



THE REVIEW of RELIGIONS

VOL LXXXII

NO. 3/4 MARCH/APRIL 1987

IN THIS ISSUE

- GUIDE POSTS
- THE COUNSELLOR
- THE CASTE SYSTEM
- EFFICACY OF PRAYER
- AMONG THE BELIEVERS
- PERSECUTION OF RELIGIOUS MINORITIES
- POST CRUCIFIXION TRAVELS OF JESUS
- CURRENT AFFAIRS

EDITORIAL BOARD

1. M. A. SAQI
2. B. A. ORCHARD
3. A. M. RĀSHID
4. DR. Q. M. BARAKATULLAH
5. A. MAJEED CHAUDHRY

Managing Editor
A. Majeed Chaudhry

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.



Contributing Editors

1. M. A. Saqi
2. Mushtaq A. Bajwah
3. A. M. Rāshid
4. R. A. Chaudhry
5. Nasir A. Sheikh
6. Dr. Q. M. Barakatullah
7. Prof. Saleh M. Alladin
8. Mrs. Bahri Hamid
9. Khalil Mahmud
10. Prof. Saud Ahmad

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

The REVIEW of RELIGIONS

A monthly magazine devoted to the dissemination of the teachings of Islam, the discussion of Islamic affairs and religion in general.

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,
The London Mosque,
16 Gressenhall Road,
London, SW18 5QL, U.K.*

*Annual subscriptions:
U.K. & Europe £10
U.S.A. & Canada \$15*



CONTENTS

Page

- | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| 1. Guide Posts
(Bashir Ahmad Orchard) | 2 |
| 2. The Counsellor
(Dr. A. R. Bhutta) | 5 |
| 3. The Caste System
(Damodar Sharma) | 19 |
| 4. Efficacy of Prayer
(Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad) | 23 |
| 5. Among the Believers
(V. S. Naipul) | 26 |
| 6. Persecution of Religious Minorities
(Professor Terence P. Day) | 35 |
| 7. Post Crucifixion Travels of Jesus
(Dr. Q. M. Barkatullah) | 40 |
| 8. Current Affairs
(Rashid Ahmad Chaudhary) | 46 |

Guide Posts

BROTHERHOOD

(Bashir Ahmad Orchard)

“Surely all believers are brothers. So make peace between your brothers, and fear Allah that peace may be shown to you.”

(Quran 49:11).

Islam lays much stress on brotherhood which involves proffering a cordial attitude towards others. No doubt ties of human relationships vary in depths of affection. This is human nature. One may be intimate with some persons and less so with others. Brotherhood demands a certain standard of respect and goodwill towards everyone. Hazrat Mirza Nasir Ahmad — the third successor of the Promised Messiah and Holy Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam — propagated the maxim:

“Love for all. Hatred for none.”

The Holy Quran declares:

“O mankind, We have created you from a male and a female; and We have made you tribes and sub-tribes that you may know one another. Verily the most honourable among you, in the sight of Allah, is he who is most righteous among you. Surely Allah is All-Knowing, All-Aware.”

(49:14).

This verse declares the brotherhood and equality of mankind. Having originated from the same source all members of the human race belong to one

family. Love and respect are the unifying bonds of family life. Peace is an essential ingredient for lasting brotherhood as friction of any kind undermines it. No doubt this is why the Holy Prophet of Islam taught that in the event of any dissent between two Muslims they should not cease talking to one another for more than three days. He also epitomised the spirit of brotherhood with the following exhortation:

“O ye men! your God is One and your ancestor is one. An Arab possesses no superiority over a non-Arab, nor does a non-Arab over an Arab. A white is in no way superior to a red, nor, for that matter, a red to a white, but only to the extent to which he discharges his duty to God and man. The most honoured among you in the sight of God is the most righteous among you.”

In times of war and other extremely aggravating situations it is not possible to extend normal courtesies of brotherhood. Never-the-less hatred should not be allowed to dominate the heart. The Prophet Muhammad (may peace be on him) showed extreme benevolence towards his enemies and persecutors when he victoriously returned to Mecca with ten thousand followers. The town was at his mercy and it was within his power to make the Meccans severely suffer for their crimes of inhumanity which they had perpetrated against him and his followers for so many years. On the contrary he occupied Mecca without bloodshed and forgave his persecutors. Truly he demonstrated love for all and hatred for none.

Love for one another has been the message conveyed by all revealed religions since time immemorial. Three thousand years ago God commanded Moses to proclaim:

“Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.”
(19:18).

The same exhortation was promulgated by Jesus (Matthew 19:18; Mark 12:31) as well as to love one's enemies:

“But I say unto you, love your enemies,
bless them that curse you, do good to
them that hate you, and pray for them
which spitefully use you, and
persecute you.”
(Matthew 5:44).

Elsewhere we read in the New Testament:

“For this is the message that ye heard
from the beginning, that we should love
one another.”
(1 John 3:11).

“ . . . let us love one another.”

(1 John 4:7).

“ . . . ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another.”

(1 Thessalonians 4:9).

True believers have been told in the Quran that they are friends and brothers; and that they should live at peace with one another (8:73; 49:11). Mutual respect is a basic requirement for the maintenance of peace and harmony. The Quran has provided specific directions in this respect and prohibited spiteful and discourteous conduct towards others:

“O ye who believe! let not one people deride another people, haply they may be better than they, nor let one group of women deride other women, haply they may be better than they. And do not defame your people nor call one another by nick names. It is an evil thing to be called by bad name after having believed; and those who repent not, such are the wrong doers. O ye who believe! avoid much suspicion; for suspicion in some cases is a sin. And spy not on one another, neither back-bite one another. Would any of you like to eat the flesh of his dead brother? certainly, you would loathe it. And fear Allah, surely, Allah is Oft-Returning with compassion and is Merciful.”

(49:12, 13).

We all fall short of perfection and should bear this fact in mind in our attitudes towards other people. It does not mean we should condone their sins and short-comings but at the same time we should not treat them with contempt for this attitude strikes at the root of brotherhood. Humility and an awareness of our own miserable condition should create within us sympathy and compassion rather than contempt for them. If contempt is to be directed anywhere then it should be towards ourselves.

The Counsellor

(Dr. A. R. Bhutta)

Chapters 14, 15, and 16 of the Gospel of John deal with the prophecy of Jesus Christ about the advent of a “Counsellor” after him. The relevant verses in this connection are reproduced below:

“ . . . And I will pray the Father and He will give you another Counsellor to be with you for ever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him; you know him, for he dwells with you, and will be in you”.

(John 14:16, 17).

“These things I have spoken to you while I am still with you. But the Counsellor, the Holy Spirit whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you. . . . I will no longer talk much with you, for the ruler of this world is coming. He has no power over me. . . .”

(John 14:25, 26, 30).

“But when the Counsellor comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness to me”.

(John 15:26).

“Nevertheless, I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Counsellor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. And when he comes, he will convince the world of sin and of righteousness and of judgment: of sin because they do not believe in me; of righteousness, because I go to the Father, and you will see me no more; of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged. I have yet many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth; for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you”.

(John 16:7–14).

The verses, quoted above, give the salient features of the prophecy which happens to be the most explicit prophecy of the New Testament. But it is indeed tragic to note that, in spite of all the details and explanations, the issue still became controversial and most of the followers of Jesus Christ failed to grasp the real import of the prophecy.

From the christian point of view, the counsellor promised in the prophecy was the Holy Spirit; and it was fulfilled on the day of Pentecost when the disciples had received an unusual power of speech through the help of the Holy Spirit. We, the Muslims on the other hand contend that this prophecy refers to the advent of a great prophet after Jesus Christ and that it was fulfilled with the appearance of the Holy Prophet of Islam.

To find out what Jesus had really promised in this prophecy, and how that promise was actually fulfilled, it is necessary for us to review the incident of Pentecost and to examine the context and the contents of the prophecy.

The Incident of Pentecost

It is reported in the Acts of the Apostles that on the day of Pentecost the disciples were together in a house when they heard a great noise like the rushing of wind, and then they were suddenly filled with the Holy Spirit and, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, they had started talking in languages other than their own. The Jews of the different nationalities, who were living in that area, had gathered around them and all of them were surprised to hear the disciples speak in their own national tongues, to the Jews they had appeared as if they were drunk.

This, briefly, is the incident which is supposed to have fulfilled the prophecy of the Counsellor. But even a casual look on that magnificent prophecy of Jesus Christ is sufficient to convince an impartial observer that it could not be in any way related to this insignificant personal experience of the disciples. The prophecy of the Counsellor is very elaborate, extending over almost three chapters of the Gospel. Its spiritual implications are even more extensive, reaching as far as the ends of the world. It highlights the unique spiritual attributes of the Counsellor and specifies his various achievements. The incident that happened on that day of Pentecost, might have surprised the Jews of the locality and pleased the Christian community of the area but it certainly did not satisfy any of the requirements of the Prophecy. For instance, Jesus is reported to have said:

“ . . . I have yet many things to say to you but you cannot bear them now. But when the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth”, and that “he will teach you all things” . . .

(John 16:14,26).

Now one may ask, which truth was revealed to the disciples on that day of Pentecost and what things were taught to them which Jesus had left untaught? All we are told is that they “began to speak in other tongues, as the spirit gave them utterance”. And this was no part of the prophecy, nor was Jesus sent to teach them any languages. Moreover, there is no record of what they spoke about on that day, nor is there any evidence to show that they understood what they were made to speak at that time. How can we say then, that they had been really taught anything or guided into any truth? The fact of the matter is that they had been taught nothing, not even the languages that they spoke with the help of the Holy Spirit. There is no evidence to show that they were still speaking those languages even after that incident. That experience of the disciples, therefore, can by no stretch of imagination be regarded as if they had been “taught all things” and “guided into all the truth”. And consequently, we shall have to look somewhere else for the real fulfilment of that prophecy.

Another point that proves that the incident of Pentecost was not the fulfilment of the prophecy about the Counsellor, is that Saint Peter, while explaining that incident to the Jews, mentioned it to be the fulfilment of “what was spoken by the prophet Joel” (Act. 2:16). He did not mention it to be the fulfilment of the prophecy about the Counsellor made by Jesus; and this he could not have failed to mention if that incident were in any way connected with that prophecy.

It may be asked at this point that Saint Peter did mention near the end of his speech that Jesus “having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, has poured out this which you see and hear” (Act. 2:33). It may be noted in this connection, that Saint Peter was not referring to the prophecy about the Counsellor when he mentioned that promise of the Holy Spirit. He was referring to quite another promise which Jesus had made on several other occasions. Jesus is reported to have promised:

“ . . . don’t be anxious beforehand what you are going to say, but say whatever is given to you in that hour, for it is not you who speak but the Holy spirit”.

(Mk. 13:11).

Again, he is reported to have told the disciples that:

“ . . . what you are going to say will be given to you in that hour; for it is not you who speak but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you”.

(Mat. 10:20).

It is clear from these references that, quite apart from the prophecy of the Counsellor, Jesus had also promised his disciples an unusual power of speech through the help of the Holy Spirit; and that was exactly what had happened on that day of Pentecost. The incident, obviously had nothing to do with the prophecy of the Counsellor.

The Incident Explained

It seems necessary to explain here that the incident of Pentecost was nothing but a case of revelation which the disciples had received in some languages of the Jews of different nationalities who were living in that area; and it had served to impress upon the Jews that, after the advent of Jesus Christ, the gift of the Holy Spirit could only be received through faith in him and that they had to accept and obey him if they wanted to receive it. To say that, however, is not to profess that faith in Jesus alone would have been sufficient to receive the Holy Spirit, if and when a new prophet had appeared after Jesus Christ, nor is it to preach that faith in earlier prophets was not necessary for that purpose.

