

SECOND PART
THE PRINCIPLES OF ISLĀM

CHAPTER I

IMĀN OR FAITH

The religion of Islām may be broadly divided into two parts—the theoretical, or what Faith and action. may be called its articles of faith or its doctrines, and the practical, which includes all that a Muslim is required to do, that is to say, the practical course to which he must conform his life. The former are called *uṣūl* and the latter *furūʿ*. The word *uṣūl* is the plural of *aṣl* which means *a root* or *a principle*, and *furūʿ* is the plural of *farʿ* which means *a branch*. The former are also called *ʿaqāid* (pl. of *ʿaqida*, lit. *what one is bound to*) or beliefs, and the latter *aḥkām* (pl. of *ḥukm*, lit. *an order*) or the ordinances and regulations of Islām. According to *Shahrastānī*, the former is *maʿrifā* or knowledge, and the latter *ṭāʿa* or obedience. Thus knowledge is the root; and obedience, or practice, the branch. This terminology is adopted by the later doctors; the two divisions being, in the Holy Qurʾān, *imān* and *ʿamal*. The word *imān*, generally translated as faith or belief, is derived from *amana* (ordinarily rendered, *he believed*) which means, when used transitively, *he granted (him) peace* or *security*, and when used intransitively, *he came into peace* or *security*; while *ʿamal* signifies a deed or action. (The two words are most often used together in the Holy Qurʾān to indicate a believer, and *those who believe and do good* is the oft-recurring description of true believers.) Hence God is called *al-Muʾmin* (59: 23) meaning *the Granter of security*, while the believer is also called *al-muʾmin*, meaning *one who has come into peace* or *security*, because he

THE RELIGION OF ISLĀM

has accepted the principles which bring about peace of mind or security from fear. As a principle is first accepted and then put into action, so the articles of faith are called the *roots*, and the regulations or ordinances which must be carried into effect are called the *branches*, because the branches grow from the roots just as action springs from faith. This relation of faith with actions must be borne in mind if we would understand the true meaning of Islām.

The word *imān* is used in two different senses in the Holy Qur'ān. According to Rāghib, *Imān in the Qur'ān.* the famous lexicologist of the Qur'ān, *imān* is sometimes nothing more than a confession with the tongue that one believes in Muḥammad. There are many examples of this use of the word in the Holy Qur'ān, as in 2:62: "Those who believe (*āmanū*), and the Jews, and the Christians, and the Sabians, whoever believes in Allāh and the last day and does good, they shall have their reward from their Lord, and there is no fear for them, nor shall they grieve;" or in 4:136: "O you who believe (*āmanū*)! believe in Allāh and His Apostle and the Book which He has revealed to His Apostle." But, as Rāghib has further explained, *imān* also implies the condition in which a confession with the tongue is accompanied by an assent of the heart, *taṣḍiq-un bi-l-qalb*, and the carrying into practice of what is believed, *'amal-un bi-l-jawāriḥ*, (lit., *doing of deeds with limbs*), as in 57:19: "And as for those who believe in Allāh and His apostles, these it is that are the truthful and the faithful ones in the sight of their Lord." The word is, however, also used in either of the two latter senses, *i.e.*, as meaning simply the assent of the heart and the doing of good deeds. Examples of this are: "The dwellers of the desert say, We believe; say,

IMĀN OR FAITH

You do not believe but say, We submit; and faith has not yet entered into your hearts" (49:14), where belief clearly stands for the assent of the heart explained in the verse itself; "What reason have you that you should not believe in Allāh, and the Apostle calls on you that you may believe in your Lord and indeed He has made a covenant with you if you are believers" (57:8), where "believe in Allāh" means *make sacrifices in the cause of truth*, as the context shows. Thus the word imān, as used in the Holy Qur'an, signifies either simply a confession of the truth with the tongue, or simply an assent of the heart and a firm conviction of the truth brought by the Holy Prophet, or the doing of good deeds and carrying into practice of the principles accepted, or it may signify a combination of the three. Generally, however, it is employed to indicate an assent of the heart, combined, of course, with a confession with the tongue, to what the prophets bring from God, as distinguished from the doing of good deeds, and hence it is that the righteous as already remarked, are spoken of as those *who believe and do good*.

In Ḥadīth, the word imān is frequently used in its wider sense, that is to say, as including good deeds, and sometimes simply as standing for good deeds. Thus the Holy Prophet is reported to have said: "Imān (faith) has over sixty branches, and modesty (*ḥaya*) is a branch of faith" (Bu. 2:3). In another ḥadīth the words are: "Imān has over seventy branches, the highest of which is (the belief) that nothing deserves to be worshipped except Allāh (*La ilaha ill-Allah*), and the lowest of which is the removal from the way of that which might cause injury to any one" (M. 1:12). According to one ḥadīth:

Imān in Ḥadīth.

THE RELIGION OF ISLĀM

“Love of the Anṣār¹ is a sign of faith” (Bu. 2:10); according to another: “One of you has no faith unless he loves for his brother what he loves for himself” (Bu. 2:7). And a third says: “One of you has no faith unless he has greater love for me than he has for his father and his son and all the people” (Bu. 2:8). The word *īmān* is thus applied to all good deeds, and Bukhārī has as the heading of one of his chapters in the *Kitāb al-Īmān* (Book 2): “He who says, *Īmān* is nothing but the doing of good;” in support of which he quotes verses of the Holy Qur’ān. He argues from verses which speak of faith being increased,² that good deeds are a part of faith, because otherwise faith could not be thus spoken of.

Just as *īmān* is the acceptance of the truth brought by the Prophet, so *kufr* is its rejection, and as the practical acceptance of the truth or the doing of a good deed is called *īmān* or part of *īmān*, so the practical rejection of the truth or the doing of an evil deed is called *kufr* or part of *kufr*. The heading of a chapter in the *Bukhārī* is as follows: “*Ma’āsī* (acts of disobedience) are of the affairs of *jāhiliyya*” (Bu. 2:22). Now *jāhiliyya* (lit. *ignorance*), in the terminology of Islām, means the “time of ignorance” before the advent of the Holy Prophet, and is thus synonymous with *kufr* or unbelief. In support of this is quoted a report relating to Abū Dharr who said that he abused a man, *i. e.*, addressed him as the son of a Negro woman, upon which the Holy Prophet remarked: “Abū

1. The residents of Madīna who helped the Prophet on the occasion of his flight to that city are called Anṣār which is plural of *nāṣir* meaning *a helper*.

2. “He it is who sent down tranquillity into the hearts of the believers that they may have more of faith added to their faith” (48:4); “And those who believe may increase in faith” (74:31); “But this increased their faith” (3:172).

IMĀN OR FAITH

Dharr! thou findest fault with him on account of his mother, surely thou art a man in whom is *jāhiliyya* " (Bu. 2 : 22). Thus the mere act of finding fault with a man on account of his Negro origin is called *jāhiliyya* or *kufr*. According to another ḥadīth, the Prophet is reported to have warned his Companions in the following words: "Beware! do not become unbelievers (*kuffār*, pl. of *kāfir*) after me so that some of you should strike off the necks of others" (Bu. 25 : 132). Here the slaying of Muslims by Muslims is condemned as an act of unbelief. In another ḥadīth, it is said: "Abusing a Muslim is transgression and fighting with him is unbelief (*kufr*)" (Bu. 2 : 36). Yet in spite of the fact that the fighting of Muslims with one another is called *kufr*—and those who fight among themselves are even called *kāfir*s—in these ḥadīth, the Holy Qur'an speaks of two parties of Muslims at war with one another as believers (*mu'minīn*) (49 : 9).¹ It is, therefore, clear that such conduct is called an act of unbelief (*kufr*) simply as being an act of disobedience. This point has been explained by Ibn Athīr in his well-known dictionary of Ḥadīth, the *Nihāya*. Writing under the word *kufr*, he says: "Kufr (unbelief) is of two kinds; one is a denial of the faith itself, and that is the opposite of faith; and the other is denial of a *far'* (branch) of the *furū'* of Islām, and on account of it a man does not get out of the faith itself." As already shown, the *furū'* of Islām are its ordinances, and thus the practical rejection of an ordinance of Islām, while it is called *kufr*, is not *kufr* in the technical sense, *i.e.*, a denial of Islām itself. He also tells of an incident which throws light on this question. Azharī was asked whether a man (*i.e.*, a Muslim) became

1. "And if two parties of believers fight, make peace between them, but if one of them acts wrongfully towards the other, fight that which acts wrongfully until it returns to Allāh's command" (49 : 9).

THE RELIGION OF ISLĀM

a kāfir (unbeliever) simply because he held a certain opinion, and he replied that such an opinion was kufr (unbelief); and, when pressed further, added: "The Muslim is sometimes guilty of kufr (unbelief)." Thus it is clear that a Muslim remains a Muslim though he may be guilty of an act of unbelief (kufr).

The concluding portion of the above paragraph

A Muslim cannot be called a kāfir. properly be called a kāfir. Every evil deed or act of disobedience being part of kufr, even a Muslim may commit an act of unbelief. And the opposite is equally true; namely, that since every good deed is a part of faith, even an unbeliever may perform an act of faith. There is nothing paradoxical in these statements. The dividing line between a Muslim and a kāfir, or between a believer and an unbeliever, is confession of the Unity of God and the prophethood of Muḥammad—*Lā ilāha ill-Allah Muḥammad-un Rasūlu-llah*. A man becomes a Muslim or a believer by making a confession of the Unity of God and of the prophethood of Muḥammad, and so long as he does not renounce his faith in this, he remains a Muslim or a believer technically, in spite of any opinion he may hold on any religious question, or any evil which he may commit or have committed, and a man who does not make this confession is a non-Muslim or unbeliever technically, in spite of any good that he may do. It does not mean that the evil deeds of the Muslim are not punished, or that the good deeds of the non-Muslim are not rewarded. The law of the requital of good and evil is a law apart, which goes on working irrespective of creeds, and the Holy Qur'an puts it in very clear words: "So he who has done an atom's weight of good shall see it; and he who has done an atom's weight of evil shall see it" (99 : 7, 8). A believer is capable of doing evil and an unbeliever

IMĀN OR FAITH

is capable of doing good, and each shall be requited for what he does. But no one has the right to expel any one from the brotherhood of Islām so long as he confesses the Unity of God and the prophethood of Muḥammad. The Qur'an and the Ḥadīth are quite clear on this point. Thus in the Holy Qur'an we have: "And do not say to any one who offers you salutation, Thou art not a believer" (4 : 94). The Muslim form of salutation—*al-salāmu 'alai-kum*, or peace be with you, is thus considered a sufficient indication that the man who offers it is a Muslim, and no one has the right to say to him that he is not a believer, even though he may be insincere. The Holy Qur'an speaks of two parties of Muslims fighting with each other, and yet of both as *mu'min*: "And if two parties of the believers (*mu'minin*) fight with each other, make peace between them" (49 : 9). It then goes on to say: "The believers are but brethren, therefore, make peace between your brethren" (49 : 10).

Even those who were known to be hypocrites were treated as Muslims by the Holy Prophet and his Companions, though they refused to join the Muslims in the struggle in which the latter had to engage in self-defence, and when the reputed chief of these hypocrites, the notorious 'Abd-Allāh ibn Ubayy died, the Holy Prophet offered funeral prayers on his grave and treated him as a Muslim. Ḥadīth is equally clear on this point. According to one ḥadīth, the Holy Prophet is reported to have said: "Whoever offers prayers as we do and turns his face to our Qibla and eats the animal slaughtered by us, he is a Muslim for whom is the covenant of Allāh and His Apostle, so do not violate Allāh's covenant" (Bu. 8 : 28). In another ḥadīth he is reported to have said: "Three things are the basis of faith: to withhold from one who confesses faith in *la ilaha ill-Allah*, you

THE RELIGION OF ISLĀM

should not call him *kāfir* for any sin, nor expel him from Islām for any deed..." (AD. 15 : 33). And according to a third, reported by Ibn 'Umar, he said: "Whoever calls the people of *lā ilaha ill-Allah* *kāfir*, is himself nearer to *kufr*" (Tb.). By the people of *lā ilaha ill-Allah*, or the upholders of the Unity, are clearly meant the Muslims, and it is made quite evident that any one who makes a confession of the *Kalima* that there is no god but Allāh and Muḥammad is His Apostle, becomes a Muslim, and to call him a *kāfir* is the greatest of sins. Thus it will be seen that membership of the brotherhood of Islām is a thing not to be tested by some great theologian, well-versed in logical quibblings, but rather by the man in the street, by the man of common sense, or even by the illiterate man who can judge of another by his very appearance, who is satisfied with even a greeting in the Muslim style of greeting, who requires no further argument when he sees a man turn his face to the Qibla, and to whom Islām means the confession of the Unity of God and the prophethood of Muḥammad.

A doctrine so plainly and so forcibly taught in the Holy Qur'ān and Ḥadīth stands in need of no support from the great and learned men among the Muslims, but, notwithstanding the schisms and differences that arose afterwards, and the numerous intricacies that were introduced into the simple faith of Islām by the logical niceties of later theologians, the principle above stated is upheld by all authorities on Islām. Thus the author of the *Mawāqif* sums up the views of Muslim theologians in the following words: "The generality of the theologians and the jurists are agreed that none of the *Ahl Qibla* (the people who recognize the Ka'ba as their *qibla*) can be called a *kāfir*" (Mf. p. 600). And the famous Abu-l-Ḥasan Ash'arī writes in the very beginning of his book *Maqalat al-Islamiyyin wa ikhtilafat al-Muṣallin*

IMĀN OR FAITH

(*what the Muslims say and the differences of those who pray*): "After the death of their Prophet, the Muslims became divided on many points, some of them calling others *dzall* (straying from the right path), and some shunned others, so that they became sects entirely separated from each other, and scattered parties, but Islām gathers them all and includes them all in its sphere" (MI. pp. 1, 2).¹ Ṭaḥāwī, too, is reported as saying that "nothing can drive a man out of imān except the denial of what makes him enter it" (Rd. III, p. 310). Similarly Aḥmad ibn al-Muṣṭafā says that it is only bigoted people who call each other kāfirs, for, he adds: "Trustworthy Imāms from among the Ḥanafīs and the Shāfi'īs and the Mālikīs and the Ḥanbalīs and the Ash'arīs hold that none of the *Ahl Qibla* can be called a kāfir" (MD. I, p. 46). In fact, it is the Khwārij who first introduced divisions or sectarianism into Islām by calling their Muslim brethren kāfirs, simply because they disagreed with their views.

1. Ash'arī states this principle by way of a preliminary to a discussion on the different sects of Islām, and then he goes on to speak of the Muslims as being divided into the Sh'r'a, the Khwārij, the Murji'a, the Mu'tazila, etc. Next he proceeds to discuss the main sub-divisions of these heads, those of the Sh'r'a being the Ghā'iya (Extremists) who are again sub-divided into fifteen sects, the Rāfidza who are sub-divided into twenty-four different sects, and the Zaidiya who have six branches. Fifteen sub-divisions of the Khwārij are spoken of, and so on with regard to the other main sects. All these different sects and sub-sects are spoken of by Ash'arī as being Muslims, and not even the Ghā'iya are excluded from Islām, though almost all of them believed in one of their leaders as a prophet, and legalized certain things expressly forbidden in the Holy Qur'ān. For instance, the Bayāniya believed in the prophethood of Bayān, their founder; the followers of 'Abd-Allāh ibn Mu'āwiya believed in their founder as Lord and as a prophet; and so it was with many others of them. Even these people are called Muslims because they still believed in the prophethood of Muḥammad and in the Divine origin of the Qur'ān and followed the law of Islām. The modern followers of Ash'arī who call their Muslim brethren kāfirs for the slightest differences should take a lesson from this.

THE RELIGION OF ISLĀM

The lexicology of *imān* and *Islām* has already been explained. The word *imān* signifies

Imān and Islām.

originally *conviction of the heart*,

while the word *Islām* signifies originally *submission*, and hence relates primarily to action. This difference in the original meaning finds expression both in the Qur'an and the Ḥadīth, though in ordinary use they both convey the same significance, and mu'min and Muslim are generally used interchangeably. An example of the distinction in their use in the Holy Qur'an is afforded in 49:14: "The dwellers of the desert say, We believe (*āmannā* from *imān*); say, you do not believe but say, We submit (*aslamnā* from *islām*); and faith has not yet entered into your hearts; and if you obey Allāh and His Apostle, He will not diminish aught of your deeds; for Allāh is Forgiving, Merciful."¹ This does not mean, of course, that they did not believe in

1. The use of *imān* and *Islām* in Ḥadīth points occasionally to a similar distinction in use, though ordinarily they are used interchangeably. Thus in the *Kitāb al-Imān*, Bukhārī relates the following from Abū Huraira: "The Prophet, may peace and the blessings of Allāh be upon him, was one day sitting outside among the people when a man came to him and asked; What is *imān*? He replied: *Imān* is this that thou believe in Allāh and His angels and in the meeting with Him and His apostles, and that thou believe in life after death. He asked, What is *Islām*? He replied: *Islām* is this that thou worship Allāh and do not associate with Him aught, and keep up prayer and pay the obligatory alms (*zakāt*) and keep fast in *Ramadzān*" (Bu. 2: 37). In another ḥadīth narrated in the same book, it is stated how when a Companion of the Prophet speaking of another repeatedly said that he thought him to be a believer (mu'min), the Prophet every time said, Rather a Muslim (Bu. 2: 19); thus indicating that men could judge of each other only from outward acts. In the beginning of that book, however, a ḥadīth is narrated from Ibn 'Umar showing that *Islām* also includes belief: "*Islām* is based on five fundamentals, the bearing of witness (*shahāda*) that there is no god but Allāh and that Muḥammad is the Apostle of Allāh, and the keeping up of prayer, and the giving of *zakāt*, and the pilgrimage, and fasting in the month of *Ramadzān*" (Bu. 2: 1). The word used here is, however, *shahāda* (or, *the bearing of witness*) not *imān* or *believing*, and *shahāda* in this case, though requiring a belief in the truth of what is stated, is still an outward act.

IMĀN OR FAITH

the prophethood of Muḥammad. The significance of faith entering into the heart is made clear in the very next verse : "The believers are those only who believe in Allāh and His Apostle, then they doubt not and struggle hard with their wealth and their lives in the way of Allāh ; they are the truthful ones " (49 : 15). In fact, both words, imān and Islām, are used to signify two different stages in the spiritual growth of man. A man is said to have believed (*amana*) when he simply declares his faith in the Unity of God and the prophethood of Muḥammad, which in fact is the first stage of belief, because it is only by declaration of the acceptance of a principle that one makes a start ; and a man is also said to have believed (*amana*) when he carries into practice to their utmost extent the principles in which he has declared his faith. Examples of both these uses have already been given ; examples of the first are 2 : 62, 4 : 136 ; an example of the latter (49 : 15) has just been quoted above. The only difference is that in the first use, belief or imān is in its first stage, a confession of the tongue—a declaration of the principle ; and in the second, imān has been perfected and indicates the last stage of faith—which has then entered into the depths of the heart, and brought the change required. The same is the case with the use of the word Islām ; in its first stage it is simply a willingness to submit, as in the verse quoted above (49 : 14) ; in its last it is entire submission, as in 2 : 112 : " Yea ! whoever submits himself (*aslama*) entirely to Allāh, and he is the doer of good (to others), he has his reward from his Lord, and there is no fear for them, nor shall they grieve." Thus both imān and Islām are the same in their first and last stages—from a simple declaration they have developed into perfection, and cover all the intermediate stages. They have both a starting point

THE RELIGION OF ISLĀM

and a goal ; and the man who is at the starting point, the mere novice, and the man who has attained the goal, in spite of all the difference between them, are both called mu'min or Muslim, as are also those who are on their way, at different stages of the journey.

The above discussion leads us also to the conclusion

No dogmas in Islām. that there are no dogmas in Islām, no mere beliefs forced upon a man for

his alleged salvation. Belief, according to Islām, is not only a conviction of the truth of a given proposition, but it is essentially the acceptance of a proposition as a basis for action. The Qur'ān definitely upholds this view for, according to it, while the proposition of the existence of devils is as true as that of the existence of angels, a belief in angels is again and again mentioned as part of a Muslim's faith, whereas a disbelief in devils is as clearly mentioned as necessary : " Therefore he who disbelieves (*yakfur*) in the devil and believes (*yu'min*) in Aliāh, has surely laid hold on the firmest handle " (2 : 257). The words used here for believing in God and disbelieving in devils are, respectively, *īmān* and *kufr*. If *īmān* meant simply a belief in the existence of a thing, and *kufr* the denying of the existence of a thing, a disbelief in devils could not have been spoken of as necessary along with a belief in God. God exists, the angels exist, the devil exists ; but while we must believe in God and His angels, we must disbelieve in the devil. This is because the angel, according to the Qur'ān, is the being who prompts the doing of good, and the devil is the being who prompts the doing of evil, so that a belief in angels means really acting upon the promptings to do good, and a disbelief in the devil means refusing to entertain evil promptings. Thus *īmān* (belief) really signifies the acceptance of a principle as a basis for action, and every doctrine of Islām answers to this description. There are no dogmas,

IMĀN OR FAITH

no mysteries, no faith which does not require action ; for every article of faith means a principle to be carried into practice for the higher development of man.

The whole of the religion of Islām is briefly summed up in the two short sentences, *La ilaha ill-Allah, i.e.*, there is no god

Principles of faith.

but Allāh, or, nothing deserves to be made an object of love and worship except Allāh, *Muhammad-un Rasūlullah, i.e.* Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allāh. It is simply by bearing witness to the truth of these two simple propositions that a man enters the fold of Islām. These two component parts of the simple faith of Islām do not occur together in the Holy Qur'ān, as in the accepted creed. The first part of the creed, however, is the constant theme of the Holy Qur'ān, and a faith in the Unity of God, in the fact that there is no god except Allāh, is repeatedly mentioned as the basic principle, not only of Islām but of every religion revealed by God. It takes several forms : "Have they a god with Allāh ?" "Have they a god besides Allāh ?" "There is no god except Allāh ;" "There is no god but He ;" "There is no god but Thou ;" "There is no god but I." The second part of the creed, *Muhammad-un Rasūlullah* is based on the apostleship of the Holy Prophet Muḥammad, which is also a constant theme of the Holy Qur'ān, and the very words occur in 48 : 29 ; while from Ḥadīth it appears that the essential condition of the acceptance of Islām was the acceptance of these two component parts of the creed (Bu. 2 : 40).

The above, in the terminology of the later theologians, is called *imān mujmal* or a brief expression of faith ; while the detailed expression of faith, which the later theologians call *mufaṣṣal*, is set forth in the very beginning of the Holy Qur'ān as follows : a belief in the Unseen (*i.e.* God), a belief in that which was revealed to the

THE RELIGION OF ISLĀM

Holy Prophet Muḥammad and in that which was revealed to the prophets before him, and a belief in the Hereafter (2 : 2-4). Further on in the same chapter, five principles of faith are clearly mentioned: "That one should believe in Allāh and the Last Day and the Angels and the Books and the Prophets" (2 : 177). Again and again the Holy Qur'ān makes it clear that it is only in relation to these five that belief is required. In the Ḥadīth, there is a slight variation. Bukhārī has it as follows: "That thou believe in Allāh and His Angels and in the meeting with Him and His Apostles and that thou believe in the Life after death" (Bu. 2:37). It will be seen that a belief in the meeting with God is mentioned distinctly here, and while this is included in the belief in God in the Holy Qur'ān in the verse quoted above, it is also mentioned distinctly on many occasions; see 13: 2, etc. Again, in the Ḥadīth, the Books are not mentioned distinctly and are included in the word "Apostles." Thus the basis of belief rests on five principles, according to the Holy Qur'ān and Ḥadīth, God, His Angels, His Prophets, His Books, and a Life after death. But in some ḥadīth, the words are added: "That thou believe in *qadar*" (lit., *the measure*). *Qadar* is, no doubt, spoken of in the Holy Qur'ān as a law of God, but never as an article of faith, and all the Divine laws are accepted as true by every Muslim.

As I have already said, all articles of faith are in reality principles of action. Allāh is the Being Who possesses all the perfect attributes, and when a man is required to believe in Allāh, he is really required to make himself possessor of the highest moral qualities, his goal being the attainment of the Divine attributes. He must set before himself the highest and purest ideal of which the heart of man can conceive, and make his conduct conform to that

IMĀN OR FAITH

ideal. Belief in the angels means that the believer should follow the good impulses which are inherent in him, for the angel is the being who turns a good impulse. Belief in the books of God signifies that we should follow the directions contained in them for the development of our inner faculties. Belief in apostles means that we are to model ourselves on their noble example and sacrifice our lives for humanity even as they did. Belief in the Hereafter or the Last Day tells us that physical or material advancement is not the end or goal of life ; but that its real purpose is an infinitely higher one, of which the Resurrection, or the Last Day, is but the beginning.

CHAPTER II.
THE DIVINE BEING.

SEC. I.—THE EXISTENCE OF GOD.

In all religious books the existence of God is taken almost as an axiomatic truth. The Material, inner and spiritual experience of Holy Qur'an, however, advances humanity. numerous arguments to prove the existence of a Supreme Being Who is the Creator and Controller of this universe. In a brief treatment like the present, I can only refer to the three main kinds of arguments with which the Holy Book chiefly deals. These are, first, the arguments drawn from creation, which may be called the lower or material experience of humanity; secondly, the evidence of human nature, which may be called the inner experience of humanity; and thirdly, the arguments based on Divine revelation to man, which may be called the higher or spiritual experience of humanity. It will be seen, from what is said further on, that, as the scope of experience is narrowed down, so the arguments gain in effectiveness. The argument from creation simply shows that there *must be* a Creator of this universe, Who is also its Controller, but it does not go so far as to show that there *is* a God. The testimony of human nature proceeds a step further, since there is in it a consciousness of Divine existence, though that consciousness may differ in different natures according as the inner light is bright or dim. It is only revelation that discloses God in the full splendour of His light, and shows the sublime attributes which man must emulate if he is to attain perfection, together with the means whereby he can hold communion with the Divine Being.

THE RELIGION OF ISLAM

The first argument, that from creation, centres round the word *Rabb*. In the very first revelation that came to the Holy Prophet, he was told to "read in the name of the *Rabb* Who created" (96 : 1). Now the word *Rabb*, which is generally translated as 'Lord', conveys really quite a different significance. According to the best authorities on Arabic lexicology, it combines two senses, that of *fostering, bringing up or nourishing*, and that of *regulating, completing and accomplishing* (LL., TA.). Thus its underlying idea is that of fostering things from the crudest state to that of highest perfection ; in other words, the idea of evolution. Raghīb is even more explicit on this point. According to him, *Rabb* signifies *the fostering of a thing in such a manner as to make it attain one condition after another until it reaches its goal of perfection*. There is thus, in the use of the word *Rabb*, an indication that everything created by God bears the impress of Divine creation, in the characteristic of moving on from lower to higher stages until it reaches completion. This argument is expanded and made clearer in another very early revelation which runs thus : "Glorify the name of thy *Rabb*, the most High, Who creates, then, makes complete, and Who makes (things) according to a measure, then guides them to their goal of perfection" (87 : 1-3). The full idea of *Rabb* is here expounded : He creates things and brings them to perfection ; He makes things according to a measure and shows them the ways whereby they may attain to perfection. The idea of evolution is fully developed in the first two actions, the creation and the completion, so that every thing created by God must attain to its destined completion. The last two actions show how the completion or evolution is brought about. Everything is made according to a measure, that is to say, certain laws

THE EXISTENCE OF GOD

of development are inherent in it ; and it is also shown a way, that is to say, it knows the line along which it must proceed, so that it may reach its goal of completion. It thus appears that the creative force is not a blind force but one possessing wisdom and acting with a purpose, and that purpose is the moving on of the whole creation from the lower to the higher. Even to the ordinary eye, wisdom and purpose are observable throughout the whole of the Divine creation, from the tiniest particle of dust or blade of grass to the mighty spheres moving in the universe on their appointed courses, because everyone of them is travelling on along a certain line to its appointed goal of completion.

In this connection let me draw attention to another characteristic of God's creation. Everything, we are told, is created in pairs :

"And the heaven, We raised it high with power, and We are the maker of things ample. And the earth, We have made it a wide extent ; how well have We spread it out. And of everything We have created pairs that you may be mindful " (51 : 47-49).

"Glory be to Him Who created pairs of 'all things, of what the earth grows and of their own kind and of what they do not know " (36 : 36).

"And He Who created pairs of all things " (43 : 12).

This shows that there are pairs not only in the animal creation but also in " what the earth grows," that is, in the vegetable kingdom, and further in " what you do not know ". In fact, the idea of pairing is carried to its furthest extent, so that even the heavens and the earth are described as if they were a pair, because of the quality of activity in the one and that of passivity in the other. This deep inter-relationship of things is also an evidence of Divine purpose in the whole of creation.

THE RELIGION OF ISLAM

A further point upon which the Holy Qur'an lays

One law prevails in especial stress is the fact that, the whole universe. notwithstanding its immensity of variety, there is but one law for the whole universe :

“Who created the seven heavens alike ; thou seest no incongruity in the creation of the Beneficent God ; then look again, canst thou see any disorder? Then turn back the eye again and again ; thy look shall come back to thee confused while it is fatigued ” (67 : 3,4).

Here we are told that there is in creation neither incongruity whereby things belonging to the same class are subject to different laws ; nor disorder whereby the law cannot work uniformly ; so that the miraculous regularity and uniformity of law in the midst of the unimaginable variety of conflicting conditions existing in the universe is also evidence of a Divine purpose and wisdom in the creation of things.

Another argument that there is an intelligent Being

The whole of creation guiding the universe is the fact that is held under control. from the smallest particle to the largest heavenly body, everything is held under control and is subject to a law ; no one thing interferes with the course of another or hampers it ; while, on the other hand, all things are helping each other on to attain perfection. The Holy Qur'an stresses this fact frequently :

“The sun and the moon follow a reckoning and the herbs and the trees do adore ” (55 : 5, 6).

“And the sun runs on to a term appointed for it ; that is the ordinance of the Mighty, the Wise. And for the moon We have ordained stages till it becomes again as an old dry palm branch. Neither is it allowable to the sun that it should overtake the moon, nor can the night outstrip the day ; and all bodies float on in a sphere” (36 : 38-40).

“Again, He directed Himself to the heaven and it is

THE EXISTENCE OF GOD

a vapour, so He said to it and to the earth, Come both willingly or unwillingly. They both said, We come willingly " (41 : 11).

"Allah is He Who made subservient to you the sea that the ships may run therein by His command, and that you may seek of His grace, and that you may give thanks. And He has made subservient to you whatsoever is in the heavens and whatsoever is in the earth, all, from Himself; indeed there are signs in this for a people who reflect" (45 : 12,13).

"And He created the sun and the moon and the stars, made subservient by His command; surely His is the creation and the command" (7 : 54).

All these verses show that inasmuch as everything is subject to command and control for the fulfilment of a certain purpose, there must be an all-Wise Controller of the whole.

The second class of argument for the existence of

Guidance afforded by
human nature.

God relates to the human soul. In the first place there is the consciousness of the existence of God. There is an inner light within each man telling him that there is a Higher Being, a God, a Creator. This inner evidence is often brought out in the form of a question. It is like an appeal to man's inner self. The question is sometimes left unanswered, as if man were called upon to give it a deeper thought: "Or were they created for nothing, or are they the creators (of their own souls)? Or did they create the heavens and the earth?" (52 : 35, 36). Sometimes the answer is given: "And if thou shouldst ask them, Who created the heavens and the earth, they would certainly say, The Mighty, the Knowing One, has created them" (43 : 9). On one occasion, the question is put direct to the human soul by God Himself: "And when thy Lord brought forth from the children of Adam,

THE RELIGION OF ISLĀM

from their backs, their descendants, and made them bear witness regarding their own souls : Am I not your Lord (*Rabb*) ? They said : Yes ! we bear witness " (7 : 172). This is clearly the evidence of human nature, which is elsewhere spoken of as being " the nature made by Allāh in which He has made all men " (30 : 30). Sometimes this consciousness on the part of the human soul is mentioned in terms of its unimaginable nearness to the Divine Spirit : " We are nearer to him than his life-vein " (50 : 16). And again, " We are nearer to it (the soul) than you " (56 : 85). The idea that God is nearer to man than his own self only shows that the consciousness of the existence of God in the human soul is even clearer than the consciousness of its own existence.

If, then, the human soul has such a clear consciousness of the existence of God, how is it, the question may be asked, that there are men who deny the existence of God ? Here, two things must be borne in mind. In the first place the inner light within each man, which makes him conscious of the existence of God, is not equally clear in all cases. With some, as with the great divines of every age and country, that light shines forth in its full glory, and their consciousness of the Divine presence is very strong. In the case of ordinary men consciousness is generally weaker and the inner light more dim ; there may even be cases in which that consciousness is only in a state of inertia, and the inner light has almost gone out. Secondly, even the Atheist or the Angostic recognizes a First Cause, or a Higher Power, even though he may deny the existence of a God with particular attributes ; and occasionally that consciousness is awakened in him, and the inner light asserts itself, especially in times of distress or affliction. It looks very much as though ease and comfort, like evil, cast a veil over the inner light of man, and that veil were removed by distress—a fact to

THE EXISTENCE OF GOD

which the Holy Qur'an has repeatedly called attention:

“And when We show favour to man, he turns aside and withdraws himself, and when evil touches him, he makes lengthy supplications” (41 : 51).

“ And when harm afflicts men, they call upon their Lord turning to him ” (30 : 33).

“ And when the waves come over them like coverings they call upon Allāh, being sincere to Him in obedience, but when He brings them safe to the land, some of them follow the middle course ” (31 : 32).

“ And whatever favour is bestowed on you, it is from Allāh, and when evil afflicts you, to Him do you cry for aid ” (16 : 53).

There is in man's soul something more than mere consciousness of the existence of God; there is in it a yearning after its Maker—the instinct to turn to God for help; there is implanted in it the love of God for Whose sake it is ready to make every sacrifice. Finally it cannot find complete contentment without God. But it is difficult to deal with these and the numerous other subjects relating to the attributes of the human soul in the short space at our disposal; so, perforce, we must leave it there.

The clearest and surest evidence relating to the exist-

ence of God is afforded by Divine
Guidance afforded by Divine revelation.

revelation, which not only establishes the truth of the existence of God, but also casts a flood of light on the Divine attributes, without which the existence of the Divine Being would remain mere dogma. It is through this disclosure of the Divine attributes that belief in God becomes the most important factor in the evolution of man, since a knowledge of those attributes enables him to set before himself the high ideal of imitating Divine morals; and it is only thus that man can rise to the highest moral eminence. God is the

THE RELIGION OF ISLAM

Nourisher of all the worlds, so His worshipper will do his utmost to serve the cause of humanity, and exercise care even for the dumb creation. God is Loving and Affectionate to His creatures, so one who believes in Him will be moved by the impulse of love and affection towards His creation. God is Merciful and Forgiving, so His servant must be merciful and forgiving to his fellow-beings.

A belief in a God possessing the perfect attributes made known by Divine revelation, is the highest ideal which a man can place before himself; and without this ideal there is a void in man's life which drains it of all earnestness and every noble aspiration.

In another way, Divine revelation brings man closer to God and makes His existence felt as a reality in his life, and that is through the example of the perfect man who holds communion with the Divine Being. That God is a Reality, a Truth—in fact, the greatest reality in this world—that man can feel His presence and realize Him in every hour of his everyday life, and have the closest relations with Him; that such a realization of the Divine Being works a change in the life of man, making him an irresistible spiritual force in the world, is not the solitary experience of one individual or of one nation, but the universal experience of men in all nations, all countries and all ages. Abraham, Moses, Christ, Confucius, Zoroaster, Rama, Krishna, Buddha and Muḥammad, each and every one of these luminaries, has brought about a moral, and in some cases also a material, revolution in the world, which the combined resources of whole nations have been powerless to resist, and has lifted up humanity from the depths of degradation to the greatest heights of moral, and even material, prosperity; which only shows to what heights man's soul may rise if only it works in true relationship with the Divine Being.

THE EXISTENCE OF GOD

To take but one example, that of the Holy Prophet Muḥammad. A solitary man arises in the midst of a whole nation which is sunk deep in all kinds of vice and degradation. He has no power at his back, not even a man to second him, and without any preliminaries at all he sets his hand to the unimaginable and apparently impossible task of the reformation, not merely of that one nation, but through it, of the whole of humanity, and he starts with that one Force, the Force Divine, which makes possible the impossible—"Read in the name of thy Lord;" "Arise and warn and thy Lord do magnify." The cause was Divine, and it was on Divine help that its success depended. With every new dawn the task grows harder, and the opposition waxes stronger, until, to an onlooker, there is nothing but disappointment everywhere. Yet how does it affect the Prophet's mind? His determination grows stronger with the strength of the opposition and, while in the earlier revelation there are only general statements of the triumph of his cause and the failure of the enemy, those statements become clearer and more definite as the prospects, to all outward appearance, grow more hopeless. Here are a few verses in the order of their revelation :

"By the grace of thy Lord thou art not mad. And thou shalt surely have a reward never to be cut off" (68 : 2, 3).

"Surely We have given thee abundance of good" (108 : 1).

"Surely with difficulty is ease" (94 : 5).

"And what comes after is certainly better for thee than that which has gone before, and soon will thy Lord give thee so that thou shalt be well pleased" (93 : 4, 5).

"Truly it is the word of an honoured Messenger, the possessor of strength, having an honourable place with the Lord of the throne" (81 : 19, 20).

"And during a part of the night, forsake sleep by it

THE RELIGION OF ISLĀM

(i. e. the Qur'ān)maybe thy Lord will raise thee to a position of great glory " (17 : 79).

" O man ! We have not revealed the Qur'an to thee that thou mayest be unsuccessful " (20 : 1, 2).

" And on that day the believers shall rejoice, with the help of Allāh " (30 : 4, 5).

" Surely We help Our apostles, and those who believe, in this world's life and on the day when the witnesses shall stand up " (40 : 51).

" Blessed is He Who, if He please, will give thee better gardens than these, in which rivers flow, and He will give thee palaces " (25 : 10).

" Allāh has promised to those of you who believe and do good that He will make them rulers in the earth as He made rulers those before them, and that He will establish for them their religion which He has chosen for them, and that He will, after their fear, give them security in exchange " (24 : 55).

" He it is Who sent His Apostle with the guidance and the true religion that He may make it prevail over all the religions " (48 : 28).

In like manner, the end of opposition is described more clearly in the later revelations than in the earlier, although that opposition grew more and more powerful as days went on. The following three verses belong to three different periods :

" Until when they see what they are threatened with, they shall know whō is weaker in helpers and fewer in number " (72 : 24).

" Or do they say, We are a host allied together to help each other ? Soon shall the hosts be routed and they shall turn their backs " (54 : 44, 45).

" Say to those who disbelieve, you shall soon be vanquished " (3 : 11).

And all this came about years after these things had

THE RELIGION OF ISLĀM

been foretold, though at the time of their foretelling there was nothing to justify such prophecies ; nay, the circumstances were all against them. No man could possibly have foreseen what was so clearly stated as certain to come about, and no human power could have brought to utter failure the whole nation with all its resources ranged against a solitary man whom it was determined to destroy. Divine revelation thus affords the clearest and surest testimony of the existence of God, before Whose knowledge, past, present and future are alike and Who controls alike the forces of nature and the destiny of man.

SEC. 2—THE UNITY OF GOD.

All the basic principles of Islām are fully dealt with in the Holy Qur'ān, and so is the doctrine of faith in God, whereof the corner-stone is belief in the Unity of God (*tauḥīd*). The best-known expression of Divine Unity is that contained in *la ilāha ill-Allāh*. It is made up of four words, *la* (no), *ilāh* (that which is worshipped), *illa* (except) and Allāh (the proper name of the Divine Being). Thus these words, which are commonly rendered into English as meaning, "there is no god but Allāh", convey the significance that there is nothing which deserves to be worshipped except Allāh. It is this confession which, when combined with the confession of the prophethood of Muḥammad—*Muḥammad-un Rasūlu-llāh*—, admits a man into the fold of Islām. The Unity of God, according to the Holy Qur'ān, implies that God is One in His person (*dhat*), One in His attributes (*ṣifāt*) and One in His works (*af'al*). His Oneness in His person means that there is neither plurality of gods, nor plurality of persons in the Godhead ; His Oneness in attributes implies that no other being possesses one or more of the Divine attributes in perfection ; His Oneness in works implies

THE UNITY OF GOD

that none can do the works which God has done, or which God may do.¹ The doctrine of Unity is beautifully summed up in one of the shortest and earliest chapters of the Holy Qur'an: "Say, He, Allāh is One; Allāh is He on Whom all depend; He begets not, nor is He begotten; and none is like Him" (ch. 112).

The opposite of Unity or *Tawhīd* is *shirk*. The word *shirk* implies *partnership* and *sharik* (pl. *shurakā'*) means *a partner*. In the Holy Qur'an, *shirk* is used to signify the associating of gods with God, whether such association be with respect to the person of God or His attributes or His works, or with respect to the obedience which is due to Him alone. *Shirk* is said to be the gravest of all sins: "*Shirk* is a grievous iniquity" (31:13); "Allah does not forgive the association of other gods with Him and forgives what is besides that to whomsoever He pleases" (4:48). But the great gravity of this human weakness is not due to the jealousy of God—in fact jealousy is, according to the Holy Qur'an, quite unthinkable as an attribute of the Divine Being; it is due to the fact that it demoralizes man, while Divine Unity brings about his moral elevation. According to the Holy Qur'an, man is God's vicegerent (*khalīfa*) on earth (2:30), and this shows that he is gifted with the power of controlling the rest of the earthly creation. We are told expressly that he has been made to rule the world: "Allāh is He Who made subservient to you the sea that the ships may run therein by His command and that you may seek of His grace, and that you may give thanks. And He has made subservient to you whatsoever is in the heavens and whatsoever is in the earth, all from Himself; surely there are signs in this

1. Some have explained Oneness in attributes as meaning that He does not possess two powers, two knowledges, etc., and Oneness in works as meaning that no other being has influence over Him.

