

“Muhammad is . . . the Apostle of Allah and the Last of the Prophets . . .”  
—HOLY QUR-AN, 33 : 40.  
“There will be no prophet after me.”  
—PROPHET MUHAMMAD.

*The*  
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# THE ISLAMIC REVIEW

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## BY THE LIGHT OF THE QUR-AN

And (as to) those who reject Our communications,  
We draw them near (to destruction) by degrees from  
whence they know not.

And I grant them respite ; surely My scheme is  
effective.

Do they not reflect that their companion has not un-  
soundness in mind : he is only a plain warner.

Do they not consider the kingdom of the heavens and  
the earth and whatever things Allah has created, and that,  
may be, their doom shall have drawn nigh ; what an-  
nouncement would they then believe in after this ?

Whomsoever Allah causes to err, there is no guide  
for him ; and He leaves them alone in their inordinacy,  
blindly wandering on.

They ask you about the hour, when will be its taking  
place ? Say : The knowledge of it is only with my Lord ;  
none but He shall manifest it at its time : it will be

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momentous in the heavens and the earth ; it will not come on you but of a sudden. They ask you as if you were solicitous about it. Say : Its knowledge is only with Allah, but most people do not know.

Say : I do not control any benefit or harm for my own soul, except as Allah please ; and had I known the unseen I would have had much of good and no evil would have touched me ; I am nothing but a warner and the giver of good news to a people who believe.

—The Holy Qur-án: VII: 182-188.

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## THE WAY OF LIFE

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

Life pervades the universe. All things have Life. In varying degrees of intensity and upon varying planes the universe in all its phases and in all its diverse parts lives and moves and has its being in the Supreme Life. But we are not concerned pre-eminently with the life of the nebulae, nor of the stars nor of the planets nor even of the earth with its mountains, its rivers, its plains, its atmosphere of winds, rains, snows and sultry heats. We are concerned now with humanity. Our first and foremost care is mankind ; our chief consideration the way of life for humanity.

It is said on the other hand : “ Nay, men and women already have life and exhibit it in a thousand tense and differing forms, so that the mere study of the multitudinous variety is a never-ending delight to the human mind and a source of never-failing sympathy to the human heart.”

## THE WAY OF LIFE

to know and an earnest longing to put the knowledge, when acquired, to practical use. Of no avail will be any idle curiosity to know and then to pass by, to put the knowledge obtained in thy locked storehouse of informa-subterfuges of cowards and the outward shows of the hypocrites—these are but the blusterings of an empty wind and the spirit of life shineth not from such.”

If, therefore, any man desires to know the way of life, let it now be made clear that the way of life is an orderly way, a sure and steadfast path through the wilderness of doubt and disillusion, a safety for the feet amid the quagmires of luxury, a plain track winding with progressive beckoning past hardship, frustration and failure, preserving those that walk therein with a manifest hope, ever-renewed, while they cross the delectable mountains and enter the region of eternal peace.

Blessed and happy are the true Believers,

They who humbly adore God,

Who hold themselves far from the pomps and vanities of this world,

And who duly acquit themselves of the obligations of charity ;

They who are modest and shamefaced in bearing and conduct,

And who honourably guard the deposits confided to their care, faithfully observing all their promises and engagements.

Such are they who will inherit Paradise.<sup>1</sup>

Now, before we can enter in upon the way of life, there are certain prerequisites necessary. Certain qualifications must obtain before man or woman can walk the progressive way.

And what are these required preliminaries ?

There must be humility, for the proud He knoweth from afar. There must be an intense and sincere desire

<sup>1</sup>The Holy Qur-an, XXIII: 1-7. The Qur-anic verses quoted are taken from *The Wisdom of the Qur-an*. The Arabic original of the Sacred Text translated into French by Maḥmūd Muḥtar-Kāṭircioḡiū and thence into English by John Naish, M.A. (Oxon), D.D. (Lond), published by the Oxford University Press, London.

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The reply is : " Mere everyday activity is not true life ; neither is the life of the world eternal life. Again, the seethings of the passions, the machinations of power-obsessed minds, the craftiness of the avaricious, the tion and to disport outside with the delights that vanish.

Those whom the fear of God rendereth pensive and thoughtful,  
Who believe in the messages which come from their Lord,  
And associate no other beings with Him in their worship ;

Those who help others with their substance and give alms,  
fearing lest they should do too little, convinced in their  
hearts that they must one day give account before their  
Lord of their stewardship here below,

All such make speed and press on in well-doing and outstrip  
their fellows therein. <sup>1</sup>

Except God will, no one can be a believer. Therefore every soul hath need of the grace of God in order to enter upon the way of life. To those who in humility and sincerity beseech this bestowal of the divine grace, can it be that God will not incline and out of His mercy bestow that grace ? Whom God loveth, He openeth their hearts to Islam.

Nor should fear of poverty nor any apprehension regarding the supplying of temporal needs deter a man from advancing boldly and with a good heart upon the way eternal.

Very true, very apposite and very beautiful are the words of the *Hitopadesa* upon this subject, even thus :

Ah friend !

Who made geese white and parrots green,

Who peacocks made with varied sheen,

Ah ! doubt it not ! He, too, will be

The giver of a livelihood for thee.

So, with this trust in the bountiful provision of God for all His creatures and, at the same time, using well the faculties with which He has endowed makind, it will be possible for a man to pursue the highest while

<sup>1</sup>The Holy Qur-ān, XXIII: 57-61.

## THE WAY OF LIFE

regulating his temporal affairs with an unembarrassed confidence:

Is not the teaching of Jesus upon the same lines :

Vex not yourselves for temporal things : your heavenly Father knoweth ye have need of these ?

Now here at the outset, it were well to state clearly that the way of life transcends all other considerations whatsoever. It beareth a man upon the wings of the spirit above success and above failure, above poverty and above health, above the pangs of sorrow and above the violence of joy. Acclamation or contumacy he heareth from a far place, where the spirit keepeth him in peace.

Again let me refer to the Holy Qur-án for an illustration to these words. I find even thus :

Thou hast no power at all to save any whom thou wilt ; it is God Who guideth and directeth whom He chooseth. And He knoweth well who they are who follow the good way.

That which is bestowed on you here below is naught but the gain of this world and the trappings thereof. But that which abideth with God and is laid up with Him is better and more enduring. Wist ye not so ?<sup>1</sup>

Whoso desireth the Way of Life, let him reflect somewhat in the following manner :

“ To behold and to recognize the Way of Life is not enough. A way is for walking in. That my mind and reasoning faculties, even with my heart's approval, behold the Way and assure me of its very truth, is not in itself enough. The best eyesight and comprehension of path never yet brought a pilgrim to his destination, however much desired, without action. Truly a way is for walking and to walk concerneth not only the eyes but the feet and the continued activity of the body. What bright beautiful nothing, then, is belief without action ! Let me consider, but, having considered, if I assent, let me act, so that in time I shall reach my destination. At least I will pray for grace that my eyes

<sup>1</sup> The Holy Qur-án, XXVIII : 56 and 60.

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may discern truth from error."

Surely that is the right frame of mind in which to approach the consideration of the wilderness of things temporal, through which windeth the way of eternal life. It is of no use to apprehend with another's mind. It is of no use to see with another's eye. The understanding of the subject must be with one's own mind and recognition of the way must come from one's own sight. By the justice of God, every soul must reap the reward of its own actions. Good for its good, evil for its evil. Yet, as God is the Great Forgiver, the reward of good outweigheth the pain and suffering allotted as the penalty for evil. In very truth each man's own individual virtue is the chief positive point in the fluctuations of a life dominated by temporal change.

