



THE REVIEW of RELIGIONS

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IN THIS ISSUE

- *EDITORIAL*
- *FRIDAY SERMON*
- *AHMADIYYAT IN GHANA*
- *THE GRAVE*
- *IMMORTAL LIFE*
- *A NEW MESSAGE*
- *FAITH OR WEALTH*
- *80 YEARS AGO*
- *GREED FOR WEALTH*





THE AHMADIYYA MOVEMENT

The Ahmadiyya Movement was founded in 1889 by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the expected world reformer and the Promised Messiah whose advent had been foretold by the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him. The Movement is an embodiment of true and real Islam. It seeks to unite mankind with its Creator and to establish peace throughout the world. The present head of the Movement is Hazrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad. The Ahmadiyya Movement has its headquarters at Rabwah, Pakistan, and is actively engaged in missionary work.



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The REVIEW of RELIGIONS

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The Review of Religions is an organ of the Ahmadiyya Movement which represents the pure and true Islam. It is open to all for discussing problems connected with the religious and spiritual growth of man, but it does not accept responsibility for views expressed by contributors.

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CONTENTS

PAGE NO.

1. Editorial. 2
2. Friday Sermon 5
3. Ahmadiyyat in Ghana
(Maulvi Abdul Wahab Adam) 11
4. The Grave
(Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din
Mahmood Ahmad) 16
5. Immortal Life
(Bashir Ahmad Orchard) 21
6. A New Message 31
7. Faith or Wealth
(Mirza Rehan Akram) 34
8. 80 Years Ago 37
9. Greed for Wealth 48



EDITORIAL

The average person is confused by the number of different religions and also by their subdivisions and sects. Which one is the truth, or do none of them represent the truth? Through which one can a conscious realisation of God be attained? If the world is to be saved from its present day materialism some powerful message and sign of God must be heralded and manifested. There are many who do pray to God but when their prayers do not seem to be answered, they lose faith in the efficacy of prayer and begin to doubt whether there is a God.

In all ages God has manifested Himself through verbal revelations, visions, dreams, prophecies and miracles. Not only has He conversed with His Prophets and Divine Messengers but even to ordinary individuals. People generally believe that such like Divine manifestations are things of the past or even myths. It has even been asserted that God is dead. Perhaps, to some extent, these are natural conclusions as religions, on a whole, do not today provide examples of anyone having an intimate relationship with God, which is manifestly apparent.

After a lapse of several centuries, the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam conveys the message that even today God speaks to man as He used to in earlier times. An example of this spiritual truth is Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the Promised Messiah and Mahdi and Holy Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement who was a recipient of actual words from God. Answering a question as to how God speaks to him he replied: *Just as you and I are holding a conversation*. This experience is not necessarily confined only to God's chosen prophets but may be experienced by any individual God Willing. The need is to propagate this great truth far and wide. The Promised Messiah has declared:

I have been sent by God to remove the mist of doubt which exists in man's relation with God, and to re-establish love and sincerity; to lay the foundation of peace by revealing the Truth, and thereby exterminate all religious antagonism. I shall reveal those divine truths which lie hidden from the eyes of the world, and shall give an example of the purity of soul which lies suppressed under the darkness of sin. I am to explain, not merely by saying it, but from my own personal experience, the divine powers which manifest themselves in man by prayer and concentration of mind. Above all, I am to re-plant in the minds of my followers that bright and pure tree of the Unity of God,

free from any polytheistic ideas, which is now dead. All this will take place, not by my efforts, but by the power of God Who is the Creator of the earth and the heavens. (Lecture on Islam, p.34)

This is, indeed, a message of hope. The world had become blind to spiritual light and amid the darkness of disbelief God has illuminated the way of spiritual progress. Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the Promised Messiah, has by his own experiences demonstrated the truth of religion and showed to what heights of spiritual eminence human beings are capable of attaining. He heard the soul sustaining Word of God which put new life into the souls of men, and the faith of Islam which was waning has been revived and re-established in the hearts of men. There are many among his followers whose faith has been strengthened by similar divine experiences on a smaller scale.

The Ahmadiyya Movement has among its followers people of high education and spiritual stature and who fervently pray to God for guidance, not as a manner of formality, but with all sincerity and seriousness. The love and spirit of Islam is alive in them and they are carrying the Holy message of Islam to the four corners of the earth solely out of love for Allah and His Prophet which has been rejuvenated in their souls through the advent and personality of the Promised Messiah and Mahdi whose appearance in the latter days was foretold in the scriptures of the world.

OBITUARY

It is with deep regret that we report the demise of Hazrat Dr. Mirza Munawwar Ahmad who died on the 19th of September in Rabwah, Pakistan إِنَّا لِلّٰهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ (To Allah we belong and to him do we return). He was the grandson of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the Promised Messiah and Holy Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam; and elder brother of Hazrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad, the present Head of the Movement.

The members of the Editorial Board of the Review of Religions express their heart felt condolence to Hazrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad, Khalifatul Masih IV, and to the family members of the Promised Messiah and especially to Hazrat Syeeda Mahmooda Begum, the bereaved wife of Hazrat Dr. Mirza Munawwar Ahmad. May God elevate his position in paradise and protect his family. May his good deeds and sacrifices be accepted by God and may they leave an indelible imprint on the sands of time for the inspiration of the generations to come.

A short biography of the deceased will appear in the November issue of the Review of Religions. God-willing.

FRIDAY SERMON

(The following is the gist of the Friday sermon delivered by Hazrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad, Head of the world-wide Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, at the London Mosque on 17 August, 1990)

The situation in the Middle East is worsening day by day and as Muslims mainly populate the area it is of great concern to Muslims all over the world who are particularly anxious about the holy cities of Mecca and Medina where once the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be on him) used to walk and sweeten the air with his breath. The Holy land is beset with dangers and conspiracies causing the whole world of Islam to feel deep anguish and particularly by the Ahmadiyya Community in Islam today. Other Muslims may consider it to be a pretension offensive to some other Muslims who feel that they are the standard bearers of Islam. Nevertheless what I have said is true. .

Today politics has become corrupt and devoid of justice and righteousness (taqwa). Those Muslim countries which claim their superiority in upholding Islam are not projecting and practising the high ideals of Islam including justice. Politics is linked with their selfish interests and that is why we see contradiction being practised in the world of Islam. All the sects of Islam throughout the world, except the Ahmadiyya Community, have allied with one country or another. The Ahmadiyya Community insists that one should only support Islamic values. If one has true love for Islam then one should be loyal to those principles which are in accordance with teachings of Islam. Today we do not find politics based on the morals taught and practised by the Holy Prophet of Islam. Non-Muslim nations claim that it is only they who are practising justice and are its custodians, and that without them justice would disappear from the world. Muslim countries are making loud claims in the name of Islam but the truth is that justice is neither being observed by them nor by the other side.

I will now deliberate about the situation in the Middle East caused by Iraq attacking a small neighbouring state and occupying it before the world knew about it. It created an uproar throughout the world. On account of the pressure put on Iraq by America and her allies I have become very much concerned. The undignified exchanges between President Bush and President Saddam Hussain, and the names they have been calling each other, is regrettably amazing. The background to all

this is that a large and powerful Muslim country has attacked and occupied a smaller one. Similar incidents have occurred in far more dangerous forms in so many other parts of the world; and they continue to happen. President Saddam Hussain told the President of the United States that if he truly wants to uphold justice then he should apply it everywhere in this region as there are other-unlawful occupations which have occurred with the co-operation and patronage of the United States. There is, for instance, the occupation of the West Bank of Jordan by Israel which is daily being made more permanent. Immigrants from Russia are now being settled there. It is being occupied by people with a different religion and with whom Arabs have much enmity. The West has taken no action and its concept of justice remains entirely unconcerned. Syria is another Muslim country which marched into Lebanon and occupied it. The West should also have taken action and forced their withdrawal. If it is talking in terms of justice it should consider all the incidents in the region as a whole. If there is no lawful reason for President Saddam Hussain to attack and annex Kuwait then there is less justification for the Jews of Israel to attack and occupy the West Bank of Jordan which they have annexed. In addition to that some atrocities are alleged to have taken place.

The Western powers gave much publicity to the fact that a Britisher was shot dead on the border of Iraq while endeavouring to leave the country. It is one incident. In the Lebanon and other areas the Jews have continually committed atrocities and in broad daylight they destroyed the atomic plant in Iraq. These incidents have been absolutely ignored by the Western world and not a single finger was raised against them. But when one man is killed in Iraq there is an uproar in the media throughout the world and when unarmed people in a camp in Lebanon were slaughtered, including mothers and children, no nation raised a voice against it. Justice should be practised and implemented everywhere. There was another uproar when some British air hostesses were said to have been raped by Iraqi soldiers. Later the story was proved to be fabricated and incorrect. The West closes its eyes to the numerous incidents of cruelty and rape inflicted upon innocent Muslims. For a long time innocent women have been raped in Kashmir and the stories which I have received make one's hair stand on end. The West closes its eyes to them but highlights a false and fabricated incident reported to have happened in Iraq.

During the life time of the Holy Prophet of Islam there is no record of Muslims committing excesses during the wars in which they were

engaged. People were free to move about as they wished and they were not subjected to injustices by them. Islam teaches that if one asks for protection then it should be granted to him even if he is from an enemy country. Iraq has violated this high moral teaching of Islam when it declared that all British nationals living in Kuwait and Iraq are neither allowed to leave nor live in their homes. They should gather in a particular hotel. Likewise nationals from some other countries are not allowed to leave. It is obvious that the Government of Iraq is using them as hostages. Let alone being against the teachings of Islam to hold hostages, it is against the customary protocol all over the world. In which country today whether Islamic or not, can we find politics based and practised on a high standard of righteousness? Or even on an elementary standard of Islamic morals? Every where there are gaps.

Taking the United Nations resolution as an excuse, nations are blockading Iraq from all sides. They are preventing anything from entering or leaving the country. It should be known first of all that the United Nations did not stipulate that the boycott should cover every kind of necessity. Also the United Nations certainly did not decide that a country should be compelled to boycott Iraq if it did not wish to do so. America and Britain are both involved in enforcing these unjustified actions. On one hand there are the allegations of immoral conduct by Iraq which we accept. On the other hand, however, America and Britain are themselves acting far more immorally under the guise of diplomacy. They are also including Jordan as a target of there injustices. East Jordan has always been a faithful friend to the West and more so than other countries in this area although Saudi Arabia has also been on co-operative terms but its case is not one of fidelity because all the interests of Saudi Arabia are associated with the interests of America. They are two names of one and the same thing. It is not just a matter of fidelity. East Jordan has been a faithful friend of the West for a long time. It would die if it were to boycott Iraq; and if Iraq attacked it, it would not have the power to resist even for a few hours. The West is threatening Jordan and insisting that it should cease all trade with Iraq which is part of a plan to starve its people to death until it surrenders. There are many evil consequences which make the soul tremble. The question is where is justice? The West practises diplomacy very cleverly which in Islamic terminology is called *Tajūn* (deceit). It is gentle in its words and presents its statements in such a way as to make them appear logical.

