

"Muhammad is . . . the Apostle of Allah and the Seal (the last) of the Prophets . . ."—  
HOLY QUR-AN 33: 40. "There will be no Prophet after me."—MUHAMMAD.

# *The* **Islamic Review**

FOUNDED BY THE LATE AL-HAJJ KHWAJA KAMAL-UD-DIN

Vol. XXVIII]

[No. 6

RABI'UL-THANI, 1359 A.H.  
JUNE, 1940 A.C.

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## **THE ISLAMIC REVIEW (Monthly)**

(Founded By The Late Al-Hajj Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din)

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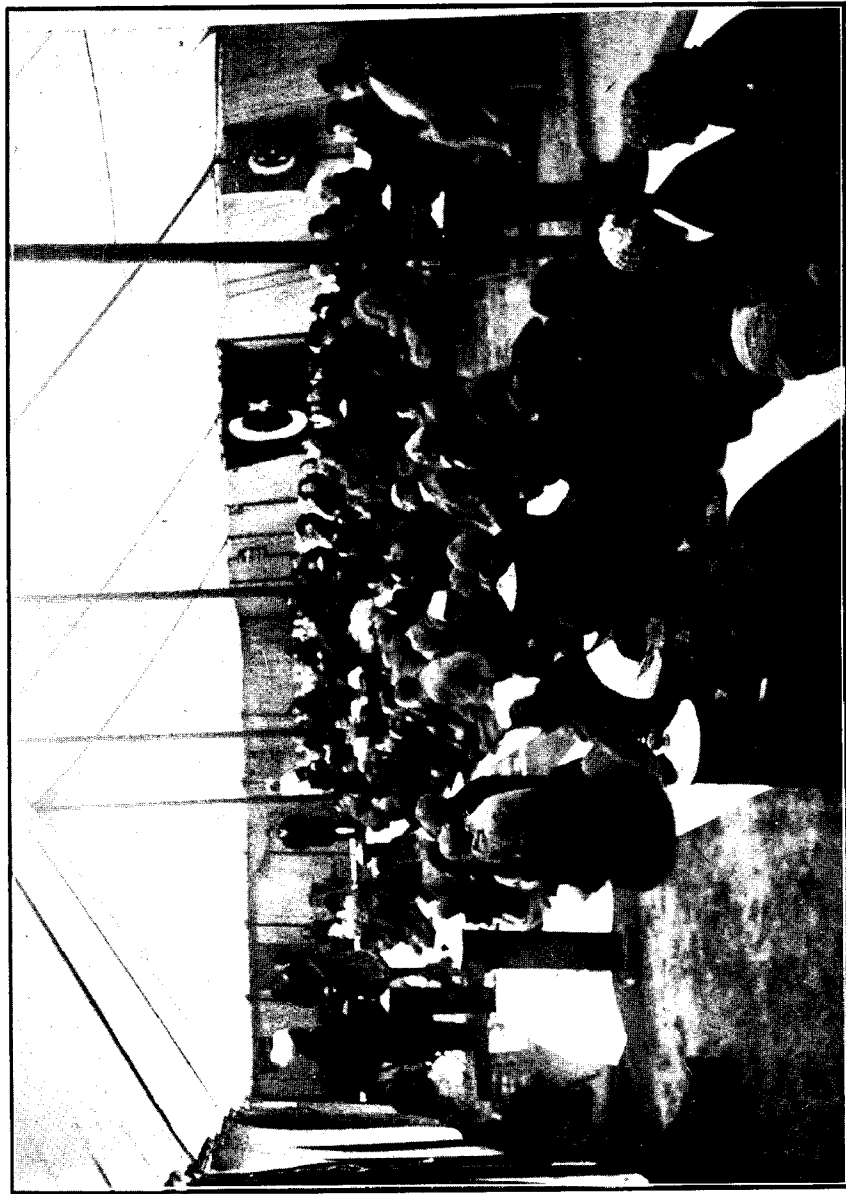
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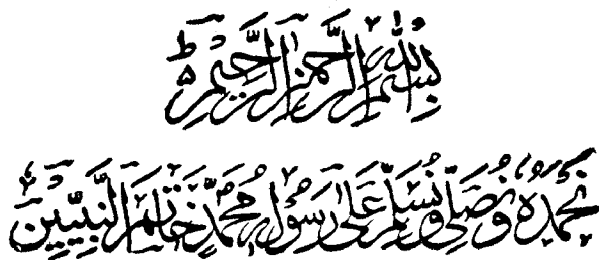
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**A partial view of the 'Idu'l-Adha (1358 A.H.) congregation at the Mosque,  
Woking, listening to the sermon.**



# THE ISLAMIC REVIEW

Vol. XXVIII]

RABI'UL-THANI, 1359 A.H.  
JUNE, 1940 A.C.

[No. 6

## A DECLARATION

I, Mrs. A. Othman, of Rosamond Street, Hull (England), do hereby faithfully and solemnly declare of my own free will that I worship 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 and others—and that I will live a Muslim life by the help of Allah.

*La ilaha ill-Allah Muhammad-un-Rasul-Allah.*

[There is but One God (Allah) and Muhammad is God's Messenger.]

(Sd.) AMEENA OTHMAN.

26th January 1940.

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### IN MEMORIAM

It is with great regret that we have to record the passing of Mr. Ahmad Shahab Suhrawardy, who died on Friday, the 16th February, 1940, after a short illness. A Requiem (Fātiha) meeting was called by Khwaja S. Mahmud, Secretary of the Mosque, Woking, at the Hall of the Muslim Society in Great Britain, London, on the same day. Many Muslims attended the meeting and recited passages from the Holy Qur-án in memory of the deceased.

The deceased young man's reputation as a keen student and his outstanding family connections brought in a record number of sympathisers. Members of Muslim Legations and representatives from Indian as well as English Societies and Associations were present to pay their tribute to his soul. Lord Zetland, Secretary of State for India, deputed Sir John Woodhead, sometime Governor of Bengal, to represent him at the Requiem (Fātiha) and to convey his condolence to Sir Hassan Suhrawardy and the members of the Muslim Community in their sad loss. Sirdar Bahadur Mohan Singh was one of the many prominent non-Muslim Indians present.

The late Mr. Ahmad Shahab was just past his teens at the time of his death and was a student of Christ Church College, Oxford. He traced his descent from the well-known ancient and learned family of India. He was the only son of the Hon'ble Mr. Shahid Suhrawardy, Minister, Government of Bengal, grandson of the Hon'ble Justice Sir Zahid Suhrawardy, Judge of the Calcutta High Court, and grand-nephew of Al-Hajj Lieut.-Colonel Sir Hassan Suhrawardy, O.B.E., Adviser to the Secretary of State for India, London, and the only maternal grandson of the Hon'ble Sir Abdur Rahim, K.C.S.I., President, Central Legislative Assembly of India, and ex-Judge of Madras High Court. It is

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a matter of added regret that by his passing the Indian Muslims should have been deprived of the last male link of that illustrious Suhrawardy family. In spite of his youthful years, Ahmad Shahab showed great promise of keeping up the family tradition of intellectuals. The Muslim community is not so full of young men of proved ability to be able to afford losing from its midst a young man of his calibre. But fate had willed it otherwise—

“Every one that there is will pass away. There remaineth but the countenance of thy Lord of Might and Glory.”—*The Holy Qur-án, LV : 26 and 27.*

The family of the deceased has always taken an active interest in the spread of Islam in the West. We have a photograph in our sitting-room in which the late Allāma Sir Abdullah Al-Mamun-Al-Suhrawardy—the doyen of the family, and brother of Al-Hajj Lieut.-Colonel Sir Hassan Suhrawardy, O.B.E.—is seen leading the prayers at the Mosque, Woking, in as early as 1906—that is to say, about seven years before the inauguration of the Woking Muslim Mission. We offer our deep sympathy to the Suhrawardy family in their sad bereavement.

