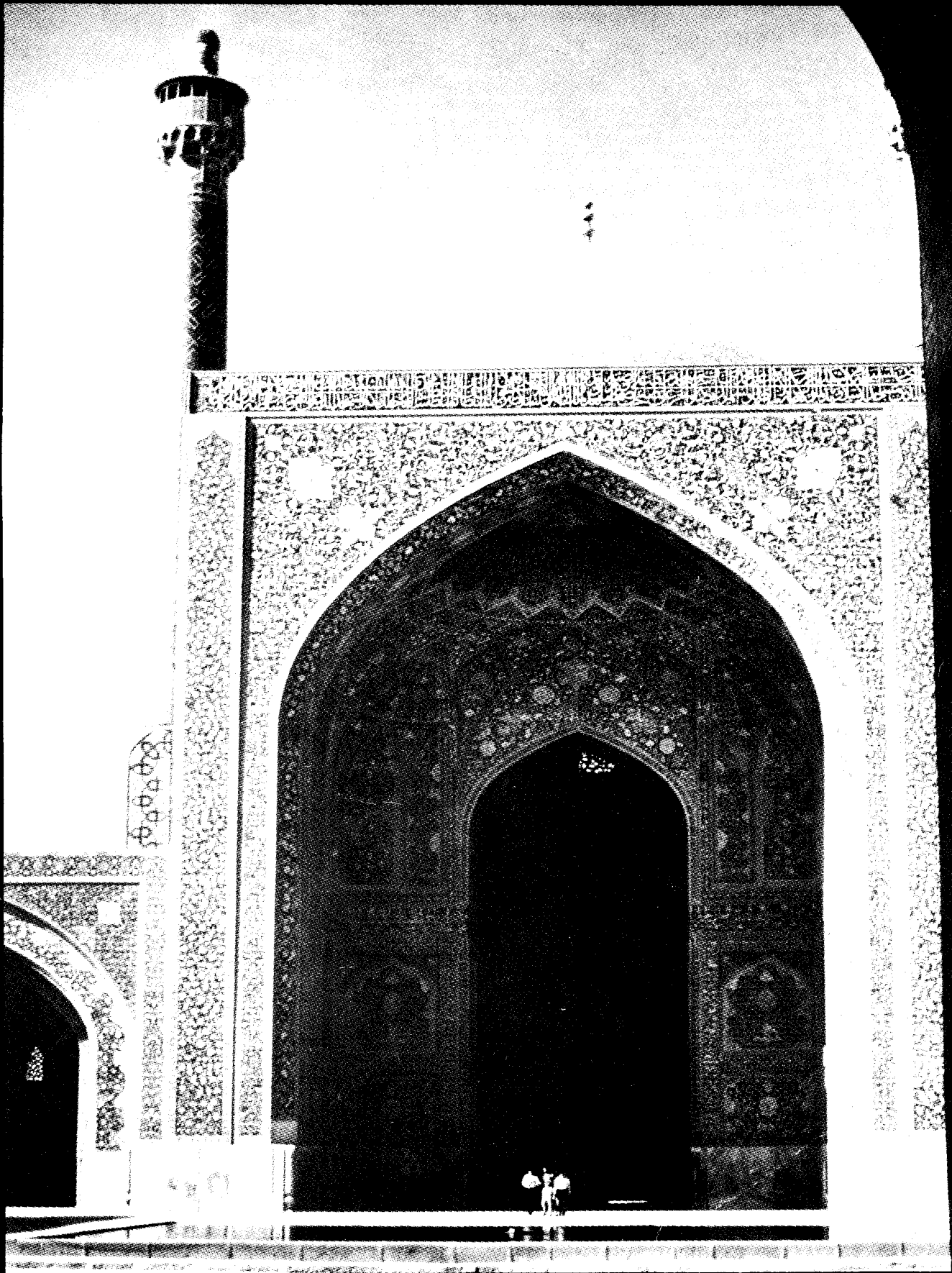


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The Promised Messiah Speaks

MIRACULOUS CHARACTER OF THE HOLY QUR'AN

by **Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad**
Founder of the **Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam**

Such are the teachings of the Holy Qur'an. They lead men to perfection both in knowledge and practice. These teachings are indeed so advanced that none of the previous Divine Books were deemed fit to propose or propound anything like them. They amount, in fact, to miracle of wisdom and achievement on the part of the Holy Prophet. They make the Holy Qur'an a standing miracle for all times in the eyes of the world. The miracles of the previous prophets are all dead and gone, but this miracle of the Holy Qur'an will stand till the last day. Such claims on behalf of the Holy Qur'an are not mere figments of our imagination lacking a basis in actual facts. There is the most irrefutable evidence in their support and the most convincing and compelling arguments substantiating their truth. Its miraculous wisdom is evident from the fact that it contains all the principles and teachings, all the facts and arguments required by man for his search after God. Its teachings are perfect. It furnishes all the arguments necessary for the establishment of truth and the refutation of falsehood. In the manner and method of its exposition of the higher spiritual truths it leaves nothing to be desired. And withal it sets forth all these teachings and commands and prohibitions in a way which is at once most eloquent and sweet and charming. This is an achievement which is certainly beyond the power of man. Next, as for its miracle of achievement, as much as of wisdom, the fact is equally plain and obvious and admits of no denial or doubt. The Holy Qur'an has indeed surprised many of the most intelligent thinkers by the wonderful effect and unique change it has wrought in the lives of its followers, by the extraordinary illumination it has caused in their minds, by the complete eradication it has effected of long-established evil customs. It scaled the walls of crooked and perverted natures and made its way into the secret chamber of the heart of the hard-hearted. It crossed the deep and wide moats of carnal lives and reached to those who lived behind those barriers. For it, through God's intervention, the most difficult works were made easy, distances were obliterated, narrow, selfish minds were broadened and enlarged and every obstacle was removed, till at last truth was made manifest and its devotees gradually came to receive clear revelations and visions and the seed of perennial miracles was sown in their hearts. That is why when questioned about miracles, we have no need to refer to bygone ages for instances of them, but even from our own place can show to the sceptic ever-fresh examples of such miracles.

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EDITORIAL

Why Keep the Truth From People

That fateful decision of the National Assembly of Pakistan in 1974 whereby 'Ahmadis' were declared a 'non-Muslim minority for the purposes of the Law and Constitution in Pakistan' was taken in such a manner that non-member participants in the debate were bound by an oath of secrecy. In view of the lack of freedom of expression at all times in Pakistan irrespective of the fact whether a government elected by the people or a military regime was in power; and given the fact that major daily news papers both in Urdu and English, the radio and television - the major medias of information belonged to the government of Pakistan in 1974 and have since continued to be so belonged, this secrecy necessarily leads one to conclude that the said decision was based on political expediency and convenience of the government in power at that time rather than being based on any sound grounds of religious belief.

As is evident from the white-paper issued by the present government of Pakistan on the black deeds of its predecessor government, neither the then Prime Minister nor a majority of the members of the said National Assembly were practicing Muslims. Religion did not mean any business in their personal lives while in their public lives - professing to be Muslims was nothing more than a political necessity and they too like other politicians and political parties paraded Islam as a vehicle to power or just a political slogan. If the said white paper carries any worth then these honorable members of the National Assembly were guilty of such black deeds which to use the words of Allama Iqbal "will put the Jews to shame" - what worth may be put on a decision in the field of religion by such a "cotary of irreligious socialists," should be evident to any one possessed of sound judicious mind.

In the case of Ahmadis, the public platform, the press, the radio and the television - all forms of government controlled media - were ruthlessly used to generate and fan hatred against them. All sorts of slanders and lies were heaped on the founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam. Means were devised to thrust this most ugly decision in the fourteen hundred years of the history of Islam down the throat of Ahmadis by conditioning the extension of the benefits of Pakistani nationality to them only on signing a government imposed declaration of their beliefs. Probably no other

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EDITORIAL

cont.

instance in the history of mankind can be found where a government took upon itself the task of declaring the belief or religion of its citizens other than the one actually professed by them.

Whatever Ahmadis said in their defence in the National Assembly was not allowed to be heard by the people of Pakistan. One may ask as to what security interests of the country or the nation would be jeopardized by allowing the people of Pakistan to hear the Ahmadiyya side of the case? We have previously requested through these columns a debate on Radio Pakistan and Pakistan Television between the Nominees of the Ahmadiyya Groups and non-Ahmedi Muslim groups regarding the beliefs and claims of the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam such as 'Death of Jesus Christ, Finality of Prophethood, Doctrine of Jihad in Islam, Apostacy and its Punishment in Islam, Abrogation of the Verses of the Holy Qur'an, etc. etc. whereon differences of view point exist between the two.

It is most unfortunate that ever since 1974 conditions of charged atmosphere against Ahmadis in Pakistan have been kept live by certain political quarters which necessitate the bringing the other side of the coin to the knowledge and information of the people of Pakistan, hence the request for the debate. In case political expediency does not permit the holding of requested debate, then we probably in all fairness would be justified in asking for extension of the rights of freedom of practicing and preaching ones religion as allowed in Islam to other religious minorities free of all or any coercive or charged atmosphere. Most important of all, we demand that the government of Pakistan allows the Ahmadis at least two hours time, once a year on the occasion of the Founder's Day, on the Radio Pakistan and television of Pakistan as is allowed to other Religious minorities in Pakistan such as Hindus, Christians, Buddhists, Parsees, etc. etc. We hope this modest demand of ours - for putting us at par with other religious minorities in Pakistan will not be denied us - and we are not asking for much, just two hours in a year.

Masud Akhtar

The Promised Messiah Speaks cont.

On the other hand, there is with our adversaries nothing but legends of the past. Such legends can never prove the truth of any religion. *The truth of a religion can be known only by the light of signs which never cease, nor ever get stale.* Thus the miracle of the Holy Qur'an is like a tree with two branches, both of which are of great majesty. These diffuse their fragrance all round and crowds of people are gathered to bear testimony to their worth, just as they gather round the Holy Temple at Makka during the days of the pilgrimage. Imagine for a moment what an amount of pain the greatest philosopher will have to undergo in order to cure the perversion of a foolish or ignorant mind or to change the habits of a vicious life. The work will well nigh prove impossible for him. Try, then, to realize the greatness of the man, who in a few years reformed thousands of men and turned them from vice to virtue, eradicated their disbelief, adorned them with the qualities of truthfulness and probity, till the light of piety illuminated their hearts and the love of God was made manifest in their faces and they were fired with the zeal for the service of their faith and traversed the earth from east to west and from north to south inviting men to Islam and the religion of Muhammad. Their minds were enlightened with Divine knowledge and their intelligence was sharpened to understand the Divine mysteries and love of God and hatred of evil became a part and parcel of their nature. Thus gradually they came to reach the stage of the upright and the blessed after they had once been sunk in the grossest idolatry. In the service of Islam they spared themselves no pains until they carried it to the farthest corners of the then-known world, of Persia, China, the Roman Empire and Syria. In short, they reached all those lands where idolatry had spread its sway and paganism had established its power. They did not falter in the presence of death and did not yield even by an inch when threatened by the sword of the tyrant. They were staunch in battle and rushed to meet death for the sake of God. They were a people who never fled before an enemy. They carried their victories to the remotest ends of human habitation. Their genius was put to test

and their fitness to rule was brought to the proof. In every field of human enterprise they came out victorious and they proved themselves masters in all departments of knowledge and achievements. This fact alone amounts to a miracle on the part of the Holy Prophet and a clear proof of the truth of Islam. If, however, our opponents should still feel inclined to doubt the truth of our statement, they may well try to point out one single instance from among the followers of Moses and Jesus or other prophets, who achieved anything like that achieved by the companions of the Holy Prophet. The condition of those followers is an open secret and the opinion expressed about them by their respective leaders is a matter of common knowledge. These prophets, of course, could never have uttered what was not a fact, for they spoke from the promptings of the Holy Ghost and were not like ordinary men who speak under the influence of temper.

An evidence of the truth of the Holy Prophet

Another evidence of the truth of the Holy Prophet is that he appeared just at the time when his appearance was most needed and he did not depart till he had perfected all the details of the religion he preached. As for his miracles, they are indeed outstanding. Mention of many of them will be found in the literature of Islam and the reliable and well-known oral traditions which have come down to us. One important feature about his miracles is that they are as much extant today as in the past, which fact puts the whole matter altogether beyond the region of doubt and mistake. The never-failing presence of these signs makes the truth of the Holy Prophet perfectly obvious, which no one can reject except those brought up in sin and fostered in the atmosphere of evil.

Apart, however, from all these external proofs and evidences of the truth of the religion taught by the Holy Prophet, if we consider the intrinsic merits of its teachings, we cannot fail to discern in their clear and shining face the reflection of truth which requires no extrinsic weight of arguments. And, by



HE ESTABLISHED GOD AS A LIVING EXPERIENCE

by GILANI KAMRAN

Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad appeared at a time, late 19th century, when the Christian mission work in India was exceedingly aggressive and the defence as put forth by Muslims in this country was comparatively weaker. The Muslims lacked self-assurance and what was seriously contemplated by the Christian missionaries to be the weakest point in the Muslim religious personality was the *loss* of faith in a living God. This was perhaps the most difficult time in the history of Islam, because the Religion had, unfortunately, succumbed to the miseries of a civilisation which had never before experienced such a catastrophe. There were talks of compromises, alliances and of outright rejection almost everywhere. Whatever be the complexion of the scene it is quite certain that the Muslims had not only lost their political freedom, they had lost the sense of direction also. The task before Hdt. Mirza Sahib was therefore of a greater magnitude and responsibility. His mission as *Mujjadid* should be evaluated within the perspective which determines the history of the period.

