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CONTENTS.

| | PAGE. |
|--|-------|
| THE NEED OF THE HOLY QURAN | 159 |
| CUSTOM AND TRADITION | 172 |
| CERTAINTY IN FAITH | 176 |
| THE FIVE DAILY PRAYERS | 179 |
| JESUS AMONG THE TEN LOST ISRAELITE TRIBES IN THE EAST, III ✓ | 181 |
| NOTES AND COMMENTS | 193 |
| THE HIGHER CRITICISM AND THE CHRISTIAN MISSION- ARIES | 193 |
| RUHULLA | 195 |
| INCREASE OF MUHAMMADANS IN INDIA IN THE LAST DECADE | 196 |
| THE TOMB OF JESUS ✓ | 197 |

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
نُحْمَدُهُ وَنُصَلِّي عَلَى رَسُولِهِ الْكَرِيمِ

The Need of the Holy Quran.

(By the Promised Messiah.)

THE great object of Islam being to teach the doctrine of the Unity of God, the question has often been asked what was the need of the Holy Quran when the doctrine of Unity had already been revealed to the world in the Taurat (the book of the Law of Moses). In answer to this question it should be borne in mind that Judaism no doubt originally taught the doctrine of Unity, but Judaism at the time of the revelation of the Quran was itself corrupt, both in practice and doctrine. The pure religion of the Unity of God had been departed from by the Jews, and the doctrine of Unity contained in their books had no practical effect upon their lives. The grand aim for which man is created and the Word of God revealed, had been utterly lost sight of. The recognition of the Divine Unity consists in a firm belief in the existence of God and His oneness attended with an implicit obedience to Him, complete submission to His will and lasting one's self in His love. The Jewish books taught Unity indeed but the inner life of the Jews was not governed by the noble principle of conduct which underlies the doctrine of the Unity of God, and their hearts were totally devoid of the deep impression of the grandeur and glory of God. Outwardly and formally they recognised Unity but their hearts were turned away from purity and under the control of Satan. Their lives were characterised by every form of iniquity such as worldliness, impure thoughts and affections, deceit and falsehood.

The honor and greatness due to God was given to priests and hermits and disgraceful deeds were done. Hypocrisy and deceit were predominant in the hearts of those who affected to be the teachers and reformers of the people.

Moreover a mere formal recognition of the Unity of God is of no avail if the heart bows down in submission before a thousand different idols. The person who assigns the glory and greatness which is due solely to God, to the means, plans and stratagems which he employs for the realization of an object, or trusts in aught but God, or gives a share of the majesty and power of God to his ownself or to any other creature, is also an idol-worshipper though he may outwardly confess the Unity of God. Idols are not only images made of stone, brass, gold, silver or any other substance, but every object of the reverence and passionate devotion which is due to God, is an idol in the sight of God. The Jewish sacred books however did not teach this noble significance of the doctrine of Unity and the Quran was, therefore, needed for its revelation to the world. The doctrine of the absolute Unity of God precluding faith or trust in everything else besides God was not known to the world until the Holy Quran revealed it. The adoration and reverence of senseless images is an act to which none but the most ignorant and superstitious would resort, but the most dangerous form of idolatry is that which cannot be easily discovered and which affects and vitiates the whole system like an imperceptible but obstinate disease. This lamentable disease prevailed among the Jews and the Bible did not prove an effectual remedy for it, for the Bible did not teach the great truth underlying the Unity of God. The general prevalence of this disease moreover required a perfect living exemplar whose life being governed by this practical principle of the absolute Unity of God should have been a guidance and a direction to mankind and a powerful remedy for destroying the disease.

What is the true doctrine of the Unity of God which the Holy Quran requires us to believe in and which is the only way to salvation? It is to believe in God as one and alone in His person, and above every rival or partner whether it is an idol, or a human

being, or a heavenly body or one's own-self or one's resources, plans or means, not to regard any one as powerful against Him, not to consider any one as the sustainer, the exalter, the abaser, the helper or the supporter as against the will of God, to love Him alone, to worship Him alone, to submit to Him alone, to fear Him alone and to centre all one's hopes in Him alone. There are three requirements for a complete adherence to the doctrine of Unity. Firstly, a man must believe in Unity in the person of God, *i.e.*, he must regard everything as vain and naught before God. Secondly, he must believe in Unity in the attributes of God and consider Divinity and Lordship as the attributes of none besides God, looking upon all those who seem to have an authority as having it from Him. Thirdly, there must be unity in the love, sincerity and devotion which he bears to God; in other words, nothing else must have a share of his love and devotion towards God and of the other aspects of his adoration, and he must be completely lost in Him. These three aspects of the Divine Unity had not been taught by any book before the Quran, and that which had been taught by Moses and the Israelite prophets was not acted upon by the Jews and the Christians. The iniquity and gross immorality in which these people indulged at that time is a clear testimony to the truth of the statement that they admitted the existence of God with their lips, but their hearts were utter strangers to this exalting and noble faith. It is for this reason that the Quran condemns both the Jews and the Christians and says that if these people had acted upon the teachings of Moses and Jesus, they would have been granted sustenance both from heaven and from earth. The heavenly sustenance indicates the spiritual blessings which are granted to the righteous and faithful in heart such as heavenly signs, acceptance of prayer, visions and inspiration. Here they are also declared as having been deprived of earthly sustenance, because they did not obtain it by just and righteous means but by bending low upon earth and making use of vile means.

Israelite Law, no doubt, taught the Unity of God, but the doctrine of Unity taught by it, fell far short of the sublime Unity revealed by the Holy Quran. This defect of teaching in itself

called for a new revelation, while the necessity was further enhanced by the spiritual death of those who professed to inculcate this doctrine. The Jewish doctrine of unity, imperfect as it was, was in their books and not in their hearts. They, therefore, needed a heavenly teacher who should have breathed the soul of Unity into their hearts, and a warm devotion in place of the dull and vapid utterance of formal words. The Jews were dead and life had departed from them on account of the hardness of their hearts and their numerous transgressions. No spark of love for God and not the slightest trace of inclination to spirituality was left in them. Their books on account of their defective teachings and the numerous alterations in their letter and spirit could not inspire a new life into, and furnish a perfect guidance to, their votaries or to the world at large. Therefore, Almighty God sent down His living Word like fresh and timely rain and to this word which gave life did He invite them, that they might find life and salvation being purified through it of their former errors and iniquities. The Holy Quran was, therefore, needed in the first place to teach a living Unity to the lifeless Jews; secondly, to inform them of their errors; and thirdly, to throw full light upon all matters relating to eschatology which had been but barely alluded to in the Israelite law.

It is true that the seed of truth was sown with the revelation of Moses while that of Jesus gave the glad tidings of a future when that revelation was to be made perfect. As the seed that grows in a healthy condition gives the glad tidings of good fruits and ears, the Gospel of Jesus gave the glad tidings of the revelation of a perfect law and unerring guide fulfilled in the Holy Quran. The seed which Moses had sown, therefore, ripened with the Quran. The holy book brought with it the perfect blessing which made a clear distinction between truth and falsehood and perfected the religious truths and spiritual verities. This was the purport of Moses' words in Deut. 32: 2, "The Lord came from Sinai, and rose up from Seir unto them; He shined forth from mount Paran." In fact the different phases of law were made perfect only by the Quran. Its two great divisions, the one treating of the relation of man to God and the other of that of man to man, found com-

plete and full development only in the Quran. The object of the Quran was to make the savage a man, to teach the man the highest moral qualities and to make him godly last of all. This function the Holy Book performed with such a success that every other law is a total failure in comparison with it.

The Holy Quran was also needed to settle the differences between the Jews and the Christians relating to Jesus. This it has done in various places. A very important point of difference is that in relation to which the following verse occurs in the Holy Quran : يا عيسى انى متوفيك ورا فبك الى ومطهرک من الذین کفروا : The Jews asserted as against the Christians that their prophet, i.e., Jesus, had been crucified and that, therefore, according to the law of Moses he was accursed and his soul did not rise to heaven. This argument they advanced as conclusive proof that Jesus was a false prophet. The Christians admitted the curse but said that he had been cursed for their sake, and that subsequently the curse being removed, he rose to heaven where God seated him on His right hand. The verse quoted above condemns both views as serious errors. It states that Jesus did not suffer either a permanent or a temporary curse but that his soul rose to heaven, the happy abode to which the souls of the righteous rise, immediately after his death which did not take place on the cross. The Mosaic Law makes curse the consequence of a death upon the cross and not of a mere suspension on it which does not result in death. The Quran plainly negatives the death of Jesus upon the cross and consequently his subjection to curse and asserts in clear words that his soul like the souls of the righteous rose to heaven after death. Therefore, the Holy Quran refutes both the Jewish and Christian doctrines and asserts that he was not accursed as his enemies and erring friends would have him, but died a pure death and was raised to heaven after his death like all other prophets. Thus did the Holy Quran settle the much vexed question of Jesus' death, but the Christians do not still admit the need of the Quran. The Quran brought the pure doctrine of the absolute Unity of God, it produced harmony between reason and religion, it carried the doctrine of Unity to its perfection, it furnished clear and conclusive arguments for the Unity and attributes of the Divine Being, it gave

reasons based on intellect, history and revelation, for the existence of God, it dressed religion which had up to that time no more value than can be given to a story, in scientific clothing, it clothed every doctrine with true wisdom, it brought to perfection the chain of religious truths which was hitherto imperfect, it took away the curse from Jesus, and it gave evidence of his being a true prophet and of his soul having risen to heaven to live with the righteous. In the face of these facts, no sensible person would assert that the Quran was not needed.

It should be borne in mind that the Quran has itself clearly proved its need. Thus it says : *اعلموا ان الله يحيى الارض بعد موتها* "Know it that the earth had been dead, and God is now going to restore it to life again." History bears evidence to the fact that immediately before the revelation of the Quran every nation had depraved itself and all the people were sunk deep in vice. Pfender notwithstanding his determined enmity to, and blind prejudice against Islam, also bears testimony to the fact that the Jews and the Christians at the advent of our Holy Prophet were corrupt to the core and led grossly immoral lives, though he adds to explain away the appearance of the Holy Prophet that the coming of a false prophet at the time of a general corruption was a warning to the Christians and Jews who had gone astray to reform themselves. Any one having an ordinary share of intelligence will clearly see that this explanation is simply an absurdity and an impertinence. Put in plain words it means that finding the people of the earth in gross errors and turpitude, God intentionally led them into greater errors and brought about circumstances which led millions of human beings farther away from the right path instead of doing something to bring them back to the truth. Is it true that when God sees the people gone astray, He intentionally leads them to greater destruction, and sends them misleaders and false prophets when they need true guides and reformers? Do the Divine laws as revealed in external nature lend support to this conclusion, and is it thus that God visits the people when sufferings and adversities are unbearable? This is the most blasphemous charge against Divine justice and mercy. To what extreme does the love of this world lead! A weak human being is first called

God and then an accursed person! The righteous prophet of God who delivered the world when it was plunged in evil and restored it to life when it was dead, is denied!

