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CONTENTS.

	Pages.
THE MESSENGER OF THE LATTER DAYS ...	1
FUNDAMENTAL DOCTRINES OF THE MUSLIM FAITH...	24
THE MUSLIM'S VIEWS ON THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT	32
THE UNIVERSALITY OF ISLAM	35

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بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

نحمده ونصلي على رسوله الكريم

The Messenger of the latter days.



Expectations of the advent of a messenger, reformer, redeemer, Mahdi or Messiah in the latter days are preserved in almost all the important religions of the world to this day. These expectations are based on prophecies, in some cases clear, in others comparatively vague, which are rooted deep in every religion. The most remarkable thing about these prophecies is that they all agree as to the time and place of the appearance of the promised one, and though the prophecy assumes a clear and definite form only in the mouth of the founder of Islam, the impression which other religions give, however vague it may be, does not point to a different conclusion.

First as regards the time. Almost all the prophecies speak of the time of the advent of the promised reformer as "the latter days," "the last ages," "the end of the age" or the "end of time." Thus the Zoroastrian prophecy speaks of that time as "the end of time," the Jewish and the Christian prophecies as "the last days," the Muslim prophecy uses a similar expression, and the Hindus speak of it as "the end of the Kalyug or iron age." All these expressions indicate the end of six thousand years from Adam. Each of these religions also gives certain indications for further fixing the time. The one point on which there is a consensus of prophecy is that the time of the advent of the messenger of the last days will be the time of an unprecedented accumulation of the forces of evil and worldliness. Thus in every religion a great struggle between good and evil, between godliness and worldliness, is described to be the result

of the advent of the Promised messenger, in which the forces of good shall finally come off victorious. According to the Zoroastrian prophecy, at his advent the spirit of Evil "shall be finally overcome and destroyed, and everlasting happiness shall reign over a renovated world," and "the devil and all his brood will be doomed to destruction." According to the Christian Scriptures, Satan "shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. And they went up on the breadth of earth and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them. And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone" (Rev. xx: 8-10). The Hindu Avatar of the last ages is also described as destroying "all that work wickedness." In the Islamic prophecies a mighty struggle—not a physical struggle as it has been misunderstood to be, but a spiritual struggle between the forces of good and evil—is described as taking place between the Messiah and the anti-Christ which is called the Dajjal or the great deceiver. It should be borne in mind that according to Islam, Christ taught, not that he himself was God incarnate, but that he was a humble servant and creature of God. The teachings of Christianity are, therefore, anti-Christian teachings in the true sense of that word. It is for this reason that the destructive part of the Messiah's mission is described, in the plainest and most trustworthy Muslim prophecies, to consist in breaking the cross, because the cross is the true representative of the anti-Christian teaching. The constructive part of the Messiah's mission is described to be the bringing back of faith into the world and its spiritual regeneration by that means.)

It would be seen from the above that the last or latter days in which the Promised Messiah must make his appearance are, according to the unanimous verdict of all prophecies, the days of the mighty prevalence of evil. The nature of this evil is not definitely described by any religion except Islam, but Christianity also gives a faint idea of it. For instance Jesus' remark "When the son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth," shows that the time of a great decline of faith is the time when the Messiah must make his appearance. Similarly, in 2 Tim. 3: 1-4, we read: "But know this, that in the last days grievous times shall come, for men shall be lovers

of self, lovers of money, boastful, haughty, railers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, implacable, slanderers, without self-control, traitors, headstrong, puffed up, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God." These are evils of a general nature, but their great and unprecedented prevalence at the present time clearly points to this as the time of the appearance of the Promised Messiah. In the Muslim prophecies, however, the peculiar nature of the predominant evil of that time is described in clear and definite words. In some prophecies it is described to be the evil of the anti-Christ while in others it is mentioned as the prevalence of the false doctrines of the religion of the cross. As I have already remarked, both of them are descriptions of one and the same evil, for it is the religion of the cross which teaches doctrines contradicting those taught by Christ, as the Holy Quran plainly says. Hence the first indication of the latter days or the time of the advent of the Promised Messiah is an unprecedented spread of the erroneous Christian doctrines of Trinity and Atonement. This is an unmistakable sign, for it specifies the nature of the evil. At the time when the Holy Prophet made his appearance, the Christian religion was decaying and it did not show any such sign of activity as might have led any reasonable person to the inference that its spread would be so marvellous as we find it to-day. For centuries after the rise of Islam, Christianity has been lying asleep, and it is only within recent times that missions for the spread of erroneous beliefs have been established in every land. (Any one who simply casts a glance over the past history of Christianity will readily see that the present predominance of the Christian religion has no parallel in its history. This is, therefore, the first evil with which the Promised messenger of the latter days has to deal, and since that evil has now outgrown all limits, therefore the present is the time of the appearance of the Promised messenger of the latter days.

That by the evil of the anti-Christ is meant really the evil of the erroneous doctrines of Christianity which are subversive of all religious truth will be easily seen by the Muslims whose Holy Book states in clear words that Christ never gave any countenance to the doctrine which is now taught in his name, that he was God, the Creator of earth and heaven and the Sustainer of all life. The

teaching that Jesus gave to his people was that they should worship God only who was his Lord and their Lord. (Alquran, V : 117). There are other indications in the Holy Quran that by the evil of the anti-Christ in the Muslim prophecies is meant the evil of the Christian religion. Thus we have it in trustworthy traditions of the Holy Prophet that the first ten verses of the chapter entitled "Cave" should be recited to counteract the evil influence of the anti-Christ. Turning to these verses we find that they only lay stress upon the erroneousness of the Christian doctrine of the Divinity of Jesus : "And that it, (*i.e.*, the Quran) may warn those who say, 'God hath begotten a son.' No knowledge of this have either they or their fathers! A grievous saying to come out of their mouths! Verily they speak no other than a lie." If orthodox Christians are offended at the fundamental doctrines of their faith being called anti-Christian, they need to be reminded that their claim of Divinity for Jesus is still more offensive to the feelings of all believers in the Unity of God. The doctrine that Jesus is God is one of the most offensive blasphemies that have ever been uttered. If Christ was God, then the preaching of all the prophets of God was in vain. Nor do even the Gospels lend any support to this error. When some body addressed Jesus as "Good Master," he was offended with him for calling him "good," for, as he said, "there is none good, but one, that is God." That he was not himself that one is too clear to need any demonstration. The expression "Son of God" is not used of Jesus particularly, but according to the Bible any saint or pious man was called a son of God. That Jesus himself attached no other sense to this word is clear from John x : 36. The Jews accused him of blasphemy in calling himself the son of God, to which accusation Jesus' reply was that not only the expression, "Son of God," but even "God" had been used in their books concerning men and that therefore he could not become a blasphemer by saying that he was the son of God. Had he used the expression "son of God" about himself in a sense different from that in which it was previously used, this reply would have been clearly absurd. In short, Jesus never said that he was God, and his followers who teach that doctrine to-day are going against him, and hence their evil is the evil of the anti-Christ.

(The Muslim prophecies with regard to the advent of the Promised Messiah further state that he will come to restore faith which shall

have utterly vanished before his advent. Such prophecies are also met with in the Christian Scriptures. They indicate that in the latter days faith would vanish from the hearts of men and they would bend low upon the world. This criterion also points to the present as the time of the fulfilment of the prophecy. Never before had Materialism and Atheism acquired such a mastery on the hearts of men. Not only is the number of professing Atheists and Materialists making progress by leaps and bounds, but what is much more to be deplored, even where a belief in God is professed, the heart is utterly devoid of true faith. In the mad pursuit of this world's desires, it is impossible to distinguish the believer in God from the denier of Divine existence. There may be some faith on the lips, but there is certainly no faith in the heart. There is no faith on earth and it "has gone up to the pleiades," as a tradition of the Holy Prophet says in giving a description of the days of the Messiah's advent.)