Hdt. Mirza Sahib was constrained to work within a milieu which was adverse to the ideas he proclaimed as the basic truths of his divine ministry. It should not be forgotten that he did his writing when the English were here, and that British Government had a soft corner for the missionaries who, by no mere accident, also came from the British Isles. Hdt. Mirza Sahib had no option; he had to accept the political situation as it stood then and had to work untiringly for the greater glory of Islam within that situation. Critics have given wrong and misleading interpretations to his commitment in relation to his loyalty to the British Government. To all practical purposes Hdt. Mirza Sahib's acceptance of the political situation was in no way a compromise with the alien power. He was actually all against it; he in fact challenged it on higher levels.

The last decades of the nineteenth century were one of the dark decades of our history. We were the victims and the Europeans were our tormentors! In our eyes the word Europe stood for our complete annihilation; it also stood for power, culture and a material wealth. Things and events obeyed the Europeans; in India the English controlled them. Islam had no doubt a glorious past to its credit, but it had only recently come out as a loser. We existed as a matter of history only. In retrospect we found our glory to be in ruins; in the future we, however, found nothing but blankness. It is rather easier today to talk of the future, but in those days the future just did not exist for us. We lived and existed in the present and there was an end to it.

Hdt. Mirza Sahib restored our faith in a living God. He said that we were no longer the people whom God had deprived of His grace. His providence still worked for us and that we had only to feel it in our hearts. Hdt. Mirza Sahib made us feel God as a living experience and thereby abridged for us the distance that lies between the infinite and the finite. Such mystical education was really valuable because the Aligarh movement was then using a phraseology which had by rationalizing Islam obscured the divine presence and had made God at once impersonal, indifferent and abstract.

By establishing God as a living experience and His providence as an active agent in the movement of our affairs, Hdt. Mirza Sahib revealed to us the image of the future which had never been read before by us with as much confidence. He disclosed to us the advent of the Muslim renaissance, and made us realize that the possibilities of the future were once again entrusted to us by the providence. He made us see that Islam was the only true religion that suited the rhythm of the modern times. It is, however, interesting to note that his contemporaries behaved apologetically and thereby had failed to present Islam with assurance. In this respect Hdt. Mirza Sahib was the only

solitary figure who proclaimed the role and significance of Islam in the world of to-day without the last hesitation. He was positive, assertive and full of confidence in his ministry. And it is in this direction that his importance as a *teacher* lies for us even today.

The Promised Messiah Speaks

cont.

God, nothing prevents men and women from the acceptance of Islam except when they carry within their hearts the secret maladies of pride, prejudice or bigotry or narrow sectional preferences or hatred. They have been deprived of this inestimable Divine Blessing only because they participated too extensively in sins. These close their hearts and entomb them in darkness and deprive them of moral insight.





THE PROMISED MESSIAH

by late AL-HAJ MUMTAZ AHMAD FARUQUI

The Second Coming of the Messiah

The 14th century of the Islamic era (Hijrah) has been so much held in dread on account of its spiritual darkness and atheistic activities that prophets and religious personages have made reference to it in their sacred scriptures and recorded a strong note of warning for the guidance of their peoples. But side by side with this grim picture, the scriptures also give the glad tidings of the advent of a great Reformer who would warn the world of the coming of heavenly chastisement, and wean the erring people from their sinful activities and rehabilitate Truth and Righteousness on this earth. The scriptures of Hindus, Christians and Muslims have made a reference to this perverted age as well as to the coming of a great Reformer who will handle the situation with a firm hand. He has been called *Nishalank* or *Kalki Avtar* in the Hindu Shastras, and *Mahdi Mir* in the scriptures of the Sikhs. The Christians call his advent as the *Second Coming of Christ* and the Muslims give him the name of *Imam Mahdi* and *Promised Messiah*.

We read a saying of Jesus Christ in the Gospel of St. John (14:3) - "*And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.*"

Incidentally Lord Krishna of the Hindus of India is also reported to have made a similar claim of re-appearance in the world: "*Whenever there is decay of dharma (true religion) and predominance of unrighteousness, I myself come forth, for the protection of the good, and the destruction of the evil-doers; and for the sake of firmly establishing righteousness and truth I am born from age to age.*" (Bhagavada Gita, Ch. 4, verses 7, 8)

But these holy persons spoke under inspiration from heaven, and their words and promises could not be false. The trouble, however, arose from the fact that, whereas they spoke in the language of metaphors and figures of speech, the sticklers of the letter clung pertinaciously to the literal meaning of their words and failed to appreciate their true intent. For the descent or

second advent of a person, mentioned in the previous scriptures, does not mean the coming of the same person but only the appearance of another person in the power and the spirit of the person prophesied about.

The above interpretation is corroborated by the Holy Bible itself. The Jews held the belief that Elijah was taken up alive to the heaven and that he would reappear before the advent of Christ. When Jesus claimed to be the Messiah, the Jews raised this objection against him; but we learn from Matthew (17:10-1) and Luke (1:17) that Jesus explained to them that this only referred to a person who would go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, and that such a person was John the Baptist.

Now it has been an indisputable fact among the Muslim Ummah (nation) that God has brought prophethood to an end with the Holy Prophet Muhammad (may peace and blessings of God be upon him). But as time affects everything it affects the religion of the people as well; but this does not mean that the religion of the people keeps on changing. What actually happens is, that interested persons introduce such doctrines into it, by ignorance or mischief, which do not belong to the original Faith. It is these extraneous matters which bring about a change in its form. It is imperative that if the last, complete and universal religion of Islam was to keep its pristine purity and glory, then some reformer must appear from time to time to remove all alien conceptions that had crept in and reset the picture of Islam in its original splendour.

The Bi'that (Appointment) of Mujaddids

It was to accomplish the above-mentioned vital task that God had so ordained, as clearly mentioned by the Holy Prophet, that mujaddids (renovators) would be raised amongst Muslims from time to time. Accordingly *Abu Dawud*, the most authentic book of Hadith, after *Al-Bukhari* and *Al-Muslim*, mentions (as translated): "*Most surely Allah will raise for this community at the head of every century (hijrah) one who shall revive for it its faith.*" (Abu Dawud

Sulaiman (d. 275 A.H.) *Kitab-al-Sunan*, Ch. *Al-Malahim* (printed at Ansari Press, Delhi-India) Vol. 2, p. 241.

This hadith has been accepted as authentic by all the preservers (huffaz) of hadith, as mentioned by Imam Jalalud-Din Suyuti (d. 911 A.H. or 1505 C.E.) Besides, a chain of Muslim holy men (auliya) throughout the centuries of the Muslim era, had proclaimed that they had been appointed by Allah as mujaddid of their respective centuries. In the writings of some of these mujaddids like Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal (2nd Century A.H.), Imam ibn Taimiyyah (7th Century A.H.), Imam Suyuti (10th Century A.H.), Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi, Mujaddid Alf-i-thani (11th Century A.H.) and Shah Waliullah, Muhaddath Dehli (12th Century A.H.), it has been stated in so many words that, as mentioned in the famous hadith of Abu Dawud, God had appointed them the mujaddid of their time.

It may also be borne in mind that more than one mujaddid may appear in the same century in different places according to the circumstances prevailing at the time. But all of them had one aim in view and that was to defend Islam and restore it in all its glory for the world to see. Some of them suffered trials and tribulations in the pursuance of their work and duty, but they bore them cheerfully.

When we turn to the Holy Qur'an, we find that it mentions the raising of khalifahs (successors) of the Prophet Muhammad from among his ummah. In the Chapter *The Light* we observe: "Allah has promised to those of you who believe and do good that He will most certainly make them successors in the earth as He made successors before them." (24:55)

Further, it must be understood that in spite of the termination of prophethood, God will continue to speak with the honoured and chosen people of this ummah. And for the eradication of some serious errors, He would Himself guide the followers of Muhammad. Thus God's communication with non-prophets and granting of revelation to them is the basis of this

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report, and God's speaking with non-prophets has been repeatedly mentioned in the Holy Qur'an, for instance:

(1) And We revealed to Moses' mother (28:7), although she was not a prophetess.

And again - When We revealed to thy mother that which was revealed (20:38).

(2) The disciples of Jesus were not prophets, but they, too, are mentioned as having received God's revelation: When I revealed to the disciples (5:111).

(3) About the righteous servants (auliya) of this ummah, it has also been mentioned in the Qur'an: The angels descend upon them (41:30).

Then again: "For them is good news in this world's life." (10:64)

(4) This has been corroborated in authentic reports from the Holy Prophet: There has remained nothing of prophethood except mubashsharat (good news). (Al-Bukhari, 92:5)

(5) Moreover, in reports that have been unanimously agreed upon, it has been mentioned that as God spoke with the non-prophets from among other nations, so shall He communicate with the followers of the Holy Prophet (Al-Bukhari, 62:6). Thus, if it is necessary for a mujaddid to have Divine Communication both the Qur'an and the genuine 'reports' confirm that this ummah will be favoured with such communications.

The Mujaddid of the fourteenth century of the Hijrah

Thus, when it has been established from the Qur'an, Hadith, sayings and claims of other mujaddids that the coming of a mujaddid at the beginning of each century is essential, then who was the mujaddid of the Fourteenth Century of the Hijrah, as it has already passed? A mujaddid must proclaim himself to the Muslim Nation, as he is so appointed by Allah to renovate the faith. For a person making a false claim to mislead the people, dire punishment is promised. "And if he had fabricated against Us certain sayings, We would certainly have seized him by the right hand, then cut off his heart's vein." (The Qur'an, 69:44-48)

However, we do find that in 1885 C.E., a holy and learned man, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian (District Gurdaspur, Punjab-India) issued a manifesto in which after referring to the publication of *Barahin Ahmadiyyah* (a book in which he established the truth of the teachings of Islam and refuted the objections raised against Islam, and emphasised the necessity of Divine Revelation, throwing light on its different aspects) he states: "This servant of Allah has been given a manifest proof by the grace of Allah the Almighty that many of the true inspirations and signs and wonders and news of the unseen and Divine secrets and visions and prayers that have been accepted, are a part of the religious experience of this servant of the faith, the truth of these being borne witness to by many of the religious opponents (the Aryas for instance). All these matters have been stated in this book, and the author has been given the knowledge that he is the mujaddid of this time and that spiritually his excellences resemble those of Messiah, the son of Mary, and one of them bears a very strong resemblance and a close affinity to the other."

The publication of *Barahin Ahmadiyyah* made a deep impression on the Muslims. They loved its author for his righteousness and piety, for his services to the cause of Islam, for his scholarly writings and for his bold stand against the opponents of Islam.

Early Life of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad

Before we proceed to understand more of the message of life which Mirza Ghulam Ahmad brought, it would be worthwhile to know something about the man himself.

It was probably in the year 1835 C.E. that Mirza Ghulam Ahmad was born. He was the son of Mirza Ghulam Murtada, whose ancestors (descended from Haji Birlas) had emigrated from Samarqand to India in 1530 C.E. during the reign of the Mughal Emperor Babar, and settled down in the Gurdaspur district, Punjab, India. Here they founded the present town of Qadian, which was originally named *Islampur Qadi*. This was shortened to Qadi and then to Kadi and finally it

became Qadian. Mirza Ghulam Ahmad was from the Persian descent, and not from the Mughal stock. The title Mirza is a Persian (or Iranian) appellation. The Tartars have Khan appended to their names, for example Chinghez Khan, Halaku Khan etc. The Holy Prophet had also said, while commenting on the Quranic verse: "And others from among them who have not yet joined them. And He the Mighty, the Wise." (62:3), as reported by Abu Hurairah: ". . . Salman, the Persian, was sitting among us, and the Holy Prophet placed his hand on Salman and said, 'Even if faith were near the Pleiades, a man from among these would surely find it' " (Al-Bukhari, 65:lxii. I).

Mirza Ghulam Ahmad received his primary education in his own village and then in the town of Batala, about ten miles away from Qadian. In his youth, under the instructions of his father, he was occupied with the management of agricultural lands. In this connection he had to conduct law suits relating to his family estate which were quite repugnant to his nature. He did it only in obedience to his father's advice. To fulfil his wishes, too, he accepted a Government job at Sialkot and remained there from 1864 C.E. to 1868 C.E. Besides his day's work, during this period he would spend his spare time in solitude reading the Holy Qur'an. Nevertheless he entered into many debates and discussion with Christian missionaries during his stay at Sialkot. In 1868 C.E. he was called back to Qadian by his father to see to the cultivation of the family lands. But his heart was not in this work; so he spent most of his time in studying the Holy Qur'an. He loved solitude and disliked worldly pursuits. To this effect he wrote to his father once mentioning that he would like to spend the rest of his life in religious study and practices, away from all worldly pursuits.

