A LIVING RELIGION and A LIVING PRAYER
Continued from previous issue

By: Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad
The Divine Reformer of This Age

A Glorious Prophet came into the world for the regeneration of mankind i.e. the Holy Prophet Muhammad (may God pour His choicest blessings upon him). And he called people to the path of the true and living God Whom the world had quite forgotten and forsaken, but in the present age he has been held in such contempt and disdain and is abused to such an extent that there is no parallel to it in any other period of history. Almighty God has, moreover, sent at the commencement of the fourteenth century of Hijra, a servant of His, i.e. the writer, that he may bear witness to the truth, glory and grandeur of the Great Prophet, and preach the unity of God and glorify Him, but he also has been abused and anathematised. This is the reason of the calamities that have befallen the world in this age. There is no fear of God in the hearts of men, there is much of vain talking and bubbling but as to real worth, the purity of heart, there is none. There is a great ado about society, and national considerations solely occupy the hearts which are totally devoid of every impression of the glory and majesty of God.

It should be further borne in mind that for proof of the blessing and fruits of Islam stated above, we do not refer the seekers after truth only to the past. Islam is not a dead religion, and we are not compelled to say that the blessings of Islam are left behind. It is in fact the unique excellence of the holy faith of Islam that its blessings are unbroken and continuous. It not only offered its blessings in the past but offers similar blessings even now. The world ever stands in need of blessings and heavenly signs, and it is absurd, to suppose that it stood in need of such signs in the past but can do without them now. Man is a weak creature, and walks blindly until he is shown traces of the heavenly kingdom; and his faith is a blind faith until he witnesses the wonderful signs of the existence and power of God. The signs shown in a previous age are of no avail in a later age unless they are renewed. The narration of stories of wonder displayed in the past can never produce the conviction which signs witnessed by a man himself can do. Every new century is the inauguration of a new era and the beginning, as it were, of a new world. The God of Islam. Who is the true God, therefore, manifests new signs in the commencement of every new century, especially when the world goes astray from probity and righteousness and is involved in darkness. He raises a vicegerent of the Holy Prophet in the looking-glass of whose nature the person of the Holy Prophet is imaged forth.

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OUR BELIEFS AND AIMS

The Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha’at Islam Lahore is an international Muslim association (founded 1914) dedicated to the presentation of Islam by literary and missionary means. It believes that the world today, both non-Muslim and Muslim, badly needs to receive the true, original message of Islam. This is the message contained in the Holy Quran and the life of the Holy Prophet Muhammad - a message which is today hidden under misconceptions and wrong popular notions.

We strongly believe that the mission of Islam is to attract the hearts and minds of mankind towards the truth, through rational arguments and the natural appeal of Islamic teachings. Islam does not seek political control over countries, nor does it use force to compel people to become Muslim or obey its teachings. In this age, the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (d. 1908), uncovered and stressed certain vital aspects of Islamic teachings which had been forgotten over the centuries. He reminded the world that Islam is:

International - God raised prophets in every nation, and Muslims believe in them all. Good people and truth may be found in any nation. No people are God's favourite, not even Muslims, except those who do the most good.

Tolerant - Gives full freedom to everyone to hold and practise any belief or religion. Preaching to be by argument and example, not force. Muslims must also respect internal differences of opinion.

Rational - Religion to be studied in the light of reason and the ever-growing knowledge of mankind. Blind following disallowed and independence of thought granted.

Non-sectarian - Every person professing the words 'There is no God but Allah, and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah' must be regarded as a Muslim. No religious board empowered to hold inquisitions into a Muslim's beliefs, or to expel self-professing Muslims from Islam.

Peaceful - Condemns all use of force except in unavoidable self-defense. Teaches Muslims to live peacefully under any rule which accords them freedom of religion.

Living - Worship is not a ritual, but provides living contact with a living God. God listens to man, answers his prayers, and speaks to His righteous servants even today as in the past.

Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad was a servant of Islam, with a mission to bring about the spiritual and intellectual triumph of the teachings of Islam over all forms of belief. He never claimed to be a prophet, but a God-sent mujaddid (renovator) within the long line of saints that arose in the history of Islam. He believed, and we believe, that after the Holy Prophet Muhammad - may peace and the blessings of Allah be upon him - no prophet can arise, whether a new one or one from the past.
27. Why are angels necessary to bring God's messages to man?

Just as light is needed as a medium for our eyes to see things, and air is needed to carry sound to our ears, similarly an agency is required to activate man's spiritual senses. The angels are that agency. They bring God's messages to the 'inner' eyes and ears of righteous people, and also cast good and noble thoughts into the 'hearts' of all people. But it is only the righteous who, because of their highly-developed spiritual senses, may be able to perceive the working of angels.

28. Is there any other important point Islam tells us about angels?

A most important point disclosed in the Holy Quran is that man has been given by God the ability to acquire knowledge of all things in the universe. The Quran further tells us that the angels, who put God's laws into action in the world, submit to man because of his great knowledge. In other words, man can use his knowledge of the laws of nature to control the world. So the Holy Quran disclosed many centuries ago that man can make the greatest progress in science and technology, because the angels, the agencies who automatically put God's laws into action in the running of the world, all submit to man.

29. Is there a key significance of belief in angels?

As stated earlier, every belief in Islam requires a Muslim to do something practical and positive, and belief in angels means that we should follow our good impulses and reject the bad ones. The Holy Quran also says that there exist 'devils' which put low, selfish thoughts in man's mind. However, even though they exist, the Quran does not require a Muslim to 'believe' in the devils, but in fact to disbelieve in them. This shows that in Islam 'belief' does not just mean believing in the heart but also acting in accordance with the belief.
PART I

Some time back we gave an account of the visions, dreams and revelations of the God-intoxicated Muslim saints and divinely-ordained Mujaddids. We did so to show that the language in which Allah talks to and holds communion with His chosen and ordained devotees, is radically different from the language in which man talks to man. It must naturally be so because the syntax and diction of the revelations and their contents must conform to the grandeur and sublimity of the Transcendental Source.

In our own times, the Mujaddid Azam (peace be upon him) received revelations presaging and envisaging the future events. He also published revelations which related to his spiritual elevation attained through annihilation in the love of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). Critics betrayed their own ignorance or rank rancour by making frivolous jibes at them. They weighed and measured the transcendental words of God by their meddling and middling intellect and poked fun at them because they superseded and eclipsed their own secular calculations.

We now give more instances from the lives of the universally-accepted saints who were favoured with communion with Allah. Their spiritual experiences were much above and beyond human comprehension. This fact alone establishes their sanctity.

Once Hazrat Shaikh Abdul Qadir Jeelani (God’s mercy be upon him) was asked to tell when he came to know that he was the chosen saint. He answered that as a boy of ten years, he went to school and was always accompanied by an angel in the form of man. He further said that when he asked him (angel) who he was, he told him that he was one of the angels and had been commissioned by God to remain with him as long as he remained in school. Hazrat Shaikh Abdul Qadir Jeelani (God’s mercy be upon him) also told his questioner that he had revelation from God saying: “O Abdul Qadir! Rise, We have extended to you our support and succour.” (Qalaid-ul-Jawahir; p. 167, Egypt).

It is reported about Hazrat Imam Jaafar (God be pleased with him) that he said: “A divine revelation is the distinguishing attribute of the Elect of God. It is the reprobates who draw conclusions without revelation.” (Taz-karat-ul-Aulia-Attar).

It is said of Hazrat Aways Qarni (God’s mercy be upon him) that although he had never met the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), yet he was spiritually nourished by the prophetic blessings. Hazrat Rabiah Basri (God’s mercy be upon her) held communion with Allah and Allah answered her questions. About Hazrat Ibrahim (God’s mercy be upon him) it is on record that whenever the doors of the unseen knowledge were thrown open to him, he used to be filled with such ecstasy that he used to say: “Where are the worldly Kings at this time? If they could have a glimpse of the affairs of the spiritual realm, they would feel ashamed and would damn their regal panoplies”. He also said: “In a dream I saw Jibreel holding a book in his hands. I asked him what he was writing. He said that he was recording the names of the friends of God. When I asked him if he would include my name therein, he replied that I was not of them. To this I replied that I also was a friend of God. After a short time Jibreel told me that he had been just commanded to write my name first.”

Hazrat Bayazed Bistami (God’s mercy be upon him) said: “When Allah endowed me with lofty indifference to the world and its temptations, He illumined me with His radiance. He vouchsafed to me the knowledge of the divine mysteries and secrets. He unfolded to me His divine mysteries and secrets. He unfolded to me His divine grandeur. Then I saw all with an eye of certainty. Then it flashed upon me that the whole devotion emanated from Him and not from me. Then I prayed to God and asked Him what that signified. Then God revealed to me. ‘I am All-Per-vading. Although you perform righteous deeds, yet it is I, Allah, Who endow you with power and strength to do all that.’”

Hazrat Bistami said: “When I abandoned earthly knowledge, Allah out of His divine abundance granted me knowledge of eternity and by His surpassing grace, planted an astral tongue in my mouth and illumined my eyes by His radiance. Then I said: ‘O God! As I talk to You through Your graces, I long to enter Your luminous land without the secular self.' To this Allah replied: ‘Now abide by Shariah in all earnestness and do not exceed the bounds of its ordained prohibitions and permissions. Then and then alone I (Allah) will reward your spiritual endeavours. Now ask for what you desire.'” Hazrat Bayazed at this stage said: “I long for You Allah as You are above all.” Then Allah said: “As you are Mine. I am yours. Then I (Bayazed) said: ‘Keep me dedicated to Yourself and keep me away from the false idols. For a short time I received no reply. Then I was given the crown of miracles. I was also equipped with astral wings with which I flew and surveyed many spheres and witnessed His wondrous works. Then I was told that my wish was His wish.’

It is stated in “Tazkiraatul Aulia” that Hazrat Bayazed held audience with God seventy times and held communion with Him.

Hazrat Junaid Baghdadi (God’s mercy be upon him) said: “For thirty years God spoke through the tongue of Junaid. Junaid had to say it and even the people did not know it.”

Ibn Atta says: “When a curtain between human minds and the Omniscient God is lifted, it symbolizes a glimpse of prophethood.”

Abul Hassan Kharqani (d. 424 H.) says: “When you see yourself with Allah, it is a state of fulfillment. When you see Allah with you, it is a state of annihilation. When you see Allah and do not see yourself, it is a state of survival. A sage is one who receives his knowledge from God direct and does not derive his knowledge from others.”

Hazrat Junaid Baghdadi wrote of Haz-
rat Shibli saying that in the world, he was The Eye of God. (Tazkiratul-Aulia).

Hazrat Abul Hasan says: "I heard the Almighty saying: "If you come to Me with a sorrow in your heart, I will grant you joy. When you cut yourself adrift from the world and lose yourself in Me, the elements of wind and water will be at your beck and call." (Tazkiratul Aulia-Sheikh Attar). Hazrat Abul Hasan further said: "When I began to hold communion with God, I was purged of all desire to talk to any human being."

Hazrat Mujaddid Alfani (God's mercy be upon him) claimed to be Mujaddid through revelation because he said that it was revealed to him by the word of God that one thousand years after the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) there would begin an era when Hāqeegat-i-Muhammadi (Muhammad's Reality) would soar from its place and would integrate itself with the Reality of Kaabah. Hāqeegat-i-Muhammadi would then be designated as Hāqeegat-i-Ahmadi and would symbolize the sublime manifestation of the Omnipotent Allah.

PART II

We give some more instances of the revelations wherein the ordained and other saints and sages were vouchsafed elevated titles and exalted ranks. The language of their revelations is out of the ordinary. There is majesty in their diction. The recipients spoke as heavenly transmitters to broadcast the communion they had with God and spelled out such narratives as only religious-minded personages could make out. They in their times did face opposition on that account. Their words were distorted and misinterpreted by their opponents who were allergic to their grand Claims. But these hostile tactics gradually faded out of memories. Now no sane and sincere Muslim confuses the God-intoxicated saints' claims and revelations with an attempt at deviation from the belief in the finality of Prophethood. It is because no devotee can attain spiritual elevation unless he channelizes his devotions through his burning faith in Khatmi-Nabuwat. Hazrat Mirza Sahib (peace be upon him) faced opposition when he, under the divine command, proclaimed his rank as the Promised Messiah. The fulfillment of his prophecies and the tragic end of his inveterate enemies almost extinguished the fire of opposition. When he departed, the erstwhile enemies showered encomiums on him for his munificent services to Islam. They lauded the majesty of his pen which silenced the batteries of the Christians and the Arya Samajists.