The situation is becoming clear and obvious and this dangerous crisis is deepening day by day. There are other dangers which, as yet, are not so

obvious. When we first glance at a small fish pond we just see the water but on looking a little closer we see some fish swimming just below the surface. On looking more closely we are able to see fish swimming around near the bottom of the pond. Similar is the case with worldly matters. There is the superficial look of the ordinary person who, after a while, is able to see more clearly; and there is also the look of an intelligent believer. There are many dangers which have not yet become obvious to you but time will show them to you.

It is my prayer, and I wish that you offer it also, that Allah may remove these dangers which are hovering over the head of Islam. The reaction of different sections of Muslims has created a very unfortunate and dangerous situation. In one of my recent sermons I delivered a message to the world of Islam on this matter. Statements were sent to Muslim leaders. The essence of it was that; in order to settle their differences Muslims should return to the teachings of the Holy Quran instead of trying to settle their problems with politicians. When two Muslim countries are about to go to war with one another then all Muslim countries should deliberate together and put pressure on that country bent upon mischief. After listening to the views of both sides efforts should be made to establish peace between them. If, however, despite all efforts, reconciliation is not achieved and one country attacks the other then it is the duty of the other Muslim countries to fight the aggressor. It is not mentioned that help should be sought from non-Muslim countries. I have full faith in the teachings of the Holy Quran and if Muslim nations acted upon this teaching which I have just explained then no matter how powerful a Muslim country may be all the other Muslim countries together would have the united strength to suppress the guilty country if it persists in its action. If this is an impossible teaching then it would not have appeared in the Quran. The teaching is clear and commands that if a Muslim country rebels, however large or powerful it may be, other Muslim countries should get together and try to settle the matter. Muslims should take advantage of it. What happened, however, is that Saudi Arabia not only invited America and Britain to send forces but also pressed other countries of the world to come and array their forces against Iraq. It is said that these are defensive measures to make stable the situation. Another aspect is that most of the other Muslim countries are under pressure from the major powers to send their forces. Some may have sent them on their own accord. It is also the folly of Pakistan to have promised to send armed forces to Saudi Arabia which will fight alongside the U.S.A. and Britain against the Muslim country of Iraq.

The situation is becoming extremely volatile. It is made to believe that

all these steps have been taken just to protect Saudi Arabia from Iraq. I fear the danger is that after disarming Iraq the major powers will permit Israel to attack it; and if Jordan continues to follow her present policy of assisting Iraq under enforced circumstances then there is danger that Israel may occupy the rest of Jordan also as she did in the West Bank. Furthermore, because the Muslim countries have united against Iraq they would not be able to separate and help Iraq as to destroy it and annihilate it for good. There are some underground plots in motion. In some places C.I.A. agents are working and also some traitors to help implement the schemes of major foreign powers.

The history of Islam is an open witness to the fact that whenever the Western powers have checked the progress of a rising Muslim nation or have broken it into pieces through an act of war or harmed it in any other way, it was always through the help of some Muslim countries.

Hazrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad quoted some instances from Islamic history where Muslim countries demonstrated with other powers. A similar situation is being connived again today with the involvement of Saudi Arabia and other Muslim states. The greatest danger is Israel because it has been complaining for a long time that it is in danger of being attacked by chemical warfare from Iraq. Now the world of Islam has risen to protect the interests of Israel.

At present Iraq is rising as a great power and it is not impossible that if it continues to rise it will digest the neighbouring countries and may create a united world of Islam in the Middle East in which there would be a high percentage of the world's oil wealth. It may also become self-sufficient in other fields also and become a great military power. These are the fears of other nations. What can be done? I feel that there is still time for the situation to be saved from disaster. There is, however, no way out for the Muslims except that they should return to Allah and His Messenger. Iraq should uphold Islamic teachings and values and not make Islam a target for world ridicule.

Iraq should allow foreign nationals to have unrestricted freedom. They are innocent trusts of Iraq according to the teachings of Islam. Misappropriation of this trust can lead to dire consequences. The fire of revenge will become so intense that it could lead to the death of thousands of Muslims. The Government of Iraq should observe Taqwa (fear of God and righteous conduct) and return to the teachings of Islam. There is no other path of peace open for them. It should declare to the world that it is fully prepared to accept whatever decisions are made and withdraw from

Kuwait. Then there will be peace. The decision should be made by the world of Islam and other countries should not be included. Why cannot this step be taken before bloodshed as Iraq returned annexed territory to Iran after years of bloodshed? Iraq should withdraw from Kuwait. Muslim countries have become divided into two and are ready to battle with one another. It is necessary that Iraq should widely proclaim the message over the radio and television throughout the Islamic world that it admits its mistakes and wants to revert to the teachings of Islam. Such an appeal to the Muslim world would win support for Iraq in the Muslim world. If Muslim countries return to the teachings of Islam then Allah would be their Protector and He would protect Iraq from the dangers hovering over its head. If my appeal is heeded then Muslims would benefit from it because what I am saying is in accordance with the teachings of the Holy Quran. If, however, this advice is rejected through pride and arrogance then I warn them today that the world of Islam is going to face such extreme dangers that for a long time it will be in lamentation and banging its head against the wall. It will see no way how to regain its lost power. Muslim countries have reached a stage from where, if they advance quietly, with wisdom and without creating violence, they can become a great power within fifteen years.

I want to remind the members of the Ahmadiyya Community that they should pray fervently with a painful heart. In whatever way Muslims might have maltreated them, or might do so in the future, they will be answerable for it to God. As I have said we Ahmadis are faithful to Islam. We do not fear the politics of the world.

I would also like to give you some good news. The Promised Messiah has written in his book *Hamamatul Bushra* that God has given him glad tidings about Arabia and that he should watch over it and guide its blessed and successful. Today, as his humble representative, I am discharging that duty and I convey this revelation to the whole world of Islam. If this sincere advice which I have given is acted upon then there is no doubt that Muslims will be blessed and successful. They will be exalted both in this world and in the next world. If, however, under slavery of their temporary interests, they should, God forbid, neglect the teachings of Islam then no power on earth will be able to save them from the wrath of the world and from the wrath of God. May God grant us the blessings of Islam and happiness of heart and remove our restlessness from which, I am sure, every Ahmadi is affected due to the plight of Muslims today.

AHMADIYYAT IN GHANA

(*Maulvi Abdul Wahab Adam*)

Islam inculcates love of one's country. The Holy Prophet of Islam, on whom be peace and blessings of Allah, is reported to have said *Love of one's country is part of faith*.

We, therefore, as a Community wish to take this opportunity to renew our loyalty to the Republic of Ghana and pledge our preparedness to contribute our utmost towards the development of our dear country.

It is an undeniable fact that at a certain point in history. Islam made a tremendous contribution to world civilization and to the development of the sciences.

At the local level Islam's contribution to the preservation of our rich history as evidenced by the chronicles discovered in Salaga and elsewhere in the country is a well documented fact.

Ibn Batuta in his famous eye witness account, written in 1355, makes mention of the fact that when he reached West Africa, he noticed that only Muslims had formal education and for that matter scholars from among the Muslims occupied prominent offices such as Ministers of State, Counsellors, Secretaries and Treasurers in King's Court.

We are further informed that many Chiefs of Asante, including Osei Bonsu, Opoku Frefre and Osei Kwame, who reigned from 1777 to the end of the century, brought into their service an increasing number of literate Muslims and invested them with administrative powers. Records of decisions of their courts were kept by Muslim secretaries.

Alas, all this glory of Muslims had virtually disappeared in our time owing to the abandonment of Muslims of the message of the Holy Quran and the teachings of the Holy Quran and the Traditions of the Holy Prophet of Islam, on whom be peace and blessings of Allah.

Thus, the emergence of a Reform Movement such as the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam was a historical necessity to rekindle faith in Islam, rejuvenate it and restore its teachings to its pristine purity. All keen observers of contemporary religious trends in Ghana would agree that the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam has made a tremendous impact on the thoughts and actions of Muslims in this country.

Certain attitudes and actions of Muslims which are taken for granted today were simply inconceivable only a few decades ago.

Establishment of secular schools, translation of the Holy Quran and Friday sermons into local languages, public preaching of the message of Islam, harmonious co-existence of Muslims with non-Muslims, organizing Muslims into Youth, Elder or Women's Associations and even the holding of conferences in the name of Islam, to mention but a few, were all regarded as sacriligious, if not heretical, only a few decades ago.

As we bring our anniversary to a close, here at Saltpond, where the torch was first lit some 69 years ago in this country, we should feel genuinely grateful to Allah for the opportunity to motivate and inspire our fellow Muslims to beneficent endeavours and for the fact that the struggle and toil of the founding fathers have not been in vain, though not without vilification and persecution.

Yet the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam has a much greater mission to accomplish. The world today presents an ironic spectacle of the highest progress in science and technology beyond the wildest dreams of even half a century ago on the one hand and the rapid deterioration of moral and spiritual values on the other.

Despite Perestroika, despite the removal of the Berlin wall, despite the release of Nelson Mandela and the seeming crumbling of apartheid, which events have, thank God, made the world seem to be a bit safer place to live in, there is still unrest and insecurity in our world today borne out of social injustices, economic imbalances political arrogance and moral and spiritual bankruptcy.

The world is still faced with the monster of hard drugs and the scourge of AIDS and despite man's scientific and technological advancement, there does not appear to be an immediate solution in sight.

While man is prepared to spend literally billions of dollars and mountains of gold to combat the monster it is clear that so long as we do not go to the root of the problem to establish, for instance, why do people take to hard drugs and set out to eliminate the cause, any attempt at solution would amount to a mere scratch on the surface.

It should be easy to understand that if man's happiness were to lie only in material wealth and if material wealth alone were to be the ultimate goal of man on this earth, then drug addiction would be associated only

with the down trodden and not the affluent in the society. But the facts prove the contrary. What then is the problem?

The truth is, people resort to drugs use them not only because they want to escape from material worries but also because they lack spiritual fulfilment.

Yet, in our world today, everything spiritual is ridiculed as backward, worth the while only of the unenlightened and the down-trodden. God Who is the centre of everything spiritual has come to be considered as non-existent at some point in history, He is certainly dead! There is a distinct difference between a religion and a cult.

In the words of Hazrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad, Khalifatul Masih IV, the Supreme Head of the world-wide Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam, cults are like fashions—they come and go but religions have a value. Religions are established for a serious service to mankind. The two words, serious and service, are deeply linked with religion and that is why they carry weight.

The Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian claimed to be the Promised Messiah and Mehdi whose advent was awaited by followers of all religions of the world: Muslims, Christians, Buddhists, Hindus, and Zoroastrians.

In this capacity, he was not only to remove the doubts of those who felt that God was dead but also to demonstrate practically to the world that God speaks today as He spoke in the past and that man can establish a living relationship with the Living God through total submission to His will.

He demonstrated to the world that it is in the establishment of such a close relationship with his Creator that man can find eternal bliss, that such bliss is attainable and that its attainment would free the world of all its injustices and imbalances and make the world a just, peaceful and tranquil place for all.

This is the message that, as a Community, we have the tremendous responsibility to deliver to the whole world. We are aware that we are far from achieving our aim of proclaiming this message to all. However, we know that the foundation has been laid, through Allah's grace, during the first Century of our existence as a Community.