His father died in 1886 C.E., and a new era dawned upon him. He related afterwards that when his father was on his deathbed, it gave him some alarm and anxiety as to how he would make a living after his father died. Just then in a state of vision, he heard a mighty voice

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saying: "Isn't Allah sufficient for His servant?" He at once felt heartened and cheerful; and never in his lifetime had he any cause to doubt this statement.

Articles on religious subjects were published by Mirza Ghulam Ahmad in various papers in 1878 C.E. Some of them were in refutation of the beliefs of Arya Samaj, a virulent and aggressive Hindu sect founded by Swami Dayanand Sarasvati (1824-83 C.E.) in 1875 C.E. at Bombay, India.

As mentioned before, in 1884 C.E. the Mirza published his monumental and comprehensive book *Barahin Ahmadiyyah*, and afterwards announced his being appointed by Allah as the Mujaddid of the 14th century A.H. At that time there were those who expressed a desire to enter into his *bai'at* (pledge of fealty) but he refused it by saying that God Almighty had not permitted him to do so. At last on the first of December 1888 C.E. he announced that God had commanded him to accept *bai'at* and form a Jama'at. He announced: "I have been commanded that those who seek after truth should enter my *bai'at* in order to give up dirty habits and slothful and disloyal ways of life and in order to imbibe faith and a truly pure life that springs from faith and to learn the ways of the love of God."

The main purpose of the *bai'at* was to defend and extend the cause of Islam and to place the service of Islam above all considerations. In short - **I will hold religion above the world** was the motto.

Obviously the work of defense and propagation of Islam could not be carried on without the formation of a strong organisation ("And from among you (i.e. Muslims) there should be a party who invite to good and enjoin the right and forbid the wrong. And these are they who are successful." *Qur'an*, 3:103) and this naturally could not be achieved without an adequate pledge, which was made by giving one's hand into the hand of the Founder. So this is the principal significance of *bai'at* in the Ahmadiyyah Movement. At this announcement many Muslims entered his *bai'at*. (For details, please refer to Maulana Muhammad Ali, *The Ahmadiyyah Movement*, translated by S. Muhammad Tufail (Ahmadiyya

Anjuman Isha'at-i-Islam, Lahore-7, Pakistan)

If Hadrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad is the Mujaddid, then Muslims must cooperate with him. The Holy Qur'an says: "O ye who believe keep your duty to Allah and be with the truthful." (9:119) The Holy Prophet is reported to have said: "He who dies in a condition that he has not recognized the Imam of his age, dies a death of ignorance (*al-jahiliyyah*) (Ahmad ibn Hambal: *Musnad*, vol. iv, p. 96). A mujaddid is certainly the Imam of his age.

Reforms made by the Mujaddid of the 14th Century A.H.

1. The first task of the Mujaddid of this age was to establish the fact that God has been in communication with His righteous servants throughout the ages, as the modern materialistic civilization had shaken the very foundation of religion and made a complete denial of Divine revelation. Mirza Ghulam Ahmad proved his point, not only theoretically from the source of Islamic Shari'ah, but also by evidence of his own experience and prophecies. He held the Qur'an over everything else and placed the sources of Islamic Shari'ah in the following order: (i) the Holy Qur'an (ii) Hadith (The sayings and actions of the Holy Prophet (iii) Fiqh (Jurisprudence) (iv) Ijtihad (Exercise of Judgement). The last two are subordinate to the Qur'an and the Hadith. Islam is rational in its outlook; and its principles and other details of religion are in conformity with reason.

2. Muhammad (may the peace and blessings of God be upon him) is the greatest and last of the prophets. No prophet, neither new nor old, shall appear after him. Mujaddids (renovators) will, however, be raised at the head of each century (Hijrah) for the removal of errors from among the Muslims and for guiding them to the right path.

3. The religion should be held above the world. One should spend a part of one's time and property for the defence and propagation of Islam.

4. Islam was not spread with sword. The Holy Qur'an says: "There is no compulsion in religion - the right way is

indeed clearly distinct from error." (2:256)

Historically it cannot be proved that the Holy Prophet compelled anybody to acknowledge Islam, or that he fought battles to force a nation or a tribe to come within the fold of Islam. It is a historic fact that when he conquered and occupied Mecca where his enemies were located, the infidels, on surrendering themselves, were not forced to accept Islam, but were pardoned and allowed to go free. In fact, it was this kind and generous treatment which won the hearts of the people and they by themselves came to accept Islam as their religion. Later on in the countries conquered by the Muslim forces, the non-Muslim subjects like Christians, Jews, fire-worshippers and others were allowed their own religions. (The Qur'an, 22:39, 40) In the East-Indies like Sumatra, Java, Malaysia and Philippines no Muslim armies were sent to invade and conquer them. It were only the Muslim traders and tourists who went there and preached Islam and by the example set by them, induced the local people to become Muslims.

Islam believes neither in forced conversion nor keeping anybody in Islam at the point of sword. Hence, apostasy is not punishable by death in Islam, as the Holy Qur'an says: "... And whoever of you turns back from his religion, then he dies while an unbeliever - these it is whose works go for nothing in this world and the hereafter." (2:217) In the past history of Islam, if ever an apostate was put to death, he had either deserted Islam during battles or joined the hostile forces, or had committed a felony and committed murder before deserting.

5. Conception of Jihad. Jihad is unfortunately considered by most people to mean the spreading of Islam only with the sword. This is wrong. Jihad primarily signifies exerting oneself for a cause and sword is not always necessary for the cause of religion. Carrying the message of the Holy Qur'an to the world is also Jihad as is stated in the Qur'an: "And strive against them a mighty striving with it (the Qur'an)." (25:52) What Mirza Sahib said was that in this age and in

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The Promised Messiah cont.

this country, the conditions of Jihad by sword were not to be found. Pen can be mightier than the sword, so by speech and writing (literature) one can preach and spread the faith peacefully. The real source of guidance is the Holy Qur'an and the sayings and traditions of the Holy Prophet; so follow them and others will follow you.

If the performance of religious duties and the preaching of the faith are forcibly hindered and your life and honour is attacked and no peaceful means are left to avert the evil, then by all means take the sword in hand and God will surely grant victory, and peace and religious freedom shall be ultimately established.

6. Revival of Islamic Brotherhood. Islam is a religion of universal brotherhood. Distinctions of race, colour or country do not exist among Muslims. However, prophets and sacred scriptures of other nations are to be respected, as God had sent warners with Divine directions to every nation and country from time to time before the final and last of the Prophets - Muhammad, was sent for the guidance of the world.

For unity among Muslims, the Holy Qur'an say: "Do not say to anyone who offers you (Islamic) salutation: you are not a believer." (4:94) It is reported from the Holy Prophet: "Anybody who faces the Qibla (the sacred mosque at Mecca) while praying should not be declared as kafir." The Holy Prophet also said that difference of opinion amongst my followers is a blessing, as by discussion many new and useful things come to light. This taught Muslims to tolerate difference among themselves, as long as the roots and essentials of the Islamic faith as verified by the Holy Qur'an and the authentic sayings and traditions of the Holy Prophet, are not affected. Unfortunately, quite a few of our misdirected and selfish religious leaders rush to declare one another Kafir (outside the pale of Islam) even on minor differences.

Mirza Sahib emphasised the fact that all the reciters of the Kalima are Muslims, and anybody who declares his faith in the unity of God and prophethood of Muhammad (who was the last and best of the Prophets) cannot

be turned outside the pale of Islam by any mullah however learned he may be.

The Promised Messiah

In the books of hadith such as *Bukhari* and *Muslim* there are prophecies of the second advent of *Isa-ibn Maryam* (Jesus Christ). In *Bukhari*, the report about the descent of Jesus Christ has been narrated by Abu Hurairah thrice, (1) *Kitab al-Buyu'*: 34, (2) *Kitab al-Mazalim*: 46, and (3) *Kitab al-Ambiya*: 60. One of it goes as follows: "What will be your condition when the son of Mary will descend among you and he will be your Imam from among you?" But Jesus having died a natural death cannot come back to this earth again. Many Muslims of note also believed in the final death of Jesus Christ. Imam Malik believed in Jesus' death (See *Majma Bihar al-Anwar*, vol. 1, p. 286). Professor Shaikh Muhamud Shaltut, Rector of the Great Al-Azhar University, Cairo, Egypt, also gave a fatwa, comprising the final death of Jesus Christ (*Al-Risalah of Cairo*, vol. 10, No. 462 at p. 515). The Austrian Muslim scholar Muhammad Asad in the translation of the Qur'an viz., *The message of the Qur'an* (vol. 1, pp. 177,178 Muslim League Mecca) also believes the same. So the coming of Jesus Christ would only mean the raising of a mujaddid amongst the Muslims, who would come in the power and spirit of Jesus Christ. This would be particularly so as he would be entrusted not only with the clearing up of the name of Islam and re-furbishing its teachings but also to prove with irrefutable arguments the falseness of the existing beliefs and doctrines of Christianity as established by Paul.

Among other attributes of the Promised Messiah are (i) he shall break the cross (i.e. false doctrines of the present day church), (ii) Kill the swine (i.e. silence the vituperators against God and true religion), (iii) Postpone the war (i.e. pen would be used to spread the religion). One point is clear in all these reports that the Promised Messiah will be raised from among the Muslims; and this only refers to his being a Mujaddid, who would be specially directed by God to overthrow the so-called supremacy of Christianity and counter their attacks; and establish the supremacy of Islam.

Why the name Promised Messiah was given to the Mujaddid of the 14th Century (Jijrah)

As mentioned before, many Muslims had flocked to take pledge with the Mirza Sahib and joined the Ahmadiyya Movement. In 1890 C.E. Mirza Sahib received a revelation from Allah informing him that Jesus, son of Mary, being dead, and We have conferred this title on you (the Mirza Sahib). An indication was given of this resemblance to Jesus (in his power and spirit) in a previous revelation also, but now it was confirmed. Mirza Sahib proclaimed this through a printed Notice to the world on 26th March 1891. Since this went against the preconceived beliefs of the majority of the Muslims ummah led in religious matters by Maulvis and religious leaders with orthodox, stereotyped ideas and beliefs, so an unprecedented storm of opposition and vituperation arose. It gained momentum and before long a fatwa (a religious edict) declaring Mirza Sahib as kafir (unbeliever and outside the pale of Islam), Liar and Dajjal (anti-Christ) was issued under the signatures of about 200 religious leaders. Mirza Sahib through several publications tried to explain the true position and significance of his claim as the Promised Messiah.

A study of Hadith reveals that:

(i) On the night of 'Ascension', the Holy Prophet met Isa (Jesus, son of Mary) in the heavens, and found him to be a man with white complexion, curly hair and broad chest (*Bukhari, Kitab al-Mi'raj*).

(ii) In a true dream, the Holy Prophet saw a person circumambulating the holy Ka'bah, who had fair wheatish complexion, with straight-flowing hair which rested on his shoulder below the ears. On enquiry he found him to be the Messiah, attended by Dajjal (anti-Christ), who was also going around it. So it was the Messiah of this Ummah (*Bukhari, Kitab al-Ambiya*:46)

So the two Messiahs are different persons. A common name has been given to both of them to show their spiritual resemblance and affinity.

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The Promised Messiah

cont.

Prophecies of the Holy Prophet about the coming of Messiah

The conditions that would be prevailing in the times when the Promised Messiah was to appear predicted by the Holy Prophet are given in the Hadith. The Holy Qur'an also mentions many prophecies relating to this age, for which please study verses 3 to 19 of Chapter 81 of the Holy Qur'an. (See English translation of the Holy Qur'an, by Maulana Muhammad Ali - Ahmadiyyah Anjuman Ish'aat-i-Islam, Lahore-7, Pakistan)

The prophecies about the appearance of the Anti-christ and of the predominance of Gog and Magog as found in the Qur'an and Hadith represent an aspect of the conflict of the spiritual and material forces, of the struggle of truth against falsehood, in which the spiritual forces are represented as being subjugated only temporarily, but as a result of which there would be a general spiritual awakening in the world and truth will prevail. It is an open secret that there is a terrible struggle at the moment between western nations and the world of Islam, or to put it more correctly between the material and the spiritual forces. The religious sections in the West have declared it quite openly that whereas other religions are non-Christian, Islam is definitely anti-Christian; and their Christian missionaries are carrying on propaganda all over the world with this object in view. Certainly these are facts which no Muslim can afford to look on indifferently.

Mahdi

The title Mahdi means one who is guided and the heir to all truths and in whom the attribute "Guide" for God is fully represented and thus this word can be applied to every guided person. For instance, the first four righteous successors of the Holy Prophet had also been called Mahdis. Later on, Umayyid Caliph, Umar bin 'Abd al-'Aziz, the first century Mujaddid, had also been called a Mahdi.

