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بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم
نحمده ونصلي على رسوله الكريم

**The Sources of Divine Knowledge.*

Having regard to the scope of the limited time allowed to me in this gathering and to the comprehensiveness with which the Holy Quran has treated this subject, I shall make myself as brief as possible. The Holy Quran has described three degrees of knowledge as already shown in commenting upon the *Sura Takasur*, viz., علم اليقين or obtaining the knowledge of certainty with respect to a thing, عين اليقين or seeing it with the eye of certainty, and حق اليقين or realizing the truth of its certainty. Of these, the علم اليقين is the knowledge of a thing acquired inferentially as we conclude the existence of fire from the presence of smoke in a place without witnessing fire itself. But if we see the fire itself, our knowledge of the existence of fire is a knowledge of the second degree, viz., عين اليقين. Our knowledge of a thing which we witness with the eye of certainty, may however be further improved upon by bringing it home to our own experience, for instance by thrusting our hand into the fire in the above case. Then we reach the highest stage of certainty which, in the language of the Holy Quran, is حق اليقين. The *sura* which describes these three stages of knowledge has already been quoted and commented upon in answer to Question II.

* This paper was read before the great Religious Conference held at Lahore in December 1896, having been written by Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, Chief of Qadian, the Promised Messiah. It forms the answer to the 5th question, the answers to the first four questions having appeared in the last year's volume.

The sources which give rise to a knowledge of certainty are reason and information. With reference to those whose abode shall be hell, the Holy Quran says : *وقالوا لو كنا نسمع أو نعقل ما كنا في أصحاب (السعير) (الملک)* "And they shall say, Had we but listened to the discourses of the wise or been ourselves wise and tested religion and belief by reason, we should not have been among the dwellers of hell." The same purport is elsewhere expressed in the Holy Quran in the words : *لا يكلف الله نفسا (لا وسعها)* "God does not compel any soul to accept that which is beyond its capacity." In this verse Almighty God gives us clearly to understand that the doctrines and beliefs to which He invites people through His messengers, are only such as are within the capacity of human understanding and knowledge, and He does not force them to bear any burden which is beyond their strength. The verses quoted above also point to the fact that a person can acquire the knowledge of certainty through accurate information. We have, for instance, not seen London, but still we are certain of the existence of a town of this name, because we cannot disbelieve all those who have seen it. Or, although we did not live in the time of Aurangzeb nor did we ever see him, still it is beyond the shadow of a doubt that Aurangzeb was one of the Moghul Emperors who reigned in India. We can, thus, arrive at a certain conclusion as to the reality of a fact or the existence of a thing through hearing when the testimony is unbroken. The inspirations of the prophets are a source of knowledge provided that there has been no interruption in their transmission, and the vehicle which conveys them is not of an imperfect nature. But if there are fifty or seventy different accounts of a single narrative contradicting each other, and the documents containing them all pretend to be based on revelation, the mere acceptance by any sect of some of these documents as of a heavenly origin and the condemnation of the rest as spurious and fabricated if not based on a critical enquiry, does not lead to a certain knowledge of the truth of the facts therein related. A series of such narratives inconsistent with each other is utterly incredible and we need no other proof for their condemnation as mere waste. Nor can they when wanting in consistency, the great test of the truth of a fact, be the source of knowledge because they

cannot give rise to any certain conclusion, being themselves coloured in dubiety.

In connection with these remarks it should be borne in mind that the truth of the Holy Quran does not depend simply on its uninterrupted transmission and authenticity, because it proceeds on the argumentative line. It does not compel us to accept its doctrines, principles and commandments simply on the authority of revelation but appeals to reason in man and gives arguments for what it inculcates. It is to this fact that the Holy Quran alludes when it says that the principles which it inculcates are impressed in the nature of man as we have in the verse: *هَذَا كَرَمًا* *i.e.*, this blessed book does not preach strange and novel doctrines but it is a remembrance of that which is impressed in the nature of man and the laws of nature. It also says: *لَا إِكْرَاهَ فِي الدِّينِ* "In this faith, *i.e.*, the faith of Islam, there is no compulsion," *i.e.*, it does not compel a man to accept its doctrines but offers reasons for their acceptance. Besides, the Holy Quran has the spiritual property of giving a light to the hearts as it says: *شِفَاءٌ لِّمَا فِي الصُّدُورِ* *i.e.*, "the Holy Quran is a cure for all spiritual ailments." The Holy Quran is, therefore, not a book which derives all its force from being an ancient document which has been handed down to us through a safe course of transmission, but its real force lies in the sound arguments which it produces and the clear light which it sheds.

In like manner, intellectual arguments which have a sound basis, lead a man to a knowledge of certainty. To this the Holy Quran alludes in the following verses: *أَن فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَاخْتِلَافِ اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ آيَاتٍ لِّأُولِي الْأَلْبَابِ الَّذِينَ يَذْكُرُونَ اللَّهَ قِيَامًا وَقُعُودًا وَعَلَىٰ جُنُوبِهِمْ وَيَتَفَكَّرُونَ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ رَبَّنَا مَا خَلَقْتَ هَذَا بَاطِلًا سُبْحَنَكَ فَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ* (آل عمران) *i.e.*, "When men of wisdom and understanding reflect upon the creation of the earth and the heavenly bodies, and look deeply into the causes which bring about variation in day and night, they find therein clear arguments of the existence of God. For a clearer understanding and knowledge they seek the assistance of God, and remember Him in all postures whether standing, sitting or reclining. This

brightens their understandings the more, so when they muse on the consummate creation of the heavens and the earth, they arrive at the certain conclusion that the perfect order and all-wise plan discernable in all these glorious orbs is not in vain, but reveals the bright face of its Creator. Thus being brought to a knowledge of the Creator, they sing hymns of praise to Him saying "O our Lord! Glory be to Thee, and far be it from Thee that any one should deny Thy existence or impute to Thee unworthy attributes. Save us Thou from hell-fire, for Thy denial is a hell and true happiness and felicity lies only in Thee and Thy knowledge. The person who has failed to recognise Thee, is truly in hell-fire in this very world,"

Conscience which in the Holy Word of God is called human nature, is also a source of knowledge. Almighty God says in the Holy Quran: *فطرة الله التي فطر الناس عليها (الروم)* "The Divine impression on the nature of men with which all men have been created." This impression in the nature of man makes him regard Almighty God as one without any partner, the Creator of every thing, and free from subjection to death and birth. Although the knowledge derived from human nature does not appear to be inferential, yet we have called the human nature a source of knowledge because it leads to a conclusion by a very fine thread of inference. Almighty God has charged every thing with a peculiar property which it is difficult to describe in definite words, but when we imagine it and reflect over it, the inherent property at once strikes the idea. If, for instance, we imagine the person of the Divine Being and ponder over the attributes which we desire to place in Him, and consider whether He should undergo the process of birth and death and suffering like ourselves, the idea makes us shudder, and human nature revolts at it and recoils from it being unable to bear it, and repels the idea. The still small voice within us at once speaks out that the God in whose powers we must completely trust, must be a perfect and Almighty Being free from every blemish and defect. The idea of God and of the Unity of God co-exist in human nature and the one is not separable from the other. It is for this reason that I have described conscience or more properly human nature as a source of knowledge.

But we can attain to a higher degree of certainty than that which has been described above, through عَيْنِ الْيَقِينِ which means a direct knowledge of a thing, as far instance in the material world we obtain the knowledge of a scent through the sense of smell, that of sapidity through the muscles of taste and that of tangibility through the organs of touch. All these experiences fall under the heading of عَيْنِ الْيَقِينِ. But with respect to the life to come, our knowledge attains this degree when we are directly inspired by God, hear His sweet voice and see His glorious revelations. There is no doubt that we cannot attain to a perfect knowledge of God except through inspiration. Moreover we feel this desire, this thirst for inspiration, in our hearts which is inexplicable unless we admit that Almighty God has beforehand provided the means of its satisfaction. Can we in the present life which is the only gauge of the next and a nursery of it, remain contented with a blind faith, based on tales and legends, regarding the existence of the true, perfect, all-powerful and living God, or be satisfied with the insufficient research of reason which has hitherto given to the world only an imperfect and deficient knowledge of the Divine Being? Do not the lovers of God desire it, heart and soul, that they should enjoy the bliss of speaking to their Beloved One? Can they who have lost everything for the sake of God and forsaken all their worldly interests, nay given their heart and soul for the sake of their Divine Master, be content to stand in a dim light never to see the brilliant face of that shining Sun of righteousness? Is it not true that the sweet words "I am" of the living God, give a better knowledge of His existence than all the reasoning of the philosophers, so much so that all their colossal literature proving the existence of God by the insufficient light of reason is nothing compared with these words? What light can be expected from the person who himself never comes out of darkness?

In short if Almighty God has willed to give a perfect knowledge of His ownself to the seekers after truth, ~~He has not shut the doors of illumining them with His word and revelation.~~ In this connection the Holy Quran teaches the following prayer to the seekers after truth, اِهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ Lord, guide us in the path of perseverance, the path of those who have drawn

Thy favors and blessings." The blessings here referred to signify the heavenly blessings which a man receives directly from God such as inspiration, revelation, &c. Almighty God says in another place in the Holy Quran: *ان الذين قالوا ربنا الله ثم استقاموا تتنزل عليهم الملائكة الا تخافوا ولا تحزنوا وابشروا بالجنة التي كنتم توعدون* (هم سجدوا) "Those who believe in the true God and then remain faithful and constant, the angels of God descend upon them and say: 'Fear ye not, neither be ye grieved but rejoice that for you is the paradise which had been promised to you.'" This verse plainly indicates that the righteous servants of God are inspired by God in fear and grief and angels are sent down for their consolation. So also in another verse Almighty God says: *لهم البشرى فى الحيرة* "Good tidings are granted to the lovers of God through His Word and inspiration in this life as well as in the next."

