

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

*The*  
**Islamic Review**  
FOUNDED BY THE LATE AL-HAJJ KHWAJA KAMAL-UD-DIN

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مُحَمَّدٌ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ  
وَاللَّهُ خَيْرٌ مِمَّا يَشْرُونَ

THE  
**ISLAMIC REVIEW**

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FEBRUARY, 1942 A.C.

[No. 2

**A DECLARATION**

I, DONALD HAROLD FROST, of Foley House, High Garrett, Branitree, Essex, do hereby faithfully and solemnly declare of my own free will that I worship One and Only Allah (God) alone ; that I believe Muhammad to be His Messenger and Servant ; that I respect equally all Prophets—Abraham, Moses, Jesus, and others and that I will live a Muslim life by the help of Allah.

*Lá iláha ill-Alláh Muhammad-un-Rasíl-Alláh.*

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

*Dated 21st February, 1941.*

DONALD H. FROST

## ISLAMIC REVIEW

### HOLY QUR-AN ON JEWS AND CHRISTIANS

BY MAULVI AHSANULLAH

[Continued from page 405 of volume XXIX.]

#### SURA TAWBA

*Verse 30.*—“ Wa qálatil Yahùdu  
‘Uzairu-bnu-lláhi  
Wa qálatin  
Nasáral-Masíhubnu-lláhi  
Zálíka qawluhum bi afwáhihim  
Yudzáhi’úna qawlal-lazína kafarú min  
qablu  
Qátalahumul-láhu  
Anná-yu’fakún.”

“ The Jews call Uzair a son  
Of God and the Christians  
Call Christ the son of God,  
That is a saying from their mouth ;  
In this they but imitate  
What the unbelievers of old  
used to say. God’s curse be on them—  
how they are deluded  
Away from the truth ! ”

*Verse 31.*—“ Ittakhazú ahbárahum  
wa ruhbánahum  
Arbábam min dúnilláhi,  
Wal-Masíha-bna Maryama ;  
Wa má ’umirú illá li-yá’budú iláhan  
wáhidan  
Lá iláha illá huwa.  
Subhánahú ‘ammā yushrikún.”

“ They take their priests  
and their anchorites to be their lords in  
derogation of God,  
And they take as their Lord,

## HOLY QUR-AN ON JEWS AND CHRISTIANS

Christ, the son of Mary,  
Yet they were commanded  
To worship but one God.  
There is no God but He,  
Praise and glory to Him,  
Far is He from having  
The partners they associate with Him.”

*Verse 32.*—“ Yurídúna ayyutfi’ú  
Nura-lláhi bi afwáhihim  
Wa ya’ba-lláhu illá ay-yutimma núrahú  
Walaw karihal káfirún.”

“ Fain would they extinguish  
God’s light with their mouth,  
But God will not allow  
But that His light should be  
perfected, even though the unbelievers  
may detest.”

*Verse 33.*—“ Huwal-lazí arsala Rasúlahú bil-hudá  
Wa díníl haqqi  
Li-yuzhirahú ‘aladdini kullihí  
Walawkarihal-mushrikún.”

“ It is He Who hath sent His Apostle with  
guidance and the religion of truth to  
make it shine above every other religion  
even though the pagans may detest it.”

## ISLAMIC REVIEW

### MUHAMMAD THE KING

By A. F. KHAN CHOUDHURY, B.A., B.T., H.DIP. ED. (DUB).

[Adapted by the author from the original in Urdu.]

Muhammad, at the height of power as the king of Arabia, used to take pride in his poverty. He was not only the best man but also a model king. He regarded himself as the servant of the people in the very true sense of the term, and if kingship implied establishment of peace and security and improvement of moral and material condition of a country, he was eminently successful in the achievement of his goal. Before Muhammad, the whole of the Arabian peninsula was distracted by quarrels and feuds, and individuality in its worse form had its supreme triumph. The Arabs were not prepared to submit to any law other than the law of the jungle. They would draw the sword at the slightest provocation and would have no scruple in indulging in the orgy of bloodshed. They would indulge in all kinds of frivolous pastimes and discourses and were interested in all games of chance. Drinking was the order of the day. Justice and fairness were unheard of and as such at a total discount. Slavery reigned supreme in all parts of the peninsula and promiscuous intercourse between the sexes was an everyday occurrence. Female child would be buried alive and women were denied all rights of independent existence. Arabia, in the pre-Islamic days, presented the worst picture of human civilization and culture when all sense of morality was thrown to the wind. It was at such a time and in such a place that God raised the Holy Prophet Muhammad with the mission of elevating the moral and social condition of his compatriots.

# MUHAMMAD THE KING

## PEACE AND ORDER

Emphasising the importance of peace and order the Holy Prophet taught, "Verily a bad government is worse than carnage of blood." For the establishment of peace and order within his realm he justified a recourse to violence (a contrast with the teaching of Mr. Gandhi) and trained up an efficient body of soldiers who could match successfully an army four times greater in strength and number.

## PREDOMINANCE OF MERCY

But violence should not be an end in itself. It is at best a necessary evil. Mercy should dominate over violence. So the Conqueror of Makka preached, "No blame attaches to you, O my countrymen, that is, I shall not take you to task for your past misdeeds and iniquities. Verily you are all free."

## BROTHERHOOD OF MAN

Then again as the Conqueror of Makka he delivered the sermon, "O people of Makka, verily you are not superior to other nations and tribes in point of birth. All are children of the same common Father and of the same progenitor. Verily Adam was made of clay. To-day all pride of birth and position is to be discarded. All are equal in the eyes of God."

## SOLICITUDE FOR THE WELFARE OF SUBJECTS

Huge booty was brought to the Holy Prophet and he distributed it among the citizens of Madina in proportion to their requirements. Only a few coins were left as his own share but the Holy Prophet thought, "There must be some souls who may still be starving in the city. So these coins should go to their succour." Forthwith he called one of his attendants and asked him to distribute those residuary coins among the wretched and the poor in the city.

# ISLAMIC REVIEW

## RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

The Holy Prophet laid it down as a fundamental principle of Islamic polity that a Muslim state should not be inimically disposed towards the neighbouring Muslim or non-Muslim states and should never play the aggressive rôle. Even in the thick of hostilities they should observe certain principles of discipline and exercise self-control.

Although his personality had a magnetism all its own yet he preached complete freedom of faith. Muslims were enjoined not only to look after the lives and properties of the conquered races but to grant them complete freedom of conscience and belief. They should cheerfully lay down their lives for the safety and protection of the places of worship of their non-Muslim subjects. They threw open the doors of their own houses of worship, after the example of their illustrious Master, to the non-Muslim devotees. Wherever and whenever they drew their sword it was purely in self-defence. The hostilities in which the Prophet became involved were due to the uncompromising and unfriendly attitude of non-Muslim states and tribes, bent as they were upon the total extirpation of Islamic commonwealth.

Whenever he entered a new country, whether as subject or king, he used to recite the following prayer :

“ O Lord, I invoke Thy benediction upon the people of this country and its products. Take the inhabitants of this country under Thy benign protection and shield them against all trouble.”

He did not finish his duty with the mere recitation of prayer. He issued the following mandate for the guidance of his generals :

“ You should encamp in a locality where the inhabitants may not be put to inconvenience

## MUHAMMAD THE KING

on account of your presence. Do not destroy the fields of harvest or orchards. You should fight only against those who are regular soldiers, in their uniform, and spare the children, the aged, women, and, in short, those who are not actively engaged against you. Respect churches and synagogues and do not violate their sanctity. If they sue for peace, grant them peace unsuspectedly and ungrudgingly. If they agree to pay you tribute, accept it and do not bear any malice towards them. If they embrace Islam, levy *Zakat* (poll-tax) and spend the same among the poor and the needy.”