It is not a mere coincidence that during the Centenary Year, such great

upheavals and tremendous changes have taken place in the world as have left man stunned and bewildered and have literally shaken the world to its very foundation.

All the upheavals and changes are in accordance with prophecies. They are all in the divine scheme of paving the way for the triumph of forces of light over forces of darkness. Some prophecies about the ascendance of Ahmadiyyat made by the Founder of the Movement a century ago on the basis of divine revelations are:

The time approaching when God will grant worldwide popularity to this Movement and this dispensation will spread in the East and the West and in the North and in the South until it covers the whole world. This is the revelation from God on high from Whom nothing is impossible. (Tohfa Golarwiyah, P. 56)

Again he says:

O Mankind! hearken, this is the prophecy of God Who created the heavens and the earth. He will spread this Movement in all the countries of the world and will give it supremacy over all through reason and argument.

Remember that no one will descend from the heavens. All our opponents who are living at present will die and not one of them will see Jesus, Son of Mary descend from the sky and then their children who survive them will also pass away and then their children who survive them will also pass away and none of them will see Jesus, Son of Mary, coming down from the heavens. Then God will create restlessness in their hearts: that the day of the glory of the Cross has passed away and the world has taken on another shape but Jesus, Son of Mary, has still not come down from the sky. Then all of a sudden, all men of wisdom will discard this belief and the third century from today will not have been completed when all those who had been waiting for Jesus, both Muslims and Christians, will despair of his coming and entertain misgivings and shall give up their belief and there will be only one Preceptor. I came only to sow the seed. That seed has been sown. It will now grow, blossom and bear fruit and none can check its growth.

Explaining further this remarkable ascendancy of the Movement, the Promised Messiah said:

God the Excellent has informed me again and again that He will

grant me great glory and will instil my love into the hearts of people and will cause my Movement to spread in the entire world and will make my sect supreme above all other sects and members of my sect shall attain such excellence in knowledge and learning that by the light of their truth and by dint of their arguments and heavenly signs, they will confound all. Every nation will drink of this fountain and this Movement will grow and prosper so that finally it will encompass the whole world.

Many obstacles will be encountered and many trials will come but God will remove all of them from the way and fulfil His promise.

And God spoke to me saying: I will shower blessings after blessings on you so much so that kings will seek blessings from your clothen. So, O Ye who hear, remember these words and keep these prophecies secure in your boxes, for it is the Word of God which must one day come to pass. (Tazkiratush Shahadatain)

He also said on the basis of divine revelation:

I see my followers in Russia like the sands of the ocean. (Tazkara)

While as members of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam we have an unshakeable faith in these prophecies and they make us feel very humble because they impose upon us tremendous responsibilities. It is our sincere prayer that Allah may, out of His grace, enable us to discharge our responsibilities in a manner that is pleasing to Him.

In the end, let us pray for unity, peace, progress and prosperity of Ghana, our Motherland. Let us also pray for Allah's guidance for the leaders of our dear country.

Let us pray that peace should prevail throughout the world; but since there can be no peace without justice, let us also remember to pray that Allah may, out of His grace, grant our world such justice as would promote peace all over the world.

The Grave

(Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad)

The Holy Quran indicates that God Himself sends every human being to his grave. The earthly grave to which the dead body is consigned is no more than the physical symbol of the grave to which the soul is consigned. The burial of the dead which involves the digging of the grave, bathing of the body and wrapping it in a shroud are things done by relatives and friends of the deceased. The soul itself is consigned to its befitting grave by God Himself.

I have gathered from the Holy Quran that the soul of every human being, whatever may be his or her station in life, will be consigned to this grave after death. There is a grave (maqbara) in the next life for the meanest and the humblest, just as there is for the most powerful and the mightiest in accordance with one's merits and demerits. There are graves of this kind for those who play great roles and for those who pass away unknown, and for those who die by fire, drowning or consumed by wild beasts. No one under any circumstance will be exempted.

As I have stated the meaning of the grave according to the Holy Quran is meant the state or state of being where the human soul resides after it has left this world through the door of death. Whether the souls are of believers or those of disbelievers, they are all kept in this place. While it is mentioned in the Traditions that disbelievers will be punished in the grave, it is in the one I have explained and not in the earthly pit which is filled in with earth. It has been recorded that some foolish people, in their mistaken zeal, opened up the graves of some of the hypocrites to see if they contained a window opening into hell. When they opened these graves they found, of course, no trace of any such windows. They had made a serious error. If the punishment of one's sins was connected with the earthly grave then the Parsees would escape punishment for they do not bury their dead. Nor do the Hindus; and those who are drowned in the sea and are never retrieved also are not buried in earthly graves. We should also remember that it so happens sometimes that a large number of people are buried together in one large grave. How would the windows opening into hell be opened in graves of this kind? All of those buried may not be equally deserving of hell-fire. Moreover, it often happens in large towns that old graves are filled up and forgotten during the course of time. New graves are dug on the sites of the old ones. Supposing a man deserving to be sent to hell is buried somewhere and in course of time his grave is forgotten and filled in, and a new grave is dug on the same spot for

someone deserving paradise. What would then happen?

This superficial interpretation of what happens in the grave is too foolish to deserve consideration. The proper interpretation of the meaning of the grave is the place where the souls are kept after they have passed through the experience of death. Further support for this view is found in the following passage of the Holy Quran:

That is because Allah is Self-Subsisting and All-Sustaining, and that it is He Who brings the dead to life, and that He has power over all things;

And because the Hour will certainly come, there is no doubt about it, and because Allah will raise up those who are in the graves.(22: 7,8)

Should the graves mentioned here be intended to mean the earthly excavations in which the dead are buried, then it would mean that at the time of the final Resurrection only Muslims would be called back to life because mostly they have graves of this kind while millions upon millions who have been cremated do not have such graves. It is not correct, therefore, to interpret the graves mentioned here to be the earthly ones dug in the ground. What is meant is the place or state in which the souls are kept after they have passed through the experience of death, irrespective of the manner of their death.

It is possible that a non-Muslim might raise the objection that *Allah will raise up those who are in their graves* reveals the ignorance of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace be on him, because all those who die are not buried in the ground. They may say he did not know that there are people who burn their dead and therefore the statement in the Quran is wrong.

This is a misconceived objection. We have every reason to believe that the Holy Prophet knew that some people meet their death through drowning, burning, or by being devoured by animals etc. These are fairly common causes of death about which no intelligent man such as a traveller or a merchant of those days would be expected not to know. The Holy Prophet, therefore, knew as well as anyone else that many people are not buried after they die. They lie in no earthly grave. When, therefore, we read in the Holy Quran that Allah furnishes every human being with a grave it is absolutely clear that the meaning of it is not of a worldly and material nature but a state of existence in which the soul is

kept from the time of death until the Day of Resurrection. It should also be remembered that the critics of the Holy Quran often try to prove that Muhammad, peace be upon him, borrowed this thing and that thing from the Christians or the Jews thereby proving that he was well informed about the environment in which he lived. At the same time they say that he was an ignorant man. Both cannot be true. Cases of this kind only prove that such objections are the result of blind, unreasonable prejudice seeking chances to say something to discredit Islam and the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace be on him.

The Holy Prophet knew perfectly well that the followers of some religions cremated their dead. He is reported to have said:

Among the Israelites there was a dying man who gathered his relatives and friends around him and said to them: Do not bury me when I am dead but make a pile of fuel and burn me so that my flesh be burnt and bones be left. They should be scattered when a strong wind is blowing.

After his death the people did as they had been directed. Later God asked the man why he had done this? He replied : I was an extremely sinful man, my Lord. and I thought that you get hold of my remains then I would receive a terrible punishment. It was my plan not to leave behind my remains for this reason. Then God said to him: If you were afraid of Me to that extent, I forgive you your sins.

This Tradition verifies the fact that the Holy Prophet knew that some people cremate their dead instead of burning them.

The grave prepared by God for every human soul is in the most strict and scrupulous accordance with deeds and achievements of that soul. On this point there is no possibility of any error like on earth where wicked people are often depicted as being good and righteous and vice-versa. The grave prepared by God embodies a record of even the minutest actions, not on their face value, but on the basis of their ultimate and intrinsic worth and on the value of intentions and motives behind them. In this respect we read in the Holy Quran:

And the Book of their deeds will be placed before them, and thou wilt see the guilty ones fearful of what is therein, and they will say, 'O woe to us! what kind of Book is this ! It leaves out nothing, small or great but has recorded it.' And they will find all that they did confronting them, and thy Lord does not wrong anyone. (18:50)

In another place in the Holy Quran God says that man's own hands and feet will bear evidence against him on the Day of Judgement, as though everything he had said or done had been preserved on tape which would be brought forward to bear witness.

It should also be remembered that all these recordings would be given a true and proper assessment irrespective of the surface values which, in human affairs on this earth, prove to be so misleading. To everyone a proper reward.

This record and its accurate assessment is precisely embodied in the grave which God prepares for every human soul according to its desserts. God says in the Holy Quran:

*Thy Lord will certainly repay them in full, according to their works.
He is surely well Aware of all that they do.*(11:112)

No one ever receives a proper and full recompense of his actions in this life no matter whether they were done openly or secretly. Everyone will be assigned a station according to merit and no one will be subjected to injustice.

It should be borne in mind that in some places the Holy Quran states that human beings will be rewarded strictly in proportion to the merits of their deeds whereas elsewhere it is stated that the Faithful would be rewarded beyond measure;

They will be provided therein without measure(40:41).

Again, regarding those destined for hell we read:

Hell shall surely be the recompense of you all — a full recompense (17:64).

When you think deeply on the matter it becomes clear that there is no contradiction involved in these statements. The meaning intended to be conveyed by the word *maufur* (measure) is that irrespective of the measure, quantity or intensity of the punishment, it will be one that is hard to bear and one which would tax to the utmost the power of endurance of those upon whom the punishment has been inflicted. Moreover, this expression also means ample and full. There is no contradiction with 40:41 . Nor is there any conflict with this passage regarding the people of paradise being rewarded without measure, because it is not only one person who will be rewarded without measure but everyone. It will not entail any comparative loss for anyone.

In short in this divine arrangement the spiritual grave of everyone most correctly indicates the true position and rank of a person. This is the real purpose of the grave. No grave is built on surface virtue or wickedness. It is built on the merit of a person without the least favour or prejudice, or the least element of ignorance to a person's real, intrinsic inner worth or lack of worth, as the case may be.

We often find in this world a very righteous person who is on the verge of starvation; and also a wealthy disbeliever in God who scoffs at the idea of there being a Supreme-Being in a most coarse manner. One has strong guards at the doors of his home while the other, who is far more righteous, has nowhere to lay his head. If the grave should be prepared in this world in accordance with the spiritual excellence and virtue of a person, then a righteous servant of God would deserve a better grave than that accorded to a temporal monarch who is guilty of sins and crimes during his reign. This is not the case in this world. The graves prepared by God are such that the moment one enters them one finds a true and exact representation of one's life there. It would reflect the most just assessment of the actions of all human beings, high and low, rich and poor, old and young and of all climes and colours.

