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INTERCESSION ON THE DAY OF JUDGEMENT

IN THE LIGHT OF THE TRADITIONS—II

BY M. H. HAKEEM

On account of the presence in the Quran of some verses which do not categorically deny all intercession, advantage has been taken by some religious scholars to widen the scope of intercession unrestrictedly. To begin with two Quranic verses are cited to support this view :

1. "And some part of the night awake for it (worship), a largess for thee. It may be that thy Lord will raise thee to a praised estate" (17 : 79).

Religious scholars take the words 'praised estate' to mean the pre-eminent position which the Prophet will occupy on the Day of Judgement as being perhaps the only prophet or the biggest prophet who will be granted the privilege of interceding for his followers on a very large scale. Apparently, there is no valid reason why as a reward merely for offering *Tahajjud*, the Prophet should be granted the exceptional privilege of rescuing his followers from Hell.

2. "Thy Lord hath not forsaken thee nor doth He hate thee. And verily the latter portion will be better for thee than the former. And verily thy Lord will give unto thee so that thou wilt be content" (93 : 25).

These verses are also taken to mean that the Prophet will intercede for his followers on the Day of Judgement. This conclusion of the scholars is equally unjustified. These verses were revealed in Mecca after a fairly long interval of cessation of revelation. The verses are designed to reassure the Prophet that he continues to enjoy Allah's favour. The latter portion mentioned in these verses means the last ten years of the Prophet's life in Madina as compared with the earlier thirteen years of life in Makkah

when the Prophet and the early converts to Islam were subjected to cruel and inhuman persecution by the disbelievers. And who does not know that the years in Madina constituted the most glorious record of success in all human history ?

Now let us take the relevant traditions bearing on the subject of intercession. Space will not allow more than a bare summary. On the Day of Judgement, Allah will assemble the believers. After the process of judging has been gone through, some will be declared entitled to enter Paradise while others will be consigned to Hell. Those declared fit for Paradise will, out of sympathy for their unfortunate fellow-believers, endeavour to persuade some of the prophets to intercede for them. They will first go to Adam for his intercession. He will remind them, however, that through him sin entered the world, and will refer them to Nuh. But he also will mention his sins and will refer them to Ibrahim. In this way they will appeal in vain to the great apostles of God until 'Isa will finally advise them to appeal to the Prophet Muhammad for assistance. The latter will gird himself and, with Allah's permission, throw himself before Him. Then he will be told : "Arise—intercession is granted thee". Allah will thereupon name him a definite number to be released and when he has led them into Paradise, he will again throw himself before his Lord and the same stages will again be repeated several times until finally the Prophet will say : "O Lord, there are now left in Hell only those who, according to the Quran, are to remain there for ever." These persons will be those who ascribe partners to Allah for, ascribing partners to Allah, is the one sin that will never be forgiven. But over against it there is the tradition

which says : "My intercession is for the great sinners of my community" which means that they will also be forgiven, i. e. the *Ahl-al-kabaair*. Traditions also say that, in a message from Allah, the Prophet was offered, during his life on earth, two alternatives : (1) that half of his community would enter Paradise and (2) that he would have the privilege of interceding for them on the Day of Judgement. The Prophet accepted the second alternative.

The bodies of some of those released from Hell will have suffered comparatively little from the fire of Hell while in some other cases, the bodies of those coming out of Hell will have been reduced to cinders. These latter will be sprinkled over with water from the well of life which will restore them to a healthy condition.

Traditions also say (and this is in keeping with the Jewish Scriptures) that along with the Prophet, other prophets will also intercede as also martyrs and saints. The Prophet's pre-eminence in the matter of intercession will, however, remain as he will be the first to intercede for his community.

Traditions also say that the prayers of those participating in a *salaat-i-janazah* asking forgiveness for the person about to be buried, is sure to be granted if the number of persons joining in the prayer is at least one hundred or (lowering down the number) they form at least three rows, the number in each row being discreetly left unspecified. And every Muslim prays in the course of the daily conventional 'Salat' :

"O Lord ! forgive me and my parents and the believers on the Day of Judgement."

In these words he intercedes for others.

And there is a very well known tradition which says that whoever declares that there is no god but Allah is sure to enter Paradise—which means that mere faith is enough and that good works are redundant for salvation—an idea rebutted by the Quran over and over again. But even those left over in Hell for one

reason or another can take comfort from the tradition which says that ultimately Hell will be emptied altogether which will make it cry out for fuel at which Allah will thrust His own thigh into it to satisfy its craving.

There is also the tradition which makes the Prophet warn his own daughter Fatima not to rely for her salvation too much on the fact of being his daughter, for he did not know what would happen to his own self on the Day of Judgement.

General remarks about traditions bearing on the subject of intercession :

The claim that the Muslims will have, on the Day of Judgement, some sort of privileged position, is rebutted by the Quranic verse 2:62 which runs as follows :

"Lo : those who believe (in that which is revealed unto thee, Muhammad) and those who are Jews, and Christians, and Sabaeans—whoever believeth in Allah and the Last Day and doeth right—surely their reward is with their Lord, and there shall no fear come upon them neither shall they grieve".

