

THE LIGHT.

EDITED BY MUSTAFA KHAN B. A.

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The object of The Light is to disseminate Islamic doctrines and to repudiate charges against Islam but the expenses incurred in getting out the paper being very heavy and the subscription being only a nominal one, we respectfully appeal to our Muslim brethren to send donations to help the Anjuman in making a free wide circulation.

Receipts of the subscriptions are not sent to senders but they are acknowledged in the columns of The Light. Subscribers are requested to see that list and if the remittance of any subscriber is not acknowledged therein he may kindly communicate with the Manager.

Correspondence of literary nature may be addressed to the Editor. Short articles, letters and questions will also be welcome. Non-Muslims are also invited to send questions to be answered.

NOTES.

Islam : the world religion.

A Correspondent of the Christian paper the " Epiphany " has taken exception to the Catholicity of Islam on the ground that the institution of fasting cannot be observed universally. He says :—

Now, fasting during the month of Ramazan is one of the religious duties enjoined upon Muslims by Islam. They have to fast from sunrise to sunset. In the Quran it is written, " Eat and drink until ye can plainly distinguish a white thread from a black thread by the daybreak ; then keep fast until night. " (Sura Baqr ii. Ayat 183.) Everyone who is acquainted with geography

knows that within the tropics days and nights are equal all the year round, but that in the temperate and Arctic zones their respective lengths vary so much, that in some countries the day may last four or six times as long as the nights and *vice versa*. Now because Muslims have to fast from sunrise to sunset, it must follow that those living in Stambul and further north, would have to fast for about sixteen or twenty hours. We know, that about the 67th degree north latitude the day lasts about one month, about the 69th two, and about the 73rd three months, *i. e.*, one, two, or three months intervene between a sunrise and the next sunset. What will be the result, if the inhabitants of these northern latitudes were to embrace Islam and observe its rule regarding the Ramzan by abstaining from all eating and drinking, for only one such day? Surely, the first Ramazan fast would cause the death of all its faithful observers. An universal religion, Divinely intended for all men, should be able to be observed in every part of the earth and by all the nations of the world.

Apparently this objection is due to ignorance of the Islamic doctrines. The same question was raised in the time of the Holy Prophet who is reported to have answered that they (*i. e.* the people of such countries) should measure according to the measure of their (Arabs) days. From this it would follow that in the countries where the days or the nights are too long, the time of fasting may be measured according to the normal days. It may also be noted here for the information of the said correspondent that Holy Quran has given a standard of measure for the fasting time, which can be utilized both by the crudest and the most civilized society ; and this is a testimony to the universality of Islam.

The Anglican Church in India.

In the Near East for April 13 1922 we read :—

At the request of Bishops in India, the church at home, has with the approval of the Punjab promised to send a mission of spiritual help, which will be in India, from November of this year until March of next year. The mission will include at best twenty four clergymen with women missionaries. They will address themselves to the English speaking members of the church in India without distinction of race. It is estimated that £ 500 to £ 600 will be needed.

This will give our readers only an inkling of the enormous sums of money which the Christian world is spending in the spread of Christianity; inspite of the fact that Jesus never enjoined upon his followers the propagation of gospels in the world, as he was sent only to the lost sheep of Israelites. The Muslims on the other hand are religously bound to spread the teachings of Islam throughout the world as it is the religion for the whole of mankind. But the pity is that the efforts of the latter in this direction sink into insignificance when compared with those of the former.

The Supplement to the Light.

With this issue we publish an open letter of Maulvi Mubammad Ali M. A. which deserves the serious attention of the whole Muslim community, as the propagation of Islam is the sacred duty of every Muslim.

Atonement.

I

Atonement is the cardinal doctrine of Christianity. It is based upon the assumption that God is just and loving. His justice demands that a sinner should not go unpunished. His love, on the contrary, wants that punishment should be wiped out from the surface of the earth. Now, it was very critical position for God. He was bound on one hand to punish every sinner to do *Justice*, but. He was equally bound on the other to show mercy to sinners in order to satisfy the impulse of *love*. With a view to solve this difficulty and to display the two contradictory attributes at one and the same time, God adopted a very curious plan. He showed mercy by crucifying His only son, who died a cursed death for the redemption of mankind. Thus the *price* was taken from mankind for its salvation and justice was also done. But as this *price* did not come out from the pocket of the people; there was nothing in it against the Divine love. God so to speake Himself paid the price out of his limitless mercy and thus effected the redemption of man, without making any departure from the strict sense of justice. Such is the popular theory of atonement. But our esteemed contemporary the "Epiphany," which is devoted to the spread of the Christian doctrines in a recent issue has given it quite a different light. The paper however uses very elastic language, which is wonderfully adapted to various interpretations. Yet if we can claim to have understood it rightly, it holds that the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus is only a symbol, which signifies life after death or more properly the revival of Christianity after a period of death or oblivion. From this principle as its data, it also draws a moral lesson that every life means a previous death; and one

who wants to live must die first. The belief in the crucifixion or atonement, therefore means the belief in this principle, and nothing more.