After Hazrat Mirza Sahib (peace be upon him) Hazrat Maulana Noor-ud-Din (God be pleased with him) came to the helm of the Jamaat's affairs. In the words of the Hazrat Mirza Sahib himself, Hazrat Maulana Sahib is the greatest authority on his status and claims. It was a period of normalization which ended in 1914. Thereafter Extremist Section tried to boost itself by attributing such unwarranted exaggerations to the Holy Founder as kindled the ire and fire of the enemies who had previously gone into hiding. The Lahore Jamaat met the attempts at sabotage. But the Extremists' tactics evoked and provoked opposition which continues to increase in intensity. Basing their hostility on the concoctions of the Khilafatists, the enemies continue to misrepresent the revelations received by the Hazrat Mirza Sahib, and totally forget that in the past there were ordained Mujaddids and saints who also had received revelations which in tempo and temper are identical with those of Hazrat Mirza Sahib. With a view to driving our point home we recount some more instances for a doubter in pursuance of the Quranic formula: HAZRAT MOHIYUDDIN IBN ARABI'S CLAIM TO SPIRITUAL ASCENSION

In his epoch-making book Fatoohat-i-Makkiah page 285, Hazrat Ibn Arabi writes: "The saints of Allah receive Wahy (Revelation). This Wahy takes different forms. Sometimes, the saints find its impact on their thoughts, sometimes it enlivens their feelings. Sometimes it illumines their minds, sometimes they see it written before them. Many saints experience Wahy in the form of a written word. For instance Abu Abdullah Naseeb Alban and Nafi Ibn Mukhlas received written revelations through the revelation-bearing angel. When they awoke from sleep, they found something on paper, whose distinctive make was such as it could be read from every side. When they turned over the leaf, the written word also turned". The Shaikh says that he had seen such a book himself. It had descended on a saint in that form. Its writing contained a promise Hazrat Ibn Arabi says that when the servant of God receives revelation in a particular manner, that manner is from God and it is not known even to the revelation-bearing angel. But the people refuse to accept it. The story of Prophet Moses (peace be upon him) and Hazrat Khizr points to this fact. Prophet Moses (peace be upon him) did not accept Khizr's word because he himself was prophet and prophets always receive their revelations directly. As the prophets are assigned Sharia, the agency of an angel is imperative to free the true nature of revelation from the least vestige of doubt.

In the same book (page 364) Hazrat Ibn Arabi says: "Angel descends on a Prophet as well as on a saint. But the nature and manner of descent in both the cases is different. In the case of Prophets and Apostles, the angel comes in person. But in the case of saints, the descent takes place through a strict and total obedience to the commands proclaimed by the Prophet. But the angel's presence is not felt in comprehension. Sometime, the angel brings glad tidings to the saint. In this regard, the Holy Quran says: 'And for those who say 'Our Lord is Allah' and then remain steadfast, the angels descend on them, saying: 'Fear ye not, nor grieve; and rejoice in the Garden that you were promised.' (41-31) IMAM GHAZALI

Imam Ghazali says: "There is one difference between a Wahy (revelation) sent to a Prophet and Wahy (revelation) sent to a saint. In the case of a Prophet, the angels descend: But in the case of a saint, only the revelation comes. The angel does not descend."

Hazrat Shaikh Akbar does not agree with this view. He says that Imam Ghazali had neither such experience nor aptitude for this experience, consequently he did not discern malak-ul-Illam (The revelation-bearing angel). This is why he identified the angel's descent with the Prophet continued on page 12
Disaffection spreads among Beduins

The main plank of this propaganda, as already observed, was given a tinge of religion. To the disaffected nucleus were added as many others as the agitators could lay their hands on. To create disaffection among the Beduin tribes, it was dinned into their ears that all the high offices of the State were monopolized by the Quraish. When it was a time of sacrifice, of undergoing the privations of the battlefield and of spilling blood - so preached the agitators - the Beduins were seen in the forefront. To the strength of arm of these brave tribes was due all glorious conquest on many a field. When, however, it came to the distribution of government offices, the Beduin was conspicuous by his absence and the Quraishite was all in all. There was apparently much force in the argument. It was a fact that the Quraish had almost a monopoly of high offices of the State; but it was equally a fact that the Quraish alone had the requisite qualifications properly to fill those offices. The Quraish were admittedly the brain of the nation and, however precious the strong arm of the Beduin might be on the field of the battle, it was a strong head that was needed in an administrator, and this the brave dweller of the desert did not possess. Nevertheless, the Beduin was shown only one side of the picture: that he was exploited by the Quraish and, unaccustomed as he was to any subtle thinking, it was but natural that he should feel this as a personal wrong. The propaganda succeeded. A wave of discontent was set in motion among the Beduins.

Deportation of Abu Dharr

Among the companions of the Prophet there was one, Abu Dharr; a man of retiring temperament and something of a hermit. He was one of the early converts to Islam and it was a hobby with him vehemently to denounce riches as anti-Islamic. In Damascus, where the Muslims possessed abundance of wealth, he was seized with one of these fits and began to preach against it. Worldly wealth, he argued, was meant only to be spent on charitable objects and was in no way to be hoarded. Gradually his views on the point reached the extreme limit and he would denounce all accumulators of wealth as fodder of hell. He based his verdict on the Quranic verse: "Those who hoard gold and silver and do not spend it in Allah's way, announce to them a painful chastisement" (9:34). Such unhinged effusions created a stir in society and there was fear of a breach of the peace. Consequently, the Governor, Mu'awiyah, sent Abu Dharr to Madinah. The Caliph in vain argued with him that his conclusions from the verse in question were wrong and that, beyond the prescribed tax of zakat, people could not be forced to part with their wealth. He went on proclaiming his own views and, there being apprehension of trouble in the capital itself, the Caliph sent him off to a place called Rabdah, where he died two years later. This afforded another propaganda-point for the agitators. The removal of Abu Dharr merely in the interest of public peace was depicted as an oppressive deportation of a saintly man by the Caliph.

Burning of unauthentic copies of Holy Qur'an

Islam had already spread far and wide. People of diverse nationalities and languages had joined the fold. In Arabia itself, there was a variety of dialects with differences in pronunciation. This had resulted in a corresponding variety of Quranic recitations. In one part, a particular word was pronounced in one way; in another, in a different way. The Prophet had himself permitted these slight variations of pronunciation according to local dialects owing to lack of education among the people. But such freedom in recitation was not necessary for foreigners. Being utter strangers to the language, to them all pronunciations were equal. If they could pick up one, they could pick up another with equal ease. In the interest of uniformity, it was desirable to have the same pronunciation. In Arabia itself, the Prophet's permission was only a temporary measure and was confined only to pronunciation. The script was to be the same everywhere. It seems, however, that people extended the permission originally granted by the Prophet from pronunciation to script as well, and the varieties of pronunciation found their way into writing. Thus there sprang up copies of the Qur'an with differences in script, and in the academies that were established during the rule of 'Umar a variety of recitations were followed. Then there arose a third necessity. In the outlying parts of the empire, there were no standard copies of the Holy Book with which all copies made in those parts could have been compared. Under these circumstances it was desirable that there should be some arrangement to standardize the text of the Qur'an throughout the world of Islam. Of such a standard text there was but one volume, the one made under the orders of Abu Bakr; as previously discussed. This volume was now in the hands of Hafsah. The Caliph called a council of the most prominent companions, and it was decided with one voice that other copies of the one in Hafsah's possession should be made and placed in the various centers of the empire to serve as standard versions. To carry this out, a committee was appointed under whose supervision fresh copies were made and one placed in each one of the big centers of the Muslim world. At the same time, to avoid discrepancies, all the unauthentic copies, the product of individual efforts, were burnt. All this, as already said, was done under the supervision and according to the instructions of a committee duly appointed for the purpose. And as a matter of fact, in thus preparing a standard version, the Prophet's own idea had been carried into effect. The Prophet himself, though he allowed variety in recitation as suited to the convenience of various dialects, maintained strict uniformity so far as the script was concerned. It was indeed a great service to Islam to take measures to preserve the original script used by the Prophet's amanuenses. Several copies were consequently made from the standard volume prepared in Abu Bakr's time but even this would, at best, have been a half measure
had not the unauthentic versions been absolutely obliterated for, in the presence of these, confusion must again have arisen. This second measure, the burning of the unauthentic copies, was thus equally a service to Islam. Yet even such a commendable work did not fail to afford the tongue of malice material for pushing forward its own propaganda. The mischiefmongers raised their hands in horror that an act of great sacrilege had been committed. A hue and cry was raised that the Caliph had caused the sacred volume to be burnt and people far removed from the capital, when presented with such half-truths, naturally felt excited. Whatever it was, religious or sacrilegious, it was not the work of ‘Uthman alone. It was the work of the whole body of responsible Muslims duly met in council. But such small scruples did not trouble the agitator, so long as he had something with which to rouse the ignorant masses against the Caliph.

Mischief started

Egypt was the headquarters of this movement aiming at the overthrow of ‘Uthman and thereby causing disruption within the house of Islam. From there, Ibn Saba carried on his propaganda and gained converts in several other parts, notably in Basrah and Kufah. In Madinah, the capital, Ibn Saba found barren soil for his propaganda. He could entice only two men there, Muhammad ibn Abu Bakr and Muhammad ibn Abu Hudhaifah. They were both young men who had a personal grudge against ‘Uthman’s administration. While in Egypt they had both quarreled with the Governor, ‘Abd Allah ibn Sa’d, the Caliph’s foster-brother. When Ibn Saba reached Egypt and started his agitation, he found easy victims in these two aggrieved youths. It was thus that they caught the contagion. Things in Kufah moved fast. The ring-leaders now began openly to condemn the Caliph and his officials. On one occasion when the Governor was holding one of his usual social gatherings, a young man in the course of talk expressed the wish that the Governor might come in possession of some lands, hinting thereby that he would then be in a position to patronize his friends. The accomplices of Ibn Saba who were also present seized this opportunity to kick up a row. "Do you wish to see others take possession of our lands," they exclaimed and fell upon the youth and well-nigh killed him and his father. Such a scene in the Governor’s presence amounted to open flouting of his authority. The matter was reported to the Caliph who ordered these men to be deported to Syria where, he expected, Mu’awiyah might with his usual tact cure them of their seditious tendencies. Ten men were thus exiled, including one Ushtar. Mu’awiyah tried his best to bring them round but to no purpose. Consequently, he packed them off to another place at a safer distance, where they were kept under surveillance. In the meantime, Sa’d, the Governor of Kufah, had come to Madinah to confer with the Caliph. The seditionists welcomed the opportunity as a god-send, sent back for their exiled comrades and stirred up general opposition. When Sa’d returned, accompanied by one servant, they barred his entry to the town and killed his attendant. The Governor, consequently, retraced his steps to Madinah. Now this was open insurrection and called for rigorous measures. ‘Uthman, however, was too meek and, rather than give exemplary punishment to the ring-leaders, he conciliated them by appointing another Governor, Abu Musa Ash’ari. Arriving at Kufah, Abu Musa made the people renew their oaths of allegiance to the Caliph, but the embers of mischief kept smouldering under this seeming tranquility.

Enquiry into grievances

The influence of the seditionists was gradually on the increase. The most effective weapon in their hands was to bring the Caliph’s governors into disrepute. This was a matter in which the ignorant masses could easily be duped. Even Madinah was affected by the poison and tongues began to wag freely. Day in and day out, many complaints poured into the capital from Basrah, Kufah and Egypt—of course, all fabricated in pursuance of a widespread conspiracy. This constant influx gave the propaganda some semblance of reality and even some of the companions, having no means to ascertain the truth for themselves, began to entertain a suspicion that there must be something really wrong with the Governors. They approached the Caliph to remedy the evil, but he said that according to his reports the governors were working well. A council was consequently held and it was decided that reliable men should be sent to Basrah, Kufah, Damascus and Egypt, who should, after due enquiry there, report on the matter. ‘Abd Allah ibn ‘Umar, Usamah ibn Zaid, Muhammad ibn Muslim and ‘Ammar ibn Yasir were selected for this mission. Of these ‘Ammar, who was deputed to Egypt, was so taken in by mealy-mouthed propagandists of Ibn Saba that he himself was caught in their net and never returned to submit his report. The reason seems to be that the Governor of Egypt was not popular with the people and, moreover, the Sabaites were too clever for ‘Ammar, who believed everything they told him as gospel truth. The other three deputies, however, were men of position and of independence of character. After thorough enquiry on the spot they reported that the charges were baseless.

