

Fighting Windmills

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COMMENTARY OF THE HOLY QURAN—II

By HAZRAT MIRZA GHULAM AHMAD
The Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement

SURAH AL-BAQARAH

It must be borne in mind that *ba'at* (oath of spiritual fealty) has a great purpose to serve. It deepens and stabilizes the mood of virtue which in the beginning has a look of artificiality. Through the spiritualising influence of the saints and the Elect of God, this mood of piety becomes a part of their nature. It kindles a flame in one's heart, which originates from the interplay of complete subordination of the servant and the sustaining Attribute of God. This state of mind which eventually crystallises into a luminous reality is designated by the mystics as *Rooh al-Quds* (the Holy Spirit). When this mood stabilises itself, it makes a man mentally allergic to evil-doing. He hates it as God abhors it. It induces a state of detachment from the people of the world and nothing except the Real Creator and Lord exists in the eyes of a man of this mood. The condition precedent for this is the sense of God-fearingness which a seeker after truth brings to bear on his whole life. This is why what is said is:

هدى للمتقين (guidance for the God-fearing) and not: هدى للفاقرين (Guidance for the profane) or هدى للكافرين (guidance for disbelievers). The rudimentary piety, the attainment of which entitles a man to be called (مستقى) the God-fearing soul,

is a part of the nature of the righteous. It is Sustained and stabilised by the Attribute of sustenance. This is the first birth of the God-fearing man. The Inner Light which is also designated as *Rooh al-Quds* takes its birth from the mutual integration of consummate submission with the perfect and encompassing Attribute of Sustenance. This follows the operation انشاء خلقا آخر (Then We developed it into another creation) (23: 15). This is the second manifestation of the Attribute of Divine sustenance. This also symbolises the Second Birth of the God-fearing saint. He also reaches a luminous stage. Then comes the stage of the third manifestation of the divine sustenance. This is a spiritual rebirth which takes the saintly worshipper to a point of Beyondness. This symbolises his Third Birth. (*Izalah Auham*, p. 423).

This Holy Book is free from doubts. It is a Book of Guidance for the God-fearing. The God-fearing people are those who believe in God Who is above and beyond human sight and comprehension. They establish prayers and spend out of their wealth in ways of God. They also believe in Books which were revealed before The Holy Prophet). They are the people on the path of divine guidance. They shall be blessed by salvation.

O you, Mian Abdul Hakim! who have turned apostate arise and open your eyes. God in these verses has given His Verdict that the condition precedent for salvation is that people should put faith in the sacred books revealed by God and should worship Him. There can be no contradiction in the Word of God. When the Almighty God has made salvation conditional on complete submission to the Holy Prophet (Peace and blessings of God be upon him), it is a flagrant unbelief to run from the categorical to the allegorical. Only such people fall for the allegorical who suffer from an incipient hypocrisy. The subtle point of divine wisdom underlying these verses is that Allah says:

الم ذلك الكتاب لا ريب فيه هدى للمتقين

This is a Book revealed by God. As the knowledge embalmed in it is free from human infirmities. It does not admit of any doubt nor is it vulnerable at any point: As God by His knowledge can confer perfection on man, it is an unflinching guide for the pious and the virtuous. Thus the Holy Quran is perfect in all respects. No book can be called perfect unless there are four factors present. These verses point to these four factors which are (1) the active cause (2) material cause, (3) cause relating to general outlook (4) ultimate objective. Thus الم points to the active cause, as it means: ان الله اعلم (I am God the Knower of the unknown). I have revealed this Book. As the Active Cause is God Himself Who is Omnipotent, this refers to the Material Cause which is stated thus: ذلك الكتاب. This means it is a Book which is rendered sublime by

Allah Revealed to The Promised Messiah

"In Lahore there are our pious members. In Lahore are our pious lovers. I will increase the numbers of your sincere lovers. I will bless their lives and their possessions."

WE BELIEVE

(1) After the Holy Prophet (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him) Allah has barred the appearance of any prophet, new or old.

(2) No Verse of the Holy Quran has been abrogated nor shall ever be abrogated.

(3) All the Companions and the Holy Prophet (Peace of Blessings of Allah be upon him) and the Imams are venerable.

(4) It is incumbent to believe in the missions of all *Mujaddids*.

(6) He who recites *Kalimah* is not *Kafir*.

(6) Islam will ultimately prevail in the world.

the knowledge of God. It is flawless because the knowledge of God is flawless. This in its turn points to its general outlook. This is described thus لا ريب فيه. This means that it is free from all drawbacks and shortcomings. There is no denying the fact that the Book revealed by God is completely immune against all defects and demerits and is peerless and unparalleled. It outshines all in being perfect and sublime. This logically leads to its ultimate purpose which is described thus: هدى للمتقين. This means that it is a book of complete and comprehensive guidance.

(To be continued)

ITA'AT

THE MUSLIM CONCEPTION OF OBEDIENCE TO AMIR—II

DR. MOHAMMAD AZIZ AHMAD, M.A., LL.B., PH.D.

(This article was sent to us by one of our readers as it had a bearing on the discussion on the Role of Khalifahs started by Hazrat Ameer in his sober and impressive statement in the Press. The article was a comprehensive whole. But for reasons of space, it had perforce to be split up into two instalments. The First Instalment published in *The Light*, dated May 24, 1967, was self-contained and left no loose end trailing because the ruling notion was forcefully spelt out, right at the beginning and referred to at intervals. But, quite naturally, it could not be as self-contained as the entire Article. The Second Instalment (indispensable part of the Article) published below, rounds off the discussion on "the conditional obedience to the Amir." The Amir in the article is one who wields political authority. It will set at rest the doubt of any reader who chose to prejudge the issue.—Editor.)

No Revolt Without Cause

Rebellion against the authority without any legitimate cause is not permitted. "Eat and drink of the provisions of Allah, and do not act corruptly in the land making mischief."

"Allah is not friend of revolts."

"Listen and be obedient to your Amir, even if he be unjust, and do not rise against him."

