

THE LIGHT.

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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.

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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.

The "Epiphany" on the Holy Prophet.

We are glad to note that in response to a correspondent our esteemed contemporary, the "Epiphany" has confessed as follows:—

We most certainly hold, with most educated Christians that Mohammed (on whom be peace) was truly called and inspired by God. But, to avoid misconception, it will be well, perhaps, to complete the sentence quoted above from the Epiphany of 15th April 1922—".....but we do not accept all his teaching as inspired.—Ed., E.

This is assuredly a very healthy sign of religious toleration and indicates a true spirit of

a real seeker-after truth. We only hope that the day will not be far away when the learned Editor of the Epiphany will realize the truth of every Islamic tenet and will thus become a Muslim.

The world Religion.

An enlightened correspondent of the "Epiphany," in a recent issue of the paper, has expressed his desire of uniting the different religions of the world into one homogenous whole. In order to do this he urges that "we would no longer remain Christians, Hindus or Mussalmans but we would simply be "men" and as such the sons of a common father. "Conscience" he says, "will be our touch stone." Although he is aware of the fact that conscience will differ in different cases but he believes they will agree on important vital matters such as avoidance of forcible conversion to Islam and abolition of idolatry". While agreeing with the noble ideal of unity; we must beg leave of bringing this fact to the notice of the correspondent that Islam is a religion that has practically laid the foundation of unity among various creeds. One of its fundamental principles is the belief in the unity of God or Allah as Lord of all the worlds and all the creatures and in the catholicity of the divine law, which was sent to various peoples at various times through various prophets. Thus the idea of common fatherhood is very dominant in Islam although the English or the Biblical word "father" is quite inadequate to express the full significance of the Quranic word Rabb. It may also be noted that the forcible conversion to Islam is unlawful; because the Holy Quran says "there should be no compulsion in religion," and idolatry is throughout condemned by Islam. As a matter of fact Islam is meant to bring about unity between the different creeds of the world; and hence it acknowledges the divine origin of every religion.

Atonement.

III.

The death of Jesus on the cross is the basic principle of atonement. There can be no atonement if it be proved historically that he did not expire on the cross; because mere death does

not amount to anything. It is death on the cross or in other words the CURSED DEATH that is instrumental to wash away the sins of humanity according to the Christian notion.

Therefore, the most important question in this connection is whether Jesus died on the cross or not. We have already said that the only reference of the event is to be found in the four Gospels which are very untrustworthy from a historical point of view; as they do not contain any first hand information on the subject. But we are obliged to refer to them as they are the only records of the incident. Let us therefore examine what the Gospels say on the point.

The description of crucifixion given in the Gospels is pretty lengthy; therefore for the sake of brevity we will only bring the following important points to the notice of our readers:—

- (a) When Jesus was delivered to the tribunal of Pilate by the elders and scribes; the latter appears to be in sympathy with former because he said to the chief priests and to the people *I find no fault in this man.*"

This is a sure testimony to the fact that in heart of hearts Pilate did not wish that Jesus should be crucified, as he thought him innocent and also "knew that for envy they had delivered him."

- (b) "When he (Pilate) was set down on the Judgement seat, his wife sent unto him saying *Have thou nothing to do with this just man (Jesus) for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of him.*"

This point is very important and should be noted particularly; because it gives an inkling of the divine intentions through the vision of Pilate's wife. It shows that God intended to save Jesus from this cursed death as he prayed that "this cup be avoided."

- (c) "When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but rather a tumult was made he took water and washed his hands before the multitude, saying "I am innocent of blood of this just person." This indicates that the vision of Pilate's wife had a tremendous influence on his mind and he did not want to be responsible for the blood, of Jesus. He therefore "washing his hands" of Jesus' blood delivered him to Jews, who eventually hanged him, on their own responsibility.

The scene which follows is very touching and we should like to reproduce the very words of the Gospels:—

Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the earth unto the ninth hour. And the sun was darkened. And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, *Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani*, that is to say, My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?

Some of them that stood there, when they heard that, said, This man calleth for Elias. Let us see whether Elias will come to save him.

Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost. Now when the centurion saw what was done, he glorified God, saying, **Certainly this was a righteous man.**

The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain on the cross on the Sabbath day (for that Sabbath day was an high day), besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away.