(There are indications of another kind as to the time of the advent of the Promised Messenger of the latter days which are met with both in the Christian and the Muslim prophecies. A certain vagueness and indefiniteness attaches to the idea in the Christian prophecies, but in Islam the prophecies assume, as usual, a clearer and a far more definite form. All that the Gospel tells us is that "there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in diverse places," and again, "Immediately after the tribulation of these days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken." (Matt. 24). There have always been pestilences and earthquakes in the world's history, and no year passes but an eclipse of the sun or the moon is witnessed. Hence it is easy to see that the prophecy of Jesus does not refer to these disasters in their ordinary form, and we are bound to consider it as foretelling their extraordinary occurrence. The Muslim prophecies not only cast further light upon these, but they also give additional signs of the latter days. For instance they tell us that there will be an eclipse of the sun and the moon in the month of Ramazan on specified dates, and thus make clear the vague words reported by Matthew that "the sun shall be darkened and the moon shall not give her light." The fulfilment of this grand prophecy was clearly witnessed in the year 1894, when the moon suffered an eclipse on the 13th of Ramazan

and the sun on the 28th of the same month, these being the very dates mentioned in the prophecy.* The appearance of an extraordinarily virulent and destructive plague is also given as a sign of the time, and the havoc which the plague has wrought in India is sufficient to show that the prophesied hour has come. Already four millions of men have been taken away by the plague. In the vast Indian continent the numbers swept off form, no doubt, only a seventieth part of the population, but they were sufficient to populate a whole country. In the tracts which have hitherto fallen under the ravages of the plague, many villages have been depopulated whilst a very large number of them have been decimated. And this is still the beginning, for the disease does not yet show any signs of abatement. The Holy Quran tells us that there will be earthquakes in those days so many and so severe that their extraordinariness will become clear to every body. Though the time of the severest shaking of the earth as prophesied in the Holy Quran has not yet come, yet even the preliminary shaking is attracting men's attention on account of its extraordinary nature. As was rightly remarked in the *Pioneer* some time ago, no parallel to these earthquakes and disasters is met with except perhaps in the first century of the Christian era. There are many other signs, such as obstructions in the pilgrimage to Mecca, the coming into existence of a new means of conveyance and the consequent disuse of camels, the multiplication of canals, the spread of knowledge, etc., and their fulfilment has been clearly witnessed in this age.

Apart from all the indications referred to above, there are prophecies which show on the basis of time computation that the Millennium or the time of the advent of the Promised Messiah has already set in. The time from Adam to the second Adam or the Promised Messenger of the latter days is divided into six millenniums, the seventh being the time of the advent of the Messiah. Both the Jewish and the Christian Apocalyptic literature have many prophecies regarding the last millennium, and it must be admitted

* The prophecy referred to here says: "Verily for our Mahdi there will appear two signs which have never appeared for any other claimant; the moon will suffer an eclipse on the first of her eclipse-nights in Ramzan (which is the 13th of the lunar month) and the sun will suffer an eclipse in the middle of its eclipse-days (which is the 28th of the lunar month) in the same month."

that they do not agree in many particulars. But notwithstanding all differences, the idea that after six thousand years from Adam the power of evil shall be finally crushed is common to all these prophecies and it seems to have obtained a strong hold over both the Jewish and the Christian mind, and had no doubt its origin in true prophecy. The same idea is met with in the Zoroastrian religion.* In fact, so prevalent and at the same time so deep-rooted is this idea in different religions that we cannot avoid the conclusion that it had its origin in real prophecy. Now by the lunar computation, six thousand years from Adam have already elapsed. The prophecy in Islam is again far more clear. We are told that for three hundred years after the Holy Prophet, the power of righteousness will remain strong. Then will follow a period of a thousand years† during which evil shall have the upper hand, and Satan shall be loosed. The people of that period are called the *Faiji-Awaj* or a corrupted company. But after the thousand years of the prevalence of evil during which the anti-Christ shall mislead people, the sun of righteousness shall again rise upon the world and dispel the darkness. According to this prophecy also, the present time is the time of the appearance of the Promised Messiah, for he must appear thirteen hundred years after the Holy Prophet, and the fourteenth century of Hejira has already commenced. Thus by two different calculations in accordance with two different prophecies, we arrive at the same result.

Prophecies concerning the advent of a Messenger of God are not our only guide for his recognition for prophecies are often contained in metaphorical language. Nay, many people are even misled by sticking to their literal significance in all their details. It is for this reason that in the above discussion, I have considered only the main features of the prophecies of the different religions, features which remain nearly the same in every religion, and which

* See Jewish Encyclopaedia, article on "Millennium."

† This prophecy is based on Alquran xxxii : 4, besides many other verses and traditions. That verse says : "He governs the affair from the heaven to the earth ; then shall it ascend to him in a day the measure of which is a thousand years of what you number." The affair mentioned in this verse is the regeneration of the world by giving a new life to faith which had vanished from it, and the verse says that the faith which had thus been brought to the world will again depart from it after a certain time and ascend to heaven. In trustworthy traditions the time of the prevalence of righteousness is described to be three generations which may be approximately taken to be three centuries.

by their agreement show that they are really the nucleus about which details have been added. I have stated above the main points determining the time of the advent of the messenger of the last days—points of agreement in the various religions and not points of difference. In like manner, I will show on the basis of prophecy that the East is by general agreement the place of the appearance of the Promised Messenger of the last days. Isaiah speaks of the righteous man raised up from the East (xli: 2); the great Persian reformer, Zoroaster, also speaks of the place of the Promised Messenger's advent as in the far East; the language used by Jesus, hidden as its meaning is in metaphor, also points to the East, for the coming of the Messiah is likened to the lightning which appears in the East; and last of all the Holy Prophet Muhammad also pointed to the East with his finger (اومى الى المشرق) as the place where the great struggle between the anti-Christ and the Messiah must ensue, and further emphasized this by stating that the Messiah will appear at a place to the East of Damascus. But the question is, what is meant by the East in all these prophecies? In the mouth of an Old Testament prophet the East might mean any region beyond the Tigris and Euphrates, Mesopotamia, Armenia or Persia. Similarly in the mouth of Jesus or the Holy Prophet, Muhammad, the East might mean any of the countries lying to the East of Judea or Arabia. But the Zoroastrian prophecy helps to take us further to the east, for the place still remains to the east of Persia. In the Hindu prophecy, however, there is no mention of the East, and we are required to look to India itself for the appearance of the great *Avatar* at the end of *Kaljug*, and accordingly we are justified in concluding that the East in all the prophecies signified India. Thus by a general agreement of the prophecies of several different nations, we can fix the time and place of the advent of the Promised Messenger of the latter days.)

It is possible to draw from some of the numerous prophecies regarding the advent of the Promised Messiah a conclusion differing from the one we have arrived at above, but there are two circumstances which strongly corroborate our conclusion. In the first place, there is the general trend of the prophecy as it has been handed down to us by various religions. The general character of the prophecy as it is met with in various religions, and its definite signs as described in the holy religion of Islam, are the two most important

considerations which make any other conclusion impossible. As I have already said any conclusion from the details of the prophecies would be unsafe as it would be based not on the cumulative evidence of prophecy, but on a consideration isolated from all other facts which only can throw light upon its true meaning. An example would make this remark more clear. Before the time of Jesus, the Jews expected a Messiah, but when Jesus advanced his claim to the Messiahship, he was taken for an impostor. Not that the Jews were not conscious of the need of a reformer and were not aware that the general trend of earlier prophecy pointed to that time as the time of his advent, but because they laid too much stress on particular considerations and details of the prophecy. For instance, one of the numerous prophecies of the advent of the Messiah made it a condition of his appearance that one of the bygone prophets, Elijah, should personally come down from heaven. Hence they thought that Jesus was one of the numerous false Messiahs who were arising among the Israelites. Similarly there were some other aspects of the Messianic prophecy which were not literally fulfilled in the case of Jesus, and hence the Jewish opposition to him. Therefore the safest course to judge the truth or falsehood of a claimant is to consider whether the general character of the prophecy is in accordance with his claims.