Governors’ conference

As a further precaution the Caliph sent word to all parts, informing the people that at the following Pilgrimage season, all Governors would be present and whoever had any grievance might put it before the Caliph. This was the utmost that ‘Uthman could do to remove public grievances. Trusted men had made searching enquiries and now by proclamation a general invitation was issued to anybody and everybody to put up complaints during the Pilgrimage. The Pilgrimage came and all the Governors collected. But there was no one with a grievance. The reality of the matter was that, as reported by the enquiry commissioners, there was no oppression by the governors anywhere. At last the Caliph called a Council of all the Governors and other prominent men to advise ways and means to put an end to this mischief. The unanimous counsel offered him was to deal firmly with the ring-leaders and to make examples of them. This, however, was the last thing that a man of ‘Uthman’s gentle nature would
agree to. He would on no account see a Mughil’s blood shed or a disturbance caused among Muslims. Therefore nothing came out of the conference to check the tide of sedition. On departure Mu’awiya apprized the Caliph that he sensed serious mischief brewing and begged that either he might be permitted to send a detachment to serve as the Caliph’s body-guard or that the Caliph might accompany him to Damascus. Both offers were rejected. How could he quit the place, replied the Caliph, where the Prophet’s earthly remains lay enshrined? Nor would he, for personal safety, burden the public treasury with the upkeep of a body-guard.

Seditionists gather at Madinah: Shawwal 35 A.H. (March 656)

The Caliph had summoned the agrieved to meet him during the Pilgrimage when Governors would also be present. Taking advantage of this, the seditionists had made a plot of their own. It had been arranged that, when at the appointed time the Governors left their respective provinces for the capital, large bodies of people should in their absence start from Basrah, Kufah and Egypt, and simultaneously reach Madinah, thus bringing pressure to bear upon the Caliph, either to dismiss his Governors or to abdicate. Should he refuse both, resort was to be had to the sword. Consequently as the Governors under the Caliph’s instructions left for Madinah at the Pilgrimage season, the seditionists, taking advantage of their absence, set about carrying out their own prearranged scheme. But their preparations were still going on when to their dismay the Governors returned to their respective headquarters after having conferred with the Caliph, as described above. Thus was their first attempt baulked. The following year, however, they made the necessary arrangements beforehand. Under the pretext of the Pilgrimage, they formed caravans of their own and left their respective centers, Basrah, Kufah and Egypt. Arriving at Madinah, they encamped there in separate places. When informed of the arrival of these bands and their designs, the Caliph, in the course of an address from the pulpit, sounded a note of warning to them. "They want to put an end to me," he observed, "but they must remember that if they raise their hands against me it will lead to a conflagration among the Muslims and they will themselves have to repent." The people of the capital consequently took up arms to defend the Caliph. This came as a sore disappointment to the conspirators, who were under the impression that the Madinities were also discontented with the rule of Uthman and expected no opposition from them. The ringleaders, seeing that they could not force their way into the town with the whole population up in arms against them, thought of another stratagem. The idea was somehow to get into the town since, once they were inside, the Madinities would not be in a position to oppose them. They would thus have the town and the Caliph at their mercy. To effect this, therefore, they waited in depreciation on the Prophet’s widows and told them that they wanted nothing more than the presentation of certain grievances to the Caliph, asking him to recall the Governors. The trick, however, was seen through and they were told that their explanation was not acceptable. And clearly enough, anybody could smell that the mischief was far too serious. If it were a case merely of a few grievances, how was it that bands from three different places in different directions had arrived simultaneously? Obviously, it was according to a pre-arranged programme, a set plot. Disappointed in that quarter, the conspirators turned to another. They approached ‘Ali from whom they had every reason to expect a good reception. In his propaganda, Ibn Saba had been advocating the cause of ‘Ali as the rightful heir of the Prophet and they expected, judging human nature from their own point of view, that the Prophet’s cousin would accord them a hearty welcome. They had sadly misjudged him, however. ‘Ali was too noble a soul to entertain any such sordid schemes. To their disappointment, they found that ‘Ali would be the first to Unsheathe his sword in the Caliph’s defence. There were yet two quarters left to try. Like ‘Ali, the conspirators had in their propaganda set up two other candidates to the Caliphate. The Basrites were for Talhah and the Kufites for Zubair. Consequently, in time of need, they turned to their respective candidates for help. There too they met with scornful rebuff. These exalted companions of the Prophet were far too noble for any such meanness. Thus disappointed in every quarter, the conspirators resorted to a more ingenious hoax. Expressing regret at their conduct, they simply requested the recall of the Governor of Egypt and the substitution of Muhammad ibn Abu Bakr. The Caliph, in his extreme gentleness of nature, rather than call them to account for their seditious activities, acceded to their request and placed the appointment order of their nominee in their hands. Taking this document with them, all three bands left the capital, pretending to be thoroughly satisfied. This was only the first act of the tragedy.

Seditionists’ entry into Madinah

The people of Madinah breathed a sigh of relief. The conspirators were gone and the crisis, it seemed to them, was over. Normal activities were resumed. But they were soon undeceived. Only a few days had passed when to their bewilderment, all three bands reappeared at one and the same time and took the town by surprise. ‘Ali with a few others went to them to find out the reason. They produced a letter under the seal of the Caliph addressed to the Governor of Egypt, containing instructions that as soon as the malcontents reached Egypt, they Should be put to death or otherwise punished and also that he should consider his dismissal order as null and void. This letter, they said, they had intercepted, when on its way to Egypt by the hand of a particular servant of the Caliph. ‘Ali at once saw through the whole game. How was it, he asked, that the courier with the letter was on his way to Egypt whereas all the three bands were back simultaneously? The roads to Basrah, Kufah and Egypt led in different directions. The return of the Egyptian band could be understood, but how could that of the other two, at one and the same time, be explained? The spot where the letter was said to have been intercepted was far off from Madinah and in that short interval of time it was an obvious physical impossibility for word to reach the other two bands already at so many days distance from the capital. The plan in reality was this. The conspirators on their first arrival
found all Madinah ready in arms to oppose them, should they attempt to force their way into the town. To lull them into security, they went back with loud protestations of their entire satisfaction. They only wanted to put the Madinites off their guard, to return under some other pretext and take them by surprise. This other pretext was supplied by this forged letter. If it had been a genuine interception, only the Egyptian band could possibly come back with it. The fact that the other two also reappeared and at the same time clearly shows that the whole thing was prearranged. They had gone in different directions and, if they had wanted to communicate the news to the bands of Basrah and Kufah, the Egyptians could have done it only by way of Madinah. But by the time they arrived in Madinah, the other two should have reached their respective destinations. It was thus physically impossible for all the three to reassemble at the same time except by pre-arrangement. The whole thing thus was a huge hoax. The ringleaders forged the letter and it was agreed that at a particular time all three bands would turn on their heels and reach the capital at the same time. The letter, it is contended, bore the Caliph’s official seal. There is nothing impossible in this. A counterfeit seal could easily have been made. This exactly was the suspicion expressed by ‘Uthman himself when the matter was put up before him. The allegation that the courier was one of the Caliph’s servants was also a fabrication, as the servant was never produced as a witness. The Caliph demanded that to prove the charge they must produce witnesses; but they were not able to present a single one. Another conjecture is that perhaps the letter was written by Marwan without the Caliph’s knowledge. If so, at least that servant should have been produced as a witness and the whole thing would have come to light. This was not done. The absence of any witness, even of the alleged courier, is proof positive that neither the letter was genuine, nor the seal, nor the story that it was found on the person of a courier. If circumstantial evidence can be relied upon, surely there is in this case overwhelming evidence to lead to the conclusion that the whole thing was a fabrication, a mere pretext to return and capture the capital unawares. When confronted by ‘Ali with the most relevant question as to how it was possible for all the three bands to reach Madinah simultaneously, the conspirators simply replied: “The Caliph’s seal is there and that is enough.” ‘Ali took the ringleaders to the Caliph but their behavior towards the venerable companion of the Prophet was most insolent. ‘Uthman affirmed on solemn oath that he had neither written the letter nor knew anything about it. The conspirators pointed to the seal. The Caliph pleaded complete ignorance of how it came to be there. Had there been not a shred of other evidence, the solemn oath of a man of ‘Uthman’s rightousness should have sufficed for conviction that in this matter the hands of the Caliph were absolutely clean. In reply to his denial, however, the conspirators resumed their insolence. "Whether you have written this letter or whether someone else has written it, in both cases you are unfit for the office of the Caliph and you must abdicate." "Abdicate I will not," replied the aged Caliph. "How can I throw off the mantle which God has put on me. Tell me where I am wrong and I am open for correction." The conspirators repeated their demand. "It is now too late for correction," they said. "There are only two alternatives now - either you must abdicate or here is the sword to make you abdicate or to finish you with." To this insolent threat the aged Caliph replied with characteristic calmness and gentleness: "As to death, I have no fear of it and consider it the easiest thing. As to fighting, if I wished such a thing, there would today have been thousands here to fight for me. But I cannot find it in my heart to be the cause of shedding a drop of Muslim blood." Thus the curtain dropped on this painful scene of insolence to old, unprotected monarch of four kingdoms. The seditionists rose and went away with ominous determination in their looks.

The Caliph is maltreated and imprisoned in his house

The town was in the hands of the seditionists. The Caliph and the companions, nevertheless, were so far free to attend the mosque for daily prayers. Once in the mosque, the Caliph rose to address a few words to the people, but he was not allowed to speak. Dust was thrown on his face and his supporters were thrust aside. The ringleaders made it a point not to let the Caliph say a word to the public. They knew fully well that if the whole truth about the forged letter and the plot were disclosed, their own dupes would desert them. Then came Friday and the congregation prayer. The Caliph as usual stood on the pulpit and addressing the seditionists, reminded them of the Prophet’s curses on them and exhorted them to show repentance. The reference was to a prophecy in which the Prophet had mentioned a few places and said that those encamping there would have the curse of God on them. Now these bands of seditionists had on their first unsuccessful incursion on the capital actually encamped at these spots. At the mention of the prophecy they made a disturbance in the mosque. Distinguished companions, such as Zaid ibn Thabit and Muhammad ibn Muslim, rose to support the Caliph in this view, but the ringleaders caught hold of them and forced them to sit down. Then followed a volley of pelting on the Caliph, the companions, and the Madinites. One man snatched the Imam’s reclining rod from the Caliph’s hand and broke it. Then came stone after stone hurling down on him. His aged limbs gave way and he fell to the ground senseless. He was removed to his house and thenceforward he was prevented from attending the mosque. His house was blockaded. The capital was astir and full of feeling for the Caliph. A handful of men were posted at his door to prevent the seditionists from breaking in. ‘Ali, Talhah and Zubair placed their own sons there fully armed to defend the Caliph with their blood. This spontaneous demonstration of public sympathy, for a while, damped the violent spirits of besiegers. As yet they were afraid of carrying things to the extent of bloodshed. But the blockade was so rigorously maintained that even the supply of water was stopped. ‘Ali tried to persuade them that the treatment they were meting out to the Caliph of Islam was sinful even towards the worst enemy of Islam. They were, however, unmoved. At length, Umm Habibah, the Prophet’s widow, in person riding on a mule, tried to carry water into the Caliph’s good grace.
house, but in vain. Even she was shown no respect by these insolent upstarts. She was roughly handled and with difficulty escaped a fall.

Madinah Muslims were averse to shedding Muslim blood

An important question arises here as to the attitude of the people of Madinah, among whom were such influential men as ‘Ali, Talhah and Zubair. Why did they keep quiet and let the rebels have their own way with the Caliph? Was it not their duty to defend his person from insult and harm, even at the sacrifice of their own lives? This question has been the puzzle of many historians who, not being able to account for it, have been misled into a great blunder. They believe that though ‘Ali, Talhah and Zubair were not in conspiracy with the rebels, nor did they wish to help them, yet they watched events not without some feeling of gratification. In other words, they were also displeased with ‘Uthman and therefore kept looking on while this infamous persecution and crime was going on without raising so much as a little finger in the defence of the helpless Caliph. But these men have their own course. This is quite a mistaken view.