### PRISONERS OF WAR

The Holy Prophet laid down that the prisoners of war should be treated with the utmost consideration and generosity. They should be distributed equitably and fairly among the citizens of Madina, preference being given to the soldiers, as booty. It is said on the authority of one of these non-Muslim soldiers :

“ The Muslims were so generous and hospitable that they would entertain us with the same food as they would take themselves, clothe us with the same cloth as they would wear themselves, and examples are not rare when they would feed us, starving themselves, and clothe us remaining themselves half-naked. They would grant us liberty immediately on the payment of ransom or on the fulfilment of the required terms and conditions of freedom.”

### A NEW WORLD

The long and short of the matter is that with the advent of the Holy Prophet a new chapter was opened in the history of mankind. It was a veritable kingdom

## ISLAMIC REVIEW

of God, or to quote an oft-repeated phrase, "A New Earth: A New Heaven." Anarchy, tyranny, quarrels and bickerings gave place to an orderly, systematic, equitable, fair and benevolent Government which secured for the individual the safety of life and property. Slavery, in its inhuman form, was put under a ban, the status of women was elevated and hospitality became a characteristic feature of the Muslim society. Travellers could move from one part of the Arabian peninsula to the other without being pillaged and molested, and women could visit the temple of Ka'ba from far off places, unattended, without any fear of being disgraced in any way. This mighty, and almost unbelievable, transformation in the moral and spiritual condition of the Arabian peninsula did not take a century or centuries to achieve but only a single generation, nay, just the life-time of a single individual. Certainly this is an eloquent tribute to the dynamic personality of Muhammad !

### ACHIEVEMENT

It is not therefore surprising that Jews and Christians should cheerfully submit to the spiritual allegiance of the Master. It is for this reason that when the message of the Holy Prophet was brought to Heraclius, the Byzantine sovereign of the Eastern Roman Empire, he exclaimed: "If Muhammad is a true Prophet, a time will come when the Eastern Roman Empire will come under his sway." The Emperor of Abyssinia paid him tribute. But look to the private life of the Prophet. At a time when the emperors and kings vied with one another in paying him tribute, the Holy Prophet himself was leading an ascetic life—the life of *Rajarshi* (Saint-king), without two full meals a day. What was left behind after the departure of the great Master were peace and order,

## THINK AND GROW RICH

love and kindness, a general and all-round rehabilitation of the material, moral and spiritual condition of mankind,—a unique achievement and a grand success, unprecedented and undreamt of by any former teacher.

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## THINK AND GROW RICH

BY NAPOLEON HILL

[We are glad to reproduce the following from an American journal, as it shows the imperceptible penetration of Islam in the popular mind of the New World—*ED. I. R.*]

If you are keenly interested in studying the strange power which gave potency to persistence, read a biography of Muhammad, especially the one by Essad Bey. This brief review of that book by Thomas Sugrue, in the *Herald-Tribune* will provide a preview of the rare treat in store for those who take the time to read the entire story of one of the most astounding examples of the power of persistence known to civilization.

### THE LAST GREAT PROPHET

(Reviewed by Thomas Sugrue)

“Muhammad was a Prophet, but he never performed a miracle. He was not a mystic, he had no formal schooling, he did not begin his mission until he was forty. When he announced that he was the Messenger of God bringing Word of the true religion, he was ridiculed and labelled a lunatic. Children tripped him and women threw filth upon him. He was banished from the native city, Makka, and his followers were stripped of their worldly goods and sent into the desert after him. When he had been preaching ten years he had nothing to show for it but banishment, poverty and ridicule. Yet before another ten years

## ISLAMIC REVIEW

had passed he was dictator of all Arabia, ruler of Makka and the head of a new World Religion which was to sweep to the Danube and the Pyrenese before exhausting the patience he gave it. That impetus was threefold—the power of words, the efficacy of prayer and man's kinship with God.

“His career never made sense. Muhammad was born to impoverished members of a leading family of Makka. Because Makka, the cross-roads of the world, home of the *magic-stone called the Ka'ba*<sup>1</sup>, great city of trade and the centre of trade routes, was unsanitary, its children were sent to be raised in the desert of Bedouins, Muhammad was naturally drawing strength and health from the milk of nomad, vicarious mothers. He tended sheep and was soon hired out to a rich widow as leader of her caravan. He travelled to all parts of the Eastern World,<sup>2</sup> talked with many men of diverse beliefs and observed the decline of Christianity into warring sects. When he was twenty-eight (five—Ed.) Khadija, the widow, looked upon him with favour, and married him. Her father would have objected to such a marriage, so she got him drunk and held him up while he gave the paternal blessing (this is just a story—Ed.). For the next twelve years Muhammad lived as a rich and respected and very shrewd trader. Then he took to wandering in the desert (to be accurate retiring to the hills—Ed.), and one day he returned with the first verse of the Qur-án and told Khadija that the archangel Gabriel had appeared to him and said that he was to be the Messenger of God.

“The Qur-án, the revealed Word of God, was the closest thing to a miracle in Muhammad's life. He

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<sup>1</sup> There is no magic about it. It is the foundation stone of the sacred House built in an unknown antiquity. Ka'ba is the name of the House and not of the stone.—Ed., *I.R.*

<sup>2</sup> This is inaccurate. He only visited a few places to the north of the peninsula.—Ed., *I.R.*

## THINK AND GROW RICH

had not been a poet, he had no gift of words. Yet the verses of the Qur-án, as he received them and recited them to the faithful, were better than any verses which the professional poets of the tribe could produce. This, to the Arabs, was miracle. To them the gift of words was the greatest gift, the poet was all-powerful. In addition the Qur-án taught that all men were equal before God, that the world should be a democratic state—Islam. It was this political heresy, plus Muhammad's desire to destroy all the 300 idols in the courtyard of the Ka'ba, which brought about his banishment. The idols brought the desert tribes to Makka, and that meant trade. So the business men of Makka, the capitalists, of which he had been one, set upon Muhammad. Then he retreated to the desert and demanded sovereignty over the world.

“The rise of Islam began. Out of the desert came a flame which would not be extinguished—a democratic army fighting as a unit and prepared to die without winning. Muhammad had invited the Jews and the Christians to join him, for he was not building a new religion. He was calling all who believed in one God to join in a single faith. If the Jews and Christians had accepted his invitation Islam would have conquered the world. They did not. They would not even accept Muhammad's innovation of humane warfare. When the armies of the Prophet entered Jerusalem not a single person was killed because of his faith. When the Crusaders entered the city, centuries later, not a Muslim man, woman, or child was spared. But the Christians did accept one Muslim Idea—the place of learning, the university.”

## ISLAMIC REVIEW

### MESSAGE OF THE MI'RAJ—PANACEA FOR THE WAR-WEARY WORLD

BY A. M. JALAL-UD-DIN AHMAD

Bombs may burst, and ships may sink. Tanks may trample rights of men. Might may seem to subdue Right. But with the force of dauntless faith in the power and grace of God, Truth must triumph in the end, and Good must prosper in the world.

Such is the heartening message of Muhammad's Mi'raj for our unhappy world to-day. Muslims all over the globe commemorate every year (27th Rajab of Islamic calendar) the Mi'raj or Ascension of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, (peace and blessings be on him). His Mi'raj marks the highest stage of spiritual development ever attained by man.

In the opening verse of the 17th Chapter of the Holy Qur-án, God says, "Glory to (God) Who did take His Servant for a journey by night from the Sacred Mosque (of Makka) to the Farthest Mosque (of Jerusalem) whose precincts We did bless—in order that We might show him some of Our Signs. For He is the One Who heareth and seeth (all things)." God's reference to Himself is generally to be found in the first person plural number, as in the case of one in authority. But the third person used at the beginning and end of this verse expresses the point of view of God's creatures whose hearing and seeing are so limited that they can do nothing but glorify Him when He raises one of His creatures to hear and see His mysteries.