One may, perhaps justifiably, ask the question : How did the Prophet know that he would, on the Day of Judgement, be permitted to intercede for his followers as he himself admits, according to a statement put into his mouth in the Quran, that he has no knowledge of the Unseen. This is the relevant verse :

"Say (O Muhammad, to the disbelievers) : I say not unto you (that) I possess the treasures of Allah, nor that I have knowledge of the Unseen ; and I say not unto you : Lo ! I am an angel. I follow only that which is inspired in me . . ." (6 : 50)

Allah's laws are unalterable whether physical or spiritual. (By the way, the laws of nature too are the will of God). Why should it be expected that He will, on the Day of Judgement, suspend the operation of His Law of Requital and release from Hell some of those whom He had earlier consigned to it because they had transgressed His laws in the course of their life on earth ? All right thinking people condemn *Sifarish* in the matter of judicial proceedings in earthly life. Why, then should we condone rather welcome intercession (which is only a theological equivalent of *Sifarish*) in the Hereafter, by the Prophet, who, according to a tradition had declared that "whoever, by his intercession, puts out of operation one of the *Hudud* Allah is putting himself in opposition to Allah ?" Is it not strange to say the least that the holder of the opinion mentioned in this tradition should himself act in a way that is contrary to it and should put himself in opposition to Allah ?

The following points may be urged against the above-stated objections.

Intercession will take place only after Allah's judgement has been pronounced and some persons have been admitted into Paradise and others consigned to Hell. Thus no attempt will be made to influence His judgement while the cases of individuals are being heard and no one will try

to put any of His *hudud* out of operation. What the Prophet will do will be not to question Allah's already pronounced judgement but only to appeal to His attribute of mercy. He will do this for his own followers. Other prophets will do likewise for theirs.

The reason why most of us readily accept the possibility or probability or certainty of intercession in our favour on the Day of Judgement is that we are desperately anxious to be spared the terrible fate of burning in the fire of Hell for ever and everywhere we are supposed to be subjected to the process of being burnt to death, of being brought back to life thereafter and of being burnt to death again—this three-told process to be continued till time endures. Like a drowning man clutching at a straw, we lay our hands on anything that may appear to offer the least little help to us in our emergency. This results in our believing in intercession over-readily.

The words 'abiding in Hell for ever and ever' need not perhaps be taken much too literally. Both the Quran and the traditions mention the possibility of life in Hell being terminated when the object of this punishment has been achieved—that is, when the dweller in Hell has been duly chastened and brought to a frame of mind in which he feels remorse for and repents of his evil deeds. One may well ask why should the punishment of Hell be interminable ? If certain people transgressed Allah's laws during their life on earth in spite of the threat of everlasting punishment which was held out to them in the Quran, and if after judgement, they are subjected to that punishment, what purpose can the continuation of such punishment serve ? Can it lead to anything useful for them or can it promote any of Allah's purposes for the universe ? Those admitted into paradise have already achieved a certain degree of goodness from which new starting point they can be trusted to go on making more and more progress. They do not need the terrible warning example of sinners in Hell to keep them away from sharing a new life of sin in Paradise. Similarly those who have been disciplined and chastened by undergoing the punishment of burning in Hell may be trusted to make a new start and behave better in future. Thus it would be in the fitness of things to release them from Hell and give them an opportunity of turning over a new leaf. That would fit in better with the nature of Allah who is called *Rahman* and *Raheem* in the beginning of every one of 113 out of the 114 chapters of the Quran and in so many other places. It is inconceivable that the Divine Being, the Creator and Sustainer of the universe, should continue to look on, apparently unmoved, at the spectacle of an almost innumerable number of human beings undergoing the intensely agonising punishment of burning in Hell fire for ever and ever.

Why should we not rely solely and implicitly on the Quranic verse quoted under (B) (c) earlier which says that Allah will Himself be the intercessor. This can be reconciled with the verses quoted earlier under (A) and with those quoted under (B) (a) and (B) (b) like this :—Those under (A), denying all intercession, can be taken as admonitory, warning men not

to take the responsibilities of life lightly, those under (B) (a) speak of intercession by angels—beings, who cannot, by their very nature, wish men anything but well—those under (B) (b) throw the ball into Allah's court as, according to them, there can be no successful intercession unless and until both the intercessor and the intercessee are approved by Allah Himself.

Concluding remarks.

In the light of all that has gone before, it would be reasonable to conclude that we Muslims should not waste much of the invaluable time placed at our disposal in the three-score-years and-ten span of our much too short earthly life, in debating theoretically about the pros and cons of intercession on the Day of Judgement but should, all the time, endeavour to the best of our ability, to obey the do's and don'ts revealed by Allah in the Quran and also those mentioned in the traditions ascribed to the Prophet, provided that they do not clash with the Quran in letter or in spirit.

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The LIGHT

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A MONTH OF SPIRITUAL EXPLORATION

“AND when My servants ask thee concerning Me, surely I am nigh. I respond to the call of the suppliant when he calls on Me. So they should listen to My call and have faith in Me, so that they may be rightly guided.”

—The Quran 2: 186.

The commandment to observe one whole month every year as a month of Fasting is an act of great confidence in man's high destiny. The above verse, interposed in the injunctions concerning fasting, high-lights what that destiny is. It lies in man's capacity to get into direct person to person relationship with God.