Another point to be noted in connection with the graves of this world is that during the course of time their importance lessens in the feelings of later generations so that in most cases they become neglected, fall into ruin and are even desecrated. Such is not the case with regard to the graves prepared by God in the world to come. In them the good name of the righteous servants of God is afforded protection against defamation and desecration. God says in the Holy Quran:

These will be in gardens duly honoured. (70:36)

Their honour will be maintained and no one will be allowed to drag their name into disrepute. On the other hand the unbelievers, with no virtue to their credit, are referred to as follows in the Holy Quran:

Those who disbelieve, their possession and their children shall not avail them at all against Allah; and it is they who are the fuel of the fire. (3:11)

Those who have worldly wealth often have magnificent tombs. A person may be cunning and deceitful with an impure mind. He may have much wealth which passes on to his heirs. They are aware of his discreditable way of life but in order to perpetuate him in history they

(continued on page 30)

IMMORTAL LIFE

(Bashir Ahmad Orchard)

'And thou, O soul at peace! Return to thy Lord well pleased with Him and He well pleased with thee. So enter thou among my chosen servants, and enter thou My Garden.' (89:28-31)

There is no doubt about it that man's real and permanent entity is not his physical body but rather an ethereal entity which pervades the former; and the heart of the latter is the soul.

The Quran throws more light on the nature of the soul and the hereafter than any other scripture. Nevertheless man's understanding of this subject will always remain extremely limited. Allah says in the Holy Quran:

And they ask thee concerning the soul. Say, 'The soul is by the command of my Lord; and of the knowledge thereof you have been given but a little.' (17:86)

And no soul knows what joy of the eyes is kept hidden from them, as a reward for their good works. (32:18)

The Holy Prophet has said:

The blessings of paradise are things which the eye has not seen, the ear not heard, nor has the mind ever conceived.

We shall learn in the pages to follow the knowledge given by Islam about the soul and the existence of realms of life which vibrate on frequencies higher those of this material universe and which cannot be seen or fully realised by the physical senses. In addition to information given by Islam some knowledge and realisation of this subject may be acquired through:

1. Intuition
2. Psychic Experience
3. Spiritual experience

Intuition

This is a power of the mind which is able to realise a truth without the aid of reasoning or analysis. A flash of intuition reveals to a person the solution of a problem or secret of an invention which years of research

and study failed to disclose. The flash may come when awake or asleep as the mind is awake twenty four hours of the day even though the body may be in restful repose.

Premonitions are often the result of an intuitive warning. A man who has booked a flight to New York feels impelled for no apparent reason to change it for a later one. The plane on which he had first booked his passage crashes and all on board are killed.

Inventors, artists, poets, authors, scientists have been among the numerous persons throughout the ages who have testified to the miraculous power of intuition. Edison was but one of many inventors who had secrets of his discoveries come to him through an intuitive flash. It is said of Michaelangelo who was one of the world's greatest geniuses and intellectuals that the solutions of some of his greatest works came to him while asleep; and there are numerous others who have been guided and enlightened at unexpected moments when their thoughts were at rest or even dwelling on some totally different matter.

Normally knowledge is acquired through the five senses, sight, hearing, taste, smell and touch and is accumulated from information, memory and experience with the aid of which reasoning is developed. Intuitive knowledge stems from a higher and independent source and is not the result of mental exercise or reasoning any more than the young squirrel which has never known a winter nevertheless gathers and stores a supply of nuts to provide for its nourishment well in advance of the coming cold season. Its actions are guided by instinct from a higher power and not as a result of experience, instruction or deduction.

Knowledge of spiritual truths pertaining to matters in the spirit world may be revealed to a person through intuitive guidance. Intuition is a form of divine inspiration which has been and continues to be experienced by people of every class, culture and faith.

Psychic Experience.

This is an experience which cannot be explained by any understood natural law and is, therefore, often termed supernatural. Such an experience is attributed to the power of extra sensory perception which has the capacity of revealing things which the normal physical senses are unable to detect or explain. Examples of psychic experiences are:

1. In an apparent waking state a person clearly sees an event occurring at a distant place which is proved to have happened in the exact manner

and at the very same time. Such an experience may also happen when asleep.

2. While in full consciousness the apparition of a living or dead friend or relative appears before a person in all reality and even speaks to him.
3. A person hears his father's voice clearly calling out to him and on investigation it is established that at that very moment the father died several hundred miles away.
4. A student sees and memorises in a dream questions on an examination paper. A few days later when sitting for his exam the identical questions are on the paper and he has no difficulty in answering them.

These are only a few of the multifarious kinds of psychic phenomena which are experienced by people throughout the world irrespective of race or creed. The piles of amassed testimonies collected and investigated by the Societies for Psychic Research in Great Britain, USA and elsewhere are more than sufficient to establish the truth of psychic phenomenon.

Realisation and limited enlightenment on the operation of various laws and secrets of the unseen have been unfolded to a lesser or greater extent to many persons through their personal experience of psychic phenomena.

Spiritual Experience

A spiritual experience is a soul moving experience. It is charged with the presence of God as distinct from a psychic experience which normally leaves no heavenly impression upon the soul although it may be very similar to a spiritual experience wherein both cases voices may be heard, distant places visited or seen, knowledge vouchsafed, visits from departed souls and future events foretold. Frequently in spiritual experiences the unmistakable Divine Voice is heard and the presence of God palpably felt. The eyes of the soul see beyond earthly horizons into realms which reveal the truth of immortality. Spiritual phenomenon is more matured than psychic phenomenon though it in no way minimises the remarkable effects and influences of the latter which has opened the minds of thousands to the fact that there is more to life than earthbound existence.

THE REAL SELF

Our real self is an immortal spirit or soul-body which is attached to a

body of flesh which sooner or later dies; but we never die. We are a soul with a body attached to it; not a body with a soul attached to it. In order to see, know, and understand ourselves we have to keep our eyes turned inwards. Although both bodies are interrelated, the existence of the soul-body — our real self — is not dependent on the physical body except in as much as the soul body — our real self — is created along with the physical body during the months of development in the womb. The birth of the soul is a point which has been discussed by the Promised Messiah — the Holy Founder of the Ahmadiyya Community — in his book *The Philosophy of the Teachings of Islam*. The soul body — our real self — is as much alive after the death of the physical body as it was before its expiration. We are immortal.

PURPOSE OF LIFE

We have not created the jinn and the men but that they shall worship Me. (51:57)

Worship of God is not confined only to prayer and meditation but embraces every thought, word and action; for whatever we think, say or do for the sake of God is an act of worship.

While we are connected with this world our goal in life should be self-purification. We should seek the attainment of this goal through prayer and constant effort in reflecting the attributes of God in our general behaviour. High is the goal and tremendous the task; efforts made in this direction are always most rewarding. We should never despair despite our failures and weaknesses but rather find inspiration in the following words of Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad:

Islam rescues man from despair and tells him that he can, in spite of his errors and mistakes, attain the purity of mind and conduct which is the highest goal of man. It thus encourages him to make constant efforts towards virtue and purity and enables him ultimately to arrive at this goal.

Real prosperity lies in self-purification which should be the cherished goal of our lives:

Verily he truly prospers who purifies himself, remembers the name of his Lord and offers prayers. (87:15)

Commenting on the object of man's earthly life the Promised Messiah has said:

The real object of man's life according to the Holy Quran is, therefore, a true knowledge and worship of God and a total resignation to His will that whatever is said or done is said or done for His sake only.

The goal of existence on earth has also been beautifully epitomised by Hazrat Ali:

All the occupations of a wise man are for his self reform, all his cares for the benefit of the next world and all his endeavours for the good of the life to come.

Life on this planet is the beginning of an eternal journey on which we live attached to a body of flesh and bone which is left behind to decay after we quit it and pass on to higher ethereal realms. Those realms are as real as this world and all the other innumerable orbs of the universe revolving and rotating in the vast ocean of space. Life is short and a time for preparation. No wasted moment can be retrieved. The Promised Messiah has warned us:

And who told them that life is long? There is no season for death. It may overtake you at any time. So we must value whatever time we have. We may not have these times again.

Our real inner self is immortal so our eyes should always be focussed ahead and not rivetted upon the things of this world. May Allah sharpen our perception of spiritual truths and enable us to fulfill successfully the purpose of life in this world of material environment.

ETHERIC OR SOUL BODY

The mysteries of the soul cannot be unravelled by brain power; but there is no doubt that every human body houses a soul. This truth has been confirmed by God in the Holy Quran which throws more light on the subject than any other scripture.

Man possesses a double or ethereal counterpart of his physical body which serves as a temporary body for the soul after death. This subtle etheric soul body also has the capacity of detaching itself from the physical body even before death and the large number of persons throughout the world and in all ages who have experienced this phenomenon bear testimony of its existence. The real self is an intangible spirit body which normally dwells within and coincides with the physical body; and within that spirit body lies the nucleus of eternal life — the soul.

During sleep the soul body detaches itself from the physical body and possesses full consciousness while it is on its travels. Before awakening it is drawn back into the physical body and normally the person has no recollection of what occurred; but sometimes a person does remember and is able to describe the experience. An anonymous gentleman wrote from Plymouth:

I suddenly discovered that I was above my body looking directly down upon it! It was lying on the bed as clear as day. I had a good searching look at the face in particular and thought how strange it was to be now looking at myself just as other people see me. The experience was very real and definite indeed... nothing imaginary about it. I know that the experience was an actual fact. (The Phenomena of Astral Projection)

Mr. Bruce Belfrage writes in his autobiography:

I had a very serious illness from which I almost died. One night I left my body and saw it quite clearly lying motionless on the bed. It all seemed perfectly natural and the experience proved to me, quite beyond doubt... that the body and the spirit are quite separate, that the spirit, the real me, cannot be hurt and cannot die.

It is not only in natural sleep that people have out-of-the-body experiences. Patients have had them while under anaesthetics. Mr. J. A. Findlay writes in his book *Looking back*:

A lady, whose honesty is unquestionable, told me that during the time she was under an anaesthetic, she felt herself standing overlooking her physical body on the operating table. She was interested to follow everything done by the surgeon and nurses, but, what impressed the surgeon when she told him of her experience afterwards, was the fact that she saw him do something to her inside that she could not have dreamed about.

Cases of people who have had the experience of finding themselves outside their physical bodies while under an anaesthetic are numerous. Similar is the case with the sick and dying and also those who are living normally in the best of health. These experiences are not figments of the imagination but absolute genuine occurrences. Thousands of such cases are on record and are in keeping with the teachings of the Holy Quran which declares that God takes away the souls of everyone not only at the time of death but also at times during their life time:

And He it is Who takes your souls by night and knows that which you do by day. (6:61)

Allah takes away the souls of human beings at the time of death; and during their sleep of those that are not yet dead. And He keeps those against which He has decreed death, and sends back the others till an appointed term. In that surely are signs for a people who reflect. (39:43)

This subject is an extremely absorbing one in as much as it brightens our spiritual vision, helps us to realise our true self more clearly, encourages us to drive deeper into eternal truths and strengthens our faith in the unseen.

