



# THE REVIEW of RELIGIONS

**VOL LXXIX NO. 5**

**MAY 1984**

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**EUROPEAN  
EDITION**

**EDITOR  
B. A. ORCHARD**



## THE AHMADIYYA MOVEMENT

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



\* MANAGER EUROPEAN EDITION: M.A. SAQ1  
16 GRESSEHALL ROAD LONDON SW18 5QL

# بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

## The REVIEW of RELIGIONS

A monthly Magazine devoted to the dissemination of the teachings of Islam and the discussion of general Islamic Problems. The magazine is published from London U.K.

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

*All correspondence should be forwarded directly to the Editor, Review of Religions, Rabwah Pakistan.*

### *Subscriptions:*

*Single Copy: Rs. 5.00*

*Annual: Rs. 50.00*

*Single Copy U.K. £ 1.00*

*Annual U.K. £ 10.00*



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## Commentary on a verse of the Holy Quran

وَلَقَدْ أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَىٰ مُوسَىٰ أَن أَسْرِ بِعِبَادِي فَاصْرَبْ  
 لَهُمْ طَرِيقًا فِي الْبَحْرِ لِيَنبَسُوا لَا تَخَفْ دَرَكًا وَلَا  
 تَخْشَىٰ ۝٤٥

And We sent a revelation to Moses, saying, 'Take away My servants by night, and strike for them a dry path through the sea. Thou wilt not be afraid of being overtaken, nor wilt thou have any other fear.'

The incident mentioned in this verse relates to the time when, under God's command, Moses led the Israelites out of Egypt into Canaan. The Israelites left secretly by night, and when Pharaoh learnt of their flight, he pursued them with his hosts and was drowned in the Red Sea.

In order to appreciate fully the nature and significance of this incident which indeed constituted a great Divine Sign, it is necessary to read the verse under comment along with other relevant verses such as vv. 2:51, 26:62-64 & 44:25. The Qur'an says:

*And remember the time when We divided the sea for you and saved you and drowned Pharaoh's people while you looked on (2:51).*

*And when the two hosts came in sight of each other the companions of Moses said, 'We are surely overtaken.' . . . Then We revealed to Moses, saying, 'Strike the sea with thy rod.' Whereupon it parted and every part was like a huge sand-hill (26:62-64). When the Israelites were passing they had the sea on one side and the small lakes on the other, which conforming to the natural laws of perspective appeared raised above the level of the land.*

*And leave the sea at a time when it is motionless. Surely, they are a host which is doomed to be drowned (44:25), i.e. pass through the sea quickly at a time when the tide has receded.*

The Bible also refers to this incident in the following verses:

And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the Lord caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all the night and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided. And the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the dry ground; and the waters were a wall unto them on their right

hand and on their left. And the Egyptians pursued and went in after them to the midst of the sea . . . And the Lord said unto Moses, 'Stretch out thine hand over the sea' . . . And Moses stretched forth his hand over the sea and the sea returned to its strength . . . And the waters returned and covered the chariots, and the horsemen, and all the host of Pharaoh that came into the sea after them; there remained not so much as one of them (Exod. 14:21-28).

The following facts emerge from the above account of this incident as given in the Qur'an and the Bible;

(a) that Moses was commanded by God to take away the Israelites out of Egypt by night;

(b) that Pharaoh pursued the Israelites with his mighty hosts;

(c) that when the Israelites reached the arm of the Red Sea which lay across their route, they were greatly dismayed because Pharaoh was close behind with his hosts;

(d) that when on seeing Pharaoh's hosts the Israelites exclaimed in fright that they were overtaken, God commanded Moses to strike the water of the sea with his rod;

(e) that when Moses struck the sea with his rod as the Qur'an says or stretched out his hand over the sea as the Bible says, it was the time of the ebb-tide and the sea was receding, leaving a dry bed;

(f) that Moses was commanded by God to cross quickly the dry bed to the opposite bank, which he did;

(g) that when the hosts of Pharaoh reached the sea, it was the time of high tide and that in their zeal to overtake the Israelites they took no notice of it and at once jumped into the sea behind them; and

(h) that, as it appears, being heavily equipped with big chariots and other heavy armaments the progress of the army of Pharaoh was greatly retarded so that while they were yet in the midst of the sea, the high tide returned and they were all drowned.

Historians differ as to the exact place from where Moses crossed the Red Sea from Egypt into Canaan. Some are of the view that on his way from the territory of Goshen, which is also called the valley of Al-Tamthilat or Wadi Tumilat and where the capital of the Pharaohs was situated (Enc. Bib. vol. 4, col. 4012, under "Rameses"), Moses passed by the Gulf of Timsah (Enc. Bib., cols. 1438 & 1439). Others think that he went much further to the north and going round Zoan crossed over to Canaan near the Mediterranean Sea (Enc. Bib., col. 1438). But what is most probable is the fact that from Tal Abi Sulaiman which was the capital of the Pharaohs in Moses's time, the Israelites

at first went north-east to the Gulf of Timsah but finding that a net of gulfs barred their way, they turned south and crossed the Red Sea near the town of Suez where it is hardly more than 2/3 mile wide, and started for Qadas (Enc. Bib., col. 1437).

The following passage from Peake's "Commentary on the Bible" (p. 64) may also be read with interest:

The Israelites fled with him (Moses) across the Goshen marshes into the Sinaitic peninsula. The crossing of the "Red Sea" (*yam suph*, "sea" or "lake of reeds") was probably the crossing of the southern end of a lake a few miles N.W. of what is now called the Red Sea. A wind laid bare a wide stretch of shore, and when an Egyptian force pursued the fugitives, their chariot wheels stuck fast in the wet soil, and the water returned upon them when the wind shifted. Writers differ as to the route taken by the Israelites. Some think that they moved southward to the mountainous range of (the modern) Sinai, and then along the eastern arm of the Red Sea, now known as the Gulf of 'Akaba, to its northern-most point at Ezion-Geber. Others think that the evidence points to the route still taken by Mecca pilgrims, nearly due E. to Ezion Geber, and that thence they moved N.W. to the region of Kadesh (Barnea), to Mt. Sinai or southward along the E. side of the Gulf of 'Akaba to Mt. Horeb. The traditions differ and certainty is impossible.

There are people who, against all canons of history take particular delight in propounding most extraordinary theories that the Israelites never lived in Egypt. Some such theories are:

(a) No reference to the Israelites is to be found in the old Egyptian historical records.

(b) In the fifth year of the reign of Pharaoh Menephtah (or Merenptah) when Moses is said to have taken the Israelites out of Egypt, some Israelite tribes were actually living in Canaan, therefore the theory of Moses having taken the Israelites out of Egypt to Canaan during his reign and their having settled in that country some fifty years later is all wrong.

(c) Though trace is found of some tribes having crossed over from Asia into Egypt but there is no proof that these were the Israelite tribes.

The propounders of these strange theories seem to ignore the patent fact that the Israelites were foreigners in Egypt and were a subject race and lived the miserable life of slaves under their cruel rulers. How could such people be considered worthy of any notice being taken of them by historians? Apart from this the fact may also be taken into consideration that when it is not quite possible for historians even in this 20th century to prepare a well-connected and harmonious narrative about a people from the remnants of its ruined civilization, it was much more difficult for historians in the past to reconstruct a

consistent record from the fragmentary accounts of a people who lived in the hoary past and who were treated like beasts of burden by their rulers. This is why no reference to the Israelites is to be found in the old historical records of Egypt.

Secondly, the doubtful theory that certain Israelite tribes were found to be living in Canaan in the 5th year of the reign of Pharaoh Menepthah cannot disprove the fact that other Israelite tribes had remained behind in Egypt. Is it not possible that some of these tribes might have left Egypt for Canaan sometime before all of them were taken out of it by Moses. It is very strange that on the one hand these very writers say that Moses is an Egyptian name and that some of the companions of Moses also had Egyptian names, and on the other that the Israelites never went to Egypt. Moreover, the Bible gives a detailed and well-connected story of the Israelites having lived in Egypt. There was no compelling reason for the writers of the Bible to have done so, especially when the Israelites had lived there only as slaves and worse than beasts of burden. No people would feel any urge or pride in forging and falsely inventing such a miserable record of shame and sorrow of themselves. Last but by no means least, the Biblical details with regard to the customs, culture and mode of life of the Pharaohs of that time is another proof of the fact that the Israelites had lived under them. The Bible had no interest in the Pharaoh dynasty of Egypt apart from their being rulers of the Israelites. Besides, as stated by old Greek historians, the Egyptians themselves admitted that the Israelites had lived in Egypt for a long time and later on had left this country. The present Egypt, however, should not be confused with a territory which in ancient times was also known as Egypt but which formed a part of northern Syria or northern Arabia.

The date of the Exodus has also been much contested and there seems to be considerable difficulty in determining its exact date from the Biblical records alone. Neither the name of the reigning Pharaoh nor the place where he held his court is mentioned; the account given is not contemporary, but has been condensed and annotated by later editors, and fused by them into a general narrative; and the Biblical chronology of the period, though containing trustworthy material, is known to be largely artificial. Apart from the Biblical records any historical information on the subject is meagre. Various theories, however, are held about the Exodus. Some of these are as follows:

1. The view that the Israelites left Egypt with the Hyksos (1580 B.C.) at the beginning of the XVIIIth Dynasty, or shortly afterwards, and lived a nomadic life of about 200 years in the desert previous to entering Canaan. But evidently this view seems to do violence to genuine Hebrew tradition.

2. The theory which dates the Exodus in the XVIIIth Dynasty, but about 1445 B.C. just after the long despotic reign of Thutmose III and during that of

his son Amenhotep II (1447-1420 B.C.). This theory too lacks the support of trustworthy historical material and Hebrew tradition.

3. The hypothesis which connects the Exodus with the religious revolution attempted by Amenhotep IV, otherwise known as Akhenaten (1383-1366 B.C.). This view would place the Exodus about 1350 or 1345 B.C. This seems to be more plausible than the first two views.

4. But the theory, largely prevalent which receives much support from historical data, archaeological research and Hebrew tradition is that the Exodus occurred in the XIXth Dynasty (1328-1202 B.C.), in the reign of Merenptah II or Meneptah II (1234-1214) and still seems the most probable. It appears to have taken place about 1230 B.C. According to this view the Pharaoh of the Oppression would be Rameses II and his successor Merenptah II, the Pharaoh of the Exodus (Peake's Commentary on the Bible, pp. 119, 955 & 956).

Incidentally, it may be stated here that the striking of the water of the sea with his rod by Moses had no cause and effect connection with the actual parting of the sea. It was merely a sign of a Divine intimation that it was the time of the ebb tide and that the Israelites should hasten to cross. God had so arranged that when Moses reached the sea the tide was about to go back, so that as soon as he struck the sea with his rod in obedience to Divine command, it began to recede and a dry path was made for the Israelites. The striking of the water with his rod by Moses and the recession of the sea coincided. This constituted a miracle because God alone knew when the sea would recede and He had commanded Moses to strike its waters at the time of its recession.

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*The man who in his being and his attributes and his actions and through his spiritual and holy faculties set an example of perfection, in knowledge and action and in sincerity and steadfastness, and was called the perfect man was Muhammad, peace be on him . . . The man who was most perfect as man and as Prophet, and came with full blessings, and who through a spiritual revival and resurrection manifested the first judgment in the world and revived the dead world, that blessed Prophet, the Seal of the Prophets, the leader of the righteous ones, the pride of the Prophets, was Muhammad, the chosen one, peace be on him. Our Lord, send down on that beloved Prophet that mercy and blessing that Thou has not sent down on anyone since the beginning of the world. Had that grand Prophet not appeared in the world then we would have no proof of the truth of lesser Prophets like Jonah, Job, Jesus son of Mary, Malachi, John, Zakaria, etc. Though they were favourites and honoured and were beloved ones of Almighty God, they are under obligation to this Prophet that they were accepted in the world as true Prophets. O Allah, send down Thy blessings on him and on his people and on his companions, all of them. Our last word is that all praise belongs to Allah, Lord of the worlds. (The Promised Messiah).*



# Notes and Comments

By B.A. Rafiq

A new version of Bible readings has been made available by the National Council of Churches. The 112 page "Inclusive Language Lectionary" has been prepared with a view to avoid the use of masculine pronouns used in the Revised Standard version for God and Jesus.