Before proceeding further it is necessary to remove a misconception regarding *Ilham* (inspiration). *Ilham* does not mean that an idea is infused into the mind of a person who sets himself to think about a thing. A mere poet is not inspired in the theological sense when brilliant ideas flash upon him as he sits down to make verses. In this case there is no distinction between good and bad. When the mental powers are applied to a subject, new ideas will flash upon the mind according to the genius of the thinker and without any regard to the good or bad nature of the subject. If the word *Ilham* is taken to mean the occurring on a particular occasion of new ideas, a thief or a dacoit or a murderer may as well be called *Mulham* (the inspired one of God) on account of the ingenious plans which are suggested to his mischiefmaking mind for the perpetration of evil deeds. Such a view of *Ilham* (inspiration) is held by men who are quite ignorant of the true God who with His word gives peace and consolation to hearts and knowledge of spiritual truths to those who are not aware of them. What is *Ilham* (inspiration) then? It is the living and powerful Word of God in which He speaks to or addresses one of His servants whom He has chosen or intends to chose from among all people. When such conversation or utterances run on continually in a regular method not being insufficient or fragmentary or enveloped

in the darkness of evil ideas, and have a heavenly bliss, wisdom and power in them, they are the Word of God with which He comforts His servant and reveals Himself to him. It is no doubt true that words are spoken sometimes to a man by way of trial and then they are not accompanied with the perfection and blessings necessary to a true inspiration. In this early stage a person is tried and he will either stumble on account of the weakness of flesh or having tasted of the sweet and life-giving fountain of inspiration, transform himself and make himself like those who are truly inspired. If he does not walk in true righteousness like the faithful servants of God, he is deprived of the favor and has nothing but vanity in his heart.

It should, moreover, be remembered that all those who receive inspiration are not of equal rank in the sight of God. Even the prophets whose inspiration stands far above the inspiration of others on account of its clearness, force and excellence, are not all upon the same level. As Almighty God says : *تلك الرسل فضلنا بعضهم على بعض* : "Some prophets have been exalted over others." From this it appears that inspiration is merely a grace of God, and does not interfere with the exaltation of degrees, for the latter depends upon the sincerity, devotion and faithfulness of a person towards God. Divine inspiration, if accompanied with all its requisites, is no doubt also a fruit of these qualities. If an answer comes to a man when he entreats his Divine Master, and there is no break or irregularity in the answers vouchsafed by the Divine Being to His servant, and the word is accompanied with Divine majesty and light and reveals the deep secrets of the future and hidden truths, there is no doubt that the word is Divine inspiration. It is necessary that between the recipient of such an inspiration and the Divine Being there should be a very close connection such as exists in conversation between two familiar friends. When he should address his prayers to Almighty God, an answer may be vouchsafed to him in sweet and elegant words, proceeding from the Divine Being, and not being the result of his own desires or of any deliberation or reflection on his part, and he should be continually graced with such words and answers. Then is surely the word which comes to him the Word of God and he has honor in the Divine presence.

But this gift of pure and living words revealed with clearness from God and not mixed with low desires, is not granted to any but those whose hearts are marked with a high degree of faith and sincerity and virtuous deeds and that which cannot be described in words. A true and pure inspiration reveals mighty wonders of Divinity. Very often an effulgent light is created and with it comes a bright and majestic inspiration. What greater blessing or happiness can be conceived of than speaking to the Creator of the earth and heavens and being spoken to by Him? In this world the face of God is revealed by His Word and, therefore, such a man enjoys the favor of His sight.

It should however be noticed that the mere utterance of words and phrases not distinctly recognised as having come from God, does not fall under the heading of Divine inspiration. A person who finds himself in this condition is really tried by God. For, Almighty God sometimes tries men who are remiss and negligent in the performance of their duties towards God by infusing certain words or phrases into their heart or causing them to be uttered from their lips with respect to which they are like blind men not knowing whether the words come from God or Satan. For a person who is thus tried by God, it is meet that he should repent and turn to God and reform himself. But the righteous man to whom the doors of Divine revelation are thrown wide open, and who is spoken to by God openly in words which have light, sweetness, majesty, deep significance and more than mortal wisdom in them, whose entreaties and supplications are answered by the Almighty as often as they are urged, who when perfectly awake has addressed his supplications to the Almighty repeatedly, say ten or twenty times, on a single occasion and received answers thereto, whose prayers are accepted hundreds of times, who has been informed of excellent truths, nice points and deep secrets of the future on numerous occasions by means of the inspiration which he receives,—the person upon whom these favors are showered, must be thankful to God and devote himself wholly to His path, for him He has chosen out of His rich grace and mercy and him He has made an heir to all the blessings which He granted to the righteous before. But this highest Divine favor is granted

seldom and to very few, and those to whom it is granted consider every other blessing as naught in comparison with this.

It is among the Muhammadans that individuals have always been raised to this spiritual eminence. Islam is in fact the only religion in which God approaches His servant and speaks to him and within him. He makes His habitation within his heart and draws him up to heaven. He grants him all the blessings which He granted to the righteous before him. Ah! the world is blind and does not know what a man may attain to if he comes nearer and nearer to God. The people of the world do not take a single step to attain the nearness of God, but him who is a pilgrim in this path, they either declare an heretic or worship as God. Both classes are guilty of an iniquity, the one for its excessive hatred and the other for its excessive love. But the wise man should adopt the mean course, neither rejecting him whom God has chosen for this eminence, nor bowing down before him whom God has created, as before the Creator Himself. The mantle of Divinity is cast upon the person who is thus favored by God and he becomes a looking-glass for the image of the Divine Being. This is the secret of the words spoken by the Holy Prophet "Whoever has seen me, has seen God." This is the final stage in the spiritual progress of a man, the goal where all his labors end and rest and satisfaction are granted to the pilgrim.

I shall be guilty of a great injustice if I hide the fact that I have been raised to this spiritual eminence. Almighty God has favored me with His certain word and chosen me that I may give sight to the blind, lead the seekers to the object of their search and give to the acceptors of truth the glad tidings of the pure fountain which is talked of among many but is found by very few. I assure the hearers that except by following the Holy Quran, no one can find the true God in whom lies the salvation of man and eternal bliss. It is my heart's inmost desire that others should see what I have seen and hear what I have heard, that they should forsake vain stories and run to accept the truth. That perfect source of knowledge which brings one to the noble presence of God, that pure heavenly water which washes off all doubts, that looking-glass through which the face of God is revealed,

is the Word of God, the Divine inspiration to which I have called attention. I say truly that if the soul desires it earnestly and the heart yearns after it, people should seek this way and set out in search of this path. But how can this way be opened and the veil of ignorance removed? I assure all seekers after truth that it is Islam only which promises this happy goal to the way-farer and gives the glad tidings of this path of salvation. With all other people the way is closed to Divine inspiration and to the followers of the Holy Prophet only it is open. But rest assured that Almighty God has not barred entrance to this way; such views are simply the invention of those who are themselves deprived of this heavenly blessing. Know it for certain also that as you cannot see without eyes, and hear without ears, and speak without tongue, in the same way you cannot see the face of the Beloved One without the Holy Quran. I was a young man and now I am old, but I have never seen a man who has drunk to satisfaction of the pure fountain of knowledge except from this source.

Bear in mind that no one can fight with God or frustrate His designs. Remember that the only means to a perfect Divine knowledge is the Divine inspiration, a blessing granted to the prophets of God. But Almighty God whose grace is bounteous has never willed that He should close the door to this Divine gift and thus destroy the world. The gates are still wide open through which a man can find entrance to the heavenly blessing of Divine inspiration and revelation. But to seek it walk in the proper path and then you will find it. That water of life came down from heaven and accumulated in a grand receptacle. To drink of it you must reach it, stumbling and falling, and apply your lips to the cold and refrigerant water of life. In this consists the felicity of man that he should run to the spot where any trace is given of the heavenly light and walk in the way in which he finds any trace of the friend whom he seeks. As light comes from heaven and sheds its lustre upon earth, the true light of guidance also comes from heaven. It is not through talk or conjectures that a man can attain to the source of true Divine knowledge. Are your eyes of any avail to you in total darkness? If they are, then may

your reason alone be a guide to a perfect knowledge of God. The true God is not the God whose lips are sealed and who is, therefore, obliged to leave us to our own conjectures concerning Him. Nay, the perfect and living God has ever been giving unmistakable signs of His existence and He has even now willed to vouchsafe such signs to the present generation. The time is come when the doors of heaven shall be opened, and the dawn is about to break forth. Blessed are they who rise up and seek the true God, the God whom no adversity can overtake and no revolution of time can affect and whose lustre of glory never grows dim. He says in the Holy Quran : *والله نور السموات والارض* i.e., "God is the light of heaven and the light of earth." It is from Him that all light proceeds. He is the sun of the sun and the life of all life, the true and living God. Blessed is he who accepts Him.

The third source of knowledge is that which is perfect in the highest degree and makes a man realize the truth of the certainty of Divine existence. These are the adversities and hardships which the prophets of God and the righteous are made to suffer from the hands of their enemies or a heavenly decree. Sufferings make a man realize the full force of the legal injunctions which are thus illustrated in his practical life. Religious dogmas are mere theories and their perfection consists in their practice. The person who undergoes great sufferings has an occasion to apply the treasures of knowledge which are accumulated in his heart, to actual circumstances of life and by their right application he becomes as it were a perfect embodiment of Divine guidance. The moral qualities of whose knowledge the brain and the heart are the sole depositaries at first, are displayed by actual practice in all the external and internal faculties, and forgiveness, revenge, patience, mercy, &c., are not more simple names to him but realities which he has felt and seen and which thus make an impression upon his external and internal nature. On this point Almighty God says in the Holy Quran : *ولنبلوكم بشئ من الخوف والجوع ونقص من الاموال والانس والذمرات وبشر الصابرين الذين اذا اصابتهم مصيبة قالوا انا لله وانا اليه راجعون اولئك عليهم صلوات من ربهم ورحمة واولئك يقبلون في اموالهم وانفسهم ولتسمعون* . and again: *من الذين اتوا الكتاب من قبلكم ومن الذين اشرکوا اذى كثيرا وان*

“تصبروا وتقتوا فان ذلک من عزم الامور” With fear and hunger and loss of wealth and of lives and bringing to naught some of your efforts and causing loss of your children, We will prove you” i.e., these mishaps will befall you either from the hands of your enemies or by a decree of heaven “but bear glad tidings to the patient who upon a mischance cry out: ‘verily we are God’s and verily to Him shall we return.’ Upon these people are the blessings and mercy of God and these they are who are the truly guided.” Here we are told that there is no very great excellence in the mere knowledge which is treasured in the heart or the brain, but the knowledge to be valued is that which on account of its application in the practical course of life gives a coloring to the whole of man. To strengthen and improve one’s knowledge, the best means, therefore, is its application in practice so that its impression is left not only upon the brain but upon every faculty and limb. In fact every sort of knowledge, however low its comparative value, is defective so long as unattended by practice. It is to this point that in the verses quoted above Almighty God calls our attention. We are told that our morals are not actually formed unless they are proved by sufferings and trials which stand to them in the relation of practice to knowledge. The remaining portion of the verses above quoted may be thus translated: “You shall assuredly be tried in your properties and your souls, (i.e., you shall be robbed of your properties and put to death), and many hurtful things shall you hear from the Jews, the Christians and the idolators, (i.e., you shall suffer at their hands); but if you be patient and eschew improper words, this shall be a great and noble deed.” All these verses show conclusively that knowledge is not perfect and fruitful without its practical application. Knowledge which is at its best in practice is a source of blessings, but that which never passes into the domain of the practical has no value.