THE RELIGION OF ISLAM

for a people who reflect" (45 : 12,13). Man is thus placed above the whole of creation ; nay even above the very angels who make obeisance to him (2 : 34). If, then, man has been created to rule the universe and is gifted with the power to subdue everything and to turn it to his use, does he not degrade himself by taking other things for gods, by bowing before the very things which he has been created to conquer and rule ? This is an argument which the Holy Qur'an has itself advanced against shirk. Thus the words, " Shall I seek a lord other than Allāh, and He is the Lord of all things " (6 : 165), are followed in the next verse by " And He has made you rulers of the earth." And again : " What, shall I seek for you a god other than Allāh while He has made you excel all created things ? " (7 : 140). Shirk is, therefore, of all sins the most serious because it degrades man and renders him unfit for attaining the high position destined for him in the Divine scheme.

The various forms of shirk mentioned in the Holy Qur'an are an indication of the shirk. ennobling message underlying the teaching of Divine Unity. These are summed-up in 3 : 63 : " That we shall not worship¹ any but Allāh and that we shall not associate aught with Him and that some of us shall not take others for lords besides Allāh." These are really three forms of shirk—a fourth kind is mentioned separately. The most palpable form of shirk is that in which anything besides God is worshipped, such as stones, idols, trees, animals, tombs, heavenly bodies, forces of nature,

1. The Arabic word for worship is 'ibāda, which carries originally a wide significance, *the showing of submission to the utmost extent, or obedience which is combined with the utmost humility*, but in ordinary usage it means the adopting of a reverential attitude of the body towards a thing, while the mind is engrossed with ideas of its greatness and mightiness, and the making of supplications to it. It is in this sense that the word 'ibāda is used here.

THE UNITY OF GOD

or human beings who are supposed to be demi-gods or gods or incarnations of God or sons or daughters of God. The second kind of shirk, which is less palpable, is the associating of other things with God, that is to say, to suppose that other things and beings possess the same attributes as the Divine Being. The belief that there are three persons in the Godhead, and that the Son and the Holy Ghost are eternal, Omnipotent and Omniscient like God Himself, as in the Christian creed, or that there is a Creator of Evil along with a Creator of Good, as in Zoroastrianism, or that matter and soul are co-eternal with God and self-existing like Himself, as in Hinduism—all fall under this head. The last kind of shirk is that in which some men take others for their lords. The meaning of this was explained by the Holy Prophet himself, in answer to a question put to him. When 9:31 was revealed—"they have taken their doctors of law and their monks for lords besides Allāh"—'Adiyy ibn Ḥatim, a convert from Christianity, said to the Holy Prophet that the Jews and the Christians did not worship the doctors of law and the monks. The Holy Prophet asked him if it was not true that they blindly obeyed them in what they enjoined and what they forbade, and 'Adiyy answered in the affirmative, which shows that to follow the behests of great men blindly was also considered shirk. And the fourth kind of shirk is that which is referred to in 25:43: "Hast thou seen him who takes his low desires for his god?" Here blindly following one's own desires is also called shirk; the reason being that the Unity of God is not merely a dogma to be believed in, but has a deep underlying significance as will be shown later on. A belief in the Unity of God means that true obedience is due to God alone, and whosoever obeys either any one else, or his own low desires, in preference to the Divine commandments, is really guilty of shirk.

THE RELIGION OF ISLĀM

Of the different forms of shirk, idolatry is denounced in the most scathing terms and, indeed, is cited more frequently than all the other forms of shirk. This is due to the fact that idolatry is the most heinous form of shirk and also was the most rampant throughout the world at the advent of Islām. Not only is idolatry condemned in its gross form, which takes it for granted that an idol can cause benefit or do harm, but the idea is also controverted that there is any meaning underlying this gross form of worship: "And those who take guardians besides Him, (saying), We do not serve them save that they may bring us nearer to Allah, Allah will judge between them in that in which they differ" (39 : 33). A similar excuse is put forward today by some of the advanced idolators. It is said that an idol is used simply to concentrate the worshipper's attention, which means that with an idol before a worshipper, whereon he may concentrate his attention, he will become more deeply engrossed in Divine contemplation, and that is the very idea which is controverted in the verse quoted above—"that they may bring us nearer to Allāh." But even in this case the worshipper must believe that the idol on which he centres his attention is a symbol of the Divine Being, which is a grossly false notion; and, moreover, it is the idol on which the worshipper's attention is centred, not the Divine Being. It is also wrong to suppose that a material symbol is necessary for concentration, for attention can be every whit as easily concentrated on a spiritual object, and it is only when the object of attention is spiritual that concentration helps the development of will-power. Along with idol-worship, the Holy Qur'an also prohibits dedication to idols (6 : 137).

THE UNITY OF GOD

Another form of prevailing shirk denounced in the Holy Qur'an is the worship of the sun, the moon, the stars, in fact of everything which might appear to control the destinies of man. The worship of these great luminaries is expressly forbidden: "And among His signs are the night and the day and the sun and the moon; do not make obeisance to the sun nor to the moon, and make obeisance to Allah Who created them" (41 : 37). The argument is also clearly put forth in Abraham's controversy with his people that these things are themselves under the control of a Higher Power.¹ The argument thus advanced against the worship of the sun and the moon not only applies to all heavenly bodies, but also, and equally well, to all the forces of nature, which are in fact again and again mentioned as being made subservient to man. The worship of Sirius is alluded to in 53 : 49, where God is called the Lord of Sirius.

Deism is mentioned in particular : "And Allah has said, Take not two gods, He is only One God" (16 : 51). The jinn are also referred to as being set up on a level with God : "And they make the jinn associates with Allah, while He created them (6 : 101)." The Trinity is also denounced as a form of shirk : "Believe therefore in Allah and His apostles, and say not, Three ; desist, it is better for you ; Allah is only One God" (4 : 171). It is sometimes

1. " And thus did We show Abraham the kingdom of the heavens and the earth and that he might be of those who are sure. So when night overshadowed him, he saw a star. Said he, Is this my Lord ? And when it set, he said, I do not love the setting ones. Then when he saw the moon rising, he said, Is this my Lord ? When it set, he said, If my Lord had not guided me, I should be of the erring people. Then when he saw the sun rising, he said, Is this my Lord ? Is this the greatest ? And when it set, he said, O my people ! I am clear of what you set up with Allah. I have turned myself, being upright, wholly to Him Who originated the heavens and the earth and I am not of the polytheists" (6 : 76-80).

THE RELIGION OF ISLĀM

alleged that the Quranic conception of the Trinity is a mistaken one, because it speaks of Jesus and Mary as having been taken for two gods: "O Jesus, son of Mary! didst thou say to men, Take me and my mother for two gods, besides Allah?" (5 : 116). The reference here is to Mariolatry. That Mary was worshipped is a fact, and the Qur'an's reference to it is significant,¹ but it should be noted that neither the Holy Qur'an, nor the Holy Prophet, has anywhere said that Mary was the third person of the Trinity. Where the Holy Qur'an denounces the Trinity, it speaks of the doctrine of sonship but does not speak of the worship of Mary at all; and where it speaks of the worship of Mary, it does not refer to the Trinity.

Another form of shirk, refuted in the Holy Qur'an, is the doctrine that God has sons or daughters. The pagan Arabs ascribed daughters to God while the Christians hold that God has a son. Though the doctrine of ascribing daughters to God is mentioned in the Holy Qur'an several times, as in

Doctrine of sonship.

1. The doctrine and practice of Mariolatry, as it is called by the Protestant controversialists, is too well-known. In the catechism of the Roman Church the following doctrines are to be found: "That she is truly the mother of God.....; That she is the mother of Pity and very specially our advocate; that her images are of the utmost utility." It is also stated that her intercessions are directly appealed to in the Litany. And further that there were women in Thrace, Scythia and Arabia who were in the habit of worshipping the Virgin as a goddess, the offer of a cake being one of the features of their worship. "From the time of the council of Ephesus, to exhibit figures of the Virgin and Child became the approved expression of orthodoxy.....Of the growth of the Marian cultus, alike in the East and the West, after the decision at Ephesus, it would be impossible to trace the history.....Justinian in one of his laws bespeaks her advocacy for the empire..... Narses looks to her for directions on the field of battle. The emperor Heraclius bears her image on his banner. John of Damascus speaks of her as the sovereign lady to whom the whole creation has been made subject by her son. Peter Damian recognizes her as the most exalted of all creatures, and apostrophizes her as deified and endowed with all power in heaven and in earth" (En. Br. 11th ed. XVII, p. 813).

THE UNITY OF GOD

16 : 57 ; 17 : 40 ; 37 : 149, yet it is against the Christian doctrine that the Holy Book speaks with gravest emphasis : " And they say : The Beneficent God has taken (to Himself) a son. Certainly you have made an abominable assertion ; the heavens may almost be rent thereat, and the earth cleave asunder, and the mountains fall down in pieces, that they ascribe a son to the Beneficent God " (19 : 88-91). The doctrine is denounced repeatedly ; for instance in 2 : 116 ; 6 : 102-104 ; 10 : 68 ; 17 : 111 ; 18 : 4, 5 ; 19 : 35, 91, 92 ; 23 : 91 ; 37 : 151, 152 ; 112 : 3. Of these, ch. 112 is undoubtedly one of the earliest revelations, while the 17th, 18th and 19th chapters also belong to the early Makka period. This shows that from the very first the Holy Qur'an set before itself the correction of this great error. It will be observed that a mention of the doctrine of sonship is often followed by the word *subhāna-hu*, which word is used to indicate the purity of God from all defects. The reason of this is that the doctrine of sonship is due to the supposition that God cannot forgive sins unless He receives some satisfaction therefor, and this satisfaction is supposed to have been afforded by the crucifixion of the Son of God, who alone is said to be sinless. The doctrine of sonship is thus practically a denial of the quality of forgiveness in God, and this amounts to attributing a defect to Him. It is for this reason also that we are told in 19 : 92, which is preceded by a most forcible denunciation of the doctrine of sonship, that " it is not worthy of the Beneficent God (*Rahmān* that He should take to Himself a son." The word *Rahmān* signifies originally the Lord of immeasurable mercy Who requires no satisfaction or compensation for a display of the quality of mercy which is inherent in Him, and the attribute of being *Rahmān* negatives the doctrine of sonship.

THE RELIGION OF ISLĀM

The various kinds of shirk mentioned in the Holy Qur'an show that in the doctrine of Significance underlying the doctrine of Unity. Unity it gives to the world an ennobling message of advancement all round, physical as well as moral and spiritual. Man is freed not only from slavery to animate and inanimate objects, but also from subservience to the great and wondrous forces of nature which, he is told, he can subdue to himself. It goes further and delivers man from that greatest of slaveries, slavery to man. It does not allow to any mortal the dignity of Godhead, or of being more than a mortal; for the greatest of mortals is commanded to say: "I am only a mortal like you; it is revealed to me that your God is One God" (18: 110). Thus all the bonds which fettered the mind of man were struck off, and he was set on the road to progress. A slave mind, as the Holy Qur'an plainly says, is incapable of doing anything good and great,¹ and hence the first condition for the advancement of man was that his mind should be set free from the trammels of all kinds of slavery, which was accomplished in the message of Divine Unity.

The doctrine of the Unity of God, besides casting off the bonds of slavery which had enthralled the human mind, and thus opening the way for his advancement, carries another

1. "Allāh sets forth a parable of a slave, the property of another, who has no power over anything and one whom We have granted from Ourselves a goodly sustenance, so he spends from it secretly and openly; are the two alike?.....And Allāh sets forth a parable of two men; one of them is dumb, not able to do anything and he is a burden to his master; wherever he sends him, he brings no good; can he be held equal with him who enjoins what is just?" (16: 75, 76). "He has made subservient to you the sun and the moon pursuing their courses, and He has made subservient to you the night and the day" (14: 33); "And the stars are made subservient by His command.....And He it is Who has made the sea subservient.....and thou seest the ships cleaving through it" (16: 12-14); "Do you not see that Allāh has made subservient to you what is in the heavens and what is in the earth?" (31: 20); and so on.

THE ATTRIBUTES OF GOD

significance equally great, if not greater, to wit, the idea of the unity of the human race. He is the *Rabb* of all the nations, *Rabb al-'alamin*. *Rabb* in Arabic signifies the *Fosterer of a thing in such a manner as to make it attain one condition after another until it reaches its goal of completion* (R.). The words *Rabb al-'alamin* thus signify that all the nations of the world are, as it were, the children of one Father, and that He takes equal care of all, bringing all to their goal of completion by degrees. Hence God is spoken of in the Holy Qur'an as granting not only His physical but also His spiritual sustenance, His revelation, to all the nations of the world: "Every nation had an apostle" (10: 47); "There is not a people but a warner has gone among them" (35: 24). We further find that the Holy Qur'an upholds the idea that God, being the God of all nations, deals with all of them alike. He hearkens to the prayers of all, whatever their religion or nationality. He is equally merciful to all and forgives the sins of all. He rewards the good deeds of the Muslim and the non-Muslim alike; and not only does He deal with all nations alike, but we are further told that He created them all alike, in the Divine nature: "The nature made by Allah in which He has made all men" (30: 30). And this unity of the human race, which is thus a natural corollary of the doctrine of the Unity of God, is further stressed in the plain words that "all men are a single nation" (2: 213) and that "people are naught but a single nation" (10: 19).

SEC. 3—THE ATTRIBUTES OF GOD.

Before speaking of the Divine attributes it will be necessary to warn the reader against a certain misconception as to the nature of the Divine Being. God is spoken of in the Holy Qur'an as seeing, hearing, speaking, being displeased, loving, being affectionate, grasping, controlling,

THE RELIGION OF ISLAM

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THE ATTRIBUTES OF GOD

of material with which to make things. Similarly, His love, pleasure, displeasure, affection, pity are independent of the organism which in the case of man gives rise to those qualities. Even the "hands" of God are spoken of in the Holy Qur'an (5 : 64), but it is simply to give expression to His unlimited power in bestowing His favours on whom He will. The word *yad* which means *hand* is also used metaphorically to indicate favour (*ni'ma*) or *protection* (*ḥifāza*) (R.). Thus in 2 : 237 occur the words "in whose hand (*yad*) is the marriage tie," where the word *yad* is used in a metaphorical sense. In the *Nihāya*, the word *yad* is explained as meaning *ḥifẓ* (protection) and *ḍifā'* (defence), and in support of this is quoted the ḥadīth which speaks of Gog and Magog in the words *la-yadāni li-ahād-in bi-qitāli-him*, which signify that no one shall have the power (*yadān*, lit., *two hands*) to fight with them. Hence *the hands of God* in 5 : 64 stand for *His favours* according to the Arabic idiom.

Another, and a greater, misunderstanding exists as to the meaning of *kashf 'ani-l-sāq*. Here it is nothing but gross ignorance of Arabic idiom that has led some to translate it as meaning *uncovering of the leg*. The expression is used twice in the Holy Qur'an, once with regard to the queen of Sheba (27 : 44) and once passively without indicating the subject (68 : 42). It has never been used in relation to God. The word *sāq*, which means *shank*, is used in the expression *kashf 'ani-l-sāq* in quite a different sense, for *sāq* also means *difficulty* or *distress*, and the expression under discussion means either *to prepare oneself to meet a difficulty or the disclosure of distress* (T.A., L.L.).

God's 'Arsh or Throne is spoken of, yet it does not signify any place, rather representing His control of things as a monarch's throne is a symbol of his power to

Arsh.

THE RELIGION OF ISLĀM

rule : "The 'Arsh of Allāh is one of the things which mankind knows not in reality but only in name, and it is not as the imaginations of the vulgar hold it to be And it is taken as indicating *might* or *power* and *authority* and *dominion*" (R.). *Istawā 'ala-l-'Arsh* is the form which occurs more often in connection with the mention of 'Arsh, and a reference to it is invariably made after mentioning the creation of the heavens and the earth, and in relation to the Divine control of the creation, and the law and order to which the universe is made to submit by its great Author. *Istawā* followed by 'ala, means *he had the mastery or control of a thing or ascendancy over it* (R.). It is nowhere said in the Holy Qur'an that God sits on 'Arsh; it is always His controlling power that is mentioned in connection therewith. A similar misunderstanding exists with regard to kursī (lit. *throne* or *chair*) which is also supposed by some to be a material thing, whereas no less an authority than Ibn 'Abbās explains the word kursī as meaning 'ilm or *knowledge* (Bai. 2 : 255), and even according to lexicologists kursī here may mean *knowledge* or *kingdom* (R.). Kursī and 'Arsh, therefore, stand only for the knowledge and control of God.

Allāh is the proper or personal name—*ism dhat*—

Proper name of the Divine Being	of the Divine Being, as distinguished from all other names which are called <i>asmā' al-ṣifāt</i> or names denoting attributes. It is also known as the greatest name of God (<i>ism a'ẓam</i>). Being a proper name it does not carry any significance, but as being the proper name of the Divine Being it comprises all the attributes which are contained separately in the attributive names. Hence the name Allāh is said to gather together in itself all the perfect attributes of God. The word Allāh being a proper name is <i>jamid</i> , that is to say, it is not derived
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THE ATTRIBUTES OF GOD

from any other word. Nor has it any connection with the word *ilah* (god or object of worship), which is either derived from the root *aliha* meaning *tahayyara* or *he became astonished*, or it is a changed form of *wilah* from the root *waliha*, which means *he became infatuated*. It is sometimes said that *Aliāh* is a contracted form of *al ilah*, but that is a mistake, for if *al* in *Allāh* were an additional prefix, the form *yā Allah*, which is correct, would not have been permitted, since *yā al-ilah* or *yā al-Rahmān* are not permissible. Moreover, this supposition would mean that there were different gods (*aliha*, pl. of *ilah*), one of which became gradually known as *al-ilah* and was then contracted into *Allāh*. This is against facts, since *Allāh* "has ever been the name of the Eternal Being" (DI.). Nor has the word *Allāh* ever been applied to any but the Divine Being, according to all authorities on Arabic lexicology. The Arabs had numerous *ilahs* or gods but none of them was ever called *Allāh*, while a Supreme Being called *Allāh* was recognized above them all as the Creator of the universe (29:61), and no other deity, however great, was so regarded.

Among the attributive names of the Divine Being occurring in the Holy Qur'an, four stand out prominently, and these four are exactly the names mentioned in the *Fatiha*, the Opening chapter, which by a consensus of opinion, and according to a saying of the Holy Prophet, is the quintessence of the Holy Book. The chapter opens with the proper name *Allāh*, and then follows the greatest of all attributive names *Rabb* which, for want of a proper equivalent, is translated "Lord". Its real significance, according to the best authority on Quranic lexicology, is the *Fosterer of a thing in such a manner as to make it attain one condition after*

THE RELIGION OF ISLĀM

another until it reaches its goal of completion (R.). *Rabb*, therefore, means the Lord Who brings all that is in this universe to a state of perfection through various stages of growth,¹ and as these stages include the lowest and remotest, which, as we go back farther and farther, dwindle into nothingness, the word *Rabb* carries with it the idea of the Author of all existence. *Rabb*, being the Bringer to perfection, is thus the chief attribute of the Divine Being, and hence it is that prayers are generally addressed to *Rabb*, and begin with the words *Rabba-nā*, that is, our Lord.² Indeed after the proper name Allāh, the Holy Qur'an has given the greatest prominence to the name *Rabb*.

The order adopted by the Holy Qur'an in speaking of the Divine attributes is a highly scientific one. Allāh, the proper name, comes first of all in the Opening chapter, and this is followed by *Rabb*, the most important

1. The theory of evolution, to which a reference is undoubtedly contained in the word *Rabb*, is expressly referred to on several occasions in the Holy Qur'an. Thus speaking of the first state of the heavens and the earth, it says: "The heavens and the earth were closed up and We opened them" (21 : 30). This, no doubt, refers to an early stage in evolution when there was a state of chaos, out of which the present highly complicated but completely regulated system has grown up. And speaking of the creation of man, it says: "And indeed He has created you through various grades" (71 : 14), showing that man has been brought to the present state of physical perfection after passing through various conditions. In another place it is said that man "shall certainly enter one state after another" (84 : 19), which is in all likelihood a reference to the spiritual evolution of man.

2. It should be noted here that Jesus Christ addressed the Divine Being as *Ab* or Father, instead of which the Holy Qur'an adopts *Rabb*. Now while *Ab* or Father carries with it the idea of paternal affection combined with fostering, the word *Rabb* carries a far grander idea, the idea of the unbounded love and affection of the Author of all existence, who has not only given to the whole creation its means of nourishment, but has also ordained beforehand for all a sphere of capacity and within that sphere provided the means by which they may continue to attain gradually to their goal of perfection. It shows how highly the Quranic revelation has developed the simpler ideas of previous revelations.

THE ATTRIBUTES OF GOD.

of the attributive names. Their relative importance is further shown by the fact that while the name Allah is found in the Holy Qur'an some 2,800 times, the name *Rabb* occurs about 960 times, no other name being so frequently mentioned. Next in importance to *Rabb* are the names *Rahmān*, *Rahīm* and *Malik* which follow *Rabb* in the Opening chapter. These three names in fact show how the attribute of *rabūbiyya*, or bringing to perfection by fostering, is brought into play. *Rahmān* and *Rahīm* are derived from the one root *rahma*, which means *tenderness requiring the exercise of beneficence*, and thus comprise the ideas of love and mercy. *Rahmān* is of the measure of *fa'lān* and gives expression to the preponderance of *rahma* in Divine nature, and *Rahīm* is of the measure of *fa'il* and gives expression to the repetition of the quality of *rahma*. On account of this difference, *Rahmān* signifies that love is so predominant in the Divine nature that He bestows His favours and shows His mercy even though man has done nothing to deserve them. The granting of the means of subsistence for the development of physical life, and of Divine revelation for man's spiritual growth, are due to this attribute of unbounded love in the Divine Being. Then follows the stage in which man takes advantage of these various means which help the development of his physical and spiritual life, and turns them to his use. It is at this stage that the third attribute of the Divine Being, *Rahīm*, comes into play, whereby He rewards every effort made by man in the right direction; and since man is making constant and continual efforts, the attribute of mercy conveyed in the name *Rahīm* is also displayed continually. This is true both as regards the physical and spiritual development of man. The Holy Prophet himself is reported to have said: "*Al-Rahmān* is the Beneficent God Whose love and mercy are manifested

THE RELIGION OF ISLĀM

in the creation of this world, and *al-Rahim* is the Merciful God Whose love and mercy are manifested in the state that comes after" (BM. I, p. 17).

To bring creation to perfection, however, there is needed the manifestation of yet another attribute. As submission to the law results in the advancement of man which brings reward, disobedience to the law must result in retarding his progress or bringing down punishment upon him. In fact, the punishment of wrong is as necessary in the Divine scheme as is the reward of good, and punishment is really only a different phase of the exercise of the attribute of *rabubiyya* (fostering); for ultimate good is still the object. Therefore, just as *Rahim* is needed to bring his reward to one who does good or submits to the law, there must be another attribute to bring about the requital of evil. Hence in the Opening chapter of the Holy Qur'an, *Rahim* is followed by *Maliki yaum-il-din* or "Master of the Day of Requital." The adoption of the word *Malik*, or Master, in connection with the requital of evil is significant, as, ordinarily, it would be expected that there should be a judge to mete out the requital of evil. The essential difference between a judge and a master is that the former is bound to do justice and must punish the evil-doer for every evil, while the latter, the master, can exercise his discretion, and may either punish the evil-doer or forgive him and pass over even the greatest of his iniquities.¹ This idea is fully developed in the Holy

1. It is here that the makers of the Christian creed have made their greatest error. They think that the Son of God is needed to atone or make compensation for the evil deeds of humanity, since God, being a judge, cannot forgive sins unless somebody can be found to provide a compensation. In the Holy Qur'an we are told that God is a Master and He can, therefore, forgive. In fact, the Lord's prayer belies the Christian creed, because there we are told to pray that God may forgive us our sins as we forgive our debtors. How do we forgive a debtor? Not by

THE ATTRIBUTES OF GOD

Qur'an, where we are repeatedly told that while good is rewarded ten times over or even more, evil is either forgiven or requited with its equivalent. In one place, indeed, the unbounded mercy of the Divine Being is said to be so great that "He forgives the sins altogether" (39 : 53). Hence the attributive name *Malik* is introduced to link the idea of requital with that of forgiveness, and that is why, while the Opening chapter mentions the name *Malik* as next in importance to *Rahim*, in the body of the Holy Qur'an it is the name *Ghafur* (Forgiving) which occupies that place of importance, the first two, *Rahman* and *Rahim*, along with the cognate verb forms, occurring about some 560 times, and *Ghafur*, the next in point of frequency, occurring in its noun and verb forms about 230 times. Hence it will be seen that the Holy Qur'an gives prominence to the attributes of love and mercy in God to an extent whereof the parallel is not to be met with in any other revealed book.

From the explanations thus given of the four names

Ninety-nine names.

Rabb, Rahman, Rahim and *Malik*,
from the frequency of their mention

in the Holy Qur'an, to which no approach is made by any other name, and from their mention in the Opening chapter of the Holy Qur'an, it is clear that the Holy Qur'an looks upon these four names as the chief attributive names of the Divine Being, and all His other attributes are but the offshoots of these four essential attributes. On the basis of a report from Abū Huraira, which, however, is regarded as *gharib* (weak) by Tirmidhi, ninety-nine names of God are generally mentioned, the hundredth name being Allāh, but while some of them occur in the Holy Qur'an, others are only inferred from some act of the Divine Being, as finding expression in the Holy

pocketing the money but by relinquishing the debt. And if man can forgive, why not God?

THE RELIGION OF ISLĀM

Book. There is, however, no authority whatever for the practice of repeating these names on a rosary or otherwise. Neither the Holy Prophet, nor any of his Companions ever used a rosary. In the Holy Qur'an, it is said: "And Allāh's are the most excellent names, therefore call on Him thereby, and leave alone those who violate the sanctity of His names" (7 : 180). The context shows that calling on God by His excellent names only means that nothing derogatory to His dignity should be attributed to Him ; for, in the second part of the verse those who violate the sanctity of the Divine names are rebuked,¹ and the violation of the sanctity of the Divine names has been clearly explained as meaning either ascribing to God attributes which do not befit His high dignity, or ascribing Divine attributes to that which is not Divine. Hence calling on God by His excellent names merely means that only those high attributes should be ascribed to Him which befit His dignity. The particular names of God mentioned in the Holy Qur'an are :

1. As relating to His person, *al-Wahid* or *Aḥad* (the One), *al-Haqq* (the True), *al-Quddus* (the Holy), *al-Ṣamad* (on Whom all depend while He does not depend on any), *al-Ghani* (the Self-sufficient), *al-Awwal* (the First), *al-Ākhir* (the Last), *al-Hayy* (the Ever-living), *al-Qayyūm* (the Self-subsisting).

2. As relating to the act of creation, *al-Khaliq* (the Creator), *al-Bārī'* (the Creator of the soul), *al-Muṣawwir* (the Fashioner of shapes), *al-Badī'* (the Originator).

1. Sanctity of the Divine names may be violated in three ways: (1) By giving the holy names of God to other beings; (2) by giving God names which do not befit Him; and (3) by calling God by names of which the meaning is unknown (Rz.). According to Rāghib violation of the sanctity of the Divine names is of two kinds: (1) giving Him an improper or inaccurate attribute, and (2) interpreting His attributes in a manner which does not befit Him (R.).

THE ATTRIBUTES OF GOD

3. As relating to the attributes of love and mercy, (besides *Rabb*, *al-Rahmān* and *al-Rahīm*), *al-Ra'uf* (the Affectionate), *al-Wadūd* (the Loving), *al-Laṭīf* (the Benignant), *al-Tawwāb* (the Oft-returning to mercy), *al-Halīm* (the Forbearing), (*al-'Afuwō*) (the Pardoner), *al-Šhakūr* (the Multiplier of rewards), *al-Salām* (the Author of peace), *al-Mu'min* (the Granter of security), *al-Barr* (the Benign), *Rafī' al-darajāt* (the Exalter of ranks), *al-Razzaq* (the Bestower of sustenance), *al-Wahhāb* (the Great Giver), *al-Wasī'* (the Ample-giving).

4. As relating to His greatness and glory, *al-'Azīm* (the Grand), *al-'Azīz* (the Mighty), *al-'Aliyy* or *Muta'al* (the Exalted, or the High), *al-Qawiyy* (the Strong), *al-Qahhār* (the Supreme), *al-Jabbār* (one Who sets things aright by supreme power),¹ *al-Mutakabbir* (the Possessor

1. Considerable misconception prevails as to the true significance of the name *al-Jabbār*, a recent writer in the *Encyclopædia of Islam* going so far as to translate it by the word *Tyrant*, while the next name *al Mutakabbir* is rendered, by the same writer, *Haughty*. This rendering is no doubt due to an obsession on the part of Christian writers that the God of Islam is an embodiment of cruelty, tyranny and frightfulness, and that a Loving and Merciful God is peculiar to the Christian religion. If the writer had consulted even Hughes' *Dictionary of Islam*, he would not have made such a blunder. Hughes renders *al-Jabbār* as meaning *Repairer*, and *al-Mutakabbir* as meaning *the Great*. The rendering in the *Encyclopædia* is distortion of the worst type. Because, he says, the word *jabbār* has been used for men in a bad sense, the same sense is conveyed when it is spoken of God. There are hundreds of words in every language which are used in a good as well as in a bad sense, and no reasonable person would contend that because a word has been used in a bad sense, it cannot be used in a good one. The Holy Qur'an lays it down plainly that God's are the most excellent names; would the rendering *haughty* or *tyrant* be in consonance with that statement? Again the Holy Qur'an declares on more occasions than one that God is "not in the least unjust" to men (41: 46; 50: 29), and that He does not do injustice to the weight of an atom (4: 40). Can we in the face of this description of God call Him a tyrant? If we go to Arabic lexicology, we find that the word *jabr*, from which *al-Jabbār* is derived, means originally *repairing* or *setting a thing aright by supreme power* (*islāh al-shai'i bi-dzarb-in min-al-qahri*) (R.). The same authority goes on to say that it is used to indicate simply *repairing* or *setting aright*, and sometimes simply *dominance* or *supreme power*. When man makes a wrong

THE RELIGION OF ISLĀM

of greatness), *al-Kabir* (the Great), *al-Karim* (the Honoured), *al-Ḥamid* (the Praiseworthy), *al-Majid* (the Glorious), *al-Matin* (the Strong), *al-Zāhir* (Ascendant over all), *Dhu-l-jalālī wa-l-ikrām* (the Lord of glory and honour).

5. As relating to His knowledge, *al-‘Alīm* (the Knowing), *al-Ḥakīm* (the Wise), *al-Samī‘* (the Hearing), *al-Khabīr* (the Aware), *al-Baṣīr* (the Seeing), *al-Shahīd* (the Witness), *al-Raqīb* (the Watcher), *al-Bāṭin* (the Knower of hidden things), *al-Muhaimin* (the Guardian over all).

6. As relating to His power and control of things, *al-Qadir* or *Qadir* or *Muqtadir* (the Powerful), *al-Wakīl* (the One having all things in His charge), *al-Waliyy* (the Guardian), *al-Ḥafīẓ* (the Keeper), *al-Malik* (the King), *al-Malik* (the Master), *al-Fattāḥ* (the Greatest Judge), *al-Ḥasīb* or *Ḥasīb* (the One Who takes account), *al-Muntaqim* or *Dhu-ntiqām* (the Inflicter of retribution), *al-Muqīt* (the Controller of all things).

The other names which are taken from some act or attribute of God mentioned in the Holy Qur‘ān are *al-Qabīḍ* (the One Who straitens), *al-Bāsiṭ* (the One Who amplifies), *al-Rafī‘* (the One Who exalts), *al-Mu‘izz* (the One Who gives honour), *al-Mudhīll* (the One Who brings disgrace), *al-Mujīb* (the One Who accepts prayers), *al-Ba‘īth* (the One Who raises the dead to life), *al-Muḥṣī* (the One Who records or numbers things), *al-Mubdī‘* (the One Who begins), *al-Mu‘id* (the One Who reproduces), *al-Muḥyī* (the One Who gives life), *al-Mumīt* (the

use of dominance, he becomes a *jabbār* in a bad sense ; but in the Holy Qur‘ān itself, this word *jabbār* is used of men simply in the sense of *mighty*. When Moses asked his people to enter the Holy Land, they said : " O Moses ! there are *mighty men (jabbārīn)* in it, and we will on no account enter it until they go out from it " (5 : 22). All authorities are agreed that *al-Jabbār*, spoken of God, means either *One Who sets aright by supreme power* or the *Supreme One Who is above His creation*.

THE ATTRIBUTES OF GOD

One Who causes death), *Malik-al-mulk* (the Master of the kingdom), *al-Jami'* (the One Who gathers), *al-Mughni* (the One Who enriches), *al-Mu'ti* (the One Who grants), *al-Mani'* (the One Who withholds), *al-Hadi* (the One Who guides), *al-Baqi* (the One Who endures for ever), *al-Warith* (the One Who inherits everything).

Of the rest of the ninety-nine names, *al-Nur* (the Light) is not really a name of the Divine Being—God is called *Nur* in the sense of being the Giver of light (24:35); *al-Sabur* (the Patient), *al-Rashid* (the One Who directs), *al-Muqsit* (the Equitable), *al-Wali* (the One Who governs), *al-Jalil* (the Majestic), *al-'Adl* (the Just), *al-Khafidz* (the One Who abases), *al-Wajid* (the Existing), *al-Muqaddim* (the One Who brings forward), *al-Mu'akkhir* (the One Who puts off), *al-Dzarr* (the One Who brings distress), *al-Nafi'* (the One Who confers benefits), may be taken from the sense. Two more attributes falling under this head will be referred to later on because they require a detailed treatment; these are the attributes of *speech* and *will*, which are dealt with in the chapters on Revealed Books and Qadar, respectively.

It will be seen that the attributes of God given above have nothing to do with the autocracy, inexorability, vengeance and cruelty which European writers have generally associated with the picture of Him as drawn in the Holy Qur'an. On the contrary, the qualities of love and mercy in God are emphasized in the Holy Qur'an more than in any other sacred book. Not only does every chapter open with the two names *Rahman* and *Rahim*, thus showing that the qualities of love and mercy are predominant in Divine nature, but the Holy Book goes further and lays the greatest stress in explicit words on the immeasurable vastness of the Divine mercy. The following may be taken as examples :

THE RELIGION OF ISLĀM

“ He has ordained mercy on Himself ” (6 : 12, 54).

“ Your Lord is the Lord of all-encompassing mercy ”
(6 : 148).

“ And My mercy encompasses all things ” (7 : 156).

“ Except those on whom thy Lord has mercy, and for this did He create them ” (11 : 119).

“ O My servants ! who have acted extravagantly against their own souls, do not despair of the mercy of Allah, for Allāh forgives the sins altogether ” (39 : 53).

“ Our Lord ! Thou embracest all things in mercy and knowledge ” (40 : 7).

So great is the Divine mercy that it encompasses believers and unbelievers alike as the above verses show. Nay, the very foes of the Holy Prophet are spoken of as having mercy shown to them: “ And when We make people taste of mercy after an affliction touches them, lo! they devise plans against Our communications ” (10 : 21). The polytheists are repeatedly spoken of as calling upon God in distress, and God as removing their distress. The picture of the Divine attributes portrayed in the Holy Qur'an, is first and last, a picture of love and mercy, and while these are mentioned under many different names and repeated hundreds of times, His attribute of punishment—Inflicter of retribution—occurs but four times in the whole of the Qur'an (3 : 3 ; 5 : 95 ; 14 : 47 ; 39 : 37). It is true that the punishment of evil is a subject on which the Holy Qur'an is most emphatic, but its purpose in this case is simply to impress upon man that evil is a most hateful thing which ought to be shunned ; and, by way of set-off, not only does it lay great stress on the reward of good deeds, but goes further and declares over and over again that evil is either forgiven or punished only with the like of it, but that good is rewarded ten-fold, and hundred-fold, or even without measure. But at the same time it must be borne

THE ATTRIBUTES OF GOD

in mind that punishment itself, as described in the Holy Qur'an, is of a remedial nature, and has in it nothing of vengeance—it is the treatment of a disease which man has brought upon himself. It is still love, for its object is still to set a man on the road to spiritual progress by healing the disease. One of the names of God, included in the ninety-nine names by the later theologians, though not mentioned in the Holy Qur'an, is *al-Dzarr* or One Who causes distress, but this bringing about of distress is only in the limited sense that it is a punishment for wrong-doing with the underlying object of reformation: "We seized them with distress and affliction in order that they might humble themselves" (6 : 42 ; 7 : 94).

Just as a belief in the Unity of God is a source of Divine attributes as man's upliftment, making him conscious of the dignity of human nature, and inspiring him with the grand ideas of the conquest of nature and of the equality of man with man, so the numerous attributes of the Divine Being, as revealed in the Holy Qur'an, are really meant for the perfection of human character. The Divine attributes really serve as an ideal to which man must strive to attain. God is *Rabb al-'alamin*, the Fosterer and Nourisher of the worlds; keeping that as an ideal before himself, man must endeavour to make the service of humanity, even that of dumb creation, the object of his life. God is *Rahman* conferring benefits on man and showing him love without his having done anything to deserve it; the man who seeks to attain to perfection must do good even to those of his fellow-men from whom he has not himself received, and does not expect to receive, any benefit. God is *Rahim*, making every good deed bear fruit; man must also do good for any good that he receives from another. God is *Malik*, requiting evil, not in a spirit of vengeance or even of unbending

THE RELIGION OF ISLAM

justice, but in a spirit of forgiveness, in the spirit of a master dealing with his servants; so must man be forgiving in his dealings with others, if he will attain to perfection.

The above are the four chief attributes of the Divine Being, and it is easily seen how they serve as ideals for man. So it is with all His other attributes. Take, for example, those of love and mercy. God is Affectionate, Loving-kind, Benignant, Oft-returning to mercy, Forbearing, Pardoner, Multiplier of rewards, Author of peace, Granter of security, Restorer of loss, Benign, Exalter of ranks, Ample-giving, Bestower of sustenance and so on; all this man must also try to be. Again let us take His attributes of knowledge. God is Knowing, Wise, Aware, Seeing, Watcher, Knower of hidden things; man must also try to perfect his knowledge of things and acquire wisdom. In fact, where man is spoken of as having been made a vicegerent of God (2 : 30), his chief characteristic, that which marks him out as the ruler of creation, is stated to be a knowledge of things (2 : 31). And as regards wisdom, it is written in the Holy Book that the Holy Prophet was raised up to teach wisdom (2 : 151 ; 3 : 163 ; 62 : 2). Take even His attributes of power and greatness and control of all things; even the angels are commanded to make obeisance to man, showing that man is destined to exercise control even over them. Nay, he is told again and again that everything in the heavens and in the earth has been made subservient to him. It is true that man's love, mercy, knowledge, wisdom, and control of things are all insignificant as compared with their Divine models, but however imperfectly he may achieve it, the fact remains that he has before him the ideal of Divine morals, which he must try to imitate.

CHAPTER III

ANGELS

The Arabic word for angel is *malak*, of which the plural form is *mala'ika*. The root from which the word is derived is 'alk or 'aluka meaning *risala* or *the bearing of messages*. The *hamza* (') was dropped from the singular form which was originally *ma'lak* and afterwards changed into *mal'ak* (hence the plural *mala'ika*), such changes being very common in the Arabic language. Some authorities, however, consider the form *malak* to be the original form and trace it to the root *malk* or *milk* meaning *power*, and this difference of opinion has been turned by D. B. Macdonald into an *argument* that the word is borrowed from the Hebrew, though he admits that "there is no trace of a verb in Hebrew (nor in Phœnician, where the noun occurs in later inscriptions)" (En. Is., art. *Mala'ika*). The Holy Qur'an speaks of the creation of man from dust and of the creation of jinn from fire, but it does not speak of the origin of *mala'ika*. There is, however, a report from 'A'isha, according to which the Holy Prophet said that the jinn are created from *nar* (fire), and that the angels are created from *nur* (light) (M. 53: 10). This shows that the angels are immaterial beings, and further, that the *jinn* and the *mala'ika* are two different classes of beings, and that it is a mistake to consider them as belonging to one class. In the Holy Qur'an angels are spoken of as "messengers (*rusul*) flying on wings (*ajniha* pl. of *janah*)" (35: 1). Their description as *rusul* (pl. of *rasul*, meaning *a messenger*) has reference to their spiritual function of bearing Divine messages. Sacred

THE RELIGION OF ISLĀM

history, indeed, represents angels as possessing wings, but so far as the Holy Qur'ān is concerned, it would be a grievous mistake to confuse the *janāh* (wing) of an angel with the fore-limb of a bird which fits it for flight. The wing is a symbol of the *power* which enables those immaterial beings to execute their functions with all speed; and in Arabic, the word *janāh* is used in a variety of senses. In birds it is the wing; the two sides of a thing are called its *janāhain* or two *janāhs*; and in man, his hand is spoken of as his *janāh* (R.). The word has further been used metaphorically in the Holy Qur'ān in several places, as in 15:88 and 26:215, where the "lowering of the *janāh*" stands for "being kind." The Arabic proverb, *Huwa maqṣuṣ al-janāh*, (lit., he has his *janāh*—wing—clipped), really means, *he lacks the power to do a thing* (LL.), which shows, as I have said, that *janāh* is used for *power* in Arabic. In the immaterial beings called angels who are created from *nūr* (light), and in whom therefore a material *janāh* cannot be thought of, it is simply the symbol of a *power* which is speedily brought into action.