Thus the injunction to "Let your light so shine before men . . ." becomes "Let your light so shine before others". The words "God the Father" changes into "God the Father and Mother." "Man does not live by bread alone" now reads, "One shall not live by bread alone".

The Lectionary acknowledges that Jesus was a man but does not take the fact of his maleness as of any significant importance.

The recent change in this new version of the Bible is yet another proof of the fact that it has suffered many changes and interpolations at the hands of Christians. The Jews and the Christians have wilfully perverted the text of the Bible in the past and have thus proved by their action that this book is not the word of God.

The *Encyclopaedia Biblica* (653-654) records a Jewish tradition that all the scriptures were destroyed when the Temple was burnt.

"The text of scripture, like that of all ancient books, has been considerably altered in the lapse of time through mistakes of copyists and other causes". (*Theological Encyclopaedia* by E.O. Davies, London, 1905, p.12).

Rev. J. Paterson Smyth, in the book *How we got our Bible*, London, p.27), says, "It is rather startling to learn that the earliest Hebrew manuscripts in existence date no earlier than about the tenth century . . . As far as we can learn there seems to have been a gradual rough sort of revision of the Palestine manuscripts continually going on almost from the days of Ezra. About a thousand years ago this process of Hebrew Manuscripts Revision came to an end." The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* endorses the same view by saying that "since the fixing of the Massoretic text (between the 6th and 8th centuries of the Christian era) the "task of preserving and transmitting the sacred books has been carried out with the greatest care and fidelity . . . but before that date, owing to various causes, it is beyond dispute that a large number of corruptions were introduced into the Hebrew text."

This proves that the Jews and the Christians have been in the habit of corrupting their scriptures and are doing so even now.

## The Sayings of The Holy Prophet Muhammad

The Holy Prophet Muhammad said one day to his companions, "Reverence God as is becoming of you." They said, "Verily, O Apostle of God, we do reverence Him, and praise be to God Who has endued us with it." Then the Prophet Muhammad said, "It is not so; but whoever reverences God as it is suitable for him to do must guard his head from humbling itself to others, and from pride and arrogance towards God and God's creatures; he must guard his senses from whatever is wrong, and must guard his mouth from eating forbidden things, and his heart from receiving what is prohibited; and he must keep death in mind, and the rotting of his bones. And whoever wishes for future rewards must abandon the ornaments of the world. Therefore any one attending to the afore-mentioned points has verily revered God as it is his duty to do."

★   ★   ★

Not one of you must die but with resignation to the Will of God, and with hope for His beneficence and pardon.

★   ★   ★

When you speak, speak the truth; perform when you promise; discharge your trust; commit not fornication; be chaste; have no impure desires; withhold your hands from striking; and from taking that which is unlawful and bad. The best of God's servants are those who when seen, remind of God; and the worst of God's servants are those who carry tales about, to do mischief and separate friends, and seek for the defects of good.

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*It is not within the power of man to emerge from the operation of the system of Divine decrees and determination. (The Promised Messiah).*

# The Holy Shroud of Turin

*by Dr. Aziz A. Chaudhri*

It is called the Shroud of Turin. Until recent years few had heard of it outside Italy. It is venerated by millions, many of whom think that this is the very linen cloth in which Jesus was buried. It is well-known now, due to intense scientific investigation which reads like a mystery story. The modern detectives probing the mystery include art historians, pathologists, linguists, biblical scholars, textile experts, chemists, physicists and photographic specialists.

Since its first appearance in Europe in 1350, it has been condemned by many as a fraud. In the opinion of scientific experts, all the markings on the cloth conform to accounts of the crucifixion of Jesus and burial as recorded in the New Testament. It has been displayed to the public three times in this century, the last, in the fall of 1978 which drew more than three million people to the Cathedral of San Giovanni Battista of Turin, where it is kept with utmost security. It is the most important relic in the whole of Christendom.

The shroud measures 14 feet 3 inches by 3 feet 7 inches. It is a linen cloth with ivory colour due to age. There is a remarkable image on the shroud itself, pale, ghostly, life-size, of an unclothed bearded man with long hair. The hands are crossed over the loins. One half of cloth bears the front image of a man and the other half, back image. The man of the shroud bears obvious marks of crucifixion as practiced in the Roman Empire. There are flows of blood which encircle the head, which are more on the back of the head than on the front, probably from biblical crown of thorns. Significantly a nail wound is on the wrist which contradicts the artistic tradition. There are blood flows on both fore-arms. One large flow of blood is on the left side of chest which was actually on the right side due to reversal of the image. This recalls the thrust of a centurion's lance during Christ's crucifixion. This blood flows to the small of the back as seen on the back image. On the body there are also scourge marks which resemble the pattern inflicted by a flagrum, a multi-thonged Roman whip tipped with lead or bone. Mirror-image burns and watermarks date from a 1532 church fire when molten silver from the shroud's storage case fell on corners of the folded cloth. Fortunately the image itself was mostly spared. Burn holes were repaired with triangular patches and a backing cloth was sewn on for protection. One characteristic of blood-stains is that the blood-flows are clean and free-flowing. The blood marks are darker than body image and appear distinct.

In 1898 the first photographs of the shroud were taken by Secondo Pia. To his great excitement he saw that instead of the usual negative photograph, he had a clear positive image. Highlights and shadows were reversed from those on the cloth and were far more lifelike and realistic. They showed details never before seen on the shroud which was now revealed as a *negative* image. Thus the shroud image is a sort of photographic negative. This has always intrigued the observers and lends support to the shroud's authenticity, as no artist could have conceived of a negative portrait hundreds of years before invention of photography.

Another set of better photographs were taken in 1931 by Giuseppe Enrie revealing the same quality of photographic nature of the shroud. One of the amazing things is that the image of the face on the shroud bears marked resemblance to portraits of Jesus in traditional church art. This resemblance can be traced back as far as the 6th century. A striking photo of the face of Jesus while he lay in the tomb can be seen in the negative photograph of the shroud. There is no known pigment on the cloth and no artist or anyone else has been able so far to duplicate the shroud image by mechanical or natural means. In 1902 Yves Delage, the Sorbonne's professor of comparative anatomy who had studied Pia's photographs, gave a lecture to the French Academy of Sciences and pronounced, "The man of the shroud was Christ." The academy was outraged and refused to print his statement. He considered the shroud image to be of Christ created by special physio-chemical process while he lay in the tomb.

The main interest of medical men has been due to the anatomical accuracy of the image and totally life-like character of blood stains. Turin Commission of 1909 confirmed that the shroud image was not the work of human hands. In '73 Max Frei, a Swiss criminologist was permitted to take samples of dust and other particles by pressing sticky tape on the shroud for laboratory analysis. By microscopic examination he found 48 samples of pollen, which can survive for centuries. Among his samples he found a number from plants in France and Italy. In addition, there were seven from halophylic (salt loving) plants found in saline areas such as the Dead Sea and others from Palestine and Turkey. This science of pollen analysis is called Polynology. His findings suggested that the shroud had been in the Holy Land at some time in its history. Not all scientists, however, are ready to accept this evidence uncritically.

Two small fragments and a number of threads were snipped from the shroud in 1973 and were examined by internationally known textile expert, Professor Gilbert Raes of University of Ghent, Belgium. Some of textile indications seem to point to the Holy Land and to great antiquity. The material is linen, commonly used in ancient Palestine for grave clothes. Raes found that it had traces of a cotton of middle east variety. The weave is a herring-bone twill, a pattern not unknown to ancients. The thread appears to be hand spun.

### **A Brief History of the Shroud**

One of the baffling questions concerning the shroud's authenticity is its history before mid-fourteenth century when it made its public appearance in France in the possession of Geoffery de Charny, a famed Knight of Lirey. A British author, Ian Wilson has written the history of the shroud tracing it all the way to Jerusalem. There are gaps in its history and Ian Wilson has given ingenious solutions containing numerous conjectures and suppositions which seem reasonable to the most part. There is a great deal of circumstantial evidence including history of art. He gives the theory that the shroud is identical with Mandylion — that famed relic of Eastern Orthodox Church which was kept at Constantinople by Byzantine emperors from 944 to April 1204. He gives history that the shroud was folded and made into a portrait in the time of the Apostles and sent to King Abgar V of Edessa (now Urfa, in Eastern Turkey). The incident cured him of a disease and he converted to Christianity. In the reign of Manu VI, second son of Abgar V, he reverted to paganism and cruelly persecuted Edessa Christians. The portrait or shroud disappeared. For safety sake it was hidden in a niche above Edessa's west gate. For centuries the shroud's existence remained completely unknown while it rested in a hermetically sealed condition. In 525 during work on rebuilding the walls, the cloth was discovered and was found to have been impressed with an image of Christ. This shroud cloth was subsequently known as Mandylion. The Byzantine army besieged Edessa under instructions from Emperor Romanus Lecaperus in 993 and the next year Mandylion was recovered and sent to Constantinople. It was greatly revered but not exhibited to the public in general. Robert de Clari, a French crusader described seeing the shroud at Constantinople in 1203. Next year the Crusaders ransacked Constantinople causing much destruction and Mandylion or the shroud disappeared. Wilson hypothesises that it passed into the hands of the rich and powerful order of Knights Templars. On orders of French King Philip the Fair, Knights Templars were severely persecuted and their order was destroyed. Knight Geoffery de Charny appears to have inherited the shroud from Knights Templars. Margaret de Charny daughter of Geoffrey II de Charny inherited the shroud. She was childless and without heirs. For the safety of the shroud and other reasons, she gave her prized possession to Louis, Duke of Savoy in 1453. From that day to now the shroud has belonged to the House of Savoy. Duke Louis built a special church at Chambrey, the Sainte Chapelle, where the shroud was enshrined with honors from the Pope and pilgrims alike. In 1578, the Duke of Savoy moved the shroud across the Alps to his new capital, Turin, in Italy's northwest region of Piedmont. Except for a period during World War II, it has been there ever since. It is miraculous that this ivory coloured cloth should have survived since Joseph of Arimathea placed it under and over the body of Jesus in a rock-cut tomb near Golgotha about 2000 years ago.

### Modern Research on the Shroud

In October 1978, after the exposition, the shroud was examined for five days by a group of scientists including Italians, a Swiss expert and about three dozen Americans. Exhaustive, non-destructive tests were carried out.

About their investigation and findings, we quote below from an article, "The Mystery of the Shroud" in the June, 1980 National Graphic by Kenneth F. Weaver (Page 750-752).

1. "Perhaps never before had an object of art or archaeology been subjected to such exhaustive examination. The scientists bombarded the relic with ultra-violet radiation and X-rays and watched for fluorescence. They measured variations in the way the image, "the blood", and the background emitted or reflected energy across a wide range of electro-magnetic spectrum. In infra red, visible light, ultraviolet and X-rays, fluorescence for example can detect iron and potassium in blood, or heavy metals usually found in paints."

2. "What is the nature of the image? Under magnification, the scientists report the fibres from the image area show a light yellow colouring that lies only on the very top-most surface of the threads, has not run down the sides of threads, and has not left deposits between threads as one would expect if pigments had been painted or rubbed on."

3. "In the light of these facts, the group of scientists have settled on one far-reaching conclusion. Chemist Ray Rogers of the Los Alamos National Scientific Laboratory sums it up: "Nearly all of us now believe that the shroud is not a painting. Except for a small amount of iron oxide, we find no pigment, and we do not think that either liquid or vapour could have produced the image we see."

4. "One other team member, spectroscopist Samuel Pellicori of the Santa Barbara Research Centre, proposes still another hypothesis: The image, he suggests was formed by the darkening over the course of time of body oils, sweat or spices such as myrrh. It is, in that case, an image formed by contact. Spectroscopic evidence seems to support his idea, but, as other team members point out, such an image would have no three-dimensional qualities. Moreover, the image shows details in the face where a cloth would not have touched."