The application of knowledge in practice is what makes a man attain the degree of حق اليقين in his knowledge, for the truth of the certainty of the knowledge of a thing cannot be realized unless every side of it is put to the practical test. This is what happened in Islam. Whatever injunctions were contained in the Holy Quran were beautifully illustrated in practice in the life of the Holy

Prophet and his companions who were thus enlightened with true light. For the fulfilment of this purpose Almighty God divided the life of our Holy Prophet into two distinct periods, the period of sufferings, adversities and persecutions, and the period of triumph and prosperity. This was done in order to give him an occasion for the display of both sorts of moral qualities, viz., those which can be proved in time of sufferings and those which cannot be proved except in triumph and prosperity. In this way the Holy Prophet had all his moral qualities brought to the test of practice, and the two-fold condition of his life enabled him to display all the noble moral qualities in the highest degree. The thirteen years at Mecca represent the time of suffering, and a study of the circumstances of his life at that time shows clearly that there was not a single moral quality which could be manifested in the time of suffering by the righteous that was not displayed by the Holy Prophet. His complete trust in God, his refraining from showing the slightest impatience, his calm and serene mode, his noble and dignified manners, his unshaken activity and zeal in the performance of the duties entrusted to him, his perseverance, his fearlessness of his enemies and numerous other moral qualities so deeply impressed even the unbelievers that they bore testimony to the great miracle of his perseverance under the hardest trials and sufferings and were convinced that this was because of his whole trust in God. Then followed the life of the Prophet at Medina, a period of triumph, victory and prosperity, suited for the display of the second division of morals. His forgiveness of injuries, charity, courage and other such morals were so well displayed during this period that large numbers of the unbelievers became converts to Islam on seeing them. He freely forgave those who had persecuted and tortured him, gave shelter to those who had expelled him from Mecca, enriched the poor among them and forgave his bitterest foes when their lives were only at his mercy. The Divine morals thus displayed by the Holy Prophet convinced the Arabs that their possessor could not be but from God and a truly righteous man. Their inveterate hatred was by these noble morals at once converted into fast friendship.

One of these great and noble moral qualities is thus described

قل ان صلوتى ونسكى ومحيى ومماتى لله رب: in the Holy Quran. "Say to them: 'My prayers, and my sacrifice, and my life and my death are solely for God,' i.e., for the manifestation of the Divine glory, and for the welfare and benefit of mankind so that with his death a life may be granted to them. It should not be imagined that the death in the way of God and for the good of mankind here spoken of means that the prophet was under the delusion like ignorant and men run that a suicidal end of his own life would in any way benefit others. Nay, the Holy Prophet hated all such ideas and the Holy Quran regards the person who entertains such ideas as guilty of a serious crime and says in plain words: *ولا تلقوا بايديكم الى التهلكة* i.e., "Do not commit suicide and make not your own hands the instruments of your destruction." It is a plain truth that one man cannot relieve another of headache by breaking his own head. Such a step is at the best an act of foolishness. In short, the reference to the prophet's death in the way of God and for the benefit of mankind, simply denotes that the Holy Prophet had devoted his life out of sympathy for the welfare of mankind, and with his prayers and preaching and the adoption of every wise method for the regeneration of his people, as well as by bearing patiently their persecutions, he had sacrificed his life and all his comforts in this path. With reference to this sacrifice of his life, the Holy Quran elsewhere says: *فلا تذهب نفسك لعلك باخع نفسك الا يكونوا مؤمنين* and again *فلا تذهب نفسك* i.e., wilt thou wear thyself away with grief and hard work for these people who believe not, and wilt thou spend thy soul in sighs for these people who do not accept the truth? The way in which a man may sacrifice his life for his people is, therefore, to encounter all difficulties and work hard for their welfare by adopting measures which are likely to better their condition. It is mere folly to think that true sacrifice ~~for a people who are deeply immersed in sin or involved in error~~, consists in committing suicide. To regard this act of folly as leading to the salvation of those who are gone astray is the height of absurdity. It betrays if not want of sense at least a weakness of character and the absence of moral courage. It is the faint-hearted man who seeks a shelter in death from the difficulties which he is unable to face. In

whatever way may that suicide be explained afterwards, it cannot be doubted that it is an act of folly combined with weakness of mind.

Now for a complete display of high morals a man must have been both in straitened and well-to-do circumstances. If he has always been persecuted and subjected only to sufferings and hardships, and has never had an occasion of wreaking his vengeance on his enemies, he cannot be said to possess the quality of forgiveness of injuries. What he would have done, had he the power to avenge himself on his enemies, is impossible to ascertain. To know, therefore, that a man possessed high moral qualities, it is not sufficient to know that he showed meekness and forbearance when he was powerless against his enemies and persecuted by them but also that he freely forgave those enemies when he was completely triumphant over them, and when they were solely at his mercy. If he never went into a field of battle, his courage shall be a moot point and we cannot say whether he would have shown martial daring or cowardice. If he has never seen affluence, it is difficult to say whether he would have amassed his riches or given them in charity if he had ever possessed them. But the grace of God granted the Holy Prophet suitable opportunities for the display of all sorts of morals such as meekness, charity, courage, forgiveness, justice, &c., in a highly excellent degree which is without a parallel in history.

It is true that forgiveness was not extended to the implacable foes of Islam who were bent upon its extirpation and who ruthlessly butchered innocent Muslims or put them to excruciating tortures and cruel persecutions. But pardon to them would have meant the annihilation of the righteous ones. The object of the wars undertaken by the Muslims at the bidding of the Prophet was not to cause bloodshed. They had been expelled from their homes to seek shelter elsewhere and many innocent Muslim men and women had been murdered in cold blood. But their relentless persecutors had not stopped there. In obedience to the Divine commandment of self-defence, the sword was allowed to be taken in hand against those who had taken up the sword for the utter extirpation of Islam. The object of these wars was, therefore,

to remedy an evil by abating the bloodshed caused by the persecutors of the Muslims. Had Islam not defended itself under these circumstances against the outrages of its persecutors, the result would have been the slaughter of hundreds of innocent lives including children and women and thus it would have been nipped in the bud.

The error of our opponents lies in a misconception of the attributes of the Divine Being. They think that a Divinely revealed Law should on no account and under no circumstances whatever enjoin a resistance of evil or the punishment of evil-doers, and that Divine love and mercy should not be manifested except in the form of meekness. With them the most reverential attitude towards the Divine Being consists in limiting His perfect attributes to humbleness and lowliness. This is a serious error. Any one who can think for himself will easily see that the Divine laws of nature though they are a mercy for mankind are not always manifested in a mild and gentle form. The Divine physician out of His infinite mercy gives us sometimes the sweet sirup to drink and out of His mercy too administers the bitter dose on other occasions. Both are different manifestations of His mercy. Thus it is His mercy which requires that the wicked should be destroyed when He sees that they aim at the extirpation of the righteous and act corruptly in earth and shed innocent blood. For this purpose He sends punishment upon the wicked either from earth or from heaven for He is wise as He is merciful. Praise be to God who is the Lord of worlds.

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

EVIDENCES FROM THE QURAN AND THE TRADITIONS.

It may appear on a first sight that the arguments we are going to set forth under this heading cannot convince the Christian readers,

for they do not yield to the authority of the Quranic verses and the traditions. Our object, however, in putting them down here is to lay before the public the great miracle of the Holy Quran and our Prophet, may peace and the blessings of God be upon him, that what has been discovered now was proclaimed by the Holy Quran and foretold by the Prophet so many centuries ago.

Almighty God says in the Holy Book :—

“ وما قتلوه يقينا and وما قتلوه وما صلبوه ولا كن شبه لهم ” The Jews did not slay Jesus, nor did they put an end to his life on the cross, but they were simply in a doubt concerning him,” i.e., they imagined that Jesus had died on the cross, but they had no reason for resting assured that Jesus had really died on the cross.

It has been stated in these verses that though Jesus was fastened to the cross and his death had been determined upon, yet he did not actually die and the Jews were simply deceived by appearances in thinking that he had expired on the cross. It is remarkable how the solemn word of the Holy Quran set forth an opinion regarding the crucifixion of Jesus, which was diametrically opposed to the established doctrines of the Jews and the Christians, the two nations who as friends or foes had any interest in him. What a deep impression of the truth, the sublimity and the grandeur of the Holy Quran and of its divine origin, is left on our minds when we consider that the prophetic words of the Holy Quran, so far opposed to all that could be known through human researches and contradicting the views of the known world, have at last proved true and in exact accordance with the most thorough and close recent investigations to the utter discomfiture of the opposite doctrines. The question remains still unanswered, how did it happen that two or three hours' nailing to the cross brought the life of Jesus to an end without his bones being broken. This difficulty led some Jews to devise another story, viz., that they had slain Jesus. Their ancient history, however, lends no support to this unfounded statement. The prevalence of darkness over the face of the earth, the earthquake, the dream of Pilate's wife, the approach of the Sabbath night when the criminals could

not be kept on the cross, and Pilate's desire to release Jesus on account of the frightening dream of his wife, all these circumstances acting at one and the same time, united to save the life of Jesus who was reduced to senselessness and appeared like a dead body. The awful signs of the darkness and the earthquake terrified the cowardly Jews of Divine punishment, and the approach of the night made them fearful lest they should incur the wrath of God by the profanation of the Sabbath. On the one hand they had apprehensions of danger to their families on account of the darkness and the earthquake, and, on the other, the appearance of these awful signs was quite inconsistent with their belief in the imposture and falsehood of Jesus. Confusion and shame made them lose all courage, and seeing Jesus in a state of swoon they mistook him for a dead body. In the disorder that followed they were so perplexed that they could not apply their minds to the most important of all questions, and went away in haste without satisfying themselves as to his death. This state of things had, however, been brought about by God to save His chosen prophet, and it is to this that the verse *و لكن شبه لهم* quoted above refers. Jesus was not dead and the Jews were themselves in doubt as to his death on the cross. Thus does God always help His servants in time of affliction and thus does their trust in Him grow stronger.