What stronger evidence of the need of the Quran is needed? It came at a time when error raged in the world. It found the world blind and gave it light, it found it in error and gave it guidance, it found it dead and gave it life. The fact that the doctrine of the Unity of God had already been revealed, does not in any way affect the need of the Quran, for as already shown the doctrine of Unity as taught in previous books, was very imperfect and did not aim at the high standard revealed by the Holy Quran. Moreover, even in that imperfect condition, it was only upon the lips and not in the hearts of its adherents, and the Holy Quran was, therefore, needed to impress it upon the hearts, and to make it a living principle for action instead of a formula for repetition. The doctrine of Unity had in fact been quite lost and the Quran brought it afresh to the memory of mankind. The reason why the Holy Quran has been termed *ذِكْرٌ* or remembrance is that it brought back to the memory that which had been forgotten.

The argument against the need of the Quran, moreover, applies, if there is the least weight in it, with equal force to the Mosaic Law itself, because the doctrine of Unity was not unknown before the revelation of the Law of Moses. Do not even the Jews and the Christians admit that this doctrine had been first revealed and taught to Adam, then to Seth, Noah, Abraham and the other prophets that went before Moses? The revelation of Moses is, therefore, open to the same objection, *viz.*, that it was not needed when the doctrine of Unity was revealed and known before it. The same eternal and unchangeable God who revealed Himself to Adam, Seth, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph, revealed Himself to Moses, and Moses taught the same Unity which the earlier prophets had taught.

The truth is that the doctrine of the unity and existence of God was not originally taught by the law of Moses but is of ancient origin. We must, therefore, seek the principle which governs its repeated revelation in the world. A cursory glance at the world's

history will show that there have been periods in it when the teaching of Unity has been in its wane and men having left to act upon it, the principle has been held in contempt and disregard. Almighty God has on such occasions raised the prophets and vouchsafed fresh revelation to the world in order to deliver people from the evil and *shirk* into which they have fallen and to bring them back to righteousness and the Unity of God which they have lost. Thousands of times has the doctrine grown rusty and as many times has it been polished and restored to its original purity. With its rustiness its true worth is hidden from the human eye and accordingly for a time it appears to be quite forgotten. A prophet of God, therefore, again appears to manifest its beauty and light and to dispel the darkness from its face. Thus have light and darkness been gaining the supremacy alternately in the world. The most unfailing test that can be applied to judge the claims of a prophet is to see the time when he appears and the transformation which he works. This is the safest method which a seeker after truth should adopt. He should consider with an unprejudiced mind the condition, both as to principles and actions, of the people among whom a prophet appears, before his appearance and after he has done his work. If he comes in time of need and leaves them when that need is satisfied, this is an irrefutable argument of his truth. A prophet is needed to deliver those who are involved in sin in the same manner as a physician is needed to cure the sick.

If any one were to apply this sound test to the claims of our Holy Prophet and compare the pre-Islamic Arabs with the companions of the Holy Prophet, he would be convinced that the Holy Prophet far excelled all other prophets in his sanctifying power, in the wholesomeness of his influence, and in the abundance of his blessings and that the need of the Quran and the Holy Prophet was far more clear and easy of demonstration than the need of any other prophet or book. What great need did Jesus for instance satisfy and what is the proof that he actually did satisfy any need? Did he work any great transformation in the faith, morals and customs of the Jews? Or was he successful in purifying the lives of his chosen apostles? Both questions, we are sorry to note, must be

answered in the negative. All that can be proved is that Jesus had gathered about him a number of avaricious men who were guilty of treachery and faithlessness to their master. Was this the effect of teachings which are boasted as unequalled in their sublimity?

It should also be borne in mind that the Gospel teachings have no superiority over the teachings of the earlier prophets. The teachings contained in the Gospels have on the other hand been all taken from earlier sources including the Talmud. The Jews have always forcibly asserted that there is no originality in the Gospel-teachings but that they are only plagiarisms from Jewish sacred books. One Jewish author has traced whole passages of the teachings of Jesus in the words of earlier sages. But the Christians while admitting this charge of plagiarism would say that the object of Jesus' mission was not to teach morality but to offer his blood as an atonement for the immoralities of the world and to be subjected to curse. This is however a serious error into which they have fallen. They think that the Law was consummated in the Mosaic Law and that, therefore, the Law revealed in the Quran was not needed. The truth is that since men are apt to forget and be remiss in acting upon moral injunctions which are revealed to them through a prophet, a new prophet is required after some time to re-establish the same principles and make men act upon them. Every new age stands in need of a new reformer and a new magnetiser. But the Quran was not needed only to satisfy these two needs; it was also needed to bring the teachings of the earlier books to completion and perfection. To take one instance only, the Mosaic Law laid stress upon vengeance only in all cases, while Jesus taught unconditional forbearance and non-resistance. Both these teachings were required by the special circumstances of the time when they were taught but being one-sided they could not furnish rules for all ages. As the teaching of the extreme vengeance of Mosaic Law was abrogated by the Gospel, the Gospel-teaching of extreme forbearance itself required to be modified. Hence the need of the Holy Quran which teaches the middle path in which the punishment of the offender or forbearance ought to be resorted to as the occasion requires. Thus both the Mosaic Law and the Gospels take the extreme course while the

Quran teaches the golden mean in all cases. The essence of the teaching in all three books is the same, but the first two laid stress only upon one side of the question owing to the peculiar requirements of the time and the circumstances when and under which they were revealed, and the third, meant as it was for the whole future, led men into the mean path to which they could for ever stick. The Mosaic Law takes one extreme and the Gospel the opposite, the one requiring vengeance in all cases and the other unconditional forbearance, but the Holy Quran reveals the wise path of acting according to the occasion. The teachings of the Mosaic Law and the Gospel are thus clothed with true wisdom in the Holy Quran. If the Holy Quran had not come, the law revealed in the Mosaic Law and the Gospel would have been like the arrow shot by a blind man which, if it hits the mark once by chance, goes wide a thousand times. In short, the Pentateuch contained law in the form of stories, and the Gospel taught it in the form of parables, while the Holy Quran presented it to seekers after truth clothed in true wisdom.

The excellent teachings revealed in the Holy Quran are, thus, far above those contained in the Bible. Nay, the whole of the Bible cannot stand against a single short chapter of the Holy Quran entitled the *Fatiha* which contains only seven verses and which discloses such vast treasures of spiritual wisdom, excellent religious truths and the highest and most precious verities arranged in natural order and methodical succession of parts as are not to be met with in the books of Moses and Jesus though one should waste his whole life in turning over their pages. The word of God shows its Divine origin by the Divine power which lies hidden in it just as His handiwork shows His wonderful skill. It should be further remembered that the Holy Quran contains all the directions which are necessary for the perfection of man. The Bible is like an inn which once afforded lodging and rest to wayfarers but after a time heavy storms and violent earthquakes levelled it with the ground. The great building which had once separate apartments for different functions, lay in such waste and total disorganization that the whole was nothing but a heap of bricks. The Lord of this inn took pity on the travellers, and,

therefore, prepared a new inn, more spacious than the first and providing every sort of accommodation and all necessities for the comfort of the travellers. In its preparation the Lord of the house while making use of some of the bricks of the old building that lay in ruins, added a great deal of fresh material, in order to provide for every requirement of the travellers. This second inn is the Holy Quran : let every one who has eyes behold.

In connection with the perfection of the teachings revealed in the Holy Quran and the imperfection of those revealed to Moses and Jesus, it is necessary to remove an objection. The incompleteness of the earlier teachings is due not to any defect in the Divine revelation, but to a defect in the capability and capacity of those for whom these teachings were meant. The Israelites to whom the mission of Moses was directed had passed about four hundred years in the slavery of the Pharaohs of Egypt, and under this long subjection to the cruelty and tyranny of their masters, they had become as it were utter strangers to principles of justice and equity. As a general rule, the principles to which the masters of a country adhere, find their way into the subject people. People who are in subjection to a tyrant, must after a time grow tyrants in private, while those who are under a just ruler, must grow just in private. The king is as it were a teacher of his people. The Israelites had for many generations been in the bondage of foreign tyrants and their constant subjection to the tyranny and cruelty of their masters fostered in them a spirit which was quite inconsistent with principles of justice and equality. It was, therefore, the first and primary duty of Moses to indoctrinate them in the principles of justice and hence his teachings laid great stress upon this point. The Pentateuch of Moses is not wholly devoid of the teachings of forbearance and mercy but the vein of justice runs through its pages, and its object is also to put a restraint upon undue cruelty and vindictiveness. Such is not the object of the Gospel. It lays stress upon forgiveness and forbearance. The reason of this is not far to seek. The Jews had carried to excess the doctrine of retaliation taught by the Mosaic Law, and instead of kindness and fellow-feeling, rancor and spite had grown up in their hearts. The teaching of Jesus in the Gospels is evidently addressed to a people

whom the speaker knows to be men of a rancorous and vindictive nature and whom he wishes to instruct in the high moral qualities of kindness, patience, forbearance and forgiveness to which they are utter strangers. Hence the propriety of the teachings of Moses and Jesus is unquestionable though it cannot be denied that both doctrines were like special or local laws, and from their very nature unsuitable for permanent and universal adoption. The true and universal law was revealed in the Holy Quran which abrogated all previous laws. Any one who enters into the spirit of the Holy Book and goes to the depth of its true significance, will clearly see that the Quran has neither laid stress upon strict vengeance as the Mosaic Law did in its doctrine of retaliation and its battles, nor has it gone to the opposite extreme by emphasising absolute and unqualified forgiveness of all injuries, but adopts the middle path by enjoining that which is right and forbidding that which is wrong. It requires us to do that which is right both according to reason and law, and to refrain from doing what reason and law do not permit. The laws and injunctions of the Quran do not, therefore, relate to particular actions but lay down general rules for a right course of conduct. It does not for instance tell us to take an eye for an eye in every case or to forgive every injury however evil its consequences may be, but tells us to apply our reason and judgment to the circumstances of every case and act in a manner which is likely to produce the greatest good. By enjoining the right and forbidding the wrong, the Holy Quran has given us general laws for our guidance and thus introduced scientific principles in religious injunctions. Before proceeding to take any step, we are required to consider what will actually be the right way? Whether it is right to forgive or punish, or to give in charity or not to give, is a question of circumstances in each case. According to the Quranic teachings therefore, our primary consideration in every case should be the propriety of the occasion.