5. "Is the blood really blood? It has long been clear that the "blood" stains and the image are quite different. Secondo Pia discovered this fact when he looked at his negative plates. The "blood" areas showed white on the negative, proving that those stains on the shroud are positive while the body image, as we have seen it, is negative."

The scientific team at Turin found another significant difference between the blood and the image. When they loosened the backing cloth, they saw that a viscous liquid in the “blood” area had penetrated all the way through the linen. Yet the body image is irreversible from the back. Obviously, the two areas were produced in some completely different way.

No test so far decrees that the “blood” is not blood. On the other hand, a number of tests suggest that it could be. The stains under X-rays and ultra-violet radiation behave very much as does blood. In addition, X-ray tests show the correct percentage of iron in the blood.

Finally, Dr. John Heller, of the New England Institute, has found in the debris on the tapes, a tiny crystal that he considered to be a form of haemoglobin much altered by age. He believes the crystal is blood. Other team members are divided on the question and await further tests.”

So far, to our knowledge, Radio-carbon dating to determine the age of fabric has not been done; permission for it has not been granted as some material has to be destroyed in the process. Now, new techniques are available which require only one square centimetre of cloth to determine age and it is hoped that eventually permission for Radio-carbon dating will be granted.

Many scientific tests suggest that the image on the shroud is like a faint scorch. What scorching mechanism could have produced the delicate image is still not determined. An hypothesis can be offered that the image by whatever process it was formed was less visible or invisible but later became fixed or visible due to scorching heat of a fire in which it may have been involved which also caused circular burn marks on the shroud which pre-date the sixteenth century fire burns. Thus, the mystery of the shroud continues.

### **Shroud Shows That Jesus Was Alive**

One question of paramount importance is, what evidence there is on the shroud that the body it wrapped was a dead body or, one which was still alive. Due to religious beliefs, it is assumed the shroud was a burial cloth of Jesus who had died on the Cross. As a result, adequate attention has not been given to this question. We have already examined the New Testament account in this regard. If it is accepted as reasonable or probable that the shroud is the very cloth which wrapped the body of Jesus in the tomb, we offer the following points which favour the view that there is enough evidence on the shroud proving that Jesus did not die on the Cross and was still alive when wrapped within it.

1. According to the gospel of John, “The two men took Jesus’s body and wrapped it in linen cloths with the spices according to the Jewish custom of preparing a body for burial.” 19:40. Thus it is obvious that in preparation for burial they washed his body in accordance with Jewish custom of

preparing the body for burial. It is inconceivable that following Jewish customs they should not have done so. Joseph of Arimathea was a wealthy and influential secret disciple of Jesus. Nicodemus was a physician. Jesus was not a common criminal in their eyes. He was their revered spiritual master. Spices were used probably for anointing. Ian Wilson<sup>2</sup> who thinks that the body was not washed, says: "What of spices? St. John tells us that Nicodemus assisting Joseph of Arimathea, brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes weighing about one hundred pounds. He also tells us that these were wrapped with the body in the burial linen. Had such spices been used for anointing, it would have been requisite in Jewish ritual and indeed in that of any other culture to wash the body first."

There is a long tradition of the church that Jesus was washed. In the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, Jerusalem, the faithful revere to this day a reddish coloured stone on which he is said to have been laid to be washed and anointed before burial. This stone, which has been known since Byzantine times is specifically called the "Stone of Unction."

In the body which had been washed and wrapped in the shroud, the presence of blood marks on it proves that the body was not dead and circulation was intact with the result that fresh blood was oozing out of the wounds and its flow left their marks on the shroud. The blood marks on the shroud are clean, flowing, distinct, complete and life-like. This shows that even though Jesus had been mistaken as dead, his heart had not stopped and blood circulation was intact, proving that he was still alive. If we suppose that it was an unwashed dead body, blood on the body would have clotted and would not have left such life-like marks of its flow which seeped through the linen cloth. If, on the other hand, it was a dead body which had been washed, it would have left no blood marks on the shroud. It is a point for us to ponder.

2. Shroud image confirms the gospel account that the legs of Jesus were not broken. Medical opinion is divided over significance of leg-breaking as a cause of death. One view holds that the victim is unable to push himself upward to breath and this causes asphyxia. Additional factors may be severe pain, and hemorrhage due to injury to blood vessels of legs.

3. The blood-mark on the right side of the chest is presumably from lance piercing. The blood overflow to the small of the back in horizontal fashion is seen in back image on the shroud. This is more likely to occur when the body is lying recumbent rather than vertical on the Cross.

Some writers have assumed that the soldier's lance was a deep thrust and had penetrated the heart. It is an idle speculation because the soldiers object piercing him was to check whether he was dead or alive and was not to kill



him. Blood flowed out from the wound showing that he was still alive, though he was unconscious and in shock. Later, in the tomb, blood flowed out of this wound along with others leaving marks on the shroud confirming his life.

4. On the shroud image of hands, both thumbs are not present. It has been postulated that this was due to stimulation of median nerves by nail penetration of wrists causing contraction of thumbs. This situation could hardly exist after death. If this is a correct appraisal of absence of thumbs, it is another sign of life.

5. In the above discussion we have assumed that Joseph of Arimethia and Nicodemus thought mistakenly, that Jesus was dead and they were trying to bury him by wrapping him in the shroud. There are rare examples when people who are in a state close to death, are mistaken as dead. He was unconscious and in shock due to crucifixion trauma. The other possibility, which is more likely, is that they were aware that Jesus was alive and by wrapping him with the linen cloth impregnated with aromatic spices and possibly other medicines, they were trying to revive him. Ointment of Jesus has already been discussed earlier. This will explain the use of linen cloth instead of clothing, specifically white garments which Jews wore for festivals and were used for burials.

#### References

- 1 IAN WILSON, The Shroud of Turin (Doubleday and Company, Inc. 1978).
- 2 IBID, p.41.
- 3 KURT BERNA, Christ Did Not Perish on the Cross (Exposition Press, Hicksville, New York 1975).

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#### **Divine Decrees and Determination**

*It should be remembered that though everything has been determined by Divine decree, yet this does not exclude science and knowledge as everyone has to acknowledge that the use of appropriate medicines, through the grace and mercy of God Almighty, benefits the patient. In the same way everyone who is bestowed comprehension of the Divine has to acknowledge as the result of experience that prayer has a relationship with acceptance. This is a mystery which has been demonstrated through the experience of millions of the righteous and our experience has demonstrated the hidden reality that our prayers have a magnetic quality which attracts the grace and mercy of God, though we may not be able to convince others of this verity through logical reasoning. (The Promised Messiah).*

# The Ahmadiyya Concept of Jihad

by B.A. Rafiq

One misunderstanding that is being spread is that the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement forbade *Jihad* to please the British Government and to procure worldly benefits from it.

Before we enter upon a refutation of this misleading propaganda it would be helpful to set forth the meaning of the concept of *Jihad*. The root of the Arabic word *Jihad* is *jahd* which connotes endurance of rigorous conditions. Thus *jihad* means to strive to the utmost for the achievement of a purpose and to leave nothing undone in pursuance of it. The well-known lexicon Tajul Urus says:

“The true meaning of *jihad* is not to hold back anything and to put forth every effort and to achieve the purpose in view by forcing oneself. *Jihad* is of three types, namely, to oppose the enemy with full effort, to employ all one’s faculties in opposition of satan and to strive to the fullest so that satanic designs would be altogether frustrated in the world, and to strive to the utmost in the struggle with oneself. The verse of the Holy Quran: ‘Strive in the cause of Allah a perfect striving;’ comprises all these three types of *Jihad*.”

Thus *Jihad* is of three types. One, the *Jihad* against oneself which in Islamic idiom is called the greatest *Jihad* (*Jihad Akbar*). Two, the *Jihad* that is waged against Satan and satanic teachings and designs, and is called the great *Jihad* (*Jihad Kabeer*). Three, the *Jihad* that is waged against the enemy of freedom of conscience; this is called the lesser *Jihad* (*Jihad Asghar*). The Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, has described the striving against self as *Jihad Akbar*. It is mentioned in the *hadees* that returning from an expedition (Tabuk), the Holy Prophet said:

“We are returning from the *Jihad Asghar* (fighting) to *Jihad Akbar* (struggle against self).” (Kashaf) He also said:

“The *mujahid* who is exalted above other *mujahids* is the one who strives against his own self.”

The life of the Holy Prophet was divided into two parts, his life in Mecca and his life in Medina. During the Meccan period, he and his Companions were

subjected to every kind of persecution, but they were not permitted to undertake *Jihad* by the sword. After the migration to Medina, God Almighty granted permission to the Muslims to confront the aggression of their enemies by the sword. Now it is clear that every moment of the Holy Prophet's life was devoted to *Jihad*. It would be wrong to say that he did not carry out *Jihad* in the Meccan period and carried it out only during the Medani period. The truth is that every moment of his life and of the lives of his Companions was devoted to some type of *Jihad*. *Jihad* was also carried on in the Meccan period, though there was no fighting and no killing of the enemy. In the Medani period, *Jihad* was continued in the same way but here *Jihad* by fighting was also added.

Let us now consider the attitude of the Promised Messiah, peace be on him, towards *Jihad* by fighting. During his time British rule had been established over the sub-continent of India, also comprising what today is Pakistan. Before the British, this part of the country was subject to the rule of the Sikhs who had abolished religious freedom, especially for the Muslims, for whom it became difficult even to freely carry out Divine worship. In this connection the Promised Messiah, peace be on him, has stated:

“The Muslims have never forgotten the time when, at the hands of Sikhs, they were condemned to a blazing oven. Not only was their world in ruins but their religion was in an even worse condition. It was difficult for them to carry their religious obligations, so much so that on one occasion a Muslim was killed for calling out the *Azan* (call to Prayers).” (Announcement of tenth July 1800).

It was observed that the Sikhs were inspired with great hatred against the Muslims. Muslim men, women and children mercilessly slaughtered; their villages were ruined; their women were dishonoured and thousands of mosques were demolished (Encyclopaedia of Sikh Literature, p. 1127).

After British rule replaced Sikh rule in this part of the country, a *darbar* was held in Allahabad on 1st November 1858 in which it was announced on behalf of Queen Victoria:

“We proclaim that it is our royal will and pleasure that no one of our subjects shall be persecuted or granted any favour on account of his religious beliefs or practices, nor shall any person be deprived of his security. In the eyes of the law, all people shall be equally entitled to impartial protection.”

In such circumstances, when unlike the Sikhs the British Government did not consider the Muslims as deserving to be killed and they were granted complete religious freedom of profession and practice, the Promised Messiah, peace be on him, announced:

“Government has granted to every people full freedom for the propagation of

their respective faiths and in this way people have been provided with an opportunity to study and reflect upon the principles of every religion . . . that is the reason why we, in our writings and our speeches, make mention of the beneficence of the British Government.” (Roedad Jalsa Dua)

In his booklet *Tohfah Qaesiriyya*, the Promised Messiah, peace be on him, explained the doctrine of *Jehad* as follows:

“The second principle on which I have been established is the clarification of the doctrine of *Jehad* which has been misinterpreted by some ignorant Muslims. I have been made to understand by God Almighty that these practices that are currently regarded as *Jehad* are entirely opposed to the teachings of the Holy Quran. There is no doubt that the Holy Quran permitted the Muslims to fight under directions that were more reasonable than those relating to the battles of Moses and were more attractive than those related to the battles of Joshua, son of Nun. They had their origin in the fact that those who had taken up the sword, unjustly, against the Muslims and committed murder and carried on their tyranny to the extreme deserved to be punished by the sword. Nevertheless, this punishment was not so severe as was inflicted upon the enemy in the battles of Moses. A person who accepted Islam or agreed to pay the poll tax was exempt from punishment and this method was in accord with the law of nature . . . In short, at the time of the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, the basis of Islamic *Jehad* was that God’s wrath had been roused against the tyrants. But living under the rule of a benign government, as is the Government of our Queen and Empress, it is not *Jehad* to entertain rebellious designs against it but it is a barbaric idea which is born of ignorance. To entertain ill-will against a government under whom life is lived in freedom and there is complete security and religious obligations can be discharged to the full, is a criminal step and not *Jehad* . . . Thus, God Almighty had established me on the principle that sincere obedience and gratitude should be rendered to a benign government such as the British Government. My Community and I are bound by this principle. I have written several books in Arabic, Persian and Urdu on this question, and have expounded in them in detail how the Muslims of British India lead their lives in comfort under the British Government and how they can freely propagate their faith and discharge their religious obligations without let or hindrance; and how wrongful and rebellious it is to entertain any idea of *Jehad* against this blessed and peace-loving Government.” (*Tohfah Qaesiriyya*, pp. 9-10).