Another verse of the Holy Quran regarding Christ runs thus : *وجيها في الدنيا والاخرة ومن المقربين* "Distinguished in this world and in the next, and one of those who have near access to God," i.e., he will attain to dignity, honor and eminence in this world and in the next. It is clear that Jesus did not attain to any worldly dignity in his native land. He was, on the other hand, always affronted and insulted. The idea that he will get to this honor and eminence on his second advent in this world, is an idle fancy, not only opposed to the Holy Books of God, but also incompatible with the laws of nature. The truth is that when on his deliverance from the hands of the wicked people of Judea Jesus fled to Cashmere and honored that country with his noble presence, he achieved temporal dignity there among the ten lost tribes of Israel. The preaching of Jesus took them by the hand and raised them up from their low spiritual state. And further as the teachings

of Jesus contained a bequest to accept the mission of the Prophet that was to come after him, the ten tribes of Israel, generally known under the names of Afghans and Kashmiris, eventually became Muslims. In fine, Jesus obtained great worldly honor in the eastern countries. There is also a verse in the Holy Quran in which Jesus has been made to say: *وجعلني مباركا اين ما كنت* * "And He hath made me blessed wherever I am."

Similarly we read in the Holy Quran: *او مطهرک من الذین کفروا* † i.e., "And I will show thy (referring to Jesus) innocence and purity, and clear thee of the accusations and censures brought against thee by the Jews and the Christians." This was a grand prophecy, the sum and substance of which may be stated in the following words. The Jews said that as Jesus had died on the cross, he had, therefore, according to the Old Testament, become accursed; and that, as the curse signified, his heart turned away from and rebelled against God, plunged into the depths of darkness, became a lover of evil, hated all good, became the enemy of God and cutting all connections with Him, became subject to the kingdom of Satan. The Christians also applied the same base appellation to Jesus, but they indiscreetly held that Jesus combined in him two opposite qualities. On the one hand, they said that Jesus was the Son of God, and on the other, that he took upon himself curse, admitting at the same time that the accursed one is the Son of Darkness and Satan, or that he himself is the Evil one. Such were the base and impious imputations brought against a holy prophet of God. The Holy Quran declared that time would come when Jesus would be cleared of these charges. This prophecy has now been clearly fulfilled. It has been conclusively proved that he did not die upon the cross and thus the curse has been removed which was attributed to him by the Jews and the Christians. It is true that the innocence of Jesus had already been established by the Holy Quran and the Holy Prophet had borne testimony to the falsehood of such charges, but Divine justice willed that the fact of his being saved from dying on the cross should be as palpable

* Quran XIX, 32.

† Quran III, 48.

as was the fact of his being nailed to it, and the fulfilment of this Divine purpose has been brought about by the discovery of the tomb of Jesus which is situated at Srinagar. It is not a less remarkable fact that as the cross from which Jesus was saved was situated at Golgotha that is to say a place of a skull, so the tomb of Jesus which affords palpable evidence of his deliverance from the cross, is situated at Srinagar which also means a place of a skull. This remarkable coincidence between the significations of these two remarkable places, reveals the deep secret of the release of Jesus. Many other verses of the Holy Quran plainly speak of the natural death of Jesus and refute the idea of his death on the cross. Quoting his own words in answer to a question from God if he had taught the people to take him for God, the Holy Quran says :
 وَكُنْتُ عَلَيْهِمْ شَهِيدًا مِمَّا دَمُنْتُمْ فَلَمَّا تَوَفَّيْتَنِي كُنْتُ أَنْتَ الرَّقِيبَ عَلَيْهِمْ
 “And I was a witness of their actions so long as I lived among them, but since thou, O God, hast caused me to die, thou hast watched over them.” This verse tells us plainly that the Christians departed from Jesus’ teachings *after his death*, because Jesus says in plain words that so long as he lived among them, he witnessed their actions and found no corruption in their beliefs and that the corruption took place after God caused him to die. Reading this verse of the Holy Quran with the one quoted in the beginning in which it is indicated that the Jews did not put Jesus to death by crucifixion, we arrive at the certain conclusion that though Jesus did not die upon the cross, yet he did die a natural death afterwards. There is moreover an admission here on the part of Jesus that he was quite ignorant of the corruption of the Christians which he could not have been if he had been alive and had personally come back into the world and with his own hands destroyed the false religion. His ignorance of Christian corruption is quite inconsistent with his second advent. In fact his reply quoted above would be a white lie if he had come back into the world and seen the false beliefs prevailing among the Christians.

In another verse the Holy Quran plainly hints at his journey to Cashmere. It says :
 “واوينهما الى ربوة ذات قرار ومعين” And

we gave the son of Mary and his mother a refuge on a lofty place which was secure and watered with springs." This description does not apply to any land so well as it applies to Cashmere especially when we bear in mind that there is no other country which is so like his native land Galilee in the greenness of its soil and the charming beauty of its scenes as Cashmere. Moreover, the verse plainly indicates that the refuge was given after some heavy misfortunes or great danger, for the word *أوى* signifies the giving of refuge in danger. But with the exception of the event of crucifixion no other event of great misfortune or danger to Jesus is recorded to have taken place. The verse, therefore, conclusively establishes that Almighty God gave refuge Jesus after the event of the crucifixion in a country which like his native land was watered with springs; in other words that Jesus did not die upon the cross but escaped to Cashmere where he passed the rest of his days in peace and tranquility.

The traditions state on the authority of trustworthy narrators that Jesus lived up to the age of 125 years. The different sects of Islam also agree that two peculiarities are found in Jesus which no other prophet combines in his person:—(1) that he attained to a full human age, *i.e.*, lived up to 125 years, and (2) that he travelled in many parts of the world, and is, therefore, known as a travelling prophet. If the statement of his ascent to heaven at the age of 33 be accepted as true, both the peculiarities come to naught, for he would neither be 125 years of age, nor could he at such an early age travel so much as to be reputed as a traveller. Both these reports are based not only on the most ancient and reliable books of traditions but are also widely known among all the Islamic sects. The following tradition reported by Abu Hurairah is found in the *Kanz-ul-'Amal*, a trustworthy collection of the traditions: **روى الله تعالى الى عيسى ان يا عيسى انتقل من مكان الى مكان لئلا تعرف فتوى* "The voice of God came to Jesus from heaven saying, O Jesus! change your habitation from one place to another, *i.e.*, travel from this country to another, lest you

* *Kanz-ul-Amal*, Vol. II, page 34.

should be recognised and injured." Again the same work relates another tradition on the report of Jabar : ^{* كَان عِيسَى ابْن مَرْيَمَ يَسِيرُ} "The prophet Jesus used to travel and walk from one country to another. When evening came, he ate of the herbs of the forest and drank of the pure water (of fountains)." Another tradition reported by Abdulla, son of Umar, is stated in the following words : ^{† قَالَ أَحَبُّ شَيْءٍ إِلَيَّ اللَّهُ} ^{الْغُرَبَاءُ قِيلَ أَيْ شَيْءٍ الْغُرَبَاءُ قَالَ} ^{الَّذِينَ يَفْرُونَ بِدِينِهِمْ وَيَجْتَمِعُونَ إِلَيَّ} "The Prophet of God (may peace and the blessings of God be upon him, said, those who are *ghuraba* are dearest to God ; when questioned as to what did he mean by the *ghuraba*, he said, 'The *ghuraba* are those who like Jesus Christ flee from their country, taking their religion with them, (i.e., to spread it wherever they go).'" All these traditions prove conclusively that Jesus having escaped alive from the cross was directed by God to quit his native land and go to another country lest he should be seized again, and that in obedience to the Divine commandment he travelled to another country where he lived to the mature age of 125 years.

Controversy on the Sinlessness of the Prophets.

THE EDITOR OF THE "REVIEW OF RELIGIONS."

DEAR SIR,

Your article on the Sinlessness of the Prophets lately provoked a controversy in the *Epiphany*, a Christian weekly issued from Calcutta. Truly speaking, it could hardly be called a controversy, for both sides were not fairly represented in it. The Editor published a number of letters from the Christians and before we could say anything in defence he declared the controversy closed. What led

* Kanz-ul-Amal, Vol. II, page 72.

† Kanz-ul-Amal, Vol. VI, page 51.

him to close the controversy so prematurely is difficult to see. An Editor is at liberty to bring a controversy to close when both sides have said all they have to say on the subject and when their contributions contain nothing new. But if a controversy is carried on by one side only, it is meaningless to declare it closed. Contributions must be received from the party which is not adequately represented at any stage of the controversy. If the party fails to send any contribution, the controversy is practically closed and the Editor does not stand in need of a formal declaration that the controversy is closed. Many controversies have been started in that very paper which were never declared closed by the Editor and which came to a close simply because one of the parties ceased to send any contribution to it. For instance, in the year 1901, there was a controversy on the Quran between Hafiz Abdul Ali, B.A., on the one hand, and Messrs. Arthur, Qalandar, Goldsack, A. M. and J. M. on the other. The last letter in the controversy was from Hafiz Abdul Ali. The Editor published the letter adding that Messrs. Qalandar, A. M. and J. M. would, no doubt, come forward with their answers to the letter. But strange to say none of these gentlemen ever appeared with a reply to the letter in the columns of the *Epiphany*. The Editor did not then declare the controversy closed. On the other hand he called upon the Christian adversaries of the Hafiz to answer his letter and expressed his confidence that they would no doubt make a rejoinder to his contribution. He exhorted them not to leave the letter unanswered, but none of them ever made a response to his call. Those words of the Editor in which he called upon them to make a reply, will ever remain like an ineffaceable stigma on their foreheads. The Hafiz continued to send letters to the Editor but they were refused admission. The Editor had fully realized the shameful defeat which his party had suffered and hence he did not deem it advisable to admit more contributions from the Hafiz. Similarly there are many other instances in which the correspondence was never formally closed by the Editor but it came to a stop simply because one or other of the parties withdrew from the contest.