Mr. Muhsin Mirza read an Urdu elegy which we are printing in the Urdu edition of the *Islamic Review*.

Among those present were: Dr. Rao, Lady Headley, Maulvi Abdul Majid, Mr. Yusuf Ali, Mr. Rashid, Mr. Ismail de-Yorke, Mr. Syed Moonis Hassan Akhadi, Sirdar Ikbal Ali Shah and Mr. Amer Zia Khan.

The same evening the following resolution was passed by the Executive Committee of the Muslim Society in Great Britain:

“Resolved that this special meeting of the Executive Committee of the Muslim Society in Great Britain records its profound grief at the sad

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and untimely demise of Ahmad Shahab Suhrawardy, the only son of the Hon'ble Mr. Shahid Suhrawardy, and offers its sincerest condolences to the bereaved family in their irretrievable loss. May his soul rest in peace !

“ Resolved that copies of this Resolution be sent to the Hon'ble Mr. Shahid Suhrawardy, Al-Hajj Lieut.-Colonel Sir Hassan Suhrawardy and the Hon'ble Sir Abdur Rahim.”

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### **'IDU 'L-ADHA (1358 A.H.) 1940 A.C. AT THE SHAH JEHAN MOSQUE, WOKING**

The second of the two annual Islamic festivals, the 'Idu 'l-Adha, or the festival of sacrifices, was celebrated at the Shah Jehan Mosque, Woking, on Saturday, the 20th January, 1940, under the most untoward conditions. The weather was the most inclement that England had witnessed for many past years. It was bitterly cold and frosty. On the previous day, it had been snowing hard. Travel facilities were curtailed owing to war conditions. In a word, there was nothing to encourage a Muslim or a non-Muslim to undertake a journey of 25 miles from London to Woking. But, despite these discomforts and disabilities, it was heartening to find at the time of prayers, which were said at 11-30 A.M., that the numbers of those who took part in the Service had exceeded three hundred. If one of the charabancs bringing a large number of Indian Muslims from the East End of London had not broken down on its way to Woking as a result of the freeze, the number of devotees would have gone into the neighbourhood of 400. Non-Muslim visitors were surprised to find that it was at all possible, under conditions that were enough to damp even the most zealous, to have such a large assemblage consisting of various nationalities—Indians, Afghans, Arabs,

Egyptians, Malays and English. Some had travelled long distances and had stayed overnight in London to be able to join the prayers the following day.

In this unusual gathering there was a deep lesson to those who are accustomed to living upon truth acquired and received through pure reason, which, as is well-known, is never able to sway communities as communities; there was a source of deep inspiration for those who wonder why philosophy alone has never changed the destinies of mankind. The 'Id prayers are primarily meant to enable the followers of Islam to give their thanks to God for the performance of their duty associated with these festivals. This is the chief reason that Islamic festivals are always, before everything else, preceded by a Divine service, a prayer in congregation to God. But the social value, permeated by the religious leaven imparted to it by the Divine service, is no less important. Critics and writers on Islam are agreed that the two festivals of Islam, which owe their conception and their present structure to the religious genius of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, are such that no better expedient could have been devised for impressing on the minds of those who have accepted the outlook on life of Islam, a sense of their common life and of their brotherhood in the bond of faith.

The Imam of the Mosque, who read his address after the prayers, laid stress on this peculiarity of the religion of Islam and Islamic life. He quoted instances from the history of Islam to show how deep-rooted is the principle of the absolute equality of all men in the Islamic system of life, and how real is the sense of justice inspired by the teachings of the Holy Qur-án and how admirable are the practical institutions which enable Muslims to put their ideal of the unity of all believers and the brotherhood of man into actual



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practice. He reminded Muslims of the urgency of their duty to their fellow beings, who, because they were as yet ignorant of the pleasures and blessings bestowed upon Muslims by the practical brotherhood of Islam, were groaning under the crushing burden of race-consciousness and passionate exclusiveness. "About fifty years ago," said the Imam, "the need was perhaps not so serious. Race theories and academical discussions about the unequal distribution of wealth were confined to ethnologists and economists. But now one has begun to preach and glorify the virtues of the doctrine of servitude, of exclusiveness, of partiality, of intolerance towards people not belonging to the Aryan race. The message of the moral fraternity, of the equality of the soul, of social justice, of charity towards all, of protecting the weak and the oppressed, is being preached and derided openly. We Muslims, in common with our Christian friends, possess the certitude and the conviction of the fact that the individual does not develop thoroughly except through devotion to others—through service to his fellow beings. But there is something we possess that our fellow brethren in Christendom do not possess. That something leaves us as the only people who can shoulder the responsibility. Let us appreciate our position . . . as yet five-sixths of the human race are groaning under the crushing burden of race-consciousness and passionate exclusiveness and other ridiculous superiority complexes and, what is more, those five-sixths of mankind have not as yet realised that each and every one of us is to be of service to the others. This is a huge task, and none can shoulder it better than we Muslims, who not only possess the incomparably broad and cosmopolitan outlook on life, but also are the custodians of the secret and the methods to put that universal outlook on life into practice."

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After the sermon, the Imam wished every friend present a Happy 'Id, upon which the gathering broke up and friends wished happiness to each other by embracing and hearty handshakes. A few minutes later, the time of luncheon having arrived, all sat down to partake of the Indian dishes which had been prepared under the supervision of the proprietor of the Shafi India Restaurant of London. As the weather was frosty and cold (although the huge marquee was sufficiently well heated by the stoves placed at regular intervals all over the carpeted enclosure), friends and visitors took leave of each other to resume their normal duties and occupations.

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## **THE 'IDU 'L-ADHA (1358 A.H.) SERMON**

BY MAULVI ABDUL MAJID

To-day's festival is called the festival of Adhā, (that is to say, of sacrifices) primarily because every Muslim, after having performed his pilgrimage to Makka, sacrifices an animal on the plains of Minā near Makka, secondly because it is in memory of the willing, unstinted and spontaneous sacrifices made by the great Patriarch Abraham and his son Ishmael. But although the patience, perseverance and courage with which the son offered himself to be killed by the loving hands of his father, and the readiness which the father showed in sacrificing his son in pursuance of a dream he had had, are enough in themselves for their memory to have been made immortal for all time to come by the institution of sacrifice, as Islam has done, yet it is not merely in this lofty consideration that the occasion of to-day has its far-reaching importance. We Muslims are proud of this occasion and of the blessings that flow from it, which we in our turn are able to pass on to our fellow beings all over the world.