"The Musalmans are, however, instructed to be patient, but at the same time should not obey a sinner. "Therefore wait patiently for the judgment of your Lord, and obey not from among them a sinner or an ungrateful one."

"When a person finds his Amir or Hakim doing evil, he should be patient."

"Surely, he who guards (against evil) and is patient (is rewarded); for surely Allah does not waste the reward of those who do good."

Case of Difference—Back to Allah and the Apostle

The individual Musalman and the Muslim millat are required to obey Allah, the Apostle and the Amir, but in case of difference, they are instructed to turn back to Allah and the Apostle—the basic principles of the faith. Islam believes in a proper ordering of loyalties. A Musalman is first loyal to his Allah, then to the Holy Prophet and then to the Amir, and in case of a conflict of loyalties, he is required to be loyal to Allah and his Apostle. Islam presupposes an adjustment of loyalties to Allah and the Apostle, for the commandments of the two are not supposed to vary. By obeying the Apostle, a Musalman is simply obeying Allah. There may, however, be cases of conflicts between the commands of the Apostle and the orders of the Amir; herein the Musalman is definitely asked to turn back to Allah and the Apostle. "O you who believe! Obey Allah and obey the Apostle and those in authority from among you; then if you quarrel about anything, refer to Allah and the Apostle if you believe in Allah and the Last Day, this is, (the) better (part) and very good in the end."

"And in whatever thing you disagree, the judgement thereof is (in) Allah's (Laws), that is Allah, my Lord, on Him

do I rely and to Him do I turn time after time."

"Therefore, fly to Allah, surely I (Prophet) am a plain warner to you from Allah."

"And it behoves not a believing man and a believing woman that they should have any choice in their matter when Allah and His Apostle have decided a matter; and whoever disobeys Allah and His Apostle, he surely strays off a manifest straying."

"So be careful of (your duty to) Allah and set aright matter of your difference, and obey Allah and His Apostle if you are a believer."

"O you who believe! Obey Allah and His Apostle and do not turn back from Him while you hear."

"...and whatever the Apostle gives you, accept it, and from whatever he forbids you keep back, and be careful of (your duty to) Allah; surely Allah is severe in retributing (evil)."

"And that to your Lord is the goal."

"Our Lord! on Thee do we rely, and to Thee do we turn and to Thee is the eventual coming."

"All people are a single Ummat, so Allah raised prophets as bearers of good news and as warners, and He revealed with them the Book with truth, that it might judge between people in that in which they differ."

"But if they dispute with you, say, I have submitted myself entirely to Allah, and (so) every one who follows me."

Unbelievers—not Rulers or Guardians

"Obey Allah, the Apostle and those in authority from among you" clearly indicates that a Non-Muslim cannot be the leader of the Musalmans, and as such cannot be obeyed. Nor can an unbeliever be trusted as a guardian or friend. "Those who take the unbelievers for guardians rather than believers, do they seek, however, from them? Then surely all honour is from Allah."

"O you who believe I do not take the unbelievers for guardians rather than the believers; do you desire that you should give to Allah a manifest proof against yourselves."

"O you who believe! do not take the Jews and the Christians for friends; they are friends of each other; and whosoever amongst you takes them for a friend, then surely he is one of them; surely Allah does not guide the unjust people."

"O you who believe! do not take for guardians those who take your religion for a mockery and a joke, from amongst those who were given the Book you and the unbelievers."

"And do not incline to those who are unjust, lest the fire touch you, and you have no guardians besides Allah."

"Surely, the unjust do not prosper."

"Do not take a protector besides Me."

"So do not follow the unbelievers! and strive against them a mighty striving with it."

"O you who believe! do not take My enemy and your enemy for friends; would

you offer them love while they deny what has come to you of the truth..."

"The parable of those who take guardians besides Allah is as the parable of the spider that makes for itself a house, and most surely the frailest of the houses is the spider's house; did they but know."

"And who is in greater error than he who calls besides Allah upon those that will not answer him till the day of resurrection and they are heedless of their call."

Individual Responsibility to Allah

The Amir and the individual Musalmans owe a separate responsibility to Allah for their own deeds. **The Amir is held accountable for his conduct and the trust that is reposed in him.** "And whoever is grateful, he is only grateful for his own soul."

"O you who believe! obey Allah and obey the Apostle, and not make your deeds of no effect."

"(It is) for the poor, who fled those who were driven from their homes and their possession, seeking grace of Allah and His Apostle; there it is that are truthful."

"And obey Allah and obey the Apostle, but if you turn back then upon our Apostle devolves only that clear delivery (of the message)."

"Say! O My servants! who have acted extravagantly against their own souls, do not despair of the mercy of Allah; surely Allah forgives the faults altogether."

The Ruler is personally responsible for his conduct, and the subjects have no responsibility for his actions. "The ruler is like a shield wherewith a man protects himself: if they are righteous and rule you well, they shall have their reward but if they do evil and rule you ill, then punishment will fall upon them and you will be quit of it, for they are responsible for you, but you have no responsibility."

"Obey your rulers whatever may happen for if they bid you do anything different to what I have taught you, they shall be punished for it, and you will be rewarded for your obedience; and if they bid you do anything different to what I have taught you, the responsibility is theirs and you are quit of it. When you meet Allah (on the day of judgement) say, "O Lord! Thou didst send us Prophets and we obeyed them by Thy permission, and you set over us Caliphs and we obeyed them by Thy permission, and our rulers gave us orders and we obeyed them for Thy sake; and Allah will answer, "You speak the truth and are quit of it."

"The Imam is like a shield, under the protection of which people fight, and are guarded against evil; if the Imam, fearing Allah orders what is right, he will be rewarded. If he does otherwise, he will be held accountable."