In the first place, the town was entirely under the domination of the rebels, and they, being masters of the situation were free to do as their sweet will dictated, the people of the town being quite helpless. Then comes the second question that, if the Madinities could not in any way restrain the hands of the rebels, it was open to them at least to strike a blow and honorably fall in the attempt. In fact this was the call of the duty and the call of honor. With regard to this, it must be remembered that the Madinities were in every way prepared to defend the Caliph with the last drop of their blood. An armed posse was posted at his door. The sons of ‘Ali, Talhah and Zubair were also there, ready to lay down their lives in his defence. But they could not, under the law of Islam, strike the first blow. The rebels had not as yet unsheathed the sword. Under these circumstances the Caliph himself was against the use of the sword. In fact, in his official capacity as Caliph he had positively forbidden the people of Madinah to raise their hands against the rebels. The situation was no doubt critical, but that was no justification for ignoring the Caliph’s word. It was the duty of the people to obey his order, and his order emphatically called upon every Muslim not to unsheathe his sword against the rebels.

What could the Madinities do? Besides the Caliph’s imperative order, there was, as they well knew, the clear injunction of the Qur’ān not to be the first in unsheathing the sword even against an enemy of Islam. How could they take the initiative in shedding the blood of fellow-Muslims? Of course, they were ready to draw the sword as soon as the enemy did do and to lay down their lives in the Caliph’s defence. They were only waiting for the rebels to draw the sword first. On the other hand, the rebels also were loth to go to that length in the face of the Quranic prohibition. Of course, there were some who had no scruples and were prepared to go to any extremity. But barring these, the ringleaders, the bulk of the rebels were only the dupes of clever propaganda and their leaders could not afford to flout such an important injunction of the Qur’ān. That would have at once alienated from them the sympathies of their dupes. In all this conflict, therefore, they had to keep up appearances and maintain some show of reason and reverence. Hence they hesitated to take an extreme step. Thus there was a state of armed suspense on both sides. Both wanted to avoid bloodshed, at least not to incur the heavy curse of starting it. This was the reason that the rebel leaders were restraining themselves to mere pressure on the Caliph to make him abdicate. The hands of the Madinities were equally bound by the law of Islam. Besides, they never thought that the rebels would have the audacity to transgress those sacred limits and spill the blood of any Muslim, much less of the Caliph.

Annual Pilgrimage

Such was the state of things when there arrived the season of the Pilgrimage to Makkah. Though under a strict blockade, the Caliph was not unmindful of the duties of his office. From the top of his house, he issued instructions to the people and, appointing Ibn ‘Abbas head of the pilgrim caravan, bade them set out on the pilgrimage. Ibn ‘Abbas was one of those who kept guard at the Caliph’s door. He was loth to leave that post of sacred duty, but the Caliph’s order had to be obeyed. He went and so did some others, including ‘Aishah, the prophet’s widow. She wished to have her brother, Muhammad Ibn Abu Bakr, for her escort but he was far too busy otherwise. He was one of the ringleaders and could not afford to be away when affairs were about to come to a head. The fact that the people of the capital went on the pilgrimage shows that they had no apprehension that the rebels would resort to bloodshed. The Caliph was pressed hard for abdication. He sent word through the Madinah pilgrims to the assemblage of pilgrims at Makkah, explaining the situation. He said he had done nothing objectionable and the rebels were bent on mischief, spreading all sorts of calumnies against him and inciting others to disown his authority. He also wrote letters to the Governors telling them that mischief was exceeding all limits and some measures must be taken. The idea was that the arrival of help from outside would in itself serve as pressure on the rebels and mischief would thus come to an end without bloodshed.

The Caliph is slain: 18 Dhu-l-Hijjah, 35 A.H. (17 June 656)

But on the other side the rebels could not afford to let things drift. They were well aware that in a few days their schemes would be undone. The general populace assembled at Makkah would come to know of their mischief and flock to the capital. Troops would also arrive to rescue the Caliph. There was thus no time to lose. The capital was almost empty owing to the pilgrimage. The momentous hour had arrived, the hour to strike the blow. It was already the 18th of Dhu-l-Hijjah, and in a few more days crowds of pilgrims would be pouring into the streets of Madinah. Consequently, the rebels made an attempt to force their way into the Caliph’s house and finish him. The guard of armed men at the door stuck to their position. They were, however, but a handful and the space was very narrow. After some exchange of blows and thrusts, the guard took up their position on the inside of the door, closing it against the assailants. An attempt to break open the door did not
succeed. The ringleaders planned that, while the guard was thus occupied, they should steal in through some other way and quietly commit the black deed. A few of them, consequently, went round to a neighboring house and from there let themselves down into the inner quarter of the Caliph’s house. The Caliph in the midst of his family was at the time reciting the Qur’an. The venerable hoary-bearded man with his family members around him and with the Book of God open before him made a scene of peace and innocence which, for a moment, held even the callous intruders in awe. They hesitated to shed the blood of a man they knew to be quite innocent and harmless. But this feeble inner whisper was soon hushed. Muhammad Ibn Bakr stepped.

Uthman sacrificed his life for the unity of Islam

There are some who are inclined to attribute these seditious activities culminating in the tragic end of ‘Uthman to the Caliph’s own weakness. A more thoughtful critic, however, would hesitate to fling such a charge in the face of one whose glorious career as Caliph was crowned with martyrdom yet more glorious. No man is free from the common frailties of the human race and ‘Uthman was but a man. Flaws and frailties there might have been in him just as in all of us, but to accuse him of weakness of resolution or lack of courage is a gross travesty of facts and a most cruel assault on the memory of one who faced the assassin’s sword with calm and dignity. Though old in years, ‘Uthman certainly displayed the energy and courage of youth throughout his Caliphate and even in his death. No sooner had he taken the reins of power in hand than he had to face a general wave of revolt or invasion. There was insurrection in Persia. There was an invasion of Syria and an invasion of Egypt by land as well as by sea. The question is, how did he bear himself in this most trying situation. Did he play the coward and shrink before this tide of difficulties? Let facts speak for themselves. Not only was the insurrection in Persia thoroughly quelled, but the flag of Islam was carried farther over vast territories, right to the confines of Ghazni. On the Syrian front, the Romans were driven back, pursued and defeated in their own lands, and the flag of Islam proudly fluttered on the coast of the Black Sea. Rome was proud of being mistress of the seas, yet in her own element she was humbled by the Arab soldiers who had never seen naval warfare before. On the soil of Africa too, the hosts of the Romans were thoroughly defeated. Were all these the achievements of a weak man, of a man who would shrink before difficulties and dangers? In these perilous times, ‘Uthman steered the bark of Islam with a composure of mind and steadiness of hand that should entitle him to a place among the greatest leaders of men. Under him the crescent was carried farther and farther and shone brighter and brighter on land, and, for the first time, on sea. It is thus a great injustice to the memory of this great son and servant of Islam to interpret as pusillanimity what in fact constituted the crowning act of his glory, viz., his martyrdom. It was certainly no weakness that made him so indulgent towards the insurgents. A man who could deal with the hundreds of thousand of the Roman hosts would certainly not cow down before a rowdy rabble. He could smash them with his little finger had he so wished. But he would be the last man on earth he said, to be the cause of shedding a drop of Muslim blood. That would shatter the solidarity of the house of Islam. Even at the last stage, when the besiegers’ swords were at his throat, he stood for the cause of that solidarity and under express orders forbade the townsmen to unseath their swords. And it may legitimately be said of him that he offered his own life as a sacrifice at the altar of that solidarity, thereby serving as a beacon-light to all coming generations of Islam to keep their ranks closed and never to unseath the sword against a brother Muslim nor wish him any harm, even at the risk of death.

Prophet’s great qualities mirrored forth in the first four Caliphs

The period of the first four Caliphs was in fact a continuation of the Prophet’s own life, inasmuch as each of these great luminaries mirrored one particular phase of that life in full resplendence. Abu Bakr was an embodiment of the Prophet’s firmness of faith and resolution that knew no waverling under the most trying circumstances. ‘Umar reflected in his person the Prophet’s domination over the opponents of Islam. And ‘Uthman illustrated in letters of his own blood the prophet’s unbounded affection for his community. In simplicity of life and devotion, ‘Uthman walked in the footsteps of his two illustrious predecessors, Abu Bakr and ‘Umar. He never looked at the enormous wealth that came pouring into the public treasury in his reign, spending every penny on public good, and in this respect too he proved himself worthy successor to his great Master.

‘Uthman took nothing from the Public Treasury

The financial services that ‘Uthman rendered to the cause of Islam during the lifetime of the Prophet show that he must have been a big merchant and withal a most generous man. It was a period when Muslims were in very straitened circumstances, yet even then ‘Uthman spent thousands, nay, hundreds of thousands of dirhams in the cause of Islam. This gives some idea of the riches he must have possessed. And when better days came and Muslims became rich, ‘Uthman’s wealth must have increased in the same proportion. But money had little value in the eye of the companions of the Prophet. Just as ‘Uthman spent lakhs in the service of the Faith, so he showed great generosity towards his relations. For instance, he gave a lakh of dirhams as dowry to one of his daughters. This, let it be remembered, was his personal property; and there was no harm in a man who could afford to spend lakhs in the cause of the Faith giving away a lakh out of consideration for ties of blood. It is a baseless allegation to say that to satisfy his generosity towards his relations he drew upon the public treasury. His hands are clean of any such stain. Rather than take anything from the treasury, he liberally spent his own wealth for the public good. An amount was duly sanctioned from the treasury to meet the personal needs of the Caliph. But ‘Uthman did not draw even this sum. On one occasion he called a general meeting of Muslims and addressed them to vindicate his position against such allegations. The following is a part of his address, as quoted by Tabari:
"When the reins of Government were entrusted to me, I was the biggest owner of camels and goats in Arabia. Today I possess neither a goat nor a camel, save the two that are meant for the Pilgrimage. Is this true? (The people replied: It is so.) It is alleged that I have given the war spoils to Ibn Abi Sarh whereas I have only given him a part of these spoils which comes to a hundred thousand." (‘Uthman gave this sum to this General in fulfillment of a promise that if Tripoli were conquered, he would be entitled to one twenty-fifth of the spoils.) This was exactly what Abu Bakr and ‘Umar used to give. When, however, the people disapproved of it, I took even this much back from him... It is further alleged that I love my relations and I give them riches. As regards my love for them it has never induced them to usurp the rights of others. I put upon them the obligations that are due from them. As regards my generosity towards them, I give them whatever I do out of my own property. As regards public property, I consider it lawful neither for myself nor for anyone else. Even during the time of the Prophet, Abu Bakr and ‘Umar I used to give large sums out of my own earnings. This I did when I was yet a young man and as such stood in need of money. Now that I have reached the normal limit of my family age and my days are coming to a close and I have made over all my possessions to my family, misguided people say such things of me. By God, I have taxed no city beyond its capacity so that such a thing might be imputed to me. And whatever I have taken from the people I have spent on their own welfare. Only a fifth of it comes to me. Out of this too, I consider nothing lawful for my personal use. This is spent on the deserving people, not by me, but by the Muslims themselves, and not a farthing out of public funds is misappropriated. I take nothing out of it so that even what I eat, I eat out of my own earnings."

Every word of this address, delivered before a packed mosque, was corroborated by the audience. This shows that during his Caliphate, ‘Uthman accepted nothing from the public treasury for his personal use, though he had every right to it. He spent the whole of it on the advancement of public welfare and himself did not cast a glance at it. Nay, during his last days, he spent the whole of his wealth - and he was a millionaire - on the public good, thus proving himself a worthy successor to the Holy Prophet.