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Now it is a fact that the principle of the equality of man and man has been enunciated and affirmed by all religions. There is nothing, for instance, to choose between Islam and Christianity in this matter. If we read in the words of St. Paul the following: "God hath made of one (blood) all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth" (The Acts, 17 : 26), then we, when turning to the pages of the Qur-án read the following, the same sentiment in a slightly different form: "O you men! We have created you of a male and a female and made you nations and tribes that you may know each other. Verily the noblest of you, in the sight of God, is the best in conduct. Surely God is Knowing and Aware" (LIX : 13). Indeed one could multiply the number of such edifying and inspiring excerpts and verses from the religious books and writings of the prophets and saints of other religions. Such words and phrases do indeed create a desire for a better world order. They do create a fundamental change in men's minds, but they definitely do not suggest how to express that change in practice and conduct. For is it not a fact that the belief in the fatherhood of God and that we all are the children of God has been preached in one form or another from the pulpits of the Christian world for the last two thousand years? And yet the net result of continual doses of these admirable ideals is that the behaviour of the present Christian crowds is indistinguishable from that of the crowds that believed in the virtues of clanism and tribalism before the advent of Jesus. The answer that is made, when this is pointed out, is that Christianity has not been tried, that it has not been given a fair chance. Such an answer may satisfy some, but I wonder if it will satisfy those who realise that 2,000 years is a long period for any experiment. To illustrate my point further, I would take you to the

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year 640 A.D. in the land of Egypt. When the Muslim conquerors sent a deputation of their ablest men to discuss the terms of the surrender of the capital of Egypt, headed by Ubāda, a negro and the ablest of them all, the Archbishop Cyrus exclaimed, "Take away that black man! I can have no discussion with him." The scared Archbishop, to his astonishment, was told that this black man had been commissioned by 'Amr bin al-Ās, the Commander of the Muslim army, that the Muslims held negroes and white men in equal respect, and that they judged a man by his character and not by his colour.

"Well, if the negro must lead, then he must speak gently," ordered the prelate, so as not to frighten his white auditors. The reply of the Muslim negro Ubāda shows the spirit of the early Muslims and of the Muslims of to-day with all their backsliding. Ubāda said, "There are a thousand blacks as black as myself, amongst the companions of our Commander. I and they would be ready each to meet and fight a hundred enemies together; we live only to fight for God and to follow His Will; we care naught for wealth, so long as we have wherewithal to stay our hunger and to clothe our bodies. The world is naught to us, the next world is all."

The point which I wish to emphasise is that the spirit of the Christian prelate Cyrus of Egypt prevails even to this day in the West. Race hatred still rules and controls men's judgments. In some countries people are persecuted and even exiled because they belong to a different race. Every one knows the gulf that snobbery and class distinction make to separate English people from each other and how they spoil the otherwise admirable character of English life. Here one talks of democracy, but is not aware of its real import. Here one at best understands by democracy

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the universal suffrage, but the classes are careful that its essence does not infiltrate the masses. Considerations of prestige and discipline create class distinction and snobbery. It is simply next to impossible for an Englishman of the masses to understand the ease and freedom with which the poor move in Muslim countries amongst all sorts and conditions of men. The Muslim rich also show no trace of any consciousness of class. The snobbery and class distinction of English life are simply incomprehensible to us Muslims. We, bred and born in the Islamic system of life, cannot understand the class distinctions of English life. We Muslims have our poor, but poverty is one thing and inferiority another. With us there is an equality real enough to override the greatest inequality. With us priority in faith and spiritual eminence are the only real claims to distinction.

By way of contrast I give you two historical incidents, which will illustrate the social and political ideal of Islam.

In the days of the Caliph 'Umar the Great, in the beginning of the 7th century, the King of the Ghassanids, named Jabala, accepted Islam as his faith. Jabala went in great pomp and ceremony to perform the pilgrimage to Makka. While circumambulating the holy shrine of the Ka'aba, the robe of a poor pilgrim was accidentally flicked across the King's neck. The King turned and in a fury struck his fellow pilgrim violently, knocking out his teeth. This is how the Caliph 'Umar the Great records what followed: "The poor man came to me and prayed for redress. I sent for Jabala, and when he came before me, I asked him why he had so ill-treated a brother Muslim. He answered that the man had insulted him and that, were it not for the sanctity of the place, he would have killed him on the spot. I answered that his words

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added greatly to the gravity of his offence, and that, unless he obtained pardon of the injured man, he would have to submit to the usual penalty of the law. Jabala replied, 'I am a King and the other man only a common man.' I said, 'King or no king, both of you are equal in the eye of the law.' The King escaped in the night and became a Christian rather than apologise."

Islam abolishes both priesthood and hereditary kingship, and for this reason its conception of equality is on a different plane to that to which our friends in the West are accustomed when they use such phrases as "the King can do no wrong." By abolishing sacerdotalism and kingship, Islam emancipates man completely. It makes him the complete master of his destinies both in the physical and the spiritual world. Nowhere has the recognition of the value of the soul and the dignity of the individual been so much emphasised as in Islam. In Islam, if there has to be a king, then he submits to the same law as applies to an ordinary individual of the kingdom. The well-known incident of Sultan Salāhuddīn Ayyubī (known to Europe under the name of Saladin) who flourished from 1137 to 1193 A.D. will be remembered by many in illustration of my remarks. The Sultan (who was Sultan of Syria and Egypt and one of the mightiest men of his day) appeared before the tribunal in an action brought against him by one of his humble subjects. In a few words the story is that a man by name 'Umar al-Khalātī came to the holy city of Jerusalem and appeared before a court of justice. He placed in the hands of the judge a certified memorandum and begged him to read it. The judge asked him who his adversary was. The man replied that his affair was with the Sultan and added, "this is the seat of justice, where I have heard you make no distinction of persons." "Why," the

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judge replied, "do you bring this action against the Sultan?" The man replied, "I had a slave who remained in my possession until his death. The name of the slave is Sonkor. At the moment of his death he had several large sums of money, which now are mine by right. He died leaving these sums, and the Sultan has taken possession of them. I lay claim to them as my property." The judge remarked, "Why have you delayed your action so long?" The plaintiff said, "One does not forfeit one's right by delaying to claim it. Here is the certificate, proving that the slave remained my property until his death." The judge read the document and found that the slave had been bought by the plaintiff from a merchant of Arjish in Armenia and that the witnesses in the document had never understood that the slave had ever ceased to be the property of his master in any manner whatever. The instrument was in legal form. The judge said to the plaintiff, "It is not meet to adjudge a claim in the absence of the party sued; I will inform the Sultan and will let you know what he says in the matter." The Sultan, when told of the legal suit, thought it utterly absurd and asked if the document had been carefully examined. He was told that the document had been taken to Damascus for examination and that the judge had appended a certificate to that effect. "Very well," the Sultan replied, "let the man appear, and I will defend myself against him and conform to all the regulations prescribed by law." The Sultan, placing himself before the plaintiff, called upon him to state his case. The plaintiff stated his case, and the Sultan replied in the following words: "This Sonkor was my slave; he never ceased to be my property till the time I gave him his freedom. He is dead, and his heirs have entered upon his inheritance he left." The plaintiff answered, "I hold in my hand

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an instrument that will prove the truth of my case. Please open it so that its contents may be known." The judge opened it and found that it bore out the statement of the complainant. The Sultan having informed himself of the date of the paper replied, "I have witnesses to prove that Sonkor was in my possession and at Cairo at the said date. A year before, I had bought him with eight others, and he remained in my possession till he received his freedom." The Sultan then summoned several of his chief military officers, who bore witness that the facts were in accordance with the statement of the Sultan and declared that the date given was exact. The plaintiff was confounded.