We must admire the ingenuity of our contemporary and heartily congratulate it on the plausible interpretation which it has put on this old doctrine of Christianity. But we can hardly hope that the church will agree to it. If this is the only significance of atonement the dogmatic Christianity will fall to the ground. Jesus Christ was not the only Prophet who suffered and eventually triumphed. But as a matter of fact this has been the case with every divine teacher. The Holy Quran has laid down the principle that: "surely with difficulty is ease"; and the Muslim divines have the motto—"die before you die," which means that to achieve eternal life one must die before one's physical death, i. e. must go through hardships and misfortunes. This idea of self annihilation or mortification is often met with in the writings of Sufis. If the former phase of atonement which signifies *The Paying of the Price For sins* is a relic of the old pagans who used to appease their angry deity with sacrifices or offers; this latter development which holds that crucifixion and resurrection as the symbol of life after death is an echo of the sufi's philosophy of self mortification.

But the crucifixion of Jesus which is the foundation stone of atonement is a historical event and must be studied from a historical standpoint. We will do it in our next.

The Conversion of Salman.

THE CITY OF BASRA.

I.

[We are indebted to Haji Riaz-ud-Din Ahmad of Berially for the interesting account of the Conversion of Salman a well-known companion of the Holy Prophet. Salman was a Persian by birth. He became Christian and devoted a long time to the study of religion. But the doctrines of Christianity could not satisfy his soul. After many difficulties he succeeded in reaching Medina where he embraced Islam. Our correspondent gives in this instalment of his article a description of Basra and its past greatness. Ed. L.]

The ancient city of the Northern desert of Arabia called Basra which lies desolate to the south eastern side of Palestine was not so in the year 600 A.D. It was at the time of our narrating the story thickly populated and was full of pomp and grandeur. It was located in southern outskirts of the valley of Tofail which for the most part of the year remains dry and is about 30 miles away from the southern shore of the Dead Sea between Edome and the land of Beni Swab. The city at

that time resounded with the noise of hundreds of travellers coming to and going from Basra not to be found in any other city of the Arabian desert. Although the town was not the seat of any Government yet the trade had created a kingly pomp and grandeur. Whenever a foreigner came he found lofty palaces of the wealthy grandies and big houses of the merchants of the city. Innumerable camels passed between the churches and lofty monasteries and a babel of tongues of people of different climes mixed with the bellowing of camels and the noises of the camel drivers.

The caravanserais were filled with caravans and with goods of different countries. On every side there were signs of opulence and enterprise and the town seemed to be very proud on account of its prosperity and fortune. The chief reason of its greatness was that up to that time ships and steamers did not replace camels in the transaction of trade and large caravans carried goods as well as travellers from east to west and from south to north. All the Caravans nearly passed through this populated town. Merchants stopped here for months to sell their goods. On account of these merchants the market of Basra always remained brisk and the business continued throughout the whole year.

Besides, the Province of Armenia and Diarbeker had been battlefields of the Romaons and the Persians and there was hard conflict between Christians and the followers of Zoaraster under the banners of the rival emperors. There were numerous changes of sovereignty in those parts. One day the Persians became the possessors while the other day the Romans held sway, thus the followers of both religions were afraid of extermination. The result was that hundreds of Christian and Persian families left their homes and settled themselves in the city of Basra, Thus it had within its walls the members of various religions and various communities.

CORRESPONDENCE.

Jesus died a natural
TO THE EDITOR, THE LIGHT.

DEAR SIR,

With reference to Mr. Thaffar's article in your issue of 15th May I request the hospitality of your columns for the publication of these few lines.

M. Thaffar's contention that the verse "ma gatalu hu wa ma salabu hu" negatives the assertion of the Jews that Jesus was nailed to the cross is rather surprising. These words only contradict his having expired on the cross as a result of being nailed to it.