VISIBLE DEPARTURE OF SOUL BODY

There are many accounts on record given by people who have claimed to have seen the soul body leave a person's physical body at the moment of death. No doubt instances of this kind are unusual but for that matter all other kinds of psychic and spiritual phenomena are also unusual. There are persons, by way of example, who have claimed to have seen angels but no God-fearing Muslim will reject their statement on the grounds that such claims are unusual. Now and again people do have visions of angels though we are not conversant with those laws which enable them to see angels; nor are we conversant with those laws which enable people sometimes to observe the departure of the soul body at the time of death; but lack of understanding is not sufficient cause to reject the truth of this phenomenon.

Mr. F. L. Rawson writes in his book *Life Understood*:

In her book 'Little Women' Louisa Alcott relates how at the moment of death, she saw as it were a thin smoke arise from her sister Bertha and vanish. The doctor told her that this was not an hallucination but the life departing visibly. Dr. Patrick O'Donnell says that he has photographed this at the Mercy Hospital, Chicago.

Dr. Robert Crookhall mentions in his book *Intimations of Immortality*:

Dr. R. B. Hout also saw the soul-body of his aunt when it was being permanently released at death.

Mrs. Snell, who was a nurse, has stated:

One evening she (her friend) was taken by convulsions and died in my arms before the doctor had time to arrive... that was the first death at which I had ever assisted. Her heart had hardly ceased to beat when I distinctly saw something like a vapour disengage itself from her, arise from her body, and stop at a short distance from the corpse where it condensed into a form absolutely identical with that of my friend. Later when I became a nurse, an occupation which I followed for twenty years, I assisted at numerous deaths, and immediately after death I always observed the condensation of the etheric form above the body, always identical with the living body, and after condensing it would vanish from my eyes.

The Promised Messiah — the Holy Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement — often had the experience of seeing and even conversing with departed souls. He has written in his monumental work *The Philosophy of the Teachings of Islam*:

I have personal experience in this matter. Many a time, when fully awake, I have seen visions in which I have seen those who were dead. I have seen many an evil doer and a wicked person with a body quite dark and smoky. I have personal acquaintance with these matters and I assert it strongly that, as Almighty God has said, everybody is granted a body either transparent or dark.

Our real self is not the house of flesh and bone in which we temporarily reside. Unlike the human body which is mortal, our real body is immortal.

DEPARTED SOULS REMEMBER THIS LIFE

The soul is a conscious entity and the Holy Quran tells us in many places that in the new life after death it will remember details of its life in this world. The unbelievers and the wicked will ask that they may be sent back to this world to be given a second chance to win the pleasure of God. Had they no memory of this world then they would not have called upon God to send them back:

Until when death comes to one of them, he says entreating, 'My Lord send me back that I may do righteous deeds in the life that I have left behind'. (23:100-101)

Oh that we might be sent back! And then we would not treat the signs of our Lord as lies and we would be of the believers. (6:28)

The following verses also show that departed souls will hold memories

of this life:

On that day man will remember, but of what avail shall be his remembrance. (89:24)

Dead think they only tarried a short time in this world. (17:53)

In addition to the aforesaid verses there are also many other similar passages in the Holy Quran.

TRANSITION OF THE SOUL

The soul is the nucleus of our eternal being and manifests its powers always through a body in this world and in the Hereafter. As the soul always needs to operate through a body the question now arises in what kind of body does it dwell after it quits the human frame and enters the spirit world. The answer may well be the etheric body or soul body which varies in degree of radiance or dullness according to the condition of the soul at the time of death. Nevertheless it does not serve the soul as a permanent body.

Islam teaches that following the death of the physical body the soul undergoes a transformation. It may be likened to a drop of sperm which grows and develops in the womb from whence it emerges as a new creation in the form of a fully developed child. Similarly, after death, the soul may be likened to a sperm drop and its temporary body to a womb in which it undergoes a transformation eventually to emerge on the Day of Resurrection as new spiritual creation. This body now possesses a new soul. The general physical and mental features of a child much depend upon the multifarious inherent characteristics locked within the sperm drop cell. Similarly the condition of the new spiritual body depends much upon the state of the soul when it quitted this world. The new body now develops and matures as the child grows and matures in adult age; and when this process is completed on the Day of Judgement the gateways of heaven and hell are opened wide.

God is Merciful and in His Mercy He has decreed that the punishments of hell will not be everlasting. Wrong doers will suffer their condign punishments more or less as do convicts in prison after which they will be released and allowed to enter heaven where the bestowal of spiritual favours continually flows and where grades and stages of spiritual rewards and attainments are innumerable. God says in the Holy Quran:

And for all are grades of rank according to what they did. (46:20) Behold, how We have created some of them over others in the present life; and surely, the Hereafter shall be greater in degrees of rank and greater in excellence. (17:22)

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, has said:

There are a hundred grades in paradise prepared by Allah for those who fight in the path of Allah and, in between each, is as great a distance as between earth and heaven. (Bukhari)

The Holy Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement — Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad — has also said:

Those who accept God here, who lose themselves in divine love and who take their stand on the right path, have in store special honours which would not be attained by other people. (The Will)

The spirit of Islam demands that a sincere and earnest Muslim should never rest content with the thought that he has achieved or done sufficient to earn himself a place in paradise. Keeping in mind that he is immortal he should diligently attend to the development of his real self and not allow the desires of his physical body to interfere with this his noble aspiration. May Allah protect us from the incitements of the devil.

continued from page 20

erect an imposing tomb for him. We find such structures built over the remains of many hard-hearted tyrants. While they lived their subjects cursed them day and night; but when they died their heirs raised grand structures to perpetuate their memory in glowing colours. God says that this defect does not exist in His arrangements. Those who die without spiritual values and belief in the existence of the Supreme Being cannot acquire any grave of distinction from Him despite all the wealth, power and following they had in this world. Even the high and prosperous state of their descendants can bear no influence on this matter. In the grave prepared for them by God, on the basis of their record of life, they would burn in fire.

GLASGOW HERALD

OCTOBER 27 1903

A NEW MESSAGE

false Prophets Denounced And Challenged
(FROM OUR LONDON CORRESPONDENT)

London, Monday Night

Within the past few weeks there has been issued from Qadian, in the Punjab, a Notice *For circulation in Europe and America* entitled *Predictions Concerning Pigott and Dowie by The Promised Messiah*. This remarkable document, forms a six page pamphlet, and has been printed at Lahore in English language, but the Promised Messiah is apparently a native of Asia, since the pamphlet includes a translator's note, and the signature appended to the Predictions is Mirza Ghulam Ahmad.

The 'Delusion' of Christianity.

It may be of interest to indicate, briefly and without comment, the contents of the Notice. There is no ambiguity about the statement of the claim put forward. Mirza Ghulam Ahmad categorically affirms *I am the true Messiah who was to come in the last ages*. But this idea of the nature of the Messiah differs materially from the orthodox Christian conception. *It is impossible, he declares, that a man should ever become God, but he can attain to the highest degree of connection with Him, and is thus made an image of the Divine Being.*

He sometimes manifests the Divine attributes for the image of God is revealed in the looking glass of his person and again he displays human qualities for he has a human nature. It is for this reason that men who have not got a deep insight into spiritual matters are deceived with respect to Him by looking at one side only, and ignoring the other. Finding in him certain manifestations of the Divine attributes they take the shadow for the substance, and suppose such a person to be actually God.....The delusion under which labours the Christian sect, which takes Jesus for God, is stronger than the delusion of all other people who have been the dupes of similar errors; and what Mirza Ghulam Ahmad finds particularly disappointing in connection with the Christian religion is that, when the false-dogma found to be unacceptable to the growing intellect of the age, new methods are devised to renew a belief in the absurd theory and new false claims are set up to uphold old ones.

Dr. Dowie And Mr. Pigott

As might be expected from the title of the pamphlet, the claims that call for the strongest condemnation from Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, are those put forward by Dr. Dowie and Mr. Pigott. *In Europe, Pigott lays claims to Messiahship and Divinity and plainly declares himself to be Lord of Earth and Heavens, while in the Western Hemisphere stands up Dr. Dowie at Chicago and asserts that he is Elijah the fore-runner of Jesus Christ, whose advent, he foretells, will take place within the next 25 years. The two pretenders show a slight difference in the boldness of their assumptions. The Scotch pretender shows a faint heart. He claims at the most the office of a servant preparing the way for the master (Christ), but he shows cowardliness even in claiming Elijahship. Mr. Pigott is bolder than Dowie; that is to say, when judged by the arrogance of his pretensions. He is the very Messiah who came before: nay, he is more he is God himself; such are his vain and blasphemous assertions,*

Hundreds of Heavenly Signs

It is because the earth is defiled with impieties and impure doctrines and false claims, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad declares that the true Messiah has been raised up in his person in the land of the Punjab. Though he makes no pretence of being divine himself yet, *I do not claim to be the Promised Messiah simply by my own assertion.... The evidence of God has been manifested in hundreds of heavenly signs shown in my support. I say it truly that Almighty God has poured His grace upon me in far greater abundance than upon the Messiah who has gone before me. In the looking glass of my person the face of God is revealed to a far greater extent than in that of Jesus's person. If these are simply my own assertions, and there is no other authority for them. I am a liar; but if Almighty God bears witness to my truth no one can give the lie to me.*

A Challenge.

In particular, the fate of Dr. Dowie and Mr. Pigott will furnish a sign of the authority of the new Messiah. From the translator's note we learn that in September of last year a challenge was sent to Dr. Dowie by the Promised Messiah through a monthly periodical published at Qadian, called the *Review of Religions*. Dr. Dowie, it seems, had predicted that all Mohammedans would perish because they did not recognise Jesus Christ as God and Dowie as Elijah. The challenge provoked by this statement was in these terms: *Whether the God of Mohammedans or the God of Dowie is the true God, may be settled without the loss of millions of lives which Dr. Dowie's prediction would involve. That method is that without threatening the Mohammedan public in general with destruction, he should*

choose me as his opponent and pray to God that of us two whosoever is the liar may perish first in making this proposal I have not taken the initiative, but the jealous God has inspired me....

A Prophecy

Openly no notice has been taken of this challenge, but, it is alleged that it has not been without result, since in a recent issue of *Leaves Of Healing*, the organ of his sect, Dr. Dowie condemned Christians for believing in the Trinity and sympathised with Jews and Mohammedans who recognise the Unity of God. In his predictions (dated the 23rd of last August), Mirza Ghulam Ahmad states that he will wait seven months longer for a reply to his challenge. If Dr. Dowie accepts the challenge, within this period, and fulfils all the conditions, *the world will soon see the end of this contest. I am about 70 years of age, while Dr. Dowie is about 55... But since the matter is not to be settled by age, I do not care for this great disparity in years.* If Dowie still refuses to take up the challenge, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad declares that the pretensions of the American prophet will be proved to be those of an imposter. As to Mr. Pigott, the Promised Messiah prophesies that *arrogant pretender to Divinity ... Shall be brought to destruction within my life time.*

Bold Assertion

It is not, perhaps, without interest to note that in the concluding sentence of his note the translator calls attention to an article in the *Review of Religions* for the last month, showing that Jesus did not die upon the Cross, but that having escaped from it with his life. He subsequently died at Srinagar (Kashmir), where his tomb may still be seen in Khan-Yar Street.