So in case of the controversy on the Sinlessness of the Prophets, all the correspondence was almost wholly from the Christians and no letter had yet appeared in refutation of their objections from our

side. What then did the Editor mean by closing the correspondence? If we had failed to reply to the letters published, the controversy would have of itself come to a close. But if we had sent him a letter for publication, no matter however late we would have been in sending it, he was in justice bound to publish it. Has he not been then unfair in declaring the correspondence closed, even before he had received any communication from us in reply to the Christians? He would have been justified in closing the correspondence if he had heard enough from both sides and the parties had nothing new to say. But in the present case his closing the controversy only means that he did not wish to allow us a chance for refuting the objections. He had made no announcement that the opposite party must send in its rejoinder before such and such a date and that no communication would be received after that date. Nor is it right to fix any dates for controversies of this kind. The object being to arrive at the truth, it is unjust to impose any restriction of time on such controversies. The Editor must admit communications from both sides even if they reach him after long intervals. We never dreamt that the Editor would declare the correspondence closed even before he had received any reply from us. I was about to send him a letter containing a refutation of the objections raised by the Christians when, to my indescribable disappointment, I learned that the correspondence was closed. As the Editor would no longer receive my contribution on the subject, I take the liberty to send the reply to you for publication in your valuable Magazine. I have written the reply rather at length, trusting that you will kindly allow me more space than is generally allowed to Muslim correspondents in the *Epiphany*.

I.—A REMARKABLE FEATURE OF THE CONTROVERSY.

The most remarkable feature of the controversy is the fact that the Christian correspondents have all of them carefully avoided to refer to those passages of the *Review of Religions* which contained criticism on the character of Jesus as represented in the Gospels. They have tried, tooth and nail, to refute the article on the Sinlessness of the Prophets and have done all they could to prove their sinful-

ness but, strangely enough, they have not made the least attempt to refute those passages in the *Review of Religions*, which bore on the sins of Jesus as related in the Gospels. Their primary duty was to defend Jesus, but they, instead of saying anything in his defence, have exerted themselves to the utmost of their powers to attack other holy prophets. They have received with silence the criticism on the character of Jesus, as depicted in their own scriptures, and have chosen another outlet to give vent to their inward feelings. Your comments on the word *zanb* (ذنب) have drawn many spirited articles from our Christian friends, but your criticism of Jesus on the basis of the Gospels has been passed over with silence. That your article on *zanb* (ذنب) should cause such intense excitement among the Christians, while your damaging criticism of Jesus on the basis of Gospels should not produce the least stir among them, is quite incomprehensible.

This discreet silence on their part only shows that they have nothing to say in defence and that they have allowed the case to go against them by default rather than offer unsatisfactory apologies in the defence of their master. They have made the word *zanb* (ذنب) the bone of their contention, but have taken every care not even to allude to your criticisms of Jesus on the basis of the Gospels. They could not be unaware of the attacks made in your columns on the character of Jesus as delineated in the Gospels and their refraining from saying anything in defence only shows that they are only too conscious of their inability to refute the objections raised in your columns against Jesus. If they are really able to defend Jesus what prevents them from coming forward and refuting the objections raised against Jesus on the basis of the Gospels.

II.—CHRISTIAN IGNORANCE OF ARABIC EXPOSED.

In answer to the statement that *jurm* (جرم) is never used of the holy prophets, the most foolish assertion has been made by some of the Christian correspondents in the *Epiphany* that *jurm* (جرم) is not used of the holy prophets because it never occurs in the Quran. It was no matter of wonder that such silly statements

should have been made by Christian Missionaries working in India, for their ignorance of Arabic is only too well known. Such a foolish statement was quite worthy of men who, inspite of their little or no knowledge of Arabic, try to pass for Arabic scholars and expose themselves to ridicule by presumptuously undertaking to discuss minute linguistic points for which they are hardly competent. We are already accustomed to hear such absurd statements from these Missionary tyros, but we never deemed that the Christian Missionaries working in Arabic-speaking Muslim countries were on the same level with their brethren in India in their ignorance of Arabic. We were under the impression that the Missionaries in other Muslim lands knew Arabic better than their Indian friends, but Mr. Upson of Egypt who came in for a share in the controversy on the Sinlessness of the Prophets has undeceived us of this misconception. Many of your readers will be startled to know that this Mr. Upson who lives in Egypt was the first person to make the statement in the columns of the *Epiphany* that *jurm* (جرم) is not attributed in the Holy Quran to any one at all. This statement proceeding as it did from a Missionary of Egypt was eagerly taken up by his friends here, who set great store by it. We wonder what need there was for Mr. Upson to come in. Had we not already enough of Christian ignorance? Mr. Upson seems to be as ignorant of Arabic as many Europeans here are of Indian vernaculars. He may know something of the mutilated colloquial Arabic spoken by the Egyptians, but of pure unadulterated Arabic, he appears to be as ignorant as his friends in India. If he had been well acquainted with Arabic, he could not have made the most absurd statement that *jurm* (جرم) is not applied to any man, prophet or non-prophet in the Holy Quran. But his Indian friends hailed his statement, simply because it came from Egypt, little knowing that he was but a blind leader of the blind. The part played by one Mr. Monro of Ranaghat in this scene is amusing beyond description. Being ignorant of Arabic, he was unable to see the absurdity of Mr. Upson's assertion. Putting his faith in Mr. Upson's statement with the characteristic credulity of the ignorant, he made up his mind to make the best of it. He was simple enough to think that he had got hold of the Editor of the *Review*. He thought that the Editor had been guilty of a serious

misrepresentation and that he must not miss the opportunity of impeaching his conduct. But he could not see that he was betraying his own ignorance in seconding the most ridiculous assertion of Mr. Upson. We are not surprised at his inability to see the error of Mr. Upson's assertion, for it is just what could be expected of him. His ignorance of Arabic may serve as an excuse for his failure to see the absurdity of Mr. Upson's position. It is his impudency in impeaching the Editor that is unpardonable. He seems to be so extremely ignorant of Arabic that it would be almost impossible to make him fully realize the ludicrousness of his position. He has however learned a sad lesson this time by engaging in controversies for which he is not qualified. I hope he will profit by this exposure of his and will never make another attempt to pass for a scholar of Arabic. A jackdaw in borrowed feathers may pass for a peacock, but Mr. Monro cannot pass for an Arabic scholar.

But if he cannot sit idle and must occupy his mind in controversy I may suggest to him a safer line. The alleged sinlessness of Jesus on the authority of the Gospels has been called into question by the *Review of Religions* and the character of Jesus as portrayed in the Gospels has been subjected to very damaging criticism by the Editor of the *Review*. So it would be much better for Mr. Monro to take up this very important question for discussion and contribute a series of vigorous articles to the *Epiphany* or any other Christian organ in refutation of the sweeping criticism to which Jesus has been subjected in the pages of the *Review of Religions*. I call it a safer line of controversy because in this case there would be no danger of Mr. Monro's personal exposure though it may lead to the exposure of the man whom he superstitiously enough worships as his God. There is far greater need that he should prove the Sinlessness of Jesus on the authority of the Gospels than that he should waste his time by engaging in a controversy for which he is not fit owing to his ignorance of Arabic. But notwithstanding the fact that it is the primary and the most sacred duty of Mr. Monro to prop up the divinity of his god by proving his innocence on the authority of the Gospels, it may safely be predicted that he would never gather courage to undertake this difficult task and make an attempt to free Jesus from all those faults which may be attributed to him on the evidence of the Chris-

tian scriptures. His letters have more than once appeared in the *Epiphany*, wherein he has called to question some statements made in the *Review* but the wonderful thing is that he has allowed your criticisms of Jesus to pass uncontradicted. In spite of his overflowing zeal for the religion of the cross, he can never be expected to take up the question of the sinlessness of Jesus and refute any of the objections against Jesus. He knows full well that such an attempt on his part will only prove prejudicial rather than beneficial to his cause, the objections against Jesus being based on clear and plain words of the Gospels.

It is easy to see what led the Christian correspondents in the *Epiphany* to assert that *jurm* is not applied to any one in the Holy Quran. You wanted to prove that the Holy Quran does not hold the prophets to be sinful and in support of this you said that the Holy Quran nowhere uses *jurm* (جرم) which is the exact equivalent of sin with regard to the prophets, though the word often occurs in the Holy Book with regard to other people. You did not mean, of course, that such words as *mujrim* (مجرم), *yujrimoona* (يُجْرِمُونَ), *ajramu* (أَجْرَمُوا), *ijram*, &c., that come from the root *jurm* (جرم) may have been used of the prophets in the Holy Quran, but that the root *jurm* (جرم) is not used of the prophets in the Holy Quran and that, therefore, it does not regard them as sinful. This could be no argument of the sinlessness of the prophets. If other words derived from the root *jurm* (جرم) were used of the prophets, the mere fact that the root *jurm* (جرم) was not used of them, could be no evidence of their innocence. *Jurm* (جرم) being a root represents all the cognate words that may be derived from it, and when you said that *jurm* (جرم) is never used of the prophets in the Holy Quran, though it is frequently used of other people, you evidently referred to the whole class of words represented by the root *jurm* (جرم). But the Christians had not enough knowledge of Arabic to see this. They looked for the root *jurm* (جرم) in some concordance and not finding it there they boldly came forward with the assertion that *jurm* (جرم) is not attributed to any one in the Holy Quran, not knowing that by so doing they were only betraying their own ignorance of Arabic. Being unacquainted with Arabic, it did not occur to

look for words derived from and hence represented by *jurm* (جرم). If other words derived from *jurm* (جرم) were used of the prophets, the mere fact that the root *jurm* (جرم) was not used of them, could not prove their sinlessness. Suppose *A* asserts that the word *sin* is not used of Jesus in the Gospels and, therefore, he must be regarded as sinless. But *B* is able to quote such passages as contain the words 'sinful,' 'sinner,' 'sinning,' 'sinned,' &c., used of Jesus. Would it be reasonable on the part of *A* to defend his statement by asserting that though such words as 'sinful,' 'sinner,' &c., are used of Jesus in the instances cited by *B*, yet as the word *sin* in its simple form is not used of Jesus, therefore his statement remains uncontradicted. Such a defence on the part of *A* would be evidently ridiculous. The defence of the Christians in the case of the word *jurm* (جرم) is not less ridiculous. Although almost all the words comprising the class of words derived from the root *jurm* (جرم) are frequently used in the Holy Quran, yet they assert that as the root *jurm* (جرم) in its simple form nowhere occurs in the Holy Quran, therefore the Editor of the *Review of Religions* was guilty of a grave misrepresentation when he said that *jurm* (جرم) though often used in the Holy Quran was not used even once with regard to the holy prophets; as if the Editor meant to say that such words as are derived from the root (جرم) might have been used of the prophets, but that the root itself was never used of them in the Holy Quran.

