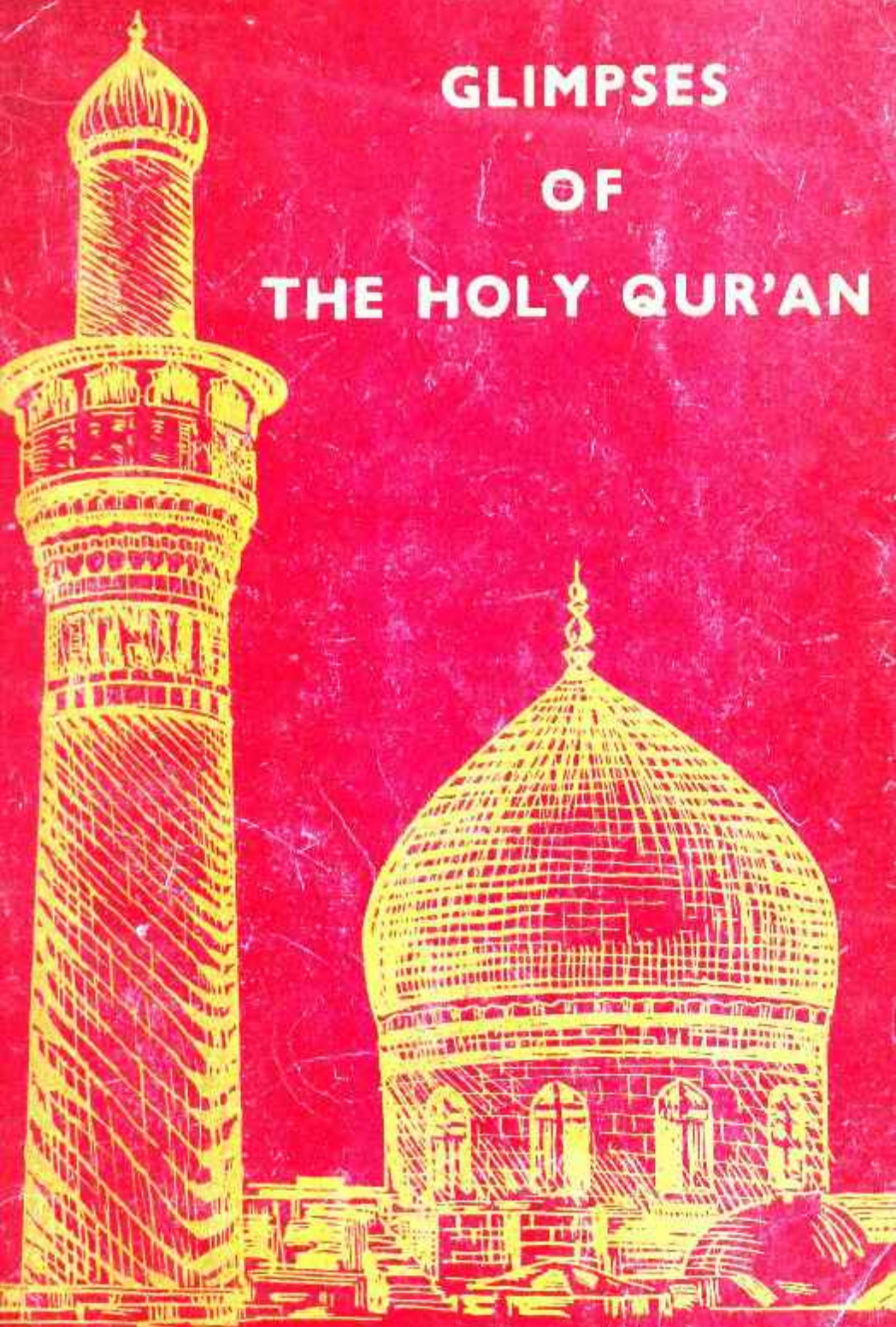
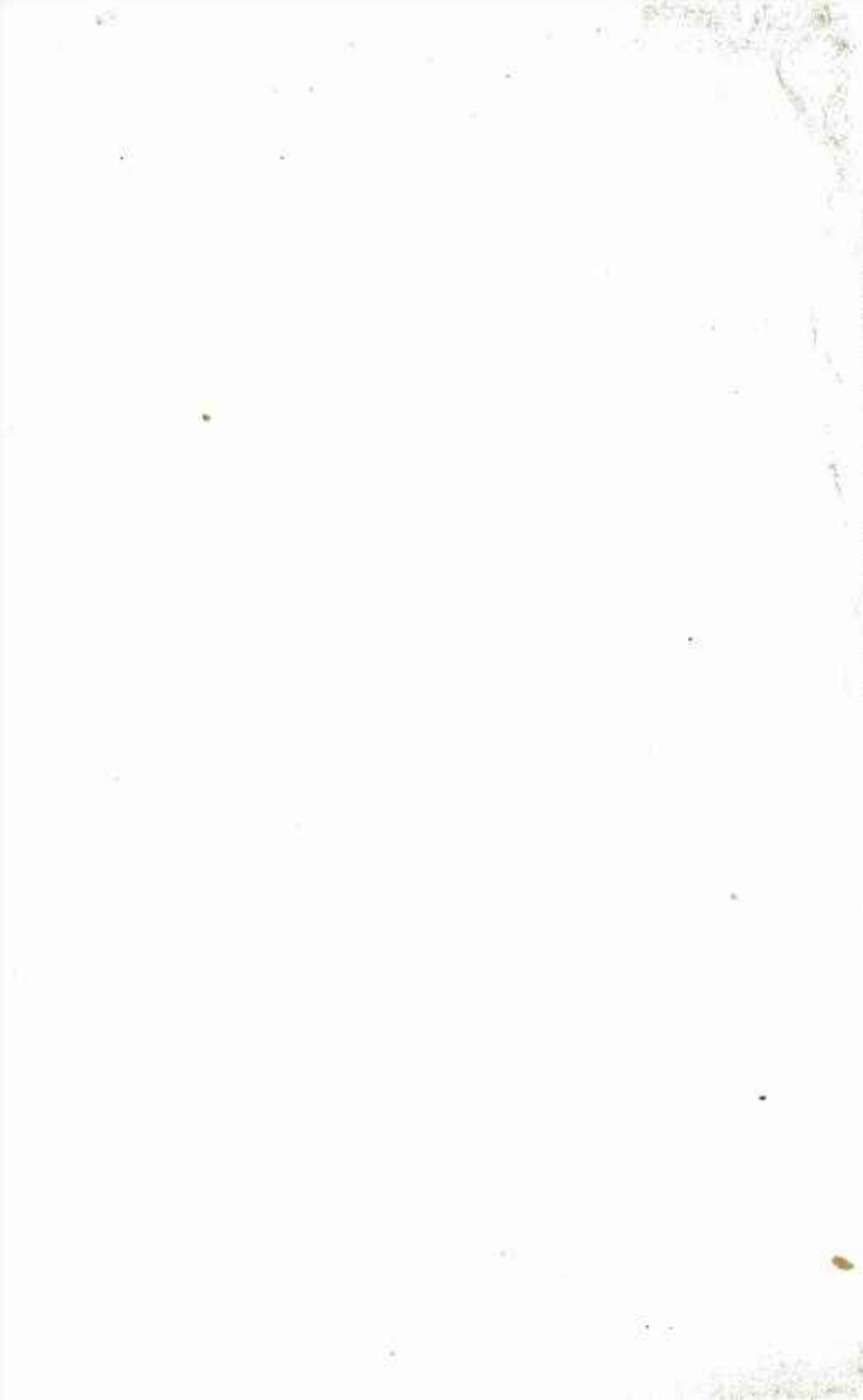


**GLIMPSES
OF
THE HOLY QUR'AN**





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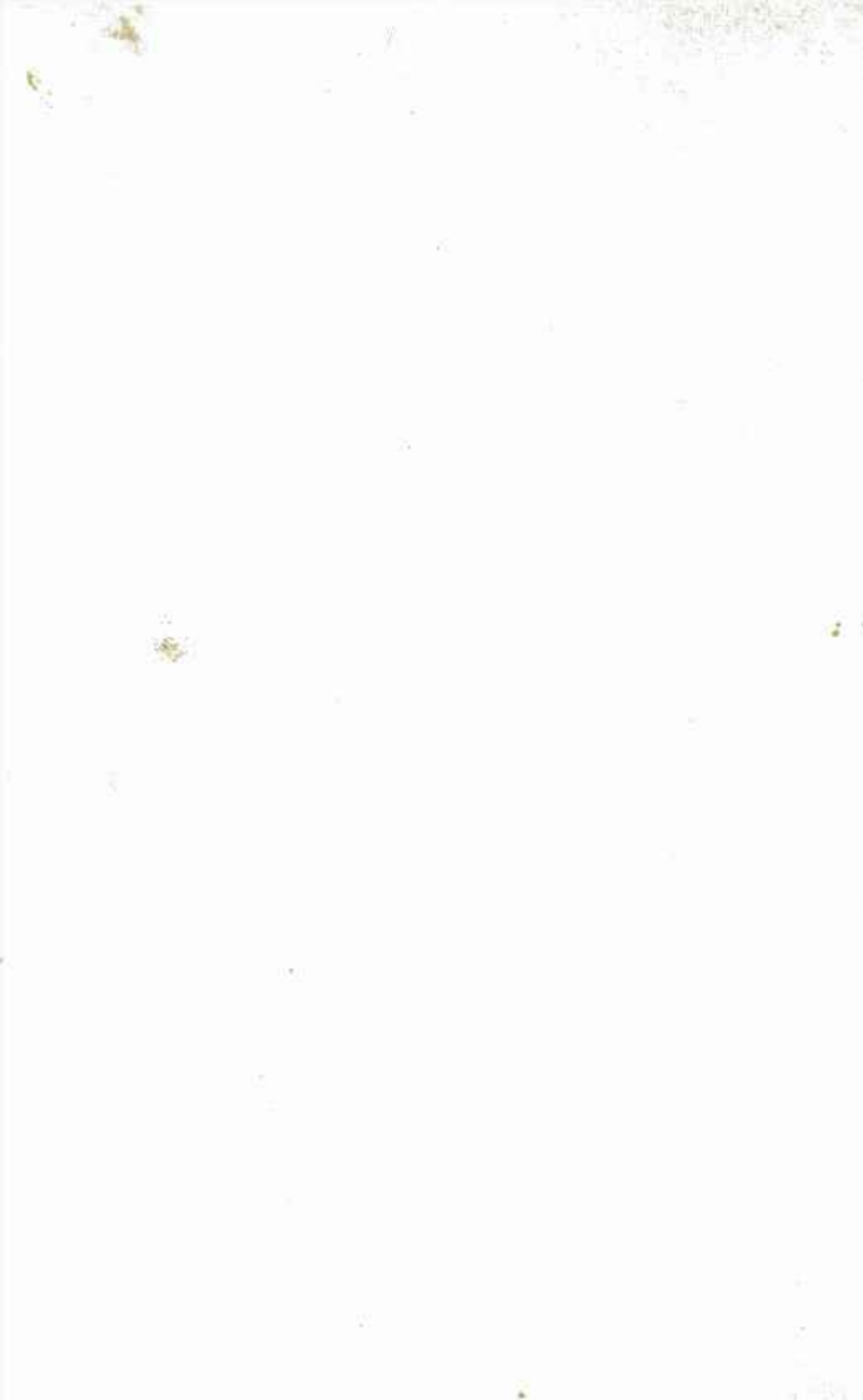
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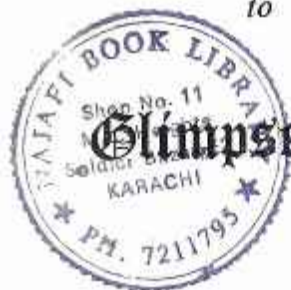
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وَاتْلُ مَا أُوحِيَ إِلَيْكَ مِنَ كِتَابِ رَبِّكَ

*"And recite and teach what has been revealed
to thee of the Book of thy Lord."*



Glimpses of The Holy Qur'an

By

MUHAMMAD AZIZULLAH

B.A., B.L. (P.T.S.)

Member Council of Learning, World Federation of Islamic Missions.
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PUBLISHED BY THE AUTHOR
19. SHAHID-E-MILLAT ROAD KARACHI-5.

1st Edition
2nd Edition

1963
1964



Distributors

S. M. MIR, BOOKSELLERS,
40, Chartered Bank Chambers
Wood Street, Karachi.

FOREWORD

One of the main points of distinction between philosophy and religion is that while the former takes pride in theorising, the latter concerns itself mainly with the practical reformation of the individual and the society. The Holy Qur'an is, therefore, a book which, in the words of Sir Muhammad Iqbal, emphasises deed rather than idea. In other words, although every word of this great Book is full of the deepest wisdom, it is not a dissertation on formal philosophy. Rather, it has its own method of the presentation of Truth—the method, namely, of direct and pithy statements which carry within their bosom the beauty and grace and force of the profound simplicity of nature and which move men and nations to action—as no other thing can move — for the promotion of goodness in all its forms. The author of the present treatise has tried to catch a few glimpses of that wisdom and that grace and he has ably reflected them through his facile pen for the benefit of his fellow-beings. May Allah bless his effort and reward him profusely and profoundly. Amen!

It has been my good fortune to serve far-flung nations and races during my missionary travels round the world and also through the international activity of the World Federation of Islamic Missions. The knowledge thus gained has convinced me that there is an urgent need of broad-casting proper type of Islamic literature through the English language which has become the most powerful medium of the dissemination of ideas among a large section of mankind. As regards Muslims, there are numerous communities in the world

ose sole literary language is English, and consequently their education in Islam is possible only through Islamic literature in English. As regards non-Muslims, they are either completely ignorant of Islamic teachings or, what is worse, they labour under horrible misconceptions concerning Islam. All in all, the situation is grim and calls for a powerful and world-embracing Islamic literary movement in the English language. One of the tasks which the World Federation of Islamic Missions has set before itself is the realisation of this goal, and the "Glimpses from the Holy Qur'an" is a most welcome addition to the series which this organisation has undertaken.

The learned author has taken great pains in making his labour of love useful and informative, and I am sure all students of Islam will derive genuine benefit from it.

Karachi:
22-4-1963

Muhammad Fazl-ur-Rahman Ansari,
President, World Federation of Islamic
Missions.

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In my trips to different countries—specially where Muslims are in a minority—I have invariably found a pressing demand for good Islamic literature, specially in English. Everywhere to-day the people are flooded with either Christian or Communist literature, and as a result naturally the parents are deeply worried about the future of their children. Their worry is a Challenge to all thinking Muslims of the world. But are we prepared to meet the Challenge?

It is, therefore, most encouraging to find Mr. Md. Azizullah of Karachi coming out with this very useful publication. I am glad to see that he had put in lots of hard-work into this concise work, "Glimpses of the Holy Quran". I am sure this will inculcate further interest and enthusiasm amongst the readers to go for more detailed study of the Book—so aptly called the Book of Guidance by the Holy Qur'an itself.

(INAMULLAH KHAN)

Secretary-General

Motamar Al-alam Al-Islami,

Pakistan was created to enable Muslims to live and order their lives according to the tenets of Islam. This is possible when each Pakistani is fully conversant with the Holy Qur'an, its teachings, its injunctions and its prohibitions. But unfortunately Arabic, the language of the Qur'an, is known only to a few. The educated class is not very enthusiastic about Urdu and an attractive summary of the Holy Qur'an is hardly available in English. It is this necessity that the book "Glimpses of the Holy Qur'an" adequately meets. Mr. Muhammad Azizullah deserves felicitations for a neat, handy and invaluable work.

The book is divided into eight parts. Part I is introduction and describes what the Qur'an is. Part II deals with the main absorbing theme of Qur'an, namely, Oneness of God. Part III gives a vivid description of resurrection, judgement and award. Part IV provides a narrative of missions of all important Prophets. Part V lays bare proclamations, injunctions and prohibitions ordained by the Holy Qur'an. Part VI summarises revelations and forecasts which go to prove the divinity of the Holy Qur'an. Part VII emphasises the need of the Qur'an. And Part VIII ends the book with the opinion of non-Muslims about the Holy Qur'an.

The language of the book is throughout simple, chaste and direct. The entire book, which is short and sweet and may be finished even at one sitting, if carefully read will give a complete picture of the Holy Qur'an—its teachings, injunctions and prohibitions. I recommend this book to the Muslim youth.

Z. H. LARI,
Senior Advocate,
Ex-Judge, West Pakistan High Court.

PREFACE

It is regrettable to note that our younger generation is so engrossed in the study of all subjects other than our own religion that they are sometimes ignorant of even the basic facts, figures and principles that every Muslim ought to know. The present condition of education has contributed to their handicap in this direction. Whatever little knowledge they get of Islam is from alien sources, generally from English writers, who are, for obvious reasons, far from sympathetic towards our faith. On the other hand, they are more antagonistic and critical and present facts in such a distorted manner that many of our youths unwittingly succumb to them and consequently show no respect for the Islamic teachings nor are they aware of their intrinsic values. They cultivate a sort of prejudice towards the teachings of Islam and consider them to be inferior to the teachings of other religions. This is the defect of our educational set-up which is undergoing a drastic change. There seems to be some move from certain quarters regarding the proposal to make religious instruction part and parcel of our educational system. Our youths receive education mostly in schools controlled by Christian missions. These institutions slowly inject into the minds of our younger generation Christian faith as the best of its kind in the world. To obviate this, the only course is to educate our children in the matter of understanding their own religion in its true perspective. In

the case of most of our adults, the knowledge of the teachings of the Qur'an is, more often than not, very defective, not dangerous. With this end of education in view, this booklet is written to acquaint them with the real truth of their faith and the beauties that permeate our Holy Book. Voluminous books are not perused until an interest is created and with this desire "Glimpses of the Holy Qur'an" has been brought out in an abridged manner to be easily readable and to inculcate enthusiasm for further detailed study on the subject which is so dear to every Muslim. I have avoided reference to the traditions of the Holy Prophet which forms the subject matter of a separate book.

It is hoped that this effort, Inshaallah, would have its desired effect; and if this object is achieved, some useful service would have been done in explaining the utility of this wonderful Book in the day-to-day life of an individual. It appeals to all human minds in a simple and spontaneous manner and teaches truth, wisdom, good behaviour, and is, so to say, a Human Book, for the guidance of mankind in this world, to lead a pure, decent and righteous life, respecting the rights and privileges of every other individual. It is an ethical code by itself. It suits men of different aptitudes belonging to every race, language, culture and status. By following its teachings implicitly man is purified, and indirectly through him, it purifies the whole human race. It teaches them to live a life according to the laws of Nature. On the spiritual side, it purifies the soul from evil desires and prepares it for its entry into Heaven. It does not believe in persecuting the followers of any other religion and it specifically states that there is no compulsion in religion. **لَا إِكْرَاهَ فِي الدِّينِ** It simply propagates the true way of life showing them the bene-

fits, and giving them a warning in case they do not heed it.

ءَأَسْمَأْتُمْ ءَأَن ءَأَسْمَأُوا نَقَدَ ءَأَهْتَدَ ءَأَه وَءَأَن تَوَلَّوْءَأَ ءَأَتْمَأَعَلَيْكُمُ ءَأَبْسَأَلُمُ ءَأَوَءَأُ
بِءَأِيْرِيْرِ ءَأَلْحَبَأَدِ ۝

“Do ye also submit yourself? If they do, they are in right guidance, but if they turn their back, thy duty is to convey the message; and in God’s sight are all his servants. (Sura III—20)

ءَأَدْعُرُ ءَأِلَى سَبِيْلِ رَبِّكُمُ بِءَأَحْكَمَةٍ وَءَأَبْوَعُظَةٍ ءَأَحْسَنَةٍ وَءَأَدْعُرُهُمْ ءَأَلْقُرْءَأَنَ مِنْ ءَأَحْسَنِ

“Invite all to the way of thy Lord with wisdom and beautiful preaching and argue with them in ways that are best and most gracious”. (Sura XVI—125)

This duty lies also on every true Muslim and I have tried in my humble way to fulfil it with all my limitations, and I pray that the Almighty may through His unbounded mercy accept this service and create the desired effect.

The English translation of the Qur’an has been taken from ‘The Holy Qur’an’ by Allama Abdullah Yusuf Ali and ‘The Glorious Qur’an’ by Muhammad Marmaduke Pickthall.

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

I am highly grateful to the Press and to the public for the very kind reception given to *The Glimpses of the Holy Qur’an* (First Edition) which was so encouraging that the 2,000 copies printed were exhausted in the first six months of its publication. In consequence I am emboldened in bringing out the Second Edition of the book with a few additions to enhance its utility and to remove the shortcomings of the First Edition.

Further, I am deeply indebted to the benevolent appreciation of this book by the Embassies of our brother

Islamic countries (extracts of which are printed separately) who feel the urgent need of such literature for the propagation of the grand ideals of the Religion of Islam, which religion alone can stand any test from any quarter of the civilized world regarding its truth, usefulness, guidance and in leading man to the desired goal of not only material progress but also spiritual salvation.

In conclusion I have to express my thanks to my friend Khwaja Abdul Waheed, Editor, Fortnightly *Al-Islam* a renowned Scholar of Islamic Literature for his useful suggestions and my deep gratitude to Mr. Aftab Iqbal, Bar.-at-Law, son of the late Dr. Sir Mohammad Iqbal for his help in bringing out this edition. May the Almighty reward them for their advice and co-operation!

M. AZIZULLAH.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER	Page
I. Introduction What is the Qur'an—How Qur'an was preserved— Divisions of the Qur'an—The First Revelation— Broad classification of the Qur'an.	1
II. Passages advocating the worship of one God .. Tauhid and Shirk explained	7
III. Resurrection, Judgement, Rewards and Punishments in the future life	20
IV. Stories of Former Apostles Adam — Noah — Hud — Shuaib — Abraham — Ismail — Isaac — Lot — Jacob — Joseph — Moses — David — Solomon — Jonah — Zakariyya — Jesus — Muhammad.	23
V. Proclamations, Directions of policy and Regulations of conduct Acts of Devotion—Prohibitions—Laws enacted: Criminal, Civil, Domestic and Socia'—Regula- tions of conduct—Jizyah—Purdah System.	43
VI. Several Revelations and Forecasts of the Quran to prove its Divine origin Why Quran is held to be God-sent—Prophecies about the progress of Islam, about Muhajirs, about defeat of the Meccans, about Abu Lahab, Hypocrites, Battles of the Prophet, Jews, Christians, Romans and about Pharoah.	75
VII. Need of the Qur'an	94
VIII. Non-Muslim opinions about the Qur'an ..	104
Map showing the progress of Islam in its early period	
Extracts of Appreciations	

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

*"In the name of God, Most Gracious,
Most Merciful."*

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

WHAT IS THE QUR'AN

The Qur'an is the record of those formal utterances, discourses, revelations or commands which were received by Prophet Muhammad (May peace be upon him) through the angel Gabriel as a message direct from God and which under Divine direction he delivered to those around him. These divine revelations started in the fortieth year of his life when he was appointed the Apostle of God and continued thereafter for twenty-three years of his Prophetic career with the last message coming in the year of his death (632 A.C.). These messages received from time to time were recited by the Prophet to his companions who were present and were committed to writing by a companion upon pieces of parchment and leather, tablets of stone, ribs of palm-branches, camel's shoulder-blades and ribs, pieces of board and were also recorded in the breasts of men.

These combined formed the Heavenly Book known as '*Al-Qur'an*'. The word 'Qur'an' is derived from the Arabic root 'Qara'a', 'to read' and means 'reading aloud' or 'chanting'; the reading or recitation of the man who knew not how to read. The Qur'an speaks in the first person, the speaker throughout being God. It is therefore the word of God Himself sent through the angel Gabriel and delivered by the Prophet in its exact form in the Arabic language which was chosen as the medium. The explanations, annotations and sayings of the Prophet were separately preserved in the *Traditions (Hadith)*.

HOW QUR'AN WAS PRESERVED

The Qur'an existed in its present form during the life-time of the Prophet himself. It was preserved in fragmentary copies and in the hearts of the followers. The full text was recited in the month of Ramadan in the Prophet's life-time, and in the year of his death it was fully recited twice in his presence.

Soon after the death of the Prophet, when many of the reciters of the Qur'an were killed during the battle of Yemama, necessity was felt to safeguard against the possibility of the Qur'an being lost; and to compile it in proper book form was indispensable. The first Caliph Abu Bakr entrusted this task to Zayd bin Thabit who collected it from the writings on palm-leaves and stones, parchments and from brains of men. This manuscript was deposited with Abu Bakr and then with the next Caliph 'Umar, on whose death it passed on to his daughter Hafsa. During the reign of 'Uthman, the third Caliph, it was found that the new converts in the outlying provinces were committing mistakes in reading the Qur'an, and hence Hudhayfa requested the Caliph to interfere, lest the Sacred Book of the Muslims should become a

subject of dispute like the scriptures of the Jews and Christians. It must be remembered that this variance was not with regard to the text but owing to the fact of its kufic script in which Qur'an was originally written, there were no indications of vowels or diacritical points leading to variant readings and different interpretations. It was therefore in 651 A.C. that Zayd was ordered to prepare the Authorised Version in the authentic manner which since then has remained the Final and Standard Version of the Qur'an. Variant readings were stopped for all time, transcriptions of the Holy Book were multiplied and forwarded to all distant lands of the domain as Iraq, Persia, Syria, Palestine and Egypt. These authentic volumes, with the seal and signature of 'Uthman, were distributed within eleven years of the death of the Prophet. Thus the Qur'an as uttered by the Prophet word by word was preserved and continues unchanged till this date.