This makes it clear that in the view of the Promised Messiah, peace be on him, there was no ground for undertaking *Jehad* by the sword against the

Government in India as none of the conditions of *Jehad* operated in India at that time.

The Promised Messiah, peace be on him, was not alone in holding the view that *Jehad* by the sword was not permitted against the British Government in India. All the eminent divines of his time made declarations to the same effect and in accordance, with this refrained from any activity which might be construed as *Jehad* by the sword and thus confirmed their declarations by their conduct. By way of illustration we set out some of these declarations.

1. Maulvi Muhammed Husain Sahib of Batala, one of the outstanding leaders of the Ahle Hadees, declared: "It is not permissible for the Muslims to fight, or to help with men and money those who fight, against a Government of whatever religion, whether Jewish, Christian, or other, under whom they live in security and are free to discharge their religious obligations. Accordingly, for the Muslims of India, opposition to or rebellion against the British Government is forbidden." (Ishaatus Sunna, Vol. VI, No. 10).

The same divine urged:

"Brethren, this is no longer the time of the sword. It has now become necessary to use the pen in place of the sword." (Ishaatus Sunnah, Vol. VI, No. 12).

Maulvi Muhammad Jafar Sabib of Thanesar, has recorded in his well-known biography of Hazrat Syed Ahmad Sahib Brelvi, the Reformer of the 13th century of Islam:

"It is a correct statement that when he was proceeding on *Jehad* against the Sikhs someone asked him why did he propose to go so far to carry out *Jehad* against the Sikhs? Why did he not start *Jehad* against the British, who are the rulers of this country and deny the truth of Islam? He could fight them at home and take over India from them. He would have the support of hundreds of thousands in this enterprise. To travel to Afghanistan through hundreds of miles of Sikh territory and to remain there for years for fighting the Sikhs is a design so difficult that the people are not willing to adopt it. To this Syed Sahib made answer that he did not desire to take over any country from the British or from the Sikhs and to rule over it himself. The only reason why he designed to carry out *Jehad* against the Sikhs was that they oppressed the Muslims and obstructed them in the performance of their religious obligations like calling out the Azan. If at this time, after the establishment of their supremacy, the Sikhs refrain from persecuting the Muslims, he would no longer have any cause to fight them. The British are non-Muslims but they do not oppress the Muslims in any way, nor do they obstruct them in the performance of their religious obligations and worship.

The Muslims openly propagate their faith and practice their religion under them. They not only do not forbid or obstruct the Muslims in any way but are ready to punish anyone who might commit any aggression against the Muslims. He affirmed that his real purpose was the propagation of the Unity of God and the revival of the practices of the Chief of the Messengers, and that under the British he carried out this purpose without any hindrance. Then why should he start *Jehad* against this Government and should shed the blood of both sides contrary to the principles of Islam. On hearing this reply, his interrogator held his peace having understood the true purpose of *Jehad*.” (Biography of Hazrat Syed Ahmad, p. 71).

2. At another place Maulvi Muhammad Jafar Sahib has stated: “It is also correctly related that while Maulana Ismail Shaheed was delivering a sermon during his stay in Calcutta, someone asked him whether it was proper to carry out *Jehad* against the British Government. In reply the Maulana said it was not permissible to carry on *Jehad* against such an impartial and non-bigoted Government. On the other hand, the tyranny of the Sikhs in the Punjab had reached a stage where it called for *Jehad* against them” (Biography of Hazrat Syed Ahmad, p. 57).

3. Maulvi Muhammad Hussain Sahib of Batala wrote: “At this time all the conditions of *Jehad* are non-existent. Therefore, in India, from Calcutta to Peshawar, and from Sindh to the Deccan, no one is at liberty to carry on *Jehad* against the British Government.” (Ishaatus Sunnah, Vol. IX, No. 1).

4. Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, Founder of the Aligarh College, wrote in 1858: “The vigorous conspiring among the Muslims and their consulting together that they should unite in carrying out *Jehad* against non-Muslims and should win their freedom from the Government is an utterly baseless thing. The Muslims enjoy complete security under the Government and can in no way carry on *Jehad* against it. Twenty or thirty years ago a very well-known Maulvi, Muhammad Ismael preached *Jehad* in India and urged people to join in it. At that time he stated quite clearly that the people of India who live in security under the British Government have no cause to carry on *Jehad* against the Government.” (Causes of the Indian Rebellion, p. 104).

5. Maulvi Murtaza Ahmad Khan Sahib has recorded that the Khalifatul Muslimeen Sultan Abdul Hameed II of Turkey communicated a declaration to the British that the Muslims of India should not fight the British as they had proved to be their allies of and in sympathy with the Islamic Khalafat. (History of the Nations of the World, p. 639).

6. Maulvi Syed Nazir Hussain Sahib Dehlvi declared: “As the conditions of *Jehad* do not exist in this country it would be wrong

and sinful to carry on *Jihad* here. (Fatawa Naziriyya, Vol. IV, p. 472).

He also declared that the rebellion of 1857 was not *Jihad* under the Islamic law but was a faithless proceeding involving a breach of covenant and disorder and rancour and that participation in it or any assistance rendered towards it was sinful. (Ishaatus Sunnah, Vol. VI, No. 10).

7. Maulana Maudoodi Sahib declared:

“When the Muslims were defeated and the British Government was established and the Muslims were content to live in this country with freedom to practice their personal law, this country ceased to be a country at war.” (Book on Interest, p. 1).

All this shows that all serious minded Muslims have been grateful to the British Government who rescued them from the oppression and religious persecution of the Sikhs and gave them complete religious freedom. Muslim divines were united in declaring that it was not permissible to enter upon *Jihad* against the British. They did not confine themselves to declarations, but confirmed them by their conduct that the conditions of *Jihad* did not exist in India and *Jihad* was not permissible against the British. Had that not been so, the Muslim divines of India would surely have raised the banner of *Jihad* against the British.

If our opponents believe that *Jihad* had become obligatory against the British in India, then they are guilty of the charge that they failed to carry out this obligation. According to the Ahmadiyya Community the causes and conditions of *Jihad* were non-existent in India and therefore *Jihad* was not obligatory on them and by not embarking on it they were not guilty of any default. But those who believe that they are under an obligation and then commit a default in respect of it are certainly sinners.

The promised Messiah, peace be on him, set forth the true Islamic teaching concerning *Jihad*. He states:

“Without a doubt the causes of *Jihad* do not exist in this country in these days. Therefore, the Muslims of this country are today forbidden to fight in the name of religion and to slaughter those who reject the Islamic Law. God Almighty has clearly forbidden *Jihad* by the sword in a time of peace and security.” (Tohfah Golarvia, p. 82).

It is obvious that no divine can hold *Jihad* lawful at a time when its conditions do not exist.

It must be remembered that the Promised Messiah, peace be on him, did not forbid *Jihad* absolutely. He urged his Community to carry *Jihad* all the time. He states:

“The *Jihad* of this age is to strive in upholding the word of Islam, to refute the objections of the opponents, to propagate the excellences of the Islamic faith, and to proclaim the truth of the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, throughout the world. This is *Jihad* till God Almighty brings about other conditions in the world.” (Letter addressed to Mir Nasir Nawab Sahib).

In this letter the words:

“Till God Almighty brings about other conditions in the world,” are worthy of note. They clearly indicate that he did not reject the concept of *Jihad* by the sword but believed that the obligation of such *Jihad* had been postponed in this age on account of the absence of the conditions that call for it. He did not abrogate *Jihad* by the sword, nor could he do so as he was bound by the Holy Quran. He merely declared its postponement. He cited the *hadees* that the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, had prophesied that the Promised Messiah would not fight with the sword as his age would be a time of religious freedom.

Finally, we would draw attention to a statement of Hazrat Khalifatul Masir II which explains the attitude of the Ahmadiyya Community towards *Jihad*. He states:

“As the *salat* is obligatory so, when the need arises, is fighting for the faith obligatory . . . It should be remembered that of the matters which have been prescribed as the principal constituents of faith, one is *Jihad* . . . He who turns away from *Jihad* when it becomes obligatory is condemned to hell.” (Report of the Majlis Mushawarat, 1950).

At a time when the conditions for *Jihad* by the sword did not exist, the Ahmadiyya Community eagerly carried out *Jihad* with the Holy Quran, which has been called the Great *Jihad*, and *Jihad* against their own selves, which has been called the Greatest *Jihad*. They continue to refute the Christian and Arya Samajist opponents of Islam. After the establishment of Pakistan, when the Dogra forces and the Indian army were trying to dominate Muslim territories by force, the Ahmadiyya Community of Pakistan was the only one that raised a volunteer corp called the Furqan Force to fight in Kashmir along with the army of Pakistan and thus carried out *Jihad* by sword in practice. Several young men of the Furqan Force became martyrs in this fighting. Thus, when the time came for *Jihad* by the sword the Ahmadiyya Community participated in it at once and should the conditions of *Jihad* by the sword arise again, the Ahmadiyya Community will, God willing, not hesitate to discharge the obligation of *Jihad* by the sword. *Jihad* in defence of one's own country by using force against the invaders, has never been abrogated by the Promised Messiah. It is the false *Jihad*, to kill people in the name of religion, which is forbidden for all times.



# From Our Archives

By A. R. Mughal

## The Soul and the Body

1. *What is soul and how much do we know about it? The answer in most cases would be! very little; in fact not much of a beginning, a middle or an end. But like everything else, if you want to solve the problem of life you have to start some-place here and now.*

2. *According to the Hindu myth, the Matter and the Soul both existed independently in the beginning of the universe. God had no hand in the creation of these two entities. He simply controlled the combination as also the permutation of the sets of animate and inanimate objects. The determination of genders and the innumerable changes that this ancient couple (Matter and Soul) had to undergo in the past ages, confounds all reasonable calculations. This is only for academics. Because Parmaeshar was not the sole Creator and, therefore, cared little for the multitudes.*

3. *The Jews and the Christians had fewer options. Some sects among the people of the Book believe that the body is the soul. A quotation from the Genesis says: "The Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." According to the Jewish belief, the soul can be killed or destroyed permanently. On Resurrection, the dead will rise again and be judged according to their deeds. This is more or less nearer to what the muslims believe with the proviso that soul cannot be killed or destroyed. It is the body alone which suffers mortal changes.*

4. *Perhaps it is now our turn to solve this knots landing. To say that human beings have not been able, so far, to unravel the mystery of the soul, is not to say that our efforts in this regard have not met with any degree of success. The Holy Quran is an unfathomable ocean of knowledge. Its secrets have been revealed to an immeasurable extent by the Holy Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement, the Reformer of the Latter Days and the ultimate Mujaddid (peace and blessings of God be on him).*

*What he has said about the origin of soul is perhaps the last word in the sciences of the unknown. Says he: "It is a bright essence in the human seed itself. It is not a part of it in the sense that matter is a part of matter. But at the same time it is untrue to say that it comes from outside . . . It is hidden in the seed*

*as fire is latent in the flint”*. The exact origin of soul could not be described in better terms.