It is commonly thought that the immaterial beings, whom we call angels, can assume any shape they like, but the Holy Qur'ān gives no countenance to this idea. On the contrary, it is repeatedly stated in answer to the demands of the Prophet's opponents who desired to see an angel or to have an angel as an apostle, that angels could not be seen and that an angel would have been sent as an apostle had angels and not human beings lived on earth: "And nothing prevents people from believing when the guidance comes to them except that they say, What! has Allāh raised up a mortal to be an apostle? Say, Had there been in the earth angels walking about as settlers, We would have sent down to them from the heaven an angel as an apostle" (17 : 94, 95). Twice it is related in the

ANGELS

Holy Qur'an that the angelic hosts sent to help the Muslims were not seen by human eye : " Then Allāh sent down His tranquillity upon His Apostle and upon the believers, and sent down hosts which you did not see " (9 : 26) ; " Call to mind the favour of Allāh to you when there came upon you hosts, and We sent against them a strong wind and hosts that you saw not " (33 : 9). The Holy Qur'an further states that the devils or jinn cannot be seen by human eye : " He sees you, he as well as his host, from whence you cannot see them " (7 : 27).

Two cases have, however, to be considered. In the first place, there is a story related about Abraham's guests. (11 : 69, 70 ; 15 : 51, 52 ; 51 : 24, 25) who first came to him and gave him the good news of a son, Isaac, and then went to Lot and bade him leave the city along with his followers, since punishment was about to overtake his people. It is generally supposed that these were angels, as angels alone are deputed to deliver messages to prophets, and the Bible says that they were angels. But the Holy Qur'an speaks of them only as the guests of Abraham and as " Our messengers," and nowhere says that they were angels. Had they been angels, they would have delivered the Divine message to Abraham and Lot in the manner in which the angels deliver such messages, which is by revealing the Divine message to the heart of the prophet : " He revealed it to thy heart by Allāh's command " (2 : 97) ; and the angel, though he may come in the shape of a man, is not seen by the physical eye of the prophet but by his spiritual eye. Therefore, if the guests spoken of were angels, their appearance to both Abraham and Lot must have been in vision, in which state it is that revelation comes to the prophets of God ; but if it was with the physical eye that Abraham and Lot beheld them, then they were men and not angels. The

THE RELIGION OF ISLĀM

fact that they did not take any food when it was offered by Abraham merely shows that they did not need it, or that they were fasting at the time. Abraham had received the news of a son independently of them, and Lot had also been informed of the impending fate of his people without their agency: "And We revealed to him this decree that the roots of these shall be cut off in the morning" (15:66).

The other case is that of Hārūt and Mārūt. Special stress has been laid on this point by Hārūt and Mārūt. Western writers generally, and by the Christian missionaries in particular, and the inference is drawn, from what is related of them in the Holy Qur'an, that angels are not immaterial creatures and that they have desires like human beings; and thus it is sought to contradict the whole teaching of the Holy Qur'an on angels by a story which is based neither on the Qur'an nor on any authentic ḥadīth. In fact, the Holy Qur'an rejects the story which was current among the Magi and the Jews about these two angels. According to Sale, the Persian Magi "mention two rebellious angels of the same names, now hung up by the feet, with their heads downwards, in the territory of Babel." And he adds: "The Jews have something like this, of the angel Shamhozai, who, having debauched himself with women, repented, and by way of penance hung himself up between heaven and earth." These stories, and others ascribing evil practices to Solomon, were rejected by the Holy Qur'an in the following words: "And Solomon did not disbelieve but the devils disbelieved, teaching men enchantment, and it was not revealed to the two angels Hārūt and Mārūt at Babel, nor did they teach it to any one, so that they should have said, We are only a trial, therefore do not disbelieve" (2:102). The statement made here amounts to this. The Jews instead of following the word

ANGELS

of God went after certain evil crafts which they attributed to Solomon and to two angels at Babel. Solomon is declared to be innocent of evil practices, and the story of the two angels a fabrication. All reliable commentators have taken the same view of the Quranic statement. The ḥadīth which is quoted in support of it is not to be met with in the six reliable collections, but only in the Musnad of Aḥmad, and the Musnad contains many untrustworthy ḥadīth. Moreover, nothing which contradicts the very principles laid down in the Holy Qur'an can be accepted on the basis of such weak authority. The commentators condemn the alleged report as *fāsiḍ* (untrue) and *mardūd* (repudiated) (Rz.). Another authority says that nothing in this story can be traced to the Holy Prophet and calls it *khurāfat* (puerile and worthless) (R.M.). Hence the alleged story of Hārūt and Mārūt which is rejected by the Holy Qur'an, and is not based on any authentic ḥadīth, cannot be made a basis for rejecting the principle laid down in the Holy Qur'an that angels cannot be seen.

Though angels are spoken of as *beings*, they are not endowed with powers of discrimination like those of human beings; in this respect, indeed; they may be said to partake more of the attributes of the powers of nature than of man. Their function is to obey and they cannot disobey. The Holy Qur'an says plainly: "They do not disobey Allāh in what He commands them and they do as they are commanded" (66 : 6) ; which also shows that the story of Hārūt and Mārūt, which ascribes disobedience to angels, is without foundation. And inasmuch as man is endowed with a will while the angel is not, man is superior to the angel; which superiority is also evident from the fact that angels were commanded to make obeisance to him (2 : 34).

THE RELIGION OF ISLĀM

It is true that the angel Gabriel is spoken of as coming to the Holy Prophet with the Divine revelation, but as has been already shown, it was with the spiritual senses that the Holy Prophet received the revelation, and therefore it was not with the physical eye that he beheld Gabriel. The angel came to him sometimes in the shape of a man; the Prophet heard the words of revelation, on occasions, with the force of the ringing of a bell, yet those who were sitting next him, while fully conscious of the change coming over him, neither saw the angel, nor heard the words of the revelation. Numerous incidents are related in which the Holy Prophet received the revelation while he was sitting among his Companions, yet not one of the Companions ever saw the angel, or even heard his voice. And even when Gabriel came to him at other times, it was always with the spiritual eye that the Holy Prophet saw him. 'Ā'ishā is very explicit on this point. It is related that on a certain occasion the Holy Prophet said to her: "O 'Ā'ishā! here is Gabriel offering salutation to thee." She said: "And on him be peace and the mercy and blessings of Allāh; thou seest what I do not see" (Bu. 59:6). This shows that even 'Ā'ishā never saw Gabriel, whether he came with revelation or on other occasions.

There are, however, a few stray incidents, related in certain ḥadīth, from which inference is drawn that others besides the Holy Prophet saw Gabriel, but, from what has been stated above, it is clear that either it was in a state of *kashf* (vision) and therefore with the spiritual senses that they saw him, or that there had been some misunderstanding in the relation of the incident. For instance, it is stated that a stranger came to the Holy Prophet while he was sitting with his Companions, and asked him what imān,

ANGELS

Islām, etc. were ; and when he went away, the Holy Prophet said that it was Gabriel who had come to teach them their religion (Bu. 2 : 37). But it is doubtful whether the Prophet meant that the man who put the questions was Gabriel, or that the answers which he gave to the stranger were at the prompting of Gabriel. I should be inclined to place the latter interpretation on his words, as being more in consonance with the principle laid down that the angel cannot be seen with the physical eye, and with the vast majority of other incidents in which Gabriel came to the Holy Prophet and was seen by him but not by others present at the same time. Or, it is possible that the few people who were present with the Prophet shared his vision and saw Gabriel with the spiritual eye.

There are two other cases in which there seems to be a misunderstanding. The first is the case of Umm Salama, the Prophet's wife. Some one was talking with the Holy Prophet, and Umm Salama thought it was Diḥya. Afterwards she heard the Prophet delivering a sermon which gave her to understand that it was Gabriel (Bu. 66 : 1). Here, clearly there seems to be a misunderstanding. The Holy Prophet never told Umm Salama or anybody else that it was Gabriel who talked to him in the presence of Umm Salama. Her first impression was that it was Diḥya, and when she expressed that opinion to the Holy Prophet, he did not contradict her, which shows that she was right. Afterwards certain words of the Holy Prophet in a sermon gave her the impression that it was Gabriel, but she never expressed that opinion to the Holy Prophet, and therefore her second impression cannot be accepted in face of the fact that whenever Gabriel appeared to the Prophet, whether with or without a revelation, he was never seen by any one except the Holy Prophet, and that too with the inner light. The second is an incident

THE RELIGION OF ISLĀM

recorded by Ibn Sa'd as to 'Ā'ishā having seen Gabriel (Is. VIII, p. 140). It cannot be accepted when, according to Bukhārī as quoted above, 'Ā'ishā herself told the Prophet that she could not see the angel whom he saw. If Gabriel could be seen with the physical eye, the Prophet would have then and there shown him to her.

In the Holy Qur'an, angels are generally described as having some sort of connection with the spiritual state of man. It was an angel, Gabriel by name, who brought revelation to the Holy Prophet (2 : 97 ; 26 : 193, 194) and the prophets before him (4 : 163). The same angel is mentioned as strengthening the prophets (2 : 87) and the believers (58 : 22), while angels generally are spoken of as descending on believers and comforting them (41 : 30); they are also intermediaries in bringing revelation to those who are not prophets, as in the case of Zacharias (3 : 38) and Mary (3 : 41, 44). Angels were also sent to help the believers against their enemies (3 : 123, 124 ; 8 : 12) ; they pray for blessings on the Holy Prophet (33 : 56) and on the believers (33 : 43); they ask forgiveness for all men, believers as well as non-believers (42 : 5); they cause to die believers (16 : 32) and also non-believers (4 : 97 ; 16 : 28). They write down the deeds of men (28 : 10, 12). They will intercede for men on the Day of Judgment (53 : 26). There is no clear reference to their function in the physical world unless the causing of death may be treated as such, but I have classed it as a spiritual function because death makes both the believers and unbelievers enter a new life. It may be added here that the Ḥadīth speaks also of an angel of birth, that is an angel appointed for every man when he quickens in the mother's womb (Bu. 59 : 6). There are, however, verses in the Holy Qur'an which show that the angelic hosts have some sort of connection with the physical world.

ANGELS

The most important of these verses are those which speak of the creation of man (Adam). When God wished to create man, He communicated His wish to the angels (2 : 30 ; 15 : 28 ; 38 : 71). This shows that the angels were there before man was created, and, therefore, must have had some sort of connection with the physical world and with the forces which brought about the creation of man. Unless they are treated as intermediaries carrying out the Divine will, the imparting to them of the Divine will to create man is meaningless. These verses, therefore, lead us to the conclusion that the laws of nature find expression through angels. It is due to this function of theirs that they are called *rusul* (messengers) (22 : 75 ; 35 : 1). Expression of the Divine will is a Divine message, and the angels as bearers of that message carry it into execution. The description of them also as bearers of the Throne ('Arsh) of the Lord (40 : 7 ; 69 : 17) leads to the same conclusion ; for, as already stated, the 'Arsh stands for the Divine control of the universe, and the angels, the bearers of that control, are in fact the intermediaries through whom that control is exercised.

Vastly greater importance is, however, attached to the angelic function in the spiritual world, because it is primarily with the spiritual development of man that the Holy Qur'ān is concerned. To put it briefly, the function of the angel in the spiritual world is the same as his function in the physical world—to serve as an intermediary in carrying out the Divine will which, in the latter case, is to bring about the evolution of creation, and in the former, the evolution of man. According to the teachings of Islām, the angel has a close connection with the life of man from his birth, even from the time he is in the mother's womb till his death, and even after death, in his spiritual progress in Paradise and

THE RELIGION OF ISLĀM

his spiritual treatment in Hell. The different functions of the angel in connection with the spiritual life of man may be broadly divided into seven classes which are detailed below.

The most important and, at the same time, the most prominent function of the angel, in the spiritual realm, is the bringing down of Divine revelation or the communication of Divine messages to the prophets. The prophet not only sees the angel, but also hears his voice, and the angel is to him, therefore, a matter of fact reality. This has been the universal experience of humanity in all ages and all climes. As the angel is an immaterial being, the prophet sees him sometimes in the shape of a human being and sometimes in other forms. Thus the angel Gabriel often appeared to the Holy Prophet in the shape of a man, but sometimes he saw him "in his shape" (*fī šūrati-hī*) "filling the whole horizon" (Bu. 59 : 7). It is not stated what that shape was, and probably it could not be described; only the spiritual eye could recognize it. Once, also, he saw his six hundred *ajniḥa* (Bu. 59:7) which no doubt stand for his immense power. On another occasion he saw him in a cloud (Bu. 59 : 6); the cloud itself being probably a part of the vision.

According to the Holy Qur'an, the angel who brought revelation to the Holy Prophet is known by the name of Gabriel (2 : 98). The Arabic form is *Jibrīl* which is, according to 'Ikrama, composed of *jibr* meaning 'abd or servant and 'il meaning God (Bu. 65, sūra 2:6). The same authority says that *Mikāl* (Michael) also has the same meaning, being *Mika-'il*, *Mik* bearing the significance of 'abd. Gabriel is mentioned too as *Ruḥ al-Amin* or the Faithful Spirit (26:193, 194), and *Ruḥ al-Qudus* or the Holy Spirit (16 : 102). In all three

ANGELS

places, Gabriel or the Faithful Spirit or the Holy Spirit is said to have revealed the Qur'an to the Holy Prophet. The revelation to the prophets that appeared before him is said to have been granted in a similar manner (4:163). In Hadith, Gabriel is spoken of as *al-Namūs al-akbar* or *the great angel who is entrusted with secret messages*, and the same *Namūs* is said to have appeared to Moses (Bu. 1:1). Gabriel is also called *rasūl* or the messenger through whom God speaks to His prophets (42:51).

While Gabriel is thus spoken of as bringing revelation to the prophets, angels generally are said to bring revelation to other righteous servants of God: "He sends down the angels with the inspiration (*al-ruh*) by His commandment on whom He pleases of His servants" (16:2). And again: "Exalter of degrees, Lord of the Throne; He makes the inspiration (*al-ruh*) to light by His command on whom He pleases of His servants" (40:15). These are general statements; and in the case of Mary who was undoubtedly not a prophet, the angels are also spoken of as bearing Divine messages: "And when the angels said, O Mary! Allāh has chosen thee and purified thee" (3:41); and again: "When the angels said, O Mary! Allāh gives thee good news with a word from Him of one whose name is the Messiah" (3:44). And so in the case of Zacharias, the father of John the Baptist: "The angels called to him as he stood praying in the sanctuary, That Allāh gives thee good news of John" (3:38). And the believers generally are thus spoken of: "As for those who say, Our Lord is Allāh, then persevere on the right way, the angels descend upon them, saying, Fear not, nor be grieved, and receive good news of the garden which you were promised" (41:30).

THE RELIGION OF ISLĀM

The second function of the angels, as revealed in the Holy Qur'an, is to strengthen the righteous servants of God, prophets as well as others, and to give them comfort in trial and affliction. Jesus Christ is specially mentioned in this connection because of the serious allegations of the Jews against him. Thrice it is stated in the Holy Qur'an that Jesus Christ was strengthened with the Holy Spirit which is the same as Gabriel (2 : 87, 253 ; 5 : 110). And the believers generally are said to be strengthened with the Holy Spirit: "These are they into whose hearts He has impressed faith, and strengthened them with a Spirit (*Rūḥ*) from Him" (58 : 22), where instead of the *Rūḥ al-Qudus* we have *Rūḥ-in min-hu* (Spirit from Him), the meaning being the same. In one ḥadīth, the Prophet is reported as asking Ḥassān, the poet, to defend him against the abuse of the unbelievers and adding: "O Allāh! strengthen him with the Holy Spirit," and in the next the words are: "And Gabriel is with thee" (Bu. 59 : 6). And again we find in the Holy Qur'an that the angels are the *auliyā'* (friends or guardians) of the faithful in this world's life and in the hereafter (41 : 31). It was in this sense, *i. e.*, to strengthen the believers, that the angels were sent to help the believers in their struggle against the unbelievers. Thus in one place we read: "When you sought help from your Lord, so He answered you: I will assist you with a thousand of the angels" (8 : 9); and in another: "Does it not suffice you that your Lord should assist you with three thousand of the angels sent down" (3 : 123); while yet on a third field of battle the Muslims were promised the help of five thousand angels (3 : 124). The Holy Qur'an itself explains why the angels were sent: "And Allāh gave it as a good news and that your hearts might be at ease thereby"

ANGELS

(3:125; 8:10). It was through the strengthening of the believers' hearts that the angels worked (8:12). What were the conditions under which these angelic hosts were sent? The Muslims had to fight in defence against heavy odds, 300 against a thousand, 700 against three thousand, and 1,500 against 15,000. And on all three fields the Muslims were victorious and the unbelievers had to go back "failing to attain what they desired" (3:126). The strengthening of heart through the angels is, therefore, a solid fact of history.

Closely allied with this strengthening of the believers is the third function of the angels—that of executing Divine punishment against the wicked, because in the contest between the righteous and the wicked the punishment of the latter and the help of the former are identical. Often would those who sought to extirpate the truth by physical force say that if there were a God Whose messenger the Prophet was, and if there were angels who could help his cause, why did they not come?

Angels as intermediaries in carrying out Divine punishment.

"Why are not the angels sent down upon us, or why do we not see our Lord?" (25:21).

"They do not wait aught but that Allāh and the angels come to them in the shadows of the clouds, and the matter has already been decided" (2:210).

"They do not wait aught but that the angels should come to them or that the commandment of thy Lord should come to pass" (16:33).

"They do not wait aught but that the angels should come to them, or that thy Lord should come, or that some of the signs of thy Lord should come to them" (6:159).

To these demands the Holy Qur'ān replies in the following words: "And on the day when the heaven shall burst asunder with the clouds, and the angels shall be

THE RELIGION OF ISLĀM

sent down, descending. The Kingdom on that day shall rightly belong to the Beneficent God, and a hard day shall it be for the unbelievers" (25 : 25, 26). This shows that it was the promised punishment of the unjust which was hinted at in the coming of the angels. Elsewhere it is said : "And hadst thou seen when the angels will cause to die those who disbelieve, smiting their faces and their backs" (8 : 50). "But how will it be when the angels cause them to die, smiting their faces and their backs" (47 : 27). And on one occasion, the demand and the answer are thus put together : "Why dost thou not bring to us the angels if thou art of the truthful ones? We do not send the angels but with truth, and then they would not be respited" (15 : 7, 8).

Another very important function of the angels is that of intercession—an intercession Angels' intercession and prayers for men. which includes both the believer and the unbeliever. As God "has ordained mercy on Himself" (6 : 12), and His "mercy encompasses all things" (7 : 156)—in fact, it was to show mercy that "He created them" (11 : 119)—it was necessary that His angels, who are intermediaries carrying out His will, should include all in their intercession. The intercession of the angels is mentioned in the Holy Qur'an on one occasion in particular : "And how many an angel is there in the heavens whose intercession does not avail at all except after Allāh has given permission to whom He pleases and chooses" (53 : 26). The Ḥadīth also speaks of the intercession of angels (Bu. 97 : 24). Now intercession is really a prayer to God on behalf of the sinners on the Day of Judgment, but we are told that the angels pray for men even in this life : "The angels celebrate the praise of their Lord and ask forgiveness for those on earth" (42 : 5), "those on earth" including both the believer and the unbeliever. And while this

ANGELS

prayer is all-comprehensive, it grows stronger in the case of believers: "Those who bear the Throne and those around Him celebrate the praise of their Lord and believe in Him and ask protection for those who believe: Our Lord! Thou embracest all things in mercy and knowledge, therefore grant protection to those who turn to Thee and follow Thy wayand make them enter the gardens of perpetuity which Thou hast promised to them and those who do good of their fathers and their wives and their offspring..... and keep them from evil" (40 : 7-9). As a result of the prayers of the angels, the faithful are actually guided forth from every kind of darkness into light: "He it is Who sends His blessings on you and (so do) His angels, that He may bring you forth out of darkness into the light" (33 : 43). And as regards the Prophet, the angels bless him: "God and His angels bless the Prophet; O you who believe! call for Divine blessings on him" (33 : 56). Thus it will be seen that the angels' connection with man grows stronger as he advances in righteousness. As regards men generally, the angels pray for their forgiveness so that punishment in respect of their evil deeds may be averted; as regards the faithful, they lead them forth from darkness into light, and thus enable them to make progress spiritually; and as regards the Prophet, they bless him and are thus helpful in advancing his cause in the world.

It will be seen that in his spiritual function the Angels help in the spiritual progress of man. angel is meant to render help in the spiritual advancement of man. The angel brings down Divine revelation, and it is only with the help of such revelation that man is able to realize what the spiritual life is, and to make advancement spiritually by a development of his inner faculties. The angel strengthens the Prophet, through whom the law of spiritual progress is revealed, and also the believers who

THE RELIGION OF ISLĀM

are instrumental in carrying the ennobling message to humanity, and thus renders help in establishing the law of spiritual advancement; and the same end is achieved by the punishment of those who try to exterminate that law and its upholders. The angels' intercession and prayer even for the unbeliever are undoubtedly meant to set him on the road to spiritual progress, while his bringing of the believers from darkness into light, and his blessings on the Prophet, are the advancement of the cause of spiritual progress. Thus, if analyzed, every one of the functions of the angel is aimed at helping the spiritual advancement of man, and bringing about his spiritual perfection. This is further borne out by the fact that there are angels even in Paradise and Hell¹ which are really two different places or conditions, wherein man is enabled to carry on his spiritual progress after death, the former opening the way to unmeasurable heights of spiritual progress,² and the latter cleansing man of the spiritual diseases³ which he has himself contracted by leading an evil life in this world.

Every good and noble deed is the result of the Angels' promptings to noble deeds. promptings of the angel. The Holy Qur'ān speaks of the angel and the devil as leading man to two different courses of life; the former as shown above to a good and noble life aiming at the development of the human faculties, and the latter, as will be shown later, to a base and wicked life tending to the deadening of those faculties. Every man is said to have two associates, an associate angel and an associate

1. Speaking of those in Paradise, the Holy Qur'ān says: "And the angels will enter in upon them from every gate" (13 : 23). And of Hell it says: "And We have not made the guardians of the fire others than angels" (74 : 31).

2. A single day of that progress is said to extend over fifty thousand years: "To Him ascend the angels and the spirit (of man) in a day, the measure of which is fifty thousand years" (70 : 4).

3. See the discussion on Hell.

ANGELS

devil. The first is called a *shahid* (witness), and the second a *sā'iq* (driver): "And every one shall come, with it a driver and a witness. Certainly thou wert heedless of it, but now We have removed from thee thy veil so that thy sight to-day is sharp" (50 : 21, 22). The *driver* is the devil who makes evil suggestions and leads man to a state of degradation, and the *witness* is the angel who helps man on to a good and noble end. Man is said to be heedless of it here, there being a veil over his eyes, so that he cannot see to what condition he is being led, but he will see the result clearly on the Day of Judgment. In *Ḥadīth* we are told that every man has an associate angel and an associate devil. Thus Muslim reports from Ibn Mas'ūd: "The Holy Prophet said, There is not one among you but there is appointed over him his associate from among the jinn and his associate from among the angels. The Companions said, And what about thee, Prophet of Allāh? He said, The same is the case with me, but Allāh has helped me over him (*i.e.*, the associate jinn) so he has submitted and does not command me aught but good" (MM. 1 : 3-i; Ah. I, pp. 385, 397, 401). According to another *ḥadīth*, the Holy Prophet is reported to have said: "There are suggestions which the devil makes to the son of man and suggestions which the angel makes. The devil's suggestion is for evil and giving the lie to the truth, and the angel's suggestion is for good and the acceptance of truth" (MM. 1 : 3-ii).

Another spiritual function of the angels, on which special stress is laid in the Holy Qur'an, is the recording of the good and evil deeds of man. These angels are called *kirām-an katibin* (honourable recorders), the words being taken from the following verse of the Holy Qur'an:

"And surely there are guardians over you,

THE RELIGION OF ISLĀM

honourable recorders, they know what you do" (82 : 10-12).

And elsewhere we have :

"When the two receivers receive, sitting on the right and on the left. He utters not a word but there is by him a watcher at hand" (50 : 17, 18).

"Alike (to Him) among you is he who conceals his words and he who speaks them openly, and he who hides himself by night and who goes forth by day. There are (angels) following him closely, before him and behind him, who guard him by Allāh's command." (13 : 10, 11).

The guarding in the last verse refers to the guarding of man's deeds. The angels are immaterial beings, and hence also their recording is effected in a different manner from that in which a man would prepare a record. In fact, their record exists, as elsewhere stated, in the form of the effect which an action produces : "And We have made every man's actions cling to his neck, and We will bring forth to him on the Resurrection Day a book which he will find wide open" (17 : 13). The clinging of a man's actions to his neck is clearly the effect which his actions produce and which he is powerless to obliterate, and we are told that this effect will be met with in the form of an open book on the Resurrection Day, thus showing that the angel's recording of a deed is actually the producing of an effect.

The different functions of angel in the spiritual world are thus connected, in one way or another, either with the awakening of the spiritual life in man or its advancement and progress. Herein lies the reason why faith in angels is required along with a faith in God :

"Righteousness is this that one should believe in Allāh and the last day and the angels and the book and the prophets" (2 : 177).

ANGELS

“ The Apostle believes in what has been revealed to him from his Lord and so do the believers ; they all believe in Allāh and His angels and His books and His apostles ” (2 : 285).

Faith or belief in any doctrine, according to the Holy Qur’ān, is essentially the acceptance of a proposition as a basis for action. Faith in angels, therefore, means that there is a spiritual life for man, and that he must develop that life by working in accordance with the promptings of the angel and by bringing into play the faculties which God has given him ; and this is why— though the existence of the devil, who makes the evil suggestions, is as much a fact as the existence of the angel who makes the good suggestions—the Holy Qur’ān requires a belief in angels and a disbelief in devils.¹ This, of course, is not to say that one must deny the existence of the devil. The significance is clear enough : one must obey the commandments of God and refuse to follow the suggestions of the devil. Faith in the angels, therefore, only means that every good suggestion—and such is the suggestion of the angel—must be accepted, because it leads to the spiritual development of man.

There is a popular misconception, into which many writers of repute have fallen, that Iblīs is not an angel but one of the jinn. Iblīs or the Devil is one of the angels. The misconception has arisen from the fact that where the angels are commanded to make obeisance to Adam, there is also mention of Iblīs and his refusal to make obeisance : “ And when We said to the angels, Make obeisance to Adam, they did obeisance but² Iblīs

1. “ Therefore, whoever disbelieves in the devil and believes in Allāh, he has laid hold on the firmest handle ” (2 : 256).

2. The word *illā*, which ordinarily means *except* and is used as indicating *istithnā* (exception), is sometimes used to indicate *istithnā’ munqasī* (lit., an exception which is cut off), the thing excepted being disunited in kind from that from which the exception is made, so that the two belong to two

THE RELIGION OF ISLĀM

(did it not): he refused and he was proud and he was one of the unbelievers" (2 : 34). From these words it is clear enough that Iblis or the Devil was one of the unbelievers and refused to obey, and, therefore, he could not be an angel, because, of the angels, it is plainly said that "they do not disobey Allāh in what He commands them, and do as they are commanded" (66 : 6). And elsewhere it is stated in so many words that Iblīs was not from among angels but from among the jinn : "And when We said to the angels, Make obeisance to Adam, they made obeisance but Iblīs (did it not); he was of the jinn, so he transgressed the commandment of his Lord" (18 : 50). Now jinn and angels are two different classes of beings; their origin and their functions have nothing in common. The jinn, as we have seen, are mentioned as being created from fire, while the angels are created from light; and the function of the jinn has also been shown to be quite different from the function of the angel. It is, therefore, an obvious error to look upon the jinn as being a branch of the angelic creation.

The word *jinn* is derived from *janna* meaning *he covered* or *concealed* or *hid* or *protected*. All Arabic lexicologists are agreed on its Arabic origin, and moreover, there are numerous words in use in Arabic which are derived from the same root, as the verb *janna* meaning *it covered* or different classes. Thus they say, *jā al-qaumu illā ḥimār-an*, the meaning of which is that the people came but an ass did not come, the people and the ass belonging to two quite different classes. It is exactly in this sense that the word *illā* is used here, the angels and Iblis belonging to quite two different classes. Hence the rendering adopted. It is sometimes argued that if the devil were not an angel, he would not have been spoken of at all in connection with the commandment to the angels to make obeisance to man. The fact is that the commandment to the angels was in fact a commandment to all creation, and the lower beings, jinn, were, therefore, included in it. The words *idhā martu-ka* (when I commanded thee), occurring in 7 : 12 regarding the devil, show that the lower beings called jinn were included by implication in the commandment to the higher beings.

ANGELS

overshadowed (6 : 77), or the noun *janna* meaning *garden* because its trees cover the ground, or *janān* meaning *the heart* because it is concealed from the senses, and *majann* or *junna* meaning *shield* because it protects a man, and *janīn* or the *fœtus*, so long as it is in the mother's womb.¹ The word jinn has been used in the Holy Qur'an distinctly in two senses. It is applied in the first place to a certain class of beings that cannot be perceived with the senses. The origin of these beings is said to be fire, and their function is described as that of exciting evil passions or low desires. The Holy Qur'an is explicit on both these points. As regards the creation of jinn, it says: "And the jinn We created before of intensely hot fire" (15 : 27); and again: "And He created the jinn of a flame of fire" (55 : 15). And to show that the jinn and the devils are one, the devil is spoken of as saying: "I am better than he (*i. e.*, man); Thou hast created me of fire while him Thou hast created of dust" (7 : 12). As regards the function of jinn, the Holy Qur'an is equally clear: "The slinking devil who whispers into the hearts of men, from among the jinn and the men" (114 : 4-6). Hadīth have already been quoted showing that every man has with him an associate from among the angels who inspires him with good and noble ideas, and an associate from among the jinn who excites his baser passions.

The question is often asked why has God created beings which lead man astray? There is a misunderstanding in this question. The devil. God has created man with two kinds of passions, the higher which awaken in him a higher or spiritual life, and the lower which relate to his physical existence; and corresponding to these two passions there are two kinds of beings, the angels and the devils. The lower passions

1. In spite of this, the writer in the *Encyclopædia of Islam* calls it a loan-word.

THE RELIGION OF ISLAM

are necessary for man's physical life, but they become a hindrance to him in his advancement to a higher life when they run riot and become out of control. Man is required to keep these passions in control. If he can do so, they become a help to him in his advancement instead of a hindrance. This is the meaning underlying the Holy Prophet's reply in the ḥadīth already quoted, when he was asked if he too had an associate jinn. "Yes," he said, "but Allāh has helped me to overcome him, so he has submitted and does not command me aught but good." His devil is said to have submitted to him (*aslama*), and instead of making evil suggestions commanded him naught but good, that is to say, became a help to him in the development of his higher life.

Such is the true significance underlying the story of Adam. The devil at first refuses to make obeisance to man, *i.e.*, to become helpful in his spiritual advancement, and is determined, by hook or crook, to set him on the wrong course and excite his baser passions: "Most certainly I will take of Thy servants an appointed portion; and I will lead them astray and excite in them vain desires" (4 : 118, 119). But he is subdued by the help of the Divine revelation, and those who follow the revelation shall have no fear of the devil's misleading: "Then Adam received some words from his Lord, so He turned to him mercifully.... Surely there will come to you guidance from Me, so whoever follows My guidance, no fear shall come upon them, nor shall they grieve" (2 : 37, 38). The presence of the devil thus indicates that, in the earlier stages of spiritual development, man has to contend with him by refusing to obey his evil promptings, and any one who makes this struggle is sure to subdue the evil one; while in the higher stages, the lower passions having been brought into subjection, the devil actually becomes helpful, "commanding naught but

ANGELS

good," so that even physical desires become a help in the spiritual life of man. Without struggle there is no advancement in life, and thus even in the earlier stages, the devil is the ultimate means of man's good, unless, of course, man chooses to follow, instead of stubbornly resisting him.

The other use of the word jinn is with regard to men of a certain class.¹ Even the word *shaitān* (devil) or *shayāṭīn* (devils) has been applied to men in the Holy Qur'ān, and the leaders of evil are again and again called devils; see 2 : 14 ; 3 : 174 ; 8 : 48 ; 15 : 17 ; 21 : 82, etc. But the use of the word jinn when speaking of men was recognized in Arabic literature before Islām. The verse of Mūsa ibn Jābir *fa-mā nafarat jinni*, which would literally mean, *and my jinn did not flee*, has been explained as meaning, "and my companions who were like the jinn did not flee" (LL.). Here the word jinn is clearly explained as meaning human beings. And Tabrezi says, further, that *the Arabs liken a man who is sharp and clever in affairs to a jinnī and a shaitān* (TH. I, p. 193). There are other examples in pre-Islamic poetry in which the word jinn has been used to denote great or brave men.² In addition to this, the word jinn is explained by Arabic lexicologists as meaning *mu'azzam al-nās* (Q., TA.), i. e., *the main body of men or the bulk of mankind* (LL.). In the mouth of an Arab, the main body of men would mean the non-Arab world. They called all foreigners jinn because they were concealed from their eyes. It is in

1. Some authorities have held that the word jinn is also applicable to the angels, but it should be borne in mind that it is in a strictly literal sense that the word has been so used. The literal significance of the word jinn is *a being hidden from the human eye*, and as the angels are also invisible beings, they may be called jinn in a literal sense. Otherwise they have nothing in common with jinn.

2. I have quoted these verses in my Urdū commentary, the *Bayān al-Qur'ān*, under 6 : 131.

THE RELIGION OF ISLĀM

this sense that the word jinn is used in the Holy Qur'ān in the story of Solomon: "And of the jinn there were those who worked before him by the command of his Lord... ..They made for him what he pleased of fortresses and images" (34 : 12,13). The description of the jinn here as builders of fortresses shows them to have been men. And they are also spoken of as *shayāṭin* (devils) in 38 : 37, where they are called builders and divers, and it is further added that some of them were "fettered in chains." Surely those who built buildings and dived into the sea were not invisible spirits, nor do invisible spirits require to be fettered in chains. These were in fact the stangers whom Solomon had subjected to his rule and forced into service¹.

In one place in the Holy Qur'ān jinn and men are addressed as one *ma'shar* (6: 131),² and *ma'shar* is a class or community (*jamā'a*) whose affair is one (L.A.); and the jinn and men spoken of in this verse cannot belong to two different classes. Again, in the same verse, both jinn and men are asked the question: "Did there not come to you apostles from among you?" Now the apostles who are mentioned in the Holy Qur'ān or Hadīth all belong to mankind, and the Holy Book does not speak of a single apostle from among the jinn. The jinn in this case, therefore, are either non-Arabs or the iniquitous leaders who mislead others. In 17 : 88, it is stated that if jinn and men should combine together to bring the like of the Qur'ān, they could not bring the like of it," while in 2 : 23, in an exactly similar challenge,

1. A comparison with II Ch 2:18 would further clear the point: "And he set threescore and ten thousand of them to be bearers of burdens, and fourscore thousand to be hewers-in the mountain."

2. "O assembly (*ma'shar*) of jinn and men! did there not come to you apostles from among you, relating to you My communications and warning you of the meeting of this day of yours" (6: 131).

ANGELS

we have the word *shuhadā'a-kum* (your helpers or leaders), instead of jinn. Again in the sense of a foreigner the word has been used in 46 : 29, where a party of the jinn is stated to have come to the Holy Prophet and listened to the Holy Qur'an and believed in it ; for all the injunctions contained in the Holy Qur'an are for men, and there is not one for the jinn. This was evidently a party of the Jews of Nisibus as reports show, and the Holy Qur'an also speaks of them as believers in Moses (46 : 30). The jinn mentioned in the first section of ch. 72 are evidently Christians,¹ since they are spoken of as holding the doctrine of sonship (72 : 3, 4). In 72 : 6, they are called *rijāl* (pl. of *rajul*), which word is applicable to the males of human beings only (LA.).

Commenting on 46 : 29, Ibn Kathir has quoted several reports from the Musnad of Aḥmad, which establish the following facts. The Holy Prophet met a party of jinn at Nakhla when returning from Ṭā'if in the tenth year of the Cáll. These are said to have come from Nineveh. On the other hand, there is a well-established story that the Holy Prophet on his way back from Ṭā'if took rest in a garden where he met a Christian who was a resident of Nineveh ; and the man listened to his message and believed in him. It may be that he had other companions to whom he spoke of the Holy Prophet, and that these came to him later on. Another party of jinn is said to have waited on him when he was at Makka, and he is reported to have gone out of the city to a lonely place at night time, and to have spent the whole night with them. And we are told that their traces and the traces of the fire which they had burned during the night were visible in the morning. When prayer-time came and the Holy Prophet said his payers in

1. This is very probably a prophetic reference to the spread of Islām among the Christian nations of Europe.

THE RELIGION OF ISLAM

the company of Ibn Mas'ūd, the narrator, two of them are said to have come and joined the service. They are supposed to have been Jews of Nisibus and were seven in number (IK. 46 : 29). The Holy Prophet went to see them outside Makka, evidently because the Quraish would have interfered with the meeting and ill-treated any who came to see him. At any rate the Holy Qur'an and the Hadith do not speak of the jinn as they exist in the popular imagination, interfering in human affairs or controlling the forces of nature or assuming human or any other shape or taking possession of men or women and affecting them with certain diseases.¹

There is another misunderstanding in connection with the devils or the jinn which it is time should be removed. It is thought that according to the teachings of the Holy Qur'an, the devils have access to the Divine secrets, and stealthily overhear the Divine revelation which is communicated to the angels. This, however, was an Arab superstition borrowed either from the Jews² or the

1. Such ideas are unfortunately associated with the existence of jinn in the Gospels. The stories of Jesus casting out devils are more wondrous than fairly tales : " And devils also came out of many, crying out, and saying, Thou art Christ the Son of God " (Lk. 4 : 41). A devil was cast out of a dumb man and he began to speak (Mt. 9 : 32) ; a woman from Canaan had a daughter possessed with the devil and Jesus at first refused to cast out the devil because she was not an Israelite (Mt. 15 : 22) ; as many as seven devils went out of Mary Magdalene (Lk. 8 : 2) ; the devils cast out of another two men were sufficient for a whole herd of swine : " They went into the herd of swine : and, behold, the whole herd of swine ran violently down a steep place into the sea, and perished in the waters " (Mt. 8 : 32). And this power of casting out devils was given to all those who believed in Jesus (Mk. 16 : 17).

2. " The Talmud teaches that angels were created of fire and that they have various offices.....that the Jinn are an intermediate order between angels and men.....that they know what is to happen in the future, because they listen to what is going on behind the curtain to steal God's secrets" (RI. p. 68). The Quranic teaching is opposed to this ; it is not the angels that are created of fire but the jinn. The jinn are not an intermediate order between angels and men ; man is placed highest of

ANGELS

Persians, and the Holy Qur'an has rejected it in emphatic words. Thus, speaking of the revelation of the Holy Book, it says : " And this is truly a revelation from the Lord of the worlds ; the Faithful Spirit has descended with it upon thy heartAnd the devils have not come down with it, and it behoves them not and they have not the power to do it ; they are far removed even from the hearing of it " (26 : 192-212). In the face of these words, it is impossible to maintain that the Qur'an upholds the doctrine of the devils' access to Divine secrets. The Divine message is entrusted to Gabriel, who is here called the Faithful Spirit to show that it is quite safe with him ; and this message he brings direct to the heart of the Prophet. But that is not all ; the idea that the devils can overhear it by eavesdropping is strongly condemned ; they do not ascend to heaven as is popularly supposed, nor do they come down to earth with the Divine secrets ; nor does it behove them, nor have they the power to ascend to heaven and come down with the revelation ; they are far removed even from the hearing of it, so their stealthy listening to the Divine secrets is only a myth. And again : " Or have they the means by which they listen (to Divine secrets) ? Then let their listener bring a clear authority " (52 : 38). Here too the claim made by superstition on behalf of the devils, that they can ascend into heaven and listen to the Divine secrets, is plainly rejected. And yet again we are told that Divine secrets are safely entrusted to the apostles, and that no one else has access to them : " He does not reveal His secrets to any, except to him whom He chooses as an apostle, for He makes a guard to march before him and after him " (72 : 26, 27).

all, even above the angels ; the jinn are invisible beings of a very low order, their only function is the insinuation of evil into the hearts of men, and they have no access to Divine secrets.

THE RELIGION OF ISLĀM

Among Muslims, too, there is this misconception of the eavesdropping of devils, which, however, has arisen from a misunderstanding of certain words, particularly the words *shaitān* and *rajm*. *Shaitān*, as already shown, has admittedly been used for the iniquitous leaders of opposition to the Holy Prophet, as in the case of the hypocrites: "And when they are alone with their devils (*shayaṭīn*), they say, we are with you" (2 : 14). All commentators are agreed that here by *their devils* are meant their leaders in unbelief (IJ—C. I, p. 99, Bdz., Rz., etc.). Now opposition to the Holy Prophet came chiefly from two sources, *viz.*, the worldly leaders and the diviners or soothsayers (*kāhin*). As the simple faith of Islām was the death-knell of all superstitions, and the office of *kāhin* represented one of the greatest superstitions that ever enthralled the Arab mind, at all times prone to superstition, the diviners fought the Prophet tooth and nail. They deceived the people by their oracular utterances, and by presuming to foretell that the Prophet would soon perish. Like the worldly leaders of 2 : 14, these diviners are also spoken of in the Holy Qur'an as *shayaṭīn* (devils), because they led people to evil courses of life. The word *rajm* used in connection with these devils or diviners has also been misunderstood. *Rajm*, no doubt, does mean *the throwing of stones*, but it is also used to indicate *zann* or *conjecture*, *tawahhum* or *superstition*, *shatm* or *abusing*, and *ṭard* or *driving away* (R.). It occurs in the sense of conjecture in 18 : 22—"Making conjectures (*rajm-an*) at what is unknown"—, and in the sense of *abuse* in 19 : 46 in which the word *la-arjumanna-ka* is explained as meaning, "I will speak to thee in words which thou dost not like" (R.). And it is added that *shaitān* or the devil is called *rajīm*, because "he is driven away from all good and from the high places of the exalted assembly (*mala' al-a'la*) (*Ibid.*).

