

# Islamic Review

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## THE HOLY QUR-ĀN

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"Having been attracted by your religion for some time, I feel compelled to write to you on the matter. Is there any way in which I may become a Muslim? I belong at the moment to the Church of England."

#### DECLARATION FORM

I, Stanley C. Pullen, son of Charles H. Pullen, of . . . Derby, do hereby faithfully and solemnly declare of my own free will that I adopt Islam as my religion; that I worship the One and only Allah (God) alone; that I believe Muhammad to be His messenger and servant; that I respect equally all prophets—Abraham, Moses, Jesus, etc.; that I will live a Muslim life by the help of Allah.

La ilaha ill-Allah.  
Muhammad Al Rasul-Allah.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ  
 مُحَمَّدٌ وَآلُهُ عَلَى سُلُوكِ الْكَيْمِ

# THE ISLAMIC REVIEW

JUMĀDA 'TH-THĀNIYA 1347 A.H.  
 VOL. XVI. DECEMBER, 1928 A.C.

No. 12

## NOTES

### Southward March of Islam in Africa.

The Bishop of Johannesburg, writing in the *Church Overseas*, vol. i. No. 4, in the course of an article entitled "Africa and South Africa," says:—

The future religious contest of Africa is between the Cross and the Crescent—Islam or Christianity. Opinions, even of experts, differ whether the southward march of Islam has been stayed or not. But one thing is certain, that the progress of Mohammedanism in Africa during the last generation has been very great. There is nothing surprising in this. Islam in Africa has some of the qualities of the chameleon. It takes its colour from its surroundings. It adapts native feasts and customs. It makes no moral demand. It raises the native slightly, and there leaves him. He can remain a polygamist. He is required to *do* certain things, not expected to *become* anything very different. Christianity demands that he should follow in the steps of Jesus Christ and grow into his likeness. Unfortunately there is one direction in which Mohammedanism compares favourably, not with true Christianity, but with our presentation of it to-day. Islam knows no colour bar. The native convert joins a real brotherhood. He is at home in all mosques. He is proud to feel that he has joined a religion that has produced great fighters and conquerors in the past; he understands a religion that wields the sword. He is proud to feel that he is recognized by leaders in Egypt and Turkey, and is in one great fellowship with them.

That the advance of Islam is a danger, not only to Christianity, but to Western civilization in Africa, is unquestionable. Islam detribalizes those who have hitherto been ruled through their chiefs. It teaches them to despise their brethren, and even their chiefs, and to look for their orders to North Africa or Europe.

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Now, nothing could be farther from the truth than the assertions contained in the above excerpt. Leaving other allegations—to wit, “Islam raises the native slightly and there leaves him. He can remain a polygamist”—let us take the one which says that Islam makes no moral demand. This, as a matter of fact, has long been the clergy’s pet argument, under the cloak of which they have been able to shield themselves against the volley of criticism levelled by those who, armed with damaging statistics, point out the progress of Islam and the failure of the Church teachings in spite of their being sponsored and bolstered up by the might of worldly allurements and the local resources of authority. The clergy want—and it is to their interest—to evade every argument and disarm every criticism by affirming that Islam makes no moral demand on its converts. For thus at least they have the satisfaction of throwing dust into the eyes of their critics by asserting that Christianity, as represented by the Church, requires an infinitely superior standard of morality.

Let us, for the sake of argument, assume that such is the case; but, for Heaven’s sake, show us any living example, give us Christianity in action—if not in whole, at least in part. Religion, after all, must manifest itself among its adherents in some phase of their everyday existence. But how can one argue with a friend whose sole retort it is to-day that this or that is not Christianity, not up to the ideals of Christianity and consequently not a fair test?

If only, instead of talking glibly and in the vaguest of vague terms, the bishops would tell us definitely what was required of a Christian, proving at the same time that all such requirements are not to be found in or demanded by other religions, then we should, perhaps, begin to see daylight.

Has the Bishop of Johannesburg ever considered the fact that Islam advocates total abstinence and imposes rigorous fasts with frequent daily prayers? In view of these facts none but a bishop, and a colonial bishop at that, would have the temerity to say that Islam succeeds because it makes no moral demand on its followers. Does he regard all these institutions of Islam as making no moral demand on Muslims? What

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about the institutions in Christianity—Churchianity—compared with those of Islam? The Sacrament of Holy Communion or the belief in the doctrine of the Atonement? They are, perhaps, comparatively easy to accept, as being more comfortable to profess than the teachings of Islam. The Holy Communion has magical powers, whereas the doctrine of the Atonement promises an easy path to heaven. Let the Bishop judge which of the two is, in fact, easier—that which holds out promises of a blissful life in heaven, and makes you taste of the flesh and blood “of Our Lord” merely by virtue of the recital of certain words, or that which imposes fasts, the *Zakāt*, or the prayers. The doctrine of the Atonement, or, in non-theological words, the doctrine of Retribution, is both irrational and immoral.

To say that the Christian ideal is too high for human attainment is to condemn it. Nineteen solid centuries have passed by and still it fails to materialize. We, for our part, would not talk of an ideal which was not attainable—in any walk of life. Yet we do not begrudge the Bishop his feelings of self-satisfaction in imagining that he is striving after an ideal which, in the course of his earthly pilgrimage, he can never hope to come near.

Perhaps it would interest the reverend gentleman to know that Islam progresses not only because it offers equal privileges and no colour-line, but also because it does not suffer from the encumbrance of an organized priesthood; that is to say, the class to which the Bishop of Johannesburg belongs!

### **Is Westernization an Unnatural Phenomenon?**

Latter-day European journalism seems to be studded with accounts of the Westernization of Eastern countries, and in its frenzy to make them look ridiculous in the eyes of the Western peoples it does not even hesitate to circulate items of news which are the most barefaced balderdash. Our readers will remember, for instance, two of the more significant and ingenious concoctions. We refer to the fable which imputed to Mustafa Kamal Pasha the impious—we had nearly said insane—act of flinging the Holy Qur-án from one corner of the room to the other, and to the news which

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flashed the story that King Amānu 'llah had ordered some nobles to be shot because they were opposing his reforms. And what is more: this modern European journalism tries to represent each step taken by any prominent man in the Muslim East as being another nail driven into the coffin of the Muslim world. The Christian missionary to the East detects in this symptoms of a more amenable frame of the Muslim mind for the acceptance of Christianity.

Now the question which arises is whether or not Westernization is a process which Muslims should adopt, whether or not it is something unnatural, and whether or not Westernization at all is something which estranges Muslims from their religion.

An answer to each of these questions is quite simple if we take the trouble to cast even a cursory glance at the synthetic components of the cultures of various nations.

This is not the place for going into the details of all the changes introduced in every walk and phase of Muslim life in certain Muslim countries. We do not profess to hold a brief for one or the other. Our aim is simply to judge everything on the criterion of the Qur-ān and the Hadīth. There may be, and there are, some changes which are possibly short-sighted. What we are concerned with at present, however, is to find out if one is at all justified in classing every new reform, every new improvement, as "Westernization"—a term which, let it be clearly understood, to a Christian missionary as well as to any average European, conveys the idea of some process whereof the tendency is to dismantle the strongholds of the Muslim Faith and ultimately to dethrone Islam. Why this should be so is something which passes our understanding. Why "Westernization" and un-Islam should be synonymous; why the mention of "Westernization," with respect to the Muslim East, should be accompanied by a sneer and an indulgent smile illuminating the countenances of our Christian missionary friends, is to us incomprehensible. Show us one country, one race, one people, which can honestly boast of being the sole creator of its own civilization, which can proclaim from its housetops that the neck of its culture was never bent under the crushing yoke of indebtedness to other contiguous cultures. It is truth, and nothing but truth, to say that our various

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civilizations are continuations, or at best permutations and combinations, of various elements of various other cultures. No culture has ever existed as an isolated whole. To prosper, it has always borrowed and grafted on to the parent stock elements from other cultures. Moreover, elements of such cultures have travelled from their homelands to far distant regions and have there, in a short while, become to all intents and purposes indigenous. Cultures have never been transplanted wholesale, but their individual elements have been; and this process will continue to function till the end of the world.

Even in the case of primitive peoples there is a constant interchange of elements. Elements originate in one area and are carried on to an adjacent region. For instance, the elements of our cultures have come to us from a successive series of earlier cultures and have been modified in turn by each group that has assimilated them. Thus the science of astronomy was developed first by the Chaldeans, the alphabet we use by the Phœnicians, and our numeral system by the Arabs, and they all have been handed down to us in a developed form by people nearer to us in point of time.

Again, many of the most vital elements of our cultures are so deeply rooted in the remote past that we cannot trace their origin. Who, for example, were the pioneers who blazed the trail for the development of language, and conceived the idea of writing? Who worked out the principle of the lever, and who first domesticated animals and studied plants, and extracted metals from ores? The truth is that each succeeding culture is the apex of a series, the inheritor of the past and the legator of the future.