5. *I am writing this short note only as an introduction to an article contributed to our Magazine by Mr. B.A. Orchard, Trinidad, in March 1960. ‘The Soul and the Body’ is a vast and delicate subject and, perhaps, much more than what has already been said, can be said about it. I intend to write a detailed article on this subject, based on the writings of the Promised Messiah (peace be on him) InshaAllah.*

6. *Before winding up this note, I might add:—*

*a. Signs of life do not represent the soul. Because during sleep, when the soul has departed from the body temporarily, the life symptoms are still present.*

*b. The soul may be said to be present in matter in a latent state.*

*c. In euphemistic language, soul is almost substantive.*

*d. It is absurd to be pre-occupied with origin and quality of life until and unless the problem of the quantity of life is solved.*

7. *The above sub-headings are not conclusions based on some sort of a mathematical data. This only provides food for thought.*

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*Man is subject to Divine decree. If a human design should not be in accord with the design of God no amount of effort can succeed in putting it into effect; but when the time of the design of God arrives, that which had appeared most difficult becomes easily available. (The Promised Messiah).*

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*The purpose of religion is that man should obtain deliverance from his passions and should develop personal love for God Almighty through certain faith in His existence and His perfect attributes. Such love of God is the paradise which will appear in diverse shapes in the hereafter. To be unaware of the true God and to keep away from Him and not to have any love for Him is the hell which will appear in diverse shapes in the hereafter. Thus the true purpose is to have full faith in Him. Now the question is which religion and which book can fill this need. The Bible tells us that the door of converse with God is closed and that the ways of obtaining certainty are sealed. Whatever was to happen, happened in the past and there is nothing in the future . . . Of what use then is a religion which is dead? What benefit can we derive from a book that is dead? What grace can be bestowed by a God who is dead? (The Promised Messiah).*

# The Soul and the Body

By Mr. Bashir Ahmad Orchard

What is soul? Where did it come from and where will it go? What is the relationship between the soul and the body? These are some of the questions to be examined and answered in the light of Islam.

## Christian Outlook

The Churches do not seem to provide a very definite and authoritative teaching on the subject. In fact, “No precise teaching about the soul received general acceptance in the Christian Church until the Middle Ages.”<sup>1</sup>

Perhaps the Jehovah witnesses, a Christian denomination, propagate a theory that is more definite than most other Christian sects. They say that the living human body is itself the soul. They do not believe that the soul has any separate identity from the body. The body is the soul. When the body dies, the soul dies. They quote from Genesis:

“The Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.”<sup>2</sup>

The interpretation given to this passage is clearly given in their publication *Let God be True*.

“Thus we learn that man is a combination of two things, namely, ‘the dust of the ground’ and ‘the breath of life.’ The combining of these two things (or factors) produced a living soul or creature called man.”

In further support of their theory, they believe that the soul can be killed, thus endeavouring to establish that the living body is the soul. In the same book it is written:

“In the Hebrew scriptures there are at least fifty-four texts where the word ‘nephesh’ (soul) is used in such way as to show that the soul can be slain or killed. An example of this is in Joshua, 10:28-19. There you will find seven instances in which soul is spoken of as filled, slain or destroyed.”

## References

- 1 The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church
- 2 (2:7)

The Jehovah witnesses believe, therefore, that the soul can die. On the Day of Resurrection, they believe, those persons, who are not ‘condemned,’ will rise from their graves and again dwell on this earth — all, except 144,000 persons, who will be given spirit bodies to live and work in heaven. According to their belief, there will exist a condition of complete unconsciousness from the time of death to the Day of Resurrection.

### **Life Force and the Soul**

The human body requires life force to animate it. When the life force is absent, the body is dead. What is this mysterious life force? It is not the soul. The soul spiritually animates the life force. Life force is a manifestation of electricity. Professor Aldani says:

“When a limb is to be moved, the nerves, aided by the brain, draw some electricity from the interior of the muscles discharging this upon their surface, and they are thus contracted as desired.”

In modern medicine, electric shocks are given to revive vital organs, such as the heart, which have ceased to function. Many years ago the scientist Galvani discovered that when two different metals were contacted with certain nerves and muscles of a dead frog, its legs ‘came to life’ and moved in their normal way.

Everything is a creation of God, be it a substance or an invisible force. God is Creator of the life force which energises the physical body. He is also the Creator of the soul which ‘colours’ the life force, according to its condition and development. Both are separate identities, yet independent within the body.

### **Knowledge About the Soul Limited**

While the Holy Quran provides us with sufficient knowledge of the origin, purpose and destiny of the soul, we know little about its spiritual creation. God says in the Holy Quran:

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

There are some people who think that it is impossible to believe in anything unless everything is known about it and its existence proved scientifically. Such a philosophy would have to deny the Existence of God and the next world. There is, however, ample evidence to prove the Existence of God and the next world — evidence that will thwart the criticism of the most diehard atheist. The testimony of the Holy Quran is sufficient. Outside the Holy Quran we can turn to the testimonies of godly men to whom knowledge of these matters has been vouchsafed through personal spiritual experiences.

### **Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad**

*(Peace be upon him)*

One of the illuminaries of God, who appeared in this generation, is Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (peace be upon him). He has shed much light on the nature of the soul. He was not just a saint or holy man, but was the Promised Messiah and Mahdi whose advent was foretold by the Holy Prophet (peace and the blessings of God be on him) and other prophets of God including Moses and Jesus (may peace be on them). He proved himself the ablest interpreter of the Holy Quran being guided and inspired by God. Relating some of his experiences with the souls of the departed ones he says:

“I have personal experience of this matter. Many a time, when fully awake, I have seen visions in which I saw those who were dead. I have seen many an evil doer and wicked person with a body quite dark and smoky. I have personal acquaintance with these matters, and I assert it forcibly that, as Almighty God has said, everyone is granted a body either transparent or dark. It is not necessary that unaided reason should be able to look into these mysteries. The eye sees things, but it is vain to expect it to serve as an organ of taste. Similarly, the muscles of the tongue may be used for tasting things, but as organs of sight they are simply useless. In like manner, the deep secrets of the other world, upon which light is thrown only by visions, cannot be discovered by the help of reason. Almighty God has established certain laws in this world and particular means for knowledge of particular things. To know a thing, therefore, we must first seek the proper means and then we are sure to discover the thing itself.” (The Teachings of Islam).

### **Origin of the Soul**

There are various schools of thought about the origin of the soul. Some think, it descends from some kind of spirit world into the body of the individual by the Command of God. Those, who believe in re-incarnation, think that the soul is something that takes a new earthly life after death. That is to say after death there is a rebirth into a new person or creature. If it is deservant of reward, it will be reborn within a more elevated or prosperous being or creature. If it formerly had an unworthy existence, then it will be reborn into a more degraded person or creature. An honest business man may be reborn as a minister of religion, while a wicked man may be re-incarnated as a beggar or even a dog. So the process continues to fluctuate up and down at death according to the type of life lived.

### **The Soul and the Holy Quran**

According to the Holy Quran the soul has no pre-existence, but it develops within the body from the very outset of its development in the womb. God says in the Holy Quran:

“Verily We created man from an extract of clay; then We placed him as a drop of sperm in a safe depository; then We fashioned the sperm into a clot; then a shapeless lump; then We fashioned bones out of this shapeless lump. then We clothed the bones with flesh; then We developed it into another creation. So blessed be Allah, the Best of Creators.”<sup>1</sup>

In this passage God says that He created another creation from out of the body of clay, i.e., the soul. In explaining the Quranic teaching about the origin and development of the soul, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the Promised Messiah, (peace be on him), says:

“ . . . the soul is a light which springs up from the body, which is being prepared in the womb. By the springing up of the soul, I only mean that at first it is hidden and imperceptible although its germs are present in the seed itself, and as the body is gradually developed, the soul grows along with it, and becomes manifest. There is not the least doubt that the inexplicable connection of the soul with the seed is in accordance with the design of God and with His permission and Will. It is a bright essence in the seed itself. It is not a part of it, in the sense that matter is a part of matter, but, at the same time, it is untrue to say that it comes from outside, or, as some wrongly imagine, falling upon the earth it is mixed with the substance of the seed. It is hidden in the seed as fire is latent in flint. The Holy Word of God lends no support to the view that the soul comes from the heavens, as something distinct from the body, or that it falls suddenly upon the earth and the womb.”<sup>2</sup>

Hazrat Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmud Ahmad, the illustrious son of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, (peace be on him), and Head of the world-wide Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam, has given some very interesting expositions on the subject. Concerning the passage, as quoted above from the Holy Quran, he says:

“The verse shows clearly that the soul does not enter the body from outside but is a distillation from the substance which is being developed in the mother’s womb . . . It (the Holy Quran) teaches that the birth of the soul is the ultimate stage of the evolution of the human body in the course of its creation. It does not enter the body from outside, but is born as a consequence of the changes that the body goes through in the course of its development, yet it is something distinct from the body. It is not merely the motive power of the human body, but is a distinct and permanent entity distilled from the substance of the body, just as alcohol and vinegar, though

1 (23:13-15)

2 The Teachings of Islam

distilled from corn or fruit, are nevertheless distinct from the substances from which they are manufactured. By bringing this truth to light the Holy Quran has entirely revolutionized the attitude of man towards the relationship between the body and the soul.’<sup>1</sup>

### **Soul — Dependent upon a Body**

The soul, being an inner invisible creation, can only manifest itself through an outer body. In this world it is connected to a physical body and cannot develop a spiritual lustre without the work of physical action. A righteous way of living calls for appropriate bodily and mental discipline which, in turn, influences and brightens the soul.

Cleanliness is next to godliness! These words are full of significance. Outer cleanliness brings about inner cleanliness. The performance of ablution before offering prayers causes a feeling of inner cleanliness. Everybody knows how individuals feel in the presence of other people if they are dirty and untidy. They do not feel comfortable, rather they suffer some sort of shame and loss of confidence. Take a bath, put on clean clothing and attend to one’s personal appearance; then you feel a surge of self respect and satisfaction flows throughout the body.

One may be feeling ‘in the dumps’. Plans and hopes are not fruitifying. A wave of depression is devitalizing one’s inner energy. Loss of vital force is weakening one’s moral. Mental and physical exhaustion of this nature dims the spiritual light within. However, let one take hold of oneself, start laughing and smiling and begin thanking God for all His numerous blessings, and it will not be long when a state of peace and strength will be experienced.

In this way the development of the soul is dependent upon the body. Let one’s actions and thoughts be guided by the Will of God, and consequently the soul will be proportionately influenced in its development, and it will radiate an invisible light, which at the same time is visible to beholders, but difficult to describe or explain.

### **Soul after Death**

What then happens to the soul at the time of death? The soul quits its earthly body and takes on a new spiritual body representing the actions of this life which may be dark or bright to the spiritual eyes. The knowledge of these things by means of spiritual experience has already been established by the words of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad as quoted already.

### **Does Soul Return to Body after Death**

Immediately after death the soul is completely severed from the body never to

<sup>1</sup> Introduction to the Study of the Holy Quran.

return. The body without a soul consists only of chemical properties and soon begins to rot and decay. The Holy Quran refutes the theory that life can be restored to the dead.

There is no doubt that people sometimes revive after they have been declared dead by doctors. People have sat up once again and entered into the daily routine of life after they have been prepared for burial. Not so very long ago, the cessation of the heart beat was evidence of death and the preparation of a death certificate. To-day medical science has, on a number of occasions, resuscitated a still heart. All this may be misleading and suggest that dead people can have life restored to them. The truth is that death was wrongly diagnosed. There can be no doubt that, in the course of history, persons have been buried when life was not quite extinct. So serious consideration should be given to avoid hasty burial.

That the dead does not return to life is clearly stated in the Holy Quran:

“Allah takes away the souls of human beings at the time of their death’ and during their sleep of those also that are not yet dead. And then He retains those against which He has decreed death, and sends back the others till an appointed term. In that surely are Signs for a people who reflect.”<sup>1</sup>

This passage also draws attention to the fact that the soul is taken away at the time of sleep but returned for an appointed time. It would seem, therefore, that there must be some kind of connection with the body even though it is taken away because, as our study has shown, the soul cannot exist without a body. What is the relationship between the soul and the body at the time of sleep? Is it connected with the body by some kind of slender spiritual thread, or does it exist in an aura of spiritual colour like the souls that have been taken away at death? God tells in the Holy Quran that little knowledge has been given to us about the soul, but further enlightenment on this point would be very welcome from any person who might be in possession of this spiritual knowledge.

