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PROMISED MESSIAH SPEAKS
‘The Concept of Perfect Man In Islam’
by Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad
Founder of the Ahmadiyyah Movement in Islam

It should be born in mind that according to the Islamic Shari’a the best among angels do not have a better rank than the best among men. In fact, the best among men are superior to the best among angels and their function as media, both in the worlds of spirit and matter, does not indicate their superiority. According to the guidance given by the Qur’an they have been employed as servants in the work of this universe, as Almighty God says:

“He(God) has made subservient to you, the sun and the moon.” (The Qur’an, xiv:33)

To illustrate this, consider a messenger who delivers a dispatch from the ruling monarch to the Governor-General; is the messenger, who acts as a medium between the monarch and his Governor-General, superior in position to the Governor-General himself? Thus it should be carefully understood that a similar position is held by those media who are engaged in carrying out the will of the Almighty and communicate His wishes to this realm of both spirit and matter. Many times in the Qur’an, Almighty God explicitly says that whatever is in the heavens and the earth, has all been created for the servitude of man, and man enjoys a higher and more sublime position in comparison with the rest of creation over whom man is the lord and which exists to serve him. Accordingly, the Qur’an says:

“And He has made subservient to you, the sun and the moon, pursuing their courses; and He has made subservient to you, the night and the day. And He gives you of all you ask of Him. And if you count God’s favors, you will not be able to number them.” (xiv:33,34)

“He it is Who created for you all that is in the earth.” (ii:29)

The Qur’an says that the sun and the moon are always in orbit and have been made subservient to man. In other words, these two bodies in space keep on changing their state and characteristics; the condition of the sun during the spring months is never the same as during the autumn months. Thus the sun and the moon keep on rotating in this manner, and their rotation sometimes brings spring and sometimes autumn, at certain times they show characteristics of one

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OUR BELIEFS

(1) That there is no God but Allah and Muhammad is His Messenger.

(2) After the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him), Allah has completely barred the appearance of a prophet, old or new.

(3) After the Holy Prophet, Gabriel can never descend and bring Prophetic Revelation (Wahy Nubuwwah) to any person.

(4) If Gabriel were to descend with one word of Prophetic Revelation (Wahy Nubuwwah) 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.”

(5) 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.” (Abu Bukhari: Kitab al-Manaqib)

(6) 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.

(7) He named his followers ‘Ahmadi’ after the Holy Prophet’s Jamali (beatific) name ‘Ahmad’.

(8) He proclaimed that no verse of the Holy Qur’-an has been abrogated nor shall ever be abrogated.

(9) All the Companions of the Holy Prophet and the Imams are venerable.

(10) It is spiritually conducive to our Faith to accept the revivallist Islamic missions of all Mujaddids (Renovators).

(11) Any one who declares his faith in the Kalimah (Muslim formula of faith- la ilaha illalahu Muhammadur Rasulallah) is a Muslim.
EDITORIAL
Some Misnomers, Some Misstatements
By Ch. Masud Akhtar

The Orthodox Muslim Clerics and groups are referred to in the Western media as Fundamentalists. This creates a wrong impression, as if other Muslims do not believe in the Fundamentals of Islam. Nothing is more beyond the truth than this statement. As for fundamentals of Islam, Muslims all over the world believe in these without an iota's difference. The division in the ranks of Muslims have never been along the lines of either the Fundamentals or the Non-Fundamentals. Put simply, the Fundamentals of Islam are the belief in Allah and in the Unity of Allah; belief in the prophethood of the Prophet Muhammad, peace be on him; belief in the Revelation from Allah to the Prophet Muhammad and to prophets who were raised amongst different nations before him; belief in the life after death and the Day of Judgement; belief in Angels; belief in the Qur'an as the word of Allah and the Final prophetic Revelation with which the prophethood came to an end; belief in Salat, Zakat, (poor rate), Saum(fasting), Hajj(pilgrimage to Mecca, if the means permit), Jihad(striving in the cause of Allah with one's wealth, knowledge, all material and spiritual means, even at the loss of one's life)(N.B. Jihad is grossly misunderstood both in the West as well as in the Muslim world, as it is mixed up with the word Qital, that is waging war, which is only one amongst other forms of Jihad and is permissible only if conditions for Qital are met in any given situation. Not every war will qualify as Jihad until all the conditions are fulfilled. While the teaching and the preaching of the Qur'an at all times is a duty which is enjoined upon every Muslim and has been called "Afaq-al Jihad", that is the best form of jihad in the Qur'an);

belief in all mankind as being one nation and all human beings being equal, with no preference to one or the other because of his race, creed, or color-the only mark of distinction being that one is more righteous than the other. The above are the Fundamental teachings of Islam and all Muslims, without any exception, agree on these. Hence, calling a certain shade of Muslims as Fundamentalists is not fair to other Muslims and belies a lack of proper knowledge about Islam and its Fundamentals. Islam is unique amongst the great Religions of the world in one matter, it being that it provides guidance in matters of worldly life, where other religions are silent. In this field, the Qur'an has laid down certain basic principles and has left to Muslims the working of the details for the application of these principles in a given situation at a given time. Along these lines, Muslim Jurists have developed a vast network of laws covering almost all fields and the concept of Ijtihad has kept the process of developing laws open for all ages. Naturally, the application of the same principle of law in two different sets of facts has to be variant. This difference of opinion, which is the backbone of the process of the development of laws and which was rightly called by the Prophet a mercy of Allah on His Ummah, guarantees that there would not be any stage where stagnation will overtake the Muslim Ummah. Unfortunately, when the professional Clerics crept into the ranks of Muslims, they started claiming monopoly of Islamic knowledge and thought and like all other professional priestcrafts, took hard lines against each other on the one hand and against any change through Ijtihad on the other. Adherents of different schools of Jurist, due to their hard-liner attitude, became strong opponents of each other. Likewise, adherents of various schools of Sufia took upon themselves the role of enemies of other Tareeqah. The divisions of the Muslims are along such lines and not on the Fundamentals of the Religion.

Another phrase commonly used by the Orientalis is "there is no separation of Church and State in Islam." The concept of the Separation of Church and State is the basic principle of secularism. Since Christianity developed in Europe through the Church, therefore, the Church in the Western world stands for both the Religion and the Administration of the Church, the bureaucracy of the Clerics. Since the Clerics in Islam are not interchangeable with Islam or Religion, therefore the use of the word church in relation to Islam is highly misleading. In fact, no church-like thing in the meanings of the Bureaucracy of the Clerics is tenable in Islam. Since an Islamic State, in discharge of its executive, legislative and judicial functions, is required to adhere to the teachings of the Qur'an and the Sunnah, therefore, people lacking proper comprehension of Islam have misunderstood it as non-separation of the Church and the State. There being no concept of a Clergy in Islam, there is no role for him to play in the State or otherwise. On the other hand, the teachings of Islam, being all-comprehending in all spheres of life, the Statecraft is no exception therefrom.
The Uniqueness of Islam
By Dudley Wright(Muhammad Sadiq) Phil.D.S.Z.S.

The belief is widespread among Christians that the revelations of God to the human race ceased with the advent of Jesus. A little thought and reflection on the recorded utterances of Jesus will, however, demonstrate the fallacy of this belief, for it there was to be no further revelation after his departure the promise given by Jesus as recorded in John xvi, 13, would be false and valueless. It is there reported that he said to his disciples:

"Howbeit, when he, the spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you unto all the truth, for he shall not speak from himself but what things soever he shall hear, those shall he speak and he shall declare unto you the things that are to come."

Then, too, we have the injunction in Matthew vii, 7:

"Ask and it shall be given you, seek and you shall find; knock and it shall be opened unto you,"

which would be equally valueless if the asking and searching were to remain unanswered and unrewarded.

Is it not the plodder to whom success comes, the persistent inquirer and searcher, whose labors are rewarded with the acquisition of the knowledge desired? Is not the failure of the individual to secure success explained in the popular judgement: "He never sticks to anything for long." To take one illustration from many that might be cited: Newton's discovery of the law of gravitation was not a sudden revelation, but the outcome of much observation and hard thinking, as were Kepler's Laws of Planetary Motion. Revelations, like revolutions, are nearly always the result of lengthy "underground" cogitations. They may burst suddenly upon the world, but they are the outcome of deliberate and often long-continued thought and planning.

When, therefore, it is claimed that Islam came to mankind as a revelation from the Eternal, the claim is not one to be ignored or even to be disregarded, for Muhammad, the Prophet of Islam, was certainly a plodder seeking for long years by prayer to know the Will of Allah and continually knocking at the door of heaven, quietly but effectively by constant meditation.

Islam had stood the test of time and Muslims have suffered undauntedly bitter persecutions without losing for one moment their faith and they regard these facts as a proof of the divine foundation of their faith, but there is another characteristic of Islam which should be emphasized - its uniqueness.

Islam is unique in the fact that its Prophet, the Prophet of Allah, is a historical character, whose life, in every detail related to him can be traced in authentic records. L'abbe Loisy, now ranks as a leader of Christian modern thought, who achieved the distinction of excommunication from the Roman Church as well as the placing of his writings on the Index Prohibitorum, maintained that Christianity is unique in its ability to claim a historical character as its founder. That statement, however, is inaccurate. When the challenge has been made, there has not been a single feature or incident in the life of Jesus, as recorded in the New Testament, for which evidence has been or can be produced that would pass tests which would be regarded as satisfactory by the modern practising barrister. The claim for historicity, however, can be made and substantiated in every detail on behalf of Islam and its Prophet Muhammad.

For many years the Free-thought camp has been divided into two sections, the one claiming the reality of the existence of the founder of the Christian Religion (Jesus, however, was not the founder of Christianity as known today), the other maintaining that into the story of his life there have been woven mythical legends of previous ages, which have been assimilated into the Christian belief and related as true of its founder. That question was also discussed by Loisy in some of his writings. Personally, I think there is much presumptive evidence for the existence theory but that much myth has been incorporated into the meager account of his life and death as related in the New Testament. That, too, is generally the Muslim belief.

The correct view in which to regard myth is that a parable or, to recall the old-time definition, to treat mythical stories as "earthly stories with heavenly or spiritual meanings." The harm which has sometimes proved dangerous to truth is when myth has been placed on a level with truth and has been added to or incorporated with historical narrative. As Loisy has written:

"It is true that Jesus has lived in a myth and that myth has borne him to the summit of history."

Islam rejects myth when it is sought to add it to fact and necessary to salvation. Islam distinguishes firmly between myth and history so that its teaching contains nought to startle the inquirer or disciple, nothing that is beyond his understanding or acceptance. It makes no demand on credulity. It is now, however, a frigid Deism,
but a living faith, full of vitality. Let us not mistake Theology for Faith; Faith is eternal, theology is transient.

It can also be claimed that the message proclaimed in the mosque at the present day is identical with that delivered by Muhammad when he entered upon his mission to liberate the pre-Islamic Arabs from the thralldom of polytheism. Exponents of Islam are never heard demanding a restatement of the faith on the plea that the original message has become stale and unprofitable. We read in the Qur’an (sura vi, verse 116):

“The words of thy Lord are perfect in truth and justice; there are none who can change His words.”

Christians, however, are constant in their clamor for a restatement of the Christian faith and there have even been frequent revisions of the New Testament in order to bring its contents into line with modern thought and expression. In a booklet entitled The Gospel of Tomorrow, from the pen of Dr. J.W. Hunkin, Bishop of Truro, published in the Pelican series, we read:

“Many attempts are being made to restate the essentials of Religion in the light of modern knowledge and in the language of today. But most of them are not thorough enough. Research has not only discovered fresh evidence but has also developed an improved technique for dealing with it. Modern thought has been moving rapidly. Religious thought has been moving, too, but not fast enough to keep up.”