God's knowledge has no limitations of time or space. Of this unbounded knowledge, the Mi'raj of His Holy Prophet Muhammad was but a reflection. In an incredibly brief period of a few moments, the Prophet was transported by invisible means from Makka,

## MESSAGE OF THE MI'RAJ

his place of preaching, to Jerusalem, the seat of earlier Revelations, was initiated into the mysteries of the universe, into the mysteries of human soul struggling in time and space, into the mysteries of life and death, virtue and vice, reward and punishment, of individuals and nations ; and was eventually granted the sublime vision and audience of God on the very Throne of God, which extends over the whole of universe and beyond. In a word, Muhammad had complete realisation of Truth. He thus got that fullness of faith which nothing whatsoever could shake,—faith in the reality of God, faith in the truth of His revelations, and faith in the righteousness of His cause.

Himself thus inspired and equipped, Muhammad could infuse similar unshakable faith in the hearts of his small band of followers, some firm, some faltering, at a time when Makkan atrocities were heading towards a climax, when opposition spared no pains to put out the candle of God's true religion, when love's labour of regenerating mankind looked like lost, and when the entire future of the small Muslim community appeared to be dark, dismal and dreary.

The momentous event of Mi'raj took place shortly before the Prophet's forced migration from Makka to Madina. But the seed of Faith which got implanted with perfect firmness in that auspicious Night of Ascension, soon grew into a magnificent tree yielding marvellous fruits, in the form of constancy, courage, patience, perseverance, justice, kindness, self-sacrifice, and self-purification. Thus the religion of Islam which was preached by every Prophet but purified and perfected under the leadership of Muhammad, found a firm foothold in Madina, conquered Makka and Arabia in but a few years, and began to scatter freely far and wide the lovely fruits of its tree of Faith.

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Faith, faith, and more faith,—faith in the reality, power, wisdom, and love of God ; faith in the truth and practical advantages of His revealed commandments and prohibitions ; faith in the righteousness of His cause which is the cause of humanity ; faith that knows neither fear nor failure,—that is the Message of Muhammad's Mi'raj for the war-weary world of to-day !

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### WORLD RELIGIONS—THEIR CONTRASTS AND RESEMBLANCES

#### ISLAM

BY SIR HASSAN SUHRAWARDY, D.Sc., LL.D.  
(HON. CAUSA), LONDON

*[Lecture delivered at Caxton Hall, London, on Tuesday  
25th March, 1941.]*

I would like to begin by expressing my sincere thanks to Sir Francis Younghusband for inviting me in such gracious terms to speak on Islam before this session of the World Congress of Faiths. Realising the importance of the subject, and my own limitations, I was on the point of reluctantly writing a letter of apology when it occurred to me that if, by being associated at work with this great mystic of modern times, I might have the privilege of becoming even a small brick in the great edifice of goodwill, toleration and understanding among mankind which he has built, I should deem myself highly fortunate.

The ideal of the World Congress of Faiths is to place one's own religion alongside other world religions, so that one may see in what way it contrasts with and in what way it resembles them. I shall therefore endeavour to follow this principle, and give a very

## WORLD RELIGIONS—THEIR CONTRASTS

brief account of the faith of Islam as it is understood by Muslims. I shall give more attention to Christianity, as it is the great world-religion which preceded Islam.

It is very desirable that not only Englishmen but the English-speaking nations of the world should understand a religion with which they have so much in common in moral foundations and in spiritual values. The followers of the faith of Islam, like the English-speaking nations, are to be found spread all over the four quarters of the earth, and like them wield an important influence on world affairs, and, with courage and determination, are allied to them in the principles of justice, freedom and democracy for which they are making such a gallant and heroic stand.

The religion preached by the Prophet Muhammad has been called "Muhammadanism" and its followers "Muhammadans" as parallel terms to Christianity and Christians. These are misnomers. Its correct name is Islam, and the followers of the faith of Islam are called Muslims. The word "Islam" means "Absolute submission to the Will of God," but this does not imply any idea of fatalism, any more than "Thy Will be done" does to the Christian. In its ethical sense it signifies "Striving after the ideal (Righteousness)." "Islam" is derived from a root word which also means "peace." The true Muslim submits to the Will of God and obeys His commandments, and lives at peace with mankind. The greeting of the Muslim is "Assalamu-Alaikum" **السلام عليكم** which means "Peace be on you!"

The term "Muhammadanism" is also based on the misconception that Muslims worship Muhammad. The fact is that Muslims do not worship Muhammad who, according to their religion, was a Prophet divinely inspired, but a mortal man. Chapter III, verse 144

## ISLAMIC REVIEW

of the Qur-án says:—"Muhammad is only a man charged with a Mission, before whom there have been others who received heavenly Missions and died."

وما محمد إلا رسول قد خلت من قبله الرسل

The Muslim believes in a chain of inspired Prophets and Teachers who taught the same fundamental truths, beginning with the dawn of religious consciousness in man, the first teacher being the first man (Adam). The Muslim therefore believes in the divine revelations of all the earlier Prophets mentioned in the Scriptures ; the Qur-án makes no distinction between any of them. In everyday speech the Muslims use the same term of respect "Sayyiduná" or "Hazrat" (my Lord and Master) for Abraham, Moses and Jesus, and all other Prophets, as they use for their own Prophet Muhammad. "Say : We believe in God and that which was revealed unto us, and that which was revealed unto Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac and Jacob, and that which Moses and Jesus received and that which the Prophets received from their Lord. We make no distinction between any of them." (Qur-án II—136.) *قولوا آمنا بالله وما أنزل - الى ابراهيم واسماعيل واسحاق ويعقوب والاسباط وما أوتى موسى وعيسى وما أوتى النبيون من ربهم ونحن له مسلمون-*

The Qur-án says : "There hath never been a nation to whom God hath not sent a Prophet." *وان من امة الا خلا فيها نذير (XXXV—24)*

Chapter XL verse 78 says : "We did aforetime send Prophets and Apostles before thee ; of them there are some whose story We have related to thee, and some whose story We have not." *ولقد ارسلنا رسلا من قبلك*

*منهم من قصصنا عليك ومنهم من لم نقص عليك*

Thus it is clear that God has sent messengers of His Truth to every people; there are some whose names

## WORLD RELIGIONS—THEIR CONTRASTS

are known to us through the Qur-án, but there are a large number whose names are not made known—we must recognise the Truth wherever we find it. The Aryans and many other ancient people were Unitarians, which can be proved by a careful study of the Zend-Avesta of the Zoroastrians, and the Vedas and the Upanishads of the Hindus and the teachings of the Buddha and Confucius. The followers of the great religions of the world, by their over-zealous admiration for their Masters, and by coming into contact for centuries with idolatrous and superstitious people, lost the divine truth of their religions. “O ye people of the Book! Why do ye clothe Truth with falsehood and conceal the Truth while ye have received knowledge?”  
(III—71). يا اهل الكتاب لما تلبسون الحق بالباطل وتكتمون الحق  
وانتم تعلمون-

As regards the teachings of Muhammad, he did not claim to be the founder of a new religion ; his Mission was to consolidate the truths of the earlier religions and restore them to their pristine purity. Verse 38 of Chapter XIII of the Qur-án says: “To every age its own Book.” لكل اجل كتاب The Muslims believe that, whereas the earlier revelations of God are enshrined in the sacred Books of the Prophets, the Qur-án is the latest revelation, and has been sent to consolidate the fundamental truths of religion to the end that it might continue in the earth. The words of God are like drops of rain that come from time to time through the teachings of the Prophets, and just as the pure rain from heaven gives life to the dead earth and germinates fresh verdure and vegetation by its vivifying influence, so the Qur-án reaffirms the old truths revealed to all the inspired Teachers of humanity. “We have not revealed to thee the Book except that thou makest clear to the people that about which they differ, and as

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a guidance and a mercy for a people who believe. And God hath sent down water from the cloud and therewith given life to the earth after its death; most surely there is a sign in this for a people who would understand.”