Ita'at Fil Ma'ruf

Ita'at is obligatory only under the condition that the Amir (Ruler) orders for enjoined (Ma'ruf) acts. The Amir should enforce the provisions of the Shari'at and can, thus, be entitled to the allegiance of the subjects. The orders of the Amir (Ruler) in short, be not derogatory to the dictates of the Shari'at. Allah's command is the supreme command, and every-

(Continued on page 4)

THE LIGHT

(Thursday—June 8, 1967)

Fighting Windmills

Disciplined Criticism a Blessing

In the commerce of ideas, there can never be one-way traffic, because unilateralness detracts from the worth and value of an idea which is rammed down the hearers' or the readers' throats. An editor of a magazine has to be very cautious and circumspect, because he has to face a vast array of all types of readers who may not be visible, but are nonetheless Argus-eyed and Janus-headed. They enjoy an inalienable right to analyse and criticise the matter purveyed to them in the pages of the Magazine. But this right is subject to an undoubted responsibility and it is the disciplined exercise of this right of evaluation and appraisal which is its only justification and vindication. It is more so in the case of Journalism which has its peculiar hazards. An editor, who is true to his delicate calling, must expect more brickbats than bouquets, because a dissatisfied reader is more prone to drop a brick or hurl a barbed shaft than to give a second thought to the theme of his objection. More often than not, a reader flares up in "righteous indignation" against some supposed omission or oversight which would evaporate into thin air under the impact of cool pondering or a spirit of accommodation. It is now and then observed that a reader catapults a missile against an editor as if it were a categorical imperative and he thinks that it is not possible that he could ever be wrong that the editor could ever be right or could ever meet the criticism fully and squarely. This is a case of extreme or supreme self-satisfaction which sometime implies self-obsession. This is a mild form of unfriendliness or is at best a disapproval of the editor not for having faults, but for having faults which differ from those of the indignant reader.

A Thorough Perusal Indispensable

A reader who must don the mantle of an implacable critic must first be able to prove that he has read the printed stuff thoroughly and there is no loose end trailing. An elementary case of a reader or readers going off the rails is when a delicate subject is discussed in more than one instalment. It is quite likely and it does happen that the first instalment does not and cannot present the entire picture. Its perusal leaves and quite rationally so, a vague sense of incompleteness, which is completely resolved in the ensuing instalment. Even when it is not so, a critic owes it to himself to wait for the succeeding instalment. He must see a thing and see it whole otherwise a criticism based on an incomplete assessment must inevitably and quite naturally, be incomplete, incomprehensible and incoherent. It is unusual, hence very exasperating to rush into print without waiting for the full unfoldment of the theme.

Skipping over First Instalment

Some such thing happened in The Light which published the first instalment of an

article on a thoughtful theme:

"*Ita'at*—The Muslim conception of obedience to Amir." It began with an unequivocal and for the matter of that, a forceful assertion thus:

"*Khilafat is the trust of Mankind and Khalifah is the Trustee. The Amir of the Millat has thus, limited power and cannot act in an arbitrary manner.*"

The author, a great scholar biased in favour of the Islamic democracy, highlighted his point further by saying:

"*Erroneous views have been held by the European and Oriental Scholars regarding the institution of 'Ita'at'. Arnold says, 'We find an uncompromising the doctrine of civic obedience in the Traditions.' This statement is entirely erroneous.*"

The author of the article re-inforces his viewpoint by descanting on its nature and extent by saying:

"The importance of allegiance to authority has been unequivocally emphasised in the Holy Quran and Hadith. It is the explicit duty of every individual Muslim first to obey Allah, second the Holy Prophet (Peace and blessings of God be upon him) and third the *ul-ul-amr* (person in authority) from among them. 'O you who believe! Obey Allah and obey the Apostle and those in authority from among you' (4: 8).

He does not complete the Quranic verse. The part omitted is *فان تنازعتم فردوه الى الله والرسول* (If there is difference among yourselves refer it to Allah and His Apostle (peace and blessings of God be upon him). This cannot be called omission because it is elaborately and amply discussed in the Second Instalment of the Article published in this issue. Thus the dictates of sweet reasonableness demand the proper perusal of the elaboration of this aspect of theme in the ensuing instalment where the wheel of discussion comes full circle.

The Governing Idea

Even in the First Instalment, this omission is no omission and should not rankle, because the governing idea of the Article is that the Amir is a Trustee and is debarred from an arbitrary behaviour and this is forcefully stated right at the beginning of the First Instalment. To use the Shakespearean phrase, "it is the most unkindest cut of all" to categorise it as a tendentious omission and make it a basis for a caustic castigation. But it has been done by our venerable General Secretary—Dr. Allah Bakhsh Sahib who dashed off a pungent letter published in the preceding issue of *The Light* (June 1, 1967) and indulged in a trenchant aspersion on the editor. He begins his learned letter by announcing his denial of congratulation to the editor for publishing an article on "*Ita'at*", and has completely ignored that it was not a complete Article, but a part of the Article. He has ended his blistering criticism by saying that "the editor has done no service to truth by publishing the said article." He was so charged with pious emotions at what he was pleased to regard as a deliberate omission, that it never for a single moment crossed his mind that what he called an Article was a part of it and that in conformity with the canons of justice and fairplay or with the principles of sound criticism, he should bide his time and wait for the next instalment.

Unwarranted Assumption and Foregone Conclusion

He very kindly vouchsafed an opportunity for discussion. In the course of a congenial parley, he was requested "to hasten slowly" and wait for the Next Instalment. His kind attention was drawn to the sentences which spotlighted the author's basic view which was on all fours with his own. He was also told that the Next Instalment would lay the ghost of his apprehension, because the idea embalmed in the verse:

فان تنازعتم فردوه الى الله والرسول has been convincingly presented at the appropriate place in the Article. But he appeared to be impervious to solemn submission and would not wait for the Second Instalment lest it should take the sting off his pungent polemics. He did not let grass grow under his feet and wrote a letter (published in the preceding issue) based on an unwarranted assumption and a foregone conclusion. Forewarned is to be forearmed. As the First Instalment began by a strong assertion against *unconditional obedience* and much more forceful than this was to come in the Next Instalment, it was naturally expected that the venerable Doctor Sahib would not fly off at a tangent and would stress his own point without impeaching the editor. He says that the editor did not serve the cause of truth by publishing an article. But he self-complacently feels that he has served Truth by his unwarranted bitterness. It is also problematical if he deserves congratulation on jumping to a conclusion without studying the article in full and without paying any attention even to the sentences which throw into a sharp relief the spirit and essence of the First Instalment. Did he keep in view the Quranic formula for effective and impressive exchange of views, contained in the verse:

أدع الى سبيل ربك بالحكمة والموعظة الحسنة وجادلهم بالتي هي احسن - ان ربك هو اعلم من كل عن سبيله و هو اعلم بالهتدين

(Call into the way of thy Lord with wisdom and goodly exhortation and argue with them in a way which is best. Surely thy Lord knows best who has strayed from His way; and He knows those who are rightly guided. (16: 126).