The gist of reports from the Holy Prophet Muhammad about Mahdi found extant in some of the authentic collections of Sihah Sitta is that: "A Mahdi will appear in this Ummah in the

later Ages who will fill the earth with fairness and justice." In another: "I give you the glad tidings of Mahdi who will be raised in my Ummah at a time of digression and distress of people. He will fill the earth with equity and justice as it was filled with oppression and violence." (*Musnad* of Ahmad ibn Hanbal, vol. 3, pp. 26, 27)

The report in *Ibn Majah* that "There is no Mahdi except 'Isa" (*Sunan ibn Majah*, ch. Al-Sharat al-Sa'ah, p. 302) brings out clearly that the Promised Messiah and Mahdi are not two separate persons but two names for the same Reformer. He was to be the Promised Messiah for the Christians and Mahdi for the Muslims. There was a profound reality hidden behind these two names. Accordingly, the Mujaddid of this age was assigned two great tasks which entitled him to receive the names of Messiah and Mahdi. For shedding the light of Islam in the Christian world he was called Messiah and for illuminating the hearts of Muslims with the light of Islam he was called Mahdi.

The reports also mention about the Divine appointment (bi'that) of Mahdi. Such an appointment for human beings in Islamic terminology is either for prophets or for Mujaddids. But as prophethood has come to an end with the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), therefore Mahdi can be raised in this Ummah only as a Mujaddid.

However, the reports about the appearance of the Mahdi have been tempered with for various reasons by interested persons, so much so, that even those who believe in the coming of Mahdi only accept the fundamental fact of his advent. The attitude that if there is discrepancy in details the basic fact itself should be rejected does not only go against all the principles of accepting Hadith but also of history. On the other hand, the difference in details show that there is somewhere a fundamental reality behind all this.

Strangely enough, a common misconception prevalent among Muslims about Mahdi, that he would spread Islam at the point of the sword, has not been mentioned in the reports at all. The Sihah Sitta and the Musnad of Ahmad ibn Hanbal which refer to the benevolence of Mahdi do not mention any report to show that Mahdi will

wage wars or conquer the whole world or convert unbelievers to Islam at the point of sword; especially as it would be against the clear verdict of the Qur'an that "There is no compulsion in religion." (2:256)

It was, however, destined that the sun of Islam should rise over Eastern countries first. therefore, it was mostly in the East that the light of Islam spread in the beginning, but then, according to the law of nature, this sun was going to shine over the Western countries as well. In a report of the Prophet, this had been described as the rising of the sun in the West - the prophecy to be fulfilled at the hands of the Mujaddid of the 14th century Hijrah who was also called the promised Messiah and Mahdi.

Hadrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian opened the eyes of Muslims and made them realize that the story which was forged by their enemies to stem the progress of Islam was unwittingly accepted by Muslims themselves. In his book, *Izalah-i-Au'ham*, part II (pages 518, 519, published 1891 C.E.), Mirza Sahib proclaimed the fact that he himself is the Mahdi of the age. So the 'report' that: *There is no Mahdi but 'Isa*, as reported by Ibn Majah, mentioned earlier, came out to be true in his person. Hadrat Mirza Sahib interpretations concerning the prophecies about Mahdi do not seem to be the result of his intellectual investigations but were the work of Divine light given to him which helped him to discover the truth underlying these reports. This discovery consisted of two great facts - Firstly, it was wrong to associate the name of Mahdi with the sword, and to believe, as the opponents did, that Islam was spread at the point of the sword. Secondly, that the (Promised Messiah) and Mahdi were not two separate persons but two names of the same reformer. In a hadith reported by Abu Hurairah, it is mentioned: "Whoever lives from among you shall meet Jesus, son of Mary (i.e. the Promised Messiah), who is Imam Mahadi and arbiter (Musnad Ahmad ibn Hanbal, vol. 2, p. 411).

The 'Sign' on the Appearance of Mahdi

The Prophecy about the advent of Mahdi is from among those prophecies

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SOME PROPHECIES OF THE PROMISED MESSIAH

Allah speaks and communicates with His chosen ones. The Holy Prophet said that the only thing left of Prophethood for the ummah after him was the giving of glad tidings (Mubashsharat). He also said that God spoke to such holy men among the Israelites also, although they were not 'prophets' (in the accepted sense of the word) and that 'Umar (the second caliph of Islam) from his ummah, was one such person. Many auliya and Mujaddids in Islam have confirmed in their writings of having received communication from God. In fact, how can there be a living God if he does not speak and what kind of living religion it would be if its auliya (or holy men) are not honoured by communication from God. Of course, no prophetic revelation can come to any one after the Holy Prophet Muhammad. So Hadrat Mirza Sahib also received many communications from God and some of those, to prove the truth of Divine origin of these tidings, were prophecies about coming events of which no indication was present at the time of such announcements. Such prophecies incidentally proved that a living and mighty God existed and that Islam was a living religion.

The Divine Communications vouchsafed to Hadrat Mirza Sahib were long and many; and have been compiled in the form of a book viz., *Tazkirah*. Some of these prophecies are mentioned below:

The Rise of Japan

Japan, less than a century ago, was merely an obscure and weak Asiatic country. Of her people and customs very little was known to the outside world. In 1853 C.E. Commodore C. Perry with a squadron of the U.S.A. navy, appeared near the Japanese coast, and induced Japan to enter into trade relations with the nations of the West. It was destined by God to raise Japan into a great power whose friendship would be sought by the nations of the world; and the country would progress tremendously. It was revealed to the Promised Messiah: "A great Power of the East, and the critical condition of Korea".

Japan, as her power grew, entered upon a career of territorial expansion in Eastern Asia. The Sino-Japanese war brought Korea under Japanese influence, and it was finally annexed by Japan in 1910 C.E. The policy of Japan also came in conflict with that of Russia of the Czars, and finally a war broke out between the two countries. The Russian Naval fleet came all the way from the Baltic Sea to the sea of Japan to give battle which had started by 8th February 1904 C.E. The Russian fleet was destroyed and the Russian armies were defeated by Japan on 10th October 1904 C.E. A truce was declared. Thus the prophecy made by the Promised Messiah came out to be true. Korea was subjugated and Japan became a big power.

A Prophecy about Bengal (India)

Lord Curzon was the British Viceroy of India from 1899 to 1905 C.E. One good thing he did was to organize the Department of Archaeology in the Indian Government, thereby help preserving the priceless and historic remains of the former and ancient kingdoms in India. However, to increase the Government revenue and partially to undo the permanent Settlement of Bengal, he arranged to create a new province of 'East Bengal and Assam', while Bengal proper with its capital at Calcutta remained as such. The Bengalees, resented this partition; and when the representations to the Government failed to undo the division of their homeland, they resorted to violent measures. This was the state of things when in February 1906 C.E., the Promised Messiah received a Divine Communication saying "About the first order (of division) regarding Bengal, now they (the people) will be conciliated". There was no indication of any cancellation of the decree by the British Government at the time. King George V of Great Britain, being Emperor of India, was requested in 1911 C.E. to visit India and hold a darbar (a Royal Court and Reception) at Delhi which was to become the new capital of India (in place of Calcutta) and the seat of the Indian Government. It was in this darbar that the king formally ordered the cancellation of the

Division of Bengal and restored it to its original position. Thus was fulfilled the great prophecy which had been announced some six years ago by the Mujaddid of the age.

Revolutionary changes in Persia (Iran)

In Persia there was absolute monarchy and the subjects were none too happy and wanted more democratic ways of life. In 1896, the then Shah of Persia was assassinated, and Mirza Muhammad 'Ali Shah became the King; but unrest continued. In 1906 C.E., the Promised Messiah received a Divine Communication: A violent upheaval in the palace of Kisra (the ancient title of the Kings of Persia).

In 1909 C.E. revolution broke out in Persia and he took shelter in the Embassy of Russia in Tehran. A people's parliament came into being. But this prophecy also foretold the coming misfortunes which would befall Persia. Not long afterwards the two major powers of the region - British and the Russians, started interfering in the affairs of Persia and established their spheres of influence - the British in the southern half of Persia and the Russians in the Northern half. But the Lord God finally saved Persia, now Iran.

The World War (1914-18) and its Aftermath

The Promised Messiah had been receiving repeated Divine Communications about some world shaking earthquakes or upheavals.

(i) the first warning came in December 1903 and June 1904: "Its (Punjab) buildings of both permanent as well as temporary residence would be levelled to the ground." And then a Divine promise came that: "All those persons within the four walls of your dwellings shall be saved." On April 3rd, 1905, the Divine warning came: "Death is standing at the door." On the next day April 4, 1905, in the morning a very violent earthquake occurred in the mountain range which caused much death and destruction, particularly at Dharamsala and Palampur in the district of Kangra, Punjab. As people

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Some Prophecies of the Promised Messiah cont.

never took warning and reformed themselves, such terrible earthquakes came in latter years also, of which the Bihar and the Quetta earthquakes (in 1935) were the most destructive.

(ii) But the warning of another terrible disaster came again and was published in the April 1905 issue of *The Review of Religions*. In this the Promised Messiah compared it to the shakaing of the day of Judgment and which the world had not hitherto seen. Further details of the prophecy are given (in the form of a poem) in the book *Barahin-i-Ahmadiyah*, Part V, p. 120:

(a) In the twinkling of an eye this earth shall turn upside down. (b) Streams of blood shall flow as the water of rivers. (c) The travellers shall feel the severity of that hour; those who are on the way shall lose the way, losing their senses as well. (d) The great and the small shall all be in a state of prostration on account of this fear. (e) Even the Czar (of Russia) shall at that hour be in a state of utmost distress.

The prophecy was made on 15th April, 1905. The Promised Messiah left this world on 26th May, 1908. In 1914, events happened which led to the most terrible world-wide war of the history. Millions of people died, thousands of cities were reduced to rubble, many kings lost their crowns and their countries changed shape. But the most outstanding change in history came through the revolution in 1917 C.E. in Russia, when the Mighty Czar not only lost his crown but his head as well; and the Romanoff Dynasty of absolute power ended after 304 years of rule.

The Turkish Empire, its Disintegration, and Rising like Phoenix from its Ashes

The great Turkish Empire which took its birth in 1258 C.E., and after the conquest of Constantinople by Sultan Muhammad II, expanded step by step till most of South-Eastern Europe was under its control; while its sway extended to the shores of Persian Gulf, the Indian ocean and the Red Sea, and to Egypt and Tripoli in Africa. Its naval fleet sailed in all its glory and power over the Mediterranean Sea.

But, in the 18th century, signs of decadence began to appear. The control of its affairs passed into the hands of the self-seeking ministers. Russia was all the time pecking on the northern frontier; and Christian nations had not yet quite forgotten the crusades or the conquest of Constantinople. They plotted and planned and, before the 19th century was out, Turkey had lost most of its European possessions.

In the 1914-1918 World War. Turkey sided with Germany; and after their defeat, the Allied powers dismembered the Turkish Empire in the East. Greece was given a free hand in Asia Minor. But long before that, in January 1904 C.E., the Promised Messiah had received a Divine Communication (published in *The Review of Religion*), in the following words:

“The Turks (called Rum in olden days) shall be defeated in the land nearby; but, after their defeat, they shall overcome their foes.”

Turkey had accepted defeat in October 1918 C.E., but God had different plans. The presence of Greek Forces in their homeland at last roused the anger of the Turkish people. They got together and, being organized by Mustafa Kamal Pasha, they fought and drove the Greeks out of Asia Minor. In October 1918, a new Turkish Republic, headed by Mustafa Kamal Pasha, with its capital at Ankara, came into being. They defied the European Powers and finally made them agree to their independence and the new Republic. So came true the word of the Lord God.

Shastri's Prophecy turned out to be False

On the termination of the British Rule in India in 1947 C.E., the country was divided into two parts - Bharat and Pakistan. The Hindus of Bharat never forgave Pakistan, and, from the very start, plotted to undo it.

The Promised Messiah was vouchsafed a vision on April 29, 1905 (Al-Hakm of 30th April, 1905), which goes as follows:

“It was seven minutes to two in the night when I beheld in a vision that all of a sudden the earth began to quake. A severe shock was then felt. I said to the members of my family: Get up; it is the

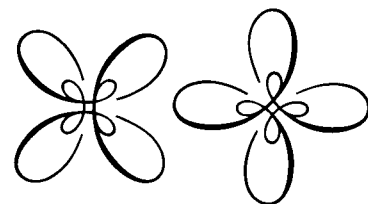
earthquake; and take Mubarak (his young son) also with you. In the same state of vision, a thought also came to me that the prophecy uttered by Shastri turned out to be false.”

The Promised Messiah also mentioned that, in the vision, he had received the Divine Communication. “I shall come stealthily. With my armies I shall come at a time when no person would ever dream that such an event is about to take place.”

The Indian army, with all their might, invaded Pakistan, even without a declaration of war, in the early hours of September 6, 1965. The area between the border and the city of Lahore shook under the bombardment of enemy guns, and their armour and tanks relentlessly rolled on till they were stopped at the B.R.B. Canal a few miles away from the city, by the gallant troops of Pakistan, who though small in number and with fewer lethal weapons, fought like tigers to save their homes and hearth. But in India, the Prime Minister Shastri was announcing in the Indian Parliament, in unholy glee, that the Indian Forces had invaded Pakistan to punish them; and he said boastfully that “after 24 hours he would tell them a very happy news (of the conquest of Lahore).” The Indian Commander-in-chief, General Choudhry, was inviting his colleagues to be his guests at a cocktail party that evening (of 6th September) at the Gymkhana Club at Lahore.