It must be remembered that for any Spiritual achievement, which is possible only through the influence and help of the Holy Spirit, it is absolutely essential to have faith in all the prophets of God in general and to accept and obey the prophet of the age in particular. For the Jews of the time of Jesus it was necessary to obey him in spite of their faith in earlier prophets because he was the spiritual ruler and prophet of their age. With the advent of the Holy Prophet of Islam, however, it became imperative to accept and obey him in addition to the faith in earlier prophets including Jesus Christ. And the same holds good in this age after the advent of the Promised Messiah.

Context of the Prophecy

Before we go on to the contents of the prophecy, it is essential to review its context. It is said that the Bible interprets the Bible. Difficult and controversial parts of the Bible usually become clear and easy to understand if studied in their context. In fact, no passage of the Bible should be lifted out of its Biblical setting and studied in isolation. Any such attempt would simply be misleading. This is particularly true of the prophecies which are usually made in metaphoric language and can prove to be confusing unless studied in their Biblical context. The New Testament in general, is supposed to be the fulfilment of what is recorded in the Old Testament. In fact, there is nothing prophetic in the New Testament particularly the Gospels, which is not supported by, and explained in, the Old Testament. Any prophecy in the Gospels, therefore, should normally offer no problem to any one who makes a keen and careful study of the Bible.

As far as this prophecy of the Counsellor is concerned, we know that it is reported in Chapters 14, 15 and 16 of the Gospel of John. Also from the very opening chapter of this Gospel, we also learn that before the advent of Jesus Christ, the Jews were expecting three different prophets to appear, in the light of the prophecies of the Old Testament. They were expecting (1) Elijah, (2) The Christ, and (3) The Prophet, promised by Moses. (John 1:21, 25). Now, with regard to the appearance of these three prophets, we are told

that Elijah appeared in the person of John, the Baptist, and the Christ came in the person of Jesus; but what about the prophet, promised by Moses? Here again, Saint Peter clarifies the situation. While addressing the Men of Israel, he reminded them:

“And now, brethren, I know that you acted in ignorance, . . . But what God foretold by the mouth of all the prophets, that his Christ should suffer, he thus fulfilled. Repent therefore, and turn again, . . . that he may send the Christ appointed for you. Jesus, whom heaven must receive until the time for establishing all that God spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets from the old. Moses said, ‘The Lord God will raise up for you a prophet from your brethren as he raised me up. You shall listen to him in whatever he tells you . . .’ And all the prophets who have spoken, from Samuel and those who came afterwards, also proclaimed these days . . .”
(Act. 3:17–24).

This statement of Saint Peter, given above, fully establishes the facts:

- (1) That what “God foretold by the mouth of all the prophets, that his Christ should suffer” was fulfilled with the coming and suffering of Jesus.
- (2) That “the prophet promised by Moses” was still being expected after the departure of Jesus, the Christ.
- (3) The Christ had to stay in heaven and could not come for the second time until the prophecy of Moses about the advent of a prophet like him was fulfilled.
- (4) And that all the prophets who had come from Samuel down to the days of the apostles, had been proclaiming the advent of “that prophet”.

Now, if it is a fact that “that prophet” was still being expected to appear sometime before the second coming of the Christ and that all the prophets who had come from Samuel down to the days of the apostles, had been proclaiming the advent of that prophet, then it is only logical for us to believe that Jesus could not have possibly forgotten that prophecy and failed to proclaim the advent of that prophet; particularly when Jesus had himself declared that he had come, not to abolish, but to fulfil the Law and the Prophets. In fact, Jesus being a prophet immediately before the fulfilment of that prophecy, had a primary duty to pronounce the forthcoming advent of that prophet — the prophet who had been the focal point of the prediction and preachings of all the Biblical prophets. Since there is no other statement of Jesus about the advent of that prophet, we can safely conclude from the above mentioned context, that the Counsellor or the Comforter, pronounced by Jesus, could be no other person than the prophet promised by Moses, who was still being awaited at that time by Jews and Christians alike.

Another context of this prophecy of the Counsellor is provided by Isaiah who had also promised a Counsellor. He had foretold:

“ . . . to us a son is given; and the government will be upon his shoulders, and his name will be called ‘wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace’. Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, upon the throne of David . . . and kingdom, to establish with justice and righteousness . . .”.

(Is. 9:6, 7).

This is one of the most remarkable prophecies of the Old Testament, just as the prophecy of the Counsellor is the most important prophecy of the New Testament. Here we find in the Old Testament a Counsellor promised by Isaiah, and there we find in the New Testament a Counsellor promised by Jesus; and there is no reason to believe that both the prophets were not talking of the same personality. Both the prophecies mention that the Counsellor will be source of peace in the world and that he will remain in the world forever. Both the prophets have given him the divine metaphoric names like “Everlasting Father” and the “Spirit of Truth that proceeds from the Father”. Jesus calls him the “ruler of the world” who will come “to convince the world of sin, righteousness and judgment”; while Isaiah declares him to be the “Prince of peace” who is supposed to inherit “throne and kingdom of David, to rule with righteousness and with justice” (John 14:27, 30; 15:26; 16:8). All these facts strongly suggest that the Counsellor promised by Jesus could be no other person than the Counsellor promised by Isaiah. Since the Counsellor promised by Isaiah was a son, a man and a prophet, with divine attributes, it naturally follows from this context that the one promised by Jesus too was a man and a prophet, and not just a spirit.

Contents of the Prophecy

Having studied the context of the prophecy, we can now go on to examine its contents.

1. First of all, let us discuss the names by which the promised one has been called in the Bible. His first name as it appears in the RSV of the Bible, is “Counsellor”. Some other versions of the Bible mention the first name as “Comforter” or “Helper”. The real name used by Jesus is not known because we do not have the original text of the New Testament. The oldest version available is the Greek translation of the New Testament, and the name mentioned there is “Parakletos” which means an advocate, pleader, counsellor, helper or a comforter. There is a strong possibility that even this Greek word “Parakletos” may not be the real translation of the original name used by Jesus; it may well be a changed form of another very similar Greek word “Periklutos” which means the “praised one” or the “renowned one”. Mr. Jack Finegan, a well known Christian theologian, has written in his book

“The Archeology of World Religions” that “. . . the Greek word Parakletos (Comforter) is very similar to Periklutos (Renowned); the latter word being the meaning of the name Ahmad or Mohammad”.

Another evidence that shows that the original word was indeed “Periklutos” which means Ahmad, is supplied by “The Damascus Document”, a scripture discovered towards the end of the nineteenth century in Ezra Synagogue, Old Cairo. In that document Jesus is reported to have said, “. . . and by his Messiah He had made them know His Holy Spirit. For it is he who is Emeth, the truthful one” (Strachan’s Fourth Gospel, Page 141). According to this document, the name used by Jesus was “Emeth” while the Holy Quran claims that Jesus had promised that a prophet called “Ahmad” will come after him (Quran 61:7). The phonetic similarity between the Hebrew word “Emeth” and the Arabic word “Ahmad” is only too obvious.

The other names used for the promised one are the “Holy Spirit” and the “Spirit of Truth”. It is mainly on account of these names that the Christians think the promised one to be a “spirit” and not a prophet. But a careful study of the contents and the context of the prophecy would reveal that these names are only metaphoric and attributive in nature. For instance, we find that the words “Holy Spirit” and the “Spirit of Truth” almost always appear as second names to the counsellor, which shows that these are not the real names. If the promised one were really the Holy Spirit as is preached by the Christians (and the Counsellor were only his attributive name), then he would have been called as “Holy Spirit, the Counsellor” and not as “Counsellor, the Holy Spirit” as we now find in the Bible. Moreover, the words “even the Spirit of Truth” used to qualify the Counsellor, further confirm that the Counsellor is not really any spirit and that these words are used only in a symbolic sense.

Those who find it surprising that the Counsellor, a human being, should be referred to as the “Holy Spirit”, should note the Counsellor promised by Isaiah who is “a child”, “a son” and thus a human being without doubt, has been called even as “Mighty God”. Evidently, the name “Holy Spirit”, like the name “Mighty God”, is only metaphoric in nature and is given to those divine people who are the recipient of the Holy Spirit. Here is an example from the Bible. Just before he was stoned to death, Saint Stephen addressed the Jews and said:

“. . . you stiff necked people, uncircumcised in heart and ears, you always resist the Holy Spirit. As your fathers did, so do you. Which of the prophets did not your fathers persecute?”.

(Act. 7:51, 52).

Here in this passage the persecution of the prophets has been called as the resistance to the Holy Spirit. Now the Jews were neither against the Holy Spirit, nor could they resist it. What they had done was the resistance and persecution of the prophets. But their persecution of the prophets has been

called as the resistance of the Holy Spirit, which clearly shows that the term Holy Spirit can sometimes stand for the prophets who are the recipient of the Holy Spirit.

As far as the term "Spirit of truth" is concerned, it should also offer no problem. This term is used for those divine people who preach and practice the truth. Here again is an example to explain the use of this term. Saint John in his First Letter writes:

"Beloved, do not believe every Spirit, but test the Spirit to see whether they are of God; for many false prophets have gone out into the world . . . We are of GOD. Whoever knows God listen to us and he who is not of God, does not listen to us. By this we know the Spirit of truth and the Spirit of error".

(I John 4:1-6).

The reference, given above, not only proves that the word "Spirit" can be used for Prophets but also confirms that the term "Spirit of truth" stands for those who are of God and who listen to the people of God.

2. Having dealt with the names mentioned in the prophecy, let us now discuss other contents of the prophecy. Jesus is reported to have said:

"And I will pray the Father and He will give you another Counsellor to be with you for ever . . ."

(John 14:16).

In the above mentioned statement of Jesus, the words "another counsellor" are particularly note worthy. These words clearly imply that Jesus himself was a counsellor and that another Counsellor was to come after him. If the Comforter or the Counsellor promised by him were actually the Holy Spirit, as we are supposed to believe from the christian point of view, then the term "another Counsellor" would mean "another Holy Spirit". And how many Holy Spirits do we have? Since there is one and only one Holy Spirit, another Counsellor can only mean another Prophet like Jesus himself. Of course, the blessings and the teachings of that other Counsellor were to stay forever. That is why Isaiah too, has called him "Everlasting Father".

3. The prophecy further reads in the words of Jesus:

"I have yet many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth; for he will not speak on his own authority but whatever he hears he will speak . . . He will glorify me".

(John 16:12, 13).

and that:

"He will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you".

(John 14:26).

It is evident from these references that the teachings of Jesus Christ and all the other prophets who had come before him, were not complete and did not contain "all the truth" necessary for the spiritual development of the mankind; and that the complete and perfect code of life for the guidance of mankind was to be given through the Counsellor who was to come after Jesus Christ.

It is also mentioned in these verses that the divine message given through the Counsellor, would be the pure and perfect word of God, for it is mentioned that "he will not speak on his own authority but whatever he will hear he will speak". This particular aspect of the Counsellor's advent is exactly the same as that of "the prophet" promised by Moses. God had promised through Moses that He would raise a prophet like Moses from among the brethren of Israel, and that He would put His words into his mouth and he would speak all that God would command him (Deut. 18:18).

From the evidence, given above, we can clearly see that the Counsellor promised by Jesus could be no other person than the prophet promised by Moses. And the only prophet whose advent could have possibly fulfilled this prophecy, is the Holy prophet of Islam who, like Moses, was a law-bearing prophet who was raised among the brethren of Israel, who received and delivered God's message by mouth in the form of pure and precise words of God, and who brought a perfect and complete Law for the guidance and spiritual advancement of the mankind (Quran 5:4, 68; 73:16).

