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# THE REVIEW OF RELIGIONS

(AUGUST 1903.)

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*Secretary to the Khilafat*



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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ  
نَحْمَدُهُ وَنُصَلِّي عَلَى رَسُولِهِ الْكَرِيمِ

## *Monro on Sinlessness-Continued.*

### THE CHARGE AGAINST DAVID.

The charge of adultery brought against David by the Christian Missionaries may have some support in the Bible romance but not a single word of the Holy Quran leads to such a conclusion. Nay the Holy Quran gives the lie to such a charge in plain words, and the learned Muslim theologians and commentators treat it as a sheer falsehood. Thus Imam Fakhr-ud-din Razi, the greatest of the commentators, who has written the *Tafsir-i-Kabir*, says in relation to this point: *الاكثرون المحققون والمحققون منهم يردونه ويحكمون عليه*: *i.e.*, "Most of the commentators who are learned and have searched for the truth, falsify this charge (*i.e.*, the charge of adultery against David) and condemn it as a great lie and a mischievous story." Not only this, but Caliph Ali when he heard the false charge, caused it to be announced: *من حدّثكم بحدّيث داود على ما يرويه القصص جلدته مائة وستين وهو حدّ الفرية على الانبياء* "Whoever shall relate the story of David as the story-tellers relate it, I will give him 160 stripes, for such is the punishment of those who lay false charges against the prophets of God." The Caliph doubled the punishment, for, as he gave his reason further on, when a false charge of adultery against an ordinary believer was to be punished with eighty stripes, it was necessary that in the case of such a false charge against a prophet of God to whom no sin could be ascribed, the punishment should at least be doubled. It also appears from this that such false stories found currency in Muslim circles not through trustworthy and learned men but through the story-tellers,



This proclamation, by Caliph Ali, and the opinions of the more trustworthy commentators are sufficient to show the futility of the charge brought forward by the Christians against an innocent prophet of God ; but to show how farther off such a statement is from the truth, we shall take the words of the Holy Quran itself and consider whether they lend any support to or condemn the statements of Mr. Monro and his fellow-workers. The Holy Quran relates the story of David as follows in the chapter entitled the Sad: *ما يقولون* :  
 واذ كر عبدنا داود ذا ال ايد انه اواب . . . . . وشد د نا ملكه و آتينه  
 الحكمة وفصل الخطاب . وهل ا تلك نبوءة الخصم اذ تسوروا للمعراب  
 اذ دخلوا على داود فغزع منهم قالوا لا تخف خصمنا بغى بعضنا على  
 بعض فاحكم بيننا بالحق ولا تشططوا وهدنا الى سواء الصراط . ان هذا  
 اخى له تسع وتسعون نعجة ولي نعجة واحدة فقال اكفلنيها وعزني في  
 الخطاب . قال لقد ظلمك بسوء الظن جعلك الى نعاجه وان كثير من  
 الخطاء لييغى بعضهم على بعض الا الذين آمنوا وعملوا الصالحات وقليل  
 ما هم وطن داود انما فتنه فاستغفر ربه وخر راكعا وانا ب . فغفرنا  
 له ذلك وان له عندنا لوزقى وحسن ما ب . يداود انا جعلتك خليفة  
 These are the verses on whose strength the charge  
 is brought forward and how far it is really the case, the reader  
 will see from these words. The first thing to be noted about this  
 story is that it is both preceded and followed by words highly praising  
 the prophet David, and it is simply absurd to suppose that an inci-  
 dent relating a most impious and black deed is placed between highly  
 commendatory words. The story begins with the words: " Have  
 patience, O Prophet, on what the unbelievers say and do against  
 thee, and remember our servant David whom We gave power for he  
 turned to Us . . . . . and We established his kingdom and bestowed  
 upon him wisdom and skill to pronounce clear decisions." Here the  
 Holy Prophet Muhammad, may peace and the blessings of God be  
 upon him, is enjoined to follow David in his quality of forbearing  
 the evil of his enemies. The chapter containing these verses being  
 revealed at Mecca, it is clear that the Holy Prophet was at that time  
 severely persecuted by his enemies and in bearing those persecutions  
 he was commanded to follow the example of David whom Almighty  
 God, we are told, had granted a great kingdom. It is clear then  
 that the story following this injunction must relate some act of great



and exemplary forbearance done by David, and not a heinous crime, for in that case the Holy Prophet would not have been called upon to follow him. To understand this the Christian Missionaries need not have faith as a grain of mustard seed, for this according to the criterion of their Gospels they have not, but if they have the same amount of reason in their brains, they can easily understand that the Holy Prophet could not be called upon to follow David in transgression and man open disobedience to Almighty God. It is strange indeed that a who teaches that "no one who commits adultery is a believer when he commits it," and that "whoever takes the slightest share in shedding the blood of an innocent person, shall come on the day of judgment with the words 'Despaiser of the mercy of God' written on his forehead," should be commanded to follow the man who is in the very next verse described to have committed adultery and caused an innocent believer in God to be murdered. Moreover the Prophet could not be commanded to follow David in his quality of patience if the latter was unable to resist his evil passions. Again David is here honoured with the glorious title عبدنا *i.e.*, "Our servant." This description shows clearly that Almighty God regards David as a perfect man and, therefore, honors him with a title in which He draws attention to the true relation of David to Himself. The true relation of 'abd (servant) to Allah (God) is one of perfect obedience to His commandments and complete submission and total resignation to His will. A man becomes the 'abd of God when he is quite lost in his master and becomes as a dead man in the hands of God. It is then that he reaches the highest stage of 'aboodiyyat in which he is honored with the title of عبدنا "Our servant" by God. A narrative of adultery and manslaughter could not be consistent with such a dignified title. A description of the "servants of God" is given in the *sura Furqan* where among other high qualifications, it is stated that they do not commit adultery or shed innocent blood. Again David is here described as having obtained power from God. Now this power does not simply mean a temporal power, for attention to his temporal power is drawn in the following words where it is said وشد لنا ملكه "We established his kingdom," and because temporal power has not been withheld from the unbelievers by God. The power here referred to is the spiritual power, the power to resist every evil tendency, and this is the power which gave him the quality of patience with regard to which the Holy



Prophet is commanded to follow David. We have, therefore, clear proof here that David had from God the power to walk in obedience to His commandments and shun every path of evil. This explanation is further supported by the next word in which David is described as *awwab* (واب) . This word denotes exaggeration and is derived from the root *و ب ا* which means to turn to God. David is, therefore, here described to be a man who turned to God in everything, i.e., turned to His obedience in every deed. Attributing adultery and manslaughter to such a man in the very next verse is the sheerest nonsense. Further on still Almighty God says that He bestowed wisdom on David and this bestowal of wisdom He Himself thus describes in another place: *ومن يوت الحكمة فقد اوتى خيرا كثيرا* "Upon whomsoever wisdom is bestowed, to him the greatest good is given." Such are the high qualifications of David preceding the narrative which is said to relate his black deeds, nay the blackest deeds which a man could commit.

Before discussing the words of the narrative itself, it is necessary to consider how David is regarded by Almighty God after relating his alleged sins. Just where the narrative ends, Almighty God says: "And truly David had with us a near approach and an excellent retreat for his turning to us on all occasions." These qualifications can be consistent with a narrative describing his firm obedience to the Divine Being and not with one which marks him out as a guilty person openly transgressing the Divine commandments. Nowhere are the transgressors described in the Holy Quran as having near approach to God and an excellent retreat for their turning to God. In fact the two ideas are contradictory to each other. The transgressor is farthest off from the Divine Being and he turns to Satan instead of turning to God and, therefore, his turning is to be condemned and not praised as an excellent retreat. The most wonderful thing is that in consequence of the deeds related in the narrative, Almighty God is so pleased with David that he says to him: "O David, we make thee our vicegerent upon earth." A strange reward! A man who for the perpetration of an evil deed went so far as to cause innocent bloodshed, is just at that moment singled out by Almighty God as His own representative, as if this were the only occasion on which Almighty God was pleased with his conduct. Could anything



more absurd be conceived? Just imagine the ridiculousness of Almighty God saying to David that since he had been guilty of an act of adultery and of murdering an innocent man, and since in obedience to his carnal passions he was blind to all rights human and Divine, therefore being pleased with him He gave him charge over His creatures and made him His own representative and vicegerent upon earth and a guardian of the rights of men. Were it the sincere desire of a single Christian to know the truth he would not have the slightest difficulty in understanding that the alleged charge of adultery is simply a fabrication, but these men seek the world and not the true and living God. We have shown that the context of the narrative being so far from lending any support to the charge, conclusively establishes the impossibility of any such incident. We shall now take the narrative itself and consider the conclusion to which it leads.

