

# The Light

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## THUS SPOKE THE HOLY PROPHET

(peace and blessings of Allah be upon him)

Abu Harairah also reported God's Messenger as saying, "It is enough falsehood for a man to relate every thing he hears." Muslim transmitted it.

Ibn Mas'ud reported God's Messenger as saying, "There was no prophet whom God raised up among his people before me who did not have from among his people apostles and companions who held to his *sunna* and followed what he commanded; then they were succeeded by people who said what they did not practise and did things they were not commanded to do. So he who strives against them with his hand is a believer, he who strives against them with his tongue is a believer, and he who strives against them with his heart is a believer. Beyond that there is not so much faith as a grain of mustard seed." Muslim transmitted it.

Abu Huraira reported God's Messenger as saying, "If anyone summons others to follow right guidance, his reward will be equivalent to those of the people who follow him without their rewards being diminished in any respect on that account; and if anyone summons others to follow error the sin of which he is guilty will be equivalent to those of the people who follow him without their sins being diminished in any respect on that account." Muslim transmitted it.

He also reported God's

Messenger as saying, "Islam began as a small religion and will return to the state in which it began. Then blessed will be the few [who hold to it]." Muslim transmitted it.

He also reported God's Messenger as saying, "Faith will shrink back to Medina as a snake shrinks back to its hole." (Bukhari and Muslim.)

We shall mention the tradition from Abu Huraira, "Leave me as long as I have said nothing to you..." in the book on the rites of the Pilgrimage, and the traditions of Mu'awiya and Jabir, "A section of this people will continue..." in the chapter on the reward of this people, if God will.

Rabi'a al-Jurashi said: A heavenly visitant came to God's prophet, and he was told to let his eye sleep, his ear hear, and his heart understand. He said, "My eyes then slept, my ears heard, and my heart understood, and I was told that a lord built a house, prepared a feast, and sent one to issue invitations. Whoever responds to the one who invites him will enter the house, eat of the feast, and enjoy the lord's favour; but whoever does not respond to the one who invites him will not enter the house, or eat of the feast, and he will incur the lord's anger." He explained that God is the Lord, Muhammad is the one who delivers the invitation, the

(Continued on p. 2 col. 3)

### WE BELIEVE

(1) After the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) Allah has completely barred the appearance of a prophet, old or new.

(2) After the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) Jibreel can never descend and bring Prophetic Revelation (وحي لئوت) to any person.

(3) If Jibreel were to descend with one word of Prophetic Revelation (وحي لئوت) for any person, it would contradict the two complementary verses:

اليوم اكملت لكم دينكم  
(This day have I perfected your *Deen* for you.) (5 : 3)

ولكن رسول الله و خاتم النبيين  
(He is the Messenger of Allah and the Last of Prophets). (33 : 40)

(4) The Holy Prophet (Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) also said: "I am Muhammad and I am Ahmad and... I am *al-aqib* (the one who comes last) after whom there can be no prophet." (Al-Bukhari : *Kitabul Manaqib*)

(5) Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad never claimed to be *Nabi*. He exhorted his people to refrain from using the word *Nabi* for him. He further directed them to regard the word *Nabi*, in his writings, as deleted.

(6) Hazrat Mirza Sahib named his followers 'Ahmadi' after the Holy Prophet's *Jamali* (beatific) name 'Ahmad'.

(7) He proclaimed that no verse of the Holy Quran has been abrogated nor shall ever be abrogated.

(8) All the Companions of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and the Imams are venerable.

(9) It is spiritually conducive to our Faith to revere the revivalist Islamic missions of all *Mujaddids*.

(10) He is a Muslim who recites the *Kalimah* with sincere belief in *Tauhid* and *Khatmi-i-Nabuwat*.