These two instances should suffice to show how deep-rooted is the principle of the absolute equality of all men in Islam, and will bear witness to the sense of justice inspired by the teachings of the Holy Qur-án, and will give some idea of the practical institutions which enable us Muslims to put our ideal of the unity of all believers and the brotherhood of man into actual practice.

The miraculous change that comes over an individual when he joins the brotherhood of man in Islam, and the reality of human fellowship under the aegis of Islam have been remarked by all those writers and travellers who have had the good fortune of mixing with Muslims. A recent writer, Dr. M. N. Dhalla, a distinguished Zoroastrian high-priest in India, has recently published a book entitled, "Our Perfecting World," and in it has paid the following tribute to Islam for rising above colour and racial prejudice :

"Muhammadanism alone among the religions of the world has remained free from colour bias . . . it welcomes all converts with open arms, whether they be negroes or pariahs.



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Without reserve it accords them their rights and privileges, and receives them into its social circle as much as into its religious fold. It is the only religion that excludes all barriers of birth and colour, and admits its converts into the community on the basis of complete social equality." The same writer, referring to this matter elsewhere, makes the following observations: "Until the race problem is solved, peace and goodwill cannot come on earth. The race problem is the most menacing that confronts civilisation."

In view of these observations it will be quite correct to say that moral exhortations, even backed by religious authority, are not efficacious. For otherwise the history of Christendom, for example, would have offered a different spectacle and would have been free from race hatred. But the Christian world is the same to-day as it was at the time of the conquest of Egypt by the Muslims, as I have illustrated already by referring to the words of the Christian prelate Cyrus. Therefore it would be no exaggeration to say that there is something else that is wanted and there is still something that is missing from Christianity. In other words, why is it that Islam alone succeeds where others fail ?

The diagnosis of Islam is that it is the lack of right and suitable formalism and institutions, through which alone man can get an opportunity to express his noble ideals of human fellowship, and human brotherhood, that is ultimately responsible for the discrepancy and anomaly existing between his behaviour and the high ideals he entertains and is so anxious to materialise. How, then, does Islam try to solve the difficulty that has been the bane of its predecessors, which, in spite of their sublime idealism, as sublime as that of Islam,

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were unable to make that idealism part and parcel of the lives of their followers? What does Islam do to remove the wide gulf existing between the ideals of man and his behaviour?

The first thing Islam does is this. While it creates the suitable frame of mind by echoing in common with all other religions the essentials of the brotherhood of man, it also realises that mere pious wishes and words have not been enough to induce man to give up his age-old tribal outlook on life. It is here that Islam is an improvement on its sister religions. Islam does succeed in implementing the ideal of human fellowship simply by devising institutions that enable every Muslim to practise effectively and learn visually that we are in reality the children of God. One of those institutions, which, linked together, gradually awaken in a Muslim a consciousness of his real place in relation to his fellow beings and ultimately make him cosmic conscious, is the festival of to-day which we are now celebrating.

To-day is the last day of the pilgrimage; to-day is the 10th day of the 12th month of the Muslim year. In Makka to-day there are gathered together tens of thousands of men and women from all over the world. They have gone there because Islam wants every believer to perform the pilgrimage to Makka at least once in his lifetime. In the words of the late Sir Thomas Arnold let me describe to you the part this festival of to-day plays in the social life of us Muslims. "No touch of religious genius could have conceived a better expedient for impressing on the minds of the faithful a sense of their common life and of their brotherhood in the bonds of faith. Here in the supreme act of worship, the negro of the West Coast of Africa meets the Chinaman from the distant East, the courtly and polished Ottoman recognising his brother Muslim in

the wild islander from the farthest end of the Malayan Sea. At the same time, throughout the whole of the Muhammadan world, the hearts of believers are lifted up in sympathy with their more fortunate brethren gathered together in the sacred city of Makka, as in their own homes they celebrate the festival of Eid ul Adha. . . . whatever be the race, colour, or antecedents of the worshipper, he is received into the brotherhood of the believers and takes his place as an equal amongst equals." (*The Preaching of Islam*, London 1913 pp. 416-17).

The marvellous fraternal spirit transcending all barriers of race, country or colour animates to-day the great brotherhood of Islam in exactly the same manner as it did 1,400 years ago, when it was preached and instituted by the Prophet Muhammad, and this in a degree not discernible in any other community of mankind. Here, I am proud to say, at any rate we have a great example and a great promise for the redemption of humanity. If Islam had done nothing else than eliminate (as it has incontestably done) the unconscionable barriers of racial antipathy and national exclusiveness from among one-sixth of the human race, scattered over the surface of the globe and covering every land and clime, then it must hold civilisation its debtor for ever.

Christianity, after two thousand years of evolution, has signally failed in this vital aspect. The conception of a human brotherhood, a social communion that would transcend geographical, racial or national boundaries, seems to be equally unrealised in the other great religions of the world. It is Islam alone that rules out in practice, no less than in theory, the claims of race or nation, caste or colour, which claims break the unity and mar the harmony of the human family ; and there can be no question but that it is along that

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path the world will have to travel to find its ultimate salvation.

The gathering at Makka which comes to an end to-day, consisting of tens of thousands of Muslims, consisting of poor and rich, prince and peasant from all countries, meeting together from far and near, all wearing the same simple unsewn garment, is an annual demonstration of the brotherhood of man in Islam and sets a grand practical example of fraternity and equality. Each of these pilgrims on his return home enlivens his fellow beings with his experiences in the plains of Makka. You can imagine the enthusiasm and how fast it would spread. There is no parallel to this institution in any other religious system of the world. Islam is unique in this and unsurpassed.

The gradual evolution of the daily prayers of us Muslims into the international Islamic gathering, which is being celebrated this day at Makka and in which we are joining by our prayers and our sympathy, makes a fascinating sociological study. It must be remembered that a Muslim is initiated into the idea of the equality of man and man on the floor of the Mosque, where prayers give every day a demonstration of the simplicity and the equality which run through the whole of the Islamic system.

We Muslims must never forget that, as yet, it is only one-sixth of mankind, (the Muslims making 1/6th of mankind) that has tasted the delicious fruit of equality. With the happenings of the last few years in Europe the duty of us Muslims towards our fellow beings becomes all the more important. They perhaps have a faint appreciation of but as yet they do not know the fullness of the taste of this fruit; and the reason is partly because we have failed in our duty to carry the light of Islam to them. The Qur-án says to the Prophet Muhammad, "Give to the people what has

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been revealed to you from your Lord " (V. 67). This commandment holds as good to-day as it did 1,400 years ago. The world is in sore need of ways by which it can obliterate its racial differences and forget its antipathies. No one but Muslims can do this task. About fifty years ago the need was perhaps not so serious. Race theories were confined to sociologists and ethnologists. But now one has begun to preach and glorify openly the virtues of the doctrine of enslavement, of exclusiveness, of partiality, of intolerance towards people not belonging to the Aryan race. The message of the moral fraternity, of the equality of souls, of social justice, of charity towards all, of protecting the weak and the oppressed is being pooh-poohed and derided openly. We Muslims, in common with our Christian friends, are inspired by the conviction of the fact that the individual does not develop but through devotion to others, through service to his fellow beings. But there is something more that we possess and that our fellow brethren in Christendom do not possess. That something leaves us as the only people who can shoulder the responsibility. Let us appreciate our position. We are the only spiritually democratic people in the world ; for what other community or people can boast of being free from the blight of priestcraft ? We alone can give spiritualised democracy to the world. I know that Europe has built up idealistic systems that preach race equality, that inculcate service to mankind, but experience shows that truth received through pure reason and through religions without the right and suitable accompaniments of formalism is incapable of bringing the fire of living conviction to societies and is incapable of a regeneration *en masse*. No religion in the world excepting Islam, not even Christianity, possesses the means of changing and transforming societies into

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veritable fraternities. No doubt Christianity has succeeded in changing the lives of individuals, and is doing so every day, but wholesale transformation has never come its way. The same applies to other religions.