These words (the italics are mine) support the statement sometimes made that “Religion must move with the times” and explain the insistence for a demand for a restatement of the Christian belief. Truth does not alter; it is invariable, though our knowledge or appreciation of it may, as the poet has expressed it, “grow from more to more,” with the result that “more of reverence will in us dwell.”

The Muslim shares with the Jew a horror at the doctrine of a trinity of Persons in the Godhead, which doctrine each regards as blasphemous. The Muslim’s belief is grounded on the Unity of Allah. We read in the Qur’an (sura cxii):

“God is One God; the Eternal God, He begetteth not, neither is He begotten and there is not anyone like unto Him.”

The Muslim believes in angels as the messengers of Allah, “Messenger” being the meaning of the Greek word, ‘angelos’, but the doctrine of the Trinity, involving, as it does, the Eternal in an act of procreation, is, to his mind, derogatory to Allah and unthinkable. The prominence given in some sections of the Christian Church to the adoration of the Virgin Mary-an adoration so extensive and intensive as to lead an uninstructed non-participant to assume a quaternity of persons in the Godhead-is as repulsive to the Muslim as it is to the Jew. In past ages men and women in England, other than Muslims, have been sent to the scaffold because of their disbelief in this doctrine. In the reign of James I, Bartholomew Legard and Edward Wightman were burned for denial of the doctrine of the trinity. One of Wightman’s persecutors, Archbishop Laud, was himself, later sent to the scaffold, though not for the same offense.

The only creed imposed upon his followers and disciples by Jesus consisted of two articles: “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart” and “Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself”, both of which precepts are emphasized in Islam. It must not, however, be overlooked that the majority of Christians regard Paul, not Jesus, as the founder of their faith. All Muslims can and do subscribe to the faith of Jesus; Islam looks upon him as a prophet of Allah but refuses to consider the metaphysical speculations of Paul. Religion, to the Muslim, is life and action, not a forced subscription to a man-made creed; it is a life of submission to the will of Allah and of love to neighbor and the widest possible interpretations is given to the term “neighbor.” It embraces the whole of humanity without any geographical or color limitation; that is the basis of Islamic effort and propaganda.

Islam imposes no creed by any society or section claiming authority by a divine commission or appointment. The Roman Church and the Church of England have three creeds-the Apostles, a wrong description, since its origin is of a date much later than that known as the apostolic age; the Nicene and the Athanasian. The last is the subject of continuous wrangling among English churchmen, some of whom refuse to recite it even on the fourteen days when the rubric orders it to be said. One of those days is Christmas day which is supposed to be a festival of happiness and joy. The creed is not to be found in the American prayer book and Bishop Hunkin avers that it is not a creed at all and that Athanasius was not its author. Edmund Biship, a well-known Roman Catholic author, said that it exhibits the characteristic spirit of Spanish orthodoxy of the sixth and seventh centuries. Presbyterians have the “Westminster Confession of Faith,” which has often been a bone of contention. There is a Baptist creed, in pamphlet form, but this is seldom heard of in recent times, a fact not surprising when consideration is given to the divisions in that body and to the fact that each minister or pastor is practically a law unto himself in the matter of belief. Like the Congregationalists, with a similar form of church government, the various churches or chapels get along fairly well, when they do not run
counter to the wish and will of the real governors of the communities, the deacons and elders, who, very frequently, are the local tradesmen.

Today the whole of Christendom is, as it has always been, a battle-ground of internecine warfare, split up into hundreds of sects each opposed to the remainder. No sect or faction is complete in itself, for each suffers from subdivision. Consider, for instance, the “Brethren” — they are generally described as “Plymouth Brethren” because of an early connection with a locality made famous in naval history by Sir Francis Drake. The “Brethren” maintain that the description “sect” should not be applied to them on the ground that each of their assemblies is founded on the model of the original assemblies described in the Acts of the Apostles. Although they are called “Brethren”, they do not dwell together in unity, for they are divided into “Open Brethren”, “Close Brethren”, “Newtonians” and others, the last-named taking the name from their founder, Benjamin Wills Newton, who seceded from the parent stock. There are other divisions in what is, perhaps, the smallest sect in Christendom, while the Christadelphians resemble them greatly in organization, practice and prophetic interpretation of the Old Testament. Whether called “Brethren” or “Christadelphians” they remind one of the story of the aged couple who could find agreement with no known sect and so they worshipped together at stated times on Sundays and on other days, but the great concern of the old man was his duality as to the orthodoxy of his partner.

Within the past twenty years there has been a movement towards amalgamation among the various Non-conforming bodies. The movement towards reunion with the Roman Church on the part of a large number of clerical and lay members of the Church of England is much older. In “Non-conformity, a kind of concordant or working agreement has, in many instances, been effected which, on paper, has brought about a slight reduction in the number of sects, but as new ones are constantly coming into the lists, it is doubtful whether there is any real reduction in the number. Moreover, the “union”, such as it is, has been effected without regard to unity. It implies merely that a certain number of bodies have combined to form an external organization, without reference to unity of belief and the doctrinal differences still remain.

Islam is unique in the fact that it is a religion without priests, so that it can never become “priest-ridden.” The term “Mohammadan priest” may occasionally be met with in the newspapers, but it is a contradiction in itself. Islam has no sacrifices in the sense of substitutionary atonement nor has it a body of clergy known as bishops, priests and deacons. The Imam, who leads the prayers in the mosque, is a member of the congregation as is the preacher of the Khutbah at the Friday prayers or at festivals. The Old Covenant, as it is called, did not teach the doctrine of substitutionary atonement. But under the New Covenant, we are told, one may suffer for the sins of the many, indeed, has taken upon his shoulders the sins of the whole world, the consequences of the evil wrought by mankind as the result of the disobedience of our first parents in the garden of Eden. In other words, the mind of God has been changed through this act, which has caused the immutable to become Mutable.

Sacrifices are demanded by Islam; they are described in the words of pre-Islamic prophet as the sacrifices of a broken spirit, of a broken and contrite heart. These are followed by another, a crowning sacrifice complete submission to the Will of Allah; and yet, after all, can an act or a series of acts, resulting in a happiness which the most gifted poet might find a difficulty in describing be counted a “sacrifice.” Men still own “that life to be the highest which is a conscious, voluntary, sacrifice,” wrote George Eliot in the poem to “Romola.”

Can the Eternal be defined in a creed, whether expressed in few or many words? Man is prone to attempt to measure the Immeasurable by his own yardstick. Man is a finite being: Allah is the Eternal, the Infinite, the All-Beneficent, the All-Merciful. We acknowledge Him and bow in adoration before Him in submission to His Will, because we cannot fail to discern Him in all His works, particularly in His providential care.

Travellers have rendered abundant testimony to one of the characteristics of Islam — the change, rather, the transformation which Islam has effected in the lives of those who have accepted its teachings and made Islam their rule of life, because Islam is a religion of daily life and conduct in this world. Travellers have borne testimony to the value of the dietary laws of the Faith and to the beneficial effect the observance of those laws has had upon the health and well-being of all who have observed them, particularly in enrolling men and women as members of the largest total abstinence society the world has ever known, a position it attained centuries before any Blue Ribbon or similar movement was known among Christians. They have also pointed out the ill-effects which have occasionally resulted, since men are but human, from a disregard of even temporary breaking of those laws. Nor is there to be found among Muslims any Society for the Regulation of Vice or for the Rescue of Fallen Women. Yet today in Islam, women are accorded full freedom. In the exercise of that freedom they are proving themselves to be, not the weaker vessels our forefathers (and sometimes our fathers) delighted to call them, for they have not only proved themselves to be the equal but often the superior vessel, even in athletic prowess and in intellectual and
scientific attainments. This development has been encouraged and stimulated in various ways in Muslim countries, particularly in a social manner by the gradual removal of Purdah restrictions and other customs.

Christianity has found it necessary to form Evidence Societies to prove to the world in general and to Christians in particular the truth of the tenets of the Christian doctrine. Islam has not found it necessary to form an auxiliary society. It has one already in the corporate body of Muslims. The evidence for Islam is to be found in the lives of Muslims, lives reorganized at the root of their activities, the change being made enduring by action. Mark Pattison wrote in "Tendencies of Religious Thought in England":

When an age is found occupied in proving its creed, this is but a token that the people have ceased to have a proper belief in it."

Islam is also distinguished by the fact that it welcomes its ranks men and women of all races and color. "So does Christianity," may be the retort. We know it does, but seldom to sit together at public functions or to worship together. It may give a welcome to a mixed assembly on the missionary platform, with an eye on the collecting box or plate, but that is strangely at variance with the practice outside. In America, there are churches and chapels set apart for the worship of those Christians whose skin is of a darker hue than that of the pale-faced officials. The example set by the Christian Church has been imitated by many secular societies and associations. I was at one time a member of a prominent London club composed entirely of literary men. It is still in existence. One evening I had as a guest at a club dinner a highly intellectual Indian, a graduate of the University of London as well as of a university in his homeland. He was the author or editor of several volumes dealing with Oriental religions, books constantly in demand at the present time and not infrequently referred to in the modern press, although it is now some years since he passed away. He was possessed of means and for years had borne the character of an upright man, known for his straightforward dealing. Before we parted that evening, he asked me if I would propose him for membership of the club. I had no hesitation in acceding to his request but, to my surprise, I was informed by the secretary that if I pressed the proposal it would undoubtedly be rejected by the committee, some of whom were clergymen (one was an Archdeacon) and my candidate would be rejected. I asked "why?" and was told the club was for white men only. I pointed out that there was no reference in the rules as to the color or absence of color in the skins of candidates and said that I regarded whiteness of character as of far greater importance than the absence of color in the skin. I also pointed out that my candidate was a British subject but the secretary was adamant. Islam knows nought of any racial or color bar but welcomes under its banner, the banner of Allah, Lord of All the worlds, all who live or wish to live in conformity with His will.

The individual who invented the statement that British wars are waged for the furtherance of Christian civilization must have had his tongue in his cheek when he gave it utterance. Is it for the furtherance of 'Christian civilization' that, when occasion demands, assistance is sought of Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists, Sikhs, Confucians, Communists and others of no religion at all? Can the Christian Church show a clean sheet when it has had the opportunity of choosing between peace and war? Is not the history of the Christian Church a history of wars and conflicts, as indeed was foretold by Jesus when he said that he came not to send peace on earth but a sword. That sword, according to the story told in the gospels, was first drawn in the garden of Gethsemane by one of his disciples and it has not yet been sheathed. Lord Morley once commented on the odd fact of Muslims coming to a Christian government to be taught the "noble art of human slaughter."

Islam is not, as it was once the fashion to describe it, "the religion of the sword." It is the religion of peace, joy and happiness. The greeting of Muslims when they meet is "Assalamu alaiakum" with the response "wa Alaikum as salam," or "peace be unto you!" with the response: "And to you, peace!" The falsity of the one-time charge is today demonstrated either by silence or by an open, frank and honorable withdrawal by Christian teachers who have given any attention to the matter. In a book published not long since by the Christian Student Movement, written by the Rev. Laurence E. Browne, Professor of Comparative Religion at the University of Manchester (one looks for fair treatment at the hands of Manchester professors) he says:

"Incidentally these well-established facts dispose of the idea so widely fostered in Christian writings that the Muslims, wherever they went, forced people to accept Islam at the point of the sword."

