and *Tarikh-i-Hasan*.<sup>5</sup>

Among the European travellers and writers Francis Bernier was the first to note this fact. In his fourth ground for the belief that Kashmiris were descendants of Israel, he said :

The fourth ground is the belief that Moses died in this city of Kaschmire and that this took place within a league of it.<sup>6</sup>

George Moore, in his *The Lost Tribes*, says :

Moses himself came amongst them to teach them the worship of one God.<sup>7</sup>

Lt.-Col. H. D. Torrens writes :

There is a belief too, that Moses died in the Capital of Kashmir and that he is buried near it.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Hashmat-i-Kashmir*, F. 7, R. A. Society of Bengal. MS. 192.

<sup>2</sup> Khwaja Muhammad Azam, *Tarikh-i-Azami*, 84.

<sup>3</sup> Pandit Har Gopal, *Guldasta-i-Kashmir*, 17.

<sup>4</sup> *Wajeez-ul-Twarikh*, Vol. I : 28.

<sup>5</sup> *Tarikh-i-Hasan*, Vol. III : 74.

<sup>6</sup> Bernier, *Travels in India*, 174.

<sup>7</sup> George Moore, *The Lost Tribes*, 137.

<sup>8</sup> Torrens, Lt. Col. H. D., *Travels in Ladakh, Tartary and Kashmir*, 268.

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Mrs. Harvey, citing Badi-ud-Din as her authority, stated :

According to one eminent authority Kashmir was inundated on account of the relapse of the inhabitants to idolatry, after having been taught the worship of One God by Moses, who died there and whose tomb is by some said to be still pointed out.<sup>1</sup>

I personally went to the Sepulchre of Moses. We had to go up on ponies for Aham Sharif, a place about eight miles from Bethpur (Bandipur). One Ghafar Rishi is the custodian (*Mutwalli*) of the place, and he conducted us there. The tomb itself is in a quadrangular enclosure and in it there are three other covered tombs. One of them is of Sang Bibi, the hermitess and the other two are of her disciples. All these three tombs, like the Muslim graves, are in the north-south direction. The fourth is the tomb of Moses, which like the Jewish graves, is in the east-west direction.

The tomb of Moses has two trees on either side. They were planted about 400 years ago by *Hazrat Makhdoom* Sheikh Hamza of Kashmir who prayed here for forty days near the tomb of Prophet Moses. He said, it is recorded, that he could smell the aroma of Prophethood from the tomb.

The tomb of Moses is on *Nabu baal* (Mount Nabu.) From this place Bethpur (Bandipur), *Sin*, *Betour* (the second Mount Sinai) are visible. *Hashba*, Peshga and *Maqam-i-Musa*, the Place of Moses, are within short distance from it.

Are these all mere coincidents or freaks of nature?

There is considerable material in support of the tradition that Moses came to Kashmir and died there. Musa is a very popular name among the inhabitants of Kashmir and many places are also named after him. Thus there is *Gund-i-Khalil* or *Gund-i-Musa* in Awantipur. Sir Auriel Stein mentions *Kohna-i-Musa* near Shadipur<sup>1</sup> and Pampur.<sup>2</sup> There are four *Maqam-i-Musa*, the place of (rest) of Moses in Kashmir known to me and there may be many others. One is near Auth Wattu in Handwara Tehsil. This place is also known as *Ayat Maula*, the Sign of God. Moses came to the valley

<sup>1</sup> Mrs. Harvey, *The Adventures of a Lady in Tartary, Thibet, China and Kashmir*, Vol. III : 154.

<sup>2</sup> Stein, Sir Auriel. *Rajatarangini*, Vol. I : 70.

<sup>3</sup> Stein, Sir Auriel, *The Ancient Geography of Kashmir*, 166.

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from this direction and prayed at this spot for forty days. The second place is at the junction of the two rivers, Jhelum and Sindh near Shadipur. It is sometimes known as *Kohnā-i-Musa* and Steins mentions it by this name. The third is at Peshga and the fourth is near Bandipur.

There is *Sang-i-Musa*—the stone of Moses at Bijbehara. It is locally known as *Ka Ka Pal*—the stone of Ka Ka. The Ladakhis call Moses Ka Ka. The Pathans call an elderly or saintly person *Ka Ka*.

This stone of Moses is also mentioned in Rajtarangini. It weighs about 110 lbs. There is a tradition about this stone which I tested myself. We were told that if eleven people sat round it and put one finger each beneath this stone and called out *Ka Ka, Ka Ka*, the stone would lift itself from the ground. I was accompanied by four other friends<sup>1</sup> and we collected six local people and tried the experiment in the manner indicated. The stone rose to a height of about four feet from the ground and we did not feel its weight at all. We tried it with ten and then with twelve persons. The stone did not move. We tried again with eleven and it kept on rising so long as we all were shouting *Ka Ka, Ka Ka*. This time we carried it shoulder high when one of us began laughing and the stone fell to the ground. On the question of the significance of eleven persons we were told that out of twelve tribes of Israel one (Levi) was disinherited. The remaining eleven tribes must be symbolically represented before the stone of Moses would move itself.