POLITENESS

Politeness should be studied as an art and practised as such. It is sometimes practised only before company, but the shallowness is soon discovered. A person naturally polite will be so before a beggar and before a king.

(Edmund Shaftesbury)

FAITH OR WEALTH

(Mirza Rehan Akram)

On visiting a relative's home in London recently, a message displayed upon a wall caught my attention. It read:

'Love for money is artificial. True love is for Allah.'

How true we find these words to be when we call to mind not only man's love for money, as it were, but other similar pursuits of man that are wholly of a materialistic nature.

It is not simply the people of those Godless societies, which have day by day drawn away from faith, who have recently introduced a culture dominated and motivated by worldly desires, but such passions have been an evident characteristic of human nature ever since the beginning. It is simply a question of those who have the God-fearing sense to shun the acquisition of worldly knowledge and possessions in preference to faith.

Man's desire to acquire material possessions and his exorbitant eagerness to excel others in wealth, prestige and social position, lie at the foundation of all human discord. From such passions, ill-founded rivalry, and ill-feeling towards others arise. It can ultimately lead to the common human vice of jealousy and envy; and moreover, it is an inevitable prelude to arrogance.

The Promised Messiah clearly states:

'...he who, out of a mistaken conception of his wealth, or status, or dignity, looks down upon his brother, is arrogant because he forgets that his wealth, status and dignity were bestowed upon him by God. He is blind and does not realise that God has the power to so afflict him that in a moment he might be reduced to the condition of the lowest of the low, and to bestow upon his brother, whom he esteems low, greater wealth than him. So he who is neglectful of prayer on account of his dependence upon his faculties is arrogant for he has not recognised the Fountainhead of all power and strength, and relies upon himself.'
(Nuzulul Masih, pp. 24-25)

Acquisitiveness, in many cases, accounts for the neglect and abandonment of the higher values of life and the rewards to be found in faith. Herein, one can find peace and tranquillity of heart, which can only

be achieved by submission to the Will of God.

The Holy Quran explains:

'Surely, the right way has become distinct from error: so whosoever refuses to be led by those who transgress, and believes in Allah, has surely grasped a strong handle which knows no breaking.(2:257)

It is also man's unfortunate trait that his enthusiasm for earthly gain recognises no limits, and leaves him little time to think of his Creator and the life hereafter.

In his book *Fateh Islam*, published in 1890, the Promised Messiah describes in Persian verse, the very relevant condition of Muslims at that time:

'It behove the eyes of every faithful one to shed tears of blood over the distress of Islam and the disappearance of true Muslims... Before your very eyes Islam has fallen into the dust, what excuse will you offer to God, O Muslims, who pass your lives in the lap of luxury? The well-to-do are eager in pursuit of their joys and pleasures, passing their time in laughter and in the company of beautiful women... O Muslims, are these the signs of your spirituality that while the faith is in such distress you are occupied wholly with the pursuit of the carrion of the world?'

The sad fact remains, that those who pursue their world at present and not the world hereafter, never come to appreciate that it is Allah alone, the Benefactor of mankind, Who bestows and blesses not only spiritual, but also material gain.

It is not, therefore, simply the perseverance or hard work of men that allows them to excel in wealth, or attain position and respect in society, but the will of Allah, without Whom man could achieve little or nothing. It is Allah Who can retract and retrieve as quickly as He bestows.

However, those who attain worldly success and are grateful to Allah, and spend in the way of their Lord, always receive a greater reward in return.

The Holy Quran states:

'Those who spend their wealth by night and day, secretly and openly, have their reward with their Lord; on them shall come no fear, nor shall they grieve.(2:275)

With such divine reassurances, it is misfortune that lies ahead for those who subordinate the infinite and limitless blessings of the hereafter to the finite values that are found in the material world that surrounds us. It is most obvious that material possessions acquired in our lives are found to be futile in the world beyond. The only wealth that Allah, the Almighty looks to, is that which is found in our hearts and souls.

Those who neglect the clear and beautiful teachings in the Holy Quran remain entirely engrossed in their ill-founded pursuits till it is time for their demise. Only then, when their actions are irrevocable, do they realise and accept that they have wasted their valuable time in superficial occupations.

Islam certainly does not prohibit the use or seeking of the good things of this world; but it certainly condemns those who make them the very object of their life.

In conclusion, the following verse of the Holy Quran beautifully illustrates and sums up this message:

Fair seeming to men is made the love of desired things-women and children, and stored-up heaps of gold and silver, and horses of mark and cattle and crops. That is the provision of the present life; but it is Allah with Whom is an excellent home.(3:15)

Admit Your Mistakes

This precept is nearly always a good one. No honest man need ever fear the result of admitting an error. If the error is unnoticed do not call attention to it, if there is possibility of harm arising from its concealment if it is noticed, and you attempt to dodge it, the result will be disastrous. A ready, straightforward acknowledgement of an error has a breezy air of frankness about it that always charms and captivates. Dishonest people generally seek to circumlocute and explain away their errors.

(Edmond Shaftesbury)

80 YEARS AGO

ATTITUDE OF THE HOLY QURAN TOWARDS OTHER REVEALED SCRIPTURES AND ITS CLAIM TO PRECEDENCE.

(M. Muhammad Din, B.A.)

(This article appeared in the *Review of Religions*
dated September 1910)

From time immemorial, human society has been obliged to bow down before the unseen and the inevitable. It has seen limitations put to its ubiquitous enquiry after the unseen and the unrealisable. The experience of the learned and the wise has led to the discovery of the existence of the prime cause of everything and fully exploded the so-called doctrine of the spontaneity of commencement. *Some antecedent condition or conditions must precede any event.* They have come to the conclusion that events do not follow one another irregularly, indiscriminately or capriciously. They think, and rightly so that every phenomenon of the present is linked with some phenomena of the pasttoo; that the present condition of things is one end of an iron chain of causation, at the other end of which must have been the primary or first cause.

It is obvious and self-evident that the primary cause which we call by the name of God or Allah or Purmeshwar must be infinite in its essence or attributes. On the other hand it is admitted by all that human faculties and resources are after all finite and limited not withstanding the insatiable thirst and lofty aspirations man may have to the contrary. Our every day experience corroborates this.

Amongst the many advantages of experience, one of the most valuable is that we come to know the range of our own powers, and if we are wise we keep contented within them. Man being finite, cannot understand the infinite, unless the infinite comes to his help. This is why we cannot say that we know all about any and every thing. We cannot say anything for certain even about the common things. We cannot even sound the depths of our parents hearts, who are so dear and near to us. We cannot know anything about God, unless He by His own love and All Pervading providence reveals something about Himself. But God being the Prime Cause, it was necessary that this frail humanity should have known some of the obligations it owed to that Supreme Being, and He in the nature of the case was to reveal His will, not that He was bound to do so, but

because the needs of humanity that were weltering and wallowing in the mire of their inherent materialistic tendencies, required that it should be given some thing of the light without which its existence was mere groping in the dark. Hence God in the fullness of His love and mercy revealed everything that was necessary for the emancipation of man from the bondage of his downward-going tendencies. Nay, more he was given to understand that he could make eternal progress and hold communion with God Himself.

Then began that chain of revelation which is the subject of this paper. How that chain gained in length and strength will be discussed here. But before we take up the question in earnest, it is necessary for us to have a glance at the beginning of religious history.

Man, we came to know, stood in need of revelation from on high. We began with experience as our basis and the world as a settled fact. Even here our own experience and the experience of those that preceded us will act as our guide. For instance it is God Who sends down rain from the clouds. God is Almighty; He could do this without resorting to any means, but still our observation and experience tell us that He employs means whenever He wishes to send down rain. No natural phenomenon occurs without the agency of the means. So in sending down revelation, God selects some persons from among the common run of mankind. They are called the chosen ones of God who fulfil His mission here on earth. They are specially designed for this purpose. They are the mouthpiece of heaven in a way. They are purified, like distilled water, of every impurity. They are pure metals cleansed of every dross and it is through these people that God reveals His own will.

What should be the nature of this revelation would be clear now. It is the expression of the will of God in human speech. It is what ennobles man's character and leads him higher and higher until he soars high in the heavens, and seeks communion with God and finds rest and comfort in His lap for He is the goal of everything. It is at once a code of law and spiritual magnetism, which directs as well as attracts and purifies man. This revelation embodied in books, or tablets or found in people's memory is designated as the Holy Book.

Now we come to a somewhat different question. Here on the face of this globe we have got many books whose followers claim divine origin for them. The Jews, the Christians, the Muhammedans, the Hindus, the Parsis and the Buddhists etc, have their own books and each insists upon the acceptance of his own to the exclusion of every other. Had the subject

been one, though in different tongues, or had there been harmony of opinion between the followers of different books, all would have been well. But the difficulty is that each party not only advances its own claims, but also repudiates vehemently the claims of all others. The Arya with Niyoga i.e., (the doctrine permitting a woman to have sexual intercourse with strangers) and Transmigration, the Christian with his doctrine of Atonement and the crucifixion of God, the Parsee with his gods of Good and Evil and the Musalman with his ideas of Forgiveness and Submission to the Will of God are all contending for mastery.

We have discussed the necessity of divine revelation but the difficulties crop up when we examine individual cases. How should we bring order out of this chaos. Where should we search for harmony when there is a jarring discord of opinions. The Christians and the Jews say that God selected only two tribes out of the sons of Israel upon whom He showered his special favours and let all the world go without them. It appears that either these children of Israel stood in special need of revelation on account of some of the heinous deeds which they committed for which a special warning was required, or, that God purposely intended eternal perdition for the whole of mankind with the exception of a few favoured dwellers of the valley of Jordan. But the matters did not end here. The Jews and the Christians would both differ on the personality of Jesus, son of Mary, whom the former regarded and still regard as an impostor, while the latter worship him as the son of God. Yet both of them are agreed on the fact of an eternal seal having been set to divine revelation.

So is the case with the Hindus and the Parsees. They believe in the necessity of divine revelation and say that God spoke to the sages of yore. But He spoke only in former times as if He were like a carbine that has discharged itself once and then stands in need of some one to recharge it.

Such doctrines look preposterous and human nature revolts at the idea of such niggardliness being ascribed to the All-Loving God. When humanity is the same struggling mass that it once was when God felt Himself responsive to its needs, it is inconceivable why the necessity of divine revelation should be dispensed with now. When we have the same cause working here, why should we not expect the same effect? Man and his environments remaining the same, why should there be a change in God? By the way, if He is subject to the law of change, He is not infinite, for that would amount to the total denial of His existence which we have reason to believe as imperatively inevitable. It is to the eternal disgrace of these systems that they inculcate such doctrines. When the world was in

its infancy, then God was Merciful enough to reveal His will to this herd of mankind, but when that herd increased and mutual wars and feuds sprang up, and material tendencies completely shrouded what was divine in man, then the All-Loving, All-Seeing and All-Wise God excused Himself on the plea that He had expressed Himself once for all, though that *once* be millions and millions of years ago.