THE DIVISIONS OF THE QUR'AN

The Holy Book is divided into 30 divisions called Ajza. (Paras) and into 114 chapters called 'Surahs'—probably a Syriac word meaning text or scripture. Each Surah contains a different number of verses (Ayat or signs). The number of verses in a Surah varies as does also the length of the verses. At the head of twenty-nine of them

stand groups of letters such as **الْقُرْطَه - يَس - حَمْدُ الْمُتَّقِينَ**

Out of the 114 chapters 92 were revealed at Mecca and 22 at Medina. The Qur'an contains 6,616 verses, 77,934 words, 323,760 letters of the alphabet and amongst letters (Alif) 48,992 (Ba) 12,228 (Ta) 2,404 (Tha) 3,105 (Ja) 4,232 and so on, which shows the devotion with which the Qur'an is held and the effort made to count these

which is a labour of love and a guarantee against interpolation. The Qur'an is a plain book according to the laws of Nature. Everyone can get out of the Qur'an plain guidance for his life according to his capacity for spiritual understanding. It has an inimitable style and symphony and the very sounds of it move men to tears and ecstasy. It is a book which has no parallel and is a literary masterpiece of surpassing excellence. Its reading makes man understand nature, understand himself, and know God, his Creator, through His wondrous signs and glorify Him in truth, reverence and unity. It is a book which was given to men of every time and clime universally and not to a particular race, as the Vedas to the Aryans and the Holy Bible to the Hebrews.

THE FIRST REVELATION

The first revelation came to the Prophet in the month of Ramadan 609 A.C. at a cave at Hira, a desert hill not far from Mecca, where he used to retire for meditation. He was in a trance when he heard a voice say "Read"! (Iqra'). He said: "I cannot read". The voice was that of the angel Gabriel. The angel hugged him close to his bosom and asked him again to read. He said: "I cannot read". A third time the voice, more forceful, commanded: "Read". He said "What can I read?" The voice said:

اقْرَأْ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ ۚ خَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ عَلَقٍ ۚ وَإِنَّا وَرَدُّنَا
الْأَعْيُنَ عَنْ أَلْفَيْهِ ۖ أَفَلَا يُبْصِرُ ۚ

"Read in the name of thy Lord who createth,

Createth man from a clot,

Read: it is thy Lord, the Most Bountiful

Who teacheth by the pen.

Teacheth man that which he knew not." (Surah 'Alaq)

This was the first experience of the heavy responsibility of prophethood being placed on his shoulders. Thereafter the words remained inscribed upon his heart. He went out of the cave and on to the hillside, and heard the same awe-inspiring voice say: "O Muhammad! thou art Allah's Messenger and I am Gabriel". Then he raised his eyes and saw the angel, in the likeness of a man, standing in the sky above the horizon again repeating the same words. He thus remained for a long time and thereafter vanished. He returned home shivering with fear and asked his dear wife Khadijah to wrap him with a blanket. She enquired the cause of his fear and he related the whole occurrence. Thereupon she consoled him and assured him that Allah would not let harm and sorrow come to him and believed he would be the Prophet of his people. She took him and consulted her cousin Waraqa bin Naufal, a man of wisdom and learning who knew the scriptures of the Jews and the Christians. He confirmed that the heavenly messenger was angel Gabriel and that Muhammad was chosen as the Prophet of his people.

There was a lull after the first revelation for some time. This is known as the period of '*Fatrat al-Wahy*' or the cessation of revelation. How long this lasted is a matter of controversy. Some say it was 2 to 3 years but the correct version is that it lasted for about six months. The lull was to give him respite as the pressure of the first revelation had affected his health and his body might not have withstood a rapid repetition. Again the revelation came accompanied with the same feeling though not with the same intensity. Again he asked Khadijah to wrap him up. Then the command came, "Oh thou that has wrapped thyself up! Arise and warn". This was the second

stage. Then messages continued with small intervals till the book was revealed in its entirety.

إِنَّا نُنزِّلُ الْقُرْآنَ عَلَيْكَ فِي تَرَاتُيبٍ

"It is We who have sent down the Quran to thee by stages."

(LXXVI—23).

BROAD CLASSIFICATION OF THE QUR'AN

The Qur'an may be classified broadly with regard to its contents under four different heads:—

1. Passages advocating the worship of one God, Allah, the Creator of all things and the Bestower of the good gifts of life;
2. Eschatological material setting forth the resurrection, judgement, rewards and punishments of the future life;
3. Stories of former Apostles, some of them being Arabs and some Jewish; and
4. Proclamations and regulations belonging mostly to Medinite period of the Prophet's life, when as head of a community he directed the policy and regulated the conduct in the name of Allah.

CHAPTER II

PASSAGES ADVOCATING THE WORSHIP OF ONE GOD

The doctrine of the oneness of God has been beautifully portrayed in the Qur'an. The Arabic word 'Allah' is a consolidated form of "Al-Ilah" (The God). It is a proper noun *par excellence*. No plural can be formed from it and it is according to the best authorities without derivation. It connotes all attributes of perfection and beauty. The concept of God was purified from the elements of polytheism. He is the Creator and Sustainer of the universes, the All-Knowing and All-Powerful, Arbiter of good and evil and final Judge of all men. He does not assume human form and is free from all human needs and imperfections. He is One, Invisible, Indivisible, Beneficent, Almighty, Just, Loving and Forgiving. Belief in the Unity of God is the essential requirement of a Muslim's faith.

The epithets used in the Qur'an denoting His attributes are 99 in number, which are "the most beautiful names of God" (Asma'al-Husna). Some of the epithets are Hearer (Sami), Seer (Baseer), Granter (Wahhab), Reckoner (Jabbar), Pardonner (Ghaffar), Sustainer (Razzaq), Guide (Hadi), Creator (Khaliq), and so on and so forth. Some of His qualities have been mentioned in the *Ayat al-Kursi* (Verse of the Throne, Surah II, Verse 255) which is translated as follows:—

“There is no God but He, the Living, the Self-Subsistent, the Eternal. Slumber seizeth Him not, neither sleep. To Him belongeth whatsoever is in the heavens and in the earth. Who is there that shall intercede with Him save by His will ? He knoweth what is present with men and what shall befall them, and naught of His knowledge do they comprehend save what He willeth. His throne is wide as the heavens and the earth and the keeping of them wearieth Him not. And He is the Most High, the Mighty one”.

God exists from all eternity to all eternity. He is the only reality. To Him belongeth the rule and to Him shall ye be brought back for judgement. He is the sole Creator of beings and producer of things. He is Perfect in His works. Everything, from the Seven Heavens downwards comes into existence by His will and at his creative word “Be” (Kun). He alone gives life and death, His decree is inescapable and all things are determined and disposed by His fore-knowledge. He exalts whom He wills and bringeth low whom He wills.

وَنُوعًا مِّنْ تَشَاءُ وَرَسُولًا مَّنْ تَشَاءُ مَا يَدَّبُ إِلَيْكَ الْعِبَادَةُ وَإِنَّكَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ۝

He is not only the Compassionate one, the Merciful, but also the Protector, the Provider, the Pardoner, the Clement, ever ready to turn to the repentent sinner. He is the Subtle, who is closer to man than his neck-vein. وَنَحْنُ أَكْرَبُ إِلَيْهِمْ حَبِيبٌ ۝ (L-16)

He is the First and the Last, the Manifest and the Hidden. To Him belongs the Kingdom, the Power and the Might. The effects of His Might are innumerable and the objects of His Knowledge infinite. He is Omniscient and Omnipotent. He is All-Seeing but Unseen yet perceivable through His actions.

Today except for the atheist everyone believes in the existence of God. It is only the atheist who wants a concrete proof by saying 'Seeing is believing'. This is an absurd idea as in life there are many things which we accept implicitly without actually seeing them. Certain things we perceive through the senses by feeling, as the air we breathe or the hardness of the stone or softness of butter or strength of an individual; some we detect by tasting, as sourness, sweetness, bitterness; some by smelling such as fragrance; some by hearing as music, sound of a gun or of a plane at great height. In all these cases we never for a moment deny the existence of these things in spite of their invisibility. Take again, for instance, our own faculties of reason, memory and intelligence, which are universally accepted as existing, although nobody has seen, heard, tasted or smelt them. Then why demand that God should be first seen to be believed and make this discrimination for Him alone? He manifests Himself in countless ways: by His Powers, by His Attributes, by His Creation of Nature, by the Creation of the Sun, the Moon, the planets following their prescribed courses; by the creation of the Heaven and Earth and all that is between them; by the pouring of rain from the skies, the growth of trees, the flowers, the fruits; by the night following the day, the change of seasons, and last but not the least, the creation of man himself. The Qur'an repeatedly addresses itself to humanity and invites an answer to its questions as follows:

قُلْ مَنْ يَرْزُقُكُمْ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ أَمَنْ يَمْلِكُ السَّمْعَ وَالْأَبْصَارَ
 وَمَنْ يُخْرِجُ الْحَيَّ مِنَ الْمَيِّتِ وَيُخْرِجُ الْمَيِّتَ مِنَ الْحَيِّ وَمَنْ يُدِيرُ
 الْأَمْرَ فَاقْبَلُوا لِلَّهِ قَوْلًا أَقْلًا تَتَّقُونَ ○ فَذَلِكُمْ اللَّهُ
 رَبُّكُمْ الْحَقُّ ۚ فَمَاذَا بَعَدَ الْحَقِّ إِلَّا الضَّلَالُ ۚ فَأَنْتُمْ تُصِرُّونَ ○ كَذَلِكَ
 حَقَّقَتْ كَلِمَاتُ رَبِّكَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ فَسَقُوا أَنَّهُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ○

“SAY: Who supplieth you sustenance from the heavens and the earth? Who hath Power over the hearing and sight? And who bringeth forth the living from the dead, and bringeth forth the dead from the living. And who ruleth over all things?”

“They will surely say, ‘Allah’. Then say: What! will ye not therefore be mindful of Him? Such then is God, your True Lord: and when Truth is gone, what remaineth but error? How then are ye so perverted?”

“Thus is the Word of thy Lord proved True against those who rebel: Verily they will not believe.”

(X—31-33)

He has no partner, counsel or assistant. He has no wife nor child:

قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ ۝ اللَّهُ الصَّمَدُ ۝ لَمْ يَلِدْ ۝ وَلَمْ يُولَدْ ۝ ذَكَرَ يُتَبَيَّنُ لَكُمَا
صُفْرًا أَحَدٌ ۝

Say God is One;

God who liveth on;

Without father and without son.

And like to Him there is none.

(Surah CXII)

لَقَدْ كَفَرَ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ ثَلَاثٌ ثَلَاثَةٌ مِمَّا صَدَّكُم بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ وَقَدْ جَاءَكُمْ

“They do blaspheme who say: ‘God is one of three in a Trinity: for there is no God except one God.’”

(Surah V-Verse 76)

وَإِذْ قَالَ اللَّهُ لِيُعْلِمَ ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ إِنَّكَ تُخَلِّقُ لِلنَّاسِ الْفِتْنَةَ فِي ذُرِّيَّتِي وَأَعْيُنَ الْفِتْنَةِ
مِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِي قَالَ اللَّهُ تَبَّ عَلَى مَنْ كَفَرَ إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ مَالِكٌ لِمَا تَشَاءُ وَإِنْ كُنْتَ
تُخَلِّقُ فَقَدْ عَلِمْتَهُ ۖ فَكَلَّمْنَا فِي نَفْسِهِ وَلَا أَعْلَمُ مَا فِي نَفْسِكَ ۖ إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ عَلَّامُ
الْغُيُوبِ ۝

“And God will say:

"Oh Jesus, the son of Mary! Didst thou say unto men, 'Worship me and my mother as gods in derogation of God?' He will say: "Glory to Thee! Never could I say what I had no right (to say). Had I said such a thing thou wouldst indeed have known it. Thou knowest what is in my heart, though I know not what is in Thine. For thou knowest in full all that is hidden."

(*Surah V, Verse 119*)

'Christ was not divine but human' said Dr. Rashdall, the Dean of Carlisle. 'I do not for a moment suppose that Christ ever thought himself as God', said Dr. Bethune-Baker. 'Jesus was a man, genuinely, utterly, completely, unreservedly human', said the Rev. R. C. Parsons of Rusholme. These eminent men and great theologians expressed this opinion in the Modern Churchmen's Congress at Cambridge which staggered the Anglican Church.*

(Extract from the *Graphic* dated 20-8-20)

Attributing partners to God is called 'Shirk' which is unforgivable. Shirk is not only idolatry but also offering prayers and supplications to persons dead or living believing that they hold the same attributes in a lesser degree than God. Some of the passages relating to these acts in the Holy Book are given below:

وَلَا تَدْعُ مَعَ اللَّهِ إِلَهًا آخَرَ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ قَدْ عَلِمَ كُلُّ شَيْءٍ هَالِكًا إِلَّا وَجْهَهُ ۗ
لَهُ الْحُكْمُ وَإِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ ○

"And cry not unto any other "god" along with Allah. There is no God save Him. Everything will perish save

*See St. Mark (New Testament)

(Chap 12, V 29 & 30)

"And Jesus answered him. The first of all the commandments is, Hear O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord. And thou shall love the Lord, thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength; this is the first commandment."

This strikes at the very root of the belief in the Divinity of Christ.

His countenance. His is the command, and unto Him ye will be brought back.'

(*'Surah Khasas, Verse 88*)

مَثَلُ الَّذِينَ اتَّخَذُوا مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ أَوْلِيَاءَ كَمَثَلِ الْعَنْكَبُوتِ عَلَىٰ إِذْنِهَا
بُنِيَ بَيْتُهَا إِنَّ أَوْهَنَ الْبُيُوتِ لَبَيْتُ الْعَنْكَبُوتِ لَوْ كَانُوا يَعْلَمُونَ ۝

"The likeness of those who choose other patrons than Allah is as the likeness of the spider when she taketh unto herself a house, and lo! the frailest of all houses is the spider's house, if they but knew."

(*Surah 'Ankabut, Verse 41*)

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ ضُرِبَ مَثَلٌ فَاستَمِعُوا لَهُ ۗ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ تَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ
لَنْ يَخْلُقُوا ذُبَابًا وَلَا يُبَاتِلُوهُ أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ تَدْعُونَ لِيَسْتَنفِثُوا
مِنْهُ مَا ضَعُفَتِ الظَّالِمِينَ وَالْمُظَلِّمِينَ ۝

"O mankind! A similitude is coined, so pay ye heed to it: Lo! Those on whom ye call besides Allah will never create a fly though they combine together for the purpose. And if the fly took something from them, they could not rescue it from him. So weak are (both) the seeker and the sought."

(*Surah Hajj, Verse 73*)

وَمَنْ يُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ فَكَأَنَّمَا خَرَّ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ

To hold partners with Allah is just like anyone falling from the heavens and breaking into pieces:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ تَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ عِبَادٌ أَمْثَلُكُمْ كَادَ عَوْهُمْ فَلْيَسْمِعُوا
لَكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ۝

"Verily those whom ye call upon besides God are servants like unto you. Call upon them, and let them listen to your prayer if ye are (indeed) truthful."

(*Surah A'raf, Verse 194*)

False gods, whether idols or deified men or ideas or superstitions, have no existence of their own, independent of God's creation. They are God's creatures and like servants are subject to His authority. Deified

men are not real men, but false ideas of men. They cannot help themselves; how can they help others?

The Qur'an proceeds and gives a challenge:

أَلَهُمْ أَرْجُلٌ يَمْشُونَ بِهَا أَمْ لَهُمْ آيٌ يَبِينُونَ بِهِمْ أَمْ لَهُمْ أَعْيُنٌ
يُبْصِرُونَ بِهِمْ أَمْ لَهُمْ آذَانٌ يَسْمَعُونَ بِهِمْ أَفَلَا تُدْعَوْنَ إِلَى تَرْكِ
تِلْكَ أَعْيُنِكُمْ وَرُجُلِكُمْ وَآذَانِكُمْ ۚ

"Have they feet to walk with? Or hands to lay hold with? Or eyes to see with? Or ears to hear with? Say: Call your god-partners, scheme (your worst) against me, and give me no respite."

(Surah A'raf, Verses 194-5)

The challenge is that if the false gods have any power or even existence, collect them all together and let them do their worst against the Prophet. They cannot, because the whole thing is based on a superstition and a chimera.

As regards prayers to deified men, who are dead and cannot hear, the Qur'an exposes their foolishness as follows:—

وَمَنْ أَضَلُّ مِمَّن يَدْعُوا مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ مَنْ لَا يَسْتَجِيبُ لَهُ إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ
وَهُمْ عَنْ دُعَائِهِمْ غَافِلُونَ ۝

"And who is further astray than those who, instead of Allah, pray unto such as hear not their prayer until the Day of Resurrection and are unconscious of their prayer."

(Surah Ahkaf, Verse 5)

وَلَا أَحْسِرُ النَّاسُ كَمَا آلِهَتُهُمْ آعْدَاءُ وَكَأُولَٰئِكَ يَرْجِعُونَ كَافِرِينَ ۝

"On the Day of Judgment when these deified persons are confronted by God they will deny that they had ever asked them to worship them."

(Surah Ahkaf, Verses 6)

إِنَّ الشِّرْكَ لَكُفْرٌ عَظِيمٌ ۝

In Surah Luqman Verse-13 ascribing partners to Allah is regarded as a tremendous wrong.

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَغْفِرُ أَنْ يُشْرَكَ بِهِ وَيَغْفِرُ مَا دُونَ ذَلِكَ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ ۗ وَمَنْ يُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ فَقَدْ افْتَرَىٰ إِثْمًا عَظِيمًا ۝

“God forgiveth not that partners should be set up with Him; but He forgiveth anything else to whom He pleaseth; to set up partners with God is to devise a sin most heinous indeed.”

(Surah Nisa, Verse 48)

Allah alone is the One Who is eternal and who hears our prayers. He is All-Knowing and as close to us as our neck-vein and always ready to pardon the truly penitent. His mercy predominates over His retribution and He is the most Compassionate. There is no pleasure or advantage to God in punishing His own creatures over whom He watches with loving care.

When He desires you to approach Him direct and prohibits you from taking with Him partners, why disobey Him and incur His wrath. Is not your Creator, Sustainer, Benefactor enough to help you?

It could be thus seen from the foregoing that the great doctrine of the Qur'an is the Unity of God which has been portrayed so beautifully and elaborately as to defy description. The Arabs of the time did profess the Unity of God but this was superficial as they simultaneously had faith in the Sun, the Moon, the Stars as the controllers of their destinies, besides, worshipping images which they honoured as inferior deities. This was carried to such an extent that there were no less than 360 idols, one for each day in the year, installed in the Ka'ba. They looked upon angels as the daughters of God. On journeys they would carry four

stones, three to make a hearth and the fourth to serve as an object of worship. From such a deplorable condition did Islam divert them to the worship of One God Whose attributes have been detailed above.

Sir Adwin Arnold, K. C. I. E. says: "The soul of Islam is its declaration of the unity of God; its heart is the inculcation of obedience to His laws".

"The doctrine of one Supreme God to Whose will it is the duty of every man to surrender himself is the kernel of Islam, the truth for which Muhammad lived and suffered and triumphed".—**Stanley Lane-Poole.**

It is appropriate to deal here with the first Chapter of the Qur'an known as *Surat-ul-Fatiha*. Its due importance could be realized from the fact that this Surah has been given the first position in the Holy Book and forms its opening (*Fatihah-ul-Kitab*). Every believer has been enjoined to recite it in his daily five-time prayers and without its recitation his prayer becomes incomplete. The Qur'an emphasises its importance in the following terms:

وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَاكَ سَبْعًا مِّنَ الْمَثَانِي وَالْقُرْآنَ الْعَظِيمَ ۝

(O Prophet!) It is a fact that We have given thee Seven Oft-repeated verses and the great Qur'an."

(15:87)

It is also called the *Umm-ul-Qur'an* or the Core of the Qur'an. The Prophet describes it as the greatest and finest Chapter as in a nutshell it gives the text that is to follow:

(1) *In the Name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.*

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ۝

- (2) Praise is for Allah only—
The Lord of All the
Worlds. اَلْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ رَبِّ الْعٰلَمِيْنَ ۝
- (3) The Benevolent, the
Merciful. الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ ۝
- (4) Master of the Day of
Recompense. مٰلِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّيْنِ ۝
- (5) Thee only do we serve,
and Thee only do we ask
for help. اِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَاِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِيْنُ ۝
- (6) Direct us to the Straight
Path. اِهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيْمَ ۝
- (7) The Path of those to
whom Thou hast been
Gracious,
not of those who have
incurreed Thy dis-
pleasure, nor of those who have
gone astray. صِرَاطَ الَّذِيْنَ اَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ ۝
غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوْبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا الضَّالِّيْنَ ۝

Ameen !

(Surah I—1 to 7)

A study of this Surah brings home to the reader the first and the foremost Attribute of the Lord of All creation, viz., His quality of being full of Tenderness, Love and Mercy as indicated by the words 'Rahman' and 'Rahim'. The word 'Rabb' means Nourisher and denotes His nourishing according to the requirements coupled with love and care as He is Aware of the helplessness of man from childhood to old age. He is, therefore, disposed to deal with him generously. Then His attribute of Justice is described when He will deal with people on the Day of Recompense. The old belief of absolutism and despotism which created fear and offering of sacrifices to keep His temper at normal has been refuted. The Qur'an affirms His quality of Justice tempered with Mercy. If He does not hold the

scales of justice evenly it would lead to chaos. The elements of terror and vengeance preached by other religions is dismissed. He is not the jealous God as described in the Old Testament as follows:

“Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them; for I am the Lord, thy God. I am a jealous God visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me.”

(*Exodus*, 20:5-6).

In the next verse the direction is to worship Him and Him alone and to seek aid from Him and Him alone thus discarding Creature-Worship. Even the invoking of help of any Prophet, Saint, Angel, ‘Son’ or ‘Mother’ is absolutely forbidden. God alone must be invoked for help and none else. This brings us to the Law of Give and Take. In every sphere of life it is demonstrated. For instance a labourer renders service and receives wages; an employee from a minister down to a peon works and expects salary; a trader offers goods and takes its value; parents offer love and benefits and in advanced age expect the same from their children; a king offers protection and security and expects loyalty. Similarly, the Lord of the worlds, who is the Creator, offers help to man and in return desires perfect loyalty to Him and prayer addressed to Him only, as all others are just His servants and helpless.

Again, there is the word ‘Hidayat’ which means ‘to show the way, to give direction, along a path, to guide ! This ‘Hidayat’, the Qur’an says, is the instinctive urge of nature which really proceeds from Him. For instance, the human child, after birth, clinging to the mother’s breast for nourishment, and the flow of milk which was not present till then in the breast, and continuing only till such time

as the child is weak. So also His guidance is necessary to find out the Straight Way, not only to find it out but to keep us steadily on it, as the Straight Way is not the way which could be achieved easily but it is full of ups and downs and His Help is needed at every stage to traverse it smoothly and overcome obstacles and to be led to the final goal which is the spiritual destiny and the way to salvation. This Path is clearly distinguishable from the paths of evil and it is the path followed by Prophets, martyrs, the righteous and those on whom God's Favours have been bestowed. It is the Straight Path and the Path of Goodness.

Just ponder over these few Verses and you would find that this is the sublimest of all prayers that exist in any religion. I would quote here the Lord's Prayer given in the Bible for the sake of comparison:—

1. "Our Father which art in heaven.
2. Hallowed be Thy name.
3. Thy Kingdom come.
4. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.
5. Give us this day our daily bread.
6. And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.
7. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
8. For thine is the Kingdom, and the power and the glory, for ever. Amen!"

(*Matt: 6-11 to 13*).

Note.—In St. Luke instead of 'debts' the word 'sins' is used and item No. 8 omitted.

God is addressed here as 'Father' to depict the idea

of paternal care which has its own limitations, but the Qur'an uses the words 'Rabb', 'Rahman' and 'Rahim' already explained above which denote his All-embracing Beneficence and Love and Mercy. Then in the Lord's prayer the Kingdom of God is invoked on earth as if it is not present, while the Qur'an emphasises the Kingdom of God to encompass all the heavens and the earth. The Lord's Prayer desires the Will of God to prevail while the teaching of the Qur'an is that His Will is always predominant. While in the Lord's Prayer there is the craving for the daily bread and the physical needs, the *Surah Fatiha* has, as its object, the higher aspiration of the redemption of the Soul and happiness of the future life. God is not our enemy to lead us to temptation which will mean that He is unjust, whereas we implore Him to guide us to the Straight Path as we require His Guidance at every stage. In every respect, therefore, the Lord's Prayer sinks into insignificance compared with the majesty and glory of the *Fatiha*.



CHAPTER III

RESURRECTION, JUDGEMENT, REWARDS AND PUNISHMENTS IN THE FUTURE LIFE

The next article of faith laid down in the Qur'an is the belief in a general resurrection reckoning or judgement. The dead shall rise from their graves, being restored to life. Every individual will be answerable for his or her actions in life, and judgement will be pronounced bestowing joys of Paradise for the good and tortures of Hell for the wicked. The last Day (Qiyamat) would come suddenly at a time known only to God Almighty.* The vivid presentation of the Doomsday is given in the Surah entitled 'The Folding up' and the Surah entitled 'the Severing'.

إِذَا الشَّمْسُ كُوِّرَتْ ۝ وَإِذَا النُّجُومُ انْكَدَرَتْ ۝ وَإِذَا الْجِبَالُ سُيِّرَتْ ۝
وَإِذَا الْعِشَارُ عُطِّلَتْ ۝ وَإِذَا الْوُحُوشُ حُشِرَتْ ۝ وَإِذَا الْبِحَارُ
سُجِّرَتْ ۝ وَإِذَا الْتُفُوسُ زُوِّجَتْ ۝

"When the sun (with its spacious light) is folded up; when the stars fall losing their lustre; when the mountains vanish (like a mirage); when the she-camels, ten months with young, are left unattended; when the wild beasts are herded together; when the oceans boil over with a swell; when the souls are sorted out (joined like with like)".