### **Infinite Spiritual Progress of the Soul**

God tells us in the Holy Quran that His purpose of creating mankind is that He may be worshipped. Not that God depends upon being worshipped, or stands in need of being worshipped. It is for the benefit of man himself. Worship does not just mean offering prayers and bowing down, but the exercising of every faculty in the path and service of God.

<sup>1</sup> (39:43)



“I have not created the Jinn and the men but that they may worship Me.”<sup>1</sup>

The soul may be likened to a precious stone. The more it is polished, the brighter it shines. In this world there is no limit to the height of spiritual progress that may be developed by the exercising of both physical and spiritual faculties.

The development of the soul is not limited only to the period that it dwells in a human body on this earth. According to the teachings of Islam, it will continue to progress spiritually in the next life also. In the next world they will be beseeching God to grant them perfection as stated in the Holy Quran:

“They will say, ‘Our Lord! perfect our light for us and forgive us; surely Thou hast power over all things.’”<sup>2</sup>

The soul will ever be yearning for a higher spiritual state even as, in this world, a true believer never rests content with the standard of spiritual status. Like a ladder leading unto the sky he is anxious to climb higher and higher. So in the next life also, the soul will continue to have the opportunity to progress being impelled with the desire to become more and more immersed in the Light of Allah.

It would be wrong to suppose that after death souls will have the power to do good or bad, and for this reason they request forgiveness. All spiritual progress will be entirely the result of the Grace of God and will not be dependent upon how the souls conduct themselves. Their calling upon God to forgive them does not mean that they are liable to commit sins, but only that they find favour with God to be worthy of upliftment to a higher realm of spirituality.

### **Most Precious Possession**

Our souls are our most precious possessions. Therefore, we should cherish and care for them more than any other possession. It is the only part of us that does not remain in this world after death. Everything else remains — our hearts, our brains and all our worldly belongings. Only our souls, which dwell within us, enter into the life to come. It is clear, therefore, that our greatest concern and interest in this life should be the purification of our souls.

1 (51:57).

2 (66:9)

**The Boomerang**

What a man of little faith  
I think and feel ashamed  
I couldn't see the ruinous clouds  
And none but winds, I blamed

The man who did torment and tease  
I took him safe and sound  
My faith was little, I didn't know  
Now soon he would be bound

I thought that all was calm for him  
Who troubled my mind and soul  
His sails and oars were pomp and show  
And nothing could make a hole

'Tis time for him to think and learn  
Mysterious ways of God  
The aim hasn't been reached by him  
The crooked path who trod

'Tis sure that he was rising high  
And felt that sky was near  
He shunned the earth and earthly men  
And space to him was dear

Let all the men of sense and wit  
Combat the evil deeds  
Of every low or high a man  
Who sows the evil seeds

He put his feet on heads of men  
And kicked them in the face  
He got a push and smiled at it  
For, he was winning the race

Naseem Saifi

But wingless creatures in the air  
Can stay a jiffy or so  
They may or may not understand  
— A change — and down they go

If boat it is, they row and tow  
Its base has hidden holes  
Their drowning scene is dread and awe  
With gnawing grief of souls

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*The purpose of accepting a religion is that God, Who is Self-Sufficient and is in no need of His creation or its worship, may be pleased with us, and that we should experience such grace and mercy as should wipe out our inner stains and rusts so that our breasts may be filled with certainty and understanding. This is not possible for a man to achieve through his own devices. Therefore, God the Glorious, keeping hidden mainly His own Being and the wonders of His creation, for instance, souls and bodies, angels, heaven, hell, resurrection and messengership etc. and yet disclosing them partially through reason, appointed his servants to believe in all these mysteries. (The Promised Messiah).*

# Young Heroes

By M.A. Khan Ghauri

The Holy Prophet, peace be on him, had, under divine direction, migrated to Medina. He most sincerely wished to live there in peace so that he could give himself fully to his mission of preaching the word of God Almighty. But his brethren in Mecca would not let him do that. The leader of the Meccans, who later became known as Abu Jahl, was an extremely obstinate man. He could not have faith in a man who disavowed the gods that he worshipped. He persistently refused to accept the truth that the Holy Prophet preached. He was the most bitter enemy in the whole of Mecca of Islam and its Prophet.

His hatred towards the Holy Prophet was greatly enhanced when he found that he had succeeded in migrating to Medina. He advised all the chiefs in Mecca to go after him to Medina and bring him back or see that he was killed. They were so sure of their success that they sent an open challenge to the Muslims of Medina that if they would not send the Prophet back to Mecca they would go themselves to Medina and bring him back to Mecca by force.

The Holy Prophet and his companions from Mecca had no intention of taking any aggressive step against Mecca although the Meccans had committed most ignoble atrocities against the Muslims. The Holy Prophet taught love and peace and not aggression. The threat of hostility had come from the Meccans and the Holy Prophet was greatly disconcerted and did not know what to do. So he sought guidance from God Almighty.

The All-Seeing and the All-Knowing God was fully aware of the ill intentions of the Meccans. He, therefore, gave permission to the Muslims to retaliate. This permission to fight was granted in the following words:

“Permission to fight is granted to those against whom war is made, because they have been wronged and Allah indeed has the power to help them. They are those who have been driven out of their homes unjustly only because they affirmed: Our Lord is Allah. If Allah did not repel the aggression of some people by means of others, cloisters and churches and synagogues and mosques wherein the name of Allah is often commemorated, would surely be destroyed. Allah will surely help him who helps His cause. Allah is indeed Mighty, Powerful. If we establish these persecuted ones in the earth, they will observe Prayer and pay the Zakat, and enjoin good and forbid evil. With Allah rests the final issue of all affairs. (22:40-2)”

“If Allah were not to repel a section of mankind by another, the earth would be filled with disorder, but Allah is full of bounty. (2:252)”

Permission to retaliate against the Meccans for the atrocities that had been inflicted on them, of course, gladdened the hearts of the early Muslims. The first move that the Holy Prophet made after this revelation was to make friendly relations with all the tribes that lived in the neighbourhood of Medina and made pacts of peace and alliance with them. Thereafter he turned his attention to the trade routes. Meccan caravans accompanied by trained and well tried fighters used to go to the north for the purpose of trade. The Meccan Qureish had begun to spread false rumours among the tribesmen about Islam and the Muslims. They tried to create gross misunderstanding and ill will between the tribes and the Muslims living in Medina.

The Holy Prophet, therefore, began sending forage parties on these trade routes on which the Muslims accosted the Meccan caravans and captured a great deal of booty in this manner. This was considered to be a normal practice between hostile parties and a legitimate war activity.

These measures taken by the Holy Prophet were all precautionary measures — exactly as a wise and shrewd leader must do. These measures were not taken with the intention of profiting from worldly gains. No certainly not! This would be explained better if it was illustrated by an actual incident that happened during these raids.

A tribal Arab who had newly accepted Islam also happened to go with a raiding party. When the spoils were distributed among the members of that party and the newly converted Arab was also given his share. But he said, “O Messenger of Allah, I had joined Islam so that when I went to fight in path of Allah, an arrow might pierce my throat and cause me to die in the field so that I could go straight to heaven.” The Holy Prophet answered, “If that was your wish Allah will soon fulfil it.”

A few weeks later this Arab aspirant died in another expedition exactly as he had wished. When his body was brought the Holy Prophet offered prayers over his body and gave his own cloak in which that Arab was buried.

This shows that the Holy Prophet and his Companions did not go for mere worldly gains. They were obtaining practical training for future fights.

The Holy Prophet had received news from Mecca that the Qureish were getting ready to go to Medina to capture or kill the Holy Prophet. The news came that very soon a very large party was quite ready to leave Mecca. The Holy Prophet kept the news secret but informed a few of his most trusted Companions and also bade them not to divulge that news.

A little later the Holy Prophet summoned his companions in his usual manner, for some consultation. He told them that he wished to go out of

Medina with another fighting force. Abubakr, Umar and others who knew why and where he would go readily expressed their willingness to accompany him. Those who were not aware of the ill-intentions of the Meccans thought that the Messenger of Allah was going to lead another foraging party and he wanted volunteers for that purpose. Those who had important business did not go with him and stayed to attend to their important personal matters.

The Holy Prophet, therefore, set out with the small party, most of whom had joined for some forage party. He took the road to Badr and when they had reached Zaffraan, which was still one day's journey to Badr, he received further news that the Meccans were not very far from Badr. The Holy Prophet, therefore, stopped for consultation. It was his first war council. Abu Bakr, Umar, Ali and others who knew of the activities that had been going on in Mecca against the Muslims of Medina readily showed their willingness to fighting against the enemy. One of them said, "O Messenger of Allah, we shall fight on your right and on your left and we shall fight for you anywhere. We shall not, O Messenger of Allah, ever desert you and behave like the followers of Moses, who shamelessly told their Prophet, 'Go ye and your God and fight the enemy. We shall sit here and see you kill them all.'

But the Holy Prophet asked for more advice again. On this Sa'ad bin Ubadah stood up and said, "O Messenger of Allah, it seems that you wish to know what the Ansar of Medina have to say in this matter. O Messenger of Allah! I remember our original pact with you before you came to Medina . It was that we shall defend you up to the utmost of our power if someone came to give you harm in Medina. Our pact did not say that we shall fight for you outside Medina. That pact was made when we knew very little of Islam and had seen you only once or twice. But now that we believe you in our inner souls that you are truly the Messenger of Allah , we shall never desert you now. Even if you command us to go to the farthest corners of the land, we shall go; and if you command us to walk into the raging sea we shall never hesitate."

The Holy Prophet was highly pleased with this loyalty of the Medina Muslims. He then cheerfully went round to review his small force and found that there were three or four striplings in his small army. He wanted them to go back to Medina. He saw a boy who was trying to hide behind his elder brother. The Holy Prophet wished them to go back to Medina but the boy began to cry so bitterly that the Holy Prophet did not have the heart to send him back. He was permitted to stay.

A little further the Holy Prophet saw a boy who was trying to raise himself on his toes so that he may look taller than he really was. The Holy Prophet told him to go back. But he said, "O Messenger of Allah, that boy whom you have given permission to stay, I can beat him in a wrestling bout. He was,

therefore, allowed to prove his word. The bout took place and the boy proved his word. He was also granted permission to stay.

When the two armies stood in battle array, a valiant fighter, Abdul Rahman bin 'Auf wanted to see whether he was flanked by stout-hearted fighters. He was truly dismayed when he saw on his right and then on his left two mere striplings. But only a moment later he felt a nudge from his right and the boy asked him in a whisper, "Uncle! Where is that man called Abu Jahal who persecutes the Messenger of Allah?" Before he could give the answer to the boy on his right he felt another nudge from his left and he heard the boy saying, "Dear uncle! where is Abu Jahal the arch enemy of the Holy Prophet?" The stout warrior was so amazed that he could not utter a single word. He simply lifted his finger and pointed out Abu Jahal who was standing fully clad in shining armour between a number of warriors.

Looking carefully at the man whom Abdul Rahman bin 'Auf had pointed, both the boys sped fast like the falcon falling on his prey and reached the spot where Abu Jahal was standing. Before he knew what was happening, the two boys attacked and felled Abu Jahal to the ground. Abu Jahal's guards had no time to protect him.

Ikrama, Abu Jahal's son who was not very far, saw what had happened and he attacked one boy and almost severed his arm. The boy found the near severed arm getting in his way. Muaz put his foot on the arm and pulled it off. The two striplings killed the most arrogant man and a very experienced fighter Abu Jahal the Commander of the Meccan Army — even before the actual fight commenced.

