The Promised Messiah Speaks:

Search for a Higher Being
The Holy Qur'an Provides Sure Testimony

by HADHRAT MIRZA GHULAM AHMAD
Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam

Among the natural conditions of a person is the search for a Higher Being for Whom there is an attraction in the heart of every person. The effect of that search begins to be felt as soon as a child is born. As soon as it is born it exhibits a spiritual characteristic which is that it leans towards its mother and entertains a natural affection for her. As its senses develop and the flower of its nature blooms, this attraction of love, which is inherent in it, begins to exhibit itself patently. It finds no comfort anywhere except in the lap of its mother. If it is separated from its mother and is put at a distance from her, its life becomes bitter, and though a heap of bounties may be placed before it, it finds its true comfort only in its mother’s lap and nowhere else. Then what is this attraction that it feels towards its mother?

In truth it is the same attraction which is vested in a child’s nature for God. Every exhibition of affection by a person in fact proceeds from that very attraction and the restlessness of a lover which a person experiences in truth a reflection of that very love, as if he takes up diverse things and examines them in search for something that he has lost and whose name he has forgotten. A person’s love of property, or children, or wife or his soul being drawn towards the song of a sweet voiced singer, are in fact all in search of the lost Beloved. As man cannot perceive with his physical eyes the Imperceptible Being Who is latent in everyone like fire and yet is hidden from everyone, nor can he find Him through the exercise of his imperfect reason, he has been subject to many errors in his understanding of Him and through his errors he renders to others that which is His due. God Almighty has mentioned an excellent illustration in the Holy Qur’an that the world is like a great hall paved smooth with slabs of glass and a current of water flows underneath them which runs very fast. A person looking at the slabs of glass wrongly imagines them to be water also and is afraid of walking upon them as he would be afraid of walking upon water, though in reality they are only glass but very clear and transparent. Thus these great objects in heaven like the sun and the moon etc. are transparent like glass and are worshipped by mistake. Behind them there is a Higher Power at work which is flowing swiftly like water. It is the mistake of those who worship created things that they attribute all this activity to the glass which is the activity of the Power behind it. This is the explanation of the verse: It is a great hall paved smooth with slabs of glass. (27:45)

As the Being of God Almighty, despite its brightness, is hidden beyond sight, the physical universe is not adequate for its true recognition. This is the reason why those who depended upon the physical system despite their careful consideration of its perfect orderliness which comprehends hundreds of wonders within itself, and despite their pursuit of astronomy and physics and philosophy to a degree which shows that they had penetrated through heaven and

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EDITORIAL

"Let well informed People Judge our Position - An Everstanding Offer." (part I)

T he 1974 Constitutional Amendment of Pakistan re the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam and the two sections of the Ahmadiyya has created some confusion and misunderstanding in the minds of the common Muslim, hence the need to state our position viz-a-viz this legislation which declares the founder and the two sections of the Ahmadiyya 'a non-Muslim minority' for the purposes of the law and Constitution in Pakistan.

This legislation, which is more or less in the nature of a Bill of Attainder, has been rejected outright by both the sections of the Ahmadiyya on the ground that it is contradictory to the clear injunctions of the Qur'an and Hadith. It raises many issues, legal, constitutional and doctrinal, which are of dire importance to the present day Muslim world wherein all the States are engaged in a struggle to find some solution whereby to identify themselves with Islamic teachings in exercise of their power to frame Constitution and making law. One thing can be safely said without any fear of contradiction - that none of the States in the Muslim world, as presently constituted, is 'Islamic'. Each one of these contradicts one or the other basic requirement of 'the Islamic State'. Finding a solution to this problem remains a challenge to the present day Muslim intelligentsia.

The Constitutional Amendment re the Ahmadiyya proceeds on a presumption that the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Isla'm, Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, was a claimant to prophethood and thereby lacked belief in the finality of the prophethood of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be on him, and consequently any one who believes in the founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement as a Mujadid (not a prophet) or even a righteous person, also does not believe in the finality of prophethood and hence a non-Muslim. In all fairness, before proceeding to legislate this amendment, it was necessary to determine as to whether the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement did in fact claim to be a prophet of any kind? For, if he had not, the very basis of the legislation falls.

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Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad passed away in May 1908 and till 1914, when his son Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmud Ahmad claimed that his father did not understand his position and that in fact he was a prophet, none of the followers of the Ahmadiyya Movement had ever believed that the Founder had laid any claim to prophethood of any type. Secondly, during his life time, whenever the Founder was asked as to whether he claimed to be a prophet, he always, in outright and catagorical terms, said “No, I do not claim to be a prophet; it is blasphemy. I only claim to be a Muhaddath.” In any case, since 1914 we the members of the Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha’at Islam Lahore have been at daggers drawn with the Qadiani (now Rabwah) group of the Ahmadiyya on this issue of the Nubuwah as to the claims of the Founder and have produced volumensous literature on this issue alone which proves beyond any doubt that the Founder had never laid any claim to prophethood. By falsely presuming a fact which is not only controvertible but has no existence or base, the framers of the Constitutional Amendment have violated all the settled norms of fairness and justice. We are ready to debate this issue with any one and take the onus of proving that any allegations that the Founder ever laid a claim to prophethood of any type are baseless and false. He simply claimed to be the Mujaddid of the 14th Century Hijrah and a Muhaddath. He also claimed to be the ‘Promised Messiah’ in accordance with the predictions of the Hadith clearly stating that “being ‘Promised Messiah’ is in no way a higher claim than that of a Muhaddath or Muttaddid and that the predictions of the ‘Promised Messiah’, Son of Mary, as contained in the Hadith mean a person in the likeness of Jesus, Son of Mary. Otherwise, according to the Qur’an, Jesus Christ, Son of Mary, is dead and if we believe that he is alive and is to come yet, then it contradicts the doctrine of the Finality of Prophethood - a doctrine so clearly and unambiguously stated in the Qur’an and Hadith.”

Here we say arguendo that a multitude of Muslims, the framers and supporters of the Constitutional Amendment included, by their belief that Jesus Christ had risen alive to the Heavens in his physical form and will descend in the later days of the world for the guidance of Muslims, place no higher value on the doctrine of the finality of the prophethood than the one placed by the Rabwah section of the Ahmadiyya. As we said, we are ever ready to discuss and debate these or all issues relating and relevant to the claims of the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam with any one who entertains any doubts about his claims or even seeks a debate. As to the Government of Pakistan and those who put any value in their so-called Constitutional Amendment re the Ahmadiyya, we hereby make an offer and hope if they sincerely believe in the validity of their stand, they will not hesitate accepting this offer. We seek the people of Pakistan to be able to take a well informed decision re the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement and the two sections of the Ahmadiyya and for this we suggest a public debate between the representatives of the Government of Pakistan and the supporters of the Constitutional Amendment and our representatives on the above stated issues. This debate to be broadcast and telecast live from all the stations of the Raiho Pakistan and Television Corporation of Pakistan without any censor. Parties to pay for the time consumed by their representatives. After the debate is completed, an opinion poll to be taken from the people of Pakistan as to the claimed position of the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement and beliefs of the parties re the finality of prophethood. We promise to pay the costs of this poll. This offer shall ever stand open to enable our adversaries to choose to avail it whenever they like. We hope, if they entertain an iota of consideration for fairness and justice and above all the validity of their stand, they will not fail us.

Masud Akhtar

N.B. The legal and Constitutional issues involved in the Amendment will be discussed in the next issue.
ISLAM, MY ONLY CHOICE
by the late KHWAJA KAMAL-UD-DIN

The Historicity of Faiths and Their Founders

All religions are a matter of history. Even with Islam, the latest of all, more than thirteen hundred years have passed since its birth, and if a man must look to some Holy Scripture for the light he has to receive from a religion, no religion should claim our allegiance unless its record is absolutely unimpeachable on the score of authenticity. In this respect Islam seems to me to possess merits of its own - merits which attach to no other religion. For example, the Scriptures of all other religions have now been found, as is even admitted by their respective adherents, to be wanting in genuineness. Even Rabbis and high dignitaries of the Church are today ceasing to believe in the authenticity of the Holy Bible. The followers of Zoroastrianism can only point to five or six verses that have come to them in their original purity, out of all the revealed mass ascribed to that great prophet of Persia, Vedicism, popularly known as Hinduism, presents another insurmountable difficulty. The Holy Vedas were written in a language now obsolete and what we should call “dead”; no one in India speaks it or understands it. The Vedic verses are susceptible of contradictory interpretations; they have given rise to innumerable sects, who differ from each other even in the fundamentals of their religion while they all receive their inspiration from the same Book. There are atheists, theists, agnostics, and deists, image-worshippers and image-breakers, among Hindus, but they all take the same Book as the authority to substantiate their respective views. The translation of the Vedas given by one class of Hindus is condemned by the others. On the other hand, al-Qur’an, the Holy Book of Islam, is admitted by friend and foe to be the very words revealed to Muhammad. The Book has maintained its purity till now. Fortunately we live in times when reliable criticism has established the above facts, and its verdict has not been questioned. Now, whatever may be the worth of the teachings of a religion, I think I could not consider or accept its claims when the very source of our information with respect to it is of a dubious character. From this point of view, I think I am justified in saying that there is no comparison between Islam and other religions.

I was constrained to come to the same conclusion as to the founders of the various religious systems. The Vedic religion is the oldest of all; but we know nothing about the authors or recipients of Vedic revelations excepting their names, and these are but incidentally mentioned at the beginning of the different Vedic Mantras (hymns). Similarly, the strictly historical aspect of the Lord of Christianity is not free from doubt and suspicion. Even if Jesus may be admitted to be an historic character, we know very little of him. Mary, we read, gave birth to the illustrious Nazarene; but soon after the event she and her husband fled from Judaea with the child; and after some twelve years Jesus is seen in synagogues finding fault with the Rabbis and joining issue with the teachers of Judaism. Then the curtain drops again. Another gap of some eighteen years and the Master comes back out of an Essenic monastery and is seen on the banks of the River Jordan. But his ministry was too short for him to become our perfect specimen and guide in the manifold and divine walks of human life. A few sermons, a few miracles, a few prayers accompanied by a few curses are not enough to give humanity a religion. His movements are of meteoric character which presents few incidents of note and consequence, excepting his crucifixion. Moses was no doubt a great law-giver, an historic character, liberator of his nation from their bondage in Egypt, worker of wonders and performer of miracles, but not an example for practical purposes in real life. In a word, the life of all these founders is enshrined in much mystery. My surprise knew no bounds when I began to read of Muhammad. Like a panorama the events of his life passed before my eyes one after the other. From the cradle to the grave everything of note in his life is narrated and preserved in a well-authenticated record. I was amazed to find in him an assemblage of the best of characteristics so rare in others. I am at a loss to understand how he could unite in himself all the best qualities of discrepant characters. He is meek and at the same time courageous; modest as a maiden but the bravest of the soldiers on a battlefield. While with children, loved for his playfulnes and endearing talk to the little ones; when in the company of sages and old men, respected for his wisdom and farsightedness. Truthful, honest, trustworthy; a reliable friend, a loving father and husband, a dutiful son and a helpful brother, Muhammad is the same man whether in adversity or prosperity; affluence or indigence cannot change him; unruffled in his temperament whether in peace or in war. Kind and hospitable, liberal in giving but abstemious for himself. In short, judge Muhammad from whatever angle of human character you will, and he is nowhere found wanting.

