

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

THE LIGHT.

EDITED BY MUSTAFA KHAN B. A.

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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.

Apostasy Held Back.

The situation in the apostasy area is bright and hopeful. Our missionaries are doing their best to check reversion of Muslims to Hinduism; and it is gratifying to note that their efforts are meeting with success :—

1. In Badina, (District Gurgaon), a Panchayat was recently convened, and it was unanimously resolved that people should remain firm on the religion of Islam.

2. A mass meeting was held in Faridabad, in which our missionary Maulvi Asmatullah spoke for about 6 hours. The Arya Smajists raised some objections which were refuted by the able speaker. The Aryas are thinking to have a controversy with Muslims in Faridabad.

3. In Dig (Bharatpore State) the would-be-converts asked the Brahmans to eat with them; but the latter declined. Therefore most of the people remained firm and only 6 men were converted. Maulvi Abdul Haqq and Shaikh Qadir Bakhsh are to be congratulated on it.

4. The Sanaj propagandists are taking the advantage of the month of Ramazan, during which the Muslims naturally cannot work so hard as usual. Maulvi Asmatullah has gone to Palwal to check the *Shuddhi* movement because Aryas are said to be working energetically there.

The Moslem World on the Light.

The Christian Quarterly, *The Moslem World* writes :—

Whatever else one may say about the Ahmadiyas of India, they at least are not asleep. One of their latest methods of propaganda is found in *The Light*. This is a bi-weekly four page journal, published in English by Master Faqir Ullah from the Ahmadiya Buildings, Lahore, and printed by one L. Hari Chand (a Hindu) at the Khosla Brothers' Press of the same city.

A list of the subjects treated in the number of August 16th will convey a fairly satisfactory idea of the character of the paper "The Position of Christianity"; "Islam and Christianity in Africa"; "Moslem Mission in Germany"; "The Atonement"; "A Study of the Bible" The last column of the fourth page is devoted to questions and answers. Perhaps the most suggestive question and answer of the lot is the following :

"Q.—It is said that Japan is sending off a mission to find out the best and convenient religion. Have you done anything to convince her of the truthfulness of Islam?"

"A.—The matter is receiving consideration."

Anyone who knows the small Christian paper, *The Epiphany*, published by the Oxford Mission of Calcutta, will see at once where Mustafa Khan, B.A., got his idea. It is a good replica from the Moslem point of view. What *The Light* at once suggests to the careful student of the evangelization of Moslems is that for India, at least, we need a similar paper from the Christian standpoint written especially for Mohammedans. Unfortunately *The Epiphany* is not sufficient, as it is designed chiefly for the educated Hindus, who form a problem by themselves. The question is, Where are the funds coming from, and who can do it?

This shows how jealous the Christian propagandist is to see any attempts to further the cause of Islam. He would lose no opportunity to strengthen his own resources of "evangelization" and would always hunt for a plea to appeal to his nation for funds to attack Islam.

THE LIGHT.

Dated the 1st May 1923.

"Is Islam Pessimistic in its Teachings?"

(Communicated).

".....There is only one master of the day of Judgment, nothing associates itself with the boundlessness of his not answerable judgments. A feeling of such an absolute dependence as filled Muhammad could only become one being, the only one Allah. But the dismal picture of the day of judgment the features of which have been mostly offered to Muhammad are out of that circle of ideas which are common to the literature of the Apocryphas is not to be equalized through the hopes of a coming heavenly kingdom. Muhammad is an announcer of the decline of the world. His eschatology according to his descriptions, inculcates the pessimistic side; the optimistic side is only laid for the "chosen few" in the paradise. For the mundane world Muhammad has no ray of hope left." (Goldziher, *Vorlesungen über den Islam* page 6.)

The above extract has been translated from the "Vorlesungen über den Islam" lectures on Islam by Prof. Goldziher who is authority on Islam in Europe and is well known for his objective study of the Religion of Islam. One reads the above and receives the impression: Islam enjoins upon its follower to shun the world. Muhammad's teachings are pessimistic.

"Eat, drink and be merry." Kingdom is a blessing and can only be showered upon, if you care to follow the dictates of Satan "Be celebrate. Woman is the origin of sin." "Be an ascetic. See that you don't hurt any living being of the lower species."

These are a few streams of ideas some are too pessimistic and others are too optimistic.

Now let us turn to Islam. Islam lays stress, no doubt, on the life to come and regards it as of higher value than the life here. But, it does not ignore the life here. The following verses of the Quran will verify the statement:—

"And as for monkery, they innovated We did not prescribe it to them" (chapter 57, verse 27).