Though all the Christian correspondents of the *Epiphany* have joined in the assertion that *jurm* (جرم) is not used of the prophets because it nowhere occurs in the Holy Quran, yet they have not laid so great emphasis on the point as Mr. Monro has unfortunately done. Out of pure ignorance of Arabic, he made up his mind to turn this discovery to the greatest advantage and wasted columns of the *Epiphany* in impeaching the Editor of the *Review* for what appeared to him to be a grave misrepresentation. He seems to be so ignorant of Arabic that I do not think he will be able to realize even now the ridiculous position in which he has put himself through his ignorance of Arabic.

III.—ZANB USED IN THE SENSE OF HUMAN WEAKNESS.

The following considerations show that *zanb* is not always used in the sense of sin :—

(a). The Christians assert that the Holy Quran holds the prophets as sinful as ordinary mortals. If so, why does the Holy Quran not use such words as *jurm* (جرم), *fisq* (فسق), *junah* (جناح), *ism* (إثم), &c., with reference to prophets, while such words are frequently used of others than prophets by the Holy Quran? If it regards them as sinners as it regards other mortals, why does it refrain from using such words with reference to them, as it often uses with regard to other sinners? The words *fisq* (فسق), *jurm* (جرم), *ism* (إثم) and *junah* (جناح) are used about 200 times in the Holy Quran, but in spite of their being so frequently used, they are not even once used of any of the prophets. If there is no difference between *zanb* (ذنب) and *jurm* (جرم), &c., why is it that the Holy Quran has selected the word *zanb* (ذنب) for the prophets and has invariably avoided the use of *jurm* (جرم), &c., with reference to them? The use of the word *zanb* (ذنب) is very rare compared with the use of the words *jurm* (جرم), *fisq* (فسق), *ism* (إثم), &c., but in spite of this we find that the Holy Quran only uses the word *zanb* (ذنب) with reference to the holy prophets to the exclusion of the other words mentioned above, which however, are very frequently used of others than prophets. If the Holy Quran observes no difference between *zanb* (ذنب) and other words such as *jurm* (جرم), *fisq* (فسق), &c., why does it always use the word *zanb* (ذنب) and never use the words *jurm* (جرم), &c., with reference to the holy prophets. This distinction observed by the Holy Quran evidently shows that whenever God uses the word *zanb* (ذنب) with reference to the holy prophets, He does not use it as synonymous with *jurm*, (جرم), &c.

(b). Another argument advanced in the *Review of Religions* proving that *zanb* does not always mean actual sin was that God does nowhere define it as a punishable deed, while other words such as *jurm*, &c., are so defined. This evidently shows that God does not regard it as a punishable deed in all cases. We are nowhere told in the Holy Quran, that every body who commits *zanb* is liable to

punishment. But *sin* is a punishable deed, and every body who is guilty of *sin* is liable to be punished. So we must conclude that God does not regard *zanb* as the equivalent of *sin* in all cases, inasmuch as He does nowhere state that every body to whom *zanb* may be attributed is guilty of a punishable deed. There is not a single verse in the Holy Quran from which it may be inferred that God regards *zanb* as a punishable deed in all its forms.

But the Christian correspondents in the *Epiphany* seem to have bid farewell to all logic in their attempts to refute this argument. Instead of producing any verse from the Holy Quran, wherein *zanb* may have been defined as a punishable deed, and wherein every person guilty of *zanb* may have been declared as liable to be punished, they have loaded the columns of the *Epiphany* with verses wherein *zanb* is used in the sense of 'sin' as if we had asserted that *zanb* is never used in the sense of actual sin. Verses have been quoted from the Holy Quran showing that *mujrim*s will be punished for their *zunub*. But does this show that whoever commits *zanb* will also be punished for his *zunub*? All that we can gather from these verses is that *mujrim*s only are subject to punishment for their *zunub*. What we demand from our Christian friends is a verse showing that whoever commits *zanb* is liable to be punished. There are various verses in the Holy Quran showing that whoever commits *jurm*, *fisq*, *ism*, *kufr*, is liable to be punished, and these have been quoted at length in the articles of the *Review*, but there is not a single verse showing that pure *zanb* is punishable.

The *zanb* of a *mujrim*, *kafir*, *fasiq*, &c., is not pure *zanb*, because in these cases it is not *zanb* alone that is attributed to them. There it is coupled with the idea conveyed by the words *jurm*, *kufr*, *fisq*, &c., and, therefore, there is no ground for us to conclude that *zanb* is punishable even in the case when the ideas of *kufr*, *jurm*, *fisq*, &c., are not coupled with it. What we want our Christian friends to produce is a verse in which simple *zanb*, unaccompanied with *kufr*, *jurm*, &c., may have been described as punishable with hell-fire. If a *mujrim*, a *kafir*, or a *fasiq* is threatened with hell-fire for his *zanb*, we cannot conclude thereby that prophets to whom *jurm*, *kufr*, and *fisq* are nowhere attributed in the Holy Quran, are also liable to

be punished for their *zanb*. The Christians must show on the authority of the Holy Quran that a person to whom *zanb* alone is attributed and to whom no additional idea of *jurm*, *fisq*, *ism*, &c., is ascribed is as liable to be punished with hell-fire as a *mujrim* or an *asim*.

Now in the Holy Quran God only uses the word *zanb* of the prophets which He nowhere describes as punishable in all its forms and refrains from using the words *jurm*, *fisq*, *kufr*, *ism*, &c., which He defines as punishable in all cases. This clearly shows that God does not treat them as persons that are in the danger of being cast into hell as He regards those of whom He uses the words *jurm*, *fisq*, &c. Here, it must be borne in mind that we are bound only to show that the Holy Quran observes a difference between the words *zanb* and *jurm*. We are not bound to show whether any other writer observes this difference. We are not concerned with other writers. There is a large number of words used by the Holy Quran in a sense in which they are not used by any earlier writer. New sense was to be attached to certain words to express new ideas unknown to pagan Arabia.

(c.) The Christians assert that the prophets are as liable to sin as any other man, and that there is no difference between the Holy Messengers and other mortals in this respect. This is contradicted by the Holy Quran. It does draw a distinction between the prophets and other men in respect of sinfulness. When certain men suspected the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to have taken an undue share of the booty, God answered their suspicions by saying : مَا كَانَ لِنَبِيٍّ أَنْ يَغْلِبَ “A Prophet cannot be guilty of embezzlement.” The form, in which the charge is refuted shows at least that God does not hold the holy prophets to be on a level with other people in the matter of sinfulness. He could refute the charge by saying that the Holy Prophet did not commit embezzlement in this case. On the other hand, God denies the very possibility of such an act on the part of any prophet, great or small. This clearly shows that in the point of sinfulness, the prophets are not on a par with other men as the Christians think them to be. God speaks here only of one form of sin because it was this sin which was laid to the charge of the Holy Prophet in the present case and it was of this charge alone that God wanted to clear the Holy Prophet.

(d.) It has been asserted by the Christians that *istighfar* is a prayer for the forgiveness of sins actually committed and that it, therefore, follows an actual commission of sin, and that there can be no *istighfar* in case there is no actual sin. This statement is wrong for more reasons than one. Firstly, the *literal* meaning of the word falsifies the assertion. It literally means "asking for covering or protection." The words asking the protection of God from sins, evidently refer not only to sins actually committed but also to sins that may possibly be committed. We feel a natural desire to pray to God not only for the forgiveness of sins actually committed but also for protection against sins that may be committed and *istighfar* is only an expression of the desire which we naturally feel. We desire to be free not only from the punishment of sins but also from the bondage of sin, and *istighfar* being a prayer for protection from sins, must be an expression of both these desires. It is unjust to confine it to the former desire only. Secondly, there are several verses in the Holy Quran which show beyond the shadow of a doubt that *istighfar* is not necessarily a prayer for sins actually committed, but that we may say *istighfar* even in cases where there is no actual commission of sin.

(1). *Istighfar* in the Holy Quran is often counted with virtues and enjoined as a virtue of the highest order. Thus it is said: الصبرين والصدقين والقانتين والمفقيين والمستغفرين بالاسحار
 "Those who are patient, true, obedient, who spend their money for the sake of God and say *istighfar*." There are many other verses of similar import in the Holy Quran.

(2). Another verse which shows, beyond all doubt, that *istighfar* does not imply sinfulness runs as follows: نورهم يسعى بين ايديهم واما
 نهم يقولون ربنا اتم لنا نورنا واغفر لنا انك على كل شيء قدير (التحريم)
 God speaking of those in paradise says: "Their light shall run in front of them and on their right; they shall say, Our Lord, perfect our light and grant us *maghfirat*, for thou art powerful over all things." In this verse we are told that those living in paradise shall say *istighfar*. Their *istighfar* cannot be for sins, there being no commission of sins in paradise. Nor can they say *istighfar* for sins committed by them in the world, for we learn from the verse immediately preceding

the foregoing verse that they shall have their sins pardoned before their entry into paradise. The verse runs thus: عسى ربكم ان يكفر منكم سيئاتكم ويدخلكم جنات تجري من تحتها الانهار "Your Lord will pardon your sins and cause you to enter into paradise." So, their *istighfar* shall not be for sins. What they shall say *istighfar* for, may be inferred from the words of the verse itself. There being no limit to the light of God, the light possessed by them shall appear to them imperfect compared with what they may still possess. With this consciousness of their defect, they shall ask God to complete their light and thus cover their defective state. The light of God being unlimited, they shall never be satisfied with any quantity of light, and shall thus ever continue to ask for more and more light. This verse clearly shows that *istighfar* is a prayer for spiritual progress. There being no limit to spiritual advancement, the prophets of God are incessantly engaged in *istighfar*, ever asking for more and more light. They may attain to any stage of spiritual progress, but they are never satiated with what they have gained. The more they move on in their spiritual career, the more they are conscious of their position being far inferior to that to which they may yet attain. So they are ever engaged in *istighfar*, praying God to cover their defective state and grant them the full measure of light. It is for this reason that God revealed the following verse to the Holy Prophet: قل رب زدني علما "Say (O Prophet), my Lord, grant me more and more knowledge of Thee," thus intimating that there can be no limit to the knowledge of God, who is infinite.

In short, the fact that those residing in paradise shall say *istighfar*, conclusively proves that *istighfar* does not necessarily imply sinfulness, and that we are required to say *istighfar* in order that our weakness may be covered and that strength may be granted us for our spiritual progress. The Christians will be guilty of injustice if they still insist on saying that *istighfar* is always a prayer for the forgiveness of sins. The use of the word by the Holy Quran clearly negatives the above assertion. The wide signification attached to the word by the Holy Quran is quite consistent with the *literal* sense of the word, which originally signifies 'asking for covering or protection.'