Now, to illustrate our point, out of the many new changes introduced into Turkey, in Afghanistan and Persia, in their social and political systems of life, let us take the new Latin alphabet which has in Turkey supplanted the Arabic characters. The Turks found out—and they, of course, are the best judges—that the Arabic alphabet was cumbersome and did not adequately convey the various sounds peculiar to their language. So they came to the conclusion that the Latin character would best solve their phonetic and linguistic problems. The change

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in itself is quite simple. But do changes of alphabet or numerals or dress make people leave their religion? Did Europe Islamize itself any more than the East or the Muslim countries are Westernizing themselves, or was Europe Sarcenizing itself when it adopted the use of the often-changed, often-washed garment of linen or cotton which still passes under its old name amongst ladies? The answer must obviously be "No."

Nations can change dress, discard customs, supplement ideas and conceptions, improve social institutions and the rest, without incurring the charge of "Westernizing" themselves. For really it is nothing extraordinary that is happening. We borrow from each other, and we ought to learn to recognize the debt of gratitude that we owe to each other. The East does not despise the West, and is prepared to take from it what is good; what it must, and will, repudiate is the popular obsession that, in any sense, the West is achieving any sort of moral as well as political conquest.

All of which reminds us somewhat of a verse in the Qur-án which expresses an unchanging law: "And we bring these days to men by turns" (iii. 139).

### **Is Islam Compatible with Material Progress?**

There is a beautiful adage which says that one should discard all that is detrimental to progress and assimilate all that is beneficial. In adopting or discarding a custom, or ingrafting a foreign element on our culture, we have only to ascertain that our proposals are not clashing with the injunctions of the Qur-án and the directions of the Hadith. If they do not so clash, they should be adopted; for that has been the secret of the growth of Islamic countries throughout the centuries. Islam has never looked askance on progress or anathematized any one kind of dress, nor is Islam the name for any one kind of dress or type of veil or special alphabets. It is another term for our outlook on life. It is the name of certain constant principles which never change. It is from God, and there are no chance happenings with God. It is only with us that things change. Those who believe otherwise have not understood the real signification of Islam.



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When Christendom freed itself from the shackles of the Church, it was literally groping in the dark, because it did not know which way to take to reach its goal. Its guide, the Bible, was insufficient and misleading because of interpolations and accretions. The Catholic Church, which claimed to be the mouthpiece of God after Christ, had been found wanting. Thus Christendom had all but given up its search. We Muslims need never be in such a dilemma. We still possess the Book in as pure a state as it was in the days of Muhammad, with all the wealth of detail as to the life of Muhammad such as no other prophet can offer us. It will be a day of misfortune when Muslims cease to bear this in mind. They may reach the goal, but it will only be after a long and heartbreaking struggle if they attempt anything without the Qur-án or Hadīth. A goal which could have been achieved in a day will in such conditions take years, perhaps centuries. In order to substantiate the truth of this statement we have only to cast a glance at our past, at the tremendous, the unparalleled triumph which attended the efforts of the successors of the Holy Prophet Muhammad. Have we ever pondered over that for the purpose of finding out why it was so? We know that before Muhammad died the whole of the Arabian peninsula had submitted to him and that within a century of his death the banners of Islam were flying from the turrets of the Caspian to the Red Sea and from the Rock of Gibraltar to the Indus River. There is no parallel in history to this remarkable expansion, and the reason for it was that they followed the Qur-án and the Hadīth. We have but to repeat the experiment.

We should remember, too, that those who take advantage of and assimilate the better elements of the cultures of other nations are Muslims. For that is really what the Qur-án inculcates in the following verse: "God does not change the condition of a people until they do first change themselves" (xiii. 11). If Muslims have ever shown any signs of antipathy to the better elements of the European culture, it was only because they were not living up to the golden verse in the Qur-án, in which lay the panacea for their ills. Everyone knows how bitterly they suffered and what heavy penalties they have since paid in the form of foreign subjugations.

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That Muslims have begun to see the real meanings of this verse is a happy sign, and the time is not far off when the map of the world shall be read in the words of the famous philosopher-poet Iqbāl of India, who said in 1913, in his *Shama' o Shā'ir*:—

Ānkh Jo Kuchh dekhtī hai lab pe ā saktā nahīn  
Mahvi hairat hūn ke dunyā kayā se kayā ho Jā'igī.

“What the eye sees is ineffable.

I am astonished to find what the world is and what it is going to be.”

For, once again, “God does not change the condition of any nation until it changes its own” (xiii. 11).

### **Some of the recent Improvements considered in the Light of Muslim Cultural History.**

During the Golden Age of Islam no kind of learning was taboo. The caliphs, with all their defects—defects, indeed, from which no man can be free—distinguished themselves as patrons of learning and set an example of refinement.

But now, in the twentieth century, the tables have turned, and we are repeatedly told that because Muslim countries are organizing postal services, building railways, making roads, improving trade and industry, promoting education, universities, schools and colleges, and are generally being brought up to date, they are Westernizing themselves. Historically considered, there is very little truth in an assertion of this nature. For what we Muslims are doing is nothing more than picking up the threads of our past glory. Let us therefore examine this claim of Westernization a little bit farther. Schools, colleges, universities are not new to us. The University of Al-Azhar is the first real university in the world. It was founded before the end of the tenth century by the Fatimid Caliph Mui'zz. The great mosque, the public library and the Madrasas or colleges were actually turned into a university in the year A.D. 938. Paris, Oxford and Cambridge were founded during the thirteenth century, and Vienna, Bologna and Heidelberg in the fourteenth. Roads are not a novelty to us—roads which are the pride of Europe. For it should not be forgotten they were once the pride of the Muslim countries as well. Cordova, under the administration of the Muslim

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princes, boasted that after sunset a man might walk through it in a straight line for ten miles by the light of public lamps. Seven hundred years after this time there was not so much as one public lamp in London. The streets of Cordova were solidly paved. In Paris, centuries subsequently, whoever stepped off his threshold on a rainy day stepped up to his ankles in mud—or worse. Other cities, like Granada, Seville, Toledo, considered themselves rivals of Cordova. The same is the case with hospitals. Muslims gave much thought to medicine from the tenth to the fourteenth century, and to chemistry as subsidiary to it. About the beginning of the ninth century, when the greater Christian writers were supporting a fetish of theology, Caliph Al-Māmūn declared:<sup>1</sup> “They are the elect of God, His best and most useful servants, whose lives are devoted to the improvement of their rational faculties.” The influence of Avicenna, the translator of the works of Aristotle, extended throughout Europe during the eleventh century. The contributions of the Muslims to pharmacy remain of value even to the present hour. Christian ecclesiastical opposition had the effect of relegating the study of medicine to the lowest order of practitioners. This can be judged by the fact that those who made noble discoveries in science were attacked with that virulence which, reinforced by the epithets “infidel” and “atheist,” has decided the fate of so many eminent scientists. *Another missile was discovered in the word “Muhammadan,” which was flung with effect at Roger Bacon, one of the greatest benefactors of mankind.*<sup>2</sup> See *how the tables have turned!*

As to the case of the insane, it was believed by the Christians that mad persons were possessed by the devil or in league with him. In all the beautiful provision during the Middle Ages for the alleviation of human suffering, there was almost no place for the insane. Some monasteries, indeed, gave them refuge. We hear of the charitable work done for them at the London Bethlehem Hospital in the thirteenth century, at Geneva in the fifteenth, at Marseilles in the sixteenth, but the only really important effort in the Christian Church was stimulated by the

<sup>1</sup> White's *Warfare of Science with Theology* (London, 1896), vol. ii. p. 34.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. i. p. 389.

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Muslims. Certain Christian monks who had much to do with them in redeeming Christian slaves, discovered in the fifteenth century what John Howard found in the eighteenth, that the Muslims made a large and a merciful provision for lunatics, such as was not seen in Christian lands; he declared that he found in Constantinople a better insane asylum than the great St. Luke's Hospital in London. And this example led to better establishments in Spain and Italy.<sup>1</sup>

### To Our Readers.

In view of the uneasiness evinced by Muslims the world over by reason of the changes which have been kaleidoscopically introduced in certain Muslim countries, we have much pleasure in printing elsewhere a valuable article from the pen of Sirdar Ikbal Ali Shah, who has, further, very kindly promised to place his impressions, gathered by him on a recent tour of all the Muslim countries, before the readers of the *Islamic Review* and eventually the Muslim world. The Sirdar, who is very well known both in English and American journalistic circles, needs no introduction from us; for he has contributed for years past to the foremost English, continental and American publications, and on the occasion of the visit of their Afghan Majesties to England he published a remarkable book entitled, *Afghanistan for the Afghans*, and very recently another, *Westward to Mecca*. His articles in *The Times* three years ago attracted world-wide attention and interest, and he has recently traversed some twenty-four countries, covering over 40,000 miles.

We are confident that his present article, which, as he assures us, is to be regarded as the first of the series recording his impressions, will be read with great interest and will be found most useful in helping our readers to appraise the mentality of the present-day Turk.