The words in which the Holy Quran describes the narrative have been quoted above. We translate them below:—

“And has the story of the enemies (of David) reached thee, O Prophet, when they climbed over the wall of his apartment where he used to worship God? When they entered in upon David, he was frightened at them (because of their evil intentions). They said, ‘Be not afraid; we are two opposing parties to a case; one of us has wronged the other.’ Judge, therefore, with truth between us, and do not postpone the case, but guide us to the right way. This, my brother, had ninety-nine ewes, and I had but a single ewe, and he said: ‘commit this to my care; and he prevailed over me in the dispute.’ David said: ‘Certainly he has wronged thee in asking for thy ewe to add her to his own ewes and many of them who are concerned together in business as partners, wrong one another, except those who believe and do that which is right, but how few are they!’ And David perceived that We had thrown him into a great trial, so he sought the protection of God and he fell down and bowed before God and turned to Him. So We gave him the protection prayed for, and truly he had a near approach with Us and an excellent turning. (So we said to him), O David, We make thee Our representative upon earth.” Now in this whole narrative there is not a single word which can lead to the direct or indirect inference that David caused Uriah to be murdered or that he committed adultery with his wife. It is a pity that to support the weak theory



of atonement the Christians cannot afford to be respectful even to the grandfather of their God. The literal translation of the words of the Holy Quran given above gives the lie to the Christians who charge a holy prophet of God with base charges, and shows conclusively that whatever may be the origin of the story, the Word of God condemns it as a falsehood. What the Holy Quran relates is simply the narrative of the enemies of David who with the evil intention of murdering him jumped over the walls but being unable to perpetrate the evil deed advanced the pretence that they were parties to a case which they had brought before him for his immediate disposal. Seeing that his enemies were so bent upon taking away his life, which was, therefore, in great danger, David perceived that unless Almighty God took him under His special care and protection, he could not be safe, and therefore, he prayed to God for His protection (سَتَعَفْرُ) which, on account of his near access to God and his constantly turning to Him, Almighty God bestowed on him and removing all danger to his life, made him His vicegerent in that country. All authoritative commentaries cite this to be the meaning of the words, as Imam Razi says in his great work : " It is narrated that a party of the enemies were bent upon murdering David, the prophet of God, and he had a day set apart on which he used to worship God in solitude. His enemies thought this a suitable opportunity for carrying out their evil design and jumped over the walls of his apartment. When they entered in upon him, they found the guards and fearing lest they should be seized they invented a lie." In fact this is the only explanation which is in agreement with the circumstances related and which is supported by the context.

The story that the enemies spoken of were not enemies but only angels who had come to warn David of the sin he is alleged to have committed against Uriah and his wife, finds no support in the words of the Holy Quran. There is not a single word to show that they were angels. On the other hand, their jumping over the walls and not coming in through the gates or appearing supernaturally to David, shows clearly that they were neither actual parties to a suit nor angels, but the enemies of David who thinking David to be alone and unguarded then, jumped over the walls lest the guards at the gates should seize them. Moreover if they were angels, they could not



have told a lie and said that they were parties to a suit whereas they were not actually so. If David had really committed a sin, was there no other way left to God to make him conscious of it; nay, was David's consciousness of sin so lost that he could not feel that by committing adultery and shedding innocent blood, he had done anything against the will of God, and that two angels were required to tell a lie to make David conscious of his guilt. The fictitious story, therefore, charges one of the great prophets with the blackest of deeds and the angels of God with lying and fabrication. Moreover if David were really guilty of the heinous crime of setting at naught all laws human and Divine, how could he speak the words which he is related to have spoken while giving his judgment *وان كثيرا من ا لخلطاء ليبغى بعضهم على بعض الا الذين آمنوا وعملوا الصالحات* "Most of those who are mixed up in business, i.e., neighbours, relatives, partners, &c., wrong one another *except those who believe and do good deeds.*" Evidently he classes himself with the latter as one of those who fully discharge their duties to their neighbours and relatives or to other men who are in any way connected with them. If his judgment means anything, it means this that he himself being one of those who believe and do good deeds could not be guilty of a crime of which one of the parties before him was proved to be guilty. Now when David says plainly that he could not deprive another of his property or do the slightest injustice to him, it is the height of absurdity to suppose that he had been guilty of the most heinous crime of causing a man to be murdered and having illegal connection with his wife. If he had really been guilty, then instead of making himself an exception to the ordinary doers of injustice, he should have classed himself as the worst of all of them. Moreover, the injunction to the Holy Prophet to forbear the evil if his enemies like David is quite absurd if instead of an act of forbearance an evil deed is related as an instance of the doings of David. The force of such an injunction is however clear when the story is interpreted as we have done above; for it is clear that under these circumstances David showed the greatest forbearance and instead of doing any injury to his bitter enemies who had come with the evil intention of taking his life, he freely forgave them and resorted to his heavenly master for protection. He could have put his enemies to death if he liked because he had the power to do so, but as he turned to God constantly, so did he do on this occasion too:



and instead of acting in obedience to his own desires sought the protection of God. The words *و ظن داود انما قتله* and *و نا ستغفر ربه* do not necessitate the absurd supposition of adultery. The former expression means that "David perceived that we had thrown him into a trial" which is equivalent to saying that his life was in great danger. The second expression means that "he sought the protection of God" as has already been shown in discussing the meaning of *istighfar* at length.

It may not be out of place to say a few words as to the origin of this fictitious story. In the reign of Solomon's son as much of the glory departed, the Jews who had shaken off his yoke, conceived an aversion towards him and, therefore, also towards his father and grandfather. With the lapse of time this hatred grew stroger and ripened into bitter enmity. Hence they went so far as to circulate false reports about David and Solomon. They declared Solomon as an idolator and it was for this reason that the Holy Quran thought it necessary to refute the charge of unbelief brought against Solomon in the words *وما كفر سليمان* i.e., "Solomon was not an unbeliever." Such an expression was rendered necessary for a refutation of the serious charge of unbelief brought against Solomon. Another instance of such a refutation is that in the case of Jesus. The legitimacy of his birth was attacked by the Jews and, therefore, Almighty God refuted it by stating that the soul of Jesus was from God and not a Satanic soul. Both expressions would have been unnecessary had there been no false charge. In short, fictitious stories regarding David and Solomon were current among the Jews and ultimately became a part of the national belief. At the advent of the Holy Prophet when large numbers of Jews entered into Islam, these stories were still believed by them to be true. It was the currency of these false stories that rendered necessary the proclamation by Ali referred to above. But as the number of Jews coming to Islam increased, and the hold of the pure principles of Islam relaxed with the lapse of time, a fresh credence was gained by the false stories and in this manner they found their entrance into some careless commentators. But as shown above, the context, the words of the narrative and the opinions of the best commentators as well as other considerations such as Caliph Ali's proclamation condemn the stories charging David with adultery and manslaughter and maintain the unsullied purity of his character.



Not a single word supports the charge against David but a story is told of Jesus in connection with a woman of a notoriously bad character and we wish to know how the purity of Jesus is to be established if every word of the Gospels is to be believed true. He got himself anointed by a harlot with ointment which was part of her earnings of adultery and allowed her to take undue liberty with him (Luk. 9 : 38). Notwithstanding youth and bachelorship he had too familiar connections with some women of dubious character. He even praised harlots (Matt. 21 : 31). Had a single circumstance like this been related of David or any other prophet of God in the Holy Quran, the Christian Missionaries would have considered it as the clearest proof of sinfulness. But here is a beam in the Missionary's eye and he does not see it. Had the circumstances which are related of Jesus in the Gospels been related of any other prophet, we would have had a number of articles from Monros and Qalandars that such and such a prophet was guilty of such and such heinous crimes, but every such circumstance when related of Jesus in the Gospels is lauded and praised as a sublime moral deed and a thousand lessons are drawn from it for the edification of the Christians. We have never been able to understand the logic of the Missionaries. We are told to believe that because David resorted to *istighfar*, i.e., sought the protection of God, therefore he was an adulterer, and because Jesus freely mixed with harlots and allowed them to take undue liberty with him, therefore he was a good man. Greater enemies of righteousness than these abusers of prophets and deifiers of a weak human being, were never born. They do not know to purify their own hearts but the cleanliness of others' hearts is condemned by them as the veriest impurity.

#### CHARGES AGAINST THE HOLY PROPHET.

Mr. Monro ends his list of charges against the prophets of God with two charges against the Holy Prophet of Arabia. He quotes two passages\* of the Holy Quran as referring to alleged sinful deeds of the Holy Prophet. The first passage is that occurring in the *Sura Ahzab*. After giving a translation of a portion of a verse in that *Sura*, Mr. Monro has the audacity to remark: "Does not this mean that

\*The remaining four passages to which Mr. Monro refers are dealt with under the heading of *zanb* and *istighfar*, because in these passages, particular sinful deeds are not alleged as in the two here discussed.