Professor David M. Kay also says in "The Semitic Religions":

"No bigger fiction-call it by its more accurate description, lie-was ever invented than to describe Islam as 'the religion of the sword' as though in its missionary work it had been propagated by the sword."

Suppression or oppression of thought, though characteristic of Christianity in all its branches, is unknown in Islam. This has been acknowledged more than once in his writings by Joseph McCabe, who describes himself as an atheist and materialist. There was a time when, in Austria, a
belief in the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary was held to be essential, when a man, though possessed of the necessary educational qualifications, was permitted to impart instruction in arithmetic and geometry, many other similar and ridiculous restrictions could be cited. But there is no necessity to labor a point on which evidence in abundance has been collected and published by Andrew D. White, a Christian, in his monumental work, "A History of the Warfare of Science with Theology." It must not be thought that such restrictions were the acts of any particular branch of the Christian Church. Within the memory of many within my own certainly that great Puritan leader, Charles Haddon Spurgeon, deprecated the use of a certain "Primer of English Literature" because its author, Stopford A. Brooke, one of the leading literary guides of the nineteenth century, was, in the opinion of the famous Baptist minister, unsound in his teaching of the doctrines of Christianity, that is to say, he differed in his exposition of them from his critic. The following is a picture of the culture of Islam in the seventh century, as related by Archdeacon Storrs in his book "Many Creeds, One Cross," published by the C.S.M. Press as this chapter is being written:

"For the first three centuries of its existence (A.D. 650 to 1000) the realm of Islam was the most civilized and progressive in the world. Cairo, Alexandria, Damascus, Bagdad, Cordova, Toledo, became centers of learning, luxury and art. The conquerors had the saving grace to learn from the conquered and though they themselves contributed little more than the Arabic language, yet through the medium of Coptic, Syrian, Greek, Persian and Spanish subjects, through Jewish and Christian scholars and artists, they became the patrons and sponsors of great university cities. The rude austerity of the desert had been left behind and much, too, of the deep religious zeal; but the world owed a great deal to the Saracens for keeping the torch of science and philosophy alight in its dark ages. Aristotle, Euclid, Ptolemy were translated into Arabic and thence into Latin and learning and literature were not suffered to die, until the Renaissance made once again the original fountainheads of thought accessible to the scholars of Europe in their own tongue."

Persecution has not been confined to the Roman Church. It has been equally as rife, though in a different and, sometimes, more cruel form among Nonconformists as in earlier days by the Church which instituted the Inquisition. "The medieval Christian," says Dr. Maude Royden, in "The Problem of Palestine" (p. 27), "could not easily be surpassed in the arts of persecution." It is not unknown even among Unitarians and among those who call themselves Liberal Christians. Charles Voysey proved this when he offered his services on the foundation of the Robert Ellesmere Settlement (now the Mary Ward Settlement) in Tavistock Place and evidence is also given in the "Life of Theodore Parker" as well as in the "Life of H.W. Crosskey." It has been recorded that, upon one occasion, C.H. Spurgeon said, in a public lecture, that all religious sects had indulged in persecution with the exception of the Baptists, a statement which was received with applause. When this had died down, he proceeded: "Why did you not let me finish my sentence? I was going to add: 'And we have never had the power.'"

Professor J.B. Bury in his "History of Freedom of Thought" (pp. 63-64) points out that:

"Doctrines and implications in Christianity formed a solid rampart against the advance of knowledge, blocked the paths of science in the Middle Ages and obstructed its progress till the latter half of the nineteenth century. In every important field of scientific research, the ground is occupied by false views, which the Church declared to be true on the infallible authority of the Bible. The Jewish account of the Creation and the Fall of Man, inextricably bound up with the theory of Redemption, excluded from free inquiry, geology, zoology and anthropology."

On pages 77-78 on the same work he instances in particular the intolerance of Luther and Calvin and on page 97 he relates an instance of Protestant intolerance which many would not hesitate to describe as incredible. Briefly it was as follows: Lord Baltimore (a Roman Catholic) Governor of Maryland, was the means by which an Act of Toleration was passed in 1649:

"The tolerance of Maryland attracted so many Protestant settlers from Virginia that the Protestants became a majority and, as soon as they won political preponderance, they (1654) introduced an Act excluding Papists and Prelatists from toleration. The rule of Baltimore was restored after 1660 and the old religious freedom was revived, but with the accession of William III, the Protestants again came into power and the toleration which the Catholics had instituted in Maryland came to an end."

Christians are supposed to have joy and gladness in their bones and loudly they sing; "Be glad in the Lord and rejoice," but they sing it in such a mournful manner that the hymn bears all the features of a funeral dirge. Where there is peace there is gladness but the Christian when he cries "Peace" admits, in the same breath, that "There is no peace."

The longest and most strenuous struggle in which Christianity

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The sixth distinction: the duty of a prophet is that he should communicate all his revelation to men.

The sixth distinctive feature between the revelation of a prophet and that of a non-prophet is this, that the revelation of a messenger, by virtue of it being sent for the guidance of men, and because it is specially protected and it is at that time to be held above all the previous revelations, and because it has been sent from God for a special purpose Who has made its acceptance most essential, therefore, it is obligatory on the messenger also that he should convey and pronounce to mankind every word of it, which has been revealed to him. The Qur'an is explicit on this point when it says:

"O Messenger, deliver that which has been revealed to thee from thy Lord, and if thou dost not, thou hast not delivered His message." (The Qur'an, 5 al-Ma'idah:67) Similarly, it has been generally stated about the messengers:

"But have the messengers any duty except the plain delivery of the message? And certainly We raised in every nation a messenger:"

(Ibid., 16 al-Nahl:35) Thus, as the Divine messages of the messengers have certain characteristics, similarly, the communication of those messengers has a certain peculiarity which is that every word of these messages should be conveyed to the people. This peculiar belongs to messengers because the revelation which is sent to them—zally maluwwa (revelation meant to be recited)—is meant for the guidance of the people and it also contains commands and prohibitions. It is, however, the first duty of a messenger to communicate them to the people. But the position of the revelation of a disciple is different. In matters of guidance, commands and prohibitions and in the other details of shar'ah he totally stands in need of the revelation of his master prophet, and his revelation generally consists of mubahsharat (good news) or prophecies, and it is not obligatory upon him to communicate all his prophecies to others. Therefore, he is not commanded to deliver every word of his revelation to the people. So this is the status of the revelation of the followers of the Prophet Muhammad. Because this revelation according to the Hadith: "I am vajha min al-mubahsharat i ill al-mubahsharat, i.e., There is nothing left of prophethood except good news (mubahsharat), none from among this ummah is obliged to communicate every inspiration of his to others. Those who are divinely appointed for a special purpose are commanded to announce some of their inspirations (ilhamat). It is not because a certain ilham is a special kind of revelation but because something needs an announcement, or the communication of some of these inspirations becomes essential for the manifestation of a sign which in its turn becomes the source of strength to the religion (of Islam). The main object of prophecies is to aid the Divine religion. Therefore, only for the support of religion, or with a view to increasing the faith of the believers, or to silence the deminers can they serve the purpose of revelation and for this object they can be published as well. Otherwise, every inspiration (ilham) which a follower receives need not be communicated to the world.

The seventh distinction: the revelation of a prophet can alter or abrogate the previous shar'ah.

The seventh distinction between the revelation of a prophet and that of a non-prophet is that the revelation of a prophet can alter, add, or alter something to the previous shar'ah, but the revelation of a non-prophet—whether of a follower does not enjoy this status. For instance, God gave Moses a Law (shar'ah) which contained details about mutual dealings, and particularly about worship. After Moses many prophets were raised in this nation. Although the shar'ah remained the same which was given to Moses, those prophets were also the direct recipients of the Divine grace like Moses. In other words, their relation with Moses was not the relation of master and servant but of law-giver prophet and his successors, or the one who laid the foundation of a building and those who completed it. The foundation of this building was laid down by Moses, but it was not destined that he should complete it. So much so that during his life his people could not get the mastery of the sacred land about which a Divine promise was given to them. Because this nation had a great relation to the last prophet, Muhammad (peace and blessings of God be upon him!), therefore God willed it like this that the nation of Muhammad should also be especially educated. For such an education (tarbiyat), many prophets were sent after Moses: We sent Our Messengers one after another. (The Qur'an, 23 al-Mu'minun:44) says the Qur'an, the names of some of them have been mentioned therein. These prophets had been completing the building which was started by Moses till the chain of messengership was cut off in this nation by the appearance of Jesus Christ. As the Torah, the shar'ah of Moses, was but endemnic in its scope and teaching, besides its being meant for a particular nation (mukhtas al-qaum) it was limited to a particular age (mukhtas al-zaman). Therefore these prophets also communicated to their nation new teachings from God according to the new conditions. Whereas on one hand their task was the purification of the Israelites, on the other they also kept on making some changes in the commands of shar'ah under Divine instructions. A clear evidence of this change and alteration is found at the time of Jesus Christ. The Qur'an has clearly witnessed this fact in the words: "I allow you part of that which was forbidden to you." (The Qur'an, 3 al-Imran:49) The Gospel, in whatever condition it is at present, explains very well this verse of the Qur'an where Jesus Christ openly declares: Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth, but I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whatsoever shall smite thee on
And unlike the Torah, vengeance in every case is not necessary. And then this teaching has removed the two defects of the teachings of the Gospel as well. Firstly, the exercise of forgiveness is not recommended in every case, as has been done in the Gospel that “whoever shall smite thee on the right cheek turn to him the other also”. This is quite impracticable and even a staunch follower of Christianity cannot make it a rule of his life. Secondly, the exercise of forgiveness has been restricted with amendment, that is, one should only resort to forgiveness when it will mend the matter and be of some good to the wrongdoer. Now this perfect conception of justice is neither found in the Torah nor in the Gospel. The Torah contained a part of it which was imperfect because punishment was made compulsory and the Gospel contained another part which was also defective because their forgiveness was made essential and no scope was left for punishment. The real cause of all this was that the Israelites were not yet capable that Moses or Jesus Christ or the prophets who passed in between could give them complete and perfect teaching. And if it was, however, given to them it could not have helped them in any way. It was, however, expedient that they should have at one time the Mosaic law of retaliation, but when they went to the other extreme in the application of this law then another aspect of the teaching was needed. This point can well be established by Jesus Christ’s own words when he says: I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of Truth (i.e., Ahmad or the Paraclete) is come he will guide you into all truth (St. John, 16:12-13). In short, this one instance is enough to prove that in the shar’iah of Moses some matters needed alteration or modification even before the shar’iah of Muhammad came into operation. This work was done by those prophets who came after Moses. Thus, there is no doubt that the revelation of a prophet can alter and abrogate the shar’iah, but the revelation of a follower cannot do so. The follower does not come to perfect the religion, but only for its revival, and he cannot subtract from it or add anything to it.