The meaning of verse "Ya Isa inni Muta Waffika" should be read in the light of verse (5: 117) *Falamma Tawaffaitani Kunta antar rakiba alai him* "and I was witness of them so long as I was among them, but when thou didst cause me to die, thou wert the watcher over them" This verse is a conclusive proof that Jesus died a natural death; and he is not now alive in heaven, as is the theoric belief of the Christians and the supposition of many Muslims; because here Jesus says that so long as he was among his followers he was a witness of their condition and he did not find them holding the belief in his and his mother's divinity. The logical conclusion of this statement is that the false doctrine of his Divinity was introduced into the Christian faith after his death, after "thou didst cause me to die."

A saying of the Holy Prophet is recorded in Bokhari, in which he speaks concerning himself in the very words which are here put into the mouth of Jesus. He said that he would be shown on the day of resurrection some men who had gone against his teachings, and "I would say what the righteous servant said: I was a witness of them so long as I was among them, but when thou didst cause me to die thou wert the watcher over them." This saying shows clearly that it was after the death of both Jesus and the Holy Prophet that their followers perverted their teachings.

Compare John 17: 3 "and this is life eternal, that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent;" and John 17: 12 "while I was with them in the world, I kept them in Thy name."

This verse (5: 117) conclusively settles the meaning of *Muta Waffika*.

As regards "*I withheld the children of Israil from you*" it should be read with "Allah will protect you from the people." (5: 67) In spite of this promise the Holy Prophet was persecuted by his enemies and at last had to flee to Medina. He was also called an enchanterer, forger and poet (21: 1-5).

MANZUR, ILAHI.

Lahore,

20-5-22.

Questions and Answers.

S. A. Abbas Q.—1. What is the source of friendship? In how many senses is the word used Can I befriend a Christian according to the Holy Quran?

Ans:—Real friendship springs out from the affinity between two persons. Loosely the word is used for any acquaintance. There is a verse in the Holy Quran.

And you will certainly find the nearest in friendship to those who believe (to be) those who say: we are Christians" V : 82.

Q.—2. Does our religion allow us to dine with any Non-Muslim at the same table;

Ans. Yes; even the lawful food of the "People of the Book" is permissible.

Q.—3. Why do the Christians believe that all nations will be amalgamated into their faith when there is ample testimony in religious books that Islam cannot perish?

Ans.—There appears no reason for it. Please ask the Christians who have got this novel idea.

Yaqub Ali Q. 1. What is the difference between you and the Sunni Muslims?

Ans.—No difference with the only exception that we hold that Jesus Christ died a natural death according to the Holy Quran; and the prophecy in regard to his second advent as contained in reports of the Holy Prophet, has been fulfilled in the person of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian.

Q.—2. Do not the various newly-invented sects of Islam destroy the fraternity of Muslims?

Ans.—Yes; they do; and that is why all the Muslims should be united together under the banner of the *mujaddid* of this century, who is also the promised *Masslaha* of Islam.

Q.—3. Was there any difference of sect creed or party, when Islam came to existence; if not how did it creep in and what will be result of it?

Ans. No; differences always arise after the lapse of time; and such was the case with Islam. But it should be borne in mind that these differences are not in regard to the basic principles of Islam; and therefore, if the Muslims try to be broad minded, there is every possibility of their unity.

Yusaf Ali Q.—1. What to do with the interest on bank deposits?

Ans. It may be spent in the propagation of Islam.

Mubammad Mustau Sharaf Q. 1. Is life insurance permissible in Islam?

Ans. No.

Q.—2. Where does the spirit of man go after death?

Ans.—Please see the last issue. Soul does not require any place.

Q.—3. What is your opinion about "Shabrat"? Is it a religious festival?

Ans.—It is not enjoined by our religion.

Q.—4. Is it necessary to follow some religion?

Ans.—Yes.

Fazal-ul-Karim :—Q. 1. What is "Arash"?

Ans.—Arash means the divine control over the universe.

Q.—2. Is Jesus Christ mentioned in the Holy Qu-ran?

Ans.—Yes; Isa son of Marry is one of the prophets mentioned in the Holy Quran.

Q.—3. Is Mirza Ghulam Ahmad the Promised Mahdi and Messiah?

Ans.—Yes.

Q.—4. What is the necessity of Qurbani (sacrifice) of animal?

Ans.—It is enjoined by the religion. As a matter of fact it is a symbolical institution; and its significance is that we must sacrifice our desires, our passions, our interests even our lives in the path of Allah.

Mahammad Tah-ur-ud-Din :—Q. 1. Whether any Muslim can call professors of other religions Kafirs or infidels on any authority? Did our Prophet use the term against any man in his life time?