(XVI—64-65). وما انزلنا عليك الكتاب الا للذين اهلهم الذي اخذنا،  
 فيه وهدي ورحمة لقوم يؤمنون-  
 الله انزل من السماء ماء فاحيا به الارض بعد موتها ان في ذلك  
 لاية لقوم يسمعون-

When there is so much similarity between the teachings of Christ and those of Muhammad, and when Islam and Christianity equally share the responsibilities of restoring the religion preached by the earlier Prophets to its original purity, and of arousing the primitive people to the inspiration of revealed religion, where then do the Muslims and Christians differ? The chief points of difference lie in the fact that the Muslims believe in the message of Jesus Christ, in his power of healing by prayers, and in his other authentic miracles but they do not believe in his divinity or in his Sonship. (III—47).

The personalities of Jesus Christ and his mother, Mary, are held in the highest reverence by the Muslims, based on the teachings of the Qur-án. Chapter III, verses 42—49 of the Qur-án will illustrate this point. “Behold,” the angels said: “O Mary! God hath chosen thee and purified thee—chosen thee above women of all nations. God giveth thee glad tidings of a Word from Him: his name will be Christ Jesus, the son of Mary, held in honour in this world and the Hereafter, and of the company of those nearest to God. He shall speak to the people in childhood and in maturity and he shall be of the company of the righteous and God will teach him the Book and Wisdom, the Law and the Gospel, and appoint him a Prophet to the children of Israel with this message: ‘I have come to you with

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the sign from your Lord. I heal those born blind and the lepers, and I quicken the dead by God's leave'. ”<sup>1</sup>

وإذ قالت الملائكة يمرزم إن الله اصطفك وطهرك واصدقك على نساء العالمين- إذ قالت الملائكة يمرزم إن الله يشرك بكلمة هذه أسماء المسيح عيسى ابن مريم وجيه في الدنيا والاخرة ومن المقربين و يكلم الناس في المهود وكهنة ومن الصالحين وإبرمى الآلهة و الابص و احبى الموتى باذن الله-

Verse 171 of the Chapter IV of the Qur-án makes the position clear: “O people of the Scriptures, do not exaggerate in your religion, nor utter aught concerning God save the truth. The Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary, was only a messenger of God, and His word which He conveyed unto Mary, a spirit from Him (God). So believe in God and His messengers, and say not ‘Three’—Cease! It is better for you! There is but one God. Far be it removed from His transcendent majesty that He should have a son. His is all that is in the heavens and all that is in the earth.”

ياهل الكتاب لا تغلوا في دينكم ولا تقولوا على الله الحق- ألما المسيح عيسى ابن مريم رسول الله وكلمته القا الى مريم وروح منه فامذوا بالله ورسله ولا تقولوا ثلاثة انذهموا خيرا لكم انما الله ائله واحد سبحانه ان يكون له ولد له ما فى السموات وما فى الارض-

The Muslim conception of God is that He is free from all human needs and imperfections; He is One, Indivisible, Beneficent, Almighty, All-Knowing, Just, Compassionate and Forgiving. “God, there is no God but He, the Living, the Self-subsisting, the Eternal. Neither slumber nor sleep overtaketh Him. Unto Him belongeth whatsoever is in the heavens and whatsoever is in the earth. . . He knoweth that which is in front of His creatures, and that which is behind

<sup>1</sup> These verses should not be taken too literally, for thus they will go against some clear principles of the Qur-án itself. For example, according to the Qur-án a man really dead can not return to this life. It is only desirable, therefore, to regard these signs of Jesus to have a reference to the spiritual transformations brought about by him.—Ed., *I. R.*

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them, while they encompass nothing of His Knowledge save what He willeth. His Throne includeth the heavens and the earth, and He is never weary nor fatigued of guarding and preserving them. He is the Sublime and the Supreme in Glory." (II—255).

الله لا اله الا هو العلى القويم لا تاخذة سدة و لا نرم له ما فى السموات و ما فى الارض من ذا الذى يشفع عنده الا باذنه يعلم ما بين ايديهم وما خلفهم ولا يحيطون بشىء من علمه الا بما شاء وسع كرسيه السموات والارض ولا يؤنة حفظهما وهو العلى العظيم-

"Your God is One God, there is no God but He, Loving, Gracious, Most Merciful." (II—163). والهم  
اله واحد لا اله الا هو الرحمن الرحيم-

Belief in the unity of God is the essential requirement for a Muslim: no baptism or formal ceremony of conversion is necessary as in the Christian religion. "Abraham was not a Jew, nor yet a Christian, but he followed the Truth and bowed his will to God's (which is Islam), and he joined not other gods with God." (III—66)

وما كان ابراهيم يهوديا ولا نصرانيا ولكن كان حنيفا مسلما وما كان من المشركين-

The Muslims believe that the Jews made the mistake of denying the Mission of Christ, and that the Christians erred by exceeding the bounds of praise and deifying Christ. In order to avoid any misconception, Muhammad's position as a Messenger or Prophet of God is repeatedly made clear. "Do not exceed bounds in praising me," said Muhammad, "as the Christians do in praising Jesus, the son of Mary, by calling him God, and the son of God; I am only the Lord's servant; then call me *the servant of God and His Messenger*."—(The Sayings of Muhammad, page 60, "Wisdom of the East Series." John Murray, London.)

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*The cardinal doctrines of Islam are :*

- (1) The affirmation of belief in the unity of God.
- (2) The recognition of the Divine Mission of Muhammad, and that he is only a Messenger of God.

*The obligatory duties of the Muslims are :*

- (1) Prayers five times a day, at dawn, mid-day, mid-afternoon, sunset, evening (before retiring).
- (2) Fasting for one month in every lunar year.

This is not a penance, but a discipline for the subjugation of passions, and the development of spiritual powers by self-denial. During fasts a Muslim is not allowed to eat, drink or smoke between dawn and sunset, and he must abstain from vain talk and angry disputes, and from luxuries and indulgences of all kinds.

- (3) The performance of *Hajj* (Pilgrimage) to Makka at least once in a person's lifetime.

Incumbent on those whose financial, mental and physical conditions and family obligations permit it.

- (4) Obligatory annual payment of *zakat* or poor-rate, for the relief of the needy (one-fortieth or  $2\frac{1}{2}\%$  of the value of a person's movable possessions for the year).

This does not refer to voluntary charities which are strongly encouraged as a pious and meritorious act. The poor-rate is a religious obligation—the rich are bound to share a definite percentage of their wealth with the poor.

The basis of the *ethics of Islam* will be apparent from Chapter II verse 177 of the Qur-án. "It is not

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righteousness that ye turn your faces (in prayer) to the East and the West ; but righteous is he who believeth in God and in the Day of Judgment, in all the Scriptures and in all the Prophets ; and giveth of his wealth, in spite of his love for it, to kinsfolk, to captives of war and to set slaves free, and who payeth the poor-rate and keepeth his promise and treaty when he maketh one, and the patient in tribulation and adversity, and in time of stress. Such are they who are sincere, such are the God-fearing.”