Muhammad was rebuked by God for committing a sin in fearing men." But in the verse to which he refers he cannot point out a single word showing that the Prophet feared men in the sense in which he ought to have feared God, or that he did not fear God, or that God was rebuking him or that any sin was attributable to him for the alleged fearing from men. Here is the verse with a literal translation of it:

وَإِذْ تَقُولُ لِلَّذِي أَنْعَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَأَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِ أَمْسِكْ عَلَيْكَ زَوْجَكَ وَاتَّقِ اللَّهَ وَتُخْفِي فِي نَفْسِكَ مَا اللَّهُ مُبْدِيهِ وَتَخْشَى النَّاسَ وَاللَّهُ أَحَقُّ أَنْ تَخْشَاهُ فَلَمَّا قَضَى زَيْدٌ مِنْهَا وَطَرًا زَوَّجْنَاهَا لَكَ لَا يَكُونَ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ حَرَجٌ فِي أَزْوَاجِ أَدْعِيَائِهِمْ إِذَا قَضَوْا مِنْهُنَّ وَطَرًا وَكَانَ أَمْرُ اللَّهِ مَفْعُولًا

"And remember when thou didst any to him to whom God had shown favor and to whom thou also hadst shown favor, 'Keep thy wife to thyself and fear God,' and thou didst conceal what God would bring to light, and thou didst fear men, but God has greater right to be feared. And when Zaid divorced her and had no more connection with her, we married her to thee so that it might not be a crime in the faithful to marry the wives of their adopted sons when they have divorced them, and the command of God was thus to be fulfilled." Now the simple act of fearing others than God is not a sin however considered. Mr. Monro ought to have quoted the verse of the Holy Quran which supported his views. Moses feared the Egyptians and fled to Madian, yet he did not commit a sin in doing so. Again, when he threw the rod at the command of God and it turned into a serpent, Moses feared it, but nowhere is this fearing described to be a sin. Once more, when Moses met the magicians and their cords and rods were made to appear to him as if they ran along, فَاوْجَسَ

"Then Moses conceived a secret fear within him." Yet on none of these occasions Mr. Monro holds Moses to have been rebuked by God for committing a sin in fearing others than Him. Numerous instances may be quoted from the Bible of such fearing on the part of the righteous prophets, where it is never considered a sin. Of Zacharias who according to Luke was "righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord, blameless," it is related by the same writer that "he was troubled and fear fell upon him" on the sight of an angel. Yet he is nowhere rebuked for committing a sin in fearing others than God. We need not multiply instances. The fact is that "fear is a passion, implanted



in nature, that causes a flight from an approaching evil." Such fear is however quite different from the fear of God which means to have a reverential awe of the Divine Being which enables one to walk in obedience to His will and to look upon sin as a consuming fire. In this particular sense no prophet of God ever feared any one besides God. The verse next to that quoted above testifies to this. Almighty God says: *الذين يبلغون رسالت الله ويخشونه ولا يخشون احد الا الله* "Those who deliver the messages of God and fear Him and do not fear any one besides God." Here all the prophets are plainly described as not fearing any one besides God in the sense in which they ought to fear God, and the Holy Prophet Muhammad *صلی الله علیه وسلم* being one of the prophets is, therefore, free from the charge of having committed a sin in fearing others than God. Mr. Monro could have easily seen these words written in the Quran in the same place where he picked up certain words to charge the Prophet with a sin, but prejudice did not allow him to make right use of his eyesight in the perusal of the Word of God. This description of the prophets shows clearly that the fear displayed by Moses or the Holy Prophet or any other prophet of God on a particular occasion did, in no way contradict his fear of God, for it is in a different sense that the word is used in that case. Not only the Holy Prophet had no fear of any one besides God, but it is also said of his companions in the Holy Quran that they did not fear the blame of any blamer (*لا يخافون لومة لائم*). If the disciples did not fear any one besides God according to the Holy Quran, how could such a charge be brought against the great Teacher.

To trace the exact meaning of the phrase *وتخشى الناس* "And thou didst fear men," it is necessary to consider the whole question of Zaid's marriage with Zainab and the subsequent divorce. The first verse occurring on this subject in the *Sura Ahzab* and just preceding the verse under discussion runs as follows: *وما كان لمومن ولا مومنة ان يقضى الله ورسوله امرا ان يكون لهم الخيرة من امرهم ومن اعصى الله ورسوله فقد ضل لا مبينا* "And it is not for a believer, man or woman, to have any choice in their affairs, when God and His Apostle have decreed a matter: and whoever disobeys God and His Apostle walks in manifest error." Regarding the occasion on which



this verse was revealed, the following account is given in "*The Lubab-un-Naqool fi Asbab-in-Nazool*" (the essence of reports on the occasions of revelation) by the learned Sayooti. "Tabrani reports on the authority of Qatada through trustworthy reporters in an authentic report the following account. He says: 'The Holy Prophet, may peace and the blessings of God be upon him, asked Zainab in marriage intending her for Zaid. She thought that he himself intended to marry her. When she came to know that it was Zaid with whom he intended to marry her, she refused. Upon this was revealed the verse quoted above.' Another version is given in the same book in the following words: 'Ibni-Jarir reports through 'Akrima on the authority of Ibn-i-Abbas that the Prophet of God, may peace and the blessings of God be upon him, asked in marriage Zainab, daughter of Jahsh, for Zaid, son of Harisa, but she refused to accept him as a husband, and said that she was of a higher descent and a nobler family than the man. Then God revealed to the Prophet the verse which says: 'And it is not for a believer, man or woman, to have choice, &c.'" up to the end of the verse." The same version is according to the same author reported through another channel.

These concurring versions of the report which are admitted as being authentic and reported on the authority of trustworthy reporters prove conclusively that the Holy Prophet had asked the hand of Zainab in marriage for Zaid, but the lady and her guardians though glad to accept the Prophet himself as her husband, rejected Zaid on the ground that he was not a suitable match for the high-born lady. The Prophet however had no mind to marry her himself and he wished her only for Zaid. The lady and her brother being persistent in refusal, Almighty God reproved them in the matter and told them in a general injunction to all believers that they had no choice left to them in a matter decided by God and His Apostle, and that if they did not obey God and His Apostle, they would be in manifest error. Upon this command from the Almighty, Zainab and her brother yielded to the match proposed by the Prophet and Zainab became the wife of Zaid.

So far as to the marriage, and the reader will see from this account the utter falsity of the base charges of the Christian Missionaries. It should be further borne in mind that Zainab was very



nearly related to the Prophet of God. Her mother was Umema, daughter of Abdul Muttalib, the grandfather of the Holy Prophet. The mother of Zainab was thus a sister of the father of the Holy Prophet. (See Asadul Ghabah fi Ma'rifat-is-Sahabah, Volume V, page 463). Add to this very close relationship the fact that she was one of the earliest Muslims and was moreover a *Muhajira* (one of the refugees who fled from Mecca on account of the persecutions of the unbelievers). From this it would appear that Zainab was very well known to the Prophet, and all the circumstances, her close relationship to the Prophet, her early conversion to Islam, her subsequent flight along with the believers to Medina, lead to the undeniable conclusion that the Prophet knew her intimately and must have seen her on numerous occasions in her childhood as well as in her youth. Moverover the two sexes mingled freely in Arab society and the seclusion of women was enjoined only by Islam. But even in Islam the seclusion of women was not enjoined until after the marriage of Zainab with the Holy Prophet. Since Christian writers on Islam have admitted this, we need not quote original authorities on the point. Now under the circumstances that Zainab was so closely related to the Holy Prophet, being his real aunt's daughter, that she was a member of the very small society that gathered about the Prophet very early, that she fled from Mecca with the Holy Prophet to Medina, that the Holy Prophet sued her in marriage for Zaid, and that there was no seclusion of women at that time, the conclusion cannot be avoided that the story of the Prophet having seen Zainab by chance through an half-open door and fallen in love with her on account of her great beauty is the basest and the most monstrous falsehood that was ever devised. On the other hand, we find him rejecting her when on asking her in marriage for Zaid, she offered herself for the Holy Prophet. If lust was the motive of his marriage afterwards when she had grown to the age of 35 years, what circumstance compelled the Holy Prophet to reject her when she was more youthful? The veil of prejudice that hangs before the Christian eye is too thick to allow it to see circumstances as they really are.

