Promised Messiah Speaks:

The Miracles of the Holy Quran

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The miracles and extraordinary signs of the Holy Quran are of four types; one, miracles relating to the intellect; two, miracles relating to knowledge; three, miracles relating to spiritual blessings; and four, miracles relating to extraordinary matters. The first three are miracles of the inherent qualities of the Holy Quran. They are very grand and are susceptible of obvious proof. They can be witnessed in every age like visible realities, but the fourth kind are external matters which are not inherent in the Holy Quran. Of these is the miracle of the splitting of the moon. The true excellence and beauty of the Holy Quran are exhibited in the first three kinds of miracles. Indeed, this is the great sign of all Divine words that these three kinds of miracles should be found in them. In the Holy Quran all three are found in a high and perfect and complete degree, and they are put forward by the Holy Quran repeatedly as proof of its being matchless and peerless, as it is said: Proclaim: If all men, high and low, were to combine to produce the like of this Quran, they would not be able to produce the like thereof even though they all help each other in the effort (17:80).

At another place it is said: We have not left out anything from the Book (6:39). . . Again it is said: Reciting pure scriptures wherein are lasting commandments (98:3-4). . . At another place it is said: Had We sent down this Quran on a mountain, thou wouldst certainly have seen it bend down in humility and rent asunder in awe of Allah’s majesty. These are illustrations that We set forth for mankind that they may reflect (59:22). . . Besides this, large numbers of miracles of external changes are mentioned in the Holy Quran. Miracles of this kind are like ornaments for the beauty of the Quran with which handsome people are bedecked. It is obvious that what is beautiful in itself does not need any ornament though an ornament enhances its beauty to some degree. These miracles that are mentioned in the Holy Quran are of diverse types. One is that through the prayer of the Holy Prophet, peace be on him, God Almighty manifested His powerful control over the heavens and split the moon into pieces. Secondly, the change that God Almighty brought about on earth through the prayers of the Holy Prophet, which appeared in the form of a famine that lasted for seven years, whereby people were so overcome that they ground down bones and swallowed them. Thirdly, the miraculous control that was exercised on the day of the migration of the Holy Prophet, peace be on him, to safeguard him against the mischief of the disbelievers. When the disbelievers of Mecca resolved to kill him, God, the Glorious, informed the Holy Prophet of their design and commanded him to migrate from Mecca to Medinah and gave him the good news of his victorious return. It was a Wednesday and the time was midday and the day was very hot, when this trial was manifested by God. In this situation of distress when the Holy Prophet was about to leave suddenly his home town, and his enemies had surrounded his house with the design of killing him, a close relative whose being was compounded of love and faith laid himself down, under the direction of the Holy Prophet, on his bed, covering his face so that the spies of the enemies should not investigate the departure of the Holy Prophet, and deeming the substitute to be the Holy Prophet himself should continue to wait for killing him. After the Holy Prophet had left, leaving his faithful relative in his place, and

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"A Word to Anti-Neuk Protestors!"

The present debate and preparation for a possible use of NEUCLEAR WAR HEADS in a limited theater of war, though providing no guarantees that the use shall remain so limited to that theater alone as assumed by the proponents of this theory, and expert opinions granting 'zero' chances for any survivors out of a Nuclear Conflict, provide a scenario wherein 'Anti-Neuk' rallies being held in Europe and U.S.A. not only fit properly but make abundant sense. Like all sane men we too are interested in seeing life on this beautiful planet of ours to continue, hence most naturally the cause of 'Anti-Neuk Protestors' is dearer to us, and it will be hypocritical to by-pass it by labelling it as the handiwork of 'Communists' or any other political group. But we like to bring it on record that if the cause is 'the survival of human race', then these protest rallies fall short of their objective. These amount to going only half the way to goal or accepting only half the truth. Allah in His Gracious Beneficence has granted mankind great faculties of mind and absolute and unlimited freedom of thought and action. Use of these faculties in the sphere of science and technology has granted man command and control over natural sources of immense potential and power, NEUK being one amongst these. Assuming that in response to the call of Anti-Neuk protesters all NEUK-WAR HEADS are destroyed to-day by those who possess them, will that guarantee the security and survival of mankind? As we know, faculties of human mind admit no limitations and man's desire and flight towards harnessing and enslaving more sources of nature and power is not possible to limit or curtail, hence no one can guarantee that NEUK shall not be replaced by a yet more devastating power or weapon. It is a matter of common sense that NEUK or for that reason any other materials, chemicals or sources of power that are being presently employed by men in the manufacture of devastating war devices or weapons by themselves pose no danger to mankind. It is only their misuse that threatens turning this globe into a lifeless planet. Turning harmless sources of nature or power to weaponry is a clear misuse not only of the source but also of the knowledge in a particular field. God bestowed life on our planet and thankless men are out to extinguish life from it. But why do men need weapons? To wage war or to defend against those who wage war - as simple as that. Thus weapons, neuclear or non-neuclear, are only a means to an end. But why do people wage war? Is war an end in itself? There must be some cause, something that makes men wage war? This exercise in cause and effect study of weapons brings us face to face with the real question. That wars not weapons alone are the real danger to mankind and the future of mankind shall remain insecure till such time as man is able to banish war completely and for good and this goal is not possible to achieve until and unless mankind is willing and prepared to find means...
A WORD TO ANTI-NEUK PROTESTORS

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to eliminate the causes for war. This should suffice to explain our statement 'that Anti-Neuk Rallies' go only half the way to goal and accept only half the truth. An honest endeavour in the direction of search for 'survival' of life on earth must essentially lead one to the probe for and elimination of the causes of war. Short of that all efforts will be misdirected and must prove fruitless.

Coming to the causes, to-day these are both economic and political - and ultimate cause is that 'web' of prejudices which, if not all, then most of us have woven around ourselves in the names of nationalism, economic welfare, political creeds etc etc. What is needed to-day is a 'new world order' wherein man can rediscover himself as a man and man alone and is able to identify himself with one and only one interest - the interest of the human race - the mankind as one nation. It shall never be possible at the hands of politicians, who are slaves of their political philosophies and national interests and identifications. Only men of intellect who help shape and develop thinking of mankind can help usher in this new era in human history, provided they find courage to free themselves from the bondage of prejudices engulfing them - a free gift of the social atmosphere wherein they are born, grow and live. Such men are hard to find, and it is a very hard path to tread in the face of the prevalent creeds of Nationalism, Capitalism and Communism etc, yet that is the only path that leads to peace, security and survival for sure. This path was first shown and illuminated by the greatest man of the human history, Muhammad, the Prophet of Allah, may peace and blessings of Allah be on him, when he proclaimed fifteen hundred years ago under the Command of Allah, 'Human race is one nation. Shed all prejudices of race, color, wealth and nation.' Do you find courage to discover and find truth? Whole truth. If so, come join hands with us in showing the path to Peace, Security and Survival to mankind by carrying the message of 'ONE MANKIND UNDER ONE GOD.'

Masud Akhtar

The Miracles of the Holy Quran
Continued from inside cover . . .

his enemies discovered his departure these wicked people pursued him with the intention of killing him somewhere on the way. At that time of distress the Holy Prophet was accompanied only by one sincere and faithful friend. But as ever, and also in the course of that dangerous journey, his Lord was with him, Who had sent this perfect and faithful servant of His into the world for carrying out a grand reform. In order to safeguard this dear servant of His, He exercised wonderful control in many ways which are mentioned briefly in the Holy Quran. One of them was that none of his enemies noticed his departure though it was morning time and his enemies were surrounding his house. As is mentioned in Surah Yaseen, God Almighty put a covering on the eyes of all those wretches and the Holy Prophet slipped away unnoticed. Another extraordinary manifestation that God, the Glorious, exhibited for safeguarding His immaculate Prophet was that, though his enemies arrived outside the cave in which the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be on him, was hidden with his companion, they could not see him for God Almighty had sent a pair of pigeons which built a nest the same night at the entrance to the cave and also laid their eggs there and by Divine command a spider also wove her web at the place, whereby the enemies of the Prophet were misled and returned frustrated. Another miracle that occurred was that an opponent of the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be on him, who was riding a pony on the way to Medinah, tried to approach the Holy Prophet and through the latter's prayer the hooves of his pony sank into the earth and he fell down, whereupon he asked for forgiveness of the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be on him, and turned away. Another miraculous event that occurred was that when being provoked by their failure, his enemies advanced against the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be on him, with a large army so that they might destroy the Muslims, who were small in number, and thus root out Islam, God, the Glorious, created confusion among the enemy forces at Badr in consequence of the holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be on him, throwing a handful of gravel at his enemies, and thus brought about their defeat. God Almighty caused this handful of gravel to make the enemy leaders blind and confused them and rooted them to the earth and made them fall down dead at the spots which the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be on him, had specified in advance. The Holy Quran mentions several other wonderful supports and Divine interventions, the purport of which is how God Almighty raised the Holy Prophet at a time when he was poor and an orphan and alone and helpless and then within a short period, which did not extend to even thirty years, made him victorious over a region and made him supreme over the Byzantine emperor and the kings of Syria and Egypt and the countries between the Tigris and the Euphrates, and spread the Muslim victories within this short period as far as the Oxus river. The Holy Quran had foretold the spread of Islam in these countries. Considering the resourcelessness of the Muslims and their wonderful victories, wise and learned Europeans have testified that there is no other instance in the history of the world of such rapid advance as that of Islam and the Islamic kingdom. It is obvious that that which cannot be matched is in other words miraculous. In short, many external changes of a miraculous nature are mentioned in the Holy Quran. Every part of this holy word announces aloud instances of Divine support (Surma Chashm Arya, 12-19, footnote).

When men spread themselves over the earth, And became many nations, Speaking diverse languages, And observing diverse customs and laws; The evils became multiplied, As one race or nation Became alienated from another. The Brotherhood of Man was now doubly forgotten, - First, between individuals, and secondly, between nations. Arrogance, selfishness, and untruth Were sown and reaped in larger fields; And Peace, Faith, Love and Justice Were obscured over masses of men. As large tracts of land are starved Of sunshine by clouds floating far on high.

from a translation of the Holy Quran by ABDULLAH YUSUF ALI
Call For A New World Order
By MAULANA MUHAMMAD ALI, M.A., L.I.B.

Humanity is to-day face to face with the biggest catastrophe and the severest crisis that it has ever seen. The devastations of the First World War were yet fresh in the minds of the people when, within the short space of twenty years, we found a veritable hell raging on this earth from one end to the other in the form of the Second World War. And not many years passed on that conflagration, that there started whispers of a Third World War; and who knows if a forth or a fifth visitation, each more horrible than the one that precedes it, is yet in store for this world!

Are these the travails through which humanity is going to give birth to a better world order? Such is the hope of everyone who has faith in the wisdom of God; even a man who does not believe in God can see in these horrible calamities the harbinger of a mighty revolution. But, as a matter of fact, all this is happening, as will be shown later, according to a set Divine plan calculated to take humanity by gradual steps to its destined goal of perfection.

The cry for a New World Order is universal, especially in the Western world which was hitherto under the impression that by its unprecedented material advancement and unthought-of conquests of Nature it had reached the acme of perfection. That impression has received a rude shock by the happenings of the past eighty years. The material advancement, which was believed to be the source of increased happiness for the human race, has brought instead untold misery and vast destruction. The world is almost in a chaotic condition, every weak nation being the victim of the tyranny of its more powerful and more advanced neighbour. The sense of right and wrong in international relations has entirely disappeared before the passion for national aggrandizement, and this mentality rules the world from end to end. Might is as much right today as it was in the savage state. Instead of finding itself at the height of perfection by its great material strides, the world finds itself at the lowest depth of degradation, at the very place from which it started thousands of years ago, at the kill-and-destroy stage.

Selfishness, disregard of others' rights, indifference to moral responsibilities, tyrannising over the weak, are as rampant - perhaps more - at the height of civilisation as they were in the savage state; they have only donned a different garment. Selfishness is denounced so long as it is a disease affecting one or more individuals, but when it becomes a plague and affects a whole nation, it is lauded as a great national achievement. Individuals may be secure within certain territorial limits, but whole countries are insecure and may at any time be run over by a nation which has developed a more powerful war machinery. Tyranny may not be allowed within the limits of a State, but there is nothing to check the tyranny of a nation against a nation. A certain social system may have been successful in curbing the greed of individuals, but there is nothing to curb the greed of a nation except the greater greed of a more powerful nation. Evil is taken for a virtue if it wears the cloak of nationalism. Humanity has been divided into races and nations which hate one another; in their march for advancement and their passion for more and more of material comforts and worldly pelf and power, they seek to destroy one another, not being bound by any moral code. The material civilisation of the West which has made the acquisition of wealth the highest purpose of life is wholly responsible for the anarchical state of things which prevails today.