And the prophet himself is reported to have said there is "no monkery in Islam."

"And seek by means of what Allah has given you the future abode, and don't neglect your portion of this world and do good to others as Allah has done good to you." (28, 77).

Notice how beautifully "don't neglect your portion of this world" has been qualified by the sentence which follows. The attention of a Muslim is inverted to the good things in the world and he is encouraged to utilize them—but in the proper way. How for the above quoted verse goes to condemn Faqirism and Jogiism can be easily seen.

"Oh you who believe! do not forbid yourself the good things which Allah has made lawful for you and do not exceed the limits" (4, 87).

"Oh children of Adam! attend to your embellishment at every time of prayer and eat and drink and be not extravagant" (7, 31). "Say! who has prohibited the embellishment of Allah which he has brought forth for his servants and the good provisions (7, 32) These verses demand a careful attention of those who regard that Islamic teachings inculcate that the present state of the world is essentially evil and hence not worth aspiring.

"And He has made subservient for you the night and the day and the Sun and the Moon, and the Stars are made subservient by his commands. Do you not see that Allah has made what is in the heaven and what is in the earth subservient to you and made complete to you his favours outwardly and inwardly" (31, 20).

Was it of any use to say "We have made this thing and that thing subservient" if they were to be void of anything good.

"And He it is who has made the sea subservient that you may eat fresh flesh from it and bring forth from it ornaments which you wear and you see the ships cleaving through it and that you might seek of his bounty and you may give thanks" (16, 14).

Can pessimistic teachings be expected to make mention of fresh flesh, ornaments and the beautiful things transacted by the ships?

"And Allah has promised to those of you who believe and do good that He will most certainly make the rulers in the earth as He made rulers before them" (24, 55.)

A nation composed of pessimists can never aspire to become rulers. A pessimist regards his very life, his very existence a burden. How can he be expected to shoulder the responsibility for security of property and safety of life of others? The Quran speaks of Solomon, of David—both were Kings—as Prophets of God. If kingdom were a thing to

be despised of, God would never have granted it to his prophets. A Jesus only can afford to reject the offer!

The Holy Prophet Muhammad used to pray; "Our Lord! Grant us good in this world and good in the hereafter and save us from the chastisement of the fire" (2, 197.)

And this is the true prayer of a Muslim. Is it not striking a golden mean between monkery and materialism. To a pessimist the present state of existence is essentially evil. The above quoted prayer only becomes the lips of an optimist—one who believes that the present state of existence is for the best.

The Quran while defining a true believer makes mention of an attribute which surely can't be the outcome of a pessimistic mind:—

"And they who say: O our Lord, grant us in our wives and our offspring the joy of our eyes and make us guides to those who guard (against evil)" (25, 74).

The doctrine that sin was introduced into this world by woman and that we are born sinful must always have a depressing—pessimistic—effect on the mind of a Christian. A Muslim is quite free of this anxiety. He is a born optimist. He does not require the artificial protection of crucifixion.

It is Islam which turns the saddest moments of despondency and depression into those of happiness by the enchanting wand of its teachings. A soldier is on the battlefield and finds the enemy invincible. Depression prevails. A youngman in the prime of his life is snatched away by death from the arms of a poor mother and leaves her without any prop. Islam steps in and teaches the depressed and the despondent:—

"Surely we are Allah's and to Him we shall surely return" (2, 156.)

Come what may a Muslim is always an optimist. Every trial every calamity is changed into a blessing: "and do not speak of those who are slain in Allah's ways as dead; verily they are alive." can a better optimistic view be conceived?

I would like to add a few words more. A westerner is very much apt to institute a comparison between the present state of the Islamic people (which state he believes to be the result of the pessimistic teachings) and that of the Christian people. The Quran has come down to us without any change, without any interpolation. The teachings of the Quran cannot be,

should not be confused with the present condition of the people. The teachings of the Bible were there till the 15th century but the westerners were groping in the dark and the Muslims were shining like stars in the firmament of Science Literature Music, History, Chemistry. There is a very beautiful verse in the Quran, mention of which I think should not be out of place: "Surely Allah does not change the condition of a people until they change their own condition." To profess the faith of Islam does not mean that a Muslim actually becomes the recipient of all the worldly, heavenly treasures. Conformity in action and profession is the end-all and be-all of the teachings of the Quran. There is a strong psychological connection between man's ideas and his actions. A nation disposed to pessimism and controlled by pessimistic teachings cannot be expected to achieve the wonderful progress in all the branches of learning, trade, commerce of the 12th and 13th centuries.

Correspondence.