The words “ask thee concerning Me” leave no room for doubt that in God's eye man has in him the potentialities to discover God for himself just as we make so many other discoveries. Man has aptly been described as a discoverer and conqueror of the secrets of Nature. The greatest discovery, this Quranic verse tells us, is the discovery of God, the Supreme Personality Who is the Author of the whole of Nature.

The lines that follow in the above verse hold out the assurance that God is not only really there, but He also actively participates in this quest of man by positive responses to his prayers. The seeker is therefore told to be on the look-out for those responses, the signals, as it were, to the explorer beckoning him to keep on going in that direction. The whole imagery reminds one of a ship sailing on a dark night on the high sea beset with dangerous rocks being guided in its course by the beaming signals of a distant beacon.

This is the high destiny assigned to man who voyages, as it were, on the main of life. He must discover God for himself and establish a direct and intimate contact with Him as between one person and another. That way alone lies the haven of peace and content.

This picture of God as a Living Personality may come jarring to the ears of rationalistically-minded friends. Modern man would rather talk of God as an Ultimate Reality, the Source of Life, the Ground of our being, the Depth of existence—indeed any philosophic abstraction, than face up to the concept of Him as a Person or Personality.

The fact remains, however, that God is either a Personal God or what we worship is anything but God. A philosophic abstraction is certainly not the God of religion. God, as witnessed to by all the prophets since the dawn of life, is One Who sees, Who hears, Who speaks, Who knows, Who wills and so forth. And these are the traits that we associate with the term Person or Personality.

The month-long fasting is meant to serve so many useful purposes. One purpose, in the Quranic words, is *laallakum tattaqoon*—i. e. that you may learn to eschew the paths of evil, and cultivate moral fibre. Incidentally, fasting also gives us an insight into what deprivation from the basic needs

of life means, thereby enabling us to sympathise with our poor fellow-men and share our amenities with them. Another by-product of fasting is that it even tones up man's physical health. Self-discipline, self-control, self-conquest which are the hallmark of a strong character are some other qualities that Fasting breeds. A Humanist would be quite satisfied with these achievements as a result of Fasting. But not a man of religion. No amount of character-building can satisfy the deepest yearning of the human soul to know the why, whence, whither and wherefore of this earthly existence. The supreme benefit that is wrapped up with Fasting lies, as underlined in the above verse, in satisfying that yearning by putting man into something like person to person relationship with God—man calling to God and God responding to his calls.

Muslims would be a nation of saints if only they were to enter into the spirit of Fasting. That anyway is the high destiny which according to the above Quranic verse they are meant to pursue.

THE GOLDEN JUBILEE

To mark its half-a-century of services in the cause of the dissemination of the light of Islam, the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement celebrated its Golden Jubilee during the last Christmas week. Delegates from a number of foreign countries—Germany, Holland, South Africa, the Sudan, Indonesia, Trinidad, and Nationalist China—participated and addressed the conference. The German delegate, a Muslim by adoption recounted how he came to find the light of Islam. He said there was great demand for that true religion in his country. He paid a tribute to the great service which the Berlin Muslim Mission founded by Ahmadiyya Anjuman Ishaat-i-Islam, Lahore was doing. Mr. G. A. Bashir, Muslim missionary for Holland with headquarters in the Hague, told his own experiences in missionary work, and how the Dutch people were responding to the Islamic teachings. He treated the conference to the tape-recorded messages from prominent Dutch Muslims, sending greetings to their brethren in Islam in Pakistan, and showing appreciation of the good work the Hague Muslim Mission was doing. Delegates from the Muslim countries acknowledged their debt to the very useful literature on Islam which the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement had produced, which brought enlightenment to Muslims in their respective countries. Some of the Movement's publications had been translated into the languages of those countries. The delegate from East Pakistan, Mr. A. S. Jamali gave a

survey of the work that was being done in that wing of the country to stem the Christian missionary campaigning that was very active there. Quite a number of books and pamphlets had been translated into Bengali.

Among the messages of good wishes received was one from the renowned Muslim scholar and divine of India, Maulana Abdul Majid Daryabadi, Editor, *Sidq*, of which the following is a literal translation:

“The work of the dissemination of the light of the Quran that you people are doing the world over is not only admirable; it is enviable for us. Only those would deny your services who are unaware of the extent of your missionary work. Whatever your beliefs, the commandment is that the work of البر والتقوى (good) whoever may do it, must be given co-operation.”

The Symposium on “Propagation of Islam in the West” attracted a number of intellectuals of this cultural centre of West Pakistan. The President, Dr. Muhammad Sharif, and other distinguished speakers made thought-provoking contributions to the discussion.

Credit for organising the big show goes to Dr. Allah Bakhsh, retired Chemical Examiner, West Pakistan who for months spared neither pains nor planning to make the occasion a success.

Action and its Consequences

Al-Haj Dr. ZAHURUL HAQUE, M.B.B.S., SHILLONG

The religion of Islam has certain fundamental principles, of which some relate to Faith and some to Action. Those who practise good are promised good rewards, and those who do evil are promised its consequences. In this article the subject Action and its Consequences are discussed briefly, taking self-explanatory quotations from the "Running Commentary of the Holy Quran" by Dr. Allamah Khadim Rahmani Nuri of Sufi Hamsaya, Barabazar Road, Shillong, India.