Now it would appear from the account which is regarded as the only true and authentic account by Muslim authorities that it was







was the freedman of the Prophet, with contempt, and her haughty demeanour became quite unbearable by Zaid. So he came to the Prophet complaining of this and expressed his determination to divorce her. The Prophet forbade him in the emphatic words *امسى عليك* "Do not divorce thy wife and fear God." To say that these words proceeded from unwilling lips is the basest dishonesty, whether Muir or Monro or any other meek preacher of the Gospel of the lamb may be the author of it. Would not Jesus according to this rule be a wolf—nay, worse than a wolf—in a lamb's clothing. Ah! when will the time come when these Christian Missionaries will learn to be honest? When will they see that abusing the holy ones of God is no service to their own poor master. If all the saints of the world are charged with sins, a weak mortal, a poor creature who remained for nine months in the womb of a woman, would not thereby become the Omnipotent God, the Creator and Ruler of the universe. Zaid came to the Prophet and complained to him of the haughtiness of his wife due to her consciousness of her own high birth and expressed his desire of divorcing her. The Holy Prophet gave him the strict injunction not to divorce her, and this the enemies of truth declare to have proceeded from insincere lips. If, as is alleged, the Prophet knew that Zaid was aware of his intention to marry his wife and was divorcing her for his sake, could he utter the words *اتق الله* "O Zaid, fear God and divorce not thy wife." Could a guilty conscience utter such words? Nay these words could not but proceed from the deepest depth of the heart of him who uttered them. "Fear God" is not an expression which a guilty heart can speak to a man who is aware of his guilty intentions. Is it conceivable that such words can be addressed from an insincere heart to a man who is aware of that insincerity? And who is this man Zaid? By what tie is he bound to the Prophet of God? It is the delicate tie between the disciple and the master. The disciple believes the master a messenger from the Most High to call the people to righteousness, one who speaks to God and is spoken to by Him, perfect in his righteousness and a model of virtue whom he must imitate and follow in all his words and deeds. Remember this relation which is based on righteousness and conceive the master saying to his disciple: "Be righteous before God and do not divorce thy wife." Iniquity and injustice could go no further than suppose that these words



were insincere. Was there no sincerity in the words "fear God?" If these words did not come from the heart, why did they go straight to the hearts of the disciples who sacrificed their lives and everything that was dear to them in obedience to his will. Is there a single circumstance lending the slightest support to this monstrous supposition?

To come back to the point from which we started, when Zaid on account of domestic difficulties wished to divorce his wife Zainab, the Prophet was against it. Various reasons weighed with him. Zainab was related to him very closely and Zaid his freedman was loved by him very dearly. He could not wish a pair so dear and near to him to be separated. Moreover it was he himself who had insisted upon the marriage of Zainab with Zaid when the relations of the former were all opposed to this union. What they would say on the lady being divorced could be easily seen, and this, the Prophet thought, would be a source of great trouble to him. Her relatives would say to him that as he had compelled them to give her hand in marriage to a freedman, it was his duty to prevent the dissolution of the marriage. But the most important reason which had the greatest weight with the Prophet was the Divine revelation which commanded Zainab and her relations to submit to the orders of the Prophet of God. He saw that ignorant people would make it a point of objection that a marriage performed in obedience to a Divine revelation had such a sad end. He also knew that the divorce would give an opportunity to the unbelievers to hold in derision the Divine revelation itself which sanctioned the marriage. It was for this reason that he ordered Zaid not to divorce his wife, for he knew that ignorant men would say that if Almighty God knew beforehand that the marriage would not prove to be a happy union, why did He send a revelation to His Prophet requiring the bride and her guardians to submit to the Prophet against their wishes. So after the portion of the verse quoted above, follow words expressive of the Prophet's state of mind under these circumstances: *وتخفى في نفسك ما الله مبديه وتخشى الناس والله اعق* : *ان تخشاه* "And thou didst hide in thy mind what God would reveal and thou didst fear men, and God has more right that thou shouldst fear Him." Following immediately the injunction of the Prophet to Zaid that he should not divorce his wife, these words express the state of



mind in which the Prophet was and give as it were a reason for the Prophet's forbidding Zaid to divorce her. He knew that if the family-strife between Zainab and Zaid were reported abroad, it would give an occasion to the evil-minded carpers to find fault with the Prophet that a marriage which he had proposed and insisted upon, and consent to which had ultimately been obtained by a Divine revelation, ended so miserably. He moreover knew that such an objection would keep back many ignorant men who had not a deep insight into spiritual matters from accepting the truth. Therefore it was his earnest desire that Zaid should not divorce his wife and that the quarrel should not be rumoured abroad. It was this that the Prophet wished to hide, but the Divine will was that it should be revealed because as suggested later on in the same verse a great object was to be fulfilled by the divorce. What the Prophet feared was the cavilling of the evil-minded enemies of Islam, and the fact that such a superficial objection to Divine revelation would be a bar to many in the acceptance of the truth. He feared people but he feared them only for their own sake. Elsewhere Almighty God says in the Holy Quran : *لا يكونوا مومنين* : "Wilt thou kill thyself with anxiety that these people do not believe." An ignorant man will take this to be a rebuke to the Holy Prophet, but the fact is that here the Holy Prophet is praised for the great anxiety which he had for the welfare of his people. In the words *تخشى الناس* the same anxiety for the welfare of people is expressed. As a man whose sympathy for his fellow-beings was unbounded, the Prophet wished that the matter should be hushed up and that Zaid should be restrained from resorting to divorce but his prophetic office, the voice of heaven, soon told him that Almighty God had another great object to fulfil and, therefore, he had no need to fear men, for God whose wisdom willed to bring about the divorce, had more right to be feared. The good of people was no doubt before the eyes of the Prophet, but Divine wisdom had ordained the fulfilment of another great object, the extirpation of the custom of adoption, and, therefore, in the words *والله احق ان تخشاه* there is an injunction to the Prophet to submit to the Divine will altogether and not to fear that the divorce will lead to any evil consequence. Up to this time the Prophet had no desire to marry Zainab because he had already a year or two before declined to marry her when asking her in marriage for Zaid.



Zaid persisted in the divorce and the Holy Prophet knowing it to be the Divine will that the divorce should take place, refrained from interfering any more and resigned himself to the Divine will in the matter. After this we are told in the Holy Quran that the divorce took place and the prescribed term for divorced women passed away. This is stated in the words *فلما قضى زيد منها وطرا* After this follow the words *زوجناها* i.e., "Then did We marry her to thee." Mark the form of this expression. It is not stated that then "thou didst wish to marry her" or "thou didst marry her" and we gave thee permission but that "*We married her to thee.*" Do not these words establish conclusively that the Prophet married her in obedience to express Divine commandment which was not given until Zaid had divorced her and the term prescribed for divorced women had expired. Had the marriage been performed in obedience to the Prophet's own wish, the Holy Quran ought to have stated so. But Almighty God tells us plainly that it was He who commanded the Prophet to marry Zainab. The question naturally arises here, why was it that Almighty God did not command the Prophet to marry Zainab on the previous occasion and sanctioned her marriage with Zaid at that time, but now that such a saddening separation had taken place between two persons who were so near and dear to the Prophet, the command was given to the Prophet to marry Zainab. Almighty God knew that the marriage of Zainab and Zaid would give rise to disunion; why did He not then command the Prophet to marry her himself at the very outset? The answer to this question is given in the Holy Book itself in the following words which follow the command of marriage immediately and give the reason. These words are : *لئلا يكون على المؤمنين حرج في أزواج أدعياءهم إذا اقضوا منها وطرا وكان أمرا للمعقول* i. e., " (The reason of Our giving this command to the Prophet to marry Zainab is) that there might be no obstacle to the faithful in marrying the wives of their adopted sons when they have divorced them. This was the decree of God that was to be fulfilled (in the Prophet's marriage with Zainab)." Here is a reason assigned in plain words for the Divine commandment to the Prophet to marry the divorced wife of Zaid who was known as his adopted son. There is no ambiguity about these words and no doubt can be entertained as to their true meaning. Had it been the Prophet's own desire to marry