The world has made progress, unparalleled in its history in the matter of its conquests of the forces of nature only to find that it is destroying itself and digging its grave with its own hands. As yet five-sixths of the world are groaning under the crushing burden of race consciousness, passionate exclusiveness and other ridiculous superiority complexes, and these five-sixths of mankind have not as yet realised that each and every person of them is to be of service to and to co-operate with all the others rather than be an enemy to all the others. This is a huge task! No one can shoulder it better than we Muslims, who not only possess the incomparably broad and cosmopolitan outlook on life but who also are the custodians of the secret and the methods to put that universal outlook on life into practice.

May Allah shower on us all the blessings of the Holy Qur-án. Amen!

THE HOLY QUR-AN AND ITS COMMENTARY

BY THE LATE AL-HAJJ KHWAJA KAMAL-UD-DIN

[Continued from Vol. XXVIII, page 197.]

Now, as I have already said, if we do not find in the revelation of a great man provisions for the proper training of these two impulses (towards worship and towards civilisation) not to speak of other things, we cannot, by reason of this very deficiency, call that person a "prophet." As, after all, prophethood is the outcome of God's attribute of *Rabubiyyah* or "nourishing;" the kind of nourishment which prophethood affords is that of the emotions or impulses. It may be of interest to mention here that Abdul Baha, the great Bahai propagandist, has tried to prove the prophethood of Bahaullah, and this again on the authority of certain verses of the Holy Qur-án. He refers, among other verses, to the following :

So whenever there will come to you from Me any guidance, then whoever follows My guidance, no fear shall come upon them, nor shall they grieve " (2 : 38).

Abdul Baha has tried to substantiate with this verse his theory of the continuation of prophethood. He, however, does not seem to make allowance for the fact that the pronoun in "from Me" has as its noun in the previous verse the word *Rabb*. So we are constrained to see whether this subsequent claimant to prophethood has got any teachings reflecting God's attribute of *Rabubiyyah*; in other words, whether he has any guidance to offer in the refinement of the emotions or the purification of the consciousness. No doubt, Hazrat Bahaullah has framed a so-called "Law." He has changed the order of prayers, introduced modifications in fasting and effected other similar minor changes. But there is no provision in his

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teachings for any purification of the consciousness, which the Qur-án has omitted. I, therefore, fail to acknowledge Hazrat Bahaullah as a prophet on the mere grounds of his having introduced certain modifications in institutions like those of prayer and fasting. *Verses 130 and 131.*

The prayer just discussed gives, indeed, a very clear picture of Abraham's religion ; but the substance of the whole position has been given in two brief words in the Verse 130. When God commanded Abraham to bow before His will, his reply was, as the verse says, that he would bow before any command that could come from the "Lord of the Creation." It is this religious attitude, indeed, which is of the purest form—freed, as it is, from every kind of narrowness—national, racial or ritualistic. The phrase "Lord of the Creation" refers to the desirability of a religious man acknowledging and acting upon such principles alone as fulfil the aims of the nourishment of the whole creation.

It is not religion that a man should act exclusively for himself. He should rather keep the good of God's creatures in view. This was the religion of Abraham ; hence his precedence before God among the members of the human family.

132.—It was this religion which Abraham taught his children—that is to say, that they should obey the commandments of the Lord or the Nourisher of the Universe.

133.—The Prophet Jacob also, while taking leave of this world, said the same thing to his children. They similarly replied, saying that they did submit themselves to God. They also said that they would obey his God as well as the God of Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac. This particularisation is on one ground only. The same God is the Creator of all. And yet there are wide



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differences between the various conceptions of God with reference to the attributes ascribed to Him. From this point of view, one may say that the God of the Christians is not the same as the God of the Muslims. It was on this account that the sons of Jacob said that they would worship the God of Abraham.

134.—These people have passed away and have carried the effects of their actions with them. The whole affair, in reality, revolves round the worship of God. Hence to say that unless one becomes, for example, a Jew or a Christian, one will not be given guidance, is not correct.

135.—The proper attitude for any one to adopt in matters of religion is to say that he follows the religion of Abraham, who remained, throughout his whole life, a *Hanif*, *i.e.*, one dedicated to God. The word 'Hanif' literally means "to be inclined in one particular direction." With reference to Abraham, it only means that he was solely inclined towards God. In other words, he did not turn in any other direction. And the right religion is that one should obey the commandments of God, through whomsoever they may be communicated.

136.—Now in this verse a Muslim is commanded to announce to people that he does not make any distinction between any two messengers of God, in whatsoever part of the world they may happen to appear; that he is not concerned with personalities, but with the commandments of God, which have to be obeyed, it being immaterial through whom they are delivered.

137.—Now, if others also follow this line of conduct, they must also be in the right course. But if any one is opposed to it, he is evidently actuated by a feeling of obstinacy. And if such a person adopts an aggressive

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attitude in his hostility, God will support the believers, —and He hears and sees everything.

138.—Thus true religion is that we should be saturated with Divine grace, and this is the highest possible form of religious life. In fact, the object of our human birth, as the Qur-án rightly points out, is nothing but that we should base our conduct on His behests. And the truth about our life is that we carry the effect of our actions with us into the other life. Now, when we are all subject to the law of righteousness of action, and the God which we worship is also the God of others, there is no room left for any quarrel on religious matters. At this point, for the Jews and the Christians to say that the prophets Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac and Jacob were Jews or Christians is a mere assertion opposed to facts. These people, unfortunately, do not stop to think that the personalities in question had departed from this world long before the appearance of the founders of those two religions. How, on earth, can they be conceived of as belonging to any or both of these two religions? Such assertions are, in fact, attempts to hide the very evidences which are to be found in their scriptures.

139.—These sacred personalities have departed with the record of their own conduct clinging to them, and no one else will ever be called upon to account for how they behaved.

In this last section of its first part, the Holy Qur-án has preached a perfect religion of peace, the like of which is not to be met with in any other religion of the world. Of course, I have to admit with regret that, reacting to the narrow-mindedness of others some Muslims, contrary to the teachings of the Book, have become rather narrow-minded of late. If, however, the world adopts the religious attitude outlined by the Qur-án, there will be no possibility left of any

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disturbance in the field of religion. True religion is that one should do deeds of virtue, the instructions for which are to be found in the commandments of God, Who is the common Lord of all peoples. Through whomsoever His voice may come, one should bow before it. It is a well-known fact that, commanded by the Qur-án, Muslims pay unqualified homage to the leaders of all the religions of the world. If the followers of other religions, acting upon the example of the Muslims, begin respecting the leaders of faiths other than their own, in the same way as they revere their own leaders, the days of religious dissension will soon be over.