# THE LIGHT

SATURDAY — NOVEMBER 1, 1975

## ONLY ISLAM CAN SAVE MUSLIMS

In these days, lying has become both science and art and it is meaningfully designated as propaganda. All the social techniques as Press, Platform, Radio and educational institutions which influence human behaviour purvey fictions and fantasies, myths and make-believes to formulate and perpetuate a particular attitude towards life. All such facts as will not suit a propagandist's book are travestied and mutilated and held up to ridicule. In short, the very virtue of veracity is stifled out of existence by a high-powered propaganda machinery. A sort of embargo is laid on truth in the exchange of informational data among nations. The suppression of truth on a cosmic scale has perverted all ethical values. The consequences are obvious. Every body is suspicious of every body. There is no peace and amity. Credulity is considered akin to stupidity. Skepticism passes for sagacity. This unnatural state of affairs has its fruits in social unrest and chaos. In any venture of social rehabilitation, the restoration of truth as a basis for a healthy society must get the first place. But this task cannot be accomplished by the political planners and social engineers who deal with the exterior of human society. They cannot inculcate love of truth. It must spring from within. No human agency by itself can bring about this consummation. It is the basic function of Religion to create love of truth and veracity and estrange one's mind from lies and falsehoods. Thus any scheme of New Order, which claims to build the world anew, must be based on Religion. By its insistence on the supremacy of moral ideas, Religion

gives rise to a standard of conduct. It also gives birth to a moral elite which takes care of ethical values. It facilitates moral living by giving a definite context to the vague and obscure notions of good and evil. It represses the evil and bridles the egotistical passions to enable men to bear the burden of social existence. In short, it is a training in social conduct. Thus mere readjustment or reshuffling of economic relationships on equalitarian lines or the enforcement of goose-step co-ordination through legislation does not bang the door on moral evils. Economic inequalities result from the brutal misapplication of economic laws, which in turn is the upshot of moral bankruptcy. Hence the rehabilitation of moral values must precede a genuine social reconstruction.

In the Round-Table of Religions, it is Islam alone which affirms life in all its bearings and provides a moral basis for it. There is a great testimony to the efficacy and adequacy of the Islamic ethics that is given by the authors of the Chamber's Encyclopaedia. They observe :

"That part of Islam which distinctly reveals the mind of its author is also its most complete and its most shining part — we mean the ethics of the Quran. They are not found, any more than the other laws, brought together in one or two or three Surahs, but like golden threads are woven into the very fabric of the religious constitution of Muhammad. Injustice, falsehood, pride, revengefulness, calumny, mockery, avarice, prodigality, debauchery, mistrust and suspicions are inveighed against as ungod-

ly and wicked, while benevolence, liberality, modesty, forbearance, patience, endurance, frugality, sincerity, straightforwardness, decency, love of peace and truth, and above all trust in One God and submission to His will are considered as the pillars of true piety and the principal signs of a true believer."

It is a tragic irony that the Muslims by their deviation from Islam have denuded themselves of the superb qualities and shining virtues which are succinctly mentioned in the foregoing quotation. They have forgotten that as the torch-bearers of Islam their mission was not merely to see or know the world through concepts or to indulge in vapid moralizings or pass venomous verdicts on one another. They were charged to make and remake the world by their pious behaviour and by propagating the Revealed Truth. Lo and behold! They themselves have not only become victims of a lying propaganda, but have adopted it as a camouflage for their progressive moral deterioration. Thus what they badly need is to return to Islam in all sincerity and re-christen themselves and build up a new real being to qualify themselves for the fulfilment of the Divine Promise

وكان حياءً لنا نصر المؤمنين

i.e. "And it was certainly due from Us to help the believers." (30-48)

If in this crisis-ridden age they fail to turn over new leaf in their book, they will become a mere ring of smoke.

(Continued from p. 2, col. 3)

house is Islam, and the feast is paradise. Darimi transmitted it.

Abu Rafi' reported God's Messenger as saying, "Let me not find one of you reclining on his couch when he hears something regarding me which I have commanded or forbidden and saying, 'I do not know. What we found in God's Book we have followed.'" Ahmad, Tirmidhi, Abu Dawud, Ibn Majah, and Baihaqi (in *Dalā'il an-nubuwwa*) transmitted it.

## The Conception of God in Islam and Christianity—VII

Love for God and God of Love

The Central Notion in the Holy Quran is not Justice but Divine Mercy

By Maulana G. A. Bashir

*Why in the Quran has God not been mentioned as the Father?*

Many Christians think that as, in the Quran, God has not been mentioned as Father of mankind, therefore His love for mankind cannot be the same as understood in Christianity. But this supposition is not correct, as we have already shown that the Quran enjoins love for God and tells us that, if we want to be loved by God, we have to better our conduct and follow the footsteps of God. We have to colour ourselves in His colour; and treat the whole of mankind as He does. All people, whether good or bad, belong to one humanity, and we have to consider them so. We are not allowed to consider a part of mankind as if they were animals. The Quran says: "The best of you in God's sight is he who is most God-fearing". It is not the nation, land or family relation which make us high or low, it is our own achievement by which we can be judged. No human being has the right to think himself better than another without personal achievements.