The second consideration which supports the conclusion we have arrived at above is the internal evidence of the claim of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian (India) to be the Promised Messiah of the last ages who has come in fulfilment of these prophecies, but before that evidence is considered it is necessary to remove certain misconceptions which have arisen from adherence to a too literal significance of the prophecies. Both the Christians and Muslims are generally under the impression that the prophecy of the advent of the Messiah in the last ages cannot be fulfilled unless Jesus himself comes down from heaven where he is supposed to be living. Both the basis and the superstructure of this idea are delusions. Jesus never rose to heaven but he died on earth and his tomb has been discovered in the Khan Yar Street at Srinagar in Kashmir. As to his coming back in person, it is as great a delusion as his going up to heaven with his body of clay. The Jews entertained similar hopes of the personal descent of Elijah from heaven as they believed on

the basis of their heavenly books that he had gone up alive into heaven and his coming back from there would be necessary to bear witness to the truth of the real claimant to Messiahship. It was Jesus himself who first explained the meaning of the second advent when he told the expectant Jews that John the Baptist had come in the spirit and power of Elijah and that this was what was meant by the second advent of Elias. Jesus never denied that Elias must come, but he said that the coming of Elias signified the coming of a person in his spirit and power. Thus Jesus was the first man in sacred history who explained the true meaning of the second advent of a person in prophetic language, and it is only natural that when he spoke of his second advent he meant a similar coming. If he had not meant that, he would have explained to his disciples that though he had been laying stress on the circumstance that the second advent of Elias meant only the advent of one in his spirit and power and not his personal return, yet his own second advent would be of a different nature. Unless he made any such statement, he must be taken to have spoken of his second advent in the very sense which he attached to the second advent of Elias. When Jesus assured his disciples that he was a true prophet, because a prophecy relating to the second advent of a person meant really the advent of one in the spirit and power of that person, he must be understood to have attached a similar significance to the prophecy of his own second advent. Ludicrous attempts have been made to meet this difficulty by some Christian periodicals of India. It is asserted that Elias could not come back personally because he was a man and that therefore it was necessary that a person should be sent in his spirit and power to fulfil the prophecy, but that Jesus being God can come back personally and that hence the prophecy of his second advent cannot be fulfilled by the advent of one in his spirit and power. The ingenuity displayed in this attempt is not praiseworthy but laughable. The question is what Jesus meant when he spoke of his second advent. If he meant anything contrary to his own explanation of the second advent of Elias, it was his duty to gather the disciples round him and to deliver some sermon to them as the following: "Look here, friend, I have been speaking to you of the second advent of Elias, without which my claim to Messiahship falls to the ground, as meaning the advent of a person in his spirit and power, but when I speak of my own second advent, I

do not put upon it the interpretation which I put upon the prophecy of the second advent of Elias. Elias, my friends, was a man and he could not come back personally, but I am a God and can return in person. But if you say, why was the prophecy of the second advent of Elias then made, I can only suggest in reply that the prophet might have been under the impression at the time of the utterance of the prophecy that Elias too was God and that he could come back personally." Moreover, when Jesus interpreted the prophecy of the second advent of Elias, he never said that Elias had not come. "And if ye shall receive it, this is Elias, which was for to come" (Matt. xi: 14). "And his disciples asked him, saying, why then say the scribes that Elias must first come? And Jesus answered and said unto them, Elias truly shall first come, and restore all things. But I say unto you, that Elias is come already, and they knew him not, but have done unto him whatsoever they listed. Likewise shall also the son of man suffer of them. Then the disciples understood that he spoke unto them of John the Baptist" (Matt. xvii: 10-13). From this it is clear that Jesus recognised the necessity of the coming of Elias and never said that Elias had not come back because he was a man or because his mission could be fulfilled by a different person. What he said was that John was Elias because he came in his spirit and power, that is, was spiritually one with him. From the last quoted verses it positively appears that Jesus' own second advent would be of a similar nature, for he says, that Elias had come, but they knew him not and persecuted him, and "likewise shall also the son of man suffer of them." That is to say, as Elias was subjected to persecution in his second advent, because the persecutors did not know that it was Elias they were persecuting, so would the Messiah also suffer in his second advent because his persecutors would not know that it was the Messiah whom they were persecuting.

The Muhammadans, as I have said above, also expect that Jesus himself must come back. This expectation in their case is the more surprising because the Holy Quran proclaims the death of Jesus in the plainest words and negatives his personal second advent. In the closing verses of the fifth chapter the Holy Book mentions an incident in connection with Jesus which must take place on the judgment day. It is related that on that day, Almighty God would ask Jesus if he had said to his people to take him for a God, and Jesus' reply

to this question is given in the following words: "I spoke not to them aught, but that which Thou didst bid me—'Worship God, my Lord and your Lord;' " and I was their witness while I stayed among them; but since Thou didst cause me to die, Thou hast Thyself watched them, and Thou art witness of all things" (Alquran v: 117). This reply proves conclusively that the Christians deified Jesus, not in his lifetime, but after his death, and that he would not come back personally, for if he came back into this world, he could not say that he did not know into what erroneous paths the Christians walked after him.

There is a great deal of other evidence in the Islamic prophecies showing that Jesus, son of Mary, the Israelite prophet, would not come back personally. Every prophet whom Almighty God sends into the world comes both for destruction and construction. He has a two-fold object before him, *viz.*, the destroying of evil, evil ideas, evil practices, false beliefs and all other kinds of evil, and establishing in its place righteousness, good deeds and sound doctrines. No prophet of God was ever raised for destruction only, for destruction is only a step for the more important object of effecting construction, and unless this object is attained no value can be attached to mere destruction. The Promised Messiah cannot be an exception to this Divine law. When we turn to prophecies, we find the first object of his advent to be the breaking of the cross, that is to say, the destruction of the evil of the anti-Christ. In this prophecy the Messiah is described as being Jesus. This prophecy does not mention the other and more important object of the coming of the Messiah which is met with in a different prophecy which says: "If faith went up to the Pleiades, a man from Persia would bring it back into the world." This prophecy describes the disappearance of faith from the earth in the last days to restore which the Messiah must come. The words of Jesus, "When the son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?" describes exactly the same state of things and shows the same necessity of the appearance of the Messiah, *viz.*, the regeneration of the world by restoring faith to it. The constructive part of the mission of the Promised Messiah is, (therefore, the restoration of faith to the world and its regeneration by that means. In this prophecy, however, the reformer is spoken of as "a man from Persia." The use of two different names cannot

lead us to the conclusion that these two prophecies relate to two different persons. These prophecies are really complementary to each other. None of them describes the entire mission of the reformer, but each describes only a part which is complimentary to the other. The Messiah comes to break the cross, the "Man from Persia" to restore faith to the world. Now faith could not be restored without destroying the predominating evil of the time first, and dealing a death-blow to an evil or erroneous doctrine is of no use unless the spiritual regeneration of the world is brought about by restoring true and certain faith in God. Hence the two prophecies really speak of the two parts of the mission of a single reformer. Moreover, in the prophecy, as we have it in the mouth of Jesus, the restoration of faith to the world is described as the function of the Messiah himself, and this circumstance ~~also establishes the identity~~ of the "Man from Persia" with "the Messiah."

(The prophecy regarding the advent of the "Man from Persia," is based on the Holy Quran itself. In the chapter entitled *Al-Juma* or "the congregation," we have the following two verses: *هو الذي بعث في الامم رسولا منهم يتلوا عليهم اياته ويزكيهم ويعلمهم الكتاب والحكمة وان كانوا من قبل لفى ضلال مبين واخرين منهم لما يلحقوا بهم* *i.e.*, "God it is who sent to the unlearned people of Arabia a messenger from among themselves to recite to them His signs and to purify them and to teach them the Book and the wisdom, although they were before in obvious error.

"And (a Messenger) to the last of them who have not yet overtaken them, and He is the mighty, the wise" (lxii: 2,3).

In commenting upon the meaning of the latter verse, Zamakhshari tells us that when this was revealed to the Holy Prophet, he was asked as to who the last people were who were mentioned in this verse. Upon this the Holy Prophet placed his hand upon the shoulders of *Salman*, a man from Persia and one of his companions, and said, "If the faith went up to the Pleides, a man (or men) from among these people, *i.e.*, the people of Persia, would bring it back to the world." The word used in this verse to designate the people among whom a messenger was to be raised is *akharin* which signifies "latter" or "last," and is exactly the word which is used in other

prophecies to describe the time of the advent of the Promised Messiah. This consideration together with the above explanation of the verse of the Holy Quran from the mouth of the Holy Prophet himself shows clearly that the "Man from Persia" spoken of in Islamic prophecies is no other than the Messiah or the Messenger of the latter days. It should also be borne in mind that the Holy Prophet's description as to the going up of the faith to the Pleides, alludes to a great distance of time from him, and accordingly the prophecy relating to the advent of the "Man from Persia" cannot be said to have been fulfilled in the person of Abu Hanifa or Bukharee, for not only did they never claim to be the Messengers of God, but their time was also so close to that of the Holy Prophet that faith could not at that time be said to have gone up to the Pleides. On the other hand, the Holy Prophet has spoken of the three centuries after him as the best of times.