‘Uthman’s reign

The reign of ‘Umar stands out so conspicuously in the territorial expansion of the Empire of Islam, and mighty empires fell one after another; before the arms of Islam, in such quick succession that subsequent conquests dwindle into insignificance. But the fact is that the reign of ‘Uthman was to no less degree a period of Islamic strength. No signs of weakness are seen in the power of Islam under him. Suppression of rebellion and anarchy is as important as territorial expansion. And ‘Uthman had only been six months on the throne of the Empire when Persia raised the standard of rebellion. He put it down with a strong hand. Not only was the subject territory cleared of all insurrectionary influences but, as a measure of strategic necessity, further territory was annexed to the Empire of Islam, such as Afghanistan, Turkistan and Khurasan. This revolt had hardly been suppressed when the Roman Empire invaded Syria. Here too the forces of Islam displayed considerable strength. The Roman hordes were driven off and, over and above this, such territories as Armenia, Azaiba and and Asia Minor were added to the Empire of Islam. It was during ‘Uthman’s reign that the naval conquests of Islam began and Muslim ships captured the island of Cyprus. The Caesar also invaded Egypt and captured Alexandria. ‘Uthman’s army not only recaptured Alexandria but also turned westward to exterminate the Roman army altogether, and the Empire of Islam was largely extended and fortified in that direction. All this should suffice to show that the power of Islam was at the zenith of its glory during the reign of ‘Uthman. Notwithstanding the fact that the Caliph was murdered and there was an insurrection in Madinah, the very heart of the Empire of Islam, no foreign dependency had the courage to rise in revolt. Such was the prestige the power of Islam had attained during his reign.

Administration

There was absolutely no change in the form of government during the reign of ‘Uthman. The machinery of government worked exactly on the lines that had so far grown up as a peculiar institution of Islam. The same were the powers of the Caliph, the same his rights over the public purse. The Majlis-i-Shura or Council of Consultation was also maintained and all affairs were settled by this council. The Caliph kept himself fully informed of the state of affairs in the various parts of the Empire. Every Friday, before prayers, he would gather whatever information he could from those in the mosque. There was no obstacle in the way of approaching the Caliph with a complaint or grievance against a Governor or public servant. Every such case received full and prompt attention. All the departments of state worked as during the reign of ‘Umar. The Revenue Department was in a much more flourishing condition. The subsidy from Egypt alone went up from twenty to forty lakhs dirhams. With the swelling of income, the stipends that were awarded from the public treasury were also increased. Many new buildings were erected. Roads, bridges, mosques and guest-houses were constructed in different towns. Adequate provision was made for the comfort of wayfarers along all the routes leading to Madinah. Military posts and caravanaries, together with water fountains, sprang up everywhere. To protect Madinah against floods, a huge dam was constructed. The Prophet’s Mosque was extended and rebuilt with stone. Farms for the feeding of horses and camels were opened on a large scale and water arrangements were also made.

Standardization of the Qur’an

In the record of ‘Uthman’s services in the cause of Islam, one particular service must stand pre-eminent. It was he who had copies made form the only authentic copy of the Qur’an and had them sent to the big centers of the Empire of Islam. This is an achievement of which Muslims cannot be too proud. If today all over the world of Islam, in east and west, one and the same copy of the Qur’an is in the hands of the various sects of Islam, it is due
to 'Uthman. When he came to know that people disputed among themselves regarding the various copies of the Qur'an then in circulation, he sent for the authentic copy prepared during the reign of Abu Bakr on the advice of 'Umar. It was in the custody of Hafsah. 'Uthman sent for it, had several copies of made and sent one to each of the big centers of Islam, so that it might serve as a reference edition and local editions might be corrected accordingly. This was an act of great farsightedness on the part of 'Uthman. In an age when the printing machine had not yet been invented, no better arrangement could have been made to maintain the purity of the text of the Qur'an. 'Uthman was not the collector of the Qur'an, as is generally thought but, doubtless, he brought the whole of the world of Islam together on one single uniform edition of the Holy Book.

Manners and morals

From his very early life, 'Uthman was gifted with a pure nature. Islam brought luster to this inner gem. In chastity and integrity he was as firm as a mountain. During his reign when worldly wealth found its way to Muslims in great abundance, 'Uthman's integrity, 'Uthman's honesty, 'Uthman's chastity, 'Uthman's piety waivered not thereby so much as an hair's breadth. Riches had as little fascination for him when he earned lakhs and spent lakhs in the way of God as when he became the master of the richest treasury in the world. He scrupulously followed the footprints of the Prophet. Modesty was the most salient feature of his character. Even the Prophet did not become as free with him as in the company of other companions. For instance, once he was seated while a knee happened to be uncovered. Abu Bakr and 'Umar were also there, but he took no notice of it. As soon, however, as the arrival of 'Uthman was reported, he covered his knee. During his Caliphate, 'Uthman in person conducted the five daily prayers and was regular even in his midnight prayers. Notwithstanding the fact that he had already attained to the good old age of 80. When, however he got up for his midnight prayers, he took care not to disturb any of the servants for his own comfort. He was rolling in plenty yet he contented himself with plain dress and plain food. Even his wife he did not wish to see in costly costume. His generosity has already been noted. It went to all alike. His deep love of brother Muslims made him sacrifice his own life rather than wield the sword against them. Not only did he himself refrain from using the sword against Muslims, but he even stayed the hands of his associates.

Spiritual Experience of the Chosen Saints
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The representative so raised shows the excellences of the Holy Prophet whom he follows and establishes the charge against his opponents by truth, by showing the reality and by exposing them; by truth, because he shows that the Prophet whom they rejected was a true Prophet, and shows the heavenly signs for his truth; by showing the reality, because he solves all difficulties in the comprehension of the religion of the Prophet, and removes all doubts that are entertained with respect to it, and refutes all objections that are urged against it and by exposing them, because he rends asunder all the veils under which they hide themselves and lays bare before the world their folly in not comprehending nice points of religious truths, their love of remissness, ignorant and darkness, and their being forsaken by God and cut off from communion with Him. The perfect man who is raised for this purpose is a recipient of Divine revelation, and he is purified and blessed and has his prayer accepted by God. He shows with cleanness that God exists and that He is powerful over all, Sees, Hears and Knows everything, and regulates affairs according to His will, that prayers are in fact accepted and have an efficacy, and that the men of God actually show heavenly signs. He is not only himself rich in Divine knowledge but his appearance brings about a life in the faith of the people. The heavenly signs which were rejected and scoffed at by people as opposed to the laws of Nature and contrary to reason, or, if treated with respect, were considered at the most to be stories, are not only accepted as truths at his appearance because of their renewal at his hands, but the absurdity of the former position is also fully realized. It is then clearly seen and even regretted that what was taken to be wisdom was really folly, and that which was considered to be knowledge of the laws of Nature was in fact ignorance. In short, the holy one raised by God falls like a flame upon the world and gives a light to everyone according to his capacity. He is at first tried, thrown into afflictions, persecuted on all sides, abused and injured by all possible means, and every attempt is made to bring him to disgrace, but as he has with him the argument of truth and Divine assistance, he overcomes all difficulties and vanquishes his enemies, and the rays of the light of his truth are made to pierce into the world by a powerful hand. When almighty God sees that the earth has rejected him, He commands the holy host of heaven to bear testimony to his truth. Therefore, a clear and bright testimony comes down for his sake from heaven in the form of extraordinary heavenly signs, acceptance of prayer and the disclosure through him of deep religious truth and verities. This heavenly testimony gives sight to the blind, and hearing to the deaf, and the power of

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Paraclete
The Comforter Foretold by Jesus
By Khwaja Nazir Ahmad

I. The Promises to Abraham and Hagar
(a) A nation will be raised from their progeny and God will bless them and make them great.
(b) God will bless them, for they will bless Abraham.

Jesus did not bless Abraham. Christians do not remember or bless him in their prayers.

The Qur'an sends peace on Abraham, so did the Prophet Muhammad. The Prophet and the Muslims, following the Sunnah, say "blessings" at least eleven times in their five daily prayers, in which Abraham and his descendants are blessed.

(c) The descendants of Ishmael will be made a great nation.

II. The Prophecy of Moses
(a) A prophet will be raised from among their brethren
(b) That Prophet will be like unto Moses.
(c) People will associate, counsel and gird themselves against that Prophet.
(d) That Prophet will be Immanuel, i.e., to him "God is with us" will apply.
(e) God will command that Prophet.

III. The Prophecy of Prophet Isaiah
(a) The Prophet shall be conceived of a woman.
(b) He shall eat butter and honey.
(c) People will associate, counsel and gird themselves against him, but they shall be broken in pieces.
(d) That Prophet will be Immanuel, i.e., to him "God is with us" will apply.
(e) That Prophet will bind up the testimony and seal the law.
(f) The Prophet will be a servant of God.
(g) He will be an elect of God with whom God will be pleased.
(h) The inhabitants of the wilderness, the cities and villages of Kedar will sing his praises.

This did not apply to Jesus. He never addressed himself to the Arabs.

Kedar refers to the "tribes of Arabia." (Dummelow, Commentary on the Holy Bible, 441. See also Peake, Commentary on Bible, 447.) The Prophet Jeremiah said that Paran will be the place where Ishmael shall live. (Jer. XLIX. 7)

Paran according to Biblical geography was near Hijaz.

It is evident, therefore, that this prophecy could apply in all its details only to the Prophet Muhammad.

IV. The Prophecy of Prophet Malachi
That Prophet will not belong to the house of Jacob, for Israel did not walk in the way of the Lord and corrupted the covenant of Levi, and that Levi, and that Prophet will be the Messenger of God.

This prophecy does not apply to Jesus. The designation "Messenger of God" was never applied to him. He belonged to the house of Jacob, which had violated the covenant of Levi. The mention of this covenant and its breach excludes Jesus. In any case that Prophet had to be apart from the Messiah. Dummelow says: There is no Messianic Prophecy in Malachi in the ordinary sense of the word. (Dummelow, Commentary on the Holy Bible, 613.)

Peake observes that "Malachi was not predicting Christ." (Peake, Commentary on Bible, 517.)

Taking the two together the Prophet did not belong to the house of Jacob and was the Messenger of God.

It is, therefore, abundantly clear that out of all the principal components of these Biblical prophecies only three apply to Jesus, and these simply because they would suite the character of any Prophet of God. It can, therefore, be asserted that none of these prophecies really applied to him at all. On the other hand, all of them literally befell the life, character and mission of the Prophet Muhammad.

But there is another aspect of the question. No one can deny that the Jews were expecting this prophet. For over a thousand years they had been expecting a prophet like unto Moses. The Prophet Ezra, some nine hundred years after Moses bewailed:

And there arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face. (Deut, XXIV: 10; cf. Nu XXI: 6; Deut. XVIII: 15, 18.)

The Jews questioned, and enquired of every prophet that arose amongst them whether he was that Prophet. They asked John the Baptist:

Art thou Elias? And he saith, I am not. Art thou that Prophet? And he answered, No. (John 1:21.)

This incident clearly shows that Jews were anxiously awaiting three prophets: Elias, the Messiah and that Prophet. Thus Elias, according to Jesus, came in the person of John the Baptist. Jesus was the Messiah, and that Prophet had yet to come, for Jesus never put forward any claim to be that Prophet. This becomes abundantly clear, for John tells us that the Jews further questioned John the Baptist:

Why baptize thou then, if thou be not the Christ, nor Elias, neither that Prophet? (John 1:25.) In fact, as I will presently show, Jesus himself confirmed their belief by promising the future advent of that Prophet whom he described as the Paraclete. Even after him, his apostles, like Peter, looked forward to the coming of that Prophet. (Acts III:22.) Jude also referred to the same future event and said:

And Enoch also, then seventh from Adam, prophesied to these sayings: Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints. (Jude 14.) It is noteworthy that when the Prophet conquered Makkah, he had an army of exactly ten thousand.

Thus according to both Peter and Jude the second advent of Christ had to be preceded by the coming of that Prophet. If we read the 14th and 16th chapters of John's Gospel it will become apparent that Jesus was also responsible for these views. He said:

But the Comforter which is the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things and bring all things to your remembrance. Whatsoever I have said unto you. (John XIV:26.)

Hereafter I will not talk with you for the prince of this world cometh and hath nothing in me. (John XIV:30.)

In another place, he is reported to have said:

Nevertheless I tell you the truth; it is expedient for you that I go away: for I go not away, the Paraclete will not come unto
you... and when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment. (John XVI:7-8)

I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now, Howbeit, when he the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth; for he shall not speak of himself, but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will show you the things to come. He shall glorify me. (John XVI:12-14.)