Belief in Islam does not mean mere confession of the existence of something. It really means the translation of the faith into action. Belief in something means that man should inculcate the qualities, or carry out the promptings or guidance of that thing in his action. Therefore the term "believe and do good" has been used like a phrase all over the Holy Quran. Empty words without real deeds carry no meaning in Islam :

O ye who believe ! (let your actions to your words accord, knowing that well-done is better than well-said, and a man of words and not of deeds is like a garden of weeds, so) why (should) you say what you do not do (and why do you not realise that an ounce of act is certainly better than a whole ton of tall talk, and why don't you see that none preaches better than the ant though she says nothing) ?

(It is) highly hateful in the sight of Allah that you should say what you do not do (hence practise what you preach, and put your creed into your deed). (61 : 2, 3.)

Full account of a man's every action is preserved.

He utters not a word but there is an observer (like a tape-recorder or a radio-transmitter) ready close by (to record every bit of a man's action, 18 : 49). (50 : 18).

And verily over you there are (malaks who are appointed) guardians (to protect you from dangers and pitfalls, 6 : 61),

honoured ones (in the sight of Allah), recorder (of your actions, who preserve everything a man says or does, so that all his actions becoming evident like tape-records and cinematographs to yield a certain effect, 13 : 11) ;

they know (all) what you do (50 : 17, 18)...(82 : 10-12).

Then whoever does deeds out of good deeds (, be it however negligible, 47 : 99 : 7)

and who is a (sincere) believer (2 : 25, because only the Believers follow the Right Path),

there is then no disavowal of his effort, and surely We are Writers (of it) for him (and so it is never lost). (21 : 94)

On a (certain) day Allah will raise them up all together ;

then He will inform them (in the form of consequences) of what they worked.

Allah has recorded it while they have forgotten it (18 : 49),

for Allah is a Witness over everything (either small or big, 54 : 52, 53). (58 : 6).

And the book (recording the deeds) shall be put forward,

then thou shalt see the guilty in fear (trembling like an aspen leaf) on account of what is therein ;

and they will say : "O woe to us !

what kind of (record-) book is this !

It leaves not out either a small (thing) or a great one,

but has put it down (in every detail, like the pictures of a cinematograph or the voice of a tape-record) !"

And they shall find what they did confronting (them, 17 : 13, 14; 54 : 52, 53).

And thy Lord does not do wrong to anyone. (18 : 49).

Every action will have its reaction ; every deed however insignificant will have its reward.

And We will set up the balance of justice (7 : 8, 9) on the day of the Awakening,

so that no soul shall be wronged aught (in its evaluation).

And if it (—a deed, a word, thought, or motive) were (no more than) the weight of a mustard-seed,

We will bring it forth (to account, 99 : 7, 8).

And sufficient are We as Accountants. (21 : 47)

(And Luqman who therefore deserves obedience as a father, said further :) "O my son ! (no matter whether thou be a Muslim or the son of a nabi,) verily if there be (anything good or bad, even of) the weight of a grain of mustardseed (21 : 47),

then be it (concealed) inside a stone, or in (the expanse of) heavens, or in (the core of) the rotatory-earth (2 : 29),

Allah will bring it forth (to light and take an account of it).

Verily Allah is Knower of subtilities, Aware, (31 : 16)

So (because every cause will have its effect, and every action has its reaction) whoever (, be he a Muslim or a non-Muslim,) does an atom's weight of good shall see (the good of) it (even in this life, and many a little will make a mickle, 3 : 194 ; seeing that if you sow, things will grow, 2 : 261) ;

and (similarly) whoso (, not excluding a Muslim) does an atom's weight of evil shall see (the effect of) it (21 : 47; 31 : 16, not a bit of his actions will be left unaccounted for, 18 : 49 ; so beware before it is too late, 41 : 18). (99 : 7, 8)

Justice delayed is justice denied. This rewarding of actions will not be kept waiting. It will be done instantaneously, starting from this life itself.

Surely (even in the affair of those well-groomed Muslims,) thy Lord is quick in respect of the consequences (and hence if they fall off and follow evil ways, they too will be overthrown) ;

and He is indeed the Protector (against faults), most Merciful (and hence out of His mercy He will protect them from falling into evils by raising Mujaddids in every century, and thus ultimately take them by the hand). (6 : 166)

Verily thy Lord is quick indeed in respect of the consequences.

And surely He is (also) most Protecting (against faults), most Merciful.

Reward of good is always good, as it brings manifold reward.

And it shall be said to those who practised reverence :

"What is that your Lord has sent down ?"

They (unlike the proud Unbelievers, : 24) will say : "It is good."

(Whereas virtue of itself is sufficient for happiness), for those who do good there is good (everywhere) in this world ;

but (all's well that ends well, hence) the (permanent) Home of the Hereafter is indeed (far) better.

And how excellent is the Home of those who practise reverence ! (16 : 30)

(Whilst kindness ought to be repaid by kindness,) is the reward of goodness aught but goodness (, seeing that love is love's reward) ? 55 : 60.