Why does the Quran not speak of God as father? It has got some reason. In the early books, perhaps, it was very difficult for the people to understand the relationship between man and his God. Therefore they used the expression "Father and Son" which does not give the true idea of God's relation to man. We all know that, although there is a strong tie between "father and son", that is not such that can be between man and God. Even the love which a "mother" shows towards her son is stronger than that between father and son.

What a father does for his son is far less than that which a mother does. The mother carries the child in her womb for almost nine months. The child has to thank its mother for its existence. For nine months the child is fed by her, and even after the birth she carries on her duties towards the child. What the father does is to provide the necessary means of living. Therefore the mother's love is more for the child than is the father's. If the mother is doing much more for the child, how can we express the love ties between God and mankind by the expression Fatherhood. It is not that God has

created us and has left us alone. He continues providing all the necessities of life. Before we were born He had already provided all that we should need. If He did not do so, we could not even breathe on the earth. After we are born, He does not leave us. He even provides us with guidance for our souls. This is the reason why, in the Quran, God has not been mentioned as "Father". The words which the Quran has used give the right idea of the relation between God and His creatures. We read in the chapter "al-Fatiha":

"Praise be to the Lord, the Creator and Sustainer of the worlds; the Merciful, the Gracious; the Master of the Day of Judgment" (1: 1-3). He is the Creator of all things which exist, not only the Creator but also the Sustainer. He provides for us all that we need without our request. He is Gracious; if we turn ourselves towards Him, He takes us in His loving arms. He is not Judge but Master of the Day of Judgment; He would forgive us and nobody can say why He did so.

When one fully realizes this, one cannot help saying:

"Thee alone do we worship, and Thee alone do we implore for help" (1: 4)

Thus a true servant of God is attracted towards Him, his Creator. This relationship could not be described by using the word "Father". We know that the father cannot do all that we need. We may expect so, but the power of the father is limited. Some fathers may be able to give necessary things to their sons, but not all.

*The Central Notion in the Quran is not God's Justice but His Mercy, Compassion and Forgiveness*

In conclusion, I should like to explain that it is not God's Justice which is the general theme of the Quran but it is God's Mercy. If we open the Quran, the first word used after the name of God is *Rahman* (the Merciful) and *Rahim* (the Compassionate). It is true that the Quran turns our attention in various ways to the object of our life, and again it points out that we have to think of the Hereafter and we have to work for that as the law of spirit is also working. Whatever we do, we shall get its fruits, good or bad. If we

don't follow the way of the spirit we will become spiritually blind and sick. But besides this, it does not let us down. God knows our weaknesses and His Mercy is prevailing over everything; therefore we need not despair. We must not think "Oh! we sinners and weak human beings cannot achieve much. Oh! we are lost". The Quran encourages us and helps us to keep standing and keep doing all we can. It is not the heaping up of good deeds which can help us, but it is the pure and sincere intention and God-fearing life which can help us. The Quran does not say that every success depends on our own efforts; but, as I have said, it is not the quantity of good works which counts, but the intention which lies behind the good deeds. To purify the intention is not impossible, and all human beings, whether rich or poor, healthy or sick, can achieve this alike, if they want to do so.

Every chapter of the Quran starts with the words *Bismillah al-Rahman al-Rahim* (In the name of God the Merciful, the Compassionate). This sentence occurs 113 times at the beginning of 113 chapters, and once in the middle of a chapter. This means that the revelation of the Quran and the advent of the Prophet of Islam is the manifestation of the two attributes of God—*Rahmaniyyah* and *Rahimiyyah* (Mercy and Compassion), and on these depends our salvation. We read in the Quran:

"The Merciful (God is He, Who has) taught the Quran" (55: 1-2). On the advent of the Prophet we read:

"We have not sent thee but as Mercy for the worlds" (21: 106).