To illustrate this truth let me refer briefly to the *Laws of Manu* :

For in his passage to the next world neither his father nor his mother nor his son nor his kinsmen will remain in his company ; his virtue alone will adhere to him. Single is each man born ; single he dies ; single he receives the rewards of his good, and single the punishment of his evil deeds.

A further thing : I do not make the presumptuous claim that there exists but one only way to God. God is the Ever-Living, *Al-Hayy*, and the manifestation of God is so multitudinous, the phenomena so multifarious and the forms and conditions and degrees of life are of such myriad diversity that it would be strange indeed if, to each and all, there should be but one path through the temporal to the eternal.

Not so : but this I do claim that here is a definite and sure way to God. Following this path a man can arrive at a distinction between right and wrong, between the true and the false, between good and evil. Following this path by the light of grace from God, a man may attain to a knowledge of God and to nearness to God.

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O true believer! Call ye upon God with frequent invocations and extol His glory at morn and at eve.

It is He Who extendeth His blessing over you, His blessing and the blessing of His angels, to draw you from darkness to His marvellous Light. God is ever full of Mercy for those who stand firm in the faith.

The Peace and the Blessing from Him shall be their portion on that Day when they shall stand forth in His presence. For them is prepared a great and a splendid reward.

O Prophet! We have sent thee to be a witness of the Truth, to proclaim the gospel, and to warn the unenlightened.

Call men to God, as He hath instructed thee. Thou art the Torch which giveth Light to all around.

Give out the good news of the mighty favours which await believers at the feet of God.<sup>1</sup>

Again it seems highly reasonable to believe that, in the countless centuries before the present years, the Eternal God (Whose Name be praised! the One, the Supreme) revealed His will and the true way of life to many prophets, men of God, sincere, courageous, truth-loving, purified. These indeed, out of their love for God and His righteousness, proclaimed the path of the Eternal, the path of virtue, that their fellow men might listen, follow and live.

The prophets passed away. Time's course stretched onward. Forgetfulness, corruption and heedlessness closed over their message. Humanity relapsed into a torpor of careless ignorance, carried about aimlessly to a varied destruction by their unbridled passions

At such a time arose in Arabia the Prophet Muhammad, not claiming to be other than a mortal man, but bearer of divine message. It is this message which humanity now possesses in the form of the Holy Qur-án. Muhammad made no pretence of delivering any different message from God. He came only to revive, to renew that same message sent to many a prophet of the former

<sup>1</sup> The Holy Qur-án, XXXIII : 41-46.

## ISLAMIC REVIEW

times, but by indifference long since forgotten or corrupted.

It is this very message enshrined in the Holy Qur-ân that, even to the present day, remains still incorrupt and still with glorious accents proclaims the Way to God.

This is the Book in which there is nothing uncertain. It is the Guide of those who devote themselves to a life of piety,

Who believe in Him Who is Unknowable, who give themselves up to prayer, and who support the poor from the wealth with which We endow them.

Those who believe in the revelation sent down to thee from heaven, and in that which was sent down before thee ; those finally who are persuaded of life to come.

These are they who are in the Way of their Lord. Verily they are the Redeemed.<sup>1</sup>

Implore Divine aid by prayer and by perseverance in well-doing, albeit that is hard to do, except for the lowly in heart.

For those, namely, who cherish the thought that they will one day appear before their Lord and return to His presence.<sup>2</sup>

So by the foregoing remarks, we have endeavoured to proclaim the Way of Life, to cry and publish it abroad, so that whoever lists may walk therein. The Way is a way for everyone : it is a way for humanity. It is not secluded, exclusive, private pathway, fenced-in and concealed with a jealous secrecy, but a veritable pathway for mankind ; for the brotherhood of individuals ; for the friendly mingling and mutual help of diverse races ; a path of Mercy, of Blessing and of Peace.

*(To be continued.)*

<sup>1</sup> The Holy Qur-ân, II : 1-5.

<sup>2</sup> The Holy Qur-ân II : 45-46.

## O YE HYPOCRITES

BY DR. ABDULLAH VICTOR FERNANDEZ, D.Sc.

O ye hypocrites ! ye can discern the faces of the sky, but can ye not discern the signs of the time ? <sup>1</sup>

The week-end had been rather a dull affair. The black fog of London had kept most people indoors. I had become tired of remaining inactive and looked listlessly into the uninviting street opposite my house. The grey atmosphere was depressing. Having nothing in particular to occupy myself with, I shook off the lethargic feeling and decided on a long Sunday afternoon stroll. I stepped out of my house and moved aimlessly towards Hyde Park. As I reached the Marble Arch corner, I heard the guttural and sonorous voice of a Jewish speaker. I guided my steps to this "gutter orator" of the atheistic platform. I found a scrubby bearded man, in a misfit morning suit and a flat bowler hat, waving his hands in air. Now and again, he was thumping his hands, rather audibly, to impress his arguments upon his none too sympathetic audience. He was trying to be witty, ironical and serious at one and the same time. I joined the small crowd which had gathered round him, and began to listen to him: at first, I confess, rather absent-mindedly. Gradually, however, I began to understand his condemnation of religion. He was saying :

What is the utility of religion in the present-day world ? To me and many others it has none, to few it has some. A modern man, with his vast knowledge and advanced civilisation, can boldly compete with God in respect of the attainment of Power. (An interjector : "Can you make the sun appear and shine now?")

Religion, my friends, is nothing but a bundle of absurdities, dogmas and "do nots", to curb the liberty of man. To some it is a cloak to hide the ugly head. (Another interjector : "Like

<sup>1</sup> St. Matthew, XVI : 3.

## ISLAMIC REVIEW

yours"); to some it is sugar to coat a quinine pill. But to many religion is nothing but a conventional necessity like alcohol and tobacco. Man can safely do without it, but he keeps it out of love for convention. He takes a "peg" of religion to excite the drooping spirit and breaks it when the *spirits* are high.

Religion is a nose-gay put on the button-hole to add to the grandeur of a few persons—the Bishops—and to spread a mild scent around them. When the rose withers and the scent goes away, the nose-gay is thrown into the dust-bin ; so is religion.

I listened to this vituperative gusto of this Yiddish agnostic till I could stand it no longer. Disgusted with everything around me I went to a cinema and saw the famous American production : "The Crusades."

I returned home and sat down to enjoy a "pipe" in front of the blazing fire, in the grate, which was lighting the whole room. As I was pondering over nothing in particular, my thoughts wandered back to the Yiddish speaker. I saw him once again and his words began to din in my ears. He disappeared as suddenly as he had irised in. I felt uneasy and just to drive him away from my mind I began to stroke the fire. As I bent forward I saw, in the the glow of its light, the Sea of Galilee. As I looked at it more keenly I saw on the hillside a diabolical face. I somehow felt that it was Satan. Beside him was standing Peter, the Hermit, of the Crusades' fame : and sitting on a rock at some distance was Saladin the Great : just as I had seen him on the screen in "The Crusades." Unconsciously I sank back into my chair to listen more attentively to the conversation which was taking place. It seemed I was just in time to hear it start.

*Satan* : "Hello, Peter. What are you doing here ?"

*Peter* : "Ah, here you are, my friend : Welcome once again. We meet after many centuries. Where have you been and what have you been doing ?"

*Saladin* : "The Devil hath gained the mastery over them, so he hath made them forget the remembrance of Allah ! they are the Devil's party." <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Holy Qur-an, LVIII : 19.

## O YE HYPOCRITES

*Satan* : (to Peter) "Where else could I be except where I am worshipped: the lands of greed, avarice, money, heretics and the ungrateful. Why, Great Britain and the United States of America, of course."