Is it goodly exhortation to indulge in a gratuitous impeachment?

As for the person of the editor is concerned, he would not mind the ungenerous observations, because it is a literary maxim that "style is the man." Perhaps the venerable Doctor Sahib would have been less than natural if he had not expressed his view in the manner he did. The editor honestly believes in the truth of Shelley's noble and ennobling observation that "No one is truly dishonoured by the act of another man." But as his remarks incidentally hit an institution which *The Light* certainly is, it became necessary to defend the position at some lengths. The Light has built up a reputation for strict adherence to truth without detriment to the legitimate demands of liberalism. Hence it could not take the hasty observations lightly. The editor, as his profession demands, should be open to correction and conviction. But he must counter an uncharitable attack when it is motivated by a hurried judgment and precipitate behaviour.

Difference with Amir—Author's Standpoint
Granted that the conception of obedience

is closely related to a sensitive sector of our differences. The venerable Doctor Sahib could be more effective if he had read the entire article or had pressed his point without starting a pungent polemic. This he could do after the full article had been published. Perhaps he laboured under the notion that a truth is less than truth if it is not dipped in vitriol. The Second Instalment which is published in this issue dispels 'the dangers of obedience' which weighed heavily on the mind of the venerable Doctor Sahib. In regard to differences with Amir, the author of the Article says in the Next Instalment:

— "The individual Musalman and the Muslim Millat are required to obey Allah, the Apostle and the Amir, but in case of difference, they are instructed to turn back to Allah and the Apostle—the basic principle of the faith. Islam believes in a proper ordering of loyalties. A Musalman is first loyal to his Allah, then to the Holy Prophet (Peace and blessings of God be upon him) and then to the Amir, and in case of a conflict of loyalties, he is required to be loyal to Allah and His Apostle."

The entire Second Instalment is couched in the forceful language and it is bound to gratify the venerable Doctor Sahib by taking the wind out of his objection. If he is sincerely keen on conditional obedience and was upset because he in his wisdom felt it was not stressed in the First Instalment, he would find in the Second Instalment an irresistible negation of all that he feared and apprehended in an unguarded moment.

Out of Context

What disturbed his conscience in the First Instalment was the quotation of Hadith: "The Holy Prophet (Peace and blessings of God be upon him) said: 'one who proved faithless to me is faithless to Allah and one who was disobedient to the Imam, was disobedient to me.'" Even as Hadith, it should be received with all the reverence due to it. But in the First Instalment, the full context reads as follows:

"Those who obey Allah, obey the Apostle and the Amir. The Muslim Millat is called upon to pay allegiance to the Holy Prophet and the Amir, because they proclaim and enforce the law of Shariat. Obedience to the commands of the Apostle and the Amir amounts to submission to the Will of Allah, as manifested in the Shariat: The Holy Prophet said: One who obeyed me obeyed Allah. One who proved faithless to me is faithless to Allah and one who was disobedient to the Imam was disobedient to me."

It leaves no room for doubt that obedience to the Amir or Imam is subject to the peremptory condition that his command must be in complete accord with the command of Allah and the Holy Prophet (Peace and blessings of God be upon him).

Does our honourable critic think that obedience to the Amir is conditional even when his words are fully covered by the commands of God and His Apostle?

To search in the Article for anything which contradicts the conception of conditional obedience, is like the search of a blind man in a dark room for a black cat which is not there.

In an objective discussion, it is easy to disrelish "Ita'at" and highlight its supposed and real dangers. But when it is viewed subjectively, it appears to be the essence of discipline, because no one having any authority, can brook deviation from Ita'at. Our submissions are a test case for our venerable critic. It is to be seen how he reacts to our appraisal. It is sincerely hoped he will take them magnanimously, and will regale our readers with congenial expression of his views.

In the end we draw the attention of the venerable Doctor Sahib to the contents of the Second Instalment. We feel sure that a conscientious and pious seeker after truth as he is, he will on its perusal involuntarily say:

دیکھنا تقریر کی لذت کہ جو اُس نے کہا
میں نے یہ جانا کہ گویا یہ بھی میرے دل میں ہے

(The speech is so delicious that I felt that the speaker was speaking my mind).

In all humility we also remind him of the first few lines of the beautiful booklet —*Ek ghalti ka Izalah* of the Promised Messiah (Blessings of God be upon him). (ایک غلطی کا ازالہ). Therein Hazrat Sahib in his inimitable style propounds a criterion for correctly evaluating a point at issue. The sum and substance of his sacred formula is that a close contact with an author and equally close study of his writings are a condition precedent for forming a valid opinion about his basic point of view. An opinion based on a hurried perusal of a part of writing and a total ignorance of its concluding portion cannot by any stretch of imagination be considered correct, much less a valid basis for personal attacks. It merely means fighting windmills.

M. M. H.

(Continued from page 2)

body connected with the political organization of Islam is subject to that command. "Obedience is essential only in the enjoined acts."

"Obedience to the Imam does not imply disobedience to Allah, but obedience only in enjoined actions."

"It is incumbent upon you to pay allegiance (to a Muslim ruler), irrespectively whether willingly or unwillingly, until his orders are against the Shari'at."

"Obedience is obligatory, until the ruler orders the commission of a sinful act."

"Those who would accept their (rulers') falsehood as Truth, and help them in tyranny and oppression, have no relation to the Prophet."

"The best Jihad is to tell the Truth before the rulers."

"Listen and be obedient even if an Abyssinian slave is your ruler, so long as he orders according to the Book of Allah."