We have so far discussed every side of the question relating to the need of the Quran. One point only remains to be considered. Did Islam wage war with the Jews and the Christians to compel them to accept its doctrines? This asserted compulsion has no basis at all. Islam never took the initiative in the battles which it had to fight. It was compelled to take up the sword against those who

had either aggressed on it or assisted the aggressors. The jealousy of God was, therefore, moved to punish the offenders. But His mercy still saved from the deserved punishment such as accepted Islam or paid the *jizya*. This favor was also in accordance with the Divine laws, for whenever there is a visitation of God such as a famine or a plague, the hearts of men are naturally turned to humbleness, repentance, prayers and charitable deeds to avert the Divine punishment. This shows clearly that God Himself inspires into the hearts of men a remedy for averting the evil. The ardent prayers of Moses averted many a time the punishment of the Israelites. In short the Islamic fights were a punishment from God to the aggressors, in which the way was still open for repentance and obtaining the mercy of God.

It cannot be denied that the early Muslim wars were not undertaken to compel the Jews and Christians to accept the doctrine of Unity preached by Islam. Wars were resorted to at the express command of the Almighty as a punishment for the offenders who either took up arms against the holy faith for its extirpation or assisted the aggressors or laid obstructions in the way of Islam intending to hinder its progress. These three causes necessitated a severe chastisement of the offenders and Almighty God willed that it should be effected by means of the sword. Another unjust and unwarrantable charge against Islam is that it preached peace during the first thirteen years under the most cruel tortures and persecutions of its enemies because it lacked force at that time, but that as soon as it had sufficient force to make its appearance in the field of battle it declared war. Such a charge would have had some foundation if the opponents of the Holy Prophet had not committed the heinous deeds of cruelty and innocent bloodshed or plotted to take away his life as they did at Mecca, and the prophet had left Mecca of his own accord and not on account of their evil designs. The slightest acquaintance with the circumstances of the Prophet's life at Mecca, would convince every sensible person of the unreasonableness of such a supposition. Even the enemies of Islam cannot deny—nay they have borne testimony to the fact—that the Holy Prophet met the rejection and persecutions of his enemies with great fortitude and strictly enjoined

forbearance and non-resistance of evil upon his companions. There was no end to the severe persecutions of his enemies. They shed the blood of many an innocent person and inflicted wounds and injuries upon whomsoever they could lay their hands on. An attack upon the Prophet himself was at last plotted to bring the whole movement to an end. At this critical moment, Almighty God led His messenger out of all danger to Medina and gave him the glad tidings that those who had taken up the sword against Islam would perish by the sword. Do these circumstances lend the least support to the cruel charge that the Prophet was from the very commencement bent upon war and that this cherished idea took a practical shape when he found himself at the head of an army at Medina? Is it not true that when the Meccans advanced towards Medina, and were met by the Moslems at the famous field of Badr, the ranks of the Muslims contained no more than 313 men of whom very few had any experience of war and the majority were young men who had never fought a battle before? Nay, among these three hundred and thirteen were also boys who had not yet grown to manhood. Could this small number of raw young men be relied upon as a sufficient force to meet the sturdy warriors and Bedouin hordes of the whole idolatrous Arabia and the thousands of Jews and Christians who were bent upon extirpating the new faith? Could a general ever make his appearance in the field with such scanty material to deal destruction to innumerable foes? Does it not clearly prove that the Prophet was obliged to take the sword in obedience to the commandment of God and not to fulfil any plan which he had concerted? Had it been his plan he would have first collected a force of thirty or forty thousand strong and then made his appearance into the field of battle?

Custom and Tradition

AND

THEIR RESPECTIVE VALUE IN MUHAMMADAN LAW.

(By the Promised Messiah.)

Next to the Holy Quran, the Muhammadans have been given *sunnat* (custom) for their guidance in religion. *Sunnat* is the custom

of the Holy Prophet or the explanation and application of the injunctions of the Holy Quran in the practical life of the Holy Prophet. The Holy Quran enjoins the observance of prayer, for instance, but it does not explicitly fix the number of *rak'ats* for each different prayer. But custom fully explains this and all other injunctions of the Holy Quran which need to be done practically for their due observance. To regard custom and tradition as one thing is an error. Custom came into existence along with every injunction that was revealed in the Holy Quran, and it was fully established by the Prophet himself in his own life-time, whereas the sayings of the Prophet remained in the course of oral transmission for more than a century after the Holy Prophet and were then collected and arranged. The Holy Quran and the custom are simultaneous whereas tradition properly belongs to a later period. Almighty God and His Holy Prophet had charge of two things only. Almighty God made known His will to the world through His Word, while the Holy Prophet's duty it was to explain the injunctions of the Quran in a practical way. This he did by turning the injunctions into practice and thus expounding the maxims of the law. It is an error to regard tradition as giving the necessary details. Before tradition was collected and recorded, Islam had been fully established upon earth and its ordinances were the guiding rules of the lives of millions of human beings. Prayers were observed, alms given and pilgrimages performed in accordance with the requirements of the law, and all distinctions between things allowed and prohibited, had been clearly marked out long before the collection of tradition. All these things, therefore, depend upon the Holy Quran and custom and not upon tradition.

Tradition no doubt occupies the third place in Muslim Law and throws light upon many historical problems, adds to the ethical code of Islam and assists in the application of the general principles of the Holy Quran to particular circumstances. It is like a servant in its relation to the Holy Quran and the custom. The *Ahl-i-hadis* confound custom with tradition and include both the sayings and the practice of the Holy Prophet under the name of tradition. But facts do not lend any support to this view. Custom was established under the direct care of the Holy Prophet, and this part of the law without which the injunctions of the Holy Quran would not have passed into

the domain of the practical was in his own immediate charge, while tradition was not collected and classified to serve as a guide on doctrinal points until after the death of the Prophet and even his companions. Tradition, therefore, does not supersede or govern the Holy Quran and the custom but serves as an auxiliary to them. All important and essential principles and practices have been established by the Holy Quran and the custom, while tradition casts light upon secondary and minor points.

The value of each of these three sources of Muslim Law is, therefore, varying. The Holy Quran is the pure and unaltered Word of God and its authority on all points is unquestionable. Custom is the practical course of life into which the Holy Prophet guided his companions and which has since been followed by all true Muslims. The authority of custom though second to the Holy Quran, is far superior to that of tradition, because it was established by the Prophet himself and handed down to us through a safe medium. But the same reliance cannot be accorded to tradition as to the Holy Quran and the custom. Its authority is only admissible when it does not contradict the Holy Quran and the custom. Tradition is subsidiary to the Holy Quran and the custom and possesses a vast treasure of religious doctrines and, therefore, its utter rejection is the cutting off of one of the three branches of Muslim Law. There is no doubt that we cannot place the same confidence in tradition as in the Holy Quran and the custom, and must dismiss as a pure fabrication every narrative which contradicts the Holy Quran and the custom or traditions which agree with them, but still it is a very serious error to regard the whole mass of tradition as a pure fabrication. Every tradition must be honored which is true when tested by the touch-stone of the Holy Quran and the custom, for the ultimate source to which it may be traced is the Prophet himself. Do not deny it until the Holy Quran and the custom give it the lie, lest you should reject the word of the Holy Prophet. Nay, you should be so scrupulous about it that you should not do, or forbear from doing, an act unless you have a tradition in support of it. If you find a tradition contradicting the words of the Holy Quran, try to put upon its words a construction which should reconcile it to the Holy Quran. But if such a reconciliation is not possible in any case, reject the tradition for it cannot be from

the Prophet. If a tradition is borne out by the Holy Quran, its authority is unquestionable though its authenticity may have been called into question by the collectors. In like manner if you come across a tradition involving a prophecy which has been fulfilled in your own time or previous to it, know it for certain that it is the word of the Prophet and condemn the opinion of those who have questioned its authenticity and truthfulness, for by bringing it to fulfilment Almighty God has Himself sealed its truth. If you reject such a tradition because some collectors or compilers of tradition have pronounced it to be unworthy of credit, you are guilty of rejecting an argument for the truth of Islam. In that case you are an enemy of Islam and not its friend. Almighty God says in the Holy Quran : *فلا يظهر على غيبه احدا الا من ارضى من رسول* "God does not reveal His deep secrets except to such of His chosen apostles as He is pleased with." Hence a true prophecy cannot be attributed to any but a true prophet of God. If a compiler has pronounced a tradition to be unauthentic or fabricated which has afterwards been shown to be true by the fulfilment of the prophecy which it reveals, it is easy to see that the error must be attributed to the judgment of the compiler. What a folly to assert that Almighty God committed a mistake in showing the truth of that which was really false !

Along with this respect for traditions it is necessary to warn the reader against their abuse. The gigantic mass of tradition contains an immense amount of fictitious material. Tradition opened up for every section dissenting from the true faith a vast field for fabrication to support its own views. Each sect thus came to have its own traditions and their variance at last affected even the unity of custom in certain cases. Custom, for instance, did not teach more than a single way of saying prayers, yet tradition even in this case splitted the Muslims into many sects. An erroneous view of the authority of traditions has led astray many sections of Islam. In this lies the error of the Shias too. The same error led astray the Jews who placed too great a confidence in their traditions to the utter neglect of the Word of God. They trusted in the traditions which plainly said that Elijah would descend from heaven before the coming of Jesus Christ and rejected the interpretation which Jesus put on the Word of God that by the coming of Elijah was meant the coming

of one in his power and spirit, because their traditions told them a bodily and not a spiritual descent of Elijah. Among the collections of Muslim tradition, the Bokharee is a sacred and trustworthy book. It is the book which like the Quran plainly speaks of the death of Jesus Christ. In like manner, the work of Muslim and other collections of traditions are depositaries of important religious truths, and the traditions narrated in them must be acted upon by all true Muslims subject to the condition that they do not contradict the Holy Quran and the custom,

Certainty in Faith.