Truth is stranger than fiction. Any one doubting this statement can test it for himself.

If we turn to the Holy Qur-ān we can find material for maintaining that Moses did come to Kashmir. To begin with the Israelites are assured that they will live in the Land of Promise after they had been persecuted.<sup>2</sup> Consequently the Israelites had to enter the Land of Promise after their captivity and their subsequent release.

The meeting of Moses with *Khwaja Khizr* is an incident which lends support to the fact that Moses did

<sup>1</sup> They were : Dr. Wazir Ahmad Quraishi, Health Officer, Srinagar, Mr. Amar Nath Menta of Monatta & Co., Srinagar, Mr. Abdul Aziz Shora, editor of the Weekly *Roushani*, Srinagar, and Muhammad Tufail of High Court, Lahore.

<sup>2</sup> The Holy Qur-ān, VII : 129.

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come to Kashmir. We are told that Moses with his servant reached the junction of the two rivers.<sup>1</sup> The phrase, *Majma-ul-Bahrain*, does not indicate merely a junction of two rivers, but it really signifies the fact that the two rivers must lose their identity as if they have fallen into the sea. The junction of rivers Jhelum and Sindh (it must not be confused with Indus) is at Shadipur and after a few miles they fall into Wullar Lake. At this junction, and in midstream, is a rock on which a platform has been made. It is known as *Maqam-i-Musa*, the place of Moses and sometimes it is called *Kohna-i-Musa*, the corner-stone of Moses. Thus Moses with his companion came up to this junction and they took refuge on the rock."<sup>2</sup> And it is from this place that they retraced their foot steps.<sup>3</sup>

On this return journey Moses meets a person, unnamed in the Book, upon whom God had bestowed mercy and taught him of His knowledge.<sup>4</sup> Commentators agree that this person was *Khwaja Khizr*. Moses asked his permission to follow him :

So they went (their way) until when they embarked in the boat he made a hole in it. Moses said : Have you made a hole in it to drown its inmates ? Certainly you have done a grievous thing.<sup>5</sup>

The Holy Qur-ān then mentions the reason for this extraordinary conduct of *Khwaja Khizr* :

As for the boat, it belonged to (some) poor men who worked on the river and I wished that I should damage it, and there was behind them a king who seized every boat by force.<sup>6</sup>

Moses lived from 1571 B.C.E. to 1450 B.C.E. Nalsain was his contemporary ruler of Kashmir. He was a wicked and cruel king. During his reign Kashmir was invaded and there was also a rebellion in the land. Nalsain took forcible possession of all the good boats so that he may cut off the means of communication of his enemies. This is a fact of history and *Khwaja Khizr* was made aware of the evil intention of Nalsain.

It only remains for me to point out that *Khizr*, like *Moses*, is a very popular name among the Kashmiris and *Khwaja*, meaning *Master*, is prefixed to the names of better class Kashmiris.

(To be continued)

<sup>1</sup> The Holy Qur-ān. XVIII : 60.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, XVIII : 64.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, XVIII : 71.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, XVIII : 63.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, XVIII : 65.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, XVIII : 79.

## LAW OF INHERITANCE IN ISLAM

BY C. A. SOORMA

Turning to the laws of *Inheritance*, we get the following verse from the Holy Qur'ān :

Allah enjoins you concerning your children that male shall have the equal of two females, then if they are more than two females, they shall have two-thirds of what the deceased has left, and if there is one, she shall have half; and as for his parents each of them shall have the sixth of what he has left if he has a child, but if he has no child and (only) his two parents inherit him, then his mother shall have the third; but if he has brothers, then his mother shall have the sixth, after (the payment of) a bequest he may have bequeathed or a debt.<sup>1</sup>

While commenting on this verse Maulvi Muhammad Ali says :—

When the daughters are the sole heirs, they are entitled to a share of two-thirds. The share of two-thirds to which "more than two" daughters are entitled remains the same even when the daughters are two only; and so in practice they have always been judged to be entitled to two-thirds of the property. This is further evident from the analogy of two sisters, who are entitled to two-thirds of the property when they are the sole heirs (Chapter iv, 177). As to those different cases in which there are others who inherit along with them, they are also considered in this verse and in that which follows.

Where the deceased is survived by parents.

The parents first take their respective shares, and the residue goes to the children, if there are any, failing which, the share of the parents is increased. But in case the deceased has brothers, the mother receives the same share as she would have received if the deceased had children. This is the second case. It may be noted that in all cases the payment of bequests and debts takes precedence over the shares of the heirs.