"If a slave is made ruler over you and he rules in accordance with the provisions of the Book of Allah, then obey him and act accordingly."

Hazrat Umar wrote to Abu Musa Ash'ari, "Indeed, the people are guided in their actions by the Amir, so long as the Amir is turned towards Allah and carries on the responsible duties of the Khalifah of Allah."

Amir Violating Shari'at—Release of Allegiance

The emphasis on the allegiance of the Millat is not one-sided, but carrying with it a corresponding duty on the part of Amir to fulfil his contract by acting according to the provisions of the Shari'at. In case, the Amir violates the Shariat, the Millat is released of its allegiance to the Amir. The Amir is, like the Millat, subject to

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THE ARAB'S OUTLOOK ON LIFE

SERIOUS VIEW OF LIFE

By SANIA HAMADY, Ph.D.

As a principle, people react to life the way it meets them. Their outlook on it is formulated according to the nature of experiences that they are undergoing. It is not surprising to find the Arabs reacting to life with sobriety since most of them are poor, diseased, and uneducated. They have very little control over their environment and their individual fate. For them, life has been mainly a series of struggles and miseries.

The Arabs' environment appears to them as hostile since it does not provide them with the necessary means to satisfy most of their needs. Merely to subsist becomes their main concern. Life to them is an endless, desperate effort. "There is the determination of the starving in all desert life; the first law of the desert is the law of endurance and abstinence."

In that hard environment, the Arabs look at life as a burden. They are conscious of time because they feel the heaviness of a dragging existence, full of privations. The weight of frustration and suffering ages them while still young.

The Arabs have learned to take life as it is and have developed endurance; resistance to suffering has become a challenge to them. Hardihood and firm will have evolved in the Arabs by necessity, as a result of the unfavourable conditions under which they live. In addition to individual experience the ability of endurance in the Arab is achieved by the severe training received from his parents while growing up. He is taught to be denied things. Besides, parents feel that life will share in teaching their child how to bear frustrations and overcome difficulties. This philosophy is well expressed in the following proverb: "Don't instruct your child, life will teach him."

The tough life of the Arabs leads them to believe in the inevitability of hardship and deprivation and to hold pessimistic views. In many cases they exaggerate the difficulties—"The miseries of this world are more numerous than the plants of this earth." They increase the impact of obstacles and sufferings in their mind. They always foresee a bad future. They are so used to disappointments that they usually do not anticipate happy events; and if something fortunate occurs, they do not let themselves rejoice over it for fear that it would not last.

On the other hand, they meet loss or disasters with austerity. Nothing seems to be too much for their nerves. They are prepared for all kinds of sufferings—"When one is drenched he does not fear rain."

Patience, as the ability to bear difficulties, is of great importance in the survival of the Arab. It is considered the most powerful weapon he has in life to triumph over hardships and miseries: "Patience destroys mountains." "In course of time the rope will cut the rock." Patience is considered a cure to everything—"Everything has its remedy in patience but lack of patience has no remedy." They believe in the rewarding results of patience—"He who has patience in the leanness of the night will gather his fat-

ness." "Patience transforms bitterness to sweetness"; this belief is reinforced by a sense of resignation—"Resign yourself to what is bitter till the sweet comes to you." "Don't seek the news for in due time it will come to you." "We will remember them (worries) when we reach them." Patience is joined by wisdom—"The world moves but does not fall." "Take things from their manageable side." "Not to regret a thing, suppose it never existed." Furthermore, there is consolation in patience—"If this year passes, hope for another."

There is warning against haste—"There is regret in haste and safety in deliberation." "Who goes slowly obtains what he seeks."

Vicissitudes of fortune have to be accepted. One's grief is lessened when it is compared with that of others. There is so much misfortune spread around that consolation is found in realizing the miseries of others. Three proverbs will illustrate this feeling: "What befalls you, will befall others," "None is protected from bad fortune," "If time comes to us for weeping we see others have been blinded."

The Arabs are immersed in sadness. This is apparent in their sights their reflections, in their love of poetry that speaks of bygone days and lost hopes, and in their philosophy that is so pessimistic. Arab culture promotes sadness and allows for its expression.

The Arabs consider suffering inevitable in their life. "The one who tastes the sweetness of life has to taste its bitterness" is a proverb that depicts their attitude towards bearing pain. Pleasure is expected to be accompanied or followed by pain—"Joy is always by sorrow," "Sadness is not separated from joy but by the time to turn a page," "He who has not tasted bitterness would not appreciate sweetness."

The Arabs make a value of suffering. It is not sought deliberately, but when borne it is enjoyed with serenity. It is the ability of endurance that gives birth to contentment. There is revelling in sheer exertion.

The Arab's sterile experience robbed him of compassion and perverted his human kindness to the image of the waste in which he hid. Accordingly he hurt himself, not merely to be free, but to please himself. There followed a delight in pain, a cruelty which was more to him than goods. The Arab found no joy like the joy of voluntarily holding back. He found luxury in abnegation, renunciation, self-restraint. He made nakedness of the mind as sensuous as nakedness of the body. He saved his own soul, perhaps, and without danger, but in a hard selfishness.

"What one obtains painfully is more cherished" is another popular saying among the Arabs.

Furthermore, pain and sickness are interpreted as divine punishment for some wrong done by the one afflicted. Or they are considered as a test set by God to try his endurance and therefore his merit for obtaining a place in heaven.

The Arabs believe also that suffering is meant to reduce the pride of arrogant people and bring them down to the level of their fellow men.

The Arabs live in a stoic, and not a pleasure-oriented, society. Happiness is not their goal. Temperance and prudence are among the prevailing principles of conduct, and so is self-control.

Reason must reign over thoughts and actions. Man must transcend the bestial part of his personality. Self-control and discipline in behaviour are necessary to secure worthiness. If the vegetal soul were allowed a free hand, man would sink into carnal pleasures and lusts. The rule of man must be left to the rational soul so that he can grow upright and live in peace. Reason does not err nor does it ever harm. Emotions are the cause of failures and turmoil.

Love of excess is condemned. There is continuity in restriction—"He who lives on a little abides safely," "A little which will endure rather than the plenty which will be cut off."