Zainab, the reason given by the Holy Book would have been meaningless. But two questions may be asked here. Is the custom of adoption an evil custom? Was it necessary for the Prophet to set an example to extirpate it if it was really pernicious? Here we can give only very brief answers to these questions. That the custom of adoption is an evil custom cannot be denied. A man cannot become a son or a father by mere word of mouth. Moreover the custom is based on a falsehood which keeps a man far away from righteousness. The evil effect of the custom has been fully realized in the Hindu religion. The custom of adoption has there given rise to the immoral doctrine of the *niyoga*, according to which a married woman is required to have carnal knowledge of others than her own husband to raise up sons to the nominal father from the seed of strangers. Such is the evil effect of the custom of adoption. It was, therefore, necessary for the Holy Prophet whose mission was to uproot all evil principles and practices to give a death-blow to this evil custom. But this could not be done without his setting an example himself. It is the secret of the success which attended the mission of the Holy Prophet that he set an example in all that he required his followers to do. The deep Divine wisdom which he possessed enabled him to see that human nature could not be prompted to do a thing unless there was an example before it. Why did Jesus fail in his mission? Because the Gospel-teachings are impracticable and, therefore, Jesus himself could not set an example to his followers. Why are the Christian nations debased with drunkenness? Because Jesus himself drank wine. Look at the Prophet of Islam, how with his good example of total abstinence, he succeeded in uprooting the evil of drunkenness from among his followers. The Prophet was a guide to his followers in every phase of life. He showed them how they could walk in righteousness by himself walking in it. The extirpation of evil customs is the hardest part of the task of a reformer. Inveterate customs grow into habits and become as it were parts and parcels of human nature. A thousand volumes written and preached on their evil effects would not make one individual leave them, to say nothing of their extinction. But Almighty God had given the Prophet the keys of heaven and earth. He knew where to strike the blow to cause death. The Holy Quran had taught his companions : *لقد كان لكم في رسول الله اسوة حسنة* : "Verily for you there is in the Prophet of God a model of virtue." So they did what they saw



him doing. Whenever he saw a deep-rooted aversion to an act he did it first himself. This was the reason that Almighty God commanded the Prophet to marry the divorced wife of Zaid, because he had not become his son by being called a son. From this will be seen the necessity of the commandment to the Prophet. Had the Prophet himself any intention to marry Zainab whom he knew from her childhood, he could do so easily when she was quite young or at least when she had offered herself to the Prophet on his asking her in marriage for Zaid? But the object of the marriage was no other than to extirpate the evil custom of looking upon the adopted son as the real son. Hence the Divine revelation first sanctioned the marriage of Zainab with Zaid as the Prophet wished. But on the second occasion Almighty God allowed Zaid to divorce his wife and did not give sanction to what the Prophet wished, and then after the divorce commanded the Prophet to marry the divorced lady. It is to the fulfilment of this Divine purpose that attention is called in the concluding words of the verse: *وَكَانَ أَمْرُ اللَّهِ مَفْعُولًا* "And the command of God was thus to be fulfilled," and again immediately afterwards: *وَكَانَ أَمْرُ اللَّهِ: قَدَرًا مَقْدُورًا* "And the command of God was a decree ordained beforehand." All the apparent objections to the Divine sanction of the marriage of Zaid with Zainab and the subsequent divorce vanish with these words of God, because here He informs us that all this was done by Him to fulfil a purpose fixed beforehand, and that purpose He has Himself stated to be the extirpation of the evil custom of adoption.

The next verse states even more clearly that the marriage of the Prophet with Zainab was only in obedience to the Divine commandment and not his own passions or wishes. It says: *مَا كَانَ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ مِنْ حَرَجٍ فِيمَا فَرَضَ اللَّهُ لَهُ* "No blame attaches to the Prophet in what God imposed upon him as a duty." Mr. Monro ought to feel ashamed if he has any sense of shame. The verse says plainly that the marriage had been imposed upon the Prophet as a duty by God Himself and no blame whatever attaches to the Prophet. Is the Prophet of God "rebuked for committing a sin," or is he declared free from every blame with which his blind and ignorant enemies may charge him? The word *فَرَضَ* proves conclusively that the Prophet himself had no wish to marry Zainab, but Almighty God gave him the express com-



mandment to do so and imposed it upon him as a duty which he could not lay aside. The Prophet is moreover here declared quite blameless, and Mr. Monro's presumption of sin is an arrogant presumption. There is no presumption of sin in this case but clear proof of sinlessness. Mr. Monro's particular charge that the sin was committed in fearing men is also condemned as false in the very next verse which says : *الذين يبلغون رسالت الله ويخشونه ولا يخشون احدا الا الله* "Those who deliver the messages of God to people, and fear God only and do not fear any one besides God." These are general words and it is folly to limit them to the deliverance of messages only. Had the words *ويخشونه* not interposed, such folly would have been permissible, but the interposing words "and they fear God only" shows clearly that it is a different description from the previous one which says "who deliver the messages of God." In fact these are all descriptions of the words *الذين خلوا من قبل* "Those who have passed before" occurring in the previous sentence. Who are meant by the words "those who have passed before" is here stated. By these are meant, says the verse, "those who deliver the messages of God and fear God only and do not fear any one besides God." A drowning man, they say, catches at straws, and Mr. Monro may find it convenient to remark in order to keep up his reputation as a first class Missionary inasmuch as he is the greatest abuser of the prophets of God, that this is only a description of the earlier prophets. But he ought to know that as a prophet, the Holy Prophet is included in this description, and had this description not been intended of him, it would have been quite meaningless. He may also read the verses which he has himself often quoted showing that the Prophet is like the prophets who went before. He shall have also to remember that he does not regard the earlier prophets as blameless and, therefore, there is no reason why he should regard this description as applicable to the earlier prophets and not to the Holy Prophet. Let him also bear in mind that the fearing of Moses who is one of those who passed before, is also related in the Holy Quran. and, therefore, if this description is applicable to him, it is also applicable to the Holy Prophet.

We have already stated that wherever a Prophet is described to have feared others than God, it is not at all meant that he feared them as he ought to have feared God, or that he did not at that particular



moment fear God. We have also shown that such fearing is nowhere described as sinful in the Holy Quran, and if it is, Mr. Monro will kindly quote the verse by reference to his valuable concordance. It should also be noted that fearing in this sense is the requirement of the very nature of man. On account of his humanity, a prophet may also fear in this manner, but the Divine support immediately takes him by the hand and suppresses the human weakness. This is testified to in the words *وتخشى الناس والله احق ان تخشه*. These words are expressive of the state of mind in which the Prophet then was. A revelation is not the outcome of a particular state of the mind but it is granted by Almighty God according to the state of mind and is an image of it. No sooner does the Prophet conceive the idea that in doing a certain thing he is fearing men, in whatever sense we may take his fearing, the idea at once takes possession of the heart that the real fear is that of God and not of anything besides Him. It is not true to say that the fear of men had gained any possession of the heart of the Prophet. On the other hand this idea is repelled so soon as it enters the heart by the more strong and firm idea due to his prophetic character, to the constant support of the Divine Being granted to him, that the fear of men in any sense is nothing, and it is really God who deserves to be feared. The human weakness is thus at once suppressed by the Divine strength. The prophets of God have a human nature and, therefore, they are subject to all human weaknesses and human infirmities. But the grace of God is constantly with them and, therefore, no sooner a human weakness begins to operate than the grace of God at once comes to their support. We do not believe the prophets of God to be free from human weakness, but we believe that this weakness in their case is suppressed by the strength and support of God. It is for this reason that when the fear of aught besides God enters the heart of a prophet, though it is not a fear of the same nature as the fear of God, the fear of God at once expels the temporary fear and permanently takes its place. Hence it is that the words *وتخشى الناس* are immediately followed by the words *والله احق ان تخشه* the latter words being expressive of the permanent and stable state of the mind of the Prophet. The first was a requirement of the human nature and the second was due to the very close connection with God which the Prophet had. Similarly where Moses' fear is described we have the words *فاجس في*



نفسه خيفة موسى, *i.e.*, the human nature in Moses perceived a fear, (the fear of course being that the people would be deceived by the magician's doings); and the next words are *قلنا لا تخف* (انك انت لا على), *i.e.*, the voice of God spoke at once within him, 'Do not fear, for thou shalt be the uppermost.' Here too no sooner the fear enters the heart because of the human nature than the better nature, the Divine voice, at once comes with the assurance of his own victory and the former idea is expelled as soon as it is conceived. The fact is that the idea conceived by the human nature of a Prophet gains no ground over his heart, but the support of God due to *istighfar* at once takes him by the hand and places him above the weakness of human nature. The idea due to human nature is so momentary that it vanishes as soon as it is formed.

It will be clear from the above exegesis of the verses of the Holy Quran that the various incidents of the narrative are described in succession. At first there is the Divine sanction to the marriage of Zaid with Zainab because it was opposed by the latter. Then there is the quarrel and the Prophet's injunction to Zaid, not to divorce his wife, and his fear for the people to whom it might prove a stumbling-block. Then follows the divorce. The prescribed term after divorce then passes away and the Prophet receives a commandment from the Almighty to marry Zainab. The reason of this marriage is then given that there may be no harm for the faithful to marry the divorced wives of those whom they call their sons only by word of mouth. It is then stated that this was the great purpose, the fulfilment of which was brought about through all these events. The Prophet is then declared free from every charge in connection with this marriage, and it is stated that the marriage was imposed upon him by God as a duty. Lastly it is stated that it should not be imagined that in fearing men the Prophet committed any sin for the prophets of God never fear any one besides God in the sense in which they fear God. Thus we have shown that the fear of the Prophet was in respect of the divorce, and Bokhari also states in an authentic tradition that these words were revealed in connection with the matters of Zaid and Zainab, thus intimating that they refer to the disagreement and the divorce. But even if the words are taken to refer to the Prophet's fear, that people would say that he married the wife of his



adopted son, none of the arguments furnished above is thereby weakened. The adopted son was looked upon according to Arab custom as the real son of the adoptive father and, therefore, marriage with his divorced wife was a step strongly opposed to inveterate Arab custom. If, therefore, the Prophet feared the objections of the people in contracting such a marriage, he is as blameless as in the former case. The fear is still of the same nature, and every argument advanced above in proof of the blamelessness of the Prophet in this matter is still applicable with the same force. Mr. Monro's objection is, therefore, as groundless according to this interpretation as according to the one which we have adopted. We do not reject the former interpretation, though we think that the context favors the latter. But our arguments are equally applicable in both cases.