### Erratum.

*Islamic Review* for November, 1928, page 400, line 4, read Gāwūr for Gāwūn.

<sup>1</sup> White's *Warfare of Science with Theology* (London, 1896), vol. ii. p. 106.

## HAS TURKEY DIVORCED ISLAM?

### HAS TURKEY DIVORCED ISLAM?

By SIRDAR IKBAL ALI SHAH

THE Disestablishment of the Church in Turkey, which has bewildered the world of Islam on the one hand, and the internal reforms there which have amazed the Christian West on the other, are the two most considerable movements in the history of the contemporary Near and Middle East.

It is essential to examine here, first, to what extent the Turkish State was the true standard-bearer of modern Islam, and to what measure Mecca Law was enforced in their country before ever the fact of Turkey's revolt from Islam can justifiably arise. This necessitates some recapitulation of history. The Turks first came in Muslim history as mere fighting elements, because they saw in Islam a system of laws that advocated chivalry and cleanliness. It was shorn of all novel methods of thought, and was one which was frankly evident to the senses. This religion they adopted in the beginning, as the servants of the great Khalifās, but they soon fought their way to the leadership of Islam, till the Muslim world looked to Constantinople for moral and material guidance. The chief of the fighting forces of Turkey became the "Protector of the Faithful," and the priests of Turkish blood were installed as Shaikhu l-Islam, holding an enormous sway over the people through their juris-consults, the Muftis and Qādīs.

With this as the genesis of the case, we notice a system of political symbiosis grow in Turkey in the sense that autocratic Sultans strengthened their power and prestige with the aid of the Decrees of the Muslim Doctors of Law, and the Church increased its hold upon the masses in virtue of the fact that the Khans of the Turkish race lent their unqualified support to the hierarchy of the clergy. Thus matters had been allowed to exist, the clergy lending strength to the State, and *vice versa*; and for a considerable time the scales of power in the country were pretty nearly balanced. Presently the Doctors of Law devised a scheme for placing a ban upon every endeavour that calculated to probe into the sacred injunctions of Islam. And although the Turk was not really inclined to

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seek any interpretation for himself, nevertheless the religious ignorance of the masses increased to the extent that the real word of Allah was entirely wrapped in priest-made dogma. Concurrently with this the clergy exerted themselves to the preaching of war so earnestly that the Sultans could scarcely do without the help of the Church whenever a danger to the State occurred; till the thralldom of the Hoja or the priest was unquestioned in the realm. They could make kings and as easily dethrone them, or without the slightest provocation precipitate a revolution.

Then we come to the seventeenth century, when the Turkish power began to decline, and in the following two centuries, what with the defeat of the Turk by Austria and Russia and with the revolt of Egypt and the ultimate grant of reforms in 1856, the Church in Turkey had assumed a prodigious importance over the State because Sultan 'Abdu l-Majid had to throw himself on the mercy of the clergy in order to retain his position in the Muslim world on account of his surrender to victorious Russia in matters of commercial and criminal reform so utterly alien to the Revealed Law of Islam. Here, again, the Doctors of Law qualified the situation by saying that the Sultan's action was dictated solely by reasons of legislative diplomacy, and by thus lending their support conversely added further to their power. Gradually the influence of the clergy became the only influence in the country. With the masses in ignorance, a weak State, and armed with weapons of being able to excommunicate anybody who dared to challenge their decrees, the power of the clergy was unbounded. All progress was made impossible and pure fanaticism was bred. When subject races were oppressed, and corruption reigned supreme in the modern Turkish State, it was so, let it be made quite clear here, not because the Sultans were incapable, but chiefly for the reason that they were practically the slaves of the clergy—a clergy with no skill in Statecraft. Furthermore, they had entirely changed the true colour of Islam in so far as the Prophet gave a clear permission for Interpretation of the Revealed Law, whereas the official theological order of Turkey had contained: "If a verse of the Scripture or a saying of the Prophet seems to stand in contra-

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diction with the doctrine taught by the Doctors of Law, it must be considered as a case of abrogation or interpretation, not as that of a text having been overlooked. Consequently, the doctrine of the Doctors of the Law is to be followed in preference to the text of the Law." To act otherwise was heresy, often punishable by death.

The belief in opportunism which characterized the clergy is further shown by the fact that in the national education that culminated in a Turkish revolution in 1908 against Sultan 'Abdu l-Hamid the priests were the only power who aided the Sultan to quash the upheaval by a wholesale massacre of officials and Nationalists. They had declared that the Reformists were not true Muslims. In the following year, when 'Abdu l-Hamid was deposed, the head of the Church joined issue with the stronger party and gave a religious decree that his former friend, the Sultan, whom he had aided but a year previously, was unworthy and is to be deposed.

This duplicity continued, and when Ghazi Mustafa Kamal Pasha organized the Nationalist forces in Anatolia an edict was issued for the extermination of the Nationalists, who were styled the rebels of Islam by the religious 'Ulamas. The struggle between the last Khalifa and the Angora Government was largely fanned into flame by the Doctors of the Law, and the recent Kurdish revolt, which very nearly overthrew the Nationalist Government, was directly traced to the machinations of the white-turbaned clergy of Constantinople.

With this plethora before the Turks, the only course that lay before the Angora Nationalists was to destroy that nefarious organization, which had not only impeded the progress but had actually imperilled the very existence of Turkey as a nation. The clergy were against and for the Sultans turn about, as it suited their own scheme of self-aggrandizement ; they did the same with the Nationalists ; but Mustafa Kamal Pasha, whose merits equalled his reputation, never fumbled in discovering in that priesthood a very real menace to the future of his country. And so the whole structure, burdened with the clerical heaviness of centuries, had to be dismantled.

To view the whole perspective in this light is to view it correctly. There is no revolt against Islam in Turkey—rather

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it is a reaction against that unspeakable intrigue of the 'Ulamas that would have deprived Turkey even of the merest semblance of national existence if it were allowed to remain in the land. Culturally the purest form of Islam is to be seen everywhere in Anatolia. One needs to go only a hundred yards up the hill on which Angora is built to notice real Islam in all its glory, despite Occidentally dressed men and unveiled women. In Konia, that lies in the heart of Old Turkey, you would notice Islam writ large over the ploughboys' faces, as also over the countenance of the manager of a modern hotel there. Squalor, filth, there is none, nor quarrelling, drunkenness or dancing the Cane-cane, of which I saw plenty in Beyrout.

That heavy tapestry of dogma which cast a gloom over the young and the old in Turkey is gone—gone, I hope, never to return. A healthy sense of Nationalism bubbles from the heart of every young Turk that you meet in the cobbled streets of Angora. After breaking the shackles of that sham religion, they feel free, even freer than when they won the war against the Greeks. Nationalism is the cry of the moment; none would throttle that deputy in the chambers to-day in Angora if he speaks of religion in a liberal tone. All look to their military leader, Mustafa Kamal Pasha, their great Khān of the Great Wolf, to lead them on to Nationalism of Old Jagatai. This I saw so dramatically sitting in a wayside café in Angora, when I heard a distant roar of shouting. Then outriders passed us down the hill: the Ghazi was on his way to a military review. Every man and woman rushed to the scene where this Asiatic Napoleon was to pass. The pavements, tops of houses, windows, everything seemed to consist of human faces. A large open motor-car bumped slowly down the uneven, stone-paved Kara Oghlund Street, its occupant, Mustafa Kamal Pasha, clean-shaven and dressed in European fashion, held his top-hat in his hand, frequently nodding acknowledgment to his people. His steel-grey eyes set under a stern pair of eyebrows were here full of smiles. The crowd lost all control of its passion; they were shouting welcome, waving handkerchiefs, singing the President's praises. Some cried aloud with sheer joy. "This is our deliverer, this hero," sobbed a man near me. "May Allah protect him." And he



# MUHAMMAD IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

held his three-year-old son aloft over the heads of the people to give him a view of the Turkish President. That spectacle was perhaps the truest index of hero-worship that I had ever witnessed in my life.

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## MUHAMMAD IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

By PROFESSOR 'ABDU 'L-AHAD DÁWÚD, B.D.

### VI

#### MUHAMMAD IS THE SON-OF-MAN

[The learned Professor is open to correspondence on the points discussed or raised in his article. Letters may be addressed to him care of the Editor, *Islamic Review*, Woking, England.—ED. I.R.]

IN the previous discourse we perused and commented upon the marvellous vision of the Prophet Daniel (Dan. vii.). We saw how the four beasts that represented the four kingdoms succeeding one another were the Powers of Darkness and how they persecuted the Jews and the early Church of Jesus, which was constituted of true believers in the One God. We also remarked that those Powers were pagan and allegorically described as ferocious brutes. Further, we saw that the "Eleventh Horn," which had eyes and mouth, which uttered blasphemies against the Most High, had fought and overcome His Saints, had changed the times and the Law of God, could be no other than Constantine the Great, who, in A.D. 325, promulgated his imperial rescript proclaiming the creed and the decisions of the Nicene General Council.