Verily Allah does not do injustice (to anyone) to the weight of an atom (99 : 7, 8) ;

and (whilst actions and their results are always uniform) if it be a (little) good deed (proceeded from the purity of one's heart)

He multiplies it (from His grace),

and (moreover) He gives (the doer) from His own presence a great reward (and hence good must ultimately preponderate in the universe, 6 : 161 ; 42 : 25, 26). (4 : 40)

The parable of those who spend their wealth in Allah's way (in the advancement of the cause of Islam, 9 : 60)

is like the parable of a grain (of corn) which grows into seven (: 29) ears, in every ear a hundred grains (, so why not venture a small fish to catch a great one).

And (over and above these seven hundred-fold increase,) Allah (further) multiplies for whom He pleases (of the deserving ones) ;

for Allah is ample Givng, all-Knowing. (2 : 268)

Evil is the end of those who do evil, and the recompense of evil is an evil like it.

So it was not Allah Who did them wrong (by bringing their doom),

but (because man is his own worst enemy,) they used to do wrong to themselves (by their obstinate infidelity).

Then evil was the end of those who did evil,

because they belied the Messages of Allah,

and they used to mock at them (36 : 30). (30 : 9, 10)

Whoever does evil,

he shall not then be requited except in the like thereof (28 : 84). (40 : 40)

He who brings one good,

for him there are then (at least) ten like thereof (and over a seven-hundred-fold reward, 2 : 261 ; Bu. 81 : 33, on account of Allah's generosity) ;

and he who brings an evil,

he will then not be rewarded except its like (as the maximum chastisement, 28 : 84, if not pardoned on account of His mercy, 39 : 53) ;

and (owing to such preponderance of mercy in Divine Being) they shall not be dealt with unjustly (6 : 161)

Whoever brings good,

he will than have (a reward) better than it (i.e. better than his merit) ;

and whoever brings evil,

no recompense shall be given to those who do evil except (according to) what they used to do (6 : 161 ; 40 : 40 ; 53 : 31, but they may even be forgiven due to their repentance, Bu. 81 : 33, because Allah often forgives sins altogether, 39 : 53). (28 : 84)

The righteous will be rewarded with a vast Garden extending the whole universe.

(Know ye that earth has no sorrow that Heaven cannot heal, hence) vie in hastening towards protection from your Rabb (against pitfalls)

and (towards) a Garden the breadth of which is like the breadth of the heaven and rotatory-earth (3 : 132)

prepared for those who believe in Allah and His results (knowing that whoever is foremost leads the herd while the devil takes the hindmost).

(Know ye that Heaven and hell are not the names of two material places, but really two spiritual conditions, seeing that if Garden were the name of a particular place, Gohenna could not have any space to exist ; and) this (spiritual Garden which extends over the whole universe) is the grace of Allah,

He gives it to (the deserving ones) whom He pleases (and what He will, no frost can kill).

And Allah is the Master of great grace. (57 : 21)

The inmates of the Garden will stay in peace and tranquillity as the permanent inheritors thereof.

And as to those who are blessed that day),

they shall be in Garden,

abiding therein as long as the heavens and the rotatory-earth (2 : 29) last,

excepting as thy Lord pleases (as He is Possessor of unbounded power and command ; but in fact there is no limitation upon the eternity of paradise, because) —

(this is) a gift which shall never be cut off (nor shall anyone be ejected therefrom, 15 : 48). (11 : 18)

Verily those who practise reverence shall be in Gardens and springs (as a result of their going straight to Fountain-head for drawing pure water).

(And whereas all doors open to courtesy, it is said unto them :) "Enter ye therein with (absolute) Peace (of mind),

safeguarded (from any inclination to evil or any other danger)."

And We take out whatever of hatred is in their breasts (towards the fellow-men, 7 : 43 ,

(thereby they are) turned into (true) brethren, (seated) upon thrones (each having its own dignity) facing one another (with joy and confidence).

No fatigue shall touch them therein

nor shall they be driven out therefrom (—from that state of perfect bliss, 81 : 108 ; 44 : 56 ; because there is no temporary salvation as in the Hindu doctrine). (15 : 45-48)

Thus the picture of the Garden is one of eternal bliss.

This is a reminder ;

and verily for the reverent (who are aware that he that will enter into Paradise must come with the right key, and so for them) there is an excellent resort :

Gardens of Eden—

the gates (whereof) are opened for them (even in this very life, as they had procured the key thereof by their sound Faith and righteous action, 2 : 25).

reclining therein,

calling therein for many (sorts of) fruits and drinks (which are produced out of the plants of Faith that they planted and nurtured with the water of good deeds in their lifetime, 14 : 23-25).

And near them are (spiritual) large-eyed beauties (37 : 48, 49) being equals in age (with them, because the growth of these beauties begins with the growth of their spiritual life, and so these are the fruits of good deeds of both men and women, 33 : 35).

(And it shall be said :) "This is what you were promised for the day of Reckoning.