It should be remembered that, so far as the question of good deeds is concerned, one finds a uniform teaching given by all teachers of religion. Ritualism, as introduced into religion, has not only deformed religion, but has also become the fruitful source of inter-religious bickerings. If all followers of religion can set aside the ritualistic parts of religion, and concentrate on the worship of God and righteous acts, there will be no occasion left for any quarrel. This is, in essence, the connotation of Islam, as I have explained above. When the literal as well as the implied meaning of the term 'Islam' is the carrying out of God's commandments, it is inconceivable that one should not like to be called a Muslim. However much one may call himself Hindu or Christian or Jew, it is, after all, a case of associating oneself with a person or a race; but, so far as the question of righteous actions is concerned, one must, more or less, be a Muslim. To say this is merely to state a fact. After all, if, on the one hand, previous revelations have not retained their original shape and form, being distorted almost beyond recognition by the influence of human mind and hand, while, on the other hand, the Qur-án is proved to be the only Book that has maintained its purity

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from the beginning until now, and again, if the injunctions contained in this Book are such as are acceptable to the unsophisticated intelligence of man, and further, if there are no two opinions on the question of its being beneficial to man, why should not obedience be given to this Book alongside with God? And this is Islam in its recognised sense.

### PART II

In the last section of its first part, the Holy Qur-án laid the world of humanity under a great weight of benefaction by separating real religion from the rituals of any system of religion. It taught, in very clear language, that religion, first and foremost, consists of faith in God and the Day of Judgment and of good deeds—things which have nothing exclusively to do with a particular people or country or person.

In every religion prayer is an institution, which inclines to be the embodiment of religion. Then there is the further possibility of the direction towards which the votaries turn in their prayers, becoming a substitute for the religion itself. The literal meaning of the term '*Qibla*,' the symbolical pivot of Muslim prayer life, is the direction towards which a person turns. In the religious sense, however, it signifies the direction towards which a religious community turns in times of prayers. After all, the *Qibla*, or the sacred direction of every man, is the symbol of his religion. For instance, in olden days, the Zoroastrians used to face the sun in their prayers. But to-day a person facing the sun in prayers can pass for a Christian. In the same way, those who turn towards Jerusalem in prayers are called Jews.

At the time of the advent of the Prophet Muhammad different religious communities had different *Qiblas*. Although Arab traditions spoke of the religion of Abraham, his sojourn in Makka and his

erecting the walls of the Ka'ba in Makka, and although the Arabs remembered the prayers of Abraham, yet there was no mention, in Makkan revelations, of the prayer of Abraham or its occasion.

There was, no doubt, a reference in it to the religion of Abraham, but there was nothing to indicate that our Holy Prophet was the prophet promised in it. Further, because of all the existing points of devotional turning, the temple of Jerusalem was the only one whose adherents were believers in the Unity of God to some extent, and also because, unless there was any clear commandment from God on any particular religious matter, the Prophet used to follow the sensible part of the traditions of the followers of the Scriptures, until the time of the revelation upon the matter, he kept the Temple of Jerusalem as the *Qibla* or point of turning. But on his immigration to Madina, the revelation of the chapter entitled 'The Cow,' made it clear first that he himself was the subject-matter of the prayer of Abraham; secondly that the Jews and Christians had deviated greatly from the Unity of God, which forms the corner-stone of the teachings of the religion of Islam, and thirdly that if that perfect Unity of the Divinity could be found anywhere it was in his teachings alone. Hence, if there was any suitable *Qibla* for him to adopt it would be the Ka'ba, the *Qibla* of Abraham, towards which he was naturally inclined now.

142.—Accordingly, when, on receiving the relevant revelation, he changed his *Qibla* of the Temple of Jerusalem for the Temple of Abraham in Makka, the ignorant began to be busy with gossip about the change. These people failed to realise that to face any particular direction in prayer was, after all, a matter of custom and did not constitute in itself any virtue. God is everywhere—in the East as well as in the West and at all places; there should be no particular importance

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attached either to the East or to the West. The guidance of God operates irrespectively of these directions.

143.—Of course, it was in the knowledge of God that the Muslim community was destined to spread Islam all over the world, and that they were not to be confined to any particular country as the Jews were in Palestine, rather they were to be the inhabitants of the whole world. For these reasons it was necessary that they should have a *Qibla* in a distinguished place, particularly in view of the fact that the *Qibla* of a people is, in a way, the symbol of its beliefs. The beliefs of the Muslims were not the same as those of the Jews, as the latter were not observers of the Unity of God in its purest form as the former were. Hence it was necessary that there should be something to distinguish the Muslims from the Jews. So much so that, even while saying prayers, people should know that they were Muslims and that the birth-place of their religion was the Holy City of Makka. At this time, moreover, there were some hypocrites, passing for believers, who were closely connected with the Jews. Besides, some Muslims, because of their hatred for the Quraish of Makka, were not inclined to turn towards that city. Circumstances, such as these, naturally made this change of *Qibla* a rather difficult matter. People of firm convictions, however, do not mind these trials, provided, of course, the favours of God guard them. As for the Holy Prophet himself, such a commandment was rather welcome to him.

144.—He receives the injunction to make the *Qibla* of Abraham his own *Qibla*, towards which the believers, wherever they happen to be, should turn their faces while in prayers.

145.—Now, however much the Jews might be dominated by the passion of greed, they would never

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agree with the Muslims on their change of *Qibla*. Besides, when this question was raised, there were already several *Qiblas*. To begin with, the Christians had their own *Qibla*, not the same as the Jewish Temple of Jerusalem, and this in spite of the fact that the Christians belonged to the same tradition as the Jews, and that the prophet Jesus, as a true Jew, had kept to the *Qibla* of Jerusalem throughout his life. Nay, even the followers of Jesus had been observing the same *Qibla* for their prayers for two hundred years after him. In the fourth century, however, idolatrous tendencies vitiated the pure traditions of Christianity—and the Christians gradually adopted all the features of the sun-worshipping cult as their own. One of the changes thus wrought in their religious practices was that the East, *i.e.*, the rising point of the sun, came to be the Christian *Qibla* instead of the Temple of Jerusalem, the original *Qibla* of their religion. But even the Jews themselves were not free from corruption on this score. There was a sect among them called ‘Samaritans’ who differed from the bulk of the Jews on this question of *Qibla*. Thus there were various *Qiblas* belonging to different nations, and not one of them would yield to the other in the matter.

146.—Hence the rather serious tone of the command that the prophet should not follow the insensate desires of the Jews.

## ISLAM AND JESUS

BY MRS. NADIRE F. IVES OSMAN (NEW YORK)

In the opening chapter of the Gospel of St. John, the principal titles bestowed upon Jesus are acknowledged by his relative, John the Baptist, and by four of the men about to become his disciples. We are thus at once informed that Jesus was considered to be "the only-begotten Son," "the Lamb of God," "the Messiah" and "the King of Israel" in an account of the ministry of Jesus which follows upon a brief introduction designed especially for those having an acquaintance with Greek Philosophy. Of these witnesses it is Philip who declares: "We have found Him of whom Moses in the Law and the Prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph." (John I: 18, 36, 41, 45, 49.)