(Surah LXXXI)

*St. Mark (Chapter 13 : 32)

"But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, ^o angels which are in heaven, neither the son, but the Father."

angels which

إِذَا السَّمَاءُ انْفَطَرَتْ ۝ وَإِذَا النُّجُومُ انْتَثَرَتْ ۝ وَإِذَا الْجِبَالُ فَجُورَتْ ۝
 وَإِذَا النُّجُومُ بُعْثِرَتْ ۝ عَلِمْتَ نَعْرًا مَّا قَدَّمْتُمْ وَأَخَّرْتُمْ ۝ يَا أَيُّهَا
 الْإِنْسَانُ مَا عَشَرْتُمْ بِرَبِّكَ الْكَرِيمِ ۝ الَّذِي خَلَقَكَ فَسَوَّاكَ فَعَدَلَكَ ۝
 فِي أَيِّ صُورَةٍ مَّا شَاءَ رَكَّبَكَ ۝ كَلَّا بَلْ تُكذِّبُونَ بِالذِّينِ ۝ وَإِنَّ عَلَيْكُمْ
 لَحَافِظِينَ ۝ كِرَامًا كَاتِبِينَ ۝

*“When the sky shall be severed,
 And when the stars shall be shivered,
 And when the seas to mingle shall be suffered,
 And when the graves shall be uncovered,
 A soul shall know that which it hath deferred or de-
 livered.
 O Man! what beguiled thee against thy Gracious Master
 to rebel.
 Who created thee and fashioned thee right and thy frame
 did fairly build.
 He composed thee in whatever form He willed.
 Nay, but ye disbelieve in the Ordeal!
 Verily over you are recorders honourable,
 Your deeds inscribing without fail”.*

(Surah LXXXII)

يَوْمَ يَكُونُ النَّاسُ كَالْفَرَاشِ الْمَبْثُوثِ ۝ وَتَكُونُ الْجِبَالُ كَالْعِهْنِ السَّنْوَثِ ۝

*“(It is) a Day when men shall be as flies scattered
 and the mountains shall be as shreds of wool tattered.”*

(Surah CI—423)

The Quran’s beauty of expression and emphasis on its description of the happenings of the Last Day when the whole of the present order of things will be thrown with a tremendous convulsion and Nature’s processes will cease to function is inimitable. The sun as the centre of our solar system will be folded up or twisted up like a sheet of garment and all other physical forces

attached to it will break up. Along with it the symbols of stability on our own earth will be swept away as if they never existed. The instance of the camel is given as it was the pet animal of the Arabs. There will be no differentiation between human habitations and the wilds of the forest. The oceans which now keep their bounds will surge and boil over and overwhelm all landmarks. Thus there will be the destruction of the present-day world and in its place a new spiritual world will come into being; the dead will be brought out of the graves and God will judge all human beings on the basis of their acts done in this world. God not only created man but fashioned him in such a way that he could use the extraordinary capacities of reason and common-sense bestowed on him, to fulfil his high destiny with the faculties given to him which guide him to the right path. Spiritual agencies were also appointed to protect him. If in spite of all the Goodness and Mercy of God he goes astray there is the punishment to be meted out to him. Man is therefore warned beforehand as to what is to follow after death and concerning accountability for the present actions in the hereafter.

A description of Hell and Heaven has been given in Surah LXXXVIII describing the destinies of the good and the evil persons in the following words:—

هَلْ أَتَاكَ حَدِيثُ الْعَاشِيَةِ ۝ وَجُودًا يُؤْمِنُ خَاشِعَةً ۝ عَامِلَةً
 نَاصِبَةً ۝ تَصَلُّنَا نَارًا حَامِيَةً ۝ تُسْقَى مِنْ عَيْنٍ أَيْبَةٍ ۝ لَيْسَ لَهُمْ
 طَعَامٌ إِلَّا مِنْ صَرِيرٍ ۝ لَا يَسْمُونَ وَلَا يَغْنَمُونَ ۝ وَجُودًا
 يُؤْمِنُ نَاعِمَةً ۝ لَسَعِيهَا رَاضِيَةً ۝ فِي جَنَّةٍ عَالِيَةٍ ۝ لَا تَسْمَعُ فِيهَا
 لَإِعْيَةٍ ۝ فِيهَا عَيْنٌ جَارِيَةٌ ۝ فِيهَا سُرُرٌ مَرْفُوعَةٌ ۝ وَأَكْوَابٌ
 مَوْضُوعَةٌ ۝ وَنَمَارِقُ مَصْفُوفَةٌ ۝ وَزَادَ فِي مَبْنُوتِهَا ۝

"Has the story reached thee of the overwhelming (event). Some faces that Day will be humiliated, labouring hard, weary, while they enter the blazing fire, while they are given to drink of a boiling hot spring, no food will there be for them but a bitter dhari which will neither nourish nor satisfy hunger.

"Other faces that Day will be joyful, pleased with their striving, in a garden on high where they shall hear no word of vanity. Therein will be a bubbling spring; therein will be thrones of dignity raised on high; goblets placed ready and cushions set in rows and rich carpets all spread out."

There are several such verses in the Qur'an giving further details. The righteous will be rewarded with the Garden of Paradise, the Abode of Peace, where they shall dwell indefinitely amongst flowing rivers, praising God, reclining on silken couches, enjoying heavenly food and drink, and the company of 'Hours' or companions which are of a purer form devoid of earthly sensuality. Even their earthly wives may become their pure mates, and yet greater bliss which no soul knoweth. These pleasures of Paradise will pale into insignificance compared to the exquisite delight of beholding the face of the Almighty morning and evening. The evil-doers and unbelievers will be cast into the Hell of fire to abide there for ever fed with boiling water and the fruit of the Zaqququm. It is stated that the infidels will remain there till the Hell lasts, but the believers will be delivered from torments after they have expiated their crimes by their sufferings and released through the Mercy of God.

Those qualifications enumerated for believers who are promised success in this world as well as entry in

Paradise in the world to come appear in several places in the Qur'an. One such example detailed in Surah XXIII is cited below:—

الَّذِينَ هُمْ فِي صَلَاتِهِمْ خِشْعُونَ ۝

Those who humble themselves in prayer.

وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ عَنِ اللَّغْوِ مُعْرِضُونَ ۝

Who avoid vain talk.

وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ لِلرَّكَّاتِ كَوَافِعُونَ ۝

Who are active in deeds of charity.

وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ لِأَفْوَاجِهِمْ حَافِظُونَ ۝ إِلَّا عَلَىٰ أَزْوَاجِهِمْ

Who abstain from sexual relations—except with those joined to them in marriage bond.

وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ لِأَمْتِنِهِمْ وَعَهْدِهِمْ رَاعُونَ ۝

Those who faithfully observe their trusts and their covenants (whether they are expressed or implied).

أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْوَارِثُونَ ۝ الَّذِينَ يَرْتَدُونَ الْقُرْآنَ وَمَنْ فِيهِمْ مَخْلَدُونَ ۝

These will be the heirs who will inherit Paradise wherein they will dwell for ever.

CHAPTER IV

STORIES OF FORMER APOSTLES

All Prophets form one brotherhood. Their message is one, and their religion and teachings are one; they serve the One True God Who loves and cherishes them and they owe their duty to Him and Him alone. They were sent one after the other as warners to different people with the message of serving Allah and to obey His behests, to refrain from sins, to preserve their chastity and to do righteous acts and believe in the Day of Judgement.

The object of their mission was to establish that they had performed the duty entrusted to them by God so that no one could later take the plea that they were not fore-warned. It is generally believed that 124,000 prophets (God alone knows the actual number) were sent from time to time to every country of the world out of God's universal Love for mankind, but the Holy Book mentions only the names of about 25. The Qur'an says:—

وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا رُسُلًا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ مِنْهُمْ مَنْ قَصَصْنَا عَلَيْكَ وَمِنْهُمْ
مَنْ لَمْ نَقْصُصْ عَلَيْكَ

"We did aforetime send Apostles before thee: of them there are some whose story We have related to thee, and some whose story we have not related to thee."

(XL—78)

The first Prophet was **ADAM**, the original man. After his creation he was placed in Parádise along with his wife Eve and all that they were forbidden was to approach the Tree of Evil, but Satan beguiled them and they succumbed to it, and ate the forbidden fruit. As punishment they were both thrown out of the Garden of Bliss into the present world to make good their lost status of innocence. Thus started the spiritual history of mankind who are the children of Adam.* The lesson we learn from the story of Adam is the exalted position a man can achieve, and the lowest degradation he may descend to. At one time Adam is the Vice-regent of God, getting homage from angels when he obeys the behests of his Creator, but when he deviates from the right path and is led astray, he is deprived of all happiness and thrown out of heaven to earn his own livelihood and to toil and sweat.

The next great Prophet was **NOAH** whose mission was to preach to a wicked world plunged in sin. They had contempt for the weak and the humble and treated them with arrogance. Noah pleaded with them in all humility and persuasiveness and taught them the truth of God but his message was ridiculed and rejected. His mission lasted for 950 years but it had no effect. They were warned of a great flood and God ordered Noah to construct a great Ark to save the righteous.

He was in a plain in the higher regions of the Mesopotamian basin far away from the sea and they did not believe him. Then God's wrath came; there was a heavy downpour of rain from the sky, and the fountains of the earth gushed forth (وَقَارَالْأَنْهَارِ) and

*Christian Scriptures, however, hold Eve alone guilty of beguiling Adam to eat the forbidden fruit, but the Qur'an is explicit in proclaiming that the injunction not to go near this plant was given to both Adam and Eve. Both were therefore equally guilty and the stigma attached to woman-kind was removed by the Qur'an.

all the disbelievers perished while the Ark of Noah was saved with peace and blessings. His son, a disbeliever, also perished with them as he deviated from the right path. God has no consideration even for the son of a Prophet when he goes astray.

Prophet **HUD** was the fourth in generation from Noah and was sent to the 'Ad people. They occupied a large tract of country in Southern Arabia. The people were tall in stature and were great builders. They forsook the true God and oppressed the poor. The preachings of Hud had no effect. At first a three years' famine visited them but they took no heed. At last a terrible blast of wind destroyed them and their land. A remnant of them were called Thamud. **ثمود**

Their story also belongs to the Arabian tradition. They were the arrogant and privileged classes. As a sign a she-camel was sent and Prophet **SALIH** warned them that the pasture and water which was a free gift from God should not be denied to that animal. This was a test case but the proud race slew the animal secretly. They were destroyed by a fearful earthquake. Similar was the fate of **SHU'AIB'S** people, the Midianites, who were warned against fraud and mischief but they reproached him and they were themselves destroyed.

Prophet **ABRAHAM** was the next great prophet who was sent against Namrood, a ruler of Babylon. He was named lovingly by God as 'Khalilullah' or the 'Friend of God'. He was given also the title of 'Hanif', 'the True'. He and his son **ISMA'IL** laid the foundations of the sacred house of Ka'ba, purified it and made it the centre of worship:

وَاذْيُرْقِعْ اِبْرَاهِيمَ الْقَوَاعِدَ مِنَ الْبَيْتِ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ رَبَّنَا تَقَبَّلْ
 مِنَّا ذَلِكْ اَنْتَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ ۝

"And remember Abraham and Ismail raised the foundations of the House (with the prayer): 'Our Lord! Accept this service from us; for Thou art the All-Hearing, the All-Knowing.'"

(Surah II, Verse 127)

The temple at Mecca was a far more ancient place of worship than the temple of Jerusalem. Arab tradition connects various places in and around Mecca with the name of Abraham and identifies the well of 'Zam-Zam' with the story of the child Isma'il. He was one of the great Prophets of the universal religion 'Islam' which means 'total submission to the Will of the Almighty', and also conveys the idea of peace.

مَا كَانَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ يَهُودِيًّا وَلَا نَصْرَانِيًّا وَلَكِنْ كَانَ حَنِيفًا مُسْلِمًا
 وَمَا كَانَ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ ○

"Abraham was not a Jew, nor a Christian; but he was true in faith and bowed his will to God's (which is Islam) and he joined not gods with God".

(Surah III, Verse 67)

From his boyhood Abraham was in the quest of the reality of the True God. He at first wondered at Nature's creations, the Stars, the Moon and the Sun and for a moment he felt they were his Lords, but when they set, he observed:

فَلَمَّا أَفَلَ قَالَ لَأُوْحِبُّ الْاَوْفَلِينَ ○

'I love not those that set'.

(V I- 76)

He penetrated into the truth further and concluded that God is He Who created all these luminaries as well as the heavens and the earth:

اِنِّي وَجَّهْتُ وَجْهِيَ لِلَّذِي فَطَرَ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضَ حَنِيفًا وَمَا اَنَا
 مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِيْنَ ○

(VI - 79)

To make the people ashamed of worshipping senseless stocks and stones he entered their temple, broke all small idols to pieces and left the big idol untouched, to demonstrate that there was a fight between them, and the big one had smashed the others. He was suspected of mischief and when questioned, he coolly replied, 'Why don't you ask the big one who is in possession of the axe?' By this grim practical joke he wanted them to realise the helplessness of the idols and the folly of worshipping them who could not answer nor protect themselves. He said:

○ قَالَ أَفَتَعْبُدُونَ مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ مَا لَا يَنْفَعُكُمْ شَيْئًا وَلَا يَضُرُّكُمْ

"Do ye then worship besides God things that can neither be of any good to you nor do you harm".

In anger they lit a fire and threw him into it, but he was saved by the mercy of God and they were humiliated.

Abraham was granted a son in his 86th year and Isma'il was born to him whom he loved. But as a test of self-sacrifice God commanded that Isma'il should be sacrificed in His Name. Both father and son cheerfully agreed and while the act was going to be performed with the consent of Isma'il, God of His Mercy substituted a sheep or ram and Isma'il was saved. God does not require the flesh or blood of animals, much less of human beings. The object was to test if Abraham was prepared to give up the thing which was most dear to him in the Name of God. The version of the Old Testament that it was Isaac the younger son and not Isma'il is incorrect, as the reference was to the only son of Abraham, and Isma'il remained the only son for fourteen years since Isaac was born fourteen years later. The Jewish tradition of Isaac was introduced to glorify the younger branch of the family, descended from Isaac, who was the ancestor of the Jews, while Isma'il was the ancestor of the Arabs.

One of the contemporaries of Abraham and his nephew was **LUT** (Lot) who was an Apostle sent to Sodom and Gomorrah, cities of the plain by the Dead Sea. The inhabitants were addicted to horrible crimes, one of which was sodomy. Lot's preachings were unheeded; he was insulted and God destroyed these cities. Lot's wife was also amongst those sinners.

ISAAC was the son of Abraham through Sarah and his son was Israel named **YA'KOOB** (Jacob) meaning the one who followed, since he was one of the twin children who came later. Through Israel came the Bani-Israel or children of Israel. Jacob's brother was Esu and his son was another prophet named **AYYUB** (Job) who lived for 140 years, saw four generations of descendants and was blessed at the end of his life with large pastoral wealth although he had a number of calamities by way of trial. All this is recorded in the Book of Job in the Old Testament.

Jacob had twelve sons, the most renowned of whom was **YUSUF** (Joseph). Another of his sons was **JUDAH** whose descendants are the Jews.

The Qur'an relates the story of Joseph at length in Surah XII and calls it the most beautiful of stories (Ahsan-ul-Qasas). Readers are advised to read the original for a detailed account. Here only a short gist could be given. Joseph had ten half-brothers and one full brother Benjamin. They lived in Canaan thirty miles from Jerusalem. Joseph was renowned for his beauty and since he was loved by his father most, the half-brothers became jealous of him and plotted to get rid of him. They took him out on a pretext and threw him in a dry well to die; and the wicked brothers reported to his father that he was killed by a wolf, and

showed him his blood-stained shirt. The poor grieved father scented foul play, but what could he do against so many sons! He had simply to suffer grief, implore God's assistance, and wait patiently till such time when Providence would help him. Some merchants who passed by the side of the well heard cries, rescued Joseph and finding him a handsome young lad of seventeen, sold him to Aziz, the Wazir of Egypt. There he grew into full manhood and Zulaikha, the wife of Aziz, fell in love with him. His virtue was tried through her beauty and passion but he remained steadfast and never yielded to temptation. Slighted love made her ferocious and she lost all sense of right and wrong. The consequence was her vengeance and landing of Joseph in prison. She had laid the blame on him that he had attempted to assault her which she had resisted. The righteous man receives disasters and reverses cheerfully and takes refuge in God.

At the same time two men came in the prison, of whom one was a cup-bearer and the other a baker. They had dreams and finding Joseph a man of God and of wisdom, sought interpretation from him of their dreams. He foretold the release of the cup-bearer and the execution of the baker, which happened; and the former was restored to the favour of the ruler. Sometime later, the ruler had a frightful dream and the cup-bearer remembered Joseph who was in prison, consulted him and gave out the interpretation as well as the remedy. The King was interested in meeting Joseph but he declined to come out of the prison until his honour was vindicated and the charges against him were investigated. Zulaikha admitted her guilt and Joseph was set free and made the Wazir (Aziz having died) and was given full powers to deal with the difficult times of

depression and famine that were foretold by him. After a series of incidents there is the final touching reunion of the father and the son followed by repentance of the wicked brothers and forgiveness. There is the moral that through all dark plots and machinations finally truth and goodness triumph and evil fails. This incident happened somewhere between the 19th and the 17th century B.C.

Long after the age of Joseph, who had been a Wazir to one of the Pharaohs, there came on the throne of Egypt a Pharaoh who claimed to be God himself and hated the Israelites who believed in God. There was a prophecy amongst the Israelites that there would be born a child who would annihilate him. He therefore ordered all their male children to be killed when they were born. God had ordained that this child would be **MOSES**. On his birth, the mother of Moses, according to God's indication, put the child into a chest and floated it down the river Nile. It so happened that this chest passed through the stream which flowed through Pharaoh's garden. He was found by Pharaoh's wife who adopted him as her own child as he was lovely and attractive. They wanted a nurse and, in the search that followed, the mother of Moses offered her services which were accepted. This was brought about by God's special providence and mercy in giving asylum to the child in the house of his deadliest enemy. Years passed and the child grew up to be a man. One day he went to the Israelite colony and found one of them oppressed and mercilessly beaten by an Egyptian. Moses intervened and smote the Egyptian, not with the idea of killing, but his blow proved fatal. It was now impossible for him to stay there. So he fled out of Egypt to the Sinai Peninsula, to the land of the Midianites. There he married the daughter of a Midianite Chief.

After many years, one day in the valley of Tuwa and under the mountain called Tur, he saw a fire, and when he went near it, he was addressed by God and chosen as His Messenger and deputed against Pharaoh. In those days the children of Israel were subjected to all sorts of oppression and indignities and groaned in bondage. They had to be liberated and the oppressor punished. At Moses' request he was given the assistance of his brother Aaron (Haroon). Two miracles were given to him to assist him in his mission, viz, (i) The Rod, and (ii) The Radiant Hand. When the rod was thrown, it became a serpent and when his hand was drawn from his breast it was white and shining as with divine light. These were days when magic and sorcery were at their height. The serpent also played a large part in Egyptian mythology and many of their gods and goddesses took the forms of snakes. With these signs Moses appeared in the court of Pharaoh and his demand was two-fold : (i) Come to God and cease oppression, and (ii) allow the children of Israel to be taken out of Egypt. These demands were rejected by Pharaoh with scorn. To counteract the miracle of the serpent, the Pharaoh gathered all his magicians to show their tricks and they threw their ropes and rods which seemed to move like snakes, but when Moses threw his rod, it turned into a serpent which swallowed up all which they had faked. Falsehood could not prevail over truth. The sorcerers on seeing this were struck with terror and were converted, but not Pharaoh who was arrogant and stiff-necked. The curse of God descended on his followers and several signs followed as warnings, viz., (i) years of draught or shortage of water, (ii) scanty crops, (iii) epidemics among men and beasts, (iv) falling of locusts, (v) spreading of lice, (vi) and frogs and (vii) water turning into blood. Whenever these plagues came they begged Moses to intercede on

their behalf to the true God to end these calamities, but every time it ceased, they went back to their evil doings until the final retribution came when they were drowned in the sea together with their ruler, and the children of Israel were saved from their tyranny. Pharaoh was given many chances by God to repent but he did not avail of them. The Pharaoh referred to here was, probably, THOTHMES I of 1540 B. C. The book given to Moses was the Mosaic Law (Taurat) which was in the form of tablets, but this was later lost and is now not in existence.

The next great prophet was **DAVID** who was not only a shepherd, a warrior, a king, a wise man, but was also endowed with gifts of poetry and music. The book given to him was Zabur (Psalms) which is now extinct. David, though a mere shepherd's boy, was chosen by God to liberate the Israelites from the giant Goliath (Jalut). His only implements were his shepherd's sling and staff. He picked up five smooth pebbles from the stream and with his sling he was able to knock down Goliath and slay him with his own sword. With the death of their leader the Philistine army fled and David was victorious and was later crowned as King. The making of coats of mail is attributed to David which is a defensive armour.

SOLOMON was the son of David and a Prophet. Both father and son were the real establishers of the Jewish monarchy. He inherited his father's kingdom, his spiritual insight and the prophetic office. He had knowledge of birds, beasts and plants and could understand their speech. He was just and wise and endowed with many gifts; and with true gratitude he referred them to God, the Bestower of all gifts. He had birds in his army who flew and brought information to him

from far and wide. One day he missed the Hoopee (Hudhud). This bird brought him the information of the beauty of the Queen of Saba (identified with the Biblical Sheba) by name Bilqis, who possibly ruled over the Abyssinian people. The ancient religion of the people of Saba or Sabaeans was the worship of the sun, the planets and the stars. Solomon called her to the true religion and invited her also to his palace, to which she, after consulting her council, agreed. Before she arrived Solomon ordered one of the Jinns to carry her throne to his palace, made certain changes in it to test if Bilqis could recognise it. She was bewildered to find her throne there and recognising Solomon as the Apostle of God, was converted to the true faith. Solomon's reign of 40 years is usually believed to be between 992 & 952 B.C.

In or about 800 B.C. the city of Nineveh was a great and glorious city and the seat of the Assyrian Empire. Prophet JONAH (Yunus) was sent to this city which was steeped in wickedness. He preached to them but they would not heed and he foretold God's wrath on them within three days. The people in the meantime repented and obtained God's forgiveness, Who is All-Merciful. But Jonah felt humiliated, as his denunciation had not been fulfilled and left Nineveh like a slave in captivity, instead of remaining at his post and submitting himself to God's Will. He took a ship, but there was storm in the sea and the sailors who were superstitious wanted to find out who was responsible for their ill-luck. Lots were drawn which pointed out to Jonah who was thrown overboard. He was swallowed by a whale and would have perished there had he not repented. God forgave him and the fish cast him forth on the shore. The lesson given in this story is that no man can take upon himself the privilege of judging

God's wrath or mercy and His Will always prevails. The Qur'an nick-names him "Zun-Nun" 'the man of the fish or the whale'.

وَذَا النُّونِ إِذْ ذُهِبَ مُغَاضِبًا أَظَنُّ أَنْ لَنْ نَقْدِرَ عَلَيْهِ

"And remember Zun-nun when he departed in wrath. He imagined that We had no power over him".

(Surah XXI-27)

ELIAS is the same as Elijah whose story is found in the Old Testament in I Kings (B. C. 896 - 874).

Another Prophet ZAKARIYYA prayed for a son. He and his wife were past the age of parenthood but their prayers were answered and they were granted a son Yahya (John the Baptist) the precursor of Jesus. John the Baptist, did not live long. He was imprisoned by Herod, a ruler under the Roman Empire, whom he had reproved for his sins and eventually beheaded at the instigation of the woman with whom Herod was infatuated. Yahya's mother Elisabeth was the cousin of Mary, the mother of Jesus and therefore John and Jesus were cousins by blood and there was a spiritual affinity in their birth and career.

Mary, the mother of JESUS was unique in that she gave birth to a son by a special miracle without the intervention of the customary physical means, i.e., of a husband. Nothing is impossible for God as He did create Adam and Eve without father and mother. But, unfortunately, the Christians, except the Unitarians, raised Jesus to the "sonship" of God, and this blasphemous belief was endorsed by the Council of Ephesus in 431 A.C. But, his mere miraculous birth could not elevate him from a mortal to godhood.

إِنَّ مَثَلَ عِيسَىٰ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ كَمَثَلِ آدَمَ خَلَقَهُ مِنْ تُرَابٍ ثُمَّ قَالَ لَهُ كُنْ
فَيَكُونُ ○

“The Similitude of Jesus before God is as that of Adam; He created him from dust, then said to him ‘Be’ and he was”.
(Surah III - 59)

If this reason of birth is to be taken, then Adam should claim it more than Jesus. And remember that there is no divinity except God (وما من اِله الا الله) * On account of this birth Mary’s chastity was suspected. The delivery took place in Bethlehem about six miles south of Jerusalem. People gathered to condemn her and by God’s grace the child came to her rescue. By a miracle he spoke, defended his mother’s honour and preached to an unbelieving audience. He, at the very outset, proclaimed himself as the ‘Servant of God’ (Innee ‘Abdullah), thus negating the false notion that he was God or the Son of God. Begetting a son is a physical act depending on the needs of man’s animal nature, but God is independent of all such needs.

لَقَدْ كَفَرَ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الْمَسِيحُ ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ

“They do blaspheme who say God is Christ the son of Mary”.
(Surah V—75)

لَقَدْ كَفَرَ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ ثَلَاثَةٌ

They do blaspheme who say, “God is one of three in a Trinity”.
(Surah V—76)

*Attention is invited to the following verses in the New Testament:

(ST. MATTHEW 4—10)

1. Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, thou shalt worship the Lord Thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve.

(ST. MARK 10—17 & 18)

2. And when he was gone forth into the way, there came one running, and kneeled to him, and asked him, Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life? And Jesus said unto him, why callest thou me good? There is none good but one, that is, God.

(ST. MARK, 13—29 & 30)

3. And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord; and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind and with all thy strength; that is the first commandment.

A perusal of these Verses would prove the Oneness of God and demolish the theory of Trinity and the belief in the Divinity of Christ.

The end of the life of Jesus is as much shrouded in mystery as his birth. The orthodox Christian churches make it a cardinal point of their doctrine that his life was taken on the cross, that he died and was buried, that on the third day he rose physically with his wounds intact and walked about and conversed, and ate with his disciples and was afterwards taken up bodily to heaven. Some of the earlier Christian sects did not believe that Christ was killed on the cross. The Basilidians believed that some one else was substituted for him. The Gospel of St. Barnabas supported the theory of substitution on the cross. The Quranic teaching is that Christ was not crucified nor killed by the Jews, though some outward circumstances led to such an illusion, and that he was instead taken to God.