I will now proceed to show that the prophecies of the advent of the Messiah, or the "Man from Persia" have been fulfilled in the person of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian who claims to be the Promised Messiah. He fulfils both the Christian prophecy of the second advent of Jesus and the Muslim prophecy of the advent of the "Man from Persia." To understand this clearly, we must go back to a time prior to his advancement of the claim. In the *Barahin-i-Ahmadiyya* which Mirza Ghulam Ahmad wrote in 1880, that is nearly ten years before he claimed to be the Promised Messiah, he expressed the same view of the advent of the Messiah as was commonly held by the Muslims, viz., that Jesus himself would come back. Yet in the same book he published visions which establish his spiritual identity with Jesus and revelations in which he was addressed as Jesus Christ and as the "Man from Persia." This evidence, conflicting as it may appear at first sight, is really the most conclusive testimony of the sincerity of the claimant and the truth of his claim. The view expressed as to the personal second coming of Jesus was not based on any revelation, nor had Divine revelation yet informed him that he himself was the very Messiah that was to come. True to himself and true to Divine revelation, he expressed his own view as based on the prevalent Muslim belief and published the revelations as he had received them in the *Barahin-i-Ahmadiyya*. The inconsistency of these revelations with the view

expressed is a clear and conclusive testimony that the revelations were not the outcome of the mind of their recipient and that they proceeded from a different source. Had these revelations been invented by himself as a preparation for the claim to Messiahship, he could not have expressed the view in that very book that Jesus himself would come back at the appointed time. This circumstance affords to us clear proof of the truth of the revelations and the sincerity of their recipient. Now these revelations, as I have already said, establish the spiritual identity of the claimant to Messiahship with Jesus, son of Mary, who was to come in the last ages, and since this evidence was pronounced at a time when he had not the least idea of himself becoming the Promised Messiah, its conclusiveness is an established fact. Some of the visions and revelations to which I have referred above, and which were published in the *Barahin-i-Ahmadiyya* about a quarter of a century ago, are given below. One vision is related in the following words: "On one occasion he (Jesus) and I ate beef upon one table from one dish in *kashf* which is really a state of wakefulness. With expressions of humbleness and love, he told me that he was my brother." Another vision is thus related: "I saw that Jesus and I were so like each other as two peas and that spiritually I was one with him." In one revelation Ahmad is addressed thus: "O Jesus! I will cause thee to die a natural death, (i.e., will protect thee from violent death or murder) . . ." Another revelation says: "If faith went up to the Pleides, a man from Persia would bring it back." Here the recipient of the revelation is spoken of as the promised Man from Persia whom prophecy describes to be the messenger of the last ages. Another revelation runs thus: "Hold fast by the Unity of God, the Unity of God, O sons of Persia." And again "Those who disbelieve and turn people from the path of God—a man from Persia refuted them: God will recompense his labour." In all these revelations, their recipient is spoken of as the "Man from Persia." It may be added that historical evidence also shows that the ancestors of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad came from Persia.

Having settled these preliminary points, we are now in a position to consider the internal evidence of the truth of the claims of the Promised Messenger of the latter days which should convince every reasonable person whatever his religious convictions may be. Such an evidence can only be a miracle as should satisfy every seeker

after truth. For this purpose I will choose a miracle which is not open to any of the ordinary objections against miracles. David Hume says in his *Essay on Miracles*: "There is not to be found in all history any miracle attested by a sufficient number of men of such unquestioned good sense, education and learning, as to secure us against all delusion in themselves; of such undoubted integrity as to place them above all suspicion of any design to deceive others; of such credit and reputation in the eyes of mankind as to have a great deal to lose in case of their being detected in any falsehood; and at the same time, attesting facts performed in such public manner, and in so celebrated part of the world, as to render the detection unavoidable; all which circumstances are requisite to give us a full assurance in the testimony of men." In these words, a great denier of miracles has stated all the possible objections which can be advanced against the truth of a miracle, and therefore to make the testimony in support of the claims of the Promised Messiah conclusive, I will state here one of those miracles against which none of these objections can be advanced, and which would therefore afford a convincing proof of the truth of those claims.

The proof of the miracle referred to above is free from all objections because the testimony on which it is based is not the evidence of a certain number of men who could be suspected of delusion or a design to deceive others. It is written testimony of a well-known book which was published among thousands of men a quarter of a century ago, and whose circulation has since continued unbroken. This book is the *Barahin-i-Ahmadiyya*, by Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, and it has already gone through four editions. It is in four volumes which were published at intervals from 1880 to 1884. The third volume was published in the year 1882, and on page 236 of this book the author gives an idea of what Divine revelation is. Perfect Divine revelation, we are told there, is that in which deep secrets of the future are revealed to the recipient of the revelation by Almighty God, and on page 238, he asserts that such revelation has been granted to him. He writes: "Many revelations of this kind have been granted to me, but I give here only those revelations which I have received just at the time of writing this foot-note, that is to say, in March 1882, in which this deep secret of the future has been revealed to me as a prophecy, that those who oppose me shall be ultimately utterly

vanquished, the seekers after truth shall find guidance, and false beliefs shall vanish, and people shall assist me and turn to me and come to me because Almighty God shall inspire them to do so and shall turn their hearts to me, and all these wonderful things and many others shall take place by means of this book and the things that I have written in it." The revelations are then given in Arabic on pp. 238 to 242. The translation of some of these is given below :

"The merciful God has taught thee the Quran, that thou mayest warn a people whose fathers have not been warned and that thou mayest make clear the way of the guilty. Say, I have been commanded to undertake this duty, and I am the first to submit myself to the will of God. God is He who has sent His Messenger with guidance and the religion of truth that he may make it victorious over all other religions. They will try to extinguish the light which God has kindled, but God will make that light perfect. Soon We will inspire awe into their hearts. When the assistance of God and victory will come, and to us shall return the whole affair, then will it be said, Is not this true? . . . And they will make plots against thee and God will plan their destruction, certainly God is the best of planners. Now surely the grace of God is near. Now surely the assistance of God is near. Assistance will come to thee from every distant path. People will come to thee from every distant path. God will assist thee from Himself. People whom God will inspire from heaven will come to thy assistance. There is no god but God, therefore write these things, then get them printed, then circulate them in countries. and recite to the people what has been revealed to thee from thy Lord, and turn not away from people nor do thou get tired of them when they come to thee in vast numbers. Thou shalt also have the companions of the mat, and what knowest thou yet who the companions of mat will be. Thou wilt see tears flowing from their eyes, and they will pray for the blessings of God upon thee and say, O Lord ! we have heard the voice of a crier calling to the faith and an inviter to God and an illuminating lamp. Write down all these things."

The above is a literal translation of some of the revelations which the author of the book in which they are published received and

published in the year 1882, as prophecies concerning his future career. The fourth volume of the same book which was published two years later contained many similar prophecies. Thus on page 485 of the book the following words are met with: "A few Arabic revelations which contain mighty prophecies and give promises of Divine favours are given below with their translation (in Urdu), so that, if it please God, the true seeker may benefit by them, and so that the opponents may also know how the people to whom God is gracious and who walk in the right path are granted the blessings of Divine revelation, and how God informs them beforehand of those blessings which through His kindness He is to grant them at the proper time." ~~This preliminary remark, which shows the author~~ to be certain that the things which were promised him will come to pass, is followed by revelations which are contained in a foot-note which runs from page 486 to 562. A few of these, I translate below along with such explanation as is given in the book itself.

"Thou art to Me as My Unity and oneness, so the time has drawn nigh when thou shalt be assisted and made known among men. Has not a time come upon man, *i.e.*, upon thee, when in the world no one spoke of thee, *i.e.*, none knew who thou wast," (page 489). Both these revelations show clearly that at the time when the recipient of these revelations was writing this book, he was not known outside his own village. These prophecies informed him that a time would come when he would be made known throughout the world.