*Peter* : "Strange! Those countries are your abode now? But what is it that has brought you to the Holy Land? Is it only a friendly visit or something important?"

*Satan* : "Primarily, a friendly visit; though, of course, I have something else to do: just to look after our Zionist friends, so that they will not let the Arabs awhile. But for the present let us talk about ourselves. Do you remember how Jesus rebuked me when I tried to befriend him?<sup>1</sup> Ah, if only he had listened to me. But he was a young man, just baptised by John. His young heart was imbued with some religious fervour. Without passing my test he tried to be the Messiah. I would have made him to be the lord of all the kingdoms of the world and other worlds, which I would have yet shown him. I would have made him much more than a mere component of the Trinity—the lord of the world."

*Saladin* : "O my Lord! I seek refuge in Thee from the evil suggestions of the devils."<sup>2</sup>

*Satan* : (To Peter) "Ignore him. He is a religious maniac. He and his co-religionists try to live up to what they profess."

*Peter* : "Yes, yes; but was Jesus wrong at the time?"

*Satan* : "Right or wrong. What does it matter now? I put matters right anyhow, though perhaps not in the way I would have preferred them to be. Paul was my good disciple. Jilted and embittered as he was, I appeared to him on his way to Damascus. I made it certain that he should not see me."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> St. Matthew, IV : 1-10.

<sup>2</sup> The Holy Qur-án, XXIII : 97.

<sup>3</sup> Acts, IX : 7.

## ISLAMIC REVIEW

*Saladin* : "He (the devil) sees you, he as well as his hosts, from whence you cannot see them." <sup>1</sup>

*Satan* : "Tut, Tut ; will you please refrain from interfering." (To Peter) "As I was saying, Paul from thence on knew me and I looked after him. He first of all caused dissension and division in the Church of Jerusalem<sup>2</sup> of which James 'the just'—I hate the word—was the head. Paul's creed that a man was justified by faith alone without the deeds of the Law<sup>3</sup> was just what was desired. It was the basis for unchecked licentiousness. But Paul had not the courage to go beyond proclaiming the sonship of Jesus. He, however, made one of his scribes, John, to lay, in his Gospel, the foundation for the Divinity of Jesus. But that again is of little consequence now. Have you seen who is ruling the world to-day ? It is not Jesus, the Prophet of God. It is not even Jesus, the son of God. No, it is not your Lord Saviour. It is I, Satan, the Great."

*Peter* : "That cannot be true. How can you claim this, when Jesus, the Son, with the help and guidance of the Holy Ghost, has the largest following both in Europe and 'God's own country', America ?"

*Satan* : "Ah, my friend ! you are still a dreamer. You were a good and loyal helper once, but you will not see facts as they are. What do you mean by following?"

*Peter* : "I mean that the vast majority of people in Europe and America follow the faith of Jesus."

*Satan* : "But, Peter, you are sadly mistaken in taking professing to be following. I could not have credited you with being so simple as to consider lip-service to be worship. People in Europe and America worship me and obey my commands. Are you not aware of the two world-wars ? Jesus never sanctioned war, still his so-called followers have waged wars with bull-dog tenacity.

<sup>1</sup> The Holy Qur-án, VII : 227.

<sup>2</sup> Galatians, II : 13.

<sup>3</sup> Romans, III : 28.

## O YE HYPOCRITES

How can you seriously claim this largest following for Jesus?"

*Saladin* : " But your friend here had also waged war against me in the name of Jesus Christ."

*Satan* : "That is true, I had then helped him ; but please don't interrupt, and do realize that we both resent your interference." (To Peter) " You are a sensible fellow : you once before listened to me. Please don't be misled. People in Europe and America are no more followers of Jesus than the proverbial man in the moon."

*Peter* : "No ! I agree to differ with you. You think simply because people in Europe and America live a licentious and sinful life, they are not Christians. No ! you are entirely wrong. Jesus gave up his ghost on the Holy Cross to wash away the sins of humanity. But for the sinners in Europe and America and elsewhere the life and blood of Jesus would have gone all in vain. We Christians drink his blood and eat his flesh at every Holy Communion. That is our guarantee, and our protection against eternal damnation. If we did not live a sinful and licentious life, we would ourselves be rendering futile the sacrifice of our Saviour. No ! no ! I am not convinced. It is true that our Lord Jesus Christ did on one occasion give in in a moment of weakness. But I for one will not. I will not say : *Eli Eli Lama sabachthani.*"<sup>1</sup>

*Satan* : "I am very glad to hear you say this ; just like your real self. But I was only explaining why I had come here. My friend, it is rather paradoxical. Those who follow Jesus, do not profess his faith ; and those who profess his faith do not follow him. Every word of Jesus is faithfully followed in this country by the infidels like him (pointing to Saladin), but it is wonderfully ignored and respected in its breach by the Christians all over the world."

*Saladin* : "Those who believe in Allah and His apostles and do not make a distinction between any of

<sup>1</sup> St. Matthew, XXVII : 46

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them—Allah will grant them their reward, and Allah is Forgiving, Merciful.<sup>1</sup>

“O Followers of the Book: Why do you confound the truth with falsehood and hide the truth while you know?”<sup>2</sup>

*Peter*: (To Satan) “I don’t follow his Mumbo-jumbo. But nevertheless I can’t say that it is a pleasure to me to learn that the infidel Muslims follow our Lord Jesus Christ in spite of their ignorance and poverty. How is it that the Christians in Europe and America, though well-fed, well-educated and well-civilized, do not obey our Lord?”

*Satan*: “The defect, I admit, does not lie in Jesus. He certainly preached universal love. But the Bishops and the other Church dignitaries had to move with the times, and had to mould the simple religion of Jesus in toe with the notions of the countries of their origin. The Europeans and the Americans are not so simple to-day as to be ruled with love alone. The Bishops, my serfs, were only too anxious to follow the rulers of the waves and air. They did not and really could never follow the religion of Jesus, as ruling and loving could never go together. That is the reason why I suggested to them long long ago to go out to foreign countries. They went with the Bible in their hands and taught the inhabitants of those countries ‘to drink the blood of Jesus,’ and thus reduced them to the standard of their own morality. They, the Bishops and the Christian missionaries I mean, then invited the rulers of their own countries to step in and become conquerors. The Christian missionaries proclaimed them as heralds of peace and tried to convince people that all this was for the betterment of the inhabitants of the ‘mandated’ countries.”

*Peter*: “I don’t doubt that you are telling the truth. But I am not prepared to admit that the religion of

<sup>1</sup> The Holy Qur-an, IV : 152.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*, III : 70.

## O YE HYPOCRITES

Jesus as set forth in the Holy Bible—the infallible Word of God—is not suitable for all times.”

*Satan* : “ You can’t paint red green and say there is no danger. You should not deceive yourself. You have seen the different editions of the Bible. Are you not aware of King James’ Edition, suitably abridged, with the inconvenient passages carefully expunged? It is mostly printed and published in England. You must admit that the simple creed of Jesus does not exist any more.”

*Peter* : “O Jesus, is this the fulfilment of your mission? Is this the reward of your suffering?”

*Satan* : “Don’t be down-hearted, Peter. We will look after you and your brethren in faith. By the bye, what are you doing here now?”

*Peter* : “I came here to preach the Gospel.”

*Satan* : “To whom? I don’t see any one here. Oh! I see, like Jesus, you too are without any real companions or disciples: Like him, you are preaching in the wilderness. What are you preaching?”

*Peter* : “The famous Sermon on the Mount, of course.”

*Satan* : “Well, well. I had almost forgotten it. Will you repeat it?”