With a critical eye, I studied all that has been said about him by his opponents. They could not lay a finger on a single flaw in his private character. It is perfect. And whatever has been said against his public character in one or two things, involves really a matter of principle. They say he had more than one wife; that he waged war; that he did this, that and the other; but before we judge him in these matters we have to decide as to the validity of the principles under which he worked. If polygamy is a matter of necessity in certain circumstances and an economic measure sometimes, then why find fault with Muhammad, when all the great men and benefactors of humanity, especially in the world of religion, have all of them had more than one wife? As to the use of the sword, the whole world until now has taken the greatest pride in unsheathing the weapon. War has hitherto been an indispensable institution. A prophet was needed to teach the world the true ethics of war, and who can deny the nobility of Muhammad in this respect? He unsheathed the sword only to crush evil and defend truth. With great care I read the accounts of every war waged by him and they were all in self-defence.

There is something unique in this great man; he is the only teacher among the noble race of prophets who brought his mission to success. Jesus was crushed by evil, and words of despair continued on next page
and despondency were on his lips on the Cross. Muhammad really crushed the serpent, but just in the moments of his victory, when the real "generation of vipers" was at his feet, his character revealed another noble aspect - that of forgiveness. No student of history can read the account of the conquest of Mecca by Muhammad without bowing down to that great hero. He not only forgives his cruel oppressors, but raises them to places of dignity and honour. Who knows what Jesus would have done if he had achieved any victory over his enemies? After all, he said that he had come not to send peace on the earth, but a sword. Moses, Ramchandra and Krishna, the other great teachers in the world of religion, disclosed not a gleam of mercy in their dealings with their enemies.

**The Kaleidoscopic View of Religion**

It did not take me long to pass in review the various religious persuasions with their tenets and doctrines. Whatever may have been the original form of Hinduism, it is now one vast accretion of ceremonialism and sacrifice, this being the only feature common to its numberless sects, beyond this there is no meeting-ground among them. In fact, there does not exist a definition of Hinduism wide enough to comprise all its sections and subdivisions. Animism, element-worship, hero-worship, polytheism in its worst shapes, monotheism, though not in its pure form - all come under the heading of Hinduism. It possesses its philosophy, but it is a philosophy which has no bearing whatever on practical life; it tries to solve certain riddles - for example, the problem of ultimate pain and pleasure, and here it speaks of the transmigration of the soul - but all this is a species of mental luxury possessing no practical advantage. I admit that ceremonialism and sacrifices are not without their uses, but they are of secondary importance - a means to certain ends - whereas in Hinduism they have become essentials. Again, these Hindu rituals were intended to meet certain local and topical needs, and cannot therefore be of use to alien races and later generations.

Judaism brought light and culture into the world, but in the course of time, it, too, became merged in ceremonialism and sacrifice. The vice of ceremonial piety lies in the fact that when once a person has observed its demands he thinks himself to be better than his neighbour, no matter what crime he may commit. For this very reason the Brahmins in Hinduism and the Pharisees in Judaism considered themselves absolved of all the duties laid upon other members of society. Jesus did not come with a new religion, nor did he found a Church; he was a Jew of the Jews. Jealous for the religion taught by Moses, he came to redeem the teachings of the Master from the formalism of the Pharisees. He had the courage to expose their hollowness and hypocrisy. In short, his aim was to reform Judaism and to restore it to its pristine purity, but his enemies would not allow him to do so, and so he failed in the end. Then St. Paul came on the scene, but instead of carrying on the work of Jesus, he grafted on the old faith something quite new and repugnant to it - the religion of the Blood and its grace.

It is called the "New covenant," but it seems to me but a reappearance of old paganism with a change of name and setting. I sum up here the story of Christianity in a few words: man drowned in sin and God alienated from him and in anger. To appease His wrath He sends His own son to the world through a virgin's womb. The son is brought to the Cross and pays the penalty for all human sin, thus washing away the sins of humanity with his blood. He dies for all, and then through his resurrection brings new life to mankind. This is the superstructure of the Pauline schism as it was never taught by the Lord of Christianity. But it is not a new revelation. It has now come to light that Jesus as portrayed by Paul and others as "the new Adam" is only just the last of the virgin-born Sun gods - Mithra, Appolo, Bacchus, Horus, Osiris and others; all of them born at the first hour of the 25th of December. They all led a peaceful mission; the first miracle that all performed had some connection with wine; they all declared that they had come to save humanity through their blood; they all went to death at the third hour of Friday some time in the end of March; they all remained in the tomb for two days; they all rose again on Easter Sunday; they all ascended into heaven with a promise to return.

Thus, centuries before the construction of the Christian Church, different countries had already evolved a system of religion which Christianity repeated word by word in the writings of the early Fathers. In the names of these virgin-born incarnates people were initiated into their cult through baptism. Their votaries worshipped the Cross, and their great festivals were Easter and Christmas. In fact, the Roman Catholic Church, the first church on Pauline lines after Jesus, is just a replica of the old cult of mystery; and Christian worship remains sun worship with all its old features. How can we stigmatize Paganism as a false religion when all its features did but forestall the official Church in the West? If Paganism is falsehood, the formal Church must, ipso facto, be falsehood, too. Anyhow, current Christianity is not a religion if by religion is meant a code of life that may help man to live worthily in this world and in the hereafter.

Viewed from this standpoint again, I say, Islam is my only choice. It is a religion of action, of good morals and ethics; a religion simple and practical; if I am asked to subscribe to its doctrines, I can do so freely; they are not dogmatic in their nature. All Islamic tenets are reasonable and consistent with intelligence. They have a direct bearing on life; and here I will go more into detail.

Doubtless Islam is not free from some sort of formalities. Muslims also make sacrifices, but my happiness knew no bounds when I read in the Qur'an: "It is not righteousness that you turn your faces towards the East and the West, but righteousness is this, that one should believe in God and the last day and the angels and the book and the prophets, and give away wealth out of love for Him to the near of kin and the orphans and the needy and the wayfarer and the beggars and for (the emancipation of) the captives, and keep up prayer and pay the poor-rate; and the performers of their promise..."
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when they make a promise, and the patient in distress and affliction and in time of conflict - these are they who are true (to themselves), and these are they who guard (against evil)." The Qur’an (2:177)

What a wonderful, decisive and bold statement! It brushes ceremonialism completely away. Islam has a few formalities but they seem to me to be essential formalities - one of them being the turning of the face, when in prayer, towards Mecca. It indicates the place that gave birth to Islam, and is hence a necessity; but the above verse says that doing so in itself is not a virtue unless thereby we are helped to observe certain beliefs and actions which are there set out. In fact, Muslims turn their faces to Mecca to remember and renew the inspiration they first received from that sacred place; and if turning our faces to Mecca is itself of no value, then what of other ceremonial acts?

Muslims do observe sacrifice, but not to appease Divine wrath. One of the objects is to “Feed the poor man who is contented, and the beggar.” (Ibid., 20:36) This institution also supplies an occasion for being benevolent to others, and it is a symbol of the religion of God; as the Qur’an says, we have to submit to His will as the animals under the knife have to submit to ours. And then a verse on the subject in the following thundery words denudes sacrifices of the merits that had been attached to them by other religions - such as the propitiation of Divine anger:

"There does not reach God their flesh nor their blood, but to Him is acceptable the guarding (against evil) on your part; thus has He made them subservient to you, that you may magnify God because He has guided you aright; and give good news to those who do good (to others)." (Ibid., 22:37)

I know of no other formality in Islam; and if ceremonial piety is in itself of no consequence, then Hinduism and Judaism cannot satisfy human needs as a code of religion. Christianity no doubt did away with all the ritual that Jesus observed himself, because his personal sacrifice, as they say, atoned for it and absolved the believers in the blood from the ceremonial burden. But another set of rituals and formalities entered into the Church as a legacy from Paganism, and the position is worse than before. I cannot conclude these general remarks on religion and turn to the special doctrines of Islam before emphasizing one thing, though I have made reference to it in the foregoing; that is, the necessity for Qur’anic Revelation at a time when the old Books of God had become hopelessly mixed with folklore. Every religion of the world has based its teachings on a Revelation on high. It has pleased the Lord to guide humanity into the right path by revealing His Will to the world. The position is quite a tenable one, but if His Revelation sometimes suffers in purity and becomes vitiated, should He not send another Revelation to take the place of the old one? The Lord of the Universe observes the same course in all His dispensations. He creates things for our use, and when they disappear or become impaired or arrayed there comes a fresh supply of such needful things. What is true in physical dispensations must be true also in the spiritual sphere. How can a believer shut his eyes to the necessity of a new Revelation if the old one has admittedly become corrupt? But none of all the Revelations given to the various nations of the world in olden days had remained in their original form - a fact now admitted by all - at that period of the Christian era, and a new Revelation, the Qur’an, was a necessity.

Revealed Books and Their Contents

Though all the peoples in the world were respectively given a book for their guidance from the Lord, they are all lost today with the exception of the Vedas, the Bible, and the Qur’an. The first two scriptures are of a kindred nature, but the third exhibits an absolutely different character. The Vedas and the Bible speak respectively of some particular nations, the so-called “chosen people” of God or gods; while the Qur’an is neither a narrative of a tribe nor a story of any individual. It concerns itself exclusively with man in general. Man and his God is its chief theme.

After speaking of the creation of the world and man, the chief interest of the Hebrew Scripture lies in one particular branch of the human race - the descendants of Abraham through Isaac. It speaks of the migration of the Israelites from the land of Abraham, their settlement in Egypt, their subsequent bondage under the Egyptian yoke, their liberation by Moses under God’s command; then comes a mention of their religious and ceremonial code; again their wandering in the wilderness, their conquest of the promised land, and the establishment of the Hebrew governments, their grandeur and splendour; their subsequent iniquities and misdeeds; their stubbornness and vicious indulgences, and finally prophetic references by Jesus to their downfall. All these facts are arrayed in the Book, one after the other, as it were, on an historical basis. The Bible also contains a narrative of the Hebrew Patriarchs, who impart religious teaching accompanied by comprehensive curses directed against their enemies. The Book also speaks of the visitations of God from time to time and the appearance of angels with good news. In short, the Bible is a complete story of the rise and fall of the Hebrews, with Moses at their head as the lawgiver and bringer of good tidings of the coming rise, and with Jesus, the last of the race, shedding tears of grief on the imminent fall.

Just as the Holy Bible concerns itself with the Hebrews, so the Vedas speaks of another race from Central Asia called Aryans, who crossed the River Indus and took up their abode in the western part of India. The Hindu Book speaks of the Aryan settlement in India as of an agricultural class, where they sang hymns in praise of the elements or other manifestations of nature which sent timely rains to fertilize their lands and bring them good crops. It speaks of their rituals and sacrifices, it refers to their fights with the aborigines of the country and the final victory of the former over the latter; their civic and martial life; the establishment of their governments and their other occupations; and in the end their self-indulgence and luxury, all painted in poetical strains. Thus the two books are more or less a history of the two tribes, with the mention of religion and its accessories as a matter of incident. Al-

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Qur'an, on the other hand, is purely a book of God's religion given to man. The elevation and progress of the human race or its degradation or downfall are the chief topics of the Arab Revelation. The Qur'an, doubtless, speaks of certain persons and certain nations, but such allusions are not the main object of the Book; they come in by way of illustration. For example, the Book lays down certain principles and doctrines for human edification; it warns man against the deeds that are sure to bring him to the lowest ebb; it reads him lessons of morality and of ethics; it speaks of spirituality and godliness; and it is in elucidation of these teachings that it makes reference to events in the lives of certain men - prophets and their enemies - and nations. It is for this reason that the Qur'an has not generally given full accounts of the people thus alluded to. It is not a collection of stories, but a book of economic, moral and spiritual instruction. The Bible and the Vedas may, perchance, give inspiration to the descendants of those for whom they were first revealed, but they cannot be of any great interest to mankind at large; while the Qur'an, on the other hand, is the book for all men of every time and clime, and cannot fail to command universal interest.