Ans.—The term "Kafir" is frequently used in the Holy Quran for those who did not believe in the Holy prophet. Those who believe in Islam are Muslims, while others Kafir (unbelievers) i. e. outside the pale of Islam.

Q.—2. Belief or faith is a spiritual thing can it not exist irrespective of our outward actions?

Ans.—Yes, but the Law (shariat) is based upon our external actions.

Q.—3. Are forms very important with the essence and spirit of religion?

Ans.—Yes; because (1) the Law deals with outward forms (2) our physical attitude has a bearing on our spiritual life.

Q.—4. Our Prophet did not come with a different religion; but he came as a reformer, does this reformation come in absolute form i. e. does it concern even those who are already good?

Ans.—No; the Holy Prophet (may place and blessings of God be upon him) came as a divine law-giver. He gave a complete code of life to humanity and completed the religion.

Q.—5. Is Cohabitation with a *Bandi* or maid servant without marriage illegal or immoral?

Ans.—Yes; it is illegitimate without marriage.

Q.—6. Whether Hazrat Ismail was really slaughtered by Abraham, if not what is his later history?

Ans.—Hazrat Abraham was going to sacrifice Hazrat Ismail; but the divine revelation came and the animal sacrifice was substituted. After this, Ismail grew older and became a prophet and settled in Arabia.

Ahmadiya Building Lahore.

Dear brother in Islam,

As-Salam--u-a'laiکم.

While not ignoring the fact that the welfare of Islam requires the united exertions of the whole community of Islam in numerous directions, I wish to draw your attention to a question of vital importance for the very life of Islam. It is the menace of the Christian Missionary movement. A wide spread movement had for centuries existed among the Christian nations of the world for the attainment of political dominance in the world, and the spirit of the crusaders has all along been working in one direction or another. Islam was considered by Christendom as its chief adversary for the mastery of the world politically, but the subjugation of the Muslim nations has ultimately been brought about, not so much by the forces of Christendom as by the indifference of, and dissensions among, the Muslims themselves. Political dominance is, however a transitory thing, as the Holy Quran says: "And we bring these days to men by turns." Christianity is not, and ought not to have been, satisfied with its political dominance, it is nothing but a passing phase. The trend of the world-thought is, that every nation shall be its own master in the future and the achievement of that result in the near future is as certain as any thing notwithstanding all the physical forces arrayed against it. Spiritual predominance is however a lasting thing, and it is for this that Christianity is now making a hard struggle. Its Missionaries are spread all over the world and a great campaign is being carried on especially in Muslim countries for converting the world to Christianity. The resources of Christianity are unlimited and it commands worldly power to an extent unknown in the previous history of the world. Yet notwithstanding all this Christianity dreads the spiritual forces of Islam. It regards Islam as the only Anti-Christian religion of the world, all other religions being simply looked upon as non-Christian. This is not due to any special inimicality displayed by Islam towards Christianity, for Islam recognises the Divine origin of all the great religions of the world and honours all religious leaders. It even expresses its own special good will towards Christianity by pronouncing the Christians to be "nearest in friendship to those who believe" (Al-Quran: 5-82). It is due simply to the fact that Christianity is aware that the spiritual forces of Islam are too great for it and that Islam must ultimately predominate in the world. Christianity has now at its back all the material forces of the world while Islam depends to-day only on the spiritual forces that it com-

mands. And Islam shall win in the end. Thus says the Holy Quran: "That He may make it triumph over all the religions." But the Muslims are today neglecting the cause of Islam in the great spiritual struggle just as they neglected its cause in the physical struggle.

It is in this connection that I wish to bring to the notice of every well-wisher of Islam the important work that is being done by the Ahmadiyya Anjuman-i-Ishaat-i-Islam, Lahore. A perusal of its annual report, which can be sent if needed, will show that the Anjuman spent during the last year over a lac of rupees on the preparation of Islamic religious literature and missionary activities in England and elsewhere. Large as this sum may appear, it is nothing compared with the huge sum that Christian missions are spending. The Church Missionary Society of London alone spent a sum of over eighty-one lacs in the year 1920. Add to this nearly 57 lacs expenditure of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel nearly 44 lacs of the Baptist Missionary Society; over 29 lacs of the London Missionary Society, over 45 lacs of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society and over 67 lacs of the British and Foreign Bible Society, and you will get a total of 323 lacs for only a few of the Societies carrying on the Christian propaganda. Even this huge sum would dwindle into insignificance before the enormous total of the Missionary Finances of the whole Christian world. We know that as regards material resources; Islam will not be able to muster a hundredth part of the strength of Christianity, even if the whole Muslim world were awake to this vital need of Islam which unfortunately it is not, but there is no reason why the Muslims should lose heart, and not put what strength they have into the movement started by the Ahmadiyya Anjuman Ishaat Islam. I may here briefly note the three different heads of the work that is being done by the Anjuman.