*Peter* : “Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”

*Satan* : “That might have applied to America when it went *dry*, and the bootleggers made roaring profits. But they and the Europeans are rich in *spirits* now. No one in Europe and America now cares a fig for the kingdom of heaven. They are enjoying the kingdom of earth.”

*Peter* : “Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.”

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*Satan* : "Don't you even whisper it. You will be hanged for being a Fascist."

*Peter* : "Blessed are the meek : for they shall inherit the earth."

*Satan* : "The meek denizens of earth are the ruled classes. The Christians of Europe and America, without being meek, have seized the inheritance of the earth."

*Peter* : "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness : for they shall be filled."

*Satan* : "Nonsense. Their bellies are already full to the brim with the riches of the world. They do not want to hunger and thirst after righteousness and face poverty."

*Peter* : "Blessed are the merciful : for they shall obtain mercy."

*Satan* : "The Europeans and Americans don't stand in need of mercy. Why should they be merciful?"

*Peter* : "Blessed are the pure in heart : for they shall see God."

*Satan* : "A bird in hand is worth two in the bush. Who, in Europe and America, cares to see God, when they see daily the 'Almighty Dollar' ? In any case, this is one of the expunged portions."

*Peter* : "Blessed are the peace-makers : for they shall be called the sons of God."

*Satan* : "You see, it is not peace-keepers. To make peace, they must go to war first."

*Saladin* : "And when it is said to them : Do not make mischief in the land, they say : 'We are but peace-makers.' Now surely they themselves are the mischief-makers, but they do not perceive. And when it is said to them : Believe as the people believe, they say : 'Shall we believe as the fools believe?' Now

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surely they themselves are the fools, but they do not know.”<sup>1</sup>

*Satan* : “Oh ! I am getting sick of these interruptions. Don’t you see, Peter, for that very reason, I made my disciples attribute to Jesus : ‘Think not that I am come to send peace on earth : I came not to send peace, but a sword’<sup>2</sup> You just wait, my friend, there will be very few who will require accommodation in heaven. I was scorned for the size of hell ; but I am afraid with the number of prospective residents we will have an acute housing problem in hell.”

*Saladin* : “I wish the Christians of Europe and America would follow the sayings of Prophet Jesus, and not ‘use vain repetitions from’<sup>3</sup> their Prayer-Book. I wish the bands of the Salvation Army would not ‘pray standing in the corners of the streets.’<sup>3</sup> They do all this and many other things for the glory of Jesus, and ignore his injunctions against their doing so.”

*Satan* : “No ! no ! Don’t you listen to him, Peter. Jesus may have said these things and many more ; but they are really meant for empty Churches. If you pay the least heed to this man here, you will have to part with your cloak and do many other foolish things mentioned in the Bible, and even then you will have to face the scorn of Jesus, for he will profess : ‘I never knew you, depart from me !’<sup>4</sup> Remember this : the Sword and the Cross make two useful symbols and both are mighty weapons. Don’t forsake them. Well, good-bye, my dear friend.”

*Saladin* : “The hypocritical men and the hypocritical women are all alike ; they enjoin evil and forbid good and withhold their hands ; they have forsaken Allah, so

<sup>1</sup> The Holy Qur-án, II : 11-13.

<sup>2</sup> St. Matthews, X, 34.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid*, VI : 7.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid*, VI : 5.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid*, VII : 23.

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He has forsaken them, surely the hypocrites are the transgressors.<sup>1</sup>

“Like those before you : they were stronger than you in power and more abundant in wealth and children, so they enjoyed their portion ; these are they whose works are null in this world and the hereafter ; and these are they who are the losers.”<sup>2</sup>

“Do they not know that Allah knows their hidden thoughts and their secret counsels, and that Allah is the Great Knower of the unseen things.”<sup>3</sup>

I suddenly awoke from my reverie. I was at first bewildered. But the more I pondered on what I had seen and heard, the more was I convinced that it was not without purpose. I felt that I had been chosen to convey it to others.

May the light of truth dawn on those who read it !

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## RELIGION AND CLASS WAR

BY MAULVI AFTAB-UD-DIN AHMAD

One may agree or differ with the view that the history of social humanity, as known to us, is a history of class war or class struggle, but there is no denying the fact that class antagonism exists in an acute form in the present-day society. The hatred and ill-feeling between different economic classes has assumed fearful proportions. And when it is said that class antagonism is a very old story, it really means no more than that material comforts have a great attraction for men and that it affords a strong ground for mutual jealousies. It would be

<sup>1</sup> The Holy Qur-án, IX : 67.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*, IX : 69

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid*, IX : 78.

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equally true to say that sex also furnishes a strong ground for jealousy. The stories of Helen of Troy, of Cleopatra, of Sita, or of Draupadi, are repeated every day in different forms. The police records will disclose the exact proportion between the wealth-crimes and sex-crimes. The one may be more fundamental and universal an urge than the other, but they both lead to jealousy and bad blood. Absolute equality of worldly possession, in spite of relentless wars, both class and international, still remains a distant ideal. It cannot be denied that the basis of class war exists today as it did centuries ago, and, for all we know, it may continue to exist for all times to come. But this does not mean that the relationship between the classes will or should continue to be of the same bitter nature as we witness to day. Things must improve if humanity is not to experience a social cataclysm. Jealousy and class hatred will raise its head here and there, in every case of human possession and assertion, but they ought to be kept submerged beneath a higher and better feeling, and should be controlled by a more refined standard of the values of things. No sane person can assert that the materialistic tendency can ever be altogether eliminated from human nature and hence the view that jealousy and class struggle on this score is as old as the historical man is correct in its own way. We are prepared to go further and say that it is as old as man himself—even the primitive man—who lived in supposedly small communistic groups. In spite of all this it would be incorrect to say that this is the only tendency working in the social life of man. Concurrently with this tendency is the idealistic tendency in man which curbs its fury by a sublime diversion. It has been the rôle of religion to keep this idealistic tendency alive in man. And it is only when religion has failed to play its part efficiently that the other tendency becomes predominant and gives one the impression that it is the only and the most basic tendency in man. It must be recognised that efficiency and talent has a value of its

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own. In the absence of a higher standard it demands a material valuation. An efficient man, a talented person, a high-thinking personage, would demand a "good living" as we call it—one may say "high living." But analysing the nature of man one can see that he does not necessarily want this kind of valuation. He derives greater satisfaction from less concrete valuation of his gifts. He may as well feel satisfied with such an abstract thing as honour and esteem. As a matter of fact, man has been found to give away his material possession to see such an abstract return for his service. Indeed, even to-day, when materialism reigns supreme, there does not appear to be anything possessed by man more valuable than his honour. The highest security that a man can give to his fellow being is his "word of honour." In a society artificially built, such as our modern society is, honour seems to be indissolubly connected with material possession. We honour a man only when he happens to have an appreciable possession of material wealth. But it is so because there is no device in our days to detach honour from material wealth. This task of detachment has always rested with the people of religion. It is the religious leaders that, possessing a high vision of things and able to maintain an abstract measure of valuation, set an example of how high efficiency and high thinking can be maintained in the midst of material simplicity. They embrace what is called poverty in popular parlance but it is a self-imposed one. The communistic programme aims at evolving this type of men, but has so far failed in creating this class. A man of this type is extremely efficient and deserves highest material return, but he exchanges it for an abstract prize—the esteem and regard of people. Through him the centre of honour is shifted from affluence to asceticism, from the aristocracy and the bourgeois to the proletarian quarters. It is with reference to this self-imposed poverty that the Holy Prophet Muhammad is reported to have said: "Poverty is my