(3.) Another verse of the Holy Quran showing that *istighfar* is

not always meant for sins actually committed is as follows : *فَسُبْحَانَ بَعْدَ رَبِّكَ وَاسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُ أَنَّهُ كَانَ تَوَّابًا (النصر)* In the foregoing verse, God enjoins upon the Holy Prophet to say *istighfar*. This verse was revealed shortly before the death of the Holy Prophet. In conjunction with this verse we must take the verse : *إِنَّا فَتَحْنَا لَكَ فَتْحًا مُبِينًا لِيُغْفِرَ لَكَ اللَّهُ مَا تَقَدَّمَ مِنْ ذَنْبِكَ وَمَا تَأَخَّرَ* This verse was revealed before the conquest of Mecca and, therefore, long before the verse in which God enjoins on the Holy Prophet *وَسَلَّمَ* to say *istighfar*. The Christians would interpret the verse as follows : " We have granted thee an obvious victory so that we may forgive thy sins, both first and last." This is the Christian interpretation of the verse* and, therefore, the Christians must admit that God forgave the sins of the Holy Prophet, both first and last. Now when God had forgiven the Holy Prophet his sins, both first and last, why did He again enjoin upon him to say *istighfar*? So admitting the Christian interpretation of the verse: *لِيُغْفِرَ لَكَ اللَّهُ مَا تَقَدَّمَ مِنْ ذَنْبِكَ وَمَا تَأَخَّرَ* we must conclude that when God required His Prophet to say *istighfar* after He had forgiven him all his sins, both first and last, He did not require him to ask pardon for sins committed, for his sins were already forgiven him. How could it be possible that God should have first granted him pardon and then asked him to pray for pardon. Was the Holy Prophet required to ask pardon for the sins which were already pardoned? So the Christians must admit that *istighfar* in the verse *وَاسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُ* is not equivalent to a prayer for the forgiveness of sins. Here it only means a prayer for the covering of human weakness, a supplication to God to grant strength, power and support and facilitate the journey to the spiritual goal. The context also supports this interpretation. In the *sura* in which the verse occurs, God speaks of the triumphant career of the Holy Prophet *صَلَّى اللَّهُ*

*This interpretation is evidently wrong, inasmuch as it destroys the very sense of the verse. A victory has nothing to do with the forgiveness of sins, and the forgiveness of sins cannot follow as a consequence of victory. Here the word *ذَنْبٍ* refers to the charges of imposture, &c., attributed to the Holy Prophet. God granted the Holy Prophet success which was a sign of his truth and thus by granting him the victory, God removed all the charges of imposture, falsehood, &c., which were imputed to him by the infidels. God made his mission a complete success and destroyed his enemies and thus testified to his truth. This interpretation is supported by the context.

and his brilliant success as a prophet. The *sura* hints at his approaching end and exhorts the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم to be wholly engaged in prayer during the few remaining days of his life.

(4.) It has been said by the Christians that there can be no *istighfar* unless there has been an actual commission of sin and that the more one resorts to *istighfar*, the more he is sinful. Such a conclusion is evidently contradicted by the Holy Quran. The Holy Prophet said *istighfar* about a hundred times a day and this practice of his lasted as long as he lived. Now according to the Christians, this repeated *istighfar* shows "the depraved state of a sinful nature." But the Holy Quran speaks of the character of the Holy Prophet in very laudable terms. It says: انك لعلی خلق عظیم "Verily thou art of excellent morals." قل ان صلوٰتی ونسکی ومعبی وحماتی لله رب العلمین say "My prayer and my sacrifice, my life and my death are all for God." Again God speaks of him as the sun that sheds light. Now all this clearly contradicts the conclusion that the repeated *istighfar* of the Holy Prophet shows 'the depraved state of a sinful nature.' This shows that *istighfar* is not always accompanied with an actual commission of sin. Had it been so, God would not have spoken of the Holy Prophet in such terms as the above.

(5). Again God requires us to follow and imitate every word and deed of the Holy Prophet, He says: لقد کان لکم فی رسول اللہ "Verily, there is for you an excellent model to follow in the Holy Prophet," and again ان کنتم تحبون الله فا تبعونی "If you love God, follow me and God will love you." Now if the deeds and words of the Holy Prophet were not free from error, why did God bind us to follow him in all his actions. When God exhorts us to follow Abraham, he adds an exception,* but in the case of the Holy

* Here reference is to the following verses of the Holy Quran :—

قد كانت لکم اسوة حسنة فی ابراهیم الا قول ابراهیم لا یتبعکم الا ما تعبدون وما کان استغفار ابراهیم لا یتبعکم الا عن موعدة وعدها ایا ه فلما تبیین له انه عد لله تبرأ منه ان ابراهیم لا واه حلیم پ ۱۱ ع ۳

"There is a good model for you in Abraham excepting his words to his father 'I will ask God to pardon you.' (Al-Mumtahina). The *istighfar* of Abraham for his father was owing to a promise which he had made to him, but when it became clear to him that he was an enemy of God, he declared himself free from him, verily Abraham was pitiful and gentle (Tauba)."

Prophet He makes no exception at all. Every word and deed of the Holy Prophet is a law for us. This, then, shows that all the deeds and words of the Holy Prophet were free from error.

IV.—IS JESUS SINLESS ACCORDING TO THE QURAN?

Mr. A. M. in the *Epiphany* of 29th November, states in the beginning of his letter that like the Bible, the Quran also supports the theory that all men are sinners with the sole exception of Jesus. Putting aside, for the present, the question of the sinlessness of Jesus on the authority of the Bible, I hasten to inform him that if the words *istighfar* and *zanb* do signify sinfulness, the Holy Quran declares Jesus also to be sinful.

(a). The Holy Quran says : *يَسْتَغْفِرُونَ لِمَنْ فِي الْأَرْضِ* i.e., the angels say *istighfar* for all those that are in earth. Here we are told that angels say *istighfar* for all mankind. Now if *istighfar* necessarily implies sinfulness, we must hold that Jesus was also a sinner, for he also according to the Holy Quran, is included in mankind.

(b). The Holy Quran again tells us that the angels say *istighfar* particularly for those who believe. The verse runs thus : *يَسْتَغْفِرُونَ لِمَنْ آمَنَ* The Holy Quran divides all men into two main classes, viz., the believers and the unbelievers. Jesus, according to the Holy Quran belonged to the former class for whom the angels are reported to say *istighfar*, and if *istighfar* denotes sinfulness, the Christians must admit that Jesus was also a sinner.

(c). We learn from the Holy Quran that all the prophets believed in the Holy Prophet. The verse runs thus : *وَإِذْ أَخَذَ اللَّهُ مِيثَاقَ النَّبِيِّينَ لَمَا آتَيْتُكُمْ مِنْ كِتَابٍ وَحِكْمَةٍ ثُمَّ جَاءَكُمْ رَسُولٌ مُصَدِّقٌ لِمَا مَعَكُمْ لَتُؤْمِنُنَّ بِهِ* *وَإِذْ أَخَذَ اللَّهُ مِيثَاقَ النَّبِيِّينَ* Mr. A. M. offers a curious translation of the words *وَإِذْ أَخَذَ اللَّهُ مِيثَاقَ النَّبِيِّينَ* In order to translate it, he resorts to another verse in the Holy Quran, viz., *لَقَدْ أَخَذْنَا مِيثَاقَ بَنِي إِسْرَءِيلَ* and tries to amalgamate both. The latter verse means 'God accepted the covenant of the Israelites' and the former verse, being an exactly similar construction must, therefore, mean 'God accepted the covenant of prophets.' Both constructions are grammatically similar and if *وَإِذْ أَخَذَ اللَّهُ مِيثَاقَ النَّبِيِّينَ*

بنی اسرائیل means 'God accepted a covenant of the Israelites' the other clause must mean 'when God accepted a covenant of the prophets.' We have only to substitute, *the prophets* instead of *the Israelites*, the clauses being exactly similar in every other respect. But Mr. A. M. instead of giving it an interpretation similar to that which he gives to the other clause, puts a most ungrammatical construction on the words. He says that the words *خذ الله ميثاق النبيين* mean 'God accepted the covenant from *the Israelites in the matter of the prophets.*' The words in *italics* are thrust in by Mr. A. M. without there being any thing corresponding to them in the original Arabic. He translates *بنی اسرائیل* as "covenant of the Israelites" and in the same breath he translates *النبيين* as "covenant of the Israelites in the matter of the prophets." Both expressions are exactly alike, only we have the word *نبيين* (Prophets) in the one for *بنی اسرائیل* in the other. So if he translates *بنی اسرائیل* as "covenant of the Israelites" he is bound to translate *النبيين* as "covenant of the prophets." So there is no reason to doubt that if God speaks of a contract with the Israelites in the one case, he speaks of a contract with the prophets in the other.

The objection that there was no living prophet in the life-time of the Holy Prophet *صلی الله علیه وسلم* to believe in him and to assist him is worthless. We learn from the verse that God made this contract with every prophet that appeared before our Holy Prophet and it was the prophets and not the people who received this inspiration from God. But it was the duty of the prophets to communicate this command of the Lord to their respective people and to enjoin upon them to believe in and assist the Promised Prophet. They could not do so without believing in the Prophet. This verse conclusively proves that all the prophets preceding the Holy Prophet believed in the Holy Prophet inasmuch as they were foretold of his appearance by God.

If Mr. A. M's. objection is applicable to our interpretation, it is much more so to his interpretation. If the contract was made with the Israelites, it must have been made with a particular generation of the Israelites. If the prophets could not live for ever, that generation of the Israelites also could not live for ever. The generation

with whom the contract was made must have passed away with the prophet in whose life-time they lived and they could not live to see even the appearance of the immediately succeeding prophet, to say nothing of the prophet whose advent is foretold in the verse under question. The generation with whom the contract was made must have been dead and gone long before the appearance of the Holy Prophet. So in both cases the persons with whom the contract was made, could not personally witness the appearance of the Holy Prophet, and in both cases, the instructions of God were to be carried out by their representatives living at the time of the appearance of the Holy Prophet. We have only to see with whom the contract was made and the verse clearly shows that the contract was made with the prophets. Receiving the inspiration from God, it was the duty of the prophets to communicate the command of God to their people and to enjoin upon them to believe in and assist the promised Prophet. But they could not exhort others to believe in the Holy Prophet unless they themselves believed in him. Their assistance of the Holy Prophet consisted in exhorting their respective people to accept and help the Prophet when he appeared. Now Jesus also was one of the prophets spoken of in the verse and he also having received an inspiration from God regarding the advent of the Holy Prophet, must have enjoined upon his followers to believe in the Holy Prophet and aid him in his mission and must have been himself a believer in the truth of the Holy Prophet. God, again, enjoins upon the Holy Prophet to say *istighfar* for all believers, He says: استغفر لذنبك وللمؤمنين والمؤمنات "Say *istighfar* for thy *zamb* and for the men and women that believe in Thee." If *istighfar* implies sinfulness of the man for whom *istighfar* is said, we must conclude that Jesus was also a sinner, for the Holy Quran includes him in the men and women that believed in the Holy Prophet.