In this article let us follow our researches patiently with regard to the glorious BARNASHA, or the "Son-of-Man," who was presented upon the clouds to the Most High, to whom was given the *Sultaneh* (Sholṭānā in the original text, i.e. "dominion" or "empire") honour and kingdom for ever, and who was commissioned to destroy and annihilate the terrible Horn.

Now let us proceed forthwith to establish the identity of this "Barnasha."

Before finding out who this Son-of-Man is; it is but essential

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that we should take into consideration the following points and observations:—

(a) When a Hebrew Prophet predicts that “ all the nations and peoples of the earth shall serve him ” (i.e. the Barnasha) or “ the people of the Saints of the Most High,” we must understand that he means thereby the nations mentioned in Genesis xv. 18–21, and not the English, the French, or the Chinese nations.

(b) By the phrase “ the people of the Saints of the Most High ” it is understood to mean first the Jews and then the Christians who confessed the absolute unity of God, fought and suffered for it until the appearance of the Barnasha and the destruction of the Horn.

(c) After the destruction of the Horn the peoples and the nations that will have to serve the Saints of God are the Chaldeans, Medo-Persians, Greeks, and the Romans—the four nations represented by the four beasts that had trod upon and invaded the Holy Land.

From the Adriatic to the Walls of China all the various nations have either as Muslims received the homage, or as unbelievers served the Muslims, who are the only true believers in the One God.

(d) It is remarkable to realize the significant fact that God often allows the enemies of His true religion to subdue and persecute His people because of two purposes. First, because he wants to punish His people for their lethargy, drawbacks and sins. Secondly, because He wishes to prove the faith, the patience and the indestructibility of His Law and Religion, and thus to allow the infidels to continue in their unbelief and crime until their cup is full. God in due time Himself intervenes on behalf of the believers when their very existence is on its beam-ends. It was a terrible and most critical time for all Muslims when the Allied Forces were in Constantinople during those awful years of the Armistice. Great preparations were made by the Greeks and their friends to take back the Grand Mosque of Aya Sophia; the Greek Patriarch of Constantinople went to London carrying with him a precious ancient patriarchal cope set in gems and pearls for the Archbishop of Canterbury, who was strenuously advocating the restoration

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of Constantinople and the grand edifice of St. Sophia to the Greeks. On the eve of the Prophet's night journey to Heaven—called *al-mi'rāj*—the sacred building was crammed with a great multitude of the suppliant faithful who till the dawn most earnestly supplicated the Almighty Allah to deliver Turkey, and particularly the Sacred House, from those who "would fill it with ugly idols and images as before!" In connection with that patriarchal mantle or cope, I wrote an article in the Turkish paper the *Aqshām*, showing the existence of a schism between the Greek Orthodox and the Protestant Anglican Churches. I pointed out that the cope was not meant as a pallium of investiture and recognition of the Anglican orders, and that a reunion between the two Churches could never be accomplished unless one or the other of the parties should renounce and abjure certain articles of faith as heretical and erroneous. I also pointed out that the cope was a diplomatic bribe on behalf of Greece and its Church. The letter ended with these words: "All depends upon the grace and miracle which this *bakhshish* of a pontifical cope is expected to work!"

The result is too well known to be repeated here. Suffice it to say that the Patriarch died in England, and the Almighty, who sent the Barnasha to crush the Horn and chase out the legions of Rome from the East, raised Mustaphā Kamāl, who saved his country and restored the honour of Islam!

(e) It is to be noted that the Jews were the chosen people of God until the advent of Jesus Christ. In the eyes of the Muslims neither the Jews nor the Christians have a right to claim the title of "the People of the Saints of the Most High," because the former reject Jesus altogether, while the latter insult him by deifying him. Moreover, both are equally unworthy of that title because of their refusing to recognize the Last Prophet who has completed the list of the Prophets.

We shall now proceed to prove that the Barnasha—the Son-of-Man—who was presented to the "Ancient of Days" and invested with power to kill the monster, was no other than Muhammad, whose very name literally means "the Praised and Illustrious." Whatever other person you may try to invent in order to deprive the august Apostle of Allah

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of this unique glory and majesty bestowed on him in the Divine Court, you will only make yourselves ridiculous; and this for the following reasons:—

1. We know that neither Judaism nor Christianity has any particular name for its faith and its system. That is to say, neither the Jews nor the Christians have any special name for the doctrines and forms of their faith and worship. "Judaism" and "Christianity" are not Scriptural nor authorized either by God or the founders of those religions. *In fact, a religion, if true, cannot properly be named after its second founder, for the real author and founder of a true religion is God, and not a Prophet.* Now the proper noun for the laws, doctrines, forms and practices of worship as revealed by Allah to Muhammad is "Islām," which means "making peace" with Him and among men. "Muhammadanism" is not the proper appellation of Islam. For Muhammad, like Abraham and all other Prophets, was himself a Muslim, and not a Muhammadan! Judaism means the religion of Judah, but what was Judah himself? Surely not a Judaist! And similarly, was Christ a Christian or a Jesuit? Certainly neither of them! What were, then, the names of these two distinct religions? No names at all!

Then we have the barbarous Latin word "religion," meaning "the fear of the gods." It is now used to express "any mode of faith and worship." Now what is the equivalent word for "religion" in the Bible? What expression did Moses or Jesus use to convey the meaning of religion? Of course, the Bible and its authors make no use of this word at all.

Now the Scriptural term used in the vision of Daniel is the same as applied repeatedly by the Qur-án to Islām, namely, "Dīna" (and in the Qur-án, "Dīn"), which means "judgment." God on His "Korsiya" or throne is the "Dayyana" or the "Judge." Let us read the description of this celestial Court of Judgment: "the tribunes are set, the books are opened, and the 'Dīna'—judgment—is established." By the "Books" is to be understood the "Preserved Table" wherein the decrees of God are inscribed from which the Qur-án was transcribed and revealed by the Angel Gabriel to Muhammad; and also the books of accounts of every man's

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actions. It was according to the decrees and laws of God contained in that "Preserved Table," and the wicked actions of the Horn, that the Great "Dayyana"—the Judge—condemned it to death and appointed Muhammad to be "Adon," i.e. "Commander" or "Lord," to destroy the monster. All this language of Daniel is extremely Qur-ānic. The religion of Islām is called "Dīnu 'l-Islām." It was according to the decrees and laws of this "Dīna" that the "Barnasha" destroyed the Devil's religion and his lieutenant the Horn. How can it, then, be at all possible that any man other than Muhammad could be meant by the appearance of a "Son-of-Man" in the presence of the Most High? Islām is, indeed, a "judgment of peace," because it possesses an authenticated Book of Law, with which justice is administered and iniquity punished, the truth discerned and the falsehood condemned; and above all, the unity of God, the eternal rewards for good deeds, and eternal damnation for wicked actions are clearly stated and defined. In English a magistrate is called "Justice of Peace"; that is to say, a "judge of peace." Now this is in imitation of a Muslim judge, who settles a quarrel, decides a case, by punishing the guilty and rewarding the innocent, thus restoring peace. This is Islām and the law of the Qur-ān. It is not Christianity nor the Gospel, for the latter absolutely forbids a Christian to appeal to a judge, however innocent and oppressed he may be (Matt. v. 25, 26, 38-48).

2. The Son-of-Man, or Barnasha, is certainly Muhammad. For he came after Constantine, and not before him as Jesus or any other Prophet did. The Trinitarian régime in the East represented by the Horn, which we rightly identify with Constantine the Great, was permitted to fight with the Unitarians and vanquish them for a period described in the figurative, prophetic language as "time, times and half a time," which phrase signifies three centuries and a half, at the end of which all the power of idolatry on the one hand and the Trinitarian dominion and tyranny on the other were eradicated and swept away entirely. There is nothing more absurd than the assertion that Judah the Maccabæus (Maqbhaya) was the Barnasha on the clouds, and the Horn Antiochus. It is alleged that (if I remember aright) Antiochus,

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after desecrating the Temple of Jerusalem, lived only three years and a half—or three days and a half—at the end of which time he perished. In the first place, we know that Antiochus was a successor of Alexander the Great and King of Syria, consequently one of the four heads of the winged Tiger and not the eleventh Horn of the fourth Beast as stated in the vision. In the eighth chapter of the Book of Daniel, the Ram and the He-goat are explained by a Saint as representing the Persian and the Greek Empires respectively. It is expressly explained that the Greek Empire immediately succeeded the Persian and that it was divided into four kingdoms, as stated in the first vision. Secondly, the Horn with the speech indicates that the person who blasphemed and changed the Law and holy days could not be a pagan, but one who knew God and associated with Him purposely the other two persons whom he had equally known, and perverted the faith. Antiochus did not pervert the faith of the Jews by instituting a trinity or plurality of Gods, nor did he change the Law of Moses and its festival days. Thirdly, it is childish to give such a magnitude and importance to local and insignificant events which took place between a petty king in Syria and a small Jewish chief, so as to compare the latter with the glorious man who received the homage of the millions of angels in the presence of the Almighty. Moreover, the prophetic vision describes and depicts the Barnasha as the greatest and the noblest of all men, for no other human being is reported in the Old Testament to have been the object of such honour and grandeur as Muhammad.