(By the Promised Messiah.)

Seekers after truth! Open your ears and listen to the words which I speak that there is no wealth in the world equal to certainty in faith. It is certainty which breaks the shackles of sin. It is certainty that gives you the power of doing deeds of virtue. It is certainty and certainty alone which makes a man a true and sincere lover of God. Can you keep from sin without certainty? Have you the power to overcome the passions of flesh without witnessing a manifestation of certainty? Do you think that your lives can be transformed to purity unaided by the light of certainty? Is it possible for you to attain to true happiness without certainty? Does there exist under heaven any redemption or atonement which can take away your sins? Has the son of Mary the power to release you from the bondage of sin with his supposed blood? Speak not a lie at which the earth might cleave asunder, for Jesus himself stood in need of certainty for his own salvation. To him it was granted and therefore he was saved. Woe to the Christians who deceive the world by saying that they have been purified of their sins by the blood of Jesus, whereas they are soaked in sin from head to foot. They do not know who their God is. They are drunk with wine but the pure intoxication which descends from heaven is not known to them. They do not lead their lives in the service of the Master, and are, therefore, devoid of the spiritual blessings granted to the pure in life. Remember that except by the light of certainty you cannot come out of a life of darkness nor can the holy spirit descend.

upon you. Blessed are they who have found the wealth of certainty for they shall see God. Blessed are they whose doubts are set at rest for they shall be delivered from sin. Blessed are you when the wealth of certainty is given to you for then you shall cease to sin. Sin vanishes away where certainty finds an entrance. Can you thrust your hand into a hole in which you see a poisonous serpent or stand in a place where a volcano is raining stones, or where lightning is falling or which is the haunt of a ferocious lion or where destructive plague prevails? If you have the same certainty about the destructive nature of sin as about the destruction which volcanic matter or a plague works, it is impossible that you should disobey God's commandments and go against His will or break off the connection of sincerity and love with Him.

Ye people that have been invited to virtue and righteousness, know it for certain that the Divine attraction cannot be generated in you nor the impure stain of sin washed off from your faces until your hearts flow with certainty. If you think that your lifeless traditional belief gives you certainty, it is nothing but a delusion. Had you the desired certainty, you would not have been destitute of its consequences. You do not keep back from sin, you do not eschew evil, you do not take the forward step that you ought to take and you do not fear God as you ought to fear Him. Where is your certainty then? Do you ever thrust your hand into a hole when you are certain that it has a poisonous snake? Can you take a single morsel of a food which you certainly know to be poisoned? Or can you go inadvertently and unguarded into a jungle which you certainly know to be the abode of man-eaters? How is it then that your hands, and your feet, and your eyes, and your ears are bold in the commission of sin, notwithstanding your alleged certainty in relation to God and the reward and punishment of good and evil deeds. Sin cannot overcome certainty. How can you throw yourselves into burning and consuming fire when you see it with your eyes? The citadels of certainty rise high to heaven, and Satan cannot ascend them. If any one has been purified, it is through certainty that he has found this blessing. Certainty gives the power to meet every hardship, so much so that it makes the monarch throw away the royal sceptre and don the garments of a *darvesh*. Certainty lightens the labour and smooths

the path. Certainty enables a man to see God. Every atonement is false and every redemption vain, for to righteousness there is no other way but certainty. It is certainty which releases a man from the bondage of sin, carries him to God and makes him surpass even the angels in his sincerity and perseverance. The religion that has not the means to bring about a certainty, is false. The religion which cannot show the face of the living God with certainty, is false. The religion which has nothing but idle tales of the marvels of the past, is false. The eternal and unchangeable God is even now as He was in the past ages, and His wonderful powers are the same as they were ere now, and He has the same might to show His wonderful signs as He had at any previous time. Why then trust in tales and not seek the living manifestations of the power of God? That religion is nothing but the way to perdition whose miracles and prophecies are stories and those people are ruined to whom God has not revealed Himself and who have not been purified by the hand of God through certainty. As a man is drawn to indulgence in his carnal passions on account of the animal gratification which he feels in them, similarly he is attracted to God with a mighty magnetism when he has once tasted the heavenly bliss. His beauty then so enchants him that all else besides Him is naught to him. No man is ever freed from the slavery of sin unless he has a certain knowledge of God and His power and of the reward and punishment of good and evil deeds. The root from which every insolence grows is the lack of certainty, and the person who has any access to a certain knowledge regarding the Divine Being, dare not go against His will. If the owner of the house knows that a heavy flood is sure to sweep away his house or that it has caught fire and a very small space is left, he cannot stay in the house. How do you then, notwithstanding your pretensions to certainty as to the reward and punishment of good and evil deeds, remain in the dangerous condition in which you are? Open your eyes and consider the Divine laws which you see working in the world. Be not the rats which go downwards but be the pigeons which fly upwards and ascend into the height of the heaven. Do not turn to sin after you have sworn repentance and be not like the serpent which after stripping off its skin is still the same old serpent. Remember death for it is coming nearer you and you are unaware of its approach. Try to purify yourselves for no one who is not himself

purified can see the Holy One. But how can you find this blessing? Almighty God Himself has shown you the way and said : *واستعينوا بالصبر والصلوة* "Seek the assistance of God with patience and with prayer." Prayer must be addressed to God with true humbleness of heart and must contain the praise and sanctification of God, *istighfar* and the invoking of Divine blessings on the Holy Prophet. When you say your prayers, do not like the ignorant deem it a sin to utter words in your prayer in any but the sacred language. Their *istighfar* and prayers are only lifeless ceremonies. Therefore, when you say your prayers, address your supplications to God with humility and submissiveness in your own language, reciting the passages of the Holy Quran which is the Word of God and the prayers taught by the Holy Prophet in the Arabic language, for when you pray to God in your own language, your words have a greater efficacy and your hearts, as they realize the depth of the meaning of these words, bow down before God with greater submission.

The Five Daily Prayers

REPRESENT THE FIVE-FOLD CONDITION OF MAN.

(By the Promised Messiah)

What are the five daily prayers? They are photographs of your changing conditions. The life of man is subject to five different changes which he undergoes in the time of adversity. These five changes are necessary to human nature. First of all you are informed of the misfortune that is going to befall you, as for instance when a warrant is issued from a court of justice for your arrest. For the first time then your comfort and happiness is suddenly interrupted and a cloud of melancholy is cast over your sunshine of glory. This stage corresponds to the time for the first prayer immediately after noon. As the sun begins to decline from the zenith after noon, so a man who is at the height of his prosperity and success witnesses the first stage of his declination when he comes to know of an impending misfortune. This stage of the human condition finds its representation in the prayer which is said at the first decline of the sun, *i.e.*, the *zuhr* prayer. The sun declines farther to the west and the troubles increase. In the illustration already stated, the person upon whom the warrant is executed, is brought before the magistrate. Difficulties then encom-

pass him all around, and the light of comfort is on the verge of extinction. Corresponding to this state of man is the time of the day when the sun has declined far to the west and his light is turned pale so that the eye can rest upon him. The zenith of glory is left far behind and the setting of the sun after a short time is apparent. The later after-noon prayer, *i.e.*, 'asr, answers to this spiritual state. A third change then comes over the man. There is no hope left of being delivered from the trouble. To continue the illustration already suggested, evidence being taken against the accused person which shows his guilt a charge is framed by the Magistrate. He is then frightened out of his senses and deems himself already a prisoner. The son of glory is then set. This state corresponds to the time when the sun is actually set and the light of the day vanishes away. The evening prayer said after sunset represents this condition. The culminating point of adversity is reached when darkness encompasses a man all around, and its force is fully realized. The verdict goes against the person charged and he is thrown into a dungeon. Thus a night comes over the day of prosperity even as it actually comes after sunset when the last rays of light having disappeared, complete darkness pervades on the face of the earth. The prayer fixed for this time is the night-prayer which is thus the fourth representative of a man's condition in adversity. The night passes away and the rays of light once more beam upon the person who has been surrounded with difficulties. The mercy of God takes the prisoner by the hand and sets him free. The morning comes after the long hours of night and before its light dispels the clouds of darkness. This spiritual state of man is represented by the fifth or morning prayer.

It will be seen from this that the five daily prayers represent five changes in the fortune of a man and the time of the day at which Almighty God has appointed a particular prayer to be said represents a particular phase of fortune. The prayers are, therefore, for your own benefit. If you wish that the adversities which are in store for you should not befall you, say your prayers at the appointed times for they are images of the external and internal changes in your conditions. Prayer is a remedy for future adversities. You do not know what to-morrow has in store for you : pray, therefore, to God before the new sun rises that the new day may bring you happiness and blessings.

Jesus among the Ten Lost Israelite Tribes in the East, III.

EVIDENCE FROM THE GOSPELS--3.

Writing under this heading in two previous numbers we showed on the basis of statements from Gospel narratives that Jesus Christ was saved the accursed death on the cross. We have not met with any refutation of these arguments though three months have elapsed since their publication except the single remark that such inferences are opposed to the uniform tenor of the Gospels. Now this supposed uniform tenor does not exist anywhere outside the minds of some Christian Missionaries. The narratives of the Gospels present so many contradictions that they can hardly be supposed to relate the same story. No amount of turning and twisting the meaning of words can make the story one complete narrative. The judicious reader is, therefore, bound to reject all absurdities and take for the basis of a life of Jesus that which appears to be historically true, for otherwise the whole narrative shall have to be condemned as a fiction. As already shown, there are numerous passages in the Gospels proving conclusively that Jesus did not die on the cross. Should they be rejected as interpolations or fabrications? What must be done for instance with the prophecy which says that no sign shall be given to the Jews except the sign of Jonas the prophet? Unless the prophecy is declared false, there is no escaping the conclusion that Jesus was placed alive in the grave just as Jonas went alive into the belly of the whale. No other resemblance can be traced between the two prophets. Many attempts have been made by the Christian apologists to evade the difficulty but they are all futile. What again are we to do with the dream of Pilate's wife recorded in Matt. 27: 19? Are we to suppose it to be of a diabolical origin, or should we regard the narrative which gives it, as fictitious? No Christian would assent to these propositions. What was its purpose then? Is it not clear that it was designed to bring about the liberation of Jesus? Why did God send an angel to warn Pilate through his wife that Jesus should not die, if it was not His will that Jesus should be saved? Was the purpose of God frustrated by some mightier agency?