The version of this story as given above, is the same as found in authentic and correct reports, and it is the only true account. But as this version does not suit the purpose of the Christian Missionaries, they rely on a false version with as great an arrogance as they rely on a false Deity. It is stated that when Zainab was married to Zaid, the Prophet saw her accidentally in her house through a half-open door in the absence of Zaid and was charmed with her beauty, and that when Zaid came to know of this, he divorced her for the sake of the Prophet who married her then. Not only does this false story find no support in the Holy Quran, but it is contradicted in plain words by it. If this story is true, the Prophet must be held as blameable in this matter whereas the Holy Quran says plainly that "no blame attaches to the Prophet." Secondly, the marriage would in that case be the result of his own desire or lust, but the Quran says in plain words that it was imposed by God as a duty upon the Prophet and that he was commanded to do it. The marriage is plainly called *ما فرض الله له* "What God appointed for the prophet" and *امر الله* "The command of God." Thirdly, in the Holy Quran it is stated that the Prophet enjoined Zaid not to divorce his wife, which he could not have said if he had the least desire to possess her. To say that these words came from insincere lips only proves the dishonesty and guilty conscience of the false accuser. As shown above the words "Be righteous before God and do not divorce thy wife" could not come but from the depth of a pure and sincere heart. Fourthly, it is stated in the Holy



Quran that the object of this marriage was that the false custom of adoption should be uprooted, whereas if the story were true, the object of the marriage would have been the satisfaction of the carnal desires of the Prophet and not the one stated in the Quran. Fifthly, the words in which Zaid is described in the verse under discussion also refute the story as a false one. Instead of mentioning Zaid by name, the Holy Quran says: *واذ تقول للذي انعم الله عليه وانعمت عليه* "And when thou didst say to him to whom God was gracious and to whom thou also wast gracious." In the first place Zaid is described as one of the righteous walking in the right path. We are told in the Sura *Fatiha* to pray for being guided "in the right path, the path of those to whom God has been gracious." The words *انعمت عليه* used there are the exact equivalents of the words *انعم الله عليه* used of Zaid. Zaid is, therefore, described by God to have attained to the degree of righteousness to attain which every true Muslim should strive. Now if it be supposed that Zaid knowing of the Prophet's intention to marry his wife, divorced her for his sake, he could not be praised as one of the righteous upon whom God had showered down His favors. In such a case he ought to have been condemned as being guilty of a black deed. But the words of praise used of Zaid show clearly that he was acting righteously in the matter and following a man who was also righteous. Again, Zaid is described as one to whom the Prophet had shown favor. Now all the favors shown by the Prophet to Zaid, would have been voided if he had entertained the idea of having his wife divorced and marrying her himself. His favors would have been in that case outweighed by the wrong he would have done Zaid. In that case Zaid ought not to have been described as one who had received favors from the Prophet (as he is really) but as one who had been wronged by him. Thus every word of the Holy Quran condemns the story as false upon which the Christians rely for their false charge. It is an admitted principle with regard to traditions that every tradition, whatever may be the authority for it, should be condemned as false when it contradicts the Holy Quran. This tradition may then be rejected without any further consideration.

We will however cast a glance at the circumstances and see if the story finds any support in them. Now, in the first place it is admitted that Zainab was the Prophet's real aunt's daughter and, there



fore, the Prophet must have known her from her very childhood. Secondly, she was one of the earliest Muslims and as a member of the small society that gathered at Mecca about the Holy Prophet could not have remained unknown to, or unseen by, him. Thirdly, she was a *Muhajira* and in that capacity too, she must have been fully known to the Prophet. Fourthly, there was no seclusion of women among the Arabs, and even in Islam the order of the seclusion of women was not revealed until after the marriage of the Prophet with Zainab. Is there a grain of truth in the story that the beauty of Zainab was revealed by chance to the Prophet through a half-open door and that he was charmed with it? What a monstrous falsehood! Had not the Prophet known and seen her in her youth? Is it not moreover true that at the time of her marriage with the Prophet, Zainab was more than 35 years of age, which in the case of women is regarded as an old age in warm climates. There is another circumstance which condemns this story as false. Had such an event taken place, it would certainly have raised strong doubts in the minds of the followers of the Prophet as to his truth. Such an act which was apparently guilty could not have but brought the whole movement to utter extinction. Zaid would have been the first to apostatise, because he was aware of all the circumstances, and the scandal would have soon become public. Not a single follower could have remained with the Prophet or believed in his mission. They were bound to him by the tie of righteousness and followed him as the model of virtue. What was it for which they suffered the persecutions of their enemies, left their homes and laid down their lives for the sake of the Prophet. It was only his righteousness and their own desire to walk in his footsteps. Had any such circumstance actually happened as the Christian writers assert, they would have all dispersed. But not a single person entertained any doubt and not a single heart was subject to any misgiving. Does it not clearly show that this story is a huge falsehood devised in later ages? We may also mention that this false story is contradicted by the authentic account which we have given above, and in this manner also is its falsehood proved.

Let us now see what is the authority for this false story. Muir refers us to Tabri. Now Tabri is an historian who has tried to swell the volume of his work by narrating every event that he happened to



listen without examining it critically. The only body who took pains to sift the truth from the error in the vast mass of tradition, is that of the *Mohaddisin*. Tabri was not one of the *Mohaddisin* and in his history or commentary, we do not find a single attempt to separate truth from fiction. To judge of the truth of a tradition, therefore, we must first go to the *Mohaddisin* and they reject the false story on which the Missionaries rely. But when we examine the particular story under discussion as reported in Tabri, we are surprised at the simplicity of that historian. The same story is reported twice in Tabri with a very slight variation in the two texts. The chain of reporters is in both cases the same. Thus he says: Muhammad bin Umar reported to me that Abdulla son of Amir Aslami reported to him that Muhammad, son of Yahya, son of Habban, said that the Prophet of God . . . .” Here it should be noted in the first instance that a writer writing in the fourth century gives only three names as reporters through whom the story came to him, and this circumstance is the first witness affirming the falsehood of this story. Let us now take the several persons reporting the story in succession. The last person to whom the story is traced is Muhammad, son of Yahya, son of Habban, who is not one of the companions and, therefore, no value can be attached to a story for which he is not a first-hand authority. The story evidently is not traced to any companion of the Holy Prophet and, therefore, must be rejected as utterly false. This Muhammad died in A. H. 121, and therefore his evidence if he really said so, cannot be admitted. From Muhammad, Abdulla, son of Amir Aslami, reports the story who died in A. H. 150, and who is described in books on the *Asmaur-Rijal* as (حد) (ضعف) “One of the weak” and no trust can be placed in his report. He died in A. H. 150, and it is further stated that he does not report anything from Muhammad, son of Yahya, nor does Muhammad, son of Umar, report anything from him. But Tabri draws his report through this channel which is rejected by the *Mohaddisin*, and hence no weight can be attached to such a report. The last name in the chain of Tabri’s reporters cannot be exactly identified with any of the men of that name in the *Asmaur-Rijal*, as Tabri has not given full particulars of that name. Moreover there is only one channel through which this report is obtained, whereas the *Mohaddisin* are never contented with the truth of report unless



it is reported through various channels, the reporters in each channel living so far from each other that a plot cannot be conceived of in their case. But the report of Tabri does not satisfy a single one of the conditions necessary for an authentic and true report and, therefore, it is dishonest to attack the Prophet of God on its strength when contrary reports admitted to be true and authentic by the *Mohaddisin* also exist.