It is now history, how the Indian Forces were badly mauled; and finally the Security Council of the United Nations, stepped in with their resolution of cease-fire. Mr. Shastri, while making his statement on the cease-fire in Indian Parliament, wept twice.

So again the mighty ‘forces’ of God intervened and triumphed and worsted the enemies of the Muslims and Islam.





A SURVEY OF THE OPPOSITION TO THE AHMADIYYA

by ALLAH BAKHSH



Recently Dr. Freeland Abbott has published a book *Islam and Pakistan* in America. Therein he has offered his views about the Ahmadiyya Community. He says: "In the course of time, the Ahmadiyya arguments against other religions were whole heartedly accepted, even by their most vociferous critics. Through the vigour of their proselytising and their incessant and highly-publicised attacks on Christianity, they instilled a stronger faith in many Muslims. They developed a confident belief that Christianity does not explain the strength of Europe, and that the true religion remained Islam, even though the personal claims of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad were not accepted and his organisation was, in general, scorned. This is the essential significance of the Ahmadiyya Movement. It is somewhat ironic that the sect most attacked by Muslims in India and Pakistan has also been that which has worked hardest, in both its branches to defend and extend Islam against the competition offered by other faiths." (pp. 160-60)

Confession of Truth

In the present age of materialism and irreligion, the Ahmadiyya Community, particularly the Lahore Section, has performed a unique feat of establishing the supremacy and truth of Islam by publishing books in English and other foreign languages. The merit of this performance has been acknowledged not only by the non-Muslim writers and intellectuals, as the foregoing quotation shows, but also by the sane and sober sections among the Muslims. They have now and then paid glowing tributes to the religious renaissance created by the Ahmadiyya Movement. The booklet entitled *Shahadat-i-haqqah* (Incontrovertible Evidence) is a mirror of such acknowledgements. An honest reader is able to form an accurate view of the beliefs of the holy Founder of Ahmadiyya Movement and the Lahore Section and their sterling services to Islam.

First Opposition

It is quite natural that Dr. Freeland Abbott should feel intrigued by the opposition offered to the Ahmadiyya Community in the face of its epochmaking services to Islam. Every intellectual is surprised when he sees that even the Muslims have opposed the Ahmadiyya community in spite of its matchless endeavours in propagating Islam and battling against the false anti-Islamic propaganda. The question why it is so, can be answered by highlighting the popularity of the Ahmadiyya Community and its progress.

The Ahmadiyya Community faced great opposition in the life-time of its Founder. The Holy Founder delivered a lecture in 1905, in Sialkot, on the Divine Truth of Islam. On this occasion there occurred a great outburst of opposition. The superintendent of Police on duty expressed surprise at this eruption of hostility. He was at a loss to understand why the Muslim Ulama were hostile to the founder who was out to put to rout Christianity and cripple other creeds by his vigorous presentation of Islam. In this connection, a close appraisal of the attitude of Maulvi Muhammad Hussain Batalvi will enable us to arrive at a right conclusion. Maulvi Sahib pays a glowing tribute to the Promised Messiah's epoch-making book *Baraheen Ahmadiyya*. He writes: "This book in these times is so great that it has no parallel in Islam up to this time. *Allah may after that bring about an event!* (65:1) Its compiler has proved steadfast in serving Islam by money, by devotion, by pen and by the spoken word. The like of him is hardly to be found among the Muslims. If some one takes our word as an exaggerated expression, he should show us any other book which has launched such a vigorous attack against the enemies of Islam, particularly Arya Samaj and Brahmo Samaj, or he should indicate some such personalities as have undertaken to serve Islam by money, by dedication, by pen and by the spoken word. He should also tell us of a person who has challenged the heretics and agnostics to come to him to see for themselves the truth of the divine revelation."

Dedication to the Holy Prophet

Is it not a matter of surprise that so great an admirer of the Promised Messiah's services to Islam should become the arch-enemy? What caused this revulsion? Does it imply that Hazrat Sahib had changed his stand in regard to Islam? Did he begin to preach beliefs against Islam? the answer is an emphatic "No!"

If one views the situation realistically, one will find that the truth is just the other way about. When the holy Founder claimed to be the Promised Messiah, he created such conditions as were conducive to the achievement of his great objective of establishing the primacy of Islam. The Ulama undoubtedly opposed him on the score of his claim. But they were labouring under great delusion, because his claim was a death-blow to Christianity and was a keynote of the triumph of Islam. Belief in the natural end of Jesus Christ amounted to demolishing the edifice of Christianity and its offshoot, the creed of Atonement. It also signified the glorification of the Finality of Prophethood, because a dedicated votary of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) had been vouchsafed the status of the Promised Messiah by Allah, for his selfless devotion. Thus and thus alone the false creed of the godhead of Christ could come to an end.

False Accusation

If we accept this view, it deepens our conviction that the votaries of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) imbibe the prophetic illumination by their total dedication and complete submission to the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and thus attain to a point of communion with God. Thus his Ummat does not stand in need of any ancient prophet for its renovation and elevation. On the other hand, its own Ordained Saints came to meet the need of times. Thus they diffused the light of the Holy Prophet's purifying power and

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Opposition to Ahmadiyya cont.

spiritual blessings. No epoch had ever been without such a Saint. Seeing the advent of the Promised Messiah in this perspective, we find that his claim to Messianic status shed a flood of light on the sacred technique of the Holy War (Jihad) in the modern times. Briefly speaking, the rank and status of the Founder of Ahmadiyya Movement does not go beyond the state of annihilation in the passionate devotion to the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). But cursed be bigotry and ignorance! Some misinterpreted the Founder's Messianic claim as a claim to *Nubuwwat* (prophethood). Some others levelled the charge of propagating a new-fangled creed. Some suspected that he aspired for leadership. Still some others regarded him as a self-seeker. But there is not an iota of truth in any accusation. He repeatedly repudiated these falsehoods in a vigorous and well-reasoned manner. With a view to fulfilling his heavenly mission of resuscitating Islam, he prepared a Missionary Community which is the mirror of Islamic civilization and which is ready to sacrifice its all to preach and publicise the Truth. In the course of early twenty years, this pious Community dispelled the clouds of false accusations and the coast was clear. It became the centre of radiant hopes for the entire Muslim world.

In 1911, Dr. Iqbal acknowledged the fact of the usefulness of the Ahmadiyya Movement in his lecture delivered to an intellectual gathering in the Aligarh University. He went so far as to declare that if any one desired to see the Islamic civilisation in its pristine purity, he would see it in the form of a sect which came into being in Qadian.

Curiously enough, Dr. Iqbal himself became the spearhead of opposition in 1935. Maulvi Muhammad Hussain's opposition stemmed from his bigotry and prejudice. But Dr. Iqbal's reasons are different. When his attention was drawn to the said lecture and he was asked why he had changed his attitude, he said: "I am sorry I have no copy of the lecture in question, either in the original English or in the Urdu translation which was made by Maulana Zafar Ali Khan. As far as I

remember, the lecture was delivered in 1911, or perhaps earlier. I have no hesitation in admitting that, about a quarter of a century ago, I had hopes of good result flowing from this movement . . . But the real content and spirit of a religious movement does not reveal itself in a day. It takes decades to unfold itself. The internal quarrels between the two sections of the movement is evidence of the fact that even those who were in personal contact with the Founder were not quite aware of how the movement would evolve itself. Personally, I became suspicious of the movement when the claim of a new prophethood, superior even to the prophethood of the Founder of Islam, was definitely put forward and the Muslim world was declared kafir. Later, my suspicions developed into a positive revolt when I heard with my own ears an adherent of the Movement mentioning the Holy Prophet of Islam in a most disparaging language." (*Speeches and Statements of Iqbal* compiled by 'Shamloo', pp. 103-104).

On Doctor Sahib's own observation, there were two reasons why his suspicions escalated to revolt. The first was the internal split, the second was that one section put across new prophethood and branded all Muslims as kafirs.

It is clear as daylight that the internal split itself was due to the preaching of new prophethood and branding of all Muslims as kafirs. These newfangled beliefs fanned the flames of hostility in 1935.

It is not surprising why opposition erupted again in 1935 and why the Mussalmans in general raised their voices against the Ahmadiyya Movement. What is really astonishing and even distressing is that one section from within the Ahmadiyya Jamaat loudly proclaimed and vigorously propagated such views as confirmed the glaringly false and sweeping accusations levelled against the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement and the Ahmadiyya Jamaat. The Promised Messiah and Hazrat Maulana Noor-ud-Din during their lifetime vehemently contradicted these charges by their proclaimed views. But for the extremist policy of one Section, the charges would have been buried

several fathoms deep. A true Ahmadi is constrained to say,

"I have no grievance against the outsiders as what has been done to distress me, has been perpetrated by my own men."

It is a matter of great surprise and regret that the Promised Messiah repudiated on oath in mosques the charge of having made any claim to Nubuwwat, but after his departure, Qadian itself provided confirmation of the charge. It was proclaimed by the Qadiani section in so many words that while the enemies of Ahmadiyya Movement correctly grasped the significance of the Founder's claim, it was the Founder himself who for twelve years was at a loss to understand the meaning of his own claim. This unfortunate attitude implied that as the Founder failed to understand his own claim, all his repudiations wherein he had said that he had never laid claim to Nubuwwat, stand abrogated.

Searchlight on the Opponents

The Promised Messiah stood firmly by his view all his life. He never laid claim to prophethood. It was his opponents who took recourse to the unIslamic way of calling him kafir. Towards the end of his life, Mian Sir Fazl-i-Hussain met him and had a full-dress discussion with him on the nature of his claim. That historic talk also forcefully disproves the charge of claim to Nubuwwat. But it is an irony of fate that after 1914, the Qadian centre trotted out a new-fangled theory under which it was held that denial of the Promised Messiah's claim amounted to kufr. This disruptionist view split the Jamaat. All these facts go to prove convincingly that it was Rabwah Jamaat which was mainly responsible for reviving opposition led by Dr. Iqbal in 1935, because it denounced 65 crore Mussalmans as kafirs. The fierce opposition was based on the fallacious idea of the continuation of Nubuwwat tendentiously attributed to the Promised Messiah. It was this false creed which caused split within and evoked hostility from outside. Thus there is no gainsaying the broad and clear fact that one section in the

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Ahmadiyya Jamaat played the game of the opponents by attributing Nubuwwat to the Founder.

Political Ambitions

The Qadiani Section indulged in the unwarranted and tendentious views of the Founder's claim and thus assumed the role resented by the Muslims. They abandoned their real role as a missionary Jamaat and embroiled themselves with politics. Thus they gave cause for the resurgence of opposition. In the circumstances, the revival of opposition was in no small measure due to political causes.

In 1935, Dr. Iqbal's opposition also arose from the clash of political plans. Then the question of the chairmanship of the Kashmir Committee was in the forefront. The chief of the Qadiani Section, the late Mirza Mahmud Ahmad, managed to become its chairman. Dr. Iqbal got fed up with his policies. Consequently Dr. Iqbal turned against him. Likewise the evidence that come up before the Munir Tribunal in 1953 also highlights the fact that the Rabwahite set-up had ambitious designs to get into the saddle by political manoeuvres. This tended to strengthen the charge that Founder's real aim was not to advance the cause of Islam but to gain some ulterior ends. In this age of rising materialism, people made no bones about maligning a person or community on the score of "beliefs" and thus try to achieve certain nefarious objectives. In this particular case, a section from within the Community gave a fillip to hostile forces. This technique is very much in vogue today and the opposition of the Ahmadiyya Movement is as much based on bigotry and ignorance as on the technique of maligning out of sheer enmity.

The only effective way to counter this opposition is to expose the fallacy of the "beliefs" maliciously attributed to the Founder by the opponents or by the misguided followers. This exposure should be done on a vast scale. Thus the first and foremost objective of the Lahore Section is to mobilise all its forces to rebut all charges against the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement, because it is only this Jamaat which believes in the sanctity of the Finality of

Prophethood, the perfection of Islam and the unity and fraternity of the Mussalmans. That is why it rightfully claims to be the true successor of the Promised Messiah. It vindicates this claim by denouncing false and purposeful distortions of the Founder's claim. Obviously this is the only sure way to herald the victory of Islam.

In the light of these facts, the story related in Luke ii, 42-49, as observed by the elder Lightfoot, Wetstein and Holtzmann in their commentaries to the passage, finds its true significance. The child Jesus, when only twelve years of age, having not yet attained the religious maturity, joined, of his own accord, the teachers of the Law and astonished all by his understanding and his answers, being, as he said, concerned only about the things of his Father in heaven (Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?)

Compare with this what Josephus writes of himself: "When I was a child about fourteen years old, I was commended by all for the love I had for learning, on which account the high priest and principal men to the city came to me in order to know my opinion regarding the accurate understanding of points of the law." Vita, 2.

Before proceeding to points of contrast in the lives and careers of Jesus and Muhammad, we may linger for a moment upon one of similarity. This one characteristic which they held in common appeals to the finer instincts of both men and women - their love and affection for children. The incidents of this recorded in the life of Jesus are familiar and it is recorded of Muhammad that he would stop children in the street and pat their cheeks in affection. He was never known to speak harshly to a child and certainly never to strike one.