There is a similar instance afforded to us in the nativity story where the life of the child Jesus is saved by a similar warning through a dream. Does not a comparison of the dreams in these two instances clearly show that it was the Divine purpose that Jesus should not die on the cross? If the dream is not intended to serve this purpose, the Christians had better condemn it as a fiction. In what manner again is the prayer of Jesus in the garden to be dealt with? He was "exceeding sorrowful, even unto death," when he fell on his face before God and in true humbleness offered up the prayer that the fatal cup might, if possible, be taken away from him without his tasting it. Who knows how heavy and depressed he was on that night and with what deep agony he continued to cry out to His God the whole night long. The sleeping disciples were only now and then awakened by his loud cries. How great was his suffering and how earnest his desire to escape the accursed death on the cross, may be guessed from the fact that he was unable to suppress his deep sorrow and gave vent to it in loud cries which were uttered with a sufficient volume to disturb* the sleep of his disciples at a very long distance. No sensible person would doubt for a moment that all those cries which a chosen prophet of God had uttered in great and continued agony, could not but move the merciful God to compassion. If the prayer of Jesus in this agony was rejected by God, no Christian should have the least hope of the acceptance of his prayers. Nay, it was simply absurd that Jesus laid so much stress on prayer if his own prayer under the heaviest affliction was doomed to utter rejection. The idea of the rejection of this prayer is further contradicted by Heb. 5: 7, where it is stated in plain words that this prayer was accepted by God. But if Jesus died upon the cross, the account of this prayer must be looked upon as fictitious.

Moreover, the short duration for which Jesus remained on the cross and the post-crucifixion incidents narrated in the Gospels lead

* It is on this supposition only that the record of this prayer in the Gospels can be explained, for the general body of the disciples was not with Jesus on this occasion (Matt. 26: 36) and the three whom he took with him and who were at the distance of about a stone's throw from him (Luke 22: 41) were all asleep. But as the prayer has been recorded they must have been awakened now and then by the shrieks which Jesus uttered in his agony and thus overheard him.

to but one conclusion, *viz.*, that Jesus did not die upon the cross, and the "uniform tenor" contradicting this conclusion is nothing more than a false belief which pervades all thoughts of the Christians. There is not a single instance on record in which a two or three hours' suspension on the cross may have brought about the death of a person. Nay, there are instances in which a person has been saved even after being subjected to this lingering mode of execution for a day or two. Josephus has related an incident in which he begged release from the Emperor of three persons who had been nailed to the cross for a long time, at least over a day as the circumstances show, and by the application of proper remedy the life of one was saved. In fact, the great tardiness of death by crucifixion totally subverts the orthodox position of the death of Jesus upon the cross within the short duration of two or three hours. The futility of the orthodox contention is further made evident by the fact that in the particular case of Jesus and the two thieves, the duration of suspension was regarded quite insufficient to bring about death, and hence it was thought necessary to subject them further to the process of *crurifragium* which in most cases was employed as a distinct punishment to bring about the death of the offender. The effect of crucifixion was, therefore, considered as almost null in their case and hence the necessity of subjecting them to another torturous mode of punishment which even without crucifixion would have brought about death. It should be borne in mind that *crurifragium* consisted in breaking, with hammers or clubs, the bones of the offender from the hips to the feet. Now this process was intentionally omitted in the case of Jesus and the pretence was advanced that he was already dead. With the two thieves whose duration of suspension on the cross was the same as that of Jesus, still needing the punishment of the *crurifragium* which alone could have caused death, we are asked ~~to believe that Jesus was already dead!~~ The spear-wound further decided the question that life had not ceased because it is stated that blood and water flowed from the wound. Now the flowing of water is nothing more than a fiction invented for translating the event from the domain of the natural into that of the supernatural. No water could have flowed even if the wound had been so deep as to reach the precordial region except in case of dropsy, and this we do

not suppose is meant by the narrator. The flowing of blood however shows that life had not ceased, for blood is congealed within a few minutes after death. The fact that it was fluid conclusively shows that Jesus did not die upon the cross and that he was still alive like the thieves when taken down. It has been further alleged that the piercing of Jesus' side with a spear was a substitute for the crurifragium employed on the thieves. This is an absolute misrepresentation of the facts of the case. The soldiers had no authority to substitute one mode of causing death for another. To put an end to the life which the short duration of the crucifixion could not extinguish, the soldiers were directed to employ the crurifragium and they had not the authority to substitute a different method. But the narrative shows conclusively that the breaking of legs though resorted to in the case of the thieves was not employed in the case of Jesus. It is not stated how the soldiers came to know that Jesus was already dead. It is so hard to distinguish between a case of syncope which must be a natural consequence of crucifixion, and actual death that considering the low state of the medical science at that age even a doctor could have erred. But the writers of the Gospels ask us to submit to the opinion of one or two ignorant soldiers in the face of the strongest testimony which leads to a contrary conclusion. That the piercing with the spear which caused the flow of blood gave a fatal wound and affected the precordia is not supported by the slightest evidence. Moreover it was the side that was pierced and not the precordia and there is no evidence to show that the wound was a deep one. To strike the precordia and cause the flow of blood by that means, a great deal of skill was required which could not be expected from an ignorant soldier. Just as a pretence was advanced in the first instance that crucifixion had put an end to Jesus' life and that, therefore, recourse to crurifragium was unnecessary, so the slight wound in the second instance may have been pretended to be sufficiently fatal to cause death. But as the flow of blood from the wound showed that Jesus had not died upon the cross, so later circumstances and the absence of the employment of any method to cause actual death, afford conclusive evidence that the wound was nothing more than a scratch.

Thus there is not the slightest evidence of the death of Jesus in the

material furnished by the Gospels, and so far as other historical sources are concerned which we shall consider later on, we have clear evidence in hand that Jesus did not actually die on the cross. The single statement by some unknown person that Jesus was dead upon the cross has been contradicted in the Gospels themselves by the incident of the flow of blood. The Gospel of John thus gives the lie to the statement of those who hold Jesus to have died on the cross and establishes conclusively that he was taken down alive from the cross. This even the Christian apologists have been obliged to admit, for otherwise the Gospel of John must be condemned as a monstrous falsehood. The episode of the flow of blood thus contradicts all assertions of the death of Jesus on the cross. These assertions being, therefore, clearly falsified, there is no evidence whatever of the death of Jesus. The assertion of Jesus' rising from the dead contradicts our unvarying experience. The evidence required to establish it must, therefore, be unparalleled in its force. The mere fact of a man being seen alive of whose death we have no proof, is no argument for his resuscitation though it may be a good argument for his recovery if he has undergone severe torture. History shows that many persons have been restored to life after being hung on the cross and for longer periods than Jesus was hung. Shall we then have to suppose that they actually rose from the dead? Metaphorically such a description may not be objectionable for the world gives them up for dead men. It is in this sense that Jesus tells his disciples that after he is risen again, he shall go before them into Galilee. If any value is to be attached to the post-crucifixion appearances of Jesus, the strongest evidence is required to establish his death, for the natural conclusion from such appearances is not that he rose from the dead but that he never died. The amount of evidence required to establish the fact of Jesus' death is not found in the Gospels. There is no conclusive proof that Jesus died, and, therefore, the evidence of the Gospels establishes not a resuscitation but a recovery. The absence of any evidence of a serious kind as to the reality of Jesus' death has been felt in all ages. Even at the time of crucifixion, Pilate gave utterance to his opinion that Jesus could not die so soon. From that early time doubts have been entertained as to the reality of his death by his friends as well as foes, the former adhering blindly to the belief that

the death was brought about by a supernatural intervention though the circumstances could not bring it about. The Gospels present a strange self-contradiction. They first ask us to believe that death had actually occurred upon the cross and then relate an incident showing the flow of blood from the side of Jesus after he was taken down from the cross. If the first statement is not attributed to ignorance, as the determination of death requires accurate medical skill, the Gospels must be condemned as self-contradictory. Had there been any assertion that death occurred after the piercing of the side, the allegation of the death of Jesus after being taken down from the cross, would have had to be seriously considered though it still would have been open to the objection that like the allegation of his death upon the cross which was belied by the Gospels themselves, it was nothing more than a falsehood. But unfortunately for the Christian apologists, there is no circumstance or assertion showing the death of Jesus after the piercing episode. Hence the burden lies upon the Christians of bringing forward conclusive proof as to the death of Jesus before offering any evidence of his so-called resurrection.

Of the appearances of Jesus after crucifixion, we have already said that they conclusively show that he was possessed of human organism and that the astral body is simply a myth. Every circumstance attending his appearance besides revealing a human organism and human needs, shows clearly the same progress in the regaining of strength as might be expected in the case of recovery from severe wounds and consequent weakness. In the first place he requires two or three days before he is able to come out of the grave. It is simply absurd to suppose that these three days were required for rising from among the dead and the circumstance only points to his recovery from weakness and loss of consciousness. Then he finds himself so weak from the wounds and torture of the cross that he is unable to undertake any long journey at once, but first walks about in the garden, then goes a few miles from the city and at last when sufficient strength is gained, he at once leaves for a quieter place, *i.e.*, Galilee, a place which had been appointed beforehand as the meeting place. All this he does in disguise and takes care that his enemies may remain altogether in the dark as to his whereabouts. That he remained under careful medical treatment from the time that

Joseph took him in his charge, is not a mere conjecture, but a fact established on the very strong evidence furnished by the "Ointment of Jesus," of which however we shall speak later on.

Enough has been said already as to the perfectly human nature of the body of Jesus, in which he appeared to his disciples after crucifixion, and we do not wish to detain the reader any more on this point. We shall, however, call the reader's attention to one or two points more. In Matt. 27: 52, 53, we meet with another piece of evidence which leads us to the conclusion we have already reached. It is there said that "the graves were opened and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, and came out of the graves after his resurrection and went into the holy city and appeared unto many." Undoubtedly the story of so many saints coming out of their graves and appearing to many is not an historical event. If the occurrence of such events were possible in this world, the general resurrection would no more be an unseen thing, and all the truths of the life to come that have been kept hidden from the physical eye of men as a criterion for their sincerity and faith, would become evident to all. The fact that there is a life hereafter would then become palpably evident, alike to the believers and unbelievers, and its existence as apparent as that of the material things of this world.