*Verses of the Quran Emphasizing the Notion of the Mercy of God*

There are numerous verses in the Quran in which the Mercy, Compassion and Forgiveness of God play a great role. Some of these verses are quoted below:

"Certainly My Lord is Merciful and Most-loving" (11: 90).

"And your God is One God; there is no God but He, the Merciful, the Compassionate" (2: 163).

"But if they desist, then surely God is Forgiving, Merciful" (2: 192).

"Those who believed and those who emigrated and those who strove in the way of God, they surely hope for God's Mercy, and God is Forgiving, Merciful" (2: 218).

"And to God belongs whatever is in the heaven and in the earth. He forgives whom He pleases and punishes whom He likes. And God is Forgiving, Merciful" (3: 128).

"And whoever commits a sin, or wrongs his soul, and then asks forgiveness of God, he will find God Forgiving, Compassionate" (4: 110).

(Continued on p. 5, col 3.)

# Banking and Insurance in Relation to the Islamic Concept of Riba-III

OMAR FARRUKH (LEBANON)

A critical situation arises in connection with goldsmithery. Golden and silver ornaments or utensils should be exchanged for coins in equal weights, regardless of the workmanship involved (pp. 632-3).

A goldsmith came to Abdullah ibn Umar and said: "I make gold (ornaments) and sell (each ornament) for a sum of gold coins containing a little more gold than the gold in the ornament, the difference being the recompense for my workmanship. Abdullah ibn Umar advised him that the extra gold was not lawful. The goldsmith re-stated his case many times (to make his point of view clearer), and every time he received from Abdullah ibn Umar the same verdict of prohibition. Afterwards Abdullah ibn Umar went his own way saying: "a pound for a pound and a shilling for a shilling without any surplus. This is the pledge of our Prophet to us, and this is our pledge to you."

In Islam trading in non-existent commodities is invalid, such as, the fish to be caught; the agricultural produce to be grown and the merchandise to be manufactured. Though this rule is quite logical, it would seem sometimes too strict and, at the same time, harmful to the economic life, especially in the less prosperous years. Consequently this rule underwent certain modifications in course of time, especially in the case of agricultural products. Islam allowed the selling of fruits while still on the trees, provided they had ripened to the extent which makes their quantities easy to conjecture and, at the same time, safe from expected common plant diseases. If an expected or unexpected disease or a havoc overcame the fruits and wasted one-third of the conjectured quantities or more, the seller should refund to the buyer an amount proportional to the wastage (pp. 618-9).

Commodities that are usually counted, weighed or measured should not be traded at random, that is, in indefinite lots. This would leave the gain and loss undetermined perhaps too much, perhaps too little. Consequently, such trading would be practically gambling (pp. 623-6). Jobbing or speculation is, likewise, a type of gambling and is, therefore, prohibited.

There are in the Muwatta a few pages (p. 612) entitled *uhda* (res-

ponsibility, guarantee) and *aib*, (*uyub*-faults) which treat of something resembling insurance. Three examples are given below:

Sleeping partnership or joint venture (Arabic: *Mudarabah*; French: *abiotage*, accepted into English) is a type of partnership in which two partners (or parties) take part: one providing the capital, the other carrying on the trading. Gain is divided equally between the two partners. Loss would be sustained by the partner who provided the capital (p. 695).

When a proprietor of a piece of land with grown crop or fruit-borne trees leases it to a tenant, he is held responsible for the crop or the expected quantity of fruits. If a natural catastrophe befell the crop or fruits, and the devastation amounts to one-third of the expected produce or more, the leaser should refund to the tenant an amount equivalent to the loss incurred (p. 621).

## Modern Insurance:

Taking into consideration the Islamic concept of law, insurance may be equated with an agreement between two parties in which one gives a guarantee to the other regarding some property in possession of the other against its perishing, and raising starting degradation or deviating from its normal course of development.

Islam, as we have seen, admits some aspects of this guarantee. The only objection would be against life insurance which assumes, so to speak, a responsibility for the future of the human beings. Religiously, life insurance cannot be tolerated by Islam. The psychological effect of life insurance is also unpleasant; this idea has never found acceptance with me: to make a contract involving one's life for the material benefit of some others. The sooner the death of the contractor, the more benefit or, at least, the readier benefit others procure thereby.