وَقَوْلِهِمْ إِنَّا قَتَلْنَا الْمَسِيحَ عِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ وَمَا قَتَلُوهُ
 وَمَا صَلَبُوهُ وَلَكِنْ شُبِّهَ لَهُمْ وَإِنَّ الَّذِينَ اخْتَلَفُوا فِيهِ لَفِي شَكٍّ
 مِنْهُ مَا لَهُمْ بِهِ مِنْ عِلْمٍ إِلَّا اتِّبَاعَ الظَّنِّ وَمَا قَتَلُوهُ يَقِينًا ۗ بَلْ
 رَفَعَهُ اللَّهُ إِلَيْهِ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَزِيزًا حَكِيمًا

“That they said (in boast), ‘We killed Christ Jesus, the son of Mary, the Apostle of God’;—but they killed him not, nor crucified him, but so it was made to appear to them, and those who differ therein are full of doubts, with no (certain) knowledge, but only conjecture to follow, for a surety they killed him not,—nay, God raised him up unto Himself; and God is Exalted in Power, Wise;—

[Surah IV—157 to 158]

Our belief is that he is still living in the body, he will appear before the Final Day when the world will be purified of sin and unbelief, and then die before the final resurrection.

The last in the line of prophets is the Holy Prophet

MUHAMMAD (May peace be upon him) who is termed 'Khatimun Nabiyyeen' or the seal of the prophets. When a document is sealed it is held to be complete and there can be no additions thereafter. He has closed the long line of Apostles and there will be no prophet after him, though there may be thinkers and reformers. Such is the Will of God to terminate this system and He therefore in His discretion had selected a person who was to be a World-Prophet and a mercy for all creations.

وَمَا آتَاكَ سَنَّكَ إِلَّا رَحْمَةً لِّلْعَالَمِينَ ۝

(Surah XXI—107)

The Qur'an asserts that the appearance of the Holy Prophet was foretold by each one of the foregoing Prophets and the people were desired to accept him when he appeared. His distinguishing feature was that he confirmed the truth preached by all the Prophets that preceded him. Another distinction between him and the earlier Apostles was that while the others were sent to a chosen people or to a particular tribe or race, Muhammad was sent as a Messenger for all mankind. He conveys the message revealed to him and delivers it intact and God is witness to it. He not only delivers the message but instructs, explains its wisdom with discretion in an amiable manner, acts upon it himself, and after demonstration urges you to follow it for your own benefit, thus sanctifying you in this new knowledge.

بِالنَّذِيرِ ۝ وَالنَّبِيِّ الَّتِي بِالْحَسَنَةِ ۝ He is a warner, نذير

and a bringer of glad tidings, بشير to those who have faith. He is a man of exemplary character

وَأَنَّكَ لَعَلَّ الْخُلُقِ عَظِيمٌ ۝ and a beautiful pattern of

conduct ۝ أسوة بحسنة ۝

His wife 'A'iysha, describing his character, said: "His morals are the Qur'an", meaning thereby, that while the Qur'an was the precept, the Prophet's life was an exponent thereof.

He was unlettered *نَبِيٍّ الْأُمِّيِّ* which enhances his prestige. Whatever wisdom was preached by him was truly God's revelation and was not coming out of his own learning. It is noteworthy that the Almighty Himself has treated the personality of the Prophet with respect, for while all other Prophets were addressed in the Qur'an by their respective names, Prophet Muhammad (May peace be upon him) was addressed not by name but as *يَا أَيُّهَا الرَّسُولُ* 'The Prophet' or *يَا أَيُّهَا الْمُرْسَلُ* —'The Apostle' and sometimes lovingly as *يَا أَيُّهَا الْمَدِينُ* —"O thou folded in garments" *يَا أَيُّهَا الْمُدْرِرُ* —"O thou wrapped up in a mantle". He has further enjoined on believers to respect him as follows:—

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا صَلُّوا عَلَيْهِ وَسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا ○

"O Ye that believe! send ye blessings on him, and salute him with all respect."

(Surah XXXIII—56)

*إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يُخَادِعُونَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ لَعَنَهُمُ اللَّهُ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ وَ
أَعَدَّ لَهُمْ عَذَابًا مُهِينًا* ○

"Those who annoy God and His Apostle God has cursed them in this world and in the Hereafter, and has prepared for them a humiliating punishment."

(Surah XXXIII - 57)

He has directed the believers not to address him by name as they do among themselves. God teaches manners to the believers by saying:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَرْفَعُوا أَصْوَاتَكُمْ فَوْقَ صَوْتِ النَّبِيِّ وَلَا تَجْهَرُوا لَهُ
بِالْقَوْلِ كَجَهْرِ بَعْضِكُمْ بِبَعْضٍ

"O ye who believe! Raise not your voices above the voice of the Prophet nor speak aloud to him in talk, as ye speak aloud to one another, lest your deeds become vain and ye perceive not."

(Surah XLIX-2)

The Qur'an in another place says:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَقُولُوا سِرًّا وَعَرْنًا فَيَنْتَظِرُوا نَأْوًا غَمَضًا

"O ye of faith! Say not to the Apostle words of ambiguous import but words of respect; and hearken to him."

(Surah II-104)

It goes a step further in stating that God has done a great favour to the believers when he sent the Apostle amongst them:

لَقَدْ مَنَّ اللَّهُ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ إِذْ بَعَثَ فِيهِمْ رَسُولًا مِنْ أَنْفُسِهِمْ

(Surah III—164)

These verses show the exalted position of Prophet Muhammad who was made the Leader of all men, who did his duty with honesty of purpose, and the believers therefore had to implicitly follow him without murmur and respectfully listen to the words of the Teacher and not put foolish questions to annoy him. His message was for the whole of mankind as he was the last of the Prophets and not like Jesus who had been sent only to "the Lost sheep of the house of Israel", and this message was final for all time to come:

الْيَوْمَ اكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ

The Qur'an compares his personality to the radiant sun while the previous prophets were like Divine lamps. The light of the sun cannot be supplanted by any other

light and is universal and no other light is needed thereafter; so also after the advent of prophet Muhammad no necessity is felt of any other prophet following him.

The Qur'an again claims, "We have raised high the esteem in which thou art held". **وَرَفَعْنَا لَكَ ذِكْرًا** How

true this is can be judged from the fact that no person can become a Muslim without reciting the Kalima which joins the name of the Prophet with the name of God. These very words are recited daily by believers in the Namaz (Prayers) and in the Azan (call for the prayers). It is to him alone that the 'Kauthar' (the 'Fountain of Abundance' in heavens) has been granted **إِنَّا آَعَطَيْنَاكَ الْكَوْثَرَ**

He was the only Prophet who was taken to the heavens bodily and shown the beauties of the other world and conversed with his Creator. With all this praise lavished on him the Prophet in all humility says that he is a man like ourselves **أَنَا بَشَرٌ مِّثْلُكُمْ** and admits that it is not in his power to cause anyone harm or to bring them to right conduct except with the guidance of God, and that if he disobeys God, no one can save him from His wrath:

قُلْ إِنِّي لَأَمْلِكُ لَكُمْ ضَرًّا وَلَا رَشَدًا ○ قُلْ إِنِّي لَنْ يُجِيرَنِي مِنَ اللَّهِ أَحَدٌ

(Surah LXXII-21-22)

As regards his character and morals they were spotless and exemplary and every action of his was characterised by simplicity and purity—simple in habits, simple in food, simple in dress and in living. The members of his household also led a simple life, to whom he gave the choice of living in the manner he lived, or to quit.

The above is a brief description by the Qur'an of the Holy Prophet who is unique in all respects. Some opinions about him by non-Muslim writers are given below to appreciate the miraculous transformation brought by him in the religious, social, and moral life of Arabia within a brief span of twenty-three years, which is unparalleled in the history of the world.

Major A. G. LEONARD, says:

“If ever a man on this earth found God, if ever a man devoted his life to God’s service with a good and great motive, it is certain that the Prophet of Arabia is that man.

“Muhammad was not only the greatest but the truest man that humanity has ever produced.”

The opinion of **THOMAS CARLYLE** in his ‘Heroes and Hero Worship’ is:

“Muhammad was a man of truth and fidelity, true in what he did, in what he spoke, in what he thought; he always meant something; a man rather taciturn in speech, silent when there was nothing to be said, but pertinent, wise, sincere when he did speak, always throwing light on the matter.

“The word this man spoke has been the life guidance of a 180 (Now Seven Hundred) millions of men these twelve hundred years. These 180 millions were made by God as well as we. A greater number of God’s creatures believe in Muhammad’s word at this hour than in any other word whatever. Are we to suppose that it was a miserable piece of spiritual legerdemain, this which so many creatures of the Almighty have lived and died by?

I, for my part, cannot form any such supposition. I will believe most things sooner than that. One would be entirely at a loss what to think of this world at all, if quackery so grew and were sanctioned here.

“A false man found a religion? Why, a false man cannot build a brick house! If he does not know and follow truly the properties of mortar, burnt clay and what else he works in, it is no house that he makes but a rubbish heap. It will not stand for twelve centuries to lodge a 180 millions; it will fall straightway. A man must conform to Nature’s laws, be verily in communion with Nature and the truth of things, or Nature will answer him not at all.”

LAMARTINE writing about the Prophet says:

“Philosopher, orator, apostle, legislator, warrior, conqueror of ideas, restorer of rational dogmas, of a cult without images; the founder of twenty terrestrial empires and of one spiritual empire, that is Muhammad. As regards all standards by which human greatness may be measured, we may well ask, is there any man greater than he?”

“Muhammad’s character and qualities was a combination of the best that is in a human being and exalted him to a position unsurpassed by any man since the creation of the world”.

بعد از خدا بزرگ توئی قصه مختصر

An idea can also be formed from what STANLEY LANE-POOLE says in his *Speeches and Table-Talk of the Prophet Muhammad*:

“He was gifted with mighty powers of imagination, elevation of mind, delicacy and refinement of feeling. He is more modest than a virgin behind her curtain, it

was said of him. He was most indulgent to his inferiors and would never allow his little page to be scolded whatever he did. Ten years, said Anas, his servant, 'I was about the Prophet and he never said as much as 'Uff' to me. He was very affectionate towards his family. One of his sons died on his breast in the smoky house of the nurse, a blacksmith's wife. He was very fond of children; he would stop them in the streets and pat their little heads. He never struck anyone in his life. The worst expression he ever made use of in conversation was, 'what has come to him? May his forehead become darkened with mud.' 'He visited the sick, followed any bier he met, accepted the invitation of a slave to dinner, mended his own clothes, milked the goats, and waited upon himself', relates summarily another tradition. He never first withdrew his hand out of another man's palm, and turned not before the other had turned.

"He was the most faithful protector of those he protected, the sweetest and most agreeable in conversation. Those who saw him were suddenly filled with reverence, those who came near him loved him, they who described him would say 'I have never seen his like either before or after'. He was of great taciturnity, but when he spoke it was with emphasis and deliberation, and no one could forget what he said."



CHAPTER V

PROCLAMATIONS, DIRECTIONS OF POLICY AND REGULATIONS OF CONDUCT

(A) Among proclamations the foremost are the 'Acts of Devotion' (*Ibaadat*) which are enjoined on the Muslims. They are five in number and are commonly known as the 'Five Pillars of Islam'.

(i) **Prayer:** This is performed five times a day at stated periods congregationally in a mosque under the leadership of an Imam facing the 'Qibla', the prescribed direction of the Ka'ba at Mecca. Public notice is given from the mosque (Adhan) when the periods are at hand. Ablution (Wudhu) before prayers is strictly enjoined in the Qur'an which says 'When ye rise up to prayer, wash your faces and your hands and arms to the elbows, and wipe your heads and your feet to the ankles (Sura 9). Wudhu preceding the prayer shows the importance Islam attaches to cleanliness of the body prior to the mind and soul being purified by prayer. The maxims 'healthy mind in a healthy body' and 'cleanliness is next to godliness' are thus practically demonstrated in these instructions.

This practice of meeting five times a day of the believers in the mosque of the locality strengthens fellow-feeling, and thus ties of brotherhood are cemented. Once a week there is the noon-prayer on

Friday, when all work should be suspended and the believers should meet in a centrally-located place so that opportunity may be offered to all the persons of the town to come in contact. Besides there are two important 'ID prayers to be conducted outside the city limits to enable not only the people of the town or the city but also of the neighbourhood to come into contact with one other. These prayers therefore contribute to a large degree the closest brotherhood in the highest service of God. The benefit to the individual is that he is purged of all indecent and shameful acts, purifies him and brings him closer to his Creator.

وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ إِنَّ الصَّلَاةَ تَنْهَى عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَلَذِكْرُ اللَّهِ أَكْبَرُ

"Establish regular prayer, for prayer restrains from shameful and unjust deeds; remembrance of God is the greatest (thing in life)."

Philip K. Hitti, in his book *History of the Arabs* says: "As a disciplinary measure this congregational prayer must have had great value for the proud, individualistic sons of the desert. It developed in them the sense of social equality and the consciousness of solidarity. It promoted that brotherhood of community of believers which the religion of Muhammad had theoretically substituted for blood relationship. The prayer ground thus became 'the first drill ground of Islam.'"

Says, J. H. Dennison in *Emotion as the Basis of Civilization*:

"Muhammad had created a religion which had none of the features of the ancient cults, no priesthood, and no ceremonial, which was based on no form, but upon a spiritual relationship to an unseen God. It

was not designed to give prestige to a special group but to create a universal brotherhood composed of all men of every race who would accept this God and promise loyalty to His Prophet.

“The vast difficulty of creating any sense of unity or solidarity in such a group is apparent. All historians declare that the amazing success of Islam in dominating the world lay in the astounding coherence or sense of unity in the group, but they do not explain how this miracle was worked. There can be little doubt that one of the most effective means was prayer. The five daily Prayers, when all the faithful, wherever they were, alone in the grim solitude of the desert, or in vast assemblies in crowded city, knelt or prostrated themselves towards Mecca, uttering the same words of adoration for the one true God and of loyalty to His Prophet, produce an overwhelming effect even upon the spectator, and the psychological effect of thus fusing the minds of the worshippers in a common adoration and expression of loyalty is certainly stupendous. Muhammad was the first one to see the tremendous power of public prayer as a unification culture, and there can be little doubt that the power of Islam is due to a large measure to the obedience of the faithful to this inviolable rule of the five prayers.”

From the foregoing it is clear that Islamic prayer is a mighty force in purifying and unifying the human race. The congregational prayer promotes social relations in an atmosphere of equality and love. The object of one Qibla is to bring about a unity of purpose.

(ii) **Alms-giving (Zakat):** It is setting apart of one-fortieth of the annual savings in money or kind. It is not a tax but is regarded as a loan made to God which He will repay manifold. The objects upon which the

Zakat is to be spent are the poor, the needy, the employees, slaves, debtors, those who struggle in God's cause, strangers stranded in the way, and all those who have a claim to charity.

(iii) **Fasting** in the month of Ramadan, the ninth month of the lunar year when complete abstinence from food and drink has to be observed during the hours of daylight. It is considered a duty of so great a moment that Prophet Muhammad characterised it as the 'Gate of Religion' and proclaimed that the 'odour' of the mouth of him who fasts is more pleasing to God than that of musk. The Muslim's fast is not meant for self-torture but has a spiritual significance. It makes man realise what pangs of hunger mean and creates a feeling of sympathy for the poor and the needy. It teaches restraint from excesses of food and drink and creates salutary effect in such people. One other main object is to curb the animal nature in man, and extra prayers are prescribed during this period to cleanse his soul and bring him closer to his Creator by such abstentions from evil deeds and desires. If this object is not achieved by fasting, then it is mere starvation. The training of piety and righteousness for full one month is a sort of a refresher course which helps man to maintain the same degree of piety throughout the year.

(iv) **Pilgrimage (Hajj)** to the sacred mosque of Mecca in the month of Zil-Hijja. The ceremonies are actually between the seventh and tenth of this month consisting of circuit round the Ka-ba, running between the two small hillocks of Safa and Marwa, assembling on the ninth day at the hill of Arafat (some 12 miles east of Mecca), offering sacrifice at Mina on way back to Mecca. The persons who perform the Hajj are clad

in two plain unsewn sheets (*Ihram*) to denote that all men in the eyes of God are created equal and even the distinction of dress is therefore discarded. Until the rites of pilgrimage are observed the person in *Ihram* has to abstain from luxuries and gratification of the senses, however legitimate they be, and to indulge in Prayer, Praise of God and self-examination. Every Muslim is enjoined to visit the Holy City at least once during his life-time provided he has the means to do so. On an average seven to eight lakhs of pilgrims visit the Ka'ba each year and one main object of this institution is to enable the Muslims of the world to meet one another and imbibe the feelings of the universal Islamic brotherhood and to exchange ideas and know about one another.

(v) **Jihad** in the way of God. Believers have been enjoined to fight in the way of God against those who obstruct and fight them, but they are asked not to commit aggression. In one of the passages of the Qur'an (Surah 9) Muslims are asked to fight against those who believe not in God nor in the Last Day, who prohibit not what God and his Apostle have prohibited and who refuse allegiance to the True Faith from among those who have received the Book, until they humbly pay tribute or *Jizyah* in submission.

Jizyah is a poll-tax levied on those able-bodied non-Muslims who did not accept Islam but lived in the protection of a Muslim State and is in lieu of the military service which they would have been otherwise called upon to perform had they been Muslims. If they choose to serve in the Muslim Army they would be exempt from this tax and an example of this exemption is the case of Al-Jurajimah, a Christian tribe, in the neighbourhood of Antioch who made peace with the

Muslims and promised to be their allies and to fight on their side. The Jizyah was not a burden considering the fact that these persons were released from compulsory military service which was incumbent on Muslim fellow-subjects. Non-Muslim women, children, aged persons, the destitute, the blind, the lame, the diseased and the insane, etc., were exempt. During the Abbaside period such tax payable by the rich was 48 Dirhams per year (each Dirham is equal to 5 pence), 24 Dirhams for the middle classes while from the poor only 12 Dirhams were taken. The tax could be paid in kind, cattle, merchandise, household effects, even needles were accepted, but not pigs, wine or dead animals. In the treaty entered into by Khalid bin al-Walid with some people in the neighbourhood of Hirah he affirmed that, "if we protect you then Jizyah is due to us; if we do not then it is not due". In the reign of Khalifa 'Umar, Abu 'Ubaida, the Arab General, returned the Jizyah collected from Christians as they were engaged on a different front against Emperor Heraclius and were not able to protect them. Enormous sums were returned from the state treasury and the Christians blessed them for this, as they had had no such experience in the past. They exclaimed "May God give you rule over us again, and make you victorious over the Romans; had it been they, they would have not given us anything, but would have taken all that remained with us". Comparatively the Muslims were in a more disadvantageous position than the non-Muslims since they were subject to not only compulsory military service but had also to pay legal alms and zakat payable annually to the exchequer.

O. Houdas in *La Grande Encyclopaedia* writes: "The Jihad was not really obligatory except against peoples who had no revealed religion or who menaced

the existence of Islam. Jihad had to be waged to defend Islam against aggressions. Once the war was terminated the Muslims always displayed a great tolerance towards the conquered peoples leaving them their legislation and religious beliefs."

De Lacy O'Leary writes in *Islam at the Crossroads* that "history makes it clear, however, that the legend of fanatical Muslims sweeping through the world and forcing Islam at the point of the sword upon conquered races is one of the most fantastically absurd myths that historians have ever repeated."

E. Alexander Powell in *The Struggle for Power in Moslem Asia* states: "In their wars of conquest, however, the Muslims exhibited a degree of toleration which puts many Christian nations to shame".

(B) Prohibitions may be briefly classed under the following heads:—

(i) The drinking of wine, under which name all sorts of inebriating liquors are comprehended, is forbidden by the Qur'an. Even buying and selling intoxicating drinks is totally prohibited for all true Muslims. The following are the provisions in the Holy Book:

يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْخَمْرِ وَالْمَيْمِرِ قُلْ فِيهِمَا إِثْمٌ كَبِيرٌ وَمَنْفَعَةٌ
لِلنَّاسِ وَإِنَّهُمَا آكْرَهٌ مِنْ نَفْعِهِمَا

"They ask thee concerning intoxicants and gambling. Say: 'In them is great sin, and some profit, for men; but the sin is greater than the profit.'"

(Surah II - 219)

This was the first stage of prohibition of intoxicants and gambling which was in the nature of advice or recommendation. The next stage was the prohibition to get into mosques in a drunken state:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَقْرَبُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَأَنتُمْ سُكَارَىٰ حَتَّىٰ تَعْلَمُوا
مَا تَقُولُونَ ○

“O ye who believe! Approach not prayers with a mind befogged, until ye can understand all that ye say.”

(Surha IV—43)

Then came the third stage of total prohibition when on its proclamation all receptacles were broken and wine profusely flowed through the streets of Medina:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِنَّمَا الْخَمْرُ وَالْمَيْسِرُ وَالْأَنْصَابُ وَالْأَزْلَامُ
رِجْسٌ مِّنْ عَمَلِ الشَّيْطَانِ فَاجْتَنِبُوهُ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ ○

“O ye who believe! Intoxicants and gambling (dedication of) stones, and (divination by) arrows are, an abomination of Satan’s handiwork: Eschew such (abomination) that ye may prosper.”

(Surah V—93)

The reason for this total prohibition is beautifully explained as follows in the next verse:

إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ الشَّيْطَانُ أَنْ يُوقِعَ بَيْنَكُمُ الْعَدَاوَةَ وَالْبَغْضَاءَ فِي الْخَمْرِ
وَالْمَيْسِرِ وَيُصَلِّدَ كُرْهُنَّ عَن ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ وَعَنِ الصَّلَاةِ فَهَلْ أَنتُمْ مُنْتَهُونَ ○

“Satan’s plan is (but) to excite enmity and hatred between you, with intoxicants and gambling, and hinder you from the remembrance of God, and from prayer: Will ye not then abstain?

(Surah V—94)

(ii) Gambling is prohibited and under this head are included all games which are subject to hazard and chance such as dice, cards, betting on horse-races, etc.

(iii) The Qur'an prohibits the eating of blood and swine's flesh and whatever either (a) dies of itself, (b) is slain in the name or honour of any idol or religious personage other than God, (c) strangled or killed by a blow or a fall or by any beast. In case of absolute necessity when starvation resulting in death is imminent it is permissible by the law of Islam to eat any kind of food.

(iv) Usury is not allowed together with unjust profiteering.

(v) The practice of infanticide prevailing among pag'an Arabs prior to Muhammad is condemned in the Qur'an as is the custom of sacrificing children to idols.

(vi) The ill-treatment of orphans is especially condemned. With regard to properties of orphans administered by guardians they are directed to keep this property and its accounts separately, lest there should be a temptation to get a personal advantage by mixing it up with their own. When orphans reach majority the property should be handed over to them intact and restoration not postponed.

(Surah IV-2)

(C). Laws Enacted:

(i) **Criminal Laws:** These occur in the form of penalties. So far as Theft is concerned, whether the theft is by a male or female, the hand should be cut. Jurists hold that petty thefts are exempt from this punishment. For the first theft one hand should be cut on the principle that 'if thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off and cast them from thee (Matt. XVIII-8). Apparently in the age of Jesus thieves were crucified (Mat-XXVII-38). In Saudi Arabia the cutting

of the hand is followed and the effect is that thefts there are almost negligible and man's property is secure.

Murder: For murder the recompense according to strict justice is life for life with strong recommendation for mercy and forgiveness. Do not waste many lives in retaliation. Let the law take one life, a slave for a slave, a free man or woman for a free man or woman, and if the aggrieved party consents, compensation may be allowed which should be reasonable and within means emanating out of brotherly love (Qisas). In Western Law however no felony can be compounded. Qisas is not applicable to Homicide due to mistake or accident and there would be no capital punishment. It cannot be demanded that if a wealthy or high born man is killed, his life is equal to 2 or 3 lives among the poor, as all lives are equal before God.

Adultery is sexual intercourse between married persons who are not husband or wife of each other, and fornication is connection between unmarried persons. The punishment prescribed is 100 stripes to each of the guilty parties which should be given in the open so that it may act as a deterrent to others. Also, people are warned from slandering chaste women with ulterior motives which is a grave offence.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَرْمُونَ الْمُحْصَنَاتِ الْعُفُولَاتِ الْمُؤْمِنَاتِ لَعْنَةُ اللَّهِ فِي الدُّنْيَا
وَالْآخِرَةِ وَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ ۝

"Those who slander chaste women, indiscreet but believing, are cursed in this life and in the Hereafter: For them is a grievous penalty." (Surah XXIV-23).

(ii) **Civil Laws of Inheritance:** The principles of inheritance are laid down in broad outline in the Qur'an and the precise details are in the Traditions of the

Prophet. All distribution takes place after the legacies and debts (including funeral expenses) are discharged. The widow of the deceased is entitled to a year's maintenance and residence, apart from the share in the property. If the parents are living they take a sixth each, and the rest goes to the children, the male taking a double of that of a female. The widow gets a fourth of her deceased husband's property if he leaves no children, and an eighth if he leaves children. The husband takes half of his deceased wife's property if no children, the rest going to residuaries; if she leaves a child the husband gets a fourth. Equity and fair dealing should be observed so that no one's interests are prejudiced. If there are no descendants or ascendants then uterine brothers and sisters come into the distribution. Uterine means by the same mother of the deceased. The shares of collaterals is a complicated affair and is unnecessary to be dealt with here. The smaller share to the female from her father is due to the fact that she gets separate share from her husband apart from dower, maintenance, etc.

R. Roberts, Ph.D., says: "Mohammed gave women the right to inherit, possess and acquire property in a way which is not enjoyed even by many modern women".

Gertrude H. Stern opines that the Qur'anic ordinances entitle a woman to inherit from her male and female relatives, both by consanguinity and affinity, receiving from them a specified share which varies with the circumstances.

Jiwanlal Kapur (Bar-at-Law) has stated that "in England it was only in 1871 or thereabout that women were granted rights of property, whereas Islam gave them these rights thirteen centuries ago."

(iii) **Domestic and Social Laws:** The Qur'anic teaching is that women should be held in honour and their rights recognised in marriage, property and inheritance. The sexes must honour each other and sacred are family relationships that arise through marriage. The mother that bore us must ever have our reverence. Similarly the wife through whom we enter parentage. The unrestricted number of wives before the advent of Islam was strictly limited to four with a proviso that you treat every one of them with perfect equality in material things. As this condition is most difficult to fulfil the recommendation tends towards monogamy which is the rule in all Muslim families, and polygamy may be taken as the exception.