V.—IS NOT THE WORD *JURM* USED OF THE JEWS ?

It has been asserted by the Christian correspondents in the *Epiphany* that if *jurm* is not used of the holy prophets of God in the Holy Quran, it is not also used of the Jews. This statement of theirs is another proof of their ignorance of Arabic. *Jurm* is attributed to the Jews in more places than one. I give here only three

of the verses in which the Jews are described as guilty of *jurm*. God says : *وعلی الذین هادوا حرمنا کل ذی ظفر ومن البقر والغنم* وحرمانا علیهم شحومهما الا ما حملت ظهورهما او الحوايا او ما اختلط با لعظم ذالک جزینا ہم ببغیہم وانا لصدقون . فان کذبوک فقل ربک ذو رحمة واسعة ولا یرد باسہ عن القوم المجرمین الا نعام— رکوع ۱۸ “We forbade the Jews all animals of uncloven hoofs, as well as the fat of the cow and the goat, excepting that which is borne by their backs or arteries or which is mixed with the bones. This was a punishment to them for their transgression and verily we are truthful, so if they have given the lie to thee, say unto them that thy Lord is of great mercy and his wrath is not turned away from people that are *mujrim*s.” In this verse the Jews are described as *mujrim*s or guilty of *jurm*. Again, we have the following verse : *ولقد ارسلنا من قبلک رسلا الی قومہم فجاءوہم بالبینت فانقمنا من الذین اجرموا وکان* “We sent before thee prophets to their people and they came with signs. Then we revenged ourselves on the *mujrim*s and it was necessary for us to assist the believers.” In this verse the enemies of all the prophets that went before the Holy Prophet of Arabia are described as *mujrim* or guilty of *jurm*. Jesus immediately preceded the Holy Prophet and his enemies must have been *mujrim*s. Now, we ask our Christian friends whether the Jews who brought Jesus to the gallows were the friends or the enemies of Jesus. If they were his friends, then certainly they were not *mujrim*s. But if they were his enemies, then the Holy Quran declares them to be guilty of *jurm*. Another verse which describes the Jews as *mujrim*s runs thus : *وکذلک جعلنا لکل نبی عدا وامن المجرمین* “Likewise every prophet had his enemies from among the *mujrim*s.” In this verse, too, as in the preceding one, the enemies of every prophet are called *mujrim*s. The Jews being the enemies of Jesus, and of our Holy Prophet are included among the *mujrim*s. The Christian correspondents must feel ashamed of their foolish assertion that the Holy Quran nowhere attributes *jurm* to the Jews. This assertion of theirs is no less ridiculous than their statement that the word *jurm* nowhere occurs in the Holy Quran. Indeed this assertion is as good an illustration of their ignorance of Arabic as the other. More verses might be quoted to show that the Holy Quran does describe the Jews as *mujrim*s, but these their, I think

will suffice to bring the Christians to a sense of shame, if they have any at all.

These Christian correspondents not only lack a knowledge of Arabic, but they do not also seem to possess much of intelligence. Even if the Holy Quran had not used the word *jurm* with regard to the Jews, this could not have placed them on a par with the holy prophets. God almost exhausts the whole vocabulary in condemning the conduct of the Jews. They are spoken of as *fasiq*, *mal'un*, *kafir*, *bagi*, *mutadin*, *zalim*, *shayatin*, *qirad*, *maghzub alaihim*, &c. In the face of these epithets used of the Jews, if the Holy Quran had omitted to use the word *jurm* (which it does not) with regard to them, could they have been regarded as sinless like the holy prophets of whom none of these words is used in the Holy Quran.

VI.—TRADITIONS ON THE QUESTION OF SINLESSNESS.

The attempt of the Christians to draw any conclusions from the *words* of traditions is fruitless. They must first prove that these are the exact words spoken by the Holy Prophet and then they should base their conclusions on them. Conclusions merely based on the words of traditions are not sound, for they do not stand on a sure and sound basis. Christians may base their conclusions on the words of the Holy Quran but not on the words of the traditions for the latter cannot be said to reproduce the exact words of the Holy Prophet.

The Christians have tried to infer sinfulness from the words of the prayers recorded in the traditions but they have shut their eyes to the traditions in which the Holy Prophet plainly declares his Sinlessness. For their information, I quote here a tradition from Muslim which is a clear evidence of the sinlessness of the Holy Prophet. The tradition is as follows:—

وعن ابن مسعود قال قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم ما منكم من أحد إلا وقد وكل به قرينه من الجن وقرينه من الملائكة قالوا وإياك يا رسول الله قال وإياي • ولكن الله أعانني عليه فاسلم فلا يا من نبي إلا نجير

In Masud says: "The Prophet said 'There is none of you but

has two companions with him, an evil spirit and a good spirit.' The people asked 'Do you also, O Prophet, have the two spirits with you.' 'Yes,' replied the Holy Prophet, 'but God has given me power over the evil one and it has become a Muslim and tells me to do naught but good.' Thus we see that traditions afford the clearest testimony of the Sinlessness of the Holy Prophet. It is impossible to find any authentic tradition relating any sin of the Holy Prophet.

VII.—DOES THE QURAN RELATE THE SINS OF THE PROPHETS ?

The Christians assert that the Holy Quran relates the sins of certain prophets ; let us see whether the Holy Quran lends any support to their assertion.

As to Adam, God Himself defends his conduct in eating the forbidden fruit by saying *وَلَمْ نَجِدْ لَهُ عَزْمًا* i.e., "We did not find his intention," i.e., he did not do the deed intentionally. Now, the sin lies in the intention. If a person drink poison, knowing that it is poison, and will result in his death, he is guilty of a sin. But if he drink it unknowingly, he must suffer the consequences, but he cannot be said to have sinned. The same was the case with Adam. He received the fruit from the hands of Eve (as we learn from the Bible) not knowing that it was the forbidden fruit and ate it. His deed was indeed against the commandment of God, but he did not violate the commandment knowingly. So he cannot be said to have sinned. The deed of eating the fruit was followed by its consequences, just as drinking poison will be followed by its consequences, for nature must have its course; but there was no sin, for there was no intention.

Adam was never guilty of *shirk*. *Shirk* is an unpardonable sin, which no holy man of God can commit. The verse to which the Christian correspondents refer does not contain the name of Adam. It only speaks of the general tendency of man to be involved in *shirk*.

The blow dealt by Moses was in good cause. It was in the

defence of one of his party against a foe. The death was accidental. He did not intend to kill the man. God does not accuse him of any sin. Aaron is accused by the Christians of 'aiding and abetting idolatry.' This is falsehood pure and simple. All we learn from the Holy Quran is that he *could not* in the absence of Moses, prevent the Israelites from worshipping the calf.

The story of Uriah is nowhere mentioned in the Holy Quran. 'Learned Zamakhshari' and 'the learned commentator Jalal-ud-Din' may quote any number of false stories from the Bible. The Holy Quran is not responsible for such fables.

Jesus said that he would show no other sign but that of Jonas. Did he mean that he too would commit a sin like that of Jonas. It is pity that what Jesus called a miracle of Jonah, Christians of to-day call a sin or the punishment of sin.

Is it not meet for the Christians to acquit Jesus of sins related in the Gospels rather than make fruitless attempts to prove the sinfulness of other prophets ?

QADIAN.

Yours truly,
SHER ALI.

Dr. Lefroy on the Moral Tone of India.

The Bishop of Lahore writing in the "East and West," a quarterly Missionary Magazine, makes some very unjustifiable remarks regarding the moral depravity of India. He says: "An almost entire absence of faith as a principle of life, a low degraded moral tone, a blunted consciousness of sin, which leaves the individual scarcely capable of shame or honest repentance in any way, except a very intense desire to escape punishment—these are some of the prominent conditions of life; and these, when they have sunk through long centuries into the very blood of the people and sapped their life, will make us scarcely wonder if results of missionary labour do not make themselves seen as immediately or as abundantly as we might wish." In these sweeping remarks regarding the moral depravity of India, the Bishop ought in

justice to Christianity at least have made an exception in favor of the sweepers, the Pariahs and several other low classes of the Hindu community, and then perhaps even the Hindus and Muham-madans would not have been pained at this remark of the good Bishop. As regards the Muslims of India we intend to discuss the Bishop's judgment of their faith and morals as well as his attack on the principle of the seclusion of women at length in some subsequent issue, but before doing so we wish to put some plain questions to which we hope to receive definite answers from his Lordship. The Bishop refers to a "blunted consciousness of sin" in the whole population of India. Will he kindly inform the public if drunkenness is a sin? If so, does it not prevail to a far greater extent in Europe and other Christian countries than in any Muslim country? Is it not true that drunkenness is the root from which every other evil springs? Is it not in fact the only thing which makes men bold in the commission of sin and blunts their consciousness of it? Is not the drunkard quite blind to all social and moral laws? Has not drunkenness wrought the worst development of all the great vices in the Christian countries? Again, we stand in need of hearing the judgment of his Lordship as to prostitution. Is it a sin? If so, is it not true that Christian countries have almost a monopoly of it when compared with the Muslim? Higher church dignitaries than the Bishop of Lahore have held so, and Dr. Lefroy, we hope, would not overlook the fact in answering the questions so necessary for the solution of the problem of India's moral depravity that nothing excites the lust and sets aside the animal passions to such a high degree as wine. Does his Lordship moreover look upon gambling as a sin or not? If he does, will he kindly point out the country where it prevails most of all? We wish to hear it from his Lordship's lips. But if the Bishop thinks that drunkenness, prostitution and gambling are not sins, we wish to be informed what sin is? The Bishop may however answer that though these are sins for non-Christians, yet the Christian is absolved of them by the blood of Jesus and these are not sins when practised by him. In that case we shall have to keep the same silence as in answer to a follower of the *Sakat mat* who holds that incest is legalised by the superior power of his *mantras*.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ
نَحْمَدُهٗ وَنُصَلِّیْ عَلٰی رَسُوْلِهٖ الْکَرِیْمِ

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