The Object of Revelation

Neither the Vedas nor the Bible seem to specify any object of Universal interest for their revelation. God no doubt spoke to Moses at Sinai and ordered him to go to Pharaoh with a message demanding freedom for the Israelites. After the Exodus, He again spoke to Moses and gave him the Ten Commandments; and Moses, when in need of guidance, goes to His Lord from time to time and the Lord expresses His will for the guidance of His people. Similarly, whenever the chosen people are in difficulty or in trouble, Jehovah sends His angels with words to meet the occasion. On the same lines we find various Mantras (hymns - in the Vedas, revealed to the old Hindu Rishis). The Ten Commandments undoubtedly promulgate the lines of action necessary to form a society. Sociable as we are, we must speak the truth; we must respect the lives, property and womenfolk of our neighbours; we must revere our parents, and, to give rest to our body, we must observe the Sabbath. I think any human society desirous of keeping itself in a healthy condition could have discovered these principles even without the help of any revelation. But the Qur'anic Revelation is far above these primitive and temporal needs. It comes to raise man to the highest height to which he is able to soar. The first call that came to Muhammad in the cave at Hira is a call free from all personal or racial elements. It is a call for the uplifting of man in general. Muhammad was not called upon to serve his own nation, nor did the heavenly dove descend from above to choose the son of God from among his fellow countrymen. Muhammad is inspired to raise his fellow-beings, wherever they may be, from the depth of degradation to the zenith of greatness. His first Revelation is as follows: "Read in the name of your Lord who created. He created man from a clot. Read and your Lord is Most Honourable, Who taught (to write), with the pen, taught man what he knew not. Nay! man is most surely inordinate. Because he sees himself free from want." Ibid., 96:1-7

Man is ordered through Muhammad to read, to cultivate the art of writing, for the spread of books and enlightenment, and to discover sciences not known before, thereby bringing humanity to a position most honourable, because his Creator is Himself most honourable and His creation should index the greatness of the Maker. Matter reaches its physical consummation in the form of man, and Nature cannot impove upon it any further. But the same matter evolves a new thing in the human frame - human consciousness - the sum total of the passions, which when refined give rise to intellect, sentiment, sociability, morality, ethics, religion and spirituality. All these divine elements, intended to create a great civilization and to bring man to his real dignity, have been reposed in human nature. But as a full-fledged man on the physical plane evolves from a clot of blood in the womb, so was human consciousness in clot condition at the appearance of Muhammad, who was deputed by God in the same verse to show his fellow beings the right path, as revealed to him by God, that will bring forth all that is noble and good in man.

This grand object the Holy Book takes for its revelation and makes mention of it in its very beginning (Ibid., 2:5). When it defines the most exalted position which man is entitled to achieve, it also indicates the lowest degradation to which he may descend. In the story of Adam (Ibid., 2:sect. 4) the high and low conditions of man are defined. He is the vicegerent of God on earth. He is to receive homage from the angels of heaven and earth; and for this purpose the sun and the moon, with all other manifestations of Nature, as the Qur'an says, have been made subservient to man (Ibid., 14:32-33, 16:12). All this he can achieve through knowledge, but if he is led astray from the right path he will be deprived of the means that contribute to his happiness (Ibid., 2:36). With all our civilization we have not as yet attained the height which we have to achieve under the directions of the Last Book. We have not secured the position of being able to bring the sun and the moon into subjection. This is the goal which the Qur'an prescribes for us in our sojourn on the earth. In this connection the Qur'an further reveals to us that we possess the highest capabilities (Ibid., 95:4) but as we have arisen from an animal state and carry with us certain carnal cravings, the Book warns us that our way to the goal is beset with difficulties. We are liable to be degraded to the lowest of the low (Ibid., 95:5) and therefore we need guidance (Ibid., 95:6) to help us upwards in our evolutionary journey and to save us from falling into pitfalls. This is another purpose of Qur'anic Revelation. We are in the dark (Ibid., 14) and we need a light, and the Book claims to be that light. Let St. Paul blackguard human nature; Islam says that we possess an immaculate nature which is inherently free from the taint of sin. In this Islam differs from Christianity. If hell is the reward of sin and heaven is reserved for those who leave this earth sinless, Islam and Christianity advance two different and contradictory propositions. Chris-

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Christianity says that man is born in sin, while according to Islam he is sinless at his birth. If a child, therefore, dies at his very birth, he must go to heaven, under Islamic teaching, but he is foredoomed to hell according to Christian principles. In other words, heaven is our birthright under Islam. We may lose it by our subsequent misdeeds. But according to Christianity we are born for hell unless reclaimed by our faith in the Blood. Similarly, sin is a heritage according to Church beliefs, but is an after-acquisition under Islam, and can be avoided.

Thus the sole object of Christian Revelation is to bring man out of the slough of sin up to the brink of virtue, but Islam finds man already on its banks at his birth and comes to raise him to its highest flight that will bring him near the precincts of Divinity. What a world of difference is here! To resume the subject, there is another marked difference between the last and the ancient revelations. The Qur'an is rational in its teachings, while the Hindu and Hebrew Books are dogmatic in imparting their messages. Like a pedagogue or a father whose words are law or gospel to his pupils or children, the Bible and the Vedas assert their precepts and principles in a spirit that seems to expect no opposition or doubt from their respective recipients.

The Books speak of God, of angels, of resurrection, and the Last Day; of Divine messengership and accountability for present actions in the hereafter; but they make no attempt to substantiate these verities by any intelligent arguments. They claim nothing to meet the demand of a sceptical mind. Perhaps the human mind at the time of these revelations had not as yet crossed the frontiers of infancy, and was groping in the avenue of sentimentality. The Qur'an seems to belong to a time when the human mind had developed enough to give precedence to intellect over blind belief. For it also speaks of the above-mentioned truths, but with logic and reason. To bring home its doctrines to its reader's mind, it makes frequent appeal to our understanding and rational judgment. It draws our attention to various manifestations of nature as evidence of what it enunciates. For instance, there are logical reasons and rational arguments in the Book to prove the existence of God, of the day of resurrection, the necessity of Divine revelation, and many other things. The Muslim Scripture would not ask its readers to accept any of its teachings except on the strength of reasoning. This is perhaps why Islam has not observed any atheistic or sceptical movement or disposition in its ranks; while no sooner did the Church persecution become relaxed and intellect freed from its iron grip than secularizing and free thought flourished apace.

In India there has perhaps been no such marked struggle between religion and agnosticism, for the Vedas favoured atheistic and sceptical tendencies equally with other forms of Hindu schism. And here, again, Islam and the other two religions present a most striking contrast. Education has alienated the human mind from the Church religion. It has brought forth a similar revolt against Hinduism, especially in these latter days. But modern science has only served to strengthen Muslim belief in the Qur'anic truths. We are rational beings. Reason and logic play a prominent part in all our beliefs and persuasions. No other book but the Qur'an, therefore, will meet the demand of our time.

Again, the first two revelations do not specifically speak of the articles of their faith; each inquirer must gather them for himself from these Books. In the Christian Churches the task fell to the Church Councils. The articles of the Christian faith as promulgated by the Fathers were collected in the Book of Common Prayer, and have been the object of successive revisions from time to time.

In Hinduism, want of a definite statement in the Vedas as to what were the articles of faith in the Vedic religion gave rise to innumerable sects that differ from each other even in their fundamental tenets. From such a fate the Qur'an has saved the Muslims; for it has clearly laid down in various verses the Islamic articles of faith (Ibid., 2:285).

Articles of Faith in Islam

Iman, the word which in Arabic corresponds to "faith," means knowledge of a thing coupled with a conviction as to its truth so strong as to incite us to strive our utmost to live up to it. The word does not, in Qur'anic terminology, include beliefs which cannot be translated into action, or are not concerned with action. Consequently, belief in something accepted as verity on the basis of a dogma does not come within the category of religious beliefs in Islam. In fact, dogmatic doctrines have no significance for a Muslim. Faith, however, in the Qur'anic sense of the word, plays a most important part in moulding every human word or action. All our movements are the portraits of such of our concepts as are based upon sure and certain faith. Every item of our routine, however insignificant, is but a motion picture of our belief in the existence or the non-existence of things. Any change in such a belief straightway produces a change in the routine. Even a slight movement in our lips, or of any other portion of the body, springs from some belief or other. For instance, we cannot utter a word unless we believe as well in the audibility and articulation of the sound we make as in the ability of our hearer to hear and give to our words the same meanings which they convey to us. Similar belief is always present in our mind concerning everything that emanates from us. This emphasizes the importance of a vigilant and wise choice of faith in every avenue of our existence, since soundness of action follows soundness of belief; and more especially is this so in our religious beliefs, seeing that no other belief approaches them in strength and in influence on the ordering of our life.

Every religion lays down certain articles of faith as its basic principles, demanding from its adherents an implicit faith therein. These basic principles may or may not appeal to our intelligence, or serve any useful purpose for us in this life, but it is nevertheless claimed for them that they possess unique merits in securing salvation and happiness in the life beyond the grave for those who hold them.

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As to that life, almost every religion strikes the same note. Faith in tenets diametrically opposed to each other in teaching have by different religions been invested with similar merits that have been invested with similar merits that are to accrue to the believer in his life after death. If a faith in the divinity of A and B, for instance, brings salvation to the believer according to one religion, it dooms him to everlasting punishment in the life to come, according to the other. No religion, on the other hand, has any decisively logical support for its assertions. No one as yet has returned from behind the veil to bear witness to the truth of his faith. Even "seances-phenomena," apart from all considerations of their futility or otherwise, are not reliable evidence that such a thing has occurred. The French spiritualist, for example, accepts the transmigration of the soul as a truth on the strength of phenomenal testimony, while his colleague in England will disbelieve in the doctrine on evidence precisely similar. Under these circumstances I am forced to conclude that a religion's claim for belief in its doctrines should never be heeded, unless those doctrines satisfy our intelligence and have been tested in the crucible of utility as regards our present life.

A plunge in the dark is a dangerous proceeding, but it is infinitely more dangerous to believe in things that not only have no bearing on our present life but sometimes are actually harmful in their effects on the building of our character. By way of illustration I may refer to doctrines like the Atonement, Predestination, Fatalism, and the Transmigration of the Soul. No one can prove any of these by reference to anything in this present life. They may seem plausible to some, but belief in them mainly concerns things as to which we are utterly in the dark. On the other hand, they produce no wholesome effects on this life, nor do they leave any incentive for action. In fact, when taken literally they prompt no action at all.

Fear of punishment is, in most cases, the only deterring influence in crushing evil. The pressure of public opinion and legal penalties are the great discouragers of wrong, and wherever they relax their hold, evil begins to crop up. Thus, for example, prostitution, gambling and drinking have been the curse of Christian nations, chiefly for the above reasons. Public opinion in Christian lands is not strong enough to stop these evils, while legislation, on its criminal side, is nearly silent on the subject. The fear of punishment in the life to come acts as a deterrent in this respect in non-Christian races; but this can hardly be so with believers in the Atonement. If God could not find any other remedy for the cleansing of human sin than that of sending His own sons from time to time to pay its penalty - since Jesus was only the last of the Pagan Christs who came to give their lives for human salvation - then there is no need of any good action on our part. There are very few of us who pursue virtue for its own sake. It is the reward of virtue, especially seen in its efficacy in counterbalancing the effects of sin, that we fulfill the law and lead a good life. But if the same thing is attainable merely by our belief in the Grace of God, few would think it worthwhile to bear the hardships and trials of the life of righteousness. Belief in the Atonement obviates the necessity for action, so it was held by Luther. Though the Romish Church attaches importance to good actions also, yet logically Luther is in the right in his conclusions. Similarly, our belief in Predestination - another Christian verity - Fatalism and the Transmigration of the Soul, weakens such impulses as we may have toward action. If everything in the form of pain and pleasure in this life has already been chalked out for us in the past, as the principle of the Transmigration of the Soul teaches, and no effort on our part can alter what is to be, then no moral schemes for avoiding adversity or achieving happiness are of the slightest avail. Similarly, if evil follows man as the shadow of his actions in a past life, he need not strive to free himself from its hold, since it is unavoidable. If, for example, he is suffering from fever in consequence of some wrongdoing in his past incarnation under the law of "Karma," no medical skill can cure him. Nay, it obviates any necessity for medical attention and, I may say, for the profession itself. It would put a stop to all advancement in that branch of science, and the same can be presumed in regard to other departments of human activity. I admit that believers in these principles do not generally show apathy towards progress. They are interested in it and sometimes contribute to its advancement, but this only means that they do not faithfully believe in things they hold as articles of faith. Their actions belie their belief.