مَا جَعَلَ اللَّهُ لِلرَّجُلِ مِنْ قَلْبَيْنِ فِي جَوْفِهِ

"God has not made for any man two hearts in his one body."

(*Surah XXXIII-4*)

This is interpreted as meaning that a man cannot love two women with the same affection; hence the injustice of taking more than one wife.

Yet the permission of polygamy is there as an institution based on natural instincts and sex desires which are not gratified, and to save one from adultery, which is commonly practised in western countries where 'keeps' are the order of the day. Occasions arise on account of weak health of the wife for the man to take another. Further polygamy may be considered to be a sort of a remedial law in Islam which comes into operation when opportunity arises as in case of wars when the number of the male population is reduced and the weaker sex is left without home or protection. The institution as such cannot be condemned

as almost all the prophets had more than one wife and they were the chosen ones of God and models of human perfection.

J. E. Clare McFarlane writing on polygamy, says that it "offers a practical remedy for the problem of the destitute and unwanted female; the alternative is continual and increased prostitution, concubinage and distressing spinsterhood."

Dr. Annie Besant says: "I often think that woman is more free in Islam than in Christianity. Woman is more respected by Islam than by the faith which preaches monogamy. In Al-Koran the law about women is more just and liberal. It is only in the last 20 years that Christian England has recognised the right of women to property while Islam was allowed this right from all times. It is a slander to say that Islam preaches that women have no souls." (The Life and Teachings of Muhammad.)

A table of prohibited degrees for purposes of marriage is given in Surah (iv) and it is enjoined that marriage should not be from motives of lust but in order to promote chastity between the sexes. Since the woman in marriage surrenders her person, the man should surrender some of his property as Dower according to his means. When a breach occurs in the family relationship arbiters from each party should be appointed to bring about reconciliation (Surah IV-35.) If there is cruelty and desertion and reconciliation fails, then divorce comes in. "Out of all things permitted, the most hateful thing to God is divorce." Divorce should not be pronounced during the monthly courses as during this period mutual physical attraction is at an ebb. The pronouncing of three divorces at one time without an interval is un-Islamic and will be

counted as only one divorce which is subject to revocation during the waiting period. The 'Iddat' or interval is 4 months and 10 days when the lady should be allowed to stay in her husband's house. By doing so, firstly, a chance is offered of reconciliation and secondly, it decides whether there is pregnancy, in which case the waiting period is till delivery. After delivery the mother and the child should be supported with food and clothing for two years to safeguard the interest of the new-born. If no reconciliation is possible, the parties should separate with kindness and the man should be generous in not taking back the gifts given (Surah II-229). These injunctions should be treated seriously as they affect not only individual lives, the lives of the children, but also the purity and well-being of the society.

In early days there was an evil Arab custom by which the husband selfishly deprived his wife of her conjugal rights and yet bound her down like a slave without giving her freedom. He pronounced words naming her his mother.

وَمَا جَعَلَ أَرْوَاحَكُمْ رِئَاسَةً لِّتُظْهِرُوا مِنِّي مَنَهُنَّ أُمَّهَاتِكُمْ ۗ

Such practice was condemned and punishment provided for it. This was technically termed 'Zihar'.

(XXIII-4)

When the proposal of divorce proceeds from the husband it is called *Talaq*, and when it takes effect at the instance of the wife it is called *Khul'a*. This means that Islam gives this right to both husband and wife.

Edmund Burke in his 'Impeachment of Warren Hastings' writes: "The Muhammadan law which is binding on all, from the crowned head to the meanest subject, is a law interwoven with a system of the

wisest, the most learned, and the most enlightened jurisprudence that ever existed in the world.”

It is appropriate to explain here that the *pardah* system that is prevalent in India and Pakistan is neither Islamic nor of Arabian origin. Let us see what the Qur'an says in this respect:—

قُلْ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ يَخْضَعُوا مِنْ أَبْصَارِهِمْ وَيَحْفَظُوا أْفُرُوجَهُمْ ذَلِكُمْ أَزْكَ لَهُمْ
إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا يَصْنَعُونَ ○

“Say to the believing men that they should lower their gaze and guard their modesty: that will make for greater purity for them and God is well acquainted with all that they do.”

(Surah XXIV-30)

وَقُلْ لِلْمُؤْمِنَاتِ يَخْضَعْنَ مِنْ أَبْصَارِهِنَّ وَيَحْفَظْنَ فُرُوجَهُنَّ وَلَا يُبْدِينَ زِينَتَهُنَّ إِلَّا مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا وَلَا يَخْضَعْنَ عَلَىٰ جُجُوبِهِنَّ وَلَا يُبْدِينَ زِينَتَهُنَّ إِلَّا لِبُعُولَتِهِنَّ أَوْ آبَائِهِنَّ أَوْ آبَاءِ بُعُولَتِهِنَّ أَوْ أَبْنَائِهِنَّ أَوْ أَبْنَاءِ بُعُولَتِهِنَّ أَوْ إِخْوَانِهِنَّ أَوْ بَنِي إِخْوَانِهِنَّ أَوْ نِسَاءَهُنَّ أَوْ مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُهُنَّ أَوِ التَّائِبِينَ عَمَلُهُنَّ أَوْ إِلَىٰ الرِّجَالِ أَوْ الْوَالِدِينَ أَوْ الْأَوْلَادِ الَّذِينَ لَا يَلْمُونَهُنَّ عَلَىٰ عَوْرَتِ النِّسَاءِ وَلَا يَخْضَعْنَ بِأَرْجُلِهِنَّ لِيَعْلَمَ مَا يُخْفِينَ مِنْ زِينَتِهِنَّ ط

“And say to the believing women that they should lower their gaze and guard their modesty; that they should not display their adornment except what must ordinarily appear thereof, that they should draw their veils over their bosoms and not display their adornment save to their own husbands, their fathers, their husband's fathers, their sons, their husband's sons, their brothers or their brother's sons or their sister's sons or their women or their slaves or male attendants who lack vigour or children who know naught of women's nakedness. And let them not stamp their feet so as to reveal what they hide of their adornment”.

(Surah XXIV—31)

In the first verse the rule of modesty is prescribed for both men and women, viz., to lower their gaze and not stare at each other, which is a breach of good manners. The best way to guard against evil is to avoid the path that leads to temptation.

In the second verse there is no indication of drawing the veil on the face. The ornaments, make up and display of adornments is prohibited, more particularly the bosom. It is permissible to keep open the face and the palms of the hand, without which the ordinary everyday activities could not be performed. This is what is meant by, "except what must ordinarily appear thereof". It is not enjoined that the woman should lock herself up in the four walls of her house to the detriment of her health and happiness. The Qur'an, however, recommends the confining of their activities to the sphere of their homes and not to go out indiscriminately to exhibit their charms and beauty.

(*Surah XXXIII-33.*)

This is opposed to the spirit of Islamic teaching. The word used is '*Zinat*' meaning the display of adornments such as dress and ornaments. Some commentators of the Qur'an have held that a woman's face and hands are the most important beauty parts and therefore should be veiled. But the other type of opinion is that they are permitted to be kept open, or otherwise there is no meaning in asking the men to lower their gaze as desired in the first verse. Islam does not desire a promiscuous intermingling of the sexes and the reckless display of charms on the part of the fair sex, which latter has gone a long way towards undermining the moral tone of Christian countries.

Early Muslim women, acted as nurses in wars, and the Prophet's wife 'Aysha commanded her own

troops at the famous Battle of the Camel (Jang-i-Jamal). The present Purdah system has mostly been copied from the Rajputs and Mahrattas. It is also of Zoroastrian, Persian and Christian Byzantinian origin. During the Hajj the women keep their faces and hands open. To my mind the real purdah is the dress of the Nuns of a monastery copied from the Moors of Spain, which strictly fulfils the conditions laid down in the Qur'an.

Another verse dealing with the same subject is:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ قُلْ لِمَنْ أَرَادَ وَبَنَاتِكَ وَنِسَاءَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ يُدْرِنَهُنَّ عَلَىٰ هُنَّ
 مِنْ جَلَابِئِبِهِنَّ ۚ ذَلِكَ أَدْنَىٰ أَنْ يُعْرَفْنَ فَكَرِهْتُمُوهُنَّ ۗ

"O Prophet! Tell thy wives and daughters, and the believing women, that they should cast their outer garments over their persons (when abroad). That is most convenient, that they should be known (as such) and not molested."

(Surah XXXIII—59)

'Jalabib' is the outer garment which is slightly drawn over the face which was enjoined at a particular period which is explained in the next verse when the conditions prevailing then in Medina were abnormal.

لَيْسَ لَكَ مِنَ الْأَمْرِ شَيْءٌ مَنَعَهُ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتُ
 فِي الْمَدِينَةِ

"Truly if the Hypocrites and those in whose hearts is a disease, and those who stir up sedition in the city desist not."

(Surah XXXIII-60)

Hypocrites were those who pretended to be Muslims outwardly but were really immoral and un-Islamic in their day-to-day dealings, and have been cursed by God for creating disorder and lawlessness.

(D) Regulations of Conduct:

I. Kindness:

(a) Kindness to Parents:

وَوَصَّيْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ بِوَالِدَيْهِ حَمَلَتْهُ أُمُّهُ وَهْتًا عَلَى وَهْنٍ وَفَصَلَّهُ
فِي عَامَلَيْنِ أَنِ اشْكُرْ لِي وَلِوَالِدَيْكَ ۖ

"And We have enjoined upon man to be good to his parents. In weakness upon weakness did his mother bear him and his weaning is in two years. Show gratitude to Me and to thy parents."

(Surah XXXI-14)

وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا كَرَى الْقَرِيبَى وَالْيَتَامَى وَالْمَسْكِينِ وَقُولُوا لِلنَّاسِ حُسْنًا

"Treat with kindness your parents and kindred and orphans and those in need and speak kindly to mankind."

(Surah II-83)

وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا إِذَا مَا بَلَغْتَ عِنْدَ الْكِبَرِ أَحَدُهُمَا أَوْ كِلَيْهِمَا فَلا
تَقُلْ لَهُمَا آيَةً وَلا تَنْهَرُهُمَا وَقُلْ لَهُمَا قَوْلًا كَرِيمًا ۝ وَأَخْفِضْ لَهُمَا
جَنَاحَ الدُّنْى مِنَ الرَّحْمَةِ وَقُلْ رَبِّ ارْحَمْهُمَا كَمَا رَبَّيْتَنِى صَغِيرًا ۝

"That ye be kind to parents. When one or both of them attain old age in thy life say not to them a word of contempt, nor repel them, but address them in terms of honour. And out of kindness lower to them the wing of humility and say, 'My Lord! bestow on them Thy mercy even as they cherished me in childhood.'"

(Surah XVII-23)

(b) Kindness to Animals:

وَيُطْعَمُونَ الطَّامِرَ عَلَى حُبِّهِ مَسْكِينًا وَيَتِيمًا وَأَسِيرًا ۝

"And they feed for the love of God, the indigent, the orphan and the captive." Captives include dumb animals who are under subjection to men. They must be properly fed, housed and looked after.

(Surah 76-8).

In the Qur'an animal life stands on the same footing as human life in the sight of God. "There is no beast on earth nor bird which flieth with its wings, but the same is a people like unto (mankind) and to the Lord shall they return."

(Surah VI-38)

(c) **Kindness to slaves and others:**

وَأَقْرِضْ عَلَىٰ حَبِّهِ دُونَ الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْيَتَامَىٰ وَالْمَسْكِينِ وَابْنِ السَّبِيلِ
وَالسَّائِلِينَ وَفِي الرِّقَابِ ۖ

"To spend of your sustenance out of love for Him, for your kin, for orphans, for the needy, for the wayfarer, for those who ask and for the ransom of slaves (i.e., to give or to buy the freedom of the slaves)." (Surah II-177)

Slaves are to be set free on some pretext or the other. For instance, in Zihar a slave is set free to resume conjugal rights.

(d) **Kindness to Women:**

In Surah (IV), verse 19, the old custom of a step-son or brother taking possession of a dead man's widow along with his goods was forbidden and it is enjoined that they should be treated with kindness. In verse 20 it is stated that even if a treasure has been given to the divorced wife it should not be taken back. In the same Surah men have been directed not to leave their wives unattended as if hanging *كَالْمُعَلَّقَةِ* in the air. In Surah XXIV verse 23 there is a curse on those who slander chaste women, both in this world and the hereafter. As against this, in Christianity the orthodox Church excluded women from the exercise of all religious functions.

According to Lecky women were pronounced to be "a necessary evil, a natural temptation, a desirable calamity, a domestic peril, a deadly fascination, a painted ill."

Tertulian represented women as “the devil’s gateway, the unsealer of the forbidden tree, the deserter of the Divine Law, the destroyer of God’s image-man.”

On the other hand it was Islam that first conferred on women property rights and juridical status. *Bertram Thomas* says: “Islam condemned the practice of inheriting the widow with the rest of the estate as though she were a chattel (prevalent amongst Jews). She must not be a despised creature to be ashamed of and to be ill-treated any more, but a person to love and cherish and respect: at her feet lay the gates of paradise.” A chapter has been devoted in the Qur’an to women entitled *Sura-i-Nisa*.

(e) Kindness to the Blind and the Infirm:

In *Surah XXIV*, verse 61, it is explained that the blind or the lame, or those afflicted with serious disease were customarily supposed to be the objects of Divine displeasure and as such not fit to be associated with us in meals in our houses. We are not to entertain such a thought as we are no judges of the causes of people’s misfortunes who deserve our sympathy and kindness.

(f) Kindness to Orphans:

وَأْتُوا الْيَتَامَىٰ أَمْوَالَهُمْ وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا الْأَخْيَارَ بِالطَّلِبِ وَلَا تَأْكُلُوا
أَمْوَالَهُمْ إِلَىٰ أَمْوَالِكُمْ إِنَّهُ كَانَ حُوبًا كَبِيرًا ۝

“To orphans restore their property (when they reach their age), nor substitute (your) worthless things for (their) good ones; and devour not their substance (by mixing it up) with your own; for of a certainty this is indeed a great sin.

(Surah IV - 2)

II. Good Manners:

(a) *Lugman* is held as a pattern of wisdom and his advice to his son as related by the Qur'an is:—

Conduct of
affairs

يَبْنِي أَعْمَلَ الصَّلَاةَ وَأَمْرًا بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَإِنِّهِ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَأَصْبِرْ عَلَى مَا أَصَابَكَ
إِنَّ ذَلِكَ مِنْ عَزْمِ الْأُمُورِ ○ وَلَا تَصْعَقْ خَدَّكَ لِلنَّاسِ وَلَا تَمَسَّ فِي
الْأَرْضِ مَرَحًا إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ كُلَّ مُخْتَالٍ فَخُورٍ ○

“Oh my son! establish regular prayer, enjoin what is just and forbid what is wrong. Bear with patient constancy whatever befalls thee, for this is firmness of purpose in the conduct of affairs. And swell not thy cheek with pride at men, nor walk with insolence through the earth; for God loveth not any arrogant boaster.”

(Sura: XXXI-17)

وَاقْصِدْ فِي مَشْيِكَ وَاعْضُضْ مِنْ صَوْتِكَ إِنَّ أَنْكَرَ الْأَصْوَاتِ لَصَوْتُ الْمُجِيمِ ○

“And be moderate in thy pace and lower thy voice: for the harshest of sounds without doubt is the braying of the ass!”

(Sura's XXXI-17 to 19)

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لِمَ تَقُولُونَ مَا لَا تَفْعَلُونَ ○ كَبُرَ مَقْتًا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَنْ
تَقُولُوا مَا لَا تَفْعَلُونَ ○

Truth

“O ye who believe! why say ye that which ye do not? Grievously odious is it in the sight of God that ye say that which ye do not.”

(Surah LXI-2-3)

وَإِذَا قُلْتُمْ فَاعْدِلُوا وَلَوْ كَانَ ذَا قُرْبَى

“Whenever ye speak speak justly even if a near relative is concerned.”

(Surah VI-152)

وَلَا تَلْبِسُوا الْحَقَّ بِالْبَاطِلِ وَتَكْفُرُوا بِالْحَقِّ وَأَنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ○

“Never try to mix up wrong with right and do not conceal the truth intentionally.”

(Surah II-42)

الَّذِينَ يُنْفِقُونَ أَمْوَالَهُمْ بِاللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ سِرًّا وَعَاجِزَةً فَلَهُمْ أَجْرُهُمْ
عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ

“Those who in charity spend of their goods by night and by day, in secret and in public, have their reward with their Lord.”

Charity

(Surah II-276)

○ خُذِ الْعَفْوَ وَأْمُرْ بِالْعُرْفِ وَأَعْرِضْ عَنِ الْجَاهِلِينَ

“Hold to forgiveness; command what is right and avoid company of the ignorant.”

Forgiveness

(Surah VII-199)

وَتَنَاجَاً بِالْبِرِّ وَالتَّقْوَى

“Whenever you talk to anyone talk about piety and righteousness.”

Righteousness,

(Surah LVIII-9)

وَلَا تَقْفُ مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِ عِلْمٌ

“Do not pursue and investigate a matter too much, which you know nothing about.”

(Surah XVII-36)

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا يَسْخَرُ قَوْمٌ مِنْ قَوْمٍ عَلَىٰ أَنْ يَكُونُوا خَيْرًا مِنْهُمْ

“O Believers ! None of you should mock and ridicule another person, for may be really the despised one is much better than the hater.”

Mockery and Ridicule.

(Surah XLIX--11)

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِنْ جَاءَكُمْ فَاسِقٌ بِنَبَأٍ فَتَبَيَّنُوا أَنْ تُصِيبُوا قَوْمًا بِمَهَالٍ

Suspicion

“O ye who believe! If a wicked person comes to you with any news, ascertain the truth, lest ye harm people unwittingly.”

(Surah XLIX-6)

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اجْتَنِبُوا كَثِيرًا مِمَّا ظَنَّنَ أَنَّ بَعْضَ الظَّنِّ إِثْمٌ وَلَا تَجَسَّسُوا وَلَا يَغْتَبَ بَعْضُكُمْ بَعْضًا أَيُحِبُّ أَحَدُكُمْ أَنْ يَأْكُلَ لَحْمَ أَخِيهِ مَيْتًا فَكَرِهْتُمُوهُ

“O ye who believe! Avoid suspicion as much as possible, for suspicion in some cases is sin. Spy not on each other, nor speak ill of each other behind their backs. Would anyone of you like to eat the flesh of his dead brother? Nay he would abhor it.”

(Surah XLIX-12)

وَلَا تَيْسَروا وَلَا تَحْزَنُوا وَأَنْتُمْ الْأَعْلَوْنَ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ

Despair

“Lose not heart, nor fall into despair; for ye must gain mastery if ye are true in faith.”

(Surah III-139)

وَلَا تَأْتِي سُوْرًا مِّنْ رَّوْحِ اللَّهِ فَتَأْتِيَهُ لَآئِيْمٌ مِّنْ رَّوْحِ اللَّهِ إِلَّا الْقَوْمَ الْكَافِرِينَ

“Never be despondent of the favour and mercy of Allah; for none can be despondent of the favour of Allah, but the disbelievers only.”

(Surah XII-87)

وَتَنَزَّلُكُمْ فِي الْأَمْرِ وَعَصَيْتُمْ مِّنْ بَعْدِ مَا أَرَاكُمْ فَأَتَّجِبُونَ

Discipline.

In this Verse reference is to the battle of Uhud when the order was not to run after booty but to strictly maintain discipline which was not adhered to and as a result there was a temporary reverse.

(Surah III-152)

وَيَلِّ اللّٰهُ الْمُظْفِرِينَ ۝ الَّذِينَ إِذْ التَّالَوْا عَلَى النَّاسِ يَسْتَوْفُونَ ۝ وَلَا إِذْ كَانُوا هُمْ أَوْ ذُرِّيَّتُهُمْ بِحُيْرُونَ ۝ أَلَا يَطَّلِنُ أُولَٰئِكَ أَنَّهُمْ مَبْغُؤُونَ ۝
لِيُدْعَىٰ عَذَابُهُمْ

“Woe to those that deal in fraud. Those who when they have to receive by measure from men exact full measure, but when they have to give by measure or weight to men give less than due. Do they not think that they will be called to account on a Mighty Day.”

Fra

(Surah LXXXIII-165)

تَاؤْتُوا الْكَيْلَ وَالْمِيزَانَ وَلَا تَبْخَسُوا النَّاسَ أَشْيَاءَهُمْ

(O Shopkeepers and Traders!) “Do not decrease the things (in weight and number) for the customers (when you have charged their fixed price).”

(Surah VII-85)

وَلَا تَجْعَلُوا اللَّهَ عُرْشَةً لِّإِيمَانِكُمْ

“Do not make God a shield for your false oaths.”

(Surah II-224)

Fals
Oat

وَإِذَا حُكِمْتُمْ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ أَنْ تَحْكُمُوا بِالْعَدْلِ

“And whenever you are appointed a judge between two groups decide their affairs with a full sense of justice.”

(Surah IV-58)

Just

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا تَوَدُّوا قَوْمِينَ بِاللهِ شُهَدَاءَ بِالْقِسْطِ وَلَا يَجْرِمَكُمُ شَنَاةُ
قَوْمٍ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذْ أُعِدِّدُوا لَكُمْ هُوَ أَقْرَبُ لِلتَّقْوَى

“O ye who believe! Stand out firmly for God as witness to fair dealing, and let not the hatred of others to you make you swerve to wrong and depart from justice. Be just, that is nearer to piety.”

(Surah V-8)

Mrs. Sarojini Naidu opines: “Sense of justice is one of the most wonderful ideals of Islam, because as I

read in the Qur'an, I find those dynamic principles of life, not mystic but practical ethics, for the daily conduct of life suited to the whole world." (*Ideals of Islam*).

وَاسْتَعِينُوا بِالصَّبْرِ وَالصَّلَاةِ

"Seek God's help with patient perseverance and prayer."
(*Surah II-153*.)

The word 'Sabr' denotes a cheerful attitude of resignation and understanding in sorrow, defeat or suffering as opposed to murmuring and rebellion.

وَاصْبِرْ لِقَاءِ اللَّهِ لَا يُغْنِي عَنْكَ الْجَبَلُ الْعَظِيمُ ۝

"Be steadfast in patience; for verily God will not suffer the reward of the righteous to perish."

(*Sura: XI-115*)

قَاصِرٌ صَبْرًا جَمِيلًا ۝

"Do thou hold patience— a patience of beautiful contentment."

(*Surah: LXX-5*)

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا صَبِرُوا وَرَابِطُوا وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ ۝

"O ye who believe! Endure, outdo all others in endurance, be ready and observe your duty to Allah, in order that ye may succeed."

(*Surah: III-200*)

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ تَزَكَّى

"But those will prosper who purify themselves."

(*Surah LXXXVI-14*)

This teaches purity of body, mind and soul and the beloved of God is one who is pure.

إِنَّا أَكْرَمُكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ

فَمَنْ تَصَدَّقَ بِهِ فَهُوَ كَفَّارَةٌ لَّهُ ۗ

"If anyone remits retaliation by way of charity it is an act of atonement for himself."

Foregoing Retaliati

(Surah V-48)

وَلَا تُبَدِّلْ رِبِّيًّا بِرَبِّ ۗ إِنَّ الْمُبْدِلِينَ كَانُوا إِخْوَانَ الشَّيْطَانِ طُوًى وَمَكَانَ الشَّيْطَانُ لِرَبِّهِمْ كَفُورًا ۝

"All extravagant people are brothers of Satan, and Satan is a rebel against God."

Spendthri

(Surah XVI)

وَلَا تَقْتُلُوا أَوْلَادَكُمْ خَشْيَةَ إِمْلَاقٍ نَحْنُ نَرْزُقُهُمْ وَإِيَّاكُمْ إِنَّ قَتْلَهُمْ كَانَ خِطَاً كَبِيراً ۝

"Kill not your children for fear of want. We shall provide sustenance for them as well as for you. Verily the killing of them is a great sin."

Killing o Children.

(Surah XII-31)

قَوْلٌ مَّعْرُوفٌ وَمَغْفِرَةٌ خَيْرٌ مِّنْ صَدَقَةٍ يَتَّبِعُهَا أَذَىٰ

"Kind words and the covering of faults are better than charity followed by injury."

Kindness

(Surah II-263)

وَإِذَا حُيِّتُمْ بِتَحِيَّةٍ فَحَيُّوا بِأَحْسَنَ مِنْهَا أَوْ رُدُّوهَا ۗ

"When a (courteous) greeting is offered you, meet it with a greeting still more courteous, or (at least) of equal courtesy"

C. urtey

(IV-86)

وَلَا تَعْنُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ مُفْسِدِينَ

"Do no evil nor mischief on the face of the earth."

(Surah II-60)

Restraint from mischief.

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُفْسِدِينَ ۝

"God loves not those who do mischief."

(Surah XXVIII-7)

وَلَا يَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِينَ يَتَّخِذُونَ مِمَّا آتَاهُمُ اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ هُوَ خَيْرًا لَهُمْ
بَلْ هُوَ شَرٌّ لَهُمْ سَيُطَوَّقُونَ مَا يَخِفُّونَ بِهِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ ۗ

Covetous-
ness

“And let not those who covetously withhold of the gifts which God hath given them of His Grace. Think that it is good for them: Nay, it will be the worse for them: soon shall the things which they covetously withheld be tied to their necks like a twisted collar, on the Day of Judgement.”

(III-180)

ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّ اللَّهَ لَمْ يَكُ مُغَيِّرًا نِعْمَةً أَنْعَمَهَا أَنْعَمَهَا عَلَىٰ تَوْبِهِمْ حَتَّىٰ يَغْيِرُوا
مَا بِأَنْفُسِهِمْ ۗ

Change of
heart need-
ed for God's
Grace

“God will never change the Grace which He hath bestowed on a people until they change what is in their (own) souls.”

(VIII-53)

لَا تَخْتَرِي فِي كَثِيرٍ مِّنْ تَجْوَالِهِمْ إِلَّا مَنْ أَمَرَ بِصَدَقَةٍ أَوْ مَعْرُوفٍ
أَوْ إِصْلَاحٍ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ ۗ

Secrecy

“In most of their secret talks there is no good: but if one exhorts to a deed of charity or justice or conciliation between men (secrecy is permissible)”.