How and where Jesus spent the period intervening from twelve years of his age and his baptism is unknown and has given rise to much speculation. Some writers have assumed that he went to India and studied there. Another theory is that he became, for a time, a member, though not, perhaps, a professed member, of the Essenic community. Certainly, there were striking parallels between the teachings

and practices of the Essenes and those recorded of Jesus, as I demonstrated in a brochure published nearly forty years ago, entitled: *Was Jesus an Essene?* long since out of print, of which I possess only a shorthand copy.

Joseph, his father, disappeared from the scene when Jesus embarked upon his public career. He may have been alive; he was present at the scene in the Temple (Luke ii, 31) after which he returned to Nazareth, Jesus accompanying him. This is the last we hear of Joseph, though Mary, the mother, appears upon the scenes several times. As a matter of interest, the fact is generally overlooked, but from Luke ii, 4, we learn that Joseph and Mary were living in Nazareth before Jesus was born.

There is a striking contrast between the attitude of the parents and kinsmen of Jesus towards him and the kinsmen of Muhammad towards him after he had declared his mission. Both have been admirably summarized by Syed Ameer Ali in his *Critical Examination of the Life and Teaching of Muhammad*. Of the former he says (pp. 39-40):

"The influence of Jesus himself was lost amongst his nearest relatives. His brothers never believed in him (John iii, 5) and once they even went so far as to obtain possession of his person, believing him to be out of his mind (Mark iii, 21).

Even his most intimate disciples were not firm in their conviction; and, as we are told, they all fled at the first sign of danger. The exact opposite is shewn in the story of Muhammad. Syed Ameer Ali says (op. cit., p. 39):

"It is a notable feature in the history of the Prophet of Arabia and one which strongly attests the inspired character of his teachings and the intensity of his faith and trust in God that his nearest relatives, his wife, his beloved cousin and intimate friends, were most thoroughly imbued with the truth of his mission and convinced of his inspiration. Those who knew him best, who lived with him and noted all his movements, were his most sincere and devoted followers. If these men and women, noble, intelligent and, certainly, no less educated than the

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fishermen of Galilee, had perceived the slightest sign of earthliness, deception or want of faith in the teacher himself, Muhammad's hope of moral regeneration and social reform would all have been dashed to pieces in a moment.

So intense seems to have been the antipathy shewn towards Jesus and his mission that he renounced his family ties when that family expressed the opinion that he ought to be put under restraint (Mark iii, 31-35), saying, in effect: "I have no mother, no brothers, no sister." *Whoso shall do the Will of God, the same is my brother and sister and mother.*

This line of conduct he wished to extend to others (Luke ix, 57-62) and recommended a would-be disciple, who wanted to become his disciple after he had buried his father, to *Let the dead bury their dead; but go thou and preach the kingdom.* while he discouraged another from going to say 'good-bye' to his people at home.

This repudiation of family ties in monasticism, which Muhammad definitely discouraged, to the point of prohibition, has been one of the banes of Christianity. Although monasticism is pre-Christian in origin and finds a limited support in Islam, it has its principal authority in the words ascribed to Jesus in Luke xiv, 26: *If any man came to me and hate not his father and mother and wife and children and brethren and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.*

It must have come as a shock to those who told him that his mother and brethren stood without, desiring to speak with him (Matthew xii, 45-46) to receive so rude an answer as he gave them. Apparently this happened very early in his public career for it was not forgotten when, a few days afterwards (Mark vi, 1-6), he entered the synagogue "in his own country" and began to teach. The villagers, however, like his family, would have naught to do with him:

Whence hath this man these things? Where is the wisdom that is given unto this man? What mean such mighty works wrought by his hands? Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary (why no mention of Joseph?) and brother of

James and Joses and Judas and Simon? Are not his sisters here with us?

Evidently Jesus had wished to make an impression - quite a laudable ambition - but the attitude of his neighbours prevented the achievement, for we are told that "he could do no mighty work there save that he laid his hands upon a few sick folk and healed them." We are also told that he marvelled at their unbelief, although he summed up the position very succinctly in the statement that (J.N. Darby's translation): *A prophet is not despised, save in his own country and among his own kinsmen and in his own house.*

That was not the experience of Muhammad. There have been many attempts by commentators and preachers to tone down the filial insubordination of Jesus and the rudeness which took place at the wedding feast at Cana of Galilee at the very outset of his mission, but no satisfactory explanation has ever been devised and the rudeness was not toned down in any way by the Revision Committee of the New Testament.

It is generally accepted that wives and mothers are often severely critical and not easily convinced in favour of a new departure on the part of their husbands and sons, but Khadijah, the wife of Muhammad, was the first, as well as the most earnest of his disciples to believe in his mission. All his early disciples were of his own kith and kin or members or acquaintances of his household. Abu Bakr was on intimate terms with the Prophet before he received the divine call: he was the first male disciple to proclaim belief in the divinity of his mission. Ali Abu Talib, Muhammad's cousin and companion almost from infancy, was also an earnest believer; Zaid ibn Haretha, his slave, whom he freed and adopted, was another; all had been on the closest terms of intimacy with the Prophet and they expressed confidence and faith in the sincerity of his claims. Throughout his life he maintained the character which led to his being known as Al-Amin, "the man never known to tell a lie."

William Bolitho, in his chapter on "Mahomet" in *Twelve against the gods*, seems to change Islam with a surfeit of common-sense and Muhammad with a superabundance of worldly wisdom.

But should not commonsense be a characteristic of religion, for it is a deficiency of this quality which has largely contributed to the development of scepticism and atheism and has not the derision of religion been caused in a great measure by its fairy-land and unearthly teaching? A religion that can, by its common-sense, transform the lives, not only of a few members of any one nation, but of many members of many nations and even of nations as a whole, is surely worthy of respectful consideration and calls at least for consideration, if not, for investigation. Is it not the common-sense of Islam that has been the motive-power of the grip with which it has seized many who have halted to consider its claims and has it not been its wonderful transforming power that has lifted it above other faiths? In no incident in the life of the Prophet was his common-sense exhibited more definitely than in the Hijra - the emigration from Makka to Madina - but will it be suggested that because of this fact there was an absence of divine guidance, unless it is suggested that the ways of Allah, in addition to being mysterious to men wilfully and stubbornly ignorant, are also bereft of the exercise of the rare and singular virtue of common-sense, which is the crowning success of strategic movements in warfare, movements which often, by their simplicity, have baffled and defeated the elaborate opposition tactics of the enemy. The fact that Islam is a religion of common-sense does not deprive it of its divinity but, rather, enhances its claims to the possession of it.

Dr. William A. Shedd, in *Islam and the Oriental Churches* (p.4), says:

To the follower of Christ and especially to the student of Christian history, Islam possesses a melancholy interest, peculiar to it among the religions of the world. It alone can claim to have met and vanquished Christianity. Islam arose in a region accessible to Christianity, for Makka is only eight hundred miles from Jerusalem, over a road travelled by Muhammad in his youth. It arose at a time when Christianity would have evangelized Arabia, for in the six centuries by which the gospel of Christ

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preceded the creed of Muhammad, Christianity had spread to the borders of the Pacific, Indian and Atlantic Oceans, had revolutionized the greatest empire known to ancient history and had created a vast learning and a new learning. Why did it lose in Asia? What were the causes of defeat? Why was it possible for Muhammad to arise in that age of the world? Why did his religion take root and flourish in lands sacred to Christian history?

The religion of the Arabs before the rise of Muhammad - a period known as the days of ignorance - was chiefly gross idolatry - the Sabeian religion which had overrun the whole nation - they believed in the Unity of Allah but paid attention to the stars and to the angels or intelligences they supposed to reside in them. They prayed three or seven times a day and kept three fasts during the year of thirty, nine and seven days respectively. They abstained from certain foods they regarded as unclean and went on pilgrimage once a year to Harron in Mesopotamia. They had great respect for the temple at Makka and for the pyramids in Egypt, which they believed to be the sepulchres of Seth and his two sons. They belonged to the sect of Disciples of St. John the Baptist and practised a form of baptism.

J.M. Robertson, in *A Short History of Christianity* (p.121), writes:

When the Muslim rule was established from Jerusalem to Carthage the Christian Church, tolerated only to be humiliated, dwindled to insignificance on its former soil. In the African provinces it absolutely disappeared; in the others it became incapable of moving either Arab or Afrikan to respect. But, adds Mr. Robertson:

What pagan Rome could not do, for lack of systematic effort or continuous purpose, Islam did with the greatest ease, the purpose and the effort being wholehearted. And when we compare the later civilization and the Saracens with what they overthrew, it is hard to feel that they lost by the change. If Monotheism had any civilizing virtue as against polytheism, it was the Muslims, not the Christians, who were monotheist....Islam knew no priestcraft; and it substantially

excluded the common Christian evils of drunkenness and prostitution. Gibbon also bears the following testimony:

"The Christians of the seventh century had insensibly relapsed into a semblance of paganism, their public and private vows were addressed to the relics and images that disgraced the temples of the East; the throne of the Almighty was darkened by a crowd of martyrs, saints and angels, the objects of popular veneration, and the Collyridian heretics, who flourished in the fruitful soil of Arabia, invested the Virgin Mary with the name and honours of a goddess. The mysteries of the trinity and incarnation appear to contradict the principle of the divine unity. In their obvious sense they introduce three equal deities and transform the man Jesus into the substance of the Son of God...The creed of Muhammad is free from the suspicion of ambiguity and the Qur'an is a glorious testimony to the Unity of God."

At the time of the advent of Muhammad his father was dead, he had, in fact, passed away three months before the birth of the Prophet and he was bereft of his mother when he was six years of age. His grandfather, Abdul-Muttalib, became his guardian: this office devolved upon him as Chief of the Quaraish, the principal tribe in Makka, to which Muhammad belonged. He was also, by virtue of that position, the custodian of the Ka'ba, a post of great importance and dignity. On the death of Muttalib, the guardianship of Muhammad devolved upon his son, Abu Taleb, brother by the same mother of Abdullah, the father of Muhammad. Abu Taleb has been claimed as a poet, but his right to that distinction has never been established.

Makka was one of the centres of the caravan trade and almost every inhabitant had a financial interest in some trade. The caravans carried important and valuable merchandise - metals, particularly silver; precious essences; spices; leather goods, etc. One of the principal traders was Khadijah, a wealthy widow, a kinsman of Muhammad, but fifteen years his senior. She appointed him to be overseer of the caravans she sent into Syria. The caravan trade was a serious

undertaking. Tabari mentions seeing one caravan with 2,500 camels. The caravans were attended by escorts and convoys, but even then were liable to attacks by banditti, whose onslaughts and depredations led to the institution of a system of insurance. Professor Clement Huart, in *Arabic Literature*, has an interesting account of the manner in which the poetic genius of Arabia was evoked by these caravan-drivers. He says: (pp. 4-5):

The long caravan marches across the monotonous deserts, when the camel's steady swing bends the rider's body almost double, turning the unaccustomed traveller sick and giddy, soon taught the Arab to sing rhymes. He even noted very soon that as he hurried the pace of his recitation, the long string of camels would raise their heads and step out with quickened pace. This creature, stupid and vindictive though he be, is sensitive, to some extent, to music or, at all events, to rhythm. Its four heavy steps gave the metre and the alternations of long and short syllables in the spoken language the successive pulsations of the said metre. This was the *hida*, the song of the leading camel-driver of the caravan. And here we have the origin of the prosodic metre, unconsciously invented by the genius of the Bedouin, springing from the necessities of the life in which his monotonous existence dragged itself out, for which the theorists of a later date formulated laws. We know that the idea of Khalil's prosody came to him from hearing the hammers of the workmen in the bazaars ringing on their anvils with alternate cadence strokes. Until the wise grammarian made this fruitful discovery, the Arabs had pronounced poetry with no knowledge of its rules, beyond their own innate feeling for poetic rhythm.

Muhammad became noted for the care and scrupulosity with which he carried out his duties while, at the same time, preserving his kindness of heart, gentle manners and unsullied character. It was his fidelity, more than his kinship, that attracted him to Khadijah and, despite the disparity in their ages, they were, with the approval of the tribe, married when Muhammad was but twenty-five years of age.

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By his marriage Muhammad became a wealthy man but his altered state does not appear to have affected his manner of living. When not engaged in business affairs he spent much time in meditation and spiritual communion, particularly during the month of fasting. Idolatry was rampant in pre-Islamic Arabia and it has been said that there were 365 idols in the Ka'ba, a different one for each day of the year. The black stone, built into the temple, was an object of devotion. The legend runs that it was originally a white stone which fell from heaven and that it had become black by kisses from the sinful sons of Adam.

Othman, leader of the Byzantine despots, sought to hand Makka over to the Greeks, but the Prophet was instrumental in preventing this. Many other private acts of charity done by him could also be quoted. His uncle, Abu Taleb, fell upon evil days. Muhammad adopted one of his sons and persuaded Abbas, brother of Abu Taleb, to adopt another, thus relieving the father of a burden of anxiety. All the sons of Muhammad had died in infancy and Fatima, his youngest daughter, became the wife of the son of Abu Taleb. It was a grief to Muhammad to see the inhabitants of Makka steeped in idolatry and barbarism and he pondered much over this when sitting apart for meditation. One day, while thus occupied, he received a call, which led him to decide on devoting his life to the service of Allah and humanity. Sale relates that while on Mount Hira he heard himself called by name. He looked around, but could see nobody; then, looking upward, he saw the angel Gabriel on a throne between heaven and earth. Then came the divine call as recorded in sura (a Hebrew word signifying a row of stones in a wall, thus, by analogy, "a line of writing") lxxiv, 1, of the Qur'an (a word meaning "reading"):

O! thou covered one, arise and preach and magnify thy Lord.