ANGELS

Now in the Holy Qur'an occur the words : " And We have adorned this lower heaven with lights and We have made them *rujūm-an li-l-shayāṭīn*," which words are wrongly translated as *missiles for the devils*.¹ In the light of what has been stated above, the meaning is clearly, *means of conjecture for the kāhins, i.e.,* the diviners and the astrologers. The following significance is accepted by the best authorities : " We have made them to be means of conjectures to the devils of mankind, *i.e.,* to the astrologers" (LL., Bdz., TA.). Another commentator says : " It is said that the meaning is that We made them so that the devils of mankind who are the astrologers make conjectures by them " (RM.). Ibn Athīr, after stating that the stars could not be missiles because they remain in their places, and that therefore only flames from their fire could be meant, gives the following alternative explanation : " It has been said that by *rujūm* are meant the conjectures which were made,.....and what the astrologers state by guesses and surmises and by their coming to certain conclusions on account of the combination of the stars and their separation, and it is they that are meant by *shayāṭīn*, for they are the devils of mankind. And it has been stated in some ḥadīth that whoever learns anything from astrology.....learns the same from sorcery, and the astrologer is a *kāhin* (diviner or soothsayer) and the *kāhin* is a sorcerer and the sorcerer is an unbeliever, and thus the astrologer who claims to acquire a knowledge of the stars to decide the happenings (of the future) thereby, and ascribes to them the sources of good and evil, is called a *kāfir*" (N. art. *rajm*). Thus a plain verse of the Holy Qur'an which, really condemns the

1. This is even Mr. Pickthall's translation, though he adds a footnote which shows this translation to be incorrect : " On the authority of a tradition going back to Ibn 'Abbās, the allusion is to the soothsayers and astrologers who saw the source of good and evil in the stars."

THE RELIGION OF ISLĀM

practices of diviners and soothsayers has been misinterpreted to mean that the stars were used as missiles for the devils who went up to heaven. Reference to this subject is contained in two other places:

“Surely We have adorned the nearest heaven with an adornment, the stars. They cannot listen to the exalted assembly and they are reproached from every side, being driven off, and for them is a perpetual chastisement; but he who snatches off a single snatching, there follows him a brightly shining flame” (37 : 6-10). “And certainly we have made stars in the heaven and We have made them fair-seeming to the beholders, and We guard it against every accursed devil; but he who steals a hearing, so there follows him a visible flame” (15:16-18).

On both these occasions, the principle is again stated in forcible words that the soothsayers and diviners have no access to heaven or the stars on which they base their conjectures; it is they again who are here called the rebellious or accursed devils—“They cannot listen to the exalted assembly.” But we are also told that “they are reproached from every side, being driven off,” *i. e.*, their own votaries do not honour them, and they are reproached because what they assert proves untrue and, therefore they live in perpetual torture. And then there is an exception: “But he who snatches off a single snatching.” Now this snatching away of the soothsayers, after we are told that they are reproached from every side and driven off, clearly means nothing but that occasionally their conjecture turns out to be true. The same idea is expressed in ch. 15 by the words “he who steals a hearing.” It is of course not meant that the Divine secrets are being discussed aloud somewhere, in heaven or in some star, and that the soothsayer, or the devil, is hiding and overhears them.

ANGELS

Divine revelation, as I have already shown, is entrusted to the Faithful Spirit, that is Gabriel, who, in turn, discloses it to the heart of the Prophet—there is no question of overhearing in this process.¹ And on both these occasions, it is the diviners and soothsayers, the *kāhins* of Arabia, that are spoken of. It has been established on the authority of the Holy Qur'ān itself that the devils cannot ascend to heaven, that they have no access to Divine secrets, that Divine revelation as sent to the Prophet is sent through the Faithful Spirit direct to the Prophet's heart, and it is a travesty of all these clearly established principles to say that the devils can overhear the Divine secrets. The soothsayer's occasional snatching and his stealthy hearing refer only to his conjecture sometimes coming true, the visible flame which follows meaning the subsequent failure and disappointment due to the advent of Islām, which

1. The following ḥadīth cannot be taken literally, and inasmuch as certain portions thereof are opposed to the Holy Qur'ān, there seems to have crept in some misunderstanding on the part of some narrator. The Holy Prophet is reported to have said that when God intends to send a revelation, the heavens are shaken and the heavenly hosts swoon and fall down in prostration. Gabriel is the first to raise his head and to him God reveals His pleasure. The angels then enquire of Gabriel what God has said, and he replies: The Truth, and He is the High, the Great. The secret listeners hear a part of this. Some are destroyed by the flame of fire but some are successful in imparting the news to others before they themselves are destroyed, and these latter take the message to the *kāhin* (diviner) on earth (Bu. 65 : sūra 34 : 1). Different versions of this ḥadīth are met with, but I have taken the most salient points of all. Now whereas a large number of ḥadīth state, and the Holy Qur'ān also is explicit on this point, that revelation is communicated directly to the Prophet by Gabriel, without any intervention, this ḥadīth says that it is communicated by Gabriel to other angels, and this is done in such a way that even the devils can hear it, while according to the Holy Qur'ān the devils are "far removed from the hearing of it" (26 : 212). Hence the ḥadīth, being opposed to the Holy Qur'ān and other ḥadīth, cannot be accepted in its entirety. There has undoubtedly been some misunderstanding somewhere in the course of transmission, and the wrong view of some narrator has crept in.

THE RELIGION OF ISLĀM

destroyed the whole effect of the soothsayer's pretensions. The description of spiritual truths in terms of physical laws which are prevalent in the world is of common occurrence in the Holy Qur'an; and it is a fact that before the light of Islām the darkness of superstition—and the office of the *kāhin* or the soothsayer was undoubtedly a superstition—was completely dispelled, so that Islām may be said literally to have proved a flame of fire for the chaff of soothsaying and divination.

CHAPTER IV REVEALED BOOKS

Revealed books are mentioned in the Holy Qur'an under three names. In 2 : 285 and in other places, the Prophet and the believers are spoken of as believing in *kutubi-hi* or His books. The word *kutub* is pl. of *kitāb*, which is derived from the root *kataba*, meaning *he wrote* or *he brought together*, and *kitāb* (*book*) is *a writing which is complete in itself*. Thus a letter may be called *kitāb*, in which sense the word occurs in 27 : 28, 29, regarding Solomon's letter to the Queen of Sheba. The word *kitāb* has, however, been used to speak of the revelation of God to prophets whether written or not (R.), while it is also freely used regarding the Divine decrees or ordinances (see 8 : 68, 9 : 36, 13 : 38, etc.). The word *al-Kitāb* has been used in the Holy Qur'an for the Qur'an itself, for the chapters of the Holy Qur'an (98 : 3), for any previous revelation, for all previous revelations taken together (13 : 43) and for all revealed books including the Holy Qur'an (3 : 118). Revealed books are also spoken of as *ṣuḥuf* (pl. of *ṣaḥīfa*) as in 87 : 18, 19, where all previous books, particularly the books of Moses and Abraham are so called, or as in 80 : 13 and 98 : 2 where the Holy Qur'an itself is spoken of as *ṣuḥuf*. The word *ṣaḥīfa* is derived from *ṣaḥf*, and *ṣaḥīfa* means *anything spread out* (R.). *Muṣḥaf* means *a collection of written pages*, and the Holy Qur'an is also called *muṣḥaf*. The third name under which revealed books are mentioned is *ṣubur* (pl. of *ṣabūr*), as in 26 : 196, 55 : 43, etc. The singular form, *ṣabūr*, occurs three times only in the Holy Qur'an, twice in connection

THE RELIGION OF ISLĀM

with the book of David “And to David We gave a scripture (*zabūr*)” (4 : 163, 17 : 55); and on one occasion a quotation is given from *al-Zabūr* : “And truly We wrote in the Book (*al-Zabūr*) after the reminder that the land— My righteous servants shall inherit it ” (24 : 105). The word *zabūr* is derived from *zabara* which means *he wrote* or *he wrote it firmly* or *skilfully* or *engraved* or *inscribed on a stone* (TA.); and *zabūr* means *any writing* or *book*, and particularly *the Book of the Psalms* of David is called *al-Zabūr* (LL.).

The Arabic word for revelation, *wahy*, which originally means *a hasty suggestion* has, in its highest form, come to signify the Divine word which is communicated to His *anbiyā'* (prophets) and His *auliyā'* (saints, or righteous servants of God, who have not been raised to the dignity of prophethood)¹ (R.). According to the Holy Qur'an, *wahy* or revelation is a universal fact, so much so that it is even spoken of as being granted to inanimate objects: “Then He directed Himself to the heaven and it was a vapour, so He said to it and to the earth: Come both willingly or unwillingly. They both said: We come willingly. So He ordained them seven heavens in two periods, and revealed in every heaven its affair ” (41 : 11, 12). On another occasion there is mention of revelation to the earth : “When the earth is shaken with her shaking, and the earth brings forth her burdens, and man says, What has befallen her ? On that day she shall tell her news, as if thy Lord had revealed to her ” (99 : 1-5). In the first instance, God's speaking to the earth and the heavens and His revelation to the heavens shows that there is a kind of revelation through which the Divine laws are made to operate in the universe ; in the second, a great revolution that is

1. *Al-kalimatu-llatī tulqā ilā anbiyā'i-hī wa auliyā'i-hī wahy-un.*

REVEALED BOOKS

brought about upon earth—its “bringing forth its burdens,” explained as the laying open of its treasures (R.) in the form of minerals and other products—is spoken of as a kind of revelation. There is also a revelation to the lower animals: “And thy Lord revealed to the bee, saying, Make hives in the mountains and in the trees and in what they build: then eat of all the fruits and walk in the ways of thy Lord submissively” (16: 68, 69). This is really an example of the Divine revelation being granted also to the lower creation, so that, that which they do by instinct is really a revelation. These two examples show that Divine revelation is intended for the development and perfection of everything within its ordained sphere. Here may also be mentioned the revelation to angels: “When thy Lord revealed to the angels: I am with you, so make firm those who believe” (8: 12). As revelation itself is communicated through angels, it appears that there are various orders of angels; and it is for this reason that Gabriel, the angel who brings revelation to the prophets of God, is regarded as the greatest of them all.

Much misconception prevails as to the sphere of revelation to man. It is generally thought that revelation is limited to the prophets of God. This is not true, for the Holy Qur’an regards it, in one form or another, as the universal experience of all humanity. Rāghib, whom I have already quoted, defines revelation, in a strictly technical sense, as meaning the word of God as conveyed to the prophets (*anbiyā’*) and to other righteous servants (*auliyā’*) of God. And the Holy Qur’an speaks on several occasions of revelation (*wahy*) having been granted to such righteous servants of God as were not prophets, men as well as women. The mother of Moses is said to have received a revelation though she was undoubtedly not a prophet, and

THE RELIGION OF ISLAM

so are the disciples of Jesus who were not prophets: "And We revealed (*auḥaina*) to Moses' mother, saying: Give him suck, and when thou fearst for him, cast him into the river, and do not fear nor grieve; for We will bring him back to thee and make him one of the apostles" (28: 7); "And when I revealed (*auḥaitu*) to the disciples (of Jesus), saying, Believe in Me and My apostle" (5: 111). These verses leave not the least doubt that *wahy* or revelation is granted to those who are not prophets as well as to prophets, and therefore the door to revelation is not closed, even though no prophet at all would come after the Holy Prophet Muḥammad. It is only authoritative revelation, the form of revelation peculiar to prophets, the revelation through Gabriel as explained in the next paragraph, that has ceased with the coming of the Holy Prophet.

Revelation to inanimate objects, to the lower animals and to the angels is of a different nature from revelation to man, and it is the latter with which we are chiefly concerned. Revelation to man is stated to be of three kinds: "And it is not for any mortal that Allāh should speak to him except by inspiring or from behind a veil, or by sending a messenger and revealing by His permission what He pleases" (42: 51). The first of these, which is called *wahy* in the original, is the inspiring of an idea into the heart, for the word *wahy* is used here in its original significance of a *hasty suggestion* or *infusing into the heart*, as distinguished from a revelation in words. In spite of the fact that this kind of revelation is the "infusing of an idea into the heart," it is called a form of God's speaking to man. This is technically called *wahy khafiyy* or inner revelation, and the sayings of the Holy Prophet touching religious matters are in this class. The Holy Prophet himself is reported to have said on such an

REVEALED BOOKS

occasion : " The Holy Spirit has inspired (this) into my heart " (N.). It is an idea put into the mind, as distinguished from revelation proper, which is a message conveyed in words. Revelation in this form is common to both prophets and those who are not prophets, and it is more or less in this sense, the sense of putting a suggestion into the mind, or what is called a *limma* or *waswasa* of the devil, that the devils are spoken of as bringing *wahy* to their friends: " And the devils do suggest (*yuhān* from *wahy*) to their friends " (6 ; 122).

The second mode of God's speaking to man is said to be " from behind a veil " (*min warā'i ḥijāb*), and this includes *ru'yā* (dream), *kashf* (vision), and *ilhām* (when voices are heard or uttered in a state of trance, the recipient being neither quite asleep, nor fully awake). This form of revelation is also common both to prophets and those who are not prophets, and in its simplest form, the *ru'yā* or the dream, is a universal experience of the whole of humanity. The Holy Qur'an tells us of the vision of a king, who was apparently not a believer in God (12 : 43)—a vision which had a deep underlying significance. This shows that, according to the Holy Qur'an, revelation in its lower forms is the common experience of all mankind, of the unbeliever as well as of the believer, of the sinner as well as of the saint.

The third kind, which is peculiar to the prophets of God, is that in which the angel (Gabriel) brings the Divine message in words. This is the surest and clearest form of revelation, and such was the revelation of the Qur'an to the Holy Prophet. This is called *wahy matluww* or *revelation that is recited in words*. It is the highest and most developed form of revelation ; and it was in this form that revelation was granted to all the prophets of God, to Noah, to Abraham, to Moses, to every

THE RELIGION OF ISLĀM

prophet of every nation.¹ The revealed books are a record of this highest revelation, and technically the word revelation (*wahy*) is applied to this form as distinguished from the lower forms.

Speaking of Adam, the Holy Qur'ān has stated the reason why revelation from God was needed, and the purpose which it fulfilled. Man had two objects before him, to conquer nature and to conquer self, to bring under his control the powers of nature and his own desires. In the story of Adam as the prototype of man, related in 2 : 30-39,² we

Object of God's revelation to man

1. Some Muslims have been misled, by the Christian conception of revelation, into the belief that revelation means only an illumination of the mind, and that to say that God speaks is merely metaphor, because it is only the recipient of the revelation who speaks under a certain Divine influence. Unfortunately the original Gospel, the revelation of Jesus Christ, having been lost, there arose four men who at different periods wrote four gospels containing the life-story of Jesus together with remnants of his teachings. These were believed to have been written under Divine influence and therefore the Christian conception of revelation could go no further. According to the Holy Qur'ān, the illumination of the mind, or the inspiration of the mind of man with a certain idea, or, as it is called in the Holy Qur'ān, the putting of a hasty suggestion into the mind, is only the lowest form of revelation, common both to the prophet and to him who is not a prophet, the only difference being that, in the case of the prophet, it is a very clear idea while in the case of others it may be clear or vague according to the capacity of the recipient. Revelation, in which words are communicated to the prophet through the angel Gabriel, is the highest and most developed form of revelation, while next to it in force and clarity come the words communicated to the righteous among the Muslims, or the visions shown to them.

2. I quote here the more important passages of this section : " And when thy Lord said to the angels, I am going to place in the earth one who shall rule in it, they said, What ! wilt Thou place in it such (beings) as shall make mischief in it and shed blood, and we celebrate Thy praise and extol Thy holiness ? He said, I know what you do not know. And He gave Adam knowledge of all things And when We said to the angels, Make obeisance to Adam, they did obeisance, but Iblis did it not ; he refused and he was proud, and he was one of the unbelievers. And We said, O Adam ! dwell thou and thy wife in the garden, and eat from it a plenteous food wherever you wish, and do not approach this tree, for then you will be of the unjust. But the devil made them both fall from it, and caused them to depart from that in which they were..... And

REVEALED BOOKS

are told that Adam was given the knowledge of things, that is to say that man was endowed with the capacity to obtain knowledge of all things (2 : 31); he was also gifted with the power to conquer nature, for the angels (beings controlling the powers of nature) made obeisance to him (2 : 34); but Iblīs (the inciter of lower desires in man) did not make obeisance, and man fell a prey to his evil suggestions. Man was powerful against all, but weak against himself. He could attain perfection in one direction by his own exertions; he could conquer nature by his knowledge of things and the power granted to him; but the greater conquest and the greater perfection lay in the conquest of his inner self, and this conquest could only be brought about by a closer connection with the Divine Being. It was to make this perfection possible for him that revelation was needed. Thus, we are told, when man proved weak against his own desires and passions, Divine help came to him in the form of certain "words from his Lord" (2 : 37), that is to say, in the Divine revelation which was granted to Adam.

Adam received (some) words from his Lord, so He turned to him mercifully; He is Oft-returning to mercy, the Merciful. We said, Go forth from this all, so surely there will come to you a guidance from Me, then whoever follows My guidance, no fear shall come upon them, nor shall they grieve." Light is thrown on this subject by what is stated elsewhere in the same connection: "And certainly We created you, then We fashioned you, then We said to the angels, Make obeisance to Adam. So they did obeisance except Iblis, he was not of those who did obeisance..... And We said: O Adam! dwell thou and thy wife in the garden..... But the devil made an evil suggestion to them that he might make manifest to them what had been hidden from them of their evil inclinations" (7 : 11—20). The latter passage shows that in the story of Adam, the story is related of every son of man, that it was by his evil suggestion that the devil misled man and that this suggestion was in connection with man's own evil inclination. This is made yet more clear by a warning to all sons of man: "O children of Adam! let not the devil cause you to fall into affliction as he expelled your parents from the garden, pulling off from them both their clothing that he might show them their evil inclinations. He sees you, he as well as his host, from whence you cannot see them" (7 : 27).

THE RELIGION OF ISLAM

And as for his posterity, the Divine law was given : "There will come to you a guidance from Me, then whoever follows My guidance, no fear shall come upon them nor shall they grieve " (2 : 38). In these words man is told that, with the help of Divine revelation, he shall have no fear of the Devil's temptings, and so the hindrance in his progress and the obstacle to the development of his faculties being removed, he shall go on advancing on the road to perfection.

It has already been pointed out that revelation in its lower forms, in the form of inspiration or that of dreams or visions, is the universal experience of humanity, but even in its highest form, it is not, according to the Holy Qur'an, limited to one particular man or to one particular nation. It is, on the other hand, most emphatically stated that just as God has given His physical sustenance to each and every nation, even so He has endowed it with His spiritual sustenance for its moral and spiritual advancement. Two quotations from the Holy Qur'an will suffice to show that revelation in its highest form has been granted to every nation : " There is not a people but a warner has gone among them " (35 : 24) ; " And every nation had an apostle " (10 : 47). And thus the idea of revelation in Islām is as broad as humanity itself.

The religion of Islām, therefore, requires a belief, not in the Holy Qur'an alone, but in all the books of God, granted to all the nations of the world. At its very commencement it lays down in clear words : " And those who believe in that which has been revealed to thee and that which was revealed before thee " (2 : 4). And again : " The Apostle believes in what has been revealed to him from his Lord, and so do the believers ; they all believe in Allāh and His angels and His books

REVEALED BOOKS

and His apostles" (2 : 285). A book was granted to every prophet of God : " All people are a single nation ; so Allah raised prophets bearing good news and warning, and He revealed with them the book with truth" (2 : 213) ; " But if they reject thee, so indeed were rejected before thee apostles who came with clear arguments and scriptures and the illuminating book" (3 : 183). Only two books are mentioned by their special name, the *Taurat* (Torah, or book of Moses) and the *Injil* (Gospel, or book of Jesus). The giving of a scripture (*ṣabūr*) to David is also mentioned (17 : 55), and the scriptures (*ṣuḥuf*) of Abraham and Moses are mentioned together in 53 : 36, 37 and 87 : 19. But, as stated above, a Muslim is required to believe, not only in the particular books named, but in all the books of all the prophets of God ; in other words, in the sacred scriptures of every nation, because every nation had a prophet and every prophet had a book.

According to the Holy Qur'an, revelation is not only universal but also progressive, attaining perfection in the last of the prophets, the Holy Prophet Muḥammad. A revelation was granted to each nation according to its requirements, and in each age in accordance with the capacity of the people of that age. And as the human brain became more and more developed, more and yet more light was cast by revelation on matters relating to the unseen, on the existence and attributes of the Divine Being, on the nature of revelation from Him, on the requital of good and evil, on life after death, on Paradise and Hell. The Holy Qur'an is called a book "that makes manifest," because it shed complete light on the essentials of religion, and made manifest what had hitherto remained, of necessity, obscure. It is on account of this full resplendence of light which it casts on all religious problems that

THE RELIGION OF ISLAM

the Holy Qur'an claims to have brought religion to perfection: "This day have I perfected for you your religion and completed My favour on you and chosen for you Islam as a religion" (5 : 30). Six hundred years before, Jesus Christ said: "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth" (Jn. 16 : 12, 13). This is clearly a reference to the coming of a revelation with which religion shall come to perfection, and, among the sacred books of the world, the Holy Qur'an is alone in advancing the claim that it has brought religion to perfection, and, in keeping with that claim, has cast the fullest light on all religious questions.

Besides bringing religion to perfection and making

The Holy Qur'an as
guardian and judge of
previous revelation.

plain what was obscure in the previous scriptures, the Holy Qur'an claims to be a guardian over those scriptures;

guarding the original teachings of the prophets of God, and a judge deciding the differences between them. Thus after speaking of the Torah and the Gospel (5 : 44, 47), it says: "And We have revealed to thee the Book with the truth, verifying what is before it of the book and a guardian over it" (5 : 48). It is elsewhere pointed out in the Holy Book that the teachings of the earlier scriptures had undergone alterations, and therefore only a revelation from God could separate the pure Divine teaching from the mass of error which had grown around it. This the Qur'an did, and hence it is called a guardian over the earlier scriptures. As for its authority as a judge, we are told: "Certainly We sent apostles to nations before thee.. And We have not revealed to thee the Book except that thou mayest make clear to them that about which they differ" (16 : 63,64). Religious differences had grown to such an extent that religion itself would have lost

REVEALED BOOKS

all hold on humanity had not a revelation from the Divine Being guided humanity aright. All religions were from God, yet they all denounced each other as leading man to perdition; and their basic doctrines had come to differ from each other to such an extent that it had become simply unthinkable that they could have proceeded from the same Divine source; till the Holy Qur'an pointed out the common ground, namely, the Unity of God, and the universality of revelation.

There is much that is common to the Holy Qur'an and the previous scriptures, especially the Bible. The Qur'an has repeatedly declared that the basic principles of all religions were the same, only the details differing according to the time and the stage of a people's development. All these principles in a more developed form are taught by the Holy Qur'an, and occasionally lessons have been drawn from previous history. But one thing is remarkable, to wit, that both in its discussion of religious principles and in its references to history, the Holy Qur'an has done away with the defects of the earlier books. Take, for example, the Bible. It mentions many incidents which, so far from conveying any ennobling lesson, are derogatory to the dignity of prophethood, and, sometimes, even of an obscene nature. An educated Jew or Christian would prefer that his sacred book did not contain such statements as that Abraham, that great and revered patriarch of all nations, was a liar, that Lot committed incest with his own daughters, that Aaron made the image of a calf and led the Israelites to its worship, that David, whose beautiful Psalms are the texts of sermons in churches and synagogues, committed adultery with Uria's wife, and that Solomon with all his wisdom worshipped idols to please his wives. The Holy Qur'an speaks of all these

THE RELIGION OF ISLAM

great men but it accepts none of these statements and rejects most of them in unmistakable words. Again, it speaks of the Devil tempting Adam, but in language which makes it clear that it is the story of man's every-day experience; there is no image of dust into whose nostrils the breath of life is breathed; no rib of Adam is taken out to make the woman; there is no Divine interdiction against the tree of the knowledge of good and evil; there is no serpent to beguile the woman, nor does the woman tempt the man; the Lord God does not walk in the garden in the cool of the day; no punishment is meted out to the serpent that he shall go on his belly and eat dust; the bringing forth of children is not a punishment for the woman, nor is labouring in the fields a punishment for the man. Similarly the Holy Qur'an relates the history of Noah several times, but not once does it state that there was a deluge which covered the whole earth and destroyed all living creatures on the face of the earth. It only speaks of a flood that destroyed Noah's people. There are many other examples¹ which show that, though the Qur'an relates the histories of some of the prophets of yore in order to draw lessons therefrom, yet it does not borrow from the Bible. It is from the Divine source that its knowledge is drawn, and hence it is that when referring to those histories, it removes all their defects.

The examples given above show that the old scriptures, though revealed by God, have undergone considerable changes; and this is not only true of the Bible but applies with equal truth to all the ancient revealed books. Modern criticism of the Bible, together with the accessibility of

1. I have noted these and other differences between the Holy Qur'an and the Bible in the notes to my Translation of the Holy Qur'an; to which I may refer the reader who seeks further information on this point.

REVEALED BOOKS

ancient manuscripts, has now established the fact that many alterations were made in it; it is over thirteen hundred years since the Holy Qur'an charged the followers of the Bible with altering its text; and that at a time when nobody knew that such alterations had been made in its text. I shall content myself with only one quotation: "Do you then hope that they would believe in you, and a party from among them used indeed to hear the word of Allāh, then altered it after they had understood it, and they know (this).....Woe, then, to those who write the book with their hands and then say, This is from Allāh; so that they may take for it a small price" (2: 75-79).¹ Hence it should be borne in mind that

1. The following examples of alterations in some of the Old and New Testament books are taken from a Christian commentator on the Bible. Regarding the authorship of the Pentateuch which has generally been ascribed to Moses, he says: "On close examination, however, it must be admitted that the Pentateuch reveals many features inconsistent with the traditional view that in its present form it is the work of Moses. For instance, it may be safely granted that Moses did not write the account of his own death in Dt 34..... In Gn 14: 14 and Dt 34 mention is made of Dan; but the territory did not receive that name till it was conquered by the Danites, long after the death of Moses (Josh 19: 47, Jg 18: 29). Again, in Nu 21: 14, 15 there is quoted as an ancient authority 'the book of the Wars of the Lord', which plainly could not have been earlier than the days of Moses. Other passages which can with difficulty be ascribed to him are Ex 6: 26, 27; 11: 3; 16: 35, 36; Lv 18: 24-28; Nu 12: 3; Dt 2: 12" (Dm. p. xxv). And again: "A careful examination has led many scholars to the conviction that the writings of Moses formed only the rough material or part of the material, and that in its present form it is not the work of one man, but a compilation made from previously existing documents" (*Ibid*, p. xxvi).

How true are the words of the Holy Qur'an, uttered 1300 years ago! "Who write the book with their hands, then say, This is from Allāh."

The case of other books of the Bible is no better. Even the Gospels are admitted to have been altered. The original Gospel of Jesus Christ is nowhere to be found. But even the authenticity of the authorship of St. Matthew and the others is doubtful. As Dummelow says, "Direct authorship of this Gospel by the apostle Matthew is improbable" (Dm. p. 620). As regards Mark, he says: "Internal evidence points definitely to the conclusion that the last twelve verses (*i. e.*, 16: 9-20) are not by St. Mark" (*Ibid*, p. 732). The explanation as to how these verses found a place

THE RELIGION OF ISLĀM

though the Holy Qur'an speaks again and again of "verifying" what is before it, yet it does not and cannot mean that there have been no alterations in them. On the other hand, it condemns many of the doctrines taught by the followers of the earlier scriptures, and this shows that while their origin is admitted to be Divine, it is at the same time pointed out that these books have not come down to us in their original purity, and that the truth revealed in them has been mixed up with errors due to alterations effected by human hands.

In almost every great religion, Divine revelation is

Door to revelation is considered to be the peculiar experience of a particular race or nation, and even in that nation the door to revelation is looked upon as having been closed after some great personage or after a certain time. But Islām, while making revelation the universal experience of humanity, also considers its door as standing open for all time. There is an erroneous idea in some minds that, in Islām, the door to revelation was closed with the Holy Prophet Muḥammad, because it is stated in the Holy Qur'an that he is the last of the prophets. Why there shall be no prophet after him will be discussed in the next

here is very interesting. It is stated that the Gospel of Mark, being the first authoritative account of the life of Jesus, gained a good circulation at first; but, later on, Matthew and Luke became more popular, and Mark was, so to say, put in the shade. "When at the close of the apostolic age an attempt was made (probably in Rome) to collect the authentic memorials of the Apostles and their companions, a copy of the neglected Second Gospel was not easily found. The one that was actually discovered, and was used to multiply copies, had lost its last leaf, and so a fitting termination (the present appendix) was added by another hand" (Dm. p. 733). Many other examples of changes made in the text can be quoted, but one more would suffice. Commenting on the well-known confession of Christ, "Why callest thou me good" (Mk. 10 : 17), Dummelow says that in the Revised Version of Matthew, Christ's reply is, "Why askest thou me concerning that which is good"; and adds: "The author of Matthew..... altered the text slightly, to prevent the reader from supposing that Christ denied that He was good" (*Ibid*, p. 730).

REVEALED BOOKS

chapter, but it is an error to confuse the discontinuance of prophethood with the discontinuation of revelation. It has been shown that of the three kinds of revelation, two are common to both prophets and those who are not prophets, while only one form of revelation, the highest, in which the angel Gabriel is sent with a message in words, is peculiar to the prophets; and therefore when it is said that no prophet shall appear after the Holy Prophet Muḥammad, the only conclusion that can be drawn from it is that the door has been closed on that highest form of revelation; but by no stretch of words can revelation itself be said to have come to an end. The granting of revelation to those who are not prophets being an admitted fact, as shown above on the basis of plain Qur'anic verses, revelation remains, and humanity will always have access to this great Divine blessing, though prophethood, having reached its perfection, has naturally come to an end. The doctrine of the continuance of revelation is clearly upheld in the Holy Qur'an and the Ḥadīth. Thus the former says: "Those who believe and guard against evil, they shall have good news (*bushra*) in this world's life and in the hereafter" (10: 63, 64). The *bushra* granted in this world's life are "good visions which the Muslim sees or which are shown to him," according to a saying of the Holy Prophet (Rz.). And according to one of the most reliable ḥadīth, *bushra* or *mubashsharat*—both words having the same significance—are a part of prophethood. Thus the Holy Prophet is reported to have said: "Nothing remains of prophethood but *mubashsharat*" (Bu. 91 : 5). Being asked what was meant by *mubashsharat*, he replied, "good (or true) visions" (Bu. 91 : 5). According to another ḥadīth, he is reported to have said: "The vision of the believer is one of the forty-six parts of prophethood" (Bu. 91 : 4). In another version of the same

THE RELIGION OF ISLĀM

ḥadīth, instead of the *vision of the believer*, the words are *good (or true) visions (ru'ya ṣāliha)*. The word *vision* is used here in a wide sense, and includes the inspiration which is granted to the righteous. For we are told in yet another ḥadīth: "There used to be among those who were before you persons who were spoken to (by God) though they were not prophets; if there is such a one among my people, it is 'Umar" (Bu. 62 : 6). All these ḥadīth and the Qurānic verse quoted above afford proof enough that revelation in some of its lower forms is continued after the Holy Prophet, and it is only the highest form of revelation, the revelation brought by Gabriel, that has been discontinued with the termination of prophethood.

It is thus one of the basic principles of Islām that God speaks as He hears and sees. *Kalām* (speaking) is an attribute of the Divine Being. It has been said that God is never spoken of in the Holy Qur'ān as *Mutakallim* or *Kalīm*, that is, as One Who speaks (En. Is., art. *Kalām*). I have already shown that there are many names of the Divine Being that are taken from some attribute or act ascribed to Him in the Holy Qur'ān, as for instance, *al-Rafi'*, *al-Qabidz*, *al-Bāsīt*, *al-Mujīb*, *al-Muḥyi*, etc. There are even names that are taken not from an express attribute or act but from the sense simply, as *al-Wajid*, *al-Muqaddim*, *al-Mu'akkhir*, etc. Now the attribute *kalām* of the Divine Being is mentioned frequently in the Holy Qur'ān. God spoke to (*kallama*) Moses (4 : 164 ; 7 : 143); He spoke to (*kallama*) other prophets (2 : 253); He speaks to those who are not prophets (42 : 51). This leaves no doubt that speaking is an attribute of God according to the Holy Qur'ān, just as seeing and hearing are His attributes. The list of ninety-nine names that has been prepared may not include it, but the Holy Qur'ān definitely and decidedly states

REVEALED BOOKS

again and again that God has been speaking to His servants. Hence though no prophet will come after the Holy Prophet Muḥammad, yet God still speaks to His righteous servants, because it is one of His attributes, and because His attributes cannot cease.

The useless controversy which once occupied the attention of the Muslim world as to whether the Holy Qur'ān was created or uncreated, and whether it was eternal or *muḥdath* (new, or coming into existence afterwards), on account of which many men of note had to suffer great hardships, seems to have been due to some misunderstanding. It is recognized by all that *kalām* (speech) is an attribute of God, and all attributes of the Divine Being are inseparable from Him; indeed the Divine Being could not be conceived of as existing without these attributes. Hence no attribute could be said to have been created or *muḥdath*, that is, coming into existence afterwards. But there is equally no doubt that Divine attributes find expression at different times. God sees and hears from eternity, He sees and hears now and He will see and hear in the future. Similarly He speaks from eternity; He speaks even now and He will speak in the future. When Adam came into this world, He granted him a revelation; afterwards He granted a revelation to Noah, then to Abraham, then to Moses. He granted revelations to all nations of the world, each at a particular time and in the language of that particular people. That revelation, and in fact all events of the future, existed in His unlimited knowledge from all eternity, but so far as human experience is concerned, it was *muḥdath* or new; and we have to speak in terms of human experience. Nothing is new in the sight of God, whenever done, but according to our conception of things, the revelations given

THE RELIGION OF ISLĀM

to Adam and to Noah and all other prophets were new when they were granted. The Holy Qur'an itself is explicit on this point: "There comes not to them a new (*muhdath*) reminder from their Lord but they hear it while they sport" (21:2). In this sense, the Holy Qur'an was also a new reminder, though it was there in the knowledge of God from all eternity. But things cannot be said to be eternal and uncreated, simply because they are in the knowledge of God from eternity.

CHAPTER V
PROPHETS

The next article of faith in the Muslim catechism is belief in the prophets. The Arabic word for prophet is *nabī*, which is derived from *naba'*, meaning *an announcement of great utility imparting knowledge of a thing* (R.). It is added by the same authority that the word *naba'* is applied only to such information as is free from any liability to untruth. It should be noted that the hamza (') in the root-word *naba'* is dropped in the word *nabī*.¹ One lexicologist explains the word *nabī* as meaning *an ambassador between God and rational beings from among His creatures* (R.). According to another, a *nabī* is *the man who gives information about God* (Q.), and this is further explained as *the man to whom God gives information concerning His Unity and to whom He reveals secrets of the future and imparts the knowledge that he is His prophet* (T.A.). A *nabī* is also called a *rasūl*, which means *an apostle or messenger*, lit., *one sent*. The two words *nabī* and *rasūl* are used interchangeably in the Holy Qur'ān, the same person being sometimes called *nabī* and sometimes *rasūl*; while occasionally both names are combined. The reason seems to be that the prophet has two capacities, viz., he receives information from God, and he imparts the message to mankind. He is called a *nabī* in his first, and a *rasūl* in his second capacity, but there is one difference. The word *rasūl* has a wider significance, being applicable to every messenger in a literal sense; and the angels are called Divine

1. It is for this reason that some authorities are of opinion that *nabī* is derived from *nabuwwa* meaning *the state of being exalted*.

THE RELIGION OF ISLĀM

messengers, *rusul* (pl. of *rasul*) (35 : 1), because they are also bearers of Divine messages to carry out the Divine will.

It has already been stated that a faith in Divine revelation is one of the essentials of Islām, and since revelation must be communicated through a man, faith in the messenger is a natural sequence. Hence faith in the messengers of God is mentioned along with faith in the revealed books (2 : 177, 285). In fact there is a deeper significance underlying faith in the prophets, and hence the greater stress is laid upon this article of faith. The prophet is not only the bearer of the Divine message, but he also shows how that message is to be interpreted in practical life ; and therefore he is the model or exemplar to be followed. It is the prophet's example that inspires a living faith in the hearts of his followers and brings about a real transformation in their lives. This is why the Holy Qur'an lays special stress on the fact that the prophet must be a man. The reformation or transformation of man can only be accomplished through a man-prophet. The angel's function is restricted simply to the delivery of the Divine message to the perfect man, the prophet. Hence an angel is sent as a messenger to the prophet and not as a messenger to men generally. He belongs to a different class of beings and cannot serve as a model for men. The reformation of man is thus entrusted to man: "Had there been in the earth angels walking about as settlers, We would have sent down to them an angel from the heaven as an apostle" (17 : 95) ; " And we did not send before thee any but men to whom We sent revelation And We did not give them bodies not eating food " (21 : 7, 8). If, then, even an angel cannot serve as a model for men, much less would God Himself serve that purpose, even if it were possible that He should come in the flesh. The

PROPHETS

doctrine of incarnation is, therefore, rejected, because God incarnate would serve no purpose in the reformation of man ; seeing that man has to face temptations at every step, but there is no temptation for God.

Prophethood is a free Divine gift to man, a *mauhiba*,¹

Universality of the institution of prophethood.

according to the Holy Qur'an. Just as He has granted His gifts of physical sustenance to all men alike, so His spiritual gift of prophethood, through which a spiritual life is awakened in man, is also a free gift to all the nations of the world. It is not among the Israelites alone that prophets were raised up, as would appear from the Bible. According to the Holy Qur'an, there is not one nation in the world in which a prophet has not been raised up : " There is not a people but a warner has gone among them " (35 : 24). And again : " Every nation has had an apostle " (10 : 47). We are further told that there have been prophets besides those mentioned in the Holy Qur'an : " And We sent apostles We have mentioned to thee before, and apostles We have not mentioned to thee " (4 : 164). It is, in fact, stated in a ḥadīth that there have been 124,000 prophets, while the Holy Qur'an contains only about twenty-five names, among them being several non-Biblical prophets, Hūd and Ṣāliḥ raised up in Arabia, Luqmān in Ethiopia, a contemporary of Moses (generally known as Khidzr) in Sūdān, and Dhu-l-Qarnain (Darius I, who was also a king) in Persia ; all of which is quite in accordance with

1. The Holy Qur'an itself is called a gift of God : " The Beneficent God (*al-Raḥmān*) taught the Qur'an " (55 : 1, 2). That is to say, it is a free gift of God, not the result of anything done on the part of man, because *al-Raḥmān* means the bestower of free gifts. We are also told that no man can rise to the dignity of prophethood by his own efforts ; it is God Who raises someone to that dignity when He intends to reform men. Thus the unbelievers' question, as to why revelation is not sent to them, is met with the reply : " God knows best where He places His message " (6 : 125)

THE RELIGION OF ISLĀM

the theory of the universality of prophethood, as enunciated above. And as the Holy Book has plainly said that prophets have appeared in all nations and that it has not named all of them, which in fact was unnecessary, a Muslim may accept the great luminaries who are accepted by other nations as having brought light to them, as the prophets of those nations.

The Qur'ān, however, not only establishes a theory that prophets have appeared in all nations; it goes further and renders it necessary that a Muslim should believe in all those prophets. In the very beginning we are told that a Muslim must "believe in that which has been revealed to thee and that which was revealed before thee" (2 : 4); and a little further on: "We believe in Allāh and in that which has been revealed to us and in that which was revealed to Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac and Jacob and the tribes, and in that which was given to Moses and Jesus, and in that which was given to the prophets from their Lord; we do not make any distinction between any of them" (2 : 136), where the word *prophets* clearly refers to the prophets of other nations. And again, the Holy Qur'ān speaks of Muslims as believing in all the prophets of God and not in the Holy Prophet Muḥammad alone: "Righteousness is this that one should believe in Allāh and the last day and the angels and the book and the prophets" (2 : 177); "The Apostle believes in what has been revealed to him from his Lord, and so do the believers; they all believe in Allāh and His angels and His books and His apostles; we make no distinction between any of His apostles" (2 : 285). In fact, to believe in some prophets and reject others is condemned as *kufur* (unbelief): "Those who disbelieve in Allāh and His apostles, and (those who) desire to make a distinction between Allāh and His apostles, and (those who) say

PROPHETS

We believe in some and disbelieve in others, and desire to take a course between (this and) that—these it is that are truly unbelievers” (4 : 150, 151). A belief in all the prophets of the world is thus an essential principle of the religion of Islām, and though the faith of Islām is summed up in two brief sentences, there is no god but Allāh and Muḥammad is His apostle, yet the man who confesses belief in Muḥammad, in so doing accepts all the prophets of the world, whether their names are mentioned in the Holy Qur’ān or not. Islām claims a universality to which no other religion can aspire, and lays the foundation of a brotherhood as vast as humanity itself.