It is evident that materialism which fans the fire of human greed will bring in its trail only ruin and misery, just as it has brought in the two world wars, if there is no force to unite the human race. Such a force could only be a spiritual force. In the materially advanced Western world, the seismic centre of the convulsions which are shaking the entire world, such a moral force does not exist. Christianity which supplied such a force for centuries retreated before the advancing forces of materialism; ultimately it has been utterly routed. Its hold on Russia proved too weak to withstand the advancing tide of atheism; in most other European countries and U.S.A. where it still lives, it lives in name only, not as a vital force. Religion is recognised only as man's private concern, and people feel ashamed of speaking of it in society. The name of God is on the lips, and the politicians, instead of serving Him, requisition His services in some great national calamity or for victory in a war. God is needed more to further material gains and to serve political ends than to bring contentment of mind - as the slave of materialism, not as a spiritual force, to check the evil tendencies of materialism which are proving so ruinous for the world. The world has practically banished God from the soil of its mind, and God has banished peace and order from the soil of the world.

It will be said that the West is still bent upon converting the world to Christianity; it sends out missions to and spends enormous sums of money in Asia and Africa and other parts of the world with this purpose. Does it show that the West believes in the spiritual force of Christianity? It does not. If the West had any faith in the spiritual value of Christianity, it should have tried to save Russia first. The West only believes in the materialistic value of Christianity, and therefore the message of Christianity is deemed fit only for the materially backward people of the East, for the untouchables of India, for the Negro tribes or for the Chinese masses. It is thus materialism that goes about in the East wearing the cloak of Christianity. There is no sense in preaching to the East a religion which has proved spiritually an entire failure in the West itself. Christianity has not saved the West which is now in the grip of materialism and is burning like hell from one end to the other; it is absurd to suppose that it will turn Asia into a heaven. Failure is writ large on the forehead of Christianity; its retreating forces are trying their luck in the East with the message of economic uplift, unaccompanied by any spiritual benefit.

If Christianity has any spiritual force left in it after its defeat at the hands of materialism, why does it not make an attempt to convert atheistic Russia, whose poison of godlessness is affecting the whole world, instead of sending missions to the East where belief in God still exists in greater vitality than it does in Europe and America? The West defends itself against Russian Communism, but that
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continued

too because it affects its material interests and because it is a menace to Capitalism. If Bolshevik emissaries were out only to preach godlessness and did not touch Capitalism and economic interests of the West, it would not move its little finger against them.

The failure of Christianity to keep the fire of faith burning in human hearts against the tide of materialism is due to two reasons. In the first place, the Christian religion - not the simple faith of Jesus Christ but as represented by the Church - was based on a dogma which was repugnant to human reason. So long as Europe was sunk low in ignorance, it remained satisfied with the authoritative Church declaration - Believe and do not question! With the advance of scientific knowledge in all branches of life, it was evident that the hold of a religion whose basic doctrines defied reason should loosen. Christianity's first clash was in fact with science. Every new discovery in the domain of science was looked upon by the Church as a heresy, because its spirit was more in consonance with ignorance than learning. It was not because of Christianity, but in spite of Christianity, that scientific research gained ground in Europe. The Church tried to suppress every scientific discovery with all the force at its command but suffered defeat every time. Then came a stage at which, contrary to all previous traditions of Christianity, reason began to be applied to Church doctrines; all basic doctrines - the Divinity of Jesus, the crucifixion, the atonement of sins, the Eucharist - when brought under the searchlight of reason, were found to have been based on the myths of ancient idolatrous nations. Christianity was the only religion known to the West, and Jesus Christ the only God, and if these failed to satisfy the advanced mind, religion and God were bound to go along with them.

The other reason for the failure of Christianity was that it was only a creed that concerned itself with salvation in the next life. It was not a system or an order dealing with this life; all the interest that it took was in ultra-mundane questions. But with the advance of science there was a general progressive outlook of life, to which the very spirit of Christianity was opposed. The two great problems of this life, the problems of wealth and sex, as accepted by generations of Christianity, did not satisfy the advanced mind. Not only did Christianity not offer any solution to the new questions that arose in the march of civilisation, it opposed all reform on these matters, and therefore men's minds were turned in disgust from it. The hold of religion on the minds of men having thus loosened, materialism remained the sole master in the field.

The cementing force of religion has thus for the time being disappeared from the West, and the one-sided development of its civilisation, the uncheck growth of materialism, has let loose the forces of selfishness, jealousy, hatred and grabbing political power, which have brought ruin and destruction upon humanity. The first requisite of the New World Order, therefore, is that it must be based on spiritual force which religion alone can supply. If the foundations are not deep and reliable, the superstructure of the New Order would go to pieces. This is what happened before. The First World War raged for over four years, visiting ruin and desolation on populous cities and towns, changing fertile lands into barren wastes, killing hundreds of thousands of the healthiest youth, maiming even greater numbers for their lives, destroying the happiness of millions of homes, and plunging vast sections of humanity into misery and affliction. The end of the war seemed to justify all these sacrifices. The aggressor was defeated, and the democracies won a complete victory. There were summoned together the best brains from the winning nations and a great international conference was convened so as to lay the foundations of a New World Order. The map of Europe was redrawn. New territorial bounds were demarcated. The vanquished aggressors were so cut up into pieces that never again should they regain the strength to raise their heads. The League of Nations was created to give this Order a moral support. This was New World Order No. 1.

Where is that Order today? It went to pieces within ten years of its creation, and another ten plunged the world into a conflagration more horrible than the first. All the travail that humanity had to go through ended in smoke. Why? Because the New Order had no moral foundations. The worthy people that assembled at the conference gave no thought to the real ills of humanity. They thought that vanquishment of one nation by another was a remedy for future aggression. It was not, and it shall never be. They did nothing to eliminate the mutual hatred of the warring factions. They did nothing to bring about a change of heart, either in the conquerors or in the conquered. They did not pay the least attention to the fact that in their peace proposals they were only giving impetus to the very human greed which had brought about the great disaster. They talked of everything excepting how to weld humanity into one nation, and how to lay a moral foundation for the superstructure of their New Order. The proposed moral support of the League of Nations was nothing but a farce; it was rightly called a League of Thieves by Iqbal, because each one of them had but one desire in his heart of hearts: how to steal away material advantages for his own nation; and one of them was inspired by the noble idea: how to weld the different nations into one humanity.

Now the same process was repeated at the end of the Second World War. United Nations replaced League of Nations. All kinds of questions were discussed as to what World Order No. 2 should be, but one question was again conspicuous by its absence: how are the different nations to be welded into one humanity? If this question is not tackled seriously, this offering at the altar of the god of war in the shape of untold human woe and misery and the devastation of civilisation will go in vain, and the United Nations will go the way of World Order No. 1. It will only pave the way for another and perhaps more terrific world cataclysm. No conference of materialistic people, no league of greedy nations, can bring salvation to the world. The solution of a thousand materialistic questions will not bring peace unless the moral foundations for welding different nations into one humanity, and for a change of greedy mentality, is discovered first. The way the politicians are going is not the way of the Kingdom of God, and peace will only come to humanity when the Kingdom of God is established on earth. Any Order, if based on the same materialistic foundations of how to divide the booty, will as surely lead to World War No. 3, as World Order No. 1 led to World War No. 2.

It is the greatest misfortune of humanity that religion which alone can furnish the moral foundations on which a true World Order can be established has been put under taboo, and the
very panacea is deemed to be a poison. Hatred of religion has become the fashion among the materially advanced people, without giving a thought to the incontrovertible fact that religion has been the supreme force in the development of mankind to its present condition. As a matter of fact, human civilisation, as we have it today, is based on religion. Religion has made possible a state of civilisation which has again and again saved human society from disruption. Trace back the history of human civilisation among all nations, and it will be seen that whenever it has begun to totter, a new religious impulse has always been at hand to save it from utter destruction. It is not only that civilisation, with any pretence to endurance, can rest only on a moral basis, and that truth and lofty morals are inspired only by faith in God, even the unity and cohesion of jarring human elements, without which it is impossible for any human civilisation to stand for a day, is best brought about by the unifying force of religion.

It is often said that religion is responsible for much of the hatred and bloodshed in the world, but a cursory glance at the history of religion will show this to be a monstrous misconception. Love, concord, sympathy, kindness to one’s fellow-men, has been the message of every religion, and every nation has learnt these essential lessons in their true purity only through the spirit of selflessness and service which faith in God has inspired. If there have been selfishness and hatred and bloodshed among religious people, they have been there in spite of religion, not as a consequence of the message of love which religion has brought. They have been there because human nature is too prone to these things; and their presence only shows that a still greater religious awakening is required, that a truer faith in God is yet a crying need of humanity. That most shall sometimes turn to low and unworthy things does not show that the nobler sentiments are worthless; it only shows that their development has become all the more an urgent need.

If unification be the true basis of human civilisation, by which phrase I mean the civilisation, not of one nation or of one country, but of humanity as a whole, then Islam is undoubtedly the greatest civilising force the world has ever known or is likely to know. Fourteen hundred years ago, it was Islam that saved it from crushing into an abyss of savagery, that came to the help of a civilisation whose very foundations had collapsed, and that set about laying new foundations and rearing an entirely new edifice of culture and ethics. A new idea of the unity of the human race as a whole, not of the unity of this or that nation, was introduced into the world; an idea so mighty that it welded together nations which had warred with and hated one another since the world began. It was not only in Arabia, among the ever-fighting tribes of a single peninsula, that this great miracle, as an English writer calls it, was wrought, a miracle before the magnitude of which everything dwindles into insignificance:

“A more disunited people it would be hard to find till suddenly the miracle took place. A man arose who, by his personality and by his claim to direct Divine guidance, actually brought about the impossible - namely the union of all these warring factions.” (The Ins and Outs of Mesopotamia, p. 99)

It not only cemented together the warring tribes of one country but it established a brotherhood of all the nations of the world, joining together even those which had nothing in common except their common humanity. It obliterated differences of colour, race, language, geographical boundaries and even differences of culture. It united man with man as such, and the hearts of those in the Far East began to beat in unison with the hearts of those in the farthest West. Indeed, it proved to be not only the greatest but the only force uniting humanity, because whereas other religions had succeeded merely in unifying the different elements of a single race or a single nation, Islam actually achieved the unification of different races and nations, and harmonised the jarring and discordant elements of humanity.

Islam not only made the different human races a single race, it united different nations into a single human nation. Upon this basis, the surest basis of civilisation, it brought back to man his lost civilisation. Thus writes J. H. Denison in Emotion as the Basis of Civilization:

“In the fifth and sixth centuries, the civilized world stood on the verge of chaos. The old emotional cultures that had made civilization possible, since they had given to men a sense of unity and of reverence for their rulers, had broken down, and nothing had been found adequate to take their place. . . .

“It seemed then the great civilisation which it had taken four thousand years to construct was on the verge of disintegration, and that mankind was likely to return to that condition of barbarism where every tribe and sect was against the next, and law and order were unknown. . . . The old tribal sanctions had lost their power. . . . The new sanctions created by Christianity were working division and destruction instead of unity and order. . . . Civilization like a gigantic tree whose foliage had overreached the world . . . stood tottering. . . . Rotted to the core. . . . Was there any emotional culture that could be brought in to gather mankind once more into unity and to save civilization?”

And then speaking of Arabia:

“It was among these people that the man was born who was to unite the whole known world of the east and south.”

Civilisation is once more faced with disintegration and destruction owing to a condition similar to that prevailing in the sixth century. Nation has risen against nation, seeking to destroy one another. Some force is needed - and that is the first need of humanity today - which should unite the different nations into one humanity. This force which should bring about a change of mentality so as to eliminate mutual jealousies and hatred can only be a moral force, and a moral force can be supplied only by religion. Islam supplied such a force in the seventh century beginning with Arabia. In those days Arabia presented a scene of internecine warfare exactly similar to that which the world presents today. Tribes and clans that inhabited that desert-land were in the grip of unending feuds. The smallest thing served as a matchstick to set ablaze the flames of war which lasted for years. All the tribes would plunge themselves into the conflagration, some ranging themselves on one side, some on the other. There was wholesale bloodshed and destruction. After exhausting themselves they would conclude peace. Hardly would the ink of the treaty dry up when old grudges which kept smouldering would burst up and once more the country would find itself in.

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the flames of war. Thus went on things for long generations from sire to son and from son to grandson. The whole people were on the verge of being consumed to ashes by these flames of warfare, when, lo! God in His mercy poured down from above the cooling waters which once for all extinguished the last embers of those age-long enmities and grudges, replacing them by mutual sympathy and affection.