ليس البر ان تولوا وجوهكم قبل المشرق والمغرب ولكن البر من آمن بالله واليوم الآخر والملئكة والكتب والنبيين وأتى المال على حبه ذوى القربى واليتامى والمساكين وابن السبيل والسائلين وفى الرقاب، اقام الصلاة وأتى الزكاة والمؤنر بعد هم إذا عاهدوا والصابرين فى الباس والضراء وحين البأس أولئك الذين صدقوا وأولئك هم المتقون.

Another point where there is a striking difference between Islam and Christianity is the position of the clergy as a specially privileged class. *There is no monasticism or any priesthood in Islam.* Muhammad said, “The retirement that becometh my followers is to live in the world and yet to sit in the corner of a mosque in the expectation of prayers.” Muslims do not believe that any priest, pastor or saint can intervene or mediate between the individual worshipper and his Creator, nor can anyone grant indulgence or absolution from sins.\* In congregational worship any Muslim of good character can be the “Imam” or leader of the prayers. The Rev. John Naish says: “The idea of a church as the sole repository of supernatural sacramental grace, and of its clergy as the unique medium through whom this grace is dispensed to mankind, that is the idea of a church and clergy in the Christian sense, is foreign to and unknown in Islam.”

\*Literacy is encouraged and every Muslim, man and woman, learns to say the prayers individually or in groups.

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The Muslims believe in the accountability for human actions in another existence, but they do not accept the doctrine of original sin. Hence, according to Islam, the souls of unbaptised babes are not lost. Muslims do not believe in the doctrine of Redemption or vicarious atonement, each soul must work out its own salvation. "Whosoever repenteth sincerely of his wrong doing, reformeth and amendeth, God will accept his repentance, verily God is the Forgiving, the Merciful." (V—42).

It is therefore held that, provided a person believes in the cardinal doctrines of Islam, no one can say that he is not a Muslim. If he makes amends and reforms by sincere repentance, God will forgive his sins. Islam does not promise salvation to Muslims alone, but gives equal hope to the righteous and God-fearing of all religions. Chapter II verse 62 of the Qur-án says: "Whether Muslim, Jew, Christian or Sabian, whosoever believeth in God and in the Last Day, and doeth good to others, verily he shall find his recompense with his Lord. For him there shall be no terror, neither any torment or suffering."†

ان الذين آمنوا و الذين هادوا و الذمى و الصابئين من آمن بالله  
واليوم الآخر و عمل صالحا فإلهم اجرهم عند ربهم ولا تحرف عليهم و لا هم  
يعذبون.

Although all religions have preached the brotherhood of man, in Islam the principles of democracy, fraternity and equality have been put into actual practice in a remarkable manner. Islam teaches that all men are equal before God. There is no colour or race-prejudice, and no distinction between Arab and

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†This does not mean that a faith in the latest revelation is not essential to salvation. What the verse implies is that salvation is not confined either to a race or even to an organised religion. The individual will be saved not because of his nationality nor of his religious denomination but through his living faith in God and the Hereafter and perfected deeds of virtue, among which standing up for the latest inspired leader of religion is one (See Ch. 5, v. 12).—ED., I. R.

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non-Arab—goodness is the only criterion of worth. I shall not be far wrong if I say that every eighth or ninth person one meets in the world is probably a Muslim. They are spread all over the world, but though so widely separated by land and sea, and in spite of the diversity of race, nationality and colour, a living spirit of brotherhood, whose loyalties outweigh those of either kin or tribe, binds together the followers of the faith of Islam to-day, just as it did when the first followers of the Prophet of Arabia embraced the religion. The Muslims are not broken up by caste restrictions based on occupation or wealth or by barriers against inter-marriage. The *Hajj* is not a pilgrimage in the ordinary sense. It is not a visit to a place of sanctity to which miracles and superstitions are attached. It is a commemoration of a great event in the spiritual life of Abraham. It is a symbol of the journey of life, and a re-enactment of the principles of equality and brotherhood. There, the rich and the poor alike appear in the congregation for worship and in the sacred precincts of the *Ka'ba* clad in a simple unembroidered, unstitched white garment, with bare head and either barefoot or with an unstitched sandal. As here in any place of worship throughout the Muslim world, the prince and the peasant pray together in the same room, and indeed can sit in the same ranks. No one has any right of precedence in the House of God.

The Dutch Orientalist, Professor Snouck Horgronje, says: "The ideal of a league of human races has indeed been approached by Islam more nearly than by any other; for the League of Nations founded on the basis of Muhammad's religion takes the principle of the equality of all human races so seriously as to put other communities to shame."

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Sir Thomas Arnold refers to the *Hajj* in these terms: "Here is a supreme act of common worship, the Negro of the West Coast of Africa meets the Chinaman from the distant East; the courtly and polished Ottoman recognises his brother Muslim in the wild island from the farthest end of the Malayan Sea. At the same time, throughout the whole Muhammadan world, the hearts of believers are lifted in sympathy with their more fortunate brethren gathered together in the sacred city (Makka) as in their own homes they celebrate the festival of 'Id-al-Adzha, or, as it is called in Turkey, the feast of Bairam." It is popularly called Qurban Bairam in Turkey, and Baqra 'Id in India.

How do Muslim prayers compare and contrast with those of other religions? In order to maintain a uniformity of practice, the Muslims have adopted a manner of saying their prayers based on the traditions of the practices of the Prophet. The worshippers do not bare their heads, they stand in a respectful attitude, either singly or in orderly rows; the sick and the infirm can say their prayers sitting or lying down. The Muslim can say his prayers anywhere, alone in the privacy of his own room or while travelling or in company, wherever he happens to be at the appointed hour; for the soldier it is enough if he whispers a remembrance in the recess of his heart amid the heat and clamour of the battlefield. The main essentials are forgetfulness of self, concentration of mind, and sincerity of heart. While praying, the Muslims turn their faces towards Makka (the Ka'ba) not to worship anything or anyone but as the central point round which, at the appointed hours of prayer, are focussed the religious thoughts of Muslims all the world over. Thus each Muslim feels that he is one of the great community which keeps alive the memory of the

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inviolable place of worship where Abraham prayed to one God without partner or associate, and which again saw the light of the regenerated truth preached by Muhammad. The Qur-án does not inculcate the belief that God is to be found in any particular direction : “Unto God belongeth the East and the West, and whithersoever ye turn, there is the presence of thy Lord. Behold, God is All-Pervading, All-Knowing.” (II—115).

لله المشرق والمغرب فاذا ما تولوا فثم وجه الله ان الله واسع عليم

As has already been pointed out, the Muslims are required to pray five times a day, but as the prayers are short and to the point they do not take up much time, nor weary the mind nor strain the powers of concentration. The mid-day prayers have been criticised by some as interfering with the exigencies of modern business practice. It must not be forgotten, however, that in the middle of the day there is always an interruption of work for the mid-day meal, which is a physical necessity, and during this interval a Muslim can easily find a few minutes in which to say his prayers, thus satisfying his spiritual needs and resuming his work refreshed and fortified both in body and in mind. Besides this, the Muslim law provides that if, for any special reason, the prayers cannot be said within the prescribed period, it is permissible to offer them at the earliest opportunity.\*

The Muslims perform congregational worship with a sermon in a mosque at noon on Fridays, corresponding to the Saturday of the Jews and the Sundays of the Christians, and also annually on the days of 'Id-al-Fitr and 'Id-al-Adzha. No music or incense, nor any

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\*As a matter of fact, a little self-examination in the light of the thought of God at a time when the struggle for existence is the keenest, would have made for a greater stability in our economic efforts by providing a stronger moral foundation for them.—Ed., *I.R.*