"With awe art thou assisted and with truth life has been breathed into thee, O thou truthful one! Thou art assisted, and the opponents said, there is no place to escape now. This means that Divine assistance shall come so mightily that the hearts of the opponents shall be broken, and disappointment will take possession of their hearts, and truth will become manifest," (page 490). "I willed to send a vicegerent upon earth, so I created Adam; I am going to establish upon earth, *i.e.*, I will establish him upon earth. The word *Khalifa* (vicegerent) here signifies a person who should be a mediator between God and man for the purpose of guiding men to the right path. It does not indicate material viceroyalty or temporal rule or authority, but only spiritual dignity and spiritual vicerency. So the word Adam too does not signify the Adam who

is our progenitor, but it means a person who should become the spiritual progenitor of a world by becoming the founder of a spiritual dispensation, so that he is the spiritual father of seekers after truth. This is a mighty and wonderful prophecy for it foretells the establishment of a great spiritual dispensation which has no existence at all at the present time." (pages 492, 493).

Pages after pages of this remarkable book are filled with revelations which foretell a great and mighty future for their recipient, but the above two quotations are sufficient to give the reader an idea of these mighty prophecies. The circumstances which make these prophecies one of the grandest and clearest miracles that has ever been wrought are all facts, a convincing proof of whose truth is easily accessible to every one who makes an effort for it. It is a miracle which is free from all those objections which are advanced against the testimony of those who witness them, because the chief evidence of this miracle which relates to the publication of these prophecies is written testimony met with in a published book. The fact of the publication of the *Barahin-i-Ahmadiyya* at the dates shown on the title pages of its several volumes cannot be denied by any sensible person, and any one who goes the length of denying it may satisfy himself by examining the records of the Government. A copy of the book may also be found in the British Museum at London. Moreover, it was not an obscure or ordinary book which could have remained unnoticed by the public. It acquired a fame throughout the length and breadth of India at the time of its publication and attracted favorable as well as hostile criticism. It was accompanied with a challenge to the followers of all other religions to write a refutation of it. It claimed to give the most sound and conclusive arguments of the truth of Islam and offered a reward of Rs. 10,000 for its successful refutation. Thousands of notices to that effect printed in the English and Urdu languages were distributed among the leading followers of other religions in India as well as abroad. All these circumstances gave this book an importance which ordinary publications cannot claim. The fact of the publication of the book in the year in which it is alleged to have been published, that is about a quarter of a century before the time at which we are writing is, therefore, an established fact and such is, therefore, also the fact of the publication of the mighty prophecies some

of which have been quoted above. Hence there can be no denying the fact that the prophecies referred to above were widely published and circulated among friends as well as foes at a time separated from the present by about twenty-five years.

The next thing to be seen about these prophecies is their contents. They foretold that a time would come in the life of the recipient of these revelations when people would flock to him from every distant path, and so great would be their numbers that he would be well-nigh tired of them. It was also foretold that great opposition would rage against him, but that it would all be brought to naught by the powerful hand of God. In order that we may be entitled to call this prophecy a miracle, it is necessary to show further that its utterer had no following at the time at which he uttered the prophecy and that there was no opposition bent upon crushing him and bringing him to naught at that time, and to prove the fulfilment of the prophecy or the completeness of the miracle, it must be further shown that the things spoken of have actually been brought about. For proof of the first fact, we have the evidence not of a certain number of men who might be interested to give such evidence or on whose part a design to deceive others might be suspected, for it is the evidence not of friends but of foes. The fact that he was a solitary and obscure person at the time of the publication of these prophecies is admitted by his bitterest enemies, and none of his opponents has ever dared to deny such a palpable fact. Moreover, as the above quotations would show, the publication of these prophecies is preceded by the statement that the wonderful disclosure of the deep secrets of the future contained in these revelations would be a sign that they were the Word of the mouth of God, and that the gift of Divine revelation which was intercepted in every other religion was still continued in Islam. In fact, the prophecies were published with the avowed object that their fulfilment at a later date would be a sign that they were from God. Had their recipient any following at the time, his critics would have at once pointed out the fact and thus divested the prophecy of its value. But so unknown to fame was he at the time that his hostile critics only laughed at these prophecies at that time because they considered their fulfilment to be impossible. Living in a village in an out of the way place with no connection with any of the great centres of theological

or secular learning, he was a solitary man at the time and his prediction that time was coming when people would flock to him from all sides was laughed at as the word of a mad man. No one could believe at the time that such a thing would ever happen. There is yet a third circumstance which shows that at the time of the utterance and the publication of these prophecies he was a solitary person quite unknown to fame with not a single follower with him. It is the internal evidence afforded by the revelations themselves. I have already pointed out this evidence in connection with two revelations, one of which says that the time has drawn nigh when he should be made known to the world, showing that at that time he was not known, and the other depicts his state of solitariness and obscurity in the words, "Has not a time come upon man, *i. e.*, upon thee, when in the world no one spoke of thee, *i. e.*, none knew who thou wast." This revelation was meant to remind him at a later time of his former state. Similarly, there is a revelation in the form of a prophetic prayer which runs thus: "O my Lord! leave me not alone and Thou art the best of inheritors" which also shows that he was alone at the time.

The only other circumstance of which the proof is required to complete the miracle is that these prophecies have actually been fulfilled. If any one cannot be satisfied on this point by the wonderful progress which this propaganda has made, he can make a personal enquiry. The following of the man who was alone twenty-five years ago is counted now by hundreds of thousands, and the propaganda has already taken its roots not only in the most distant corners of India, but also in distant countries. Many a time in the year the number of visitors who come to see him is large enough to actually tire him, and thus the truth of the words, "Do not get tired of people," shines out like the meridian sun.

There is one circumstance more which enhances the value and grandeur of the prophecy and makes the miracle the clearest in point of proof in the whole sacred history. The revelations foretell not only a great future for their recipient, but they plainly state that his triumph would be brought about in spite of the hardest opposition. They depict a state of a mighty struggle in which no stone would be left unturned to bring him to naught. "People would try to

extinguish the light of God, but God will complete His light," so says one of the revelations quoted above. Another revelation tells us that ultimately when his triumph would be brought about, disappointment would overtake his opponents, and they would see that their opposition had availed naught against the powerful hand of God which worked in his support. Numerous other revelations published in the *Barahin-i-Ahmadiyya* speak in plain words of a mighty opposition which would ultimately be brought to naught. For eight years after the publication of these prophecies, there was neither a propaganda nor any opposition of which the prophecies spoke. The basis of both was laid about the beginning of the last decade of the nineteenth century, and so great and so hard was the opposition on all sides that no mortal could have out-lived that opposition by his own efforts to withstand it. The whole country from one end to the other rose against him. The theologians excited the ignorant masses by their *fatwas* (judgments) in which they pronounced the claimant to Messiahship to be a heresiarch, and condemned his followers who were very few in numbers. They were not to be allowed to enter Muslim mosques because the sacred edifices were polluted by their presence, and their dead bodies were considered to be too unholy for Muslim graveyards. Their marriage contracts were declared to be void, and their wives and their properties could be taken away. The murder of the claimant himself was declared to be a deed of the highest merit. In fact no effort was spared to excite the fanatical mobs to the highest pitch, and for a time the propaganda appeared to be doomed to destruction. But in accordance with His promises and prophecies, Almighty God brought the opposition to naught and the propaganda began to swell steadily in numbers and power, so much so that at present it has nearly three hundred thousand members.

All these circumstances give us the clearest proof of one of the grandest miracles which proves conclusively the truth of the claimant and the existence, the Omniscience and the Omnipotence of God. At a time when the recipient of the Divine revelation was alone and companionless, about a quarter of a century ago, prophecy gave him the glad tidings that he would not be left alone, but that he would have numerous followers and that people would come to him from distant places and remote corners in such numbers that they should tire him. It was also foretold that he would receive great assistance

from those people in the propagation of truth. The third point which the same prophecy announced was that people would do their utmost to bring him to naught and to extinguish the light which God had kindled through him, but that all their efforts would be fruitless and all their designs would be brought to naught. The proof of the publication of these prophecies and of their fulfilment is not open to any of the objections which are generally advanced against miracles. No sensible person would hold that these wonderful disclosures of the deep secrets of the future, upon which no guess or surmise could shed the faintest light, could be announced beforehand except by a revelation from Almighty God, the Knower of all secrets and the Possessor of all power. There was no circumstance which could make the most intelligent person guess that the solitary and companionless man, unknown to the outside world, who lived in an obscure village and who had never stepped out from the corner of solitude, would one day become the leader and guide of hundreds of thousands of men. If it is within the power of man to reveal such secrets, let another such instance be cited. The grandeur of these prophecies is made the more manifest when the third prophecy foretelling the attempts of people to thwart the fulfilment of these prophecies and God's promise to bring about their fulfilment in spite of every opposition is borne in mind. Can a mere mortal thus challenge the world? No, he cannot even say that he would live for such a time.