The testimony of the Qur’an that commands may be abridged or modified

The Qur’an has expressed this idea in a very subtle way. This is, in fact, such a pure and beautiful book that the more a person reflects and contemplates over it the more he becomes its admirer and his heart is involuntarily allured by it. The Qur’an does not mention the abrogation of shar’iah, because actually the whole shar’iah(law) is never completely abrogated. After all, the first prophet who was raised by God was also given the command that God was One and He alone deserved to be worshipped and that there was no associate with him. The prophet who was sent last of all was also given the same message. Therefore, the shar’iah of even the first prophet had been fundamentally giving the same teaching, it is not even correct to think that a prophet could abrogate the all-in-all teaching of another prophet. It is for this reason that the Qur’an has not mentioned about the abrogation of shar’ihs, but has rather stated:

“Whatever message(or verse) We abrogate or cause to be forgotten We bring one better than it or like it” (The Qur’an, 2 al-Baqarah:106)

This signifies that the verses of God which are revealed to the prophets have sometimes to be abrogated and sometimes people forget them. In both these cases God sends down other verses. That is His general practice. This does not specially refer to the Qur’an, but it has been stated that God has been doing so from the beginning.

Thus, after the words which follow the above verse, Knowest thou that God is Possessor of power over all things? (Qur’an, 2 al-Baqarah:107), it has been stated, Knowest thou not that God's is the kingdom of the heavens and the earth? (Detailed discussion on the subject of abrogation in the Qur’an will be found in Muhammad 'Ali’s English translation of the Qur’an (1951 ed.), p. 47, under the verse 2:106; and his book The Religion of Islam, pp. 33-44) As a king finds it necessary to introduce changes from time to time for the betterment of his
Evidently, the real object of the raising of a prophet is that he should show men the way to guidance which would help them in their self-purification and spiritual upliftment, so that they may attain to the perfection for which they have been created. Now, if a prophet does not show the way of guidance, the real object of his coming becomes void. In other words, his being raised as a prophet of God has no meaning at all. If it is said that he helps in the self-purification of his people, either by leading them in the light of some previously revealed guidance or by making them follow in the footsteps of a previous prophet, then this work is that of a mujaddid (renovator) or a muhaddath (one spoken to by God) who is a follower. This means that anyone who teaches the people not to obey himself but another prophet and to tread in the prophet’s steps and to make the prophet their guide and pattern and to get from the prophet their spiritual blessings, is not a master but a servant. He himself has a master to whom belongs all his miracles (karamat) and supernatural signs. He calls men to the same fountain which has quenched his own thirst. Those who thirst let them also go to this fountain of life. He calls men to the same source of light which has enlightened him. Those who grope in the darkness, let them go to the light. But prophets are different people. They are themselves the source of light and guidance for men. They receive guidance from God and teach men accordingly. I have already discussed this point in the first chapter in the Divine Scheme of things the object of the sending of prophets was to bring guidance for men, and it has also been mentioned in the Qur’an that each and every prophet was the bearer of guidance (hidayah) and that it was a prerequisite of his office that he should make the previous guidance perfect. This might have become indispensable for various reasons. Perhaps that guidance was unable to help any more a nation to attain to perfection, or some defect might have crept into it or it might have been lost or forgotten, or the needs and circumstances of the nation might have changed, so that it had to be abrogated, altered or modified; but the raising of a new prophet meant that something was out of order in the previous shari’ah.

About other prophets it is an acknowledged fact, but it is sometimes said that the Israelite prophets who came after Moses did not bring a new guidance. The Qur’an, however, rejects this view. Let us consider the case of the Torah and the Evangel. If it is proved that the Evangel brought new teaching, new guidance and new light, then the position of all the prophets coming after Moses becomes clear. At one place in the Qur’an it has been mentioned:

“And He will teach him the Book and the Wisdom and the Torah and the Gospel,” (The Qur’an, 3:1 numeration:47) and at another place in the chapter al-Ma’idah (The Food), where it has been first stated about the Torah that:

“Surely We revealed the Torah, having guidance and light,” (The Qur’an, 5:1 al-Ma’idah:44)

and then a mention has been made about the Gospel:

“And We gave him the Gospel, containing guidance and light and verifying that which was before it, and a guidance and an admonition for the dutiful.”(Ibid., 5:1 al-Ma’idah:46)

Thus, when in spite of the existence of the Torah a mention has been made of another prophet who brought guidance and light, the case of other prophets must be judged in view of this fact, and it must be admitted that all the prophets who came after Moses brought guidance and light and were instrumental in perfecting the guidance.

The ninth distinction: the prophetic revelation is recited in prayers

Another peculiarity of the prophetic revelation not shared by any other revelation is that it is recited in the prayers. In fact, this revelation possesses such effect that its mere recitation even helps in the purification of self. Therefore, the first task of a messenger is that: Y’alih alahim ayathi, i.e., he recites to them the messages of God, and at some places after this a mention has been made of
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When a Muslim believes in Muhammad, the seal of the prophets, he, in fact, comes to believe in all the messengers. The names of some of the messengers have been clearly mentioned in the Qur’an. Therefore, their denial takes a person outside the fold of Islam, and as to the names which have not been mentioned, a general faith in them is enough. We believe in all the messengers, wherever they might have been raised, in India, Iran, China or Japan. But besides the messengers, the other appointed ones of God, such as mujaddids, faith in them is not essential to become a Muslim. Their denial is the denial of only a part (branch), but the denial of a prophet or messenger is the denial of a fundamental, the denial of the root itself. Therefore, the denial of a part does not necessitate the denial of the whole.

The Qur’an regards the denial of prophets even appearing after Moses as kafir, as has been mentioned:

(We believe 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.’ (The Qur’an, 2 al-Baqarah:136)

Thus, the truth is that a prophet must necessarily bring a new command. Otherwise, what is the significance of a prophet being raised if he has not brought something which has to be communicated to people? The making of prophecies alone is not the object of prophethood. On this point a detailed discussion will be made afterwards. Here I only want to show the difference between waly-i-nubuwwat and waly-i-wilayat, that by the denial of the former one becomes a kafir and by the denial of the other one does not become a kafir though his is liable to account for it and, if he increases in his enmity, a time may come when it may cause destruction to his faith. The same has been the belief of Muslim divines. Thus, Sayyid ‘Abd al-Qadir al-Jilani makes the same distinction between prophethood and wilayah (sainthood) in one of his books:

“And the difference between nubuwwah (prophethood) and wilayah (sainthood) is this, that prophethood is the communication of the Most High God and with it comes revelation with Spirit of God (i.e., Gabriel). This is that, the acceptance of which is necessary, and he who rejects it is a kafir because he rejects the communication of God. And sainthood is this, that the Most High God supports him with inspiration (ilham) which is communicated to him. Thus kalam is for the prophets and hadith is for the saints (awliya’). He who rejects the kalam is a kafir, because he rejects the kalam of God and His revelation. And he who rejects the hadith does not become a kafir but unlucky (ka’idh) and that becomes heavy on him and his heart is flabbergasted because he rejects that thing from God which had brought the love of the Most High God.” (Ghaniyyah al-Talibin)
ISLAM OR CHRISTIANITY

By Mirza Masum Beg

During a friendly discussion on some of the doctrines of the Christian faith, a minister of the Church remarked, in full confidence that either Islam was wrong and Christianity was right, or Islam was right and Christianity was wrong; both could not be right. And he had to be told that all religions, since they came from the same Divine source, were right and true originally and it was later on that people, in order to serve their own mean motives, intermixed their own ideas into the sacred teaching and corrupted it. This hard fact has now been borne out palpably by modern research and investigation.

Religion of Jesus

The Teacher of Galilee brought a simple, monotheistic message for the guidance of his people, the Israelites. When one of the scribes came and asked him, which is the first commandment of all? Jesus, as reported in the Gospel according to St. Mark (12:29), replied: “The first of all the commandment is, Hear, O Israel, The Lord our God is one Lord, and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength; this is the first commandment.”

It was exactly an echo of what Moses and the prophets, who came after him, had said long before. Turn over Deuteronomy, the fifth Book of Moses, Chapter 6, and read verses 4 and 5: “Hear, O Israel, The Lord our God is one Lord; and thou shalt love thy God with all thine heart and with all thy soul, and with all thy might, and these words which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart.”

The Prophet of Arabia taught the same sublime lesson of the Unity of Godhead in the most perfect form: “Say, He, God is One. God is He on Whom all depend. He begets not, nor is He begotten; and none is like unto Him.”

All religions, as claimed by the Holy Qur’-an, were pure and right at the time of their revelation; it was, as time passed on, that people corrupted and contaminated them. And Christianity was no exception to this general rule. Modern research has confirmed this hard fact in all its nakedness; and Christian scholars of learning and repute have confessed it with the intrepidity which should accompany a diligent and critical enquiry into facts. We shall reproduce the finding of one such scholar of the Christian faith, Rev. Tucker, who writes in his book “The History of the Christians in the Light of Modern Knowledge,” page 320:

“Thus Gospels were produced which clearly reflected the conception of the practical needs of the community for which they were written. In them the traditional material was used, but there was no hesitation in altering it, or making additions to it, or in leaving out what did not suit the writer’s purpose. An excellent example of such amended Gospel is found in the Gospel of Marcion which, apart from minor changes, was the narrative of Luke, with everything omitted that revealed the true humanity of our Lord and his connection with the religion of the Old Testament.”

Finding of Research Scholars

The present-day Christianity, it is no gainsaying the fact, cannot hang together with Islam; both are diametrically opposed to each other. That Jesus was the heavenly Son of God who did not belong to earthly humanity, who assumed human form through a virgin in order to propitiate for the sins of humanity by his own blood on the Cross, who rose from the dead and ascended to Heaven to take his seat on the right hand of the Most High God as the Lord of his own people, and who will come again to this earth to judge the world- this teaching, we confess, is wholly repugnant and irreconcilable to Islam and we concur with the Reverend Minister of the Church that either this teaching is right and Islam is wrong or Islam is right and this teaching is wrong; both cannot be in the same camp. But this queer and quixotic creed, it should be clearly understood, has nothing to do with the simple, monotheistic religion preached and practiced by Jesus Christ. This fantastic faith, it has been clearly established by modern research, is the fanciful invention of the fertile brain of St. Paul. Dr. Arnold Meyer, Professor of Theology of Zurich University who instituted a sifting enquiry into the Church dogmas mentioned above, writes on page 122 of his book, Jesus or Paul: ‘If this is Christianity, then such Christianity was founded by St. Paul and not by our Lord.’ This free and impartial finding of Dr. Meyer has, furthermore, been approved and upheld by the research of another savant of the Christian faith, Dr. Johannes Weiss of Heidelberg University who writes on page 130 of his book, Paul and Jesus: The faith in Christ as held by Paul was something new in comparison with the preaching of Jesus; it
was a new type of religion.”

Quranic Disclosure

This grim fact that the Gospels contain a teaching which was absolutely unknown to Jesus, has been discovered in the present age through a long and assiduous investigation. But it may be stated for the information of the Church Minister that it was disclosed 1400 years ago when it was a sealed secret and no one even doubted the genuineness of the Bible, by the Ummi Prophet who was perfectly unlettered and ignorant of the teachings of other religions:

“Do you (the Prophet) then hope that they (the Jews and the Christians) would believe in you, and a party from among them indeed used to hear the word of God, then altered it after they had understood it, and they know this?... Woe, then, to those who write the book with their hands and then say, this is from God!” (Qur’an 2:75,79)

The world has taken fourteen centuries to find out and discover this hidden truth which the Holy Prophet Muhammad had divulged and disclosed at a time when the authenticity and authority of the Bible was not even called into question. The Prophet, every fair-minded and impartial critic of Islam will agree, spoke under inspiration from the Most High God when he proclaimed this truth.