Again, if it were true that hundreds of thousands of the Israelite prophets and saints had risen after the crucifixion and entered the holy city, and that such a miracle had been wrought to prove the truth of Jesus' mission, the Jews had a good opportunity of learning from all these saints and prophets who were their own forefathers whether Jesus was true in his claim to Divinity. It is also evident that the Jews, who had an anxious desire to converse with the dead, would not have lost so favourable an opportunity when thousands of dead men walked up into the different quarters of the city. They must have asked questions concerning the man whom they had crucified. The story of Jesus and his mission must have been on the lips of everybody and freely discussed in every family, for there was a good opportunity of solving this all-important question on the authority of the dead whose evidence could not be refuted. Such evidence, it appears, was not favourable to Jesus, and the risen saints must have

told the Jews that Jesus' claim to godhead was a pure fabrication; for after this event the Jews, instead of accepting his mission became more averse to it. Their hearts hardened and waxed more gross after they had learned the real nature of things from thousands of the old prophets and saints restored to life through the miraculous power of Jesus. They became more and more inclined to mischief, and not satisfied with the death of Jesus, their vengeance was now directed against his followers. We cannot understand how the Jews could have rejected Jesus when thousands of saints whose bodies rested in that holy land had risen and publicly testified in their presence that Jesus was in fact the Son of God, and that whosoever did not believe in him as such would go to hell. If, therefore, we suppose that the saints and prophets came out of their graves and went to the holy city to give to the people true information about Jesus, their evidence must have been against him, and his claims to sonship and godhead, if he ever put forward such claims, must have been falsified by them. Perhaps, this very evidence made the Jews more obstinate in their opposition to Jesus and instead of admitting him a God they rejected him even as a prophet.

In short, it is the very height of absurdity to believe that Jesus raised hundreds of thousands of dead bodies at the time of his crucifixion, or, that he ever raised any single dead body before that time, for no good seems to have come from the wonders said to be performed by Jesus. The following illustration throws some light on the futility of the orthodox attempt to establish that Jesus ever raised any dead person. Some persons went to a distant country, and saw the wonders and curiosities of that land such as they had never seen before. After the lapse of a long period of time, the travellers paid a visit to their native land. Now, during the time that they were away, a certain man of low and humble appearance, came to this country and stated that he was the monarch of the country to whose capital the travellers had gone. He also stated that certain other great rulers known to the people of this country were inferior to him in rank. The people of the country not believing his statements, went to the travellers to enquire who the claimant was. Now, these travellers knew the claimant very well. It was but natural that they should have satisfied the enquirers and so they told them all they

knew. The result of the enquiry was that the people looked upon the claimant as an impostor, and tortured him and drove him out from amongst them. Imagine what the travellers might have told about him, for had they spoken well of him, the people would have honored and respected him. This parable is a good illustration of the case of Jesus. His raising the dead could only have been accepted if the opinion of the dead, which the public would naturally have been anxious to learn, had been favourable to him. But here the result is quite the reverse of what one should expect. If we suppose that Jesus had raised the dead, we are at the same time obliged to admit that the dead did not bear a testimony which established the truth of his assertions, but that their evidence led to still further opposition. The weak point in this otherwise extraordinary feat is thus easily exposed. To conceal the blemish, the narrators should have stated that Jesus restored so many animals to life, for in that case no one could have questioned the authenticity of the miracle on the ground of the absence of favorable evidence. The fact of accepting a religion on the authority of those who have tasted of the life after death—if their coming back into the world were possible—is so clear that even if the Hindus were asked whether they would accept a religion as true which was testified to as such by their dead forefathers miraculously restored to life, the answer would certainly be in the affirmative.

The Christians do not stand alone in ascribing such a miracle to Jesus, for the Sikhs mention a similar story about Nanak, the founder of their religion. But the latter have shown more ingenuity in their invention than the Christians, inasmuch as they state that Nanak had once restored a dead elephant to life. Now such a miracle is not open to the objection which has already been forwarded against the raising of the dead bodies of men, for the elephant, even if really raised to life, could not have testified to the truth or falsehood of Nanak. In fine, the ignorant people may feel proud of such miracles, but the wise man finds such absurdities abhorrent to his nature, and feels ashamed when other people raise just and reasonable objections.

We would now try to explain what is the reality contained in the Gospel narrative of the rising of the dead bodies of the saints and

their coming into the holy city ; for our love and respect for Jesus is far greater than that of the Christians who know not whom they admire. The fact is that this very event, which has been so much talked of, was a vision seen by some righteous person. This vision was to the effect that the dead saints had risen and paid visits to the people of the holy city. But the dream is not to be taken in a literal sense but must be interpreted in the same way as other dreams in the Holy Books of God, the dream of Joseph for instance. The interpretation of this dream is that Jesus did not die on the cross, but that God saved him from the hands of his wicked enemies. As to our authority for this interpretation, we would refer the reader to the greatest writers on this point, who have had personal experience of what they incorporated afterwards in their books. For instance the author of *تفسير القرآن* one of the most reliable works on interpretation says on this point :—

“ If any one sees in a dream or in a vision that dead men have come out of their graves and gone back to their homes, the interpretation of the dream is that a prisoner will be set at liberty and be delivered from the hands of his oppressors,” (see *Ta'tir ul anam fi Ta'bir il Manam* by Sheikh Abdul Ghani al Nabilasi, page 289).

From what the author has written, it appears that the prisoner referred to in the interpretation must be a great and illustrious personage. This interpretation is clearly applicable to the case of Jesus Christ, and we can easily understand that the rising of the dead saints and their visiting the city denoted nothing more. It was a sign for the wise to understand that Jesus escaped with his life from the cross.

Lastly, it is necessary to draw the reader's attention to another Biblical evidence met with in the following words of Matthew : “ Verily I say unto you, ‘ There be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom.’ ” (Matt. 16 : 28) and the words of John : “ Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come what is that to thee ” (John 21 : 22). These verses clearly show that Jesus had made a promise with his disciples that his coming would be so speedy that some of the men of that time (John amongst them) would be still living. It was necessary that the prophetic words should have been fulfilled. The

Christians hold the same view and admit that Jesus had appeared, in accordance with his promise, at the time of the destruction of Jerusalem, and was seen by John who was then living. But they say that he had not descended from the heavens in full glory and with all the signs as he had predicted, but had only appeared in a revelation to John in order to fulfil his words preserved in Matt. 16: 28. But to take this strange explanation for a fulfilment of the prophecy is a mere stretch on the meaning of the words. This interpretation is forced out of the words in order to avoid the objections and is so plainly wrong that there hardly seems to be any need of refuting it. It appears rather ridiculous that Jesus should have made a prophecy in such forcible words, if its fulfilment had simply to consist in his being seen by some body in a dream or revelation,* for in this way he had long before appeared to St. Paul. The prophecy contained in Matt. 16: 28, has perplexed the minds of the Christians who have not been able to construe these words in any reasonable sense in conformity with their religious views. They cannot assert that Jesus had appeared in his glory at the time of the destruction of Jerusalem, nor can they overlook the words wherein Jesus had plainly told them that some of those who were standing before him should not pass away till they had seen the son of man coming in his kingdom. They are, therefore, obliged to strain the words into quite a different sense, and take them as indicating the appearance of Jesus in a spiritual sense. But this is a gross mistake. The elect of God even after death often appear to good men in their visions, not necessarily in dreams but sometimes also in a state of wakefulness. Such scenes often present themselves, and we are fully aware that we are in this world, seeing with our eyes, hearing with our ears and speaking with our tongues, but on a deeper consideration it appears that at such times we are in a supernatural world. The people of the world do not know such wakefulness, for they lead lives of indifference and negligence. Such wakefulness is granted from heaven to those

* The meaning attached by some Muslim Maulvis to the words of Matt. 16: 28, is still more amusing. They maintain that since Jesus had made it a condition of his second advent that some persons of that time (John amongst them) should be still living, therefore, since Christ has not yet appeared, it follows that John is still alive hidden in some mountain where he is waiting for the Messiah.

who are endowed with other senses besides those possessed by ordinary people. This is a fact and a substantial reality. If, therefore, John had seen Jesus in this manner at the time of the desolation of Jerusalem, this event has no connection with the prophecy contained in Matt. 16 : 28, and does not in any way constitute the fulfilment thereof, even though John might have in that state conversed with his master. One may still see Jesus or any other of God's chosen prophets in that way provided the grace of God be with him.

The real nature of the prophecy is, therefore, simply this that Jesus sincerely believed that he would be saved from the death on the cross, and would not depart from this world before he had seen the ruin of the Jews with his own eyes, and before the heavenly kingdom shone in its full glory upon earth. Jesus knew it full well that God would never destroy him and his mission but that ultimately success would crown his efforts. He uttered the prophecy for the consolation of his disciples to whom he meant to convey in these words that those who had taken up the sword against him would perish with the sword in his life and before his eyes. What stronger proof can be given to a Christian than the words uttered by Jesus that some of the people of his time would be living when he would come again.

The reader should notice that the Gospels contain two sorts of prophecies regarding the second advent of Jesus. (1) Prophecies which foretell of his appearance in the last ages. It should be carefully borne in mind that a spiritual and not a corporeal appearance is meant here. Christ would surely come but exactly in the same manner as Elias had come. (Matt. 17 : 12, 13; and Mark. 9 : 13). As in the case of the prophecy about the coming of Elias, we should take John the Baptist for the promised one, so the promise of the second advent of Christ had to be fulfilled by the appearance of a person in the spirit and power of Christ. Thus the prophecy has been fulfilled in the person of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad who is the Promised Messiah. He has been raised for the good of mankind, and on account of his spiritual resemblance with Christ, he appears under the name of the Promised Messiah, the glad tidings of whose advent are given by Jesus so often in the Gospels. Blessed are they who out of respect for the word of Jesus free themselves from all prejudices in considering this point and do not stumble. (2) All other prophecies which

speak of the re-appearance of Jesus are, in fact, meant to corroborate the statement that Jesus escaped with his life from the cross and lived to preach the word to his people. The Christians have committed a gross mistake in confusing these two kinds of prophecies. Consequently, they find themselves involved in serious difficulties on these points, which they could have easily avoided by drawing a line of demarcation as shown above.