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pride." Yes, one who has experienced this kind of poverty, is undoubtedly proud of it. But to create such a valuation of efficiency in one's mind and have it established in, and recognised by, the society, one needs a higher kind of culture which religion alone can provide. And as a point of fact religion in all ages has provided this culture. It is only when the religious culture has waned in a particular society and its religious teachers have themselves fallen victims to the general worldly standards of valuation, that the society is left with this as the sole standard. Then a keen competition for material possession, and consequent jealousy, becomes the order of the day. Having no example of high thinking and plain living, people vie with one another in high living on the slightest pretext of efficiency, or, even without any such pretext, not only because high living is enjoyable in itself but more so because it is the only, though artificial, criterion of honour and respectability in society. Christianity has suffered this fate. From early times in its history the Christian clergy has been betraying a weakness for worldly power and possession. The continuous struggle of the Church with the State, the Pope's love of power, the Church's anxiety for worldly possession, are all matters of history. Not once do we find during this period the clergy establishing their supremacy on pure spiritual grounds. With the separation of the Church from the State, the political ambitions of the clergy were all dashed to the ground. But the money greed continued and the clergy found its melancholy satisfaction in the fact that they were classed with the aristocracy everywhere. They discarded their real role of combining the mental vigour, and moral refinement of the ideal bourgeois with the material surrounding of the natural proletariat. Had they stuck to their allotted position they would not only have been a consolation and an encouragement to the "have nots" but would also been a whip for the "haves." By creating an abstract standard of honour, they could have minimised the honour and prestige of the

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people of wealth. The jealousy between the economic classes could thus have been prevented from assuming any fearful proportions. But the weakness of the flesh, deplored by the Master, prevented the Christian clergy from playing their part faithfully. They failed in their mission and would not allow their flock to come in contact with another religious tradition that could remove these drawbacks. The history of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, and his Successors in spiritual office, was shut out from the knowledge of Christian nations. No wonder, the laymen in Christendom should develop a system of society that "has stripped of its halo every occupation hitherto honoured and looked up to with reverent awe.....has converted the physician, the lawyer, the priest, the poet, the man of science, into its paid wage-labourer, has torn away from the family its sentimental veil and has reduced the family relation to mere money-relation."<sup>1</sup>

For all these outrageous changes in man's social psychology, the entire responsibility rests with the priestly class. They were expected to rise above the money value of things and set a standard of moral values for the people at large. But they themselves became victims of the "money value" and the whole structure of society was inevitably reduced to this despicable depth. Material possession thus became the sole standard of man's honour and class-war became inevitable.

What then is the remedy? Is it to fan the flame of class-war, as is proposed by Marxism, and thus to annihilate the bourgeois by force? Let sane humanity give some thought to the question before plunging headlong into any action.

Let us remember that efficiency must have its price, and economical living, the true basis of capital must have its reward. When nature has gifted a man with a talent, does it beseem man or even lie properly in his power

<sup>1</sup> The Communist Manifesto.

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to deny him the credit for it? Indeed, to deny it will be to upset the order of nature. Then if you do not reward thrift, you will be penalising a virtue, which, apart from its moral values, is the only safety-valve in man's grim struggle for existence.

Give unskilled labourer his human rights, and maintain him in his human dignity by all means. Rather give a virtuous labourer more respect and honour than to a skilled but unscrupulous labourer. But still the skilled labourer must have his due and the thrifty worker must have his reward.

Let us not be frightened by the fact that capital has led to Capitalism with all its current evils. The tragedy of Capitalism is no fault of capital as such or of thrift out of which it grows. It is rather due to a lack of proper guidance in the accumulation of capital and its use in trade and commerce. If Europe had adopted Islam as a code of social conduct when it took to large-scale production and international distribution this calamity would never have befallen humanity. We should not forget that suppression of any tendency by violence has never succeeded in the world; it has always fostered animosity and suppressed rage bursting out into a counter fury.

The remedy, therefore, does not lie in this direction. Efficiency, talent and economical living must be rewarded in some way or other. For an ordinary man with no higher vision of things, money or worldly possession can be the only measure of such a reward. But the matter should not be left there. Let religion do its work and create a value higher and truer than the material. Let civilized humanity be introduced to a religion which has a living tradition for creating such a value, a religion of which the leaders have always been proud of their altruistic and self-imposed poverty—meaning extreme simplicity of living, in spite of their extraordinary talents and the capability of producing enormous wealth. In other words, let the tradition of Islam be widely known to Europe.

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Nor would we be confused to find this class struggle as a recurring phenomenon in history. This repetition merely establishes that Divine intervention in human affairs is a recurring need of humanity. This feature of history can confuse only those who believe that Divine Will has ceased to be revealed after a certain point in history. Muslims believe in a God Who is never indifferent to human affairs and repeats His guidance from age to age. Thus, so long as the effect of one guidance continues, struggle of the classes is kept within their bounds. Classes do exist, as they must. The less fortunate do feel uneasy. The more fortunate do exhibit some arrogance as it is natural for them to do. But the higher values of life created by religion do not allow this uneasiness and this arrogance to break all bounds of moral consideration. These feelings are controlled and checked *together with other passions of man*, in the interest of ordered social life and the common interest of humanity. A time comes, however, when the religious inspiration received through one revealed guidance ebbs in a particular society. The teachers of religion themselves become worldly-minded. Greed and avarice sway their minds as much as those of other people. The society is thus left with only one standard wherewith to judge a man's worth and honour, the standard of material possessions. When such a state of things prevails, the antagonism between the classes naturally becomes acute. The higher class becomes more wealth conscious and the lower more jealous. But all that such a situation indicates is that a fresh intervention of God has become necessary to re-establish the discarded moral values of things, as a sublime diversion from the raging competition in the field of money possessions. Believers in the providential care of God look for and do find this Divine intervention coming at the proper moment, and illuminate their souls with the light thus provided. The rest of the world turns to it only after prolonged and painful experiences in other directions.

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It has also been suggested that a kind of evolution is noticed in this class-struggle, that it does not appear in the same hue and colour at every fresh appearance, that classes show a steady progressiveness with the progress of history. This again will confuse such people of religion as do not believe in the evolution of human social relationship. Islam believes in such an evolution. Islam inculcates that from the Patriarchal to the International life there has been a steady progress in the social consciousness of man and that this is one reason why religious guidance is repeated from time to time, that a progressive revelation is needed to meet the new social conditions. With the advancement in social consciousness, social evils assume an advanced appearance too. People who would stick to a guidance vouchsafed at the clan or tribal period of history, may regard religion as a back number, finding the light of their own religion inadequate for an advanced stage of social consciousness. But to a Muslim the case is very different. He finds his religion quite abreast of the international age and finds therein ample provision for mitigating the bitterness seizing the economic classes of this evolved stage in human social consciousness. It is for the world to turn to the religious leaders of Islam to be benefited by this Divine light and guidance.

## JESUS THE SON OF MARY

### HIS BIRTH AND DEATH

BY KHWAJA NAZIR AHMAD

(Continued from Vol. XXXIV p. 112)

### THE ISLAMIC SOURCES

#### THE HADIS

The life and the actions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad have to be judged by the standard of the Holy Qur-án. In his religious views, in his public career, and in his domestic life he followed faithfully, both in their letter and spirit, the teachings of the Holy Qur-án. In the Holy Qur-án the Holy Prophet is made to say :

I follow naught but what is revealed to me.<sup>1</sup>

In other words, true to this revelation, he translated every one of its precepts into practice. His character was so true a mirror of the Holy Qur-án that his Companions (*As-hab*) used to interpret the Holy Qur-án in the light of his actions. *Hazrat Ayisha* was, on more occasions than one, questioned as to how did the Messenger of God act under certain circumstances. In reply she always used to read the relevant verses of the Holy Qur-án and say that his action was no other than in keeping with the Holy Qur-án itself.