Precipitation into action is not recommended. One must take time to be prudent. To enter into the realm of passions is easy, but to get out of it is a problem. "I am the slave of him whom the evil suffices before it occurs." There is much emotional economy in avoidance rather than cure. Caution is necessary for success—"He who does not foresee fails, and he who does not take precautions never reaches his goal," "Who does not verify the measure before he cuts, measuring, would not avail him after the cutting." One must think of the other side of the shield—"If you hate, leave place for reconciliation and if you befriend, leave a place for your enmity." If one starts on something wrong it is always better to check oneself in the middle of the road than to keep on going—"Half the road and not the whole of it."

(Continued from page 6)

even after they had been composed in more or less the form in which we have them today:

"The New Testament in very early times held no canonical authority, and alterations and additions were actually made where they seemed improvements."

The modern critical estimate of the Bible may be given in the words of Sir Richard Gregory:

"The Bible fails to justify faith in its inerrancy on account of its inconsistency with itself, its variance from current concepts of what should constitute Christian belief, and from current codes of morality, its failure in its adaptability as regards statements of fact and the discoveries of science relating to the record of happenings in the cosmic process, and finally in its inability to withstand the investigations of textual criticism, when directed to the claims of authorship upon which the authenticity of its various parts has been based."

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The Bible=A Modern Assessment

By RENEE RAFFERTY

The orthodox Christian view regarding the Bible is that it is the literal word of God. "The Bible," writes Dr. Bayley, "can not be less than verbally inspired. Every word, every syllable, every letter, is just what it would have been, had God spoken from heaven without any human intervention."

It is further claimed that the truth of Christianity is positively and necessarily related to the genuineness of the Bible. To quote from an editorial in the *Church Times*: "The truth of the message is intimately connected with the authenticity of the record, and a critical theory which assails the one assails the other." In other words, the case for Christianity stands or falls with proof or disproof of the genuineness of the Bible.

The modern critical study of the Bible has, however, completely shaken the orthodox position. Sir Richard Gregory writes in *Religion in Science and Civilization*: "With the advance in the technique of textual criticism in the course of the last generation, with a more searching analysis of the matter of the text, and with the use of the comparative method in evaluating the tradition embodied in the narrative, it has become even more patently evident that orthodox opinion in regard to the authenticity of the Bible cannot be maintained."

The subject of Biblical Criticism is so vast that it would be beyond the scope of a small article to give even a sketchy outline of the problems. All we can do here is to briefly mention the conclusions which the European research scholars have arrived at. To guard against any misunderstanding we shall quote only from the writings of believing Christian scholars.

The Old Testament

First as to the Old Testament. Canon A. F. Kirkpatrick, D. D., who was Master of Selwyn College, Regius Professor of Hebrew in the University of Cambridge, and Canon of Ely Cathedral, writes in his standard work *The Divine Library of the Old Testament* (a book which was selected for examination by the Christian Evidence Society):

"The books (of the Old Testament) were constructed out of earlier narratives; some were formed by the collections of poetry or prophecies; some betray marks of a reviser's hands; and even books which bear the names of well-known authors in some cases contain matter which must be attributed to other writers." "The Psalms like the Proverbs, have a long literary history. They are poems by different authors, and David may have been one of them." "Modern criticism claims, and claims with justice, that the *Hexateuch*, like so many of the other books, is composite in its origin, and has long literary history." "That the *Pentateuch* was entirely written by Moses is merely a Jewish tradition, which passed into the Christian Church and was commonly accepted until modern times. Some of the variants of the Septuagint from the Hebrew text are due, no doubt, to errors and interpolations and deliberate alterations; but after all allowance has been made for these,

I do not see how any candid critic can resist the conclusion that many of them represent variations existing in the Hebrew text from which the translation was made." As regards the last twenty-seven chapters of *Isaiah*, he writes: "I do not see how we can resist the conclusion that these chapters were not written by Isaiah, but by an unknown prophet towards the close of the Babylonian Exile;.... it will inevitably seem to many students of the Bible that, in assigning the prophecy to a date so near to the events which it foretells, we are detracting from its truly predictive character and diminishing its value."

These conclusions utterly destroy the divine character of the Old Testament. Dr. Kirkpatrick is conscious of it and, being a clergyman, feels uneasy about it. He finally offers the following fundamental questions, but leaves them unanswered: "In what sense, it is asked, can this legislation, which is now said to be Mosaic in elemental germ and idea only, and to represent not the inspired deliverance of a supremely great individual, but the painful efforts of many generations of law-makers; these histories which have been compiled from primitive traditions, and chronicles, and annals, and what not; these books of prophecy which are not the authentic autographs of the prophets, but posthumous collections of such writings (if any) as they left behind them, eked out by the recollections of their disciples; these proverbs and psalms which have been handed down by tradition and altered and edited and re-edited; these histories which contain errors of date and fact, and have been perhaps 'idealised' by the reflections of the circumstances and ideas of the writers' own times upon a distant past; these seeming narratives which may be allegories; and these would-be prophecies which may be histories; in which sense can these be said to be inspired? In no sense, to be sure!

The New Testament

Turning now to the New Testament, we find its trustworthiness as a historical document impeached so thoroughly by modern criticism that it would be difficult to find today a single Christian scholar of note who could endorse belief in its divine character.

For our present purpose it would be best to refer to the *Encyclopaedia Biblica* which is the most comprehensive and authoritative Christian work on Biblical problems—higher, textual and historical.

The views of the scholars who have contributed to the *Encyclopaedia Biblica* concerning the Old Testament are essentially the same as those of Dr. Kirkpatrick cited above. For them the book of *Genesis* is a composite narrative based on older records long since lost; the stories of the Patriarchs like Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, are legendary; the book of *Exodus* is a composite legend; the character of Moses and the origin of the Ten Commandments is legendary; the book of *Deuteronomy* is a composite and a considerably modified version of an older work; the *Psalms* is a composite book of doubtful character; the book of *Job* is

not a literary unity but a growth; *Jonah* is a Jewish midrash written after the Exile; *Isaiah* is the work of several authors; the book of *Daniel* is fabulous in character and was written during or after the happenings of the events which are foretold therein.