After citing these proofs, I appeal to every one who has the slightest regard for truth, to every Atheist, Christian, Hindu, Muslim or the follower of any other creed, I appeal to those who believe in God, in the name of God, and to those who do not believe in God, in the name of justice and truth, and ask them if all the evidence produced above does not lead to the certain conclusion that the miracle which has been performed in the fulfilment of these prophecies is quite beyond human power. Let every seeker after truth weigh the evidence and consider the facts, and if he thinks that any reasonable objection may still be advanced against the certainty of the conclusion, let him plainly state this so that I may be able to remove it. There are many men who have written about the Promised Messiah and many more will yet write about him, but I appeal to their sense of justice to make an enquiry into these circumstances first and pronounce their judgment upon this miracle.

mlk

Fundamental Doctrines of the Muslim Faith.



(Being the substance of a speech delivered by the
Promised Messiah on the 26th December 1906 at
an Annual Gathering of the Sadr
Anjuman-i-Ahmadiyya, Qadian.)

Translated from the Badr, Qadian.

The first fundamental principle of the faith of Islam is the recognition of Divine Unity, but it should be borne in mind that a mere belief in the Unity of God is not sufficient. One should never be contented that one is called a Muslim and believes in the formula that "there is no god but God." Those who have read the Holy Quran know it well that Almighty God is not pleased with lip-profession. It is the heart to which God looks because the heart is the seat of the Almighty. In the Holy Quran Almighty God speaks of the Jews as a favored people to whom great blessings were granted, but another time came upon them when their beliefs became lip-beliefs only, and the words which they uttered with their mouths had no access to their hearts, because while there was faith on their lips, their hearts were full of evil ideas, dishonesty and faithlessness. Hence Almighty God sent upon them punishments of various sorts. They had still the books of the prophets with them in which they expressed their belief and they believed also in the prophets, but they found no favour in the sight of God because the words they uttered were upon their lips and their hearts did not realize the meaning of those words. Bear in mind, then, that Almighty God is not pleased with the words of the mouth when the heart is devoid of true purity. Remember this, and let not a mere profession of belief in God deceive you, for the faith that is on the tongue and not in the heart is an impure and powerless faith. It cannot serve any purpose, neither in this life nor in the next. Almighty God is not pleased until He sees that a man has banished from his heart all ideas except the idea of God and turns solely to Him and sets greater value upon

his faith than upon the things of this world. You may deceive men by outward deeds of prayers, fasting and almsgiving when your heart is devoid of the true spirit of these virtuous deeds, but you cannot deceive God by your dry and spiritless formalities. That you repeat the formula of faith and are known as believers in the Unity of God has no value in the sight of God.

It is the meaning of the formula of faith which you should know and act upon. When a person says لا اله الا الله, 'there is no god but God,' he professes with his tongue and believes with his heart that none except God deserves to be worshipped. The word *ildh* translated "god" really means in Arabic the "object of love, worship and desire." The formula *la ilaha illallah*, "there is no god but God" which has been taught to the Muslims as a proclamation of the Unity of God is really the essence of the Holy Quran. It means that unless God is made the true object of a man's love, desire and worship, and unless Divine glory and majesty reign supreme in a man's heart so that he is prepared to sacrifice every worldly interest for the sake of God, he cannot attain to the supreme bliss and eternal happiness known as salvation. There is a tradition of the Holy Prophet according to which "whoever says that there is no god but God shall enter into paradise." The meaning of these words has been greatly misunderstood. The tradition does not mean as many people think that the utterance of the above-mentioned words with the tongue is sufficient for the attainment of salvation. Almighty God sees the hearts and mere words have no importance in His sight. The tradition signifies that when a man fully realizes the significance of the words *la ilaha illallah*, and the majesty and glory of God fully enter into his heart, he enters into a paradise. The realization of the significance of these words involves that a man should have no object of love besides God, nor any object of worship or desire besides Him. True and sincere faith in the Unity of God and acting in practice upon the true significance of the formula of the faith is that stage in the spiritual progress of man upon reaching which a man becomes a saint or the beloved one of God. Be not proud that you do not worship an idol or a human being, for idol-worship and human-worship are evils of a gross type and are avoided by every man of common sense. Even the Hindu who has for centuries remained steeped in the grossest idol-worship has now begun to hate it, and the

worshippers of Jesus are also beginning to see their errors. But Islam does not stop there, and when it inculcates a belief in the Unity of God, it does not require us simply to avoid idol-worship or human-worship. It requires us to completely forsake all those false idols which we have made in our hearts. For instance, to follow one's desires or to gratify one's passions or to follow evil courses are really so many idols which men are worshipping. The faith of Islam, "there is no god but God," rejects these idols as well, and considers them great hinderances to the spiritual progress of man. In Islam there is a negation of all gods besides God, whether those gods may be the false idols within a man's heart or actual images made of stone. What is required is that the heart should be purified for the love and reverence of one Being only. Nay, it is easy to forsake the worship of stone-idols, but the idols of desires assume various disguises and remain hidden in the deepest depths of the heart. There was a time when idol-worship predominated every phase of life in India, but many idol-worshippers have now become Muslims and even the Hindus who stick to their old faith are beginning to hate idol-worship. This is because the errors of idol-worship are plain enough. But the other form of idol-worship is a far more dangerous disease. The idols within the heart of a man are not seen by the physical eye, and even philosophic minds are misled by the disguises which they assume. It is through the microscope of Divine grace only that they can be seen. And so long as they occupy the heart, it cannot become the seat of the Almighty. Their harm is the greater on account of their very nature. These idols are the desires and passions for whose gratification a man infringes both Divine and human rights. Some people trust the efficiency of means and resources to such an extent as to exclude all ideas of God. They may profess a belief in God and express hatred for idols, but their means and resources are really their idols. Unless all these idols are swept off, true Unity of God can never be established in the heart.

Many people would ask, 'Do we not believe in the Unity of God?' My answer to them is that they do not believe in the Unity of God if their hearts still follow their own desires and rely on their own resources. A belief in the Unity of God is not a meaningless thing. It has a wonderful effect upon the human life and this

effect can be witnessed clearly in the practical life of the man who with his whole heart and true sincerity believes in the Unity of God. What I say to you is my own experience: let him who will accept it. It pains me to see even among my followers those who do not accept the Unity of God to which He invites them. A belief in the Unity of God requires us to be most regardful of the rights of His creatures. Therefore the person who violates his brother's right is not a believer in the Unity of God. So long as jealousy, enmity, hypocrisy, dishonesty, &c., are met with in a man's relations with his fellow-men, his profession of the Unity of God is not sincere and does not proceed from his heart. For, unless a man shows in his practice that he has forsaken all gods and all objects of love, worship and desire, a profession with the lips is an utterly useless thing. A man can never be pure in heart unless he first destroys all the false idols which like rats on earth affect it with a plague. It is in this that the distinctive superiority of Islam lies, for as regards the mere belief in the Unity of God, there are Unitarians even among the Christians, and the Aryas, the Brahmos and the Jews too profess a belief in the Unity of God.