These actions or practices of the Holy Prophet are called *Sunna*, *mode of life*, or *way of acting*, and they are held in great reverence, next to the Holy Qur-án, throughout the Muslim world. The *Sunna* are described along with the *Hadis*, plural *Ahādīs*, the *doings* or *sayings* of the Holy Prophet. The *Hadis* also contain his answers to the questions put to him by his Companions and opponents. They also record his

<sup>1</sup> The Holy Qur-án, X : 15.

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approval or disapproval of the incidents which took place in his life-time. All these are collectively called the *Hadis*, which form the second Islamic Source.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad is an historical character. He passed through various vicissitudes of life. From an orphan he became the head of the State at Madina. His private and public life is known in the minutest details. All his Sayings and practices have been recorded, and nothing escaped the careful and vigilant notice of his Companions. It has been asserted that it is impossible to know everything of any man, however great he may have been but it is not so with the Holy Prophet. There were various reasons for it, but I will mention only two

The Holy Prophet was sent as a "mercy to all Nations,"<sup>1</sup> and was, therefore, a guide to mankind as a whole. He was the best model of virtue for humanity. In the words of the Holy Qur'an :

Certainly you have in the Apostle of Allah, an excellent exemplar....<sup>2</sup>

The Holy Prophet did not give sentimental and impracticable precepts, but rather he laid down practical rules of guidance for men, and illustrated them by his own example. By his example as a kind, loving and affectionate husband and father he guided men in their everyday duties ; by making laws for the guidance of his followers, he demonstrated how legislators should act ; by deciding disputes, he became a model for the judges ; by fighting personally in battles, he taught soldiers to lay down their lives in the cause of truth, justice and freedom ; by leading armies, he served as a guide for a General leading his armies in the field of battle ; by being the head of a state he set an example for the kings to rule benevolently ; by punishing the tyrants for the wrong inflicted on innocent and weak persons, by facing patiently worst

<sup>1</sup> *The Holy Qur-an*. XXI : 107.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*, XXXIII : 21.

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persecutions for years and then fighting and overcoming them, by forgiving the vanquished, his persecutors and enemies in particular, by overlooking the fault of those attached to him, he proved himself to be *an excellent exemplar*. Indeed, it is the distinguishing feature of his life that he not only taught rules of guidance in every walk of life, but also gave, by his own example, a practical illustration of all those rules. The Holy Qur-án, therefore, enjoins the Muslims to obey Allah and His Apostle<sup>1</sup> and to keep back from what he forbids,<sup>2</sup> and to follow his example, as the Holy Prophet did never deviate from the right path.<sup>3</sup>

The Holy Qur-án says that "Muhammad is.....the Apostle of Allah and the Seal of the Prophets ;"<sup>4</sup> and the Holy Prophet said : "There will be no prophet after me." The Holy Prophet is the Seal, the last of the Prophets, because the object of prophethood, the manifestation of the Divine Will for the guidance of humanity, was finally accomplished in the Holy Qur-án. That is why we find in the Holy Qur-án :

This day have I perfected for you your religion and completed My favour on you and chosen for you Islam as your religion.<sup>5</sup>

This verse was the last to be revealed to the Holy Prophet, and nothing came after it, he having died eighty-one days after its revelation. It was necessary, therefore, that the living example of the Holy Prophet, in the light of the Holy Qur-án, should have been recorded for all times to come.

The second reason was the love his Companions had for the Holy Prophet. History does not know of any man who had companions like those of the Holy Prophet from the beginning of his career to his death.

<sup>1</sup> *The Holy Qur-án*, III : 30-31, 131 ; IV : 13, 59, 69, 80 ; V : 92 ; VIII : 1, 20, LXIV : 12.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*, LIX : 7.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid*, LIII : 2.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid*, XXXIII : 40.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid*, V : 3.

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The conduct of his Companions is a parallel of its own. They sacrificed their property, homes, lives, everything for him. They took "*the Pledge of the Tree*," whereby they solemnly took oath to defend him even to death. Can any reformer or Prophet claim among his disciples men like the four Caliphs, men like Bilāl the celebrated *Muazzin*, and Yasir and his wife Samiya and Ammar their son? Yasir was captured by the idolaters of Makka. His legs and arms were tied to four different camels, who were made to run in four different directions. Yet he stood loyal to his God and His Apostle. Bilāl was made to lie, for days, on the burning and blistering sands of the desert, but in spite of these tortures, he kept on shouting: "*There is one God, There is one God.*" *Hazrat* Ali, the fourth Caliph, risked his life for the safety of the Holy Prophet and actually occupied the bed of the Holy Prophet to receive the blows with which the enemies intended to kill the Holy Prophet. *Hazrat* Abu Bakr, the *Truthful*, the first Caliph, carried the Holy Prophet in a bundle on his head, and left the house, which was actually surrounded at that time by the idolaters of Makka who had conspired and come to murder the Holy Prophet; and when challenged, he told them that he was carrying Muhammad. They laughed at his assertion but he carried his beloved Prophet out of danger. *Hazrat* Talha received, in the battle of Uhud, no less than twenty-one wounds on his person in order to avoid any injury being inflicted on the person of the Messenger of God. Such love and devotion can never be found in history. In their love for the Holy Prophet, they followed him like a shadow. In assemblies they would rush to get a place near him. They even attached great importance to his most insignificant acts. The Holy Prophet, for example, used a particular ring, they did the same; he discarded it, so did they. The Holy Prophet once said his prayers with shoes on, his Companions also followed his example. Is it any wonder that they

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followed his *Sunna* so rigidly, and preserved his *Hadīs* so carefully ?

But this is only so far as his public life is concerned. A Prophet, it has been said, and repeated by Jesus, is not without honour save in his own country and among his own relations. Voltaire said : " No man is a hero to his valet." It only shows that small minds cannot understand or appreciate a great mind. The ordinary lot of a great man, or even a Prophet, was, in the case of the Holy Prophet reversed ; he was not without honour save among those who did not know him. In his case we find that his Divine Mission was accepted not only by his countrymen but also by his own family. In fact, his wife *Hazrat* Khadija was the first to believe and honour him. Regarding his private life we have the *Hadis* recorded on the authority of his wives, *Hazrat* Ayisha in particular, and his daughter *Hazrat* Fatima, and his servant Anas, who served him for many years. They, one and all, did not only accept him as the Messenger of God, but also preserved his *Hadis* accurately for the generations to come. Thus, when in public, his Companions ; when in his house, his relatives ; when alone, his servant bear authentic testimony to what he said or did, and nothing was left which was not reported, repeated and recorded in its minutest details. Can history tell us of any Prophet, or any other man, how he ate, drank, slept and prayed ; how he laughed and were his teeth then visible ; what features he had ; how many grey hair he had ; how he combed his hair ; how he dressed and what he wore ; how he sat and walked ; what he liked and what he disliked ; and what was his countenance on different occasions ?

It is true that during the lifetime of the Holy Prophet the *Hadis* were not written collectively in any book, but there is unimpeachable evidence that they were being committed to memory by most of the Companions, and reduced to writing by some of them.

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Even Muir admits this fact.<sup>1</sup> I may mention that *Hazrat* Ali kept record of some Sayings. And Ibn Malik reports that *Hazrat* Abu Bakr wrote down for him the laws regarding Zakat. Abdullah bin Umar and Abdullah bin Abbas were two other Companions who were especially engaged in the preservation and transmitting of the *Hadis*, so was Abdullah bin Amr. He reports :

I used to write everything that I heard from the Messenger of God intending to commit to memory. I spoke about it to the Holy Prophet, who said : Write down for I only speak the truth.