As to the New Testament, the following is a very brief summary of their conclusions.

The view hitherto current that the Gospels were compiled by Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, and appeared thirty or forty years after the death of Jesus, can no longer be maintained. The four Gospels were compiled from earlier materials which have perished. Even if we accept more conservative opinions which place the Gospels about 65 A. D. that would not, of course, make any material difference, nor affect the conclusions of criticism as to their contents. Some of their statements of facts are quite erroneous, and the data are often in direct contradiction to one another. The evangelists made it clear that they wrote with a "lack of concern for historical precision." The imperfection of Gospel accounts is everywhere manifest. The text must not be taken as a trustworthy guide to his (Jesus's) original meaning. It merely shows us what the evangelists or their predecessors believed him to mean. The situations in which the words of Jesus are said to have been spoken can not be implicitly accepted. Both St. Matthew and St. Mark seem to have read into the utterances of Jesus details borrowed from subsequent facts or controversies. The historical value of the third Gospel is lowered by evidence of the writer's errors and misunderstandings. In the fourth Gospel we find more ambiguities than in all the other three together. The records of the miracles in the fourth Gospel are all poetic developments. It is vain to look to the Church fathers for trustworthy information on the subject of the origin of the Gospels.

The Acts of the Apostles does not all come from a companion of St. Paul. It is the work of several hands. No statement merits immediate acceptance on the mere ground of its presence in the book.

According to Professor van Manen none of the *Epistles* attributed to St. Paul were written by him. Others, however, regard four out of fourteen epistles as genuine.

There are only nine passages in the Gospels, says the Rev. Dr. Schmiedel, which "might be called the foundation-pillars for a truly scientific life of Jesus."

The Rev. Dr. A.B. Bruce regards the Gospel account of Jesus as unreliable in many details. For instance, he shows that the Temptation is a symbolic representation of a spiritual experience; the story of the crucifixion is not pure truth, but truth mixed with doubtful legend; the night trial, the mocking, the incident of Barabbas, the two thieves, and the preternatural concomitants of the death are picturesque accessories of doubtful authenticity.

According to Dr. Schmiedel, the Gospel accounts on which the actuality of the Resurrection depends for its establishment, "exhibit contractions of the most glaring kind."

Finally, this is what we read in the *Encyclopaedia Biblica* with regard to the changes that continued to be made in the various books of the New Testament

(Continued on page 5)

EDUCATION IN MUSLIM COUNTRIES

By DR. MUHAMMAD NIZAMUDDIN,

Dean of the Faculty of Arts of the Osmania University at Hyderabad, India

Education, as we know full well is a sacred mission. It is a link between the individual and society and between man and God. It is the ornament of intellect and the food of the soul. It is the art of making a man sublime and bringing out all that is best in him to fulfil the purpose of creation. He who adopts that art is practising the noblest profession and should be given the highest place in society. It is the highest expression of human knowledge translated into action. It is the fountainhead of all human endeavour from which emanate all arts, sciences, philosophy and discoveries in the material and spiritual spheres. In short, it begins with the study of self, leads to the control of forces of nature and ends in the illumination of the soul and beatific vision. This whole argument can be summed up by the beautiful Sufistic expression in Arabic:—"He who knows his mind, verily he knows his Creator."

Today the Islamic world is faced with several problems. One of them being education, which is most vital for the well-being of all nations. Now we have to see in the light of Islamic teachings what are the essentials of religion and how far the Islamic peoples are adopting or deviating from them and what are the ways of reforming them.

Islam in the early days was one community; but it is not so today. It has spread far and wide and its adherents are found almost in all continents. They stretch across Africa, Asia and Europe, from the Atlantic to the Pacific and from Central Asia to Central Africa. They are over 350 million in number: that means the Muslims form one-seventh portion of the human race. There are 10-countries in which Islam is the State religion, viz., Morocco, Libya, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Jordan, Yemen, Iraq, Afghanistan, and Iran to which Pakistan may also be added. There are others under non-Muslim or State Governments, but comprising large majorities and important minorities as in Spanish Morocco, Algiers, Tunis, French West Africa, French Central Africa, Albania, Turkey, Yugoslavia, the Sudan, British East Africa, Eritrea, Ethiopia, the Soviet Union (24 million), China, India (40 million), Malaya, Indonesia and the Philippines. Thus the Islamic communities are spread all over the world.

The problem is, what should be the motive force for the connection of the Islamic communities which are scattered so widely over three continents and what should be the guiding principles and ethical and scientific precepts that should be adopted as the basis of education in the Muslim countries?

Faith or Reason, which should rule? Science or philosophy, which should bring happiness to man, and under these circumstances, which path should one select? Islam, as expounded through the Holy Quran, expects every Muslim to reflect on the workings of the forces of nature and so mould his life as to keep him on the straight path. Such being the purpose of the Holy Quran and the injunctions of the Holy Prophet (Peace be upon him) and the meaning of the faith, it cannot make distinction between what is called religious or secular education. The ideal

is that every effort to extend knowledge must serve the supreme purpose of self-realization, introspection and purification of the soul; but it has been the misfortune of the Muslim countries for over a thousand years that religion has been made a hand-maiden of politics. The result has been that life in each community is not uniform, and is unprogressive. Under the influence of the West, what we call modern education has been organized everywhere, but to speak the truth it has touched only the fringe of society and has not solved the basic problems.

If the Muslim communities are ever to present the character of a people attached in a single faith namely Islam, a first step that they need take is to bury their age-long differences and sectarian tendencies, keep aside their national emotions, transcend geographical boundaries and adopt the true tenets of internationalism which Islam enjoins—the brotherhood of man and the peaceful solution of intercultural problems.

Religion, insofar as it is a part of education is often being confused with morality. A characteristic of the modern attitude is neglect of the things of the spirit. There is in India an additional reason for this attitude:—the multiplicity of religions and the experiences of riots and suspicions in the name of religion. "Religions as they are taught and practiced today, and the liberator of Bharat, Gandhiji, "lead to conflict rather than unity." On this occasion the same great leader said, "Unless there is a State-religion, it is very difficult, if not impossible, to provide religious instruction, as it would mean providing for every denomination and they are so many."