From this it is clear that the story is quite fictitious on whose strength Mr. Monro charges the Holy Prophet, and the Holy Quran condemns the charge as false. Another consideration leads us to the conclusion which we already reached. The Arabs were a particularly jealous nation and they were men who were conscious of their own high descent and noble blood. The companions of the Prophet were not drawn from the dregs of society such as fishermen or washermen, nor were the women that followed him harlots. They were jealous and chaste people. On one occasion when the Holy Prophet was accompanying one of his wives home, two men passed by, and the Holy Prophet called them and told them that the woman he was accompanying was his wife. This he did not, because any doubt had arisen in their minds, but because he was so scrupulous as not to give any one any chance to entertain the slightest doubt with respect to his own perfect chastity. Here we observe an important difference between our own Holy Prophet and Jesus. In the Gospels it is related that in a solitary place Jesus was found talking with a woman publicly known as a harlot and he had no explanation to offer. Mark the deep insight of the Holy Prophet into human nature. He was going with his wife but still he saw that on account of the delicate relation in which he stood to his followers, it was necessary for him to tell them that it was not a strange woman he was accompanying but his own wife. Which of these two prophets stands on a higher eminence of sinlessness, it is easy to see. On the one hand is a bachelor who is in the habit of drinking wine (for such the Gospels represent him to be) talking in a solitary place with a woman who is not chaste but publicly known to be of a bad character, and he has no explanation to offer when discovered. On the other hand is a man walking with his own wife, but to dispel every doubt regarding his chastity which might possibly arise he informs the passers by that it is his wife. Can such a man who is so scru-



pulous about his chastity be reasonably charged with the guilt with which the Christian Missionaries charge him? These circumstances further show that the companions of the Prophet had reason to be certain that the Holy Prophet was perfect in his righteousness and, therefore, they did not hesitate to sacrifice their lives for his sake, while the disciples of Jesus had no reason for having a certain faith in his righteousness and in the truth of his mission and, therefore, they did not hesitate to betray him into the hands of his enemies or curse him or quit him at the moment when he needed their help. In fact, it cannot be questioned that the companions of the Holy Prophet had a perfect faith in his righteousness whereas the disciples of Jesus were devoid of such a faith. Their weakness of which we read so often in the Gospels was in fact due to the weakness of their faith in their master, while the strength of the companions of the Prophet was due to the firmness of their conviction in the righteousness of the great teacher whom they followed. Here we wish to draw Mr. Monro's attention to the character of Jesus as displayed in the story above referred to, and ask him to state honestly what would he have thought of another Prophet of God if such incidents had been related of him. While solving this question, Mr. Monro will kindly remember the opinion of Jesus' contemporaries with regard to his character and read the verse in which they state him to be a drunkard and a friend of sinners, *i. e.*, harlots.

Another verse of the Holy Quran in which Mr. Monro finds the Holy Prophet described as having committed a sin, runs as follows: *انا انزلنا اليك الكتاب بالحق لتحكم بين الناس بما اراك* (النساء) "Verily we have sent down the Book to thee with truth, that thou mayest judge between men according as God has given thee insight, and for the deceitful ones be not a disputer." Perhaps the reader will be astonished that Mr. Monro was going to point out a sin but the verse does not say anything about it. Mr. Monro's argument is this that since the Prophet has been commanded not to dispute for the deceitful ones, therefore he must have so disputed, and must have been guilty of some sin, but such an argument betrays poverty of intellect on the part of Mr. Monro. A commandment to a Prophet does not mean that he has already acted against it. This is an absur-



dity which Mr. Monro will see on a deeper reflection. Mr. Monro has also his "learned commentators" whom he blindly follows without paying any attention to the words of the Quran. If the "learned commentators" have given their own opinion, it is open to criticism; if they have stated any tradition in support of their statement, the authenticity of the tradition must first be determined. There are various versions of this story and although none of them is of the highest class of authentic traditions but the only one to which credit can be given is that adopted by Jalal-ud-din Sayooti in his *Lubab-un-Naqool fi Asbab-in-Nazool* (the essence of reports as to the occasions of revelation) on the authority of Tirmazi and Hakam and other traditionalists as reported by Qatada, son of Numan. This report is given in the following words:—Qatada says "There were some people of us, called Banu Uberik, Bashr, Bashir and Mobashshir. Now Bashr was an hypocrite who used to make verses abusing the companions of the Holy Prophet and attributing them to Arab poets saying: 'Such and such a one has said thus.' These people were in poverty in the days of ignorance as well as in Islam, and the food of the people at Medina was figs and barley. Now my uncle bought a load of bread and kept it in a saloon where he had his arms, coat of mail and sword. Some one from beneath broke into the saloon and took away the loaves as well as the arms. In the morning my uncle Rafa'h came to me and said: 'Son of my brother, we have been wronged during the night, our saloon has been broken into and the bread and arms have been taken away.' So we began to spy out in the house and on enquiry were told that the Banu Uberik had been seen kindling a light during the night and that so far as could be judged, it was kindled on some of our loaves. When we were thus inquiring, the Banu Uberak said: 'By God we believe Labid, son of Sahl, to be the thief,' a man of us who did good actions and was a Muslim. When Labid heard this, he drew the sword and said: 'I, a thief? By God, this my sword will cut you or bring forth proof of your allegation?' Then the Banu Uberak said: 'Away from us thou man, thou art not the thief?' Then we continued to inquire in the house, until there was no doubt left that the Banu Uberak were the real thieves. So my uncle said to me: 'Son of my brother, it is desirable that thou shouldst go to the Prophet of God and mention it to him.' So I went to the Prophet of God and said to him: 'There are some people in our house who broke into the house of my uncle and took away his



bread and arms. They should return to us our arms and as for the bread we have no need of it.' The Prophet of God said: 'I will look into it?' When the Banu Uberak heard this, they came to a man called Asir, son of Urwa, and talked with him on this matter. So he gathered some people of the house and they came and said to the Prophet: 'O Prophet of God, Qatada, son of Numan, and his uncle falsely charge some people of us who do good actions and are Muslims, with theft without any evidence and proof.' Then I went to the Prophet of God and he said to me: 'Oppressest thou people who are spoken of as doers of good deeds and Muslims and chargest them thou with theft without any evidence or proof?' So I came back and told my uncle, who said: 'God is the helper.' After a short while came the revelation: . . . . *نازلنا إليك الكتاب* On the revelation of this verse the arms were brought to the Prophet of God and he returned them to me." Mr. Monro will kindly point out the part of this story which speaks of the alleged sin of the Holy Prophet. What the Prophet did was quite right under the circumstances. Qatada gave no proof of his assertions, and neither had he any such proof in his hands, for when the Holy Prophet said to him that he had no proof, he went away silent and his uncle also, hopeless of being able to furnish any evidence as to the truth of his assertions, only said: "God will help us." As a judge, the Prophet was wholly right in rejecting the suit of Qatada, because he did not bring forth any evidence at all. The judge has to decide a case on the evidence brought forward, and if the complainant does not produce any evidence, the complaint must be dismissed. Even if such dismissal involves a miscarriage of justice, yet it is not the judge who is to be blamed for it. The fault is at the door of the complainant and the judge acts rightly in the matter. How can the intention of the Prophet be called wrong then in the case under discussion? What folly on the part of Mr. Monro to say that the Prophet committed a sin when he intended to dismiss a suit for want of proof! Was the Divine commandment given to him that he should decide a case in favor of the party who brought forward no evidence or proof? In fact the habit of finding faults with the Prophets of God and abusing them as sinful men has led Mr. Monro to the height of absurdity, and he never thinks what he is going to say.

That in this case where no evidence for the complainant was coming forth, the Prophet would have been quite right in dismissing the



complaint, no sensible person would doubt for a moment. But the Divine revelation came at once to his assistance and in the words revealed as quoted above, there was a hint to him that the circumstances of the case required a judgment in favor of the complainant. His decision in this case proceeded upon *بما اراد الله* "What God had shown him." We have already stated that the words *ولا تكن* *للخا ئذين خصيما* do not presuppose that he had been a disputer for the fraudulent. These words of the revelation coming upon the heart of the Prophet, are in fact an image of the innermost feelings of his heart and their significance is really that the Prophet could never be a disputer for the fraudulent. Though revelation does not proceed from the heart and comes from God, yet it is granted according to the capability of the heart of its recipient and is, as it were, an image of his heart. Thus the verse under discussion is an image of the heart of the Prophet and it means in his mouth, "Almighty God has sent to me the Book with truth that I may judge between men according to the insight which He has granted to me, and I will never be a disputer for the fraudulent." Every sensible person would be surprised to see a conclusion of sinfulness drawn from a verse which negatives the sinfulness of the Prophet.