The Divine scheme whereby prophets were raised up for the regeneration of the world, as disclosed in the Holy Qur’ān, may be briefly summed up as follows. Prophets were raised up in every nation, but their message was limited to that particular nation and in some cases to one or a few generations. All these prophets were, so to say, national prophets, and their work was limited to the moral upliftment and spiritual regeneration of one nation only. But while national growth was a necessity of the first condition of the human race, when each nation lived almost an exclusive life and the means of communication between different races were wanting, the grand aim which the Divine scheme had in view was the upliftment and unification of the whole human race. Humanity could not remain for ever divided into water-tight compartments of nationality, formed on the basis of blood or geographical limitations. In fact these divisions had, through jealousy, become the means of discord and hatred between different nations, each looking upon itself as the only chosen nation, and despising the rest. Such views

THE RELIGION OF ISLĀM

tended to extinguish utterly any faint glimmerings of aspirations for the unity of the human race. The final step, therefore, in the institution of prophethood was the raising up of one prophet for all the nations, so that the consciousness of being one whole might be brought to the human race. The day of the national prophet was ended ; it had served the purpose for which it was meant, and the day of the world-prophet dawned upon humanity in the person of the Holy Prophet Muḥammad, to lead it on to the grand idea of the oneness of the human race.

The idea of the world-prophet is not based on a solitary passage occurring in the Holy Qur'an, as to the extent of the mission of this or that prophet ; but is a fully developed Divine scheme. When mentioning the earlier prophets, the Qur'an says that Noah was sent "to his people" (7 : 59, 71 : 1), and so Hūd (7 : 65), and Ṣāliḥ (7 : 73), and Shu'aib (7 : 85)—everyone of them was sent to his people. It speaks of Moses as being commanded to "bring forth *thy* people from darkness into light" (14 : 5) ; it speaks of Jesus as "an apostle to the children of Israel" (3 : 48) ; but in speaking of the Holy Prophet Muḥammad, it says in unequivocal words that "We have not sent thee but to *all men* as a bearer of good news and as a warner" (34 : 28). The Arabic words for *all men* are *kāffat-an li-l-nās*, where even *al-nās* carries the idea of *all people*, and the addition of *kāffa* is meant to emphasize further that not a single nation was excluded from the heavenly ministrations of the Prophet Muḥammad. On another occasion, also, the universality of the Prophet's mission is thus stressed : "Say, O people ! I am the Apostle of Allāh to you all, of Him Whose is the kingdom of the heavens and the earth" (7 : 158). One thing is sure that no other prophet is spoken of either in the

PROPHETS

Holy Qur'an or in any other scripture¹ as having been sent to the whole of humanity or to all people or all nations, nor is the Holy Prophet Muhammad ever spoken of in the Holy Qur'an as having been sent to *his people* only. It is, no doubt, true that he is commanded to warn "a people whose fathers were not warned" (36 : 1), but that does not mean that he was not to warn others than Arabs, for in 25 : 1, he is expressly described as being "a warner to all the nations." Nay, the Holy Qur'an itself is repeatedly termed "a reminder for the nations" (68 : 52 ; 81 : 27 ; 38 : 87 ; 12 : 104). And he is not only a warner to all the nations, but a mercy to all of them as well : "And We have not sent thee but as a mercy to all the nations" (21 : 107).

The idea that a world-prophet must follow the national prophets is further developed in the Holy Qur'an. It is in a Madina revelation,² that the whole proposition, the appearance of a world-prophet, the

1. Jesus Christ was the last of these national prophets ; and though the message of Christianity has now been conveyed to all the nations of the world, yet that was never Christ's own idea. He was perfectly sure that he was "not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (Mt. 15 : 24) ; so sure indeed that he did not hesitate to call those who were not Israelites "dogs" in comparison with "the children" who were the Israelites (Mt. 15 : 26), and the bread of the children could not be cast to the dogs. Nevertheless, the idea of casting the heavenly bread of Jesus to the same non-Israelite "dogs" entered the head of one of his disciples, after "the children" had shown no desire to accept that bread.

2. A. J. Wensinck advances a new theory in his recent book, *The Creed of Islam*, to the effect that though there are passages in the Holy Qur'an which speak of a universal mission of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, but it was an earlier idea given up later : "It is true that there are in the Kuran expressions that seem to cover a wider field. We have already seen an example of this in the verse, 'Say to them, O men! verily I am unto you all the Apostle of God.' None of these passages, however, seems to have been revealed after the Hidjra" (p. 7). One fails to understand the force of the argument, if there be one, conveyed in these words. When a proposition is so clearly stated, what difference does it make whether it was uttered in Makka or Madina. As a matter of fact, Madina and Makka revelations are equally clear as to the universality of the Holy Prophet's mission.

THE RELIGION OF ISLĀM

distinguishing feature of his religion and the necessity for believing in him, is laid down in clear words. I quote the whole passage :

“And when Allāh made a covenant through the prophets, Certainly what I have given you of book and wisdom—then an apostle comes to you verifying that which is with you, you must believe in him, and you must aid him. He said, Do you affirm and accept My compact in this matter? They said, We do affirm. He said, Then bear witness, and I too am of the bearers of witness with you. Whoever then turns back after this, these it is that are the transgressors. Is it then other than Allāh's religion that they seek to follow, and to Him submits (*aslama*) whoever is in the heavens and the earth, willingly or unwillingly, and to Him shall they be returned. Say: We believe in Allāh and what has been revealed to us, and what was revealed to Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac and Jacob and the tribes, and what was given to Moses and Jesus and to the prophets from their Lord; we do not make any distinction between any of them, and to Him do we submit. And whoever desires a religion other than Islām, it shall not be accepted from him, and in the hereafter he shall be one of the losers” (3 : 80-84).

That a world-prophet is spoken of here is evident from the fact that his acceptance—“you must believe in him and you must aid him”—is made obligatory on the followers of all the prophets that had passed away before him. As prophets had been sent, according to the plain teachings of the Holy Qur'an, to every nation, the conclusion is obvious that the followers of every prophet are required to believe in this, the final, Prophet. The distinguishing feature of the world-prophet as mentioned here is that he will “verify that which is with you;” in other words, that he will bear testimony to the

PROPHETS

truth of all the prophets of the world. You may turn the pages of all the sacred books and search the sacred history of every nation, and you will find that there is but One Prophet who verified the scriptures of *all* religions and bore testimony to the truth of the prophets of every nation. In fact, no one could aspire to the dignity of world-prophet who did not treat the whole humanity as one ; and Muḥammad is the only man who did so by declaring that prophets of God had appeared in every nation and that every one who believed in him must also believe in *all* the prophets of the world. Hence it is that the verse requiring a belief in all the prophets of God—a belief in Abraham, in Ishmael, in Isaac, in Jacob, in Moses, in Jesus, and finally and comprehensively in *the prophets*,—which occurs several times in the Holy Qur'an, is repeated here again, and followed by the plain statement that Islām, or *belief in all the prophets of God*, is the only religion with God, and whosoever desires a religion *other than Islam*—a belief only in one prophet while rejecting all others—, it shall not be accepted from him, because belief in *one* prophet is after all only acceptance of partial truth, and tantamount to the rejection of the whole truth, to wit, that there have been prophets in every nation.

Muḥammad (peace be on him), therefore, does not only claim to have been sent to the whole world, to be a warner to all people and a mercy to all nations, but lays the foundations of a world-religion, by making a belief in the prophet of every nation the basic principle of his faith. It is the only principle on which the whole of humanity can agree, the only basis of equal treatment for all nations. The idea of a world-prophet is not a stray idea met with in the Qur'an ; it is not based simply on one or two passages, stating that he had been raised up for the regeneration of all nations ; but the idea is here

THE RELIGION OF ISLĀM

developed at length, and all the principles which can form the basis of a world-religion are fully enunciated. The whole of humanity is declared to be one nation (2: 213); God is said to be the *Rabb* (the Nourisher unto perfection) of all nations (1: 1); prophets are declared to have been raised up in all the nations for their upliftment (35: 24); all prejudices of colour, race and language are demolished (30: 22; 49: 13); and a vast brotherhood, extending over all the world, has been established, every member of which is bound to accept the prophets of all nations, and to treat all nations equally. Thus not only is the Prophet Muḥammad a world-prophet who takes the place of the national prophets, but he has also established a world-religion wherein the idea of nationality is superseded by the consciousness of the unity of the human race.

All prophets, being from God, are as it were brothers.

All prophets are one community. This doctrine of the brotherhood of all prophets is not only taught in the interdiction against making distinctions between the prophets of God, as stated above, but is laid down in the plainest words in both the Holy Qur'an and Ḥadīth. Thus, after speaking of various prophets in the chapter entitled *Prophets*, we are told: "Surely this is your community, a single community" (21: 92). And again: "O apostles! eat of the good things and do good; surely I know what you do. And surely this your community is one community and I am your Lord" (23: 51, 52). Ḥadīth also tells us that all prophets are as brothers: "The prophets are, as it were, brothers on the mother's side, their affair is one and their followers are different" (Bu. 60: 48). Every prophet may have some special characteristic of his own, but, generally, what is said of one in the Holy Qur'an, of his high morals or sublime character or noble teachings or trust in God, is true of all. Thus of Abraham we are told that he was "a

PROPHETS

truthful man" (19 : 41); of Moses that he was "one purified" (19 : 51), or that he was "brought up before My eyes" (20 : 39); of Ishmael that he was "truthful in promise" or "one in whom his Lord was well pleased" (19 : 54, 55); of Noah, Hūd, Ṣāliḥ and Lot that they were "faithful" (26 : 107, 125, 143, 162); of Jesus that he was "worthy of regard in this world and the hereafter, and one of those who are near to God" (3 : 44); of John the Baptist that "We granted him wisdom..... and tenderness from Us and purity, and he was one who guarded against evil, and dutiful to his parents and he was not insolent, disobedient" (19 : 12-14), or that he was "honourable and chaste" (3 : 38). It is the gravest mistake to think that the high qualities attributed to one prophet may be wanting in others. The prophets are all one community; they were all raised up for one purpose; the teachings of all were essentially the same; they were all truthful, all faithful, all worthy of regard; all were made near to God, all were pure, all of them guarded against evil, all were honourable and chaste, and none of them was insolent or disobedient to God.¹

1. As the Christian religion is based on the supposition that Jesus Christ was the son of God and that he alone, being sinless, could be an atonement for the sins of humanity, every Christian writer has taken pains to call in the help of the Qur'ān for the exclusive sinlessness of Jesus Christ, while the Gospels deal a death-blow to that sinlessness by the plain answer he is said to have given to one who called him "good master": "Why callest thou me good? There is none good but one, that is, God" (Mt. 19 : 17, Mk. 10 : 18). In the Holy Qur'ān, all prophets are treated as one community. The Christian argument that Jesus is spoken of as "worthy of regard" and as "one of those made near to God" and that therefore other prophets were not such would, if applied against Jesus, mean that, since of John it is said that he was "chaste" and "one who guarded against evil," therefore Jesus Christ was not chaste, nor did he guard against evil; or since of Abraham it is said that he was "truthful" but not so of Jesus, therefore Jesus was not truthful. It should be noted that the Holy Qur'ān speaks of Jesus as "one of those made near to God," and, on another occasion, of the Companions of the Holy Prophet as being *muqarrabūn* or *those made near to God* (56 : 11). The exclusive sinlessness of Jesus Christ is quite unknown to the Qur'ān; neither does

THE RELIGION OF ISLAM

The prophets are raised up for the upliftment of humanity and for freeing men from the bondage of sin. It has been shown in the last chapter that Divine revelation was needed to enable man to subdue the devil, who would, otherwise, be a great hindrance in his moral and spiritual progress. Man was commanded to live in a spiritual paradise, but since he was unable to withstand the temptations of the devil, the Divine revelation came to his aid; and a rule for all time was laid down for the guidance of all men: "There will come to you a guidance from Me, then whoever follows My guidance, no fear shall come upon

the fact that Jesus Christ is called *kalimatu-hū* (His word) and *rūḥ-un min-hu* (a spirit from Him) in any way establish that he is looked upon as more than mortal, since his mortality is repeatedly established in the clearest words: "Surely the likeness of Jesus with Allāh is as the likeness of Adam" (3 : 58); "The Messiah, son of Mary, was but an apostle; apostles before him had indeed passed away; and his mother was a truthful woman; they both used to eat food" (5 : 75). And if Jesus Christ is called God's word, it only shows that he is looked upon as a created being like other mortals, for all created beings are called *words of God*: "If the sea were ink for the words of my Lord, the sea would surely be consumed before the words of my Lord are exhausted, though We were to bring the like of that sea to add thereto" (18 : 109). Jesus Christ is thus one of these numberless words. Similarly, he is called a spirit from God, not the spirit of God, as Christian writers have generally supposed: "O followers of the Book! do not exceed the limits in your religion, and do not speak lies against Allāh, but speak the truth; the Messiah, Jesus son of Mary, is only an apostle of Allāh and His word which He communicated to Mary and a spirit from Him" (4 : 171). The spirit of God was also breathed into Adam: "And when I have made him complete and breathed into him of My spirit fall down making obeisance to him" (15 : 29). In fact, every man is spoken of as having the spirit of God breathed into him: "Then He made his progeny of an extract, of water held in light estimation. Then He made him complete and breathed into him of His spirit" (32 : 8, 9). Thus every man is a spirit from God; nay he is more than this, inasmuch as every man is called a vicegerent of God (*khalīfa*) (2 : 30). Sometimes a *ḥadīth* is quoted in support of the theory of the exclusive sinlessness of Jesus: "No child is born but the devil touches him when he is born, so he raises a cry for help on account of his touching him, except Mary and her son" (Bu. 60 : 44). A similar *ḥadīth* is related about John the Baptist: "There is no man (*abd*) but he will meet Allāh in a state of being sinful except John (Yaḥyā)" (IK.). Now these *ḥadīth* contradict

PROPHETS

them, nor shall they grieve " (2 : 38). The negation of fear refers to the fear of the devil's temptation, as a remedy against which Divine revelation was first granted to man. Again, every prophet brings the message of the Unity of God, and the significance underlying this message has already been shown (in ch. 2) to be the all-round advancement of man, physical as well as spiritual and moral. And every prophet is called a *mubashshir* (giver of good news) and *mundhir* (warner) (2 : 213) ; the good news relating to his advancement and elevation, the warning to the retarding of or interference with

each other ; for, according to the first, even John was born with a touch of the devil, while, according to the latter, even Mary and Jesus are sinful. It is therefore out of the question to take them literally. In fact, Mary and her son, in the first *ḥadīth*, and John, in the second, are mentioned as prototypes of the righteous man. The Holy Qur'ān itself tells us that Mary stands for a believer : " Allāh sets forth to those who believe the example of the wife of Pharaoh.....and of Mary, the daughter of 'Amrān, who guarded her chastity, so We breathed into him of Our inspiration, and she accepted the truth of the words of her Lord and His books, and she was of the obedient ones " (66 : 11) The believer not yet emancipated from the bondage of sin is compared to Pharaoh's wife ; Pharaoh being, as it were, the embodiment of evil ; and the believer so emancipated is likened to Mary who guarded her chastity and accepted the truth of the words of her Lord Mary, therefore, according to the Holy Qur'ān, typifies the man whom the devil cannot mislead, or, in the words of the *ḥadīth*, whom the devil does not touch ; while her son is described, in the same verse, as one into whom " We breathed of Our inspiration." The *ḥadīth* therefore tells us that two kinds of men are not tempted by Satan or touched by him ; of such as are not prophets, those, like Mary, who guard themselves and are perfectly obedient, and the prophets, like Jesus, who are the recipients of Divine revelation. In the second *ḥadīth*, both these are called *Yaḥyā* which literally means *he is alive, i.e.,* people in whom the life spiritual is awakened. All others are said to be touched by the devil, *i.e.,* the devil misleads them at times, but being believers in God they cry aloud for help, such being the significance of the word *ṣārīḥ* used in the *ḥadīth*. The time of birth mentioned in the *ḥadīth* indicates the spiritual birth, the first beginnings of which are marked by the struggle against evil, or the temptations of the devil, which struggle is spoken of as the crying for help to God against those temptations. Both these *ḥadīth*, therefore, must be accepted only metaphorically ; for if they are taken in a literal sense, they contradict each other, and, not only each other but all principles of religion also, and are therefore plainly unacceptable.

THE RELIGION OF ISLAM

his progress. Moreover, the four works of the Prophet, as mentioned several times in the Holy Qur'an, are stated thus : " We have sent an Apostle to you from among you who recites to you Our communications and purifies you and teaches you the Book and the wisdom " (2 : 151, etc.). The Arabic word for purifying is *yusakkī* which is derived from *zakā*, originally meaning, according to Rāghib, *the progress attained by Divine blessing (i.e., by the development of the faculties placed by God within man)*, and relates to the affairs of this world as well as the hereafter, that is to say, to man's physical as well as spiritual advancement. The prophet's message of *purification*, therefore, signifies not only purification from sin but also man's setting forth on the road to physical and moral advancement.¹ All these references to the Holy Book show that the object of sending prophets was no other than the upliftment of man, to enable him to subjugate his animal passions, to inspire him with nobler and higher sentiments, and to imbue him with Divine morals.

The very object of the raising up of prophets makes it clear that the men who are commissioned for this high office must themselves be free from the bondage of sin, and more than that, the possessors of high morals. The doctrine of the sinlessness of prophets has therefore always been an admitted principle among Muslims.

1. Christian theologians have greatly misunderstood the object with which prophets are raised up. They think that to be delivered from the bondage of sin is the be-all and end-all of man's earthly life, the highest spiritual stage to which man can rise ; and therefore they believe that prophets were raised up solely for this purpose. The Holy Qur'an, on the other hand, looks upon sinlessness as the starting point of man's spiritual advancement. It teaches, of course, that man must resist the temptation of the devil, but that is only the first step for the proper development of the great faculties which God has granted to man, and man's advancement is so limitless that it continues even after death, in a new life.

PROPHETS

Christian writers on Islām, however, have laboured to show that this doctrine is opposed to the Holy Qur'an,¹ but nothing could be further from the truth. The Qur'an not only speaks of individual prophets in terms of the highest praise, but also lays down clearly in general terms that the prophets cannot go, either in word or in deed, against any commandment of God: "And We did not send before thee any apostle but We revealed to him that there is no god but Me, therefore serve Me. And they say, The Beneficent God has taken to Himself a son.

1. Sell in *The Faith of Islam* admits that "the orthodox belief is that prophets are free from sin" (p. 299), and then goes on to say that this "does not agree with actual facts." Klein in *The Religion of Islam*, while conceding the point that according to the teachings of Islām, a prophet must possess faithfulness, truthfulness and the like, and that it is impossible to ascribe to prophets attributes opposed to these, such as unfaithfulness, falseness, mendaciousness, want of intelligence, dullness, or concealing the message (pp. 73, 74), says that there is a "contradiction between the teaching of the Qur'an and that of the theologians." The fact is that the Christian doctrine of Atonement is responsible for all these quibblings of the Christian controversialists. Because the "Son of God" was needed to make atonement for the sins of men, therefore all the prophets raised up for the regeneration of man must be sinful. If others, besides Jesus Christ, were sinless, the world would have no need for a "Son of God." The Bible itself, notwithstanding the many alterations in it, contains clear evidence of the sinlessness of the prophets. Of Noah it is said that he "was a just man and perfect in his generations" (Gen. 6: 9). To Abraham, the Lord said: "Walk before me and be thou perfect" (Gen. 17: 1). To Moses, He said: "Thou shalt be perfect with the Lord thy God" (Deut. 18: 13). Now *perfect* is more than *sinless*. The Bible itself says: "Blessed are the perfect in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord..... They also do no iniquity: they walk in his ways" (Ps. 119: 1, 3). And again: "The law of his God is in his heart; none of his steps shall slide" (Ps. 37: 31). Zacharias, according to the writers of the Gospels, was not a prophet, and yet both he and his wife are declared to be sinless: "And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord, blameless" (Lk. 1: 6). And of John, their son, it is said that he was "filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb" (Lk. 1: 15). In the face of such clear words upholding the sinlessness of prophets, and of even the righteous persons who were not prophets, it is sheer defiance of sacred authority to call the prophets sinful, for the sake of one who rebuked others for calling him "good" (Mk. 10: 17, 18). The doctrine of the sinlessness of the prophets is therefore based both on the Holy Qur'an and the Bible.

THE RELIGION OF ISLĀM

Glory be to Him. Nay! they are honoured servants ; they do not precede Him in speech and only according to His commandment do they act " (21: 25-27).¹ And elsewhere it is said: "It is not attributable to a prophet that he should act unfaithfully " (3: 160). These two verses set out in general words the principle of the sinlessness of prophets, while it has already been shown how each individual prophet has been spoken of in terms of the highest praise; one is called a *ṣiddīq* (*i. e.*, one who never told a lie); another is said to have been purified by God's hand and to have been brought up in the Divine presence; a third is described as being one in whom God was well pleased; a fourth is mentioned as having been granted purity and as one who guarded against evil and never disobeyed; a fifth is said to be worthy of regard and one of those who are near to God; and many of them, including the Holy Prophet Muḥammad, are described as being *amin*, which means *one who is completely faithful to God*. The Holy Qur'ān, therefore, leaves not the least doubt as to the sinlessness of the prophets.

There are however certain words which have been misunderstood by some critics, who have straightway rushed to the erroneous conclusion that the Holy Qur'ān gives no support to the doctrine of the sinlessness of prophets. The most important of these words is *istighfār* which is generally taken as meaning *asking for forgiveness of sins*. It carries, however, a wider significance, being derived

1. Commentators who have taken the last words as applying to angels, have done so only because they have paid no attention to the context. There is no doubt that, elsewhere, similar words are used about angels: "Who do not disobey Allāh in what He commands them, and do as they are commanded" (66: 6). But the context here is too clear to need any comment. It speaks of the prophets, and then it speaks of the Christian doctrine that God has taken a son to Himself, which is based on the theory of the sinfulness of all prophets, as already shown, and hence it goes on to state in clear words that all prophets are sinless.

PROPHETS

from the root ghafr which means *the covering of a thing with that which will protect it from dirt* (R.). Hence istighfar means only *the seeking of a covering or protection*, and therefore seeking of *protection from sin* is as much a meaning of istighfar as the *seeking of protection from the punishment of sin*. Qaṣṭalāni, in his commentary on Bukhārī, makes this quite clear, and adds that ghafr means *sitr or covering, which is either between man and his sin or between sin and its punishment* (Qs. I, p. 85). When it is established that, according to the plain teachings of the Holy Qur'ān, the prophets are sinless, istighfar can, in their case, only be taken as meaning the *seeking of protection from the sins to which man is liable*. The istighfar of the prophets, therefore, means only their flying for protection to God, for it is through Divine protection alone that they can remain sinless. Hence the Holy Prophet is spoken of in a ḥadīth as doing istighfar a hundred times a day; that is to say, he was every moment flying for protection to God, and praying to Him, that he may not go against His will. Istighfar or the prayer for ghafr (protection) is in fact a prayer for Divine help in the advancement to higher and higher stages of spiritual perfection. Thus, even those who have been admitted into Paradise, are described as praying to God for His ghafr: "Our Lord! make perfect for us our light and grant us protection (ighfir), for Thou hast power over all things" (66 : 8). The ordinary rendering is "forgive us," but forgiveness, in the narrow sense of pardoning of sins, is meaningless here, because none can be admitted into Paradise unless his sins are pardoned. Ghafr or forgiveness, therefore, stands here for Divine help in the spiritual advancement of man, which will continue even after death. On another occasion, maghfira, which is the same as ghafr, is described as a blessing of Paradise: "For them therein

THE RELIGION OF ISLAM

are all kinds of fruits and forgiveness (*maghfira*) from their Lord" (47: 15). *Maghfira* is therefore one of the blessings which the righteous shall enjoy in Paradise, and therefore a Divine help in the onward progress of man therein.

Another misunderstood word is *dhanb* which is generally translated as meaning sin; *Dhanb.* but *dhanb* also is a word with a very wide significance. According to one authority, *dhanb* is originally *taking the tail of a thing*, and it is applied to every act the consequence of which is disagreeable or unwholesome (R.). According to another, it means either a sin, or a crime or a fault, and it is said to differ from *ithm* in being either intentional or committed through inadvertence, whereas *ithm* is definitely intentional (LL.). *Dhanb* is therefore as much applicable to sins due to perversity as to shortcomings resulting from inadvertence. Now in the case of these latter, there is a vast difference between the righteous man and the sinner. A righteous man, without in the least departing from the course of righteousness, would always feel that he had fallen short in doing some good to humanity or in doing his duty to God; and thus, even though he is engaged in doing some good, he feels that there is something lacking in him. But between the shortcoming of such a one and that of the sinner is a world of difference. The sinner's shortcoming or *dhanb* is that he has set himself against the will of God deliberately and done evil, while the righteous man's shortcoming lies in the fact that he is not satisfied that he has done all the good that it was in his power to do.

Another word which requires to be explained in this connection is *khat'a* or *khata'*. This *Khata'.* word too has a wide significance. According to Rāghib *when a man intends the doing of a good thing but he happens to do instead something which*

PROPHETS

he never intended, that is also *khata'i'a* (mistake). According to another authority, the difference between *khata'i'a* (mistake) and *ithm* (sin) is that in the latter there is intention, which is not necessary in the former (IJ-C. V, p. 162). When the mujtahid (one who exercises his reasoning faculty) does not arrive at a right conclusion and makes a *khata'a'* (mistake) in his judgment, he is still said to merit a reward, since his intention was good. Hence the word *khata'i'a* or *khata'a'* does not necessarily imply sin.

Christian criticism of Islām has been particularly directed against the doctrine of the sinlessness of the prophets, and this, as I have already pointed out, is due to the Christian doctrine of Atonement which falls *ipso facto* the moment that any one else is regarded as sharing with Jesus Christ the honour of sinlessness. This criticism is, however, based, not on any principle enunciated in the Holy Qur'an, for it is there stated in clear words that all prophets of God are faithful, both in word and deed, to the Divine commandments, but on certain cases of individual prophets. Most of this misdirected criticism is due to a wrong conception of the four words I have explained; *viz.*, *ghafr*, *istighfar*, *dhanb* and *khata'a'*. For example, it is said that Noah was a sinner because he prayed to God, saying: "My Lord! I seek refuge in Thee from asking Thee that of which I have no knowledge; and if Thou shouldst not forgive (*taghfir*) me and have mercy on me, I should be of the losers" (11 : 47). The word used for forgiving is from *ghafr*, which, as I have shown, means the granting of protection as well against sin as against the punishment of sin, and the prayer has not the remotest reference to any confession of sin on the part of Noah. Similarly, Abraham is looked upon as a sinner because he is spoken of as expressing the hope that God "will forgive my mistake (*khata'i'ati*) on the Day of Judgment"

THE RELIGION OF ISLAM

(26 : 82). It is one thing to commit a mistake and quite a different thing to go against the Divine commandments, and no sensible critic could twist such words into a confession of sin.

The Holy Prophet Muḥammad is said to be a sinner

The Holy Prophet because he is commanded to seek Muḥammad.

Divine protection (*istaghfir*) for his *dhanb* (40 : 55). Now to seek protection against sin does not mean that sin has been committed—he who seeks Divine protection rather guards himself against the commission of sin; and, moreover, the word used here is *dhanb* which means any human shortcoming. The following verses may however be discussed at greater length : “We have given to thee a clear victory, that Allāh may grant thee protection for that which has gone before of thy *dhanb* or the *dhanb* attributed to thee (*dhanbi-ka*) and that which remains behind” (48 : 1, 2). Even if the first interpretation (*dhanbi-ka* meaning, thy *dhanb* or thy fault) is adopted, there is no imputation of sin, but only of human shortcomings, for, as has been already shown, *dhanb* carries that wider significance. But as a matter of fact, *dhanbi-ka* here means the *dhanb attributed to thee*, not thy *dhanb*. The victory spoken of in the first sentence is, on the best authority, the Ḥudaibiya truce, (Bu. 65, sūra 48 : 1). During a prolonged state of hostilities, between the Muslims and their opponents, the latter had had no opportunity for reflecting on the beauties of Islām, but had, in fact, contracted a certain hatred towards it. They did not come into contact with the Holy Prophet except as enemies on the field of battle, and hence they drew a dark picture of him as an enemy. The truce drawn up at Hudaibiya was a victory for Islām, or, at any rate, a gain to the cause of Islām, since it put a stop to hostilities; and peace being established in the country, the non-Muslims freely mixed with the Muslims,

PROPHETS

and the good points of Islām together with the high morality of the Prophet made their impression. Misunderstandings were removed, and people began to be attracted by the bright picture of Islām. It was in this sense that the Ḥudaibiya truce, which is called a clear victory of Islām, became the means of protection (*ghafr*) to the Holy Prophet against the evil things which had been said concerning him. It was a victory over the hearts of men, and it changed their mental attitude towards Islām, while the number of Muslims increased by leaps and bounds and all carpings ceased. The reference in "what remains behind" is to the later carpings of the critics of Islām, and means that evil things will be said about the Holy Prophet at a later date as well, and that all such misrepresentations and misunderstandings will, in their turn, be swept away. This significance of the *idzāfa* is a common-place of the Arabic language. Again and again the Holy Qur'an speaks of *shuraka'* (associates) of God, though the meaning is that they are the associates attributed to the Divine Being by polytheists. Similarly in 5 : 29, the word *ithmi* does not mean *my sin*, but *the sin committed against me* : "I wish that thou shouldst bear the sin against me (*ithmi*) and thy own sin."

Moses is also said to have committed a sin by killing
Moses. a Copt, but the Holy Qur'an makes it clear that he simply used his fist to ward off an attack against an Israelite who was being ill-treated (28 : 15), and thus death was only accidental. No law would hold a man to be guilty under such circumstances. It is true that the word *dzall* is used of Moses in connection with this incident on another occasion (26 : 20), but *dzalla* means *he was perplexed* or *confused* (LL.), and it is in this sense that the word is there used. *Dzall* is also employed with reference to the Holy

THE RELIGION OF ISLAM

Prophet Muḥammad in 93 : 7 in almost the same sense, one unable, by himself, to find the way to prophethood (R.).¹ This is not only made clear by the context, but also by the history of the Prophet's life, which shows that from his very childhood he shunned not only idolatry but all the evil practices of Arab society, a reference to which is contained in the Holy Qur'an: "Your companion did not err, nor did he deviate" (53 : 2). Living in the midst of an evil society, he was not only free from the evils of that society, but was further anxious to find a way for its delivery from those evils. He saw around him the degraded condition of a fallen humanity but could not see the way to raise it up; it was God Who showed him that way, as the verse runs: "And He found thee unable to see the way and He showed the way" (93 : 7).

Concerning Adam, it is undoubtedly said that "Adam
Adam. disobeyed his Lord" (20 : 121), but even here there is no commission of sin, for as a preliminary to that incident, it is clearly stated: "And certainly We gave a commandment to Adam before, but he forgot; and We did not find in him any determination (to disobey)" (20 : 115). There was no intention on the part of Adam to disobey the Divine commandment; it was simply forgetfulness that brought about the disobedience. In 2 : 36, where the same incident is related, the word used instead of *disobedience* is a derivation of *salla* which means *a slip* or *a mistake*. Thus, individually, none of the prophets is spoken of in the Holy Qur'an as having committed a sin, and therefore the doctrine of the sinlessness of the prophets is unassailable.

The word employed in the Holy Qur'an for miracle
Conception of miracles is *āya*, the primary meaning of which
in Islām. is *an apparent sign* or *mark* by

1. *Ghāira muhtad-in li-mā sīqa ilaihi min al-nubuwwa.*

PROPHETS

which a thing is known (R.). As there used, it generally carries one of two significations, *an indication, evidence* or *proof*, and a *Divine message* or *communication*. In the first sense, it includes the miracle in its meaning, and in the second, a verse of the Holy Qur'an. The adoption of the same word to indicate a Divine message and its proof is noteworthy. It shows that the Divine message itself is first and foremost the proof of its own truth, and hence it is that the Holy Qur'an has always been looked upon by all Muslims as the greatest miracle of the Holy Prophet. And it is indeed the greatest miracle ever vouchsafed to a prophet because it stands in need of no other evidence whatever, but is itself a living proof of its own truth for all time.

Christian writers on Islām are generally of opinion that though the Holy Qur'an records certain miracles of other prophets, it denies that any signs at all were vouchsafed to the Holy Prophet Muḥammad save and except the Holy Qur'an. It is true that the Quranic conception of miracles is quite different from that of the Christian. In Christianity, miracles are all in all. Not only do they take the place of argument, but the central doctrine of the Christian religion is itself based on an alleged miracle. For what is the rising of Jesus from the dead but a miracle? And a miracle, too, without a shred of evidence. Yet if Jesus did not rise from the dead, the pillar on which the whole structure of Christianity rests crashes to the ground. The basic doctrine of Christianity thus being a miracle, it is not surprising that, in the Gospels, miracles take the place, not only of argument, but also of religious duties, moral teachings and spiritual awakening. The dead are made to rise from the graves, multitudes of the sick are healed, sight is restored to the blind, the lame are made to walk, the deaf to hear, water is turned into wine, devils are cast out

THE RELIGION OF ISLAM

and many other wonderful deeds are done.¹ That these are only exaggerations or misunderstandings, or even pure inventions is quite another matter ; the impression one gains is that the great object before the reformer is not to bring about a transformation by implanting

1. Though the Gospels lay so much stress on miracles, the whole force out of the argument of miracles, if there be any argument, is taken away by two outstanding facts. In the first place, similar miracles were, according to the Gospels, worked even by the opponents of Jesus Christ, for he is himself made to say : " And if I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your children cast them out ? " (Mt. 12 : 27 ; Lk. 11 : 19). The disciples of the Pharisees could therefore work the miracles which Jesus did. And again, he is reported as saying : " Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name ? And in thy name have cast out devils ? And in thy name done many wonderful works ? " (Mt. 7 : 22). Even false Christs could work the miracles which Jesus showed : " For there shall arise false Christs and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders " (Mt. 24 : 24). And last of all there was the healing pool of those days : " Now there is at Jerusalem by the sheep market a pool, which is called in the Hebrew tongue Bethesda, having five porches. In these lay a great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered, waiting for the moving of the water. For an angel went down at a certain season into the pool, and troubled the water : whosoever then first after the troubling of the water stepped in was made whole of whatsoever disease he had " (Jn. 5 : 2 4). If miracles were so cheap in those days, if even the disciples of the Pharisees and iniquitous and false Messiahs could perform the self-same miracles which the " Son of God " was performing, if there was such a miraculous pool, what evidence can these miracles possibly afford ?

Yet another consideration makes the evidence of the Gospel miracles worthless. The miraculous in a prophet's life is needed to assure the people to whom he is sent of the truth of his message, and to convince the ordinary mind that some supernatural power is at his back. The question, therefore, is, supposing Jesus wrought the miracles which are recorded of him in the Gospels, what was the effect produced by those miracles ? Certainly if such wonderful deeds were done, the masses ought to have followed him without hesitation. But the Gospels tell us that though multitudes of the sick followed him and were healed, and though faith was a condition precedent to healing, yet Jesus never had multitudes of followers. His following was very poor, perhaps no more than five hundred men. His own disciples also did not show in any marked degree the effect of the miraculous upon their lives. Of the twelve specially chosen, one turned traitor, another cursed and the rest all fled, leaving the master in a sad plight. Therefore even if Jesus worked miracles, they would seem never to have fulfilled the objects for which miraculous power is vouchsafed.

PROPHETS

faith in God in the mind of man ; and that conviction of the truth is sought, not by argument or appeal to the heart, but by overawing the mind by the miraculous. The conception of the miracle, as given by the Holy Qur'an, is quite different. Here the supreme object before the Prophet is to effect a moral and spiritual transformation ; the means adopted are an appeal to the reasoning faculty, an appeal to the heart of man to convince him that the Divine message is meant for his own uplifting, and lessons drawn from previous history showing how the acceptance of truth has always benefited man, and its rejection has worked to his own undoing. The miracle has its own place in the Divine scheme ; something great and beyond human power and comprehension is wrought now and again to show that the source of the great Message of Truth is supernatural, Divine. Thus the Holy Qur'an makes it clear that the bringing about of a transformation is the real object for which prophets are raised up, that this object is attained by several means, each of which, therefore, has but a secondary value, and that among these evidences of the truth of the prophet, the miracle occupies not the highest place.

Thus it is that, while the Holy Qur'an is full of arguments, makes frequent appeals to human nature, and repeatedly refers to the histories of previous peoples, the mention of miracles in it is very rare. But still they are not denied : " And they swear by Allāh with the strongest of their oaths that if a sign came to them they would most certainly believe in it. Say, Signs are only with Allāh ; and what should make you know that when it comes they will not believe " (6 : 110). The words " signs are only with Allāh " clearly imply, as do those that follow, that extraordinary signs will be shown as an evidence of the Divine mission of the Prophet. Strange it is that there are critics who see in this verse a

THE RELIGION OF ISLĀM

denial of signs, only because it is said that signs are with God. It is true that the Holy Qur'an does not represent the Holy Prophet Muhammad as a wonder-worker, as the Gospels represent Jesus Christ. Signs were shown, not when the Prophet so desired, or when his opponents demanded, but when it was the will of God; hence, whenever an extraordinary sign of the Prophet's truth was demanded, the reply was that such a sign would come when God willed it.

Another much misunderstood verse of the Holy Qur'an relating to the showing of signs is 17:59: "And nothing could have hindered Us that We should send signs except that the ancients rejected them...and We do not send signs but to make men fear." The words do not signify that because the former people had rejected the signs, therefore God would send no more. Had this been their meaning, God would have ceased to send even Divine messages, because the ancients had already rejected such messages. But, since the word *āya* means both *a sign* and *a communication*, the argument of rejection applies to both equally well. The meaning of the words is quite clear: If anything could have been considered as hindering God from sending a new communication or a sign, it would surely have been the rejection of such by previous generations, but it never did. The Divine Being has been equally merciful to all generations, and rejection by former was no ground for depriving later generations of signs and Divine guidance.

As I have already stated, the greatest miracle of Islām is the Holy Qur'an. Nor is this an after-thought on the part of the Muslims, for the Holy Book itself claims to be a miracle and has challenged the world to produce its like:

"If men and jinn should combine together to produce the like of this Qur'an, they could not produce the like of

PROPHETS

it, though some of them were aiders of others " (17 : 88).

" Or, do they say, He has forged it ? Say, Then bring ten forged chapters like it and call upon whom you can besides Allāh, if you are truthful " (11 : 13).

" Or, do they say, He has forged it ? Say, Then bring a chapter like this and invite whom you can besides Allāh, if you are truthful " (10 : 38).

" And if you are in doubt as to that which We have revealed to Our servant, then produce a chapter like it, and call on your helpers besides Allāh, if you are truthful " (2 : 23).

And if the claim be so great, the proof is not less, in witness whereof let me cite a few quotations from recent writers :

" It was the one miracle claimed by Mohammed—his 'standing miracle' he called it ; and a miracle indeed it is " (Bosworth Smith's *Life of Mohammed*, p. 290).

" The Qorān is unapproachable as regards convincing power, eloquence and even composition " (*New Researches*, by Hirschfeld, p. 8).

" Never has a people been led more rapidly to civilization, such as it was, than were the Arabs through Islām " (*Ibid.*, p. 5).

" A more disunited people it would be hard to find, till suddenly, the miracle took place ! A man arose who, by his personality and by his claim to direct Divine guidance, actually brought about the impossible—namely the union of all these warring factions " (*The Ins and Outs of Mesopotamia*, p. 99).

" That the best of Arab writers has never succeeded in producing anything equal in merit to the Qur'an itself is not surprising " (Palmer Intr. to *Translation of Qur'an*, p. lv).

In short, the Qur'an is a miracle because it brought about the greatest transformation that the world has ever

THE RELIGION OF ISLAM

witnessed—a transformation of the individual, of the family, of society, of the nation, of the country; an awakening material as well as moral, intellectual as well as spiritual. It produced an effect, a hundred thousand times greater than that of any other miracle recorded of any prophet; hence its claim to be the greatest of all miracles is incontestable and uncontested.

Of all miracles, the Holy Qur'an gives the first place to prophecy, and, in fact, prophecy does, in some respects, enjoy a distinction beyond that attaching to other miracles. Miracles generally are manifestations of the powers of God, and prophecy gives prominence to God's infinite knowledge which comprehends the future as well as the past and present. But there is one great disadvantage attaching to all miracles which are merely manifestations of power. It is very difficult to secure reliable evidence for them under all circumstances. Certain men may have witnessed the performance of such a miracle and their evidence may satisfy their contemporaries, but, with the lapse of time, their testimony loses much of its value. Therefore a miracle stands in need of being proved up to the hilt before it may be used as evidence of a prophet's claim, and in most cases it is very hard, if not impossible, to adduce any proof that the miracle ever actually took place.