(IV-114)

لَا يُحِبُّ اللَّهُ الْجَهْرَ بِالسُّوْءِ مِنَ الْقَوْلِ إِلَّا مَن ظَلَمَ ۗ

Publicity

“God loveth not that evil should be noised abroad in public speech except where injustice hath been done.”

(IV-148)

وَيْلٌ لِّلْمَلِكِ لَمَّا هَمَّ بِالسُّوْءِ الَّذِي يَجْمَعُ مَالًا وَعَدَدَهُ ۗ يُحْسِبُ أَنَّ مَالَهُ
يَأْخُذُهُ ۗ

Spreading of
scandal and
hoarding

“Woe to every (kind of) scandal-monger and back-biter; who pileth up wealth and layeth it by, thinking that his wealth would make him last for ever!”

(CIV-1 to 3)

وَالَّذِينَ إِذَا أَنْفَقُوا لَمْ يُسْرِفُوا وَلَمْ يَقْتُرُوا وَكَانَ بَيْنَ ذَلِكَ قَوَامًا ○

“Those who, when they spend, are not extravagant and not stingily but hold a just (balance) between those (extremes).”

(XXV—67)

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَدْخُلُوا بُيُوتًا غَيْرَ بُيُوتِكُمْ حَتَّى تَسْتَأْذِنُوا وَ
تَسَلِّمُوا عَلَى أَهْلِهَا

“O ye who believe! Enter not houses other than your own, until ye have asked permission and saluted those in them.”

(XXIV-27)

وَيَذَرُونَ بِالْحَسَنَةِ السَّيِّئَةَ

“And they turn off evil with good.”

(XIII-22)

ثُمَّ كَانَ عَاقِبَةَ الَّذِينَ أَسَاءُوا السُّوْءِ

“In the long run evil in the extreme will be the end of those who do evil.”

(XXX-10)

لِكَيْلَا تَأْسَوْا عَلَى مَا فَاتَكُمْ وَلَا تَفْرَحُوا بِمَا آتَاكُمْ وَاللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ كُلَّ مُخْتَالٍ
فَخُورٍ ○

“In order that ye may not despair over matters that pass you by, nor exult over favours bestowed upon you, for God loveth not any vainglorious boaster.”

(LVII-23)

إِلَّا أَنْ تَكُونَ تِجَارَةً عَن تَرَاضٍ مِّنكُمْ ط

“Except that there be amongst you traffic and trade by mutual good-will.”

(IV-29)

وَالْمُؤْتُونَ بِعَهْدِهِمْ إِذَا عَاهَدُوا

“Fulfil the contracts which ye have made”.

(II-177)

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا تَدَايَنْتُمْ بَيْنَكُمْ فِي أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى فَاصْتُبُوهُ

“O ye who believe! when ye deal with each other in transactions involving future obligations in a fixed period of time reduce them to writing”

(Surah II-282)

إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ إِخْوَةٌ فَأَصْلِحُوا بَيْنَ أَخَوَيْكُمْ

“All the believers are brothers to one another; so promote the noble cause of brotherhood among your fraternity.”

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوا إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَاكُمْ

“O mankind! We created you from (a single pair of) male and female and made you into nations and tribes that ye may know each other (not that ye may despise each other). Verily the most honoured of you in the sight of God is the most righteous of you.”

(XLIX-13)

Rev. Murray Titus says: “Islamic brotherhood is a social and spiritual fact. Islam is not only a faith, it is a legal system and a social system as well. Islam does possess a brotherhood which is a unifying factor amid the clashes of colour, race, nationality and class.”

Sir P. C. Roy affirms that ‘it is the peculiar privilege of Islam that it makes no difference between man and man. It was this equality and not the sword of iron which attracted many Hindus to Islam’.

CHAPTER VI

SEVERAL REVELATIONS AND FORECASTS OF THE QUR'AN TO PROVE ITS DIVINE ORIGIN

(a) Why the Qur'an is held to be God-sent and not man-made:

Non-Muslim writers have tried to establish that the author of the Qur'an is Prophet Muhammad, but he was illiterate; and the Qur'an proclaims that it is the Word of God and God alone. It is held to be a true revelation and a miracle in itself, as besides being a spiritual truth it is expressed in such a noble language that it has no parallel.

If it is not believed to be the Word of God, then the disbelievers are challenged to produce one surah of its like and to get the aid of whomsoever they want.

وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ فِي رَيْبٍ مِّمَّا نَزَّلْنَا عَلَىٰ عَبْدِنَا فَأْتُوا بِسُورَةٍ مِّمَّنْ مِثْلِهِ
وَادْعُوا شُهَدَاءَكُمْ مِمَّنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ۝

(i) "If ye are in doubt as to what We have revealed to our servant then produce a surah like thereunto; and call your witnesses or helpers (if there are any) besides God, if your (doubts) are true."

(Surah II-23)

وَمَا كَانَ هَذَا الْقُرْآنُ أَنْ يُفْتَرَى مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ وَلَكِنْ تَصْدِيقَ الَّذِي
 بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ وَتَفْصِيلَ الْكِتَابِ لَمْ يَأْتِ بِهِ مِنْ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ○ أَمْ يَقُولُونَ
 افْتَرَاهُ قُلْ فَأْتُوا بِسُورَةٍ مِثْلِهِ وَادْعُوا مَنِ اسْتَضَعْتُمْ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ
 إِن كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ○

(ii) *“This Qur’an is not such as can be produced by other than God; on the contrary it is a confirmation of revelations that went before it and a fuller explanation of the Book—wherein there is no doubt—from the Lord of the worlds. Or do they say, ‘He forged it?’ Say, bring then a Surah like unto it and call to your aid anyone you can, besides God, if it be ye speak the truth.”*

(Surah X-37)

قُلْ لَئِنِ اجْتَمَعَتِ الْإِنْسُ وَالْجِنُّ عَلَىٰ أَنْ يَأْتُوا بِمِثْلِ هَذَا الْقُرْآنِ لَا يَأْتُونَ
 بِمِثْلِهِ وَلَوْ كَانَ بَعْضُهُمْ لِبَعْضٍ ظَهِيرًا ○

(iii) *“If the whole of mankind and jinn were to gather together to produce the like of this Qur’an, they could not produce the like thereof, even if they backed up each other with help and support.”*

(Surah XVII-88)

Rev. Stanton in the Teachings of the Koran says: *“Taking the Koran at its best in point of style it is far below the level of the Bible whether in lyric or rhetoric, argument or narrative.”* This is his individual opinion and shows his complete ignorance of the Arabic language.

As a rejoinder to this we quote the opinion of **F. F. Arbuthnot** (in *The Construction of the Bible and the Koran—London, 1885*):

“From the literary point of view, the Qur’an is regarded as the specimen of the purest Arabic, written in half poetry and half prose. It has been said that in some cases grammarians have adopted their rules to agree with certain phrases and expressions used in it, and that though several attempts have been made to produce a work

equal to it, as far as elegant writing is concerned, none has as yet succeeded.

“It will thus be seen from the above that a final and complete text of the Koran was prepared within twenty years after the death (A.D. 632) of Muhammad and that this has remained the same, without any change or alteration by enthusiasts, translators or interpolators up to the present time. It is to be regretted that the same cannot be said of all the books of the Old and New Testaments.”

H. A. R. Gibb opines in his book **Muhammedanism**;

“Well then, if the Qur’an were his own composition other men could rival it. Let them produce ten verses like it. If they could not, and it is obvious they could not, then let them accept the Qur’an as an outstanding evidential miracle.”

Some of the revelations of the Quran are quoted below to prove its truth and incorruptibility. God affirms that He will be the Guardian of this revealed Book and protect its text from any change and this assurance has withstood the onslaughts of these 14 centuries and will no doubt continue till the Last Day.

إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا الذِّكْرَ وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَحَافِظُونَ ○

“We have without doubt sent down the Message and We will assuredly guard it (from corruption).”

(Surah XV-9)

بَلْ هِيَ آيَاتٌ بَيِّنَاتٌ فِي صُدُورِ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ

“But it is clear revelations in the hearts of those who have been given knowledge.”

(Surah XXIX-49)

The Qur’an was commended to the hearts of the believers and this is a novel experience as previous to the Qur’an no religious book was memorized from beginning

till end. Such a person is called 'Hafiz' or Memorizer. It was one of the ways ordained by God to preserve the Qur'an in the hearts of people; and no other religion can boast of such a unique method.

And yet another assurance given by God is that such remembrance will be made easier.

وَلَقَدْ يَسَّرْنَا الْقُرْآنَ لِلذِّكْرِ فَهَلْ مِنْ مُدْرِكٍ

"And in truth We have made the Quran easy to remember; but is there any that remembereth?"

It is common experience that the whole Qur'an is learnt by heart easily by children within three years and they remember it all their lives. Amongst Muslims there are today about 70 lakhs of such people who can recite the Qur'an by heart. Can any other religion boast of such an achievement? This itself is a miracle and the fulfilment of the promise of the Almighty.

Another assurance is that the writing and the publication of the Qur'an will increase day by day.

وَكُتِبَ فِي رِجْلِ الْقُرْآنِ فِي رَقٍّ مَبْشُورٍ

"And a Scripture inscribed on fine parchment unrolled."

'Inscribed' means reduced to writing to make it clear to the intelligence of man, and 'parchment unrolled' means spread out so that everyone who has the will can seek guidance from it.

Another assurance given by God is that no attacker of the Qur'an can succeed whether the attack be open or secret.

لَا يَأْتِيهِ الْبَاطِلُ مِنْ بَيْنِ يَدَيْهِ وَلَا مِنْ خَلْفِهِ تَنْزِيلٌ مِّنْ حَيْكُمِ حَمِيدٍ

"No falsehood can approach it from before or behind."

"It is sent down by One Full of Wisdom, Worthy of all Praise."
(Surah XLI—(42))

It may be noted that no philosophy, old or new, and no teaching can compare with the teachings of the Qur'an.

(b) Prophecies about the progress of Islam:

يُرِيدُونَ لِيُطْفِئُوا نُورَ اللَّهِ بِأَفْوَاهِهِمْ وَاللَّهُ مُتِمُّ نُورِهِ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ الْكَافِرُونَ

(i) *"Fain would they put out the light of Allah with their mouths, but Allah will perfect His Light however much the disbelievers are averse."*
(Surah LXI-8)

هُوَ الَّذِي أَرْسَلَ رَسُولَهُ بِالْهُدَىٰ وَدِينِ الْحَقِّ لِيُظْهِرَهُ عَلَى الدِّينِ كُلِّهِ
وَلَوْ كَرِهَ الْمُشْرِكُونَ

"He it is Who has sent His Messenger with the guidance and the religion of truth, that He may make it conqueror of all religions however much the idolaters may be averse."
(Surah LXI-9)

The way in which Islam progressed according to the above revelation can be best appreciated by the following opinion of LAMARTINE:

"In less than two centuries after its appearance Islam in faith and in arms reigned over the whole of Arabia and conquered in God's name, Persia, Khorasan, Transoxania, Western India, Syria, Egypt, Abyssinia, all the known continent of Northern Africa, numerous islands of the Mediterranean, Spain and a part of Gaul."

(*Histoire de Turquie*)

كَلِمَةٌ طَيِّبَةٌ كَشَجَرَةٍ طَيِّبَةٍ أَصْلُهَا ثَابِتٌ وَفُرُوعُهَا فِي السَّمَاءِ ۝ تُوْتِقِي
أَكْلِهَا كُلَّ حِينٍ يَا ذُن رَّبِّهَا وَيُؤْتِي اللَّهُ الْأَمْثَالَ لِلنَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَذَكَّرُونَ

(ii) *"A goodly saying is like a goodly tree, its root set firm, its branches reaching into heaven, giving its fruit at every season by permission of its Lord. Allah coineth the similitudes for mankind in order that they may reflect."*

(Surah XIV-26)

سُرِّيَهُمَا لِيَتَأْتِيَ فِي الْأَفَاقِ وَفِي أَنْفُسِهِمْ حَتَّىٰ يَبَيِّنَ لَهُمَنَّا الْخُرُوجَ

(iii) *“Soon We will show them our signs in the farthest regions of the world and in their own souls until it becomes manifest to them that this is the truth.”*

(Surah XLI-53)

This verse reveals that God’s truth has spread across to the utmost ends of the earth and Islam in fact did reach the four corners of the earth.

إِنَّهُمْ لَهُمُ الْمَنْصُورُونَ ○ وَإِنَّ جُنَدَنَا لَهُمُ الْغَالِبُونَ ○

(iv) *“That they would certainly be assisted. And that our forces—they surely must conquer.”*

(Surah XXXVII-172)

The prophecy is that the upholders of God’s truth will be victorious.

وَيَجْعَلُكُمْ خُلَفَاءَ الْأَرْضِ

(v) *“He will make you viceroys of the earth.”*

(Surah XXVII-62)

That is successor, heir or inheritor of the earth getting its ownership.

لِلَّذِينَ أَحْسَنُوا فِي هَذِهِ الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةٌ ○ وَلَدَارُ الْآخِرَةِ خَيْرٌ ○

(vi) *“To those who do good, there is good in this world and the home of the Hereafter is even better.”*

(Surah XVI-30)

There is the prophecy that they will be rewarded in this world which history shows that it did come true and obviously God would have also rewarded them in the world hereafter.

(c) Prophecies about the prosperity of Muhajirs:

وَمَنْ يُهَاجِرْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ يَجِدْ فِي الْأَرْضِ مُرْعًا كَثِيرًا وَسِعَةً ۝

(i) "He who forsakes his home in the cause of God finds in the earth many a refuge wide and spacious."

(Surah IV-100)

الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَهَاجَرُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ بِأَمْوَالِهِمْ وَأَنْفُسِهِمْ أَكْبَرُ
دَرَجَةً عِنْدَ اللَّهِ ۝

(ii) "Those who believe and suffer exile and strive with might and main in God's cause with their goods and their persons have the highest rank in the sight of God."

(Surah IX-20)

وَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ عَيْلَةً فَسَوْفَ يُغْنِيكُمُ اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ إِنْ شَاءَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ ۝

(iii) "And if ye fear poverty soon God will enrich you if He wills, out of His bounty, for God is All-Knowing, All-Wise."

(Surah IX-28)

وَالَّذِينَ هَاجَرُوا فِي اللَّهِ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا ظَلَمُوا لَنَنصُرَهُمْ فِي الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً ۖ وَ
لَآجْرٌ الْآخِرَةِ أَكْبَرُ لَوْ كَانُوا يَعْلَمُونَ ۝

(iv) "And those who become fugitives for the cause of Allah after they had been oppressed, We verily shall give them goodly lodging in the world, and surely the reward of the Hereafter is greater, if they but knew."

(Surah XVI-41)

وَيَمْحُ اللَّهُ الْبَاطِلَ وَيُجِئُ الْحَقَّ يُجْلِبُهُ

(v) "God blots out falsehood and proves the truth by His Words."

(Surah XLII-24)

فَأَصِدْ عَلَىٰ بِنَائِهِمْ وَأَعْرَضْ عَنِ الْمُشْرِكِينَ ۝ إِنَّا كَفَيْنَاكَ الْمُسْتَهْزِئِينَ ۝

(vi) "Expound openly what thou art commanded and turn away from those who join false gods with God. For sufficient are We unto thee against those who scoff."

(Surah XV-94-95)

The early Muslims who were persecuted by the Meccans on account of their faith were forced to leave their homes in Mecca along with the Prophet but they were consoled in the above verses not to fear their present predicament which was but a temporary phase and that God through His bounty would turn their poverty into affluence and they would be entitled to the highest honour for their sacrifices in the cause of Allah. This apparent loss of hearth and home and goods was counter-balanced very soon by their great achievements through the help of God when Pagans were extinguished from Arabia and the once-poor pilgrims (Muhajirs) became the rulers of the whole country and their small numbers increased thousandfold.

How this prophecy came true can be realised from the fact that in a short period, Syria, Iraq, Persia, Egypt and Sudan came under their sway and they became the overlords. It is remarkable that almost all the conquerors of these countries were Muhajirs who distinguished themselves as great generals such as *Khalid bin Walid*, *Abu Ubaida*, *Sa'd bin Waqqas*, *'Umar Binul Aas*, *'Amir Bin Aljarah*, etc. In the verse quoted in (iii) it was foretold that they would be soon relieved of their poverty, and how true the fulfilment was when the faithful became so rich that they themselves did not know the extent of their wealth. When *Abdur Rahman Bin 'Auf* died he left 1,000 camels, 3,000 sheep, 100 horses, besides huge cash and goods. One of his wives received for her share cash alone of Rs. 83,000. The daily expenditure of *Abu Talha's* hospitality was 1,000 dinars. *Zubair bin 'Awwam* had 1,000 slaves and whatever they earned for him was distributed in charity.

وَمَنْ آخَلَ مَسِينًا مِّنْ مَّسْجِدِ اللَّهِ أَنْ يُدْكَرَ فِيهَا اسْمُهُ وَسَعَىٰ فِي خَرَابِهَا أُولَٰئِكَ
مَا كَانُوا لَهُمْ حُرَّانَ يَدْخُلُونَهَا إِلَّا خَائِفِينَ ۝

(vii) "And who is more unjust than he who forbids that in places for the worship of God, God's name should be celebrated?—whose zeal is in fact to ruin them? It was not fitting that such should themselves enter them except in fear."

(Surah II-113)

لَهُمْ فِي الدُّنْيَا خِزْيٌ وَلَهُمْ فِي الْآخِرَةِ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ ۝

"For them there is nothing but disgrace in this world and in the world to come an exceeding torment."

(Surah II-114)

الَّذِينَ جَعَلُوا الْقُرْآنَ عِضِينَ ۝

So also on "such as have made the Quran into shreds as they please."

(Surah XV-91)

The Meccan pagans in the early days of Islam in order to dishonour and ridicule the Qur'an divided what was so revealed in bits and disjointed portions and handed them to people coming on pilgrimage to Mecca, slandering the Apostle of God and scoffing at what was sacred. But the Truth of God was eventually vindicated. They tried to shut out the Muslims from the Ka'ba, the place of worship, but they were disgraced and they were themselves shut out and the prophecy mentioned in (v) to (vii) above came true. How one by one these persecutors were disgraced is a matter of history.

Ubaiyy bin Khalaf who persecuted Bilal was eventually slain by Bilal himself.

'Aas Bin Wail, another oppressor fell from his ass in a hole where he was bitten by a poisonous insect and perished.

Aswad bin Mutha'lib, a tormentor, complained on getting up from his sleep that thorns were being pricked into his eyes.

Manba bin Hajjaj became blind and died in consequence.

Abu Lahab died of plague and his relatives did not touch his corpse but threw stones from the house-tops on his body to cover it up.

Aswad bin Yaghus: His face was burnt by the hot winds of the desert and he was beyond recognition. Out of thirst his tongue protruded out of his mouth and he died of pain and thirst.

These are just a few instances of the punishment they received in this world itself.

(d) Prophecy about the defeat of the Meccans:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَيُنْفِقُونَ أَمْوَالَهُمْ لِيَصُدَّوْا عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَسَيُنْفِقُونَهَا
ثُمَّ تَكُونُ عَلَيْهِمْ حَسْرَةً ثُمَّ يُغْلَبُونَ ○

“Lo! those who disbelieve spend their wealth in order that they may debar men from the way of Allah.”

“They will spend it, then it will become an anguish for them, then they will be conquered.”

(Surah VIII-36)

The Meccan disbelievers had gathered a lot of wealth to fight the Muslims and their leaders, and by rotation they entertained their armies, but all proved of no avail and they were eventually defeated.

(e) Prophecy about Abu Lahab and his wife:

كَبَّتْ يَدَا أَبِي لَهَبٍ وَتَتَّ ۝ مَا أَغْنَىٰ عَنْهُ مَالُهُ وَمَا كَسَبَ ۝ سَيَصْلَىٰ
نَارًا ذَاتَ لَهَبٍ ۝ وَامْرَأَتُهُ حَمَّالَةَ الْحَطَبِ ۝ فِي جِيدِهَا
حَبْلٌ مِّن مَّسَدٍ ۝

*“Perish the hand of the father of flame! Perish he.
No profit to him from all his wealth and all his gains!
Burnt soon will he be in a fire of blazing flame! His
wife shall carry the cracking wood as fuel! A twisted
rope of palm-leaf fibre round her own neck.”*

Abu Lahab, “father of flame” was the nickname of an uncle of the Holy Prophet, named from his fiery temper and ruddy complexion. He was the bitterest enemy of Islam. He used to curse the Prophet but it was of no avail and Islam progressed rapidly. Many of his colleagues perished in the battle of Badr and he himself died a miserable death after a week which was foretold in these verses some 15 years ago. The way in which he died has already been detailed in a preceding para.

The wife of Abu Lahab was equally cruel towards the Prophet, as she used to collect thorns and prickly fibre and strew them on the path which the Prophet took, to cause him bodily injury. She used to carry false tales and instigate people. What was her end! while she was carrying a bundle of wood tied with a rope, the bundle slipped and the rope twisted round her neck and she died of strangulation. Thus the prophecy about her death was also fulfilled.

(f) Prophecies about the Hypocrites:

وَمَا لَهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ مِنْ دَرَجَةٍ وَلَا فِي سِيْرِ

“They shall have none on earth to protect or help them.”
(Surah IX-74)

Falq, a priest, after his defeat at Uhud, sought the assistance of the Roman Empire to march on the Muslims and although he was backed by the Roman priests he did not succeed in his mission. Similarly Jabla Bin Aiham tried to instigate the Emperor Heraclius of Rome, but all his efforts proved futile.

لَيْسَ لِحُرَيْتِهِ الْمُسْفُؤُونَ وَالَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ مَقْرَصَاتٌ وَالْمُزْجِفُونَ فِي الدِّينِ
 لَنُغْرِبَنَّهُمْ لَنُغْرِبَنَّهُمْ ثُمَّ لَا يُجَاوِرُونَكَ فِيهَا إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ۝ مَلْعُونِينَ أَيْمًا تُنْفِرُونَ
 أُخِذُوا وَتَمَثَّلُوا لَنَيْيَلًا ۝

“Truly if the Hypocrites and those in whose hearts is a disease and those who stir up sedition in the city desist not, We shall certainly stir thee up against them. Then will they not be able to stay in it as thy neighbours for any length of time.

“They shall have a curse on them; wherever they are found they shall be seized and slain without mercy.”
 (Surah XXXIII-60)

These hypocrites sought to cause disorder. Those who became outlaws, rebels against the Law, were themselves destroyed by the law. According to this prophecy Ubaiyy bin Salul and his party of about 300 were exiled from Medina and met a miserable death, in the life-time of the Prophet himself. Thereafter Medina was named ‘Taiyyiba,’ the pure city.

(g) Prophecies about the outcome of the battles of the Prophet:

(i) The Battle of Badr:

كَمَا أَخْرَجَكَ رَبُّكَ مِنْ بَيْتِكَ بِالْحَقِّ طَوْلَكَ فَرِيْقًا مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ كَذِبُكَ
 يُجَادِلُونَكَ فِي الْحَقِّ بَعْدَ مَا تَبَيَّنَ كَأَنَّمَا يُسَاقُونَ إِلَى الْمَوْتِ وَهُمْ يَنْظُرُونَ ۝

وَلَاذِ يَعِدُكُمْ اللَّهُ إِحْدَى الظَّالِمِينَ أَنَّهُمْ لَكُمْ وَكُودُونَ أَن تَعْبُدُوا
 الشُّكْرَةَ تَكُونُ لَكُمْ وَيُرِيدُ اللَّهُ أَن يُخَيِّطَ الْحَقَّ بِكَلِمَاتِهِ وَيَقْطَعَ
 دَابِرَ الْكَافِرِينَ ○

“Just as thy Lord ordered thee out of thy house in truth, even though a party among the believers disliked it, disputing with thee concerning the truth after it was made manifest, as if they were driven to death and they actually saw it.

“Behold! God promised you one of the two enemy parties, that it should be yours: ye wished that the one unarmed should be yours, but God willed to justify the truth according to His words and to cut off the roots of the unbelievers.”

(Surah VIII-5 to 7)

Just before the battle of Badr there were two alternatives before the Muslims in Medina: (1) To fall upon the Quraish caravan returning from Syria to Mecca with rich booty led by Abu Sufiyan and 40 unarmed men. This attack would have given them easily and safely abundant booty without a fight. (2) To march upon the well-armed and better-equipped Quraish army of 1000 men coming from Mecca which was a hazardous venture, fraught with danger of defeat, as the Muslim army of 313 persons was ill-equipped to face this formidable foe. This course appeared to be on the face of it to invite disaster.

God, however, commanded them to this honourable second course promising them victory in the above verses; and He did make good his promise by granting them a splendid victory.

(ii) The Battle of Khaiber:

لَقَدْ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ إِذْ يُبَايِعُونَكَ تَحْتَ الشَّجَرَةِ فَعَلِمَ مَا فِي
قُلُوبِهِمْ فَأَنْزَلَ السَّكِينَةَ عَلَيْهِمْ وَأَسَابَهُمْ فَتَحًا قَرِيبًا ○

“God’s good pleasure was on the believers when they swore fealty to thee under the tree. He knew what was in their hearts and He sent down tranquility to them, and he rewarded them with a speedy victory.”

(Surah XLVIII-18)

This verse foretold the victory in the battle of Khaiber to those who swore allegiance to the Prophet under a tree in the plain of Hudaibia. The Prophet came with a large body of Muslims from Medina to perform the Hajj; but when they were just five miles from the city of Mecca the disbelievers prevented their entry. Although they were strong enough to make a forcible entry, God to avoid bloodshed forbade them, and there came a time later when they entered Mecca victoriously without shedding a drop of blood. At the moment they concluded a treaty and returned and gave a demonstration of exemplary discipline. Some suspected that the Muslims were weak; but this impression was dispelled when on their return to Medina they met a force of the Jews and defeated them and the prophecy thus came true.