Among Orientals "to be covered," i.e., to have the head covered, is a mark of high respect, hence the synagogue practice, which is often carried into private and business life. In studying the Talmud or when engaged in devotions,

whether prayer or meditation, Jews always cover the head, as do many Muslims when reading or studying the Qur'an or engaged in prayer.

Muhammad mentioned his experience to Khadijah who urged her husband to pay respect to what they both regarded as a direct behest of Allah. Muhammad, in obedience to the divine call, immediately organized a crusade against idolatry which lasted throughout his life and has been continued with vigour by his successors and disciples to the present day. Submission to the will of Allah is the main pillar of Islam, as betokened in the name and none will be found more zealous for the honour of Allah than the Muslim. The Qur'an is replete with injunctions against idolatry and detraction from the Unity of Allah, particularly in according to him a partner, as do many Christians. Thus we read in suras ii, 48 and iv, 16:

Lo! Allah forgiveth not that a partner shall be ascribed unto Him....whoso ascribeth partners to Allah, he hath invented a tremendous sin.

It does not detract from the honour and reverence paid to the Prophet by Muslims to point out that he was not the first Makkan to proclaim the doctrine of the Unity of Allah or to denounce the evil of idolatry. About 572, Abu'l Sait of Ta'if taught that doctrine but he retained practice of pagan customs. He was a talented man and composed much religious poetry, but whereas Muhammad spoke with the authority of a prophet and taught by example as well as by precept, Abu'l Sait delivered his message on second-hand information and failed to frame his life in conformity with his teaching. He condemned idolatry and forbade the use of wine but he does not seem to have proceeded beyond those external observances nor does he seem to have risen to the height of personal communion with the Eternal nor to have made his entire submission of will to Allah, both prominent features in the life of the Prophet Muhammad.

Muhammad also suppressed the abominable custom of infanticide, which had become widespread throughout Makka. There are many injunctions in the Qur'an inculcating respect for life when once created:

vi, 141: They are losers who besottedly have slain their children without knowledge.

vi, 152: Slay not the life which Allah hath made sacred, save in the course of justice.

xvii, 33: Slay not the life, which Allah hath forbidden, save with right.

"Jesus Christ was a great prophet, but he failed to recall men to the true faith, whilst Muhammad, seven hundred years later, succeeded."

That is not the utterance of a Muslim but of a Christian minister. These words, as printed here, will be found on p. 31 of Dr. Maude Royden's booklet, **The Problem of Palestine**, published by Hutchinson. The social services of Dr. Maude Royden (Mrs. Royden Shaw) were recognized by the King on January 1, 1930, by her appointment to the Companionship of Honour, an exclusive group, limited to fifty members, whilst her services to religion have been recognized by the University of Glasgow, who honoured their roll of Doctors of Divinity by the inclusion of her name. From 1917 to 1920, she was assistant preacher at the City Temple, known, before its destruction, as the Cathedral of Nonconformity. In the latter year she founded the Fellowship Service, which she led until 1936, being joined shortly after its foundation by Dr. Percy Dearmer, a wellknown clergyman of the Church of England. In the brochure from which the above quotation has been taken, she described Muhammad (p. 30) as "the greatest of Arabs and one of the greatest of men."

Religion, as expounded by the Prophet Muhammad, has spread and is still spreading over the face of the earth. Unlimited and untrammelled by geographical boundaries, as are some religions and free from transient emotion, Islam makes a sober, unexcited appeal to the thoughtful and serious-minded. The mission of Jesus was circumscribed; it was limited to "the lost sheep of the house of Israel" but, even with that limitation, it was a failure. It was identical with the mission of Moses and other prophets of the Old Testament - the reclamation of Israel and the blessing of the nations through the Children of the Covenant. If the

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JESUS AND MUHAMMAD

by late M. S. DUDLEY WRIGHT, Phil.D.

The reliable sources for the compilation of a Life of Muhammad are more copious than are those for a Life of Jesus. This may account, in part at any rate, for the very large number of the alleged Lives of Jesus in almost every language that have seen the light of publication. The paucity of reliable information has led to much speculation, but the various speculations and theories put forward are certainly not without interest and, of course, there is the chance that one out of the number may be right. In the case of Muhammad, however, the main facts of his life are on the records and are not disputed, either by friend or foe. He, too, has had many biographers, although his number is insignificant when compared with the number of the biographers of Jesus. Not only is it possible to trace and prove the main facts in his life, but his pedigree can also be drawn up and traced in a manner that would satisfy the requirements of the most exacting genealogical expert.

The exact opposite has to be admitted when the life of Jesus is considered. The Fundamentalist will not take into consideration any source of information outside the Old and New Testaments, nor will he permit any doubt to be passed upon the authenticity of either of those documents. If secular history happens to confirm any of the contents, well and good; if, on the other hand, history should be in opposition, so much the worse for history for the Old and New Testaments are divinely inspired documents and must be right. It seems to matter not at all that the gospels, which are the only source of information as to the life of Jesus, instead of being in agreement are often, even in some of the most important details, in direct disagreement, particularly as to time and place. Many attempts have been made to produce a Harmony of the Gospels but all have signally failed. Taitian, in the second century, has been accredited with priority in this effort, although Eusebius, the Christian historian, refers to two less pretentious efforts. As a general rule, in consequence of the difficulty, the so-called "Harmonies"

consist merely of the arrangement into four parallel columns of the various incidents, discourses and miracles of Jesus without regard to the time of their occurrence, thus mutely recognizing the impossibility of harmonizing events which are contradictory in essential details.

In addition to the four gospels, which form part of the Biblical Canon, various apocryphal books are sometimes mentioned, particularly the *Apocryphal New Testament*, but the incidents related therein, which refer to the infancy and boyhood of Jesus, are of so puerile and trivial a character that they fail to carry either conviction or respect. They cannot be criticised because there is nought wherewith to compare them. This remark does not apply to the important and valuable contribution to apocryphal literature, *The Excluded Books of the New Testament*, the work of Bishop Lightfoot, Doctors M.R. James and H.B. Swete and others, published by Eveleigh Nash and Grayson.

Nor does a belief in the plenary inspiration of the Bible ensure agreement in any argument that may be constructed upon that foundation. For instance, Christadelphians at their week-day meetings when public discussion is permitted, will not allow any participation in the discussion except upon that basis. But it is very unlikely that there would be more than a limited agreement in a discussion between, say, a Plymouth Brother and a Christadelphian, despite the similarity in the conduct of their meetings for worship, although the arguments would be on a common basis. There would be even less probability of any agreement between, say, a hardshell Baptist and a Christadelphian or a Plymouth Brother.

Prior to the sudden appearance of Jesus upon the scene of his labours at the age of thirty years, there is no mention of any incident in his career, save that of the Temple, at the age of twelve.

A word or two upon this scene in the Temple. If there has been an error and the age should be thirteen years instead of twelve, then the incident undoubtedly occurred at what is known as a Barmitzvah ceremony, which can

happen only once in the life of a Jew. It has been my pleasure and privilege to be present at more than one of such ceremonies but, at my request, the Rev. S. Levy, M.A., has kindly furnished me with the following note on the function:

Bar Mizwah or Bar Mitzvah, means literally 'son of commandment' or 'man of duty', a Hebrew term applied to a boy on completing his thirteenth year, the age of religious duty and responsibility.

The solemnization of the attainment of the age of religious maturity takes place on the first Sabbath of the fourteenth year, when the Bar Mitzvah is called up to read a chapter from the weekly portion of the Law, either as one of the seven men or as the eighth, where it is customary to read the closing chapter and the haftarah, i.e., the Lesson or Reading from the Prophets.

The event is celebrated by joyous festivity, the Bar Mitzvah boy delivering on this occasion a learned discourse or oration at the table before the invited guests, who offer him presents, while the Rabbi or teacher gives him his blessing, accompanying it at times with an address.

Henceforth he is reckoned among the adults to fill the Minyan or required number of ten (for aynagogue services). Marsakot Soferi, xviii, 5, is even more explicit: 'In Jerusalem, they are accustomed to initiate their children to fast on the Atonement Day year or two before their maturity; and then, when the age has arrived, to bring the Bar Mitzvah before the priest or elder for blessing, encouragement and prayer, that he may be granted a portion in the Law and in the doing of good works.'

Rabbi Eleazar remarks: "Until the thirteenth year it is the father's duty to train the boy: after this he must say: 'Blessed be He who has taken from me the responsibility (the punishment) for this boy.'"

A disinterested survey and study of the mission of Jesus as recorded in the four gospels can hardly fail to bring any conviction other than that it ended in failure, even though it had the advantages of geographical and ethnological limitation. "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel." (Matthew xv, 24) was the

Jesus & Muhammad cont.

explicit statement of Jesus reaffirmed by Peter in Acts iii, 25, 26. The Gentiles (nations) were to be blessed through the house of Israel in accordance with the prophetic utterance in Zechariah viii, 25, and as foretold by the aged Simeon, in Luke ii, 25, when he held the infant Jesus in his arms. Jesus founded no church and he gave the name of "apostles" to none while he was upon the earth. The term "apostles" has been adopted by the translators in Matthew x, 2, but in the previous verse it will be seen that Jesus spoke of "disciples" and when he sent those disciples on their mission they were strictly bidden to "go not the way of the Gentiles and enter not into the city of the Samaritans, but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." (Matthew x, 5-6) In what is alleged to be the last chapter of the gospel of Mark (xvi, 15) occur the words: "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." but it would be a difficult task at the present time to find any commentator to differ from Westcott and Hort, l'abbe Duchesne and other scholars that all the verses in this chapter from the ninth onwards are an interpolation, for the inclusion of which no authority can be cited.

The poor Canaanitish woman, ignoring the inattention of Jesus to her request when she made her appeal on behalf of her daughter and passing over his discourtesy, which some would not hesitate to describe as "unpardonable rudeness" still persisted asking, so urgent was her need and came even and worshipped him. But this was not all. Her persistence was met with a further display of bad manners, for Jesus said: "It is not well to take the bread of the children and to cast it to the dogs." (Matthew xv, 26). Now the dog was not a favored animal among Orientals and, as pointed out in *Helps to the Study of the Bible*, published by the Oxford University Press: "The general term 'dog' in the Bible is never used except in a tone of disgust." One cannot but admire the woman's retort (v. 27): "Truth, Lord, yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from the master's table." According to the record she got her crumb and well did she deserve it, if only for her smart retort and although

given grudgingly, because she was not one of "the lost sheep of the house of Israel."

The following is extracted from *The Crucifixion* by Rabbi Emil, G. Hirsch (New York, p. 17):

"Salvation, according to Jesus, is only for the Israelites. his position thus agrees, without the possibility of a modification, with the prevalent conceit of the ruling party in Judaism. For him, as for them, religion is coincident and co-existent with nationality. He is far from disregarding the law. He emphasizes his mission as one come to fulfil but not to abolish it. The term 'fulfil' in this connexion can only be understood if translated back into the original Hebrew or Aramaic. It certainly cannot have the bearing generally attributed to it by the current Christian theology. Fulfilment, in the sense in which Paul and the Church after him have taught it, is a concept altogether foreign to the thought world of the Jew. The phrase attributed to the Nazarene cannot but be that which we find in the daily prayer as preserved up to the present day in the common ritual of the synagogue. 'I am come not to destroy but to fulfil' recalls to one familiar with Jewish liturgy the passage in which is voiced the petition for "understanding to do and fulfil" all the words of the Torah.

The controversies in which Jesus is represented to have been engaged with the Pharisees and the Scribes reveal not even one single trait that would countenance even the assumption of a departure on his part from the well-organized principles and stand of Jewish orthodox practice. His saying that the sabbath is made for man and not man for the sabbath is an echo of a well-known Rabbinical contention: "The Sabbath is given in your charge: you are not given in its charge." That to save life and to help the sufferers the most rigid prohibition should be set aside on the sabbath, is a fact which none will deny who has ever so superficial an acquaintance with Talmudical dialectics. The argument, thus, that on account of his peculiar religious doctrines or his disregard of the rights of the synagogue, Jesus aroused the hostility of the Jews among whom he loved and lived is not worthy of serious attention."

For the first seven years of their missionary efforts the "apostles" confined their labours to the Jews and it was only when Peter and Paul broke the ring that the evangelization of the Gentiles was agreed upon. Paul speaks of the admission of the Gentiles as one of those things not at first known but afterwards revealed though still to be regarded as a mystery.

If the statement in Mark ix, 1, is accurate it cannot be claimed for Jesus that he was a success as a prophet. Jesus, himself, lamented that his mission was a failure. Read his summary of his efforts and their result in Matthew xxiii, 37, 38:

Jerusalem, Jerusalem, that killeth the prophets and stonest those that are sent to her, how often would I have gathered thy children as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings and ye would not? Behold, your house is left unto you desolate; for I say unto you, Ye shall in no wise see me until ye say: 'Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord!'