Verily this is Our provision (grown out of your cultivation of righteousness) ;

there will never be exhaustion for it ;"—

this (shall be the reward of the righteous) ! (38 : 49-55)

(Since no man can conceive the actual spiritual nature of the Garden with his physical senses, 32 : 17 ; Bu. 59 : 8) the parable of the Garden which is promised to the reverent is (like this, 13 : 35) :

Therein are rivers of water which does not become noxious ;

and rivers of milk—the taste of which changes not ;

and (whilst wine has drowned more men than the sea,) rivers of wine which (instead of being intoxicant, 37 : 47) is delicious to the drinkers ;

and rivers of clarified honey (;—all these flow abundantly like rivers, without being exhausted),

and therein are (plenty of) all (kinds of) fruits (grown out of their various kinds of righteous actions, 14 : 24, 25),

and protection from their Rabb (against the frailties of human nature ; thus they are blessed, not only with the Garden of the life after death, but also with the fertile land which they are to inherit in this very life,—the Garden of Eden, Gen. 2 : 8, where there is abundance of all things, so that the Muslims are promised the Holy Land in addition to Makkah).

(Shall the persons for whom these things are promised, be) like one who resides in the (hell-) Fire,

or (like those) who are made to drink of boiling water, so that it tears their entrails (6 : 70 ; 14 : 16, 17) ? (47 : 15)

The Garden is meant for further spiritual progress for reaching the heaven of heavens.

But as to those who reverence their Rabb,

(they enter a life of unceasing progress both here and in the Hereafter, because) there are for them dense Gardens,

above which are (other) dense Gardens, well-founded (for them, and thus they go spiritually from strength to strength and reach the heaven of heavens, 66 : 8),

beneath which flow rivers (, and thus their birth made them mortals, their death will make them immortals, 2 : 25 ; 35 : 34, 35).

(This is) the promise of Allah (whose mouth knows not to utter falsehood).

Allah does not fail in (His) promise. (39 : 20)

O ye who believe !

turn towards Allah a sincere turning.

May be your Rabb will wipe off from you your sins,

and cause you to enter Gardens 'neath (the shade of) which rivers flow (2 : 25) ;

on the Day whereon Allah will not disgrace the Nabi and those who believe with him.

Their light will run on in front of them

and by their right side—

(whilst) they will say : "Our Rabb ! complete for us our light (making us advance spiritually from stage to stage and strength to strength to reach the heaven of heavens, 39 : 20),

and protect us (from stoppage in progress, 40 : 55) ;

verily Thou art Possessor of prudential-power over all things." (66 : 8)

The wrongdoers, on the other hand, shall be cast into hell or Gehenna for the sake of chastisement.

But for the intemperate ones there is certainly an evil resort—

Gehenna.

They shall enter it ;

so (it shall be) an evil cradling (for nursing them for spiritual growth, 2 : 206) !

This (is for the intemperate ones) !

So let them taste it,—

boiling hot and intensely cold (drink ; because they went to the two extremes and did not follow the Golden Mean, 14 : 16, 17 ; 78 : 24, 25),

and other (torments) of the same nature—

in pairs (for following the two extremes, 1 : 5-7).

(And it shall be said to the ringleaders :) "This is an army (of blind followers of falsehood) rushing headlong (into Gehenna) with you.

(Is there) no welcome for them (from your side) ?

(Hell and Chancery being always open,) surely they are entering into the (hell-) Fire (whether you welcome them or not)."

They (—the seduced) shall say (to the seducers) :

"Nay, as to you (—our formidable leaders) !

no welcome for you (either, as you too are surely not feeling happy in this state) !

It is you who prepared it for us (by your misleading) ;

so evil is the residence (for us all)." (38 : 55-60).

(They shall be dwelling) in hot blasts and boiling liquids (44 : 47, 48),

and in the shade (or cover) of black smoke (choking the throat, blinding the eyes and blackening the face),

(the position being) neither cool (in feeling by the self) nor honourable (in presence of others).

Verily before this (while on earth) they were well to do (and the cheese and bread had made their cheeks red, and were proud to exhibit themselves), and they used to persist (deliberately) in the Great Violation (of Our commandments). ... (56 : 42-46.)

The hell is meant, not for torture, but for purification of the dross of evil life, the severity of the treatment depending upon the intensity of the evil.

And when it is said to him :

"Reverence Allah",

(his) pride carries him on to (more) sin ; so sufficient to him is Gehenna,

and surely an evil cradling is that (because for spiritual growth it serves as a cradle or the lap of mother, 57 : 15 ; 101 : 9, for those who retarded their growth here by their engrossment in the world and by pursuing evil course). ... (2 : 206).

For them is Gehenna (as) a cradle (2 : 206, below them)

and from above them (folds and folds of) coverings (of it, bandaging thereby their foul sores for healing in the Hell-hospital).

And it is thus (by enveloping from all sides) that We requite the unjust. (7 : 41).

So this day no ransom shall be taken from you nor from those who reject

Faith (even if you pay gold to the weight of the whole earth, 3 : 90 ; 5 : 36).

(And just as a drowning man will catch even at the edge of a sword,) your refuge is the hell—) Fire (which is paved with good intentions to purge the evil out, 2 : 206, just the way fire burne out the dross from gold).

That is your protector (like the lap of the mother, 101 : 9, to help the spiritual growth of those who have retarded it by wasting the opportunity granted in their lifetime),

and evil is the resort (thither, because the severity of treatment and operations in that Hell-hospital depends upon the severity of the diseases you have contacted, 7 : 41) ! (57 : 15.)