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rituals or special vestments are considered necessary. As regards the mosque itself Islam does not require any ceremony of consecration of the ground on which the Muslim builds his place of worship, nor does the Qur-án recognise such a place as essential for the due worship of God. "It is one of the glories of Islam," says Sir William Hunter, "that its temples are not made with hands, and that its ceremonies can be performed anywhere upon God's earth or under His Heaven." There are no sects and denominations in Islam in the Christian sense, which debar them from praying in the same place of worship together. The Shias and the Sunnis differ on the question of the succession to Caliphate after the death of Muhammad, but this does not prevent them from performing the Pilgrimage together, and saying their prayers in the same congregation and in the same mosque. A prescribed form of ablution precedes the prayers, the parts most likely to be soiled,—the hands, feet and face,—are washed. For congregational prayers on Fridays and on 'Id days a complete bath and change of garment are necessary. Before attending public worship, one is also directed not to smoke, eat or drink anything that may make one's breath a nuisance to fellow worshippers. These excellent hygienic rules help one to achieve the essential requirement of cleansing the mind and heart from worldly thoughts which distract attention from the true worship of God. (For details regarding the prescribed form of ablution and of performing Muslim prayers, see "The Sayings of Muhammad," "Wisdom of the East Series," John Murray, London.)\*

Another point of difference between Islam and Christianity is the manner in which the Qur-án and the

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\*"Islam and the Muslim Prayer," by Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din, will furnish the best information on the subject.—ED., *I. R.*

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Bible came into existence. The four Gospels relate the teachings of Jesus Christ and the story of his life, and were compiled long after his death, mainly from oral traditions. The Qur-án, on the other hand, was written verbatim from the utterances of Muhammad, at the time of each revelation. Every word and every sentence were written down on any available writing material by the specially appointed scribes, while others undertook the task of committing them to memory. This practice of committing the whole of the Qur-án to memory has been continued through the ages as a pious act, and to-day there are tens of thousands of Muslims throughout the world of Islam who know the whole of the Qur-án by heart, correct in every detail of chapter and verse. These people are known as *Háfiz*, which signifies the Custodian or Preserver. On the death of the Prophet in 632 of the Christian era, the texts were collected within six months and kept in safe custody by his successor Abu Bakr, the first Caliph. It was from this volume that copies of the Qur-án were transcribed under the personal supervision of Uthman, the third Caliph, and within eleven years of the death of the Prophet, copies were sent to such distant lands as Persia, Syria, Palestine and Egypt. Thanks to the care of the early Muslims, every copy of the Qur-án to-day is exact word for word as it was uttered by the Prophet Muhammad.

To the Christians, the Bible provides a foundation for their moral code, but the social and personal laws vary in different countries. To the Muslim, however, the Qur-án is the Word of God, revealed through the Prophet. Every detail regarding religious injunctions as well as those relating to the personal laws are laid down in the Qur-án, and cannot be altered. In British India, the Muslim law of inheritance, marriage and

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divorce and other personal laws are exactly the same as obtain in Arabia, Egypt and other Muslim countries.

Another point of contrast is in the attitude of the Muslims towards Christ and Christianity, and of the Christians towards Muhammad and his religion, Islam. From quotations in the Qur-án I have shown that the Muslims, as a religious obligation, are bound to show, and do show, the highest reverence to Jesus Christ and to the religion preached by him. Jerusalem is called *Bait-ul-Muqqadas* (the sacred house), on account of its association with Christ and other Prophets. Unfortunately, however, Muhammad and his religion, Islam, have been grossly misrepresented by Christians. Muhammad has been called an impostor, and Islam a pagan and aggressive religion which introduced and legalised polygamy, denied women social and spiritual status, and promised a carnal Paradise to its followers. Even in everyday English speech, one hears the saying, "If the mountain will not come to Muhammad, then Muhammad will go to the mountain." Muhammad never claimed such a miracle at all, and when he was pressed to do so he said: "The other messengers of God had their miracles and were called sorcerers. Mine is the Qur-án, which will remain for ever."

The reason for these misrepresentations is not far to seek. The intolerant church, which regarded freedom of thought as leading straight to heresy, and tried to exterminate it among the Christians of Europe by the rack and the stake, could hardly be expected to show forbearance towards a religion which preached against their vested interests. The clergy, being the only literate people in the Dark Ages, misguided the ignorant masses and justified every means to attain the pious end of suppressing Islam. By causing a panic with

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the threat of Saracenic military domination and declaring that the Holy Land was being desecrated, they succeeded in fanning the religious ardour of Christian Europe into waging the Crusades against the Muslims, in order to "free the Holy Land from the infidels!"

The cross appeared on the banners of the Crusaders as the sacred emblem of the religion for which they were fighting, but the crescent which appeared on the battle-flag of the defending Muslims had no such religious significance. The Sultan was a (Seljuk) Turk, and the crescent was his national emblem and appeared on the banners of the Turks long before they embraced Islam. The crescent has no association either with the Prophet Muhammad or with the Arabs. The banners of the Prophet and his immediate successors were plain white or black flags without any emblem. The Abbassid Caliphs of Baghdad had a red flag and the Ommayyad and the Fatimid Caliphs of Damascus and Cairo had a green banner. The inscription: "There is only one God and Muhammad is the Messenger of God," appeared on the banners of these Caliphs. When the Ottoman Turkish Sultan, Muhammad the Conqueror, captured Constantinople, the crescent was on his flag, and by confusion of names it became associated with Muhammad the Prophet. Like the Crusaders, the Christians of Europe were misled into a belief that the crescent was the religious symbol of Islam. Whenever a Christian nation conquered a Turkish province, the first thing they did was to replace the crescent by the cross. The white crescent on a red flag remained the emblem of the Ottoman Turks until 1839 when, during the Tanzimat, a star was added. Through centuries of association with this great Islamic power, whose capital became the seat of the Caliphate, from the middle of the 16th century until 1924, the crescent

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and star has become a symbol of spiritual unity amongst Muslims, and appears on the court-of-arms and flags of independent Muslim countries. The Red Crescent (*Hilal Ahmar*) has been given international recognition as an emblem of humanitarian work in time of war and peace, and has happily come to have a friendly collaboration with the Red Cross. We trust that, through this friendly association, a "spirit of fellowship may be quickened amongst us and abound among men."

The World Congress of Faiths has stimulated the modern spirit of enquiry and broad-minded tolerance which prevents the continued acceptance of old prejudices. Let us examine the cause of aversion to Islam. One reason has been the ecclesiastic antipathy, the causes of which I have explained, and another is the natural human aversion towards a conqueror. The Muslims with incredible rapidity, became the rulers of a vast empire extending from the Great Wall of China to the Atlantic, and thus came into conflict with the peoples of many lands, which created antipathies and left a legacy of misrepresentations against their religion,—Islam. The peoples of these diverse nations which embraced Islam, some of them highly intellectual and others almost primitive, exhibited peculiarities of conduct for which Islam was blamed. I have heard people citing the examples of the cruelties and carnage of Kubla Khan and Changiz Khan, and the Tartars and Mongols, who were not Muslims at all, as instances of Islamic barbarity. Islam in itself is not to blame; the fault lies with the people who are Muslims.