It was also mentioned in the prophecy that the Counsellor would glorify Jesus and would bring to our remembrance all that Jesus had said. This job too, has been done in a perfect manner through the Holy prophet of Islam. Anybody going through the pages of the Holy Quran, would discover to his great surprise that it has glorified not only Jesus but also his mother; and, like a capable Counsellor, it has vindicated them from all the dirty and disgraceful charges, levelled against them by their enemies (Quran 4:157–159; 19:30–34). In fact, the Holy Quran has exalted the honour of Jesus not only in this world but also in the world hereafter (Quran 3:43–46, 56). The Holy Quran has also sought to correct the erroneous beliefs about the life and death of Jesus, preached and propagated by his so called followers and has brought to our remembrance his true teachings (Quran 5:117–119).

An important aspect of the advent of the Counsellor is mentioned in the prophecy as follows:

"Nevertheless I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Counsellor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you".

(John 16:7).

This statement of Jesus lays down an important condition for the Counsellor to come. We are told that Counsellor could not come as long as

Jesus was there in the world. For the Counsellor to come, Jesus had to go. This condition makes it impossible for us to believe that “the Counsellor”, destined to come after Jesus, could be the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit had been there in the world before Jesus and it was there among them in his presence. In fact, Jesus had already given the Holy Spirit to his disciples when he had breathed upon them saying, “Receive ye the Holy Spirit” (John 20:23). How, then, could he say that the Holy Spirit would not come to them unless he went away? And why should the coming of the Holy Spirit be incompatible with the presence of Jesus? It is, therefore, obvious that when Jesus mentioned that condition for the coming of “another Counsellor”, he was talking not of any Spirit but of “another prophet” who could not possibly come in his presence. The reason for this too, had been explained by Jesus. Concluding the parable of Vineyard, he had told the Jews that the kingdom of God would be taken away from them and given to another nation. (Mat. 21:43) The “other Counsellor” who was to come from the Gentiles, therefore, had to take away the “kingdom of God” from the nation of Israel and had to establish it on earth on a universal and permanent basis. And Jesus who was a national prophet of Israel and the “King of Jews”, naturally had to be effected by this change of “governments” in the Kingdom of God. Jesus, therefore, had to go winding up the spiritual rule of Israel in this world and clearing the way for the “other spiritual ruler” of this world.

This very fact was further emphasised in the prophecy when Jesus declared:

“I will no longer talk much with you, for the ruler of this world is coming. He has no power over me; but I do as my Father has commanded me . . .”.

(John 14:30).

This statement of Jesus affirms, once again, that with the advent of the next ‘spiritual ruler of this world’ his own teachings will come to an end. Since Jesus, like most of the Biblical prophets, had come to preach and practice the Law of Moses, this statement also implied that the Law of Moses and the teachings of all the other prophets too, will come to an end with the advent of the other “prophet like Moses”.

The Ruler of the World

It seems necessary at this stage to explain the term “ruler of the world” as it appears in the Bible. The Christian scholars have interpreted it to mean “the Devil”. But this interpretation is absolutely out of context and quite irrelevant.

It may be noted that the use of this term is peculiar to the Gospel of John where it occurs three times. And on all the three occasions it is reported as the statement of Jesus Christ (John 12:31, 14:30 and 16:11). If we study the

context of these verses, we find no evidence to show that when Jesus used the term “ruler of the world” he could be referring to the Devil. On the contrary, there is clear evidence in the context as well as in the contents of these verses, to show that when Jesus used this term, he was either referring to himself or to the Counsellor who was to come after him.

1. In the first verse, for example, Jesus is reported to have said:

“Now is the judgment of this world, now shall the ruler of this world be cast out; and I, when I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw all men to myself”.

(John 12:31).

Now we know that Jesus said these words to the crowd which had gathered to welcome him as he entered the city of Jerusalem riding on a donkey. He was hailed by the people as the “King of Israel”. As he talked to the crowd, he told them about his glorification and also about this forthcoming rejection and crucifixion. Even the Christian scholars agree that when Jesus said, “I will be lifted up from the earth”, he was referring to his own crucifixion. But they insist that when he said, “the ruler of this world will be cast out”, he was referring to the Devil. They want us to believe that a part of the verse refers to the Christ while the other part refers to the Devil.

It appears that it is the words “cast out” which make the Christian scholars think of Devil in this verse. Since these words are commonly used in connection with the evil spirits, they tend to think that “the ruler of this world” too, must be an evil spirit. But this is simply ridiculous. They should know that in this very Gospel of John it is mentioned that the blind man, cured by Jesus too had been condemned and “cast out” by the Jews (John 9:34, 35).

So if Jesus was talking of his own crucifixion in one half of the verse, why can't we believe that he was talking of his own rejection in the other half? After all Jesus was rejected and treated as an outcast; and it was this rejection which had led to his crucifixion. In this context, therefore, we can easily infer that when Jesus said that the ruler of this world will be cast out, and that he will be lifted up from the earth, he was telling the crowd that this “Son of Man” who has been hailed as the “King of Israel”, will soon be rejected as an outcast and lifted up on the cross, and that eventually he will draw all men to himself who will believe in him and glorify him.

2. The other verse where the term “ruler of the world” is used is John 16:11, where it occurs in connection with the functions of the Counsellor. In this verse and in the three preceding verses, three functions of the Counsellor are mentioned.

First, we are told that the Counsellor will come to “convince the world of sin” because they did not believe in Jesus.

Secondly, that he will come to convince the world of righteousness because Jesus was going to Father.

And thirdly, that he will convince the world of judgment because 'the ruler of this world was judged. Here again from the Christian point of view, the term "ruler of this world" refers to the Devil.

But it will be noted that the first two functions of the Counsellor are specified in respect of Jesus while the third one is mentioned to be in respect of the "ruler of the world". The context of the verse 16:11 and the nature of the functions of the Counsellor mentioned therein, strongly suggest that if the first two functions of the Counsellor are related to Jesus, the third one must also be related to Jesus. So if the first two assignments of Counsellor are to prove to the world that it was a sin not to believe in Jesus and to doubt his righteousness, the third assignment must also be to prove to the world that the Jews were wrong in their judgment of Jesus.

"The ruler of the world" mentioned in the third assignment of the Counsellor, therefore, could be no other person than Jesus himself, who was in fact the spiritual ruler of his time and who was wrongly judged and convicted by this world. These verses specifically mention that the coming Counsellor shall uphold the truthfulness of Jesus and will defend him against the judgment passed by his enemies.

It must be noted that throughout the text of the prophecy of the Counsellor, which extends over three chapters of the Gospel, all the functions and duties of the Counsellor are either related to the personality of Jesus or to his ministry. In this part of the verse 16:11, therefore, Jesus could not be talking of any hypothetical judgment passed on the Devil while he knew that he himself had been wrongly judged and an appeal against that judgment was still pending before the coming Counsellor.

3. Finally, we take up the third verse (14:30) where the term "ruler of the world" is mentioned. In this verse Jesus is reported to have said:

"I will no longer talk much with you, for the ruler of this world is coming. He has no power over me . . .".

In this statement Jesus has predicted the advent of the "ruler of the world" sometime in the near future; and if this term is to be interpreted to mean the "Devil", then, evidently Jesus has predicted the coming of the Devil. But this prediction hardly makes any sense because the Devil had been already there in this world, fully active since the creation of mankind. Moreover, the Devil had been already "judged and cast out" as we are supposed to believe from the other two verses discussed above. So, what could Jesus mean by saying that the "Devil was coming"? And how could the Devil come back to rule the world after being judged and cast out? Supposing Jesus was talking of some sort of "second coming" of the Devil, why should he have stopped

talking to his followers? If the Devil was really coming to rule the world, it was all the more reason that he should have talked, and even shouted, about the forthcoming danger, particularly when he knew that the “coming ruler” had no power over him.

We learn from the Gospels that Jesus had been predicting the advent of the Counsellor. He had been talking of the coming of the “Holy Spirit and the Spirit of truth”. We also know that he had always preached that the “Kingdom of God” was at hand. But now we are supposed to believe from this verse that Jesus had decided not to talk much with his followers because he had somehow discovered that it was the “kingdom of the Devil” that was at hand. If this sort of interpretation is simply blasphemous and quite irrelevant, then we will have to believe that Jesus could not be talking of any Devil when he said that the “ruler of this world” was coming. We certainly need a more plausible and pertinent explanation of this term.

The Verse Explained

A careful study of the prophecy would reveal that immediately before this verse, it is mentioned that the Counsellor will come to teach us all things. And in chapters immediately following this statement, it is reported that “the Spirit of truth” will come to guide us into all the truth. It is, therefore, clear that the coming of the “ruler of the world” could not be anything unconnected with the coming of the Counsellor or the Spirit of truth which Jesus had been already preaching about. As a matter of fact, the coming of the “ruler of this world” could only refer to the advent of the same Counsellor, using for him another attributive name. So, when Jesus said to his followers, “I will no longer talk much with you, for the ruler of this world is coming”, he was simply trying to impress upon them that with the advent of the next “ruler of the world” a new Law will come into force and, consequently it will be no longer necessary for them to preach and practice his own teachings.

In this verse again, I think, what makes the christian scholars think of Devil, is that part of the verse which reads “he has no power over me”. They seem to think that since it is the Devil who had no power over Jesus, the “ruler of the world” must be interpreted to mean the Devil. But this is hardly a cogent reason to justify this blind approach to the problem; and we should be able to offer a rational explanation of this sentence.

We know that all the rulers, elected to rule in this world, derive their powers from the constitution which they are supposed to uphold and enforce in their countries. Similarly, all the prophets of God, who are appointed as spiritual rulers in the world, draw their powers from the Divine Laws which they are sent to preach, practice and enforce in the world. Now Jesus, like all the other prophets who followed Moses, was sent to follow, fulfil and establish the Law of Moses (Mat. 5:17–20). All these Biblical prophets,

therefore, shared the Law of Moses as their common source of spiritual power; and they were not independent of each other, nor could they do without the Law of Moses.

When Jesus announced that the “coming ruler of the world had no power over him”, he was telling the world that the next “ruler of the world” who was coming after him, would be an independent prophet like Moses, who would be given his own new Law; and that Jesus himself would not be covered by that New Law. The constitutional powers of the two “rulers of the world” (Jesus and the Counsellor) had to be quite different from each other, no one having any jurisdiction over the other. In other words, the rule of the “Son of God” was to end where the kingdom of the “everlasting Father” was to begin.

Before I end this discourse, I would like to answer one question. It has been said that if the Counsellor promised by Jesus was a prophet and that prophet was the Holy prophet of Islam, why the Holy Quran does not mention it?

The short reply to this question is that the Holy Quran does mention it and mention it in very clear terms. It specifically mentions the prophecy of Jesus and declares that Jesus had given the good news of a prophet who was to come after him and whose name, he said, was Ahmad (61:7). The Holy Quran not only mentions the prophecy of Jesus but also gives the real name of the Counsellor. We find no evidence in the Bible about the name of the Counsellor and whatever little evidence there is outside the Bible, it supports the Quranic version.

As far as the fulfilment of the Biblical prophecies in the person of The Holy Prophet is concerned, the Holy Quran has also claimed it in very clear terms. God has categorically declared in the Holy Quran that those who follow the Messenger, the Prophet, whom they find mentioned in the Torah and in the Gospel . . . and those who follow the light that has been sent down with him, shall prosper (Holy Quran 7:158).

I end my humble submissions with the prayer that God may grant us the power to follow the light that has been sent down with His Prophet whom we find mentioned in the Torah and the Gospel.

Amen.

THE WORST MAN

The worst man in the eyes of God is the one whose harsh language goes so far as to estrange people from associating with him.

(The Holy Prophet)

The Caste System

(Damodar Sharma)

The Hindu Scriptures clearly advocate the theory that people differ in their capacities and inclinations, and that these differences are caused by the laws of nature and forces beyond our control. These ideas are stated and emphasised in a number of verses.