The Great Law

The Holy Qur’an has, in a very beautiful way, enunciated the great Law of Life: “God sends down water from above, and thereby gives life to the earth after its death”(16:65). What is true in the physical world is even more true on the spiritual plane. The water from heaven is the Divine Revelation, the death of the earth is its corruption, and the giving of life signifies its spiritual awakening. Water from heaven, we observe, brings life to the whole of nature; but when it loses its vitality in consequence of its earthly admixture, a fresh supply of it comes from above to meet the situation. When Judaism founded by Moses, lost its purity, Jesus was raised to rectify and reform it; and when the teaching of Jesus was corrupted with human interpolation, the elixir of life came from above in the form of a fresh Divine Revelation incorporated in the pages of the Holy Qur’an. It contains guidance with comprehensive arguments which afford a criterion for separating truth from falsehood. “We have revealed to thee the Book,” says the Most High God addressing the Holy Prophet Muhammad, “that thou mayest make clear to them that wherein they differ.”

The Most High God has taken it upon Himself to protect the teaching of the Holy Qur’an against change and alteration. “It is a glorious Qur’an in a guarded tablet”, “Surely We have revealed the Reminder, and surely We are its Guardian.” And it is a standing miracle of the Holy Qur’an that the purity of its text has been guarded, under a Providential plan, against every kind of corruption and contamination, so that even an adverse critic of Islam, Sir William Muir, has had to admit that “there is probably in the world no other book which has remained a century and a half uncorrupted.” Yet another scholar of the Christian faith, Bosworth-Smith, has even more lucid statement to make on the purity of the Qur’anic text. Writes he on page 18 of his book, Muhammad and Mohammedanism: “In the Qur’an we have beyond all reasonable doubt the exact words of Muhammad without subtraction and without addition.”

Islam vs. Pauline Creed

Christianity, as practiced and propounded by the Church, is another name for the creed founded by St. Paul. Islam and this creed, we agree with our Christian friend, cannot both be true. They are, as a matter of fact, poles apart from each other. Islam denounces and disclaims this creed in the most vehement terms. A few verses of the Holy Qur’an:

(1) “The Messiah, son of Mary, is but an apostle; apostles before him have indeed passed away, and his mother was a truthful woman, they both used to eat food.”

(2) “Of followers of the Book! do not exceed the limit of your religion, and do not speak lies against God, but speak the truth; the Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary, is only an apostle of God and His word which He communicated to Mary and an inspiration from Him. Believe, therefore, in God and His apostle and say not Three. Desist, it is better for you. God is only One; far be it from His glory that He should have a son, whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth is His and God is Sufficient Protector.”

(3) “Certainly they disbelieve who say: Surely God is the third (person) of the Three; and there is no God but One God; and if they desist not from what they say, a painful chastisement shall befall them among whom they disbelieve... The Messiah, Son of Mary, is naught but an apostle.”

It is the Pauline Creed, as discussed at some length above, that is going by and passing under the name of Christianity; and Islam, we said, denounces such a creed uncompromisingly. The deleterious dogmas, as professed by the Church, for instance, a belief in the Son-God who is the third person in the Holy Trinity, the Immaculate conception, the crucifixion and thereby the Atonement of the sins of humanity, the Ascension and the Return to this earth, have now been dashed to the ground, by modern research and investigation, as Pagan principles wherewith the true teaching of Jesus has not even the remotest connection. “Paul,” observes Dr. Arnold Meyer, “raised Jesus from the position of a Jewish Messiah to that of the Divine Redeemer of the Gentiles and of the whole world.”
Divine Promise to Abraham

The Most High God has promised to Abraham, as recorded in the Old Testament, Genesis (12:2), "I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing." The Holy Qur'an also corroborates and confirms it in clear, concise terms, saying, "We granted him (Abraham) Isaac and Jacob and ordained prophethood and the Book among his seed" (29:27); "And We have given to Abraham's children the Book and Wisdom, and We have given him a great Kingdom." (4:54). The Patriarch was blessed with two sons, Ishmael and Isaac. From the Children of Isaac sprang up the twelve tribes of the Jews commonly called the "Bani Israel" (the Israelites); the Children of Ishmael likewise, multiplied and became a great nation called "Bani Ishmael." Thus the Bani Israel and the Bani Ishmael were brothers in relation to each other.

Curse of the Jesus

In accordance with His promise, the Most High God blessed, in the first instance, the Children of Israel with the great gift of prophethood, and raised among them, in long succession, a large number of prophets for their good and guidance. But the incredulous Israelites treated them with cruelty and affliction, and even put some of them to death, as the Bible would have us believe. The time at last came after 1400 years of persistent persecution of the Divine Messengers, that these ungrateful and incorrigible people should be chastened and chastised. But the Most Merciful God is slow to punish. To give them the last warning that they might recoil from their evil course and reform, He sent Jesus the Christ, son of Mary. Jesus tried his best to wean them from their transgression; but the Jews would not listen to him; and they conspired, most wickedly, to take his life upon the cursed Cross. So, Jesus flung upon them the curse of the Most High God, saying: "The Kingdom of God shall be taken away from you and given to a nation, bringing forth the fruit thereof." (Matt. 21:48). Prophets before Jesus, too, had cursed the children of Israel for their perversion and persecution of the Apostles of God. Turn over Malachi, Chapter 3, verses 7 and 9, and read:

"Ye, sons of Jacob! Even from the days of your fathers, ye are gone away from My ordinance and have not kept them...ye are cursed with a curse."

So it happened, Jesus was the last prophet who appeared among the Children of Israel; and after him, the Divine gift of prophecy, the Kingdom of God, was taken away from them, smiting them down with the curse of perpetual barrenness and spiritual lifelessness.

Birth of Jesus

Jesus was born at Bethlehem, a village seven miles from the town of Nazareth in the province of Galilee (Palestine). There was yet another Bethlehem farther south, in the province of Judea, near Jerusalem, the city of the ancient King David. This Bethlehem, in order to distinguish it from the Bethlehem of Nazareth, is called Bethlehem-Judea. Jesus was born at Bethlehem-Judea, as stated by St. Matthew in his Gospel (2:1). We read in the Encyclopaedia Biblica (col. 3361):

"The discrepancies of the evangelists compel us to make some hypothesis: Jesus was born in Nazareth and not in Bethlehem-Judah; and the transmitters make mistake; some said Bethlehem and some said Nazareth."

Matthew had made this misstatement deliberately, for he was out to foist on the person of Jesus any and every prophecy that he came across in the ancient scriptures pertaining to the appearance of the Messiah. When this hard fact of history was adduced before the Reverend Minister of the Church, he remarked rather despairingly that the opinion of the Encyclopaedia Biblica was not binding on him; and he had to be told that the compilers of this book were the most accredited scholars of the Christian faith. Moreover, Jesus has been described in the Gospels as Jesus of Nazareth; Jesus of Galilee; Jesus, Prophet of Nazareth of Galilee; but never as Jesus of Bethlehem-Judah. We read in the Gospel according to St. John that the opponents of Jesus hurled an objection strongly in his face that the Messiah was to be born in Bethlehem-Judah, the city of David, but he came from Galilee:

"But some said, shall Christ come out of Galilee? Hath not the scripture said, That Christ cometh of the seed of David, and out of the town of Bethlehem, where David was? (John 7:41,42).

"Can there any good come out of Nazareth? (John 1:40).

"Out of Galilee ariseth no prophet" (John 7:52).

But, strange enough, Jesus never answered them saying that he was born in Bethlehem-Judah, the city of David, as St. Matthew would have us believe. If Jesus had actually been born at Bethlehem-Judah, he would have straightway asserted this fact to silence the carping tongue of his opponents. But Jesus evaded the pertinent objection with the remark: "A prophet is not without honor save in his own country and his own house." Born in ordinary natural way

Jesus was born, at Nazareth, of Mary and Joseph in the ordinary natural way. The evidence of the mother herself, as well as the evidence of the whole Jewish nation, establishes this fact.
beyond the least shadow of doubt. Jesus, once, got separated from his parents at Jerusalem where they had gone to attend the feasts of the “Passover.” They found him after three days in the temple discussing religious problems with the doctors:

“And when they saw him, they were amazed; and his mother said unto him, Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? behold thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing” (Luke 2: 48).

Philip findeth Nathaneal, and saith unto him, We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, “the son of Joseph” (John 1:45).

And they said, Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? His is it then that he saith, I came down from heaven? (John 6:41).

“Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James and Josce, and of Judah and Simon? And are not his sisters here with us? (Mark 6:3).

That Jesus was acknowledged as the son of Joseph in the physical sense cannot be denied. His opponents told on his face contemptuously that he was the son of a carpenter, but Jesus did not even repudiate their statement, but born of a virgin without the agency of a human father. The only answer that Jesus could make to the opponents’ objection, was: “A prophet is not without honor, but in his own country, and among his own kin, and in his own house.” In the Gospels, Jesus has been spoken of as “the Son of Man” as many as four-score times. And let us see what Christian scholars of light and learning have to say in this connection. In his book, “History of the Apostolic Church,” writes Hastings on p. 318:

“The Virgin-born disappears from the source altogether.”

From the Seed David

Jesus was every inch a human being, born of human parents in the ordinary natural way. The Gospels give his genealogy to show that he was from the line of David. Even Paul, with all his hyperbolic statements, had to admit in his Epistle to the Romans (1:3): “Our Lord which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh”; and it is stated in the Acts of the Apostles that “God had sworn with an oath to him (David) that of the fruit of his loins according to the flesh, he would raise Christ to sit on his throne” (2:30). Thus, Jesus was born from the seed of David according to the flesh. But the ministers of the church hurled a huge joke on the world when they say that Jesus was born of immaculate conception without the agency of a human father. Writes Paulus in his “Commentary on Matthew”:

“For we all await the Christ who will be a man among men...the Messiah will be descended from the seed of David; he will not be born of a virgin, for it was God’s promise to the ancient King that he who is to come, would issue from his seed. Are we to think that God was merely mocking him.”

These two statements, born from the seed of David, the fruit of his loins according to the flesh on the one hand, and Divine Sonship without agency of human seed on the other, are evidently in contradiction to each other; and when this hard fact was brought to the notice of the Reverend Minister of the Church, he confessed fair-mindedly, it may be stated to his credit that the genealogy had been drawn up in fulfilment of the scriptural prophecy that the Messiah would come from the line of David. He felt, of course, a little abashed when we remarked that the genealogy then, had to be cooked up in order to foist an old prophecy on the person of Jesus,
otherwise the heavenly Son of God who did not belong to the earthly humanity, had nothing to do with it.

**In a Metaphorical Sense**

Jesus, the fact cannot be gainsaid, did use the appellation, ‘Son of God’ for himself. But he used it merely in a metaphorical sense, much in the same way as other outstanding personages, for instance the prophets and the earthly kings, believed to be God’s appointed, used to be called in the time of Jesus. We read in the Gospels:

>“Then the Jews took up stones again to stone him. Jesus answered them. Many good works had I shewed you from my Father; of which of those works do ye stone me? The Jews answered him, saying, For a good work we stone thee not but, for blasphemy; and because that thou being a man, makest thyself God. Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods? If he called them gods, unto whom the Word of God came, and the scripture cannot be broken; say ye of him whom the Father hath sanctified and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God?” (John 10:31-36)

Jesus was evidently referring to the Book of Psalms(82:6) in the Old Testament which stated: “I have said, Ye are gods, and all of you are children of the Most High.” In Exodus, the Second Book of Moses(22:28), even judges, as God’s representatives, had been called “gods”; and Jesus, making a reference to these scriptural statements, argued with his opponents that if judges could be called “gods”, how could he be accused of blasphemy if he said in the same metaphorical sense that he was a son of God.