Another difficulty in the matter of miracles generally is to be found in the fact that however wonderful a performance, it may be explained scientifically, and thus lose all value as a sign of the Divine mission of its worker. Take for instance the great miracles of Jesus Christ. The greatest of these is his raising the dead to life, and in one case, that of the ruler's daughter, Jesus is reported as saying: "The maid is not dead, but sleepeth" (Mt. 9: 24). There was no doctor's certificate at hand to

PROPHETS

show that the maid actually was dead, and, notwithstanding the impression of the relatives that such was the case, Jesus Christ himself knew that she was only sleeping or, perhaps, in a state of stupor. If then the disciples did not misunderstand his symbolical words, and Jesus used to talk much in figurative language,¹ there is still the possibility that a person who was taken for dead was not actually dead. And this is exactly what happened in the case of Jesus himself who was taken for dead but was not actually dead, as is shown by facts recorded about him in the Gospels. Jesus' miracles of healing are still more doubtful in view of the fact that similar miracles were also performed by his opponents, and that there was, as we have seen, a Pool of Healing in those days, which restored sight to the blind and cured all kinds of ailments. Such doubts, however, do not exist in the case of prophecy, which can stand the test of scientific investigation. Moreover, the evidence in such case rests on a firmer basis altogether, and its fulfilment generally comes to pass after a long time. A prophecy which proceeds from a Divine source must, of course, disclose some event which is beyond the scope of human knowledge and which cannot possibly be discovered by human

1. There is not the least doubt that Jesus often spoke in parables and used symbolic language freely: "Let the dead bury their dead" (Mt. 8:22); "The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God.....for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice and shall come forth" (Jn. 5:25-29). There seems to be no doubt that words like these were the source from which sprang marvels like the following: "And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent; And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, And came out of the graves after his resurrection and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many" (Mt. 27:51-53). A recent commentator says of this incident that it "seems to be a pictorial setting forth of the truth that in the Resurrection of Christ is involved the resurrection of all His saints, so that on Easter Day all Christians may be said in a certain sense to have risen with Him" (Dummelow's *Bible Commentary*).

THE RELIGION OF ISLĀM

foresight. It must also be connected with some deep Divine purpose connected with the elevation of humanity, for prophecies are not meant merely to satisfy human curiosity. Lastly, it must have behind it the force of conviction, so that it is not only uttered with the utmost certainty but even in circumstances which apparently conflict with what is disclosed in the prophecy. A prophecy that fulfils these three conditions is one of the greatest miracles, a miracle which by an appeal to reason shows that there is a God Who reveals deep secrets to man and with Whom man can hold communion.

The prophecies mentioned in the Holy Qur'an and
Prophecy of the triumph of Islām. those uttered by the Holy Prophet of which Ḥadīth literature is full, cover so vast a ground and relate to a future so distant that they require separate treatment. But I would give one example in illustration of what I have said above. The Holy Qur'an gives prominence to the great prophecy of the triumph of Islām, and its earlier chapters are full of such prophecies uttered in various forms. Now these chapters were revealed, and these prophecies announced, at a time when the Holy Prophet was quite alone and helpless, beset by enemies on all sides plotting to put an end to his very life. The few adherents to his cause had, by cruel persecution, been forced to leave their very homes and to take shelter in a foreign land. There was not the remotest prospect of Islām ever making any headway against the mighty forces of polytheism and idolatry, the mass of superstition and evil of every kind ranged against it. All previous attempts at the regeneration of Arabia, those of the Jewish nation which had settled down in various parts of Arabia, of the Christian missionaries who had the backing of the powerful Roman empire on the north and of Abyssinia in the south and west, the indigenious Arab attempt known as Ḥanīfism,

PROPHETS

had all proved utter failures, and thus the fate of each previous attempt was only a symbol of despair for a fresh reform movement. Yet under these circumstances amid all this despair on every side, we find prophecy after prophecy announced in the surest and most certain terms to the effect that the great forces of opposition should be brought to naught, that the enemies of Islām should be put to shame and perish, that Islām should become the religion of the whole of Arabia, that the empire of Islām should be established and battles fought in which the Muslims should be victorious and enemy brought low, that Islām should spread to the farthest corners of the earth and that it should ultimately be triumphant over all religions of the world.¹ Has

1. I give a few quotations from the Holy Book : "Are the unbelievers of yours better than these (Pharaoh and others), or is there an exemption for you in the scriptures? Or do they say, We are a host allied together to help each other? Soon shall the host be routed, and they shall turn (their backs)" (54 : 43-45).

"And you dwell in the abodes of those who were unjust to themselves and it is clear to you how We dealt with them and We have set forth parables to you. And they have indeed planned their plan, and their plan is with Allāh, though their plan was such that the mountains should pass away thereby. So do not think Allāh to be failing in His promise to His apostles; for Allāh is Mighty, the Lord of retribution" (14 : 45-47).

"Those who disbelieve, neither their wealth nor their children avail them in the least against Allāh.....After the manner of the people of Pharaoh and those before them; they rejected Our communications, so Allāh seized them on account of their sins and Allāh is swift in requiting (evil). Say to those who disbelieve: You shall be vanquished and driven together to hell" (3 : 9-11).

"We will soon show them Our signs in remote regions and in their own souls, until it will become quite clear to them that it is the truth" (41 : 53).

"And those who disbelieved said to their apostles, We will drive you forth from our land, or else you shall come back into our religion. And their Lord revealed to them, Certainly We will destroy the unbelievers and We will settle you in the land after them" (14 : 13, 14).

"And truly We wrote in the Book after the reminder that the last of My righteous servants shall inherit it. In this is a message to a people who serve Us" (21 : 105-106).

"Allāh has promised to those of you who believe and do good that We will make them rulers in the earth as He made rulers those before

THE RELIGION OF ISLAM

all this been said in the Holy Qur'an in plain words, and at a time when there was not the least prospect of Islām gaining ground? And was not all this brought to fulfilment, against all expectations, in the lifetime of the Holy Prophet? These are simple questions and no one who has the slightest acquaintance with the Holy Qur'an or the history of Islām can have any hesitation in answering them in the affirmative.

The value of prophecy, as a miracle of Islām, is, however, much more extensive. There are great and wonderful prophecies in the Book, and more still in Ḥadīth, extending into the far future, many of which have been fulfilled in our own age, and almost every generation of Muslims sees with its own eyes the fulfilment of one or more of these great prophecies, and needs not to turn the pages of history to find out what miracles were performed by the Holy Prophet in a previous age. Another feature of this miracle is that it has been vouchsafed even to the righteous followers of the Holy Prophet in every age. Thus it is not the Prophet's own prophecies that are witnessed in every age, for prophecy is also a heritage to his devout and faithful followers.¹

There is one more point on which light should be

Intercession : God is thrown in connection with the place
the real Intercessor. of prophets in Islām, and that is the

and that He will establish for them their religion which He has chosen for them, and that He will, after their fear, give them security in exchange" (24 : 55).

"He it is Who sent His Apostle with the guidance and the true religion, that He may make it overcome the religions, all of them" (61 : 9 ; 48 : 28 ; 9 : 33).

1. Speaking of the faithful, the Holy Qur'an says : " They shall have good news (*bushrā*) in this world's life " (10 : 64) ; and elsewhere : " The angels descend upon them, saying, Fear not, nor be grieved, and receive good news of the garden which you were promised " (41 : 30). And according to Ḥadīth, "nothing remains of prophethood except *mubashsharāt*" (Bu. 91 : 5), and these are explained to be good visions and called a part of prophethood (Bu. 91 : 4).

PROPHETS

doctrine of intercession. The Arabic word for intercession is *shafā'a* which is derived from *shaf'* meaning *the making a thing to be one of a pair* (T.A.), or *the adjoining a thing to its like* (R.) ; and *shafā'a* signifies *the joining of a man to another assisting him*, especially when a man who enjoys a high rank and honour joins himself to a man of a lower position (R.). In the Holy Qur'an, God is spoken of as the real *Shafī'* (Intercessor): "There is no guardian (*waliyy*) for them besides Him, nor any intercessor (*shafī'*)" (6 : 51, 70). And on another occasion : "Allāh's is the intercession altogether" (39 : 44). It is sometimes spoken of in connection with the Divine control of things as in 32:4 : "Allāh is He Who created the heavens and the earth and what is between them in six periods, and He holds control on the Throne ; you have not besides Him any guardian or any intercessor ; will you not mind ?" Thus intercession, according to the Holy Qur'an, is really in the hands of God, just as the control of things is really in His hands, and hence the oft-repeated expression that none can intercede with God except with His permission (10 : 3 ; 2 : 255).¹

Intercession is also denied in the case of those that are set up as gods : "And they shall not have any intercessors from among their associate gods" (30 : 13) ; "And they serve besides Allāh what can neither harm them nor profit them, and they say, These are our intercessors with Allāh" (10 : 18).

Among those who can intercede with God with His permission, angels are mentioned :
Who can intercede ? "And how many an angel is there

1. The writer of the article on *shafā'a* in the *Encyclopædia of Islām* is evidently wrong when he translates the *shafā'a* passage as meaning "Who should intervene with Him, *even* with His permission." The Arabic words are *illā bi-idhni-hi*, and any one having even a superficial knowledge of Arabic knows that *illā* means *except*, not *even*. The erroneous rendering has entirely changed the sense of the passage.

THE RELIGION OF ISLĀM

in the heavens whose intercession does not avail at all except after Allāh has given permission to whom He pleases and chooses " (53 : 26). Prophets are also spoken of as intercessors : " And We did not send before thee any apostle but We revealed to him that there is no god but Me, therefore serve Me. And they say, The Beneficent God has taken to Himself a son. Glory be to Him. Nay, they are honoured servants. They do not precede Him in speech and only according to His commandment do they act. He knows what is before them and what is behind them, and they do not intercede except for him whom He approves " (21 : 25-28). Believers are also spoken of as interceding : " And those whom they call upon besides Him have no authority for intercession, but he who bears witness of the truth and they know " (43 : 86). Since every believer is a witness of the truth, this verse may fairly be taken as referring to the intercession of believers. Another verse which apparently speaks of the intercession of true believers is as follows : " They do not control intercession, save he who has made a covenant with the Beneficent God " (19 : 87), since every true believer may be said to have made a covenant with God.

Hadīth also speaks of the intercession of God, of angels, of prophets and of believers. Thus a ḥadīth relating to shafa'a, accepted by both Bukhārī and Muslim, concludes with the words : " Then Allāh will say, The angels have interceded and the prophets have interceded and the believers have interceded, and there remains the most Merciful of all merciful ones ; then He will take a handful out of fire and bring forth from it a people who have never done any good " (Bu. 97 : 24). The handful of God cannot leave anything behind.

PROPHETS

As I have shown with reference to Arabic lexicons, the true meaning of *shafa'a* is the rendering of assistance by one who holds a high position to one in a low position and standing in need of such help. The word has been used in exactly the same sense in the Holy Qur'an. The idea of mediation, which depicts a wrathful Being, on the one hand, determined to execute the sentence of punishment, and, on the other, a suppliant on behalf of a sinner, is not the Quranic sense of intercession or *shafa'a*. For here the real intercessor or *Shafi'* is God Himself, not the wrathful God who is bound to punish the sinners for what they have or even for what they have not done,¹ but the most Merciful of all merciful ones, Who is moved for humanity's sake to such an extent that He takes out from the fire even those who have never done any good. The *shafa'a* of God is, therefore, the merciful Divine help which enables the sinners to escape from the evil consequences of what they have done, when all other means have failed.

Intrecession of the angels.

The intercession of angels is thus spoken of in the Holy Qur'an :

“ Those who uphold the Throne and those around Him celebrate the praise of their Lord and believe in Him and ask protection for those who believe : Our Lord ! Thou embracest all things in mercy and knowledge, therefore grant protection to those who turn (to Thee) and follow Thy way, and save them from the chastisement of the Hell : Our Lord ! and make them enter the gardens of perpetuity which Thou hast promised to them and those who do good of their fathers and their wives and their offspring, for Thou art the Mighty, the Wise :

1. According to the Christian Church, man must suffer for what is called Original Sin, i.e., the sin not committed by man but by some distant forefather of his in the remote past.

THE RELIGION OF ISLĀM

And keep them from evil deeds, and whom Thou keepest from evil deeds this day, indeed Thou hast mercy on him, and that is the Mighty achievement " (40 : 7-9).

" The heavens may almost rend asunder from above them and the angels celebrate the praise of their Lord and ask forgiveness for those on earth ; now surely Allāh is the Forgiving, the Merciful " (42 : 5).

It will be seen that in the first of these passages, the angels are spoken of as asking for Divine protection and Divine mercy for the believers specially, though their fathers, wives and offspring are afterwards included, and in the second passage, the angels are spoken of as asking forgiveness for believers as well as unbelievers. The intercession of the angels is, therefore, common to both believers and unbelievers. The spiritual relation of the angel with man, as has already been seen in the chapter on Angels, is one of prompting to noble and virtuous deeds, and hence the angels' intercession is in connection with those who have done some sort of good, whether they be believers in a prophet or not. And this intercession takes the form of a prayer that mercy and forgiveness be shown by God to His creatures.

Divine mercy is also manifested through the prophets,

Intercession of prophets and believers. and this is the *shafā'a* of the prophets. It is a mistake to suppose that the *shafā'a* of the prophets will be exercised only on the Day of Judgment ; nor is it limited to the prayers of forgiveness for the dead.¹ The prophet's *shafā'a* is witnessed in the change he brings about in the life of a

1. In the article on *Shafā'a* in the *Encyclopædia of Islām* we have : "But it should be noted that the Prophet even in his lifetime is said to have made intercession. 'Ā'isha relates that he often slipped quietly from her side at night to go to the cemetery of Baqi al-Gharqad to beseech forgiveness of Allāh for the dead.....Similarly his *istighfār* is mentioned in the *ṣalāt al-djanā'iz* and its efficacy explained..... The prayer for the forgiveness of sins then became or remained an integral part of this *ṣalāt*..... ..to which a high degree of importance was attributed."

PROPHETS

people, in delivering them from the bondage of evil, and setting them on the road to advancement. Thus it is stated that the Holy Prophet Muḥammad was raised up so that he might purify the people (2 : 151). The Arabic word for purification is *yusakkī*, derived from *saka* whereof the original meaning is, *the progress attained by Divine blessing* (R.). And the miraculous purification of Arabia and its advancement, physical, intellectual, moral and spiritual, is the clearest evidence of the *shafa'a* of the Holy Prophet Muḥammad. He prayed incessantly for the well-being of his followers, and his prayer is said to be "a relief" to those for whom he prayed (9 : 103). He is also commanded to do *istighfar* for them, as in 3 : 158, 4 : 64, 24 : 62, 47 : 19, 60 : 12, and this was clearly, as in the case of angels, intercession on their behalf. The *shafa'a* of the believers is of a similar nature. The believers who are on a higher spiritual plane help those who are on a lower level, by their example and by their prayers. The *shafa'a* by example is clearly spoken of in the Holy Qur'an : "Whoever joins himself to another (*yashfa'*) in a good cause (*shafa'at-an hasanat-an*) shall have a share of it" (4 : 85). The original word used here is *shafa'a*, and the meaning is that when a man sets a good example which others follow and benefit thereby, he is rewarded for it.

It is clear from the above that the doctrine of *shafa'a* in Islām is really meant to give expression to the boundless mercy of the Divine Being. This *shafa'a* is exercised, in the first instance, in this life. There are the angels of God who prompt men to do good and pray to God that men may be saved from falling into evil, and that Divine blessings and mercy may be extended to them; there are the prophets of God who are raised up with the express object of delivering men from the bondage of sin and setting

Shafa'a on the Judgment Day.

THE RELIGION OF ISLAM

them on the right course to advancement, who, by their example and by their prayers, lead men out of the darkness of evil into the light of the Divine mercy and blessings ; and there are believers who have attained to perfection, and who, following in the footsteps of the great prophets of God, intercede for those who are left behind. But according to the Holy Qur'an, the progress of man is not limited to this life. Far more extensive fields of activity are awaiting him in the life after death, and the Day of Resurrection is the great day when the consequences of all good and evil deeds shall be made fully manifest. The *shafa'a* of the Holy Prophet Muḥammad on that day is given the greatest prominence, so much so that no prophet exercises that prerogative until the Holy Prophet Muḥammad shall have prostrated himself before God and praised Him with the highest praises and prayed to him with the most earnest prayer. It is then that God shall say to him : " O Muḥammad ! raise thy head, and speak and thou shalt be granted thy desire, and intercede and thy intercession shall be accepted " (Bu. 81 : 51). It is no wonder that the intercession of the Holy Prophet Muḥammad shall thus be exalted on the Day of Resurrection, for even in this life, the *shafa'a* exercised by him is so transcendent that the *shafa'a* of every other prophet sinks into insignificance before it. The material, moral and spiritual revolution brought about by the Holy Prophet Muḥammad has been so tremendous that by a consensus of opinion he is admitted to be the "most successful of all prophets and religious personalities" (En. Br., art. *Koran*). God had been showering his blessings on mankind through angels and through prophets and their righteous followers, and the help which they have rendered to mankind is itself evidence that in the higher life they will render similar help ; but, inasmuch as God's mercy knows no bounds, even those who have

PROPHETS

esponded neither to the call of the angel in this life, nor to the call of the prophets of God, nor yet to the call of other righteous servants of God, those who, in the words of the ḥadīth, have never done any good, shall be lifted up by Divine mercy, by the most Merciful of all merciful ones, and being delivered from the evil consequences of what they have wrought, shall be set up on the road to unlimited progress which the Resurrection shall open up for mankind.

In the Holy Qur'an, the Holy Prophet Muḥammad is spoken of as the last of the prophets: Finality of prophet-hood. "Muḥammad is not the father of any of your men, but he is the Apostle of Allāh and the last of the prophets (*khātam al-nabiyyīn*), and Allāh is cognisant of all things" (33: 40). The words *khātam al-nabiyyīn* and *khātim al-nabiyyīn* mean *the last of the prophets*, for both the words *khātam* and *khātim* mean *the last portion of anything* (LL.). The best Arabic exicologists are agreed that *khātam al-qaum* means *the last of a people* (TA.). The doctrine of the finality of prophethood in Muḥammad (peace be on him), therefore, rests on the clear words of the Holy Qur'an.

Ḥadīth is even clearer on this point. The meaning of *khātam al-nabiyyīn* was thus explained by the Holy Prophet himself: "My example and the example of the prophets before me is the example of a man who built a house and he made it very good and very beautiful with the exception of a stone in the corner, so people began to go round it and to wonder at it and to say, Why has not this stone been placed? The Prophet said, I am this stone and I am the last of the prophets" (Bu. 61: 18). This ḥadīth, in which the Holy Prophet speaks of himself as the corner-stone of prophethood and the last of the prophets, is related by Muslim and Tirmidhī as well, and also by Aḥmad in more than ten places. Another ḥadīth in

THE RELIGION OF ISLĀM

which the Holy Prophet speaks of himself as the last of the prophets is contained in the following words: "The Israelites were led by prophets; whenever a prophet died, another prophet came after him; surely after me there is no prophet, but there will be successors" (Bu. 60: 50). This is also narrated by Muslim and Aḥmad in several places. According to another ḥadīth, the Holy Prophet is reported to have said to 'Alī, when on the occasion of the Tābūk expedition he left him in Madīna in his place: "Art thou not pleased that thou shouldst stand to me in the same relation as Aaron stood to Moses except that there is no prophet after me" (Bu. 64: 78). Similar ḥadīth in which the Holy Prophet made it clear that no prophet would appear after him abound in other Ḥadīth books.

The idea that prophethood came to a close in the A Prophet for all person of the Holy Prophet Muḥam-
people and all ages. mad is not a stray idea. On the other
hand, it is the natural conclusion of the universalization
of the theory of revelation which is the basic principle of
the religion of Islām. Revelation, according to the Holy
Qur'an, is not the solitary experience of this or that
nation but the spiritual experience of the whole of the
human race. Allāh is spoken of in the very opening verse
as the *Rabb* of all the nations of the world, the *Nourisher*
unto perfection, physically as well as spiritually, of the
whole human race. Starting from that broad basis, the
Holy Qur'an develops the theory that prophets were sent
to every nation: "There is not a people but a warner
has gone among them" (35: 24); "Every nation has had
an apostle" (10: 47). At the same time it is stated that
every prophet was sent to a single nation and, therefore,
though prophethood was in one sense a universal fact, it
was more or less a national institution, the scope of the

PROPHETS

preaching of every prophet being limited to his own nation.

The advent of the Holy Prophet Muḥammad universalized the institution of prophethood in a real sense. The day of the national prophet was over, and one prophet was raised for the whole world, for all nations and for all ages:

“Blessed is He Who sent down the *Furqān* upon His servant that he may be a warner to all the nations” (25 : 1).

“Say, O people! I am the Apostle of Allāh to you all, of Him Whose is the kingdom of the heavens and the earth” (7 : 158).

“And We have not sent thee but to all the men as a bearer of good news and as a warner, but most men do not know” (34 : 28).

The world-prophet therefore took the place of the national prophets, and the grand unification of human race based on finality of prophethood. idea of unifying the whole human race, and gathering it together under one banner, was thus brought to perfection. All geographical limitations were swept away as were all bars of colour and race, and the basis of the unity of the human race was laid upon the grand principle that the whole human race was one, and that all men, wherever they may be found, were a single nation (2 : 213). Such unity could not be accomplished unless the finality of prophethood was established, for if prophets continued to appear after the world-prophet, they would undoubtedly demand the allegiance of this or that section, and shatter the very foundations of the unity at which Islām aimed by giving a single prophet to the whole world.

It may, however, be further added that by bringing prophethood to a close, Islām has not deprived the world of a blessing

Significance underlying finality.

THE RELIGION OF ISLĀM

which was available to previous generations. The object of sending a prophet to a people was to make known the Divine will, and point out the ways by walking in which men could hold communion with God. That object was also brought to perfection through the great world-prophet, whose message was so perfect that it met the requirements not only of all contemporary nations but of all future generations as well. This is plainly claimed by the Holy Qur'an, a claim not put forward by any other heavenly book or any other religion: "This day have I perfected for you your religion and completed on you My blessing" (5 : 3). The perfection of religion and the completion of the blessing of prophethood thus go hand in hand, and the blessing of prophethood being made complete in the person of the Holy Prophet, it is a distortion of facts to say that if no more prophets appeared, the Muslims would be without the blessing of prophethood, since they possess that blessing in its most complete form. Religion being made perfect, and prophethood being made complete, there remained no need for another religion after Islām or for another prophet after the Holy Prophet Muḥammad.

There is a prophecy in Hadīth books which states
Appearance of the that the Messiah would appear
Messiah. among the Muslims. The words in
Bukhārī are: "How would you feel when the son of
Mary makes his appearance among you, and he will be
your Imām from among yourselves (*imāmu-kum min-*
kum)" (Bu. 60 : 49). In *Muslim* instead of *imāmu-kum*
min-kum, the words are *amma-kum min-kum* (M. 1 : 70), the
significance being exactly the same as that of *Bukhārī's*
words. This prophecy has given rise to a more or less
general misconception that the Israelite prophet Jesus
Christ would appear among the Muslims, a misconception
due to not giving proper attention to the doctrine of

PROPHETS

finality of prophethood, for if there is *no need* for a prophet, as clearly set forth in the Holy Qur'an, neither a new nor an old prophet can appear. In fact, the appearance of an old prophet would be as much subversive of the doctrine of the finality of prophethood and as derogatory to the dignity of the *last* prophet of the world, as would the appearance of a new prophet. The words of the prophecy are so clear that if due attention had been paid to them, there could never have been a misconception. The son of Mary spoken of in the prophecy is clearly called "your Imām from among yourselves," and therefore the Israelite prophet Jesus Christ, who was from among the Israelites, could *not* be meant.

The prophecy relating to the appearance of the Messiah among the Muslims is on all fours with the prophecy relating to the second advent of Elias among the Israelites. In fact, there is a strange coincidence between the cases of Elijah and Jesus Christ. Of Elijah it is said in the Bible: "Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven" (II. Kings 2: 11). On the strength of this inspired evidence, the Jews believed that Elijah was alive in heaven. Then there was the prophecy: "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord" (Mal. 4: 5), which showed that he would return to this earth before the Messiah appeared. Yet these hopes based on such strong evidence were not fulfilled. Jesus Christ was confronted with this difficulty: "And his disciples asked him, saying, Why then say the scribes that Elias must first come?" (Mt. 17: 10). Jesus' reply is recorded in the following words: "Elias truly shall first come But I say unto you, That Elias is come already, and they knew him not, but have done unto him whatsoever they listed..... Then the disciples understood that he spake unto them of John the Baptist" (Mt. 17: 11-13).

THE RELIGION OF ISLAM

And John the Baptist was called Elias in prophecy because it had been said of him : " And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias " (Lk. 1 : 17).

Now of Jesus Christ it is nowhere said in the Holy Qur'ān that he went up into heaven. On the other hand, it is plainly stated that he died a natural death.¹ Therefore there is not the least ground for supposing that Jesus Christ is alive in heavens. Again, the Bible states plainly that Elijah will be sent, but the Hadith prophecy about the advent of the Messiah adds the clear words that " he will be your Imām from among yourselves." Even if Jesus had been alive and the words quoted above had not made clear the true significance of the prophecy, the analogy of the prophecy of Elijah's advent would have been sufficient to eradicate all misconceptions regarding the reappearance of Jesus Christ. But in addition to all this, there is the clearly defined and strongly established fact of the finality of prophethood which bars the advent of any prophet, old or new, after the Holy Prophet Muḥammad.

It must however be borne in mind that, as shown in the last chapter, Divine revelation is granted to prophets as well as to those who are not prophets, and that, therefore, though prophethood, being no more needed, has been brought to a close, the gift of Divine revelation to the righteous servants of God is still granted as heretofore. Men do not stand in need of a new prophet because they have a

1. "O Jesus! I will cause thee to die and exalt thee in My presence and clear thee of those who disbelieve and make those who follow thee above those who disbelieve to the Day of Resurrection" (3 : 54).

"And when Allāh said : O Jesus, son of Mary ! didst thou say to men, Take me and my mother for two gods besides Allāh, he said.....I did not say to them aught save what thou didst enjoin me with, That serve Allāh, my Lord and your Lord ; and I was a witness of them so long as I was among them, but when Thou didst cause me to die, Thou wert the watcher over them, and Thou art witness of all things " (5 : 116, 117).

PROPHETS

perfect law in the Holy Qur'an, but they do stand in need of Divine blessings, and Divine revelation is the highest of all blessings. Moreover, speaking is an attribute of the Divine Being, just as hearing and seeing are His attributes also, and Divine attributes never cease to function. It has also been shown in the last chapter that, according to a most reliable ḥadīth, a part of prophethood called *mubashsharāt* (lit. *good visions*) remains after prophethood has ceased (Bu. 91 : 5), and according to another, God speaks to the righteous in this *umma* though they are not prophets (Bu. 62 : 6). There is another ḥadīth showing that *mujaddids* (reformers) will appear among the Muslims: "Surely Allāh will raise up for this community (of Muslims), at the commencement of every century, one who will reform their religion" (AD. 36 : 1). A *mujaddid* is a reformer raised up to remove errors that have crept in among the Muslims, and to shed new light on the great religious truths of Islām in the new circumstances which the Muslim community will be called upon to face.

CHAPTER VI LIFE AFTER DEATH

A faith in a life after death is the last of the basic principles of Islām. The word generally used in the Holy Qur'an to indicate this life is *al-ākhhira*; and *ākhhir* is the opposite of *awwal* (which means *the first*), and thus signifies *that which comes after or the future, or the last*. *Al-yaum al-ākhhir* or *the last day* is used instead of *al-ākhhira* (2 : 8, 62, etc.) ; sometimes *al-dār al-ākhhira*, *the next or the future or the last abode*, is used (28 : 77 ; 29 : 64 ; 33 : 29), and once *al-nash'at al-ākhhira* or *the future or the next life*, which is the real meaning conveyed by all these terms (R.).¹ Death, in the light of the plain teachings of the Holy Qur'an, is not the end of man's life ; it only opens the door to another, a higher, form of life : " Have you considered the small life-germ ? Is it you that create it or are We the Creator ? We have ordained death among you and none can prevent Us that We may change your attributes and make you grow into what you know not " (56 : 58-61). Just as from the small life-germ grows the man, and he does not lose his individuality for all the changes which he undergoes, so from this man is made the higher man, his attributes being changed, and he himself being made to grow into what he cannot conceive at present. That this new life is a higher form of life is also made plain : " See how We have made some of them to excel others, and certainly

1. Occasionally the word *al-ākhhira* is used to indicate the future condition in this very life as compared with the previous state, as in 93 : 4 : " And that which comes after (*al-ākhhira*) is certainly better for thee than that which has gone before," where the meaning is that the future had great eventualities in store for the Holy Prophet, and his cause would continue to gain as time went on.

LIFE AFTER DEATH

the hereafter is much superior in respect of degrees and much superior in respect of excellence " (17 : 21).

The Holy Qur'an accords to faith in the Future Life an importance which is next only to faith in God. Very often all the doctrines of faith are summed up, as amounting to belief in God and the Future Life : " And there are some people who say, We believe in Allah and the last day, and they are not at all believers " (2 : 8) ; " Whoever believes in Allāh and the last day and does good, they shall have their reward from Allāh " (2 : 62).

The Opening chapter of the Holy Qur'an, entitled the *Fatiha*, is not only looked upon as the quintessence of the Holy Qur'an, but it is actually the chapter which plays the greatest part in creating a true Muslim mentality ; for the Muslim must turn to it in his five daily prayers over thirty times daily. In this chapter God is spoken of as the " Master of the Day of Requital," and thus the idea that every deed must be requited is brought before the mind of the Muslim continually. This constant repetition of the idea of a requital of deeds, undoubtedly impresses on the mind the reality of a future life, when every deed shall find its full reward. The reason for giving this great importance to a life after death is clear. The greater the faith in the good or bad consequences of a deed, the greater is the incentive which urges a man to or withholds him from that deed. Now a belief in life after death implies that every deed, however secretly it may be done, must bear fruit, and therefore this belief is both the greatest impetus towards good and noble, and the greatest restraint upon evil or irresponsible, deeds. A deep consciousness of the consequences of a deed, consequences which must follow even after death, is thus engendered by a belief in a life after death. But more than this, such a belief purifies

THE RELIGION OF ISLĀM

the motives with which a deed is done. It makes a man work with the most selfless of motives, for he seeks no reward for what he does; his work is for higher and nobler ends relating to the life beyond the grave.

The Holy Qur'an not only speaks of a life after death which opens out before man a new world of advancement, before which the progress of this life sinks into insignificance; it also shows that the basis of that life is laid in this our life on earth. The hereafter is not a mystery beyond the grave; it begins in this life. For the good, the heavenly life, and for the wicked, a life in hell, begin even here, though the limitations of this life do not allow most people to realize that other: "Certainly thou wert heedless of it, but now We have removed from thee thy veil, so thy sight to-day is sharp" (50 : 22). This shows that the life spiritual which here is hidden from the human eye by reason of material limitations, will become manifest in the Resurrection; because human perception will then be clearer, the veil of material limitations having been removed. The Holy Qur'an plainly speaks of two paradises for the righteous and two chastisements for the wicked, and as plainly of a heavenly and hellish life, each beginning here :

" And for him who fears to stand before his Lord are two gardens " (55 : 46).

" O soul that art at rest ! return to thy Lord well pleased with Him, well pleasing Him, so enter among My servants and enter into My Paradise " (89 : 27-30).

" Nay ! if you had known with a certain knowledge, you should certainly have seen the Hell " (89 : 5, 6).

" It is the fire kindled by Allāh which rises above the hearts " (104 : 6, 7).

" And whoever is blind in this life, shall also be blind in the hereafter " (17 : 72).

LIFE AFTER DEATH

“ Such is the chastisement, and certainly the chastisement of the hereafter is greater, did they but know ” (68 : 33).

The state between death and Resurrection is called *barzakh* which literally means *a thing that intervenes between two things*, or *an obstacle or a hinderance* (L.L.). The word *barzakh* has been used in this latter sense in two places in the Holy Qur’an (25 : 53 and 55 : 20), where a barrier between two seas is spoken of as *barzakh*. As signifying the state between death and Resurrection, it occurs in the following verses : “ Until when death overtakes one of them, he says : Send me back, my Lord, send me back, haply I may do good in what I have left. By no means ! it is a mere word that he speaks, and before them is *barzakh* until the day when they are raised ” (23 : 99, 100). This intervening state is also known by the name of *qabr*, which means *grave*, but has also been used in the wider sense of the state which follows death. Thus the three states, death, the grave and Resurrection, are spoken of, where the *grave* undoubtedly stands for *barzakh* : “ Then He causes him to die, then assigns to him a grave (*aqbara-hu*) ; then when He pleases, He will raise him to life again ” (80 : 21, 22). And the raising to life on the Day of Resurrection is spoken of as the raising of those who are in their graves, as in 100 : 9 and 22 : 7, where all people are meant, whether actually buried or not. The state of *qabr* is therefore the same state as that of *barzakh*, the state in which every man is placed after death, and before the Resurrection.

It will have been seen that the Holy Qur’an speaks of the growth of a higher life even in the life of this world, and thus the spiritual experience of man is the first stage of the

THE RELIGION OF ISLAM

higher life. Yet, ordinarily, man is neglectful of this higher experience, and it is only persons of a very high spiritual development that are in any way conscious of that higher life. Barzakh is really the second stage in the development of this higher life, and it appears that all men have a certain consciousness of the higher life at this stage, though full development has not yet taken place. In the Holy Qur'an, even the development of the physical life is mentioned as passing through three stages. The first stage of that life is the state of being in the earth; the second, that of being in the mother's womb; and the third, that in which the child is born. Thus we have: "He knows you best when He brings you forth from the earth and when you are embryos in the wombs of your mothers" (53 : 32). And again: "And He began the creation of man from dust; then He made his progeny of an extract of water held in light estimation; then He made him complete and breathed into him of His spirit" (32 : 7-9). And still again: "And certainly We have created man of an extract of clay; then We make him a small life-germ in a firm resting-placethen We cause it to grow into another creation, so blessed be Allāh, the best of the creators" (23 : 12-14). Corresponding to these three stages in the physical development of man, the stage of dust, the stage of embryo and the stage of birth into life, the Holy Qur'an speaks of three stages in his spiritual development. The first is the growth of a spiritual life which begins in this very life, but it is a stage at which ordinarily there is no consciousness of this life, like the dust stage in the physical development of man. Then there comes death, and with it is entered the second stage of the higher or spiritual life, the barzakh or the *qabr* stage, corresponding to the embryo state in the physical development of man. At this stage, life has taken a

LIFE AFTER DEATH

definite form, and a certain consciousness of that life has grown up, but it is not yet the full consciousness of the final development which takes place with the Resurrection, and which may therefore be compared to the actual birth of man, to his setting forth on the road to real advancement, to a full awakening of the great truth. The development of the higher life in barzakh is as necessary a stage in the spiritual world as is the development of physical life in the embryonic state. The two stages thus stand on a par.

That there is some kind of awakening to a new spiritual experience immediately after the barzakh stage. death is abundantly evident from various Qur'anic statements. For example, the very verses in which barzakh is spoken of (23 : 99, 100) set forth the spiritual experience of the evil-doer, who immediately becomes conscious of the fact that he has been doing in his first life something which is now detrimental to the growth of the higher life in him, and hence desires to go back, so that he may do good deeds which may help the development of the higher life. It shows that the consciousness of a higher life has sprung up in him immediately after death. On another occasion, we are told that evil-doers are made to taste of the evil consequences of their deeds in this state of barzakh, the consciousness of the chastisement becoming clear on the Resurrection Day : "And the most evil chastisement overtook Pharaoh's people : the fire ; they shall be brought before it every morning and evening and on the day when the hour shall come to pass : Make Pharaoh's people enter the severest chastisement " (40 : 45, 46).

It should be noted that while, in the Holy Qur'an, the guilty are spoken of as receiving chastisement in the state of barzakh, in the Hadith this punishment is spoken of as 'adhab al-qabr, or the punishment meted out in

THE RELIGION OF ISLAM

the grave. In *Bukhārī* the chapter on '*adhab al-qabr*' (Bu. 23 : 87) begins with quotations from the Holy Qur'an, one of which is the verse relating to the punishment of Pharaoh's, people in *barzakh*, quoted at the conclusion of the previous paragraph. This shows that *Bukhārī* regards these two punishments as one, and thus he establishes the identity of *qabr* and *barzakh*. Again, the 90th chapter of the same book has the following heading: "The dead man is shown his abode morning and evening" (Bu. 23 : 90). Under this heading, a *ḥadīth* is narrated from 'Abd-Allāh ibn 'Umar reporting the Holy Prophet as saying that "when a man dies, his abode (in the next life) is brought before him morning and evening, in Paradise if he is one of the inmates of Paradise, and in fire if he is one of the inmates of fire" (Bu. 23 : 90). This *ḥadīth* also shows that '*adhab al-qabr*' means only the spiritual condition of the guilty people in the state of *barzakh*.

Similarly, the righteous are spoken of as tasting the fruits of good deeds immediately after death: "And reckon not those who are killed in Allāh's way as dead; nay, they are alive, being given sustenance from their Lord; rejoicing in what Allāh has given them out of His grace, and they rejoice for the sake of those who, being left behind, have not yet joined them, that they shall have no fear nor shall they grieve" (3: 168, 169). These verses show that the departed ones are even conscious of what they have left behind, and this establishes some sort of connection between this world and the next.

All questions connected with the life of the other world are of an intricate nature, inasmuch as they are not things that can be perceived by these senses; they are "secrets" that shall be made known only after death, according to the Holy Qur'an (32 : 17); "things which no eye has

LIFE AFTER DEATH

seen, nor has ear heard, nor have they entered into the heart of man," according to a saying of the Holy Prophet (Bu. 59 : 8). As will be shown later on, the very ideas of time and space as relating to the next world are different from those here, and therefore we cannot conceive of the duration of barzakh in terms of this world. Moreover, the full awakening to the higher life will take place in the Resurrection, and the state of barzakh is therefore a state, as it were, of semi-consciousness. Hence it is that it is sometimes likened to a state of sleep as compared with the great awakening of the Resurrection, for the unbelievers are made to say: "O woe to us! who has raised us up from our sleeping-place?" (36 : 52). The state of barzakh, as regards those who have wasted their opportunities in this life, lasts, according to the plain teachings of the Holy Qur'an, till the Day of Resurrection: "And before them is barzakh until the day when they are raised" (23 : 100). The question of a longer duration of barzakh for some, and a shorter one for others, does not arise, as they do not seem to have consciousness of the length of time: "And at the time when the hour shall come, the guilty shall swear that they did not tarry but an hour; thus are they ever turned away. And those who are given knowledge and faith will say, Certainly you tarried according to the ordinance of Allāh till the Day of Resurrection, so this is the Day of Resurrection, but you did not know" (30 : 55, 56). As regards those in whom the life spiritual has been awakened in the life on earth, consciousness in the barzakh state will undoubtedly be more vivid, and there is a ḥadīth which speaks of the righteous being exalted to a higher state (*raf'*) after forty days, and thus making progress even in the state of barzakh.

The Resurrection is spoken of under various names, the most frequent of which is *yaum al-qiyaama* or *the day of the great rising*,
Various names of Resurrection.

THE RELIGION OF ISLĀM

which occurs seventy times in the Holy Qur'an. Next to it is *al-sā'a* which means *the hour*, and occurs forty times, *yaum al-ākhir* or *the last day* which occurs twenty-six times, while *al-ākhirā* as meaning *the future life* occurs over a hundred times. Next in importance is *yaum al-dīn* which means *the day of requital*. *Yaum al-faṣl* or *the day of decision* occurs six times, and *yaum al-ḥisāb* or *the day of reckoning*, five times. Other names occur only once or twice, such as *yaum al-faṭḥ* (*the day of judgment*), *yaum al-talāq* (*the day of meeting*), *yaum al-ḡam'* (*the day of gathering*), *yaum al-khulūd* (*the day of abiding*), *yaum al-khurūj* (*the day of coming forth*), *yaum al-ba'th* (*the day of being raised to life*), *yaum al-ḥasra* (*the day of regret*), *yaum al-tanād* (*the day of calling forth*), *yaum al-āzifa* (*the day that draws near*), *yaum al-tagḥābun* (*the day of manifestation of defects*). Other names which occur once or twice without the word *yaum* (*day*) are *al-qāri'a* (*the striking calamity*), *al-ghāshiya* (*the overwhelming calamity*), *al-ṣākhkha* (*the deafening calamity*), *al-ṭamma* (*the predominating calamity*), *al-ḥāqqa* (*the great truth*), and *al-wāqi'a* (*the great event*).

It will be seen that most of these names refer either to a destruction or an awakening and rising to a new life; they relate to the sweeping off of an old order and the establishment of a new one. A few quotations descriptive of the Resurrection will make the point clearer:

"He asks: When is the Day of Resurrection? When the sight becomes confused, and the moon becomes dark, and the sun and the moon are brought together. Man shall say on that day, Whither to flee to? By no means! there shall be no place of refuge. With thy Lord alone shall on that day be the place of rest..... Some faces on that day shall be bright, looking to their Lord; and other faces on that day shall be gloomy,

LIFE AFTER DEATH

knowing that there will be made to befall them some great calamity" (75 : 6-25).

"When the stars are made to disappear, and when the heaven is rent asunder, and when the mountains are carried away as dust, and when the apostles are made to reach their appointed time" (77 : 8-11).

"The day of decision is a day appointed: the day on which the trumpet shall be blown, so you shall come forth in hosts; and the heaven shall be opened so that it shall be all openings; and the mountains shall be moved off so that they shall remain a mere semblance" (78 : 17-20).

"The day on which the quaking one shall quake, what must happen afterwards shall follow it. Hearts on that day shall palpitate, their eyes cast down. But it shall be only a single cry, when lo! they shall be wakeful" (79 : 6-14).

"They ask thee about the hour, whither is its destination.....To thy Lord is the goal of it" (79 : 42-44).

"When the earth is shaken with her violent shaking, and the earth brings forth her burdens. On that day men shall come forth in sundry bodies that they may be shown their works" (99 : 1-6).

"The day on which they shall come forth from their graves in haste, as if they were hastening on to a goal" (70 : 43).

"And when the trumpet is blown with a single blast, and the earth and the mountains are borne away and crushed with a single crushing; on that day shall the great event come to pass..... On that day you shall be exposed to view, no secret of yours shall remain hidden" (69 : 13-18).

"When the great event comes to pass—there is no belying its coming to pass—abasing, exalting" (56 : 1-3).