All living beings act helplessly, pushed by
their own nature.

(The *Bhagavad Gita* ch.3, v. 33).

It ought to be understood that all good, medium and bad
tendencies (in men) have been produced by Me.

(*ibid*, ch. 7. v. 12).

It is believed that these differences are based mainly on heredity and only to a small extent on education, training or environment. A person is born with both general and specific capacities: physical, vocational, intellectual and emotional. Hinduism teaches that these are determined by one's previous life or lives (see Chapter 11). It also teaches that one can make the best of this life by trying to develop and use one's innate interests and abilities. Therefore, everyone should do whatever he or she is most suited for, as a result of past lives.

Hindu society has, therefore, been divided into four broad classes which have come to be known as the four *varnas* or castes.

I have created the four *varnas* (castes) and this division is based upon their different kinds of qualities and capacities to perform certain activities.

(The *Bhagavad Gita* ch. 4, v. 13).

These four castes are: Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Shudras. Brahmins are those who are supposed to be best fitted for intellectual, priestly and advisory tasks. The Kshatriya caste consists of those who should prove good as governors, administrators and soldiers. They should be made responsible for maintaining law and order, and the security of the land. The

third caste, that of Vaishyas, consists of people more inclined to engage in business, industry and agriculture. These people ought to be made responsible for looking after the economic affairs of the nation. The fourth caste consists of Shudras who are considered to be, by and large, good only at performing manual labour and doing menial work. Within this broad framework there exist hundreds of sub-castes, each following a particular occupation, and there are still further groupings within these. Each group keeps to itself as much as possible, living, socialising, eating with and marrying their own kind.

The theory in support of the caste system is that if someone is good at intellectual activities he cannot be equally good at soldiering, commerce or physical labour and should not be pushed into them. Similarly, those who can be more useful in defence work or business activities should not be forced, or even permitted, to do intellectual or manual work. Mahatma Gandhi, the 'father' of modern Indian nationalism and independence, held that the Hindu caste system had a scientific basis and was sensible. According to him, the four castes exist in all societies, and Hindus have recognised this fact and have organised themselves accordingly.

The Hindu Scriptures lay down that, whether a person is engaged in manual labour or is a high priest in a temple, both are equally useful to society and should receive equal respect and enjoy equal status. They do not, however, recommend equal opportunities, since they believe that people are born with fixed and different potentials. In practice, over the centuries, the Brahmins have taken the highest place of respect and the Shudras have come to be relegated to the bottom. These divisions of society have, as a result, assumed the form of the high and the low, the "haves" and the "have-nots", the privileged and the down-trodden. To show his disapproval of this kind of discrimination against Shudras, Gandhi objected to wearing the sacred thread, which members of the three upper castes are permitted to wear, but which is forbidden to Shudras.

Untouchables

This discrimination went so far that the lowest of the Shudras, those who do the dirtiest kinds of work like refuse collection and disposal of dead animals, came to be considered untouchables i.e. so low and so impure that they are not even to be touched by members of the higher castes. Indeed, another name for them is outcastes. Until about 50 years ago they would not enter a temple, hotel, restaurant or any other public place, and certainly not the house of a high caste Hindu. They could not attend even government schools. They were not allowed to draw water from public wells, nor to travel by public transport, unless a train had a special compartment for them. Today, although they form quite a substantial proportion of the Hindu population,

untouchables are the poorest: they can hardly manage to get a square meal a day; have to go half naked; live in squalor in hovels on the outskirts of settlements; are shunned by the higher castes and made to do all the dirty work.

Mahatma Gandhi raised his voice against this inhumanity and launched a campaign for the removal of untouchability. He renamed the untouchables Harijans, meaning Children of God, a term which is still used by many today. Early in this century he took the bold step of abolishing untouchability in his *ashrams* (communes) in which all the inmates, whether from the high or the low castes, whether Hindus or non-Hindus, lived as equals and were made to share on an equal footing in offering prayers, cooking, serving food and in all menial work, including the cleaning of toilets. Gandhi was at first very strongly opposed by Brahmins, the other high caste Hindus and even by his own wife. Gradually opinions changed and he was eventually able to muster the support of many high caste Hindus against the inhuman treatment given to millions of decent human beings. The result has been that much of the sting has now been taken out of the ill-treatment given to Harijans, although many still continue to receive a very raw deal.

When India became independent in 1947, the Indian Constitution was based on the humane principles so dear to Gandhi. It gives equal status and rights to members of the Scheduled Castes (the official name for the former untouchables). It also provides for a number of special preferences to be given to them for some decades to come (e.g. in employment, in economic aid for health, education and housing, seats in Parliament and positions in local government). The aim is to bring them up to the level of the average high caste Hindu and that their handicap, reinforced over centuries, should be reduced to the minimum, if not altogether removed. The practice of untouchability is now illegal and punishable by imprisonment. Yet in spite of these efforts made by the Government of India, as well as by many broad-minded Hindus, the life of many members of the Scheduled Castes, who number more than 100 million, still needs a lot of improvement. Gandhi once said that he would consider India to have attained full and mature democratic nationhood only when an untouchable, young woman was freely elected to the highest post of President of India. This expectation of his has so far remained unfulfilled.

Caste rigidity

The philosophy behind the caste system has led to its rigidity, so that it is virtually impossible for anyone to change castes during this lifetime. Hinduism teaches that everyone is the result of his previous life and that he is born into the caste for which he is suited. The *Bhagavad Gita* states:

It is better to risk even death in the performance of one's own duties (that have been laid down in Hindu Scriptures for each caste) rather than to

attempt to perform what has been assigned to others, since such an attempt is wrought with risks and dangers.

(The *Bhagavad Gita* ch. 3, v. 35).

Members of the lower castes were not even allowed to study the Vedas or take up the highest, spiritual practices, since there was thought to be no point in giving higher, religious teaching to undeserving people who were not yet ready for it. Foreign invasions and attempts to convert Hindus to other religions have encouraged Hindu society to become even more closed and inflexible.

By and large even now the majority of Brahmins and Vaishyas follow their family caste professions, i.e. intellectual work for Brahmins and commercial activities for Vaishyas. Similarly, most Shudras have been forced to stick to their traditional manual work and menial vocations. With the changes in government: the Muslim and British rules and the emergence of an independent, democratic republic of India, the Kshatriya caste and its profession have been badly disrupted. Enrolment to the defence forces of India has been thrown open to members of all four castes from the time of the British rule, so that the special role of the Kshatriyas has almost disappeared.

With greater contact with modern Western society and its notions of equality and respect for the dignity of the individual, cracks are starting to appear even in the ancient and rigid Hindu caste system. The constitution of India does not recognise castes and positively discourages even their mention in official records and correspondence, except in the case of Scheduled Castes. The result is that one can find some Brahmins engaged in jobs traditionally assigned to Kshatriyas and Vaishyas; for example, in the defence forces, the police and administrative services, running business establishments and managing industries. Similarly, it is not uncommon now to find members of the Vaishya caste teaching at the highest levels in schools, colleges and universities and successfully entering the armed forces of India. The lot of the majority of the Shudras has not changed much, however. Out of many millions of them some have, of course, risen to the high positions of governors, chief ministers, members of parliament, judges, managers, senior officers in the armed forces and so on; but the vast majority of Shudras are still down-trodden and poor, performing hard, back-breaking and dirty jobs.

Efficacy of Prayer

(Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad)

The truth is, no man can really get rid of sins, nor can he truly love God nor can he fear Him as he ought to until by the grace of God, he attains to divine knowledge, power and strength. It is obvious that fear and love are the result of knowledge. The love of things after which man's heart yearns and the fear of things from which he runs away, spring in his heart after he knows about them. Yes, it is true, divine knowledge cannot be attained save by the grace of God. And by the divine wisdom which comes through the grace of God, a door is opened for the discernment and search for truth.

And as a result of the repeated and continual effulgence of the divine grace, that door remains open always and is never locked. In short, divine wisdom is attained through the grace of God, but does it last? Divine grace makes spiritual understanding crystal clear and illuminating and lifts the veils which stand between man and God. It cleans the self of all dross and impurities and breathes a new life and strength into the soul. It unfetters man from the shackles of evil and purifies him of low desires. It delivers man from the turbulent deluge of passions. Then a change comes over him and he naturally begins to abhor evil life.

The first thing towards which his spirit moves him after such a holy transformation is wrought in him, is prayers.

Think not that your prayer every day and your daily devotions are but prayers. The prayer which is instilled into you after the attainment of divine knowledge, is entirely different from ordinary prayers. It possesses the quality of annihilation. It is fire which possesses the quality of melting. It is a magnetic attraction which draws the mercy of God. It is a death but gives new life in the end. It is a rising flood which, at last, is turned into an ark. Everything that is spoiled or is in disorder is set right by it. Even poison is turned into antidote by it.

Blessed are the captives who never grow weary in praying, for one day, they will be emancipated. Blessed are the blind who never cease to pray, for they will begin to see. Blessed are those who are lying in their graves and seek help

and strength from God, for, one day, they will be brought out from their graves.

Blessed are you, when you tire not of praying, your spirit melts in devotion, your eyes shed tears your breast burns with a flame which takes you to the dark chambers and the wilderness so that ye taste the joys of solitude; and ye become restless and over-powered by a fervour to be alone with God. When such is the case the divine grace shall be showered upon you. God towards Whom we call you is infinite in His bounty, compassion and kindness, is faithful and truthful and shows mercy unto the weak and the helpless. Be ye, therefore, trustful in God and pray unto Him in all sincerity and faith that he may show mercy unto you (Islam. A lecture given at Sialkot).

It is commonly thought, and often urged as an argument against the efficacy of prayer, that a prayer to God and the seeking of means are two opposite courses, and that since the latter course is sufficient for the attainment of an end, a man need not resort to the former. This objection against prayer is not only directed from the camp of the atheists, but strange as it may appear, even within the circle of Islam there are men, by no means few in number, who entertain this mistaken view. When we cast a glance at the Divine laws manifest in external nature, it becomes quite clear that there is a necessary and indissoluble connection between means and ends. Any one who sets before himself the attainment of an object at first looks for the means and endeavours to his utmost to find out the agencies by which he can possibly attain that end. In this search for means he has to apply all his faculties to the object before him and give his whole attention to the finding of these means. When we are sick, for instance, we seek the proper remedy, or if we have not the skill which can enable us to find the true remedy, we call a physician who reflects on the causes and the nature of our disease, and whose genius is sometimes guided by a remedy, which removes our illness to some extent. The method thus suggested is the result of a deep reflection and of the consideration given to the question, which, in other words, may be called a prayer. For when we strive hard in search of what is hidden from us and unknown to us, we really seek for guidance from a higher power, from whom nothing is hidden, in a language which is expressed by our very condition. In fact, it cannot be doubted that when in search of a thing the soul stretches out its hands in true zeal and ardour before the Giver of all gifts, and finding itself weak and unable to attain the end by itself, seeks for light from some other source, it is plunged in a prayerful meditation, and its condition then is truly of one who prays to God. It is this prayer which is the key to all treasures of knowledge and which has brought about the discovery of so many sciences. Our meditations and reflections and our search for that which is hidden from us are all a sort of prayer. The difference is only this that the truly wise, the holy men of God, pray with due respect to Him whom they recognise to be the Source of all blessings and their supplications are based upon a clear

knowledge, the prayer of those upon whose eyes a veil is cast is like wandering in darkness and it takes the form of meditation and reflection. Both have the object in view, viz., the opening of hidden ways and deep paths and the discovery of means which would make them successful in the attainment of an end. The person who has not a true knowledge of God and a certain faith in His existence is ignorant of the Giver from Whom he must seek, but still, when in distress, he seeks for assistance from some other source which he does not know. He walks in darkness and does not know that the way opened to him upon reflection and consideration is also opened by God. But Almighty God sees the heart looking upon its meditations as prayer, guides the man, who is thus engaged, in the attainment of his object. In short, it is God who breathes into the heart of men new points of wisdom and knowledge, for Almighty God knows that it is He from Whom the assistance is sought though the seeker may be unaware of it. If, as stated above, the search is made and assistance sought with a certain knowledge of the true Guide and a certain belief in His existence it is devout prayer as required by the holy word of God. But if the search for true light degenerates into a search of means by deep consideration and reflection, and the source from which that light comes is not recognised, it is a prayer over which the veil of ignorance is drawn.