God's choicest blessings be upon the souls of these two striplings who, for the love of the Holy Prophet, killed his most callous and greatest enemy from among the Meccans. Amen

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*The God of Islam is the same God who is visible in the mirror of the law of nature and is discernible in the book of nature. Islam has not presented a new God but has presented the same God Who is presented by the light of man's heart, by the conscience of man, and by heaven and earth.  
(The Promised Messiah).*

## Book Review

### **Iqbal's Concept of God**

*Author: M.S. Raschid*

*Publisher: Kegan Paul International, London & Boston*

The book, perhaps the first of its kind, provides a critical view of Iqbal's most celebrated work 'Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam'. The author has challenged the hitherto revered opinion of Muslim scholars about Sir Muhammad Iqbal as a great thinker. The excessively exaggerated opinions such as "Iqbal is the most versatile genius that the Muslim world has produced", have been proved wrong as the author examines Iqbal's works as a religious thinker. He submits that in the "Reconstruction of Religious Thought" in Islam, Iqbal's concept of God is a finite one, and is arrived at largely by a superficial and uncritical reading of western science and philosophy. The chief philosophical influence, the author says, are those of Hegel, Whitehead and Bergson. There is both misunderstanding as well as distortion, no doubt unconscious, on Iqbal's part.

Dr. Raschid writes "Iqbal tries to relate his metaphysical extrapolations from western sources, especially his finite concept of God to the Quran and the tradition of Muslim thought. This enterprise is equally unsuccessful. In particular, his attitude to the Quran is extremely irresponsible and he manages to ignore the whole tradition of Tafsir (exegesis and kalam (theology))".

The writer, Dr. Raschid was educated at Trinity College, Cambridge, where he read natural science. He has been Visiting Scholar in the Philosophy Department at Harvard University and is a member of the Husserl Circle. He is at present at the University of Edinburgh where he holds a research appointment in the Department of Arabic and Islamic studies.

The author asserts that Iqbal's criticism of the cosmological and theological arguments about the existence of God are heavily influenced by Hegelian thought.

The sweeping claims made by the author need further examination to ascertain the validity of his assertions.

M.A. Saqi

## Letters to the Editor

Dear Mr. Rafiq,

It was a real pleasure to receive a copy of the January edition of Review of Religions, which you are now editing so successfully. The magazine is just as I imagined it should be, with plenty of quotes from the writings of the Promised Messiah himself, and reasoned debate from talented writers. In this one edition all the endeavours of the Ahmadiyya Community are admirably focused. It is full of matters of extreme interest.

May I congratulate you on being such a worthy exponent of the aims of the Promised Messiah. I missed you when you returned to Pakistan and more or less lost touch with the Ahmadiyya Community.

With all good wishes,

Yours sincerely,

R.C.E. SKOLFIELD

England

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*God is the light of the heavens and the earth. Every light that is visible on the heights or in the valleys, whether in souls or in bodies, whether personal or impersonal, whether apparent or hidden, whether in the mind or outside it, is a bounty of His grace. This is an indication that the general grace of the Lord of the worlds envelopes everything and nothing is deprived of that grace. He is the source of all grace and is the ultimate cause of all lights and is the fountain-head of all mercies. His Being is the support of the universe and is the refuge of all high and low. He it is who brought everything out of the darkness of nothingness and bestowed upon everything the mantle of being. No other being than Him is in himself present and eternal or is not the recipient of His grace. Earth and heaven, man and animals, stones and trees, souls and bodies, have all come into existence by His grace.  
(The Promised Messiah).*



# Pandit Lekh Ram — The Malicious Arya

By Syed Hasnat Ahmad, Canada

In the decade beginning with 1880, there was a great resurgence of religious activity among Hindus of the sub-continent, particularly in the Punjab. It looked as if the leading protagonists of Hindu religion found this point in time ripe and opportune for launching a massive conversion campaign. With the defeat of the last Mughal Emperor, Bahadur Shah, around whom the rebel Indian army had rallied in 1857, the Muslims were generally in a state of complete demoralization and dejection. There appeared to be no future before them.

Queen Victoria took over the administration of the subcontinent from the British East India Company. Arya and Christian missionaries had been vigorously engaged in weaning away a faltering lot of Muslims. A great Muslim poet, Moulana Hali, in a long descriptive poem had lamented the decline and fall of the Muslim Empire, which had degenerated into a hopeless mess.

No wonder Arya Samaj, a fiery, chauvinistic Hindu Movement, came to the forefront with a great bang. Since the Muslims were drifting aimlessly, they offered themselves as easy prey for such chauvinistic movements.

Pandit Lekh Ram, who was a leader of Arya Samaj in Peshawar in 1881, took up the editorship of the Arya Gazette in 1884 after resigning from Police Service. The Gazette was the chief mouthpiece of the Arya Samajees. Pandit Lekh Ram used Arya Gazette as the chief vehicle for attacking Islam and its Prophet-Muhammad (may peace and blessings of Allah be on him). The strategy, it appeared, was to launch bitter attacks on the Holy Prophet. A systematic campaign of vilification and abuses began against him.

The Muslims, at that time, were lying low and for a while it appeared that the Arya Samaj would have a walk over, as insults upon insults were heaped upon the person of the Holy Prophet in the vilest possible language and it did not evoke even the smallest ripple of protest from that body of Mullahs who thought that “Islam was their property”.

Pandit Lekh Ram, finding the field clear, was spreading foul views about the

Holy Prophet and the Holy Quran. The best of mankind, he thought to be the worst of mankind and the best of the holy books, the worst. Lekh Ram broke all limits of decency and maligned the Holy Prophet persistently.

In 1886, Pandit Lekh Ram paid a visit to Qadian with the prime object of finding fault with Hazrat Ahmad's concept of Islam. The visit was a hurried one. Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad asked him to stay for a longer period in Qadian so that he could be a witness to some heavenly sign. He even offered to pay him twice the amount he was earning, if monetary consideration prevented him from a longer stay. But Lekh Ram did not accept the offer. His sole aim was to pry and find fault in Islamic literature.

Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad was, at that time, engaged in a mighty mission of producing a monumental book on Islam — *Brahain-i-Ahmadiyya*. To counter the immediate onslaught of the Aryas, Ahmad also produced a separate booklet "Surma Chashme Arya (eye-opener for Arya)".

Lekh Ram took upon himself the task of demolishing the image of this growing personality of Islam. He retaliated with malice and guile and wrote a booklet in reply to each of Ahmad's books. First "Takzeeb Brahain-i-Ahmadiyya (Falsification of the Arguments of Ahmad). Ahmad did not mind this semi-literary effort. What however pained him was the filthy language that the Pandit used against the Holy Prophet, peace be on him. Ahmad described the attacks on the life of Muhammad as unvaunted, uncalled for and the language was such that even an ordinary, simple writer would hate to adopt. However, Lekh Ram in his frenzy was mounting his attacks with greater malice on Muhammad and Ahmad, peace of Allah be on them. Ahmad was not worried about attacks on his personality but what he could not bear were attacks on the life of Muhammad, peace be on him. Ahmad was deeply grieved by such unwarranted attacks.

Attacks on Ahmad were understandable, for the Arya and the Christian missionaries were engaged in a gigantic struggle to win over as converts those Muslims who were faltering and were completely demoralized by the sudden loss of their empire in the sub-continent. Ahmad's arrival on the scene was therefore not only unwelcome but also a source of extreme annoyance to the non-Muslims.

Ahmad opened his "Battle of Islam" not with the sword, but by the pen and prayer.

As if the campaign of vilification and vituperation was not sufficient, a handbill was issued by Arya on July 27, 1886, in highly inflammatory

language threatening Ahmad with death. He was told that his end would come within three years. An anonymous letter dated December 3, 1886, was sent to Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad that he would be murdered. To avoid the hand of the law, the letter was written in a childish script but bore close resemblance to the contents of the handbill published earlier.

In the meantime, Pandit Lekh Ram continued unabated his movement that Vedas were the only divine books and the God of Arya — the only deity and to add strength to his arguments, attacks on Hazrat Muhammad, peace be on him, and his teachings were increased with corresponding venom and rancour.

“Hujjat-ul-Islam” and “Khabteh-Ahmadiyya” were his latest provocative books. They were a series of writings designed to defame and disgrace Islam, the Holy Prophet and his great Spiritual son Ahmad of Qadian.

Pandit Lekh Ram became more cocky and on page 324 of his book “Khabteh-e-Ahmadiyya”, he accepted the challenge of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad for a prayer-dual. Accepting the challenge, the Pandit wrote:

“All the four Vedas are holy books. It is my firm belief that the soul is eternal and everlasting, it was not created nor could be destroyed. I also believe that God does not pardon sins, and I don't hope for, depend upon, or trust on any one's intercession in this behalf. That all divine grace flowed from Aryan religion and the Arya are the prime teachers of the world.

And I believe that all the one hundred and twenty four thousand Prophets coming outside the pale of Aryan religion are false. And all the books — the Torah, Bible and the Quran are all man-made, false and the basis of these books is either greed, stupidity or sword and nothing else.

My adversary, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad says that the Quran is the word of God and all its teachings true and everlasting.

Oh Permayeshwar (God), of the two of us, give your divine judgement who is true and who is a liar? For the liar does not find place of honour with you”.

Ahmad, then issued a leaflet on February 20, 1883, announcing that God had informed him through revelation that Pandit Lekh Ram would be severely punished for the vile abuses that he had poured upon the Holy Prophet, within six years from the date of the publication of this leaflet.

This leaflet appeared along with another of Ahmad's monumental books, “Ayena-i-Kamalat-i-Islam” (Islamic splendor”). This revelation further

indicated that like “molten calf” of the days of Moses, Pandit Lekh Ram would be cut to pieces.

When Ahmad’s prophecy was published, a clamour ran through the country that the Prophecy was too vague and did not mean much.

The “Anees-hind”, in its issue of March 29, 1893 described it as a conjecture, and several other papers did the same.

In answer to this, Ahmad said that if the Prophecy was a mere conjecture, let Lekh Ram make a similar prediction about him. It was easier for the Pandit to make such a prediction specially when Lekh Ram was a young man of 30 years, while Mirza Ghulam Ahmad was already over fifty years old. He could have fixed a period of ten years for Ahmad’s punishment which was the period nearer to his life’s end than for a man of thirty years dying within six years.

To silence the wagging tongues and the clamour that the Prophecy was too vague, Ahmad, who was at that time engaged on another book, in which he was tackling the allegations that he had no knowledge of Arabic language, made ready use of it. The book (in Arabic) called “Karamat us Sadiqueen” (the miracles of the Righteous) carried on page 54 one of his fresh revelations. It said: “The punishment of Lekh Ram would not be an ordinary one; it would be so unusual that the people would recognise its supernatural character.” Ahmad also declared, “God has revealed to me that a mighty prophecy would be fulfilled on a day next to Eid Festival”.

It was so clear that a Hindu paper, “Punjab Samachar”, in its issue of March 10, 1897 acknowledged the fact, that these Arabic verses, which had been penned in the form of a poem, referred to Lekh Ram.

However, Pandit Lekh Ram was not at all frightened by the publication of the Prophecy.

There was no pause, however minor, in his vilification, vituperation and the campaign of slanders that he had started against the person of the Holy Prophet and his Disciple Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad. In fact it grew with terrifying boldness and audacity.

As a counter-prophecy, Pandit Lekh Ram declared that he had also received a revelation, and on the strength of it, he could say that Mirza Ghulam Ahmad would die of Cholera within three years. Not content with this prediction, which he made in his book “Takzeeb Brahin-i-Ahmadiyya” on page 307 and 311, Lekh Ram made another prediction in his book entitled “Kulliyat Arya

Musafir” (page 501) where he declared; “Ahmad’s progeny would also be cut.” Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad made another prophecy on April 23, 1893. Ahmad published it, when it was revealed to him in Arabic “Ijjaalun Jasadun Lahoo Khawar Lahoo Nasbun Wa Azab”. Details of this revelation were published by him on the title page of another of his books “Barakatudooa,”. The particulars were carried under the caption:-

“Another news about Lekh Ram Peshawari”

The Text of the version ran as under:

“Today, on April 2, 1893 (14th ramazan 1310 A.H.) early in the morning, I had a nap. I found myself in a spacious house and a few of my friends were around me. Suddenly I saw a person of terrifying stature, strong, tall, as if blood trickled from his face, standing before me. When I looked at him, I felt that he was a being of different creation and character, as if he was not a human being but an angel or some other supernatural creation, leaving a horrifying effect on the beholder. When I saw him, he enquired from me “Where is Lekh Ram and mentioned the name of another person. I realised then that he had been divinely deputed to punish Lekh Ram. Who the other man was I forget but this much was clear to me — in the vision, the other man was one of the persons about whom I have issued the handbill.”