When, with the march of time, the din and dust of the clash of arms subsided, and the Muslims came to live together peacefully as fellow-citizens, a feeling of goodwill grew up to the mutual benefit of both the

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conqueror and the conquered. The Muslims benefited by the ancient philosophy, culture and civilisation of many countries and diverse races. Egypt, Greece, Persia and India specially influenced and infiltrated their social structure. The reciprocal spiritual influences fostered a spirit of toleration and broad thinking. This happy blend resulted in the appearance of mystics and *Sufis* and movements of religious reformation. In the case of India, it would be interesting to note that the *Din-i-Ilahi* started by the great Emperor Akbar was an eclectic faith based on the original Hindu monotheistic ideas, revived under the influence of Christianity and Islam. Later on, Guru Nanak, in the Punjab, preached against the corruptions and superstitions that had crept into the Hindu religion and revived monotheism. The Sikh movement started by him assumed a political character in later years, but Nanak's own efforts were directed towards religious reform. Coming to more recent times, in Bengal we see the rise of the Vaishnavism and the Brahmo-Samaj movements. Chaitanya, Ram Mohan Roy and Keshab Chandra Sen fought against the tyranny of the caste system, inspired by contact with the Muslims, and revived the worship of One, Invisible, Omnipresent and Omniscient God by a study of the Qur-án and the Upanishads, which is apparent from the *Tuhfatul-Muwahhidin* ("a gift for the Monotheists" written by Raja Ram Mohan Roy in Arabic and Persian). In Europe also similar results followed the Dark Ages of the Crusades by the break of the dawn of "Renaissance." While Europe lay steeped in the darkness of the Middle Ages, the Muslims were the torch-bearers of culture, science, arts and letters, and it is to them that their revival is mainly due. The domes, minarets and arches seen in the stately buildings of Europe are a

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legacy of Saracenic architecture. The graceful style of ornamentation in paintings and inlaid carvings of imaginary intertwined foliage and geometrical figures, excluding all animal forms, derived its name "arabesque" from its originators. Evidence of the influence of Arabic art and craftsmanship can still be seen in Southern Spain, Sicily, Malta, and many other places in Europe. In the world of science, there are many words reminiscent of Muslim influence; in music, in medicine, the Canon of Avicenna (Qanun-Ibn-Sina); in chemistry, alchemy (alkīmiyā); in mathematics, algebra (al Jabru wa 'l-Muqābala); in navigation, astrolabe and Admiral (Amir-ul-bahr). The cipher (sifr) and the notation system known as Arabic numerals were also introduced by them into the West.

In spiritual renaissance by analysis of the resemblance between the teachings of Christ and those of Muhammad, the striking fact is made clear that Muhammad was indeed the first 'Protestant' and through successive stages of Reformation, the Presbyterians, Quakers, the Covenanters, and the Unitarian Church of Modern Christianity have come back to the purity of the original teachings of the Master which it was Muhammad's Mission to revive. This is the miracle of the Qur-án.

Regarding toleration in Islam, the position of women, polygamy and the Muslim conception of Paradise, to which I have referred in my paper, I shall be glad to explain the position in the discussion which is to follow.

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## THE SARACENS

### Etymology and Denomination

BY KAZI AHMAD MIAN AKHTAR

Things that happen to be widely well known, have a tendency to render their origin ultimately obscure. Such has been the case with the term "Saracens," about which there exists such a vast difference of opinion that it has become difficult, or rather impossible, to arrive at a correct and definite conclusion. The theoretical explanations regarding this term advanced by Western writers and Oriental scholars, have been proved not only unsound and vague but quite presumptuous and sometimes ridiculous ; at the same time one is astonished to find that despite their daily use of the term for centuries, no satisfactory solution has been reached up to the present day.

#### *Early use of the Term*

The earliest use of this name is traced in the works of Greek and Roman historians. In the middle of the first century A.C. the Greek botanist Dioscorides writes about myrrh (mukl) as the product of a Saracenic tree. In the same era Pliny the elder (d. 79 A.C.) names those Arab tribes as Saracens who inhabited that part of the Arabia proper which is extended up to the Nabathean borders. He makes mention of the famous Arab tribes of Tayy and Thamud whom he designates as "Tavini" and "Thamudai." In the middle of the second century the geographer Ptolemy mentions "Sarakin" as a district of Arabia Petræ and shows its situation in the west of the Black Mount, which, according to him, stretches from the Bay of Paran to the Judea mountains. Again he speaks of the Saracens inhabiting the heart of Arabia Felix. The Byzantine historian Stephanus states "Saraka" as a district the

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inhabitants of which were called "Saraceni." About the tribe of Tayy the same historian observes that they live in the south of the Saracens. In the chronicles of the Ecclesiastical historians, Eusebeus and Heroneum, the Saracens are mentioned as the Ishmaelites of the Old Testament, who reside in the Arabia Deserta, at a place named Qadish situated in the district of Paran or Madyan wherein stands the Hurb mountain in the east of the Red Sea ; at first they were called Ishmaelites then Hagarenes and finally Saracens.(<sup>1</sup>)

### *Application of the Name*

(1) The ancient Romans (Latins) used the name Saracens for the people inhabiting the Arabia Felix. In the Middle Ages, only the Arabs were called Saracens. In earlier times the name of Saraceni was applied by Greeks and Romans to the troublesome nomad Arabs of the Syro-Arabian desert who continually harassed the frontier of the empire from Egypt to Euphrates. (<sup>2</sup>) After Islam the name was confined to all the Arab people and thereafter it was extended to the Mahomedan Turks and even to all non-Christian nations against whom a Crusade was preached. (<sup>3</sup>) Later on it was applied to all the followers of Muhammad (may peace be upon him) ; the Turks and even other Mahomedan nations were not an exception. (<sup>4</sup>) In the Middle Ages "Saracens" was a common term for Mahomedans hostile to the Crusaders. (<sup>5</sup>) Gibbon defines Saracens as a name which every Christian mouth had been taught to pronounce with terror and abhorrence. (<sup>6</sup>)

### *Original home of the Saracens*

On the authority of the Greek and Roman historians the original home of the Saracens should be fixed

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(1) Encyclopædia of Islam, Vol. IV, p. 155. (2) Encyclopædia Britannica, Vol. 21, p. 304. (3) Whitney, Century Dictionary, Vol. VII, p. 5241. (4) Hughes, Dictionary of Islam, pp. 564-565. (5) Webster's Dictionary, ii p. 1276. (6) Roman Empire, V, pp. 446-447 (1891).

## ISLAMIC REVIEW

in the Senai peninsula, the oldest home of the Arabs, on the Egyptian borders, in the neighbourhood of the Nabatheans. In the opinion of Rev. Forster Serat mountain is the home of the Saracens, which he thinks to be a country of Sarat of which Ayal Sarah, or Beni Sarah, a town in Yemen in the south of Beni Yam, is the capital.<sup>(1)</sup> The ingenuity of the Reverend gentleman in deriving so ridiculously the word Sarat from Sarah, the wife of the patriarch Abraham, is quite uncalled for, as Sarat in Arabic means the hump of a quadruped animal and hence the appropriate appellation ; <sup>(2)</sup> although in fact the mountain is properly named al-Hijaz which according to al-Hamadhani is the vast chain of mountains stretching from the farthest Yemen to Syria.<sup>(3)</sup>

Ptolemy has pointed out the country as the home of the Saracens, lying to the west of the great Sinai chain along the southern confines of Judea to the borders of Egypt. Eusebeus has also mentioned the Saracens as the inhabitants of this tract in the 3rd century.<sup>(4)</sup>

### *Pronunciation of the Name*

In different European languages the word "Saracen" has assumed different pronunciations which are given below :

1. Old English : Saracen, Sarazyn, Saraysyn.
2. Old French : Saracin, Sarracin, Sarrazin, Sarracen, Sarrasin.
3. Spanish : Saracen.
4. Portugese : Sarracen.
5. Italian : Saraceno.

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(1) Geography of Arabia, II, p. 27.

(2) Mas'udi, Muruj uz-dhahab (on the margin of al-Maqqari, Cairo ed.), Vol. II, p. 84.

(3) Yaqt, Mu'jam ul-Buldan, V, p. 66.

(4) Forster, II, pp. 20-21, note.