In another place the Holy Qur'ān enjoins :

And you shall have half of what your wives leave if they have no child, but if they have a child, then you shall have a fourth of what they leave after (payment of) any bequests they may have bequeathed or a debt; and they shall have the fourth of what you leave if you have no child, but if you have a child, then they shall have the eighth of what you leave after (payment of) a bequest you may have bequeathed or a debt; and if a man or a woman leaves property to be inherited by neither parents nor offspring, and he (or she) has a brother or a sister, then each of them shall have the sixth, but if they are more than that, they shall be sharers in the third after (payment of) any bequests that may have been bequeathed or a debt that does not harm others.

<sup>1</sup> The Holy Qur'an, IV : 11.



This is an ordinance from Allah: and Allah is Knowing, Forbearing.<sup>1</sup>

This is the third case, and it deals with the question when the deceased leaves a husband or a wife or is without children. The husband or the wife takes his or her share first, as in the case of parents, and the residue goes to the children.

If there are parents as well as husband or wife with children, the first two would take their shares first, and the residue would go to the children, whether males alone or females alone, or males and females mixed. The two-thirds share for two or more daughters can be given only when there are neither parents, nor husband nor wife; otherwise they take the residue, as in the case of sons, or sons and daughters . . . By a brother or a sister is meant a brother or a sister on the mother's side. A similar case when the deceased has neither parents nor offspring, and has brothers or sisters or both (where real brothers and sisters, or brothers and sisters on the father's side are meant), is dealt with in the concluding verse of this chapter (iv. 177), which is as follows:—

(c) "They ask you for a decision of the law, say: Allah gives you a decision concerning the person who has neither parents nor offspring; if a man dies and he has a sister, she shall have half of what he leaves, and he shall be her heir if she has no son; but if there be two (sisters), they shall have two-thirds of what he leaves, and if there are brethren men and women, then the male shall have the like of the portion of two females; Allah makes clear to you lest you err! and Allah knows all things."<sup>2</sup>

Reverting to chapter iv, v. 12, we notice that the brothers and sisters take the place of children in such a case (*i.e.*, when the deceased leaves neither parents nor offspring), a view which is reinforced by the rule in the above verse (iv. 177).

Since in the case of those who have no children, there is much likelihood of their burdening the estate with unnecessary debts, or even admitting debts that have not really been contracted, and of making bequests that would leave nothing for legal heirs, the words "without harming others" are added to make it clear that debts and bequests in such a case shall not prejudice the rights of the legal heirs.<sup>3</sup>

To summarize the Islamic Law of inheritance where

<sup>1</sup> The Holy Qur'an, IV : 12.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* IV : 177.

<sup>3</sup> Muhammad Ali, pp. 203-4.

## LAW OF INHERITANCE IN ISLAM

it deals with women, we observe :

(a) That Islam does not give unfettered power of testamentary disposition of one's property. The rights of heirs are jealously guarded.

(b) That before inheritance can be distributed, all valid debts, funeral expenses, widow's dower, bequests, etc., must be paid.

(c) That the rights of females generally are recognized, although their shares are less than those of males. There are two reasons for this. Firstly, as men are the chief breadwinners, and as wealth is increased principally by the efforts of men, they are to have more than the women who, although they contribute their share towards the family riches, yet bear a less burden in the accumulation of wealth. Secondly, women before marriage are maintained by the father, and after marriage, they are maintained and supported by their husbands. Thus, their need for wealth generally is less than that of men.

(d) That on the death of a man, his mother, his widow and his daughters all inherit simultaneously. Their shares vary according as to whether the deceased had parents, wife and children or not. The widow and the mother are sharers in the deceased's property, and they, along with other sharers, are paid first. Then come the daughters, who take as *residuaries*. Sons, as such, have no preference over the daughters. In the absence of parents and offspring, the sisters of the deceased also inherit. Among the other female relatives, grandmothers, half-sisters, son's daughters, etc., are not overlooked. They too inherit in certain circumstances. Broadly speaking, therefore, the general policy of Islamic law is to recognize the rights of women to inherit as far as possible. That these rights were far in advance of anything that existed before the Prophet is amply clear from this comparative study. Even to-day, Islamic law is superior to Hindu law, as the latter allows the widow either merely a *life interest* in the property, or she comes in as absolute owner after the great-grandson. Again, under Hindu law, the daughter takes only on the death of the widow, and even then there is a certain order of precedence, as we have observed, which must be followed. In all these respects, Islam has accorded to women better rights and a higher status.