3. It is equally futile to claim for Jesus Christ this celestial honour given to the Son-of-Man. There are two main reasons to exclude Jesus from this honour: (a) If he is purely a man and prophet, and if we consider his work a success or failure, then he is certainly far behind Muhammad. But if he is believed to be the third of the three in the Trinity, then he is not to be enlisted among men at all. You fall into a dilemma, and you cannot get out of it; for in either case the Barnasha could not be Jesus. (b) If Jesus was commissioned to destroy the fourth Beast, then instead of paying poll-tax or tribute to Cæsar and submitting himself to be bastinadoed or whipped

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by the Roman governor Pilate, he would have chased away the Roman legions from Palestine and saved his country and people.

4. There has never lived upon this earth a Prince-Prophet like Muhammad, who belonged to a dynasty that reigned for a long period of about 2,500 years, was absolutely independent and never bent its neck under a foreign yoke. And certainly there has never been seen on earth another man like Muhammad, who has rendered more material and moral service to his own nation in particular and to the world in general. It is impossible to imagine another human being so dignified and so worthy as Muhammad for such a magnificent glory and honour as depicted in the prophetic vision. Let us just compare the great Prophet Daniel with the Barnasha he was beholding with awe and wonder. Daniel was a slave or captive, though raised to the dignity of a vizier in the courts of Babylon and Susa; he worshipped an angel, but was forbidden. What would, in the presence of the Almighty, be his position when compared with Muhammad, who would be crowned as the Sultan of the Prophets, the Leader of mankind, and the object of the angels' homage and admiration? Small wonder that the Prophet David calls Muhammad "My Lord" (Psa. c. 10).

5. It is no wonder to find that on his night-journey to Heaven Muhammad was received with the highest honours by the Almighty and invested with power to extirpate idolatry and the blasphemous Horn from countries given by God to him and to his people as an everlasting heritage.

6. Another most amazing feature in this prophetic vision is, according to my humble belief, that the sight of a Barnasha upon the clouds and his presentation to the Almighty corresponds with and is simultaneous with the Mi'rāj—or night journey of the Prophet Muhammad; in other words, this second part of the vision of Daniel is to be identified with the Mi'rāj! There are, indeed, several indications both in the language of Daniel and in the Sacred "Hadith"—or traditions of the Apostle of Allah—which lead me to this belief. The Qur-án declares that during that night-journey God transported His servant from the Sacred Mosque at Mecca to the Farther Temple of Jerusalem. He blessed the precincts

of that Temple, then in ruins, and showed him His signs (chap. xvii.).

It is related by the Holy Prophet that at the Temple of Jerusalem he officiated in his capacity of the Imam, and conducted the prayers with all the company of the Prophets following him. It is further related that it was from Jerusalem that he was carried up unto the Seventh Heaven, being accompanied by the spirits of the Prophets and Angels until he was taken to the presence of the Eternal. The modesty of the Prophet which forbade him to reveal all that he saw, heard and received from the Lord of Hosts is made good by Daniel, who narrates the decision of God's judgment. It appears that the Spirit which interpreted the vision to Daniel was not an Angel, as thoughtlessly remarked by me elsewhere, but the Spirit or the Soul of a Prophet, for he calls "Qāddīsh" (in the masculine gender) and "Qaddush" (iv. 10; viii. 13), which means a Saint or a Holy Man—a very usual name of the Prophets and Saints. How glad must have been the holy souls of the Prophets and the Martyrs who had been persecuted by those four beasts, especially more so when they saw the decree of death being pronounced by the Almighty against the Trinitarian régime of Constantine and the Seal of the Prophets being commissioned to kill and annihilate the uttering Horn! It will also be remembered that this vision was seen as well during the same night in which took place the journey of the Barnasha from Mecca to the heavens!

From the testimony of Daniel we, as Muslims, must admit that Muhammad's journey was corporeally performed—a thing of no impossibility to the Omnipotent. There must exist a law in physics according to which a body is not controlled by the main body to which it belongs, or by the law of gravitation, but by the law of velocity. A human body belonging to the earth cannot escape from it unless a superior force of velocity should detach it from the force of gravitation. Then there must also exist another law in physics according to which a light body can penetrate into a thick one and a thick body into an even still thicker or harder one through the means of a superior force, or simply through the force of velocity. Without entering into the details of this subtle question,



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suffice it to say that before the force of velocity the weight of a solid body, whether moved or touched, is of no concern. We know the rate of the velocity of the light from the sun or a star. If we discharge a bullet at the rate, say, of 2,500 metres a second, we know it penetrates and pierces a body of iron plate which is several inches thick. Similarly, an angel, who can move with an infinitely greater velocity than that of the light of the sun and even the thought in the mind, could, of course, transport the bodies of Jesus, Muhammad and Elijah with an astounding facility and rapidity, and set at nought the law of gravitation of the globe to which they belonged.

St. Paul also mentions a vision he had seen fourteen years before of a man who had been taken up unto the third heaven and then unto Paradise, where he heard and saw words and objects that could not be described. The Churches and their commentators have believed this man to be St. Paul himself. Although the language is such as to convey to us the idea that he himself is the man, yet out of modesty it is that he keeps it a secret lest he should be considered a proud man (2 Cor. xii. 1-4). Although the Qur-án teaches us that the Apostles of Jesus Christ were all holy and inspired men, yet their writings cannot be relied upon, because the wrangling and disputant Churches have subjected them to interpolations. The Gospel of St. Barnabas states that Paul afterwards fell into an error and misled many of the believers.

That Paul does not reveal the identity of the person seen by him in the vision, and that the words which he heard in Paradise "cannot be spoken and no man is permitted to speak them," shows that Paul was not himself the person who was taken up to Heaven. To say that Paul, for reason of humility and out of modesty, does not praise himself is simply to misrepresent Paul. He boasts of having rebuked St. Peter to his face, and his epistles are full of expressions about himself which do rather confirm the idea that Paul was neither humble nor modest.

Besides, we know from his writings to the Galatians and the Romans what a prejudiced Jew he was against Hagar and her son Ishmael. The glorious person he saw in his vision

could be no other than the person seen by Daniel! It was Muhammad that he saw, and durst not report the words which were spoken to him by the Almighty because on the one hand he was afraid of the Jews, and because on the other he would have contradicted himself for having glorified himself so much with the Cross and the Crucified. I am half convinced that Paul was allowed to see the Barnasha whom Daniel had seen some six centuries before, but "the angel of Satan who was continually pouring blows upon his head" (2 Cor. xii. 7) forbade him to reveal the truth! It is an admission by Paul that "the angel of Satan," as he calls him, prohibited him from revealing the secret of Muhammad, whom he had seen in his vision. If Paul was a true and righteous servant of God, why was he delivered into the hands of the "angel of the Devil" who was continually beating him on the head? The more one reflects on the teachings of Paul, the less one doubts that he was the prototype of Constantine the Great!

In conclusion, I may be permitted to draw a moral for the non-Muslims from this wonderful vision of Daniel. They should take to heart a lesson from the fate which befell the four beasts, and particularly the Horn, and to reflect that Allah alone is the One True God; that the Muslims alone faithfully profess His absolute Unity; that He is aware of their oppressions, and that they have their Sultan of the Prophets near to the Throne of the Most High.

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### EUROPE'S DEBT TO ISLAM:

By DR. GUSTAV DIERCKS, PH.D.

(Continued from the November number, p. 418.)

#### THE RELIGION OF THE ANCIENT ARABS AND THE NEED OF A RELIGIOUS REFORMATION

ULTIMATELY we find among the Arabs, just as much as among the Israelites and other Semites, a fairly developed tree-cult. Long-lived trees, such as the oak, the turpentine and the

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tamarind, could readily be taken as typifying certain aspects of revelation of the deity; and later, especially at the time when a lower sort of fetishism was abroad, they were worshipped as in themselves divine. The Arabs also believed that the powers of the stars to which such trees were dedicated were vouchsafed to the trees also.