It is, therefore, clear that prayer has the precedence over means and that it is an essential step for every person who sets any object before himself. Every one who seeks to gain an end must pass over this bridge. To set prayer in opposition to means is the height of absurdity. When we pray to God we only supplicate the Almighty Being, Who has superior knowledge of the most subtle and hidden means, to infuse into our minds some suitable and proper plan, or by His creative power to bring into existence some plan which can bring about the object that is before us. Means, therefore, are not opposed to prayer but a result of them. Moreover, as this close connection between means and prayer is established by the laws of nature, human nature also bears witness to it. It is not only to means and remedies, but it also seeks a relief in alms and prayer. A glance at the different nations of the world establishes the universality of this rule. Resorting to prayer is, therefore, as well a requirement of human nature as the seeking of means, but both these methods for the attainment of an end are, like twin brothers, the benefactors of the human race. Prayer opens the ways to means, and the search of means calls for prayer. The true success and prosperity of a man lies in this that before resorting to means, he should resort to prayer and seeking assistance from the true Giver of all gifts, so that being fed from that source of light he may find the best and most suitable plans.

Among the Believers

(V. S. Naipul — author and journalist)

The Ahmadis considered themselves the purest of Muslims. To their reverence for the Prophet they had grafted on a reverence for a Promised Messiah, Ahmad, who had appeared in India in the nineteenth century. Ahmad's followers, the Ahmadis, claimed that Ahmad had appeared to purify the decayed faith. To other Muslims this reverence for the Promised Messiah derogated from the Prophet's "finality" as a prophet and was the blackest sort of blasphemy. There had been repeated campaigns against the followers of Ahmad; and in Mr. Bhutto's time the hated Ahmadis had been declared non-Muslims.

My interest in the sect had begun with the Ahmadi woman civil servant I met in Karachi — the widow in the green sari. I had been struck by her education and dignity, her acceptance of persecution, her acceptance of the fact that it might be necessary for her and her children to leave Pakistan.

My hope, in coming to Lahore, was to visit the Ahmadi settlement at the little town of Rabwah, about a hundred miles away. But introductions were necessary; and it was not easy in Lahore to get introductions to Ahmadis. The Ahmadis themselves were, understandably, secretive. And Muslims not of the sect didn't want to know about them; they either pretended not to hear, or they raged.

I heard that the Ahmadis indulged in casuistry; that the man they publicly spoke about only as the Promised Messiah was accepted by them in private as a second prophet. I heard that the original Ahmad had been encouraged by the British, to divide Indian Muslims. I also heard that they were strong in the armed forces; that they were good businessmen and "looked after their own"; that to become an Ahmadi was to be secure and looked after.

Then, through the son of a retired army officer, I met Colonel Anees, formerly of the Pakistan army. The colonel was of the sect; he had left the army because he felt that the prejudices — especially after the outlawing of the sect — were now too strong. He was forty-one, heavy but muscular, with powerful shoulders. He had a serene expression that seemed close to a smile.

He had spent two years as a prisoner of war in India after the Bangladesh war in 1971. In the Indian camp he had read a lot, learned French, and done a number of fine, patient, photographic drawings in pencil. Some of his serenity would have come to him during those two years of withdrawal and mental concentration.

He was an easy man to like. It was harder to enter his prodigious faith. But he expected that: he said that to understand the Ahmadis it was necessary to know a lot about Islam, a lot. And I understood what he meant only after he had taken me to meet the Lahore leaders of the sect. He took me there late one afternoon, and left me to make out on my own.

A rich suburban house, with three or four cars in the drive; a green, leafy garden; sliding timber-framed glass doors; a carpeted floor; reproduction furniture; low carved tables; modern Pakistan paintings; servants; tea. A strange setting — right perhaps only in its Indian-Victorian fussiness, the feeling it gave of being enclosed — for the exposition of religious mysteries that to me seemed to come from an antique world. And the men waiting for me — of varying ages: from the late thirties to the late sixties — might have been modern businessmen from their dress, education, and manner. Some probably were businessmen. But they had an extra authority: they were men in their own estimation made tremendous by their faith.

It was not given to many to recognize a Messiah, to be among the first: to be linked in this way to the earliest believers in the Prophet's mission. The courage of those early believers was now vindicated, as theirs would be when the whole world turned to the Promised Messiah. And as a mark of their faith — in spite of persecution — some wore a very thin crescent of beard on the chin.

A hundred years before there was only Ahmad, one man. Now there were ten million Ahmadis all over the world. In a hundred years from now why not ten million times ten million? It was what the Lahore Imam or bishop (who had a crescent beard) had told a doubter in London. With that tremendous faith they could afford to laugh at scoffers, at "vested interests". True religion, the Imam said, was overlaid by "culture". Once that passing thing was seen through, religion became clear again.

There were always people who preferred to deny the signs, the Imam said. It has been prophesied, for instance, that when the Promised Messiah appeared or declared his mission there would be an eclipse both of the sun and the moon. When such eclipses had occurred in close conjunction in 1894, a doubter banged his head in frustration against a wall and said, "Now that man" — the Promised Messiah — "is right"! But the doubter had not given up his doubt.

They laughed at the story, which they knew well. And there was a more recent story of disbelief and vested interest.

The Imam said, "Last year there was a conference in London at the Commonwealth Centre. There were hundreds of delegates from various countries. There were scientists there. Some read papers. But the press ignored the conference. The TV people didn't send anyone."

I said, "What was the conference about?"

The oldest man said, "It was about the deliverance of Christ from the cross."

Christ hadn't died on the cross. He was only in a coma when he was taken down from the cross. The Turin shroud proved that blood had flowed from a man who was still living. Christ's broken limbs were healed and he went about preaching to the lost tribes of Israel. He made his way to Kashmir in northern India and died there at the age of 120.

I said, "Who arranged this conference?"

The Imam was taken aback. "We did."

I was puzzled. But that belief about Christ was central to the Ahmadi faith.

Some Muslims believe (though there is no sanction for it in the Koran) that Christ (to Muslims, one of the prophets before Mohammed) will return to earth as the redeemer or the Mahdi. The Ahmadis say that the prophecy has been misinterpreted. For this reason: Christ is not alive in heaven somewhere, waiting to come back to earth; Christ is dead. He is dead because he was not taken up to heaven from the cross. He was taken down from the cross, healed, and went on with his preaching work until he was 120. He lived out his life as a man; it was a very long life; he cannot come back to earth for a second spell.

The true prophecy, according to the Ahmadis, was that someone *like* Christ was going to come back to earth as the Promised Messiah, to cleanse religion at a time of darkness and restore the purity of Islam. And that man was Ahmad, born in 1838 in the village of Qadian, now in India, just across the border from Pakistan. Jesus was born 1,300 years after Moses; Ahmad was born 1,300 years after the Prophet. Jesus was born in a Roman colony; Ahmad was born in a British colony. Those were just two of the numberless similarities.

Ahmad's family had been landowners. But under the British administration they had lost their eight villages, and family division of the remaining property had left little for Ahmad. Of Ahmad's childhood or early life little is said. It is known that Arabic, the holy language, came to him without instruction; and that he suffered from vertigo and diabetes and had a slight stammer. He had his first revelation when he was forty. But it wasn't until he was fifty-one or fifty-two, in 1889, that he announced his mission. It

was found then that many of the things about Ahmad — including his physical disabilities and the name of his birthplace — had been prophesied.

His revelations came to him in words, and that was important. If he had claimed merely to be inspired, he would not have been able to claim much for his words. He was charged at one time with attempted murder — it was an early attempt to discredit him — but he was acquitted. He married late; had a son at the age of fifty. The son became the second head of the movement (Ahmad died in 1908). All these events were prophesied.

It was a difficult story, as Colonel Anees had warned me; and I may not have got all the details right. Much of what I have written (but not all) was told me by Idrees, the Lahore Imam's brother, during a long morning drive to the Ahmadi settlement at Rabwah.

Idrees wished me to see that the faith was pure Islam, and fitted accepted traditions and prophecies. He was also, I felt, a little nervous after the outlawing of the sect, and anxious not to appear to be blaspheming. Idrees was a high-court lawyer, white-haired; his explanations could be fine and detailed.

The outlawing of the sect by Mr. Bhutto had been prophesied. So had the punishment of Mr. Bhutto. It had been prophesied that a ruler was going to declare them *kafirs*, infidels; and that afterwards both hands of this ruler were going to be broken. "The hand that held the declaration," Idrees said, "and the hand that authenticated it."

I asked Idrees whether it wouldn't have been better for the Ahmadis to stay in India, in their original headquarters in Ahmad's birthplace.

Idrees said, "Without Pakistan and Mr. Jinnah, India would have been another Spain."

"Spain?"

"A land where Islam has been wiped out. And now so many scholars say that the most glorious achievements of Islam were in Spain."

Long before partition, though, the second caliph or successor (Ahmad's son) had prophesied a migration: a migration similar to Christ's, after he had been taken down from the cross. The prophecy had come to him in a dream.

The land through which we had been driving was flat. The hills, when we came to them, were abrupt. They were the salt hills of the Punjab, and Idrees said that from the air they showed as the last outcrop of the Himalayas. They were low red hills, so red that the men who quarried the salt — pure, the lumps like veined marble — were red with the dust.

Beside the hills was the Chenab River, one of the rivers of the Punjab, a river here of the Indo-Pakistan sub-continent: not a flow of water within well-defined banks, but a wide, ravaged depression, which at the town of Rabwah (below the salt hills) was two to three miles wide: most of the river bed exposed and dry, with low convex sand-banks, great grey flats of silt, blackish where soaked by water, and with water in pools, with the true river like an irregular spread of water rather than a flow, unrippled, seemingly without depth, lazily dividing around an island.

The second caliph, after he had prophesied the migration from India, had seen a landscape like this in a dream, and it did have a quality of dream, with the abruptness of the red rocky hills and the sprawling river channel after the level, irrigated Punjab plain.

“He saw that there was a huge flood,” Idrees said, “and we were all drifting in it and ultimately we touched land at a place which was hilly, which had mounds, and some sandy area also.”

The hills were important, in this migration that had to resemble that of Christ; it was reported that Jesus and Mary, after leaving Galilee, had moved to some physically elevated place. And the river was important because the Promised Messiah himself had prophesied that times would be hard for his people and that then, to solace them, he would appear on the banks of the Nile or a river like the Nile. In an unreal world “simile” — to use the word Idrees constantly used — was everything. The Nile, Idrees said, rose in the Mountains of the Moon; Chenab meant “Moon River”.

The community had planned a housing development on the bank of this precious river. Many devotees had bought little plots. But then the Pakistan government — pursuing the community even here — had claimed the land for Bihari refugees from Bangladesh. Refugees against outcasts, the unwanted dispossessing the unwanted: the Biharis had actually built a mosque, symbol of their take-over, before the Ahmadis obtained a stay order from the courts against the appropriation of their land. In Rabwah itself the government had claimed nearly four acres of developed community land for a police station; a stay had been obtained against that as well.

Beyond the river, at the foot of one of the red hills, the light vaporous with heat, was the Ahmadi cemetery. The people buried there were people who had willed money to the community and the movement. The graves were low; the wall was low. The cemetery was like part of the strange landscape, and if Idrees hadn't pointed it out to me I wouldn't have noticed it.