Then came Joseph of Arimathea, a councillor of honourable estate, who also himself was Jesus' disciple, but *secretly for fear of the Jews, and besought that he might take away the body of Jesus.*

And Pilate marvelled if he were already dead, and Pilate gave him leave.

Then came the soldiers, and brake the legs of the first and of the other, which was crucified.

And when they came to Jesus, and saw that he was dead already, they brake not his legs,

But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forth with came there out blood and water.

Joseph came and took the body of Jesus, and wound it in a clean linen cloth with the spices.

And he laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock (now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden; and in the garden a new sepulchre wherein was never man yet laid), and rolled a great stone to the door.

Now the next day the chief priests and Pharisees came together unto Pilate, saying, command that the sepulchre be made sure, lest his disciples come by night and steal him away, and say unto the people, He is risen from the dead: so that the last error shall be worse than the first.

From this it is transparently clear that—

- (a) Legs of Jesus were not broken.
 (b) Death could not occur in such a brief time on the cross.
 (c) Pilate whose opinion carries great weight as he was experienced in such matters was *surprised* that Jesus should die in a brief space of time.
 (d) Blood and water came forth from his side which is a sure indication of life.

(e) The body of Jesus was entrusted to one of his disciples who was an influential and rich man, and thus was in a position to acquire best medical aid.

(f) Even the Jews were doubtful as to the death of Jesus on the cross and thought that it was their "first mistake" that the body of Jesus was taken down so soon, and insisted that the "sepulchre be made sure." But there is nothing to prove that the sepulchre was "made sure." On the contrary every word of the narrative goes to prove that the 'sepulchre' was sort of cave, where Jesus, disciples came and nursed him.

To be continued.

Love Thy Enemy.

'Love thy Enemy' is the lip word of every Christian missionary and it resounds from every pulpit, but when we turn over the pages of the church history, to our utter-disappointment, we fail to find it enacted in the very lines of these great professors. Even Jesus himself could not leave a practical example for his followers. The history of Christendom abounds with the instances which go to prove that the Christians have invariably run mad to cut each other's throat for wordly interest. The late great war is a typical illustration of it. The fact is that as all other laws of Mosses have failed to keep pace with the growing needs of humanity at large, so has been the fate of this very enactment. The Holy Quran, which Professes to be the perfect code of laws for the whole of humanity and for all ages, gives it in a somewhat modified form. To put it in the words of the 14th century reformer, I give below an extract from his writings.

"Ye (Christians) were told to love your enemies but I teach you according to Islam) that you must have no personal or selfish enmity. Let your enmities be for the sake of God His prophet and His Book, and although you pray for such an enemy and seek guidance for him, you must not love his doing nor tolerate it but you must destroy it as quickly as it is in you power and clean the world of evil. Be you the well wisher of the evildoer, but be then the enemy of evil. It is neither wise nor salutary to forgive on all occasions. The recompense of evil is evil like into it, except where you see that by forgiveness you can effect more good than by punishing, in which case forgive and punish not."

Muslim history is full of practical instances which go to prove beyond doubt, that the Muslims really loved their enemies.

MUHAMMAD ABDULLA

Correspondence.

To

THE EDITOR.—"THE LIGHT".

"Can Jesus Christ be our Saviour."

SIR,

When Diogenes was asked what kind of wine he liked best, he replied, that which is drunk at the cost of others; and when a Christian is asked what kind of Salvation he likes best, he replies, that which is obtained at the cost of Christ. This is the essence of the doctrine of atonement. This doctrine as explained by Christian theologians is that Adam sinned and as a result of it he was expelled from the garden of Eden. The same sin was inherited by progeny; and therefore God became angry with man. To appease the wrath of this blood thirsty and merciless God, and to wash away the 'original sin' which is implanted in every one of us as being a member of Adam's family the sacrifice of Christ's life became an imperative necessity. This reminds me of the following story. A certain lady, after admitting her boy in the parish school, said to the teacher, "Sir, Jack is very delicate and sickly; but if he does any mischief—and he is sure to do some—punish the boy seated next to him" because for the transgressions of Adam Christ was chastised.