The name of Joseph figures prominently in the two genealogies of Jesus which have come down to us in the Gospels. The one contained in the Gospel of St. Matthew has been given the name of "The Legal Genealogy." Here the male line has been traced from Jesus through Joseph, the husband of Mary. The first book of the New Testament commences: "The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham. Abraham begat Isaac,"—and so on until it concludes with the 16th verse,—“and Jacob begat Joseph, the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ.” (Matth. I:1—16.)

We may well wonder why this genealogy of Joseph has been given to us for, were Jesus a mere step-son, there could have been no reason to graft him on the family-tree of Mary's husband. The line of descent is also incomplete, for the name of one of the progenitors is missing somewhere from the list. We know this because in the following verse (Matth. I: 17) we are told, "from the carrying away unto Babylon unto



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Christ are fourteen generations." Only thirteen have been given. Such an omission completely invalidates the reckoning, from a legal standpoint.

A second genealogy is included in the Gospel of St. Luke which, likewise, traces the ancestry of Jesus through Joseph. This has been named "the Natural Genealogy." It is, however, even more naive than the first. We discover that Joseph is now declared to have been the son of Heli, instead of the son of Jacob. If we are fortunate enough to possess a Bible with commentaries, we learn in a footnote that Heli was Mary's father. As it was the custom to trace a line through the male side only, someone has ingeniously inserted the name of Joseph in Mary's pedigree, substituting it there instead of her own. (It is not out of place to remark that if Mary had had a brother, which we cannot verify, his line would have been superior to hers.) In brief, Luke III : 23—38 reads : "Jesus, as was supposed the son of Joseph, which was the son of Heli, which was the son of Matthat,"—and so on until we come to the name of Adam, who, we are informed, "was the son of God." It is very obvious that a desperate attempt has been made, in these two genealogies, to make something plausible.

From the two above-mentioned sources, we do gather the valuable information that Joseph was the lineal descendant of King Solomon, the son of David, whereas Mary traced her descent from David through his *younger son*, Nathan, *Solomon's brother*. Zechariah gives us additional light on the matter. He undoubtedly prophesied of Jesus in verses to which we shall later refer ; but he has also drawn a very clear distinction between the two lines represented by Joseph and by Mary, which never became confused. "And the land shall mourn, every family apart : the family of the house of David apart, and their wives apart ; the family

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of the house of Nathan apart, and their wives apart; the family of the house of Levi apart, and their wives apart," etc. (Zech. XII:12.) It is very evident, therefore, that a descent from Joseph was necessary to establish Jesus's title to the inheritance of the throne of David,—a descent from Nathan would have represented only the claim of a younger brother which could not have been in force while the royal line of David was still in existence. The right of the first-born male was mandatory in Hebrew law. (Deut. XXI: 15—17.) Unless Jesus were the offspring of Joseph, one of his half-brothers, born later to Joseph and Mary, could have superseded him and made his pretensions invalid.

Despite the fact that Mary was of the tribe of Judah, we know from Luke I: 36 that she was also a cousin of Elizabeth, the mother of John. In Verse 5 of the same chapter, we are told that Elizabeth was born of the line of Aaron, and was also the wife of a priest: both having been descended from Levi, they were separate from the tribe of Judah. They had long been childless. The holy Qur-án tells us that Mary's mother, like Elizabeth, also came of the line of Aaron, and that she had placed her daughter under the care of Zacharias, Elizabeth's husband, in obedience to a vow made even before the birth of Mary (Holy Qur-án III: 34, 36). The only tradition that we have of Jesus's mother states that she had been devoted to the temple service as a child. It is quite likely, therefore, as Mary was related to Elizabeth, of the line of Aaron, while her father came of the house of Jacob, that actually her mother had been born in the priestly caste, but had later married out of it.

Seven hundred years before Jesus was born, the Prophet Isaiah had spoken: "Therefore the Lord Himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name

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Immanuel" (Isaiah VII: 14). There is no doubt that Mary and her son were given to the world as a sign from God, for the resulting controversies which have ravaged and torn mankind have indicated that. We find an acknowledgment of this in the Holy Qur-án: "And We made the son of Mary and his mother a sign" (Holy Qur-án XXIII: 50).

It is not recorded that this name "Immanuel" was ever given to Jesus directly by his mother. As interpreted, "God with us," it might have been used as an appellation for any prophet. It may be observed, however, that the name given to Mary's son by his parents was not really that of "Jesus." This latter is only the Latin form of the original Hebrew name 'Yēshūa', which signifies "Jehovah helps." There is not a very great difference in meaning between the two names, "Immanuel" and "Yēshūa", except that the name from which "Jesus" has been derived was constructed with the aid of that name of God so disparaged by Christians,—"Jehovah."

One of the words used in this prophecy, "virgin," will bear a cautious scrutiny. It appears frequently in Hebrew Scripture where it was uncoloured by later strained intellectual aspirations. In Psalms XIV: 13, 14, to quote an example, we read of "The King's daughter . . . the virgins, her companions that follow her." There was, however, a peculiar association with this word in the Israelite mind, very remote from Western thought. This was the result of certain restrictions placed upon the priests in their choice of wives. They could not marry a widow, a divorced woman, a profane, or a harlot. All but virgins were forbidden to them (Lev. XXI: 13, 14). The clue to the reason for this prohibition may be found when we review other requirements for the hereditary priesthood. Any physical blemish excluded a son from officiating

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at the altar or from going into the veil. Only the most perfect specimens of man, beast, bird, fruit or grain (and, of the last, only the first-fruits) were considered worthy of presentation. Such a state of physical excellence was a witness to the glory of God in His rôle as Creator, and impressive to a wondering people but recently escaped from a state of bondage and depression.

This scrupulous selection of an exterior perfection rounded out the insistence upon a purity of content. The direction given to Abraham, "Walk before me and be thou perfect . . ." (Gen. XVII : 1) had again been voiced in Deuteronomy XVIII : 13—"Thou shalt be perfect with the Lord thy God"—which made the Ten Commandments obligatory. It was recognised that a disregard of chastity would spread havoc throughout the nation and destroy its finest qualities, as well as the direct line. Purity of Life was re-emphasised for the priesthood. The virgin, about to be admitted into a domesticity closely allied with the life of the temple, became an example of virtuous womanhood.

It is to be noted that Ezekiel, companion of the Babylonian Exiles, gave substantially the same directions as those contained in Leviticus, for the priesthood of his day, but with a difference. The authority for this modification of the law of Moses was his inspired vision : Neither shall they, the priests, take for their wives a widow, nor her that is put away ; but they shall take maidens of the seed of the house of Israel, or a widow that had a priest before." (Ezek. XLIV : 22.) With the substitution of the more common noun, "maiden," for our austere term, "virgin," the direction seems to assume a softer outline.

When, however, we consult the Hebrew texts of Leviticus and Ezekiel which refer to the choice of wives for the priesthood, we make the discovery that, although the English translation of the Bible offers us "maiden"

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as the substitute for "virgin," the same Hebrew word has been used in each instance; "bsuloh," signifying "virgin,"—a woman who has had no special experience with man. In the verse of Psalms which referred to the companions of the King's daughter, we again find "bsuloh." This word is not used in Isaiah VII: 14. In that case was employed a noun not a synonym for virgin—"almo," which means "a young woman." We have no exact equivalent for this word in English. It was used, however, to describe a young woman who is either married or unmarried in the same interchangeable way as when our English word "girl" is applied to a female child while, at the same time, it may find a rightful place in the sentence, "She is a fine girl," which now refers to a young married woman.