*To be continued.*

## *The Epiphany on the Muslim Doctrine of Hell.*

An article appears in the *Epiphany* of July 18th, signed by one W.G. of Pubna, in which an attempt has been made to prove that the Quran teaches that all men, righteous as well as sinners, shall be burned in hell, and from this supposed argument the necessity of atonement is drawn as a conclusion. The conversion of the late Dr. Imad-ud-din to Christianity is said to have been due to this teaching of the Quran. Since the Revd. gentleman is now dead we need not go into details as to the actual causes of his conversion. Even if we suppose for the sake of argument that the Quran teaches that all men whether good or bad will taste of hell-fire, the doctrine of atonement is not thereby proved. What nonsensical talk, "a savior once offered to bear the sins of many," or "God in Christ reconciling the world to himself!" How easily do these Christian Missionaries kick at reason and sense when talking of



atonement. Mr. W. G. sneers at the explanation that "by the power of their faith the fire would be extinguished," but he finds no objection to the absurd doctrine that Jesus took away the sins of the world. Such a doctrine is simply meant to open the door to licentiousness, and finding it difficult to purify their own lives, these gentlemen send their God in Christ to hell. Supposing that the Muhammadan doctrine requires all men to go to hell, the Christian doctrine only adds to its horribleness by sending even God to hell. If Mr. W. G. offers the explanation that God went to hell to save men, why should he object to some good men going to hell to save their brethren.

But let us examine the Quranic teaching. From the earliest times the Muslims have never held that the righteous will be burned in hell-fire. The verse *ان منكم الا وارد ها* "No one is there of you who shall not go to it" is to be read with the verse: *ان الذين سبقوا ان لهم منا الحسنى اولئك عنها مبعدون لا يسمعون تحسيسا وهم فى ما اشتقت انفسهم خلدون . لا يحزنهم الفزع الاكبر وتلقاهم الملائكة* "Verily they for whom we have before ordained the good reward shall be far away from it (i. e., hell-fire); its slightest sound they shall not hear, and in that which their souls longed for, shall they abide for ever. The great terror shall not trouble them and the angels shall meet them with glad tidings." Are plainer words required to prove that in the verse under discussion the Quran does not mean that the righteous will be burned in hell-fire? The fact that the righteous shall remain far away from hell and shall, therefore, never see it, that they shall never hear its slightest sound, and that the great terror shall not trouble them and they shall, therefore, never feel any torment, being established by plain words of the Holy Quran, the commentators are at liberty to explain the verse under discussion in any way that seems best to them, so long as this fact is not contradicted. It is folly to call these explanations "attempts to get over an awkward difficulty." The verse, of the Quran must be interpreted in a way which should reconcile its various parts to one another. When the Holy Quran says plainly that the righteous shall never see hell, that they shall never hear its sound, and that they shall never feel its torment, the honest critic ought to pause there and think what he is going to say. But the Christian Missionary has never been known to be a fair critic when attacking other religions. He is too partial to his own and too hostile to others. He need not defer to the opinions of the commentators, but he is bound to pay due attention to the words of



the Quran. By referring to the verse quoted above, he can at once see that whatever meaning be attached to the words **وان منكم الا وارد ها** it is established beyond the shadow of a doubt that they do not signify that the righteous shall ever see hell-fire, or hear its sound or feel its torment. If the interpreter has here before him a difficulty and he solves it as seems to him best, this or that Revd. gentleman has no business to interfere. Is the Bible without such difficulties? If Mr. W.G. has an answer in the affirmative, we shall quote as many instances as can satisfy him.

We will now examine the words of the verse under discussion. It says: **وان منكم الا وارد ها** "No one is there of you who shall not go to it." In the first place, therefore, it is necessary to see who are the persons included in "you." Is it the whole of mankind, or the faithful only or the unbelievers only? The correspondent of the *Epiphany* seems to take the word to mean the Muslims only and thus excludes even the unbelievers. He says: "The word for hell used in the context here is **جهنم** which is the technical term used by Muslim theologians for the purgatorial hell in which Muslims must expiate their crimes by their sufferings before being made partakers of the bliss of heaven." Then he says that the Quran teaches seven divisions of hell but he names only six of them. As a matter of fact the six names **سعير**, **حطمة**, **جحيم**, **لظى**, **هاوية**, and **خهيم** are only six different names of hell mentioned in the Quran and none of these is there described as a division of hell for a particular class of unbelievers. We do not wish to say anything more concerning these six names (the seventh of course the Christian correspondent does not mention, perhaps he has reserved it for himself) as these Missionaries are never ashamed of their ignorance of the Quran. The point to which we wish to draw the reader's attention is this that Mr. W. G. is clever enough to say that in the verse under discussion, the Muslims only are meant as **جهنم** only which according to him is the purgatorial hell for Muslims is mentioned in the context and the other divisions mentioned by him to contain the Christians, Jews, Magi, idolators and hypocrites are not named, showing that these unbelievers are not included in the address. Mr. W. G. has thus proved from the Holy Quran that God has declared it to be obligatory upon Him to send every Muslim to hell, whereas He has never declared it to be obligatory upon Him to send every unbeliever to hell. The conclusion then to which Mr. W. G. comes is that the Quran says that every Muslim must go to hell whereas the unbelievers may be saved. An



excellent temptation to unbelievers to accept the religion of Islam ! Mr. W. G. seems to be the ablest Christian Missionary that has visited the Indian soil. How would the Christian religion have obtained this glorious victory over Islam if W. G. had never come to India. Bless the fates, ye Christian Missionaries, that such able men are still among you !

Such are the vagaries of Mr. W.G., but let us now look at facts. The Quran itself informs us what it means by "you." If we go a few verses backward, we find *ويقول الانسان اذ انا مت لسوف اخرج حيا* "And says man : 'What ! After I am dead, shall I indeed be brought forth alive?' Does every man say this ? The Prophet did not say it, and his companions did not say it. Who is this *الانسان* then ? It is the denier of the day of judgment, the denier of the Prophet in fact. After this the Holy Quran says :—"And I swear by the Lord, We will surely gather together them (*i. e.*, the unbelievers) and the Satans (who misled them) : then surely will We set them on their knees round the hell. (Mark that the believers are not included). Then will We surely take forth from every band those of them who have been stoutest in proud rebellion against the merciful ; then shall We know right well to whom its burning is most due (*i. e.*, the severity of punishment to the unbelievers and deniers of the day of judgment will be proportional to the hardness of their hearts." Here follows the verse under discussion, and the context settles conclusively that the "you" in this verse means only the persons already spoken of. These are the same persons who have already been spoken of as having been gathered round hell-fire on their knees. To them it is said that as they are sure that they shall not be raised again and that there shall be no day of judgment and no punishment of evil deeds, so it is a settled decree with the Lord that they shall go to hell and that this punishment of their evil deeds shall certainly be awarded to them.

Some objections remain to be answered. It is stated that this verse is followed by *ثم ننجي الذين اتقوا* which is translated "Afterwards will We deliver those who feared God." But *ثم* does not always mean "Afterwards." It is sometimes placed in the beginning when something quite new is brought before the reader. Thus in *Sura Alamam*, an account of the Holy Prophet and the unbelievers is followed by the verse *ثم آتينا موسى الكتاب* which no sensible per-



son will translate into "Afterwards we gave Moses a Book." ثم therefore, does not always mean "Afterwards," but sometimes it is used to begin a new sentence. The word ننجى does not imply that they will be delivered after suffering the torments of hell-fire, but it only means that they shall be saved from hell-fire. This use of the word is exemplified on various occasions in the Holy Quran. The angels say to Lot (نا لمنجوك) It does not mean that he will partake of the torture and then be delivered from it, but that he shall be quite safe. To draw from the words ونذرنا لظالمين فيها جثيا "And We shall leave the ungodly therein on their knees," the conclusion that the righteous will not be left therein and that, therefore, they must be thrown into hell and then taken out of it, defies all principles of logic. The fact is that here the two parties, the righteous and the ungodly, are mentioned side by side and contrasted. The one class is saved from hell while the other is down upon its knees in it. Instances of this abound in the Holy Quran. In this very *Sura* we have after a few verses يوم نحشر المتقين الى "On that day We will gather the righteous unto the God of mercy with honors due, and drive the sinners into hell like flocks driven to the watering." Again in *Sura Zumar* we read وسيق الذين كفروا الى جهنم زمرا "And the unbelievers shall be driven towards hell by troops, . . . . and the righteous shall be driven on in troops to paradise." The same contrast is brought out here again and it is plainly stated that the righteous and the ungodly shall be driven in two different directions, the one to heaven and the other to hell. The righteous, therefore, cannot go to hell.

Lastly, we have no hesitation in saying that even if "you" in the verse under discussion be taken to mean the whole mankind, the interpretations adopted by learned Muslim theologians are not in the least objectionable. But we advise the Christian Missionaries to make themselves acquainted with the contents of the Holy Quran before finding faults with it. The doctrine of atonement will not stand on the feeble props on which they want to support it. Some reasonable explanation must be given of it to satisfy the seekers after truth. Misrepresentations and abuses will not succeed in the end.