The Unity of God is the first and the foremost principle of Islam. Having expressed myself briefly on the true nature of this doctrine, I will say a few words about the prayers enjoined by the Muslim law which form the second pillar of the faith of Islam. The importance of the injunction relating to prayers can be understood easily from the frequent repetition of that injunction in the Holy Quran. But the Holy Book at the same time warns the Muslims against a misconception or ignorance of the true nature of prayers, for it says: "Woe is to those who pray but are utterly regardless of the true nature of their prayers" Prayers are a supplication addressed to Almighty God by a man to purify him and to make him attain union with Him, for unless a man is purified by the hand of God, he cannot be pure, and unless Almighty God makes him attain His ~~union by His powerful hand, he cannot find it.~~ Many are the chains and fetters with which a man is bound, and his own exertions, however hard, are not sufficient to liberate him from them. He desires that he may become purified, but his efforts without the helping hand of God are of no avail, and sometimes he does stumble. To ~~redeem~~ ^{purify} one from sins is the work of God only and there is no other

power on the earth's surface which can bring about that object. Hence Almighty God has enjoined prayers that they may be the means of bringing about a pure transformation and ^{generating} creating holy promptings and pure impulses within a man's heart. Prayers are a humble and earnest supplication to Almighty God that evil desires, evil passions and evil impulses may be suppressed and a pure love and a pure connection with the Divine Being may be generated in their place which should enable a man to walk in obedience to Divine commandments. The word used for prayers in the Muslim Law is *Salat*, and the presence of the idea of "burning" in the root meaning shows that prayer is not the utterance of certain words with the lips, but that true prayer should be accompanied with a burning of the heart for the attainment of the object prayed for. Very few persons are acquainted with the philosophy of prayer. A kind of death comes over the person who sets himself to pray for the attainment of an object. It is then that prayer is accepted. But very few persons know this. I daily receive letters in which men complain that they prayed for an object, but that their prayer was not accepted. They do not know that the utterance of certain words with the lips is not prayer. It is a necessary condition for the acceptance of prayer that the heart should completely melt before God, and the grace of God should be sought with patience and perseverance. Such prayers are generally accepted. The daily prayers which are enjoined by the Muslim Law afford to a Muslim the best occasion for addressing his supplications to God, but the Muslims are unaware of their blessings. It is due to ignorance that the different sects have invented different forms of devotion for seeking the nearness of God. It is through prayers only that His nearness is attained, and this was the way which the Holy Prophet followed. It is my personal experience that nothing can make a man attain that nearness of God which can be attained through prayers. All the movements in prayers are expressive of the deepest humbleness before God. First we stand with our hands folded on the breast, as a servant stands respectfully before his lord and master, expressing by this attitude that like a humble servant, we are ready to obey all the Divine commandments. Next we bend low before Him as a servant does before his master and thus express our further humbleness while we praise the holiness and greatness of God. The highest degree of humbleness which is expressive of

utter human weakness in the majestic Divine presence is shown in the act of prostration. The tongue utters the praises of God and thus while the words express His glory and greatness, the heart shows its sincerity in this praise and glorification of the mighty Lord of earth and heavens by the physical act of prostration. The physical movements of the body in prayers are therefore only practical expressions of the deep humbleness of the heart and both the tongue and the heart, the body as well as the soul, join in singing praises of the glory and greatness of God and expressing by words as well as practice the utter weakness and humility of man.

As there is a deep significance beneath the physical movements of the body in the prayers, so there is a hidden meaning in the five times appointed by the Islamic law for the five daily prayers. They represent the five conditions of man. They are photographs of man's changing conditions. The life of man is subject to five different changes which he undergoes in the time of adversity. These five changes are necessary to human nature. First of all he is informed of the misfortune that is going to befall him, as, for instance, when a warrant is issued from a court of justice for his arrest. For the first time then his comfort and happiness are suddenly interrupted and a cloud of melancholy is cast over his sunshine of glory. This stage corresponds to the time for the first prayer immediately after noon. As the sun begins to decline from the zenith after noon, so a man who is at the height of his prosperity and success witnesses the first stage of his declination when he comes to know of an impending misfortune. This stage of the human condition finds its representation in the prayer which is said at the first decline of the sun, *i. e.*, the *zuhr* prayer. The sun declines farther to the west and the troubles increase. In the illustration already stated, the person upon whom the warrant is executed is brought before the magistrate. Difficulties then encompass him all around, and the light of comfort is on the verge of extinction. Corresponding to this state of man is the time of the day when the sun has declined far to the west and his light is turned pale so that the eye can rest upon him. The zenith of glory is left far behind and the setting of the sun after a short time is apparent. The later after-noon prayer, *i. e.*, '*asr*', answers to this spiritual state. A third change then comes over the man. There is no hope left of being delivered from the trouble. To continue the illustration

already suggested, evidence being taken against the accused person which shows his guilt, a charge is framed by the magistrate. He is then frightened out of his senses and deems himself already a prisoner. The son of glory is then set. This state corresponds to the time when the sun actually sets and the light of the day vanishes away. The evening prayer said after sunset represents this condition. The culminating point of adversity is reached when darkness encompasses a man all around, and its force is fully realized. The verdict goes against him and he is sent to gaol. Then there is before him the darkness of night. Corresponding to this state of physical adversity are the night-prayers which are said when the darkness of night fully sets in. This long interval of darkness is again followed by a light in the East which gives news of the rising sun. The period of imprisonment is over, and the sun of prosperity again begins to shine upon the man. In accordance with this change the next prayer-time is the morning which brings the glad tidings of the new sun.

The third principal injunction of the Muslim law is fasting. There are some men who say that changes must be introduced into these practices. They are spiritually blind and ignorant of the deep wisdom which underlies every injunction given by Almighty God. Fasting is necessary for the perfect purity of the soul. It is presumptuous on the part of those who have never walked in the spiritual paths to suggest reforms in these paths. They are engrossed day and night with their worldly affairs and their whole lives pass in temporal concerns. How absurd on their part then to handle matters religious notwithstanding their absolute ignorance about them. The fact is that the suffering of hunger and reducing the quantity of food which one generally takes is an essential step in the spiritual progress of man. It strengthens the visionary power of man. Man does not live by bread alone. And after this life there is another and eternal life to neglect which is to separate oneself entirely from God. The man who fasts should bear in mind that fasting does not mean only abstaining from food for a stated time. Its true significance is that man should abstain from every kind of evil. In fact, food is a thing which Almighty God has not forbidden but He has forbidden evil. If then He requires us to abstain while fasting from that which he has not ordinarily for

bidden, how much more necessary it is that we should abstain from that which He has forbidden. When keeping fast, you should remember God much. The practice of the Holy Prophet shows that the Ramazan is particularly the month of Divine worship. Therefore let your abstinence from food during these days serve as a step for the engrossment of your ideas with the worship of God, so that cutting off all ordinary connections with the physical world, you may enjoy the blessings of the spiritual world. Woe to him who found the physical bread and did not care for the spiritual bread. As the physical bread sustains the physical life in man, so the spiritual bread sustains the spiritual life of man and breathes vital power into the spirit. Seek assistance from God, for by His grace are the doors opened.

The fourth pillar of Islam is *Zakat* or giving of legal alms. The Arabic word signifies purification, and therefore by this injunction also Islam aims at purity. There are many people who give alms and make charitable gifts, but they do not care whether they earn money by fair or foul means. But the institution of *Zakat* in Islam requires only a stated share of that which has been earned fairly and without doing any wrong to others. *Zakat* is the giving in the way of God out of one's fair earnings which are thus purified. What Islam aims at teaching by this institution is that a man should not so love the wealth of this world as to feel it difficult to part with it in the way of God. On one occasion the Holy Quran says : *لن تنالوا البرحتى تنفقوا مما تحبون* "By no means can you attain to righteousness until you spend in the way of God out of what you love." The reason for this injunction is that unless a man learns to sacrifice his dearest interests for the sake of God, he cannot be said to have preferred the side of God to this world. When we compare the state of the Muslims of our time with the companions of the Holy Prophet, a ^{sharp} sad contrast is brought to light. There is nothing in the world which is dearer to a man than his own life, but the companions willingly sacrificed their lives for the sake of God. They had also wives and children to look after, but they loved to sacrifice themselves and everything they had in the way of God.

The fifth pillar of the Muslim faith is the pilgrimage to Mecca. The pilgrimage represents the last stage for the spiritual wayfarer. In the highest stage of spiritual advancement the spiritual way-

farer has all his lower connections entirely cut off and he is completely engrossed with Divine love. The true lover finds his highest satisfaction in sacrificing his very heart and soul for the beloved one's sake, and the circuit round the house of God is an emblem or external manifestation of it. Corresponding to the Divine temple on earth, there is a Divine temple on heaven and a circuit round the temple on earth is useless unless a circuit is made round the heavenly temple also. The pilgrim who makes a circuit round the Ka'ba takes off all his clothes and wears only one garment, but the spiritual pilgrim throws off all his superficial garments and comes into Divine presence with a heart quite naked because it has been freed from every trammel. The pilgrim shows by the external act of making circuit round the Ka'ba that the fire of Divine love has been kindled within his heart, and like the true lover he makes circuits round the house of his beloved one. He shows in fact that he has lost his own will and completely surrender it to that of his beloved master and that he has sacrificed all his interests for His sake. Such is the true meaning of the Hajj or pilgrimage in the Islamic law, and every body who undertakes to go on a pilgrimage should bear in mind that unless he realizes the full significance of the pilgrimage, and unless the bodily act of pilgrimage is accompanied with the spiritual pilgrimage, his performance of the rites of the pilgrimage is only a lifeless ceremony devoid of all meaning. But many people perform the pilgrimage only to be called pilgrims and spend their foully earned wealth for a visit to the holy places. Almighty God does not accept their pilgrimage, for they are only crusts without any essence.