The foregoing should explain what has often seemed so incomprehensible,—why an educated Jew, instructed in the language of his forefathers, should fail to respond to the suggestion that a unique miracle was prophesied in Isaiah, which found its fulfilment in the life of the virgin Mary. It also accounts for the strangeness of the fact that, for nearly eight hundred years previous to the birth of Jesus, this prophecy was current among the Jews while yet they entertained no suspicion that they were to expect other than what was common to the race of man. The Jews were not looking for an incarnation of God that should be arrived at by supernatural means: they were wishing and praying for that leader who might save them from their dependent position, and who might also become their King.

We think it interesting to point out that Matthew I: 23 attempts to quote Isaiah VII: 14, but with the following result: "Behold, a virgin shall be with child and shall bring forth a son and they shall call

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his name Emmanuel." This is not identical with the original form of the prophecy.

The Gospel of Luke is the only book in the New Testament which contains an account of what has been called "The Annunciation." We are there told that Mary, a virgin, was espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. An angel (we should add in vision) came to acquaint her with the news that she should conceive a son: "And the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father, David, and he shall reign over the house of Jacob." In other words, Mary has been informed that she will bear a son, in God's time, of her fiancé, Joseph, of the house of David, who had just been mentioned. Mary's astonishment brings the reply that with God nothing is impossible (Luke I: 27—36). Did not her cousin, Elizabeth, conceive a child in her old age, she, who like Sarah, had been called barren? We are then informed that, three months later, Zacharias publicly acknowledged the male parent of the child soon to be born to his relative, Mary. Amid an outburst of prophecy and thanksgiving occasioned by the birth of his own son, he exclaimed: "And (God) hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David" (Luke I: 69). The entire first chapter of Luke provides us with a perfect example of what may be won by interpretation.

It must be conceded that many New Testament verses declare unequivocally that Jesus was the Son of God, a statement which, as it draws certain minds through the emotions, creates in others a strong repugnance by its irrationality and suggestion of Polytheism. We should, nevertheless, feel a sense of compassion for those who react with joy to the idea that God, or His Son, would come down and submit himself to birth in our impure midst; it seems more

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difficult, however, to find any degree of sympathy for sentiments such as were once so graciously written to us, "*Que peut-il y avoir de plus beau, de plus saint que L'Eucharistie qu' un Dieu se donnant en nourriture á nos á mes ?* " What could be more beautiful, more holy, than the Eucharist, where God gives himself as food for our souls ? " We should beware, at the same time, of condemning lightly those who cherish a conception of God so high that it seems to them inconceivable that His Presence could be circumscribed by the finite, or His Majesty suffer the detraction of that incongruous personage, another member of His " Divine Family."

We have read, however, that the New Testament does not claim this sacred relationship for Jesus alone. In the genealogy of Luke just given, Adam, likewise, was called " the son of God " although in his case the term of consanguinity was not capitalised. Romans VIII : 14 informs us, " For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." This explanation would not justify the inclusion, in a legal genealogy, of that which has to do only with a spiritual state. A second explanation may then be advanced that a terse reference has been made to God as the Creator of physical man. This interpretation may at first seem more appropriate, yet further consideration must pronounce it as inadequate. The word " son " itself opens up the way for a double construction,—it demands immediately the existence of a mother. As a result, our minds cannot but revert to the first allegory of creation as given in the first chapter of Genesis. This is truly a noble representation of what a mere statement of human relationship, with its consequent disregard of all facts, can achieve.

The appearance in Hebrew Scripture of a Divine solicitude, expressed in terms of human ties, is first

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to be found in Exodus. Moses was instructed by God that he should say unto Pharaoh, "Thus, saith the Lord, 'Israel is my son, even my first-born . . . let my son go that he may serve me.'" (Ex. IV : 22, 23). We may well believe that such an address must have come as a rude shock to the mighty Pharaoh who had been accustomed to thinking of himself as the divine son of God,—realised by a most ingenious procedure. The Holy Qur-án, written nearly thirteen hundred years ago, provides us with a truer picture of what must have been Pharaoh's response than does even Exodus itself, and which we now can appreciate—thanks to the progress made in Egyptology: "If thou wilt take a god beside me, I will put thee in prison" (Holy Qur-án XXVI : 29).

In an effort to add to the prophetic background of Jesus, this event, recalled in Hosea, has been requisitioned for the New Testament. We are told in Matthew that the child Jesus was in Egypt "until the death of Herod, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the Prophet, saying 'Out of Egypt have I called my son'" (Matth. II : 15). Two references have been given in the Bible footnotes, the first being Numbers XXIV : 8: "God brought him forth out of Egypt." There is no special reason to believe that this verse prophesied the "Flight into Egypt" which, we are told, in Matthew alone, was taken by Joseph and his family. The second reference is the one from which the verse in Matthew directly quotes, but it certainly was never meant to be used in this connection: "When Israel was a child, then I loved him and called my son out of Egypt" (Hosea XI : 1). All of the context denies such an application. The verse refers specifically to that charge given to Moses which we have just quoted: "Israel is my son, even my first-



## ISLAMIC REVIEW

born . . . let my son go that he may serve me ”  
(Ex. IV : 22).

From a perusal of Old Testament verses, the conclusion should immediately be reached that, if Jesus did assert his sonship to God in the presence of his compatriots, there should have been no cause for any astonishment, on their part. This is borne out by John VIII : 41, where we are told that, while speaking with Jesus, the Jews acknowledged the fatherhood of God in his presence ; “ We have one Father, even God,” they exclaimed. When Jesus was about to be stoned for blasphemy, that most serious of all offences in the Hebrew religion,—the prophesying falsely in the name of God,—he hastened to recall to them that verse of Psalms LXXXII : 6 : “ I have said ye are gods : and all of you are children of the Most High.” We find other declarations, however, which carry Jesus far beyond the bounds of this analogy : “ The Father is in me and I in Him.” (John X : 38) ; “ He that hath seen me hath seen the Father ” (John XIV : 9) : although he also can still say to them, “ The first of all the Commandments is, ‘Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is One Lord ’ ” (Mark XII : 29). If even these statements might be explained away as an example of spiritual exaggeration, the climax may be said to have been reached, from the Jewish viewpoint, when it is said that Jesus announced, “ Before Abraham was, I am.” We are told that Jesus saved himself by hiding, after the use of these sacred words, and “ went out of the temple going through the midst of them, and so passed by ” (John VIII : 58, 59).

## WHAT IS ISLAM?

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

**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 PROPHET 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-AN.**—The Gospel of the Muslim is the Qur-án. Muslims believe in the Divine origin of every other sacred book, 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 Premeasurement 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 Pre-measurement. 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 at Mecca.

**ATTRIBUTES OF GOD.**—The Muslims worship One God—the Almighty, the All-Knowing, the All-Just, the Cherisher of

## ISLAMIC REVIEW

All the 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 Heavens 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 by itself is 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 OF 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.**—Man and woman come from the same essence, possess the same soul, and they have been equipped with equal capability for intellectual, spiritual and moral attainments. Islam places man and woman under the 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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