According to the New Testament it was 'the lost sheep of the house of Israel' that cried out with increasing fervour: "Crucify him! Crucify him!" in the final scene in his life. When he was in difficulty and danger, all his disciples with one exception of 'the lost sheep of the house of Israel' and one, at least, of his own kin, forsook him and fled. The apostle, claimed by the Roman Church to be the rock upon which the Christian Church has been founded, first "followed him afar off", then denied him and then emphasized that denial repeating it with oaths and curses. Contrast those incidents with the closing scenes in the life of the Prophet Muhammad, as portrayed by Washington Irving and other historians and read of the multitude that assembled as near as possible to the place where he drew his last breath and the difficulty with which their grief could be appeased when they were convinced their beloved Prophet was dead.

Did Jesus become a light to lighten the Gentiles? The seventh century which witnessed the advent of Muhammad, was the most corrupt period up to that time in the Christian era, though even in

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Jesus & Muhammad cont.

those days there was no lack of Christian apologists, that singular term much in evidence at the present day. The age abounded then, as now, with religious disputations, rather than in the practice of religion.

Mosheim says that in the fifth century, the lustre of religion was clouded with superstition and its divine precepts adulterated with a mixture of human learning. The images of those who, during their lives had acquired the reputation of uncommon sanctity, were honoured with particular worship in several places and many imagined that this worship drew down the propitious presence of the saints they represented - which teaching was identical with that of the pagan priests in respect of Jupiter and Mercury. Of the seventh century he says:

In this barbarous age religion lay expiring under a motley and enormous heap of superstitious inventions and had neither the courage nor the force to raise her head nor display her natural charms to a darkened and deluded world.

Mosheim attributes much of the early success of Islam to the state of abject degradation into which the Church had fallen, to which, he says:

we may add the bitter dissensions and cruel animosities that reigned among the Christian sects, particularly the Greeks, Nestorians, Eutychians and Monophysites - dissensions that filled a great part of the East with carnage, assassinations and such detestable enormities as rendered the very name of Christian odious to many.

"The workability of Islam," says Stephen Gwynn, in his *Life of Mary Kingsley* (p.189): is one of the chief reasons for its success in Africa. It is, from many African points of view, a most inconvenient religion, with its Ramadzan, bound every now and again to come in the height of the dry season; its restriction of alcoholic drinks and gambling, but on the whole it is satisfying to the African conscience.

Neither Jesus nor Muhammad was the prophet of a new religion. Nor did either pretend to teach anything new about the faith already in existence. Their message was the old Jewish formula: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy

God with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy mind." "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is One" was the battle-cry of Moses, of Jesus and of Muhammad, emphasized by the last-named with the passage in the Qur'an:

"He begetteth not and is not begotten and there is none like unto Him."

It was a sad day in the history of Christianity when Constantine made it the state religion, for the act hastened the decline which had already set in. The result of this move, says W.M. Thompson in *Democratic Readings* was that the Church soon arrogated to itself the right to wage bloody war against all who differed from her views. Christians, Jews, Egyptians and Romans began to quarrel violently. The Eastern Christians wasted their time in discussing dogma and the Western Christians rapidly assimilated more and more of the heathen ceremonies and festivities. Trade, the arts and sciences, all languished: religion became a mockery. One spot - Arabia - remained almost unaffected by those sanguinary convulsions. There the Semitic spirit survived - the spirit, that is to say, of trust and faith in the One God, which characterized Shem and the descendants of Abraham. Against the vicious mixture which then passed as the teaching of Christ, a reaction was sure to come. It is hardly too bold an assertion that to Muhammad we owe the facts that Christianity has not joined the ranks of vanished creeds. Muhammadans to-day guard the supposed tomb of Christ at Jerusalem in order to prevent the pilgrim Christians from coming to blows over it.

Although Muhammad was able to claim that he had accomplished his mission, that does not mean that the work of Islam is completed. Bishop Boyd Carpenter, in his Bampton Lectures: *The Permanent Element in Religion*, said (p.43):

Islamism has been and still is a great power in the world. There is much in it that is calculated to purify and elevate mankind at a certain stage in history. It has the power of reclaiming the slaves of a degraded polytheism from their low, grovelling conceptions of God to conceptions which are higher; it has set an example of sobriety to the world and has shielded its followers from the drink

plague which destroys the strength of nations.

Of the Prophet himself, Bishop Boyd-Carpenter said (p. 80):

Muhammad is by many seen only through the fog which dread and ignorance have spread around him. To them he is an object of horror against which anything evil might be said. He was the first-born of Satan, the dealer in black arts; his very name became an epithet of reproach. But now the mists of prejudice have cleared away, we can afford to see the founder of Islam in a fairer light.

What did Jesus accomplish? Certainly he codified much of the knowledge already existing in Judaism for nearly all that he taught has been traced to Talmudical and other sources, as demonstrated by Jewish writers: some of his sayings have been traced even to pre-Christian pagan authors. It is sometimes asserted that Jesus, in contrast with the old Jewish teaching, set forth the practice of love in the place of revenge or vengeance. What, then, is the meaning of the commandment given centuries before the advent of Jesus as contained in Leviticus xix, 18:

Thou shalt not avenge nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

This must have been known to Jesus for he is said to have demonstrated his knowledge to the priests and rabbis in the Temple when he was twelve years of age.

But this doctrine of the forgiveness of enemies which he taught (but failed to practise) he inculcated to impossible lengths which, if followed, would cause all law and order to cease. "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you" is one of his injunctions, recorded in Matthew v, 44. It is strangely at variance with his not infrequent denunciations of the Scribes and Pharisees, of his senseless denunciation of the fig-tree because it did not bear fruit out of season. Was the object of the Allied governments when they organized parties of Germans to survey the infamous concentration camps in which some of their own nationality and probably kinsmen had suffered agonies to engender in those spectators feelings of love in place of feelings of revenge?

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Jesus & Muhammad Cont.

The Rev. G.P. Badger, D.C.L., tells us that before the advent of Muhammad, the Arabian race was plunged in the darkness of paganism. Every family had its lares and penates. All, however, appear to have believed in a Supreme God, to whom they gave the name of Allah. With this god were associated a host of minor deities who officiated as mediators. Angels were considered to be feminine, Banatu'llah, "Daughters of God." Some adored the sun, moon and stars, to whom prayers were addressed.

By non-Muslims Muhammad is generally represented as inclined to obesity, with a ruddy complexion, one whom we, should without hesitation, describe as enjoying the good things of life - which we know from the records was not the case. Professor Palmer, no mean authority, one of the translators of the Qur'an and an associate of Burton, the Oriental traveller, described him as being of medium height but of commanding presence, rather thin but with broad shoulders and a wide chest.

Gibbon, the historian, tells us that the Makkans applauded his commanding presence, his majestic aspect, his piercing eye, his gracious smile, his flowing beard, his countenance that painted every sensation of the soul and his gestures that enforced every expression of the tongue;

while Emile Dermengham says:

Muhammad was in the full vigour of his manhood, robust, of medium height, strongly built, with broad chest and massive head; his hands and feet, although large, were fine and sensitive, his skin tanned...From under a turban his countenance beamed with a majestic radiance, at the same time expressive and gentle.

Sir William Muir, in *Mahomet and Islam*, says:

"Muhammad was somewhat above middle height; the chest broad and open; the frame large and joints well-knit together. His neck was long and well-moulded; his head massive with a forehead broad and noble, thick black hair, slightly curling, hung over his ears. The eyes were black and piercing, fringed with long, dark eye-lashes; eyebrows arched and joined; cheeks

thin and ruddy; nose high and aquiline, fine at the end attenuated. A long and bushy beard rested on his chest. His features and expression were handsome but pensive and something of the sensuous."

Dr. S. Gregory, in his *History of the Christian Church*, Vol. I, p.370, gives a description of Muhammad culled from Arabian sources which describes the Prophet as being of middle stature, with a large head, full beard, black eyes, aquiline nose, wide mouth, thick neck and flowing hair and a prodigious mole between his shoulders, beset with bristles. He adds:

The circumstances of the mole being the seal of the prophet's mission could not escape the ridicule of Cervantes; as is evident from the description which the princess Miamicone gives of the knight-errant by whom it was foretold she should be restored to her kingdom and which very criterion identified Don Quixote to be he.

Muhammad did not hesitate to claim that he had accomplished his mission. In March 630, C.E. occurred the farewell pilgrimage from Madina to Makka, when all the Islamic ceremonies were performed by the Prophet as he meant them to be observed for all time. In his address to his people, he said:

Truly Satan despaireth of being worshipped in your land for ever. Verily, I have fulfilled my mission. I have left that amongst you - a plain command, the Book of God and manifest ordinances - which, if ye hold fast, ye shall never go astray.

He then uttered the following prayer:

O Lord, I have delivered my message and discharged my ministry. O Lord, I beseech Thee, bear Thou witness unto it.

It was not until two years afterwards that Muhammad breathed his last, passing away at Madina in June 632 C.E.

Dr. David M. Kay, D.S.O., of the University of St. Andrew's, says:

In less than a generation disunited Arabs had been fused by religious fervour into new life. No minorities were left; idolatry never showed itself again. The whole peninsula had experienced the expulsive power of a new affection.

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Opposition to Ahmadiyya cont.

mission to Israel, as led by Jesus with his specialized knowledge and fascination of appeal, did not succeed, it was improbable that it would be attended with a different result when continued by his disciples, even though they had been privileged to have him as their instructor, to enjoy his companionship and to sit at his feet. The "Mission to the Jews," to adopt the well-known modern title, has been continued down to modern times with the expenditure of an enormous wastage of time, labour and money and attended with even more pronounced negative results.

The Promised Messiah cont.

which are related to this age. In the book of Hadith - *Dar Qutni* (as also in the collection of reports by Imam Baihaqi), it is reported on the authority of Imam Muhammad Baqir (on whom be peace) that: "Verily for our Mahdi two signs (from heaven) have been vouchsafed, which have not been shown for any person before in this world - and those are that in the month of Ramadan (lunar month) there will be a lunar eclipse on the first night and solar eclipse on the middle day." To explain this it may be mentioned that according to the astronomical calculations, a lunar eclipse occurs on either of the three nights, i.e. 13th, 14th and 15th, of the lunar month; while the solar eclipse occurs on either of the three days - 27th, 28th and 29th - of the lunar month. In 1894 C.E., the month of Ramadan fell in the months of March and April. On the 13th night (the first of the three nights) of Ramadan a lunar eclipse occurred, and in the same month on the 28th day (the middle of the three days) a solar eclipse was witnessed. And to prove the prophecy fully, again next year in 1895, in the month of Ramadan, on the same days as before, lunar and solar eclipses were witnessed in the American continent. Hadrat Mirza Sahib pointed to this final proof in support of his claim of being the Mahdi, and that the light of Islam, as preached by him, would illuminate both the old and the new worlds.

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MUHAMMAD THE GREATEST MAN OF HISTORY

“If greatness of purpose, smallness of means, and astounding results are the three criteria of human genius, who could dare to compare any great man in modern history with Muhammad? . . . Philosopher, orator, apostle, legislator, warrior, conqueror of ideas, restorer of rational dogmas, of a cult without images; the founder of twenty terrestrial empires and of one spiritual empire, that is Muhammad. As regards all standards by which human greatness may be measured, we may well ask: Is there any man greater than he?”

—Alphonse de Lamartine in *Histoire de la Turquie*

QUR'AN, THE GREATEST SPIRITUAL FORCE

“It is the one miracle claimed by Muhammad—his standing miracle, he called it—and a miracle it is.”

—Bosworth Smith

“Never has a people been led more rapidly to civilization, such as it was, than were the Arabs through Islam. . . . And to it was also indirectly due the marvelous development of all branches of science in the Moslem world.”

—*New Researches* by H. Hirschfeld

“Here, therefore, its merits as a literary production should, perhaps, not be measured by some preconceived maxims of subjective and aesthetic taste, but by the effects which it produced in Muhammad’s contemporaries and fellow-countrymen. If it spoke so powerfully and convincingly to the hearts of his hearers as to weld hitherto centrifugal and antagonistic elements into one compact and well organized body, animated by ideas far beyond those which had until now ruled the Arabian mind, then its eloquence was perfect, simply because it created a civilized nation out of savage tribes, and shot a fresh woof into the old warp of history.”

—Dr. Steingass, *Hughes’ Dictionary of Islam*

THE BEAUTIFUL CHARACTERISTICS OF ISLAM

“I have always held the religion of Muhammad in high estimation because of its wonderful vitality. It is the only religion which appears to me to possess that assimilating capacity to the changing phases of existence which can make itself appeal to every age. I have studied him—the wonderful man—and in my opinion far from being an anti-Christ, he must be called the Saviour of Humanity. I believe that if a man like him were to assume the Dictatorship of the modern world, he would succeed in solving its problems in a way that would bring it the much needed peace and happiness. I have prophesied about the faith of Muhammad that it would be acceptable to the Europe of tomorrow as it is beginning to be acceptable to the Europe of today.”

—George Bernard Shaw

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