## Modern Interest

Are interest and usury (*riba*) same things? Would interest on money for commercial enterprises be judged as different from interest on money for personal consumption? Would moderate rate of interest make any different from exorbitant rate?

My own impression is that Islam did not differentiate between the two

counterparts of these pairs. Moreover, it realised the great evil inflicted on the human character by usury. Usurers become devoid of all human sentiments. But would interest, carried on by an impersonal group or organisation, be, in this respect, different from usury practised by individuals?

Now, as a student of history, philosophy and religion, I shall try to place before you my estimation of the problem of interest and point of link between interest and usury; but the final decision will rest with those responsible for the religious side of our life. High Judges and experienced lawyers and juris-consults may prepare projects of different regulations and arrangements. But these projects would never become laws unless they are enacted by the Houses of Parliament, although some of the members of these Houses may not have any instruction in the legal sciences.

To begin with, modern banks deal also with merchandise and trade, their relations with their customers are based principally on the exchange of money with a surplus usually in their favour and sometimes in the customer's favour. That, this surplus mostly is the result of lapse of time, Islam does not tolerate it.

May or may we not consider the gains from banking to be in return for services which the individuals cannot render to themselves?

May or may we not consider that payment in different places or at different intervals, is of material use which needs be recompensed in one way or another?

May or may we not resort to the rule laid by Imam Ghazali (d. 505 A.H./1111 C.E.) that certain arts, sciences and practices have no bearing, positively or negatively, on religion.

May or may we not accept the opinion of Imam Abu Hanifa (d. 150 A.H./768 C.E.) that if the people at large did agree to an arrangement that would do them good or solve a problem of theirs, without being against any Islamic belief or practice, the arrangement may be allowed to continue?

Once more, I say that we here may state the facts and express opinions; but the enactment of laws is always the business of the House of Parliament.

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## Changing Views of the Uniqueness of Christ

By John Hick H. G. Wood Professor of Theology  
University of Birmingham

(Note : We are grateful to Mr. Zahid Aziz, Manchester, for sending us a cutting from *The Times*, London, dated October 11, 1975. It contains a thoughtful Article, which we publish for the delectation of our readers—Editor).

If all the major world religions are seen as ways of salvation, leading men ultimately to the same divine reality, what becomes of the uniqueness of Christ? If no one can come to God except by Christ how can men also come through Islam, Judaism, Hinduism, Sikhism, Buddhism...? These questions go to the heart of the most significant debate now taking place in Christian theology.

It was long taken for granted that Jesus claimed to be God incarnate, the Second Person of the Holy Trinity miraculously born on earth to live a human life; and that the traditional designation of him as God the Son incarnate accordingly derives from his own teaching. However in the light of present-day biblical studies it now seems extremely unlikely that Jesus thought of himself in any such terms.

The great christological sayings on which the traditional doctrine is most centrally based—"I and the Father are one." "He who has seen me has seen the Father" "I am the way, and the truth and the life; no one comes to the Father, but by me."—come from the Fourth Gospel; and it is no secret today that this a late document which differs from the three earlier gospels in being less of an historical record and more of a meditation about Christ from a theological standpoint achieved two or three generations after his death. Further, the author uses the technique of putting into Jesus's mouth long discourses which contrast strikingly with the parables and sayings of the earlier gospels. Thus a number of considerations have led most New Testament scholars today to doubt whether the historical Jesus uttered the speeches attributed to him in St. John's Gospel.

How then did the idea that Jesus was the Son of God enter the developing Christian tradition? It probably came with the title of messiah, the true king of Israel, who was to be God's human agent in inaugurating His reign on earth. It is not clear that Jesus himself adopted this title, but nevertheless it seems to have been the principal category by means of

which the early church understood his significance. And as messiah Jesus was believed to be of the royal house of David.

In this role he would inherit the metaphorical title "son of God", for in Israel (as elsewhere in the ancient near east) the king became "son of God" in being consecrated to his holy office. Accordingly the words attributed to the heavenly voice at Jesus's baptism are the coronation formula of Psalm ii : 7. As messiah was thus hailed as royal son of God, and later this poetic image hardened into prose as the metaphysical dogma that he was the pre-existent divine Son incarnate, of one substance with the Father, and thus the one and only mediator between God and man.