Notes and Comments.

Anent a lecture given by Dr. Rouse in Calcutta at the Bengali Christian Conference on "The Higher Criticism of the Bible," the Harvest Field, a Missionary Magazine, writes:—

"We believe that it is very desirable in the interests of truth and of the Christian Church in India that more attention should be paid to the doctrine of inspiration as the majority of the leaders and scholars of the Christian Church now formulate it..... For our part we would repeat the wise words of the *Indian Witness*. 'For a long time we have felt that it is unwise and unfair to the Indian Church, especially to the educated young men rapidly coming to the front, to withhold knowledge of the mighty revolution in Biblical criticism now proceeding in the west. There is sure to be a rude and injurious awakening on the subject if anything like a conspiracy of silence should be observed. The vast majority of the Indian Ministers are wholly ignorant of the new views of the Bible entertained by the bulk of the Missionaries. As one of the speakers at the conference affirmed, there are young men in training for the ministry at the present time who are still being taught the doctrine of verbal inspiration and the absolute inerrancy of the text of scripture. To teach this is to play into the hands of the enemy in a sadly unwise manner, and is little less than high treason against truth.....Senseless denunciation of higher criticism and contemptuous references to the critics are unworthy of Christian truth-seekers and should cease.'"

Thus has the Bible been swept away like a straw before the

mighty current of modern criticism and such was the fate it deserved. It is not the unmixed Word of God, it is not unerring, such is the modern Christian faith, and we are glad to see that even the Christian Missionaries have recognised the truth of these views. But in spite of this belief it is nothing less than sheer folly to depend on it for salvation. What is not itself free from error, cannot free others. Nineteen hundred years' experience further bears testimony to the failure of the Bible as a purifying agency. But if the Bible is erroneous in certain parts, while other parts of it contain some truth, what test do the Christians have in their hands for distinguishing truth from error? If it is reason, then the Christian faith must openly avow itself to be based on Reason and not on Revelation. But if this test is revelation, surely some pure and trustworthy revelation free from error is required to sift the truth from the falsehood contained in the Bible. This revelation is found in the Holy Quran, for it is the only Book on the face of the earth which claims to be the true and unmixed Word of God, free from every error and every fault. It is the Holy Quran which first declared that the Bible did not contain the unmixed Word of God, and hence its own necessity as the pure Divine word. We are glad to see that the view which the Holy Quran took of the Bible has at last been admitted by even the Missionaries. But we are unable to account for the misguided zeal with which they are still preaching this book which even according to them is not free from error. Do they think that they can do any good to the world by preaching error? The truth of the higher criticism and the error of the Bible being once recognised, it is difficult to see how the Christian religion can stand for a moment? The most trustworthy book containing the views of higher critics and written by professed Christians is the *Encyclopædia Biblica* in which it is stated in column 1881 (Vol. II) that in all the Gospels there are only five absolutely credible passages about Jesus. These are enumerated as follows:—1. "Why callest thou me good? none is good save God only." (Mark. 10: 17). 2. The statement in Matt. 12: 31 that blasphemy against the son of man can be forgiven. 3. The statement in Mark. 3: 21, that his relatives held him to be beside himself. 4. Mark. 13: 32, "Of that day and of that hour knoweth no one, not even the angels in heaven, neither the son, but the Father." 5. Mark. 15: 34, and Matt. 27: 46, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me."

Professor Schmiedel, Professor of New Testament Exegesis, Zurich, (for the author of these remarks is no less a church dignitary that he) then goes on to say that these passages which "might be called the foundation-pillars for a truly scientific life of Jesus" conclusively prove "that in the person of Jesus we have to do with a completely human being, and that the divine is to be sought in him only in the form in which it is capable of being found in a man." We hope that the Christian Missionaries will plainly avow these truths and condemn the false belief of the Divinity of Jesus.

A correspondent signing himself "a Hindu Reader" writes to **Ruhulla.** the Epiphany of April 18th, 1903, that "in the Alkoran of the Muhammadans" the four prophets Moses, Abraham, Christ and Muhammad "are mentioned with particular titles after their names," viz., "Kalimullah, Khalilullah, Ruhullah and Habibullah" respectively, and the editor seems to hold the same opinion as he publishes the letter without any comment. Such gross ignorance of the Holy Quran, the sacred book of the Muhammadans, is very much to be regretted especially when it is considered that publicity is given to these very views in widely circulated papers. As a matter of fact not a single one of these epithets is used in the Holy Quran after the name of any of the prophets named or any other prophet at all. Speaking of the birth of Jesus, the Holy Quarn, no doubt, uses the words روح من الله i.e., "a soul from God," but that is quite a different thing. The words are really meant to declare the purity of the birth of Jesus and to condemn his alleged illegitimacy. The birth of Jesus had been the object of the most serious charge of illegitimacy and it was, therefore, necessary for the Holy Quran to refute this charge before requiring its followers to believe in him as a righteous prophet of God. A soul that was born in contravention of the Divine law of marriage, i.e., an issue of fornication, would be described metaphorically as a devilish soul or the son of devil. This was exactly what the Jews alleged of Jesus and it was to refute this scandalous attack that the Holy Quran described Jesus as a soul from God, and thus refuted the Jewish allegation of the soul of Jesus being a Devilish soul or the offspring of fornication. Elsewhere the Holy Quran has described impure souls as devilish souls. The reason

why similar words have not been used of any other prophet of God is now apparent. There has been no prophet of God whose birth has been made the object of the scandalous charge of illegitimacy like Jesus, and hence there was no necessity of describing their souls as souls from God, because they were not affirmed to be devilish by their enemies. It is thus clear that the description of Jesus as a soul from God is meant only to refute the charge of illegitimacy. Every word of the Holy Quran has been revealed to satisfy a need and the words "a soul from God" as descriptive of Jesus are meant to establish the purity of his birth, and thus he has been placed by the Quran on the same level as other prophets in this respect though his enemies would not have it so. In fact, if God had declared in the case of other prophets as He has done in the case of Jesus, that they were not of illegitimate birth, it would have been a kind of insult to them, so it is foolish to think that Jesus was superior to other prophets because he is cleared of the charge of illegitimate birth and others are not. The word *مديقم* used of Mary has the same object in view. By describing her as a righteous and chaste woman, the Holy Quran does not mean to assert that there have been no other righteous or chaste women. Her chastity was questioned as was the legitimacy of her son's birth and, therefore, it was necessary to establish it and refute the false charge of adultery brought against her by the Jews. Similar is the import of the tradition which describes Mary and her son as free from the touch of Satan. The Jews attributed Satanic works and attributes to both mother and son and, therefore, it was necessary for the Holy Prophet to declare them as having no connection with Satan. The tradition in no way refers to their sinlessness but simply clears them of the false charges brought against them by the Jews.

The Census Report of 1901 shows that with a very small mission-

Increase of Muham- ary and propagandic effort, Islam shows
madans in India in the an increase in India which far exceeds
last decade.

the increases boasted by all the other religions of the country taken together. The following figures illustrate this remark. Since 1891 the Hindus have decreased by 585,000, the Christians have increased by about 630,000, the Buddhists by a little over 2,345,000, and the Sikhs by 187,400. Thus the

total increase for all religions in British India for the decade ending with 1901 is only about 2,586,400, while during the same period the Muhammadans have added more than 5,000,000 souls to their numbers, which is about double the increase of all other religions taken together. Out of a total population of 294 millions, the Muhammadans are 62½ millions, *i.e.*, only about 21 per cent. of the whole population. This marvellous progress of the religion of Islam in spite of many disadvantages and the paucity of the means of propagation at its disposal is due solely to its simple and attractive principles. Still it is a matter of great regret that of the 639,000 added to Christianity, though the greater number is due to conversion from other faiths yet not a few are converted from Islam. This is the result of owning principles in contravention of the Holy Quran which make the access of Christianity into ignorant hearts very easy. Is it not true that when the pure principles of Islam were preached hundreds of thousands of Christians renounced their religion for the sake of Islam, whereas now some ignorant Muhammadans have deserted their faith for a false system.

The Tomb of Jesus.

DEAR SIR,—Allow me to say a few words with reference to an anonymous letter appearing in the *Epiphany* dated 11th April 1903. The writer speaks of the tomb of a prophet at Srinagar to which he seems to have paid a visit. He makes an attempt to contradict some of the facts published by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian regarding the tomb.

The writer mostly accepts the facts published by the Mirza Sahib, and where he disagrees, he offers no reason for his disagreement. He admits that the tomb is known as that of a Prophet or a *Nabi*, and that one of the names by which the occupant of the tomb is known is Yus Asaf. Admitting both these facts, he is of opinion that the person who is known as Yus Asaf was a Muhammadan Saint of Cashmere who died not more than 200 years ago. This conclusion of his is merely based on the style and form of

the building. He remarks, "To judge by its materials and its style, the building might possibly be 200 years old, but probably it is a good deal more recent." Even if we suppose that the building is not more than 200 years old, can we conclude from it that Yus Asaf lived not more than 200 years since? Does he not know that old buildings are often repaired, and when an ancient building is brought to ruins by the wasting influence of the rolling years, new buildings have to be erected instead? The fact that he is known as a Prophet or *Nabi* refutes the idea of his being a Muhammadan Saint. No intelligent man would think that a person who was reputed as a prophet among the Muhammadans was a Muhammadan Saint. Even if a Muhammadan Saint work miracles, they would take him as a *Wali* at the best and never as a prophet. They believe that their Holy Prophet is the seal of the prophets and that he is not to be followed by any other prophet. Hence the fact that Yus Asaf is believed to be a prophet by the Muhammadans of Cashmere, clearly shows that he lived prior to the time of the Holy Prophet of Arabia صلى الله عليه وسلم and one who takes him for a Muhammadan Saint only, betrays his complete ignorance of the beliefs prevailing among the Muhammadans. The conclusion at which the writer of the letter has arrived, viz., that Yus Asaf was a Muhammadan Saint who lived not more than 200 years ago, is contradicted by the evidence contained in his own letter.

Firstly, he states that the people of the place regarded him as one of the 1,24,000 'prophets of Islam.' This evidence shows that Yus Asaf lived before the time of the Holy Prophet, for the 1,24,000 prophets of whom he is believed to be one, all preceded the Holy Prophet of Islam and none of them appeared after him.