(5) William Dwight Whitney, Century Dictionary.

## THE SARACENS

6. German : Saracene.
7. Old Latin : Saracenus, pl. Saraceni.
8. Greek : Eapakyvos (Saracenos).<sup>(5)</sup>

### *Difference of Opinion*

From the above statements it will be clearly seen that the term "Saracen" was applied to Arabs by the Greeks and the Romans and that evidently it must have its origin in the Greek or the Roman languages, but that it has been altogether lost sight of in the obscurity of conflicting surmises and presumptions and the question has been evidently left undecided as to what language the term owes its origin, and whether the Arabs have invented the name for themselves or that it was applied to them by others. This fact will be borne out by the opinions of different writers quoted below.

"The word Saracens," observes an English writer, "was applied to the Arabs by themselves as meaning Men of the Desert." <sup>(1)</sup> This view, however, is erroneous because had the Arabs called themselves by this name it should have been mentioned by them in their books. But unfortunately this does nowhere occur in the works of the Arab chroniclers and therefore it would be right to assume that in earlier times the Greeks and Romans applied this name to Arabs. "Saracens," says Nelson, "a general name applied by Greeks and Latins to the Arab tribes along the edge of the Syrian desert, and later used by mediæval writers of Europe to indicate their Moslem enemies in general especially such as they encountered in European countries."<sup>(2)</sup> Such a marked divergence of view exists about the origin and derivation of this name that according to Gibbon the "proposed explanations of its meaning are all unsatisfactory."<sup>(3)</sup> The same

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(1) Robert T. Anderson, *Extinct Civilization of the East*, p. 131.

(2) Nelson's *Encyclopædia*, Vol. 20, p. 144.

(3) *Roman Empire*, Vol. V, p. 447, note.

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view is shared by another writer who says that “no satisfactory explanation has been given of the reason why the Romans called the frontier tribes Saracens.”<sup>(1)</sup>

The famous Orientalist, Dr. Pocock, also expresses the same opinion when he observes :

“I can nowhere find, in what has hitherto been published on the subject by our writers, any satisfactory reason given as to why those who were formerly called Arabs should subsequently go by the name of Saracens.”<sup>(2)</sup>

On the above statements of the Western scholars one cannot help remarking that almost all the explanations given by them are speculative and hypothetical. In substantiation of this remark we cannot do better than cite some eminent European authorities :

1. Edward Gibbon, the renowned historian of the Roman Empire, writes :

“The name used by Ptolemy and Pliny in a more confined, by Ammianus and Procopius in a larger, sense, has been derived, ridiculously, from Sarah, the wife of Abraham ; obscurely from the village of Saraca ; more plausibly from the Arabic words which signify a thievish character, or Oriental situation. Yet the last and most popular of these etymologies is refuted by Ptolemy, who expressly remarks the Western and Southern position of the Saracens, then an obscure tribe on the borders of Egypt. The appellation cannot, therefore, allude to any national character ; and since it was imposed by strangers, it must be found not in Arabic but in a foreign language.”<sup>(3)</sup>

*(To be continued.)*

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(1) *Ibid.* V, 216, note 3.

(2) Sir Syed Ahmad, *Essays on the Life of Muhammad*, p. 114, London, 1870.

(3) *Roman Empire*, Vol. V, p. 216, note 3.

# CORRESPONDENCE

## A TIMELY WARNING

[The following letter speaks for itself. We hope those for whom it is meant will take due note of the warning it contains.—ED., *I.R.*]

To

THE EDITOR,  
THE "ISLAMIC REVIEW,"  
LAHORE.

DEAR BROTHER-IN-ISLAM,

Now-a-days when Christianity is in danger of being killed by the poison of its own creation and when a sensible section of its followers have come forward to co-operate with Islam among other religions, it is only in the fitness of things that our representatives should show them the tolerance and love characteristic of Islam. It is pleasant to reflect that our speakers and publicists have proved themselves equal to the occasion in spite of bitter memories extending over a thousand years. There is one danger, however, against which we must guard. Muslim generosity and broad-mindedness has a tendency of erring on the side of excess, at the cost both of itself and those to whom it is shown. In the excess of our earnestness we are apt to forget that a certain amount of firmness and assertiveness is necessary in the interest of the good we desire to do to the people of other religions. Islam is truth and nothing but truth. It is no dogmatic assertion, but a fact admitted now even by our enemies in their hearts if not always in so many words. Overworked, however, in our sense of modesty, we now and then make the mistake of toning down our statements in this matter. We almost become apologetic. This, is, to say the least, most unbecoming of ourselves. It is, to look at it from another point of view, bound to create an unwholesome impression on the minds of those for whom it is intended. If the believers and followers of a religion become apologetic about it, those who are otherwise inclined to appreciate its beauty from outside, cannot feel inspired to pursue their investigations any further. So our misplaced courtesy proves a disservice both to our religion and to the thirsty soul of humanity standing at its threshold. I am not talking about an imaginary condition of things. I have noted this apologetic tone in some of our world-renowned publicists whose utterances have even found place in our worthy and valiant journal of which you are the editor. Some of these have gone to the length of telling their audiences that Islam may hope somehow to rank with Christianity. You will agree with me that such utterances are no compliment to Islam and no encouragement to tottering Christendom to study our religion. I do not like to mention names as that will give my warning the colour of a controversy.

Let me hope, however, that this kind of weakness is not repeated any more and that our Muslim preachers and publicists will not hesitate to take their cue from the announcement of the Book of God:—"Surely the (true) religion with God is Islam."

Yours sincerely-in-Islam,  
M. JAMSHED HUSSAIN.

## ISLAMIC REVIEW

[ A further letter to the Editor of the "Daily Mirror" as a protest against the article "Love under the Axis" published in the issue of that journal for May 12, 1941.]

21st May, 1941.

THE FEATURE EDITOR,  
THE "DAILY MIRROR,"  
LONDON, E.C. 4.

DEAR SIR,

Thank you for your reply to my letter of the 15th instant.

I wish to point out in answer that the article in question is couched in language calculated to give offence to every Muslim. It deals with our religious Book as if it were full of absurd things. For example, nowhere in the Holy Qur-án will you find it stated that Paradise is for men alone to the exclusion of women. As a matter of fact Paradise is promised in unmistakable terms to men and women alike.

The idea given to your readers is that the Qur-án preaches sensuality. If the writer had merely referred to the customs of the Libyans there could have been no quarrel. But would it be right for a Muslim to quote from the Bible when pointing to the horrible things happening in Europe to-day ?

It seems to me that the writer of the article is striving to show that the Qur-án is a book without any high ideals. Even if what he writes were true, which it certainly is not, the way in which it is put is, to say the least, in very bad taste.

Yours faithfully,  
ABDUL MAJID,

*Imam of the Shah Jehan Mosque, Woking.*

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THE "DAILY MIRROR,"  
LONDON, E.C. 4.  
27th May, 1941.

ABDUL MAJID, ESQ.

DEAR SIR,

Thank you for your letter of 21st May addressed to the Feature Editor.

I have noted the contents of your letter and if I can do anything about it in the future I will certainly do so.

Yours faithfully,  
E. Z. (*Feature Dept.*)

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MAIDENHEAD,  
BERKS.

5th May, 1941.

DEAR SIR,

*Assalamu Alaikum!*

Many thanks for the copy of the *Islamic Review* which I was happy to receive. Please allow me to congratulate you on your latest report which shows good results. May Allah continue to bless your work.

At your convenience would you inform me when Ramadan begins this year. I have tried on several occasions to obtain an Islamic calendar but so far have been unsuccessful.

I shall endeavour to come to Woking again soon.

In the meantime I remain,

Yours faithfully,  
J. WAGON.