It is also true that most of the Companions did not write down the *Hadis* because the Holy Prophet had on one occasion taken exception to this being done. Thus Abu Huraira reports :

The Messenger of God came to us while we were writing the *Hadis*, and asked : What is this that you are writing ? We said : *Hadis*, what we hear of thee. He said : What ! a book other than the Book of Allah ?

This disapproval was meant really to avoid confusion between the Divine Revelation and his Sayings. The Holy Prophet never forbade writing of the *Hadis*. On the contrary he always gave directions that his *Sunna* should be followed and proclaimed all over.

Malik bin Ans reports that the Holy Prophet during his Farewell address said :

I leave with you two things. If you hold fast by them, you will never be misguided—the Book of Allah and my *Sunna*.

Tirmizi records two Sayings :

May Allah grant freshness to the man who hears my Sayings, keeps and preserves them in memory and acts according to them.

May Allah be pleased with the man, who hearing a thing from me broadcasts it just as he had heard it.

Bukhari records that “let him who is present, deliver it to him who is absent” were the concluding words of many of the utterances of the Holy Prophet. He further records that when a deputation of the tribe

<sup>1</sup> Muir, *Life of Muhammad*, XXXIV.

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of Abul Qais appeared before the Holy Prophet he explained to them the injunctions regarding Prayers, Fasting, Zakat, etc., and enjoined them to explain the same to the other members of their tribe who were not present. Whenever a tribe embraced Islam, the Holy Prophet always sent one or more of his Companions to teach them the Holy Qur-án and to make them aware of his *Sunna*. We are told that on such occasions "they carried written instructions with them." Very often the Holy Prophet himself had facts recorded. The pardon granted to Suraqa bin Malak was in writing, the *Truce of Hudaibiyya* was written by *Hazrat Ali*; and letters were sent by the Holy Prophet to the Chosroes of Persia, to the Heraclius of Constantinople, to the Negus of Abyssinia, to the Maqauqus of Egypt, and to other Kings and Rulers of adjoining countries, inviting them to accept Islam.

Bukhari records that in the year of the conquest of Makka, the Holy Prophet delivered a Friday Sermon. A Yamanite prayed that a copy of the *Khutba* be given to him. The Holy Prophet ordered accordingly, and this was done. This incident shows that the Companions had wonderful memories, and, secondly, that the Sayings were being recorded.

I have already mentioned that the Holy Qur-án contains some "allegorical" verses. The Holy Prophet used to explain them, and he, time and again, directed that his Sayings should be repeated and reported to those who were not present. Many a time he used to repeat his Sayings till every one understood him perfectly. Bukhari records that if *Hazrat Ayisha* could not follow any Saying of the Holy Prophet, she used to request him to repeat it over and again.

As a safeguard against wrong or false reports of the *Hadis*, the Holy Prophet said :

Be careful of (narrating) my Traditions, except what you know. Whoso imputes falsehood to me intentionally, let him know that his abode is Fire.

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And again :

Whoso narrates from me a *Hadis*, knowing that it is false, he is then of the liars.

From these two Sayings it has been inferred, by some Christian writers, that false traditions were being attributed to the Holy Prophet during his life-time. This assertion has no foundation, and in spite of repeated challenges by Muslims, no one has yet been able to produce or prove a single *Hadis* which may even be alleged to have been falsely reported, repeated or recorded in the life-time of the Holy Prophet. No, the object of these Sayings was to restrain the Muslims from following the wrong ways of the Christians and Jews who had attributed sayings to Jesus and other Prophets which he or they had never said. These two Sayings of the Holy Prophet should be read in the light of the following Saying :

There *will* be narrators reporting *Hadis* from me, so judge by the Qur-án, if a report agrees with the Qur-án, accept it ; otherwise reject it.

I have already stated that during the life-time of the Holy Prophet the *Hadis*, apart from stray records, were not recorded collectively in any book. For diverse reasons : for example, the death of the Holy Prophet, and most of his Companions, and the spread of Islam to other countries, a necessity was felt that all *Hadis* should be reduced to writing. There was yet another reason. After the death of the Holy Prophet, the disputes which came for decision before the Caliphs had to be decided in the light of the Holy Qur-án and the *Hadis*. This served a double purpose : Firstly, trustworthiness of a Tradition was tested and established, and secondly its knowledge was transmitted to many others. It was for these reasons that Caliph Umar Bin Abdul-Aziz, who flourished in the end of the first century of the Hijra, directed Abu Bakr bin Hazm, the Governor of Madina, and the Governors of other provinces, to have collected

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the *Sunna* and *Hadis* and to have them reduced to writing, and to teach them in gatherings. This was the time when *Tabiein*, Successors to the Companions of the Holy Prophet, were still alive. But the real reason which necessitated the issue of this order was that it was considered imperative that the knowledge of the *Hadis* should be preserved and spread; and, to quote this Caliph himself: "I fear of the loss of the knowledge and the death of them that possess it;" and not, as some Christians allege, that false traditions were being introduced. Up to this time no such question had arisen.

In these circumstances, and before the close of the first century of the Hijra, the Muslim scholars had devoted their lives to the collection of the *Hadis*. They travelled from city to city, from village to village, from tribe to tribe, over the whole Muslim world, and sought out by personal enquiry from among the few surviving Companions and their Successors, every Tradition and reduced it to writing. The task thus begun continued to be vigorously prosecuted and saw its perfection before the middle of the third century.

The first three compilations of the *Hadis* were prepared by Imam Abdul Malak ibn Abdul Aziz bin Juraij, Rabi ibn Suhaib and Said ibn Abi Aruba, all of whom died about the middle of the second century. Then came Imam Malik ibn Anas who wrote his famous *Mu'atta*. These and other books were written at different places, at Makka, Madina, Egypt, Yaman, Kufa, Basra, Wasil, Khorasan etc. But in all of them the Traditions preached and preserved in those places only were mostly recorded. Then followed the *Musnad* of Imam Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn Hanbal (164 A.H.—241 A.H.)

I now take up the question of the perverted or forged traditions. In the course of the political strife and rivalry, between the Alids and the Abbasids on the one hand and the Umayyads on the other, some forged

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traditions were introduced with a view to win over the neutral Muslims to the rival parties. Thus sayings were attributed to the Holy Prophet which were meant to disgrace the names of the forefathers of the Umayyads or exalt the progenitors of the Alids or Abbasids and *vice versa*. The Abbasids were installed, or rather supplanted the Alids, in the Caliphate in 132nd year of the Hijra, and with the subsequent growth of the political power certain unscrupulous Abbasid Caliphs had traditions forged to suit their needs of the day. This brought about a general upheaval among the traditionists, who, therefore, made extensive researches and prepared compilations of all authentic Traditions. Thus Imam Muhammad bin Ismail, otherwise known as Bukhari (194 A.H. to 256 A.H.), his disciple Muslim (204 A.H.—261 A.H.), Abu Daud (203 A.H.—275 A.H.), Ibn Majah (209 A.H.—275 A.H.), Tirmizi (209 A.H.—279 A.H.), and Al Nisai (214 A.H.—303 A.H.) made separately the compilations bearing their respective names. Collectively they are known as the *Sihāh Sitta*, the Six Sound Books. The first two are the most authentic, for Bukhari and Muslim travelled all over the Muslim countries collecting, checking and verifying the various Traditions. These two traditionists, in particular, were known for their piety and independence of character; and they did not spare even the Caliphs, the Governors, or other high officials. They were persecuted, and had to leave their homes, for their independence of views. In spite of these persecutions, they would not, and did not, give up their labour of love. They made every effort to collect only the authentic Traditions. Speaking of *Sahih* Bukhari the *Encyclopædia of Islam* says:

Bukhari undertook a research into the then *Hadis* with the painstaking accuracy of a modern writer.<sup>1</sup>

I have already explained how some traditions were forged by or under the order of some of the Abbasid

<sup>1</sup> *Enc. of Islam*: art. *Hadis*, 191.