(iii) The Battle of Ahzab:

All disbelievers, including the Jews of Medina who were in league with them connived to overthrow the Muslims by pooling their resources and the Jews acted as spies communicating all the weak spots of the Muslims. They attacked with full strength but could not succeed and were badly defeated in the battle of Ahzab. The Qur’an conveys this prophecy as follows:

أَمْ يَقُولُونَ نَحْنُ جَمِيعٌ مُنْتَصِرُونَ ○ سَيُهْرَمُونَ الْجَمْعَ وَيُولُونَ الدِّبْرُونَ

“Or do they say! we acting together can defend ourselves? Soon will their multitude be put to flight and they will show their backs.”

(Surah LIV-44)

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذْ نَزَّ وَنِعْمَةً اللَّهُ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذْ جَاءَتْكُمْ جُنُودٌ فَأَرْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ رِيحًا وَجُنُودًا لَمْ تَرَوْهَا ۗ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرًا ۝

“O ye who believe! Remember the grace of God bestowed on you when there came down on you hosts to overwhelm you, but We sent against them a hurricane and a force that ye saw not. But God sees all that ye do.”

(Surah XXXIII-9)

(h) Prophecies about the Jews:

ضُوبِتْ عَلَيْهِمُ الدِّالَةُ آيُنَ مَا تُقَمَّرُونَ إِلَّا بِحَبْلٍ مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَحَبْلٍ مِّنَ النَّاسِ وَبَاءٌ وَبِغَضَبٍ مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَضُرِبَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ الْمَسَدَةُ ۗ ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ كَانُوا يَكْفُرُونَ بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ وَيَقْتُلُونَ الرُّسُلَ ۚ لَا يَفْقَهُونَ ذَٰلِكَ ۚ مَا عَصَاؤُهُمْ كَانُوا أَهْلُهَا ۝

“Shame is pitched over them like a tent wherever they are found, except under a covenant of protection from God and from men, they draw on themselves wrath from God and pitched over them is the tent of dispersion. This because they rejected the signs of God and slew the prophets in defiance of right; this because they rebelled and transgressed beyond bounds.”

(Surah III—112)

لَنْ يَضُرَّكُمْ وَلَا يَضُرُّكُمْ إِلَّا نَفْسُكُمْ وَأَنْ تَقَاتِلُوا كُفْرًا تَتَرُونَ

“They will do you no harm, barring a trifling annoyance; if they come out to fight you, they will show you their backs, and no help shall they get.”

(Surah III—111)

وَالْقَبَائِلَ بَيْنَهُمُ الْعَدَاوَةَ وَالْبَغْضَاءَ إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ

"Amongst them] we have placed enmity and hatred till the Day of Judgement."

(Surah V—67)

The Jews during these days were well-known for their learning and attainments. Even in the art of war they knew the ways of breaking up impregnable fortresses and knew the use of stone-throwing machines. In Arabia they were a force to be reckoned with. The prophecy against them of defeat, therefore, was not acceptable to the unbelievers. But history showed how correct the prophecy proved. They were not only defeated in many a battle but they also lost their prestige. They were either subservient to the Muslims in Turkey, Iran, Morocco and Tunis, or subservient to Russia, Germany, America, Britain and France. They have suffered throughout ignominy, shame and humiliation, and there has been no unity between them because of their mischief.

(i) Prophecies about the Christians:

لَتَجِدَنَّ أَشَدَّ النَّاسِ عَدَاوَةً لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا الْيَهُودَ وَالَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوا وَلَتَجِدَنَّ
 أَقْرَبَهُمْ مَوَدَّةً لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا الَّذِينَ قَالُوا إِنَّا نَصْرِي ذَلِكَ يَأْتِيهِمْ مِنْهُمْ
 قَتِيلِينَ وَرُهْبَانًا وَاللَّهُ لَا يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ ○

"Strongest among men in enmity to the Believers wilt thou find the Jews and Pagans; and nearer among them in love to the Believers wilt thou find those who say: 'We are Christians'. Because amongst these are men devoted to learning and men who have renounced the world and they are not arrogant."

(Surah V—85)

Christians have generally appreciated Muslim virtues as did the Abyssinians to whom Muslim re-

fugees went for asylum during their persecution in Mecca. Their devotion to learning and the renunciation of the world by the monastic orders is referred to as a contrast to the arrogance and hypocrisy of the Pharisees and the Scribes.

(j) **Prophecy about the Victory of the Romans:**

الرَّحْمَةُ غَلَبَتِ الرُّومَ ۚ فِي آذَى الْأَرْضِ وَهُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِ غَلَبِهِمْ سَيَعْلَبُونَ ۚ
 فِي بَضْعِ سِنِينَ ۗ لِلَّهِ الْأَمْرُ مِنْ قَبْلِ وَمِنْ بَعْدُ ۗ وَيَوْمَ يُعْزِزُ الْفَرِحَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ ۚ
 بِفَضْرِ اللَّهِ يَنْصُرُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ ۗ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الرَّحِيمُ ۚ

“The Roman Empire has been defeated in a land closeby. But they, even after this defeat of theirs, will soon be victorious within a few years. With God is the decision in the past and in the future. On that Day shall the Believers rejoice with the help of God. He helps whom He wills and He is Exalted in Might, Most Merciful.

(Surah XXX—2 to 5)

In these verses the reference is to the conflict between the Byzantine Emperor Heraclius and the Persian King Khusrau Parwiz (Chosroes II). The Persians had sweeping victories and conquered Aleppo, Antioch and the chief Syrian cities including Damascus in 611 A.C. and Jerusalem in 614 A.C. Jerusalem was burnt and pillaged, the Christians were massacred, churches demolished, the burial place of Christ was desecrated and many relics including the ‘true cross’ on which the Christians believed Jesus was crucified was carried away to Persia. In this pillage the Persians were assisted by the Jews. In the following year there was the fall of Egypt, and the city of Constantinople was itself threatened in the year A.C. 615-616 (the sixth or seventh year before the Hijrah) when this

surah was revealed. The Pagan Arabs rejoiced at the news of these victories of the Persians with whom they had sympathies, and disliked the Roman Christians who were believers in the Scriptures while the Persians were not. They taunted the Muslims and the Holy Prophet whose message was the renewal of the message of Christ, and argued that the Muslims would also be defeated since the forces of the pagan empire had been able to defeat believers in the scriptures. The answer to these taunts was the grand revelation of the defeat of Persia and the victory of the Romans. The words denoting the short period is (بضع سنين) a period from 3 to 9 years. The period between the loss of Jerusalem (614-15) by the Romans and their victory at Issus (622) was 7 years and the penetration of Persia by Heraclius was 9 years. So sure of this prophecy coming true was Hazrat Abu Bakr that he laid a wager with the pagans of Mecca and they lost it on its fulfilment. In the same year the little army of the Muslims led by the Prophet overthrew the flower of Arab Chivalry upon the field of Badr. Thus it was the fulfilment of a double prophecy.

(K) Prophecy about the preservation of the body of Pharaoh:

قَالِیَوْمَ نُنَجِّیْكَ بِجَدِّكَ لِنُكَلِّمَنَّ لِیْمٰنٍ خَلَقْنَا اَیَّدَهُ وَاِنَّ صَیِّرًا مِّنَ النَّاسِ
عَنِ اَیَّتِنَا لَعٰفُوْنَ ۝

"This day shall We save thee in thy body that thou mayest be a sign to those who come after thee ! But, verily, many among mankind are heedless of our signs!"

(Surah X-92)

The body of Pharaoh was saved from the sea and presumably according to the Egyptian custom was

embalmed and preserved as a mummy. The body was found in the old city of Thebes and is said to be now preserved in the museum of Cairo.



CHAPTER VII

NEED OF THE QUR'AN

Prior to the advent of the Qur'an, the Dark Age prevailed which the Qur'an names "The Time of Ignorance" or the "Ayyam-i-Jahilliyyat". About this period Dennison (in *Emotion as the Basis of Civilization*) says: "the civilized world stood on the verge of chaos—mankind was likely to return to that condition of barbarism where every tribe and sect was against the next, and law and order were unknown. . . . civilization like a gigantic tree whose foliage had overreached the world stood tottering rotten to the core. Christianity was working division and destruction instead of unity and order." **Sir William Muir** confirms this by saying: "Christianity of the seventh century was itself decrepit and corrupt. It was disabled by contending schisms and had substituted the puerilities of superstition for the pure and expansive faith of the early ages."

In Iran there was no restriction to the marriage with one's own mother, sister or daughter. In China worship of graves and ghosts was common. In India worship of such indecent things as sex organs was carried on without shame, and wine and women and adultery were in full swing. Amongst Arabs acts of barbarity and brutality constituted their civilization. Trifling disputes led to blood feuds which lasted for generations. The birth of a female child was considered

to be a bad omen and she was buried alive by the father without any sympathy. Dancing naked before the idols was part of their worship and whistling and clapping of hands part of their prayer.

وَمَا كَانَ صَلَاتُهُمْ عِنْدَ الْبَيْتِ إِلَّا مُكَاءً وَتَصْدِيَةً

Arab poetry consisted of description of obscene things and beauty of language was the only thing they could boast of. Married women were allowed by their husbands to conjugate with others for-the sake-of-offspring (Istibza) which resembles the practice of Niyoga amongst the Hindus.

Under these circumstances reformation of the world was an absolute necessity. Fallen humanity had to be liberated from this moral degradation. The Holy Qur'an came as a miracle to dispel this darkness and like the glittering sun it spread its rays of hope for the rescue of man along with his body and soul. The Qur'an with its eloquence, beauty and charm and purity of language and with its appeals and convincing arguments, worked a miracle, and what seemed impossible was made possible. In the course of a few years these barbaric people were converted to a most cultured race, carrying the torch of learning, morality and culture to all the neighbouring countries. History cannot point out a parallel of this magnitude. Great writers have produced works in particular spheres of human activities, but there has never been a book in the world's history of the description of Al-Qur'an which is so comprehensive as to cover every walk of life. It is a wonderful book which deals at the same time with history—rise and fall of nations and the morals drawn therefrom from Adam onwards,—with law—criminal, civil, domestic, etc., with politics—ways of

administration, rules of peace and war, treatment of the conquered races, treatment of prisoners, women, children, elderly people, standing crops, places of worship—, with trade and commerce—contracts and agreements, of witnesses, profiteering, hoarding, levy of interest—, higher philosophy of life, of God and His marvellous creations, equality of mankind, economics, social dealings such as kindness to parents, treatment of women, children, slaves, orphans, the sick; justice and fairplay, mercy, patience, perseverance, discipline and what not. It is a combination of both prose and poetry. Great poets of Arabia discontinued writing poems dazzled by the grandeur of its diction and the magnificence of its expression which was simply superb.

وَعَلَمَاتٍ وَالنَّجْمِ هُمْ يَهْتَدُونَ ○

‘And marks and sign-posts; and by the stars (men) guide themselves.’

“The Qur’an repeatedly calls attention to the heavenly bodies as part of the miracles of Allah forced into the service of man. And marks and sign-posts; and by the stars (men) guide themselves. This led the Muslims to the study of astronomy and they in fact for centuries became its principal supporters. Even now many Arabic names of stars and technical terms are in use. Medieval astronomers in Europe were pupils of the Arabs. In the same manner the Qur’an gave an impetus to medical studies and recommended the contemplation and study of Nature in general.”

Hartwig Hirschfield, Ph. D.

اللَّهُ الَّذِي خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ وَأَنْزَلَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً فَأَخْرَجَ بِهِ
 مِنَ الشَّجَرَاتِ بُرْجًا كَثِيرًا وَسَخَّرَ لَكُمُ الْمَلَائِكَةَ لِيَجْريَ فِي الْبَحْرِ بِأَمْرِهِ
 وَسَخَّرَ لَكُمُ الْأَنْهَارَ ۖ وَسَخَّرَ لَكُمُ الشَّمْسَ وَالْقَمَرَ دَائِبِينَ ۖ وَسَخَّرَ
 لَكُمُ اللَّيْلَ وَالنَّهَارَ ۖ

"It is God who hath created the heavens and the earth and sendeth down rain from the skies, and with it bringeth out fruits wherewith to feed you; it is He who had made the ships subject to you, that they may sail through the sea by His Command; and the rivers also hath He made subject to you. And He hath made subject to you the Sun and the Moon, both diligently pursuing their courses; and the Night and the Day hath He also made subject to you."

(Surah XIV-32-33)

Similarly the Qur'an enjoins Muslims to study what is in the seas and calls upon them to undertake voyages. These injunctions prompted Khalifa 'Uthman to build up an armada of ships resulting in the conquest of Kuwait, Malta, Tripoli, etc., and later Tariq conquered Spain. Trade and commerce was extended far and wide and Islam gradually spread to India, Burma, Indonesia and other countries. It was the Qur'an that brought about this great awakening in every sphere. The **Marquis of Dufferin** says: "It is to Mussulman Science, to Mussulman Art and to Mussulman Literature that Europe has been in a great measure indebted for its extrication from the darkness of the Middle Ages."

It may be dispassionately judged, without prejudice, whether there is any book in the world to compare with the Qur'an which has revolutionised the world to such an extent. It has affirmed time and again that in reality righteousness is the key to success. This book is not only a guide in worldly matters but is also an inspiration for bettering the life in the hereafter.

Is there any book in the world other than the Qur'an whose verses have been heard and repeated five times a day by some 70 crores of human beings?

Is there any book which is held in such reverence by its votaries, that they do not touch it without performing ablution; لَا يَمَسُّهُ إِلَّا الْمُطَهَّرُونَ they do not stretch their legs at it or turn their backs on it, that when it falls to the ground accidentally, some penalty is paid by way of atonement; that never has its pages been used as waste-paper or made to use by a shopkeeper. Great monarchs have bowed their heads and changed their opinions at the mere quoting of a verse by the humblest. Its mere recitation has moved men to ecstasy. The second Khalifa 'Umar once heard a person reciting the Qur'an on his way, and on hearing the verses of punishment in the next world for evil-doers, fear overtook him and he fell unconscious and was lifted home where he lay ill for several days. It was the same 'Umar who was so bitter in his opposition to Islam at first, but was later converted by the forceful truth of the Qur'an, which he could not resist. Abu Talha Ansari when he heard the verse:

لَنْ تَنَالُوا الْبِرَّ حَتَّى تُنْفِقُوا مِمَّا تُحِبُّونَ ط

"You will not have salvation until you part with what is dear to you," immediately offered his gardens and lands in the cause of Islam which fetched an income of over Rs. 50,000 a year.

The Qur'an was not sent for Arabs alone but for the whole world without distinction of caste, colour or creed. It blended together peoples of every tongue and every race in a common brotherhood, confirming the equality of man before his Creator. It respects all civilized religions and their founders and claims to be a confirmation of earlier scriptures. It not only points out the evils in society but gives also remedies.

It uplifts its followers from the depths of human darkness upwards into the higher realm of Light and Truth. It has patronised learning and sciences and encouraged research in every field. Dr. A. Bertherand says: "Those who followed the counsels of this great book became the creators of a civilization which is astounding to this day."

The Qur'an catalogues the gifts bestowed upon man in general—man whose insignificance is that he was created from a little drop emitted. **خُلِقَ مِنْ مَّاءٍ دَافِقٍ ۝**
 which origin he should never forget;

فَلْيَنْظُرِ الْإِنْسَانُ مَخْرَجَهُ ۝
 and on such a being His choicest favours were bestowed and given domain over Nature that man may recognise God's Truth, but the same man becomes an open disputer. **فَإِذَا هُوَ خَصِيمٌ مُّبِينٌ ۝** If God were to

punish man for his wrong-doing He would not leave on the earth a single living creature. But He gives them respite till a stated time.

وَلَوْ يُؤَاخِذُ اللَّهُ النَّاسَ بِظُلْمِهِمْ مَا تَرَكْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ مِنْ ذَاتِهِ وَلَٰكِنْ يُؤَخِّرُهُمْ إِلَىٰ أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى ۝

Amongst the favours detailed in *Sura XVI* are the rain-bearing clouds, the cattle that give milk, flesh and skins for warmth and other numerous benefits, the animals that carry loads, the vegetation, the fruits, the sea that supplies meat, fresh and **سَحَابًا مَّوْجًا كَالْأَمْثَالِ لَحْمًا طَرِيًّا**

tender, and ornaments to wear, **حُلِيِّمَ تَلْبَسُونَهَا** rivers and roads, **أَنْهَارًا أَوْسَبَالًا** the bee that produces from its body

a drink of varying colours wherein is healing for men. *يَخْرُجُ مِنْ بَطْنِهَا شَرَابٌ مُخْتَلِفٌ أَلْوَانُهُ فِيهِ شِفَاءٌ لِلنَّاسِ* These healing qualities should have been taken seriously by man and researches made in this wonderful drug, 'honey'.

Besides He gave them mates and companions in life and out of them sons, daughters and grand-children *وَجَعَلَ لَكُمْ مِنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ بَنِينَ وَحَفَدَةً* , and for all these advantages and benefits bestowed upon man, what does He expect?

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِحْسَانِ وَإِيتَاءِ ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَيَنْهَىٰ عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَالْبَغْيِ ۚ يَعِظُكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ ۝

"God commands justice, the doing of good, and liberality to kith and kin, and He forbids all shameful deeds and injustice and rebellion. He instructs you that ye may receive admonition."

Let us see what the Qur'an has to say about itself and its utility:—

اللَّهُ تَنْزِيلَ أَحْسَنَ الْحَدِيثِ كِتَابًا مُتَشَابِهًا مَثَابًا

"God has revealed from time to time the most beautiful message in the form of a book consistent with itself."

شَهْرًا مَضَىٰ الَّذِي أُنزِلَ فِيهِ الْقُرْآنُ هُدًى لِّلنَّاسِ وَبَيِّنَاتٍ مِّنَ الْهُدَىٰ وَالْقُرْآنِ ۝

Ramadan is the month in which We sent down the Qur'an as a guide to mankind, also clear (signs) for guidance and judgement (between right and wrong),

تِلْكَ آيَاتُ الْكِتَابِ الْحَكِيمِ ۝ a guide and a mercy to doers of good, *إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا ذِكْرٌ لِّلْعَالَمِينَ ۝* and a universal message to all the worlds.

قَدْ جَاءَكُمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ نُورٌ وَكِتَابٌ مُبِينٌ ۝

“There had come to you from God a new light and a perspicuous Book” which makes things clear, and is a book of wisdom conveying the solution of spiritual problems, ۝ **أَمْ حَسِبْتُمْ** which is an act of Mercy from the Almighty **رَحْمَةً مِّن رَّبِّكَ** in guiding the helpless and granting what was best for them.

It is a truth from God **بَلْ هُوَ الْحَقُّ مِن رَّبِّكَ** a guide to those who fear God. ۝ **فِيهِ هُدًى لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ** benefitting their soul **فَمَن اهْتَدَىٰ فَلِنَفْسِهِ** if they but sought earnestly to understand it **أَفَلَا يَتَذَكَّرُونَ** and willingly accept it in submission and humility without locking and bolting their hearts and minds. **أَمْ عَلَىٰ قُلُوبٍ أَقْفَالُهَا** Had God sent down this Qur’an on a mountain, thou would have seen it humble itself and cleave asunder for fear of God.

لَوْ أَنزَلْنَاهُ عَلَىٰ جَبَلٍ لَّرَأَيْتَهُ خَاشِعًا مُّصَدِّعًا مِّنْ خَشْيَةِ اللَّهِ

But what then is the matter with them that they believe not? ۝ **فَمَا لَهُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ**

The Holy Quran was sent for the benefit of mankind in general but man is a quarrelsome being and has no satisfaction at anything. **وَكَانَ الْإِنْسَانُ أَكْفَرُ لِنَفْسِهِ**

An honour also was done to the human race by presenting the Qur’an through the medium of a man belonging to their own kith and kin but they wanted miracles.* Was not the Qur’an itself a standing miracle to last

*This should not be taken to mean that the Holy Prophet was not given miracles in the general sense of the word.

till eternity but their foolish fancies desired something else and their fanciful demands were beautifully described as under:

وَقَالُوا لَنْ نُؤْمِنَ بِكَ حَتَّىٰ تُفَجِّرَ لَنَا
مِنَ الْأَرْضِ يَنْبُوعًا ۝

They say: "We shall not believe in thee, until thou causeth a spring to gush forth for us from the earth,

أَوْ تَكُونَ لَكَ جَنَّةٌ مِّنْ نَّخِيلٍ وَعِنَبٍ
فَتُفَجَّرَ الْأَنْهَارُ خِلَالَهَا تَفْجِيرًا ۝

"Or (until) thou hast a garden of date trees and vines, and causeth rivers to gush forth in their midst, carrying abundant water.

أَوْ تَسْقُطَ السَّمَاءُ كَمَا زَعَمْتِ عَلَيْنَا كِفَاً

"Or thou causeth the sky to fall in pieces, as thou sayest (will happen), against us,

أَوْ تَأْتِي يَا لَلَّهِ وَالْمَلَائِكَةَ قِيَامًا ۝

"Or thou bringeth God and the angels before (us) face to face;

"Or thou hast a house adorned with Gold, or thou mount a ladder right into the skies. No, we shall not even believe in thy mounting until thou send down to us a book that we could read. Say: 'Glory to my Lord! Am I aught but a man, an Apostle'?"

أَوْ يَكُونَ لَكَ بَيْتٌ مِّنْ زُخْرُبٍ أَوْ تَرْفَىٰ
فِي السَّمَاءِ وَلَنْ نُؤْمِنَ لِرُفْيِكَ حَتَّىٰ
تُنزِلَ عَلَيْنَا كِتَابًا نَقْرُؤُهُ ۚ فُلْ سُبْحَانَ
رَبِّي هَلْ كُنْتُ إِلَّا بَشَرًا مَّرْسُولًا ۝

(Surah XVII—90 to 93)

Some verses of the Qur'an emphasise that if God had wished He could have brought a mountain over their heads and forced them to accept its teachings, or

crushed them under it if they refused; but His unbounded Mercy refrains Him from such an act, and has given them the choice to use their own commonsense and to accept the truth of their own free-will, which is only for their betterment, both in this world and the hereafter.

These verses have been quoted with the sole idea of impressing the fact that Islam is a practical religion appealing to the understanding of man and for expounding truth to make him attain perfection in every sphere of life. It appeals direct to reason and to the hearts of the readers and makes it a living principle for action instead of a formula for repetition.



CHAPTER VIII

NON-MUSLIM OPINIONS ABOUT THE QUR'AN

Alfred Guillaume:

(Islam)

“The Qur'an is one of the world's classics which cannot be translated without grave loss. It has a rhythm of peculiar beauty and a cadence that charms the ear. Many Christian Arabs speak of its style with warm admiration, and most Arabists acknowledge its excellence. When it is read aloud or recited it has an almost hypnotic effect that makes the listener indifferent to its sometimes strange syntax and its sometimes, to us, repellent content. It is this quality it possesses of silencing criticism by the sweet music of its language that has given birth to the dogma of its inimitability; indeed it may be affirmed that within the literature of the Arabs, wide and fecund as it is both in poetry and in elevated prose, there is nothing to compare with it.”

F. F. Arbuthnot:

(The Construction of the Bible and the Koran.)

“From the literary point of view, the Koran is regarded as a specimen of purest Arabic, written in half poetry and half prose. It has been said that in some

cases grammarians have adopted their rules to agree with certain phrases and expressions used in it, and that though several attempts have been made to produce a work equal to it as far as elegant writing is concerned none has as yet succeeded.

“It will thus be seen, from the above, that a final and complete text of the Koran was prepared within twenty years after the death (A.D. 632) of Mohammad, and that this has remained the same, without any change, or alteration by enthusiasts, translators, or interpolators, up to the present time. It is to be regretted that the same cannot be said of all the books of the Old and New Testaments.”

Arthur N. Wollaston :

(The Religion of the Koran)

“As the sacred volume of some 70 (nay, 700 millions) of the present inhabitants of the world the Koran possesses an interest and importance which will merit, and will amply repay, attention and study. To the pious Musulman it is the very word of God, the true rule of life, and the source of all his hopes for the future.”

Basanta Coomar Bose :

(Mohamedanism.)

“So there has been no opportunity for any forgery or pious fraud in the Quran, which distinguishes it from almost all other important religious works of ancient times. . . . It is exceedingly strange that this illiterate person should have composed the best book in the language.”

Davenport :

(An Apology for Muhammad and the Koran)

“The Quran is the general Code of the Muslim world, social, civil, commercial, military, judicial, criminal, penal and yet a religious code; by it everything is regulated from ceremonies of religion to those of daily life, from salvation of soul to the health of body, from the fights of the general community to those of society, from morality to crime, from punishment here to that of the life to come!”

Deutch:

“The Koran is a book by the aid of which the Arabs conquered a world greater than that of Alexander the Great; greater than that of Rome, in as many tens of years as the latter had wanted hundreds to accomplish her conquests; by the aid of which they came to Europe as kings to hold up the light to humanity, while darkness lay around, to raise up the wisdom and knowledge of Hellas from the death, to teach philosophy, medicine, astronomy and the golden art of song to the West as to the East, to stand at the cradle of modern science, and to make us late-comers for ever to weep over the day when Granada fell.”

E. Denison Ross:

(Introduction to the Koran)

“It must, however, be borne in mind that the Koran plays a far greater role among the Muhammadans than does the Bible in Christianity, in that it provides not only the canon of their faith, but also the textbook of their ritual and the principles of their Civil Law.

“It must not, however, be forgotten that the central doctrine preached by Muhammad..... .

....was the unity of God, and that the simplicity of his creed was probably a more potent factor in the spread of Islam than the sword of the Ghazi.

“Islam, although seriously affecting the Christian world, brought a spiritual religion to one half of Asia, and it is an amazing circumstance that the Turks, who on several occasions let loose their Central Asian hordes over India and the Middle East, though irresistible in the onslaught of their arms, were all conquered in their turn by the faith of Islam, and founded Muhammadan dynasties.....

“Thus through all the vicissitudes of thirteen hundred years the Koran has remained the sacred book of all the Turks and the Persians and of nearly a quarter of the population of India. Surely such a book as this deserves to be widely read in the West more especially in these days when space and time have been almost annihilated by modern invention and when public interest embraces the whole world.”

Edward Montet :

(Traduction Francaise du Koran)

“All those who are acquainted with the Koran in Arabic agree in praising the beauty of this religious book; its grandeur of form is so sublime that no translation into any European language can allow us to appreciate it.”