It has been supposed that trees were planted on historical sites to commemorate events which had thus taken place, and that gradually they had become elevated to the status of a fetish. The palm affords us an illuminating reason for the origin of the tree-cult in general, and, in particular, of the special cult centred on itself. Although the palm is essentially a tree of the desert, yet it can only thrive in a place where there is water—in other words, where there is arable soil. The considerations which led man to worship it were twofold: first, because the palm alone it is which can not only survive but thrive in the full blaze of the sun in those regions, and consequently might well be held to be in some way connected with the sun; and secondly, because its very presence is a sure indication that fertile soil is to be found in its immediate neighbourhood. Now the original Semitic term for the palm is *el*; and the selfsame word is used to name the heavenly Original Power, which has been often enough identified with the sun. It is but natural, then, that the palm should have had many other names in Arabic. For example, *Tamr*, which is the same as the Hebrew *Tamar*, gave to the town of Tadmāor the name which the Romans quite rightly translated as Palmyra. But the Greeks called the date-palm and its fruit “*phoenix*.” The same word nevertheless denoted—except among the Phœnicians—the colour purple, and a bird—to wit, the Egyptian miraculous bird, which was the symbol of the sun-deity. Exactly in the same way has the sun been conceived under the similitude of an eagle and the like avian figures. We can therefore safely draw the conclusion that, to the Arabs, the palm stood for the tree of divinity; and the very fact that it directed man to the place where he could make his habitation was enough to show its divine nature.

The principal centre of the cult was Zū-Riyām—the hub of the Sabean god-worship—where there was a temple and an

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established place of pilgrimage; others being Mina, 'Okāz and Mecca. All the religious ceremonies related to the various cults of the Arabs show there existed strong signs of affinity between themselves and those of the other Semitic peoples; and the cult of the festival of Mecca, which specially inspired Dozy to institute comparisons between that feast and those of the ancient Hebrews, and the result of his labours he has set down in his book *The Israelites in Mecca*. According to him, it is most probable that the holy place of Mecca was founded by the Israelites, or, to be more exact, by the tribe of Simeon, in the days of King David. These Simeonites, whom he looks upon as being identical with the Jurhumites of the Arabian tradition, were condemned, seeing that they had not led a thorough expedition against the Amalekites, to leave their homelands. They must have spread themselves across the adjacent provinces, and especially over the peninsula of Arabia, thus introducing the Old-Hebraic cults into Mecca. After the Babylonian Captivity there is said to have come to Mecca one more great influx of Israelites—the second Jurhumites of the Arabs; and down to the minutest detail Dozy shows how the ceremonies of the earlier period—nay, even those which are observed by the Meccan pilgrims—agree with the corresponding Israelitish ceremonies, and that those of the Arabs have completely lost their original significance. As far as the monotheistic belief of certain of the sects (especially that of the *Hanīfs*) before Muhammad, which has been described as the *Dīn* of Abraham, is concerned, we must not understand by this the “Faith of Abraham,” but rather the Faith of the Hebrews. How far Dozy is right must be left for further research to decide finally on the strength of the invaluable indications given by him. But when all is said, the influence exercised by the Israelitish religion at all times on the belief of the Arabs in all their phases of evolution must needs have been very great; indeed, the number of those Israelites who lived on the peninsula must have been itself very great, seeing that entire tribes had been completely won over to the religion of Moses. Much less marked were the effects of the Zoroastrian teachings on the belief of the Arabs in the pre-Islamic period. Even if we were to allow that the north-eastern tribes of

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Arabia were in constant and direct intercourse with the Chaldeans, with the North Mesopotamian and Irānian peoples, the influence which the religions of the latter exerted did not go very much farther than the north-east of the peninsula. Most of the traces of Zoroastrianism which we encounter in the codes of the *Hanīfs* and in Islam had been introduced through the channels of Jewish belief, according to the form it took after the Babylonian Exile and of Christianity, which, in a similar way, owing to its Mosaic bases (and in part even directly), had assimilated to itself much of the teachings and ideas associated with Zoroaster.

Both these religions, the Jewish and the Christian, in the last centuries before and in the first after Christ, contributed their share towards the culmination of chaos in Arabian religious ideas. In particular should be mentioned the sects, such as the Essenes, which, differing from the orthodox codes of belief, sought shelter in Arabia and then endeavoured to spread their ideas. In the latter respect their efforts remained unfruitful; for their teachings did not sufficiently grapple with the circumstances under which the Arabs lived. But they, like the monotheistic *Dīn* of Abraham, which over and over again tried to make its way, did actually go far towards serving as a foundation on which the Arabian sectaries could build. They had realized the importance of a reformation of the intolerable antediluvian, uncouth cults of the Arabs. It was for this reason that they had been scouted as *Hanīfs*, heretics, by the orthodox idol-worshippers of the period from the fourth to the sixth century after Christ. Far from accepting the Mosaic teachings or those of Christianity, they paved the way, by means of their strong fundamental teachings of monotheism, for the Islam of Muhammad. It was they who propounded the cult of the invisible One-God in such a way that Muhammad could retain it in its principal features. With all their might they worked for the abolition of such individual survivals of barbarism as still remained of the old régime, especially the murder of girls. If it be true to say that infanticide amongst a few of the tribes had been virtually recognized as a religious sacrifice, acceptable to the idols—a custom whereof the roots are to be traced to the same ideas which had given rise amongst other

Semitic peoples to human sacrifice, self-mutilation and other kindred manifestations—then it should not be forgotten that the murdering of girls in general, notwithstanding the fact that some higher motives may have gone a long way to determine it, is to be imputed also to causes other than purely religious ones. The fact that it was, as a rule, the poor and destitute among the Bedouins who sometimes buried the new-born daughters alive, shows that poverty may be held, in part at least, accountable for a proceeding which, according to our ideas, suggests a state of the lowest mental depravity. Not so much the fear that the family might become too large as the consideration that if the family were to grow too large its girls would, in times of war, be easy victims to the ravisher, was most probably the cause for a custom, which, according to our standard, is inhuman. Several *Hanīfs* like Zaid bin 'Amr and Waraqa bin Naufal worked zealously against it; but to abolish it completely has been the merit of Muhammad alone.

The endeavours of the *Hanīfs* to reform such a state of affairs gained in energy, especially after the penetration of the Christian belief from Abyssinia. When its kings conquered Yamen in 530 and extended their rule up to Mecca, the influence exerted by the *Hanīfs* on the masses that were not at all willing to serve the foreign African rulers grew mightily. With the help of the powerful Persian King Chosroes I, the Ethiopians were once more driven from Arabian soil in 576.

Now, if the condition of the peninsula during the sixth century be considered from the religious standpoint, we find it to be one of utter hopelessness and uncertainty, due, no doubt, in great measure to sheer moral instability. No one knew to which God to turn, and idol-worship and crude fetishism grew with sinister rapidity. Considered from the political point of view, the population of the peninsula, which had never been a national entity, was more than ever divided and embittered by the demon of blood-revenge in a most frightful manner. This state of affairs must needs create a thorough reform movement from within, and just as, six hundred years earlier, similar circumstances had given rise to Christianity, in the same way appeared in Arabia the religion of Islam, borne by the powerful personality of Muhammad.

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The Semites had already created two religions of the highest importance: the Mosaic and the Christian. It was from them also that the religion of Islam, the youngest of the world-religions, had its birth. Once again it was monotheistic—nay, a religion which laid a much greater stress on the *oneness* of the God-concept than had the others. It is here that we find the great contrast which lies between the peoples of the Indo-Germanic and the Semitic races, and which has made itself manifest in all the branches of their cultures, their views of life, their outlook on the world, and in their languages.

*(To be continued.)*

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## ISLAM'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS WOMEN AND ORPHANS

By C. A. SOORMA

*(Continued from the November number, p. 415.)*

### CHAPTER XIII

#### DUTIES OF GUARDIANS

The duties of guardians towards orphans are made clear from the following verses:—

- (a) "And give the orphans their property, and do not substitute worthless (things) for (their) good (ones), and do not devour their property (as an addition to your own property); this is surely a great crime", (iv. 2).
- (b) "And do not give away your property which Allah has made for you (a means) of support to the weak of understanding, and maintain them out of (the profits of) it, and clothe them and speak to them words of honest advice", (iv. 5).

By "your property" in the above verse is meant the property of the orphans which is under the guardian's control. The above verse lays down the principle of the Court of Wards.

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It requires guardianship in the case of all who are of weak understanding, whether minors or others.

- (c) "And test the orphans until they attain puberty; then if you find in them maturity of intellect, make over to them their property, and do not consume it hastily and extravagantly, lest they attain to full age; and whoever is rich, let him abstain altogether, and whoever is poor, let him eat reasonably; then when you make over to them their property, call witnesses in their presence; and Allah is enough as a Reckoner", (iv. 6).

The above verse enjoins on the guardians the duty of preserving the property of minors, and not to waste it, so that when they attain puberty the *corpus* of the property may be given over to them intact. When the guardian is well-to-do, he is asked not to take any remuneration for his services in looking after his ward's property. On the other hand, when he is poor the law allows him reasonable wages which must be commensurate with the value of the property and also with the nature of its management. The calling of witnesses when the guardian hands over the property to the ward is necessary to avoid disputes and litigation. But if the trustee has been clever enough to conceal his breaches of trust, then he is warned that "Allah is enough as a Reckoner"; that is to say, He knows, and as such he would be punished.

- (d) "And when there are present at the division the relatives and the *orphans* and the needy, give them (something) out of it, and speak to them kind words", (iv. 8).
- (e) "(As for) those who swallow the property of the *orphans* unjustly, surely they only swallow fire into their bellies, and they shall enter burning fire", (iv. 10).

