

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

THE LIGHT

EDITED BY MUSTAFA KHAN B. A.

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Correspondence of literary nature may be addressed to the Editor. Short articles, letters and questions will also be welcome. Non-Muslims are also invited to send questions to be answered.

NOTES.

“Moslems and Anti-Christ.”

The Missionary Review of the world writes under the above title :—

REV. ARTHUR T. UPSON, of the Nile Mission Press in Cairo, quotes a pamphlet on Moslems and Anti-Christ, written by an educated Moslem in Medina, which is being distributed in Cairo, as typical of the unhappy, unformed, half-conviction of many simple, sincere Moslems that the days of the Great Apostasy are near at hand, and that there is no *religious* Islam left! Every Moslem holds that after Anti-Christ has appeared, Jesus the Messiah will come back, and they have located the place of His descent. The following incident in Mr. Upson's experience is somewhat parallel: “When distributing tracts in an Upper Egypt railway train, near Suhag, two Moslem Sheikhs were very interested in my Gospel Purity Movement, and warmly commended my preaching Christ in the brothel streets of Cairo. I challenged them, if their religion were the true

has no power in it; there are no real Moslems left.”

This is surely an echo of despair from Muslims over which the Christian propagandists are rejoicing. Their joy is twofold first, “there is no *religious* Islam left,” and second, it is Jesus Christ who “will come back.” But perhaps neither the Editor of the *Missionary Review of the World*, nor the author of the pamphlet knows that Jesus Messiah has appeared, and has left behind him a strong community who are busy in destroying the “Anti-Christ.”

Are not the Indian Muslims yet convinced that they should now lose no time to come to the following of the Promised Messiah who is universally awaited.

Split in the Christian Missions.

The dogmatic Christianity of the day is a collection of beliefs and rituals, which are absolutely in contradiction to the beautiful and divine teachings of Jesus; and yet these are ascribed to the name of Jesus. We think the religion that goes by the name of Christ is really Anti-Christ, because it is quite against the teachings of Jesus. This is *the* Anti-Christ which was foretold by the Holy Prophet; and he also predicted that it would melt by itself as salt melts in water. This prophecy has come out pre-eminently true. Christianity of the day cannot withstand the search light of knowledge and science. Even the clergy are divided on “doctrinal questions” as is clear from the following lines of the “Missionary Review of the World” :—

THE leading British missionary societies are at present torn by controversy over various doctrinal questions. Conservative Baptists charge that the officials of the Baptist Missionary Society are disregarding the Gospel. The London Missionary Society has been compelled to send a deputation to India to investigate reasons why the missionaries are issuing hymns and prayers from which the name of Christ has been deliberately omitted. The Church

Missionary Society has the most serious disagreement, since the conservative constituency profess to find "the poisonous fumes of modern unbelief finding their way into the ranks of the C. M. S." These wish not only the officers of the society, but also the missionary candidates, to subscribe to a belief in the infallibility of the Bible, but propose to make an exception of the first three chapters of Genesis. The Dean of Canterbury has resigned as vice-president, and others of the more moderate evangelicals have also resigned. A committee has been appointed which has the delicate task of trying to bring together the various angles of sentiment.

THE LIGHT.

Dated the 1st March 1923

What to do?

III.

(communicated).

Religion too or more properly the wrong interpretation of it has, as I said in my last, tended on the whole, to enslave rather than to liberate. The Quran was given us as our Magna Carta; we made it into another shackle on our freedom of soul.

Revelation comes to revive and resuscitate. Like showers of rain—so the Quran puts it—which being a message of renewed life to the dead soil, the word of God comes to stir and awaken the soul of man. That the soul may BUD, BLOSSOM and BEAR FRUIT—is the one object of religion, its sole purpose.

Such is every religion at its inception. It kindles the spark of life in the heart of man. It sends a thrill of vivacity all through his frame. To him life assumes a new meaning, a higher value. His soul breaks through all restraints; his heart expands. No longer does he live for the day and the dust. He lives for things higher, things nobler. He interprets life in different terms—terms of eternity. His life is filled with light, with harmony, with music. In one word he becomes ALIVE.

Such was Islam in its palmy days—in the days when a MUSLIM YOUTH would not tarry to finish the few dates in his hand and dart into the thick of the battle; in the days when a TARIK burnt his fleet on the coast of Spain, throwing the gauntlet to the whole of Europe; in the days when a SALADIN'S daring and chivalry rang through the length and breadth of Christendom; in the days when MUSLIM LADS knew the value of liberty and courted enlistment by competitive wrestling matches; in the days when a MUSLIM HOARY HEAD would rather

fall on the field of action in the course of RIGHT, than breathe its last on bed; in the days when MUSLIM WOMEN had the pluck to take an Umar to task for his omission; when honour was dearer than life and a KHOLA had the go to knock enemy brains out with tent poles.

Such was the golden age of Islam. But the vision faded; the inspiration was lost—lost in the Mushroom of religious books, religious schools, religious leaders, religious this, religious that. Everywhere there cropped up something "religious", but no where was religion itself to be found. It was buried, as it were, underneath this cumbersome overgrowth of system. Reality was sacrificed to ritual. Life was strangled in the frivolities of verbal quibbles. Religion which meant, first and last, life—life, free, full, rich, thrilling—came to be regarded as the sum total of certain forms and formulas, rites and ceremonies, expressions and observances. In one word what was at bottom *internal*—a *type* of soul—became *external*. Idolatry, if I may use the word, was resumed, under a new name—religion, the idol this time carved not out of stone or marble, but of empty ritualism, with a mass of all sorts of accretions. And on the top of this all, there sprang up amongst them that most detestable priestly class. The "Mullah", the "Pir", the "Fakir"—in these was focussed the entire curse of the fallen age. In the niches of mosques, in the shrines of saints, on their "gaddies" and in their closets, they outdid the Pharises themselves in their hypocrisy and letter worship.

In ferocity of temper, they would fly, with all the sharpness of their claws and teeth, at each other's throat. Their own bread and butter was all in all to them, go where the nation may, to the winds. Their petty jealousies, their greed and—O Lord!--their cringing meanness—an abominable set, rightly foretold by the Prophet as the worst of the "Ummat"!

No longer was there a man with the moral courage of the old woman who called Umar to account, nor an Umar to listen to a word of truth. By the lapse of time, degeneration set in; and generation of stalwart men and women was followed by a progeny of puny pigmies. Unworthy successors to a great race:

Where lies the root cause of the calamity and what to do? May be, to diagnose the ailment should facilitate the cure. It was a blunder committed at the starting point. Religion took an entirely

different turn ; it ceased to mean an inspiration, an ennobling and vitalizing force. It became, on the contrary, a dead weight on the Muslims' soul and like the old man of the sea on Sindbad's neck, it choked his free-breathing. It did not emancipate the soul ; it tended to clip its wings.

Hence the need of the hour : Shake the shackles of so-called religion off ! There is no such thing as religion distinct from life. You below, God over head, the Quran before, naught else to stand between, take life by the hand and live it—that is religion, the only true religion. Let the soul be itself, have a free play, unhampered, unrestricted, unrestrained.

(To be continued)

Correspondence.

CHRISTIANITY OR ISLAM.

II.

DEAR SIR,

In my last I pointed out two main differences between Christianity and Islam. In the present article, I intend to write a few lines about 2 more points, wherein these 2 religions are opposed to each other.

3. HUMAN BIRTH.

Human birth, whether sinful or sinless, is another chief point of difference between Christianity and Islam. Every child is sinful at the time of his birth, and sin is his inherent property, is the cardinal doctrine of Christianity, upon which stands all the superstructure and the framework of this religion. The well known doctrine of atonement takes its origin from this principle. Sin simply means the violation of the laws, and hence sinful birth means, inability to follow a law, which in itself is an absurd thing.

Islam, on the other hand, says that every human child gets a sinless birth, and is quite innocent when he comes into this world. He is free from the bondage of sin. It is through his own actions that he becomes sinful. It is the violation of the laws that makes him so.

4. SALVATION.

The fourth point of difference is that of salvation. From the Christian point of view atonement is the key to salvation. Believe in the 'Blood of Jesus' and you get a passport to heaven.

On the contrary, in Islam, salvation depends upon good actions. 'Good actions based upon right principles' is the condition for salvation. Righteous deeds form an indispensable part for the attainment of our goal. Obedience to the commandments of Allah, and love and sympathy for his fellow-beings is the way to heaven.

In short, according to Christianity, man is born sinful, and hence he is apt to sin, and in order to attain salvation he must believe in atonement that is, Jesus' Death on cross; while on the other hand, according to Islam every child gets a sinless birth. Right actions based upon right principle is the way to success in this life and in the hereafter.

Sh. Mohammed Abdullah,
Islamia College, Lahore.

Questions and Answers.

Mr. Mohammad Abdullah :—

Q. 1. Is marriage permissible with a Christian lady? If so, are not the Christians **Mushrik**. When answering throw light on the verse.

ولا تتكفروا بمشركات حتي يؤمن

A. Christians are the "People of the Book," and hence marriage with a Christian lady is permissible. The verse in question relates to the idol worshippers of Arabia who did not believe in any revealed Book. Another possible answer is that marriage is legal in the case of such Christian women who do not worship the Idols of Mary and Jesus. There are of course different sects in the Christians.

Q. 2. Hazrat Husain married about ninety women, divorcing one after the other. Is it legal?

A. Divorce is permissible in Islamic law; and there does not appear any harm if the number reached ninety. It is a matter of chance only.

Q. 3. What is "Ruh"? Does it die with a man?

A. Ruh is the conscious life in man. It does not die with him.

Mr. Abdul Aziz Khan :—

Q. 1. What does the Holy Quran say about the virgin birth of Jesus? If Jesus' father was Joseph what do you mean by **إن مثل عيسى عند الله كمثل آدم**

A. There are two schools of thought on this question :—(1) one says that Jesus was born without a father; as Adam was born without parents; (2) but those who hold that Jesus had a father, interpret the verse in the light that the case of Jesus was like other men *i.e.* they interpret the word Adam not in the sense of the particular Adam; but in the sense of mankind in general.

Q. 2. (a) What does the expression **رفع الله** mean in the Quran? (b) Is it used for another prophet also?

A. (a) It means "God exalted him," (b) Yes, of Idris we read in Quran **رفعناه مكاناً علياً** we raised him to an elevated state. It does not mean that he

was raised to the upper story of a house or to the vault of heaven.

Q. 3. According to the Holy Quran every nation and every country had seen its prophet why then does not in Quran mention the names of all these prophets? While it says لا تطب ولا يابس الا في كتاب مبين

A. Here the word *kitab* means the divine knowledge which comprehends every thing. The Holy Quran would have been quite unwieldy had it given the names of all prophets.

Q. 4. Is shaving permissible for *Ghaziz* when they are out in war for the defence of *Khilafat*?

A. Shaving is not the practice of the Holy Prophet, and should as far as possible be avoided by Muslims.

Q. 5. In Darood sharif what do you mean by *آل محمد*?

A. These words include all the righteous followers of the Holy Prophet, as every apostle is the spiritual father of his followers.

Mr. Maqbul Ahmad :—

Q. 1. The definition of religion given in your issue of 1st July is not comprehensive, because you say "it is the collective name of divine laws" This excludes an atheist or Dev Samajist. I think religion is a path which according to the cherished notion of its follower leads to the purification of soul and to the eternal bliss. Kindly throw light on this?

A. What you call the "eternal bliss" and "soul" are after all things which we have learnt from the revealed books *i.e.* books containing the divine laws. The "cherished notions" of a man are always subject to variations and changes; because they are governed by experience, time, and environments and I am afraid they do not deserve the name of "religion." You may call "the cherished notion" of a man, a *Mazhab* in the literal sense of the word, but in the restricted sense a "religion" is always associated with a divine book and a divine messenger.

Q. 2. How is it that interest is permissible for the sacred cause of propagation of Islam and forbidden for one's personal use?

A. This question has been fully dealt with in the Light, for 1st August 1922.

Q. 3. Is the keeping of pictures and photoes permissible?

A. "Actions are to be judged according to motives" says the Holy Prophet. There is no harm in the legitimate use of photoes or pictures. The Police uses photoes to find out offenders; the medical students use them to study the physical system, and Islam is not the enemy of truth and science.

Muhammad Muarif Khan :—

Q. 1. Is the distribution of *Qurbani* meat permissible among Hindus?

A. As a principle the meat should be distributed among poor Muslims so that they may also enjoy this luxury with their well-to-do brethren in faith on the festival. But as a special case if the meat be given to a Hindu there can be no object to it.

Q. 2. May a Muslim eat with a Hindu in one dish?

A. Yes; our religion is not governed by "touches." But I am afraid a Hindu will cease to be a Hindu if he does so.

Q. 3. What is the definition of a sayyid?

A. Sayyid means a leader, a big man, a lord. There is a saying سيد القوم خان مهم

Q. 4. When there was no male issue of the Holy Prophet, how can the claim of the present sayyids be fair?

A. They claim only to be the descendants of Fatima, the daughter of the Holy Prophet. What claim do you mean?

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