# WHAT IS ISLAM?

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

**ISLAM : THE RELIGION OF PEACE.**—The word 'Islam' literally means : (1) Peace ; (2) the way to achieve peace ; (3) submission, as 'submission to another's will is the safest course to establish peace. The word in its religious sense signifies complete submission to the Will of God.

**OBJECT OF THE RELIGION.**—Islam provides its followers with the perfect code, whereby they may work out what is noble and good in man, and thus maintain peace between man and man.

**THE PROPHET OF ISLAM.**—Muhammad, popularly known as the Prophet of Islam, was, however, the last Prophet of the Faith. Muslims, i.e., the followers of Islam, accept all such of the world's Prophets, including Abraham, Moses and Jesus, as revealed the Will of God for the guidance of humanity.

**THE QUR-AN.**—The Gospel of the Muslim is the Qur'ān. Muslims believe in the Divine origin of every other sacred book. Inasmuch as all such previous revelations have become corrupted through human interpolation, the Qur'ān, the last Book of God, came as a recapitulation of the former Gospels.

**ARTICLES OF FAITH IN ISLAM.**—These are seven in number : Belief in (1) Allah ; (2) Angels ; (3) Books from God ; (4) Messengers from God ; (5) the Hereafter ; (6) the Pre-measurement of good and evil ; (7) Resurrection after death.

The life after death, according to Islamic teaching, is not a new life, but only a continuance of this life, bringing its hidden realities into light. It is a life of unlimited progress ; those who qualify themselves in this life for the progress will enter into Paradise, which is another name for the said progressive life after death, and those who get their faculties stunted by their misdeeds in this life will be the denizens of the Hell—a life incapable of appreciating heavenly bliss, and of torment—in order to get themselves purged of all impurities and thus to become fit for the life in Heaven. State after death is an image of the spiritual state in this life.

The sixth article of Faith has been confused by some with what is popularly known as Fatalism. A Muslim neither believes in Fatalism nor Predestination ; he believes in Pre-measurement. Everything created by God is for good in the given use and under the given circumstances. Its abuse is evil and suffering.

**PILLARS OF ISLAM.**—These are five in number : (1) Declaration of faith in the Oneness of God, and in the Divine Messenger-ship of Muhammad ; (2) Prayer ; (3) Fasting ; (4) Alms-giving ; (5) Pilgrimage of the Holy Shrine at Makka.

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

the worlds, the Friend, the Helper. There is none like Him. He has no partner. He is neither begotten nor has He begotten any son or daughter. He is indivisible in Person. He is the Light of the Heavens and the Earth, the Merciful, the Compassionate, the Glorious, the Magnificent, the Beautiful, the Eternal, the Infinite, the First and the Last.

**FAITH AND ACTION.**—Faith without action is a dead letter. Faith by itself is insufficient, unless translated into action. A Muslim believes in his own personal accountability for his actions in this life and in the hereafter. Each must bear his own burden and none can expiate for another's sin.

**ETHICS OF ISLAM.**—"Imbue yourself with Divine Attributes," says the noble Prophet. God is the prototype of man, and His Attributes form the basis of Muslim ethics. Righteousness in Islam consists in leading a life in complete harmony with the Divine Attributes. To act otherwise is sin.

**CAPABILITIES OF MAN IN ISLAM.**—The Muslim believes in the inherent sinlessness of man's nature, which, made of the goodliest fibre, is capable of unlimited progress, setting him above the angels, and leading him to the border of Divinity.

**THE POSITION OF WOMEN IN ISLAM.**—Man and woman come from the same essence, possess the same soul, and they have been equipped with equal capability for intellectual, spiritual and moral attainments. Islam places man and woman under the like obligations the one to the other.

**EQUALITY OF MANKIND AND THE BROTHERHOOD OF ISLAM.**—Islam is the religion of the Unity of God and the equality of mankind. Lineage, riches and family honours are accidental things: virtue and the service of humanity are the matters of real merit. Distinctions of colour, race and creed are unknown in the ranks of Islam. All mankind is of one family, and Islam has succeeded in welding the black and the white into one fraternal whole.

**PERSONAL JUDGMENT.**—Islam encourages the exercise of personal judgment and respects difference of opinion which, according to the sayings of the Prophet Muhammad, is a blessing of God.

**KNOWLEDGE.**—The pursuit of knowledge is a duty in Islam, and it is the acquisition of knowledge that makes men superior to angels.

**SANCTITY OF LABOUR.**—Every labour which enables man to live honestly is respected. Idleness is deemed a sin.

**CHARITY.**—All the faculties of man have been given to him as a trust from God for the benefit of his fellow-creatures. It is man's duty to live for others, and his charities must be applied without any distinction of persons. Charity in Islam brings man nearer to God. Charity and the giving of alms have been made obligatory, and every person who possesses property above a certain limit has to pay a tax, levied on the rich for the benefit of the poor!