The above verses indicate the enormity of the offence of breaches of trust on the part of guardians. The Qur-án enjoins scrupulous honesty on all, more so on guardians. These and



## ISLAM'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS WOMEN

similar verses were necessary to protect the poor orphans, who were mostly women, from the tyranny of brutal and selfish relatives and guardians in the days of ignorance.

### CHAPTER XIV

#### TREATMENT OF WOMEN

Turning our attention to the treatment of women, the Qur-ân says:—

- (a) “ And as for those who are guilty of an indecency from among your women, call to witness against them four (witnesses) from among you; then if they bear witness, confine them to the houses until death takes them away or Allah opens some way for them ”, (iv. 15).

Maulvi Muhammad Ali, commenting on the above verse, says:—

“ *Al-fahishah* signifies anything *exceeding the bounds of rectitude* (gross, immodest, lewd, obscene); and *fahishah*, or *exceeding the bounds of rectitude*, in women may mean their going out without permission or their using foul language. Though the word is no doubt used sometimes as meaning *fornication*, the context shows that here it is used to signify any immoral conduct *short of fornication*, for the punishment of fornication is given elsewhere (xxiv. 2, 3), and the words of the verse that follows, referring as they do to the same immoral act as is mentioned here, with the indefinite nature of punishment, which in the case of an act short of fornication could not be made definite and to be varied with the nature of the crime, strengthens this position. The punishment in the case of women is the curtailing of their liberty, so that they should not be free to go out of their houses. If they then mend their ways, a way is opened for them by Allah and they regain their liberty; if they do not, the curtailment should be extended till they die. There is no proof for Palmer's assertion that “ women taken in adultery or fornication were, at the beginning of Islam, literally immured ”, (Muhammad Ali, *Holy Qur-ân*, p. 204).

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- (b) " And as for the two who are guilty of *indecent* from among you, give them both a *slight punishment*; then if they repent and amend, turn aside from them, surely Allah is oft returning (to mercy), the Merciful ", (iv. 16).

Here the verse clearly means both the man and the woman, and thus the nature of the punishment is again left indefinite to vary with the nature of the offence committed.

- (c) " O you who believe! it is not lawful for you that you should *take women as heritage* against (their) will; and do not straiten them in order that you may take part of what you have given them, unless they are guilty of manifest indecent; *and treat them kindly*; then if you hate them, it may be that you dislike a thing while Allah has placed abundant good in it ", (iv. 19).
- (d) " And marry not women whom your fathers married, except what has already passed; this surely is indecent and hateful, and it is an evil way ", (iv. 22).

If we analyse the above two verses, we get the following rules:—

- (1) They deny the right of the heir to inherit the deceased man's widows, which, as we have noticed, existed among the pre-Islamic Arabs.
- (2) They deny the right of the heir to deprive the widows of their dowry unless they were guilty of hatred and desertion of the husband, or of doing harm to the husband and his family. In such cases, the fault being on the part of the woman, she may be required to return her dowry wholly or in part, (Muhammad Ali, *op. cit.*, pp. 205-6).
- (3) The heirs of the deceased are commanded to treat the widows with kindness, and not to despise them.
- (e) " And if you wish to have (one) wife in the place of *another* and you have given one of them a heap of gold, then take not from it anything; would you take it by slandering (her) and (doing her) manifest wrong? " (iv. 20).

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- (f) " And how can you take it when one of you has already gone in to the other and they have made with you a firm covenant? " (iv. 21).

Both the above verses remedy another evil which was common in the days of ignorance. It was notorious that if a married man desired to marry another woman, he would accuse his first wife of gross immorality, thus compelling her to obtain a divorce by paying a large sum of money. This would be a breach of the marriage covenant, and the Qur-án rightly forbade it.

It is also noteworthy that the Qur-án lays great stress on the fair name and reputation of women. For instance, it says:—

- (g) " And *those who accuse free women*, then do not bring four witnesses, flog them (giving) eighty stripes, and do not admit any evidence from them ever; and these it is that are the transgressors ", (xxiv. 4).

Here the accusation is against *unmarried* women, and the punishment for it is prescribed, which is severe. The following two verses deal with the accusation of the wife by the husband and *vice versa*:—

- (h) " And (as for) *those who accuse their wives* and have no witnesses except themselves, the evidence of one of these (should be taken) four times, bearing Allah to witness that he is most surely of the truthful ones ", (xxiv. 6).
- (i) " And the fifth (time) that the curse of Allah be on him if he is one of the liars ", (xxiv. 7).
- (j) " And it shall avert the chastisement from her if she testify four times, bearing Allah to witness that he is most surely one of the liars ", (xxiv. 8).
- (k) " And the fifth (time) that the wrath of Allah be on her if he is one of the truthful ", (xxiv. 9).

Verses (h) to (k) relate to cases when either the husband or the wife accuses the other of infidelity but cannot produce witnesses in proof of his or her allegation. In such a case a

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divorce is effected, as neither party is punishable for the accusation, which is based simply on oath against oath. In this connection it must be noted that if the husband accuses his wife of infidelity the wife may claim divorce *by a suit*, but *laan*, or the mere imprecation or accusation does not *ipso facto* operate as a divorce, (Mulla, *Mahomedan Law*, p. 188).

- (1) "Men are the *maintainers* (*Qawwamun*) of women, because Allah has made some of them to excel others and because they spend out of their property; the good women are therefore obedient, guarding the unseen as Allah has guarded; and (as to) those on whose part you fear desertion, admonish them, and leave them alone in the sleeping-places and beat them; then if they obey you, do not seek a way against them; surely Allah is High, Great", (iv. 34).

This verse is often quoted to prove that the Prophet treated women unfairly by giving men superior powers and rights. Let me give you its commentary by Muhammad Ali:—

"The significance of *qawwam* means *he maintained* her and managed her affair, having charge of her affair; hence he is said to be her *qawwam*, i.e. *maintainer*. Similarly, it means *he maintained the orphan or the child*. Hence by the men being *qawwamun* is only meant that they are the maintainers of women, and the reason given is that Allah has made some to excel others, i.e. the man excels the woman in constitution and physique, while the woman excels the man in beauty and delicacy of structure. . . . Obedience here signifies obedience to Allah. This significance of the verse is made clear by a comparison with xxxiii. 31 and 35; and lxvi. 5. The guarding of the unseen is a euphemism *for guarding the husband's rights*. The two justifications of a good wife, as given here, are her piety or obedience to Allah and chastity, i.e. she must be careful of her duty to Allah and to her husband. . . . The remedy pointed out when the wife's desertion is feared is threefold. At first she is only to be admonished. If she desists, the evil is mended, but if she persists in the wrong course her bed is to be separated. If she still persists, chastisement is permitted *as a last resort*. Regarding this last

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remedy two things must, however, be borne in mind. Firstly, it is a mere permission, and sayings of the Holy Prophet make it clear that, though allowed, it was discouraged in practice. Thus the Prophet is reported (by Iman Fakhruddin Razi) to have said, on the complaint of certain women as to ill-treatment by their husbands: '*You will not find these men as the best among you.*' According to Shafai, it is preferable not to resort to the chastisement of the wife. In fact, as the injunctions of the Qur-án are wide in their scope, the example of the Holy Prophet and his constant exhortations for kind treatment towards women, so much so that he made a man's good treatment of his wife the gauge of his goodness in general—'*the best of you is he who is best to his wife*'—show clearly that this permission is meant only for that type of men and women who belong to a low grade of society. Secondly, even this permission cannot be adopted indiscriminately, for sayings of the Holy Prophet make it quite evident that chastisement, when resorted to in extreme cases, must be very slight. I'Ab says that it may be with a tooth-brush (called *Khilal*) or something like it", (Muhammad Ali, *op. cit.*, pp. 211-12).

In this connection I may point out the view of English Common Law on the right of the husband to chastise his wife. Blackstone, writing in the eighteenth century, says:—

"The husband also (by the old law) might give his wife moderate correction. For, as he is to answer for her misbehaviour, the law thought it reasonable to intrust him with this power of restraining her, by domestic chastisement, in the same moderation that a man is allowed to correct his apprentices or children; for whom the master or parent is also liable in some cases to answer. But this power of correction was confined within reasonable bounds, and the husband was prohibited from using any violence to his wife. . . . The *Civil Law* gave the husband the same, or a *larger*, authority over his wife; allowing him for some misdemeanours *flagellis et fustibus acriter verberare uxorem* (i.e. *a husband may beat his wife with whips or cudgels sharply*). But with us, in the politer reign of Charles the Second, this power of correction began to be doubted, and a wife may now have security of the peace against her husband; or, in return, a husband against his wife.

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Yet the lower rank of people, who were always fond of the old Common Law, still claim, and exert, their ancient privilege; *and the courts of law will still permit a husband to restrain a wife of her liberty*, in case of any gross misbehaviour", (Blackstone, *Commentaries on the Laws of England*, vol. i. p. 444).