Saltpetre was six inches to a foot deep on the land when the Ahmadis bought it. The land — they had bought a thousand acres — had been abandoned for centuries. Now on this land, as in places on the red salt rock, there was a lime-green growth, an extra tinge of colour. And there was a little

township, with trees, though the tube-well water — which was the only water available here — was a little salt. The Ahmadi settlement and headquarters had the air of a government township: low, dusty red-brick buildings with reed curtains over the doorways; and verandahs around courtyards where, carefully watered, grew oleander, hibiscus and a kind of small palm.

Idrees settled me in the guest house — “for dignitaries” — and went to leave his name at the office of the Imam, the current head of the sect. The Imam, the Promised Messiah’s grandson, was seventy and an M.A. from Oxford, Idrees said. Pepsi-Cola was brought in for me, then tea. Soon Idrees came in to say, with some awe, that he had been “called”. He thought that I too would soon be called.

But I wasn’t. Idrees, explaining later, said the Imam was busy. He had thousands of letters and many administrative matters to deal with; and he was going to Rawalpindi the next day. Instead, I was shown a photograph — a turbanned, full-faced man — and allowed to go up to the darkened waiting room where, waiting as in a doctor’s surgery, was a sombre family group with a bowed, black-veiled woman.

In the publications section — in spite of trouble with the government about a new printing press — there were booklets in stacks, and translations of the Koran. Idrees, beating away desert dust from each bulky volume, showed the Korans language by language, title page by title page. The Ahmadis were active in Africa: they had Korans in Luganda, Swahili, Yoruba. The energy, the organisation in this corner of the Punjab! But the Ahmadis aimed at nothing less than the conversion of the world.

They were banned in many Muslim countries; but the work went on elsewhere. The tall man in white had come back from a missionary posting in Denmark. He made me think of a diplomat recalled home and living in reduced circumstances. He said, before getting on his old bicycle to ride away into the glare, that the Scandinavians were looking for new beliefs and he had built up a good little congregation for the Promised Messiah in Denmark.

Fatter, happier, and with a bigger story to tell, was the man who had served on and off for twenty years in London. He had a congregation of 10,000 (mostly Pakistani migrants, I would have thought); and he had not hesitated — in London — to fight for the Muslim cause. The headmistress of his daughter’s school wanted his daughter to wear the skirt of the school uniform rather than the slack trousers of Islamic modesty. He had taken the matter to higher authority and won his case. His daughter wore trousers, and when word got around many Muslims sent their daughters to that school; the headmistress later thanked him. The law provided for freedom of religion, he said. He meant the law of England, the other man’s law.

His big problem had been to prevent his daughter having “a divided mind”. But she had been made restless by “this woman’s lib” and she wasn’t adjusting

easily to Pakistan and Rabwah. He was talking to her and, showing her how much better for women the Islamic way was. He had seen the position of women go down in England during his time there; men no longer got up for them in buses, and he had read in *The Observer* that VD was now like an “epidemic”.

But what was it about woman’s lib that attracted his daughter? He didn’t answer. The amplified call to the one o’clock prayer came: “There is no god but God”, melodiously and variously chanted. And the former London missionary got up. He put on his black fur cap and said — with a London-made jokeyness: he still had his London manner, his London security — that he didn’t want to be late for lunch: his wife, contrary to what was said about Muslim women, was a tyrant. People in London, he said, used to ask him why he didn’t take four wives; he used to tell them he couldn’t cope with one.

Idrees himself believed in the strict seclusion of women; his own wife observed *purdah*. Idrees thought that my unhappiness with the London man was only an unhappiness about Pakistani migration. And, as we walked in the white light back to the guest house, he said, “There is a tide in the affairs of men . . .” The image of the flood, the caliph’s dream, the migration!

We had lunch. Idrees went off to say his prayers, adding to the three o’clock prayer the one o’clock prayer he had missed. Afterwards I went to his room in the guest house and we talked. He lay on one of the beds, now on his back, now on his side. I sat on the dressing-table stool. It was hot. The salt rock of the Rabwah hills stored and radiated heat. In summer the rocks never cooled down. But Idrees was at peace. This land of salt and rock and river was his sanctuary. He said that peace always came to him at Rabwah.

There were pinpricks; there was always persecution. He had received a little shock even that morning: a man of the town had complained to the police that he had been thrown out of a house on the orders of the head of the sect. It wasn’t so; it was only a dispute between a tenant and a landlord; but people knew they could go to the police with stories about the sect. It was like the recent case he had had to deal with, of a dismissed workman who had inflicted some injuries on himself and then complained to the labour court that he had been beaten up by the sect.

He invariably came to some little piece of bad news like this. But he liked to come to Rabwah, and it was his good fortune to come about twice a month. I couldn’t enter his faith. But in that room, as he lost his anxieties, I felt tenderer towards him. I liked seeing him relaxed on the bed, snatching at peace, carrying the stupendousness of his faith, his belief in the Promised Messiah who had come to cleanse and reveal anew the true religion. He became calmer; his face freshened. And I saw how I had been misled by his grey hair: he was some years younger than me. The great dry heat, the dream

landscape to which men had only recently given significance, the site of deliverance and possible martyrdom: it was like being taken far back.

We talked about dreams. The second caliph's dreams had been famous even in the British time. Sir Mohammed Zafrullah Khan, one of the most distinguished Ahmadis, used to pass them on to the British viceroy, who was sceptical until he received in this way some precise information about Allied warplanes. But dreams and prophecies had to be handled with care; they couldn't be broadcast; they could be provocative. It was better for prophecies to be made public after they had come to pass — like the prophecy about Mr. Bhutto and the breaking of both his hands.

But how long would the peace hold at Rabwah? Had there been any hint, any dream about a new migration?

It was like touching a nerve. That was something Idrees didn't want to think about. He said, formally, "At the present moment this is the place which is fulfilling the purpose of God, providing guidance for the whole world and the whole human race."

We went out into the heat. We looked at the mosque, and the big courtyard where every year there was an assembly of the faithful. We saw the school where students from different countries were being trained — training taking from six to seven years — to go back and spread the word about the Promised Messiah. We met a twenty-two-year-old Indian Muslim boy from Trinidad, an Indonesian of twenty-six. There were two Nigerians, twelve and fourteen, at the edge of the brown playing field. "Here, here!" Idrees said to me. "I don't want them to feel left out." And the boys, looking orphaned, came up: nothing to say: bright eyes in sad faces, pining below the salt hills of the Punjab, in the artificial township, for the wet forests of Africa.

The sun began to go down. We left. Abruptly, as we were talking, Idrees held his open palms together in the Muslim gesture of prayer. We were passing the cemetery. It was his custom, he said afterwards, to say a prayer for them, "that they might be elevated even higher in heaven".

Sunset flared in the Chenab, the Moon River. And when we were past the river, sunset flared in the still pools of waterlogged fields, irrigated land dying, turning to salt and marsh, marsh clearer at dusk (water catching the last of the light) than in the even glare of day.

Idrees had talked all the way out. Now he was silent. It was as though the land called up and gave an anxious edge again to his own melancholy.

Smoke rose from cooking fires. On the road smoke was black from the exhausts of unregulated vehicles. The horse-carriages had no lights; and the trucks often had no lights at the back. They all had lights once, Idrees said. Now there was no law. "When the law is dishonoured by the lawmakers, how can the common man obey?"

His high-court practice hadn't been growing. But his wife had some property and income. He wanted to travel; he liked travelling; he was only forty-two. He never said it; but I felt that for him, as for the Ahmadi girl in the green sari I had met in Karachi, there was now some idea of migration, of getting away from some harder persecution to come.

The lights of Lahore began to show.

He said, "Did you make a note of that prophecy? By 1989 the world will be tired of waiting for the coming of Christ. The Iranians will get tired of waiting for the Twelfth Imam. They will then turn to us."

Persecution of Religious Minorities

(Professor Terence P. Day)

Among all the contemporary concerns for world peace and economic co-operation between nations and peoples, one of the most grievous issues is the violation of human rights, particularly of ethnic and religious minorities in lands which have hostile religious majorities. Behind all the conferences, meetings, declarations, and legal enactments on human rights, there is the fundamental philosophical assumption that individuals have rights which ought to be protected by legislation and its practical implementation. Unfortunately, it is evident that many countries which have religious minorities view religious rights and freedoms in partisan ways which usually affect those minorities adversely. On account of them, successive subcommittees of the United Nations on the prevention of religious discrimination and the protection of religious minorities have repeatedly effected international condemnation of specific violations of the religious rights of ethnic and religious minorities brought to the Commission's attention. Such reprobations and condemnations have implicitly rejected the religious absolutism which justifies the repression of religious minorities and their religious beliefs and practices by branding them as "heretics, apostates, satanic deceivers, and enemies of the faith."

Although the human rights legislation which protects religious minorities is of relatively recent historical vintage, the right to freedom of conscience in religion has been earned during many centuries through the blood-sacrifice of religious martyrs. These representatives of minority religious positions suffered and died on account of their belief in the God-given right and duty to practice and to propagate one's religious beliefs. Their numerous sacrifices also show, however, that their "right of conscience" has rarely been fully recognized and generally protected. Instead, their right has often been painfully repudiated and its retribution painfully enacted.

The canvas of history shows that the three "absolutist" religions of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam have the heaviest individual records of persecution of religious minorities. It could be admitted that, among these, Judaism has the least to answer for because it has been more victimised

against than the victimiser. Nevertheless, the historic tradition of Judaism shows that from the time of ancient Israel, the nature-religion of Israel's pagan Canaanite neighbours was subjected to repeated and constant Israelite repression and opposition. The persecution and subjugation of non-Yahwistic neighbours continued under King David and the Israelite monarchy. The forceable conversion of non-Jews to Judaism was effected in the priestly kingdom of Judah during the Hellenistic period of the second and first centuries before Christ.

On the other hand, throughout the ages, the Jews have been savagely persecuted on account of their ethnic and religious identity at least from the second century before Christ. Moreover, in medieval Christian Europe were forged the instruments and the patterns of torture, forced conversion from Judaism, humiliating governmental legislation, and the ghettos of Jewish incarceration which culminated in the twentieth-century in the genocidal atrocities and wholesale sacrificial destruction of the Jews during the Nazi Holocaust of World War II.

Christianity itself, which began its career as a sect of Judaism was baptized in the blood of Jewish and pagan Roman persecution during the opening three centuries of its history. This Christian minority sect suffered the outrage of at least twenty general persecutions under successive Roman emperors during the closing centuries of a decadent, sick, and dying pagan imperial power. But, no sooner had this Christianity become "the religion of the Roman empire," it too became a persecuting power and force of terror for the lives and the religion of ethnic and religious minorities present in the regions of its political and ecclesiastical sovereignty.

This absolutist religion likewise rationalized its persecuting zeal by branding those minorities as "Jews, infidels, Turks, and heretics." Particularly in the pre-Reformation period of medieval Christianity, the persecutions of Christian minorities decimated such Christian minority sects as the Lollards, the Hussites, the Cathari (Albigenses), and the Waldenses. These were popular religious movements whose leaders idealistically exposed to view the corruptions, the heresies, and the moral deviances, of the clergy and the Catholic Church. In turn, the Church typically branded these sectarian groups as heretics, and by laying against them charges of the grossest immorality, the Church also religiously rationalised and authorised the genocidal repression of those groups.

In the post-Reformation period of West-European Christianity, the scourge of religious persecution decimated the Mennonites, the Ana baptists, and the French-Protestant Huguenots who were annihilated on St. Bartholomew's night of August, 1572. The bloodbath of Catholic and Protestant martyrdom during this period is too large to recount at this time. But, it sickened the conscience of European Christians after some time and

the tolerance of Christianity today toward its manifold sectarian differences can largely be attributed to the lessons learned through the struggles of freedom of conscience in religion which ushered in the Reformation.