In the same book ( Barakatudooa ) which Ahmad undertook to write to correct the mistaken view circulated by Sir Syed Ahmad that prayers are seldom heard, he wrote a poem in Persian in which he made a special reference to the efficacy of prayer in respect of Lekh Ram. Even before the fulfilment of the prophecy, Ahmad sent a copy of this book to Sir Syed Ahmad so that he could see for himself how prayers are heard and with what mighty impact.

All the prophecies of Ahmad and the visions in which he had clearly foretold the fate of Lekh Ram were fulfilled in due course.

Five months after the clear vision that was published in Barakatudooa, Ahmad published on August 24, 1893, his latest revelation. This was published in another of his books — the one in Arabic Language “Karamatus Sadiqueen” (the miracles of the righteous”). It appeared on the last page of the title of the book, and said:

“God has given me another piece of good news and revealed to me that I will identify it on a day nearer to Eid (that is the day that will be the day of happiness when this sign will manifest itself and the day will stand identified). The Eid will be near to this day. God has vouchsafed to me that He had heard my prayer about the enemy of God and His prophet i.e. Lekh Ram Peshawari. He told me that he would meet his death — the same person who heaps vilest abuses on the august person of the Holy Prophet. I have cursed

him and God told me that he would die within six years and it would be a living sign”.

The prophecies of Ahmad, if put together, foretold the following very clearly:

1. Lekh Ram will be afflicted with a calamity which will prove fatal to him
2. that the calamity will take place within six years of the first prophecy (the date was February 20, 1893)
3. that it will be on a day close to Eid
4. that Lekh Ram will meet the fate of the CALF OF SAMRI of the days of Moses , that is, dismemberment and death and dispersion of ashes into a river (exact wording used in the leaflet of February 20, 1893 were: a miserable half-dead calf (Lekh Ram) nothing awaits him but disgrace and destruction )
5. that this fatal deal will be carried out by a supernatural being.

Time had now come for divine judgement.

Ahmad had worked long enough to bring back to mankind the true ways of Islam. A heavenly sign was eagerly awaited by his followers as well as by his enemies. Followers wanted to see a fresh divine glory and a fresh manifestation of divine backing for their spiritual leader.

Now it was the turn of God to strike.

He struck so convincingly that there was nothing left to doubt; it caused utter confusion and the forces of evil and darkness were miserably routed.

Details of this divine sign were unfolded thus:

On March 6, 1897, Lahore was celebrating Eid Festival. It was the custom of Arya Samajist to exercise extraordinary caution on the occasion of Eid ever since the prophecy of Ahmad was circulated and got wide publicity. For these misguided Arya Samajists thought that Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad would send a hired hoodlum to assassinate his adversary in fulfilment of his prophecy.

Pandit Lakh Ram was in Lahore, living in a well-fortified and secure house.

The sun on March 6, 1897 (Saturday) was about to set. The clock had struck six. Pandit Lekh Ram (living in a hundred percent Hindu locality of Wachowali Mohalla in Lahore) felt secure and happy.

Half naked, Lekh Ram was performing Sandhiya — thanking his self-made God — on the upper storey of the house. After having performed a prolonged sandhiya, he felt a compelling desire to stretch his hands upwards to while away his fatigue and in the process, projected his bulging belly outward.

And Lo! the same Muslim volunteer — the first convert to Hindu Dharam — overreached Lekh Ram and slipped his sharp knife into his projected belly with such dexterity and accuracy that his victim was mortally wounded.

The assasin then vanished into thin air.

Lekh Ram bellowed like a bull uttering a horrible sound and then fell to the floor. Lekh Ram's wife and mother who heard the frightening yell, came rushing towards him to find the Pandit lying in a pool of blood.

In great panic, they rushed towards the gate, but found nobody there.

Had the earth swallowed up the assasin, or the sky wrapped him up in its fold, no one knows to this day.

There was no doubt that all exits leading out of the house were practically sealed. In fact these were closely guarded. No one had seen any one moving out or running away.

Lekh Ram was immediately rushed to Mayo hospital by the Police. Dr Perry, one of the best British surgeons, was immediately informed. Lekh Ram, who had not completely lost consciousness, was lying on the operating table anxiously awaiting the arrival of the Surgeon. Dr Perry was there within minutes. He operated successfully and stitched the wounds as best as he could. In those days, Dr Mirza Yaqoob Beg was the House Surgeon in Mayo Hospital. Before and during the operation Dr Perry was assisted by Dr Beg and several times Dr Perry called to him, "Mirza do this or do that", Dr Perry's calling Mirza greatly upset Lekh Ram and he uttered, "Oh Dam me, this Mirza Qadiyani has also arrived here". Every time Mirza Yaqoob was called, it tormented him. On account of the delicacy of the operation, the Police were not allowed to record the statement of Lekh Ram. Next day, Lekh Ram expired, despite the best medical attention that was available.

Allah is to praised. For the Sunday fixed for the Muslim's conversion into Hindu Dharam, turned out to be the day of reckoning for Lekh Ram.

The news of the death of Lekh Ram spread like wild-fire and struck terror in the hearts of all.

Protest meetings were held, resolutions condemning the event were passed. An immediate enquiry was demanded and it was openly suggested that Ahmad had conspired Lekh Ram's death to fulfill his prophecy.

The entire Hindu community and some Muslims were labouring under the widely circulated belief that Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad had hired an assassin who killed Lekh Ram.

An award of Rs.20,000 was offered to anyone who would help in arresting the assassin. The reward was later increased and the offer was coupled with a pardon if the assassin offered himself. For the basic object was not the arrest of the assassin but to put Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad to disgrace by making out that the death of Lekh Ram was not a divine act but an act carefully planned and conceived by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad.

A post-mortem of Lekh Ram's body was held by the authorities concerned and in view of the great excitement and commotion prevailing among Hindus, the Government decided to carry out a thorough search of the house of Ahmad to satisfy the public curiosity and to meet the demands of justice. An ordinary person would have been scared. But Ahmad took it as a part of a divine sign, as he was Divinely forewarned about the search. God revealed to him that there was nothing to fear.

Ahmad lived in a different world. His trust in the Divine Being was complete and total.

The District Superintendent of Police — a European — carried a surprise and sudden raid on his house in Qadian with a heavy police posse. On April 8, almost a month after, the house of Ahmad was cordoned off. Police informed Ahmad that they had orders to carry out a thorough search of his house in connection with the murder of Lekh Ram.

Ahmad promptly took the S.P., along with his staff, into his house and welcomed them to carry out the search in any manner they wanted.

Bundles of all kinds of papers mostly correspondence, and the manuscripts of his various books were opened and scanned. By sheer coincidence, the first papers that came to the hands of the Police, related to the agreement that took place between Lekh Ram and Ahmad that was concluded by Lekh Ram on his last visit to Qadian. In this document Lekh Ram had demanded a prophecy from Ahmad which should decide the issue between the two faiths, and also absolving him of the consequences. Ahmad also showed to the Police and the press, his guest house and other buildings attached to his house.



The lengthy and gruelling search came to an end. The police could not lay hand on any incriminating evidence. The police were satisfied that Ahmad had nothing to do with Lekh Ram's murder.

After the police investigations proved futile, Ahmad wrote two pamphlets in May 1897, two months after the event, explaining the sign of Allah.

In one of the pamphlets, "Istifta" mainly devoted to the divine punishment of Lekh Ram, Ahmad wrote:

"The motive which led me to write this pamphlet is, that Aryas still entertain the false idea that Lekh Ram was murdered at my instigation. I am inclined to excuse them for this, as they are entirely ignorant of the Divine origin of the prophecy and according to their belief, inspiration and revelation was false and antiquated and have become extinct. In other words Divine manifestation was not eternal but only a thing of the past. However, a study of this pamphlet will not only clear this outmoded thought but also clear me of any participation direct or indirect in Lekh Ram's murder. It will also be useful to those who deny the existence of prophecy and revelation in this age and who consider the power of foretelling future events inconsistent with the laws of Nature".

Nonetheless, the Hindu reaction at the death of Lekh Ram at the appointed day in the indicated manner was boundless. A secret society was formed to murder Ahmad. Its members were all over Lahore, Amritsar, Batala and Gujranwala. The plan was simple — hire an assassin to kill Ahmad in consideration of Rs.20,000 which was to be raised through subscription. The "Aftab-i-Hind" (March 18, 1897) issue which appeared barely 12 days after the death of Lekh Ram published an article on page 5 of the issue under the name of M.R. Basheshar Das. Its heading was: "Mirza Qadiyani Khabardar" (Mirza Qadiyani be warned). The writer threatened that Ahmad had only a few days to live. Another paper "Rahber Hind" in its issue of March 15, 1897 (page 14 column 1) published a separate warning. It ran: "It is said that Hindus will go to Qadian and murder Ahmad." The excitement and uproar among Hindus was such that according to "Rahber Hind", Hindus started threatening even Christians.

Notwithstanding all these threats and warnings, Ahmad lived for more than eleven eventful and epoch-making years. Ahmad was informed of these threats to his life as early as 17 years ago, that plans and designs would be drawn to murder him or crucify him, but God almighty also informed him that He would save him and protect him from all such threats.

## References:

- i. "Istafta", "Barakatudooa", "Karmatus Sadiqueen" and various leaflets of Ahmad.
- ii. Invitation to Ahmadiyyat (Hazrat Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmood Ahmad)
- iii. Life of Ahmad (A.R. Dard)
- iv. Mujadid-i-Azam (Dr Basharat Ahmad).

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### Qualities of the righteous

*To become truly righteous it is necessary that a person abandoning utterly such outstanding vices as adultery, theft, trespass, hypocrisy, self-esteem, scorn of fellow beings, miserliness, should eschew all low morals and should make progress in high moral values. He should behave towards his fellow beings with courtesy and sympathy and should cultivate true fidelity and sincerity towards God Almighty. He should constantly seek occasions of beneficent service. He who combines all these qualities in himself is alone righteous. The possession of any one of these qualities would not entitle a person to be accounted righteous unless he possesses collectively all of them. It is only these concerning whom it is said: No fear shall come upon them, nor shall they grieve (7:36). What more would they need? God Almighty becomes their guardian as it is said: He safeguards the righteous (7:197). The Holy Prophet has said: God Almighty becomes their hands with which they grasp, and becomes their eyes with which they see, and becomes their ears with which they hear and becomes their feet with which they walk. In another **hadees** it is stated that God has proclaimed: He who bears enmity towards a friend of Mine should become ready to contend with Me. Still another **hadees** declares: When anyone attacks a friend of God, He pounces upon him with the fierceness with which a tigress pounces upon one who seeks to deprive it of its young. (The Promised Messiah).*

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### Revelation is a means of salvation

*We have been created for a great purpose which is the true understanding of God, and on that understanding depends our salvation. It delivers us from every impure and doubtful way and leads us to the edge of a pure and clear river. It can be acquired only through Divine revelation. When being lost wholly to our ego, we dive deep with an eager heart into an unattainable Being, our humanness having appeared in the court of Godhead returns with some signs and lights from that world. Thus that which the worldly ones look upon with contempt is the only thing which brings a long-separated one in an instant to his Beloved and bestows comfort upon the lovers of the divine. It relieves a person suddenly of all types of egoistic limitations; till that true light descends upon the heart it is not possible that it should be illumined. The limitations of human reason and the limitations of current knowledge bear the need of revelation. (The Promised Messiah).*

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## The REVIEW of RELIGIONS

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

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

During more than eighty-one years the message of Islam has been conveyed through this magazine to hundreds of readers and many fortunate persons have recognised the truth of Islam and accepted it through studying it.

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

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

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



Printed by Unwin Brothers Limited, The Gresham Press, Old Woking, Surrey  
Published by The Review of Religions, The London Mosque, 16 Gressenhall  
Road, London, SW18 5QL