But as to him whose balances (of good deeds) are light (owing to his remaining in the state of Ammaran, 12 : 53),

the abyss shall then be a mother to him (because for his spiritual growth, the abyss will be to him like a cradle or the lap of his mother, 2 : 206 ; 57 : 15,—he being brought up, as it were, in the bosom of Abyss ; his stay herein for his spiritual growth being as temporary as is a child's stay in the bosom of his mother for this physical growth, 6 : 129 ; 78 : 23).

Ah ! what shall make thee comprehend what that (abyss) is !

(It is) a scorching Fire (for burning out all the dross that people collect by living an evil life, 23 : 103-106). (101 : 8-11).

And those whose balances (of virtues) are light, these then are those who have caused loss to their souls (7 : 9) ; in Gehenna they abide (to make up for the loss).

Fire shall scorch their faces (to burn up the dross, or to cauterise the diseased tissue in that Hell-hospital),

and they shall be therein disfigured (with anguish and more anguish, and with mutilating operations).

(It will be said :) "Were not My (life-giving analytic) Messages recited to you ?

But you used to belie them (and therefore became victims to all sorts of spiritual diseases)" ... 23 : (103-105.)

Thus it is seen that in the sight of Allah, the worth of a man depends upon the way he acts. Mere profession of this faith or that faith will not lead him to salvation. Every bit of his actions is accounted for. The life of this world is a probationary life ; if man turns this life to good use, he will attain the state of bliss ; and if he misuses it by indulging in evil, he must face the consequences. He can attain salvation only when he becomes fit by undergoing a thorough treatment of his spiritual maladies in the Hell-hospital. In this article, only a few outstanding verses on the subject have been touched. Since the verses have already been explained in the underbracket comments, as quoted from "The Running Commentary of the Holy Quran" of Dr. K. R. Nuri, further explanation is deemed unnecessary for the sake of concising the article.

Letters to the Editor

ANIMAL SACRIFICE

Sir,—I write in reply to the letter of Mr. M. Motiur Rehman in the *Light* of 8th December, 1964, in which he has sought to meet some of the points raised by me previously. I thank him for the non-abusive, though non-convincing, discussion of the subject.

I did not raise the question of wastage in reference to sacrifice of animals by individuals at home. I raised the point in reference to the ceremonial sacrifice of animals at Mecca by lacs, if not, millions, at the time of Hajj. Does not he find wastage therein? The pity is that this huge wastage has been going on for centuries together in commemoration of a story which looks nothing better than a sanctified tradition or superstition.

The Bible gives the name of the son as Issac, the place of sacrifice as Jerusalem and the substitute for the sacrifice as a horned ram. The Quran does not name the son, the place or the substitute for the sacrifice and the whole description of the story is slipshod, and not as detailed and punctilious as in the Bible. It is no use saying the Bible has been changed while the Quran remains unchanged. Even if this be correct, then who changed the story of sacrifice and why? And why is the Quranic version of it so vague and slipshod? After all, the Biblical version is earlier and is the source from which the Quran has taken its vague rehash with material particulars missing. And how can you deny the Bible not being the real Bible, despite the fact that the current Bible is accepted by the Jews and the Christians (minus those who do not believe in Holy Writs and Revelation) as the Holy Writ for their guidance? Does the Quran cease to be the Muslims' Holy Writ simply because the Jews do not believe in such revealed book?

The story of Hagar and Ishmael (whether in the mother's womb or a born child) having been forsaken by Hazrat Abraham is recorded in the traditions of the Jews and the Muslims. Such a conduct on the part of a father is cruelty, rather than affection for a child. This disproves the writer's argument that "in the Semitic people the affection of the father is always the greatest towards the first-born son." Ishmael was admittedly the eldest son of Abraham who, according to the Bible, made Isaac inherit all the properties of his father and deprived Ismael and six other step-brothers (the sons of Ketura who was Abraham's third wife) of their patrimony. This also makes Isaac the dearest son to Hazrat Abraham. The whole story of sacrifice looks like nothing more than a traditional story differently described in the two holy Writs apparently out of racial considerations.

In the end, the learned writer says that "on the analogy of Mr. Rational Muslim's arguments, it is very doubtful, if the performance of Hajj has any necessity in the existing circumstances of the Muslim world. It is also wastage of money and time and energy." Well, I share the Writer's doubt very much. This institution of Hajj seems to be based on tradi-

tions none too better than sanctified traditions or superstitions. Killing animals by lacs or millions, pelting stones at supposed satans etc. are not certainly rational things. No good God is expected to be pleased by such cruelties to God's creatures such as camels, cows, goats and sheep and the Devils or Satans if they are real and not fictitious beings.

We often disparagingly speak of the holy baths or dips into the Ganges by millions of Hindu men and women. There are many other places in Pakistan too where the Hindus perform such religious performances. One such place is Sitakund in Chittagong and Langabund near Narayanganj where huge congregations gather for such superstitious practices. The Muslims do similar or akin superstitious acts at Mecca but sometime have the audacity to say that Islam is free from all superstitious practices. Let us be frank and say if this is not hypocrisy. I know of Muslims having performed Hajj at Mecca even up to seven times, wasting huge foreign exchange.

Chittagong.

Rational Muslim.