The Gospels have recorded yet another event of great historical importance which dispels all doubt pertaining to the use of the term ‘son of God.’ Jesus was produced before the Sanhedrin to be tried under the charge of blasphemy: “Then said they all, Art thou then the Son of God? And he said unto them, Ye say that I am” (Luke 22:70). Matthew puts it as, “Thou hast said”. Peaks, a well-known commentator of the Bible, writes honestly while commenting on this verse: “We should perhaps take the ambiguous reply, “Thou hast said, as a refusal.” Jesus meant to say in reply to the question, “Ye say that I am the Son of God, but I do not say so.” The Jews could not prove their allegation against Jesus, and the charge of blasphemy that he claimed Divine Sonship for himself fell to the ground. But they were determined to lay their hands upon him. Another dangerous charge of sedition against the Roman Rule was raked up against Jesus, and he was haled before Pilate, the Governor, to stand his trial. Turn over Luke (23:3,4), and read: “Pilate asked him, saying, Art thou the King of the Jews? And he answered him and said, Thou sayst it,” meaning thereby, as explained in the foregoing lines, “Thou sayst it, but I do not say so.” Here also Jesus pleaded not-guilty to the charge. “Then said Pilate to the chief priests and to the people, I find no fault in this man.” It is, thus, abundantly clear that Jesus used the appellation ‘Son of God’ for himself in a wide metaphorical sense and not in the literal, physical sense as the Teachers of the Church would have us believe.

**An Apostle of God**

All these insurmountable difficulties, it was pointed out to the Church dignitary, stare us in the face for the evident reason that a wrong, untenable position has been imposed upon Jesus. Call him a prophet of God, and all the abstruse obstacles vanish away like a column of smoke in thin air. That Jesus was a true and righteous prophet of God who had been raised for the guidance of the Israelite people, is also amply borne out even by the present mutilated edition of the Bible. When the Jews were offended, we read in Matthew (13:57), by his teaching, “Jesus said unto them, A prophet is not without honor, save in his own country, and in his own house.” A few more verses will further clarify this point that Jesus claimed to be a prophet of God, an apostle from On High and nothing beyond it:

1. “I can of mine ownself do nothing: as I hear, I judge; and my judgement is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father ‘which hath sent me.” (John 5:30)

2. “For I came down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of Him that sent me.” (John 6:38)

3. “Then cried Jesus in the temple as he taught, saying, Ye both know me, and ye know whence I am; and I am not come of myself: but He that sent me is true, Whom ye know not. But I know Him; for I am from Him, and He hath sent me. Then said Jesus into them, yet a little while am I with you, and then I go unto Him that sent me.” (John 7:28,29,33)

A messenger, or one who is sent forth to execute an errand is called “an apostle” in the language of religion.

**Nation’s Evidence**

People who listened to Jesus also took him to be a prophet:

1. “And when he came into Jerusalem, all the city was moved, saying, Who is this? And the multitude said, This is Jesus the Prophet of Nazareth of Galilee....And when the chief priests and Pharisees had heard his parables they perceived that he spoke of them. But when they sought to lay hands on him, they feared the multitude, because they took him for a prophet.” (Matt. 21:10,11,45,46)
(2) "When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the son of man am? And they said, Some say thou art John the Baptist some, Elias, and others Jeremias, or one of the Prophets." (Matt. 16:13)

One, Simon Peter, however is reported to have said, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." But Jesus reproved and reprehended him, "And he straightly charged them and commanded them to tell no man that thing" (Luke 9:21). Immediately after the event of Crucifixion, Cleopas and another disciples of Jesus were going to a village called Emmaus, talking together, of what had happened. Jesus also joined them on the way. But they recognized him not; "their eyes were holden." Jesus enquired of them:

"What manner of communications are these that ye have one to another, as ye walk, are sad? And the one of them whose name was Cleopas answering said unto him, Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem and hast not known the things which are come to pass there in these days? And he said unto them, What thing? And they said unto him, concerning Jesus of Nazareth which was a prophet, mighty in deed and word before God and all the people." (Luke 24:17-19)

Jesus was human to the bone of his back. He had not only a human body, but also a human soul and human wit and intellect. He was, all the same, a prophet who had been raised for the guidance of the Children of Israel; and to be a Messenger of the Most High God, the Creator of the heavens and the earth, is, of a truth, the most exalted position that could be conferred on man. We shall indeed be guilty of a libel against Prophet Jesus if we should divest him of this high honor, and worship and adore him as a Pagan god. We respect Jesus with all the honor and respect due to a prophet of God.

**Jesus' Mission**

From a study of the Gospels it is obviously clear that Jesus had a threefold mission to accomplish and perform: firstly, to fulfil the Law of Moses; secondly, to seek and save the Lost Tribes of Israel and thirdly, to announce the advent of the Prophet of Arabia. The Holy Qur'an, too, outlines this threefold mission of Jesus in one short and sweet verse (61:6):

"And when Jesus, son of Mary, said: O children of Israel, surely I am the Messenger of God, verifying that which is before me of the Torah, and giving the good news of a Messenger who will come after me, his name being Ahmad."

**I. Revival of the Law of Moses**

Jesus was not the bearer of a new law, but he was to follow and act upon the Law of Moses. When he was let into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil, every answer that Jesus gave to his tempter, began with the words, "It is written" and was with reference to the Law incorporated in the pages of the Torah. One of the scribes asked him: "which is the first commandment of all?" Jesus replied:

"The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel, The Lord our God is one Lord, and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength, this is the first commandment." (Mark 12:29)

Jesus thus repeated "verbatim" the words of Moses as given in Deuteronomy (6:4,5). A few more verses will further clear up this point. Turn over Matthew (5:17-20) and read:

"Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets; I am not come to destroy but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you,

Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever, therefore, shall break one of these commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the Kingdom of heaven; but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the Kingdom of heaven; For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter the Kingdom of heaven."

Addressing his disciples, Jesus is reported to have said on one occasion (Matt. 23:2):

"The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat; All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works; for they say and do not."

Jesus, it is obviously clear, corroborated and confirmed the Law of Moses. He complied with and conformed his own actions to it, and also required his disciples to observe and obey it. We are, however, not a little shocked to see that Paul, setting at defiance most impudently these explicit commands of his Master, has taught that obedience of the law is a curse. In his Epistle to the Galatians (3:10,13) Paul writes:

"For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse; for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them...Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us; for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree."

**II. To seek and save the Lost Tribes**

Jesus had been sent merely for the good and guidance of the children of Israel; "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the House of Israel" (Matt. 15:24), was the blunt reply that Jesus
gave to a non-Israelite woman of Canaan who approached him, praying, “Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil,” and when the disciples intervened on her behalf, Jesus said; “It is not meet to take the children’s bread, and to cast it to dogs.” To his disciples, when he sent them out in the country to preach his Gospel, Jesus gave the explicit direction; “Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into the city of the Samaritans enter ye not But go rather to the lost sheep of the House of Israel” (Matt. 10:5). Luke has reported another saying of Jesus: “The son of man is come to seek and save that which is lost.” (19:10) It is, thus, obviously clear that Jesus’ mission was exclusively towards the Children of Israel; it was not of a universal nature. An incident has been recorded in the Acts of the Apostles, chapter 10. One Cornelius who was an Army officer and a pious man, begged Peter to receive him in the fold of Christ. But Cornelius was a heathen centurian, and Peter, in the first instance, declined to convert him, saying, “you know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company, or come unto one of another nation: but God hath shewed me that I should not call any man common or unclean.” (10:28). He, however, consented later on, and converted Cornelius. When the news reached Jerusalem, the other disciples were perturbed; “and when Peter was come up to Jerusalem they that were of the circumcision(who were the circumcised) contended with him, saying, Thou wentest in to men uncircumcised (non-Jews) and didst eat with them” (11:1-3).

One is naturally tempted to ask, who were these Lost Tribes, to seek and save which Jesus had been sent by the Most High God? It has already been stated in the foregoing lines that the descendants of Jacob who was also named Israel, multiplied in large numbers and became the Twelve Tribes well-known in history. They settled in the holy land of Palestine. The two tribes of Judah and Benjamin (henceforward known by the name of Judah) occupied Southern Palestine, whereas the remaining Ten Tribes(called Israel) lived in the Northern Palestine. Their mutual relations, after some time, became strained, and war broke out. Judah sought the help of the Assyrians who invaded Israel in 740 B.C. and carried a number of them to Assyria. This was the beginning of the captivity of the Ten Tribes. Twenty years later, in the reign of Shalmaneser IV, the Assyrians attacked Israel again, and carried away all the remainder of the Ten Tribes into captivity from where they never returned. We read in the Old Testament, the Second Book of Kings (17:23); “So was Israel carried away out of their own land to Assyria unto this day.” In 686 B.C. the Assyrian Kingdom was overrun by the Babylonian army under the rule of King Nebuchadnezzar; he also ransacked Jerusalem, and whatever had remained behind of the Ten Tribes was again carried away by him. The Ten Tribes, thus came into the Babylonian captivity. Through the ages that followed they passed into the captivity of the Persians in the time of Darius Hystaspis, and then of the Scythians whose rule extended as far as Afghanistan and India. The Ten Tribes were, thus, pushed farther and still farther east from their homeland and were lost to the parent country forever. So Jesus spoke of them as the “lost sheep of the House of Israel,” and “the children of God that were scattered abroad.”

Jesus in Kashmir

Jesus had proclaimed from time to time that his mission was “to seek and save that which was lost.” We read in John (10:16): “And other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice.” But according to the Gospel teaching, its suburbs when the Jews apprehended and killed him on the Cross; neither could he search and seek the Lost Tribes of Israel, nor could he make them hear his voice. Did Jesus fail in his mission? We enquired of our Christian friend, and told him that a prophet never fails in his mission, for he has on his back the mighty hand of the Almighty God. Jesus died not on the Cross. He was unconscious. A Roman soldier pierced his side with a spear, and blood came out, showing that life still pulsed under the skin. The disciples lavished all care on him, and Jesus revived. He passed his time in concealment, but was seen by the disciples for forty days. He met them for the last time on the mountain in Galilee and blessed them and gave them instructions regarding the propagation of his teaching, and then departed for the Eastern countries to seek the Lost Tribes. He travelled through Persia, Afghanistan and the North-Western part of India and reached Kashmir. The Kashмирis and the Pathans are the descendants of those Ten Tribes of Israel. Jesus, as a matter of fact, found out “the lost sheep of the house of Israel” and made them hear his voice. Jesus was successful in his mission. He lived among them to a good old age of 120 years, and his tomb can still be seen in Mohalla Khanyar, Srinagar, in Kashmir.

It was in fulfilment of the Divine covenant with the Patriarch that the Children of Israel were blessed with prophethood and kingship. But the time had come, we said, with the advent of Jesus when Jews had to be punished for their inordinacy. So, Jesus tolled the kneel of their departing glory, saying: “The Kingdom of God shall be taken away from you and given to a nation, bringing forth the fruit thereof” (Matt. 21:43). This nation which was to be the next recipient of the Divine blessing, was the “bani Ishmael.” We read in the Book of Genesis (17:20):
“And as for Ishmael, I heard thee (Abraham) Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful and will multiply him exceedingly; twelve tribes shall he beget and I will make him a great nation.”