The words: I have many things to say, have been interpreted to convey that Jesus had much to say, but as they, the people of Judea, would not listen to him, he must say them to another audience. (Peake, Commentary on Bible, 753.)

In spite of the apparent contradiction in verses 26 and 30 (John XIV) the Prophecy is in unambiguous terms. The Comforter stands for the Greek word Paraclete. Wastenfells explains that the word used by Jesus was Muhammana (Aramaic) and in Hebrew it was Mauhammana - both meaning the prayed. In the sister language, Arabic, this word would be Muhammad or Ahmad, which are derived from the same root Hamd, which means praising.

Before discussing the Qur’anic version regarding the fulfillment of this and other prophecies in the person of the Prophet, a reference should be made to the Gospel of St. Barnabas. Barnabas was an apostle of Jesus, (Acts XIV:14.) selected by the Holy Spirit, an uncle of Mark the Evangelist, (Col. IV:10.) and a companion of Paul. (Acts XV:12.) He travelled throughout Palestine, from Damascus to Caesarea, and form Philp to Mt. Sinai, preaching the Gospel. His relics were discovered in a tomb in Cyprus in the fourth year of Emperor Zeno (478 C.E.) and a copy of his Gospel, written in his own hand, was found lying on his breast. The Gospel of St. Barnabas was condemned by the Church by three successive Decrees: the Decree of the Western Church (382 C.E.), of Innocent I (465 C.E.) and of Galasius (496 C.E.). The Galasian Decree mentions the Evangelium Barnabe in its index of the prohibited and heretical Gospels. The recovered Gospel gradually found its way to the library of Pope Sixtus V and it was found there in 1549 by a monk named Fra Mario.

The Gospel of St. Barnabas was accepted and read in the Churches up to the Galasian Decree. The Gospel contains a complete life of Jesus from his birth to his Ascension. It begins with the miraculous birth of Jesus and deals with his circumcision, the visit of the Magi, the Massacre of the Infants, the flight into and return of the family from Egypt, and the discussion in the Temple. Its central portions deal with the journeys, miracles, discourses, parables and ethical and eschatological teachings of Jesus. Finally, it gives a description of the Paschal Supper and records the betrayal, the trial and the crucifixion. The Gospel concludes with the reappearance of the Lord and his Ascension to heaven. After going through this brief summary of its contents, one wonders why it was rejected by the Church. Sale alleged in his Preliminary Discourse to the Koran that it was a barefaced forgery and asserted:

The Muhammadans have also a Gospel in Arabic attributed to St. Barnabas, wherein the history of Jesus Christ is related in a manner very different from what we find in the true Gospels and corresponds to traditions which Muhammad had followed in his Koran. (Sale, The Preliminary Discourse to the Translation of the Koran, 58.)

To begin with, this Gospel does not differ in material particulars with the Canonical Gospels, or as Sale would have it, the true Gospels. When Sale was challenged to produce this Gospel in Arabic, he was forced to confess:

I had not seen it (the Gospel of St. Barnabas), when the little I said of it in the Preliminary Discourse.) And the other extracts I had borrowed from M. de la Monnoye and M. Toland. (Ibid., Preface to the Reader, IX.)

Sale’s knowledge, then, of the "Arabic" Gospel of St. Barnabas was after all second-hand and based on the publications of M. de la Monnoye (1716) and M. Toland (1718). These two gentlemen had never seen an Arabic copy. They had only heard of it; and, doubting the correctness of this false rumour, had themselves initiated the series of challenges to the Muslim world to produce the Gospel in Arabic. In fact, no Such Arabic Gospel of St. Barnabas existed and the rumour was without foundation or justification. With the confession of Sale, the authority for the existence of any Arabic original melts away into the baseless conjectures from which it arose. Unless the original copy which was rejected by the Galasian Council is produced, or in the absence of proof that the present copy is different form the copy of the Gospel which was recovered from the tomb of St. Barnabas, the Gospel in its present form must be accepted.

But why was this shameless and wicked suggestion made by Sale, and why did he attribute the origin of this Gospel to Muslims, and why was this Gospel rejected by the Church? The reason is not far to seek. It must have contained something very unpalatable to them both. I will quote verbatim two verses from it, which explain both its condemnation and Sale’s shameless effort to deny its authenticity. It records a saying of Jesus:

Verily, I say unto you that the Messenger of God is a splendour that shall give gladness to nearly all that God hath made: for he is adorned with the Spirit of understanding and of counsel, the Spirit of wisdom and might, the Spirit of forbearing and Love, the Spirit of prudence and temperance; he is adorned with the Spirit of charity and mercy, the Spirit of justice and piety, the Spirit of gentleness and patience which he hath received from God, three times more than He hath given to all His Creatures. O Blessed time, when he shall come to the world! Believe me that I have seen him and have done him reverence, even as every prophet hath seen and done; seeing that His Spirit God giveth to them prophets. And when I saw him, my soul was filled with consolation, saying, "O Muhammad! God be with thee, and may He make me worthy to untie thy shoe latches, for obtaining this I shall be a great prophet and Holy one of God." And having said this Jesus rendered his thanks to God. (The Gospel of St. Barnabas, CLXIII:180. The translation is by Laura Regg.)

I quote another incident recorded in this Gospel:

Jesus went into the wilderness beyond Jordan with his disciples, and when the midday prayer was done, he sat near a
palm tree, and under the shadow of the palm tree sat his disciples.

Then sayeth Jesus: So secret is predestination, brethren, that verily I say unto you, to none save one it be clearly manifest, for it is whom the nations look for, to whom the secrets of God are so manifest that, when he cometh, into the world, blessed shall they be that shall listen to his words, because God shall overshadow them with His Mercy, even as this palm tree doth overshadow us.

The disciples asked: O Master! Who shall that man be of whom thou speakest, who shall come into the world?

Jesus answered: He is Muhammad, the Messenger of God. (Ibid.) The presence of the name Muhammad is really explained by the Aramaic equivalent, Mauhamma, of the Greek word Paraclete, which John uses in his Gospel. Jesus had, therefore, foretold the future advent of the Paraclete, i.e., Mauhamma or Muhammad, the Messenger of God.

The importance of these passages in this Gospel becomes apparent when we recall that the Gospel was recovered and condensed some three or four centuries before the Prophet Muhammad was born or had proclaimed his Divine Mission. No wonder the Church condemned it as heretical and Sale felt uneasy about these passages and had to set his mind at rest by concocting a lie; even though his disgraceful attempt did not deters, but rather enhance the testimony of this Gospel.

Was the Prophet Muhammad the Comforter foretold by Jesus? The Holy Qur'an says:

Those who follow the Apostle Prophet, the ummi, whom they find mentioned in the Torah and the Gospel...and follow the light which has been sent down to them, these are the successful. (The Holy Qur'an, 7:157.)

The Gospels also contain passages which can be construed as foretelling the advent of that prophet. The parable of the owner of the vineyard, (Matt. XXI:33-44; Mark XII: 1-11; Luke XX:9, 18) coming after the son (i.e. Jesus), who is maltreated, contains a clear indication.

The Comforter foretold by Jesus had to be "the Spirit of Truth" who was to glorify Jesus. (John XVI: 12-14.)

The Holy Qur'an refers to Muhammad as the Truth, (The Holy Qur'an, 17:81) and with a Muslim it is an Article of Faith that he should believe in all the prophets of God preceding Muhammad, and in their revelation. (Ibid, 11:4.) The Prophet did glorify Jesus by denouncing as utterly false all those calumnies which were levelled by Jews against Jesus and his mother Mary. Referring to the allegations of the Jewish Talmudists against Jesus and Mary, Dummelow says:

It is interesting to notice that Muhammad indignantly refuted these Jewish calumnies. (Dummelow, Commentary on the Holy Bible, 668.)

The Holy Qur'an was revealed to clarify and confirm the truth of the earlier revealed Books of God, (The Holy Qur'an, 2:97; 5:15.) and to affirm that the Prophet Muhammad was that prophet who had also been mentioned by Jesus. Says the Holy Qur'an:

And when Jesus son of Mary said, O children of Israel! Surely I am the Messenger of God to you! Verifying which is before me of the Torah and giving the good news of the prophet who will come after me, his name being Ahmad, but when he came to them with clear arguments they said: It is clear enchantment. (Ibid, 61:6.)

I have already mentioned that Ahmad is only another name of the Prophet. It is a significant fact that when the New Testament was translated into Arabic the Christians themselves translated the word Paraclete as Ahmad. Of course, when Sale in 1826 was deputed to revise and correct the Arabic translation of the Bible, the translation of this word was changed.

Jesus is reported to have said: As long as I am in the world I am the light of the world. (John IX:5.)

By this Jesus clearly meant that after his death, he would cease to enlighten the world. It also suggests, if we read it with the prophecy about the Paraclete, that the Paraclete would bring the light of truth into the world; the Holy Qur'an asserts that the Prophet Muhammad is the light. (The Holy Qur'an 5:15.)

It may now be said with certainty that Jesus, who had come as a prophet of God for the house of Jacob in general, and for the Lost Tribes of Israel in particular, having prophesied the approach of the Kingdom of God and the future advent of

th Comforter, the Paraclete, Muhammad, or Ahmad, the Praised left for far-off lands to give the same Gospel (good news) to the Lost Tribes of Israel.

Thus Jesus, the Prophet of God, fulfilled and achieved all the three objects for which he was sent to this world. May the Almighty be pleased and bless His servant, 'Isa, the son of Mary. Ameen!

A Living Religion and A Living Prayer continued from page 12

speech to the dumb. There are many who are drawn at that time to the truth, but blessed are they who accept him previously, for they, on account of their strength of faith, are granted the dignity of the siddqis (the truthful servants of God). But this is the grace of God, and He bestows it upon whom He wills.

To complete the argument that Islam is a living religion, I deem it my bounden duty to state further that finding the world involved in utter darkness and plunged in the depth of ignorance, remoteness, unbelief and shirk, and finding faith, sincerity and righteousness vanishing away, Almighty God has raised me to re-establish in the world the purity of doctrine and practice, and the purity of morals and faith, and to save Islam from the hostile attacks of those who, with the weapons of a false philosophy and science, lawlessness, atheism, etc., are trying to damage this impregnable rock. It was exactly the time when Islam stood in need of heavenly assistance, and this Almighty God has vouchsafed by raising me. The general prevalence of error, which is to be witnessed in this age, has taken place in fulfillment of the prophecies relating to the appearance of the Anti-Christ, as foretold by the Prophet of God. The basis of these errors has been laid by Christianity, which inculcates the most fatal error. It was, therefore, necessary that the revitalist or representative of the Holy Prophet appearing at the commencement of this century, come after the name of Christ, for the foundation of the present evil has been laid by the followers of Christ. It has been disclosed to me in a revelation that the soul of Jesus being informed of the poison with which Christianity affects the spiritual at-
mosphere, came into motion for a spiritual re-advent into the world. Having thus come into motion, and finding his own people spreading destruction in the world, the soul of Jesus required that one resembling him in all points and having the same spirit and character should appear as his representative upon earth, there being such a spiritual likeness between the two that they may be considered as one. So according to the promise which Almighty God had already made, he raised one resembling Jesus and in him was manifested the resolution, character and spirituality of Jesus. He and the Messiah were so closely united as to be considered as being of the same essence. The attractions of Jesus made his heart their habitation and fulfilled their requirement through him. In this sense, therefore, his personality was considered as the personality of Christ himself, for the characteristics of Christ were manifested in him and this manifestation was metaphorically expressed in spiritual language as the second advent of Christ. It is a deep spiritual law that the characteristics of some one of the perfect Ones who have passed away, are imaged in some living perfect man, and the unity of their ideas makes the connection so strong that the appearance of the latter is looked upon by the former as his own appearance. The person whose soul is thus united with the soul of a past saint becomes, as it were, an instrument for the manifestation of the will of the latter, and the will of the one is made by Almighty God identical with the will of the other. In short, it is a Divine Law that the former prophets reappear in the world in this manner. The second advent of Elias in the person of John took place according to this law, and if this law is not recognized, the Messiahship of Jesus would be seriously in question.