Clearly, then, this permissive use of chastisement in the time of Muhammad among a savage and barbarous people was considered necessary. To-day, just as in England this right has become a "mere legal curiosity," so in almost all Islamic countries the power of chastisement has fallen into decay and never exercised as of right.

### CHAPTER XV

#### MARRIAGE IN ISLAM

Concerning the question of marriage the Qur-án says :—

- (a) "*Forbidden to you are your mothers and your daughters and your sisters and your paternal and maternal aunts and brothers' daughters and sisters' daughters and your mothers that have suckled you and your foster-sisters and mothers of your wives and your step-daughters who are in your guardianship, (born) of your wives to whom you have gone in ; but if you have not gone in to them, there is no blame on you (in marrying them), and the wives of your sons who are of your own loins, and that you should have two sisters together, except what has already passed; surely Allah is forgiving, Merciful*", (iv. 23).

When dealing with the conditions prevailing in Arabia before Islam, we observed that the limits of relationship within which marriage was prohibited were narrow and defined only by the closest degree of consanguinity. Those among them that followed the Magian religion married even their own daughters and sisters. All this the Qur-án forbids, and defines the limits of marriage quite clearly.

- (b) "*And all married women except those whom your right hands possess : this is Allah's ordinance to you;*

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and *lawful* for you are (all women) besides those, provided that you seek (them) with your property, taking (them) in marriage not committing fornication. Then as to those whom you profit by (by marrying) give them their dowries as appointed ; and there is no blame on you about what you mutually agree after what is appointed (of dowry) ; surely Allah is Knowing, Wise ", (iv. 24).

The above verse prohibits marriage with women who are already married to *Muslims*. By the phrase "except those whom your right hands possess" is meant female captives of war. The Qur-án legalizes marriage with such women even though they may be married at the time of their capture, *provided they become Muslims*, since Islam forbids marriage with an idolatress, by the verse (ii. 221) which opens—" *And do not marry the idolatresses until they believe . . .*"

- (c) " And whoever among you has not within his power ampleness of means to marry free believing women, then (he may marry) of those whom your right hands possess from among your believing maidens ; and Allah knows best your faith. You are (sprung) one from the other ; so *marry them* with the permission of their masters, *and give them their dowries* justly, they being chaste, *not fornicating, nor receiving paramours* ; and when they are taken in marriage, then if they are guilty of indecency, they shall suffer half the punishment which is inflicted upon free women. This is for him among you who fears falling into evil ; and that you abstain is better for you, and Allah is Forgiving, Merciful ", (iv. 25).

The above verse may be analysed, and means as follows :—

- (1) Maiden captives of war may be married if they become Muslims, when the man is poor and cannot afford to marry a free-born woman.
- (2) If such maidens belong to others, then the permission of their masters is necessary.
- (3) *Marriage* with such maidens is made obligatory and also the giving of dowries.

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- (4) The taking of such maidens as *concubines* or *mistresses* is forbidden, as it would be fornication, which is expressly forbidden by this verse.

This verse clearly destroys the common charge hurled at Islam, that it sanctions concubinage. Nothing can be clearer than the words "not fornicating, nor receiving paramours." Again the following verses may be cited to show that Islam forbids concubinage in the clearest terms :—

- (a) " And marry those among you who are single *and those who are fit among your male slaves and female slaves* ; if they are needy, Allah will make them free from want out of His Grace ; and Allah is Amply-giving, Knowing ", (xxiv. 32).
- (b) " And let those who do not find *a match keep chaste* until Allah makes them free from want out of His Grace . . . *and do not compel your slave-girls to prostitution, when they desire to keep chaste in order to seek the frail good of this world's life* ", (xxiv. 33).

Reverting to chap. iv. 25, given above, we may note the remaining characteristic :—

- (5) If such maidens when married be guilty of an indecency, then only half the punishment that is normally inflicted on free women may be inflicted upon them, the reason being that their captivity is enough punishment for them, and the full penalty of the law need not be enforced.

*(To be continued.)*

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# WHAT IS ISLAM?

## WHAT IS ISLAM ?

[The following is a very brief account of Islam, and some of its teaching. For further details please write to the IMÁM of the Mosque, Woking.]

**ISLAM, THE RELIGION OF PEACE.**—The word Islam literally means: (1) Peace; (2) the way to achieve peace; (3) submission; as submission to another's will is the safest course to establish peace. The word in its religious sense signifies complete submission to the Will of God.

**OBJECT OF THE RELIGION.**—Islam provides its followers with the perfect code whereby they may work out what is noble and good in man, and thus maintain peace between man and man.

**THE PROPHETS OF ISLAM.**—Muhammad, popularly known as the Prophet of Islam, was, however, the last Prophet of the Faith. Muslims, i.e. the followers of Islam, accept all such of the world's prophets, including Abraham, Moses and Jesus, as revealed the Will of God for the guidance of humanity.

**THE QUR-ÁN.**—The Gospel of the Muslim is the Qur-án. Muslims believe in the Divine origin of every other sacred book, but, inasmuch as all such previous revelations have become corrupted through human interpolation, the Qur-án, the last Book of God, came as a recapitulation of the former Gospels.

**ARTICLES OF FAITH IN ISLAM.**—These are seven in number: belief in (1) Allah; (2) angels; (3) books from God; (4) messengers from God; (5) the hereafter; (6) the measurement of good and evil; (7) resurrection after death.

The life after death, according to Islamic teaching, is not a new life, but only a continuance of this life, bringing its hidden realities into light. It is a life of unlimited progress; those who qualify themselves in this life for the progress will enter into Paradise, which is another name for the said progressive life after death, and those who get their faculties stunted by their misdeeds in this life will be the denizens of the hell—a life incapable of appreciating heavenly bliss, and of torment—in order to get themselves purged of all impurities and thus to become fit for the life in heaven. State after death is an image of the spiritual state, in this life.

The sixth article of faith has been confused by some with what is popularly known as Fatalism. A Muslim neither believes in Fatalism nor Predestination; he believes in Premeasurement. Everything created by God is for good in the given use and under the given circumstances. Its abuse is evil and suffering.

**PILLARS OF ISLAM.**—These are five in number: (1) declaration of faith in the Oneness of God, and in the Divine Messengership of Muhammad; (2) prayer; (3) fasting; (4) almsgiving; (5) pilgrimage to the Holy Shrine of Mecca.

**ATTRIBUTES OF GOD.**—The Muslims worship one God—the Almighty, the All-knowing, the All-just, the Cherisher of all the

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Worlds, the Friend, the Guide, the Helper. There is none like Him. He has no partner. He is neither begotten nor has He begotten any son or daughter. He is Indivisible in Person. He is the Light of the heaven and the earth, the Merciful, the Compassionate, the Glorious, the Magnificent, the Beautiful, the Eternal, the Infinite, the First and the Last.

**FAITH AND ACTION.**—Faith without action is a dead letter. Faith is of itself insufficient, unless translated into action. A Muslim believes in his own personal accountability for his actions in this life and in the hereafter. Each must bear his own burden, and none can expiate for another's sin.

**ETHICS IN ISLAM.**—"Imbue yourself with Divine attributes," says the noble Prophet. God is the prototype of man, and His attributes form the basis of Muslim ethics. Righteousness in Islam consists in leading a life in complete harmony with the Divine attributes. To act otherwise is sin.

**CAPABILITIES OF MAN IN ISLAM.**—The Muslim believes in the inherent sinlessness of man's nature which, made of the goodliest fibre, is capable of unlimited progress, setting him above the angels and leading him to the border of Divinity.

**THE POSITION OF WOMAN IN ISLAM.**—Men and women come from the same essence, possess the same soul, and they have been equipped with equal capability for intellectual, spiritual and moral attainment. Islam places man and woman under like obligations, the one to the other.

**EQUALITY OF MANKIND AND THE BROTHERHOOD OF ISLAM.**—Islam is the religion of the Unity of God and the equality of mankind. Lineage, riches and family honours are accidental things; virtue and the service of humanity are the matters of real merit. Distinctions of colour, race and creed are unknown in the ranks of Islam. All mankind is of one family, and Islam has succeeded in welding the black and the white into one fraternal whole.

**PERSONAL JUDGMENT.**—Islam encourages the exercise of personal judgment and respects difference of opinion, which, according to the sayings of the Prophet Muhammad, is a blessing of God.

**KNOWLEDGE.**—The pursuit of knowledge is a duty in Islam, and it is the acquisition of knowledge that makes men superior to angels.

**SANCTITY OF LABOUR.**—Every labour which enables man to live honestly is respected. Idleness is deemed a sin.

**CHARITY.**—All the faculties of man have been given to him as a trust from God, for the benefit of his fellow-creatures. It is man's duty to live for others, and his charities must be applied without any distinction of persons. Charity in Islam brings man nearer to God. Charity and the giving of alms have been made obligatory, and every person who possesses property above a certain limit has to pay a tax, levied on the rich for the benefit of the poor.

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