Who then was Jesus and what does he mean to us today? He was a man who was intensely conscious of God, living continuously in God's presence and finding his meat and drink in the doing of God's work on earth. His life was so transparent to the divine will that he could speak about the heavenly Father with authority, could proclaim His forgiveness, and could declare His claim upon men: and the power of life flowed through his hands in healing. He was so vividly aware of God that in his presence men and women were drawn by spiritual contagion into the conscious presence of God. In this way he was a saviour to many, and continues to be so today through the living memory of him passed down to us in the New Testament and within the Christian community.

All this is expressed by the traditional mythological language in which we are accustomed to speak of Jesus as Son of God, God the Son, God incarnate. It was natural that in the past Christians, reading their Bible literally, should at the same time understand and literally the poetry of their devotion to Jesus. To lay however we need to remember again the original meaning of the son of God title if we are not to be led to treat it as a literal premiss from which to draw the literal conclusion that there can be salvation only through Jesus, and therefore that God has discarded the large majority of His human creatures.

But what of the Christian mission to the world? Has this been a mistake? No doubt much of the nineteenth-century missionary movement was a mistake, for its religious intention was nullified by the fact that it was carried on the back of the politi-

cal and commercial imperialism of Christian West. But the basic policy of making the Church's memory of Jesus available to the world is not mistaken. For every great revelatory (Continued on p. 6, col. 3)

(Continued from page 3, col. 3)

"And when those who believe in Our message come to thee, say : Peace be to you, your Lord has ordained Mercy on Himself, so that, if any one of you does evil in ignorance, then turns himself to God and acts aright, He is certainly Forgiving, Compassionate" (6 : 54).

"But if they make thee a liar, say then : your Lord is of all-prevailing Mercy, but His punishment cannot be averted from guilty people" (6 : 148).

"And make not unrest on the earth, when it has been reformed; call on Him, fearing and hoping; surely the Mercy of God is nigh to those who do good" (7 : 36).

"My punishment afflicts whom I will, but My Mercy prevails over everything" (7 : 156).

"These are clear proofs from your Lord, and a Guidance and Mercy for those who believe" (7 : 203).

"Ask forgiveness from your Lord, and turn yourselves to Him. Surely my Lord is Merciful, Most-Loving" (11 : 90).

"If you would try to count God's favours you could not count them; Surely Allah is Most-Forgiving, Compassionate" (16 : 18).

"And thy Lord is Most Forgiving, Merciful" (18 : 58).

"Surely God is Most Kind and Merciful for the people" (22 : 65).

"And pray, My Lord forgive me and show Mercy and Thou art Most Merciful" (23 : 118).

"Say : O my servants who have wronged yourselves, do not despair of the Mercy of God; Surely God can forgive sins altogether; He is Most Forgiving, Merciful" (39 : 53).

From these verses we can easily draw the conclusion that the Quran teaches us that we should not despair, but that we ought to rely on the Mercy of God. Our duty is to try our utmost to follow the ways of the Lord, and, if we still fail, then we should not sit down and say, we cannot do any thing, we are surely lost. No, our Creator knows our weaknesses and, if we do not succeed in our efforts, but we are sincere in seeking after Him, then we shall certainly find Him. There can be no crime whatsoever which can stand in our way to the Lord. All sins can be nullified provided we turn ourselves towards Him. Therefore our motto should be :

"La taqnatu min Rahmatillah"  
(Do not despair of the Mercy of God).

## UNITY OF NATURE-I

By Mazher-ud-Din Siddiqui

All that we have said in the previous article underlines one basic and fundamental fact, namely, the essential unity that pervades all life, organic and inorganic. By separation and isolation we can get only a partial view of things leading to false perspectives. Thus, if we separate the organic from the inorganic, animals from men, nations from mankind in general, civilisations and cultures from the total pattern of which they form part, and life from death, we can only arrive at defective conclusions. It is only when things are seen as parts of an over-all plan of an underlying pattern that pervades them, it is only when we achieve wholeness of vision that problems can be solved and puzzles resolved.