A word here on the subject of the existence of God will not be out of place. Belief in the Deity has been universally the sine qua non of religion from time immemorial. The worshipping instinct in man has always found its gratification in directing his devotional feelings to some kind of deity. Buddhism is an exception to this rule, since no mention of God is contained in its Scriptures. But the passion for worshipping established its supremacy there very speedily. All that is reserved for God in other religions goes to Buddha. All Buddhist countries teem with his images. Their temple is another house of worship for idols, where the worshippers are seen sitting or standing before the images of Lord Buddha, with the same postures and gesticulations as are adopted elsewhere by the worshippers of God. Buddha is addressed in the same terms and receives the same adoration and homage as are ascribed by other religions to God. In short, this passion for devotion to some supreme Being is the dominant feature of man's mind. From a stone to a son of woman, he has adored various manifestations of nature as his God, and he has been none the worse for it - seeing that he has been able to keep a certain moral order under any system of worship. The worship of idols has at times inspired him with noble and lofty feelings, like those which have been observed in the most worthy of the worshippers of God. Prayers addressed to images made by man's own hands have in their beauty, grandeur and sincerity surpassed even the devotional utterances of the holiest of monotheists while adoring the Most High. The Vishnuvites, for example - a class of Hindu idol worshippers in India - are often strict observers of morality. Their piety sometimes surpasses the righteousness of a virtuous Unitarian.

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The tenets of Islam, however, supported by Culture and Progress, have played havoc with old beliefs, and the futility of such old beliefs has at last become exposed. They have lost all the force they once possessed for the moulding of good character. The world at large is on the high road to belief in Unity, and even those who, like the Christians, still evince some sort of polytheistic tendencies, are now almost prepared to apologize for them. Belief in the unity of God in its purest form, when rendered into action in our daily life, would - as I will describe later on - merely, without doubt, bring our civilization to its climax; but a lip belief in the Oneness of God is, in my humble opinion, less meritorious than the different forms which polytheism has adopted in the cases above mentioned. Orthodoxy may take strong exception to my statement, but I would make bold to say that a polytheist who leads a virtuous life earns more merit in the eye of the Lord than a wicked person with all his belief in the unity of God. I also say that I see no excellence in such a belief if it exerts no influence in beautifying the character. It is useless to sing hymns at the top of our voices if we are not leading, and do not lead, godly lives. God does not stand in need of any adoration from us; and if He does, He is not worthy of the great names with which He is revered. I would go further than that; I would say that if our worship of Him lies only in bringing offerings and sacrifices to His alter, and in the recital of praises and thanks to Him, it is neither creditable to God nor profitable to man. He is only another fetish and the biggest in the world of religion. God should stand above these things. He needs no praise from us. The Qur'an is very explicit on the point. It says that our extolling or praising God does not contribute to His glory, nor does blasphemy retract at all from His grandeur and dignity. Our prayers to Him should consist of such expressions, whether praise or Thanksgiving to God or supplications to Him for some favour, as may set us to work out our own power and ability to our best advantage.

In this respect my choice falls on the prayer that Islam prescribes for a Muslim. It is the opening chapter of the Qur'an. It begins with words of praise and Thanksgiving, but if both these actions do not go beyond the lips of the worshipper they are of no avail in Islam. The opening words of the Muslim prayer are al-Hamdu li l-Lah Rabbi l-Alamin, meaning "All praises and thanksgiving are for God." The word "Hamd" in Arabic is very rich in meaning. It conveys four ideas. (Qur'an, 1:1-7) "(All) Praise is due to God, the Lord of the Worlds. The Beneficent, the Merciful, Master of the day of requital. Thee we do serve and Thee do we beseech for help. Guide us on the right path, the path of those upon whom Thou hast bestowed favours, not those upon whom wrath is brought down, nor those who go astray."

First, the word has an exclusive use. It is reserved for the praise of the Lord. Secondly, it conveys the idea of perfection; the worshipper sees in God all the best and most excellent attributes. Thirdly, it expresses a longing desire on the part of the worshipper to possess all such attributes to the extent of his abilities, and hence his prayers for them. Fourthly, it means thanks, that is, for his possession of capacity for cultivating such attributes in himself. In fact, the action of praise psychologically consists of the said four ingredients. Perfection in beauty, sublimity and goodness on the one side, and our lack of them with desire to own them on the other, move our admiration and praise for the owner of those excellences; but we never desire to possess a thing unless we own the ability to do so, and hence our gratitude for it. Thus the word "Hamd" on the lips of a Muslim while at prayer is no empty word of compliment that may please the ears of the Deity, but a genuine expression of a genuine desire to mould his life on Divine lines; and to this end the Muslims recite, after the word "Hamd," four names of God which are the most beautiful among their class. They are Rabb, Rahman, Rahim and Malik-i-yauum al-Din. Each of them, if followed by us, would make a millennium for the world. Rabb means Creator, Nourisher, Maintainer and Bringer of faculties to perfection. Rahman means All-Beneficent Lord whose blessings go to all, unmerited and undeserved, and not by way of compensation for any good action but of His own goodness. Rahim means One who rewards an action manifold. Malik means the owner of the kind of judgment, whose sentence of punishment is only for reclamation and is not the fruit of anger on account of man's disobedience. The beauty of these four attributes is that in them God does not observe any distinction of class and creed among men. The God of Islam is the God of all nations, who is impartial in the dispensation of His blessings. I wish the rulers of the earth who hold sway over other races could show so broadminded and liberal an attitude, for then the burden of foreign rule would lose its curse. A Muslim says his prayers five times a day, which reminds him of these four Divine moulds in which he has to cast his daily life. High morality in Islam consists in the reflection of Divine morals - a truth that has recently dawned on the minds of Western theologians.

Next, the worshipper speaks of his service to God, and the best religious service. According to Islam, this consists of doing actions in conformity with the requirements of the Divine Names. The Prayer then speaks of things for which a Muslim has to pray to his God. He must not pray for earthly good, but for knowledge - knowledge of the right path that may bring him under the grace and blessings of God, and keep him away from wickedness and error.

I have made a somewhat wide digression from my subject, but it was not without its relevancy when dealing with the worshipping side of our nature. I have said that if the worship of a deity produces no moral effect on our life, it need not be pursued. Similarly, if adoring one deity is equal in its results to the worshipping of another, the choice among them is immaterial. By way of illustration I would take man-worship from among the various forms of polytheism as being the last and most refined. Jesus is the last of those favoured persons who from time to time have been placed on the throne of God by their fellows. And here I would mention two other persons who besides continued on next page
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Jesus still command human allegiance as God. These are Krishna and Rama-Chandar - the two Indian deities - who were adored as such a thousand years before the birth of Christianity. Like Jesus, they are Eastern and come of coloured races, but as gods, they are superior to him in many respects. They are more historic than the Nazarene. They can claim more genuineness for their life-records, though these were not free from folk-lore. Their precepts and other utterances are, in general, more majestic, more awe-inspiring, and of greater practical utility than visionary sermons from the Mount. Jesus came of humble parentage and did not possess even a roof for shelter, but if Rama-Chandar were a prince and later on a ruler, Krishna ruled the destinies of kings in his time. Jesus had nothing to sacrifice, as far as worldly possessions go, but the Indian gods gave up the best of worldly things in the service of humanity. Jesus was crushed by evil, but Rama-Chandar crushed evil, and Rudhra - another name for Krishna - had been the crusher of evil throughout his life. The actions ascribed to these great men by their narrators are transcendent. They are like shadows of the powers of the Almighty while the Bible is silent in the case of the sacred Carpenter in this respect. Undoubtedly the worshippers of these Indian gods did not exhibit a high standard of morals at certain periods of their history, but it is only fair to point out that such periods corresponded with that period in history of the world - I compare the Middle Ages in Europe - when every corner of it presented a horizon of moral darkness. Christianity was no exception, but in many ways worse. However, I look at the subject from a different angle. If we have to seek our God in the incarnate form, I see no special reason for giving precedence to Jesus over others. Our belief in him has not helped mankind any more than the Hindu belief in Krishna and Rama-Chandar. In one respect, Christianity has been woefully at fault. In the matter of culture and civilization Christianity has proved an implacable enemy to human advancement. It crushed science as long as it had the power to do so, and would do the same today if the modern world would suffer it. Only the other day (1931) the Bishop of Ripon proposed to give scientific research a holiday for ten years. This was but an echo of the old cry of tyranny and oppression that came from the Church against culture and science in the Middle Ages, though it is clothed in the euphemisms of modern refinement.

In short, if belief in the divinity of a man has not helped the human race more than belief in the divinity of stones or elements in the days of ignorance, it is as I have shown before, not worthy of our further attention. Modern progress in the West should not be taken as the fruit of man's faith in the Church dogmas. The West made no progress so long as it was in the iron grip of Christianity.

But even our belief in the Supreme Being, or the worship of God, is of no consequence if it does not help in the betterment of our race. Religion has been regarded as a necessary human institution from the days of Adam and Eve. But it should be treated as a back number if our pursuit of it possesses no utility. The whole question depends on the article of faith upon which a religion insists. If it asks us to believe in such tenets as have come under discussion in these pages, I think we are none the worse for dispensing with it. But if it invites our faith in doctrines that bring out all that is noble and good in us, and urges us to use all the powers of nature, whether reposed in the human frame or in the rest of the universe, to our best advantage, then religion becomes a most essential human institution. I repeat, God is not in need of human worship, but if our worship of Him inspires us to follow His way as they are to be observed in the universe, ways that work out the best of civilization on righteous lines, it ought to be part and parcel of our life. I would go to my God fifty times a day in such prayerful mood, though Islam prescribes but five prayers only.

The greatest blessing that has come to us from science is our belief in the existence of Law and that only our submission to it can bring us to success and happiness. Law is the order of the time. Every atom of nature and its various combinations, including the human frame, owes its existence and further development to implicit obedience to Law. From the nebulous state, up to the human frame, everything is a slave to Law. Religion will be doing the greatest possible service to humanity if it inspires man with a strong belief in Law. Virtue and evil, both in their growth and origin, are commensurate with the strength or weakness of our belief in Law and its forces. Criminality comes to the surface in quarters where Law can be avoided without fear of detection, and it becomes absolutely non-existent if we believe in the inexorableness of its punishments.

If Law is all in all in this way, and our belief in it is the greatest factor in the building of our character and in the achievement of success, it needs our strong belief not only in its Maker, who invests it with full force in its operation, but in many other things connected with Law. Law demands as well the services of its "functionaries," who must keep it always in force, since without them it would be but a dead-letter.

Again, Law, or such portion of it as rules human destinies, whether discovered or revealed, should be preserved in such a form as may be of service to all units of humanity. It has not fallen to the lot of all men to make researches in the realms of Law, nor to be inspired by the contemplation of its source. There are but a few chosen persons of the human race who are favoured with this gift, and it is their duty to guide and enlighten their fellow men. Again, Law loses all its force, nor can it compel universal adhesion, unless and until some reward or punishment comes inevitably to its fulfiller or breaker. Lastly, there ought to be set times for such reward and punishment - when the fruits of submission or disobedience to Law should become manifest to all. Thus if Law is the lever of the whole machinery in the universe, and our belief in it works wonders for our progress, we should also, to make it a reality in our eyes, believe in the Maker of the Law, its functionaries, its record, and the custodians thereof. We must believe, too, in the reward and the punishment ordained by such an administrative system.

For illustration, take any human institution that contributes to our civilization and we shall find it revolving
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on the pivot of the above-mentioned seven principles, with Law as one of them. Take the government of any country. No society, even in its most primitive state, can work on healthy lines without some sort of government acting in it as a sovereign political authority. It works through its laws. It must have machinery to set them in motion. It must reduce its laws to a record - they may be laws unwritten but imprinted on the tablet of the human mind - and entrust them to intermediate officials to convey to the general public. The government also needs a court of law to administrate, etc. If the Law is a thing so important, and I may say the only key to our advancement and perfection, it should be the first duty of religion to inspire in us a strong stimulus for respecting it. I find myself unable to attach any value to a faith which lacks such incentive. I cannot imagine any greater harm to the very fabric of human society than that which accrued to us by reason of our belief in a doctrine that either weakens our sense of responsibility or discourages our energy and divests us of motive for action. A religion that belittles the importance of Law is best forgotten. For this reason I had to give up my belief in the Atonement and other similar doctrines. I could not see, as I remarked before, any necessity for believing even in God, if belief is not attended with the results I have just mentioned. Law and its rules are the main things in the whole universe. Law demands an unswerving belief in its existence and implicit obedience. It is inexorable in awarding its penalties to its unbelievers and breakers. No other belief can save the transgressor of the law from its demands in this life; and shall not the same apply to the hereafter? Should not religion, then, inculcate first of all the necessity and importance of our faith in Law? It must speak of other verities also, because belief in the Law, and that alone, is of no avail, if unaccompanied by belief in other essential things. Divine worship may be taken as a matter of first importance in religion, but we know nothing of God except through His ways of work in nature. Hence our worship of Him should find its real manifestation in our following His ways in our life. Our prayer or other form of adoration should act as a reminder of that Great Truth.

The recital of certain sacred words is not an act of worship; true worship consists in submission to His laws. In this respect I can safely say that Islam is the only representative of religion from Above. The word itself literally means submission to laws, and a Muslim is one who obeys the Law. Law of course means the Divine Laws, whether discovered by us as laws of nature or revealed to man by God Himself. The Qur'an uses several other words as synonyms of Law - ways of God. His limits and His bounds, His government, His pre-measurement of good and evil, and the throne He sits upon, etc. These words, in fact, convey different functions and aspects of Law. It comes to prescribe limits; for, since no action in itself is either good or bad, it is its use or application, and the circumstances under which it is used or applied, that makes it good or bad. The Law thus defines the limits under which an action brings good to its doer or does; and in this respect it becomes a virtue. Any transgression from the prescribed bounds means wrong, wickedness, and sin.

I cannot cite a stronger statement on behalf of a revealed religion and its necessity than which I found in the last section of the second chapter of the Qur'an:

"Whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth is God's; and whether you manifest what is in your minds or hide it, God will call you to account according to it; then He will forgive whom He pleases and chastise whom He pleases, and God has power over all things. The Messenger (Muhammad) believes in what has been revealed to him from His Lord, and (so do) the believers; they all believe in God and His angels and His books and His apostles: We make no difference between any of His messengers; and they say: We hear and obey, our Lord! Thy forgiveness (do we crave), and to Thee is the eventual course. God does not impose upon any soul a duty but to the extent of its ability; for it is (the benefit of) what it has earned, and upon it (the evil of) what it has wrought. Our Lord! do not punish us if we forget or make a mistake; our Lord! do not impose upon us that which we have not the strength to bear; and pardon us and grant us protection and have mercy on us. Thou art our Patron, so help us against the unbelieving people." The Qur'an, 2:284-6

First it speaks in clear terms of six things written in bold letters on every page of nature, and their existence is palpable even to a most superficial observer, since the denial of it is attended by immediate unrelenting penalty. These are the things in reality that can rightly be given the name of Truth or Verity. The so-called verities adopted as such by various persuasions are more dogmatic.

The verities spoken of in these verses are as follows:
1. The universality of Divine Government - the working of His Law in Heaven and in the Earth.
2. Our unavoidable accountability to God for our every action hidden or manifest.
3. His law of retribution ever in operation, with occasional remission under given conditions.
4. Our ability to submit to His Laws.
5. Laws of action and their results, i.e., we reap what we sow.
6. The Hereafter - the time to bear the fruits of our actions. It may be immediate, since sometimes we are punished immediately for our wrongs, or it may be in the future - what is popularly styled the Last Day or the Day of Judgment in religious parlance.

No special revelation from God, no elaborate teaching of tutor divine is needed to bring home to us these truths. Everything in nature speaks of them. No one with a grain of wisdom in his head can deny them; which being so, the case for religion and its necessity, as well as the nature of its tenets, is obvious enough. Even an atheist must bow down to these six laws. In fact, they are his creed if we eliminate the words "God" or "His" from the above. He accepts the yoke of Law quite meekly. His only trouble is his inability to believe in the Mind from which Law

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emanates - a thing of easy proof in the light of modern scientific researches. Even those who take exception to some of the above-mentioned verities, for example the fourth - our ability to obey the law - are compelled to believe in the working of these six laws on the physical plane. Everything in the universe contradicts their dogma.

In this connection I would make a few remarks concerning the fundamental doctrine of Christianity - the doctrine of so-called Original Sin. If sin means our violation of Law, the doctrine falls to the ground. Admittedly we are capable of doing wrong, we violate Law, but this propensity in our nature does not deny our ability to observe it. The whole machinery of a government in human society works on the assumption that the members of such society are capable of obeying the mandates of the government. Without such assumption or belief, the very existence of working of a body like the British Parliament - and in the same category come various other legislative bodies - becomes an anomaly.

We believe in the working of the above-quoted six laws in the tangible world, but some of us do not see our way to concede the same belief to them in the life beyond the grave. I need not here repeat what I said before to prove the futility of such a position. Suffice it is to observe that I have keenly studied the laws or commandments of God as given in the Bible, and there is not a single word in them that cannot be fulfilled by man. Some there may be who evince a certain laxity in observing some of the said commandments, but the human race is not lacking in those who are or have been true Muslims - obedient to those laws. The first four commandments, as given in Exodus, demand our staunch belief in the unity of God. The rest of the commandments have been observed by a larger portion of humanity, as without their enforcement no human society, even in its most primitive steps of development, can stand, even for a short time. A Moses is needed to enforce those commandments in a newly fledged society for its healthy development.

But to return. The said six laws compel our belief. If we wish to live as good citizens under the government of the Lord, and attain true success and happiness, we must look for those laws and sit at the feet of those who are their custodians and teachers. It is in this respect that the quoted verses of the Qur'an speak of the prophets and the books they bring from God. The Books come to reveal the Will of the Lord of His ways under which He rules all things in heaven and earth. There is one thing more which is so necessary to infuse in us a spirit strong enough to inspire an implicit obedience to Law, and that is our belief in its unfailing and unavoidable working together, with its inexorability in the exaction of its penalties. In this connection from on Hihg that belong to the various religious persuasions speak of certain sentient beings called Angels. According to Qur'anic teachings they are a body that bring Law and every force in nature into operation and keep them so. This is their function and the object of their existence. They act as a life or soul in everything in the universe. They set the faculties of nature in motion. I do not propose to enter into a long discussion of the subject, but merely to emphasize the fact that if we do need a strong belief in Law and our obedience to it, we can never achieve it unless we believe in the existence of beings like angels. It was in this light that I have named them in these pages the "functionaries" of Law.

We may or may not believe in any religious system, but we must and do believe in these verities. They are part and parcel of our health and happiness; and they ought to be the articles of faith in any religion which claims to have come from God. They are as follows: 1. Law. 2. God, as the source of Law. 3. Angels - functionaries of Law. 4. The Books - the record of Law. 5. The Prophets - the intermediate persons who receive first message from the Lord on the subject. 6. The Hereafter. 7. The Day of Judgment.

These are the seven verities spoken of in the Qur'anic verses which demand our belief, a belief which is given to them by every person in his mundane affairs.

The present is the mother of the future. The after-life is the child of the present life. The former evolves out of the latter. Matter, in its evolutionary course on the physical plane, receives its final perfection in the human frame, but it gives rise to another order - the order of morality, ethics and spirituality. Life with the progressive element in it leaves the body at our death like the aroma from fruit or a flower. It is like a vapour, but it possesses vast potentialities for creating a great cloud full of healthy rain. But Law, as I said before, rules every step of progress in the course of evolution. It is in obedience to it that success or full development attends the progressive element in its journey. We therefore need a system of Law that may help us to work out our future life on desirable lines so that we may secure a full measure of bliss in higher regions.

And the code of it must and can only come from the original Intelligence, source of all life and its progress; hence the necessity for a Revealed religion to disclose the above-mentioned verities, with full details for working them out. Any other system of religion is but a nursery-tale, whose function it is to feed credulity and gratify the "child" in man. But the child matures one day in intelligence and judgement and begins to see things in the light of reason and culture. It is on this account that religions based on dogma and superstitions are becoming exiled from the lands of culture and advancement.

Before concluding these lines I should like to say a word on the Law of Remission as promulgated in the above-mentioned verses from the Qur'an. It is based on Equity and Justice, and satisfies every demand for reason. The sacred Book, after mentioning our ability to abide by Law and then referring to our accountability for our actions, speaks of such mitigating circumstances as may avail to remit the penalty of Law for its breach. (Muhammad Ali's Translation of the Qur'an, 2:286 - "God does not impose upon any soul a duty, but to the extent of its ability." "For it (soul) is (the benefit of) what it has earned, and upon it (the evil of) what it has wrought." "Our Lord! do not punish us if we forget

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FUTURE ROLE OF THE AHMADIYYA
AS A MISSIONARY MOVEMENT
by HADHRAT DR SAEED AHMAD KHAN
President and Ameer-e-Jama'at of the
Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at Islam Lahore

"And from among you there should be a party who invite to good, and enjoin the right and forbid the wrong. And these are they who will be successful." (3:103)

"Allah it is Who had sent His Messenger with the guidance and the religion of Truth that He may make it prevail over all religions. And Allah is enough for a witness." (46:28)

"Allah it is Who sent His Messenger with the guidance and the true religion that He may make it overcome the religions, all of them, though the polytheists may be averse." (61:9)

The above verses of the Holy Qur'an constitute the basis of the formation of the Ahmadiyya Jamaat. They are also basic to our future role as a missionary movement. Why do I call these verses basic to our future role? Because the first requirement for the success of a missionary is that he should have a firm faith, an unshakable conviction, in the ultimate success of his mission.

The first verse that there should always be a party from among the Muslims who should invite others to the truth shows that it is the Divine wish, nay it is the Divine Command, that such a Jamaat should be formed. Earlier and later verses in that text prohibit the formation of factions, sects and other dissensions among the Muslims. The only exception made is the formation of a party or a Jamaat for the propagation of the truth. What is relevant is the divine promise that a Jamaat which does what is stated in that verse, shall be successful. When the Almighty Allah makes that promise, it is bound to be fulfilled.

But we, as the Jamaat serving the Divine purpose, have to do the following things:

a. Invite others to what is good.
b. Enjoin what is right.
c. Forbid what is wrong.

These are the tasks laid down on the Jamaat as a whole, not upon its Imam only. The Holy Prophet, when he was raised to be the pioneer and an exemplar to all of us, was required first and foremost to take care of those closest to him.

How well he did it! For, the first to believe in him was his wife and the members of his family and his closest friends. That was because of the high respect and veneration in which he was already held by those closest to him because of his own exemplary character. That fact is highlighted in the prayer taught to us in the Holy Qur'an about our spouses and children in the following words:

"And those who say, Our Lord, grant us in our spouses and our offspring the joy of our eyes, and make us the leaders of those who guard against evil." (25:74) Each one of us, whether husband or wife, should set an example to the children in Taqwa which means guarding against evil. The Holy Qur'an is described in the opening verses as "A guide to those who wish to guard against evil." So my first request to my brethren and sisters is to read the Holy Qur'an and make it a habit to do so first thing in the morning - the only time when you have some leisure if you get up early as all Muslims should do to say their morning prayers if not the Tahajjud prayers, - read the Holy Qur'an daily with the translation, with the determination that you will model your life and character in accordance with this sublime book.

Apart from reforming ourselves, the next task entrusted to us, is to invite others to what is good, to enjoin the right and to forbid the wrong. Let us start with our families. They will listen to you if your own example commands respect and admiration.

Again, it is the personal example of the missionary which wins over others, even those outside the family. It was the model character of the Holy Prophet and his companions which won over more people to Islam than mere preaching. But we must invite to good, enjoin the right and forbid the wrong, even by the word of mouth. that is not likely to achieve success, I repeat, unless your own example is there. In the last resort one must pray to Him Who controls the hearts of His creatures. But prayer must follow, or at the most accompany, action, not precede it. That is the lesson taught to us in "Thee do we obey and Thee do we beseech for help." Action on our part first, prayer for help next.

So my earnest wish and prayer is that we become a model Jamaat. That is how our ancestors, the pioneer Ahmads, succeeded.

The next two verses convey the good news that it is the Divine decision, which is bound to be accomplished, that Islam shall prevail over all other religions. Whether we are the instrument in the implementation of the Divine decision or not depends on us. We should remember that it is the greatest honour and the greatest privilege to be the missionaries of truth. Previously Allah used to raise prophets to do the work. Now that prophethood has come to an end, it is the Holy Prophet's followers that are honoured by being given the mission of the prophets. That is what the Holy Qur'an says:

"And thus We have made you an exalted nation that you may be the bearers of the knowledge (you have found in Islam) to mankind, and that the Messenger may be the bearer of that knowledge to you." (2:143)

Apart from the exalted role of a Muslim missionary, his success is assured by repeated Divine announcements that Islam Shall prevail over other religions, that is why the Promised Messiah said:

"The reward for helping Allah's cause is for free, O brotherm, for it is the decision in Heaven, it will come about in any case."

And we see signs of it already. First and foremost, other religions are losing their hold on their followers. That clears the way for Islam to take their place. But not the Islam presented by our detractors. You can see how the non-Muslims are turned away and disgusted with the demonstration of the so-called Islamic Fundamentalism and orthodoxy. It is the highest achievement of the Promised Messiah who, as the great reformer that he was, restored the

continued on next page
pristine beauty of Islam so as to make it presentable and acceptable to the whole world. How lucky we are to be entrusted with the task of presenting that Islam to the whole world.

After the Promised Messiah, our greatest benefactor was the late Hazrat Ameer Maulana Muhammad Ali Sahib who made available to us in English the true picture of a universally acceptable Islam, his own diction being the envy of even the literary English writers. We have in his books, namely, the translation of the Holy Qur'an, the Religion of Islam, the Manual of Hadith, Muhammad the Prophet, the New World Order, and in the Promised Messiah's own book "The Teachings of Islam" (again translated into chaste English by Hazrat Maulana Muhammad Ali) a complete set of books on Islam. It has become so easy to propagate Islam by seeing that every library of English books has that set. If the books are to be made presentable to the people of the West, they must be printed well. Unfortunately, that is not possible in Pakistan. So, if the U.K., U.S.A., Holland and other Jamaats wish to lay the foundations for the rising of the Sun of Islam from the west they should get together to print these books in the West and to propagate them. Much as we want to, we can't send funds from Pakistan.

But, if all these books cannot be taken in hand at once, give top priority to the Holy Qur'an for that is your most effective weapon because it is the Word of Allah which goes straight to the hearts of the people and melts them. I would draw your attention to three verses of the Holy Qur'an on this point: “O, man! We have not revealed the Qur'an to thee that thou remain unsuccessful.” (20:1-2)

The Holy Prophet was a human being like any one of us. But the task entrusted to him, the burden put on his shoulders, was super human. Even so, the Holy Qur'an assures him that he cannot be but successful. And successful he indeed was. No wonder that the Encyclopaedia Britannica said under 'Koran' that Muhammad was undoubtedly the most successful of all reformers of the world. Another text of the Holy Qur'an says in greater detail: "And if there could be a Qur'an with which the mountains (of obstacles) could be blown away, and the (distances of) the earth could be cut down, and the (spiritually) dead could be made to speak (it is this Qur'an) - nay, the commandment (in these respects) is wholly Allah's." (13:31)

So don't be cowed down by the obstacles and difficulties in your way, nor by the enormity of the field to be covered, nor by the spiritual apathy of the present times. The Holy Qur'an can overcome all these difficulties. The commandment for this revolution will come from Allah. We have to convey His book to the people of the world. That is what the Holy Qur'an said to the Holy Prophet and, through him, to us who are trying to discharge his sublime mission, in the following words: "O Messenger, deliver that which has been revealed to thee from thy Lord; and if thou do it not, thou hast not delivered His message. Allah will protect thee from evil." (5:67)

May Allah be with you and guide you to, and on, the path of those on whom He bestowed His favours. Amen.

THE TWO INSPIRED ACCOUNTS OF CREATION

by M.R. Malik

The first book of the Bible, supposed to be the first book of Moses, is called Genesis. It records two accounts of creation. The first account stops with the third verse of the second chapter and the second account of the creation begins with the fourth verse of the second chapter and ends with verse twenty fifth of the same chapter. The two accounts are materially different. Both of these accounts cannot be true. Both cannot be inspired. Let us see how the two accounts differ.

Order of Creation in the First Account

1. The heaven and earth (Genesis 1:1) and light were made (Genesis 1:3).
2. The firmament was constructed and the waters divided (Genesis 1:6).
3. The waters were gathered into seas and then came dry land, grass, herbs and fruit trees (Genesis 1:11,12).
4. The sun and the moon. He made stars, also (Genesis 1:16).
5. Fishes, fowls and great whales (Genesis 1:20,21).
6. Beasts, cattle and every creeping thing (Genesis 1:25,26); man and woman (Genesis 1:27).

Order of creation in the second account.

1. The earth and the heavens (Genesis 2:4).
2. A mist went up from the earth and watered the whole face of the ground (Genesis 2:6).
3. Created man out of dust (Genesis 2:7).
4. Planted a garden eastward in Eden and put the man he had created in it (Genesis 2:8).
5. Created the beasts and fowls (Genesis 2:19).
6. Created a woman out of the man's rib (Genesis 2:21,22).

In the second account, man was made before the beasts and fowls. If this is true, the first account is false. There is no escape from it. In the New Testament, we are told that "One day is with the Lord as a thousand years and a thousand years as one day" (2 Peter 3:8). Therefore, Adam existed thousand of years before Eve was formed (Genesis
ISLAMIC RULES AND REGULATIONS
of a Responsible Democratic Government
as Laid Down in the Qur'an
by late MAULANA SADR-UD-DIN

(a) The Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon Him) is told in the following verse to conduct the affairs of the state in a parliamentary and democratic manner: "Take counsel with them in the affairs of the state." The Holy Qur'an (3:158)

(b) The Muslims are likewise called upon to show that their genius should dictate to decide their affairs by consulting the members of the nation. “And those who respond to their Lord, and keep up prayers, and their rule is to take counsel among themselves.” (42:38)

(c) “God enjoins emphatically the doing of justice and exercising of generosity and the monetary help to the kindred and He forbids indecency, evil, and oppression; He admonishes you in order that you may be mindful.” (16:90)

(d) God commands to make over trusts to those worthy of them, and that when you judge between people, you are to judge with justice; God admonishes you with what is best; God is surely All-seeing, and All-hearing.” (4:58)

The last verse not only lays stress on handing over trust of money and property to their legitimate owners but also on entrusting the affairs of government to those who possess adequate ability to conduct those affairs in a fair and proper manner. Both the rulers and the ruled should be true to their charge and responsibility.

(e) “And do not touch the property of the orphans but to the best of their interest, until they attain their maturity; and give full measures and weight with justice. We do not impose on any person a duty except to the extent of his or her ability; and when you make an utterance, then be just, though it may go against your relations, and fulfill God's covenant; He has thus enjoined you in order that you may be mindful.” (6:153)

(f) “O you who believe (i.e. Muslims), be upright and upholders of justice for God's pleasure; Bearers of witness with justice, and let not enmity of a people incite you to act unjustly; act equitably, for that is nearer to righteousness, and cherish fear of God, for God is certainly Aware of what you do.” (5:6)

(g) “Cooperate with one another in matters of virtue and goodness and do not cooperate in matters of sin and aggression; cherish fear of God; God is certainly Severe in requiting.” (5:2)

(h) “And among men is he whose utterances about the affairs of this life are pleasantly pious, and he calms on God to witness as to the honesty of his intentions, yet he is the most violent of adversaries, and when he turns round, he does mischief to the limit of his efforts and destroys all and the stock of humanity; God never likes mischief-making, and when it is pointed out to him that he should fear God, he is invested with pride and prestige and instead of desisting, carries out his sinful intentions.” (2:204-206)

COVENANTS, PACTS, PROMISES
AND OATHS

The Qur'an lays special stress on the fulfilment of covenants and pacts, and warns mankind against the violation of them, for God holds watch over their actions, and knows what motives are at the back of their dealings. The malady of not keeping pacts is an epidemic in the civilised nations of the world. It is indeed most dishonest and most injurious to violate pacts and promises. The Qur'an foresaw this moral disease that involves stupendous loss of material and moral values. The Qur'an has provided enlightenment on this serious topic in the following text: "O you who believe (i.e. Muslims), fulfill the obligations.” (5:1)

The Arabic word “Uqad” used in this verse denotes all pacts, covenants, treaties, contracts and promises. It also includes Divine ordinances given for the welfare of the individual and for that of the society in general, and it includes all kinds of pacts and treaties concluded by communities and states. Keeping of pacts and promises has been urged, because it promotes wellbeing of mankind, and it helps to inspire mutual trust.

“Those with whom you make an agreement and then they break their agreement every time, and they do not cherish fear of God, such characterless people are to be deprecated.” (8:56)

“This is a declaration of immunity by God and His Apostle towards those of the idolaters with whom you entered into an agreement.” (9:1)

“But those of the idolaters with whom you made an agreement, then they have not failed you in anything and have not backed up any one against you, so fulfill their agreements, to the end of the term; surely God loves those who are Godfearing (who do not violate their pledges).” (9:4)

“You make your oaths to be means of deceit between you, for the reason that one nation is stronger than the other: God only tries you by that.” (16:92)

“Surely God enjoins the doing of justice and the doing of good to others, and giving aid to the kindred, and He forbids indecency and evil and aggression. . . . And fulfill the covenant made in the name of God when you have made a covenant; and do not break the oaths after making them fast, and you have indeed made God a surety for you; surely God knows what you do.” (16:90-91)

“It is not righteousness that you turn your faces in prayer towards the East and the West, but righteousness is that one should believe in God and the last day and the angels and the revealed books and the Prophet, that one should give away wealth out of love for Him to the near of kin and the orphans and the needy and the wayfarer and the beggars, and for the emancipation of captives, that one should keep up prayer and pay the poor-rate; and those who keep their pacts, and those who exercise patience in affliction and in time of war. These are they who are true to their faith and these are they who are Godfearing.” (2:177)

“Those Muslims shall be successful who are keepers of their trusts and their covenants.” (23:8)

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ISLAMIC RULES AND REGULATIONS
cont.

"And those who are constant at their prayers; and those in whose wealth there is a fixed portion for the poor... and those who are faithful to their trusts and their covenants." (70:23,24,32)
"And fulfill the pact, surely every pact shall be questioned about (by God)." (17:34)

In addition to these texts, there are still others that urge likewise that pacts and promises must be kept in all fairness, with firm faith in the fact that God watches whether or not we are honest and faithful. It is required of us to always bear in mind that every pact that we concluded before, and in the presence of God, and that we must be faithful in keeping our agreements and covenants and leagues.

These instructions imply apprehensions that nations will find excuses to break and violate their pacts and covenants, and will thus create mistrust and dissatisfaction, which will lead to serious consequences.

THE RELIGIOUS LEADERS AND THE RICH PEOPLE

Every community has two classes among them that are most influential i.e., the affluent class and those who are in charge of religious affairs. They can do a lot of good, but they can also work havoc in most cases. The affluent class injures the bodies and religious leaders injure the souls of mankind, while both are seized with the greed of increasing their wealth. They are prone to worship mammon, and out to exploit those who look up to them for guidance.

Both these classes are indicted. The indictment of the Qur'an reads:
"O believers, most surely many of the doctors of law and the monks eat away the property of mankind falsely, and make them deviate from God's path; and as for those who hoard up gold and silver and do not spend them in God's way, announce them a painful chastisement." (9:34)
"They have taken their doctors of law and the monks for lords besides God and they have also taken the Messiah, son of Mary, for their Lord; while they were enjoined that they should serve God alone, for there is no God but He; far from His glory be what they associate with Him." (9:31)

The above mentioned classes enjoy incredible prestige and privilege and they exercise irresistible influence on the public as well as those to whom the reins of government are entrusted. In order to maintain the dignity and independence of man, Islam denounced them, and condemned them vehemently, and especially dealt a death-blow to priestcraft. Man can indeed perform the acts of devotion and offer his prayer without any intermediary. There are no rituals in Islam, they may require the services of clerics; there is nothing to be consecrated, and none to be ordained. Priesthood has, therefore, been abolished, and mankind freed from its bondage.

These detailed discussions have covered an extensive ground by touching on all the essential requirements of the modern age. The principles outlined therein are manifestly such as would certainly afford satisfaction and promote peace and happiness among the nations of the world. Radio and aeroplane have supplied means of bringing various peoples into contact. Islamic ideology can utilise this physical contact advantageously for bringing about the unification of the hearts. It is this realisation of great consequence that Islamic doctrines have in view. These doctrines proved effective during the life-time of the Prophet, when a realistic brotherhood of humanity came into existence; and this is being demonstrated every year at Mecca on the occasion of pilgrimage. Different nations with different colours and different languages present there a scene of corporate life on the plane of perfect equality. The same doctrines will prove effective now. There are without doubt in the Western countries persons of light and learning who appreciate these views, and it is expected of them to give publicity to these ideologies with a view to promoting the good of humanity at large. The doctrines that enjoin that the Creator and Cherisher of the entire humanity is one and the same, can certainly knit mankind together with the ties of affection and fellow-feeling, eliminating all those prejudices that are eating into the vitals of humanity, and are responsible for all the chaotic discord prevalent among the children of God. Let brave persons come forward, and work earnestly to spread these Divine ethics that edify us and change our outlook on life, and thus help to advance and establish universal peace and happiness. There is every reason that persons having such a resolve shall succeed in their noble enterprise, and shall thus reap a very rich reward.

SEARCH FOR A HIGHER BEING
cont.

there had been no philosophers He would have remained unknown. It is another impertinence to enquire whether God has a tongue wherewith He can speak. Has He not created all heavenly bodies and the earth without physical hands? Does He not hear us without physical ears? Was it then not necessary that He should also speak? It is not at all correct to say that all God's speaking has been left behind and that there is nothing in the future. We cannot seal up His words and His speech in any age. Without doubt He is ready to enrich the seekers from the fountain of revelation as He used to do before. The gates of His grace are open today as they were at any time. It is true, however, that the needs for law and limitations having been filled, all Messengerships and Prophethoods find their perfection at their last point, which was the person of our lord and master, the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him. (Islami Usul ki Philosophy, pp. 48:53)
"Allah exalts those of you who believe and who have knowledge to high ranks." (The Holy Qur'an, 58:11)

The subject, though vast and varied, is at the same time perhaps the most important subject - the burning topic of the modern age. The gravest misunderstanding prevailing today against faith, especially the faith of Islam, is that it is only a figment of the human imagination which has no reality. It is against reason, against science, against man's utility and benefit. Now, that is one of the greatest causes why people are not attracted to hear, ponder or think. They think it is a relic of the past, ignorance, superstition. In ages when people used to fear everything, then they thought man is imperfect, weak, he should have something in his mind to protect him. That is what they think about religion. The above verse of the Holy Qur'an frankly tells us that belief and knowledge are one and the same thing, and Allah raises both those people who believe and those who have knowledge. To put knowledge and belief in one verse shows that they are synonymous subjects. Knowledge means science, and science is knowledge. About a dozen verses or more are found in the Holy Qur'an which are to the effect of the verse quoted above. The Qur'an says: O people, do you think that he who knows and he who knows not, has no knowledge, are equal? No, it is only those who have the eyes to see and the ears to hear with, who remember Allah. (39:9)

The same thing in this verse, that Allah's remembrance is reserved for those who have got eyes and ears. Another verse: When the evil ones will be hurled into hell, they will say: O sorry, we did not ponder, we did not listen, otherwise we would not have been the inmates of hell.

Now, the two things are contradictory: one who possesses science or knowledge or hearing or seeing, he can never be, according to the Qur'an, an inmate of hell. They receive salvation.

Why don't they ponder over the Qur'an? Or are their hearts under locks." (47:24)

Ponder over the Qur'an, reflect on the Qur'an. The Qur'an is meant for reflection, and nature is meant for reflection. They are on parallel grounds: We have revealed this Qur'an in the Arabic language so that you may take sense. (12:2)

Not only reading as rote, but ponder over it as you ponder over nature. In the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the alternation of night and day, and the ships that run in the sea with that which profits men, and the water that Allah sends down from the sky, then gives life therewith to the earth after its death . . . there are surely signs for a people who have understanding. (2:164)

Such verses abound in the Qur'an, if you can only collect them. Now a few verses in the Qur'an to show how the Holy Book has enjoined the acquisition of knowledge of nature, to control it, to maintain it:

Allah is He Who created the heavens and the earth and sent down water from the clouds, then brought forth with it fruits as a sustenance for you, and He has made the ships subservient to you to run their course in the sea by His Command, and He has made the rivers subservient to you. And He has made subservient to you the sun and the moon, pursuing their courses; and He has made subservient to you the night and the day. And He gives you of all you ask of Him. And if you count Allah's favours, you will not be able to number them. Surely man is very unjust, very ungrateful. (14:34)

In these verses, nature has been made subservient to man, and man has been ordered to subdue it and control it. But why? for his benefit. At another place, the same subject is dealt with in different words:

And He has made subservient for you the night and the day and the sun and the moon. (16:12)

Is not science today trying to collect these rays of the sun and derive energy from them? How forceful are these verses, asking man to go, study nature, control its elements by finding the laws of nature, subjugating them and benefitting by obedience to these laws. Could one imagine a Book meant for faith describing so forcefully, so vehemently, the employment of reason, the employment of research for control of nature, for finding natural laws, then harnessing them for man's benefit. Nothing could go beyond this. So far as Islam or the Qur'an is concerned, nobody can say that it is against reason or that it prohibits subduy of nature or that it does not want man to control natural elements. In fact, one cannot leave this subject fully at all without the verse:

God created man and asked the angels to submit to him. They submitted, but Iblis (devil) did not. We taught man the knowledge of everything. Then this was presented to the angels: do you know that. They said, No.

Knowledge and science given to man is such that not only do the angels not know it, but the angels, the functionaries of God, themselves submit to that knowledge. They obey it. When man knows a natural law and wants to benefit by it, the angels submit.

Now, let us take another aspect. The Qur'an has not only given an urge for applying knowledge, an urge which none can parallel, but also it has foretold many advances which science was to make after sometime. That is, the discoveries which the physical sciences have today made, some of these have already been told by the Qur'an.

Law of Gravity
The whole order of the universe is based on this. The Qur'an says: "These heavenly objects - they are floating, rotating." (21:33)

"There are no links between them that you can see." (13:2)

You cannot see the gravitational force.

Law of Evolution
The Qur'an has dealt with this in a very perfect way:

"Praise be to God, Who is Lord (Rabb) of the worlds (al-alamin)." (1:1)

The meaning of Rabb is He Who first creates, then ordains for it a final stage to which it should grow. Not only that, it also appoints means for it to reach that goal. Is that not evolution in a general sense, a broad sense? Not only this, but the Darwinian theory says that different species spring from the same parent. The common misinterpretation continued on page 20
BOOK REVIEW
THE GOSPEL OF JESUS THE JEW
by SALEM AHMAD, U.K.


This publication is the promised sequel to the author's influential Jesus the Jew: A Historian's Reading of the Gospels, which was first published in 1973. Geza Vermes is Reader in Jewish Studies and Fellow of Wolfson College in the University of Oxford, and was already well known as an authority on the Dead Sea Scrolls prior to the publication of Jesus the Jew.

There has been a strong tendency in New Testament scholarship over the last fifty or sixty years to assume that the writers of the canonical gospels had obscured the Jesus of history beyond hope of recovery. Against this attitude Vermes argues that some features of the gospel writings point to their potential usefulness as historical documents for recovering the teaching of Jesus. He also draws attention to the fact that Christian New Testament scholars usually have at best an inadequate knowledge and grasp of the relevant Jewish historical sources; that their knowledge of Hebrew rarely goes much further than a grounding in the biblical form of the language; and that Aramaic, the spoken language of Jesus, is not given its due importance as a subject of study. In particular, Christian New Testament scholars are generally not truly familiar with the spirit of Jewish thought in early Christian times.

Vermes outlines the historical methods by which the gospel material may be sifted and compared for determining what might have been the "Gospel of Jesus the Jew" and the character of his ministry. Some of these methods, which, as he explains, must necessarily be used with caution, are derived from the work of the late Norman Perrin. One principle added by Vermes to those of Perrin is that where contradictions are found in the doctrines attributed to Jesus by the Gospels, at least one of the contradictory doctrines is likely not to be authentic; attempts to reconcile such discrepancies are to be avoided.

Regarding the development of early Christian doctrine and the influence of later ideas on the contents of the Gospels, he accepts the view that the picture of Jesus and his teaching provided by the first three Gospels is radically different from what is to be found in the epistles of Paul. There are those who are inclined to think that Palestinian Jewish culture was so thoroughly affected by Hellenism (the culture of the Greek-speaking peoples of the Roman Empire) that it is not useful to distinguish between Hellenistic and Palestinian Judaism. Efforts have been made on this basis to narrow the gap between the Jesus of history and the Jesus of the church. But Vermes upholds the view that Christianity underwent a profound change with its translation from a Palestinian Jewish environment to the outside world. He points to the withdrawal of the Ebionites (Jewish Christians who did not accept the doctrines of Incarnation and Trinity) from mainstream Christianity and states that the probable reason for their withdrawal "was that the Ebionites became convinced that they were witnessing in the Hellenistic communities a fatal misrepresentation of Jesus, a betrayal of his ideals, and their replacement by alien concepts and aspirations."

He recapitulates the argument put forward in Jesus the Jew, that Jesus conforms to the traditional image of the "man of God" (ish-ha-elonim) - a prophet or saint of such a kind as the prophets Elijah and Elisha, or the Hasidim ("Devoted Ones") Hanina ben Dosa and Honi the Circle-Drawer of an age nearer to Jesus himself. The "man of God" was expected, in the popular imagination, to perform miracles, even to the extent of raising the dead. Yet the alleged miracles of such men were not taken as evidence of their own divinity, but were attributed to the special favour of God. The Jewish idea of the "man of God" is therefore very different from that of the "divine man" of the Greek-speaking world.

For Vermes, the evidence of the first three gospels does suggest that Jesus was "a physician of the body and the mind." "when nervous and mental disorders were attributed to demonic possession," he says, "he cured them by himself, overcoming the evil spirits believed to be inhabiting the minds of the sufferers. And he mended the bodies of men and women sure that illness is the result of sin by loosening Satan's grip on them with a declaration of forgiveness." Later, Rabbis were to teach that "no sick man shall recover from his illness until all his sins have been pardoned."

Central to the preaching of Jesus is the theme of the "Kingdom of God." This same theme is presented in various different ways in the Old Testament and other ancient Jewish literature. Of these, the manner in which Jesus speaks of the Kingdom of God is perhaps closest to the Rabbinic concept of personal submission to divine authority (expressed by the Rabbis as taking upon oneself the "yoke of the Kingdom of Heaven"), which for a Jew entailed following the sacred law. Vermes suggests that for Jesus, the sovereignty of God is realized on earth by the act of repentance and surrender to the will of God, and that this whole-hearted turning to God makes redundant or irrelevant any questioning as to when and in what fashion God's Kingdom will be manifested and visibly extended over an unwilling world. The idea that Jesus would physically descend from heaven as ruler and judge of mankind will have been introduced into the gospel tradition at a later stage.

In Jesus the Jew, the author touched upon the question of the term "Father" as applied to God. He returns to this subject in the present publication. In Jewish sources the use of the term is essentially metaphorical and expresses the notion of divine patronage and friendship. God is represented as the "Father", or patron, of the Israelite people in the Old Testament, and the same usage is found in later literature, except that, as Vermes puts it, "relation with the Father grows to be less of a privilege conferred on Israel as a people, and increasingly dependent on merit." The term "Father" comes to be used frequently in prayer, and although the exact phrase "our Father" (as in the

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“Lord’s Prayer”) is not found outside Christian sources until relatively late, it is quite possible that it was sometimes used in Jewish prayers in the time of Jesus. The word probably used by Jesus for “Father” or “my Father” was the Aramaic abba, which is found in the New Testament in Mark 14:36, Romans 8:15 and Galatians 4:6. As with the expression “our Father,” there is a lack of direct evidence either for or against the use of this exact word in ancient Jewish prayers, yet there is one anecdote which Vermes cites as indicating that the Hasidim may have employed it in referring to God. The word is known to have been used as an honorific title for a number of holy men (it was used in the same way later in eastern Christianity), and the story is recorded that one such Hasid, Hanan, the grandson of Honi the Circle-Drawer, was once chased by some children who called out to him “Abba, abba, give us rain!” whereupon Hanan prayed to God to “render service to those who cannot distinguish between the abba who gives rain and the abba who does not.” Such was the metaphorical term which was to become, after it was inherited by the Christian church, the name of the “First Person of the Trinity.” As Vermes has shown here, and in Jesus the Jew, there were other similar metaphorical usages which were to result in the Christian use of the title “Son of God” as applied literally to Jesus, and ultimately in the concept of the “Second Person of the Trinity.”

Seeking to define the difference between the message of Jesus and church dogmas, Vermes asks what was the one fundamental principle by which he lived. This he finds in the words of Leviticus 19:2, “You shall be holy, for I the Lord, your God, am holy.” He cites examples of Rabbinic thinking on the theme that man must cultivate good qualities reflecting the attributes of God, such as the words of Abba Shaul: “O be like Him! As He is merciful and gracious, so you too must be merciful and gracious.” Jesus similarly says: “Be merciful as your father is merciful.” (Luke 6:36) But Vermes points out that there is an element in the teaching of Jesus which is not to be found in the other sources, namely that one should expect no earthly reward for one’s good deeds.

Vermes also draws attention to the way in which Jesus makes use of overstatement in order to communicate his message. Some of his recorded sayings have been misunderstood and misinterpreted for this reason. Sayings such as “Love your enemies,” “To him who strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also,” or “If your right eye is your undoing, tear it out and fling it away,” or “anyone who marries a divorced woman commits adultery,” are therefore not to be taken literally and at face-value.

Vermes in conclusion, contrasts Christianity with the religion of Jesus. Paul, the “apostle to the Gentiles,” he argues, substitutes for the God-centered Gospel of Jesus a religion centered on the Christ-image, pessimistic in its view of human nature, and by exhorting his followers “Be imitators of me as I am of Christ,” Paul clears the way for the adoption of intermediaries between God and man.

In this way the Jesus of history was lost to Jews and Christians alike. It fell to Islam and the Holy Qur’an to take up his cause. Yet even the Muslim world, after the time of the Holy Prophet, fell prey to Christian doctrines by accepting the notion that Jesus would physically descend from heaven in the final age. But Christian dogma is losing its grip, and the time is now here for a reappraisal of the person and teaching of the Galilean prophet by Christians and by Jews. “Is it not possible,” Vermes asks, “that Jesus the healer, teacher and helper may yet be invited to emerge from the shadows of his long exile?”

AHMED DEEDAT IN HONG KONG

The Hong Kong Muslim Herald, in its November 1982 issue, carries as its leading article a report of a visit to Hong Kong by the South African Muslim missionary Mr. Ahmed Deedat, author of such pamphlets as Was Christ Crucified? and Is the Bible God’s Word? According to the report, Mr Deedat had much to say on “the need for the propagation of Islam to the non-Muslims, a task which he quite clearly proved had not generally been pursued vigorously by the Muslims after the period known as the Rightly Guided Caliphate.” He pointed out that Christian missionaries are making great efforts to convert non-Muslims in Indonesia, Africa and the Arabian peninsula, and meeting with success to the extent that in Indonesia “The Christian Missionaries possess more private air strips than the Indonesian government and thousands of missionary workers are working towards their goal,” while in Kuwait “Fifty years ago there was only 1 Christian Arab family,” whereas today “there are 35 churches.” One of the reasons that Mr. Deedat gave for the present state of affairs was that Muslims had forgotten the message of the Holy Qur’an and that “To those who do not understand Arabic as a language, they are just reading out passages by imitating the sound and therefore the message is not registered with them.” He stressed that all Muslims should be willing to propagate Islam and stated that Muslims should be able to confront Christianity with demonstrations of error and inconsistency in the Christian Bible. Muslim missionaries, he said, must master foreign languages in the same way as Christian missionaries master the languages of the countries in which they aim to propagate Christianity.

But why is it, we may ask, that Mr. Deedat can be listened to and publicly assisted by non-Ahmadi Muslim communities when these same communities continue to attack, ignore, or at least not publicly support, the Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha’at Islam of Lahore which has been preaching the same or similar things for over half a century? And why is there no acknowledgement of the Founder of the Ahmadiyya movement, Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, who, fully a century ago, initiated a programme for the revival and propagation of Islam using arguments of such a kind? If it is a question of the finality of prophethood, then this Jama’at has repeatedly insisted and demonstrated that Hadhrat Mirza Sahib upheld the doctrine of the finality of prophethood in the Holy Prophet Muhammad!

At all events, some Ahmadi views are beginning to be fashionable. Might we now see some publicity given by non-Ahmadi missionaries and their
SCIENCE FROM THE
HOLY QUR'AN
cont.

of Darwin's theory is that he said man has descended from the ape. He didn't say that. He said that the ape and man have a common ancestor from which they sprang. How were different species formed from the same thing? Darwin said that in nature there is a process of natural selection. Through natural selection the strong survive and the weak are annihilated. How does the evolution of man go on? The Qur'an says:

*The natural selection in case of man is determined by the survival of that person or that group who are righteous. The wicked and the evil are wiped out.*

What a beautiful evolution! We select those for survival who are righteous, pious, good.

Law of Opposite Pairs

This law is so universal that only one thing is without a pair - God has no opposite. In all the universe, whether mineral, vegetable, animal, there are pairs. The Qur'an so many centuries ago told the world:

*We have created pairs in everything; in the earth, in the vegetables, in the animals, and this world does not know that there are pairs in other things also.* (36:36)

Science says, even in atoms there are pairs, pairs of particles of opposite charges. The splitting of atoms was first discovered by the finding out of radioactive elements. It was found that radium automatically gives out radiation, and thereby decreases in mass. It is now recognised that mass and energy are one and the same thing-interconvertable. The world consists of the balancing of positive and negative charges. So when the Qur'an says there are "pairs in other things that you do not know", it is a wonderful prophecy: you do not yet know there are other worlds where this law is working.

It also says: "In everything We have created pairs, so that you may take sense. You should turn to Allah." This obviously means that god and man are also a pair in one sense. In another place in the Qur'an, perfect believers are likened to two women. Unbelievers are also likened to women. That is the relationship between God and man. Man is like a woman, and God is like a man - like a man, I say, don't be misled. How, why? God sends His Revelation through His word, through instinctive urges, to turn to Him. You can imagine it like this: there is a class with a teacher and pupils. The teacher infuses and inspires into his pupils, who are the recipients.

There is another point. Science today says that matter is destructible. It is unreal. It is not dynamic. What is dynamic? It is the energy, which is in the atom. Then there are isotopes. For example, hydrogen element has an isotope. They have similar characteristics and properties, but the mass is different. And the inference is that the mass does not count.

What does the Qur'an say: "Allah is the light of the heavens and the earth." (24:35)

Today, science says, yes. It is all electricity, light, heat, and radiation, which are the main thing.

The Two Inspired Accounts of Creation

cont.

2:21, 22). He must have lived "One thousand years" before there were any trees (Genesis 3:8) and another "one thousand years" before the beasts and fowls were created (Genesis 2:19). Upon what kind of food Adam lived during these periods of "thousand years?"

In the second account, a man is made and it did not occur to God that he is without a "help meet" until a couple of "thousands of years" afterwards. God suddenly comes to appreciate the situation and says: "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him" (Genesis 2:18). Did God make "an help meet" after this decision? Did he at once proceed to make a woman? No. What did he do? He made the beasts, and tried to induce Adam to take one of them for "an help meet" (Genesis 2:18-20). Unless God was looking for a "help meet" for Adam, why did he cause the animals to pass before him (Genesis 2:19)? Why did God exclaim: "But for Adam there was not found an help meet for him" (Genesis 2:20)?

Failing to satisfy Adam with any of the inferior animals, God caused a deep sleep to fall upon him, and while in this sleep, took out one of Adam's ribs and "closed up the flesh instead thereof" (Genesis 2:21) and out of that rib God made woman and brought her to man (Genesis 2:22).

The two "inspired" accounts of creation contained in Genesis are, as we have seen, at variance. Could both be true? Could both be inspired?

HE WHO ACCEPTS GOD, SURRENDERS

The pupil beholds the treasures, like fruits, on the horizon of creation. Man reflects the verteicle light of truth: the moon, the stars and the sun, and the Holy Brightness Who he serves.

To be a true man is to abide at the station of purity, and to stand in the moment of riches with generous and outstretched hands.

To be a true man is to abide at the station of integrity, and to stand in the moment of poverty with joyous patience and prayers.

To be a true man is called *muslim*; the way of the heart is *islam*. This is the law.

This is to be a true man:
To 'abide at the station of certainty, to see in the Book of Creation - in the earth, the moon and the stars - fingers that point beyond heavens like arrows let loose from The Sun.

David Sparenberg

AHMED DEEDAT IN
Hong Kong, cont.

supporters to such questions as concubinage, apostasy, the punishment for adultery and numerous other issues investigated by Hadhrat Mirza Sahib as being of importance to the right understanding, practice and propagation of Islam?
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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