There is a general unrest among the youth of India today. Their minds are unhinged on account of the impact of western ideas, scientific progress and political ideologies. The Muslims in India are in a strong minority of 40 millions and faced with many kinds of linguistic, social and educational problems. They are now adjusting themselves to the modern constitutional changes and living peacefully side by side with their Hindu brethren as the love of homeland impels them to unite. Likewise, Iran, Egypt, Morocco and several other countries are undergoing a crisis. So then they have also to adjust themselves to their environments and to think in broader terms.

Thus the Islamic peoples in other parts of the world are also faced with grave national problems and with economic, social and political turmoil, which I need not point out as they are self-evident.

This means that the representative educationalists of the world must put their heads together and evolve a plan by which modern education, side by side with the spirituality of Islam might reform the Muslim brotherhood afresh, and propel the energies, which are today acting in every country and in almost every faith, to convert mankind into a single brotherhood. Of all the religions, Islam comes much nearer to the ideal as it is a natural and scientific religion, and appeals to the intellectual strata of Europe and America equally.

I need not lay too great a stress on this idea, for, if only the Islamic world develops a common educational outlook, it may foster a mind such as may be a force for true democracy and a force for an abiding peace.

Education in the broadest sense should aim at the harmonizing of interest and effort and should ensure the full development of personality and preservation of life in evolving a higher state of society. If education really means the gradual adjustment of the individual to the spiritual possessions of the race, then the problem arises; how far our institutions in the Middle East, Near East, Far East, South East Asia and in other foreign countries are conforming to these standards. If the older nations look back to their spiritual and cultural heritage and neglect the modern scientific progress, I am afraid they are falling short of the modern demand of society and the intellectual development of the human race, which is the prime object of education. On the contrary, if they plunge into the abyss of materialism and become creatures of the machine age, the soul of those nations will become dead and cannot respond to the higher instincts of reason and morality. Therefore, a balance has to be struck wherein there is a healthy growth of the mind and the body, and a harmony between reason and intuition, between abstract philosophical dogmas and practical necessities of life. This should be our aim in education.

(Continued from page 4)

and bound by the Shariat, which manifests the will and command of the Almighty Allah. "And do not obey the bidding of the extravagant, who makes mischief in the land and do not act aright."

"You should not quarrel with rulers in administrative matters, except when you see *Kufr* (disbelief) from them".

Hazrat Abu Bakr said, "The strongest among you is weak, so long as I exact from them the due; and the weakest among you is strong so long as I do not restore to him his rightful claim. I am only a follower, obey me so long as I follow the truth, but if I go astray, set me aright." "Listen and be obedient to your Amir, unless he orders for any forbidden action...."

"In which case, submission is not obligatory."

"A Musalman has to listen and accept what the Amir says, whether he (Musalman) likes it or not, but when he is ordered to commit some sin, he should neither listen nor admit."

"The Musalmans should fulfil the conditions of the *Bait* offered to the Amir, and Allah will call upon them to explain their conduct regarding the trust."

A companion said to the Prophet, "If such (an Amir) is appointed over us, who does not follow your traditions and care for your directions, what is your instruction regarding them?" The Prophet replied, "Who does not obey Allah is not entitled to the allegiance of the people." "Even later day thinkers like Al-Mawardi admit that in case the Khalifah violates the Shariat, he cannot continue to hold the sacred office."

(Proceedings of Political Science Conference, 1950).

Note: Comments on the foregoing article will be gratefully published.

—Editor.

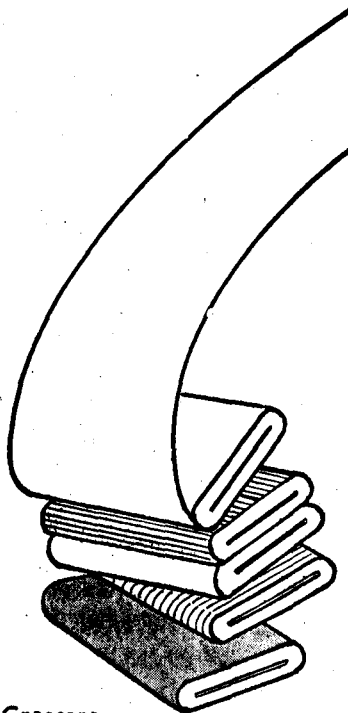


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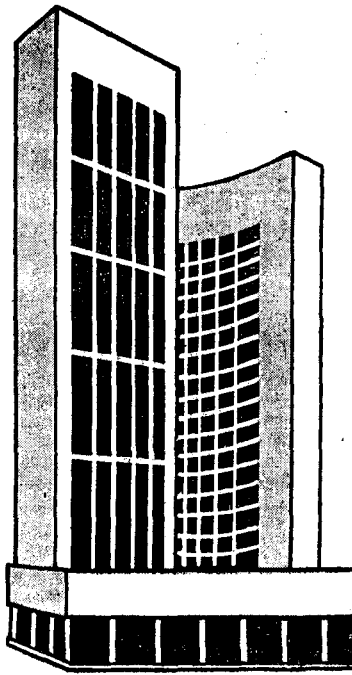


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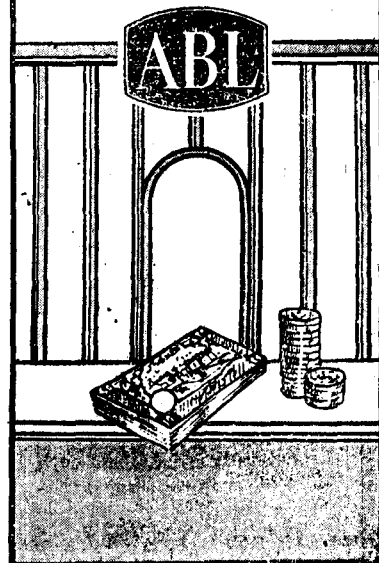


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