The Gospel

Jesus was both a warner as well as the bearer of good news. He uttered, on the one hand, a grim warning to the Jews, portending their fall from Jehovah’s favor but, on the other hand, he also gave the glad tidings of the coming of the World-Prophet. The Gospel of St. Barnabas who was a well-known Apostle of Jesus, has given the name of this Great Prophet. Said Jesus:

“And when I saw him, my soul was filled with consolation, saying, O Muhammad, God be with thee and may He make me worthy to untie thy shoe latches. The disciples asked, O Master, who shall that man be of whom thou speakest, who shall come into the world? Jesus answered, He is Muhammad, the Messenger of God.”

This Gospel was read in the Churches for sometime; but was, later on, taboosed for the reason that it bore incontrovertible testimony to the truth of the Holy Prophet Muhammad. And it was for this reason that the message of Jesus was called “The Gospel” which means “the glad tidings,” the happy news of the coming of the Prophet of Arabia. The Holy Qur’an also corroborates and confirms it (61:6):

“And when Jesus, son of Mary said: O children of Israel, surely I am the messenger of God to you, verifying that which is before me of the Torah and giving the good news of a Messenger who will come after me, his name being Ahmad.”

“Ahmad” was another attributive name of the Holy Prophet Muhammad.

The Prophecies

Fragments of this important truth are still to be found even in the present overhauled and altered edition of the Bible, pointing clearly to the advent of the Great Prophet of Arabia. Turn over the Gospel according to St. John, chapter 6, verses 12,13:

“I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot hear them now. Howbeit when he, the spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you unto all truth; for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak; and he will show you things to come.”

“If ye love me, keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter (Paraclete), that he may abide with you forever.” (John 14:15,16).

“But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me.” (John 15:26)

“It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.” (John 16:7)

The World Prophet

From the verses, it is obviously clear that the Promised Prophet (1) will appear after Jesus;
(2) will abide with the people forever, and guide them into all truth: that is to say, he will bring the final code of life and seal the law; the period of his prophethood will be everlasting, and no prophet shall appear after him. Also compare the Qur’anic teaching on this point: (a) “Muhammad is not the father of any of you, but he is the Apostle of Allah and the seal of the prophets” (33:40); and the Holy Prophet himself has said: “I am the Last of the Prophets, and there is no prophet after me,” which fact has, further, borne out by history, and no prophet has appeared after Muhammad during the last 1400 years. (b) “This day have I perfected for you your religion and completed My favor on you and chosen for you Islam as your religion.” (5:3) (3) “shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak.” We read in the Holy Qur’an: “nor does he (Muhammad) speak out of desire, It is nothing but revelation that is revised. The Lord of Mighty Power has taught him.” (53:3); “Say (Muhammad)...it is only a delivery (of commandments) from Allah and His Message” (62:22).

(4) “shall testify of me”. The Holy Prophet testified to the truthfulness of Jesus, and cleared him and his mother, Mary, of all the slanderous charges that the Jews, most wickedly, had brought against them. Says the Holy Qur’an (4:171): “The Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary, is only a messenger of Allah and His word which He communicated to Mary and a mercy from Him.” Again, “The Messiah, son of Mary, was only a messenger; messengers before him had indeed passed away. And his mother was a truthful woman” (5:75).

The advent of the World-Prophet was certainly the greatest event of human history; it had been foretold by all the prophets of the world. To the Israelites, the happy news was first given to Moses, their great Law-giver, saying (Deut. 18:17-19):

“And the Lord said unto me...I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him.”

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The Promised Prophet who would be the like of Moses, was to be raised among the brethren of Israelites, that is, among the descendants of Ishmael, the “bani Ismael” in Genesis (25:18) it was stated:

“These are the sons of Ishmael, and these are their names...and these are the years of the life of Ishmael, a hundred and thirty and seven years and he gave up the ghost and died; and was gathered unto his people. And they dwelt from Havilah into Shur, that is before Egypt, as thou goest towards Assyria; and he died in the presence of “all his brethren.”

That not a vestige of doubt or difficulty be left in the identification of the Promised Prophet, Moses had also mentioned the place of his appearance. Turn over to Deutonomy (33:2):

“And he (Moses) said, The Lord came from Sinai, and rose up forth from Seir unto them; he shined from Mount Paran, and he came with ten thousand of saints; from his right hand went a fiery law for them.”

Mount Sinai was the place where the Law was given to Moses; and the rising of the Lord from Seir referred to the appearance of Jesus. But the third manifestation of the Lord was to take place on Mount Paran which is the name of a hill in Makka. That Paran is situated in Arabia (Hijaz) is borne out by verse 21, chapter 21, Genesis: “And he (Ishmael) dwelt in the wilderness of Paran, and his mother (Hagar) took him a wife out of the land of Egypt.” Yet another unmistakable sign which establishes the identity of the Promised Prophet most palpably, has been mentioned: “He came with ten thousand of saints.” When the Holy Prophet Muhammad appeared on the hills of Paran, on the occasion of the Victory of Makka, he was accompanied by exactly ten thousand saints.

Not Jesus

In the course of a discussion with the present writer, a missionary of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society, New York, only recently, tried in vain to foist this prophecy on the person of Jesus, the Christ; and he had to be told that even 33 years after the death of Jesus, his disciples continued to wait for the Promised Prophet. Wrote St. Peter addressing his followers (Acts 3:19-24):

“Repent ye therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; and he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you; whom the heaven must receive until the time of restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all holy prophets since the world began. For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass that every soul which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people. Yea, and all the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days.”

The Concept of ‘Perfect Man’ in Islam From Page 26

is darkness of the night. The extensive canopy of space is apparent to everyone and the earth is everyone’s place of abode. All these things possess their own apparent identity and their own visible particular characteristics, but the soul of man is such a hidden thing and a matter subject to so much conjecture that there are many contending views about its very nature. There are many groups who disbelief that there is any permanent thing which exists by itself and can be called the soul or the spirit of man, and which after the end of its companionship with the body can exist till eternity. And not all of those who believe in the identity, the existence and the manifestation of the soul value the hidden abilities of the soul in a way which it deserves. Some have limited their understanding so much that they think the only purpose in being born in this world is to gorge ourselves like animals and spend our whole lives in pursuits of bodily pleasures. Such people are not even aware of the fact that the human soul possesses gifts and qualities of the most excellent form, and if they were to devote themselves to the acquisition of these qualities then in a short period they would encompass all the merits and virtues of the various things in the whole universe. Thus in the verses of the celebrated chapter mentioned earlier, Almighty God has proved the existence of the human soul and described its excellent virtues and qualities, and, in order to direct attention, the verses first mention the characteristics of the sun, the moon and other things and then lead on to the soul of man which, they state, combines within itself all those qualities. When the soul of man has the potentialities of the excellent qualities and characteristics which are individually present in the earth and the bodies in space, it would be an act of gross ignorance to suspect that the human soul, which combines within itself all these wonderful attributes, is just nothing and does not exist after the death of the body. All the objects mentioned above can be observed and sensed; their existence cannot be denied because even a blind man can believe in the presence of the sun through the warmth he feels through sunlight. How can there be any doubt about the permanent and independent existence of the soul when it holds within itself all the characteristics of those objects? Is it possible that a non-existent thing should be able to combine the characteristics of all those things that are known to exist?
CHILDREN vs PARENTS
By Dr. M.I. Rajabally

It is a fact that in Europe and the United States, the relationship between children and parents is getting worse and worse everyday. This has become a problem in almost every family.

On the other hand, Islam attaches great importance to family ties. Islam teaches us to build a very good relation between children and parents. We Muslims living in the United States have to be very cautious not to get trapped but to stay safe on Islamic ground and to establish excellent relations with our parents. We cannot behave in the same way towards our parents as our friends and classmates are behaving. This is the mistake many Muslim teenagers are making. As Muslims, we have specific obligations to fulfill towards our parents and we do not wait for a “mother’s day” or “father’s day” to show that love, care, kindness and gratitude to them. For a Muslim, every single day is a mother’s day. The question is how do we discharge our obligations to our parents.

Obedience is one of the surest ways of fulfilling our duty to our parents. These days kids have learned to be disobedient and they are on their own ego trip. They believe if they obey their parents, they do at the cost of their freedom or their individual development. Such is the attitude of most teenagers. They will do what their mind tells them to do, whether or not their parents approve of it. This is flagrant disobedience which we Muslims have to stay away from. Whatever we do, wherever we go needs to be approved by our parents first. In no way are we curtailing ourselves or reducing our ego by listening to our parents. Nothing pleases a parent more than an obedient child. Obedience brings love, respect, and trust between parents and children. Disobedience, on the other hand, is the work of the devil; it takes the child away from the family.

One of the worst enemies of teenagers is the silence they build between themselves and their parents. Islam is for dialogue, as Muslims we have to open ourselves freely to our parents. Islam teaches us to trust our parents, to confide in them because, after Allah, they are the ones who care for us and take care of us. So, it is imperative for all Muslim youngsters to be able to communicate with his parents whenever the need arises. Failure to do so will be extremely harmful and this is the main reason for so many “runaways” in this country. We should talk to our parents before the point of no return.

Verse 23 of Chapter XVII and Verse 14 of Chapter XXXI of the Holy Qur’an talk about kindness, thanks, and care to parents in old age. It is customary in this society to “dump” parents in convalescent homes. We find them to be a burden for us in their old age. It is important to know that the Qur’an does not teach us to do so. Respect and kindness to parents are a must for a Muslim. That is why the holy prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) said: “paradise lies beneath the feet of the mother.”

Unless we show kindness, care and love for our parents, we are definitely not behaving in an Islamic way. Children have to learn how to address parents with respect and proper voice control. We should not yell at our parents. We should generously use words like “please” and “thank you” in order to show the tremendous appreciation we have for our parents.

To conclude, we always take it for granted that our parents owe us so much but Islam reminds us that we, the children, owe our parents a lot.

SOME QUESTIONS FOR MUSLIM ULAMA

By Maulana Hafiz Sher Muhammad

There are certain issues raised by the Muslim religious scholars and leaders of today which have not only caused controversy amongst the Muslims but are considered by many people to be great obstacles in the way of Muslim unity. Therefore, I dare pose a few questions, purely out of an inner urge for the cause of Islam, the replies to which will demonstrate that not only can all these obstacles be removed and the Muslims saved from disintegration, disunity and mutual fighting, but more than this, they can once again be united and fraternal, and become true servants of Islam. It is hoped that you will, for the sake of earning the pleasure of God, oblige us by answering the questions given below:

1) Is the Person of God material or spiritual? Is He Omnipresent, or is there an “arsh” (throne) for Him in the physical heavens.
2) Is the rising (raf’) towards God, or going to Him, the lifting up of a person’s physical body to God, or is it a spiritual phenomenon?
3) When the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of God be upon him, went to the heavens on the night of the “Mi’raj” to meet all the prophets, did he go to the physical heavens or the spiritual ones?
4) Man can attain nearness to God by doing good deeds. Can he also get near God using rockets? What does the Holy Qur’an say in this respect?

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has been engaged with science has contributed to the uniqueness of Islam. Islam, like Judaism, has fostered and encouraged the study of science and, like Judaism, has been distinguished by the number of its adherents who have made valuable contributions, not only to science but also to general literature and the arts. Not alone was an embargo placed upon scientific study in all sections of Christianity but the views held by many Christians were only to be described as peculiar. A little longer than a hundred years ago in 1818, to be precise- a comet was held to be responsible, not only for blindness in flies and their death, but also for the birth of quadruplets to the wife of a London shoemaker. Yet, in the first century of the common era, before Christianity was established, long prior to scientific investigation on the subject, Seneca declared:

“Comets are bodies subject to the ordinary law of nature and not prodigies amenable to no law.”