**OBJECT OF MUSLIM PRAYERS**

There exists a great misunderstanding with respect to the nature of the prayers enjoined by the Muslim Law. The prayer of a Muslim is a prayer in the truest and highest sense of the term, a devout supplication to Almighty God and reverential expression of the soul’s sincerest desires before its Maker. But on account of the great ignorance that prevails among the Muslims, prayers are looked upon as a burdensome duty. Does Almighty God stand in need of imposing tax upon His creatures? Certainly not, for He is above all needs and able to dispense with all creatures. Almighty God has commanded men to pray to Him and utter His praise, not because He stands in need of it but for their own good, for only thus can they attain the great object for which man has been created. It grieves me to see that men have no love for piety, righteousness and the worship of God. The true devotion of the heart has degenerated into a lifeless ceremonial. The love of God is on the wane and the heavenly enjoyment in His worship is nowhere felt. There is taste and flavour in everything and most of all in prayers and in the worship of the Divine Being. But as the sweetest thing would excite a bitter taste in the mouth of one whose organs of taste are morbid, similarly prayers and worship do not afford any pleasure or enjoyment to those who are spiritually sick. The object of man’s life has been described in the Holy Quran to be the worship of God, and it is impossible that man should have been so created as to feel a pleasure in everything except in that which was the aim of his life. Nay, it is here that he should experience the highest bliss, and if he does not, he should clearly understand that some morbidity affects his spiritual conditions and he ought to seek for the proper remedy.

We see it in our every day experience that the things that have been created for the benefit of man possess a certain attraction for him. Are not delicious articles of food and drink pleasant to the taste, beautiful objects and sights and charming scenes pleasing to the eye and sweet sounds and soft and melodious tones pleasing to the ear. What other argument is needed to show that the observance of religious duties must afford pleasure and enjoyment to a man? Again, man and woman were created as helpmates to each other and the one was consorted with the other not by compulsion but by means of attraction placed in each for the other. The coming together of the man and the woman with the object of the procreation has thus been brought about by the pleasure which each finds in the union, and the purpose could hardly have been accomplished without it. The enjoyment which is found in the sexual connection and which is the incentive to men to propagate their kind, has such a powerful attraction that ignorant men have taken it to be the object of the sexual connection and have lost sight of the real object, viz., procreation. The object with which the close connection between man and woman was brought about was no doubt the propagation of their kind, and the enjoyment found in the connection was only a step to the attainment of that object.

The true and eternal union which affords the highest bliss is the union of man with God. It gives a pleasure which is far above every pleasure of the senses. But the unfortunate man who does not find any pleasure in this union and who regards the worship of God as a tax, has not his spiritual faculties sound and in a regular order, and is like the sick man who finds no pleasant savour in sweet things, or the blind man who finds no charm in beautiful objects or the impotent man who finds no pleasure in the sexual union. But, alas for the spiritual lethargy which so generally prevails. The sick man who finds no enjoyment in his food consults the doctor and incurs every expenditure for the cure of his disease. And the impotent man who is deprived of the pleasure of sexual union is ready sometimes to commit suicide but the hardened heart which finds no pleasure in the worship of God does nothing to heal itself and to open itself for the Divine blessings. Why does not this great grief gnaw his soul. He is mad after the pleasure of this world but there is no thirst in his soul for eternal bliss, no yearning after heavenly enjoyment. Does he think that temporal pleasures can be restored to him when he has been deprived of them, but that Almighty God has made no provision for spiritual and eternal pleasure? God has certainly made such provision, but for those who seek it and try for it as they try for the remedies of physical diseases.

The Holy Quran has on one occasion compared the faithful to virtuous women and this simile has a deep significance. The close connection which exists between man and woman serves to exemplify the connection between God and his faithful

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PIG AS TRANSMITTER OF DISEASES

By: Dr. Muhammad Ja'Far

Forbidden to you is that which dies of itself, and blood, and the flesh of swine. - The Qur'an 5:30.

Before dealing with the subject proper it seems reasonable that a few prelatory remarks be made about diet in general. It is recognized on all hands that diet is the most essential factor in the maintenance of physical health. The educated section of people realizes its importance more than ever because of the vitamin theory and the diseases attributed to the absence of the various vitamins. Our lack of knowledge of this important factor up till very recently clearly goes to show that very little attention was paid to the diet from the medical point of view. Pure diet combined with personal hygiene and a properly regulated life leads to perfect health. For my part, I think there is no subject so important as the health of an individual, because it is only out of this that a healthy mind and the best intellectual qualities can grow. It is, therefore, quite obvious that we should be more discreet in the selection of our diet than we are at present and have been in the past. I would not here deal with the nutritive value of diet, because as compared with a diseased diet, as pork is, the one of less nutritive value does practically no harm.

Diet and disease

Diet varies with countries and communities. And as far as my observations go they are directed against the empirical diet which has been handed down to these communities by their ancestors, so that they tenaciously adhere to some of the foods. Some of them, in the majority of cases, are the least nutritious, while there are others which are unhygienic. Moreover, in this advanced age, if one were to call people's attention to some of their defects in their daily life, one would find that they would manifest one of the most perplexing absurdities of human nature - they would loathe to give up and discard all that has been sanctioned by the hoary usage of the past. And what is more, they would try to justify what is unscientific. In fact, the real idea at the back of their minds is the false justification: "Well, our forefathers have been taking the same diet, and how could they have lived healthily if the present scientific denunciations of this diet were true?" But if for a moment one applied the same argument to the preventive measures against various other diseases, one would realize the fallacy of this line of argument. Take, for example, the disease called bilharzia (1), so common in Egypt. Who, until very recently, knew that the young trematode (2) entered the human body through the skin while bathing in infected water? Although everyone now would dread the infected water, yet what about those who would persist in doing what their forefathers did? They are certainly courting disease. The common house-fly was long regarded as innocuous. But now we know how important it is to keep it away from our food. Right argument is one thing and fanaticism another. I am not guilty of ungenerosity when I say that fanaticism of this sort has been a great hindrance in the advancement of civilization.

Dietetics and religion

It is rather surprising to note that while the Arabian medicine deals with the properties of all the edibles, the European medicine omits them altogether, and yet, as remarked by Professor E.G. Browne in his book the Arabian Medicine (3), the latter is an improvement on the former. Besides, in earlier days, the dietetic laws used to form part and parcel of religion. Why it was as such is quite obvious. The primitive human mind in those ages could hardly understand the explanation, but all the same it was to its interest to refrain from some harmful things. The various reformers were persons gifted with certain powers, and they had the insight to discriminate good from bad for the benefit of mankind at large. Today, when science is advancing with rapid strides, we come to realize the importance of those ideas behind some of the injunctions dealing with edibles.

Till very recently little was known about the veterinary medicine, although a great deal had already been done for human medicine; and with our present knowledge of the former a mighty revolution is making headway in the domains of the latter. The very fact that certain diseases existing in animals are very similar to those found in man and that their causal germs are the same with a little difference of biological characters, leads one to think that there must have been transmission from one to the other. The science of entomology has filled up the gap and accused the various insects for the transference of disease, thus completing the whole chain of events. So nowadays the control of a disease is based either on the elimination of the reservoir-animal host - or of the transmitter, and either one of these done successfully stamps out the disease completely.

Our diet includes various articles, e.g., vegetables, fats and meat. I would restrict myself to dealing with meat alone, and specially the meat obtained from the pig.

Meats generally become infective in the following ways: 1. The animal when slaughtered may be suffering from a certain disease - say typhoid - while the blood remains in the tissues. 2. The meat may get contaminated after slaughtering by contact with infected material. 3. The animal flesh may contain cystic (4) stage of certain parasites, and on being eaten by man these germs are liberated and develop into adult ones in the human body. Here it is that their real life begins. I will explain later what effects they produce.

Pig as germ-carrier

Now taking the pig as the subject, I will as briefly as possible describe the various diseases transmitted by it, either directly or indirectly. The animal itself, being a pet of one society and an object of desipres in another, needs no introduction, for everyone is more or less acquainted with it. It leads a peculiarly filthy life. Human and dairy refuse is its common food, while rolling in mud and living in the dirtiest quarters are ingrained in its nature. In a word, I know of no other domestic animal other than the pig which, if, on the one hand, it lives in such a close association with human society, on the other is so unclean in its ways of living.

Pig-eating originally started in China, and was later gradually taken up by other countries. Modern researches have shown that this animal is the transmitter of a large number of diseases to be found in man. I
will begin with those diseases which are produced through its close association with human society and pass on to those caused by the actual consumption of its meat.

1. Dysentery - I need not describe the symptoms of this disease, as everyone is pretty familiar with it. I must in passing suggest that the symptoms of the disease are horribly acute and may end fatally. Unfortunately, there is no specific cure for it. The causal parasite, called Balantidium coli, is a normal inhabitant of the pig's bowels. It is excreted by it in its faeces, and finding the external environment unsuitable for its life, it develops a shell round it which is called a cyst. This cyst, containing inside it the living parasite, contaminates man's diet and thereby reaches his bowels. It was in 1856 that Malmstrom (5) isolated it from man as the cause of acute dysentery and established its relationship to the pig. The Public Health Department in America has been adopting strong measures to stop it, but with little success. Now they have come to the conclusion that the eradication of the disease lies not only in the proper disposal of excreta, but also in the isolation of pigs; for the parasite of dysentery is the normal inhabitant of their bowels. Chandler, in his book on parasitology, says that it is only in pig-raising countries, and where there is too close an association between man and this animal, that this disease exists (6).

2. Another parasite of the pig present in the human organism is Fasciolopsis buski. It is extensively prevalent in China, so much so that 28 percent of the patients admitted into Shaoxing Hospital (7), were suffering from its effects, and out of all others attending the dispensary 5.5 percent were infected. This parasite remains latent for a good long time, leading to a gradual anaemic state accompanied with marked debility. Then follow the digestive disorders and a persistent diarrhoea sets in. The whole body then becomes swollen, due to the oedema of tissues lying under the skin. The parasite on leaving the pig infects a water-snail, who in turn infects man, the infection being caused through drinking the infected water.

3. Hookworm Disease - The young worms of this disease enter the human skin by piercing the skin, and cause a peculiar itching called the "ground itch." After travelling through various tissues, they reach the human bowel and start doing damage. The symptoms which are produced by their presence are a sort of profound anaemia with an irregular fever. Diarrhoea may be the chief complaint. The patient soon gets exhausted and emaciated. In children the proper growth and development is very much hindered and they fall an easy prey to other infections like TB, etc. Through the wounds caused by these parasites in the bowels may enter typhoid germs and lead to an attack of typhoid fever. The role of the pig in this is of an indirect nature. It eats up the human excreta containing eggs of the parasites which develop inside it and hatch into young worms. When these are passed out they are infective to man. This infection is very prevalent in various tropical countries, and the Rockefeller Institution have prepared a film to show to the non-medical masses and the villagers the part that this animal plays in the dissemination of the infection.

4. Round Worms - These are parasites of nine to ten inches in length, and are also called the travelling worms because they go about into various organs and do not stay in one place at all times. If present in the lungs, they may cause pneumonia; and if in the air tube, suffocation, while in the intestinal obstruction, acute pancreatitis and jaundice may result. These parasites of man are quite identical with those found in the pig, and Ransom (8) stated that the human and pig parasites are the same species, and he also called attention to this animal, that acts as the disseminator of infection. Once a man is infected, he comes a source of infection to his community. Whether or not Ransom's view is correct does not lie within the scope of this essay, but there is no doubt that the parasite is absolutely identical, and if there are any differences in character they are probably due to living in a different host.

5. Endemic Haemoptysis (or bleeding from the lungs) - This disease is quite common in China, Japan, Formosa, etc., and is due to a parasite called "paragonimus" which lives in the lungs. The disease was described by Manson in 1880. The very same parasite is a common parasite of pigs and the epidemiology of the disease in countries where the pig lives in such close association clearly shows that this animal is the reservoir of infection. This disease is however, absent from countries where the pig is rare. This parasite is the cause of pneumonia in pigs. Patients having this infection suffer from cough with rusty sputum and have many repeated attacks of profuse bleeding from the lungs. The important point is that hitherto no means of killing the parasites in the tissues or expelling them have been found.