EAST PAKISTAN ISLAMIC MISSION MEETING

Friday Prayer and Dars-i-Quran

Sir,

A meeting of the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement in East Pakistan was held at the Mission House at 3 p.m. on Friday, the 1st January, 1965. The President of the East Pakistan Jammāt, Maulana Aatur Rahman, was in the chair. Maulvi Abdus Sammad Jamali, Missionary-in-charge, Dacca Mission, spoke on his experiences at Lahore on the occasion of the Golden Jubilee of the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement, which was attended by people coming from various countries of the old and new worlds. Resolutions were then moved from the Chair and passed unanimously congratulating the Anjuman on its brilliant success in holding the Golden Jubilee, and urging that Juma Prayer be held regularly and all the members in Dacca be requested to attend punctually, and that Dars-i-Quran be held regularly every Friday after Asr prayer.

Dacca. Muhammad Aatur Rahman.

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(W. PAKISTAN)



The Concept of Islamic Socialism, by Abdul Bari Sarkar, M.A., LL.B.,
(pp. 139 ; Price Rs. 3 50. To be had from the author,
117, Kakrail, Dacca 3.

Pakistan was conceived as a separate homeland for Muslims in what now constitutes its West wing. But so far as Islamic sentiment is concerned the centre of gravity would seem to tilt more towards the Eastern wing. Temperamentally our East Pakistan brethren strike one as comparatively more passionately devoted to Islam, almost brimming with that enviable devotion. That is the first thing that fascinates a Muslim reader of the book under review from the pen of an East Pakistani Muslim. The Quranic verses with which it bristles are like so many gems strewn profusely across its pages.

The theme of the book, Islamic Socialism, is one upon the correct understanding of which depends the whole future of human society. And it is only in the fitness of things that recourse may be had to the Word of God for light and inspiration on a problem of such vital moment. The book supplies that crying need of the day.

Capitalism and Communism, the author shows, have only made the muddle worse muddled, creating conflicts and tensions on a global scale, because they both are rooted in a very superficial view of human nature—his creature needs. Islamic conception of man alone goes deep enough to the very roots of his existence, and the concepts of human equality, human freedom, and social justice that stem from that depth in human nature alone can show the path to a correct form of socialism.

It is a pity that a book of such outstanding utility has been spoiled by a whole crop of misprints with which it bristles. The author is not unconscious of this defect and has in his preface promised to remove it in the second edition.

Nonetheless, the book serves a very useful purpose and here in Pakistan where we aspire to set up a model state based on social justice on the principles of Islam all those engaged in nation-building work should find the book of much guidance and inspiration.

Hayat-i-Sheikh : Life-story of Sheikh Mian Muhammad Ismail, Founder of the Colony Group of Industries, West Pakistan, by Abdul Rab Khan Barham ; the Qasimi Press, Nisbat Road, Lahore ; pp. 228.

Sceptics who would dismiss all talk of religion as something visionary, making little impact on the practical life of its

followers should find an eye-opener in this book. The hero of its story is a man who by sheer dint of character rose from practically scratch to the position of the country's leading industrialist was at the same time a man who was never late for his daily prayers, who seldom missed his *Tahajjud* prayer, who never began his day without first doing recitation from the Quran, who made it a principle never to borrow money from banks on interest, indeed, who always put the dictates of the Quran and the Sunnah first and his business interests afterwards.

Such a man was the late Sheikh Mian Muhammad Ismail who combined a rare business acumen with a keen religious sense. At a time when commerce and industry were the preserve of the Hindu community in undivided India, who took good care to prevent Muslims from getting a foothold in this sanctuary of theirs, this great Sheikh, from very humble beginnings as heir to a petty shop in an obscure suburban town, built up a whole chain of industries dotted over the length and breadth of the former Punjab, till by the time he passed away his firm owned two dozens of factories.

To have built up his industries without falling back upon borrowing from banks for reasons of religious scruples which categorically forbid interest, proved to the hilt the futility of the modernist argument that no economic development is possible without interest-based modern banking system.

Those who talk of socialisation of industries should also find food for thought in the life-story of this pioneer Muslim industrialist. He provided to his employees unasked for all the amenities which came to be introduced in factories in Western countries after a long and bitter struggle between Capital and Labour. The standards of employer-employee relationships he set up should serve as an inspiration to the most advanced socialist societies of the day. He treated all his employees, even the common factory hands, as fellow-men first and workers afterwards, which is the essence of all true religion. And there lay the secret of his remarkable success. He founded free hospitals and schools for the benefit of his employees and their children, and allowed them liberal gratuities in the annual profit of the concern over and above their salaries and wages.

The crowning glory of his achievement lay in the paternal care he bestowed upon his two younger brothers, whom, on the

death of their father, he found without much substance. He made them partners in his growing industries, and built them up till each of them became on his own the founder of a network of industries. The greatest wealth, however, which he bequeathed to his brothers, his sons, and indeed to the whole Sheikh Family, was his love of the Quran and the Sunnah, and his scrupulous observance of the dictates of religion.

And, incidentally, it might be added that this Family of God-fearing, and God-loving industrialists is the gift of the Ahmadiyya Movement to Pakistan. If a tree is known by the fruit it bears, this handful of men and women associated with the Colony Group of industries alone should suffice to tell what kind of tree the Ahmadiyya Movement has been. To be millionaires and at the same time enthused with missionary Islamic zeal is a rare combination. That is exactly the miracle, however, that the impact of the Ahmadiyya Islam has worked.

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