In the Islamic world of ancient, medieval, and modern times, the rights and privileges of religious minorities turned upon the rising and declining fortunes of the Islamic world order. During the earlier centuries of the expansion of Arabian Islam and during the later centuries of the growth of the Turkish Islamic empire, Old Catholic, Coptic, Nestorian, Jacobite, and Armenian Christian minorities suffered the repressions of persecution in the form of forced conversions to Islam, deprivations of rights and properties, and the denial of their religious freedoms particularly by zealous and ruthless Muslim rulers. In the Islamic world of today, that is, wherever there are large Muslim majorities, there is a tidal-wave of persecution of religious minorities. This is partly due to the absolutism of Islam itself whose faith in the One God and His Prophet can have no compromises and accommodations with deviations having the appearance of heresy, impure zeal, and disbelief. In the Middle East, the terror of persecution by Muslims has been experienced by such Christian minorities as the Maronite Roman Catholics of Lebanon who were massacred by the Druzes in 1860, and by the Christians of the Coptic Church in Egypt under the impact of Arab Islam. Turkish Muslims are being made presently answerable for the massive genocides of Armenian Christians in 1895 and 1915, and are remembered for their dispossession from North Cyprus of thousands of Greek Orthodox Christians. In modern times, and outside of the Middle Eastern region of Islamic predominance, the Christians of Southern Sudan have suffered decades of decimating persecution from northern Islamic Sudan in a civil conflict which the Western news-media have largely ignored. Elsewhere, Christian minorities are subjected to restrictions on the religious liberties and freedom of conscience in religion in the Islamic-majority countries of Malaysia, Indonesia, Afghanistan, and Pakistan. Colonel Kadhafi of Libya is reported as declaring recently that no "non-Muslim" can have the right to live in the Middle East. If these "infidels" will not convert to Islam, then they must leave the territory of Islam or else be eliminated.

Yet, not only non-Muslim minorities, but Muslim minorities also are experiencing today the terrors of genocidal suppression and religious persecution. Jean Pellerin drew attention in an article dated July/August 1985 to the persistent rivalries between the Sunni'ite majority and Shi'ite minorities both in the ancient and the contemporary Islamic worlds. In Iran today, the mountain-dwelling Kurds and the urbane and sophisticated Baha'is are undergoing the fiery trials and tribulations of genocidal persecutions. In Syria recently, President Asad supported an alawite minority by exterminating 10,000 Syrian Sunni'ite muslims, and thereby created a scandal throughout the Islamic world.

In this connection, Pellerin admits that it is more unfortunate to belong to Muslim minority in the Islamic world today than to belong to a non-Muslim religious group. For there can be no greater terror than to be condemned as an “heretical” or as an “apostate” sect by a Muslim majority; for this is sufficient to place the minority in the front line of destruction in the “holy war” of the Islamic “jihad” against the enemies of Islam.

On the other hand, the present plight of the Muslim minorities does not mean that Islam itself is a persecuting power. For many centuries following the dramatic creation of the Islamic world-imperial power, Jews, Christians, and Zoroastrians enjoyed freedom of conscience in religion and also the dignity of being respected by Muslim rulers and leaders as “people of the Book”. Only from the thirteenth-century following the destruction of the capital city of Baghdad and the violent partition and fragmentation of the Islamic empire did the negative forces of the persecution of non-Muslim religious minorities start to break out. This fact illustrates a consistent feature of religious persecution itself. The history of world religions shows that such persecutions have always reached “tidal-wave” proportions during the historic turning-points of cataclysmic or catastrophic political, social, and cultural change. The twenty imperially supported general persecutions of the early Christians by successive pagan Roman emperors coincided with the violent disruption, decline, and fall of the pagan Roman empire. The persecution of Christian minorities by the medieval Catholic church coincided with the enormous upheavals of foreign invasion, civil war, internal strife and unrest which brought the medieval Church to the brink of a spiritual and economic breaking-point. It now happens to be the case that the greatest social and political upheavals of our time are occurring in the Middle East, that is, in the region of the contemporary world which has significantly large Muslim majorities. The humiliations of non-Islamic colonialism in the region, and the aspirations for national independence and the recovery of a real Islamic social identity and integrity, have quickened the vitality and fervour of Islam at the time of a massive disruption of traditional religious and cultural values throughout the modern world. The radical moral and spiritual reorientations introduced by twentieth-century modernity and the technological revolution have impacted heavily upon the world in which the universal brotherhood of Islam came closest to historic fulfilment. The catastrophic changes which swept over the Muslim community in India and led to the formation of the nation of Pakistan, also engulfed the rest of the contemporary Islamic world. In the face of these disruptive conditions, Muslims are acutely sensitive to the threats and dangers surrounding the recovery of an authentic Islamic individual and social identity and withstanding the debilitating influences of the Western world’s anti-Islamic hedonistic and secular outlook and culture.

In this situation, there is little tolerance for Muslim minorities caught between the tensions of the traditionalists who would restore the pristine

Islam and shut out the Western world and the modernists who would reform Islam in twentieth-century Western-European terms. These in-between Muslim minorities are the first target in the Islamic struggle for its historic identity and integrity. Marshall G. Hodgeson, the most renowned of Western historians of Islam, has recognised within the stresses and conflicts within the Islamic world the aspiration toward an urgently needed larger vision of the character and world-mission of Islam. At the present time, the Islamic world has every cause to be sure of itself and confident of its world-mission. But, there is need for more stable and magnanimous expressions of this victorious emancipation particularly in regard to the Christian and the Muslim religious minorities in its midst. The world-cause of Islam is not well served by its oppression and persecution of religious minorities, but rather by the magnitude of its generosity toward the wards that are in its care. For, the *duty* to practice, to propagate, and to defend Islam implies also the *right* of Muslims to follow it according to their conscience, and the right of non-Muslims to differ from it without disrespect to Islam, and not least, the *obligation* of Muslim powers and authorities to uphold the religious rights of others as well as of themselves.

In the meantime, the present plight of persecuted religious minorities indicates that the technological sophistications of our present world-order are not yet matched by corresponding moral and spiritual sophistications serving a truly "universal" world-community of humankind in which the rights and liberties of religious minorities are legally protected and constitutionally safeguarded.

References

- Jean Pellerin, "*Moyen-Orient: minorités en danger*", *Jonathan*, Sommaire, No. 28, Juillet/Aout, 1985, pp. 8-10.
- Marshall G. S. Hodgeson, *The Venture of Islam*, Vol. 3, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974.

Post Crucifixion Travels of Jesus

(Dr. Qazi Muhammad Barkatullah)

Shroud of Turin

A panel of forty scientists performing tests on the authenticity of the Shroud of Turin have unanimously declared:

“We are saying it is authentic — the Shroud of Turin is Real.”

In other words Jesus who was wrapped in this shroud was alive. It proves Jesus did not die on the cross with the result that the foundation on which christian beliefs were based has disappeared. Metaphorically the cross is now broken. The longheld beliefs that Jesus redeemed mankind of their sins, by dying an accursed death, was buried, rose from the dead and went up to heaven, have now no ground to stand on. Christianity has lost its ground. The Shroud of Turin is relatively new evidence that Jesus did not die on the cross. But almost one hundred years ago, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the Promised Messiah and Holy Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam, had declared that Jesus did not die on the cross. His declaration was based on revelations from Almighty Allah. Now the discovery of the real shroud and all the experiments, in one way, to prove that it is not real, have become fruitless. The Shroud of Turin being real proves that Jesus did not die on the cross. Further evidence that Jesus did not die on the cross may be gained from the Bible:

“ . . . for he that is hanged is accursed of God.”

(Deut. 21:23).

“ . . . for it is written, cursed is everyone that hangeth on a tree.”

(Galatians 3:13).

Jesus was a true prophet of God, therefore, he could not die an accursed death. The followers of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam firmly believe that Jesus did not die on the cross. Their belief is based on the Holy Quran. In this connection further pertinent references, Biblical and otherwise, are cited below:

1. Before the tragic incident of the crucifixion, Jesus fervently prayed; and his prayers were definitely heard by God. Jesus fell on his face and prayed, saying: “ . . . let this cup pass from me” (Matt. 26:39).

2. Also, Jesus cried from the cross with a loud voice, saying “Eli, Eli, Lama sa-bach-tha-ni? — My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?” (Matt. 27:46).
3. The legs of Jesus were not broken as were those of the two thieves crucified with him (John 19:33,34). It shows that God was taking measures to save him from an accursed death on the cross.
4. Afterwards, “one of the soldiers with a spear pierced Jesus’ side, and forthwith came there out blood and water” (John 19:34).

It is a matter of common understanding that when a person becomes dead, the heart stops its process of circulating blood. Oozing of blood from Jesus’s body was a clear sign that he was still alive though unconscious. The authorities in the field of medicine have asserted that the oozing of blood from somebody proves that the person is not dead. Jesus, therefore, did not die on the cross but was taken down in an unconscious condition and thus God saved him from an accursed death.

5. Oozing of blood from the side of Jesus is clearly seen in a picture held sacred for a long time (Life, Jan. 27, 1967 and December 13, 1963).
6. An eye-witness narrated an account that Jesus did not die on the cross (The Crucifixion By an Eyewitness, p. 192).
7. The Encyclopedia Britannica has printed some pictures of Jesus Christ. The crucifixion of Jesus took place when he was about thirty-three years of age. Some of the pictures show him clearly in late and old age. Such pictures are a clear indication that Jesus did not die at a young age but rather he died in his old age (Ency. Britannica, vol. 13).
8. Jesus is reported to have said: “. . . An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonah: For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the whale’s belly, so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth” (Matt. 12:39–40).

These words remain unfulfilled if Jesus actually died on the cross. The Ahmadiyya Muslims believe that the prophetic words of Jesus Christ were actually fulfilled and he did not die on the cross. He remained alive in the tomb and came out alive. This fulfills the prophecy, for Jonah was swallowed alive by the whale, and stayed alive and came out alive. Similarly, Jesus Christ, after the incident of the cross, entered the sepulchre alive, remained there alive and by the third day came out alive. The supporting evidence that he was the Jesus, healed from his wounds and not one risen from the dead, is that he says:

“Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself; handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have.”

(Luke 24:39).

Thus, after meeting his disciples and confirming that he did not die on the cross, Jesus resolved under Divine Command, to leave Palestine in search of the lost tribes of Israel so that he could convey the Divine message to them.

Resuscitated — not Resurrected!

Jesus was, of course, unconscious when taken down from the cross. Joseph of Arimathea wrapped Jesus in a fine linen and took him to a nearby sepulchre especially prepared for himself in a garden. The connotation conveyed by the word tomb needs to be clarified. The tombs of those days were not like tombs of these days. They were airy, spacious places with side openings.

Joseph of Arimathea was a physician and a rich man. Another physician, Nicodemus, also reached there. Jesus was then massaged with a special herbal ointment. That ointment was specially prepared for the kinds of wounds that Jesus had received. Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the Promised Messiah, has referred to that ointment known as Ointment of Jesus. Furthermore, the prescription for the ointment can be traced in medical books. Jesus, however, felt better by the application of that ointment. It is pertinent to remark that no fatal wound was inflicted on Jesus.

Jesus regained consciousness. His admirers supplied him with white clothes to conceal his identity. The other two physicians also dressed themselves in white robes. On the third day all three came out of the sepulchre like white-robed angels. This prophecy was then fulfilled:

“An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign and there shall be no sign given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonah, for as Jonah was three days and three nights in the whale’s belly so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

(Matt. 12:39–40).