THE RELIGION OF ISLĀM

“On the day when the earth shall be changed into a different earth and the heavens as well” (14 : 48).

The two words used most frequently regarding the Three resurrections. Resurrection are *al-qiyāma* and *al-sā'a*. The first of these refers apparently, to the *rising*, which is its literal significance, the second to destruction, being *the hour of doom*. Now as regards this latter word, Raghīb says that there are three *sā'as* in the sense of resurrection; *viz.*, *kubrā* or *the greater resurrection* which is the rising up of the people for reckoning; *wusṭā* or the middle resurrection which is the passing away of one generation; and *ṣuḡhrā* or the minor resurrection which is the death of the individual. An example of the last use of the word *sā'a* is given as occurring in the Holy Qur'an: “They are indeed in loss who give the lie to the meeting with Allāh until when the hour comes upon them all of a sudden” (6 : 31). Here *the hour (al-sā'a)* clearly stands for the death of the person who gives the lie. As regards the use of *al-sā'a* in the sense of the end of a generation, a ḥadīth of the Holy Prophet is quoted according to which he is reported to have said referring to 'Abd-Allāh ibn Unais, who was then only a boy: “If the life of this boy is lengthened, he will not die till the hour (*al-sā'a*) comes to pass” (R.); and it is related that he was the last to die from among the Companions of the Holy Prophet; in other words, *al-sā'a* in this case signifies the passing away of the generation of the Companions of the Holy Prophet. There are examples of this use in the Holy Qur'an also: “The hour (*al-sā'a*) drew nigh and the moon did rend asunder” (54 : 1). “The hour,” in this case, clearly stands for the doom of the opponents of the Holy Prophet. And again: “Do they say, We are a host allied together to help each other? Soon shall the hosts be routed and they shall turn their backs. Nay, the hour

LIFE AFTER DEATH

(*al-sā'a*) is their promised time and the hour shall be most grievous and bitter" (54 : 44-46). Bukhārī tells us, in his comment on these verses, that, when the Holy Prophet was faced with a most serious situation on the day of Badr, the Muslims being in danger of utter annihilation at the hands of their powerful opponents, and was praying for their safety, he was reminded of the prophecy contained here, and comforted his Companions by reciting these verses aloud (Bu. 64 : 4), showing that by *the hour* (*al-sā'a*) here was meant the hour of the enemy's discomfiture.

It may also be noted that just as the word *al-sā'a* is used in a wider sense, and indicates, besides the Doomsday, sometimes the death of an individual and sometimes the passing of a generation, so do the words *qiyāma* (rising) and *ba'th* (raising the dead to life) sometimes occur, each in a wider sense. Thus there is a saying of the Holy Prophet: "Whoever dies, his resurrection has indeed come to pass" (MM. 26 : 7). Here the state of *barzakh* is called a resurrection, and this shows that no sooner does a man die than he is raised up to a new life. It should be further borne in mind that on many occasions when the Holy Qur'an speaks of the dead, it means those who are spiritually dead, and by giving life to them it means the bringing about of a spiritual awakening in them. Take the following example: "Is he who was dead, then We raised him to life and made for him a light by which he walks among the people, like him whose likeness is that of one in utter darkness whence he cannot come forth?" (6 : 123). Here, clearly, the dead one is he who is spiritually dead, and God's raising him to life is giving him the life spiritual. On one occasion even, by "those in the graves" are meant those who are dead spiritually :

THE RELIGION OF ISLĀM

“ Neither are the living and the dead alike. Surely Allāh makes him whom He pleases hear, and thou canst not make those hear who are in the graves. Thou art naught but a warner ” (35 : 22, 23). The context shows that by “ those in the graves ” are meant those whom death has overtaken spiritually, whom the Prophet would warn but they would not listen. On another occasion, where those in the graves are mentioned, the words convey a double significance, referring to the spiritual awakening brought about by the Holy Prophet as well as to the new life in the Resurrection : “ And thou seest the earth sterile land, but when We send down water on it, it stirs and swells and brings forth of every kind a beautiful herbage. This is because Allāh is the Truth and because He gives life to the dead and because He has power over all things, and because the hour is coming, there is no doubt about it; and because Allāh shall raise up those who are in the graves ” (22 : 5-7). The first part of this passage, describing the giving of life to dead soil by means of rain, shows that the second part refers to the giving of spiritual life by means of Divine revelation, a comparison between rain and revelation being of frequent occurrence in the Holy Qur’ān. “ The hour ” here, as in so many other places, refers to the doom of the opponents of the Prophet, and “ the dead ” and “ those in the graves ” are evidently the spiritually dead. But though speaking primarily of the spiritual resurrection, there is also a reference to the great resurrection of the dead. In fact, not only here but in many other places in the Holy Qur’ān, the spiritual resurrection, to be brought about by the Holy Prophet, and the greater resurrection of the dead are mentioned together, the one being as it were an evidence of the other,¹ because an awakening to

1. This is specially the case when the giving of life to the dead earth, by means of rain, is spoken of as an evidence of the Resurrection. In such

LIFE AFTER DEATH

spiritual life shows the existence of a higher life, the development of which is the real aim of the greater resurrection. This is the first great argument running throughout the pages of the Holy Qur'an as to the truth of the greater resurrection. The spiritual resurrection brought about by the Holy Prophet, the awakening to a spiritual life, makes the higher life an experience of humanity, and thus clears the way for a development of that life in a higher sphere, above the limitations of this material world.

That the whole of creation on this earth is for the service of man, and that human life has some great aim and purpose to fulfil, is yet another argument for Resurrection advanced by the Holy Qur'an: "Does man think that he is to be left to wander without an aim?" (75 : 36); "What ! do you think that We have created you in vain and that you shall not be returned to Us?" (23 : 115). Just as the God-idea ennobles man's life, and endows it with the purest and highest impulses, so does the resurrection-idea introduce a seriousness into man's life which cannot

cases, both the spiritual resurrection and the greater resurrection are meant, the one in fact being evidence of the other. That the spiritual resurrection serves as an argument for the greater resurrection is clearly pointed out in the following verses: "Nay ! I call to witness the Day of Resurrection. Nay ! I call to witness the self accusing spirit" (75 : 1, 2). Now here the resurrection is spoken of as an evidence of the Resurrection, and what is really meant is that the spiritual resurrection to be brought about by the Holy Prophet (such being the significance of *qiyāma* here) shall serve as an evidence of the greater resurrection which is implied. And the fact that it is the spiritual resurrection that is produced as an evidence is made clear by mentioning along with it the self-accusing spirit which is the first stage of the growth of spiritual life in man, because it is when the inner self of man accuses him of wrong-doing that his struggle against evil is begun in earnest, which struggle is the first indication of the growth of spiritual life ; but when evil is done without the inner voice asserting itself, it is a sign that the man is spiritually dead. The self-accusing spirit is the lower stage of the growth of a spiritual life, the higher stage being called "the spirit at rest," or *al-nafs al-muṣma'inna*, which enters into paradise even in this life (89 : 27-30).

THE RELIGION OF ISLAM

be otherwise attained. It will be taking too low a view of human nature to imagine that with all those vast capacities for ruling nature and its wonderful forces, human life itself has no aim, and is like the grass that grows up to-day and disappears to-morrow, serving either as fodder or manure. If everything in nature is intended for the service of man, but human life itself is without purpose, then man must be placed lower than the lowest form of creation, which is a contradiction in terms. The Holy Qur'an makes this argument clear in three brief sentences: "Surely We have created man in the best make, then We render him the lowest of the low, except those who believe and do good, for they shall have a reward never to be cut off" (95 : 4-6). The last words clearly refer to the higher life which is never to be cut off, and this argument is followed by the conclusion : "So who can give thee the lie after this about the Judgment?" (95 : 7). It cannot be that the whole of creation should serve a purpose and that man alone, who is lord of it and endowed with capabilities for ruling the universe, should have a purposeless existence. It is the Resurrection alone that solves this difficulty. Man has a high object to fulfil, he has a higher life to live beyond this world ; and that higher life is the aim of human life.

Another argument adduced by the Holy Qur'an in support of the Resurrection is that good and evil must have their reward. Of the whole living creation, man alone has the power to discriminate between good and evil. And so acute is his perception of good and evil that he will strive with all his might to promote good and to eradicate evil. He makes laws for this purpose, and uses the whole machinery of power at his disposal to enforce them. Yet what do we see in practical life ? Good is often neglected and starves, while evil prospers. That is not as it should be.

LIFE AFTER DEATH

“ Allah does not waste the reward of the doers of good ” (11 : 115 ; 12 : 90, etc.); “ We do not waste the reward of him who does a good deed ” (18 : 30); “ I will not waste the work of a worker among you, whether male or female, the one of you being from the other ” (3 : 194); “ Whoever does an atom’s weight of good shall see it, and whoever does an atom’s weight of evil shall see it ” (99 : 7, 8)—such are some of the plain declarations made by the Holy Qur’an. And when We look at nature around us, we find the same law at work. Every cause has its effect, and every thing done must bear a fruit. Even that which man does in the physical world must bear a fruit. Why should man’s good or evil deeds be an exception to this general rule working in the whole universe ? And if they are not an exception, as they should not be, the conclusion is evident that good and evil must bear their full fruit in another life, which indicates the continuity of the life of man in another world, when death has put an end to it in this.

It will be seen from the above that the Resurrection is not a dogma in which a man is required to believe, for his salvation in another life; rather is it a principle of human life, a principle which makes that life more serious and more useful, while at the same time awakening in him the consciousness of a life that is higher. The man who sincerely believes in the Resurrection, will try his utmost to take advantage of every opportunity that is offered to him to live his life to the best purpose; he will do his best to do any good that he possibly can to the creatures of God, and he will shun every evil deed so far as lies in his power. Thus a belief in the Resurrection is needed in the first place to make this lower life worth living. Without such a belief, life loses not only all its point, leaving man without any

THE RELIGION OF ISLAM

real and abiding aim, but, in addition, all incentive to do good and eschew evil.

The idea of a life after death is so strange to the average mind that the Holy Qur'an has, again and again, to answer the question, how will it be? And the answer given in all cases is that the great Author of all existence Who made this vast universe out of nothing could also bring about a new creation :—

Resurrection is quite consistent with present scientific knowledge. “ Were We then fatigued with the first creation? Yet are they in doubt with regard to a new creation ” (50 : 15).

“ And they say, What! when we shall have become bones and decayed particles, shall We then be raised up to a new creation? Say, Become stones or iron, or some other creature of those which are too hard to receive life in your minds! But they say, Who will return us? Say, He Who created you at first ” (17 : 49-51).

“ What! when we shall have become bones and decayed particles, shall we then be indeed raised up into a new creation? Do they not consider that Allāh, Who created the heavens and the earth, is able to create their likes? ” (17 : 98-99).

“ And if thou wouldst wonder, then wondrous is their saying, What! when we are dust, shall we then be in a new creation? ” (13 : 5).

“ Dost thou not see that Allāh created the heavens and the earth with truth? If He please, He will take you away and bring a new creation, and this is not difficult for Allāh. And they shall all come forth before Allāh ” (14 : 19-21).

The subject is reverted to too often for me to be able to quote all the verses bearing on it, but the one universal idea running through them all is that this old creation, the earth and its heaven, that is to say, the solar system,

LIFE AFTER DEATH

or the whole of the universe, would give place to a new creation. The old order would be changed into an entirely new one. It shall be a day "when the earth shall be changed into a different earth and the heavens as well" (14 : 48). Just as this universe has grown out of chaos and a nebulous mass into its present state of systems of stars and their families, it will, in its turn, give place to a higher order which will be evolved from it. The idea is quite consistent with the scientific knowledge of the universe to which man has attained at the present day, the idea of evolution, order out of chaos, a higher order out of a lower order, and with this order of the universe, a higher order of human life, of which our present senses cannot conceive.

Another very important question connected with the

Will the Resurrection be bodily or spiritual? Resurrection is this, Will it be a resurrection of the body or a spiritual resurrection? So far as our present experience goes, it is through the body that the spirit receives all its impressions of pleasure and pain, that it gets knowledge, and perception of things, that its impulses and sentiments are developed. In fact, according to the present state of our knowledge, we cannot conceive of the soul without a body. But whether the soul in Resurrection will receive back the same body of clay which it left in this world is quite another question. There is nothing in the Holy Qur'an to show that the body which the soul left at death will be restored to it. On the other hand, there are clear statements to show that it will be a new creation altogether. The verses quoted in the last paragraph give a clear indication that it is not the old creation that will be restored at the Day of Resurrection. Even the old heaven and the old earth will pass away and there will be a new heaven and a new earth (14 : 48). If the very earth and heaven have changed

THE RELIGION OF ISLAM

at the Resurrection, how can the human body remain the same? And in fact the Holy Qur'an has stated clearly that it shall be a new body altogether. In one place, the human beings at the Resurrection are called the likes of the present race: "Do they not consider that Allah Who created the heavens and the earth is able to create their likes?" (17 : 99), where the Arabic words for *their likes* are *mithla-hum*, the personal pronoun *hum* referring to men, not to heaven and earth; and in another place, the statement that the bodies would be changed is even clearer. There, the question of the unbelievers is first mentioned: "What! when we die and have become dust and bones, shall we indeed be raised?" (56 : 47). And the reply is given: "Have you considered the life-germ? Is it you that create it or are We the Creator? We have ordained death among you and none can prevent Us, that We may change your attributes and make you grow into what you know not. And you know the first growth, why do you not then mind?" (56 : 58-62). Everything is here made perfectly clear. What will happen after men have become dust and bones? They shall be raised up again but their "attributes" will be entirely "changed," and the new growth will be one which "you know not," while "you know the first growth." The human body at the Resurrection is, therefore, not only a new growth, but a growth in which the attributes have been changed; and this growth of changed attributes is such as, with our present senses, we cannot even know. And this is as true of the human body as of all things of the next life, of the blessings of Paradise as well as of the chastisement of Hell, that they are things which, according to a saying of the Holy Prophet, "the eye has not seen, nor has the ear heard, nor has it entered into the heart of man to conceive of them" (Bu. 59 : 8). The resurrection-body has therefore nothing in common with the present

LIFE AFTER DEATH

body of clay except the name or the form which preserves the individuality.

There is another consideration which shows that the body which the soul receives after death, is not the material body of this world. As has already been shown, the departed one has a fore-taste of the blessings of Paradise or of the chastisement of fire, as the case may be, immediately after death, that is to say, while in the state of barzakh. Now the state of barzakh lasts until the Resurrection, while it is a matter of daily observance that the body either becomes dust in the grave or is burned. It is then absolutely certain that the soul's fore-taste of blessings or of chastisement in barzakh is not through the body of clay which it left behind it at death. And that it must receive a body is also certain, because it is through some body that the spirit can have experience of pleasure or of pain. The soul therefore must receive a new body even in barzakh, and since both barzakh and Resurrection are two different conditions of the same state of life after death, differing only in the vividness of the picture and the stage of growth, it is clear that the body which the soul receives in the Resurrection, does not materially differ from the body which it receives in barzakh.

To understand how, what may be called the spiritual body of the life after death, is prepared, we must turn again to the Holy Qur'ān. There we find it stated that angels have been appointed to record the good and evil deeds of man. Thus in the opening sections of the 13th chapter, a denial of the Resurrection—"When we are dust, shall we then be in a new creation?" (13 : 5)—is followed by the answer: "Alike to Him among you is he who conceals his words and he who speaks them openly, and he who hides himself by night and who goes forth by

THE RELIGION OF ISLĀM

day. There are angels following him closely, before him and behind him, that guard him by Allāh's command" (13 : 10, 11). It is first stated that to God all are alike, those who conceal their words and those who speak them openly, and those that do a good or evil deed in the darkness of the night and those who do it in the light of the day ; and it is then added that there are angels before and behind man that guard him. The guarding of the man and the guarding of his deeds are thus one and the same thing. In fact this has been made clear in an earlier chapter—earlier in point of revelation : " Nay ! but you give the lie to the Judgment, and surely there are guardians over you, honourable recorders, they know what you do " (82 : 9-12). Here the angels that are called " guardians over you," being undoubtedly the guarding angels of 13 : 11, are plainly described as the recording angels who know what a man does. Thus both these verses show that an inner self of man is being developed, all along, through his deeds, and that is what is meant by guarding man in one case and guarding *his deeds* in the other. It is the inner self that assumes a shape after death and forms first the body in *barzakh*, and is then developed into the body in Resurrection.

A similar denial of the Resurrection elsewhere—" What ! when we are dead and have become dust ? " (50 : 3), is rebutted in the following words : " We know indeed what the earth diminishes of them, and with Us is a writing that preserves " (50 : 4). It is here admitted that the body does indeed become dust, and that is " what the earth diminishes of them "—dust returns to dust—, but there is with God a writing that preserves what is essential to growth in the next life. That preserving writing is the record of good and evil deeds kept by the guardian angels, so that, here again, we are told that while the outer garb of the soul, the body, becomes dust

LIFE AFTER DEATH

and goes back to the earth out of which it came, the inner self is preserved and forms the basis of the higher life—life in the Resurrection.

This materialization of spiritualities—not a materialization in the sense in which it is accepted in this life, but a materialization of the new world to be evolved from the present world—is spoken of frequently in the Holy Qur'an as well as in Hadith. For instance, those who are guided by the light of faith in this life shall have a light running before them and after them on the Day of Resurrection: "Is he who was dead, then We raised him to life and made for him a light by which he walks among the people, like him whose likeness is that of one in utter darkness whence he cannot come forth?" (6 : 123); "On that day thou wilt see the faithful men and the faithful women, their light running before them and after them" (57 : 12). And the fruits of good deeds are spoken of as fruits of Paradise: "And convey good news to those who believe and do good deeds, that they shall have gardens in which rivers flow; whenever they shall be given a portion of the fruit thereof, they shall say, This is what was vouchsafed to us before; and they shall be given the like of it" (2 : 25). Similarly the fire which burns within the heart of man in this life, by reason of inordinate love of wealth, becomes the fire of Hell in the the next life: "It is the fire kindled by Allah which rises above the hearts" (104 : 6, 7). And the spiritual blindness of this life turns into blindness in the next life: "And whoever is blind in this life, he shall also be blind in the hereafter" (17 : 72). The seventy years of evil-doing—which represent the average of human life—are turned into a chain of seventy cubits (69 : 32). The man who acts according to the Book of God or takes it in his right hand here, shall be given his book in the

THE RELIGION OF ISLAM

right hand on the Resurrection Day, and the man who will have none of it, and throws it behind his back, shall be given his book behind his back or in his left hand (69 : 19, 25 ; 84 : 7, 10). Hadith, also, is full of examples of this. The spiritualities of this life take an actual shape in the hereafter. This is the truth underlying all the blessings of Paradise and the torments of Hell.

It will have been noticed that the guarding of the good and evil deeds of man, which form the basis of the higher life, is spoken of as writing them down ; and a book of good and evil deeds is repeatedly mentioned. I quote further:

“ Or do they think that We do not hear what they conceal and their secret discourses ? Aye ! and Our messengers with them write down ” (43 : 80).

“ This is Our book that speaks against you with justice ; surely We wrote what you did ” (45 : 29).

“ And the book shall be placed, then thou wilt see the guilty fearing from what is in it, and they will say, Ah ! woe to us ! what a book is this ! it does not omit a small one or a great one, but numbers them all ” (18 : 49).

“ So whoever shall do of good deeds and he is a believer, there shall be no denying of his exertion, and We write it down for him ” (21 : 94).

Not only has every individual his book of deeds, but even nations are spoken of as having their books of deeds :

“ And thou shalt see every nation kneeling down ; every nation shall be called to its book : To-day you shall be rewarded for what you did ” (45 : 28).

A nation's book of deeds throws light on what is meant by the individual's book of deeds. The book of deeds means nothing but the effect of the deeds done by the individual or the nation. It is not meant, of course, that there will be a book such as we understand, using

LIFE AFTER DEATH

the word materially, a collection of pages of some sort written with pen and ink. It is a mistake to take the word *kitab* in this sense in connection with the writing of good and evil deeds. *Kitab* does not always mean a collection of written leaves; it sometimes signifies the knowledge of Allah, or His command, or what He has made obligatory (R.). And *kataba* does not always mean that he wrote certain words on paper with ink and pen; it also means he made a thing obligatory or decreed or ordained or prescribed a thing (*Ibid.*). According to the same authority, the significance of *kitab* (*writing*) in 21: 94, where the writing of good deeds is spoken of, is that God will preserve those deeds for the doer, and requite him for them.

A study of the verses in which the recording of actions, or the book of deeds, is referred to, leads to the conclusion that it is the effect produced by those actions that is meant. For instance, in 17: 13, where the book of deeds is mentioned, the deeds are not stated to have been written down, but to have been made to cling to the doer's neck: "And We have made every man's actions to cling to his neck, and We will bring forth to him on the Resurrection Day a book which he will find wide open." Now making the actions cling to the doer's neck is clearly causing the effect of the actions to appear on the doer, so that whatever deed, good or bad, is done, it leaves its impress on the doer.¹ This is in accordance with what has been already stated, to wit, that an inner self of man is being prepared in this life. That inner self is really his book of deeds, a book in which is noted down the effect of every deed done. It

1. The deed done is, in this verse, called a *ṣā'ir*, which means originally a bird or a thing that flies off, and also means a deed. A man's deed is called a *ṣā'ir* to show that it flies off as soon as it is done, so that it is not in man's power to bring it back, though, as the verse clearly states, a permanent impress of it is left on the doer.

THE RELIGION OF ISLĀM

is to this that the concluding words of the verse allude where it is said that this book of deeds, the inner self, which here is hidden from the human eye, will become an open book on the Day of Resurrection. And, quite in consonance with this, the next verse goes on to say : “ Read thy book ; thine own self is sufficient as a reckoner against thee this day ” (17 : 14). In other words, the effect of a man's deeds becomes so manifest on the Resurrection Day that no outside reckoning is needed. It is man himself who reads his own book, that is to say, sees all his actions in the impress left on him, and it is he himself who takes his account because the reckoning has already appeared in his own self.

In agreement with this are two other verses of an earlier chapter : “ The book of the wicked is in prison ” (83 : 7) ; “ The book of the righteous is in the highest places ” (83 : 18). As opposed to the righteous who are in the highest places, the wicked should have been spoken of as being in the lowest places, but instead of that they are stated to be in prison, which means that a bar is placed against their advancement ; hence they are mentioned further on as being “ debarred from their Lord ” (83 : 15), while the righteous go on advancing to higher and higher places. The “ book ” here plainly stands for the inner self of the man ; in any other sense, the placing of the book in a prison is meaningless. Thus it is clear from the various descriptions of the “ book of deeds ” that it is the effect of good or evil deeds, accelerating or retarding a man's spiritual progress, as the case may be, that is meant, and that the writing is nothing but the impress that is left on man when he does a good or bad deed—an impress which no human eye can see, but whose reality cannot be doubted by any conscientious thinker.

LIFE AFTER DEATH

A balance is also spoken of in connection with the good and evil deeds of man. The
Balance. *mizān* or balance is again a misunderstood word. *Wazn* is simply *the knowing of the measure of a thing* (R.). It is true that the measure of material things is judged by a pair of scales or by some other implement, but the deeds of man need no scales for their measurement. Rāghib is very clear on this point when he says that by *wazn* or *mizān*, in connection with the deeds of men, is meant "the doing of justice in the reckoning of men." He quotes the following examples: "And the measuring out (*wazn*) on that day will be just" (7 : 8); "And We will set up just balances (*mawāzin*, pl. of *mizān*) on the Day of Resurrection" (21 : 47), where in fact the meaning is made clear in the Holy Qur'ān itself by the addition of the words "no soul shall be dealt with unjustly in the least." So too elsewhere, a *mizān* is referred to as working in nature itself: "And the heaven He raised it high, and He made the balance, that you may not be inordinate in respect of the balance, and keep up the measure with equity and do not make the balance deficient" (55 : 7-9). Here the words used for *measure* or *balance* are the same words *mizān* and *wazn*. A *mizān* or balance is first spoken of as existing in connection with the creation of the heavens, and this is followed by an injunction that men should also preserve the balance with equity. Now the balance that is seen working in nature is the law to which every thing is subject so that, while opposing forces do exist, yet each force is subject to a law and does not nullify the other. Everything works out its destiny according to a measure, and so should man also work out his destiny according to a measure. Hence the injunction not to get inordinate in respect of the measure.

THE RELIGION OF ISLAM

The *misān* or 'balance' of men is clearly spoken of elsewhere as having been sent down by God: "We sent Our apostles with clear arguments, and sent down with them the book, and (sent down) the *misān* (balance), that men may conduct themselves with equity" (57 : 25). Now revelation, or the book, is sent down by God to awaken the spiritual life in man, and therefore the balance, which is spoken of as having been sent down along with revelation, must also relate to the spiritual life of man. In his physical growth man is undoubtedly subject to the same balance as is the rest of nature, yet apart from that he has a higher life, the life spiritual, which is evolved out of the present life, and the book that is sent with the prophets and the balance both relate to the growth of that spiritual life. The book contains the directions in principle, to do good and shun evil, and the balance is there to weigh the good and the evil, so that the spiritual life awakened in man takes a good or bad turn, a higher or lower form, according to the preponderance of good or evil. Thus not only do good and evil deeds leave their effect behind, but there is also a balance which gives shape to that effect and makes the spiritual growth possible, or has a retarding effect on that growth if evil preponderates.

The 'balance' of the hereafter, therefore, differs not at all from the 'balance' of this life; except that there it takes a more palpable form. The general principle is laid down in the following verses:

"And we will set up just balances (*mawāzin*, pl. of *misān*) on the Day of Resurrection, so no soul shall be dealt with unjustly in the least; and though there be the weight of a grain of mustard seed, We will bring it, and sufficient are We to take account" (21 : 47).

"And the measuring out (*wāzn*) on that day will be just; then as for those whose measure of good deeds is

LIFE AFTER DEATH

heavy, they shall be successful. And as for those whose measure of good deeds is light, those it is that have made their souls suffer loss" (7 : 8, 9).

A certain class of persons is indicated in whose case no balance shall be set up at all. These are the people who waste away the whole of their energy in this world's doings: " Shall We inform you of the greatest losers in deeds? These are they whose labour is lost in this world's life... ..and therefore We will not set up a balance for them on the Day of Resurrection " (18 : 103-105).

The life after death takes two forms : a life in Paradise for those in whom the good preponderates over the evil, and a life in Hell for those in whom the evil preponderates over the good. The word *Paradise* (*Firdaus*) occurs only twice in the Holy Qur'an ; on one occasion in conjunction with *janna* (18 : 107) and on the other alone (23 : 11). It is the word *janna*, or its plural *jannāt*, that is generally used to indicate the abiding place of the righteous. *Janna* is derived from *jann* which signifies *the concealing of a thing so that it is not perceived by the senses*, and *janna* in ordinary usage, means *a garden*, because its ground is covered by trees. But the use of this name for the abode of bliss has a deeper significance, since of Paradise it is plainly stated that its blessings are such as cannot be perceived by the physical senses. The description of Paradise usually given is, *gardens in which rivers flow*, corresponding to which the description of the righteous generally is, *those who believe and do good*. These two descriptions, read in the light of what has gone before as to the materialization in the next world of the spiritualities of this life, are an indication of the fact that faith, which is the water of spiritual life, is converted into rivers, and good deeds, which spring from faith, are the seeds whence grow the trees of the next life.

THE RELIGION OF ISLĀM

The description of Paradise as a garden with rivers flowing in it is clearly stated to be a parable or a likeness, not an actuality, in terms of this life : “ A likeness of the garden which the righteous are promised : there flow in it rivers ; its fruit is perpetual and its shade ” (13 : 35) ; “ A parable of the garden which the righteous are promised : therein are rivers of water that does not alter ” (47 : 15). And quite in keeping with this description is the statement, made elsewhere, that the blessings of Paradise cannot be conceived of in this life, not being things of this world : “ No soul knows what is hidden for it of that which will refresh the eyes : a reward for what they did ” (32 : 17). An explanation of these words was given by the Holy Prophet himself when he said : “ Allāh says I have prepared for My righteous servants what no eye has seen and no ear has heard, and what the mind of man has not conceived ” (Bu. 59 : 8). And Ibn ‘Abbās, the famous Companion and commentator, is reported to have said : “ In Paradise there are no foods of this life except the names ” (RM. I, p. 172).

A few examples may be added. *Zill* which means a shadow is spoken of as one of the blessings of Paradise : “ They and their wives shall be in shades ” (36 : 56) ; “ The righteous shall be amid shades and fountains ” (77 : 41) ; “ Its fruit is perpetual and its shade ” (13 : 35). The same word has also been used in connection with the rigours of Hell : “ And the shade of black smoke, neither cool nor honourable ” (56 : 43, 44). “ Walk on to the shade having three branches ” (77 : 30). Now *zill* does not in all these cases bear the significance of *shade* ; the name is there but its import is quite different. In fact we are plainly told in the Holy Qur’an that there is no sun in Paradise : “ They shall see therein neither sun nor intense cold ” (76 : 13). Hence in the case of

LIFE AFTER DEATH

Paradise, *ʔill* signifies *protection* or *plenty*, as being the idea underlying the word *shade* (R.). The same authority adds that *ʔill* is *every covering whether good or bad*; and hence *ʔill* is also spoken of as one of the severities of Hell.

Take another example. Those in Paradise are spoken of as being given *rizq* which means *sustenance*. But it cannot mean what sustains the body here. It is the *rizq* that is needed for the sustenance of the inner self of man, and it is for this reason that prayer is called *rizq* (sustenance) in 20 : 131. The fruits of Paradise, whether mentioned under a particular name or generally, are not the fruits of this life, but of deeds done. The name is the same, but the significance is quite different. Thus we are told : "Whenever they shall be given a portion of the fruits thereof, they shall say, This is what was given to us before" (2 : 25). Evidently the fruits of good deeds are meant here, and not the fruits that the earth grows, because the latter are not given to all the faithful here while the former are. Similar is the case with the rivers of water, milk, honey and wine, all of which things are plainly spoken of as a parable (47 : 15); the thrones, the cushions and carpets (88 : 13-16); the ornaments, the bracelets, the silk robes (18 : 31); all those are not things of this life, but they are mentioned simply to show that whatever may serve to perfect the picture of the happiness of man, will be there. As for the exact form they will take, that cannot be made known to man, because his senses are incapable of perceiving it. All descriptions of the blessings of the next life are only a *mathal* (a likeness or a parable), as is explained in the Holy Qur'an.

As already stated, the Resurrection means quite a new life and a new order of things, a new heaven and a new earth. A little consideration will show that even our ideas of place and time are inapplicable to the next life.

THE RELIGION OF ISLĀM

Paradise extends over the whole of the heavens and the earth, that is to say, the whole of this universe: "And hasten to forgiveness from your Lord and a garden, the extensiveness of which is as the heavens and the earth" (3:132; 57:21). And when the Holy Prophet was asked where was Hell, if Paradise extended over the whole of the heavens and the earth, he replied "Where is the night when the day comes?" (RM. I, p. 670). This shows that Paradise and Hell are more like two conditions than two places. Again, notwithstanding the fact that the two are poles asunder, the one being the highest of the high and the other the lowest of the low, they are separated only by a wall: "Then a separation will be brought about between them by a wall having a door in it; on the inside of it there shall be mercy and before the outside of it there shall be chastisement" (57:13). And elsewhere, speaking of the inmates of Paradise and the inmates of Hell, it is said: "And between the two there shall be a veil" (7:46). It is impossible, with our present ideas of space, to conceive of these two things at one and the same time. Again, a "vehement raging and roaring" of hell-fire is repeatedly mentioned (25:12; 67:7), but those in Paradise shall "not hear its faintest sound" (21:102), while they will hear the call of the inmates of that fire: "And the inmates of the fire shall call out to the dwellers of the garden, saying, Pour on us some water or give us of the sustenance that Allāh has given you. They shall say, Allāh has prohibited them both to the unbelievers, who take their religion for an idle sport and a play, and this world's life deceives them" (7:50, 51). Thus those in Paradise shall hear the talk of those in Hell, but they shall not hear the roaring of the fire of Hell. This shows that the change, that will come over man in the Resurrection, will be so thorough that even his present

LIFE AFTER DEATH

senses will be changed into others of which it is impossible for him to conceive in this life, senses which would hear the lowest tones of one kind, but not the most terrible sounds of another.

The things mentioned among the blessings of Paradise are, therefore, not the things of this world, but things which we have neither seen nor heard of in this life; nor, with our present senses, can we even conceive of them. All descriptions given are simply to show that the life of the righteous will be perfect in the Resurrection. It is with the same end in view that mention is made of the company of men and women in that state, to which sensually-minded people have attached a sensual significance. Writing under the word *zawj*, Raghīb says that "the meaning of *zawwajna-hum bi-hūr-in* 'in is that we have given them *hūr* as companions (*qaranna-hum bi-hinna*), and the Qur'an does not say *zawwajna-hum hūr-an* as you say in the case of the marriage of a man with a woman, *zawwajtu-hu imra'at-an*, hinting that the relations there will not be as they are known to us here in this life." It is also stated that in the "relations with women in Paradise there is no suggestion of procreation" (RM. I, p. 172); and as sexual relationship, as understood in this life, is a requirement of nature to help the act of procreation, it is clear that the relationship of sexes or the company of men and women in the Resurrection has quite a different significance.

The mention of women in the Holy Qur'an is, in the first place, to show that men and women are both equal in the sight of God, and that both will enjoy the higher life in the Resurrection. That women, in general, shall have access to Paradise, like men, is made clear in many places:

"And whoever does good deeds, whether male or

THE RELIGION OF ISLAM

female and he is a believer--these shall enter the garden" (40 : 40; 4 : 124).

"Whoever does good deeds, whether male or female, and he (or she) is a believer, We will make him (or her) live a happy life" (16 : 97).

"I will not waste the work of a worker among you, whether male or female, the one of you being from the other" (3 : 194).

The wives of the righteous are mentioned particularly as accompanying their husbands in Paradise :

"Dwell thou and thy wife in the garden" (2 : 35).

"They and their wives shall be in shades, reclining on raised couches" (36 : 56).

"Our Lord! and make them enter the gardens of perpetuity which Thou hast promised to them and those who do good of their fathers and their wives and their offspring" (40 : 8).

"Enter the garden, you and your wives; you shall be made happy" (43 : 70).

Among the various descriptions of women in Paradise is the word *ḥūr*, which occurs four times in the Holy Qur'ān, in 44 : 54, 52 : 20, 55 : 72, and 56 : 22. It is a plural of *aḥwar* (applied to a man) and of *ḥaura'* (applied to a woman), signifying *one having eyes characterized by the quality termed ḥawar* (LL.). *Hawar* means originally *whiteness* (which is a symbol of purity), and the word *ḥaura'* is applied to *a woman who is of a white colour and whose white of the eye is intensely white and the black thereof intensely black* (LA.). *Aḥwar*, besides being applied to a man of a similar description, also signifies *pure or clear intellect* (LL.). In fact, purity is the prevailing idea in

LIFE AFTER DEATH

ḥawār, and therefore *ḥawāri*,¹ which is derived from the same root, means *a pure and a sincere friend*. Hence "pure ones" is the nearest rendering of the word *ḥūr*, in English. The four occasions on which the women of Paradise are spoken of as *ḥūr* are quoted below :

"Surely the righteous are in a secure place, in gardens and springs..... and We will give them the company of pure (*ḥūr*), beautiful ones" (44 : 51-54).

"Surely the righteous shall be in gardens and blissReclining on thrones set in lines, and We will give them the company of pure (*ḥūr*), beautiful ones" (52 : 17-20).

"In them (*i. e.*, the gardens) are goodly women, beautiful onesPure ones (*ḥūr*) confined to the pavilions" (55 : 70-72).

"And the foremost are the foremost, these are they who are drawn nigh (to God). In the gardens of bliss On thrones inwrought.....And pure (*ḥūr*), beautiful ones, the likes of hidden pearls : a reward for what they used to do" (56 : 10-24).

Are *ḥūr* the women that go to Paradise, the wives of the righteous? A hint to this effect is given in a ḥadīth. The last of the occasions on which the *ḥūr* are spoken of is 56 : 10-24, and in continuation of the subject there occur the words : "Surely We have made them to grow into a new growth, then We have made them virgins, loving equals in age, for the sake of the companions of the right hand" (56 : 35-38). In connection with this, the making them "to grow into a new growth," the Holy Prophet is reported to have said, that by this are meant women

1. In the Holy Qur'an this word has been particularly applied to the chosen disciples of Jesus, but in Ḥadīth it is used in a general sense in connection with the chosen friends of any prophet.

THE RELIGION OF ISLĀM

who have grown old here (Tr. 44 : sūra 56). The meaning, therefore, is that all good women shall grow into a new growth in the new life of the Resurrection, so that they shall all be virgins, equals in age. The Holy Prophet's explanation shows that the word *ḥūr* is used to describe the new growth into which women of this world will grow. An anecdote is also related that an old woman came to the Holy Prophet when he was sitting with his Companions, and asked him if she would go to Paradise. In a spirit of mirth, the Holy Prophet remarked that there would be no old woman in Paradise. She was about to turn away rather sorrowfully, when the Holy Prophet comforted her with the words that all women shall be made to grow into a new growth, so that there shall be no old woman in Paradise, and recited the verses quoted above (RM. VIII, p. 320).

The conclusion to which this ḥadīth leads is further

Ḥūr as a blessing of Paradise. supported by what is stated in the Paradise.

Holy Qur'an. The description of *ḥūr*, as given in the Holy Qur'an, contains the best qualities of a good woman, purity of character, beauty, youthful appearance, restrained eyes and love for her husband. But even if the *ḥūr* are taken to be a blessing of Paradise, and not the women of this world, it is a blessing as well for men as for women. Just as the gardens, rivers, milk, honey, fruits, and numerous other things of Paradise are both for men and women, even so are *ḥūr*. What these blessings actually are, no one knows, but the whole picture of Paradise drawn in the Holy Qur'an strongly condemns the association of any sensual idea therewith. It may, however, be asked, why are these blessings described in words which apply to women? The fact is that the reward spoken of here has special reference to the purity and beauty of character, and if there is an emblem of purity and beauty, it is

LIFE AFTER DEATH

womanhood, not manhood.

What is true of women is also true of *ghilman* (children). The Holy Qur'an speaks, on one occasion, of the presence in Paradise of *ghilman* (pl. of *ghulam* meaning a boy), and on two occasions of *wildan* (pl. of *walad* meaning a son or a child): "And round them shall go boys (*ghilman*) of theirs as if they were hidden pearls" (52 : 24); "And round about them shall go children (*wildan*) never altering in age" (56 : 17 ; 76 : 19). In the first case, there is a double indication showing that these boys, called the *ghilman*, are the offspring of the faithful; they are called *ghilman-un la-hum* or their boys, and it is clearly stated that God "will unite with them (*i. e.*, the righteous) their offspring" (52 : 21). To the same effect it is elsewhere said that the "offspring" of the faithful will be made to enter Paradise with them (40 : 8). Hence the *ghilman* and the *wildan* are the young children who have died in childhood. There is, however, a possibility that these boys are only a blessing of Paradise, as boyhood is, like womanhood, an emblem of purity and beauty.

No reader of the Holy Qur'an can fail to see that the real picture of Paradise, therein portrayed, strikes at the very root of sensual pleasures. I quote only a few verses which reveal the true nature of Paradise :

"Allah has promised to the believing men and the believing women gardens in which rivers flow, to abide in them, and goodly dwellings in gardens of perpetual abode; and greatest of all is Allah's goodly pleasure, that is the grand achievement" (9 : 72).

"As for those who believe and do good, their Lord will guide them by their faith; there shall flow beneath them rivers in gardens of bliss; their cry in it shall be

LIFE AFTER DEATH

Glory to Thee, O Allah! and their greeting in it shall be, Peace; and the last of their cry shall be, Praise be to Allah, the Lord of the worlds" (10 : 9, 10).

" Their greeting in it is, Peace " (14 : 23).

" The righteous shall be in the midst of gardens and fountains : Enter them in peace, secure. And We will root out whatever of rancour is in their breasts—they shall be as brethren, on raised couches, face to face. Toil shall not afflict them in it, nor shall they be ever ejected from it " (15 : 45-48).

" And they shall say : All praise is due to Allah, Who has made grief to depart from us ; our Lord is surely Forgiving, Multiplier of rewards, Who has made us alight in a house abiding for ever out of His grace ; toil shall not touch us therein, nor shall fatigue therein afflict us " (35 : 34, 35).

" They shall have fruits therein, and they shall have whatever they desire : Peace, a word from a Merciful Lord " (36 : 57, 58).

" Enter it in peace ; that is the day of abiding. They have therein what they desire and with Us is more yet " (50 : 34, 35).

" They shall not hear therein vain or sinful discourse, except the word, Peace, Peace " (56 : 25, 26).

Quite in accordance with this description of Paradise, one of the names by which Paradise is mentioned in the Holy Qur'an is *dar al-salam* or "abode of peace" (6 : 128 ; 10 : 25).