There is another consideration which belies such a doctrine as the one stated above. A blacksmith strikes hard when he sees the iron hot. He knows the time and the occasion proper for such an act. He strikes softly now and then because he sees the moment is not ripe for striking hard. It is his knowledge which withholds him from acting rashly. He would be an ill expert who does not see the time or the moment. Prescience is the one quality that is needful for all exquisiteness in work. We have got an ever progressing world before us. It would have been an ungainly, and an ill judged act on the part of the Divine Being to thrust His will at a time when the world was not ripe for the occasion. Or just take the example of a physician. He prescribes differently to different patients under his treatment. At one stage of the disease he applies one remedy and at another, another. This action of His does not denote ignorance on his part. It is His complete knowledge of the working of human constitution that makes him prescribe differently on different occasions. The same has been the case with human nature. It has been evolving itself out gradually. It would have been an unwise act of God, He applied the same remedy at every stage. In its onward course humanity has been passing from one lower grade to the next higher one, and then to the next higher one and so on. Such a conduct on God's part would have implied total ignorance of the working of human nature and its needs.

So far we have seen that the books we commonly call by the name of Holy or Revealed books recognise the need and existence of such a thing as divine revelation to man and we have also seen that these different systems err on the side of restricting it to one period of human history, ignoring human nature on the one side and depriving God of some of the most prominent attributes, such as knowledge, wisdom and love, without which even God is no God at all. But herein steps in one book with the following proclamation:-

(2:5)

وَأَن مِّنْ أُمَّةٍ إِلَّا خَلَا فِيهَا نَذِيرٌ ﴿٢٥﴾ (35:25)

إِنَّمَا أَنْتَ نَذِيرٌ (//13) وَالَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِمَا أُنْزِلَ إِلَيْكَ وَمَا أُنْزِلَ مِن قَبْلِكَ وَبِالْآخِرَةِ هُمْ يُوقِنُونَ ﴿٥﴾

i.e. 'there has been no such tribe or nation to which a warner was not sent, and thou art, O Prophet, but one of the warners. Therefore

believers are those who believe in what has been sent down unto thee, and in what was sent down before to thee and who put faith in what is to come.'

The Quran is explicit on the subject. It not only accepts all those revelations that were sent before it was revealed to the world, but it also takes the responsibility on its shoulders to announce the revelation to come. Had there been no such announcement the ardour of those who walk and work in the path of righteousness would have cooled down. There would have been no incitement or spur to action. If at this stage of the world's development and culture people were to be informed that henceforth no discovery could be made, nor any new thing invented, provided the rumour were true, there would be a complete upsetting of the whole organisation. In that case none would take the trouble of meddling with these things. Then the world would fall on its evil days again because change is the one condition of healthy life. There would be disruption, disintegration and complete breakdown. When such are the concomitants of unhealthy life, the more truly destructive would be the consequences of the cessation of divine revelation to the spiritual life. There is another verse in the Holy Book which runs to the self-same tune — and the Holy Quran is full of such references and allusions — and it is as follows:-

ءَامَنَ الرَّسُولُ بِمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ رَبِّهِ وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ كُلٌّ ءَامَنَ بِاللّٰهِ وَمَلَائِكَتِهِ وَكُتُبِهِ
وَرُسُلِهِ لَا تَفَرِّقُ بَيْنَ أَحَدٍ مِنْ رُسُلِهِ

arabic

i.e. 'The prophet believes in what is sent down to him from his God and the believers do the same. All believe in God, His angels, His books and His prophets and they make no distinction between any of the prophets. They make no disparaging comparison and contrast.'

Herein the Musalmans are ordered to believe and put faith in all the Prophets without any distinction. To crown all there is a message of peace to all nations and creeds in the following verses:-

قُولُوا ءَامَنَّا بِاللّٰهِ وَمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْنَا وَمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ وَإِسْحَاقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ ۖ وَالْأَسْبَاطِ ۖ وَمَا أُوتِيَ مُوسَىٰ وَعِيسَىٰ
وَمَا أُوتِيَ النَّبِيُّونَ مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ لَا تَفَرِّقُ بَيْنَ أَحَدٍ مِنْهُمْ وَنَحْنُ لَهُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ ﴿١٠٨﴾ فَإِنِ ءَامَنُوا بِمِثْلِ مَا ءَامَنَ بِهِ فَقَدْ
أَهْتَدُوا وَإِن لَّوَلَا فَاثِمَا هُمْ فِي شِقَاقٍ فَسَيَكْفِيكَهُمُ اللّٰهُ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ ﴿١٠٩﴾ صِبْغَةَ اللّٰهِ وَمَنْ أَحْسَنُ مِنْ
اللّٰهِ صِبْغَةً وَنَحْنُ لَهُ عٰبِدُونَ ﴿١١٠﴾ قُلْ أَطَاعُوا نَنَا فِي اللّٰهِ وَهُوَ رَبُّنَا وَرَبُّكُمْ وَلِنَا أَعْمَلْنَا وَلَكُمْ أَعْمَلَكُمْ وَنَحْنُ
لَهُ مُخْلِصُونَ ﴿١١١﴾ أَمْ يَقُولُونَ إِنَّا هُمْ وَإِسْحَاقُ وَإِسْمَاعِيلُ وَإِسْحَاقُ وَيَعْقُوبُ وَالْأَسْبَاطُ كَانُوا هُودًا أَوْ نَصَارَىٰ
قُلْ ءَأَنْتُمْ أَعْلَمُ أَمِ اللّٰهُ وَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنْ كَتَبَ شَهَادَةً عِنْدَهُ مِنَ اللّٰهِ وَمَا اللّٰهُ بِغَافِلٍ عَمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١١٢﴾ تِلْكَ ءَمَةٌ

فَذَلِّحْ لَهُم مَّا كَسَبَتْ وَلَكُمْ مَّا كَسَبْتُمْ وَلَا تُسْأَلُونَ عَمَّا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٢٧﴾

O prophet, summon these Christians and Jews and the Sabians and the followers of other systems by proclaiming reverence for all. Say that we the Muslims believe in God and that which has been sent down to the prophets of yore-to Abraham and Ismael and Isaac and Jacob and their descendants as well as to Moses and Jesus.

No difference do we make between any of the prophets and to God are we resigned (Muslims). If those summoned respond to your call and reverence in the same spirit as ye do, then they are the guided, but if they reject and turn their backs to you, then verily they are in a state of separation from you and a wide gulf divides them from you and God will suffice to protect thee against them; and He is the Hearer and Knower. (This is the humanist way possible to come to terms with upholders of different religions). Verily this is God's baptism, and one who wishes to join this fold, must pass through this baptism. We have the Baptism of God and who is the better to baptize than God? And Him do we serve. Say O Prophet: will you dispute with us about God when He is our Lord and you Lord! we have our works and ye have your works, and we show forth to him a pure faith. Will ye say, verily Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac and Jacob and the tribes were Jews or Christians? And who is more in fault than he who concealeth the witness which he hath from God? But God is not regardless of what ye say. That people have now passed away, they have the reward of their deeds and for you is the meed of yours, but of their doings ye shall not be questioned.' In these verses we find an exposition of that religion of humanity from which the people had fallen off. As God's worldly gifts are not restricted to any class, clan or creed, so are His spiritual blessings not confined to any one people. The religion of Islam is a religion of obedience and resignation to the Will of God. Whenever any new revelation is sent down the Muslims are required to believe in it as well as in those that were revealed before:

فَإِنَّمَا يَأْتِيَنَّكُمْ مِنِّي هُدًى فَنَنْبِيعُ هُدًى فَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ ﴿١٢٨﴾

The revelations will be sent to you time after time. O Sons of Adam: therefore whoso believes in the revelation whenever it comes is guided in the right path and no fear shall touch him nor shall he be grieved.

Then he who wishes to join the pale of Muslim Brotherhood should be

ready to sacrifice his narrow-mindedness and bigotry. He should not refuse reverence and respect to the founders of other religious systems-nay he should practise them. This was the original purity from which other religious systems had fallen off and which Islam has established on the earth. This was the starting point to which Islam drew attention and invited all sane, thinking and God fearing people to join the common brotherhood. If they accepted this invitation, that is, they forsook their bigotedness and intolerance for wider human sympathy, then of course they were welcome, for this was the right path, but if they refused, then there was a world of difference between them and the Mussalmans, for no Mussalman could brook his leaders and elders being railed and reviled in his presence. When he respects the leaders of other religious systems, why should others dare to revile his own. His God forbids him to say aught against the gods of other nations for the ignorant will not stop short of reviling even the very God of Islam. Such are the behests of the Holy Quran. This was the divine baptism with which Islam baptised its followers. God indignantly repudiates the assertion that Abraham and the host of other people belonged to this sect or that. They were Muslims, i.e. their religion was resignation to the will of God, which is the essence of Islam. Like true Muslims they obeyed what was revealed to them and what was revealed before them, and they had firm faith in the revelation to come.

Now comes in the question of drawing a line of demarcation between one revelation and the other. Have we got any hard or fast rules to guide us? Why do the Mussalmans act upon the ordinances of the Quran to the exclusion of every other book? It is a long and complex question, and I shall try my best to steer clear of all the difficulties that beset the inquirer after truth. To be brief it would be sheer injustice and highhandedness on the part of a person who tries to forge any line of demarcation where there is, or should be, none. We are ordered to believe in each and every revelation that is sent down. We are enjoined not to make any distinction. Here at this stage comes in the question of Mussalmans following the Quran to the exclusion of every other book. For this purpose let us go a little deeper into the question.

First let us see what is the Quran's verdict on this point and then we shall try to find out its accuracy in the light of history. In the first place the Holy Quran speaks of the former revelations as having been tampered with by human agency. The writers of those revealed books have hopelessly mixed the Word of God with the word of man. It is now next to impossible to sift out truth from falsehood. For instance we take up the

Bible and the Vedas. The former contains some sixty-six books by different authors. One is at a loss to understand the term of Holy Book being given to such story books. Only a short perusal will disclose the fact that it is not a revealed book in the real sense of the term. It is a chronicle of the children of Abraham that settled in Judea and Samaria. Herein are depicted all those vicissitudes which the children of Israel underwent. There is very little of inspired matter in it. As history it is even inferior to Buckley's History of England, for there we have a complete and connected narrative while that of the Bibles fragmentary and disjointed. It is in some such books as Deuteronomy, Isaiah and Psalms that one comes across some faint glimpses of revelation. Even here the authorship by another hand is quite apparent. Only one instance from the Old Testament would suffice here. The first books are said to be the work of Moses. Deuteronomy is the fifth one in order. In the 34th chapter of this book we find it written *And the Lord said unto him (Moses), this is the land which I swear unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, saying I will give it unto thy seed: I have caused thee to see it with thine eyes, but thou shall not go over thither. So Moses, the servant of God, died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of the Lord. And he buried him in a valley in the land of Moab, over against Bethpeor, but no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day. And Moses was an hundred and twenty years old when he died, his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated and the children of Israel wept for Moses in the plains of Moab thirty days. Now can any sane person say this to be the work of Moses? How could he write about his death and subsequent mourning over his loss.*