The doctrine of atonement involves two very important points—firstly 'the original sin' in contradiction to actual sin and secondly what calvin calls the "Mediatorial office" of Christ. Let us now see what the Gospels have to say on these two points. "Suffer thy little children and forbid them not to come unto me, for of such is the Kingdom of Heaven," conclusively establishes the fact that there is no such thing as 'original sin'.

"But, the Christian theologian says we are all sinful, and cannot save ourselves; hence the necessity of a sinless person as our saviour". Even granting this, let us see from the Gospels whether Jesus Christ is sinless and is qualified for the 'mediatorial office' claimed for him by his followers. The Gospels show that Christ never claimed to be sinless to be reproduced on the other hand the fact that Christ refused to be called 'good' saying, "why callest thou me good" and that he said. "There is none good but one and that is God," proves that Christ was not sinless.

I cannot better conclude these few lines than by relating a little story which has a direct and intimate bearing on the subject. When Kabirdass happened to pass along the bank of the Ganges, he

saw a Hindu crying and weeping. On being asked what the matter was this Hindu replied that his god whom he was washing in water, slipped from his hands and got drowned. Kabir said "My dear fellow, don't be sorry; for the god who could not save himself, cannot save you." Similarly the question "can Christ be our saviour"? elicits an emphatic "No."

Madras,
27th May 1922.

S. M. FOSSIL,
2/38 Kasa Aunakasi
St. Roypettah.

Questions and Answers

Muhammad Salman Q. 1. What is the Significance of religion?

Ans.—Religion is the collective name of the divine laws revealed for the guidance of man. When our soul is highly evolved we are in communion with God, hence this Communion is a sort of testimony to our spiritual advancement.

Q.—2. Was Adam misled by Satan.

Ans.—Not only Adam; but his wife also "But the devil made them both fall from it Quran II 36.

Q.—3. What is Satan, Does it exist?

Ans.—An evil propensity is a Satan.

Q.—How do you account for that Islam was not spread by sword.

Ans.—The Holy Quran and the Islamic History show that the Prophet and his followers never wielded sword for the spread of Islam. They used it for the self defence only. The Holy Quran says "there is no compulsion in religion."

M. Mohir-ud-din Q.—1. What is life; and what is death. Why men die at different ages?

Ans.—When your physical organs are working you are *alive* when they stop to work, you are *dead*! Men die at different ages because they are *different-ly* situated.

Q.—2 What is soul? Is the soul of man immortal?

Ans.—Soul is a spirit, there is a life after death, but soul may undergo changes.

M. Norman Q.—1, What is Fate in Islam.

Ans.—There is no trace in Islamic literature of "Fate," or "fatalism" as understood in the West. The Islamic word "Tadir" only means *measurement* which signifies the divine laws or laws of nature.

Q.—2. Can an infidel hold Communion with God, and receive inspiration from on high? If so why to accept Islam?

Ans.—Communion with God implies frequent revelation from God and this is denied to a non-Muslim. But an occasional tint of that is sometimes met with in non-Muslim as well because the instinct of Communication with God is implanted in every human heart.

M. A Hague Q.—1. What is a religion, and which is the best and why?

Ans.—Religion is the collective name of the divine laws for the guidance of man, Islam is the best religion because its (1) its teachings are pure from corruption; (2) it is the *final* code for humanity and (3) it is the *natural* religion of man.

2. Is the interest in bank deposits permissible?

Ans. It may be spent in the propagation of Islam; it is not permissible otherwise.

Q.—3 Is the keeping of photos or pictures permissible.

Ans.—So long as they do not interfere with the duties of man towards God they are permissible.

Q.—4. Will the prayer be accepted if a photo is hanging before the worshipper?

Ans.—As far as possible a photo should not be before the worshipper but in unavoidable circumstances there is no harm so long the worshipper does not worship it.

Q.—5. Is a prayer without abulation i. e. wazu or Tayammum permissible?

Ans.—No.

Mohammad Abdul Jabbar Q.—1. Is transmigration of soul supported by Islam; If not how is the theory of action to be explained?

Ans.—No; the theory of actions is simple enough some of our actions are compensated in this world others in the next. Islam believes in the continuity of life.

Q.—2 What Causes the differentiation of action. circumstances environments and other distinction?

Ans.—It is very difficult to trace such causes. The simple solution of this problem is that God is the *master* and not a mere Judge. He does as He thinks fit.

To be continued.