1. The sending of Muslim Missionaries to Christian countries especially Europe and America. Under this head the work done by the Working Mission under Khwaja Kamal-ud Din and Maulvi Sadrud Din is too well-known to need any mention. But beside that the Anjuman has resolved to establish in the present year two more Missions, one in Germany and another in America, one of which will be in the charge of Maulvi Sadrud Din. A sum has already been collected for the purpose but the large initial expenses on these two Missions require the helping hand of every Muslim brother who has the welfare of Islam at heart.

The Muslim Missions in Europe and America do not, will not, only secure converts from among

the Christians, though there is no doubt that a very good beginning has been made in this direction by the conversion of such important men as Lord Headly, Marmaduke Pickthall and other learned and highly placed men, but the still more important work that we have in view in establishing these missions, is the presenting of a true picture of the religion of Islam and removing the misconceptions prevailing in the west with regard to the pure doctrines of the faith and the holy life of its founder, misconceptions that are one of the chief causes of the hatred of the Christian populations of the West towards every thing that is connected with Islam. This work is in itself so important that even if there were no question of the preaching of Islam, it would have been necessary to keep up the Muslim national honour.

2. The combating of the growing influence of Christianity among the Muslims is the second main point in the activities of our Anjuman. The Muslims have hitherto neglected this essential duty and the result is that large numbers of their co-religionists have been converted to Christianity. Four fifths of the once Muslim population of the Philippines are now Christians; in Jawa twenty four thousand have gone over to the cross, and the process is still going on at the rate of three hundred annually. The influence of Christianity was similarly growing in Trinidad (B. W. I), where the Anjuman sent a Missionary two years ago and a great awakening has there been brought about by his efforts. Other places stand in need of similar help and the question is one of life and death to many of the isolated Muslim communities. But only the united efforts of the whole Muslim community can save the honour of Islam against the onrush of Christianity which is penetrating every Muslim land, with thousands of Missionaries, heaps of money and vast literature at its back.

3. Not the least important work of the Anjuman is the disseminating of Islamic literature among the Muslims themselves. Here we have to produce the literature and then to devise means for spreading it broad-cast. As regards the first part the society has not only been able to do the highly valuable work, at an immense cost, of bringing out an English Translation with commentary, of the Holy Quran, but has also produced some other very important works. But there are greater difficulties in the achievement of the other end. Our rising generation, the Muslim student world, stands in special need of having healthy Islamic literature brought to its very doors. The Christian religious societies are in a position to distribute their literature sometimes quite free,

among Muslim students. We lack funds for similar work, but even now the Anjuman is giving away such a valuable book as the English Translation of the Holy Quran and other books at half price to students. A fortnightly paper, "The Light" has also been issued at the nominal price of Re. 1 which is reduced to 8 annas in the case of students, an amount only covering the packing and posting expenses of the paper. To breathe the true Islamic spirit into our young men is the most useful constructive work in the building up of the Muslim nation and the sooner the Muslims are awake to this need the better.

These are bare facts and simple reasons which must appeal to every Muslim heart. The political power of Islam has almost departed, its very Khilafat has been shattered, but these are the sufferings of Islam from which it can rise with greater glory. It is in the Christian Missionary movement that there is a greater danger to Islam, danger to its very existence. If we are not up now against this danger, we may suffer irretrievable loss. Every Muslim can help the cause in all or any of the following ways:—

1. By sending liberal donations.
2. By specifying a part of the *Zakat* for the propagation of Islam, and remitting the same to the treasury of the Anjuman.
3. By undertaking to pay a monthly subscription in accordance with his means.
4. By leaving a part of his property by will for the spread of Islam and Islamic literature in favour of the Anjuman.
5. There are many Muslims who deposit money in banks or post offices for the sake of safe custody. The Holy Quran forbids the taking of interest, but the amount of interest can be spent on such charitable purposes as the preaching of Islam. It is therefore requested that all interest on such deposits may be remitted to the Anjuman.
6. By circulating the subject matter of this letter among his acquaintances.

Yours fraternally,

MUHAMMAD ALI,

President.

Ahmadiyya Anjuman-i-Ishaat-i-Islam.

Note:—All subscriptions to be remitted to the Financial Secretary to the Ahmadiyya Anjuman-i-Ishaat-i-Islam, Ahmadiyya Buildings, Lahore.