About the New Testament suffice it to say that the first four Gospels contain narratives about Jesus' three years ministry in Judea. We can challenge each and every Christian to produce any verse or verses purporting to mean that whatever is written in these Gospels is a revelation from God to Jesus, son of Mary. when this is not so, it is idle talk to go on making fuss over Christian Revelation and what not. The other part of the New Testament consists of the Acts of Apostles and their epistles which evidently mean the Acts of Apostles after the crucifixion affair and the epistles of Paul and others. There is a considerable internal evidence to prove that the first four Gospels are mere biographies in a restricted sense of the word. For instance, Luke begins his book *For as much as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us, even as they delivered them to us, which from the beginning were eye-witness and ministers of the word, it seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee, most excellent Theophilus, that thou mightiest*

know the certainty of those thing wherein thou hast been instructed... Herein the writer acknowledges the fact that seeing many others writing accounts about Jesus, he is encouraged to do the same for some person who is evidently not so well acquainted with the real story of Jesus. Here there is no mention of divine revelation nor the Holy Ghost's assistance therefore how can the Christians venture to put down their books in the category of revealed Books? If they are revealed books, one is justified to include Aesop's Fables and Plutarch's Lives, & c., in the Category of Heavenly books. Even to this day we possess a collection of the apocryphal Gospels which Christian piety could not sanction for reasons best known to itself, but we on our part see no reason why they should not be included in the New Testament story-books. And that even these story-books have been tampered with is admitted by all the Christian writers of repute. & The last chapter of the Gospel according to John is universally conceded to be the result of some later pious fraud. Higher critics, both in Germany and Holland, go the length of declaring the whole as an impious job. Only the following sentences are considered to be actual words of Jesus uttered on different occasions:-

1. *My Lord, my Lord, why hast thou forsaken me.*
2. *But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father.*
3. *Why callest thou me good, for none is good save the father.*

In the face of so many overwhelming arguments against the authenticity of the so called Christian scriptures, bold indeed would be the man who makes a futile effort to prove the revealed character of these books.

As to the Vedas, even Daya Nand could not feel sure of the purity of the text of the Atharva Veda, hence his verdict on its un-authenticity. A short perusal of the Rig Veda will prove that it is nothing but an effusion of a burning soul or souls after the conquest and vanquishment of the aborigines of India. They are the outpourings of the rough and the rude who see nothing beyond the elements of nature. They are overawed by the grand spectacle presented to them by nature. They do not see through these elements. On the contrary these elements are to them the very gods. In fact the Vedas proclaim nothing but nature worship, mixed and confused sometimes with ideas about the Supreme Being, and if God ever occupies any place, that is in the background. Such a book can never be cited as an example of the Holy Book.

When such is the pitiable plight to which the so-called heavenly books have been reduced, then what should have been the measures adopted by the Almighty for the promulgation of a New Law. The Holy Quran solves this riddle too. At first it pictures out the conditions of the times in as brief and sententious a way as is its characteristic. It says, *كَلِمَ الْفَسَادِ فِي الْبَرِّ وَالْبَرِّ*, the land as well as the sea had become corrupted. The sea became tumultuous and stormy. Confusion was reigning supreme even in those books which had some semblance of revealed character about them. To remedy this evil, it was necessary to sift truth from falsehood. God only knows the date and place when this chain of revelation began and the extent to which it had already spread. But now truth and falsehood were inseparably mixed up with each other and it was impossible for man to attempt such a stupendous task. It was God alone who could do this and He did it in a way that we will consider now.

The revelations that had been sent down up to this time were of two sorts, the one was of universal character and the other of temporary nature. They were intended for the local needs and were not of a universal nature. Besides this, the time had come when East and West were to be united into a composite whole. Therefore there was a great need for a revelation of a universal nature. Therefore in the revealing of the Quran, God reformulated what was of a universal nature in the old revelation and added those portions that were not revealed as yet which were also of universal character because a new era had dawned upon the whole mankind. God begins His new dispensation with the following verses:-

وَلَيَعْلَمَنَّ الْكَافِرِينَ (٤٩: ٤) اِعْلَمُوا اَنَّ اللَّهَ يُحْيِي الْاَرْضَ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا (١٨: ٥٧) يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيُبينَ لَكُمْ
وَيَهْدِيَكُمْ سَبِيلَ الدِّينِ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ (٢: ٤) فِيهَا كُتِبَ قِتْمَةُ (٤: ٩٨) الْيَوْمَ اَمَلْتُ لَكُمْ
وَيُنْكُمُ وَاَتَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نَعْتِي وَرَضِيْتُ لَكُمْ الْاِسْلَامَ وَيُنَا (٤: ٥)

Corruption has appeared among the people of the book as well as among those to whom no book has been sent down, from no unjust motive on God's part, but on account of the misdeeds of these people. Know Ye, O people: that God has been gracious to you. He is going to revive this earth after its spiritual death that had come over it. He wishes to show you, and direct you in, the paths of those righteous people that have pressed before you. All previously revealed books are contained in this book. Today He intends to sum up and crown His former revelations by the sending down of this book (Quran).

Here there is a clear exposition of the position adopted by the Holy

Quran with relation to other books. It recognises their holy origin but it regards their texts as perverted and interpolated. So at this juncture it was necessary that those revelations should be purified of the dross that was concealing their pure character. The former books had become a kind of metallic ore out of which pure metal was to be extracted in the fiery furnace of divine revelations. Those who have studied other books than the Quran are of opinion that the general essence and the common teaching of all is to be found in the Holy Quran. This is why the Muslims, though believing in the pre-Islamic revelations, refuse to act upon the teachings of other books except the Quran; of course it should be so. It is not incumbent to follow such perverted and interpolated text as would only create confusion and distrust.

Though the Holy Quran claims the law to have been completed in itself, yet it does not bar the way to future revelation. On the other hand, it declares it to be ever open, but only to those who follow this perfect law and through it attain to union with God. A practical proof of this has been furnished us in this age by the advent of Ahmad, the Promised Messenger of the latter days.

REVELATION

Do not think that revelation from God is not possible in the future: that it was possible only in the past: do not think that the holy spirit cannot come down now. I tell you truly that every door can be closed but the door for the coming down of the holy spirit. Open all the doors of your heart to receive it. With your own hands you remove yourself to a distance from that sun when you close the window through which light can enter. Therefore, get up at once and throw this window open, so that the light of the sun should, of its own accord, enter your heart with the simplicity and inevitability of a natural process. When God has not closed the doors of His blessings upon the world, when in fact He has multiplied them even more than before, do you venture to presume that He has closed upon you the doors of His spiritual blessings, even at a time when they were needed most! No, no; not at all. Rather has that door been opened beyond any possible shadow of doubt.

(Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad)

GREED FOR WEALTH

Greed for wealth indicates love for wealth. The Holy Quran warns:

O ye who believe! let not your wealth and your children divert you from the remembrance of Allah. And whoever does so it is they who are the losers. (63:10)

The Holy Prophet gave a timely warning to the Muslims against such greed for wealth. A few of his sayings can be related as follows:

- (1) Hazrat Abu Hurairah narrated that the Messenger of Allah said: The son of Adam becomes old while his two things remain young-Greed for wealth and for longevity. (Agreed i.e. Bukhari and Muslim)
- (2) Hazrat Abu Hurairah narrated from the Holy Prophet who said: *The mind of an old man ceases not to be young in two things- in the love of the world, and in the desire for continued possession of wealth.* (Agreed)
- (3) Hazrat Ibn Abbas narrated from the Holy Prophet who said: *Had there been two mountains of wealth for the son of Adam, he would have surely hankered after a third; and nothing but earth can fill up the belly of the son of Adam. Surely Allah turns to him in repentance.* (Agreed)
- (4) Hazrat Amr-bin-Shuaib narrated from his father (who had narrated from his grand-father that the Holy Prophet said: *The first good thing of the people is certainty in faith and renunciation; and their first aversion is to miserliness and greed for wealth.* (Al-Baihaqi)

The Holy Prophet, however, did not forbid earning of wealth. What he emphasized and urged upon the Muslims was that they should always be above the world and its possessions, and should earn to spend in the way of God in fulfilment of His purposes. They should not be engrossed in the love of wealth being negligent of their duties to God and His created beings.

What is Islam?

Islam literally means *Peace, Surrender of one's Will*; and to be in amity and concord. The significance of the name Islam is the attainment of a life of perfect peace and eternal happiness through complete surrender to the Will of God. The Quran—the Holy Book of the Muslims—interprets it to be the religion whose teachings are in consonance with human nature. Islam, as the Quran has stated (5:4), is the completion of the religion inaugurated by God in the beginning of the world, on His sending the Quran through the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him. As a child is taught his alphabet, so God taught the religion to the world gradually and little by little, by sending His prophets at different times and to different peoples.

When the world reached that stage of understanding when it was ready for the final lesson, He sent the last and complete Book through the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him. This Book not only corrects the errors which had found their way into various religions, but preaches the truths which have not been preached before, on account of special circumstances of the society or the early stage of its development. At the same time it gathers together in itself the truths which were contained in any Divine revelation granted to any people for the guidance of men (The Quran 98:4). Lastly, it meets all the spiritual and moral requirements of an ever advancing humanity.

This is Islam which is wrongly called Muhammadanism.

According to Islam, the object of man's life is its complete unfoldment. Islam does not support the idea that man is born in sin. It teaches that everyone has within him the seed of perfect development and it rests solely with a person himself to make or mar his fortune. *We created man in the best make* says the Holy Quran (95:5).

The cardinal doctrine of Islam is the Unity of Godhead. There is none worthy of worship but Allah, and Muhammad is His Messenger. He is free from all defects, Holy and Transcendent. He is All Good, All Mercy and All Power. He has no partner. He neither begets nor is He begotten, because these are the traits of frail and weak humanity. Furthermore, Islam helps us to establish a permanent relationship with God and to realise Him during our earthly life as our Helper in all our affairs and undertakings. This Unity of God is the first and foremost pillar of Islam and every other belief hangs upon it.

Islam requires belief in all the prophets, including Abraham, Moses, Jesus, Krishna, Buddha, Confucious and Zoroaster. We regard them all (and many more not mentioned here) as heavenly teachers born to reform and regenerate man and lead him to God. Adherents of some other religions may consider it an act of piety to disrespectful words and heap abuse on the prophets of other religions, but if a Muslim were to show the slightest disrespect towards the founder of any other faith, he does so at the cost of his own faith. He has to utter the respectful benediction *Alaihis-Salam*, peace be upon him, after mentioning the name of every prophet. Thus Islam establishes peace between all religions.

The REVIEW of RELIGIONS

The Review of Religions is the oldest magazine of its kind published in English language in the Indo-Pakistan Sub-Continent. Its first issue was published in 1902 and it has been continuously published since.

It bears the distinction that it was initiated under the direction of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian, the Promised Messiah himself.

During more than eighty-six years the message of Islam has been conveyed through this magazine to millions of readers and many fortunate persons have recognized the truth of Islam and accepted it through its study.

The articles published in it deal not only with the doctrines and teachings of Islam but also set forth a comparative appreciation of the teachings of other faiths.

One of its outstanding features is the refutation of the criticism of Islamic teachings by orientalists and non-muslim scholars.

It also presents solutions in the light of Islamic teachings of the problems with which the Islamic world is from time to time confronted.

A study of this magazine is indispensable for the appreciation of the doctrines of the Ahmadiyya Movement and the teachings of its Holy Founder.