Strange as it might appear, the brotherhood of which the basis was laid in Arabia in the seventh century was not limited to that peninsula. Within a century, vast territories beyond the boundaries of Arabia received the light of learning and civilisation which was established in that little known peninsula. The unification of humanity which was the foundation-stone of this new culture was unique, and the world had not seen the like of it before. No other reformer or religion had ever dreamed of such a brotherhood of man - a brotherhood which knew no bounds of color, race, country, language or even of rank; a unity of the human race beyond which conception cannot go. It not only recognises the equality of the civil and political rights of men, but also that of their spiritual rights. “All men are a single nation” (2:213) is its fundamental doctrine, and for that reason every nation is recognised having received the spiritual gift of revelation, which up to this time had only been conceived as a gift to this or that favoured nation. “There is no nation but a warner has gone in it” (35:24).

The conception of humanity as one nation, notwithstanding the diversity of races and colours and languages and outstepping all geographical boundaries, is Islam’s unique contribution to human civilisation. It is the only panacea for the poison of national jealousies and hatred which has brought humanity, along with its civilisation, to the verge of destruction. Christianity is, like Islam, an international religion in the sense that it embraces various nations in its fold, but, in the real sense of the word, in bringing all nations to one level and in bringing about harmony among these nations, Islam is the only international religion. In this respect Christianity has been a signal failure. Christians of white colour to this day hate Christians of black colour though living in the same country, as in the case of America, the most advanced Christian country and the home of democracy, where, in spite of the pious wishes of their leaders, the Negro and the white man could not gather together under one roof until only a few years back. Christians of the West still consider themselves superior to Christians of African origin in south Africa, who cannot worship God in the same church with them. Christian converts from among the low castes in India are still untouchables in the eyes of converts to Christianity from among the high-caste Hindus. Christianity has hopelessly failed in bringing about unification of humanity. Islam, on the other hand, has given birth to a World Order of universal brotherhood in which the Western and the Eastern, the white and the black, the Aryan and the Semitic, the Indian and the Negro, stand on the same level. The moment a Negro or an untouchable enters the fold of Islam, he assumes a position of equality in all respects with the white or the high-caste converts to Islam, with every member of the Muslim brotherhood, in fact. He can not only worship in the mosque but can stand shoulder to shoulder with the noblest of his brethren, and can dine sitting on the same table with him. Islam’s levelling and harmonising influence is not known to any other religion or society or order in the world.

The real world-democracy, which signifies an equality of status for all human beings as such, can be attained only through Islam. It possesses such a mighty spiritual influence that as soon as a man joins this Order, he feels himself raised to a high level where all distinctions of race, colour, caste and rank disappear as if by a magic wand. That Islam possesses this spiritual power even today, notwithstanding the loss of its temporal power, is admitted by both, friend and foe. Here is the concluding paragraph of Gibb’s Whither Islam (p. 379):

“But Islam has yet a further service to render to the cause of humanity... No other society has such a record of success in uniting in an equality of status, of opportunity, and ofendeavour so many and so various races of mankind. The great Muslim communities of Africa, India and Indonesia, perhaps also the small Muslim communities in China and the still smaller community in Japan, show that Islam has still the power to reconcile apparently irreconcilable elements of race and tradition. If ever the opposition of the great societies of the East and West is to be replaced by cooperation, the mediation of Islam is an indispensable condition.”

What is the secret of Islam’s success in establishing a world brotherhood and in bringing about unification of different nations? In the first place, the basic teaching of Islam is that the whole human race is a single family, with God as its Creator, and its division into different branches and tribes is only meant to make people know each other better: “O Men! We have created you of a male and a female, and made you tribes and families that you may know each other; the most honourable of you with Allah is the one among you who is most careful of his duty” (49:13). And just as in individuals, so among nations. The superior nation is not that which reduces others to slavery and tramples their rights under its feet; morally such a nation is on the lower plane of a savage nation. The superior nation - the one honourable with God - is that which honours the rights of others. A Muslim’s conception of humanity, therefore, is that it is but one family, whatever differences there may be in colours and languages and cultures, with God as the Lord or, in Christian terminology, the Father of all. Members of one family may quarrel with one another for ever. In fact, this broad conception of humanity is the only safeguard against national, racial or colour prejudices, and only on this basis can peace be established on this earth.

Secondly, the basic idea of the equality and fraternity of all men is worked into practice in a Muslim’s life by the institution of prayer. All Muslims gather together daily in mosques to offer prayers, where they all stand before their Maker shoulder to shoulder, the king along with his poorest subject, the rich arrayed in gorgeous robes with the beggar clad in rags, the white man with the black. Differences of rank, wealth and colour vanish inside the mosque, and quite a new atmosphere, an atmosphere of brotherhood, equality and love, differing totally from the outside world, prevails within the holy precincts. To be able to breathe five times daily in an atmosphere of perfect peace in a world of strife and struggle, of equality where inequality is the order of the
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continued

day, and of love amid the petty jealousies and enmities of daily life, is a great blessing. Man has to work in his daily life amidst inequalities, amidst scenes of hatred and enmity; he is drawn out of these five times a day and made to realise that equality, fraternity and love are the real sources of human happiness. Even if we do not take into account the great advantage which a man gains by feeling himself in the Divine presence in the mosque, the time spent in prayer is not wasted from the point of view of active humanitarianism. On the contrary, the best use of it is made in learning those great lessons which make life worth living. And these lessons of fraternity, equality and love, when put into practice in daily life, serve as foundations for the unification of the human race and of the lasting civilisation of mankind. In fact, the five daily congregational prayers are meant, among other things, to carry into practice the theoretical lessons of equality and fraternity for which Islam stands; and however much Islam may have preached in words the equality of man and the fraternity of the community of Islam, all this would have remained a dead letter, had it not been translated into the everyday life of man through the institution of the daily congregational prayers.

At the same time prayer serves another great end. The object of religion is not merely to preach the doctrine of the existence of God as a theory; it goes far beyond that. Religion seeks to instill the conviction that God is a living force in the life of man, and prayer is the means by which it is sought to achieve this great end. The real conviction that God is comes to man, not by the belief that there is a God in the outer world, but by the realisation of the Divine within himself, and this realisation is attained through prayer. The universal experience of humanity bears out the truth of this. In every age and among every nation there have been men who, through prayer, have realised the great truth of Divine existence within their hearts, and have laid down their lives for the good of humanity. In their case, belief in the existence of God was a moral force which not only worked an entire change in their own lives, but also enabled them to transform the entire lives of nations for centuries and change the histories of peoples and countries.

Their selflessness and truthfulness were beyond reproach, and their testimony, which is the testimony of all nations in all ages, establishes the one fact that belief in the existence of God becomes a moral force of the first magnitude when once it is realised in the heart of man through prayer to the Divine Being. So great a moral force it is, indeed, that even the most powerful material forces give way before it. Is not the experience of these great personalitites a beacon-light for others, showing them that they also can make God a moral force in their lives? The powers and faculties that are given to one man are also given to another, and through their proper use one man can do what another before him has done.

In fact, civilisation does not rest on the material comforts which man has gained through conquest of Nature. Its real foundations are the noble sentiments which faith in God inspires. A cursory glance at the history of human civilisation will show that faith in God has been the supreme force in the development of mankind to its present condition. That all that is noble and good in man is not due to man's conquest of Nature but to his conquest of self, inspired by faith in God, is a truth which no one can deny. It is men like Abraham, Moses, Christ, Buddha, Krishna, Confucius and Muhammad who have changed the history of the human race, and raised it from the depths of degradation to moral heights. It is through the teachings and example of this or that prophet that man has been able to conquer his lower nature, and to set before himself the noble ideals of selflessness and service of humanity. Study the noble sentiments that inspire man today and you will find their origin in the teachings and example of some great sage who had a deep faith in God, and through whom was sown the seed of faith in other human hearts. The moral and ethical development of man to his present state, which alone in a real sense can be called the civilisation of man - the material gains are only a secondary thing - is due to faith. To all appearance, the reign of materialism must needs entail the rule of selfishness. A cut-and-dried scheme for the equal division of wealth will never inspire the noble sentiments which are today the pride of man. Godlessness will make the masses sink back, gradually of course, into the state of barbarism.

In fact, a stable human civilisation can stand only on two pillars: faith in God and unity of man. The materialism which is today prevailing in the West has pulled down both these pillars, and unless they are restored again, the West, with all its material comforts, can never have access to true happiness of the heart or to peace among the nations. And just as Islam is the only order known to this world that has been successful in establishing a world brotherhood and in welding the different nations into one nation, it is the only religion which has succeeded in keeping the spirit of man in contact with the Divine spirit, withstanding the forces of materialism. It is a fact that Muslims as a nation have more vital faith in God than the followers of any other religion. It is this faith in God that accounts for the early Muslim conquests which are unparalleled in the history of the world. So far as material resources were concerned, Persia and Rome had abundance of them and the Arabs were poor in this respect. The war machinery of the former was far more powerful; in numbers too the Arabs could not bear any comparison with the fighting forces of these two empires. Yet when these mighty empires came into clash with Muslim Arabia - and they were the aggressors - they were swept away like a straw before the mighty spiritual force of Islam, the Muslim's faith in God and in the justness of his cause. It was this same faith in God that enabled Muslims to hold their own against the onslaughts of Christian Europe during the Crusades. It is this same faith in God again that enables Muslims today to carry on the contest with Christianity for the mastery of the world, in spite of the fact that all material forces in this contest - wealth, power and organisation - are on the side of Christianity. The Islamic institution of prayer which keeps the spirit of the Muslim in touch with the Divine spirit is without doubt the basis on which this strong faith in God rests, and the value of prayer in the formation of this noble trait in the Muslim national character is incalculable. As every Muslim feels himself in the august Divine presence five times a day, faith in God sways his mentality even in his outlook on the material world, and thus becomes a living force in his life.

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Islam can thus supply to the world the two great moral forces - a living faith in God and an order based on the oneness of humanity - which can restore peace to it. Unless the world is willing to receive these two heavenly gifts from Islam, its disasters will not end. Let the West diagnose its disease with a cool mind and apply the remedy with a brave heart. Let it not repeat the mistake of earlier days and look upon its real freind as its foe. Europe sought to destroy Islam with the sword in the Crusades, but it failed. The opposition after this has taken a subtler turn. Not only did the European soldier go back to his home filled with the false conviction that Islam was Europe’s enemy, and a frightful one, because he met him only on the battlefield, and that conviction was left as an inheritance from sire to son. Europe’s leaders in political and religious thought - past masters in the art of propaganda - augmented this hatred by drawing a picture of Islam which was the very opposite of reality. Islam was, in the truest sense of the word, a message of peace for the whole world, the most tolerant religion which had ever been preached, but it was misrepresented as the most tyrannical and intolerant faith. Islam not only recognised in the clearest words the Divine origin of all the great religious systems of the world, laying it down that there was not a single nation on the face of this earth to which a warnner or a guide had not been sent to draw it closer to God; it went further and required everyone who entered the fold of Islam to believe in the prophets of all other nations, just as he believed in the Prophet of Islam. But the political and religious leaders of Europe actually drew a picture of the Prophet Muhammad as going about with the sword in one hand and the Qur’an in the other. And notwithstanding the clear light that has been thrown on these topics recently, most Western writers still represent Islam to be the religion of the sword.

Under most unfortunate misconception Europe sought to destroy Islam by weakening it politically on the one hand, and carrying on, on the other, a false and abusive propaganda against it in the religious field. If there was anything on which the whole of Europe was agreed, it was that Islam was Europe’s greatest enemy and that it must be destroyed or weakened, by fair means or foul. The politician and the missionary, to whatever nation they belonged, worked conjointly to this end. Almighty God, in His wisdom, had, however, ordained otherwise. Islam was a blessing for humanity and it had to be spared. The European nations, among which real harmony had never existed, became jealous of each other, and this jealousy ultimately developed, as it was bound to do, into the severest hatred and enmity, and the urge to destroy each other took the place of the urge to destroy Islam. Christendom’s sin of seeking to destroy its real friend has been visited with a corresponding punishment: the destruction of mutual friendly relations and the desire to destroy each other. This is in accordance with the Divine plan announced fourteen hundred years ago.

“And with those who say, We are Christians, We made a covenant, but they neglected a portion of what they were reminded of; therefore We excited hatred and enmity among them to the day of Resurrection; and Allah will inform them of what they did.”

O followers of the Book! Our Messenger has come to you making clear to you much of what you concealed of the Book and passing over much; indeed, there has come to you light and a clear Book from Allah;

“With it Allah guides him who will follow His pleasure into the ways of peace; and brings them out of darkness into light by His will and guides them to the right path.”