Secondly, the very fact that he is reputed as a prophet among the Muhammadans shows, as has already been explained, that he appeared before the time of the Holy Prophet of Arabia صلى الله عليه وسلم. We do not know of any prophet who appeared in Cashmere within the last 200 years.

Thirdly, the writer informs us that the tomb is known as that of Yus Asaf. This evidence again shows that he is a prophet of old days and not of any recent times. It is this Yus Asaf that is

known to Europe as St. Joasaph or St. Josaphat. The story of Joasaph was first introduced into Europe by means of a Greek work written in the 8th century by St. John of Damascas. Some versions of the story were written much earlier. Yus Asaf or Joasaph was canonised as a Saint and has a church dedicated to his name at Plermo. The reason why he was canonised as a saint is that his teachings and parables bore a close resemblance to and some of them were even identical with those of Jesus. Some Christian writers have on account of this close resemblance thought him to be a disciple of Jesus. Some versions of the story of St. Joasaph clearly state that he died in Cashmere. Now there are very old versions of the story and there is every reason to believe that Yus Asaf of Cashmere lived not later than in the first century. This carries us as far back as Jesus himself. There may be much of fiction mingled in the stories of Joasaph or Yus Asaf, but they certainly refute the assumption that Yus Asaf was a Muhammadan Saint and that he lived not more than 200 years ago.

The writer of the letter is bold enough to charge Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian with fabrication. The Mirza Sahib has published certain facts regarding the tomb which prove the tomb to be the sepulchre of Jesus Christ. The Mirza Sahib has announced that the tomb at Srinagar is known among the people as that of Yus Asaf (also Isa Sahib) who was a prophet, prince and foreigner, and had come from the west about 1900 years ago. Some of these facts the writer admits, but the rest he calls pure fiction. This gentleman seems to have made a very poor inquiry there. His inquiry was limited only to a few persons that happened to be there. If he wanted to contradict the statements published by the Mirza Sahib throughout the world, he ought to have conducted his investigations on a larger scale and devoted a greater amount of time to this important investigation. The truth is that this gentleman, who, to all appearance, is a native Christian, and Punjabi, did not wish to push his inquiries much further, lest the truth should be revealed to him. He contented himself with a few vague answers which he received from those that chanced to be present there. If he had extended his inquiries to a wider range, he would have certainly come across many persons who would have given

him all the information that is to be found in the writings of the Mirza Sahib. Let me inform him that the announcement of the Mirza Sahib is not based on such meagre investigation as his. He, on the other hand, sent some persons to Srinagar with the express purpose of making inquiries about the tomb. These men, who were well educated and knew the Kashmiri language, lived there for months and patiently carried on their investigation regarding the tomb. Besides numerous oral testimonies of illiterate persons, they procured the signatures and written testimonies of about 500 of the leading and learned men unanimously attesting all the points which he subsequently published for the information of the public. Compared with his mature investigation, the hasty and partial investigation of a native Christian who has not the moral courage even to make his name known to the public, may be well set at naught. The truth is that all the positive information which this nameless gentleman has gathered quite agrees with the facts published by the Mirza Sahib. The only difference is that the latter has gathered more facts and taken more pains than the former. Nothing can surpass the audacity of this obscure gentleman in accusing the Mirza Sahib of forgery and fabrication. The people to whom he addressed his inquiries did tell him that the tomb was known as that of prophet Yus Asaf—a statement which quite agrees with the facts published by the Mirza Sahib, but still this writer has the stupidity to charge the Mirza Sahib with grave fabrication. He did not hear them denying the facts which the Mirza Sahib has published regarding the tomb. On the other hand, there is much in their evidence which testifies to the truth of all the statements of the Mirza Sahib. Though they did not tell him that he was a prince that had come from a country in the west about 1900 years ago—which perhaps they would have told him if he had put them direct questions on these points—yet all these facts can be inferred from their statements. There is a good deal in their evidence from which we can surely conclude that he was a prince that had come to this land from a western country and that he was an Israelite prophet, and in fact we can conclude all the facts which the Mirza Sahib has published from their evidence.

The name Yus Asaf is an evidence of his being a prince. This

name occurs in many old writings where he is invariably spoken of as a prince. So though they did not expressly state that he was called a prince yet the very fact that they called him by the name Yus Asaf leads us to the conclusion that he was a prince. That he was a foreigner is evident from the following considerations:—

1. Yus Asaf is not an Indian name, so the person who bore the name must have been a foreigner.

2. The fact that he is known as a prophet or *nabi* also shows that he was not a native of India, for in that case he must have been known as an *avatar* or a *Buddha*. The word *nabi* shows that he was an Israelite prophet, for that name is applied to none but the Semitic prophets.

Thus we see that there is not a bit in the statements of the individuals of whom he enquired about the tomb, which clashes with the statement published by the Mirza Sahib. On the other hand, their statements quite agree with and lend support to the facts published by the Mirza Sahib, and the conduct of this unknown writer in attributing false charges to the Mirza Sahib deserves to be condemned. He heads his article with the words 'The truth about the tomb of Yus Asaf,' but we are surprised to find that his letter reveals no new truth. All the facts which he relates are exactly those related by the Mirza Sahib. He expresses his opinion that this Yus Asaf was a Muhammadan Saint who lived not more than 200 years ago. We are not concerned with his private opinion, the facts he relates lend not the least support to his views. On the other hand, they contradict his opinion and if he has drawn his conclusion from the facts he relates in his letter, then we must be compelled to say that a human mind never drew a more absurd and unnatural conclusion. The pamphlet issued by the Mirza Sahib regarding the tomb contained a reference to an old stone with an effaced and almost illegible inscription. The writer has something ~~to say about this stone. He denies its existence altogether and cites~~ it as an instance of fabrication by the Mirza Sahib. Poor fellow, he in vain took the trouble of going to Srinagar. He returned with a very imperfect information and puffed up with the little information in his head, he thought himself in a position to refute

the announcements of the Mirza Sahib. If he had made a thorough investigation, he would not have appeared with his letter in the columns of the *Epiphany*. It appears that he cast a silent look all about the tomb and finding no inscription there, he declared that no such stone existed at all and that the Mirza Sahib had been guilty of a serious fabrication. If he had made as thorough an investigation as the Mirza Sahib has done, he would have learnt that the stone of which the Mirza Sahib speaks lies in a fortified place on the top of a hill known as Kuh-i-Sulaiman at the distance of about a mile from the tomb. If he desired to find some inscription lying in or near the tomb, ~~he ought to have caused the tomb to be dug up and then,~~ probably, he would have found some kind of inscription which would have assured him that the body that lies buried in the tomb, is of one whom he worships as his God.

He states that the tomb is generally known as Ranga Sahib. It is not at all known by such a name as that. This seems to be a misprint for *Rauza*. The place is known as *Rauza bal*. *Rauza* is a common name generally given to *Shrines* and other sacred places. *Bal*, in Cashmiri, means a place frequented by the people. The word *bal* occurs in combination with several other names, e. g., *yar bal*, *tar bal*, *maha bal*, all of which are the names of places. So the *rauza bal*, being merely the name of the place, does not interfere with the position held by the Mirza Sahib. By the by, I hope the writer would do well to have the misprint corrected in some issue of the *Epiphany* for this error is likely to mislead the readers.

The writer of the letter is simple enough to call the death of Jesus on the cross a historical fact. If Jesus died on the cross, why did the blood gush forth when his side was piecered with a lance. How could merely three hours' suspension on the cross kill him? The two men that were hung up along with Jesus came down quite alive and perfectly conscious. Jesus left his tomb, travelled on foot for miles, ate and drank with his disciples, and as the books on medicine inform us, had his wounds cured by the use of an ointment, known as the Ointment of Apostles. Does not all this show that the three hours' suspension had not killed him, and that his prophecy of showing a sign like that of Jonah was fulfilled? Jonah went into the belly of the *whale* alive and came out *alive*, and

an exactly similar event occurred in the case of Jesus. But in spite of all this, the writer thinks that the death of Jesus on the cross is an historical event. Does he not know that the fact that Jesus was in a state of a swoon and was mistaken for dead, is known from the earliest days of Christianity?

The writer makes a sneering reference to the ointment known as the Ointment of the Apostles and also as the Ointment of Jesus. This ointment is mentioned in a very large number of works on medicine, wherein the writers speak of it as an ointment prepared by the Apostles for the wounds of Jesus. Very old works speak of it. It is also found in Latin and Greek works, and is in Latin known as Unguentum Apostolorum. The Christian gentleman must know that simply jeering and sneering at the ointment would not do. It is found in very old works and is an incontrovertible evidence of the escape of Jesus from the accursed death of the cross. The authority of the medical works is irrefutable. Jesus left his country and came to the lost tribes of Israel that had settled in Afghanistan and Cashmere, and the tomb of a Prince Prophet and foreigner at Srinagar, marks the goal of Jesus' career on earth. One that was born at Bethlehem in Syria lies entombed at Khan Yar in Srinagar.

After I had written the foregoing lines, I chanced to see an ably written article on Cashmere in the April number of Al-Hilal, a Christian Magazine issued from Beyrout. The Editor speaks of the tomb in the following words:—

وفى حارة تسمى الخانم يا رفى هذه المدينة قبر يسميه القشا مرة
قبر النبى يوزا سف يزد ره العوام والخواص وفى بعض كتب
التاريخ عندهم ان يوزا سف هذا كان نبياً من الانبياء جاء من اقصى
البلاد ومات ودفن فى هذه المدينة فزعم رجل فنجابى ان هذا النبى
هو المسيح

“In the Khan Yar Street of this city (Srinagar) there is a tomb, which the people of Cashmere call the tomb of Prophet Yus Asaf. It is visited by people of all classes. Some of the histories of the country state that this Yus Asaf was a Prophet, who came from a distant country. He died and was buried in this city. A

gentleman of the Punjab thinks that this Prophet was Jesus." This testimony coming from the pen of a learned Christian Editor, alone suffices to refute the novel theory that Yus Asaf was a Muhammadan Saint who lived not more than 200 years ago. They also show that the tomb is not so unknown as the unknown writer in the *Epiphany* represents it to be.

QADIAN, 1st May 1903.

SHER ALI.

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