6. Clonorchiasis - This peculiar liver disease is due to a parasite called clonorchis sinensis inhabiting the bile passage and the liver. The liver becomes enlarged, attended with severe jaundice, diarrhoea, and emaciation. It may end fatally. This parasite is also found in the bile passage of the pig. The occurrence of the disease in China, Japan, Korea and Southern India again points to the close association of this animal with being the source of infection, and medical science, in spite of its strenuous efforts, has not yet been able to produce any specific treatment for this disease.

7. Gigantorphyphus gigas (discovered by Goeye in 1782) - This parasite, which is 20 to 30 cm. long, is found in the pig's intestine and is said to occur in man in the south of Russia. This fact was reported by a physician named Lindeman. It attaches itself to the mucous membrane of the small intestines and produces digestive disorders and anaemia.

8. Metastrongyulus aprius (discovered by Gmelin in 1789) - This worm is a parasite of the pig's lungs and is occasionally found in man. It is a short and slender parasite, and its presence in the lungs may lead to bronchitics, pneumonia, abscess of the lungs, and generalized secondary infection due to other bacteria.

9. Gastrodiscoides hominis (discovered by Lewis and MacConnel in 1876) The habitat of this parasite is the lower part of the human bowel. The normal host is pig in Cochin-China (10), and it is not yet known what disease it produces in man.

10. Swine Erysipelas - This may occasionally be contracted while handling these animals, and has the same course of inflammation of skin and constitutional
disturbances as in ordinary erysipelas, as fever, etc.

11. Tuberculosis - The disease needs no description, as its ravages are known to everyone. It is a common disease of pigs, and is getting more and more common in them. The United State Statistics (11) show that in 1924, 100,110 swine were condemned for this disease, and these were besides those that were infected but not brought up for slaughtering. The disease is conveyed to man by eating infected pork, and there is no doubt that many of the cases of tuberculosis in pig-raising countries can be traced to this source.

12. Variola suilla (or swine pox) is a very contagious disease which is sometimes contracted from the pig. It has a fairly high mortality.(12)

13. Tapeworm - This is an only in pork-eaters, because of its peculiar life cycle. There are three stages: 1. The egg; 2. Cysticercus (occurring in infected pork); 3. The adult parasite in man. When the egg is passed out in human excreta, it is taken up by the hog with its food, which generally takes form dirty places. Inside its bowel the eggs shell gets dissolved and an embryo is set free. This then travels to its muscles, and lives there in the second stage as cysticercus. Now when pork containing this cysticercus is eaten by man, the young dormant worm is set free and develops into an adult one. It attains a length of six to ten feet and attaches itself to the intestinal wall by means of a crown of hooks at its head. Patients harbouring this parasite continue passing a few of its segments full of eggs at intervals and infect the pigs, whose flesh in turn infects man, but the pig is the most essential stage in the life cycle, and if this could be eliminated man would practically be free from this infection.

The symptoms which this disease produces may be imagined from the very size of the worm. It is loathsome and repugnant enough to imagine that one has a snake-like thing of such a length wriggling about inside one's bowels. In the case of sensitive patients the knowledge that they have such a thing inside them leads to an extreme degree of depression, and may lead to melancholia. And what is more, this big parasite shares the nourishment of its host (man), thus starving him down and producing certain poisons in turn which have a very deleterious influence on the various systems. Diarrhoea and other digestive disturbances are only too common, anaemia quite marked, and these people remain in a state of chronic invalidism until some intercurrent disease comes to make short work of them.

14. Trichinosis - This is another disease contracted solely through eating infected pork. The young worms live in the flesh of swine in small cysts, and these cysts may be so small as to be overlooked even by the microscope. When such meat is eaten, these worms are liberated and develop quickly into the adult male and female worms, which very rapidly multiply, leading to a host of young generation which leaves the human bowel and travels by way of the blood to the muscles of man. The young trichina worms in the cysts have a very long life, and even after the animal has been slaughtered they remain alive for a very long time if the meat is preserved.

The symptoms of the disease produced may be an acute abdominal pain and diarrhoea while they are in the intestine. This leads to an extreme degree of weakness and a twitching of the various muscles. The face becomes puffy and the eyelids swollen. Then comes the stage of fever like typhoid, and at this stage the young generation is going about in the blood trying to settle in some of its host's muscles. When they reach the muscles, they lead to intense rheumatic and muscular pains. Breathing may be interfered with and some cases actually develop asthma. The skin develops a rash, and if the stress falls on the lungs it leads to pneumonia. It may be fatal in this stage, and the mortality has been as high as 30 percent of the infected cases.

Meat inspection no sure immunity

The meat inspection as a safeguard against this has so far proved quite inef ficacious. Even the microscope has failed. This fact may be illustrated by a statement made by Milton J. Rosenau in his book on Preventive Medicine. He says (13): "No method of inspection has yet been devised by which the presence or absence of trichina in pork can be determined with certainty, and the Government meat inspection does not include inspection for this parasite. All persons are accordingly warned not to eat pork or sausage, whether it has been officially inspected or not, until after it has been properly cooked."

But as far as the standard of cooking is concerned it is very difficult to know at what temperature it dies. Roasting certainly does not kill it. The process of curing raw ham by saltpetre kills only those larvae which are lying superficially; those in the deeper layers always escape. Smoke is used for curing in Westphalia, but it certainly has no effect on the trichina. The disease is never recognized in the living swine, and even in the dead one the inspection is unsatisfactory. Out of 6,329 cases of this disease in man which occurred in Germany, 32 percent were traced to meat which had been inspected as being free from trichina (14).

From the above-mentioned diseases in man which have been known up to this time to have their origin in the pig, one can imagine how absolutely essential it is to be on our guard against this animal. The rat transmits one disease - plague - and we are always after its extermination. Why should we not, then, direct our attention to the pig as well? From time immemorial its elimination from society has been suggested, but such a suggestion emanated from the religious reformers. Both Moses (15) and Muhammad (16) prohibited the use of this animal's flesh because they knew that it was the source of disease. Islam appeared on the stage of this world proclaiming from the housetops that there is nothing in its principles which science could upset or falsify even in its present advanced stage. If only people would look at them with unbiased minds they would find that the recent scientific advances and researches in various directions have gone to confirm the validity of its principles. Alcohol is a case in point. Teetotalism was applauded in the Western countries, and it is only now that we find regular societies forming to put an end to its consumption. Did not Islam enjoin upon its followers their complete abstinence from it fourteen
hundred years ago? Science has only recently been able to confirm the wisdom underlying another of Islam’s equally emphatic taboo—eating the flesh of pig.

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servant. The union of woman with man is blessed and fruitful if it is characterized by love and concord. Discord and disagreement, on the other hand, are not only fatal to the peace of the household, leading to the corruption of both the man and the woman and to disease which impair the health of the pair permanently, but also render the object of the union a certain failure. Any disturbance in the true union is productive of immense harm and mischief. Such is also the case of the spiritual union of man with God. The person who cuts asunder his connection from his heavenly master has his heartankered and vitiated. His suffering is very great and knows no end. Again as there is pleasure in the sexual union of man and woman for the production of new life, so there is bliss in the spiritual union of man and God for an immortal life. The bliss that is felt in the spiritual union far transcends all earthly and material enjoyments, and has nothing comparable to it in the pleasures of the senses. If the men of this world who are given to the worldly pleasures taste but once of this heavenly bliss, they would forget all their former pleasures for its sake. But what is to be deplored is the ignorance of most men as regards the source of this heavenly enjoyment. Their genuflections and prostrations are not accompanied with the bowing down of the soul on Divine threshold and hence their prayers are meaningless movements of the body. They perform their religious exercises with an absent mind, and their prayers have no other significance than sitting and rising alternately. It grieves me still more when I see people re-verting to prayers that they may be seen of men and revered and honoured among them; and their insincere prayers make them successful in the attainment of this mean object. Ah, ignorant soul! They never think that if their false prayers can make them honourable in the eyes of men, would not true and sincere prayers make them honourable in the sight of God?

In short, indifference to prayers and remissness in them are due only to an ignorance of the pleasure and enjoyment with which true and sincere prayers are attended. In large cities, villages in the mad race for wealth and in the heat of business, people can hardly find time to bow down in submission before their Master, and those that go through the external acts of devotion have their hearts in their business and not in the prayers which they offer. There is hardly anyone who can bow down his head in true submission and with his whole heart and soul. What is the cause of this spiritual lethargy and indifference to religion? Nothing but that people are unaware of the heavenly enjoyment of prayers and have never tasted of, their true bliss. There is a vast majority of people who would hate the call to prayer because at that time they happen to be engaged in some business of theirs. Such men are to be pitied for their ignorance. They should pray to God with true zeal and sincerity that they may be made to taste of the enjoyment of prayers as they have been granted senses with which they feel the physical pleasures. If they drink of the pure fountain but once, they will not forget its sweetness as long as they live. But as long as they are unaware of its beauties, it is hateful in their eye. To get up early in the morning from a warm bed when sweet slumber is soothing the senses to rest and to wash oneself in the cold season are heavy inconveniences if unattended with any compensatory benefit.

The question then arises, how to obtain this pleasure in prayers without which they are but an inconvenient burden. The drunkard goes on drinking and takes one cup after another until he gets intoxicated. He does not get tired with the first cup and leave drinking because it has not intoxicated him. He HP themselves the object of getting the pleasure of intoxication and devotes himself wholly to it. The man who has a longing for the divine joy which is to be found in prayers should have his attention and thoughts engrossed with it and all his faculties applied to its attainment. The desire to get at it should cause an unrest to his soul and inspire it with true zeal and sincerity for its possession. In saying his prayers he should also aim at true holiness which is the necessary consequence of sincere prayers, for the Holy Quran says: "Verily good deeds, i.e. prayers, drive away evils."

The deep and Divine delight which prayers afford and the true holiness which they effect, should be the objects which a man should set before himself in saying his prayers, and he should further pray to God that his prayers may be like those of the true and faithful servants of God and be blessed with like blessing.

Continued in the JUNE/JULY Issue

Thus Spoke
The Holy Prophet peace be upon him
"It is better to sit alone than in company with the bad; and it is better to sit with the good than alone.
And it is better to speak words to a Seeker of knowledge than to remain silent; and silence is better than bad words."

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MUHAMMAD THE GREATEST MAN OF HISTORY

“If greatness of purpose, smallness of means, and astounding results are the three criteria of human genius, who could dare to compare any great man in modern history with Muhammad? . . . Philosopher, orator, apostle, legislator, warrior, conqueror of ideas, restorer of rational dogmas, of a cult without images; the founder of twenty terrestrial empires and of one spiritual empire, that is Muhammad. As regards all standards by which human greatness may be measured, we may well ask: Is there any man greater than he?”

—Alphonse de Lamartine in Histoire de la Turquie

QUR'AN, THE GREATEST SPIRITUAL FORCE

“It is the one miracle claimed by Muhammad—his standing miracle, he called it—and a miracle it is.”

—Bosworth Smith

“Never has a people been led more rapidly to civilization, such as it was, than were the Arabs through Islam. . . . And to it was also indirectly due the marvelous development of all branches of science in the Moslem world.”

—New Researches by H. Hirschfeld

“Here, therefore, its merits as a literary production should, perhaps, not be measured by some preconceived maxims of subjective and aesthetic taste, but by the effects which it produced in Muhammad’s contemporaries and fellow-countrymen. If it spoke so powerfully and convincingly to the hearts of his hearers as to weld hitherto centrifugal and antagonistic elements into one compact and well organized body, animated by ideas far beyond those which had until now ruled the Arabian mind, then its eloquence was perfect, simply because it created a civilized nation out of savage tribes, and shot a fresh woof into the old warp of history.”

—Dr. Steingass, Hughes’ Dictionary of Islam

THE BEAUTIFUL CHARACTERISTICS OF ISLAM

“I have always held the religion of Muhammad in high estimation because of its wonderful vitality. It is the only religion which appears to me to possess that assimilating capacity to the changing phases of existence which can make itself appeal to every age. I have studied him—the wonderful man—and in my opinion far from being an anti-Christ, he must be called the Saviour of Humanity. I believe that if a man like him were to assume the Dictatorship of the modern world, he would succeed in solving its problems in a way that would bring it the much needed peace and happiness. I have prophesied about the faith of Muhammad that it would be acceptable to the Europe of tomorrow as it is beginning to be acceptable to the Europe of today.”

—George Bernard Shaw