The ultimate object of the life of man is described as *liqa' Allah* which means *the meeting with God*. In one of the earliest chapters we are told : " O man ! thou must strive to attain to thy Lord a hard striving until thou meet Him " (84 : 6). But this object cannot be fully attained in this life ; it is only in the life after death, the higher life, that

LIFE AFTER DEATH

man is able to reach this stage. Hence it is, that those who deny the life after death are said to be deniers of the meeting with God: "And they say, What! when we have become lost in the earth, shall we then be in a new creation? Nay; they are disbelievers in the meeting with their Lord" (32 : 10). To be content with this life, and not to look forward to a higher goal and a higher life, is repeatedly condemned: "Those who do not hope in the meeting with Us, and are pleased with this world's life and are content with it, and those who are heedless of Our communications—these, their abode is the fire" (10 : 7, 8); "We leave those who hope not for the meeting with Us in their inordinacy, blindly wandering on" (10 : 11); "And those who disbelieve in the communications of Allāh and the meeting with Him despair of My mercy, and these are they that shall have a painful chastisement" (29 : 23); "They know the outward show of this world's life, and of the hereafter they are absolutely heedless. Do they not reflect within themselves that Allāh did not create the heavens and the earth and what is between them but with the truth and for an appointed term? And surely most of the people are deniers of the meeting with their Lord" (30 : 7, 8). Only those who are sure that they will meet their Lord work on patiently for this great object: "And seek assistance through patience and prayer, and surely it is a hard thing except for the humble ones, who know that they shall meet their Lord and that they shall return to Him" (2 : 45, 46). The meeting with the Lord is the great goal to attain which all good deeds are done: "Therefore whoever hopes to meet his Lord, he should do good deeds, and not join anyone in the service of his Lord" (18 : 110). And what is Hell itself but being debarred from the Divine presence: "Nay! rather, what they used to do has become like rust on their hearts.

THE RELIGION OF ISLĀM

Nay! they shall, on that day, be debarred from their Lord, then they shall enter the burning fire " (83 : 14-16). Paradise is therefore the place of meeting God, and life in Paradise is above all corporeal conceptions.

That, however, is only the beginning of the higher Advancement in the life. The goal has been attained, but higher life. it only opens out wide fields for further advancement. If man has been granted such vast capabilities even in this physical life that his advancement knows no bounds, that advancement could not cease with the attainment of the higher life. In accordance with the idea of the Resurrection as the birth into a higher life, the Holy Qur'an speaks of an unending progress in that life, of the righteous ever rising to higher and higher stages. Rest and enjoyment are not the goal of human existence. Just as there is a desire implanted in the human soul to advance further and further in this life, even so there will be such a desire in Paradise : " O you who believe ! turn to Allāh a sincere turning ; maybe your Lord will remove from you your evil and cause you to enter gardens in which rivers flow, on the day on which Allāh will not abase the Prophet and those who believe with him ; their light shall run on before them and on their right hand ; they shall say, Our Lord ! make perfect for us our light and grant us protection, for Thou hast power over all things " (66 : 8). It is clear from the first part of this verse that all evil is removed from those who enter into Paradise, and as clear from the concluding portion that the soul of the righteous shall still be animated by a desire for more and more light, which evidently indicates a desire to attain to higher and ever higher stages of spiritual life. And there shall be means of fulfilment of every desire in Paradise : " They shall have fruits therein and they shall have whatever they desire " (36 : 57). So the desire to attain to higher and

LIFE AFTER DEATH

higher stages cannot remain unfulfilled : " But those who are careful of their duty to their Lord shall have high places, above them higher places (still), built for them " (39 : 20). The new life granted to the righteous in Paradise is thus the starting-point for a new advancement, in which man shall continue to rise to higher and higher places. Nor shall man ever grow weary in the attainment of these high stages of which even a conception cannot be now formed, for "toil shall not touch him therein, nor shall fatigue therein afflict him " (35 : 35); " Nor shall they be ever ejected from it " (15 : 48). The joys of Paradise are thus really the true joys of advancement.

Hell is described by seven different names in the Different names of Holy Qur'an, and these are supposed Hell.

by some to be the seven divisions of Hell. That most frequently occurring is *Jahannam*, which is, as it were, a proper name for Hell. *Jihinnām* signifies *great depth*, and *bi'r-un jahannam-un* means *a well whose depth is very great* (L.A.). Another name for Hell which bears a similar significance, but which occurs only once in the Holy Qur'an, is *hāwiya* (101 : 9), meaning an *abyss* or *a deep place of which the bottom cannot be reached* (L.A.), the root being *hawā* which means *falling down to a depth from a height*, and hence indicating low desires (R.). Four names of Hell are taken from the analogy of fire, viz., *jahīm*, derived from *jahīm* signifying the *burning* or *blazing of fire*, but this word is applied to the fury of war as well as of fire, while *tajahhama*, another measure from the same root, means *he burned with vehemence of desire* or *covetousness and niggardliness*, also *he became strained in disposition* (L.L.); *sa'ir* from *sa'r* which means the *kindling of fire* and is metaphorically applied to the *raging of war* (R.), while the word *su'ur* has been used in the sense of *distress* in the Holy Qur'an (54 : 24); *saqar* from *saqara* which means

THE RELIGION OF ISLĀM

the heat of the sun scorched a man (R.); *laṣā* which means *the flame* of the fire, and in one form (*talaxṣā*) is metaphorically used for “*burning with anger*” (L.A.). The seventh name *ḥuṭama*, which occurs only twice in the same context, (104 : 4, 5), is derived from *ḥaṭam* which means *the breaking of a thing*, also *breaking* or *rendering infirm* or *weak with age*, while *ḥuṭama* means *a vehement fire*, and *ḥuṭma* sterility (LL.). The word *ḥuṭam*, derived from the same root, is used in 57 : 20 and elsewhere for “*dried up and broken down*” vegetation.

It will be seen from the above that the different names of Hell convey three different ideas, the idea of falling down to a great depth, the idea of burning and the idea of being broken down. Thus as the idea of rising higher and higher is connected with Paradise, that of falling down to abysmal depth is essentially connected with Hell; and as the ideas of contentment and happiness are associated with Paradise, the idea of burning is associated with Hell which is itself but the result of burning with passion in this life; and lastly, as the idea of a fruitful life is associated with Paradise, life in Hell is represented as an unfruitful life. All of which is the result of man's own deeds. Because he follows his low desires and baser passions, he makes himself fall into the depths; the burning caused by worldly desires and passions changes into a flaming fire after death; and since the only end in view is some sort of gain in this life, there is no deed which can bear fruit after death. Just as the blessings of Paradise are a manifestation of the hidden realities of this life, so are the depths, the fire and the unfruitfulness of the next, the Day of Resurrection being the day of the manifestation of hidden realities (86 : 9), when the veil shall be removed from the eyes of man so that he shall see clearly the consequences of the deeds, of which he took no heed in this

LIFE AFTER DEATH

life (50 : 22). In other words, the spiritual torments and mental pangs that are generally felt almost imperceptibly in this life, assume a palpable shape in the life after death. The answer to the question, what is Hell ? is unequivocally given as " the fire kindled by Allāh which rises above the hearts " (104 : 6, 7). Now the fire which rises above the hearts, is the heart-burning caused by inordinate passions. Regret for the evil done is also spoken of as fire : " Thus will Allāh show them their deeds to be an intense regret to them, and they shall not come out of the fire " (2 : 167). The *ahwā'*, or low desires of this life, that are so often a hindrance in man's awakening to a higher life and nobler aims, become the *hāwiya* or *jahannam*, the abysmal depth, to which the evil-doer makes himself fall. Even so, in the Holy Qur'an, we are told : " Therefore avoid the uncleanness of the idols and avoid false words, being upright for Allāh, not associating aught with Him ; and whoever associates others with Allāh, it is as though he had fallen from on high " (22 : 30, 31). And again : " Say, Shall we call on that besides Allāh, which does not benefit us nor harm us, and shall we be turned back on our heels after Allāh has guided us, like him whom the devils have made to fall down perplexed in the earth ?" (6 : 71). And again : " And on whomsoever My wrath comes down, he indeed falls down to a depth " (20 : 81). And of the people whose exertions are all limited to this life, it is said : " They whose labour is lost in this world's life and they think that they are well-versed in skill of the work of their hands. These are they who disbelieve in the communications of their Lord and in the meeting with Him, so their deeds bear no fruit, and therefore We will not set up a balance for them on the Day of Resurrection. Thus it is that their recompense is Hell " (18 : 104-106).

THE RELIGION OF ISLAM

Though fire is so frequently mentioned as the consequence of evil, the reason for which I will give later on, yet there are a number of other aspects of the evil consequences of evil deeds. For example, it is said: "For those who do good is good and more, and blackness shall not cover their faces nor ignominy; these are the dwellers of the garden, in it they shall abide. And those who earned evil—the punishment of an evil is the like of it, and abasement shall come upon them—they shall have none to protect them from Allāh—as if their faces had been covered with slices of the dense darkness of night; these are the inmates of the fire, in it they shall abide" (10 : 26, 27). Blackness of the face is again mentioned as the chastisement of Hell: "On the day when some faces shall turn white and some faces shall turn black; then as to those whose faces turn black, Did you disbelieve after your believing? Taste therefore the chastisement because you disbelieved" (3 : 105). So, too, in the earlier revelation: "And on many faces on that day shall be dust; darkness shall cover them. These are they who are unbelievers, the wicked" (80 : 40-42).

Disgrace is mentioned as the chastisement of evil-doers in many other places: "Then on the Resurrection Day, He will bring them to disgrace The disgrace and the evil are this day upon the unbelievers" (16 : 27); "That We may make them taste the chastisement of abasement in this world's life, and the chastisement of the hereafter is certainly much more abasing, and they shall not be helped" (41 : 16). Again, those in Hell are sometimes spoken of as asking for water and sustenance from those in Paradise: "And the inmates of the fire shall call out to the dwellers of the garden, saying, Pour on us some water or give us of the subsistence that Allāh has given you" (7 : 50).

LIFE AFTER DEATH

They have themselves got water, but it is "boiling and intensely cold" (78 : 25). On other occasions, however, it is light that they cry for: "On the day when the hypocritical men and the hypocritical women will say to those who believe, Wait for us that we may have light from your light. It shall be said, Turn back and seek a light" (57 : 13).

Hell, therefore, only represents the evil consequences

Remedial nature of of evil deeds, but still it is not a Hell.

place merely for undergoing the consequences of what has been done; it is also a remedial plan. In other words, its chastisement is not for the purpose of torture; it is for purification so that man, rid of the evil consequences which he has brought about with his own hands, may be made fit for spiritual advancement. The Holy Qur'an has clearly set out this law regarding even those punishments which are made to overtake man here on earth: "And We did not send a prophet in a town, but We overtook its people with distress and affliction in order that they might humble themselves" (7 : 94).

It is clear from this that God brings down His punishment upon a sinning people in order that they may turn to Him; in other words, that they may be awakened to a higher life. The same must therefore be the object of punishment in Hell; it is a remedial measure.

In fact, a little consideration would show that good is enjoined because it helps the progress of man, and evil is prohibited because it retards that progress. If a man does good, he himself gets the advantage of it; if he does evil, it is to his own detriment. It is a subject to which the Holy Qur'an returns over and over again :

"He will indeed be successful who purifies it, and he will fail who corrupts it" (91 : 9, 10).

"Your striving is surely directed to various ends.

THE RELIGION OF ISLĀM

Then as for him who gives in charity and is careful of his duty, and believes in goodness, We will facilitate for him the easy end. And as for him who is niggardly and does not care for his duty, and rejects goodness, We will facilitate for him the difficult end " (92 : 4-10).

" If you do good, you will do good for your own souls, and if you do evil, it shall be for them " (17 : 7).

" Whoever does good, it is for his own soul, and whoever does evil, it is against it, and thy Lord is not in the least unjust to the servants " (41 : 46).

" Whoever does good, it is for his own soul, and whoever does evil, it is to his detriment ; then you shall be brought back to your Lord " (45 : 15).

Purification being the great object, the man who has wasted his opportunity here must undergo the ordeal of Hell in order to obtain it. Various other considerations lead to the same conclusion. In the first place, such great prominence is given to the attribute of mercy in God, that He is spoken of as having " ordained mercy on Himself " (6 : 12, 54) ; the Divine mercy is described as encompassing all things (6 : 148 ; 7 : 156 ; 40 : 7), so that even those who have acted extravagantly, against their own souls, should not despair of the mercy of God (39 : 53) ; and finally it is laid down that for mercy did He create all men (11 : 119). Such a merciful Being could not chastise man unless for some great purpose, which purpose is to set him again on the road to the higher life, after purifying him from evil. It is like a hospital wherein different operations are performed only to save life.

The ultimate object of the life of man is that he shall live in the service of God : " And I have not created the jinn and the men except that they should serve Me " (51 : 56). The man who lives in sin is debarred from the Divine presence (83 : 15) ; but, being purified

LIFE AFTER DEATH

by fire, is again made fit for Divine service. Hence Hell is called, in one place, the *maulā* (friend) of the sinners (57 : 15), and their *umm* (mother) in another (101 : 9). Both descriptions are a clear indication that Hell is intended to raise up man by purifying him from the dross of evil, just as fire purifies gold of dross. It is to point to this truth that the Holy Qur'an uses the word *fitna* (*the assaying of gold, or casting it into the fire to purify it*), both of the persecutions which the faithful undergo in this life (2 : 191 ; 29 : 2, 10), and of the punishment which the evil-doers shall suffer in Hell (37 : 63). Thus the faithful are purified through their sufferings, in the way of God, in this life ; and the evil-doers shall be purified by hell-fire. Hell is called a " friend " of sinners, because through sufferings it will fit them for spiritual progress, and it is called their " mother," because in its bosom they will be brought up, so that they may be able to tread the path of a new life.

Another consideration, which shows that this chastisement is of a remedial nature, is that, according to the teachings of the Holy Qur'an and the sayings of the Holy Prophet, all those, who are in Hell, shall ultimately, when they are fit for a new life, be released from it. This is a point on which great misunderstanding prevails even among Muslim theologians. They make a distinction between the Muslim sinners and the non-Muslim sinners, holding that all Muslim sinners shall be ultimately taken out of Hell, but not the non-Muslim sinners. Neither the Holy Qur'an nor the Ḥadīth upholds this view. There are two words *khulūd* and *abad* used in connection with the abiding in Hell or Paradise, and both these words, while, no doubt, indicating *sternity*, also bear the significance of *a long time*. Not only do all authorities on Arabic lexicology agree on this, but the use of these words in the Holy Qur'an also makes it quite

THE RELIGION OF ISLAM

clear. The word *khulūd* has been freely used regarding the chastisement in Hell of Muslim as well as of non-Muslim sinners. I will quote but one example of its use regarding Muslim sinners. After stating the law of inheritance, it is said: "These are Allah's limits; and whoever obeys Allah and His Apostle, He will cause him to enter gardens in which rivers flow to abide in them; and this is the great achievement. And whoever disobeys Allah and His Apostle and goes beyond His limits, He will cause him to enter into fire, to abide in it (*khālidīn*), and he shall have an abasing chastisement" (4 : 13, 14). Here clearly Muslim sinners are spoken of, and yet their abiding in Hell is expressed by the word *khulūd*.

Take the other word *abad*. This word occurs thrice in the Holy Qur'an, in connection with the abiding of sinners in Hell. Ordinarily, it is taken as meaning *for ever* or *eternally*, but that it sometimes signifies only *a long time*, is abundantly clear from the fact that both its dual and plural forms are in use. Rāghib says that this is owing to the fact that the word is, in that case, used to express *a part of time*. And explaining its verb form *ta'abbada*, he says it signifies the thing *existed for abad*, and is taken to mean *what remains for a long time*. Thus *a long time*, as the significance of *abad*, is fully recognized in Arabic lexicology. That in the case of those in Hell, it signifies *a long time* and not *for ever*, is clear from the fact that the abiding in hell of even the unbelievers is elsewhere stated to be for *ahqāb*, which is the plural of *huqba*, meaning *a year or many years* (L.A.), or *eighty years* (R.). At all events it indicates a definite period of time, and hence serves as a clear indication that even *abad*, in the case of abiding in Hell, means *a long time*.

The two words *khulūd* and *abad*, which are generally

LIFE AFTER DEATH

construed as leading to an eternity of Hell, being thus disposed of, I will now consider the verses which are generally adduced in support of the idea that those in Hell shall for ever and ever suffer its endless tortures :

“ Thus will Allāh show them their deeds to be intense regret to them, and they shall not come out of the fire ” (2 : 167).

“ Those who disbelieve, even if they had what is in the earth, all of it, and the like of it with it, that they might ransom themselves with it from the chastisement of the Day of Resurrection, it shall not be accepted from them, and they shall have a painful chastisement. They would desire to go forth from the fire, and they shall not go forth from it, and they shall have an abiding chastisement (5 : 36, 37).

“ Whenever they will desire to go forth from it, from grief, they shall be turned back into it ” (22 : 22).

“ And as for those who transgress, their abode is the fire ; whenever they desire to go forth from it, they shall be brought back into it, and it will be said to them, Taste the chastisement of the fire which you called a lie ” (32 : 20).

These verses are self-explanatory. Those in Hell shall desire to escape from it but shall not be able to do so ; even if they could offer the whole earth as a ransom, they would not be able to get out. The evil consequences of sin cannot be avoided, howsoever one may desire, and even so is the fire of Hell. None can escape from it. But not a word is there in any of these verses to show that God will not take them out of it, or that the tortures of Hell are endless. They only show that every sinner must suffer the consequences of what he has done, and that he cannot escape them ; but that he may be set free when he has undergone the necessary chastisement, or that God may, of His boundless mercy,

THE RELIGION OF ISLAM

deliver the sinners when He pleases, is not denied here.

Even if *abad* is taken to mean eternity, the abiding in Hell, according to the Holy Qur'an, must cease at some time, because a limit is placed on it by the addition of the words *illa mā sha'a Allah* or *except as Allah pleases*, which clearly indicate the ultimate deliverance of those in Hell. The following two verses may be noted in this connection :

" He shall say, The fire is your abode, to abide in it, except as Allah pleases, for thy Lord is Wise, Knowing " (6 : 129).

" So as to those who are unhappy, they shall be in the fire ; for them shall be sighing and groaning in it, abiding therein so long as the heavens and the earth endure except as thy Lord pleases, for thy Lord is the mighty Doer of what He intends " (11 : 106, 107).

Both these verses show that the abiding in Hell must come to an end. To make this conclusion clearer still, the Holy Qur'an has used a similar expression for those in Paradise but with quite a different ending :

" And as to those who are made happy, they shall be in the garden, abiding in it as long as the heavens and the earth endure, except as thy Lord pleases : a gift never to be cut off " (11 : 108).

The two expressions are similar ; those in Hell and those in Paradise abide, each in his place, so long as the heavens and the earth shall endure, with an exception added in each case—except as thy Lord pleases—showing that they may be taken out of that condition. But the concluding statements are different. In the case of Paradise, the idea that those in it may be taken out of it, if God pleases, is immediately followed by the statement that it is a gift that shall never be cut off, showing that they shall not be taken out of Paradise ; while in the case of Hell, the idea that those in it will be taken out is

LIFE AFTER DEATH

confirmed by the concluding statement, that God is the mighty Doer of what He intends.

This conclusion is corroborated by Hadīth. The Holy Prophet is reported to have said : “ Then Allah will say, The angels have interceded and the prophets have interceded and the faithful have interceded. and none remains but the most Merciful of all merciful ones. So He will take out a handful from fire and bring out a people who have never done any good ” (Bu. 97 : 24).

Three kinds of intercession are spoken of in this ḥadīth ; of the faithful, of prophets and of the angels, and the intercession of each class is undoubtedly meant for people who have some sort of close relation with that class. The faithful will intercede for people who have come into contact with them personally ; the prophets will intercede for their followers ; the angels, being the movers to good, will intercede for people who are not followers of a prophet, but who have done some good. And the ḥadīth adds that the most Merciful of all still remains, so He will bring out from the fire even people who have never done any good. It follows that, thereafter, none can remain in Hell, and in fact the handful of God cannot leave anything behind.

Other ḥadīth state even more explicitly that all men shall be ultimately taken out of Hell. “ Surely a day will come over Hell when it will be like a field of corn that has dried up after flourishing for a while ” (KU). “ Surely a day will come over Hell when there shall not be a single human being in it ” (FBn. IV, p. 372). And a saying of ‘Umar, the second Caliph, is recorded as follows : “ Even if the dwellers in Hell may be numberless as the sands of the desert, a day will come when they will be taken out of it ” (FBn. IV, p. 372). A similar saying is recorded from Ibn Mas‘ūd : “ Surely a time will come

THE RELIGION OF ISLAM

over Hell when its gates shall be blown by wind, there shall be none in it, and this shall be after they have remained therein for many years" (IJ—C. XII, p. 66). Similar sayings are reported from many other Companions, such as Ibn 'Umar, Jabir, Abū Sa'īd, Abū Huraira, etc., and also from the *Ṭabi'īn* (FBn.). And later Imāms, such as Ibn 'Arabī, Ibn Taimiya, Ibn Qayyim and many others have held similar views (*Ibid*). Thus there can be but little doubt left that Hell is a temporary place for the sinner, whether Muslim or non-Muslim, and this also supports the view that the chastisement of Hell is not for torture, but as a remedy, to heal the spiritual diseases which a man has incurred of himself and by his own negligence, and to enable him to start again on the road to the higher life. The truth of this has already been established from the Holy Qur'an, but a ḥadīth, also, may be quoted here which expressly speaks of inmates of the fire as being set on the road to the higher life: "Then will Allāh say, Bring out (of the fire) every one in whose heart there is faith or goodness to the extent of a mustard seed, so they will be taken out having become quite black; then they will be thrown into the river of life and they will grow as grows a seed by the side of a river" (Bu. 2: 15). This ḥadīth is conclusive as to the remedial nature of Hell, and establishes beyond all doubt that all men will ultimately be set on the way to the higher life.

CHAPTER VII.

QADAR OR TAQDIR.

*Qadar*¹ and *taqdir*, according to Rāghib, mean the significance of *qadar* making manifest of the measure and *taqdir*. (*kamiyya*) of a thing, or simply measure. In the words of the same authority, God's *taqdir* of things is in two ways, by granting *qudra*, i.e., power, or by making them in a particular measure and in a particular manner, as wisdom requires. An example of this is given in the *taqdir* of the date-stone, out of which it is the palm only that grows, not an apple or olive tree, or in the *taqdir* of the sperma of man, out of which grows man only, not any other animal. *Taqdir* is

1. The word *qadzā* is generally associated with *qadar*, and in common parlance, *qadza wa qadar* of God are spoken of together. But while *qadar* means the Divine measure of things, *qadzā*, according to Rāghib, means the deciding of an affair whether it be by word or by deed. It is further stated to be of two kinds, either as relating to man or as relating to God. An example of the *qadzā* of God in word is 17 : 4 where *qadzainā*, (present plural preterite form of *qadzā*) means, according to Rāghib, we made known to them and revealed to them a decisive revelation : "And We made known (*qadzainā*) to the children of Israel in the Book, Certainly you will make mischief in the land twice." So also in 15 : 66 which runs thus : "And We revealed (*qadzainā*) to him this affair that the roots of these shall be cut off in the morning." In both these places *qadzā* means the making known of a Divine order by way of prophecy. An example of the deciding of an affair by deed is 40 : 20, where God's judgment is called His *qadzā* : "And Allāh judges with the truth," or 41 : 12, etc. where the creation of heavens is spoken of : "So He ordained them (*qadzā-hunna*) seven heavens." Referring to the distinction between *qadzā* and *qadar*, Rāghib says that *qadar* is the measure, while *qadzā* is the decision or the bringing of it into action. Thus when the Caliph 'Umar ordered Abū 'Ubaida to give up a plague-stricken place to which 'Umar refused to go, and to remove his troops to a healthier spot, he was met with the objection : "Dost thou fly from the *qadzā* of Allāh?" i.e., from what God has ordered. 'Umar's reply was : "I fly from the *qadzā* of Allāh to the *qadar* of Allāh." What he meant evidently was that if God had brought about plague by His *qadzā* in one place, another place was free from it, and it was His *qadar*, i.e., a Divine law, that they should betake themselves to a place of safety (R.). *Qadzā* is, therefore, only the ordering of a thing to come to pass, while *qadar* signifies the creating of things subject to certain laws.

THE RELIGION OF ISLĀM

therefore the law or measure which is working throughout the whole of creation ; and this is exactly the sense in which the word is used in the Holy Qur'an. For example, the Holy Qur'an speaks of a taqdir for each and every thing that has been created :

“Glorify the name of thy Lord, the Most High, Who creates, then makes complete, and Who makes things according to a measure (*qaddara* from *taqdir*), then guides them to their goal ” (87 : 1—3).

“Who created everything, then ordained for it a measure (*taqdir*) ” (25 : 2).

“Surely We have created everything according to a measure (*qadar*) ” (54 : 49).

“And the sun runs on to a term appointed for it ; that is the law (*taqdir*) of the Mighty, the Knowing. And as for the moon, We have ordained (*qaddarna* from *taqdir*) for it stages ” (36 : 38, 39).

The law according to which foods, provisions and other things are provided in the earth is also called a taqdir of God, and so, also, the law according to which rain falls on the earth, and that according to which night and day follow each other :

“And He made in it mountains above its surface, and He blessed therein and made (*qaddara*) therein its foods ” (41 : 10).

“And there is not a thing but with Us are the treasures of it, and We do not send it down but in a known measure (*qadar*) ” (15 : 21).

“And We send down water from the cloud according to a measure (*qadar*) ” (23 : 18 ; 43 : 11).

“And Allāh has appointed a measure (*yuqaddiru* from *taqdir*) of the night and the day ” (73 : 20).

Though man is included in the creation, and his taqdir is therefore the same as the taqdir of the whole creation, he is also separately spoken of as having a

QADAR OR TAQDIR

taqdir similar to the law of growth and development in other things :

“ Of what thing did He create him ? Of a small life-germ He created him, then He made him according to a measure (*qaddara-hu*) ” (80 : 18, 19).

All these verses go to show that, as according to lexicologists, taqdir, in the language of the Holy Qur'an, is a universal law of God, operating as much in the case of man as in the rest of nature : a law extending to the sun, the moon, the stars, the earth and the heavens and all that exists in them. This universal law is fully explained in two short verses in 87 : 2-3 : “ Who creates, then makes complete, and Who makes according to a measure, then guide ” Four things are mentioned regarding every thing created, including man ; its *khalq* or creation, its *taswiya* or completion, its *taqdir* or measure, and its *hidaya* or guidance to its goal. The law of life, as witnessed in nature, is exactly the law described here. Everything is created so as finally to attain to its completion, this completion being brought about according to a law or a measure within which everything works by Divine guidance. Thus the taqdir of everything is the law or the measure of its growth and development. While one seed will grow into a blade of grass, another will become a huge tree ; notwithstanding its growth and development, one life-germ can hardly be seen with a microscope while another grows into a huge animal. Everything has its own line of development and so has man ; therefore his taqdir is not different in nature from the taqdir of other things.

Taqdir, meaning the *absolute decree of good and evil by God*, an idea with which the word is now indissolubly connected by the popular mind as well as by thinking writers, is

THE RELIGION OF ISLĀM

neither known to the Holy Qur'an,¹ nor even to Arabic lexicology. The doctrine of predestination is of later growth, and seems to have been the result of the clash of Islām with Persian religious thought. The doctrine that there are two creators, a creator of good and a creator of evil, had become the central doctrine of the Magian religion, just as the Trinity had become that of the Christian faith. The religion of Islām taught the purest monotheism, and it was probably in controverting the dualistic doctrine of the Magian religion, that the discussion arose as to whether or not God was the creator of evil. These discussions grew very hot and many side-issues sprang up. All this was due only to a misunderstanding of the nature of good and evil. God created man with certain powers which he could exercise under certain limitations, and it is the exercise of these powers in one way or another that produces good or evil. For instance, God has gifted man with the power of speech, which he can use either to do good or evil to humanity, either to tell a truth and say a good word, or to utter falsehood and slander. Similarly, man has been endowed with numerous other powers which may be used either for good or for evil. Hence the controversy, as to whether God was the creator of good and evil, arose simply out of a misconception of the nature of good and evil. The same act may be a virtue on one occasion and evil on another. A blow struck in self-defence or in defence of a

1. There is only one occasion in the Holy Qur'an on which a derivative of *taqdir* is used to indicate the fate of a person. Speaking of the wife of Lot, the Holy Qur'an says: "We ordained (*qaddarnā*) that she shall be of those who remain behind" (15 : 60 ; 27 : 57). But even here it does not mean that God had ordained that she should be a doer of evil. There is mention here of an ordinance which holds good in the case of all evil-doers that they should suffer the evil consequences of what they have done ; she was not one of the faithful, but a disbeliever, so that when Divine punishment overtook the evil-doers, she was ordained to be with them.

QADAR OR TAQDIR

helpless man is right, and a blow struck aggressively is wrong. Hence evil is also called *zulm*, which means according to lexicologists, *the placing of a thing in a place other than that which is meant for it, either by falling short or by excess or by deviation from its time or its place* (R.). Thus the use of a power in the right manner, or at the right moment, or in the right place is a virtue, and its use in a wrong manner, or at a wrong moment, or at the wrong place is a vice. The Holy Qur'an, therefore, has not dealt with the question of the creation of good and evil at all. It speaks of the creation of heaven and earth and all that is in them; it speaks of the creation of man; it speaks of endowing him with certain faculties and granting him certain powers; it tells us that he can use these powers and faculties within certain limitations, just as all other created things are placed within certain limitations—and the limitations of each kind are its *taqdir*. But in the Holy Qur'an, there is no mention of a *taqdir*, which means either the creation of good and evil deeds, or an absolute decree of good and evil by God.

The following verse is sometimes quoted as showing that God is the creator of the actions of man: "And Allāh has created you and what you make" (37 : 96). The Arabic word for "you make" is *ta'malūn*, from *'aml* which means both *doing* and *making*. So the words are sometimes taken as meaning "what you do" instead of "what you make," and from this it is concluded that God is the creator of the actions of man, and as these actions are good as well as bad, therefore God is the creator of the evil deeds of man. The context, however, shows that *mā ta'malūn* here means "what you make," and not "what you do," and the verse in question does not speak of the good and evil deeds of man, but of the idols and stones which were worshipped. Verses 91-93

THE RELIGION OF ISLĀM

speak of Abraham's breaking the idols ; v. 94 says that when the people saw their idols broken, they advanced towards him; vv. 95, 96 contain Abraham's arguments against idol-worship: "What! do you worship what you hew out? And Allāh has created you and what you make." Now the concluding words "what you make" clearly refer to the idols which they made, and the argument is clear that what was hewed out by man's own hands could not be God, God being the Creator of man as well as of the stones which were made into idols. This interpretation has been accepted by the best commentators (RM. VII, p. 300). According to some commentators, the words are interrogatory: "And God has created you, and what is it that you do?"

It may, however, be added that God is recognized by the Holy Qur'an as the first and ultimate cause of all things; but this does not mean that He is the creator of the deeds of man. He has, of course, created man; He has also created the circumstances under which he lives and acts; but still He has endowed man with a discretion to choose how to act, which he can exercise under certain limitations, just as all his other powers and faculties are exercised under limitations and only in accordance with certain laws. Thus in the Holy Qur'an: "The truth is from your Lord; so let him who pleases accept (it) and let him who pleases reject (it)" (18 : 29). And as he can exercise his discretion or his will in doing a thing or not doing it, he is responsible for his own deeds and is made to suffer the consequences.¹

1. The useless controversy as to whether God was or was not the creator of man's deeds divided the Muslim world at one time into three camps. The Jabriyya held that God was the creator of man's deeds, whether good or evil, and man was entirely powerless in the matter. He moved as the Divine hand moved him, having neither the choice, nor the power, nor the will to swerve a hair's breadth from what God had decreed. Another party went to the other extreme holding that man, being the creator of his own actions, had full control over them. This was the view

QADAR OR TAQDIR

A great deal of misunderstanding exists as to the relation of the Divine will to the will of man. All the faculties with which man has been endowed have emanated from the great Divine attributes. Yet all human attributes are imperfect, and can be exercised only under certain limitations and to a certain extent. God is All-seeing and All-hearing; man also sees and hears, but these attributes in him bear no comparison to the Divine attributes of seeing and hearing, being only imperfect and miniature images of the perfect and infinite attributes of the Divine Being, even as the reflecting mirror of human nature is itself imperfect and finite. For the very same reason, man's exercise of these attributes is also subject to certain limitations and laws. Man's knowledge of things, his exercise of power over things and his exercise of his will in relation to things, stand on a par. All these are subject to limitations and laws. Man's will stands in the same relation to the Divine will as his other attributes to the attributes of the Divine Being. He can exercise it under limitations and laws, and there is a very large variety of circumstances which may determine his

adopted later on by the Mu'tazila whose founder was Wāṣil ibn 'Aṭā. Their argument was that it was impossible that God should first compel a man to do a thing and then punish him for it. The general body of the Muslims held that both these were extreme views. But in marking out an intermediate course, they adopted a position which was not very clear. They held that faith was the *via media* between jabar and qadar, but to effect a reconciliation between these two extreme views they introduced the theory of *kasb* which means *acquisition*. The gist of this theory was "that man is neither absolutely compelled, nor an absolutely free agent" (RI., p. 104). So far the position was logical, but further discussions led the holders of this view to the absurd position that man was only outwardly free, being inwardly forced. It is true that man's will works under certain limitations, qadar or taqdir of God, but it is not true that the Divine will compels him to take a certain course. There may be a hundred and one causes of his decision in a particular case, and his responsibility may vary according to those circumstances; but still the choice is his, and so is the responsibility.

THE RELIGION OF ISLAM

choice in each case. Yet it is not true that the choice to exercise it has been taken from him; and the fact is that, notwithstanding all the limitations, he is free to exercise his will, and, therefore, though he may not be responsible to the same extent for anything done in all cases, and a variety of circumstances must determine the extent of his responsibility, which may be very small, almost negligible, in some cases and very great in others, yet he is a free agent and responsible for what he does.

I now take the Quranic verses bearing on this subject. The argument that man does an evil deed because God wills it so, is put into the mouth of the opponents of the Holy Prophet on several occasions. Take the following for instance: "The polytheists will say, If Allāh had pleased, we would not have associated aught with Him, nor our fathers, nor would we have forbidden to ourselves anything; even so did those before them reject until they tasted Our punishment. Say, Have you any knowledge so you should bring it forth to us? You only follow a conjecture and you only tell lies. Say, Then Allāh's is the conclusive argument; if He had (so) willed, He would have guided you all" (6: 149, 150). The polytheists' contention here is that what they do is in accordance with the will of God, and this is condemned as a mere conjecture and a lie. And against it, two arguments are adduced. The first is that previous people were punished when they persisted in their evil courses; if what they did was because God had so willed it, He would not have punished them for it. The second is that God had never said so through any of His prophets: "Have you any knowledge with you so you should bring it forth to us." And in the verse that follows, the argument is carried further: "If He had willed, He would have guided you all." The conclusion is clear. If it were the Divine will that people should be compelled

QADAR OR TAQDIR

guidance. But men are not compelled to accept even the right way; much less could they be compelled to follow the wrong course. The Divine will is expressed through prophets who are raised up to point out what is good and what is evil, and the choice is given to man to follow the one or the other. That is clearly laid down: "Surely We have shown him the way, he may accept or reject" (76 : 3). And again: "The truth is from your Lord, so let him who pleases believe, and let him who pleases disbelieve" (18 : 29). The Divine will is therefore exercised in the raising up of prophets, and in the pointing out of the courses of good and evil, and human will is exercised in the choice of one course or the other.

It is this very law that is expressed at the end of ch. 76: "Surely this is a reminder, so whoever pleases takes to his Lord a way. And you do not please except that Allāh please" (76 : 29, 30). And again to the same effect: "It is naught but a reminder for the nations, for him among you who pleases to go straight, and you do not please except that Allāh please, the Lord of the worlds" (81 : 27- 29). It will be seen that in both these places, the Holy Qur'an is spoken of as having been revealed for the upliftment of man, yet, it is added, only he will derive benefit from it who chooses to go straight or take a way to his Lord, that is, exercises his will in the right direction. Thus man is left to make his choice after God has sent down a revelation, and the will of man to make a choice is thus exercised only after the will of God has been exercised in the sending down of a revelation. If God had not pleased to reveal the reminder, man would have had no choice. Thus the words "you do not please except that Allāh please," mean only this that if God had

THE RELIGION OF ISLĀM

not pleased to send a revelation, man would not have been able to make his choice of good or evil.¹

The doctrine of predestination, or the decreeing of Foreknowledge of a good course for one man and an evil course for another, thus finds no support from the Holy Qur'an which plainly gives to man

1. The Western critics of Islām, who are not in the habit of giving any serious thought to the Holy Qur'an, have hastily formed the opinion that the Holy Prophet was an opportunist, and that the Holy Qur'an makes contradictory statements, preaching free will at one time and laying stress on predestination at another. Thus Macdonald writes in the *Encyclopædia of Islām* under *Kadar*: "The contradictory statements of the Qur'an on free will and predestination show that Muḥammad was an opportunist preacher and politician, and not a systematic theologian." The same view has been expressed by Sell: "The quotations made from the Qur'an in the last few pages will have shown that whilst some passages seem to attribute freedom to man, and speak of his consequent responsibility, others teach a clear and distinct fatalism" (*Faith of Islam*, p. 338). Both these writers have not taken the trouble to study the Holy Qur'an for themselves, and have based the above opinion simply on the fact that the contending Muslim sections have, all of them, quoted the Holy Qur'an in their support, as if the numerous sects of Christianity had never quoted the Bible text in support of their contradictory assertions! The verse which I have discussed here is looked upon by Sell as the "famous text" in support of predestination. Yet if a little consideration had been given to the words, the meaning could have been easily discovered. There is rather a tendency to force the conclusion of fatalism even upon plain words. I may here note some of the verses which Hughes has quoted in his *Dictionary of Islām* in support of the doctrine of predestination:

"All sovereignty is in the hands of God" (13 : 30); "God slew them and those shafts were God's, not thine" (8 : 17). Now these two verses have apparently not the least bearing on predestination; the first speaks of God's sovereignty and the second says that the defeat and slaughter of the overwhelming Quraish forces could not be brought about by the Prophet, and that it was brought about by God. Two other verses quoted by Hughes have been wrongly translated, but in spite of that they do not lend any colour to the decree of good and evil: "All things have been created after fixed decree" (54 : 49); "The Lord hath created and balanced all things and hath fixed their destinies and guided them" (87 : 2).

Now the translation of *qadar* by *fixed decree* and that of *qaddars* by *He has fixed their destinies* is opposed to all Arabic lexicons. The wish of the writer has here taken the place of rules of interpretation. The other verses quoted by him have been fully discussed by me, and none of them speaks of predestination.

QADAR OR TAQDIR

the choice to follow one way or the other. But, it is said, the doctrine of the decreeing of good and evil follows from the doctrine of the foreknowledge of God. If God knows what will happen in the future, whether a particular man will take a good or an evil course, it follows that that man must take that particular course, for the knowledge of God cannot be untrue. Now in the first place, it must be clearly understood what God's knowledge of the future means. The fact is that the future is an open book to God. The limitations of space and time, which are everything to man, are nothing to God. Man's knowledge of things is limited both by space and time, but to the Infinite Being, unlimited space is as it were a single point and the past and the future are like the present. God sees or knows the future as a man would know what is passing before his eyes. God's knowledge of the future therefore, though far above and far superior to man's knowledge, is like his knowledge of the present, and mere knowledge of a thing does not interfere with the choice of the agent or the doer. Hence God's foreknowledge has nothing to do with predestination.

Statements are frequently met with in the Holy God's writing of Qur'an in which God is spoken of as adversities. having written down the doom of a nation, or a man's term of life, or an affliction. Such verses have also been misconstrued as upholding the doctrine of predestination. The misconception is due to a wrong interpretation of the word *kitab*, which ordinarily carries the significance of *writing*, but has been freely used in Arabic literature and in the Holy Qur'an itself in a variety of senses. Raghīb says: "The word *kitāba* carries the significance of *ithbat*, i. e., *establishing* or *confirming*, and *taqdir*, i. e., *measuring out*, and *ijāb*, i. e., *making obligatory*, and *fardz*, i. e., *making incumbent*, and *'asm bi-l-kitāba*, i. e., *determination to write down*." And

THE RELIGION OF ISLAM

further on, it is stated that *kitab* also signifies *qadga*, i.e., *what has been brought to pass*, and *hukm*, i. e. *order*, and *ilm*, i.e., *knowledge*. Examples of these uses are given: "Allah has written (*kataba*), I will most certainly prevail, I and My apostles" (58:21). "Nothing will afflict us save what Allah has written down (*kataba*) for us" (9:51). "Say, Had you remained in your houses, those for whom slaughter was written down (*kutiba*) would certainly have gone forth to the places where they would be slain" (3:153). Now in all these instances there is no mention of predestination or the fixing beforehand of an evil course for the evil-doer. In the first example the meaning is clearly this, that the order or command has gone forth from God that the Prophet shall triumph, and God's orders must come to pass. "God has written down" only means that it is God's order that such a thing should happen. It is not necessary to seek a reference to any previous writing or previous order, because the order or writing is there in these words themselves, but, if necessary, the reference may be to the numerous prophecies that are met with in the Holy Qur'an regarding the ultimate triumph of the Holy Prophet, and which were in fact written down in a literal sense.

In the other two examples, there is mention of the writing down of distress or death. In the first place, it must be borne in mind that even if by the writing down of death or distress it is meant that such was pre-ordained for them, it does not lend any support to the doctrine of predestination, which means that the evil course of an evil-doer has been fixed for him beforehand, and that no choice is left to him to adopt either a good or an evil course. Death or distress is due to circumstances over which man has no control, while the doing of good or evil is a matter entirely of man's own choice, according to the plain teaching of the Holy Qur'an. But, as a matter of

QADAR OR TAQDIR

fact, there is no mention of pre-ordaining here, for *kitāba* means *ordering* and not pre-ordaining. In fact, the word sometimes means simply *intending* a thing: "The reason is that a thing is first intended, then spoken and then written. So intention is the beginning and writing the end, and therefore the word *kitāba* is used to signify mere *intention*, which is the beginning, when it is meant to emphasize it by writing" (R.). