The Promised Messiah Speaks:

The Objects of Man's Life
And the Means by Which Those Objects
May be Obtained
by HADHRAT MIRZA GHULAM AHMAD SAHB
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"And strive hard in Allah's way with
your wealth and your lives..." —9:41.

Real object: It is needless to say that different men have, on account of their superficial views on narrowmindedness, set before themselves different objects generally limited to a gratification of low desires and pleasures of this world. But the Almighty has declared a higher aim of man's existence:

"And I have not created the jinn and the men except that they should serve Me." —51:56

The real object of man's life according to the Qur'an is, therefore, a true knowledge and worship of God and a total resignation to His will so that whatever is said or done is for His sake only. One thing, at least, is plain: man has no choice in the matter of fixing the aim of life. He is a creature, and the Creator, Who has brought him into existence and bestowed upon him higher and more excellent faculties than upon other animals, has also assigned an object to his existence. A man may or may not understand it, or a hundred different motives may hold him back from it, but the truth is that the grand aim of man's life consists in knowing and worshipping God and living for His sake. The Lord says:

"Lo! religion with Allah is Islam..." —3:18

"So set thy face for religion, being upright, the nature made by Allah in which He has created men. There is no altering Allah's creation. That is the right religion..." —30:30

We cannot enter into a detailed commentary on these verses here. We may, however, make a few remarks upon the wonderful aptitude of the faculties of man for Islam.

Endowments: The external and internal endowments of human nature give us clearly to understand that the highest objective of their creation is the love and worship of God. True happiness, which is generally admitted to be the goal of life, is not attainable through the diverse pursuits which men follow but only through the Divine Being. Not all the felicities of this world can afford relief from the gnawing grief which attends man's last moments upon this earth. The greatest king, the wisest philosopher, the highest official or the richest merchant does not possess contentment of mind, and departs from this world a prey to poignant regret. His heart upbraids him for his absorption in worldly cares and his conscience judges him guilty of the employment of unfair means to attain success in his worldly affairs.

continued on page 2
AN INTRODUCTION TO THE RELIGION OF ISLAM by Maulana Muhammad Ali .................. 3

ISLAM MY CHOICE parts I, II & III .................. 7

ISLAM IN AMERICA by Lois Gottesman .................. 8

GOD SPEAKS TO MAN by Allah Bakhsh .................. 10

Book Review RELIGION ON THE LINE W.D. Muhammad Pub. .................. 11

AHMADIS TOO ARE AHL-E-SUNNAH by Masud Akhtar .................. 12

HADITH-UL-QUR’AN by Arfaque Malik .................. 13

QUEST FOR GOD by Dr. Allah Bakhsh .................. 17

ALLAH, THE ONLY PROPER NAME FOR GOD by Maulana Abdul Haque Vidyarthi ............ 18

Cover: Al-Azhar Mosque in Cairo, Egypt.

EDITORIAL

A New Religion In The Making

A study in the history of mankind with reference to the great religions of the world bears out that there have been two entirely different sources of religious beliefs and practices; that, in fact, there have always been two kinds of religion - the man-made and the revealed. The two types are very different from each other. Islam hitherto is considered the religion of the Book - the Revealed Book. Al-Qur’an is unique amongst all the scriptures of the world not only for its unquestionable authenticity but also for the preservation of its purity from the time of its Revelation till this day. One of the Miracles of the Qur’an is that in its collection, form and language it has come down to this time from the time of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace be on him, without any change of even a dot. Since the teachings contained in these pure pages formed the basis of religion for a Muslim, therefore, Islam stood free of all or any type of priesthood which is commonly found in other religions. No priesthood, in fact, is traceable from the teachings of the Qur’an and Sunnah. Unfortunately the recent trends developing in the Muslim world indicate that Muslims are unconsciously drifting towards a state where Muslim Ulema fashioning themselves on the pattern of Christian priests have come to enjoy monopolistic authority in the domain of religion. Banking upon generally prevalent illiteracy in the Muslim World and the inherent weak position of nonrepresentative Governments in most Muslim countries, this new class of politically ambitious Ulema have dug themselves so deep that while they have been able to overturn the Governments in a few countries the rulers in others can not afford their displeasure. Their activities are not confined to the field of politics alone. Profiting from their new-found position of authority, they are busy coining beliefs which are in clash with the teachings of the Qur’an and Sunnah.

It is a matter of common knowledge that even during the life-time of the holy prophet Muhammad, peace be on him, and at all times after him during the last fourteen hundred years, the recital of the Kalemah Shahadah i.e. ‘I bear witness that there is no God but Allah, and I bear witness that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah’ was considered sufficient for anyone becoming a Muslim. This fact is even recorded in the Encyclopaedia Britannica under the definition of Islam. As reported from Ibn Umar in Bukhari-

continued on page 2
Editorial

cont.

Kitab-ul-Iman, the Messenger of Allah, peace be on him, said ‘Islam is built on five (things); the bearing of witness that there is no God but Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah; and the keeping up of the Salat (prayer); and the payment of Zakat (poor rate); and the Pilgrimage; and fasting in Ramadzan.’ Again, he is reported to have said ‘Whoever offers “Salat” as we do, and accepts our Qiblah and eats our Zabeeahah (slaughtered), he is a Muslim and for him is the covenant of Allah and the Messenger of Allah.’ As against this it is now being avowed by the above stated emerging class of priestcraft that neither the recital of the Kalemah Shadah nor the five doctrines and principles constitute a sufficient basis to qualify a person to be called a Muslim. The gulf between the two positions is wide and clear. What was considered sufficient by Allah and his Messenger is considered insufficient by the Muslim Ulema. This is how in the course of time Revealed religion comes to be replaced by the man made religion. And that is why the appearance of Mujaddideen in his Ummah was Predicted by the Messenger of Allah for Tajceed Din.

Masud Akhtar

The Promised Messiah Speaks
cont. from inside cover.

Let us consider the question in an other light. In the case of the lower animals, we see that their faculties are so made as to render them unable to serve a purpose higher than a particular one and they cannot go beyond a certain limit. This leads us to the conclusion that the highest limit which the faculties of a particular animal can reach is also the highest aim of its creation. A bullock, for instance, may be used to furrow the land or draw water or for loading, but with its present faculties it can serve no higher purpose. This is, therefore, also the aim of its existence.

Judging man in the same manner, we find that of all the faculties which nature has bestowed upon him, the highest is that which awakens him to a search for God and encourages him to the noble aspiration of losing his own self in the love of the Beneficient and completely submitting himself to His will. In the requirements of his physical nature, the lower animals are on a level with him. In art, some animals display more skill than human beings. The bee produces honey from the juice of many flowers with such exquisite skill that man has failed to achieve anything like it. The perfection of man, therefore, does not consist in these matters but in something else. It consists in the excellence of his spirituality in his union with God. The true object of his life in this world is that the window of his heart should be opened towards the Creator.

Means of Attainment: We are now in a position to answer the second part of the question: how this object can possibly be attained.

The first means towards the attainment of this end is that, in the recognition of the Lord, a man should tread upon the right path and have his faith in the true and living God. The goal can never be reached by the man who takes the first step in the wrong direction and looks upon some stone or creature or an element of nature as his deity. The true Master assists those who seek Him, but a dead deity cannot assist its dead worshippers. The Almighty has well illustrated this in the following parable:

“To Him (Allah) is due the true prayer. And those to whom they pray besides Him give them no answer, but (they are) like he who stretches forth his two hands towards water that it may reach his mouth, but it will not reach it. And the prayer of the disbelievers is only wasted.” —13:14

The second means to attain the true object of life consists in being informed of the perfect beauty which the Benefactor possesses. Beauty naturally attracts the heart and incites love. The beauty of God consists in His unity, His majesty, His grandeur and His other lofty attributes. The Holy Qur’an draws attention to this point in the following words:

“Say: He, Allah, is One. Allah is He on Whom all depend. He begets not, nor is He begotten; and none is like Him.” —112:1-4

(The Qur’an teems with verses declaring the omnipotence, majesty and glory of the Almighty. It presents a God Who attracts the heart on account of His beauty and majesty, and rejects the dead, weak, unmerciful and powerless gods of false religions.)

The third means of reaching the goal consists in realizing the immense goodness of the Lord. Beauty and kindness are the only two incentives to love. The attributes of God in this respect are described in the opening chapter of the Qur’an:

“Praise be to Allah, the Lord of the worlds, the Beneficent, the Merciful, Master of the day of Requital.” —1:2-4

It is plain that the divine goodness could not be perfect unless the Creator first brought everything into existence from nothing and then gave it sustenance under all circumstances and Himself supported it in its weakness. All aspects of His mercy should come into play for His creatures, and His kindness should have no limits set to it. To this perfect goodness, the Holy Qur’an says:

“And if you count Allah’s favours, you will not be able to number them…” —14:34

The fourth means for the desired end is prayer. The Lord of the worlds says:

“Pray to Me, I will answer you.” —40:60

It may be noted that frequent stress has been laid upon this point in the Qur’an, because man can reach the Merciful only with Divine assistance.

The fifth means is to seek God by spending one’s substance and faculties, and sacrificing one’s life and applying one’s wisdom in His way:

“And strive hard in Allah’s way with your wealth and your lives.” —9:41

“(This Book is a guide to those who spend out of what We have given them.” —2:3

“And those who strive hard for Us, We shall surely guide them in Our ways.” —29:69

continued on page 9
AN INTRODUCTION TO
THE RELIGION OF ISLAM
by MAULANA MUHAMMAD ALI, M.A. LL.B.

Islam, not Muhamadanism

The first point to be noted in a discussion on the religion of Islam is that the name of the system is not Muhamadanism, as is generally supposed in the West, but Islam. Muhammad was the name of the Holy Prophet through whom this religion has revealed, and European writers call it Muhamadanism after him, on the analogy of such names as Buddhism, Confucianism, Christianity, and the like, but the name Muhamadanism was absolutely unknown to the followers of Islam. It is neither to be found in the Qur'an nor in the sayings of the Prophet, the name of the system as stated in the Qur'an is Islam, and he who follows it is called a Muslim. So far from the system being named after its founder, Prophet Muhammad is himself called a Muslim. In fact, every prophet of God is spoken of in the Qur'an as being a Muslim, thus showing that Islam is the true religion for the whole of humanity, the various prophets being the preachers of that religion among different nations in different times, and Prophet Muhammad its last and most perfect exponent.

Significance of the name Islam

Among the great religions of the world, Islam enjoys the distinction of bearing a significant name, a name that points to its very essence. The root-meaning of the word Islam is to enter into peace, and a Muslim is one who makes his peace with God and man. Peace with God implies complete submission to His will, and peace with man is not only to refrain from evil or injury to another but also to do good to him; and both these ideas find expression in the Qur'an as the true essence of the religion of Islam: 'Nay: whoever submits (aslama) himself entirely to Allah and he is the doer of good to others, he has his reward from his Lord, and there is no fear for such, nor shall they grieve.' (2:112) Islam is thus, in its very inception, the religion of peace, and its two basic doctrines, the Unity of God and the unity of brotherhood of the human race, afford positive proof of its being true to its name. Not only is Islam stated to be the true religion of all the prophets of God, as pointed out above, but even the involuntary through complete submission to Divine laws, which is witnessed innature, is indicated by the same word aslama. This wider significance is also retained in the strictly legal usage of the word, for, in law, Islam has a two-fold significance: a simple profession of faith - a declaration that 'there is no god but Allah and Muhammad is His Messenger' (Kalimah) and a complete submission to the Divine will which is only attainable through spiritual perfection.

Thus, he who simply accepts the religion of Islam, the mere novice, is a Muslim, as well as he who completely submits himself to the Divine will and practises all the Divine commandments.

Place of Islam among the religions of the world

Islam is the last of the great religions - those mighty movements which have revolutionized the world and changed the destinies of nations. But it is not only the last, it is an all-inclusive religion which contains within itself all religions which came before it. One of its most striking characteristics is that it requires its followers to believe that all the great religions of the world that preceded it have been revealed by God: 'And who believe in that which has been revealed to thee and that which was revealed before thee' (2:4).

'Say: We believe in Allah and (in) that which has been revealed to us, and (in) that which was revealed to Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac and Jacob and the tribes, and (in) that which was given to Moses and Jesus, and (in) that which was given to the prophets from their Lord; we do not make any distinction between any of them' (2:136).

'The Messenger believes in what has been revealed to him from his Lord, and so do the believers; they all believe in Allah and His angels and His books and His messengers. We make no distinction between any of His messengers' (2:285).

Thus a Muslim believes not only in the Prophet Muhammad but in all other prophets as well. And prophets were, according to the teachings of the Qur'an, sent to all the nations: 'And there is not a people but a warner has gone among them' (35:24). A Jew believes only in the prophets of Israel; a Christian believes in Jesus Christ and, in a lesser degree, in the prophets of Israel; a Buddhist in Buddha; a Zoroastrian in Zoroaster; a Hindu in the prophets who appeared in India; a Confucian in Confucius; but a Muslim believes in all these and in Muhammad also, the last of the prophets. Islam is, therefore, an all-comprehensive religion within which are included all the religions of the world; and similarly, its sacred Book, the Holy Qur'an, is spoken of as a combination of all the sacred scriptures of the world: 'Pure pages, wherein are all right books' (98:2,3).

There is yet one more characteristic of Islam which gives it a special place among religions. In addition to being the last and an all-inclusive religion, it is the perfect expression of the Divine will. Thus the Qur'an says: 'This day have I perfected for you Islam as a religion' (5:3). Like every other form of consciousness, the religious consciousness of man has developed slowly and gradually down the ages, and the revelation of the great Truth from on high was thus brought to perfection in Islam. It is to this great truth that the words of Jesus Christ allude: 'I have yet many things to say unto you but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you unto all truth' (Jn. 16:12,13). Thus it is the great mission of Islam to bring about peace in the world by establishing a brotherhood of all the religions, to bring together all the religious truths contained in previous religions, to correct their errors and sift the true from the false, to preach the eternal verities which had not been preached before on account of the special circumstances of any race or society in the early stages of its development and, last of all, to meet all the moral and spiritual requirements of an ever-advancing humanity.

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with the advent of Islam, the concept of religion received a new
significance. Firstly, it is to be treated not as a dogma, which a man must
accept if he must escape everlasting
damnation, but as a science based on
the universal experience of humanity. It
is not a particular nation that becomes
the favourite of God and the recipient of
Divine revelation; on the contrary,
revelation is recognized as a necessary
factor in the evolution of man; hence,
while in its crudest form it is the
universal experience of humanity, in its
highest, that of prophetic revelation,
it has been a Divine gift bestowed upon
all nations of the world. And the idea of
the scientific in religion has been further
strengthened by presenting its doctrines as principles of human conduct and
action. There is not a single religious
doctrine which is not made the basis of
action for the development of the man
to higher and yet higher stages of life.
Secondly, the sphere of religion is not
confined to the next world; its primary
concern is rather with this life, that man,
through a righteous life here on earth,
may attain to the consciousness of a
higher existence. And so it is that the
Qur’An deals with a vast variety of
subjects which affect man’s life in this
world. It deals not only with the ways of
devotion, the forms of worship, and the
means which make man attain
communion with God, but also, and in
richer detail, with the problems of the
world around us, with questions pertaining to relations between man
and man, his social and political life,
institutions of marriage, divorce and
inheritance, division of wealth and
relations of labour and capital,
administration of justice, military
organization, peace and war, national
finances, debts and contracts, rules for
the service of humanity and even
treatment of animals, laws for the help
of the poor, the orphan and the widow,
and hundreds of other questions the
proper understanding of which enables
man to lead a happy life. It lays down
rules not only for individual progress
but also for the advancement of society
as a whole, of the nation and even of
humanity. It throws light on problems
regarding relations not only between
individuals but also among different
tribes and nations into which humanity
is divided. It prepares man for another
life, it is true, but only through making
him capable of holding his own in the
present one.

Religion is a force in the moral
development of man

The question which perturbs every
mind today is whether religion is, when
all is said and done, necessary to
humanity. Now a cursory glance at the
history of human civilization will show
that religion has been the supreme force
in the development of mankind to its
present condition. That all that is good
and noble in man has been inspired by
faith in God is a truth at which perhaps
even an atheist would not cavil. One
Abraham, one Moses, one Krishna, one
Buddha, one Christ, one Muhammad
has, each in his turn and his degree,
changed the whole history of the human
race and raised it from the depths of
degradation to moral heights
dreamed of. It is through the
teachings of this or that prophet that
man has been able to conquer his lower
nature and to set before himself the
noblest ideals of selflessness and the
service of humanity. A study of the
noble sentiments that inspire man today
will show their origin in the teachings
and examples of some great sage who
had deep faith in God and through
whom was sown the seed of faith in
other human hearts. The moral and
ethical development of man to his
present state, if due to any one cause,
is due to religion. Humanity has yet to
find out whether the lofty emotions
which inspire man today will survive
after a generation or two of
Godlessness, and what sentiments
materialism will bring in its train. To all
appearance, the reign of materialism
must needs entail the rule of selfishness
for a cut and dried scheme for the equal
division of wealth will not inspire the
noble sentiments which are today the
pride of man and which centuries of
religion have instilled into his very
being. If the sanction of religion were
withdrawn today, the ignorant masses
and the masses will always remain
ignorant though they may be able to
read and write - will sink back,
gradually of course, into a state of
savagery, while even those who reckon
themselves above the common level will
no longer feel the inspiration to noble
and high ideals which only faith in God
can give.

Islam as the basis of a lasting
civilization

As a matter of fact, human
civilization, as we have it today, is
whether it likes the idea or not, based on
religion. Religion has made possible a
state of civilization which has again and
again saved human society from
disruption. If its history is traced back
anywhere, it will be seen that whenever
it has begun to totter, a new religious
impulse has always been at hand to save
it from complete extinction. Not only
that civilization, with any pretense to
endurance, can rest solely on a moral
basis, and that true and lofty morals are
inspired only by faith in God, but even
the unity and cohesion of jarring human
elements, without which it is impossible
for any civilization to survive, is best
brought about by the unifying force of
religion. It is often said that religion is
responsible for much of the hatred and
bloodshed in the world, but a glance at
the history of religion will show that this
is a monstrous misconception. Love,
concord, sympathy, kindness to one’s
fellow-men, have been the message of
every religion, and every nation has
learnt these essential lessons in their
ture purity only through the spirit of
selflessness and service which a faith in
God has inspired. If there have been
selfishness and hatred and bloodshed,
those have been there in spite of
religion, not as a consequence of the
message of love which religion has
brought. They have been there because
human nature is too prone to these
things; and their presence only shows
that a still greater religious awakening is
required, that a truer faith in God is yet
the crying need of humanity. That man
sometimes turns to low and unworthy
things does not show that the nobler
sentiments are worthless, but only that
their development has become a more
urgent necessity.

Islam as the greatest unifying force
in the world

If unification be the true basis of
human civilization, by which phrase is
meant the civilization not of one nation
or of one country but of humanity as a
continued on next page
whole, then Islam is undoubtedly the greatest civilizing force the world has ever known or is likely to know. Fourteen hundred years ago it was Islam that saved it from crashing into an abyss of savagery, that came to the help of a civilization whose very foundations had collapsed, and that set about laying a new foundation and rearing an entirely new edifice of culture and ethics. A new idea of the unity of human race as a whole, not of the unity of this or that nation, was introduced into the world—an idea so mighty that it welded together nations which had warred with one another since the world began. It was not only in Arabia, among the ever-bickering tribes of a single peninsula, that this great “miracle”, as an English writer terms it, was wrought, a miracle before the magnitude of which every thing dwindles into insignificance. It not only cemented together the warring tribes of one country but also established a brotherhood of all nations of the world, even unifying those which had nothing in common except their common humanity. It obliterated differences of colour, race, language, geographical boundaries and even of culture. It united man with man as such, and the hearts of those in the far east began to beat in unison with those in the farthest west. Indeed, it proved to be not only the greatest but the only force unifying man, because, whereas other religions had succeeded merely in unifying the different elements of a single race, Islam actually achieved the unification of many races and harmonized the jarring and discordant elements of humanity. How great a force it was in bringing back his lost civilization to man, is attested by a European writer.9

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

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

And speaking of Arabia, the learned author adds that “it was among these people that the man was born who was to unite the whole known world of the east and south”.10

**Islam as the greatest spiritual force of the world**

Thus Islam laid the basis of a unification of humanity of which no other reformer or religion has ever dreamed of; a brotherhood of man which knows no bounds of colour, race, country, language or even of rank; of a unity of the human race beyond which human conception cannot go. It recognizes the equality not only of the civil and political rights of men but also of their spiritual rights. “All men are a single nation” (2:213) is the fundamental doctrine of Islam, and for that reason every nation is recognized as having received the spiritual gift of revelation. But the establishment of a vast brotherhood of all men is not the only achievement of Islam, Equally great is the unparalleled transformation which it has brought about in the world; for it has proved itself to be a spiritual force the equal of which the human race has never known. Its miraculous transformation of the world conditions was brought about in an incredibly short time. It swept away the vile superstitions, the crass ignorance, the rank immorality, the old evil habits of centuries, in about two decades. That its spiritual conquests are without parallel in history is an undeniable fact, and it is because of the unparalleled spiritual transformation effected by him that Prophet Muhammad is admitted to be the “most successful of all prophets and religious personalities” (En. Br., art. Koran).

Islam offers a solution of the great world problems

Islam has a claim upon the attention of every thinker, not only because it is the most civilizing and the greatest spiritual force of the world but also because it offers a solution of the most baffling problems which confront mankind today. Materialism, which has become humanity’s ideal in modern times, can never bring about peace and mutual trust among the nations of the world. Christianity has failed to do away with race and colour prejudices. Islam is the only force which has already succeeded in blotting out these distinctions and it is through Islam only that this great problem of the modern world can be solved. Islam is, first and formost, an international religion, and it is only before its grand international ideal - the ideal of the equality of all races and of the unity of the human race - that the curse of nationalism, which has been and is responsible for the troubles of the ancient and the modern worlds, can be swept away. But even within the boundaries of a nation or a country there can be no peace as long as a just solution of the two great problems of wealth and sex cannot be found. Europe has gone to two extremes on the wealth question - capitalism and Bolshevism. There is either the tendency to concentrate wealth among the great capitalists or, by community of wealth, to bring the indolent and the industrious to one level. Islam offers the true solution by ensuring to the worker the reward of his work, great or small, in accordance with the merit of the work, and also by allotting to the poor a share in the wealth of the rich. Thus, while the rights of property are maintained in their true sense, an arrangement is made for equalizing conditions by taking a part of the wealth of the rich and distributing it among the poor according to the principle of zakat (or poor-rate, an obligatory charity) and also by a more or less equal division of property among heirs on the death of an owner. Thus, writing towards the close of his book, a European orientalist remarks:

“Within the Western world Islam still maintains the balance between exaggerated opposites. Opposed

continued on next page
Introduction to the Religion of Islam

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equally to the anarchy of European nationalism and regimentation of Russian communism, it has not yet succumbed to that obsession with the economic side of life which is characteristic of present-day Europe and present-day Russia alike. Its social ethic has been admirably summed up by Professor Massignon: “Islam has the merit of standing for a very equitarian conception of the contribution of each citizen by the tithe to the resources of the community; it is hostile to unrestricted exchange, to banking capital, to state loans, to indirect taxes on objects of prime necessity, but it holds to the rights of the father and the husband, to private property, and to commercial capital. Here again it occupies intermediate position between the doctrines of bourgeois capitalism and Bolshevist communism”.11

Similarly Islam’s solution of the sex question is the only one that can ensure ultimate peace to the family. There is neither the free-love which would loosen all ties of social relations, nor the indissoluble binding of man and woman which truns many a home into a veritable hell. And, by solving these and a hundred other problems, Islam - as its very name indicates - can bring true happiness to the human race.

Misconceptions underlying anti-religious movement

The anti-religious movement which has taken root in Russia is based on a misconception as to the nature of Islam. The three chief objections to religion are:

- that religion helps in the maintenance of the present social system, which has borne the fruit of capitalism with the consequent crushing of the aspirations of the poor.

- that it keeps the people subject to superstition and thus hinders the advance of sciences.

- that it teaches them to pray for their needs instead of working for them, and thus it makes them indolent.12

So far as Islam is concerned, the facts are entirely contrary to these allegations. It came as the friend of the poor and the destitute, and as a matter of fact it has accomplished an upliftment of the poor to which history affords no parallel. It raised men from the lowest rungs of the social ladder to the highest positions of life, it made of slaves not only leaders in thought and intellect but actual kings. Its social system is one of an equality which is quite unthinkable in any other nation or society. It lays down as one of the fundamental principles of religion that the poor have a right in the wealth of the rich, a right exercised through the state which collects annually a fourth of the wealth ammassed by the rich, to be distributed among the poor.

The second allegation that religion discourages the advancement of science and learning is equally devoid of truth. Islam gave an impetus to learning in a country which had never been a seat of learning and was sunk in the depths of superstition. Even as far back as the caliphate of ‘Umar (634-644 A.D.), the Islamic state undertook the education of the masses, while the Muslims carried the torch of learning to every country where they gained political ascendancy; schools, colleges and universities sprang up everywhere as a result of the Muslim conquest. It is no exaggeration to say that it was through Islam that the Renaissance came about in Europe.

The third allegation that religion makes people idle by teaching them to pray is also belied by the history of Islam. Not only does the Qur’an teach men to work hard for success in life, and lay down, in plain words, that ‘man can have nothing but what he strives for’ (53:39), but it actually made the Arabs - the then most backward nation in the world - a nation of great leaders in all phases of life. And this great revolution was brought about only by awakening in them a desire for work and a zest for hard striving. Islam does teach man to pray, but prayer, instead of making him idle, is intended to fit him for a still harder struggle, and to carry on that struggle in the face of failure and disappointment, by truning to God Who is the Source of all strength. Thus prayer in Islam is only an incentive for work, and not a hindrance.

1. The Arabic word for religion is din or mulla, the root-meaning of the former being obedience and requisite, and that of the latter to dictate. Mulla has special reference to the prophet through whom the religion is revealed, and din to the individual who follows it (R.). Another word for religion is madhab which is not used in the Qur’an. It is derived from the root dhabab meaning he went, and madhab signifies a way that one pursues in respect of doctrines and practices in religion, or an opinion respecting religion (I.L.). According to some authorities, the distinction between the three words is thus expressed: din in relation to God Who reveals it, mulla in relation to the prophet through whom it is revealed and madhab in relation to the mujahid who expounds it. The word madhab as used in Urdu or Persian carries, however, the wider significance of religion.

2. “This day have I perfected for you your religion and completed My favour on you, and chosen for you Islam as a religion” (5:3). ‘Surely the true religion with Allah is Islam’ (3:18).

3. ‘He named you Muslims before and in this’ (22:78), where before refers to the prophecies, and this to the Holy Qur’an.

4. “And I am the first of the Muslims’ (6:164).

5. “And the same did Abraham enjoin on his sons and so did Jacob: O my sons, Allah has chosen the religion for you, so die not unless you are Muslims” (2:132); “We revealed the Torah, in which was guidance and light: with it the prophets who submitted themselves (aslamu) judged matters for those who were Jews” (5:44).

6. Islam means entering into salm, and silm and salm both signify peace (R.). Both these words are used in the sense of peace in the Qur’an.

7. “Islam in law is of two kinds; one is a simple confession with the tongue and the other whether accompanied with, or not, such an inner change in the heart” and the other is above (iman), and it means that along with confession, there is belief (iman or real change) in the heart and a fulfilment in practice, and resignation to God in whatever He brings to pass or decrees” (R.).

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


10. Ibid., p. 296.


12. As summed up in Emotion as the Basis of Civilization, p. 506.

In my heart wells up praise for the Master (Muhammad) who in the beauty (of his conduct) has no parallel. Every excellence has been terminated with him; and (and certainly every prophethood has come to an end with him.

6 The Islamic Review • JUN/JUL
ISLAM MY CHOICE

I

SIR ARCHIBALD HAMILTON, Bt.

The late Sir ‘Abdullah Archibald Hamilton, Bt., born 10th Dec. 1876, embraced Islam on 20th Dec. 1923. A well-known figure in English society, he was the fifth Baronet of the first (1776) and third baronet of the second creation (1819). He married in 1897 Olga, only daughter of Rear-Admiral Sir Adolphus FitzGeorge, K.C.V.O., and granddaughter of Field-Marshal His Royal Highness the late Duke of Cambridge, first cousin to Queen Victoria. By this marriage he had one son, George Edward Archibald Augustus FitzGeorge, born in 1898, at whose baptism their majesties, the late King George V and Queen Mary, attended in person as sponsors. His son became a Lieutenant in the Grenadier Guards in 1917 and fell in action in Flanders in 1918, aged 19 years.

In the above article, written specially for the people (13th jan. 1924), Sir Archibald states quite frankly the reasons for his change of creed.

'Since arriving at an age of discretion, the beauty and the simple purity of Islam have always appealed to me. I could never, though born and brought up as a Christian, believe in the dogmatic aspect of the Church; and have always placed reason and common sense before blind faith.

'As time progressed, I wished to be at peace with my Creator, and I found that both the Church of Rome and the Church of England were of no real use to me.

'In becoming a Muslim I have merely obeyed the dictates of my conscience, and have since felt a better and truer man.

'There is no religion that is so maligned by the ignorant and biased as is Islam; yet if people only knew, it is the only true solution for the problem of Socialism, inasmuch as it is the religion of the strong for the weak, the rich for the poor. Humanity is divided into three classes. First, those on whom God has, out of His bounty, bestowed possessions and wealth; secondly, those who have to work to earn their living; and, lastly, the great army of the unemployed, or those who have fallen by the wayside through no fault of their own...

'Again, Islam recognizes genius and individuality. It is constructive and not destructive. For example, if a landowner who is rich and is not in need of cultivating his land refrains from doing so for some time, his property ipso facto becomes public property, and, according to Islamic law, passes into the hands of the first person who cultivates it.

'Islam strictly forbids its adherents to gamble or to indulge in any games of chance. It prohibits all alcoholic drinks and interdicts usury, which alone has caused enough sorrow and suffering to mankind. Thus, in Islam, none can take a mean advantage of another who is less fortunate.

'We neither believe in fatalism nor in predestination, but only in pre-measurement; that is to say, the fixity of the laws and the intelligence to follow them.

'To us, Faith without Action is a dead-letter; for in itself it is insufficient unless we live up to it. We believe in our own personal accountability for our actions in this life and the Hereafter. We must carry our own cross and none can atone for another's sin.

'Islam teaches the inherent sinlessness of man. It teaches that man and woman come from the same essence, possess the same soul, and have been equipped with equal capabilities for intellectual, spiritual and moral attainment.

'I do not think I need say much about the Universal Brotherhood of man in Islam. It is a recognized fact. Lord and vassal, rich and poor, are all alike. I have always found that my brother Muslims have been the soul of honour and that I could believe their word. They have always treated me justly, as a man and a brother, and have extended to me the greatest hospitality, and I have always felt at home with them.

'In conclusion, I would like to say that whereas Islam guides humanity in the daily workaday life, the present-day so-called Christianity, indirectly in theory and invariably in practice, teaches its followers, it would seem, to pray to God on Sundays and to prey on His creatures for the rest of the week.'

II

(Mrs.) Cecilia Mahmuda Connolly
Australia

'First and foremost I would say I accepted Islam because fundamentally I had always been a Muslim without being aware of it.

'Very early in my life I had lost faith in Christianity for many reasons, the main one being that whenever I questioned any Christian, whether it was a person belonging to the so-called Holy Orders or a layman, regarding any point that puzzled me in regard to the Church teachings, I invariably received the monotonous answer, "You must not question the teachings of the Church; you must have faith". I did not have the courage in those days to say "I cannot have faith in something that I do not understand", and, from my experience, neither do most of the people who call themselves Christians. What I did do was to leave the Church (Roman Catholic) and its teaching and to place my faith in the one true God in whom it was much easier to believe than in the three Gods of the Church. By contrast with the mysteries and miracles of the Christian teaching, life took on a new and wider meaning, no longer cramped with dogma and ritual. Everywhere I looked I could see God's work. And although, in common with greater minds than my own, I could not understand the miracles that happened before my eyes, I could stand and marvel at the wonder of it all—the trees, flowers, birds and animals. Even a newborn babe became a beautiful miracle, not the same thing that the Church had taught me to believe at all. I remembered how, when a child, I gazed at newborn babies and thought, "It's all covered in black sin". I no longer believed in ugliness; everything became beautiful.

'Then one day my daughter brought home a book about Islam. We became so interested in it that we followed it up with many other books on Islam. We soon realized that this was really what we believed. During the time I had believed in Christianity I had been led to believe that Islam was only something to joke about. Thus all that I then read was a revelation to me. After a while I looked up some Muslims and questioned them on some of the points

continued on page 16
ISLAM IN AMERICA
by LOIS GOTTESMAN

In October, 1977, the city of Chicago made history when, for the first time, it excused Muslim municipal workers from duty so they could celebrate the end of the month-long fast of Ramadhan. Muslim holidays are now officially recognized at Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge and Columbia University's Teachers College in New York. Islamic centers have been set up at the University of Wisconsin and at Indiana University, and many other schools have improvised mosques for Friday prayers. All over the country, local Muslim organizations are springing up, mosques and Islamic day schools and centers are opening, and people are studying Arabic in ever-increasing numbers.

After decades of near invisibility, a new self-awareness and self-assertion is growing among American Muslims. They now seem determined to make themselves seen and heard on the American religious, cultural, and political scene; to increase American familiarity with Islam - a worldwide religion with some 700,000,000 adherents; and to build a better understanding between themselves and their neighbours.

What is happening is more than just an expression of the current American passion for uncovering ethnic and religious roots. It is part of the general movement in the Islamic world toward a re-evaluation of the values that have distinguished Muslim religious and political activities since the seventh century.

American Muslims are a heterogeneous population group, a small replica of the many nations that profess Islam around the world. They include immigrants or descendants of immigrants from the Balkans and the Philippines, the Middle East and Soviet Central Asia, as well as India and East Africa. They also include the Black Muslims - American blacks who, until recently, were quite separate from other Muslim groups, but are now moving closer to the larger Islamic world.

The size of the community is anyone's guess, since Muslim organizations often do not know, or will not reveal, their numbers. Estimates range from 1,000,000 to 3,000,000 or more, while 2,000,000 is the working figure of the US government and the National Council of Churches. All sources agree that the Islamic community has grown tremendously in recent years and continues to grow, mainly through immigration from the Middle East, but also through a high birthrate and conversion.

Figures for the various ethnic subgroups are also uncertain. The Arab contingent is the largest, thought to number some 200,000. The Turks are probably the second largest subgroup, believed to number 75,000-90,000. Resident Iranians are few, but there are some 50,000 Iranians in the US on student visas and, before the fall of the Shah, there were several thousand Iranian military trainees. Among the many smaller groups are Muslims from Yugoslavia and Albania, Pakistanis and Circassians, Tatars, Turkestanis and Azerbaijanis, some of whom fled the Soviet Union in the 1940s and 1950s, and a small number of Indian Muslims.

Religious adherence and practice are almost as varied as ethnic origins. Most devout by far are the Arabs, least so the Turks, most of whom were brought up under the anti-religious regime of Kemal Ataturk (1923-38). The two major divisions of traditional Islam are both represented. The Sunni denomination is dominant in the US, as in the world at large, but Shi'ism (a heterodoxy that differs from Sunnism on matters of religious governance, not dogma) has some 300,000 adherents, including East Africans, Iranians, Pakistanis, East Indians, and Malaysians.

Old World Origins

Before World War I, only a few hundred Muslims came to this country from the region which now includes Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and Palestine. The first sizable Muslim immigration took place following the dissolution after the war of the Ottoman Empire, which governed the area, and the economic uncertainties prevailing there. First came large numbers of Turkish and Slav Muslims, settling primarily in port cities. Later, a trickle of Arab Muslims arrived, many of them drawn to Chicago, Toledo, and Detroit, where the developing auto industry promised high industrial wages. Others settled in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, where they opened the first mosque in the US in 1934. At about the same time, a small number of Indian Muslims belonging to the Ahmadiyya movement, a missionary sect in India, settled in California.

The majority of American Muslims came here in a second wave of immigration, politically motivated, that took place after World War II. It consisted mainly of urban, relatively educated people from all parts of the Muslim world. By the mid-1960s, the newcomers from the Arab countries alone exceeded 100,000. Many of the newer immigrants followed earlier arrivals into the auto industry, and Dearborn, Mich., has what is believed to be the largest Arab Muslim settlement in the US.

A third wave of Muslim immigration started in the mid-1960s and continues to the present day. Although economic opportunities in the US have been the main attraction, two other developments have spurred recent Muslim immigration. One was the passage of the US Immigration Law of 1965, which made it easier for non-Europeans to come here and for immigrants already here to bring in their families. The other was the dislocation caused by the 1967 war between Israeli Entity and the Arab states. Between 1967 and 1976, some 140,000 persons arrived from seven predominantly Muslim countries: Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, Turkey, and Egypt. Additional numbers arrived from other countries in North Africa, Southeastern Europe, the Middle East, and other parts of Asia.

The new Arab immigrants - and those from Turkey, Iran, Pakistan, India, the Philippines and Indonesia - are also predominantly urban, well-educated, and skilled. Many come as students and remain to take advantage of the greater professional and economic opportunities available to them here; others come to acquire valuable industrial skills.

The latest influx has established the Arab minority as the dominant force in American Muslim affairs. The Arab newcomers bring with them a strong sense of Muslim identity and a high degree of activism in matters of religion.

continued on next page
and Islamic culture. Arabs have founded, financed, and are running many of the Islamic religious centres in American cities and universities, and they have attained leadership positions in many of the established American Muslim organizations. At the same time, Arab Muslims work closely with their Christian compatriots in matters that affect Arabs generally, through organizations like the Arab-American Chamber of Commerce and the Arab lobby in Washington.

Separate from the immigrant Muslim community, but increasingly converging with it in its aims and concerns, is the native Black Muslim or Bilalian movement, officially called the World Community of Islam in the West. The Black Muslims are both a religious and a black nationalist organization, and are perceived primarily as the latter by most other Americans. When first organized in Detroit in the 1930s, the movement emphasized the 'true origins' of blacks and their 'true religion', which resembled Islam.

In recent years, the Black Muslims have moved even closer to traditional Sunni Islam, and today feel a kinship with Muslims across the world. Since 1976, Black Muslims have participated in events at the Islamic Centre in Washington, the Bilalian News runs regular features on the Qur'an and the Arabic language, and there is intensive and successful Islamic missionary work in the black community.

Although the Black Muslims' network of institutions - about 140 mosques and numerous schools - remains separate from the facilities of other Muslim groups, bridges are being built to Muslim countries. Saudi Arabia provides scholarships for Bilalian students and has offered to help finance a 15,000,000 dollar mosque in Chicago, while Libya has loaned the Bilalian movement several million dollars to finance new mosques and schools.

Cultural Activities

The heightened Islamic sentiment in the US and the growing cooperation between American Muslims and coreligionists abroad both reflect a major change on the world scene - the growing importance of the Middle East and the revitalization of Islam. The Arab-Israeli war of October, 1973, and the oil embargo proved to the Arabs that they could successfully adopt Western methods. Since then, they have become far more sophisticated in their economic and political activities, both at home and abroad. At the same time, the reemergence of religion as a major factor throughout the Middle East has focused attention on the Muslim minorities in other parts of the world.

More than any other countries, Saudi Arabia and Pakistan have been especially involved in the American Muslim community. Each feels a special responsibility toward Muslims around the world - Saudi Arabia because of its stewardship of the holy cities of Makkah and Madinah and its great wealth; Pakistan, because of its apparent success in establishing a modern nation-state on an Islamic model.

Saudi Arabia furnishes much of the money needed to build day schools, centers, and mosques in the US and supplies trained personnel and books as well. In 1978, the Saudis announced grants totalling 3,000,000 dollars for North American building projects over the next two years, as part of a worldwide programme to help revitalize Muslim minorities. Saudi-sponsored organizations in the US and elsewhere - among them, the Muslim World League (Rabita), set up to subsidize and coordinate Muslim groups in different countries - disseminate political and religious views directly in line with those of the Saudi government.

Pakistan currently is the American Muslim community's prime source of teachers, guest lecturers, and teaching materials - a role performed earlier by Egypt. Delegations from Pakistan attended every major Muslim convention in the US and Canada. The Pakistani government sees itself as a missionary to, and protector of, Muslims in the West, and so does the World Muslim Congress, headquartered in Karachi, the Pakistani capital.

Egypt, the home of the ancient Muslim university, Al-Azhar, has maintained links with American Muslims since Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser helped finance the Islamic Centres in Detroit and Washington in the 1950s, but Egyptian involvement today appears to be limited by that country's shaky economy. Even so, scholarships to Al-Azhar continue to be made available and Egyptian Imams and teachers are still being sent here to help start and staff Islamic schools.

In the years ahead, American Muslims can be expected to press their political and ideological views before the US government and among the general public, just as Americans of other religious and ethnic backgrounds have done before them. What is much harder to guess are the ways in which the Muslims may ultimately affect the culture of the nation as a whole. Every ethnic group, in greater or lesser degree, has made its distinctive mark on America's customs, its moral and religious values, its intellectual and artistic direction. Just what the Muslim imprint will be and how deep, only time can tell.
GOD SPEAKS TO MAN
by DR. ALLAH BAKHISH

Ours is an age of Science. Secular science is based on our senses, aided or unaided by instruments. Sensuous feelings are interpreted by our minds and our intellectual analysis by logical inferences. This is how our knowledge of secular sciences advances. But God is transcendental to matter and beyond our physical senses. So are other eschatological realities. Is it possible for the metaphysical and unlimited verities to be comprehensible through the physical and the limited?

The modern scientific man's difficulty, who is solely dependent on the physical and the material, in believing the existence of God and spiritual varities, is therefore quite understandable. It is true that the cosmological and teleological arguments lead him to conclude that there ought to be a Being. But how is he to know his qualities and characteristics? Moreover, if man wishes to overcome his earthly and inferior emotional urges, a mere surmise of God is not sufficient. The conviction and God consciousness ought to be much deep-rooted and stronger in his subconscience. It is therefore quite wrong to make a supposition that it is man who out of his intellectual arguments has created Him. Nay! It is God Himself Who reveals to man! It is the process of communication or speaking of God to man or His revelation, or sometimes called religious experience, through which God has come to be known. It is to this effect that a Hadith speaks of, 'I was a treasure concealed, then I wished to be known, so I created Adam'. Some persons, especially in this age of reason and science, are yet under the misconception that God's speaking to man is just a myth and has no significance in human life. Speech heard from outside is generally considered as if an idea is inspired into man's mind, but words in which the idea is translated are of man's own making. This accordingly is what is implied by God speaking to men.

However, such is not at all the significance in which the word revelation to man has been employed in the Qur'an. One of the fundamental characteristics of Divine Revelation is used in the Holy Qur'an is that it fortells of coming events or gives knowledge of unseen things. Were divine revelation to man a mere instillation of good and fine ideas in the mind, then every ingenious imaginative device or poetic idea would have to be regarded as Divine-Speaking. How can an idea originating in the human mind and expressed by man in his own words be a Divine message or a communication? How can such an idea of man's own creation instill conviction into man about unseen realities? How can thoughts arising within man's mind reveal to him of future events or of past historical happenings? The Holy Qur'an says: "By the Lord of the heaven and the earth, it is surely the truth just as you speak, (with each other)" 51:23. Just as men speak to each other, so is God's speaking to man a reality. At another place, the Holy Qur'an has explained the exact kind of ways through which He speaks to man: "It is not vouchsafed to a mortal that Allah should speak to him, except by revelation or from behind the veil, or by sending a messenger and revealing by His permission what He pleases. Surely He is High, Wise. "And thus have We revealed to thee a Book by Our Command. Thou knowest not what the Book was, nor what faith was. But We made it a light, guiding thereby whom We please of Our Servants" (42:51). Maulana Muhammad Ali explaining this verse in his commentary says: "This verse shows how Allah speaks to a person or makes known His will to him. Three modes of this are stated: (1) By Wahy, the primary significance of which is a hasty suggestion. Hence the inspired word, which enters the hearts of the Prophets and the righteous. Hence it is called wahy of revelation because it is like a hasty suggestion made directly to the heart of the inspired. It is in this sense that a revelation is spoken of as being granted to the mother of Moses (28:7) and to the apostles of Jesus who were not prophets (5:111). (2) The second mode of Allah's speaking to His servants it that He speaks from behind the veil such as a scene is shown in a vision, carrying a deeper significance or words are heard by the person spoken to from behind a veil. (3) The third form of revelation is in which a messenger - an angel - is chosen by the Almighty to deliver His message to the person to which He wishes to speak. This is the highest form of revelation. The Qur'an was revealed to the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) through Gabriel. This revelation is granted only to the Prophets but the other two may also be granted to righteous who are not raised to the dignity of prophethood. It should, however, be borne in mind that in all these cases the recipient of the revelation is granted certain other senses. He sees what others do not see and he hears what others do not hear. It is therefore with what may be called the spiritual senses that he hears and sees and feels things which others do not hear, see, or feel" (Foot note No. 2235).

The prophetic-revelation which contains divine-guidance for man having been made complete with the revelation of the Qur'an and having been preserved safe for all the time, is therefore discontinued in conformity with the verse, "This day have I perfected for you your faith, and have completed by favour upon you and have chosen for you Islam as your faith" (5:3). But the non-prophetic kind of revelation continues to be granted as before. This consists mostly of news about future happenings and good tidings for the righteous as the Holy Qur'an says: Those who believe in this world's life and in the Hereafter. That is the mighty achievement" (10:63-64). At another place it has, "Those who say our Lord is Allah, then they remain steadfast, angels descend upon them (saying) have no fear nor be aggrieved, we are your friends in this life and in the Hereafter and be of good cheer for the paradise you were promised with" (41:30-31).

Divine-relation is a universal phenomenon. The process of granting visions and true dream to the righteous as well as the non- righteous is a universal process. The Holy Qur'an thus mentions the visions and dreams of King of Egypt and the two co-prisoners of Joseph as having come true. Divine-communion has never ceased to exist and will ever continue. If this relation of God and man were to discontinue, then there would be no more need for worshipping Him. The Holy Qur'an has itself advanced this reasoning against

continued on next page
God Speaks to Man

cont.

worshipping false deities who neither hear nor can give any assistance to man, when it says: "They serve besides Allah those who could neither harm nor benefit them" (10:18). And again, "Call not on besides Allah on him who can neither benefit nor harm thee" (10:106).

"When he (Abraham) said to his sire, O my Sire! Why worshipst thou that which hears not, nor sees, nor yet can avail thee aught?" (19:42). The Holy Qur'an condemns worshipping and praying to such gods who never answer: "Those to whom they pray besides Him give them no answer" (13:14). Those whom you call on besides Allah are slaves like yourselves. So call on them, then let them answer you, if you be truthful" (7:194). Islam teaches praying to a God Who hears, answers and helps man in his distress and difficulties, while it questions the worshipping to a God who neither hears nor answers. To say therefore that the God of Islam neither listens nor gives replies to the supplicant is to deny the God presented by the Holy Qur'an.

Finality of Prophethood

There is a grave misunderstanding about the doctrine of Finality of Prophethood: While the unbelievers in the phenomenon of Divine revelation deny the existence of a speaking and communicating God, there are others who believe that God used to speak before but has now ceased to speak any more with man because of the doctrine of Finality of Prophethood. Finality does imply that God has perfected His guidance with the Holy Qur'an and after it no new guidance is to be revealed. The source of all guidance for man in the future would be the guidance of the Qur'an. Moreover, the Holy Prophet, may peace be upon him, is the final and the last guide. There would be none who would claim to bring any new guidance not to be found in his life, as he has shown all true paths in his illustrious life. Thus finality of Prophethood does signify both these things, completion of Divine guidance with the Qur'an and perfection of all moral and spiritual elevation in the life history of the Holy Prophet, may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him. However, it never implies that God has ceased to speak or communicate with man in the non-prophetic way. The attributes of hearing and speaking are at work for all times to come. As a matter of fact completion and perfection of Islam, with the Qur'an and advent of the Holy Prophet, demand that his followers should be able to reach God and communicate with Him. If faith means that God should not remain isolated from man but should reveal Himself to him, then perfection of faith must signify that the perfect followers of a perfect faith must able to reach God and therefore be able to speak and communicate with Him. Does perfection imply and include a perfect follower reaching and speaking to God or does it signify that man is no longer able to reach God? Before perfection, man could reach and speak to God but after its completion he can no longer communicate with Him! Surely then in such an eventuality perfection would no longer prove a blessing if it were to deprive man to reach God? Finality of Prophethood does not signify cessation of the process of Divine speaking and communicating of God with man. It is on this account that the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, said that God used to send prophets before, whenever any prophet died another was raised. But after me there would be no prophet at all. However, there would arise after me my vicegerents. He has again said that before there were persons with whom God used to speak, without their being prophets and if there is any such person in my Ummat he is Umar. Again the Holy Prophet likened Hazrat Ali to Aaron in the words "your likeness to me is as that of Aaron to Moses but there is no Prophet after me". How could then it be maintained that the process of Divine communication in its non-prophetic form has been discontinued after the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon Him.

BOOK REVIEW

Religion on the Line

The Book which is beautifully printed is divided in three sections. First section which comprises of a transcript of W. Deen Muhammad's dialogue with superintendent Dan Macarthy and Assistant Deputy Director George Warner of the California Department of Correction, is captioned as 'Islamic Guidelines for the incarcerated.' It relates to problems generally voiced by incarcerated Muslims regarding difficulties experienced by them in prisons in performing their religious duties especially the offering of 'Salat' (Prayers or Service). While Judaism and Christianity are known to American people since long but their contact with Islam is quite recent in time, hence the general ignorance on the part of society in U.S.A. vis-a-vis the teachings of Islam. Imam W.D. Muhammad who himself spent some days behind the walls for refusing to answer the draft drawing. Upon the teachings of Islam and also his personal experience has very intelligently answered some questions which will benefit both the incarcerated Muslims and the Corrections Department in addressing themselves to solution of the problems raised in the discussion.

The Second Section which is titled 'Religion on the Line' is an edited version of an interview on a popular Los Angeles radio program hosted by Carol Hemmingway. Her guests at this talk show were Imam W.D. Muhammad, president of the American Muslim Mission; Reverend Knox, from the United Methodist Church in La Mirada, California; Father Blair, the Principal of a Mission Hills, California, high school and Rabbi Goldmarth of Temple Bether in La Mirada, California. The first two parts of this section which deal with 'History of the Nation of Islam and its leader the Honorable Elijah Muhammad', its Founder, Professor Fard Muhammad; and its present position under the leadership of Imam W.D. Muhammad, are very informative. It is a brief but quite comprehensive account of various stages of developments within the

continued on page 16
Ahmadis Too Are Ahl-e-Sunnah
by MASUD AKHTAR CHOUDRY, B.A., LLB.

Leaving aside the hypocritic Mukkafireen who per habit issue proclamations (Fatwā) of Kuf against other Muslims, and such proclama-
tions in abundance are traceable against all sects and sub-sects of Muslims including the Ahmadis, an erroneous view as if Ahmadis are not Ahl-e-
Sunnah is generally prevalent amongst most circles of both Ahmadis and non-Ahmadi. This for the most part is due to the position taken by the Qadiani
now Rabwah section of the Ahmadis and partly due to lack of knowledge about the beliefs of the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Silsala in Islam and the
Lahore section of the Ahmadis commonly known as Lahore Ahmadis or the Ahmadiyya Anjuman Ishaat Islam, Lahore.

As is well known, the two major sects or groups of Muslims are the Ahl-
e-Sunnah (those claiming to follow the sunnah of the Holy Prophet, Muhammad, peace be on him) commonly called the Sunni Muslims and Ahl-e-Tashbea commonly known as Shiat Muslims. There are many sub-
sects of the Ahle-e-Sunnah as well as of the Shiats. There are four schools of Jurisprudence (Fiqh) in Ahle-e-Sunnah named after four Jurist Imams namely the Hanfi (those following the Fiqh of Imam Abu Hanefeh), the Shafa’i (followers of the Fiqh of Imam Shafa’i), the Hanbli (followers of the Fiqh of Imam Hanbal) and the Malikis (the followers of the Fiqh of Imam Malik). Shiats on the other hand follow the Fiqh of their own Imams, well
known amongst them being the Fiqh Jafar (following the Fiqh of Imam Jaffar).

In addition to the above schools of jurisprudence (Fiqh) there are many a Silsala (literally meaning a chain, a series or succession i.e. those linked to)
taking their names after the righteous spiritual Imams or Mujaddeed e.g. the Qadariah (the followers of Imam Abdul Qadir Jilan), the Chisti (the
followers of Imam Moin-ud-din Chiushi of Ajmer-India) the Ghausia (the followers of Imam Ghaus-e-Azam) the Wahabia (the followers of Imam
Abdul Wahab) etc. etc. Those belonging to these Silsala

nevertheless are all Ahle Sunnah and believe in one of the four abovementioned schools of Fiqh. Just like this the Founder of the Ahmadiyyah Movement in Islam, who was the Mujaddid and Imam of the Fourteenth Century Hijrah, named his followers as the Silsala Ahmadiyyah indicating their relationship with the beau-
teous name, Ahmad, of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace be on him. The Founder was and always claimed to be a Hanfi Muslim, and in his writings we find in scores of places his claim that he believes in all the maters in which Ahl-e-
Sunnah believe and he neither stands to add or detract even a dot from the beliefs of the Ahl-e-Sunnah. Following their Imam, all the Ahmadis also follow Hanfi Fiqah. Ahmadiyyah, thus, are neither a new sect in Islam nor a new
school of jurisprudence (Fiqh). If claiming relationship with other Silsala, all named after their Imams, does not in any manner affect their
being a part and parcel of Ahl-e-Sunnah, then how can one’s claiming relationship with one of the beauteous names of the Holy Prophet
Muhammad, peace be on him, disqualify him from being considered one of the Ahl-e-Sunnah?

The Promised Messiah Speaks
cont.

hope disappears that perseverance must be shown. Under such ills and sufferings a man must show firmness, not swerve from the line, hold on through fire and
flood, be willing to suffer every disgrace, wait for no succour or support, not even seek any good tidings from on High and, in spite of his helplessness and the absence of all comfort, he must stand up firmly, submitting himself to the heavenly will without wringing his hands or beating his breast.

This is the true perseverance which reveals the glorious face of God. It is this noble quality which the apostles, the righteous and the faithful still exhale. Referring to this, the Lord of the worlds directs the believers to pray to Him in the following words:

"Guide us on the right path." —1:6

"The path of those (believers) upon whom Thou hast bestowed (Thy

favour." —7:126

"Our Lord, pour out on us patience and cause us to die in submission (to
Thee)" —7:126

It should be noted that in afflictions and trials, the Merciful causes a light to descend upon the hearts of His faithful servants, strengthened with which they meet all trials with calmness and dignity and, on account of the sweetness of their
faith, kiss the chains they are bound with for walking in the right path. When the righteous servants are under hard trials and sufferings and see death face to face, they do not supplicate their Creator to remove their sufferings. They know that to pray to Him to remove the cup of their hard lot is opposing His will and not in accordance with total resignation to it. The true lover does not recede but takes a forward step when he sees ills and adversities and, looking upon his own
life as a very insignificant thing, willingly submits himself to the will of heaven and is prepared to meet the worst. Of such people, the Lord says:

"And of men is he who sells himself to seek the pleasure of Allah. And Allah is (indeed) Compassionate to the servants." —2:207.

In short, this is the essence of the constancy which leads to the Divine
Being.

The seventh means to attain the object is to keep company with the righteous and to imitate their perfect example. This underlines the need of the appearance of prophets.

Man is naturally inclined to imitate a model and feels the need of it. A perfect model infuses life into a person and invigorates him to act upon the principles of righteousness, while he who does not imitate a perfect model gradually loses all eagerness to do good and ultimately falls into error. To this end, the Qur'an says:

"(O believers), be with the truthful." —9:119

The eighth means is true visions and revelations from God. As the path which leads to the Creator is a secret and mysterious one, and is full of
difficulties and dangers, the spiritual

continued on page 16
HADITH-UL-QUR’AN
by ARFAQUE MALIK

The authority of the Holy Qur’an is supreme. It says: ‘In which Hadith would they believe after rejecting the signs of Allah’ (42:6). Again it is said: ‘In which hadith would they believe after this (i.e. the Holy Qur’an)’ (77:50). The Holy Qur’an is the Hadith of Allah and there can be nothing better or more authentic than it. The Holy Qur’an is the undiluted word of Allah and therefore it must have preference over everything else. The following verses make the position much clearer: ‘There is nothing doubtful in it’ (2:2). ‘Surely, the Qur’an is a decisive word’ (86:13). ‘Allah is He, Who has sent down the Book with truth and also the Balance’ (42:17). ‘The Qur’an is not a fabricated Hadith, but a fulfillment of that which is before it and a detailed exposition of all things, and a guidance and mercy to a people who believe’ (12:111). ‘Falsehood cannot approach it either from before it nor from behind it. It is a revelation from the Wise, the Praiseworthy’ (41:42). ‘Surely the guidance of Allah is the true guidance and we have been commanded to submit to the Lord and Sustainer of the worlds’ (6:71). ‘Whoso will follow My guidance, will not go astray, nor will he come to grief’ (20:123). ‘Follow that which has been sent down to you from your Lord and Sustainer and follow not besides Him any guardians’ (7:3). ‘Allah has sent down the best of Hadith’ (39:23). ‘It is light illuminated’ (24:35). ‘And this Qur’an is not such as could be forged by those besides Allah, but it is verification of that which is before it and a clear explanation of the Book, there is no doubt in it, from the Lord of the worlds’ (10:37).

The Hadith of Allah recorded in the Holy Qur’an has no discrepancies (4:82) as are met in other scriptures. It is a complete collection of the best teachings (39:27). It explains everything necessary (16:89). It is the perfect and final message of Allah for mankind. Allah has at various places in the Holy Qur’an directly addressed the believers. Some such verses, all of which were revealed at Medina, are being collected hereunder in order to establish the fundamental demands the Holy Qur’an makes of the believers. This will give a glimpse of the Qur’anic message. ‘O you who believe, will you not reflect? O you who profess to be believers, will you not show by your deeds and action that your faith is genuine and firmly founded?’

Will you not translate the following message into your daily lives and be an example to the world?

O you who believe:
Believe in Allah and His Messenger, and in the Book which He has revealed before it. And whoso disbelieves in Allah and His Angels and His Books and His Messengers and the Last Day, has surely strayed far away (5:136). Take not your fathers and your brothers for friends if they prefer disbelief to faith. And whoso of you takes them for friends, such are the wrongdoers (9:23). The best commerce which will deliver you from a painful punishment is to strive in the cause of Allah with your wealth and your persons. This is better for you, if you did but know (61:10-11).

O you who believe:
Fear Allah as He should be feared; and let not death overtake you except when you are in a state of submission. And hold fast, all together, to the rope of Allah and be not divided; and remember the favour of Allah which He bestowed upon you when you were enemies and He united your hearts in love, so that by His grace you became as brothers; and you were on the brink of a pit of fire and He saved you from it. Thus does Allah explain to you His commandments that you may be guided (3:102-103). Be steadfast in the cause of Allah, bearing witness in equity; and let not a peoples enmity incite you to act otherwise than with justice. Be always just, that is near to righteousness. And fear Allah. Surely, Allah is Aware of what you do (5:8). Remember Allah’s favour upon you when a people had determined to stretch out their hands against you, but He withheld their hands from you; and keep your duty to Allah. And in Allah should the believers put their trust (5:11). Fear Allah and seek the means of approach unto Him and strive in His way that you may prosper (5:35). If you do your duty to Allah, He will grant you a distinction and will remove your evils from you and will forgive you; and Allah is the Lord of great bounty (8:29). Fear Allah and be with the truthful (9:119). Remember Allah much; and glorify Him morning and evening (33:41-42). Fear Allah, and say the straightforward word (33:70). Fear Allah and believe in His Messenger. He will give you a double portion of His mercy, and will provide for you a light wherein you will walk, and will grant you forgiveness - verily, Allah is Most Forgiving, Merciful (57:28).

O you who believe:
Obey Allah, and obey His Messenger and those who are in authority among you. And if you differ in anything, refer to Allah and His Messenger, if you are believers in Allah and the Last Day. That is best and most commendable in the end (4:59). Obey Allah and His Messenger and turn not away from Him while you hear His commands (8:20). Respond to Allah and His Messenger when he calls you that he may give you life, and know that Allah comes in between a man and his heart, and that He it is unto Whom you will be gathered (8:24). Prove not false to Allah and His Messenger, nor should you betray your trusts (8:27). Enter not the houses of the Prophet unless leave is granted to you for a meal, not waiting till it is cooked. But enter when you are invited, and when you have had your meal, disperse without seeking to engage in talk. That causes inconvenience to the Prophet, and he feels shy of asking you to leave, but Allah is not shy of saying what is true (33:53). Obe y Allah and obey the Messenger and make not your works vain (47:34). Be not forward in the presence of Allah and His Messenger, and keep your duty to Allah. Allah is All-Hearing, All-Knowing (49:1).

O you who believe:
Spend out of what We have bestowed on you before the day comes wherein there shall be no buying and selling, nor friendship, nor intercession, and it is those who disbelieve that do wrong to themselves (2:254). Render not vain your alms by reproach and injury like him who spends his wealth to be seen of men, and he believes not in Allah and the Last Day. His case is like the case of a smooth rock covered with earth, on which heavy rain falls, leaving it bare and hard. They shall not secure aught of what they earn. And Allah guides not the unbelieving people.
(2:254). Spend of the good things that you have earned, and of what We produce for you from the earth; and seek not what is bad that you may spend out of it when you would not take it yourselves except that you connive at it. And know that Allah is Self-Sufficient, Praiseworthy (3:267).

O you who believe:
Seek help through perserverance and prayer; surely, Allah is with those who patiently persevere (2:153). Be steadfast and strive to excel in steadfastness and be on your guard and fear Allah that you may prosper (4:200). Take your precautions for security, then go forth in separate parties or go forth all together (4:71). When you go forth to fight in the cause of Allah, make proper investigation and say not to any one who greets you with the greeting of peace, 'Thou art not a believer'. You seek the goods of this life, but with Allah are good things in plenty. Such were you before this, but Allah conferred His special favour on you; so do make proper investigation. Surely, Allah is aware of what you do (4:94). When you encounter an army, be firm and remember Allah much that you may prosper (8:45). Bow you down and prostrate yourselves in prayer, and worship your Lord, and do good deeds that you may prosper. And strive in the cause of Allah as it behoves you to strive for it. He has chosen you and has laid no hardship upon you in the matter of religion; so follow the faith of your father Ibrahim (Abraham); He has named you Muslims both before and in this Book, so that the Messenger may be a witness over you, and you may be witness over mankind. Therefore, observe prayer and pay the zakat and hold fast to Allah. He is your Protector and an Excellent Helper (22:78).

O you who believe:
Come into submission all of you and follow not the footsteps of Satan; surely, he is your open enemy (2:208). Whoso among you turns back from his religion, then let him know that Allah will soon bring in his stead a people whom He will love and who will love Him and who will be kind to and humble towards believers, and hard and firm against disbelievers. They will strive in the cause of Allah and will not fear the reproach of a fault-finder. That is Allah's grace; He bestows it upon whomsoever He pleases and Allah is Bountiful, All-Knowing (5:54). What is the matter with you that, when it is said to you, go forth in the way of Allah, you sink down heavily towards the earth? Are you contented with the present life in preference to the Hereafter? But the enjoyment of the present life is but little as compared with the Hereafter (9:38). Follow not the footsteps of Satan, and whose follows the footsteps of Satan should know that he, surely, enjoins indecency and manifest evil. And, but for the grace of Allah and His mercy upon you, not one of you would ever be pure; but Allah purifies whom He pleases. And Allah is All-Hearing, All-Knowing (24:21).

O you who believe:
Devour not your property among yourselves by unlawful means, except that you earn by trade with mutual consent (4:29). Be strict in observing justice, and be witness for Allah, even though it be against yourselves or be against your parents or near relatives. Whether he, against whom witness is borne, be rich or poor, Allah is more regardful of them both than you are. Therefore follow not your low desires that you be able to act equitably. And if you hide the truth or evade it, then know that Allah is Well-Aware of what you do (4:135). Surely, many of the priests and monks devour the wealth of men by false means and turn men away from the way of Allah. And those who hoard gold and silver and spend it not in the way of Allah, give to them the tides of a painful punishment (9:34). If an unrighteous person brings to you any news, investigate it fully, lest you harm a people in ingnorance, and then you repent of what you did (49:6).

O you who believe:
It is not lawful for you to inherit women against their will; nor should you detain them wrongfully that you may take away part of that which you have given them, except that they be guilty of a flagrant impropiety, and consort with them in kindness, and if you dislike them, it may be that you dislike a thing wherein Allah has placed much good (4:19). Enter not houses other than your own until you have asked leave and saluted the inmates thereof. That is better for you that you may be heedful (24:27). Let those whom your right hands possess, and those of you, who have not reached puberty, ask leave of you at three times before coming into your private apartments - before the Morning Prayer, and when you lay aside your clothes at noon in summer and after the Night Prayer. These are three times of privacy for you. At other times there is no blame on you nor on them, for some of you have to attend upon others and to move about freely according to need. Thus does Allah make plain to you the Signs; for Allah is All-Knowing, Wise (24:58). Let not one people deride another people, perchance they may be better than they. And do not defame your people nor call one another by nick-names. It is an evil thing to be called by bad name after having believed; and those who repent not, such are the wrongdoers (49:11). Avoid most of suspicion, for surely suspicion in some cases is sin; and spy not nor let some of you backbite others (49:12). When you confer together in private, give not to each other counsel of sin and revolt and disobedience to the Messenger, but give to each other counsel of goodness and observance of duty. And keep your duty to Allah, to Whom you will be gathered together (58:9). When it is said to you, make room in assemblies, make room. Allah will give you ample. And when it is said, rise up, rise up. Allah will exalt those of you who believe, and those who are given knowledge, to high ranks. And Allah is aware of what you do (58:11).

O you who believe:
Retaliation is prescribed for you in the matter of the slain: the free for the free, and the slave for the slave, and the female for the female. But if remission is made to one by his agrieved brother, prosecution for blood-wit should be according to usage, and payment to him in a good manner. This is an alleviation from your Lord and a mercy. Whoever exceeds the limit after this, will have a painful chastisement (2:178). Fasting is prescribed for you, as it was prescribed for those before you, so that you may guard against evil (2:183). Keep your duty to Allah and relinquish what remains due from usury, if you ...e believers. But if you do it not, then be appraised of war from Allah and his Messenger; and if you repent, then you shall have your capital. Wrong not, and

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Hadith-ul-Qur'an
cont.

you shall not be wronged. And if the debtor is in straitness, let there be postponement till (he is in) ease. And that you remit (it) as alms is better for you, if you only knew (2:278-280). When you contract a debt for fixed time, write it down. And let a scribe write it down between you with fairness; nor should the scribe refuse to write as Allah has taught him, so let him write. And let him who owes the debt dictate, and he should observe his duty to Allah, his Lord, and not diminish anything from it. But if he who owes the debt is unsound in understanding or weak, or if he is not able to dictate himself, let his guardian dictate with fairness. And call to witness from among your men two witnesses; but if there are not two men, then one man and two women from among those whom you choose to be witnesses, so that if one of the two errs, the one may remind the other. And the witnesses must not refuse when they are summoned. And be not averse to writing it whether it is small or large along with the time of its falling due. This is more equitable in the sight of Allah and makes testimony surer and best way to keep away from debts. But when it is ready merchandise which you give and take among yourselves from hand to hand, there is no blame on you in not writing it down. And have witnesses when you sell one to another. And let no harm be done to the scribe or to the witnesses. And if you do it, then surely it is a transgression on your part. And keep your duty to Allah (2:282). Devour not usury, doubling and redoubling, and keep your duty to Allah, that you may be successful (3:129). Go not near prayer when you are intoxicated till you know what you say, nor when you are polluted, save when journeying upon the road, till ye have bathed. And if ye be ill, or on a journey, or one of you cometh from the closet, or ye have touched women, and ye find not water, then go to high clean soil and rub your faces and your hands therewith. Surely, Allah is ever Pardoning, Forgiving (4:43). Violate not the signs of Allah, nor the Sacred Month, nor the offerings, nor the victims with garlands, nor those repairing to the Sacred House seeking the grace and pleasure of their Lord. And when you are free from pilgrimage obligations, then hunt. And let not hatred of a people - because they hindered you from the Sacred Mosque - incite you to transgress. And help one another in righteousness and piety, and help not one another in sin and aggression, and keep your duty to Allah. Surely, Allah is severe in requiting evil (5:2). When you rise for prayer, wash your faces, and your hands up to the elbows, and wipe your heads, and wash your feet up to the ankles. And if you are under an obligation, then wash yourselves. And if you are sick or on a journey, or one of you come from the privy, or you have had contact with women and you cannot find water, betake yourselves to pure earth and wipe your faces and your hands therewith. Allah desires not to place a burden on you but He wishes to purify you, and that He may complete His favours on you, so that you give thanks (5:6). Forbid not the good things which Allah has made lawful for you and exceed not the limits. And eat of the lawful and good things that Allah has given to you, and keep your duty to Allah, in Whom you believe (5:87-88). Intoxicants and games of chance and sacrificing to stones set up and dividing by arrows are only an uncleanness, the devil's work; so shun it that you may succeed (5:90). Kill not game while you are on pilgrimage. And whoever among you kills it intentionally, the compensation thereof is like of what he killed, from the cattle, as two just persons among you judge, as an offering to be brought to the Kabah, or the expiation thereof is feeding of the poor or equivalent of it in fasting, that he may taste the unwholesome result of his deed. Allah pardons what happened in the past. And whoever returns to it, Allah will punish him. And Allah is Mighty, Lord of Retribution (5:95). Call to witness between you, when death draws nigh to one of you, at the time of making the will, two just persons from among you, or two others from among others than you, if you are travelling in the land and calamity of death befalls you. You should detain them after the prayer. Then if you doubt them, they shall both swear by Allah saying: We will not take for it a price, though there be a relative nor will we hide the testimony of Allah for then certainly we shall be sinners (5:106). When you marry believing women, then divorce them before you touch them, you have in their case no term which you should reckon. But make provision for them and set them free in a goodly manner (33:49).

O you who believe:

Eat of the good things that We have provided you with, and give thanks to Allah if He it is Whom you serve (2:172). Take not for intimate friends other than your own people; they spare no pains to cause you loss. They love that which distresses you. Vehement hatred has already appeared from out of their mouths, and that which their hearts conceal is greater still. Indeed we have made the messages clear to you, if you understand (3:117). If you obey those who disbelieve, they will make you turn back upon your heels, so you will turn back losers (3:148). Be not like those who disbelieve and say of their brethren when they travel in the earth or engage in fighting: Had they been with us, they would not have died, or been slain; that Allah may make it to be a regret in their hearts. And Allah gives life and causes death. And Allah is Seer of what you do (3:155). Take not the disbelievers for friends rather than believers. Do you desire to give Allah a manifest proof against yourselves? (4:144). Take not for friends those who take your religion as a mockery and a sport, from among those who were given the Book before you and the disbelievers; and keep your duty to Allah if you are believers (5:57).

O you who believe:

Take care of your souls - he who errs cannot harm you when you are on the right way. To Allah you will all return, so He will inform you of what you did (5:105). Keep your duty to Allah, and let every soul consider that which it sends forth for the morrow, and keep you duty to Allah. Surely, Allah is Aware of what you do. And be not like those who forget Allah, so He makes them forget their own souls. These are the transgressers (59:18-19). Take not for friends a people with whom Allah is wroth - they indeed despair of the Hereafter, as the disbelievers despair of those in the graves (60:13). Why say you that which you do not do? It is most hateful in the sight of Allah that you say which you do not do (61:2-3). Let not

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Hadith-ul-Qur'an

cont.

your wealth nor your children divert you from the remembrance of Allah; and whoever does that, these are the losers (63:9). Surely of your wives and your children there are enemies to you, so be aware of them. And if you pardon and forbear and forgive, surely Allah is Forgiving, Merciful. Your wealth and your children are only a trial (64:14-15). Save yourselves and your families from a Fire whose fuel is men and stones; over it are angels, stern and strong. They do not disobey Allah in that which He commands them, but do as they are commanded (66:6).

O you who believe:

Turn to Allah with sincere repentance. It may be your Lord will remove from you your evil and cause you to enter Gardens wherein flows rivers, on the day on which Allah will not abase the Prophet and those who believe with him. Their light will gleam before them and on their right hands - they will say: Our Lord, make perfect for us our light, and grant us protection; surely Thou are Possessor of power over all things (66:8).

O you who believe:

These were the words of Allah, Hadith of Allah contained in the Holy Qur'an - Hadith-ul-Qur'an.

The Promised Messiah Speaks

cont.

wayfarer may depart from the right course or despair of attaining the goal. The Divine grace, therefore, continues to encourage and strengthen him in his spiritual journey, gives him consolation in moments of grief and animates him with a still more zealous desire to pursue his journey eagerly.

Such is the Divine law with the wayfarers of His path that He continues to cheer their hearts with His word and to reveal to them that He is with them! Thus strengthened, they undertake this journey with great vigour. The Holy Book says:

"For them (the believers) is good news in this world's life and in the Hereafter." —10:64

It may be added that the Qur'an has described numerous other ways which assist us in reaching the goals of life, but we cannot describe them here for want of space.

ISLAM MY CHOICE II

cont.

that were not quite clear to me. Here again there was yet another revelation! My questions were all answered promptly and concisely, so different from the frustration I had experienced when questioning Christianity. After much reading and studying of the religion of Islam both my daughter and myself decided to become Muslims, taking the names of Rashida and Mahmuda respectively.

"If I were asked what impressed me most in the religion of Islam I would probably say the prayers, because prayers in Christianity are used wholly in begging God (through Jesus Christ) to grant worldly favours, whereas in Islam they are used to give praise and thanks to Almighty God for all His blessings since He knows what is necessary for our welfare and grants us what we need without our asking it."

III

Harry E. Henkel (U.S.A.)

'If the world was ever in need of Islam it is today. I am happy, very happy, to follow the 'Light' brought to this world by that great torch-bearer, the Prophet Muhammad. Islam means much to me. It is indeed a rational faith.

"My early religious training was in the Christian faith...Having lost all interest in Christianity, I began to study other world religions...I found Islam appeals to one's reason...I found that it invites and encourages the pursuit of knowledge."

Book Review

cont.

‘Nation of Islam’ in matters of beliefs. One thing that very clearly strikes a readers mind is that Imam W.D. Muhammad has very intelligently brought in reforms in the ‘Nation of Islam’s creed and has successfully turned it into a true Islamic Movement which shares its beliefs with the rest of the Muslim world. Though predominantly drawing its membership from amongst the black Americans, it no longer is a racially based black movement exclusively. The second part of this section deals with questions like ‘Jihad’ which are grossly misunderstood in Europe and America, partly because of misstatements by orientalists.

Imam W.D. Muhammad has very intelligently answered the questions in the light of the teachings of the Qur'an. The answers indicate the depth of his knowledge of the Qur'an.

The third part of this section comprises of hot issues like position of women, women rights and ERA etc. Here again, Imam W.D. Muhammad has brilliantly tried to answer these questions in the light of the teachings of the Qur'an. May be some orthodox Muslims sections try to find fault with some of the answers, yet no one can deny that Imam W.D. Muhammad has essentially based his answers on the rational teachings of the Qur'an in the context of the society wherein he lives.

These 145 pages in a handy size make a pleasant informative reading.
QUEST FOR GOD
by DR. ALLAH BAKHSH

The characteristic of modern age is emphasis on Self and the worldly acquisition. Man's attention has totally been absorbed by matter and material pursuits. However, such an extremely one-sided attention and engrossment has reached its peak. As a result mankind has reached the brink of destruction. Man is now increasingly turning his attention to something else than pursuit of material objects - to discover spiritual realities. God is the fountainhead of all spiritual verities and therefore man has turned his attention towards quest for God. "Thy Kingdom come on earth as it is in heaven" was the earnest prayer of Jesus and it appears as if his soul is crying once again in heaven with the same prayer.

The question, however, is how to discover God? It is an age of Science and man has acquired the scientific spirit of investigation, which, in essence, means that his discovery should result in objective findings. God being an immaterial transcendental reality cannot be discovered by material instruments and physical senses. God should, therefore, reveal Himself to man. It is, therefore, essential that man should turn his attention to God and only then God would reveal Himself to man. There is a saying of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), that 'when man takes one step towards God, He comes toward him with ten steps.' How can man turn towards God except that he turn his attention towards God. This in no way means that he should renounce the world. What it implies is that whatever his environmental conditions men should earnestly apply his attention to praying to God in order that He might reveal Himself to him in whatever form He wills. Man cannot discover God through intellectual arguments or scientific instruments. It is only by turning towards Him that he can find Him. It was by this process alone that God did reveal His Presence in the past upon those whom mankind reverts as the elect of God, the greatest benefactors of mankind. Prayer, meditation and concentration are the essential factors to realise God in this life. A scientist who discovers some new truth employs the same method. He devotes his entire attention towards the research work. He becomes so absorbed and engrossed in the solution of his problem that sometimes he forgets his food or other worldly affairs. It is with such an earnest and deep devotion, inherent love, dedication for his work that he is able to discover something new which is good for his fellow-beings and humanity at large. But inside of his discoveries, he remains humble. I would quote here one notable example of an eminent scientist who combined in him the qualities of both dedication and humility. He was Sir Isaac Newton. It is related that he used to be so absorbed in his research work that when once asked to boil an egg, he put his watch into the boiling kettle instead of the egg. But he is related to have said about himself: "I am like a child playing at the sands of a seashore and finding sometimes some prettier pebble while the whole sea of knowledge lies before him unexplored".

This was the man Newton, about whose work others have estimated thus: If all the work done by previous mathematicians be placed on one side and his work on the other, then his work would out-weigh all the others.

Therefore one who ventures to enter the field of finding God must be dedicated and humble in his endeavours.

It is, therefore, a mistake to say that philosophers through their higher sense of reasoning and subjective thinking discovered God. On the other hand the fact is that God reveals Himself to persons who seek Him forsoaking the world solely to see and hear Him with their spiritual insight. Prophets and righteous persons in the past have tendered their testimonies of having heard the voice of God and seen the wonders of His works. These were the souls who made their appearance to save humanity from the depths of evil, wickedness and ignorance by guiding men to the light of knowledge, truth and virtue. History knows them as Jesus, Moses, Buddha, Krishna, Confucius, Zoroaster and Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be upon all of them. These were the people who removed ignorance and demonstrated the Presence of the Divine Being Who inspires and guides us to the path of Piety, virtue, veracity, selflessness and sacrifice for the benediction of mankind.

Allah Bakhsh

The Advent of Man
(after a poem of Muhammad Iqbal)

Love cried out—Behold the lover is come who welcomes my painful arrows with joy.
And a quiver shot out through Beauty's forms that a great admirer was being born.

In the sealed off sanctuary of the mysteries of being the signal rolled forth tht eternal secrets were being revealed.
Nature grew tense, that from the dust of her enslaved world was being formed one who would freely make or break himself, a self-knowledgable and self-directing potentiality.

The unconscious drive that slept in the lap of life had opened its eyes toward new vistas called personhood. And Life exclaimed—
Long was I sealed in the enclaves of earth, restless and unfree though now I see the orifice of my deliverance.

Our body is but an old pot of clay filled with the heady wine of life; life sensating secretly even in the pall of death. That when at autumn's tiding leaves off of the branches spill, are they not but toys dropping from the hands of languid infants loosed in a sweet and transitory sleep?

David Sparenberg

JUN/JUL • The Islamic Review 17
The Holy Qur'an does not begin with the genealogy of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, nor does it begin with the geology or creation of the heavens and the earth in a space of six days. A book of God as it is, it very appropriately begins with the name of God: 'In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful.' His attributes Beneficent and Merciful comprise the embodiment of His greatness and glory, and ascribe to Him the possession of all attributes of perfection. Though His beneficence evolved the creation of the heavens and the earth and through His mercy do our deeds flower into results. Thus we have, on the one hand, an expression of His perpetual generosity and sustenance and, on the other, an expression of His infinite and vigilant mercy and favour.

The first verse of the Holy Qur'an tells us that the creator of this universe is a beneficent God, that He is not the revengeful Nemesis of the Greeks who holds man as a plaything in her hands. The Arabic word for the Beneficent is al-Rahman for which we have no word in the English language. It denotes that not only His love and mercy are unbounded, but that He blesses us with gifts of untold proportion both for and in spite of meritorious service on our part. He has granted to all of His creation those indispensable provisions necessary for their existence, sustenance, growth and development: space, forces, time, atmosphere, earth, sun, water, law - to name a few - which comprise an inconceivably small proportion, all of which, however great or small, are still subservient to His will.

We are obligated, therefore, to acquire knowledge of all things, be they in the heavens or on the earth. But in our search for knowledge, we should always be conscious of our Benefactor, to Whom we owe our efforts, to Whom we owe the results of our efforts, and to Whom we look for prototype.

In the Arabic language the proper name of God is Allah for which again we find no English equivalent and we are forced to interpret it as God. But Allah is the proper name of the Diety and is, at the same time, more definite in its application and more profound in its meaning than the term 'God'. God, in the English language is, more often than not, applied to other than the One Supreme Being, besides being continuously used in malevolent and abusive oaths. In Webster's English Dictionary we find: 'God (god), the supreme Diety and self-existent Creator and Upholder of the universe; (god), a supernatural being conceived of as possessing powers or attributes; idol; a person or thing defied or honoured to excess; (slang) an occupant of a seat in the upper gallery of a theatre.' Allah, however, has from time immemorial been applied only to the Supreme Being, the possessor of all attributes of perfection; it has not plural number and no feminine gender. (Edward Lane, Arabic-English Lexicon, 'Allah.')

The world-renowned late Agha Khan, when asked by a friend: 'Is it true that the people in India believe you to be God?' humorously replied: 'The people of India worship cows and calves as gods; it does not matter to them if they believe me to be God.'

Saint Paul writes: 'For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth as there be gods many and lords many.' (I Cor. 8:5) And we also find reference in the Bible that there were stolen gods taken by Rachel. (Gen. 31:39) The use of the word 'god' in the Bible and in Christian lands is a proof that this term does not apply to the Supreme Being alone.

Allah being the proper name of God, it should not be translated into any other language, futile as the attempt shall be, for we all know that proper names of cities and persons are not translated. Hence Muslims all over the world, regardless of their native languages, refer to the Supreme Being as Allah, and begin all their affairs by uttering Bismillah (in the name of Allah we begin).

We have stated that there is no equivalent of Allah in the English language nor in any other language of the world. Of course, different languages have different names for the Divine Being, but none of them connotes what the term Allah does; while they are general or descriptive of a particular expression of His nature, it is only the proper name Allah that entirely embodies descriptive names, i.e. He who possesses all attributes of perfection. We have in the Holy Qur'an: 'And Allah's are all the excellent names.' (the Qur'an, vii. 180) Again, we have: 'Allah there is no god by He, His are the very best names.' (Ibid., xx. 8).

We conclude, therefore, that the names of God in all other languages are merely expressions of particular attributes, and this the author intends to prove.

God in Judaism, Christianity, Islam and other revealed religions is the Supreme Being: the First Cause, Self-Existent and All-Powerful.

There does not seem to have been a period of history when mankind did not believe in a supernatural Author and Ruler of the universe; even the most savage nations have some idea of God or Supreme Being. There is no language or nation on the earth which is without the name of God. (James Hasting (Ed.), Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics. Vol. VI, Art. 'Names of God'.)

But it is surprising to find that, in the history of religion, the Holy Qur'an clearly accepts the universality of Divine revelation. For example God said to Adam: 'Verily there will come a guidance from Me, then whoever follows My guidance, no fear shall come upon them, nor shall they grieve.' (The Qur'an, ii. 38)

Again, He said: 'mankind is a single nation. So Allah raised prophets as bearers of good news and as warners.' (Ibid., ii. 213)

'And certainly We raised every nation a messenger, saying: Serve Allah (the only True God) and shun false gods.' (Ibid., xvi. 36)

'Surely We have sent thee (O Muhammad) with the Truth as a bearer of good news and a warning. And there is not a people but a warner has gone among them.' (Ibid., xxxv. 24)

'This Because thy Lord would not destroy towns unjustly while their people are negligent.' (Ibid., vi. 131)

That prophets were raised among every nation has been told repeatedly in the Qur'an. This great truth remained hidden for thousands of years from the wisest men of the world; it dawned upon the mind of an unlettered Arab who did not even know what nations then existed and what scriptures they possessed. This undoubtedly is the basic doctrine of Divine message to the whole of mankind. The Qur'an has a simple argument for it:

And for every nation there is a
messenger. So when their messenger comes, the matter is decided between them with justice, and they are not wronged.' (Ibid., x. 47)

‘For everyone of you We appointed a law and a way.' (Ibid., v. 48)

The appointment of a law and a way for everyone refers to the giving of different laws to different nations in accordance with their requirements, the revelation of the Qur'an finally fulfilling the requirements of all nations and all ages. Psychologically, the human mind is also a unity. According to Islam, all the worlds are linked by one law or one creative will, because the Creator is one. It can be absolutely realised that there is one God Who is the Creator and Author of all existence, Who has not only given to the whole creation its means of nourishment but has also beforehand ordained for each a sphere or capacity and within that capacity and within that sphere provided the means by which it continues to attain gradually to its goal of perfection. According to the Qur'an, death does not bring the life of man to an end; it only opens the door to a higher form of life. The law of requeit of good and evil is a comprehensive one:

‘He who has done an atom's weight of good shall see it. And he who has done an atoms weight of evil shall see it.’ (Ibid., xlic. 7-8)

‘And We will set up a just balance on the day of resurrection; so no soul shall be dealt with unjustly in the least; and though there be the weight of a grain of mustard seed, We will bring it: and sufficient are We to take account.’ (Ibid., xxi. 47)

‘And the measuring out on that day will be just; then as for those whose measure of good deed is heavy, they shall be successful. And for those whose measure of good deeds is light, these is that have made their souls suffer loss.’ (Ibid., vii. 8-9)

‘And the book shall be placed, then thou will see the guilty fearing from what is in it; and they will say: Ah! woe to us! What a book is this! It omits not a small one nor a great one, but numbers them all.’ (Ibid., xviii. 49)

All these passages, and many others, establish that every human soul will be judged according to the Book revealed to the messenger of God sent to his nation. Therefore it is said:

‘O community of Jinn and men, did there not come to you messengers from among you, relating to you My messages and warning you of the meeting of this day of yours. They will say: We bear witness against ourselves. And this world's life deceived them and they will bear witness against themselves that they were disbelievers.’ (Ibid., vi. 131)

‘Whenever a host is flung therein the wardens thereof ask them: Came there unto you no warrior? They say: Yes, verily, a warrior came unto us; but we denied and said: Allah hath naught revealed: ye are in naught but a great error. And they say: Had we been wont to listen or have sense, we had not been among the dwellers in the flames. So they acknowledge their sins; but far removed (from mercy) are the dwellers in the flames.’ (Ibid., lvii. 8-10)

Again, it is said:

‘This day every soul shall be rewarded for what it has earned. No injustice this day! Surely Allah is Swift in Reckoning.’ (Ibid., xl. 17)

‘And for all there will be ranks according to what they did. Thy Lord is not unaware of what they do.’ (Ibid., vi. 133)

Messengers and prophets were raised not only among the Israelites but among all the nations of the world. Job and Luqman were not Israelites. And it is plainly said:

‘And certainly We sent messengers before thee: there are some of them that We have mentioned to thee and there are others which We have not mentioned to thee.’ (Ibid., xl. 78)

Professor F. Max Muller, a great authority on religion, writes:

‘Religion is not a new invention. It is, if not as old as the world, at least as old as the world we know. There never was a false God nor was there ever a false religion, unless you call a child a false man. All religions, so far as I know them, had the same purpose. All were links in a chain which connects heaven and earth, and which held, and always was held, by one and the same hand.’ (F. Max Muller's Hibbert Lectures, p. 4 And a letter to Rev. M. K. Schermmerhorn, 1883)

It will be useful if we now study the concepts of God of different nations of the world.

(1) The Abipones, (Hastings' Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, Vol. I p. 29) a savage tribe of South America. Their chief deity is Aharaigichi or Keebet. 'He gave us valour and Spaniards riches.'

(2) The Abor. (Ibid., p. 33) Abor Miri, a people of the northern frontier of Assam. They acknowledge and adore one supreme being, Jam, as the father of all, who will judge all men.

(3) The aborigines (Ibid., Vol. II, p. 246. They circumscribe with stone knife, (Ibid., Vol. I. p. 298) of South Australia have Ainatu as their God. It means one without anus, or without flaw. The god who eats and drinks should have anus. The Qur'an says:

'Say: Shall I take for a protector other than Allah, the originator of the heavens and the earth, and He feeds and is not fed?' (The Qur'an, vi. 14)

These aborigines also declare that Ainatu is prior to Beginning. He appeared in the sky in a far remote past. He made Himself and gave Himself His name. He is very great. Whose law tribes are obeying. He established the rule that tribes at fishing golden should keep peace. His name also means 'The Great'.

(4) Some aborigines (Hastings' op. cit., Vol. II, p. 246) of South Australia say that they believe in Biaami. It means maker and father of all.

(5) The Abyssinians, (Ibid., Vol. I. p. 56) a Hamite race, adore Waq, pronounced Waquo. Originally, it means Heaven (or one who is in heaven). They say there is only one God Who is omnipresent, or everywhere.

(6) The Aegeans, (Hastings' op. cit., Vol. I. p. 147) people of the coast isles of the Aegean Sea, say that they believe in Rhea, which means the spirit of Nature.

(7) The African Negroes. (Dr. Bosman Merwi, African Languages; H.J. Ter Blauche, Nower Woode Book.) They say that they have been taught His name God. In their language godin is goddess and godji is a little tin god.

(8) The Agaao, (Hastings, op.cit., Vol. VI, p. 488) high Cushite of East Africa, say their chief god is Deban or Jar. It means sky or heaven.

(9) The Ahoms, (Ibid., Vol. I. p. 236) who belong to the Tai family, extending from the gulf of Siam to Assam, say that they believes in Phu-Ra-Ta Ra. It means God, the Creator.

continued on next page
ALLAH, NAME OF GOD

(10) The Akra (F. Max Mullar's Hibbert Lectures, No. 2) (an African tribe). They say that they believe in Jongama, meaning the highest God.

(11) The Akaipin (Ibid.) (Africans) believe in Jank Kupong; it denotes God.

(12) The Ainus (When speaking of God of gods, the Ainus gave Him the name of Pase Kamui. All the rest are termed Yai yan kamui. Hastings, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 240) is an historic race sometimes inhabiting Siberia to Japan. Their god is Kamui. They were originally monotheists. Kamui means heaven and above. It has no plural number.

(13) The Ayinar (Hastings, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 257) of South India worship Hari Hara or Vishnusiva, a Dravidian god recognised by the Aryans.

(14) The Alakh Namis (Ibid., p. 276) of Northern India worship Alakh Nam, or the unseabed God.


(17) The Algoquins (Ibid., p. 320) a well-known Alige race of North America, say that they believe in Kuloskap or Kuloskabe. It means the god, liar and deceiver, not because he deceives or injures man but because he leads his enemies astray. He is creator and friend of man, named animals and discovered that man was the lord of all.

(18) The Andamanas (Ibid., p. 468) though naked pigmy savages and totally uncivilised, say that Puluga, their chief deity, is the cause of all things, and sins are displeasing to Him. He taught His teachings to Tomo, the first teacher.

(19) The Annamese (Ibid., p. 539) of Berma call their God Doc-Cuc, i.e. one-footed God. They praise his merits thus: 'The one-footed spirit has only one eye and only one foot, but he is swift as lightning and sees all that happens in the world.'

We Believe

(a) After the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) Allah has completely barred the appearance of a prophet, old or new.
(b) After the Holy Prophet, Gabriel can never descend and bring Prophetic Revelation (Wahy Nubuwvah) to any person.
(c) If Gabriel were to descend with one word of Prophetic Revelation (Wahy Nubuwvah) on any person, it would contradict the two complementary verses:

"This day have I perfected your Religion for you" (5:5); "He is the Messenger of Allah and the Last of the Prophets."
(d) The Holy Prophet also said: "I am Muhammad and I am Ahmad and I am al-Aqib (the one who comes last) after whom there can be no prophet". (Al-Bukhari: Kitab al-Manaqib).
(e) In the light of the above Islamic fundamentals, the Holy Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement never claimed to be a Nabi, but the God-Ordained Mujaddid ("The Promised Messiah") of the 14th Islamic Century, having been expressly raised to re-establish the predominance of Islam in the world.
(f) He named his followers 'Ahmadi' after the Holy Prophet's Jamali (beauteous) name 'Ahmad'.
(g) He proclaimed that no verse of the Holy Qur'an has been abrogated nor shall ever be abrogated.
(h) All the Companions of the Holy Prophet and the Imams are venerable.
(i) It is spiritually conducive to our Faith to accept the revivalist Islamic missions of all Mujaddids (Renovators).
(j) Any one who declares his faith in the Kalimah (Muslim formula of faith - la ilaha illaluha Muhammadur Rasulullah is a Muslim.

WE STAND FOR:

(a) A UNITED ISLAM, that has no room for any sectarian disruption;
(b) A RATIONAL ISLAM, that seeks support for all its doctrines from the fact of experience;
(c) A LIBERAL ISLAM, that respects goodness wherever found, and respects all religious traditions as from Allah at their source;
(d) A WINNING ISLAM, that is anxious to win a whole world by loving persuasion and moral influence;
(e) A PROGRESSIVE ISLAM, that finds new light from the Qur'an and the Sunnah at every change in the intellectual climate of the world;
(f) A LIVING ISLAM, that is capable of bringing its worthy followers in speaking contact with Allah in every age;
(g) A PEACEFUL ISLAM, that condemns all kinds of violence in matters of religion, either to secure its acceptance or for the continuity of adherence to it.

After the love of God I am intoxicated with the love of Muhammad. If this be heresy, by God I am the greatest of heretics!

"My contemplation, I let go in every direction; but no faith like the faith of Muhammad did I find. In person did I test the truth of Islam. Listen! I say, it is light through and through."
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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