To The Editor the Light.

THE WAY TO UNIVERSAL PEACE.

Dear Sir,

We are all seeking after peace. But how to get it is the question of questions. I should like to answer this question from a Muslim point of view:—

We the Muslims believe that Allah has created all peoples whatever their colour and caste may be. Believing in one universal God, a Muslim paves the path for a universal brotherhood; because he thinks that all peoples are created by the self-same God who is also his Creator. Thus a feeling of kindredship is engendered. The Muslims fully realize that the God is an impartial God who is the master of all what we see and what we cannot see. Therefore they are open to make peace with all their fellow beings and have no grudge against any nation on religious grounds.

Then comes the second item of our faith *i.e.* belief in Muhammad. This too is wide enough to cover humanity, as Muhammad was an apostle *not* to Arabs only but to the whole world. And what is still more significant is that Muslims are required to believe not only in Muhammad; but in all the prophets, which eradicates all national prejudices. They revere all the past prophets Jesus, Moses, Abraham etc. The Christians, therefore, should have no complaints against them. The Muslims also believe

that every nation has seen its warner and therefore are prepared to think the Hindu Avates as holy men raised for the reformation of Hindu society. Thus there can be no animosity between Hindus and Muslims on religion grounds. In a word Islam is the only religion that can fasten the different elements of humanity with the bonds of fraternity.

Yours truly,
ISMIAL A DAM.

Questions and Answers.

Muhammad Shafi :—

Q. 1. Is the use of pent and hat prohibited in Islam?

A. No; but we should not stick to European dress only.

Q. 2. What is your opinion about (a) shaving of beard and (b) keeping hair according to English fashion.

A. (a) Shaving of beard should be avoided as it was not the practice of the Holy Prophet; (b) there is no harm in it.

Q. 3. A Hindu friend of mine, after reading your note on transmigration in the Light of 16th January refutes your argument and says that a man can know his previous sins by conforming to the method told by the revealed Books of Hindu religion. What do you say about it?

A. I am afraid your friend is wrong. Has any Hindu gentleman claimed to be conscious of his past sins for which he is suffering at present? Such things should be corroborated by facts.
Ram Narayan Lal :—

Q. 1. Man has not got pointed teeth, therefore he is not meat-eater. Why does Islam sanction it?

A. Man has got teeth which are fit both for meat and vegetables—a fact which can be corroborated by the actual life. Secondly we do not eat flesh like animals without cooking it. We do not rather cannot eat even vegetables in raw state. Should we not take vegetables then?

Q. 2. Cow is a most useful animal why does Islam sanction its slaughter?

A. Yes, one of the uses of the cow is to provide food, and Islam sanctions all its uses. It is not essential that we should eat beef only.

Q. 3. When God is everywhere, and can be pleased by any one with true devotion what is the use of following Islam?

A. Islam lays down the easiest and the surest means of securing communion with God. It is Islam only through which man can make a harmonious progress and attain to the highest pitch of his aspirations.

Q. 4. What relation does the soul bear with God?

A. Soul is created by God like all other things.

Q. 5. You say that God created the world from nothing. It is wrong because one must have a material before hand to create a thing.

A. You seem to think that divine power is just like the human power which is not right. What is then the difference between man and God? Does not God hear? If He does; does He stand in need of air as we do. If He speaks, has he got a tongue, and lips. If God can hear, without air if He can speak without a tongue, He can also create without matter.

Muhammad Muhi-ud-Din.

Q. 1. Does the relation between husband and wife exist after death.

A. The life after death is not associated with carnal passions.

Q. 2. What and where is the kingdom of Heaven.

A. Both in heaven and earth. Don't you see that every atom of the world is subject to some rigid rules and is working for a great object.

Q. 3. What is soul? What is mind? Is soul different from mind, if so in what way.

A. The conscious life in man is soul. I think soul and mind are one and the something.

Q. 4. What is Bahaim who is its founder and what is its chief doctrine.

A. Bahaim or Babiism was originally founded by one Bab, and elaborated by his successor Baba in Persia. The chief doctrine is that prophets can appear after the holy prophet with new and different law from the Quran.

Q. 5. What is beauty?

A. Any thing which appeals to you is beauty. Truth is beauty and beauty is truth according to Shelley.

Q. 6. What is life?

A. You are living a life, I hope.

Q. 7. What is the significance of the word "Holy" when applied to a religious book.

A. It implies that the source and the teachings of the book are holy.

Q. 8. Is there any benefit in sacrificing the animals?

A. It is symbolical act denoting that we should sacrifice every thing for the cause of Allah.

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