While Christianity in general has tried to hinder the advancement of science, Islam has fostered it. It is claimed that before the Reformation the education of the people was not neglected by the Church who entrusted that work to the religious orders. If the ridiculous stories related in the “Lives of the Saints” may be called ‘education’ the contention is granted. At the present time those ‘Lives’ are undergoing revision and the new edition will witness the deletion of some of those phantasies and may cause the work to be less a laughing-stock than the old edition has been. The Reformation the new life given to religion, appalling though it was, in many respects, followed in the wake of the Renaissance, a new life devoted to classical knowledge. In its turn, the Reformation was followed by an increased interest in science and its application to industry awakening not only interest but even enthusiasm in the meditative Oriental. True, under the Encyclopedists, this interest became the parent of revolution, the workings of which are in process of development at this hour. Christianity developed more than ever into a war of creeds and philosophy. Two notable opposing camps were to be found in Calvinism and Arminianism, both today diminishing quantities, particularly the former. “Calvinism,” says Dr. William Barry (a Roman Catholic) in “Heralds of Revolt” (p. 80) “is only pessimism in theological garb.” Under the Calvinistic religion, God ceases to be the Merciful, the Compassionate and as James Mill told his infant (op. cit. p. 77):

“Men had gone on adding trait after trait of malice and cruelty to the divine character until they had made their Creator a very demon and then had turned round and bidden their children adore him.”

This creed of Calvinism has alienated many thousands from the true spirit and worship of Allah. It is a dishonoring creed, dishonoring alike to both Creator and creature. The philosophy and religion of Islam is found to be more in accord with and adaptable to the needs of humanity than any of the conflicting theories to be found in the Christian library. Archibald Robertson, in his booklet “The Churches and the New World,” asks the question:

“Which party represents a social order, a morality and a philosophy or life adapted to the modern world, as science, industry and commerce have made it; and which represents a social order, a morality and a philosophy of life left over from the robber barbarians, serfdom and superstition- perhaps even from the age of head-hunting, cannibalism and medicine men?”

If the word “religion” is substituted for “party” I reply unhesitatingly that Islam and Islam alone can supply the answer to the question.

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Some Questions

For Muslim Ulama

5) Do the words of the Holy Qur’an referring to disbelievers, viz. "la tufattahu la-hum abwab as-sama"(7:40), i.e., "the doors of heaven shall not be opened for them.", mean physical or spiritual heavens?

6) If physical heavens are meant, then are these words not being disproved by the American and Russian astronauts going to the heavens in rockets?

7) Has the Holy Qur’an given a decision about the dispute between the Jews and the Christians regarding the spiritual elevation of Jesus? If so, which is the verse conveying that decision?

8) Can you cite a verse of the Qur’an stating explicitly that Jesus is alive in the fourth heaven with his physical body?

9) Can you cite a Saying of the Holy Prophet Muhammad stating explicitly that Jesus is alive in the fourth heaven with his physical body?

10) Do the Ulama take the hadith which says about a certain person simply that ‘God raised him to heaven’(raf'a Allahuila-s-sama) as meaning that God raised him with his physical body to a particular heaven? Is this meaning correct according to Islamic theology or Arabic lexicology? Or, does this hadith have some other meaning?

As the issue of the descent of the Messiah is a consequence of belief in Jesus having been raised alive to heaven with his physical body, if therefore there is a Muslim who believes that the elevation(rafa’) of Jesus was spiritual, not physical, would you regard such a person as a Muslim or not? If not, what arguments can you give from Islamic Shariah to prove that he is not a Muslim? What answers to the above ten questions can you give from the Holy Qur’an and Hadith?

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The Concept of ‘Perfect Man’ in Islam

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particular kind, during another period they show quite the reverse characteristics. Further, the Qur’an says that God has made the night and the day for the benefit of man and that He has given all that was asked of Him by man. This means that God has given man everything that he could ever need and if one wished to count the bounties of God, one could not do so. Man is further reminded that it is God Who has created everything in this earth for the benefit of man. In another verse, Almighty God states:

“So when I have made him complete and breathed into him My spirit: so fall down submitting to him. And the angels submitted, all of them, but not Iblis.” (The Qur’an, xxxviii:72-74)

The verses remind man, who is the most perfect manifestation of God, that God told the angels that He was about to create man from dust and that the angels were to fall down in prostration to man after God had breathed His spirit into him and shaped him as the most perfect specimen of harmony and proportion.

By ‘prostration’ God meant the angels to devote themselves to the service of man and humble themselves in their obligations to man to such an extent that it would almost amount to submission in prostration. Thus all the angels knelt in humility before this ‘perfect man’, but Satan declined this honor. It should be borne in mind that the command to the angels to prostrate themselves before man does not relate to the specific instance when Adam was created, but it is an order instructing all angels that whenever a man reaches heights of greatness, acquires moderation in his ways and allows the spirit of God to find a abode in him, then they should prostrate themselves before him. In other words, the angels should descend on him with heavenly splendor and give their blessings to him when he reaches such a state. Therefore this refers to that ancient law of God which has always been applied to the chosen men of God; whenever a person in any age achieves this spiritual harmony and the spirit of God finds a place in his heart, that is, his self suffers death and he reaches the stage of everlasting life in God, then he is graced with a special form of angelic blessing. Even in the early stages of man’s development, angels are engaged in serving him, but the engagement of angels at a sublime stage is so complete and perfect that it is almost a prostration before man. By using the word ‘prostration’, God has made it clear that angels are not superior to ‘perfect men’. In fact, like servants of the crown, they bow respectfully in their service to man, Almighty God has, therefore, in extremely delicate and subtle allusions and metaphors stated in the chapter “al-Shams” of the Qur’an that man’s state is the highest among all the creations of heaven and earth. The verses run as follows:

“By the sun and his brightness! And the moon when she borrows light from him! And the day when it exposes it to view! And the night when it draws a veil over it! And the heaven and its make! And the earth and its extension! And the soul and its perfection! So He reveals to it its way of evil and its way of good; he is indeed successful who causes it to grow, and he indeed fails who buries it. Thamud rejected (the truth) in their inordinacy, when the basest of them broke forth with mischief—so God’s messenger said to them: Leave alone God’s she-camel and give her to drink. But they called her a liar and slaughtered her. So their Lord destroyed them for their sin and levelled them with the ground. And He fears not its consequences.” (The Qur’an, xxi:1-15)

That is, by the sun and the light it gives, by the moon when it follows the sun, by the day when it manifests its light, by the night which is in pitch darkness, by the earth and Him Who spread it out, by the soul of man and Him Who has resposed in it perfect harmony and every quality of permanence and has not deprived man of any attribute of perfection, so much so that all the splendors that have been listed with the various oaths have all been assembled in man. Thus the soul of a perfect man contains within it the brilliance of the sun and its rays, the characteristics of the moon in being able to acquire benefit from others, and for his own good acquire light (wisdom) from another source of light
(wisdom). Man also has the characteristics of daylight. Just as in daylight laborers and workers are able to carry out their duties properly, in the same way the seekers of truth and those who tread the path of peace, by following the example of the ‘perfect man,’ are able to carry out their religious functions with ease and comfort. Such a man, like daylight, can reveal himself with clarity and holds within himself all the characteristics of daylight.(1)

(1) The sun, in accordance with the perfect wisdom of the Divine, from seven hundred and thirty different positions, casts its varied effects on the world. Every position is given a particular name, such as, Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, etc. These are the names of the sun in view of its particular positions, characteristics and effects. In conversation when we are not concerned with its particular attributes or functions we call it merely the sun. But when we have in mind the particular attributes, effects and positions of the sun, then we sometimes call it day, sometimes night, at times Sunday or Monday and so on, and sometimes September, October, or by other names of the months. In the same way, the human soul, according to its different phases, time, place and circumstances is given various names, such as, Nafs Zakka (the pure self), Nafs Ammara (unruly animal self), Nafs Lawwama (struggling moral self) and Nafs Mutmainna (self at peace). In fact the soul of man has as many names as that of the sun, but for the sake of brevity I have not mentioned them all.

The ‘perfect man’ also bears resemblance to the pitch darkness of night. This is explained by the fact that despite the aloofness and separation from desires of the self that he acquires through the Grace of God, he sometimes reverts to those things that constitute human rights under Divine Wisdom and Guidance. Such desires are apparently opposed to and a hindrance to the spiritual light, such as the functions of eating, drinking and resting, duties towards wives, love and care of the children. The ‘perfect man’ carries out these duties and for a little while accepts this darkness for himself, not because he inclined towards such darkness, but because Almighty God directs him towards these things, so that he may gain a little rest from the exertions and endeavors in the path of the spirit and, having rested, be prepared to carry on with the burden of his efforts. A poet (Persian) expresses this in a single verse:

Trainers sew the eyelids of a falcon
Only to unthread them again(2).
(2) It is customary to sew the eyelids of a falcon during its training.

So such people, if they indulge in bodily comforts and needs after undergoing anxiety and mental fatigue, it helps their feeble bodies to be refreshed and become fit and gain enough strength and energy to accompany the spirit on its course once again. After this somewhat baser indulgence, man is able to cover many stages of spiritual progress. Besides this, the human soul has many other finer qualities resembling the night which have been discovered through the researches carried out in the fields of astrononw and astrology. Similarly the soul of the ‘perfect man’ bears resemblance to outer space. Just as the boundaries of space are so extensive and limitless that nothing can fill it, in the same way the reasoning powers of these noble souls have extensive capacities within them, and, despite the fact that they acquire a vast amount of knowledge and truths, they still cry out ma ‘araflaka (I do not know). Just as the canopy of space is dotted with bright stars, so the soul of the ‘perfect man’ has such luminous powers that they can be detected like the stars in the dark sky. The soul of the ‘perfect man’ also bears a strong resemblance to the earth. The best kind of soil has the characteristic that, when it is ploughed, sown and irrigated and all the care and attention that it needs has been given to it, then it yields far more than any other plot of land, and the fruit produced from such a land, is finer and sweeter and more delicious than other crop of fruit; in its quantity and quality it can not be excelled. A similar thing happens to the soul of the ‘perfect man’; when Divine commandments are sown into the heart of such a person, they prosper wonderfully, and good deeds, like plants, emerge from those seeds. The fruit of these ‘plants’ is so wonderful and delicious that anyone who looks at it is reminded of the Divine power of God and has to say:

“All praise is due to God! All praise is due to God!”

The verse in the Qur’an (scti?) (And the soul and its perfection) clearly indicates that ‘perfect man’ in his inner self and nature is a universe, and all the manifestations, characteristics, and qualities of the great universe are all found in him on a smaller scale. In the verses mentioned earlier, Almighty God started with the characteristics of the sun and ended with a reference to the earth which is our place of abode and briefly referred to the characteristics of everything that falls within these two regions; these were referred to by way of oaths. After that the verses mentioned the soul of the ‘perfect man’ so that it should be understood that the soul of the ‘perfect man’ combines in itself all the various splendors which are present individually in all the things that have been mentioned by way of oath.

It can be questioned: why has God sworn by the names of those things which are His creation and which compared to His Being are insignificant and unimportant? The answer to this is that throughout the Qur’an it is the practice and the rule of God that for the proof and authenticity of a theoretical matter, He refers to such things which have manifest and clear proof of their qualities. On one can doubt that the sun exists, and that it is radiant; that the moon exists and it obtains light from the sun; everyone knows what is daylight and what

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"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