Take for example, the history of nations. As Toynbee has said, you can not understand the industrial revolution in England, if you isolate it from the general pattern of European history. English history, taken in itself, may mislead you as to facts and their meaning. But place the British historical development by the side of French and German history and you may get a new picture. The meaning of facts may be changed. Similarly, European history can not be studied in isolation from Oriental and, particularly, Middle Eastern history, for the Greek civilisation which is said to be the parent of European culture may itself be traced to Oriental sources. The Greeks and the Persians form branches of the same stock and Greece and Persia had long contacts during the course of which the former learned much from latter. Similarly, much of Greek Science and philosophy was derived from Egyptian sources. It is said that Pythagoras was an Egyptian priest and certainly his pre-occupation with numbers lends colour to this theory. Similarly, Plato had travelled to Egypt and it is well known that Plotinus whose philosophy has had such tremendous influence travelled to the East with one of the Roman Emperors. The European renaissance in the fifteenth century can not be explained without the study of Arab Islamic influences radiating from Sicily and Spain. The modern history of Indo-Pakistan sub-Continent is closely linked with the rise of British industry and the introduction of the machine age in Europe. Thus cultures, civilisations, nations and races are interlinked.

What is knowledge, again, but the determination of connections between facts. Single, isolated facts heaped upon one another do not build up the structure of knowledge in any branch of learning. Facts are interconnected and interdependent as individuals. In Economics, if we know the selling price of one commodity at one time only, that knowledge does not give any clue to economic changes. It is only when we study prices in general, not of this or that commodity but of many commodities over a long period of time that we can arrive at an understanding of the factors that govern the change of prices. Similarly, the study of one political system at a single period of history does not constitute political science. The science of politics is really the knowledge of many political systems existing at different periods in their mutual interaction. History is inexplicable if we separate epoch from epoch and age from age. Any particular epoch of history taken in isolation, gives a very lopsided view of historical phenomena. Its full meaning and function can be understood only when it is studied in relation to the preceding age and as productive of subsequent events.

What is true of History, Politics and Economics is equally true of the theory of time and space. Spatial and temporal relationships are understandable only if we take a synthetic view of time and space. Zeno's puzzle seems insoluble if we take a discrete view of space and try to make up a distance by joining the divided parts of space. But space is one indivisible unity, otherwise it would be impossible for man to cross an infinity of points in a divided space. Time, again, becomes meaningless, if we divide moment from moment. No temporal magnitude is explicable except when taken as a whole. It is impossible to make a rigid separation of childhood, boyhood, youth and age. One state passes insensibly into another. What we call a crisis in the life of a nation does not arrive suddenly at one moment. Its causes and conditions lie in the past, accumulating and gathering force until they appear in a new form what we call an important occasion in the life of a nation is also a proof of its total disjunction from the past, for the past has contributed to bring it into

existence. Thus, moments of time merge and flow into each other until they reappear as periods, epochs, ages and occasions.

Take another case, that of religion. It is generally thought that religion is something out of the run of nature, that it is supernatural, that it has nothing to do with man's social, political or economic life. This, again is a wrong way of looking at things. Religion, Morality, Law, Economics and Politics, all arose out of man's natural needs. They form parts of a whole, call it by any name, nature or life. For the sake of convenience, we may divide them and treat each of them in separation. But at a deeper level they all merge into one another and form an undivided totality.

(Continued from p. 5, col. 3)

event is for all men and ought to be made universally known. Thus what is revealed of God through Jesus can help to deepen and purify other streams of faith.

We see an ideal example of the influence of Jesus outside Christianity in the life of the Mahatma Gandhi. He was deeply affected by Jesus's teaching and example, so that E. Stanley Jones described him as "more christianised than most Christians". Gandhi remained a Hindu, but his Hindu faith was enriched by his reading of the New Testament. And we as Christians can likewise gain from the revelations given to men in other traditions. Thus we may hope in the future for a relationship between the world religions comparable with that which has been developing between the different Christian denominations. Indeed one of Christianity's gifts to mankind may be the way in which its ecumenical movement points towards a larger world ecumenism.

Courtesy: "The Times", October 11, 1975.

## BOTTLED SUNSHINE

Challenge before the Youth

The fault with our younger generation is that they have caught the contagion of European thought and this has undermined our most basic and healthy traditional social patterns. No doubt we have to imbibe a lot from the West in term of technical and critical sensibility but what we have to eschew is their cold, feelingless, social patterns. The challenge is before the youth of our country.