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A Muslim's Views ON The British Government.

While the great political leaders of India were making harangues at the Congress inciting people to constant agitation against the Government, a great religious leader among the Muslims was at a quieter meeting in an out of the way place exhorting his followers to be grateful to it for its manifold blessings, not the least of

which was religious liberty. Mirza Ghulam Ahmad addressed a meeting of nearly 1500 of his followers who had gathered from far and near on the 27th December after the afternoon prayers dwelling at some length upon the blessings which Almighty God had vouchsafed to the Indian people through the instrumentality of the British Government. He remarked :—

“It is only through His grace and goodness that Almighty God has placed us under a government which has granted religious liberty to all its subjects. It is due to the liberty granted by this Government and to its justice that our opponents cannot give a practical turn to their hostility against us (the Ahmadiyya propaganda). If it had been in their power, they would have annihilated us, but on account of their inability to do so, they only grind their teeth in wrath and despair, for they are unable to execute their designs. When I remember the hardships and persecutions suffered by the early Muslims, and then see what a kind-hearted government God has sent to protect us from such persecution, my heart overflows with thanks to the Almighty for His unbounded grace and kindness towards us. How merciful and gracious is our Lord, for when He wished to establish a heavenly dispensation in the days of the decline of Islam, He placed it under a peaceful government. I do not say this to please any body : it is hypocritical to do so, and I hate hypocrisy and have come to deal a death-blow to it. Facts compel us to praise this Government and to be grateful to God for His blessings. Consider only one fact, *viz.*, the peace and freedom with which we are doing our own work under this Government. We have been propagating the doctrines of this movement for more than twenty-five years, and the Government has not in the least degree interfered with our work. We have published thousands of pamphlets in America, England and other European countries among respectable persons inviting them to accept our holy faith. A book was even sent to her late Majesty the Queen-Empress, and though this book contained an invitation to the Queen to accept Islam, yet her Majesty or the Government was not in any way offended at it and another copy of the book was sent for. By placing us under such a Government, Almighty God has shown that it is His will to make this propaganda successful, for nowhere else

could we carry on our work with this freedom. Had we been at Mecca, innocent blood would have been shed every day by religious bigots, nor could we do our work at Medina or Constantinople without persecution on the part of the authorities. The cruel murder of two of our friends at Kabul shows the truth of these remarks. They did not rebel against the government of the country or commit homicide or any other crime under the penal code; they only spoke against the doctrine of *Jehad* and the advent of a *Ghazi* Mahdi. They did not say anything against Islam and were murdered by a Muslim ruler, while we publish writings against Christianity day and night and a Christian Government does not even prohibit us from doing so. They were good, righteous and silent men. Maulvi Abdul Latif especially was very silent, but some selfish person informed the Amir of his doctrines and excited him saying that he opposed *Jehad* and some other doctrines held by the orthodox. It was for this fault only that he was stoned to death in such a cruel manner that the hardest heart melts to tears at the mention of the cruelty.

"Look at the British rule now. For thirty years, more or less, we have been writing against the Christian religion. We tell the Missionaries and other Christians plainly that they are in a serious error in holding the Christian religion to be true. We tell them that Trinity and Atonement are false doctrines, that Islam is the only true religion and the only means of attainment of salvation, and that the Holy Prophet Muhammad, may peace and the blessings of God be upon him, is the most excellent of all prophets of God and Divine union cannot be attained except through him, but we are never arrested for saying these things against a Christian government, nor have the authorities ever asked us why we propagate our religion so openly. If we do not praise the Government for all this freedom and peace which it has granted to us, we are ungrateful to God for His gifts and guilty of a great sin. We have shown the errors of the Christian religion in the strongest words, but the Government has in respect of religious liberty shown wonderful neutrality. It has not withheld from us any right which it has given to the Missionaries of its own religion, and all the religious sects have the same freedom of opinion and freedom of propagation granted to them. A wonderful example of justice and

neutrality was shown by a British District Magistrate, Capt. Douglas, in a case of abetment of murder brought against me by a famous Christian Missionary. The Magistrate did not show any favor to the Missionary prosecutor and treated me honourably in the Court. At last when it became clear to him that the case was really got up, he honourably acquitted me.

"Though the government has granted equal freedom to all sects and communities, yet its presence in this country is one of the signs which Almighty God has manifested for us particularly. The tree which it is the will of Almighty God should grow and give fruit is planted by Him in a place where its growth is not hampered in any way, but the tree whose growth He does not like is planted in a place where it soon withers away. Now the seed of this heavenly dispensation which Almighty God has sent me to establish has been sown in a land which is suitable for its growth, and no calamity can sweep it out of existence here. It is to a very large extent quite safe from its enemies. And as it is the British Government which has been made an instrument by Almighty God in the granting of these blessings, it behoves us, when we thank God for His gifts, to express our gratitude to the Government also, for Almighty God says in the Holy Quran, "Is aught but goodness the reward of goodness?" It does not mean that you should do goodness in return for goodness only when the party concerned is a Muslim, and not when he belongs to any other religion. Such conduct Islam severely condemns. My advice to all my followers is that they should hate the narrow-minded and fanatic *Mullas* who shed innocent human blood under the guise of religion, and perpetrate the blackest deeds under the cloak of piety. They should value this Government and show their gratefulness to it by their loyalty and obedience. For, the man who is not thankful to men cannot be thankful to God."

The Universality of Islam.

In the last issue we drew the attention of the *Brahmavadin* to certain remarks made in its pages in which the "acts of Mahomet" were called an "imposture" and every Musalman was said to have his character imbued with a certain degree of "imposture," however noble.

that character may be in other ways. Our reason in calling the attention of our contemporary to these remarks was that the *Brahmavadin* was an organ of Vedantism which claimed to have special regard for the feelings of the followers of the different religions. The *Arya Patrika* of Lahore thinks, however, that such statements, should not wound the susceptibility of the Muslims, for otherwise the merits or demerits of religions cannot be discussed. So far as we see it is not at all necessary for the discussion of the merits or demerits of a religion to speak of its founder and his noblest followers as impostors, and we are certain that if Swami Dayanand and the whole body of living and dead Arya Samajists had been called impostors, our Arya contemporary would not have expressed the same opinion. Most of the leading men and organs of the Arya Samaj are accustomed to the use of harsh and scurrilous language when speaking of the founders of other religions, and even prosecutions have not given them a lesson. It is for this reason that we find them still advocating the use of abusive language in religious controversies. It is to be regretted that no member of the Arya Samaj has yet seen the desirability of preaching moderation in controversial writings.

The *Arya Patrika* also questions the claim of Islam to universality because it thinks that from the beginning of the world only one book had the character of universality, viz., the Vedas, though strangely enough for thousands of years it has remained shut up within India. Certainly our learned contemporary has a unique conception of universality. To establish the claim of a religion to universality three things must be proved; firstly, that it advanced such a claim at the time of its birth; secondly, that its fundamental principles bear out this claim; and thirdly, that it showed the truth of this claim in practice.

We are ready to offer proof on all three points so far as the claims of Islam are concerned, but for the sake of comparison, we would request our contemporary to cite proof of these three points as regards the claim of universality advanced for the Vedas. Some time ago, the *Arya Patrika* objected to the permission of polygamy in Islam, but when we showed that people who prohibited polygamy had to sanction the worst institutions which could blacken human character, and cited as instances the sanction of prostitution in Christendom and that of *Niyoga*, which is worse even than prostitution, by the Arya Samaj, and invited the paper to a friendly discussion on polygamy and *Niyoga*, it discreetly assumed silence and thus escaped out of the difficulty. We hope our contemporary would even now afford us an occasion for a discussion on the two questions, and it would be well if the question of "Polygamy or *Niyoga*" be taken first, as it has so long been awaiting a discussion.