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Caliphs. This happened about the middle of the second century. It was really to counteract these mischievous but stupid acts of some of the Abbasid Caliphs that Bukhari and others had to prepare their compilations.

These compilations are accepted by Muslims, and are recognised invariably by all the European writers, as authentic. Sprenger while discussing the Traditions says that "although the nearest view of the Prophet which can be obtained is at a distance of one hundred years, and although this long vista is formed of a medium exclusively Mohammedan, yet it can be shown to have been achromatic." Even a bigoted Christian like Sir William Muir had to admit :

There is no reason to doubt that the collectors were sincere in doing that which they professed to do. It may well be admitted that they sought out in good faith from all the traditions actually correct, inquired carefully into the authorities on which they rested, and recorded them with scrupulous accuracy.....There is no reason to suppose that they at all tampered with the Traditions themselves.<sup>1</sup>

The precautions adopted by these collectors were unique and extraordinary. The rules, *inter alia*, followed by them in collecting the Traditions were :

1. A Tradition opposed to known facts was rejected.
2. A Tradition which was contrary to the teachings of the Holy Qur-án, or the teachings of the Holy Prophet, was rejected.
3. A Tradition against reason or known principles of law was rejected.
4. A Tradition which ought to have been known generally and acted upon, was unknown and not acted upon was discarded.
5. The Tradition must record some Saying or action of the Holy Prophet.

<sup>1</sup> Muir, *Life of Mohammad*, XLIII-XLIV.

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6. Traditions with a non-Arabic style were rejected.
7. Each of the narrators must have been :
  - (a) at the time he heard the tradition, of an age at which he was capable of understanding it :
  - (b) a person known for his piety, virtue, honesty and learning.
  - (c) a person known to have possessed good memory.
8. Each of the narrators must never have told a lie, committed a crime, or made any mistake and blunder.
9. There must be a complete chain of the names of the narrators (*isnad*) from the last to the Holy Prophet.

Thus by following these rules they established three categories : (1) *Sahih* (sound), those which were absolutely faultless and authentic and in whose *isnai* (chain of narrators) there was no *illa* (flaw) ; (2) *Hasan* (good or approved) were those which were not absolutely faultless or in which the *isnad* were not complete and (3) *Za'if* were the weak in authenticity. In Bukhari and Muslim only *Sahih* Traditions were recorded. The number of Traditions, from which selection was made, or even those selected, was large. But it must be remembered that the same Traditions had been reported by different sets of narrators and that numerous Traditions were recorded under four or five or more different heads according to their contents. The precautions taken by the Holy Prophet, his Companions and Successors and finally by the Compilers of the *Sihāh Sitta* are, in themselves, a guarantee of the correctness of their texts and origin. But if any proof is necessary it can be found in the letters of the Holy Prophet which he had sent to the various Kings of the adjoining countries, and to which I have already referred. These letters were written after the *Truce of Hudaibiyya* in the 6th year of the Hijra, and they have been quoted *verbatim* in Bukhari and

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other books of *Hadis*. These Traditions state that Hatib Ibn Abi Balta'ah took and presented this letter to the Maqauqus of Egypt and also personally explained to him the mission of the Holy Prophet. The Maqauqus took the letter and after some discussion, which need not be repeated here, placed the letter in a casket, which was sealed and made over to the State Treasurer for safe custody. In 1858 some French travellers unearthed the original letter from a tomb attached to a convent in Upper Egypt. Its authenticity and genuineness has been admitted by Dr. Badger and many other famous archæologists. It was subsequently removed in Ottoman custody to Constantinople. Its *facsimile* was published in the *Islamic Review*.<sup>1</sup> On comparison it was found to be word for word the same as recorded in the *Hadis*. One thing more, there are five different *Hadis* on record which state that a special seal of the Holy Prophet was made for sealing these letters, and that it read : *Muhammad Rasul Allah*, Muhammad, the Messenger of God—written in three lines thus :

Muhammad  
Rasul  
Allah

And the seal on the recovered letter is exactly the same. If we bear in mind that the discovery was not made till 1858 and that the Traditions were recorded at the latest in the beginning of the third century of Hijra, a difference of over 800 years, the authenticity of the Traditions becomes established without any shade or shadow of doubt. Similarly, the letter written to Munzar, the ruler of Yaman, has also been preserved. It is in the possession of the head of the Ayyubi family, the family of Sultan Salah ud-Din Ayyubi, the Great Saladin, of the Crusades' fame. The late Al-Hajj Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din

<sup>1</sup> The *Islamic Review*, Vol. V, No. 1.

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went specially to Damascus in September 1914 to see and compare this letter with the *facsimile* of the letter addressed to the Maqauqus.<sup>1</sup> He found the two letters to be in the same handwriting and their contents, with the exception of the name of the addressee and the details of his subjects, to be the same. The letter to Heraclius is also, apart from the *Hadis*, known to history, but, unfortunately, it was lost during the Crusades. Sir William Muir while referring to these letters and the replies received, as mentioned in the Traditions, styled them as apocryphal.<sup>2</sup> But he published his *Life of Mohammad* in 1861 and he must have been ignorant of the discovery of 1858. This clearly shows that he was out to condemn everything Islamic without the least justification.

In this connection, I may also refer to two other Sayings of the Holy Prophet. He is reported to have said that the Muslims will be defeated at the hands of Turks and will be turned out bag and baggage, and that Constantinople will be reconquered by the Muslims. These Traditions, I would like to point out again, were written at the latest in the beginning of the third century of the Hijra. At that time the Turks were nowhere in prominence ; and Constantinople was in the possession of a Christian King. Yet, Changez Khan did defeat the Muslims ; and, in 1453 C.E., *i.e.* , about five hundreds years after the Traditions had been recorded, the Muslims did reconquer Constantinople. These prophetic utterances, had they not been from the lips of a Divinely inspired Prophet, could never have been made and much less so literally fulfilled.

In conclusion, I must mention that, unlike the Gospels, the Holy Qur'ân is till to-day in its pristine purity and the *Hadis* are a correct record of the Sayings and

<sup>1</sup> *Islamic Review*, Vol. V ; 52.

<sup>2</sup> Muir, *Life of Mohammad*, 396.

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*Sunna* of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (may the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him !)

I have discussed the Islamic Sources to show that, unlike the Christian Sources, we can accept their authenticity without any hesitation. These Sources deal with the life and death of Jesus and can serve as a guide in coming to a proper conclusion.

(*To be continued*)

### THE HOLY PROPHET'S HERITAGE

*Hazrat 'Āyisha* reported : The Apostle of Allah left no *dīnār*, no *dirham*, no goat and no camel ; nor did he leave any legacy.—Muslim.

\* \* \* \*

*Hazrat 'Amr-b-Hārith* reported :

The Aposle of Allah left no *dīnār* at his death, nor *dirham*, no slave, no maid, and nothing except his white mule, his armours and a land which he gifted away in charity.—Bukhārī.

\* \* \* \*

*Hazrat Abū Bakr* reported that the Apostle of Allah said : We leave nothing for heritage. What we leave goes to charity.—Agre. d.

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