Goethe:

(West-Oestlicher Divan)

The renowned German author states: “However often we turn to it.....it soon attracts, astounds and in the end enforces our reverence..... Its style in

accordance with its contents and aim, is stern, grand, terrible,—ever and anon truly sublime—Thus this book will go on exercising through all ages, a most potent influence.

James A. Michener:

(Is'am—the misunderstood Religion)

“The Koran is probably the most often read book in the world, surely the most often memorised, and possibly the most influential in the daily life of the people who believe in it. Not quite so long as the New Testament, written in an exalted style, it is neither poetry nor ordinary prose, yet it possesses the ability to arouse its hearers to ecstasies of faith.

“The Koran was revealed to Muhammad between the years 610 and 632 in the cities of Mecca and Medina. Devoted scribes wrote it down on ‘scraps of paper, bark and the white shoulder-blades of animals.’ The early revelations were dazzling assurances that there was only one God, Merciful and Compassionate: ‘He is Allah, the Creator, the Maker, the Fashioner. Whatever is in the heavens and the earth declares His glory; and He is the Mighty, the Wise.’

“It was this message that swept away idols, and inspired men to revolutionise their lives and their notions. In later years, when Islam began to penetrate large areas of Arabia and had acquired much power, the revelation dealt with the organisation of society, its laws, procedures and problems.

“Many revered names from Christianity and Judaism appear in the Koran. For example, five important chapters are titled Noah, Jonah, Joseph,

Abraham and Mary. Lacking special chapters of their own, but playing quite important roles, are Jesus, Adam, David, Goliath, Job, Moses, Lot and Solomon.

“The Koran is remarkably down-to-earth in its discussion of the good life. In one memorable passage it directs: ‘When ye deal with each other in transactions involving future obligations, reduce them to writing.and get two witnesses, so that if one of them errs the other can remind him. This is juster in the sight of God, more suitable as evidence, and more convenient to prevent doubts among yourselves.’

“It is this combination of dedication to one God, plus practical instruction, that makes the Koran unique. Each Islamic nation contains many citizens who are convinced that their land will be governed well only if its laws conform to the Koran.”

John Naish:

(The Wisdom of the Quran)

“The Quran in its original Arabic dress has a seductive beauty and charm of its own. Couched in concise and exalted style, its brief pregnant sentences, often rhymed, possess an expressive force and explosive energy which it is extremely difficult to convey by literal word for word translation.”

John William Draper:

(History of the Intellectual Development of Europe)

“The Quran abounds in excellent moral suggestions and precepts; its composition is so fragmentary that we cannot turn to a single page without finding maxims of which all men must approve. This fragmentary

construction yields texts, and mottos, and rules complete in themselves, suitable for common men in any of the incidents of life."

Johnson:

"If it is not poetry,—and it is hard to say whether it be or not,—it is more than poetry. It is not history, nor biography. It is not anthology, like the Sermon on the Mount: nor metaphysical dialectics, like the Buddhist Sutras; nor sublime homiletics like Plato's conferences of the wise and foolish teachers. It is a prophet's cry, Semitic to the core; yet of a meaning so universal and so timely that all the voices of the age take it up, willing or unwilling, and it echoes over palaces and deserts, over cities and empires, first kindling its chosen hearts to world-conquest, then gathering itself up into a reconstructive force that all the creative light of Greece and Asia might penetrate the heavy gloom of Christian Europe, when Christianity was but the Queen of Night."

Harry Gaylord Dorman:

(Towards Understanding Islam)

"It (Quran) is a literal revelation of God, dictated to Muhammad by Gabriel, perfect in every letter. It is an ever-present miracle witnessing to itself and to Muhammad, the Prophet of God. Its miraculous quality resides partly in its style, so perfect and lofty that neither men nor jinn could produce a single chapter to compare with its briefest chapter, and partly in its content of teachings, prophecies about the future, and amazingly accurate information such as the illiterate Muhammad could never have gathered of his own accord."

Laura Veccia Vaglieri:

(Apologie de l' Islamisme)

“On the whole we find in it a collection of wisdom which can be adopted by the most intelligent of men, the greatest of philosophers and the most skilful of politicians.....But there is another proof of the Divinity of the Qur'an; it is the fact that it has been preserved intact through the ages since the time of its Revelation till the present day.....Read and re-read by the Muslim world, this book does not rouse in the faithful any weariness; it rather, through repetition, is more loved every day. It gives rise to a profound feeling of awe and respect in the one who reads it or listens to it.....It was, therefore, neither by means of violence of arms, nor through the pressure of obtrusive missionaries, that caused the great and rapid diffusion of Islam, but, above all, through the fact that this Book, presented by the Muslims to the vanquished with the liberty to accept it or reject it, was the Book of God, could show to those in doubt and to those who remained stubborn.”

Dr. Noldeke:

(Islam)

“To those who seek miracles, this glorious result, achieved in less than a decade, constitutes a real and splendid miracle of Islam, which alone give it the title to be ranked as a great religion and a wonderful civilizing agency. In an exquisitely beautiful passage, full of grace and wisdom, the Holy Koran draws a contrast between the life and manners of the Arabs in the shade of Islam and those in pre-Islamic times; and urges upon

the true believers a true union of hearts, and dwells on the real purpose of the advent of the new religion. Here is a translation of the verses: 'O ye believers, fear God as He deserveth to be feared; and die not but as true Muslims. And hold ye fast by the cord of God, all of you, and do not scatter yourselves, and remember God's goodness towards you, how that when you were enemies, He united your hearts, and through His grace, ye became brethren, and when ye were on the brink of the pit of fire, He drew you back from it; thus clearly God showeth His signs, that ye may be guided. And let there be among you a people who invite to the good, and enjoin the right, and forbid the wrong; and these are they who shall succeed. And be ye not like those who have broken into divisions and fallen into variance, after the clear proofs have come to them; and for those there waits a terrible chastisement.'

Paul Casanova:

(L'Enseignement de L'Arabe ou College de France)

"Whenever Muhammad was asked a miracle, as a proof of the authenticity of his mission, he quoted the composition of the Qur'an and its incomparable excellence as proof of its Divine origin. And, in fact, even for those who are non-Muslims nothing is more marvellous than its language, which with such a prehensible plentitude and a grasping sonority with its simple audition ravished with admiration those primitive peoples so fond of eloquence. The ampleness of its syllables with a grandiose cadence and with a remarkable rhythm have been of much moment in the conversion of the most hostile and the most sceptic."

Rev. G. Margoliouth:

(Introduction to The Koran)

“The Koran admittedly occupies an important position among the great religious books of the world. Though the youngest of the epoch-making works belonging to this class of literature, it yields to hardly any in the wonderful effect which it has produced on large masses of men. It has created an all but new phase of human thought and a fresh type of character. . . .”

Rev. J. M. Rodwell:

(The Koran.)

“It must be acknowledged, too, that the Koran deserves the highest praise for its conceptions of the Divine nature, in reference to the attributes of power, knowledge and universal Providence and Unity that its belief and trust in the One God of Heaven and Earth is deep and fervent—and that.....it embodies much of a noble and deep moral earnestness, and sententious oracular wisdom, and has proved that there are elements in it on which mighty nations and conquering:empires can be built up.”

Sir William Muir:

(The Life of Mohamed)

“The Koran is the groundwork of Islam. Its authority is absolute in all matters of religion, ethics and science, equally as in matters of religion.....the Koran is supreme and much of the tendency is so plain as to admit no question, even among contending sectaries.”

* * *

Dr. Steingass:

(Dr. Hughes' Dictionary of Islam)

“A work, then which calls forth so powerful and seemingly incompatible emotions, even in the distant reader,—distant as to time, and still more so, as to mental development—a work which not only conquers repugnance with which he may begin its perusal, but changes this adverse feeling into astonishment and admiration, such a work must be a wonderful production of the human mind indeed, and a problem of the highest interest to every thoughtful observer of the destinies of mankind. Much has been said to acknowledge, to appreciate, and to explain the literary excellencies of the Koran, and a more or less distinct admission, that Buffon's much-quoted saying: “*Le style est L'homme*”, is here more justified than ever, underlies all these verdicts. We may well say, the Koran is one of the grandest books ever written, because it faithfully reflects the character and life of one of the greatest men that ever breathed. ‘Sincerity’ writes Carlyle, ‘sincerity, in all senses, seems to me the merit of the Koran.’”

S. P. Scott:

(History of the Moorish Empire in Europe)

“The Koran commands relief of the oppressed, protection of the defenceless, mercy to the orphan, and kindness to animals. It enjoins the strict performance of engagements, even though entered into with members of a hostile creed; in humiliating contrast with the policy of Catholic Rome, whose children were perpetually absolved from the observance of contracts concluded with infidels. It denounces awful penalties

against the murderer and the suicide. In its pages the profound deference that usually attaches to aristocratic birth and distinguished station is ignored; titled insolence is not permitted to assert superiority over the unpretending worshipper, and the monarch and the beggar meet as brethren before the throne of Almighty God. The right of private judgement is repeatedly and authoritatively declared to be the privilege of every believer; the humblest Moslem may place his own interpretation on the texts of the alleged revelation; and his conception of their meaning and application is entirely independent of the edicts of priests or the suspicious decisions of synods and councils.

“Abstinence from swine’s flesh and from the blood of all animals is enforced through hygienic considerations arising from experience of the injurious effects of such food in tropical climates; and the requirement of personal cleanliness by frequent and regular lustration has its origin in the same vigilant solicitude for the public welfare.....”

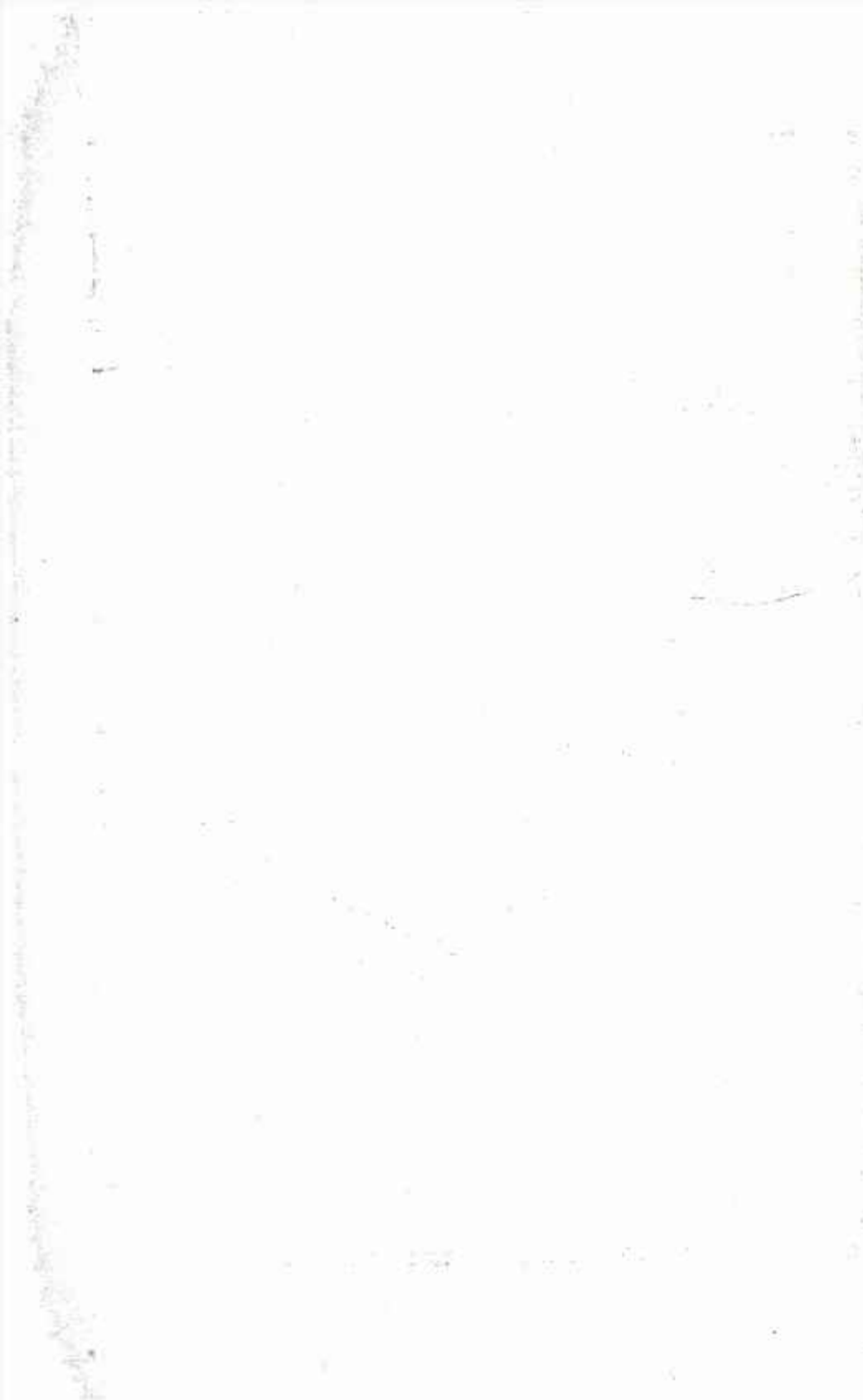
“Show me a people’s God,” said Euripides, “and I will tell you that people’s history.” To the history of Islam is this significant remark especially appropriate. The Moslem conception of the Deity is one of unapproachable grandeur and sublimity. While placed immeasurably above His creatures, their praise and their petitions are always tendered Him without the officious intervention of a privileged caste, and wherever the hour of prayer may find the worshipper, whether in the retirement of his home, in the noisy bazaar, upon the deck of a vessel in mid-ocean, or amidst the awful stillness and solitude of the Desert.

“The practical value and consequent importance of a religion consist not so much by whom or under what circumstances it is alleged to have been founded, but in what it has effected to the happiness and permanent improvement of humanity. It elevated the position of woman; repressed the unblushing licentiousness prevalent in the Age of Ignorance; formulated an equitable law of divorce, where separation had been previously a matter of caprice; and shielded the wife from the cruelty, avarice, and injustice of the husband. It prohibited not merely the abuse of wine and other intoxicants, but even the slightest indulgence in them. It declared divination and all games of chance to be devices of Satan, whose practice would inevitably cause a forfeiture of Paradise. It impressed upon youth, of whatever rank or station, the obligations of polite and courteous behaviour and the unremitting exercise of filial piety. It accorded to every seeker after truth the inestimable privilege of private interpretation and individual opinion—an inherent right of man refused by Christianity until the time of Luther, who, on account of his advocacy of this innovation, was himself denounced as a Mohammedan; and in certain countries of Europe, not asserted until the seventeenth century, except in secret, and under the threatening shadows of the stake and the scaffold. Unlike other religions, it did not refuse salvation to those who rejected its dogmas.”.

In conclusion, this book is closed with the prayer:

وَآخِرُ دَعْوَاهُمْ أَنِ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

“Praise be to God, the Cherisher and Sustainer of the world.”



EXTRACTS OF APPRECIATIONS
ABOUT
GLIMPSES OF THE HOLY QUR'AN
(*First Edition*)
(NEWSPAPERS)

Daily 'DAWN', Karachi, dated 19-5-1963.

"Glimpses of the Holy Qur'an ' contains extracts from the Holy Qur'an and their translation in English, covering such subjects as Tauhid; Resurrection, Judgement and Award; Missions of all important Prophets; Proclamations, injunctions, prohibitions ordained by the Qur'an; Revelations and forecasts that go to prove the divinity of the Holy Qur'an. In conclusion, the author has collected a number of opinions of non-Muslim scholars and historians, about the Holy Qur'an.

"It is a handy book for all those who are interested in Islamic theology. And while it can be of definite use in promoting the understanding of Islam among non-Muslims, it can also be of immense guidance to the younger people in this country whose education has been lacking in religious thoughts."

Daily 'INDUS TIMES', Hyderabad, dated 29-5-1963:

"As the title denotes, it deals with the teachings of the Qur'an topically, and quotes the original verses in Arabic with their literal translation given below. The purpose in view is to let the Muslim as well as the non-Muslim world know what Islam sought to teach in matters of faith and social relationship. The learned author has admirably succeeded in stating in the simplest and the briefest language, all the salient doctrines taught by Islam. The choice of the English medium, is a realistic recognition of the need of the day. Happily

or unhappily, English now stands as the only lingua-franca for the various peoples that profess Islam. The book, which is no doubt a valuable and welcome addition to the Islamic missionary literature, is divided into eight parts, each devoted to a single theme such as the Oneness of God, the Resurrection, the injunctions and prohibitions, and the like. The choice of topics covers both the 'Ibadat' and the 'Muamilat' i.e., man's duties to God and to fellow men. It presents quite a representative miniature portrait of Islamic belief and practice.

A notable feature is that the last chapter quotes the opinions of the non-Muslim critics of Islam, some of which lie interspersed at the end of other chapters as well. It is perhaps a measure of our slavish respect for non-Muslim thought and criticism that our missionary endeavour has to invoke their aid to gain weight and carry conviction. But unfortunately we cannot help it for facts must be faced, and the domination of non-Muslim scholarship, especially the European, over our intellectual make-up is a decided, though unwholesome, fact.

However, the book may be commended particularly to the Pakistani readers who in their mad craze for unlicensed sensuality, are rearing up an ignoble monument over the pious hopes of Allama Iqbal and the Quaid-i-Azam who had intended Pakistan to be a bold experiment in Islamic polity in an age of Bacchanal lewdness.

Daily 'MORNING NEWS', Karachi, dated 14-7-1963:

"In his Preface, the author rightly laments the gross ignorance of the present day Muslim youth, in the matter of their religion. His aim in writing this book is to give them the rudiments about the teachings of Holy Qur'an, which is the fountain source of Islam. Messrs. Fazlur Rehman Ansari, President of World Federation of Islamic Missions, Inamullah Khan, Secretary-General, Motamar Al-alam Al-Islami and Z.H. Lari, Senior Advocate, in their Forewords have expressed the hope that the book will be useful in disseminating true knowledge, in English language, about Islam.

A perusal of the book shows that the author has tried to achieve his objects on a modest scale. For apparently the whole of the Qur'an cannot be abridged in 96 pages, nor it is so claimed. However, whatever is there in the book, is enough to create an interest in the further study of the Qur'an.

The book is divided into various chapters and each chapter brings out the essential teachings of the Qur'an on some aspect of human belief and behaviour. Thus under 'Prayer' the author says that the meeting of 5 times a day of the believers in the mosque of the locality strengthens fellow feeling and ties of brotherhood. Similarly the believers of the whole town meet each other on Fridays, and twice a year on Id days, people from all the adjoining places come and meet. These prayers therefore contribute among other things to improve human relations in the service of God. The author should have as well added that Islam to crown all these, laid the foundation of the world Assembly of Muslims 13 centuries ago for Haj provides the meeting place where social, political, economic and in fact, everything connected with the well-being of the Muslims, are to be dealt with as was done by the Prophet. (Peace be on him). *In his Khutba at Arafaat, the three days compulsory stay at Mina provides another occasion for such meetings.

The author has also reproduced the opinions of several western writers about the Qur'an. Some of us suffer so much from inferiority complex that they will not even look at anything unless it has the stamp of approval from some western writer. The opinions quoted by the author should go a long way to convince this fraternity that Qur'an has also been acknowledged by unbiassed western thinkers as a Book of God.

Fortnightly 'AL ISLAM', Karachi, dated 1-6-1963 :

"The author has taken great pains to summarise the contents of the Holy Qur'an within the short space of less than one hundred pages. This was made possible by the use of language which is pithy and the frequent use of statements which are concise. In fact with the minimum number of words the learned author has provided the maximum amount of matter which a busy reader of today can find easy to go through in a very short time.

This book needs to be distributed free in the recently emancipated countries of Africa and Asia where missionary work for Islam needs to be done on a grand scale and philanthropic people will render a great service to Islam by purchasing large number of copies of this book and distributing them free through Islamic missionary organisations.

*Note—This has been mentioned under Hajj.

This book, if prescribed a textbook, will be of great help to students of Islamiyat.

Appreciations also in: Urdu Dailies: 'JANG', dated 11-6-63, 'ANJAM', dated 31-5-63.

His Excellency Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, Prime Minister of the Federation of Nigeria:

“Thank you for your letter of 28th June forwarding a copy of your book ‘Glimpses of the Holy Qur’an’. I have read through this book and found it to be most interesting and useful.”

Private Secretary to His Highness The Agha Khan, dated 14-1-1964.

“His Highness has asked me to thank you very warmly for having given him the book, and he looks forward to reading it with much interest.

“His Highness has asked me, however, to convey to you his warm greetings and his sincere hopes that your work will be a great success in propagating Islam.”

EMBASSIES

The Royal Embassy of Saudi Arabia (His Excellency Sheikh Mohammed Al-Hamad Al Shubaily).

“I am in receipt of your letter, dated 15th July, 1963, and pleased to advise you that His Excellency has gone through the ‘Glimpses of the Holy Qur’an’ and found it to be excellent. He wishes you every success.”

Imperial Iranian Embassy (His Excellency Djafar Kafari).

“I am in receipt of a copy of your book ‘Glimpses of the Holy Qur’an’. I have gone through this interesting publication which bears upon your knowledge of, and love for the Holy Book. You have, however, done a great service to the cause of Islam and God will reward you for this virtuous deed. Only the Muslims would read, understand and act with love and sincerity to propagate the cause of Islam.”

The High Commissioner of Malaysia in Pakistan (His Excellency Enche Mohammed bin Baba):

"Glimpses of the Holy Qur'an" is a new approach to the understanding of the Holy Qur'an—an Islamic Literature of great charm and full of wisdom. Particularly for Moslems, young and old, who have only scant knowledge of the Qur'an and its teachings, "Glimpses of the Holy Qur'an" should inspire in them a desire to go for a more detailed study of the Holy Book. I congratulate you for the painstaking efforts that you have put in producing such a useful addition to our Islamic literature. You have indeed performed a most praiseworthy service in the cause of Islam.

Embassy of the Republic of Iraq (His Excellency Al Syed Abdul Kadir Al-Gaylani):

I thank you for your letter of 14th September, 1963, and for your book entitled "Glimpses of the Holy Qur'an" and pray Allah Almighty to help you in your endeavours to serve the religion of Islam which is the duty of every Muslim.

I pray Him also to bestow on you His benediction and that the Holy Prophet's blessing and Ghous-e-Azam Shaikh Mohiuddin Abdul Kadir Al-Gaylani's barkat may be always with you.

Alhaj Maulana Fazlul Karim, Advocate, High Court, Dacca, Author of Al-Hadis, Ideal World Prophet, Religion of Man, Manab Dharama, etc.

I am extremely pleased to read your "Glimpses of the Holy Qur'an" but I could not reply earlier as I was reading your book carefully. My heartfelt thanks to you for your venture as in the midst of pre-occupations of your service life, you have enrolled your name as one of those who are preachers of Islam in silence and in an enduring way.

The type, both English and Arabic, the get-up and general form of the book are excellent and good. This work will be greatly helpful to the students of Islam for their preliminary study and knowledge of Islam, specially to those who have just adopted Islam. I am sure this will create interest and enthusiasm among the English-knowing readers and the students of schools and colleges. I have got no further comments except praise and praise for your noble pen. May the Almighty grant you long life, so that you may be further helping the cause of Islam.

Secretary, Serendib Islamic Propaganda Society, Ceylon

'I went through your book, and found it an interesting and informative book on Islam. Though the book is only a nutshell of Holy Qur'an, the subjects discussed in the book are very useful to the present generation. Further the subjects were supported from the writings of eminent Muslims and non-Muslims. The words chosen to describe the subjects were really good. Finally, I wish your honour in the name of Allah a bright future in the field of Islamic writings.

Mohd. Motiur Rahman, E.P.C.S., Magistrate, First Class, Dacca:

"I have gone through the book with much interest and found it to be a valuable addition to the Islamic literature of the line. We, the Muslims ourselves are much ignorant of the teachings of the Qur'an, and our backwardness is mainly due to the fault that we have drifted far and far away from the Qur'an. We are Muslims by profession and not by practice. The materialistic Western education has been greatly influencing our way of life and thinking, and we, the educated Muslims have a gross misconception about our religion. Pakistan was achieved with an avowed purpose of setting up of free Islam in free India and it would be the laboratory of Islam. The object will not be achieved, I am afraid, unless and until we become Muslims in the true sense of the term. And this requires that we should study the Qur'an thoroughly and build our character and conduct accordingly. I believe, your book will help to create some interest in the English knowing Muslims to study the Qur'an.

"If you kindly permit me, I may translate the Book into Bengali for the benefit of the Bengali-speaking people. In fine, once again, I thank you for the neat, handy and valuable book "Glimpses of the Holy Qur'an."

Alhaj M.A. Kareem Mohammadi, B.A., Tangutur, Andhra Pradesh, India

MAY GOD'S Peace and Blessings be showered upon you!

I have perused your very good book "Glimpses of the Holy Qur'an". I find it to be one of the best compilations that have ever dealt with this important subject. Your minute and clear ex-

position of the fundamentals and more essential doctrines of Islam are remarkably admirable. The book shows the author to be a great learned scholar, gifted with such brilliantly enlightened spirit, and the mastery of English shown is remarkable. I have started translating this book in Telugu for the benefit of Telugu-knowing Muslim brethren throughout the ANDHRA PRADESH.

I therefore, strongly recommend to the heads of Muslim institutions and each and every school for their libraries to purchase the book and encourage the writer to produce many more such books.

Again, I invoke upon you, Almighty God's Peace and Blessings.

GLIMPSES OF THE HADITH

By the same Author

(UNDER PRINT)

Knowledge of the Qur'an alone does not suffice. It has to be supplemented by the sayings of the founder of the great religion, Muhammad (may peace be upon him). The understanding of his sayings which are termed 'Hadith' is absolutely essential. It is this knowledge that this book tries to impart.

The book is divided into two parts. Part I deals with the definition of Hadith, its importance, its preservation, classification, narration and a detailed discussion of the Science and Technique of Hadith with life sketches of some of the Muhaddithin. In Part II a selection of Hadith under various categories and subjects have been given which would prove not only instructive but would inspire the reader with the great ideals preached by Islam in all walks of life and urge him to follow them to attain success both in this world and the world to come.