It should be noted that the Prophet Jonah was swallowed alive, remained in the belly of the whale alive, and came out alive. Similarly, Jesus was alive when placed in the sepulchre, stayed there alive and came out alive. It was the same real Jesus who had come out of the sepulchre and who said to his disciples who had gathered for the supper:

“Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself.”

(Luke 24:39).

“Look at my feet, and see if they are not touching the ground, for it stands written in the Prophets: A spirit, an apparition, has no trace on the earth.”

(Apocryphal Gospel: Andrew).

Migration

Jesus met a disgraceful treatment at the hands of his country men. So he said: "A prophet is not without honour save in his own country." He decided to leave Palestine. Furthermore he had yet to fulfil a part of his mission which was to preach to the Lost Sheep of the House of Israel. In order to reach the "Lost Sheep of the House of Israel" he had to migrate from the country where he had been accorded neither honour nor respect. After the crucifixion, Jesus prepared for a long journey so he gave instructions to his followers: The scripture records:

"For the Son of man is like a man taking a far journey who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch."

(Mark 13:34).

After the incident of the cross, Jesus was very weak and could not walk very well. However, he met his followers several times in places of concealment. Also, he met the eleven disciples at supper and even slept one night in the company of his followers.

Jesus regained strength and asked his followers to meet him at the Mount of Olives, near Bethany. There he advised them, and embraced each one of them in turn. Jesus then took leave of them and walked up the mountain. The simple and poor folk stood there amazed and dismayed. They were full of sorrow as he was parting from them. They looked at him as far and as long as they could look. It was cloudy and Jesus was leaving the hilltop. They could see him no more, as the clouds had received him out of their sight. Thus for those simple people Jesus had gone up to heaven. However, Jesus came down the hilltop on the other side. Then in the company of Mary Magdalene he set out on a long journey. It is also reported that Jesus's mother, Mary, also accompanied them on this journey. During the journey Mary Magdalene passed away. Jesus and his mother continued their journey to complete and fulfil his mission.

Lost Sheep

Jesus's mission was to locate and convey his message to the Lost Sheep of the House of Israel. He said:

"I am not sent but unto the Lost Sheep of the House of Israel."

(Matt. 15:24).

Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian, the Promised Messiah, has traced and also confirmed by historical evidence that the people of Afghanistan and Kashmir represent the ten lost tribes of Israel. There were twelve tribes (Matt. 10:5-6) and only two were in the country from where Jesus migrated in search of the rest of the tribes.

Bernier says that the people of Kashmir have common names like Rahim Jew, Jul Jew, Jus Jew, and it can be understood that these people were of Jewish descent. Moreover, the Jewish cast of features of many of the inhabitants of Kashmir has been noted by many travellers (Bernier's Travels, p. 430).

The majority of Eastern writers consider the people of Afghanistan to be the descendants of the tribes of Israel, "And this is the opinion of the Afghans themselves" (J. E. Ferrier, History of The Afghanistsans, p. 1).

Again, the traditions of the people refer them to Syria as the country of their residence at the time they were carried away into captivity of Bukhtunassar — Nebuchadnezzar, and planted as colonies in different places. At subsequent periods they settled in Afghanistan (The Races of Afghanistan, p. 15).

The names of towns and cities of Afghanistan and Kashmir are also identical with those of ancient Syria. For example, the name of Kabal, Himis, Gilgit, Laddakh, Leh, Sure, Sukat, are similar to Kabul, Hams, Golgotha, Laddak, Lehi, Shur, and Succoth of ancient Syria. This presents one of the strongest proofs of the fact that the ancestors of the people of Afghanistan, Kashmir, and the adjoining provinces came from ancient Syria, representing the Lost Tribes of Israel.

Arrival of Jesus

Jesus was informed by God that "The Lost Sheep of the House of Israel" had migrated to regions of Afghanistan and Kashmir. Several connotations have been assigned to the word Afghan. Some say Afghan means brave. Some maintain that Afghan is from the Persian word "Faghan," meaning crying, weeping. The tribes were constantly in a state of lamenting and bemoaning because they had lost their original homeland. Some say that they are descendants of Afghan who was a contemporary of Nebuchadnezzar. It is also believed that a reputable Israelite of the Afghan race, Qais, by name, lived during the time of Prophet Muhammad (Peace be on him). Qais became a Muslim and the title of Pathan was conferred upon Qais. Pathan in Syriac means rudder and the word was considered to be synonymous with the word Afghan. In due course, Afghans embraced Islam. Afghanistan literally means the land of the Afghans. Their striking resemblance of the physical features of Jews reveal their identity to be of Jewish origin. The same kind of people with Jewish ancestry made another settlement in the region which came to be known as Kashmir. In order to fulfil his mission to locate and deliver his message to the Lost Sheep of the House of Israel, Jesus started his long journey. Some scholars maintain that he first went to Cyprus. Other scholars say that he went first to Egypt. He then passed through Nasibus, Iran, and

reached Afghanistan. He met the Jews who had settled there and, thus, partially fulfilled his mission.

In order to locate the rest of the Lost Sheep of the House of Israel, Jesus finally reached Kashmir. Bernier, a notable historian, testified that the Kashmiris are Jewish in descent and had migrated from their motherland in the reign of King Asur (Bernier, *Travel*, vol. 2).

In those days people of that part of the world were also expecting their Messiah. In their language it was Buddha who had to make another appearance. Jesus learned the Pali language which was the language of the followers of Buddha. They called Jesus, Bagwa Metteya. Bagwa means white or of fair skin, and Metteya is a word of the Pali language meaning Messiah. So Jesus was received, accepted as the expected Buddha, their Messiah. Great respect and honour was accorded to him. Some rulers placed his name on their coins prevalent in those days. A mountain Mari, near Islamabad, Pakistan, was named after his mother or perhaps his wife Mary.

The capital of Kashmir, is called Srinager, which literally means the place of Siri or Skull. The word golgotha also has the same meaning; that is the Place of the Skull where the crucifixion took place.

In an ancient religious scripture of the Hindus, Bhoshia Paran, it is recorded that the ruler Shalbahan met Jesus in Kashmir. It is also recorded in an early history of Kashmir that Jesus took a long journey from Jerusalem and reached Kashmir (Jesus, *Son of Mary*, p. 32).

The Buddhist followers of Jesus were deeply impressed by his teaching. They mixed Jesus's teachings with their own original teachings. This explains the striking parallels between the teaching of Buddha and Jesus.

Jesus lived to a very ripe old age. He toured various places in India and was accorded respect and honour everywhere. But his headquarters remained in Kashmir. He lived up to one hundred and twenty years. He passed away peacefully and was buried in Khanyar Street, Srinagar, Kashmir. His tomb is still in existence and is of the same pattern as Jewish tombs.

Current Affairs

(Rashid Ahmad Chaudhary)

The provincial Minister for Auqaf and Local Bodies, Punjab, Malik Khuda Bux Tiwana, in a public meeting recently, at Khushab, has declared that:

“The present Government is determined to eradicate the evil of Mirzaiyyat (derogatory term for Ahmadiyyat), and is duty-bound to uproot it completely. A Committee has already been set up for this purpose.”

In this public meeting, the Deputy Commissioner Khushab, Superintendent of Police, Administrator Auqaf, civil and police officers, along with various other dignatories of the city were present.

The statement of the provincial Minister speaks amply about the Government intentions and is in line with the central government policy towards Ahmadis. The statements of the President and the Prime Minister of Pakistan, respectively, to the effect that:

“We will Insha Allah (God willing) persevere in our efforts to ensure that the cancer of Qadianism is exterminated”,

and,

“We have taken strong measures in Pakistan to undo this problem. We hope that the whole Muslim world will take appropriate measures to crush this curse with full force”,

make it abundantly clear that the Government of Pakistan has embarked upon a total annihilation of Ahmadi Muslims in Pakistan. A new legislation is in the pipeline which reportedly envisages liability of capital offence for the utterance or writing of anything which seems to insult the status of the Holy Prophet (Peace be Upon Him) in the eyes of a sect with a particular doctrinal bias. The fact remains that Ahmadi Muslims do not believe in anything but the true Islam and that no Ahmadi can even imagine utterance of a single word which could even indirectly and inadvertently mean an iota of insult to the Holy Prophet of Islam (PBUH). In the present situation in Pakistan, however, General Zia's regime, in collusion with mullahs of a particular

brand of Islam, are portraying a totally misleading picture of the Ahmadiyya Muslim community to augment political gains for themselves, completely conniving to the fact that how genocidally this legislation could be abused by every next person in power with his interpretational variation of the religion of Islam out of the seventy-three sects! The Deputy Attorney General of Pakistan, in his submissions to the Federal Government Shariyyat Court has already gone as far as stating that:

“It is not necessary that the Government should take action; on the contrary, any Muslim can take the law in his own hands.”

In the light of the above-mentioned state of affairs, the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community in Pakistan have genuine fears and apprehensions regarding their lives and property.

The Ahmadiyya Muslim Association, UK, strongly urges all the civilized governments of the world to put pressure on the Government of Pakistan to stop persecuting a tiny God-fearing minority.

Allah Answers Prayer

Allah it is Who answers the cry of the distressed person when he calls upon Him and removes the evil.

(Quran 27:63)

Dedication to God

I urge you to fear God. Stick to the Law of God. Listen to him upon whomsoever God has entrusted your affairs—and obey him, for he who will obey him will get rid of low passions, greed and unwieldy anger. Do not feel proud. It does not behove that he who is created from dust and has to go back to dust should display pride; he has to be eaten up by worms. Today he is alive and tomorrow he will be dead. Every moment that passes, carries him nearer to the time of his death.

(Hazrat Abu Bakr)

Attributes of Allah

Allah – there is no God but He, the Living, the Self-Subsisting and All-Sustaining. Slumber seizes Him not, nor sleep. To Him belongs whatsoever is in the heavens and whatsoever is in the earth. Who is he that will intercede with Him except by His permission? He knows what is before them and what is behind them; and they encompass nothing of His knowledge except what He pleases. His knowledge extends over the heavens and the earth; and the care of them burdens Him not; and He is the High, the Great.

(Quran 2:256.)

Quran on preaching

Say, "O People of the Book! Come to a word equal between us and you – that we worship none but Allah, and that we associate no partner with Him, and that some of us take not others for Lords beside Allah". But if they turn away, then say "Bear witness that we have submitted to God".

(3:65.)

Call unto the way of thy Lord with wisdom and goodly exhortation and argue with them in a way that is best.'

(16:126.)

But speak to him a gentle word, haply he might take heed or fear.

(20:45.)

And warn thy nearest kinsmen.

(26:215.)

And argue not with the People of the Book except with what is best as an argument, but argue not at all with such of them as are unjust. And say, "We believe in that which has been revealed to us and that which has been revealed to you, and our God and your God is One, and to Him we submit."

(29:47.)

And who is better in speech than he who invites men to Allah and does righteous deeds and says "I am, surely, of those who submit?"

(41:34.)

And good and evil are not alike. Repel evil with that which is best. And lo, he, between whom and thyself was enmity, will become as though he were a warm friend.

(41:35.)

And keep on exhorting; for verily, exhortation benefits those who would believe.

(51:56.)

ARTICLES WELCOME

**READERS ARE INVITED TO SUBMIT ARTICLES
WHICH WILL BE CONSIDERED FOR PUBLICATION
IN THE REVIEW OF RELIGIONS**

What is Islam?

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

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

This is Islam which is wrongly called Muhammadanism.

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

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

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

The REVIEW of RELIGIONS

The Review of Religions is the oldest magazine of its kind published in 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-three 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.

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

One of its outstanding features is the refutations of the criticism of Islamic teachings by orientalist 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 The Eastern Press Ltd, London and Reading
Published by The Review of Religions, The London Mosque, 16 Gressenhall Road, London,
SW18 5QL