O followers of the Book! Indeed Our Messenger has come to you explaining to you after a cessation of the mission of the messengers, lest you say there came not to us a giver of good news and a warner. So indeed there has come to you a giver of good news and a warner” (5:14-19).

The covenant spoken of in the first verse quoted above is in reference to the prophecies of the advent of the Holy Prophet Muhammad to be met with in the Gospels, and Jesus Christ’s order to his followers to accept the great Prophet with whose advent a perfect World Order will be revealed to humanity. We are further told, in the verses quoted above, that real peace would come to Christendom only when it accepts the World Order established by Islam.

That the great civilisation of the West should work its own destruction because of its one-sided growth is also a part of the Divine plan revealed through the Holy Prophet Muhammad, the materialism of the West finding express mention in the Holy Qur’an:

“Say, Shall We inform you of the greatest losers in deeds?”

“These are they whose labour is lost in this world’s life, and they think that they are well versed in skill of the work of hands.”

“These are they who disbelieve in the communications of their Lord and His meeting, so their deeds become null, and We will not set up a balance for them on the day of resurrection.”

“Their recompense is hell because they disbelieved and held My communications and My messengers in mockery.” (18:103-106)

Here is an exact description of the civilisation of the West, of the pride of Christendom: all effort lost in this world’s life - manufacture being its great speciality - and utter loss of God-vision. So far as worldly gains are concerned, its star is in the ascendance, and looks the brightest; as regards matters spiritual, its eye is closed. The portrait of modern civilisation attains to most vivid clearness in the above verses. Manufacture is the one speciality and pride of the West; but, we are told, these people would be so engrossed in the race of manufacturing goods that they would have no thought of God left in their minds. They would therefore lose that peace of mind which God-vision alone can

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Prophethood in Judaism and Islam

By MUHAMMAD SADIQ DUDLEY WRIGHT, Ph.D.

The following article, which is reproduced here with very little alteration and with footnotes added, originally appeared in the Islamic Review for December 1947. It investigates the meaning of the terms "prophet" and "son of a prophet" as found in the Hebrew Bible. The standard work on prophecy in Ancient Israel from the point of view of modern Western critical scholarship is the book Prophecy in Ancient Israel by J. Lindblom (Oxford, Blackwell, 1962 and subsequent reprints).

The author of the article, Dr. Wright, has also written of Islam: "Islam is no mere creed: it is a life to be lived... The aim of the Muslim is to become God-bound, and to endeavour to advance the knowledge of God in all his undertakings." (Islam Our Choice, Woking, 1961, p. 108)

Selim Ahmad

The expression "Sons of the Prophets" is met with in II Kings iv, 1. The word used here for "son" is ben, which has the limited meaning of "son" or "offspring," yet it seems certain that it could not have been used here with that special application. Elsewhere, in I Samuel x, 5, xix, 20, we read of the "company of prophets," where the word used is chabel or "cord." The same word is used in Esther i, 6; Job xxxvi, 8; Psalm cxl, 5; Proverbs v, 22; and elsewhere in the Old Testament.

Rabbi Hermann Adler (one-time Chief Rabbi of Great Britain), was of the opinion that the term indicated that they were members of a guild, corporation or college. From I Samuel iii, 1; x, 5, xix, 20, it may be assumed

1. II Kings iv, 1 - Now there was a certain woman of the wives of the sons of the prophets unto Elisha, saying, Thy servant my husband is dead; and thou knowest that thy servant did fear the Lord; and the creditor is come to take unto him my two sons to be bondmen.

2. I Samuel ii, 1 - And the child Samuel ministered unto the Lord before Eli. And the Word of the Lord was precious to Eli; and he taught the things of the Lord. And when the child had grown, he knew Eli that he was the Lord's chosen one. And he taught him the things of the Lord. And when the child had grown, he knew Eli that he was the Lord's chosen one.

3. I Samuel xix, 20 - And Saul sent messengers to take Daoud, and when they saw the company of the prophets prophesying, and Samuel standing as appointed over them, the Spirit of God was upon the messenger of Saul, and they also prophesied.

4. For example, Job xxxvi, 8. And if they be bound in fetters, and be held in cords of affliction.

5. I Samuel iii, 1 - So she sat down upon the ground, and cried with a very lamentable voice.

6. II Kings iv, 1 - And it came about at the time of the harvest, that Elisha said, Go now to my master's house; and eat some bread, and tarry there until the sun is gone down.

7. II Kings iv, 1 - And the woman knew that it was the word of the Lord spoken by Elisha the prophet.

8. II Kings iv, 1 - And it came to pass, when the Lord had opened the mouth of the woman, that she spake.

9. II Kings iv, 1 - And in the same hour Elisha blessed her, and said, Behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son. And the woman conceived, and brought forth a son.

10. II Kings iv, 1 - And she said, Behold, my master, thy servant, and thy maidservant, have no more children; but this child is born to us by this time.

11. II Kings iv, 1 - And she said, Behold, my master, thy servant, and thy maidservant, have no more children; but this child is born to us by this time.

12. II Kings iv, 1 - And she said, Behold, my master, thy servant, and thy maidservant, have no more children; but this child is born to us by this time.

13. II Kings iv, 1 - And she said, Behold, my master, thy servant, and thy maidservant, have no more children; but this child is born to us by this time.

14. II Kings iv, 1 - And she said, Behold, my master, thy servant, and thy maidservant, have no more children; but this child is born to us by this time.
books of Samuel, Kings and Chronicles and other books which have been lost, mentioned in I Chronicles xxxix, 29; II Chronicles ix, 29; xii, 15; xiii, 22; xx, 34. In these schools also were trained David, the shepherd warrior, wandering outlaw, composer of psalms and the Lord's anointed; Saul, the wild and wayward king, but also the Lord's anointed; and Herman, the grandson of Samuel.

These colleges appear always to have had the leading prophet of the day as their president. With Samuel, says Dean Stanley, the long line of judges in Israel ended and the long line of prophets began. Samuel is revered among Muslims as the herald of the prophets and Muslim tradition hails him as the revealer of the mysteries of the nocturnal flight of the Holy Prophet Muhammad from Makkah to Jerusalem. He was succeeded by Elijah (II kings ii) who, when translated, was addressed by Elisha as “My father, my father.” This was, in ancient times (I Samuel x, 12; II Kings v, 13) a title of dignity, as well as of paternity. In this meaning it has been retained in the Roman and Greek churches. It is also found in the Jewish form of Ab Beth Din, or “Father of the House of Judgement.”

Dr. John Ker, in his Lectures on the History of Preaching, says:

It is the time of Samuel that we first read of companies of prophets under a director of music as forming the accompaniment of their prophecies and of the Spirit of God falling upon them as in the New Testament Church. But, doubtless, teaching was the chief part of duty and it is at this stage we find the beginning of that great advance in spirituality of view, which appears in the Psalms and later prophets, when ritual was seen to be a lower thing than mercy and truth and righteousness. This was so great a step in the prophetic position that Samuel is spoken of in the 99th Psalm as occupying a marked place “among them that call upon His name” and he is put in the Acts of the Apostles (iii, 24) at the head of the prophetic rule. Later, we hear of Schools of the Prophets at Bethel and Jericho and Gilgal, the very seats of idolatry; of the places where some of them met becoming too narrow and of their going forth to form new schools.

Moses Maimonides, in Fundamentals of the Law (chap. vii) says:

They that aspired to be enrolled in the prophetic order were called Sons of the Prophets. But, however eagerly they aspired to this high estate, it was not a thing of certainty that the Spirit of God would descend upon them. The call came only to those who were worthy instruments for receiving the divine inspiration; who were endowed with wisdom; who, self-controlled, led the simple life, holding themselves aloof from the toiddles and vanities of earth and its many inventions. The call came to those who had purged their minds from sordid cares and who devoted their thoughts to spiritual concerns, meditating upon the goodness and wisdom of God.

According to Ewald, there were secular privileges attached to membership of the Schools. In Antiquities of Israel, he says:

A prophet, especially if he had vindicated his position, had the right according to the fundamental constitution of the nation, i.e., the Theocracy itself, of speaking in the national assembly or elsewhere in public. That right was maintained unquestioned, even to a late period, however much the public authority of the prophets might gradually decline after the ninth and eighth centuries B.C.

There is no evidence that admission to the Schools of the Prophets was limited to any particular class or rank in life. In all probability Gehazi was a member of one of these Schools under Elisha’s leadership. Seeing that he was entrusted with an important mission, he could have been no menial. His punishment came when he proved unable to withstand greed and covetousness. On the other hand, Amos, the shepherd and dresser of sycamore trees, of Takoah, became an inspired messenger, although he says definitely (vii, 14) that he was neither a prophet nor a prophet’s son.

Whence arose the prophets? Dr. Claud G. Montefiore thinks that the most probable theory is that prophecy was of Canaanitish origin and that it was borrowed or imitated by the Hebrews from the Canaanites, that seers and prophets coalesced, the former being the older society or order. Nabi is the Hebrew term for “prophet” and Abraham (Genesis xx, 7) is the first person in the Old Testament to be so described; he is followed by Moses (Deuteronomy xxxiv, 10, et seq.). He was regarded as the greatest of the prophets, because to him was entrusted the supreme privilege of communicating the Law unto Israel. By the time of Samuel, prophecy had become a permanent institution and, for the first time (I Samuel x; xix) we read of the nebiim, “disciples of the prophets” to become masters in due time. But neither the name nor the office had its origin among the Hebrews. Nebi or Nabi was the herald or prophet of Marduk, the great Babylonian deity. In Babylonia and Assyria, divination was an organized function of the State and the art of divination has been traced to Emmerdunki, the Babylonian. As nebo was the Babylonian expression for “interpreter of the gods,” W. E. Addis thinks it was also used by the Hebrews to denote “spokesman” or “interpreter.” The late Rev. A. A. Green, a Jewish scholar, propounded the theory that the Schools of the Prophets are to be identified with the Order of the Nazarites, who, whenever they are mentioned, are intimately connected with

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12 I Samuel xix, 20; see above, footnote 2.
13 I Chronicles xxviii, 29; see above, footnote 11.
14 II Chronicles xxxix, 9-10, and the acts of the acts of Solomon, first and last, are not written in the book of Nathan the prophet, and in the prophecy of Ahijah the Shilonite, and in the visions of Iddo the seer against Jeroboam the son of Nebat.
15 II Chronicles xii, 15. Now the acts of Rehoboam, first and last, are not written in the book of Shemariah the prophet, and of Iddo the seer concerning genealogies.
16 An important medieval Jewish theologian and philosopher.

17 Amos vii, 14. - Then answered Amos, and said to Amaziah, I am no prophet, neither was I a prophet’s son: but I was an herdman, and a gatherer of sycamore fruit.
18 Genesis xxvii, 7. - Now therefore rise early, and feed my flock, as thou wentest to feed my father.
19 I Samuel x, 5; xii, 20; see above, footnote 2.
Did Jesus Ascend? Quranic View

By ARFAQE MALIK

The entire super-structure of the Christian faith is built on a dogma: the death of Jesus on the cross, his resurrection and his bodily ascension to heaven. Islam categorically rejects this dogma: "They slew him not nor crucified him." (H. Qur'an 4:157) Some of the Muslim scholars have attempted in vain to paint this episode in the colors borrowed from the Christians. But do the Quranic injunctions warrant this interpretation? The Holy Qur'an says:

"And because of their saying we slew the Messiah Jesus, son of Mary, Allah's Messenger - They slew him not nor crucified but it appeared so unto them; and lo! those who disagree concerning it are in doubt thereof; they have no knowledge thereof save persuit of a conjecture; they slew him not for certain." (4:157)

It is accepted that Jesus was apparently placed on the cross and they were determined to kill him but they failed in their attempt and Jesus escaped death on the cross. Allah created circumstances to save Jesus dying an accursed death. (Deut. 21:23)

There is nothing in the Holy Qur'an to suggest that "Jesus was taken up" so much so that even Mawlana Mauloodi in his popular commentary Tafhimul - Qur'an had to admit that "The Qur'an . . . is silent about the nature and the details of the matter and does neither say explicitly whether Allah raised him bodily from the earth to some place in the heaven, nor does it say that he died like other mortals and only his soul was raised to heaven. It has been couched in such a language that nothing can be said definitely about the incident except that it was uncommon and extraordinary." (note 195 to verse 4:157) That is not the whole truth. It is wrong to say that "nothing can be said definitely." If we interpret this verse with the application of the rules of interpretation, we arrive at only one conclusion: that Jesus had died - that he is not living. The same rules of interpretation have led Muhammad Asad to the conclusion: "The Qur'an catagogically denies the story of the crucifxion of Jesus." (note 171 on verse 4:157 in his commentary: The Message of the Qur'an) He further goes on to explain: "There exist, among Muslims, many fanciful legends telling us that at the last moment God substituted for Jesus, a person closely resembling him (according to some accounts, that person was Judas), who was subsequently crucified in his place. However, none of these legends finds the slightest support in the Qur'an and in authentic traditions, and the stories produced in this connection by classical commentators must be summarily rejected. They represent no more than confused attempts at "harmonizing" the Quranic statement that Jesus was not crucified with the graphic description, in the Gospels, of his crucifixion. The story of the crucifixion as such has been succinctly explained in the Quranic phrase wa-lakin shuhbiha lahum, which I render as 'but it only appeared to them as if it had been so' - implying that in the course of time, long after the time of Jesus, a legend had somehow grown up (probably under the then powerful influence of Nihraitic beliefs) to the effect that he had died on the cross in order to atone for the 'original sin' with which mankind is allegedly burdened; and this legend became so firmly established among the latter-day followers of Jesus that even his enemies, the Jews, began to believe it - albeit in a derogatory sense (for crucifixion was, in those times, a heinous form of death-penalty reserved for the lowest of criminals). This, to my mind, is the only satisfactory explanation of the phrase wa-lakin shubhbiha lahum, the more so as the expression shubhbiha li is idiomatically synonymous with khuyyila li, '(a thing) became a fancied image to me', i.e. 'in my mind' - in other words, '(it) seemed to me' (see Qamus art. Khayala, as well as Lane II, 833 and IV, 1500)." He rejects the theory of bodily ascension of Jesus and explains that the verb rafa'aahu (Lit. 'he raised him' or 'elevated him'), as in verses 4:158 and 3:55, "has always, whenever the act of ra' (elevating) a human being is attributed to God, the meaning of 'honouring' or 'exalting'. Nowhere in the Holy Qur'an is there any warrant for the popular belief that God has 'taken up' Jesus bodily, in his life time, into heaven. The expression 'God exalted him unto Himself' in above verse (4:158) denotes the elevation of Jesus to the realm of God's Special Grace - a blessing in which all prophets partake - as is evident from 19:57 where the verb rafa'ahu ('we exhasted him') is used with regard to the prophet Idris (see also Muhammad Abdula in Manar III 316f and VI 20f)." That was Muhammad Asad commenting on the Quranic verses 4:157 and 4:158 in his "The Message of the Qur'an."

The application of the same rule of interpretation forced Sheikh Muhammad Shaltut to the conclusion: "There is nothing in the Holy Qur'an, nor in the sacred traditions of the Prophet, which endorses the correctness of the belief in the contentment of heart that Jesus was taken up to heaven with his body and is alive there even now . . . "(Al-Risalah, Cairo, vol. 10 no. 462, P515).

He further writes in the same article: "The word tawafa is used in so many places in the sense of death that it has become its foremost meaning: 'Say the angel of death, who is given charge of you, shall cause you to die.' (32:11);'(As for) those whom the angels caused to die while they are unjust to themselves.' (4:97); 'And if thou couldst see when the angels will cause to die thou who disbelieve.' (8:50); 'Our Messengers caused him to die.' (22:5); 'Make me die in submission and join me with the righteous.' (12:101)." It is absolutely clear from the Quranic verses quoted by Sheikh Shaltut that tawafa has no other meaning other than taking away the soul either in sleep or death, particularly when God is the subject and a human being the object. The interpretation is also supported by Ibn-Abbas. According to him, as narrated in Bukhri, Muttawafika means Mumiituka. (i.e. I will cause thee to die).

Jesus was messenger (5:75), a mortal (21:7) subjected to the laws of Allah. Allah created human beings (and Jesus was a human being) and ordained that Death shall be their common lot. Life without death has not been granted to anyone. All human beings are mortals and accordingly must die on earth. There are numerous verses that clearly indicate that every soul must taste of death: "Every soul shall taste of death."(3:185);"Every soul must taste of death."(21:35);"He said(to continued next page . . .

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man) therein (on earth) you shall live and therein you shall die.” (7:25); “We appointed immortality for no mortal before thee.” (21:34); “And He it is who gave you life, then He will cause you to die.” (22:66); “Every one in it (earth) must pass away.” (55:26); “We have ordained death among you.” (56:60); “Then He causes him to die and assigns him to a grave.” (80:21); “Verily we created man from a product of wet earth; then placed him as a drop of seed in a safe lodging; then we make the life-germ a clot, then we make the clot a lump of flesh bones, then we clothe the bones with flesh, then we cause it to grow into another creation. So blessed be Allah the Best of Creators! Then after that you certainly die.” (23:11-15).

In contrast with the life of man which must come to an end in accordance with the fundamental law laid down by the above verses, the Qur'an says that Allah alone is “Everlasting who does not die.” (25:58) The Qur'an lays down the principle that a man must die (21:35) and that only Allah lives forever (25:58). It does not contemplate any change or exception as it is categorically stated: “And you shall not find a change in Our course.” (27:77); “And you shall not find any change in the course of Allah.” (33:62); “Thou wilt not find for the law of Allah aught of power to change.” (48:23); “Thou wilt not find for Allah's way of treatment any substitute, nor wilt thou find for Allah's way of treatment aught of power to change.” (35:43).

The fundamental principles, wherein there can be no change (27:77) are: (i) a mortal must die (3:185) and (ii) a mortal cannot live for ever as only Allah lives for ever (25:58). The application of these principles force us to believe that Jesus must have died a natural death as he was a mortal, a human being subject to all divine laws (21:78; 25:20; 5:75). How could Jesus escape death (3:103; 20:55; 2:28) when Allah says: “Wherever you are, death will overtake you, though you are in towers raised high.” (4:78)?

Conclusive proof that Jesus died a natural death is furnished by the verse 5:117. In verse 5:116 Allah is said to remonstrate with Jesus and enquires if he taught his followers: “Take me and my mother for two gods besides Allah.” (5:116) Jesus is made to say: “I said nothing to them except that which Thou didst command me: Serve Allah, My Lord and your Lord. And I was a witness over them as long as I remained among them, but when Thou didst cause me to die (i.e. after my death) Thou hast been the Watcher over them and Thou art witness over all things.” (5:117) The following facts are revealed by this verse:

(i) As long as Jesus was alive he kept a careful watch on those who followed him; (ii) but he did not know how they behaved after his death; (iii) the followers of Jesus have gone astray.

Accordingly, as long as Jesus lived his teachings were uncorrupted. The doctrine of his Divinity was introduced after his death or he could not plead ignorance. This verse (5:117) conclusively proves that Jesus will not return, for if he returns to this earth this verse is rendered void. Moreover, he should have said that he had corrected his people on second coming. He does not say so. A report in Sahih Bukhari supplements the proof provided by the verse 5:117. It is narrated that on the day of Resurrection the Prophet would be shown some men from among his Ummah being dragged towards hell. The Holy Prophet (8:8) is reported to have said that he will plead: “I was a witness over them as long as I remained among them, but when Thou didst cause me to die (i.e. after my death) Thou hast been the watcher over them and Thou art witness over all things.” (Al-Bukhari Kitab-ul Tafseer) Note the words. They are identical to those of verse 5:117. Since the words are same, the same meaning must also be assigned to them. Double standards cannot be accepted.

No Muslim during the life time of the Holy Prophet believed about the so-called ascension of Jesus. The deniers of his (i.e. Holy Prophet’s) mission challenged him to prove his prophethood by ascending to heaven (17:93). Did Allah empower the Holy Prophet to show this miracle? No - instead the Prophet had to say: “I am but a mortal sent as a messenger,” (17:93) The Question arises: was not Jesus a mortal? How could he ascend when the Holy Prophet could not? The only conclusion is that Jesus must have died a natural death on this earth. If Jesus had ascended, why did no one refer to his ascension to refute the Prophet’s argument that he was only a mortal and a messenger.

The fact that Jesus has died is further apparent from verse 144 of Surah Al-imran: “And Muhammad is only an apostle; all of the (other) apostles have passed away before him; if, then, he dies or is slain, will you turn about on your heels? (3:144; Asad's translation)

It is clearly indicated in this verse that: (i) the Holy Prophet was mortal; (ii) all the prophets before him (including Jesus) were mortals and (iii) all the prophets before the Holy Prophet had died. Hadrat Abu Bakr argued on the basis of this very verse about the death of the Holy Prophet when some of his companions thought that the Prophet was not dead and could not die. The Muslims accepted his arguments. If the people had believed that Jesus or some other prophets are alive, Hadrat Abu Bakr’s arguments could not have satisfied the doubters in the prophet’s death. No one referred to any living prophet. None of them mentioned anything about the ascension of Jesus. The only logical conclusion is that they did not believe that Jesus had ascended to heaven or was alive.

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Knowledge & Learning

The illiterate Prophet says the following as to knowledge and learning:

(I) Acquire knowledge. It enables its possessor to distinguish right from wrong. It lights the way to the heaven; it is our friend in the desert, our society in solitude; our companion when friendless; it guides us to happiness, it sustains us in misery, it is an ornament among friends, and an armour against enemies.

(II) Seek knowledge from cradle to the grave.

(III) Go in search of knowledge even to China (a very distant place).

(IV) Whoso honoureth the learned, honours me.

(V) The knowledge from which no benefit is derived is like a treasure from which no charity is bestowed in the way of the Lord.

(VI) Excessive knowledge is better than excessive praying; it is better to teach knowledge one hour in the night than to pray the whole night.

(VII) Who are the learned? Those who practise what they know.
Muslim Woman, An Equal of Man in Rights.
(N. A. FARUQI, LAHORE)

QUESTION:
In Islam, is it permissible for women to join with men in religious organisations, sharing the executive as well as committee positions?

ANSWER:
There were no organizations like the present-day ones and executive positions in the early days of Islam. Nor is there any direct reference to them in the Holy Quran and Sunnah. So we will have to resort to *ijtimad* in meeting the present-day situations.

2. For the purpose of *ijtimad* on the question raised, one has to bear in mind the following facts:

(a) Men and women are the same in the eyes of Allah so far as their spiritual and material rights are concerned. That should be clear from the following, among the many, verses of the Holy Quran on the subject:

"O mankind! Guard yourselves against Allah's reckoning Who created you from a single soul and created his mate from the same soul, and spread from these two many men and women. And guard yourselves against Allah's reckoning by Whom you demand (rights) of each other." (4:1)

"I (Allah) will not waste the work of a worker among you, whether male or female, the one of you being of the other." (3:194)

"And whoever does good deeds, whether male or female, and he (or she) is a believer - these shall enter the Paradise." (40:40)

(b) The Holy Quran speaks of women even receiving Divine revelation, the highest blessing of Allah to mankind. (3:41; 28:7)

(c) Women were given the right of inheriting property (4:7), a right not so extensively available even to the so-called emancipated women of today.

(d) Women can also earn their own living: "Men shall have the benefit of what they earn and women shall have the benefit of what they earn." (4:32)

(e) Women have also got the right to go to the mosque to join the congregational prayers (Bukhari, 10:162, 164) and religious gatherings.

(f) They also join men soldiers in battle to perform a large number of duties such as the carrying of provisions (Bukhari, 56:66), care of the sick and wounded, and carrying drinking water (Bukhari, 56:67), removing the wounded and the slain from the battle-field (Bukhari, 56:8). They could take part in actual fighting when necessary (Bukhari, 56:62, 63, 65).

(g) Women can do any work they like. They helped their husbands in the labour of the field (Bukhari, 67:108); they served the male guests at a feast (Bukhari, 67:78); they could carry on business (Bukhari, 11:40); they could sell to and purchase from men, and men could sell to and purchase from women (Bukhari, 34:67). A woman was appointed by Hazrat 'Umar (the second Caliph) to be the superintendent of the market of Madinah.

(h) But those were exceptions. And the proper sphere of the woman was the house and the care of the children (33:33). The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) however permitted them to go out for their "needs" (hijab) as reported in Bukhari, 4:13 and 67:116.

(i) Intermingling of the sexes without necessity does not seem to be permissible (33:33). And even when women are permitted to go out of their homes they are prohibited from displaying their beauty (24:31 & 33:33) and are required to wear a cover or over-garment (24:31 & 33:59). This is because the women, as opposed to men, are allowed to wear colourful clothes, ornaments and other adornments, and are more attractive physically and sexually. Even women of advanced age, who are permitted to put off their over-garments, without displaying their adornment, are advised that they adopt modesty (24:60). The requirement of over-garment was relaxed in emergencies or special circumstances such as work in the battle-field or the farms (and now factories). But even there the discipline of the prophets and their schools. Both Samuel and Elijah, he says, were Nazarites, both ecstatic prophets and both identified with the Schools of the Prophets. Amos, he says, used the terms *Nabi* and *Nazir* indiscriminately. *Nabi* is also the Arabic word for "prophet" and the meaning of *Naba* is "an announcement of great utility" or, secondarily, "a prediction." It has, therefore, a wider application than that given to it in common speech, where it is limited to prediction.

The Qur'an supplies more details about the prophets than the Bible, although the latter contains several books supposed to have been written by them, which later research has demonstrated to be, in many instances, a fallacious belief.

The line of the prophets sent to the nations, as given in the Qur'an, is a lengthy one, but it is nowhere suggested that the list is complete nor even that the names of all the prophets are even known to men. Indeed, the contrary is definitely asserted. For instance, we read in the Qur'an (xxv, 24):

Surely We have sent you with the Truth as the bearer of good news and a warner; and there is not a people but a warner has gone among them.

Muhammad Ali, in his translation of the Holy Qur'an (appendix I), has the following note on this verse:

This broad doctrine that a prophet was raised among every nation is taught repeatedly in the Qur'an and, curiously enough, it is met with in the earlier revelations at Makka as well as the later revelations at Madina. This great truth, which had remained hidden for thousands of years from the wisest men of the world, had shone upon an unlearned Arabian, who could not have even known what nations then existed and what scriptures they possessed. This broad doctrine forms the basis of the universality of a divine message to the whole of mankind.

Also in the Qur'an (iv, 165), we read:

We sent apostles as the givers of good news and as warners, so that people should not have a plea against Allah after the coming up of the apostles.
MUSLIM WOMEN

continued

play of adornments or the bodies of the women was not contemplated.

() To come to the specific question raised about the membership of religious and other organizations and their committees, it seems to be no prohibition of women being appointed to them with men so long as: [1] they dress simply and wear a plain over-garment, and [2] A woman is not placed alone with a man. There are some sayings of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) which prohibit a woman being alone with a man who is not her near relative (duh mahram or a person with whom marriage is prohibited) unless a duh mahram is present (Bukhari, 67:112).

This is supported by a verse of the Holy Quran which requires a single man to ask a woman who is alone “from behind a curtain.” (33:53) But when other people are also present, or one is exposed to public view, there is no harm in being alone with a woman (Bukhari, 67:113).

PROPHETHOOD IN JUDAISM

continued

And in x, 47: “And every nation had an apostle,” concerning which Muhammad Ali has written:

This is one of the noblest lessons that the Qur’an has taught of which humanity will always be under the deepest obligations to the Holy Prophet.

What may be regarded as a striking poetical commentary on the foregoing quotations from the Holy Qur’an has been contributed to literature by James Russell Lowell:

God sends His teachers into every age, To every clime and race of men, With revelations fitted to their growth, And shape of mind, nor gives the realm of Truth, Into the selfish rule of one sole race Therefore, each form of worship that hath swayed The life of Man and given it to grasp The master-key of knowledge - reverence, Enfolds some germ of goodness and of right; Else never had the eager soul, which loathes The slothful down of pampered ignorance Found in it even a moment's fitful rest.

We talk of nations and races, but the Qur’an speaks of one nation only - the human race, of which Allah is Lord and King. Muslims do not speak of revelations made by the prophets, but of revelations made by Allah through the prophets. In the Qur’an (ii, 13) we read:

All people are a single nation, so Allah raised prophets as bearers of good news and as warners.

When we speak of the ‘brotherhood of man’, a phrase often on men’s lips with a political application, we limit it mentally to a brotherhood of nations on one planet only - the Earth. Allah, however, is, in Islam, Lord of All the Worlds and the brotherhood of Islam is coextensive with His realm and government. This, says Muhammad Ali, is not a dry dogma but a living principle. Allah is not a local deity, as He was to the pre-Islamic Arabs, but the Universal Lord.

Muslims accept, not only Muhammad as The Prophet, but they accept and honour all the prophets who preceded him, whether mentioned or not by name in the Qur’an or the Bible. We read in Qur’an xl, 78:

We sent apostles before you; there are some of them We have mentioned to you and there are others whom We have not mentioned to you.

Adam is mentioned in the Qur’an and the Bible but the Qur’an does not state that he whom we know and call by the name of Adam was the first man in point of time. This is the name mentioned in the first chapter of Genesis and its meaning is “earth” or “earthly.” When, however, we come to the second chapter of Genesis, the Hebrew of the term “man” is no longer adam but ish, which means “a superior man,” a man of spiritual apprehension and of higher intelligence. This duplication of terms to denote man is to be found in nearly, if not all, root languages; it serves to disprove the erroneous doctrine of the Fall of Man and illustrates, rather, the mental and spiritual progression of man as taught in the Qur’an.

xviii, 37: Do you disbelieve in Him who created you from dust, then from a small life-gem, then He made you a perfect man? xxii, 7:9: Who made good everything that He has created and He began the creation of man from dust... then He made him complete and breathed into him of His spirit.

xl, 67: He it is who created you from dust, then from a small life-gem, then from a clot, then He brings you forth as a child, then that you may attain your maturity.

Two names are also given for “prophet” - nabi, as we have seen, alike in Hebrew and Arabic; and rasul, “the sent one,” which is of special significance. It is, of course, familiar to Muslims who repeat it several times daily in the first article of the Creed of Islam.

In the Qur’an (xxiii, 40) we read: “Muhammad is the seal of the prophets.” This word “seal” has been interpreted by Lane to mean “the last” and this interpretation has secured a world-wide circulation. There is no warrant, however, for accepting this as a term indicating finality, except, as Muhammad Ali points out, it is combined with the perfection of the attributes of prophethood. Muhammad Ali says:

He is the seal of the prophets because with him the object of prophethood, the manifestation of the Divine Will in laws which shall guide humanity, was finally accomplished in the revelation of a perfect law in the Holy Qur’an and he is also the seal of the prophets because certain favours bestowed on the prophets were for ever to continue among his followers.

To seal a document is to give it authority and authenticity to its contents and the practice in legal circles is for the person signing such document to place his (or her) forefinger on the seal and say “I deliver this as my act and deed.”

An impression is abroad that revelation ceases at a certain period or stage in human existence, but there is no authority for such opinion and Sufism, for instance, recognizes no time-limit to Divine revelation. Revelation in the sense of Communion with Allah is possible and occurs, as is held by Jews, Christians and Muslims without limitation of time or nationality or place. It occurs, not by the incarnation of a divinity or deity, but by the spiritual progression of the individual and his purification from sensuality.

Neither Jesus nor Muhammad claimed or attempted to found a new religion. That was not the mission of either. Rather, in each instance, it was
give. They would have too thick scales on their eyes to see beyond their little manufactures and have a glimpse of the blissful glory of God. The passion for production and possession would so seize upon them that it would make them oblivious of all higher values of life. Production and more production, possession and more possession - this would be the be-all and the end-all of life with them. Whole nations would be engrossed in these pursuits, and in these they would strive to outstrip one another. At long last, however, these very manufactures of theirs would prove their undoing. Their hearts would get filled with mutual hatred, and they would be out, day and night, planning and counter-planning, to encompass the destruction of one another.

This destruction of the materialistic civilisation of the West is still more explicitly mentioned in the beginning of the 18th Chapter - The Cave - which deals with the history of Christianity, the verses quoted above occurring towards the end of it:

"And to warn those who say, Allah has taken a son, They have no knowledge of it, nor have their fathers; a grievous word it is that comes out of their mouths...

"Then may be thou wilt kill thyself with grief, sorrowing after them, if they do not believe in this announcement.

"We have made whatever is on this earth an embellishment for it, so that We may try them which of them is best in work.

"And We will surely make what is on it bare ground, without herbage.

"(18:4-8)"

The first verse shows that it is the Christian nations that are being spoken of here; the last two show that these nations will beautify the earth with their conquests of Nature, but that all this, because of their own misdeeds, will come to ruin, and the beautiful cities raised on it will be razed to the ground and great gardens turned into waste-land.

Elsewhere it is stated that this devastation of civilisation will be so wide as to cover the whole earth, not a town will remain that will not have a taste of this ruin:

"And there is not a town but We will destroy it before the day of resurrection or chastise it with a severe chastisement - this is written in the Book." (17:58)

We are further told that the sentence of punishment which will be brought down on these nations as a consequence of their great sin in rejecting the peace which Islam offers, may in seeking to destroy this Divine Message of Peace, will be executed through these nations themselves. Europe will be the instrument through which Europe's ruin will be worked. Providence sometimes appoints one people to punish another. The Jews were punished for their transgressions at the hands of Nebuchadnezzar. The Muslims were visited with Divine punishment at the hands of Hulagu, when Baghdad, the centre of Muslim civilisation, was razed to the ground. Europe was too powerful to be punished by another people; she is made to suffer torture for her evil deeds at her own hands. This part of the Divine scheme is also made clear in the Holy Qur'an, where Western nations are spoken of under the name of Gog and Magog: "When Gog and Magog are made to overrule the world and they shall break forth from every elevated place." (21:96) In Hadith, Gog and Magog are described as powerful nations which would overcome the world, and with whom "no people of the world will have the power to fight." (M.)

In the case of these nations, transgression was therefore to be punished by making some of them rise against others. Here again the Holy Qur'an is clear:

"And on that day We will forsake them - a part of them rising in waves against another." (18:99)

And again:

"And We will bring forth hell, exposed to view, on that day before the unbelievers." (18:100)

This is what we actually find. European people first fell upon foreign lands and subjugated the weaker nations. No nation of the world had the might to withstand them. After having overcome almost the whole world, they rushed at and fell in deadly grips with one another. They have themselves become the instruments of ruining what they built with their own hands. The hell that is spoken of in the above verses as being the result of their mutual conflict is raging today, not only in Europe but more or less throughout the world. God deals justly by His creatures, and this hell in this world has been made manifest because men would not mind God's Reminder, would not even lend their ears to any such talk:

"These are the people whose eyes were under a cover from My Reminder and who could not even hear to hear." (18:101)

According to the Holy Qur'an, however, all chastisement is corrective:

"And We sent apostles to nations before thee, then We seized them with distress and affliction so that they might humble themselves." (6:42)

The travails of the world are not in vain. Out of affliction comes real happiness. Evolution is working not only physically but also spiritually.

In the very verse of the Holy Qur'an, the one most repeated, God is spoken of as Rabb al-âlâmín. The word Rabb means fostering of a thing in such a manner as to make it attain one condition after another until it reaches its goal of completion, and 'âlâmín means worlds or nations. Hence God, according to Islam, is Nourisher unto perfection of mankind, of all the nations. The world is moving on towards advancement by steps and stages. And the World War II disaster, the heaviest ruin that has ever visited this earth, may move the world on by the largest stride. Speaking of the great conflict of European nations, the Holy Qur'an says:

"And the trumpet will be blown and We shall gather them together as one people." (18:99)

The blowing of the trumpet indicates the coming of a mighty revolution. The unification of the fighting nations into one nation is a broad enough hint at the nation of Islam: for there is but one faith, Islam, which has been able to weld different nations into one homogeneous whole; and this, therefore, is the New World

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CALL FOR A NEW WORLD ORDER

continued

Order on which depends the advancement of man towards a higher goal.

As already shown, Islam was successful in bringing about a unification of the dissentient elements of humanity through Divine service, i.e., by deepening the roots of God-consciousness in human heart. And though faith in God and faith in the oneness of humanity must remain the two foundations of any World Order that could subsist and save humanity from disaster and restore to it peace of mind, yet even the oneness of humanity is only a corollary of vital faith in God, and therefore faith in God is the real foundation. The torch of this faith is kept burning by the God-consciousness which is awakened in the human heart by the Islamic institution of prayer. Islam does not allow that God-consciousness which is implanted in the very nature of man, should lie dormant for six days in the week and then receive a stirring up on the seventh. It is a fire which can be kept live only if stirred every now and then.

Prayer is, therefore, a part of the everyday affairs of man. There is a prayer in the morning when rising from the bed - man’s first daily work - and a prayer in the night when going to bed - his last daily work; and in the midst of these there are other prayers during hours of business or recreation. This is the Islamic arrangement: to call back a man when he is in the midst of his worldly engagements and to usher him into the divine presence; to awaken him, in the midst of all his turmoils and agitations which are likely to lead away his mind from God, the consciousness that there is a Higher Presence to Whom he is really responsible for every act; to remind him in the hour of triumph that he is nothing but a weak and humble creature of God, and in the hour of his failure and disappointment that he has still a support to fall back upon, and that there is nothing to despair of. Prayer thus not only awakens God-consciousness in man; it adds a new zeal to his work, to which he goes back with a fresh mind.

What is the prayer which Islam teaches? It gives the individual full freedom to ask from God for anything that he needs and to give vent to his feelings in the presence of his Maker as he likes, but at the same time it directs him to seek in first place guidance from the All-Knowing, All-Powerful God. The Muslim’s most important prayer is that contained in the Opening Chapter of the Holy Qur’an, a prayer which he generally offers five times a day:

“Thee do we serve (O our Nourisher unto perfection!)
And of Thee do we ask for help;
The path of those on whom Thou hast bestowed favours.” (1:4-6)

In the first place, this prayer creates in man the mentality to “serve God,” to obey the Divine commandments even when they are opposed to his own wishes, or to the requirements of his environment, or to the usages and traditions of the people among whom he lives. Secondly, it creates the mental attitude not to despair in the greatest difficulties and to seek strength when all means have failed, from the Source of all strength. The man who depends on the help of God knows no despair, and has the strength to withstand the hardest trials.

The most important part of this prayer, however, is that in which man is taught to seek guidance from God in all his affairs. The Muslim’s God does not live on his lips; He lives in the deepest depths of his heart. He seeks help from Him hourly, and He seeks guidance from Him in whatever He undertakes. If one does not believe in a guiding God, one does not believe in Him at all. Are we not in the midst of difficulties every now and then? Is there not darkness around us momentarily? Who can show us light in the midst of darkness? It is only God. The man is morally armed who seeks guidance from God in all his affairs, and this is what prayer in Islam means.

Prayer is an expression of the soul’s inmost desire, and the desire that Islam seeks to create in the human heart is to be guided in the right path, to be led on and on to the great goal of life. It makes the soul aspire to the highest eminence. The Muslim’s attitude towards the world is not one of inaction or listlessness; it is one of continuous struggle to be led on and on until he attains to perfection. He gives praise to God at every step, cries out alhamdu-lillah (all praise is due to God), and the mentality thus created is to live in perfect peace with his environment. Yet he is not in a stationary condition. Nor is he the slave of his environment; he struggles and strives throughout his life to master it. He does not stand for peace without progress, nor yet for progress without peace, but for peace and progress combined. The mentality thus created in the individual ultimately becomes a national characteristic, for individuals make a nation; and when the same mentality is created in all the individuals of a nation, it becomes the nation’s mentality. If one wants to see what change Islam can bring about, one should only study the all-round progress that the earlier Muslim generations made in the world.

Prayer, however, is not the only means through which Islam keeps faith alive in the heart of man, and thus makes religion a vital force in his life. There is also the Divine arrangement which is peculiar to Islam that there appear in it from time to time men of a higher God-consciousness who draw their fellow-beings closer to God and revive faith in Him. The followers of all religions believe that God spoke to some great sage or sages of the past; but Islam alone, of all the religions of the world, teaches that God speaks to the elect even now as He spoke in the past. The question naturally arises: If God listens to prayers as He listened in the past, how is it that He does not speak now as He spoke in the past? Therefore, though revelation was made perfect and prophethood came to a close in the person of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, it does not mean that God has ceased to speak after that. He speaks to the elect even now, because speaking is one of His attributes, and Divine attributes never cease to function. Prophets are not raised now because the Law was made perfect with the advent of the holy Prophet Muhammad; but revelation and prophethood are two different things, and it is an error to confuse the discontinuance of prophethood with the discontinuance of revelation. Revelation in its lower forms is common to both prophets and those that are not prophets; it is only the highest form of revelation which is peculiar to the prophets.

This is, in fact, the reason why faith in God has ceased to be a vital force except in Islam. That God revealed Himself and spoke to a man thousands of years ago, and that this is not the
CALL FOR A NEW WORLD ORDER

continued

universal experience of humanity, deprives faith in God of all vitality. In fact, God and religion are thus dismissed as things of the past, and Revelation becomes a story with no living force. Islam universalises revelation and establishes it on a scientific basis. Revelation, in the first place, according to the Holy Qur'an, is not the solitary experience of this or that nation but the universal experience of humanity. The elect to whom God spoke and revealed Himself appeared among all nations and in all ages, and revelation is thus the experience of the whole human race. And, secondly, Islam teaches that Revelation is still a fact and God still speaks to His elect. Such elect are even now needed to impart vitality to faith in God; but they are not called prophets because they do not bring a new law, nor do they make any changes in the existing law.

In fact, the finality of prophethood was a need without which the unification of humanity was impossible. Every nation had its prophet; and thus, though prophethood was in one sense a universal fact, prophets appearing in every nation, it was more or less a national institution, the scope of the teachings of every prophet being limited to his own nation. National prophethood cemented the bonds of national unity; but the time was fast approaching when international unity or world unity would be needed, and this could be effected only by sending a world-prophet, or one prophet to all the nations of the world. Only thus could the grand idea of unifying the whole human race be brought to perfection. The Holy Prophet Muhammad's mission is thus described in the Holy Qur'an:

"Blessed is He Who sent down the Qur'an upon His servant that he may be a Warner to all the nations.”

(25:1)

"Say (O Prophet!) I am the Apostle of Allah to you all, of Him Whose is the kingdom of the heavens and the earth.”

(7:158)

"And We have not sent thee but as a bearer of good news and as a Warner to all the people.”

(34:28)

"And We have not sent thee but as a mercy to all the nations.”

(21:107)

The Prophet Muhammad was a prophet of God like any other prophet, but his advent marked a revolution in the history of prophethood. The day of the national prophet came to an end, and a new day dawned upon the world with the world-prophet who was to combine the different nations into one nation. The grand idea of unifying the whole human race, and gathering it together under one banner, was thus brought to perfection. All geographical limitations were swept away as were all bars of colour and race, and the basis of the unity of the human race was laid upon the grand principle that the whole human race was one, and that all men, wherever they may be found, were a single nation. Such unity could not be accomplished unless the finality of prophethood was established; for, if prophets continued to appear after the world-prophet, they would undoubtedly demand the allegiance of this or that section, and shatter the very foundations of unity at which Islam aimed by giving a single prophet to the whole world.

To revert to the original subject that God even now speaks to the elect, there is a clear saying of the Holy Prophet Muhammad: “Surely there were among those before you people to whom God spoke but they were not prophets; if there be such a one among my people, it is ‘Umar.” (B.62:6) This shows that, though there would be no prophets after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, yet God will speak to the elect among the Muslims. Not only because speaking is an attribute of the Divine Being just as hearing and seeing are His attributes, but also because it is through His word that real conviction comes to the heart that God exists, and it is through such elect that a vital faith in God is restored. They are the renewers of the faith of the masses. Such elect are specially spoken of as rising at the commencement of every century:

"Surely Allah will raise up for this community (of Muslims) at the commencement of every century one who will renew their religion.”

(AD.36:1)

Such a person is called a mujaddid, or a reviver, in the terminology of Islam, and he not only revives faith in God but also removes errors which have crept up among Muslims, and sheds new light on the great religious truths of Islam in the new circumstanc-

ces which the Muslim community is called upon to face. The Mujaddid of the fourteenth century of Hijra was Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian, the founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement - the latest revivalistic movement in Islam - who appeared at the commencement of the 14th century A.H., i.e. about the year 1882 C.E.

Amongst other matters, he laid foundations for the propogation of Islam in Europe and America so that it may serve as the basis for a new World Order that can guarantee peace on Earth.

DID JESUS ASCEND?

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The Quranic verse 75 of Surah Al-Maida negates the allegation that Jesus is alive: “The Messiah, son of Mary, was only a Messanger; Messangers before him had indeed passed away. And his mother was a family woman. They both used to eat food.” (5:75) The verse contradicts the claim of the Divinity in respect of Jesus. It shows that he stood in need of food when he was alive. As he does not partake food now, he cannot be alive. Jesus was mortal (5:75; 21:7). How could he live without food?

Prayers and giving of alms have been obligatory on Jesus; “He has enjoined on me prayer and poor-rate so long as I live.” (19:31) Note the words: “so long as I live.” If, let us suppose, Jesus has all the facilities of prayer and absolution in the heaven, to whom is he offering poor-rate (zakaat), which was made essential for him as long as he lived?

Allah is above limitations: “Vision comprehends Him not, and He comprehends (all) vision.” (6:104) “Nothing is like Him.” (42:11) He is nearer to us than our life-vain (50:16). He is present everywhere, in all directions (2:115). He is not sitting in any particular office giving orders. His presence can be felt. He is all knowing (2:255; 58:7). If Jesus has “gone up” and is “with Allah”, does it mean that he is also present everywhere? If so, then he cannot be a human being, for human beings cannot be present everywhere. Logic dictates that Jesus has not gone up alive but must have died in this

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DID JESUS ASCEND?  
continued

world. However, there cannot be any doubt that he has gone up spiritually like all other prophets and other mortals.

Man is essentially a social animal. He lives in a company of his mates. He will go mad if put in a solitary confinement. How could it be possible for Jesus to remain above for such a long time and still remain sane?

Another question: Even if we accept the proposition that Jesus went up into heaven, who was the one who was put on the cross and crucified? Why did Allah substitute? Is not this substitution unethical? Is not this deception unbecoming of Allah? (God forbid) This is cruelty and injustice by the cannons of any "civilized law." Allah could not substitute for he embraces all mercy (40:7; 6:148; 7:156). He is Truthful and Just. There is no evidence either in the Holy Qur'an or the Hadith literature showing that someone else was put on the cross.

In conclusion, we can only say that the Holy Qur'an clearly repudiates the concept of the ascension of Jesus.

PROPHETHOOD IN JUDAISM  
continued

to restore the knowledge of the Unity of God - a doctrine which had become clouded with superstition and idolatrous practices. Each received certain directions and instructions. The mission of Jesus, as he himself definitely stated, was to "the lost sheep of the house of Israel" but to Muhammad was given the commission to be the prophet to all nations, particularly, as we read in the Holy Qur'an (ii:4): to all "who believe in that which has been revealed to you and that which was revealed before you." Islam is the only religion that laid down the broad basis of faith in all the prophets of the world and the recognition of truth in all religions.

Family Life in Islam  
MASUD BEG MIRZA, M.A.

The family is the smallest unit of society and is of utmost importance in the development of the individual. By a family we generally mean a group of persons closely related by blood, as parents, children, uncles, aunts and cousins etc. It may also mean a group of persons who form a household under one head, including parents and children. In our everyday life, the word family means a father, mother and children. Islam as the most perfect and all-encompassing religion, lays particular stress on guarding the ties of relationship and promoting mutual love and fellow-feeling, which lead to the formation of good family bonds. Islam also aims at the creation of a highly civilised and cultured society of decent and dutiful people, who always guard against evil. And the Holy Quran places a very high ideal before the believers regarding family life in the following words: "And they say, Our Lord, grant us in our wives and our offspring the joy of our eyes, and make us leaders for those who guard against evil." (25:74) This is the aspiration of a true believer about his wife and children and the type of people his family should be composed of.

The husband and wife -

The most important members of the family are the husband and the wife. The stability of the home and the happiness that prevails in it is an index to the stability of society and its civilization. Islam has, therefore, rightly stressed the proper relationship between husband and wife, and described this relation as one of a single soul in two bodies, and also as being created from each other. "He it is Who created you from a single soul and of the same did He make his mate, that he might find comfort in her." (7:189) Again the Holy Quran says: "O people! be careful of your duty to your Lord, Who created you from a single being and created its mate of the same kind, and spread from these two many men and women." (4:1) "He created mates for you from yourselves that you may find quiet of mind in them, and He put between you love and compassion." (30:21) "They (your wives) are an apparel for you and you are an apparel for them." (2:187) The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said, "The most excellent of you is he who is best in his treatment of his wife." (MM.13:11)

In the farewell pilgrimage, the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) impressed upon his followers, "O my people! you have certain rights over your wives and so have your wives over you . . . They are the trust of Allah in your hands; so you must treat them with all kindness." (M.15:19) The Islamic law has nothing but benevolence for women. Thus strengthening the foundations of matrimonial relationship, Islam has assigned definite rights to both husband and wife. The Holy Quran says: "And women have rights similar to those against them in a just manner." (2:228) Such an announcement was heard in the world for the first time, for the equality of the rights of women with those of men was never recognised by any religion before Islam. And the Arabs had hitherto regarded women as mere chattels. This declaration, therefore, brought about a perfect revolution in the existing social order, not only in Arabia, but in the whole world.

Marriage in Islam is a sacred contract (mithaq) which every Muslim must enter into, unless there is a special reason why he should not. Celibacy was expressly forbidden by the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). Marriage, in fact, is the basic principle of human civilization, because it leads to the moral and social uplift of man. If there is no marriage, there can be no family life, no ties of kinship, no force uniting the different elements of humanity and consequently, no civilization. It is through the family life that humanity is held together and civilization made possible. The law of Islam aims at a happy marriage, and mutual love between husband and wife is described as a sign of God in the Holy Quran (30:21). The home, or the family thus is the first training ground of love and service. Here a man finds real pleasure in the service of others, and the sense of service is gradually developed and broadened. It is in fact a training ground for every kind of morality, for it is in the home that a man learns to have a sense of his own obligations and responsibilities, to have a respect for the rights
A Recent Trend in Christian Thought
DR. ZAHID AZIZ, England

Professors Anthony and Richard Hanson, twin brothers who are churchmen as well as professors of theology at British universities, have recently written a book entitled Reasonable Belief. In the Sunday Times, London of 12 April, 1981, there appeared an article about the authors and their book. Given below is an extract from this article briefly describing book's contents:

"The content of the Hanson package is this. Science doesn't make a creator God improbable, nor does logic make him irrational; but knowledge of him (as of anyone else) depends on his goodwill ("revelation") and on our commitment ("faith"). What is irrational is to demand certainty - not to be had, after all, in committing oneself to a spouse or a house. All we can do is to see that we have the best available reasons.

Among these are scripture (but as witness, not oracle) and the evidence for the impression which the whole career of Jesus, including his death and resurrection, made upon his disciples, his contemporaries and the first generation of Christians." (The resurrection is not least on: the main evidence for it, too, say the Hansons, is the effect it had on the disciples.)

On these grounds, "it is quite reasonable to hold on the one hand that Jesus was completely human and that he did not claim to be God, and on the other that he was the unique and supreme revelation of God the Word, and that in him God manifested Himself, active for man's salvation, as never before or since . . ."

 Salvation is taken to mean deliverance from our own and the world's evil - Christianity's special claim. Through Jesus, say the Hansons, "God has shown that his clearest mode of self-revelation lies in a life of complete human obedience, crowned by suffering and death."

What has that to do with salvation? "A deep instinct or intuition within us affirms that the only way to overcome evil at its worst is to meet it with voluntary innocent suffering." The Christian doctrine of the atonement is "a therapeutic pattern of belief."

The Hansons believe in heaven ("in the last twenty years or so respectable philosophical and scientific opinion has begun taking much more notice of evidence which suggests that the human personality survives death"); they incline to believe in a preliminary purgatory, but not in hell, except as annihilation.

The most trenchant part of the book is the last, where the twin theologians leave theology for questions of church order. Here they say that in its ungenerous treatment of its women workers the Church has lower moral standards than the world outside; that there should be less infant and more adult baptism; that marriage should be thought of as a covenant, and therefore breakable at need; that there is no biblical authority for any existing form of ministry or lack of it; and that a bishop may be "an unworthy, ineffective or conceited person" like anyone else.

Here the Hansons can speak without fear of being thought impertinent, since one of them - Richard - is a bishop himself. In the early 1970s, during the worst of the Northern Irish troubles, he was bishop of the border diocese of Clogher. He found it "fascinating but heartbreaking."

So he was glad when release came in the form of the offer of his Manchester chair; but once a bishop always a bishop, so he functions as an assistant bishop of the Manchester diocese.

Now his efforts at liberalisation are in the realm of the mind. "We are working towards the aim of liberating the humane sciences from the paradigm of the exact sciences," he says: in other words, from insistence on proof positive.

It is clear from the above description of the book Reasonable Belief that the authors hold many views which are really taught by Islam, and not traditional Christianity. It also appears that they are conscious of the weaknesses in the conventional Christian case, but, since they are unaware of the solutions offered by Islam in this regard, the authors find themselves glossing over these basic flaws of Christianity.

It is because the sources and teachings of Christianity offer so little certainty to the mind and heart that the book considers it "irrational" for one to demand certainty from a faith. The authors may argue that, as one cannot have certainty in worldly transactions, certainty cannot be had with regard to faith either, but the fact is that when a person searches for a faith to follow he looks at least to a prospect of eventually attaining certainty about it, or failing that he would try to see whether there had been any followers of that faith who had perfect certainty in it. So we ask, does Christianity hold out the promise of certainty to its perfect followers, and have there been any Christians who attained to that stage so as to be a guiding-light to their weaker brethren?

Islam claims not only to provide "the best available reasons" for one to believe in it, but also that the true believer's faith progresses to the point of certainty. Besides this claim, in practice too there have been thousands of Muslims who attained to the highest degree of belief, and by their noble character and godly lives they demonstrated to their lesser brethren that Islam was indeed the true religion.

Position of Jesus -

The third paragraph in the extract above shows the author's dilemma in determining the position of Jesus using only the Christian scriptures. Having acknowledged that Jesus was "completely human and did not claim to be God," the Hansons are unable to accept logical conclusion that he could only have been a prophet in the sense in which the Israelites understand that word. It should be noted here that it is the Holy Quran which established fourteen centuries ago that Jesus was a mortal prophet of God, and today we find eminent Christian writers such as the Hanson brothers coming even closer to this position.

Salvation and suffering -

Christian thinkers, including the authors of Reasonable Belief, make fundamental errors regarding the questions of evil, suffering, and salvation. The reason is that they regard Jesus as, in the words of the Hansons, the "supreme revelation of God," whereas the fact is that that prophet symbolised only one aspect of man's moral capabilities, viz., forbearance and non-resistance to evil, just as Moses illustrated the complementary side, i.e. establishment of justice through retaliation. The Holy Prophet Muhammad's (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) life teaches us that circumstances may require either of these two complementary approaches in order to combat the forces of evil.

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A RECENT TREND IN CHRISTIAN THOUGHT
continued
Can a religion be positively proved true?
Towards the close of the extract above, the author's basic theme is repeated that to prove the truth of a religion one cannot insist on "proof positive," the sort of proof required by the "exact sciences." This stand is, in fact, a result of the utter lack of evidence there is to support Christian doctrines such as atonement and resurrection of Jesus. Just as the so-called exact sciences study natural phenomena, draw conclusions therefrom, and devise explanations of why they happen, similarly one can look at the lives of the founders of various religions and judge whether their claims are borne out by events in their lives. Of course, in the first place it needs to be ascertained what historical proof there is that incidents (such as the virgin birth, the miracles, and the resurrection in the case of Jesus) which support a religion's claims actually took place. And there is no reason at all why, in determining this, one should not use the techniques of the exact sciences which are employed in other spheres. After all, the God in whose name a religion makes its claims, are one and the same Being.

FAMILY LIFE IN ISLAM
continued from page 18
of others and, above all, to have a real pleasure in suffering for the sake of others. Marriage thus strengthens the ties of the natural love of the two mates, but it also requires them to share each other's cares and sorrows; for human life has its cares and sorrows as well as its pleasures.

Both husband and wife are equal partners in the marriage contract. They have rights and obligations, against each other, which are amply clarified by Islam, and these are accepted as a duty imposed by God. The Holy Prophet said: "Women are the twin halves of men." The position of woman is the same as that of man so far as material as well as the spiritual gains are concerned. The only difference between them is that of their functions. A woman can earn money and own property just as man does, as the Holy Quran says: "for men is the benefit of what they earn; and for women is the benefit of what they earn." (4:32) She has full control over her property and can buy and sell as she pleases. The husband is mainly required to earn for the maintenance of the family, and the wife is responsible for the management of the household, looking after the children and spending her husband's earning judiciously. Each is vested with authority suited to the functions with which he or she is entrusted. Hence men are spoken of as maintainers of women, and women are spoken of as "rulers over the household and the children." Thus the family concern is kept going by the husband and wife in mutual cooperation.

The Parents -
Obedience to parents and treating them generously is also greatly stressed in Islam. In fact obedience to parents is placed next to one's obedience to Allah, and no one has a greater claim over a person for good treatment than his parents. The Holy Quran says: "And do good to your parents. If either or both of them reach old age with thee, say not to any of them, 'You are old,' and turn away your face from them; but say to them, 'Be of good cheer, and merciful unto them, as Allah has been merciful to you.' And lower to them the wings of humility out of mercy, and say: My Lord, have mercy on them, as they brought me up (when I was little)." (17:23-24) Allah has enjoined on man to give thanks to his parents after thanking Him.

The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) laid special emphasis on good treatment and showing consideration to one's mother, so much so that paradise was described by him to be beneath her two feet. A companion asked the Holy Prophet: "Who has the greatest right that I should keep company with him with goodness?" The Holy Prophet said: "Thy mother." The man asked: "Who next?" The Holy Prophet said: "Then thy father." (B.78:2) A person came to consult the Holy Prophet about enlistment in the fighting forces. The Prophet asked him if he had his mother living. On receiving the reply in the affirmative the Holy Prophet said: "Then stick to her for paradise is beneath her two feet." (N.s.25:6) Taking good care of parents in their old age is a moral and religious obligation in Islam; and they are to be nursed and fostered just as they had nursed us when we were weak and small. They are not to be forsaken in their old age or sent to "Old Peoples Homes" to live alone and die in seclusion.

Children -
Children are the most precious, delicate and sensitive part of the family, and Islam lays particular stress on their proper care and upbringing. Keeping children ignorant and not giving them proper education is considered tantamount to killing them, and Allah strongly warns in the Holy Quran in these words: "And kill not your children for fear of poverty - We provide for them and for you. Surely the killing of them is a great wrong." (17:31) The Holy Prophet also exhorted his followers to show regard to their children and bring them up in the best possible manner. He was very gentle and benevolent, and was particularly kind to children. In a certain battle fought by the Prophet a woman was discovered among the slain. On this, the Holy Prophet strictly forbade the killing of women and children in wars. In his daily life, he was extremely fond of children and always showed indulgence in them. He would often stop them in the streets, pat their cheek, and enquire about their pets. He made it obligatory for his followers to treat children with kindness as he said, "He is not of us who does not show mercy to our little ones and respect to our elder ones." (Tr.24:15)

The Holy Prophet's magnanimity of heart was not confined to Muslim children only, but he showed consideration for every child born of any human being. The Holy Prophet announced that all children would go to Paradise if they die before attaining the age of desoration. At this some of the Muslims asked him if the children of polytheists were also included; and the Holy Prophet said: "The children of polytheists as well." (Bu.91:48) According to Islam every human child is born into the world in a pure state; and none comes into life with the impress of hell on it. Human nature is so made that it is not compelled to follow the evil course. It is free from every taint. And the Holy Prophet said that "every child is born in the fitra (the right state or the condition of Islam), and that it is his parents who later on "make him a Jew or a Christian or a Magian." (Bu.23:80,93) Islam thus recognises the dignity and sinlessness of all children, and declares that man has been created in the best make (95:4) which means that he is given enormous capability for advancement and he can rise to any heights.
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MUHAMMAD THE GREATEST MAN OF HISTORY

"If greatness of purpose, smallness of means, and astounding results are the three criteria of human genius, who could dare to compare any great man in modern history with Muhammad? ... Philosopher, orator, apostle, legislator, warrior, conqueror of ideas, restorer of rational dogmas, of a cult without images; the founder of twenty terrestrial empires and of one spiritual empire, that is Muhammad. As regards all standards by which human greatness may be measured, we may well ask: Is there any man greater than he?"

—Alphonse de Lamartine in *Histoire de la Turquie*

QUR'AN, THE GREATEST SPIRITUAL FORCE

"It is the one miracle claimed by Muhammad—his standing miracle, he called it—and a miracle it is."

—Bosworth Smith

"Never has a people been led more rapidly to civilization, such as it was, than were the Arabs through Islam. . . . And to it was also indirectly due the marvelous development of all branches of science in the Moslem world."

—*New Researches* by H. Hirschfeld

"Here, therefore, its merits as a literary production should, perhaps, not be measured by some preconceived maxims of subjective and aesthetic taste, but by the effects which it produced in Muhammad’s contemporaries and fellow-countrymen. If it spoke so powerfully and convincingly to the hearts of his hearers as to weld hitherto centrifugal and antagonistic elements into one compact and well organized body, animated by ideas far beyond those which had until now ruled the Arabian mind, then its eloquence was perfect, simply because it created a civilized nation out of savage tribes, and shot a fresh woof into the old warp of history."

—Dr. Steingass, *Hughes’ Dictionary of Islam*

THE BEAUTIFUL CHARACTERISTICS OF ISLAM

"I have always held the religion of Muhammad in high estimation because of its wonderful vitality. It is the only religion which appears to me to possess that assimilating capacity to the changing phases of existence which can make itself appeal to every age. I have studied him—the wonderful man—and in my opinion far from being an anti-Christ, he must be called the Saviour of Humanity. I believe that if a man like him were to assume the Dictatorship of the modern world, he would succeed in solving its problems in a way that would bring it the much needed peace and happiness. I have prophesied about the faith of Muhammad that it would be acceptable to the Europe of tomorrow as it is beginning to be acceptable to the Europe of today."

—George Bernard Shaw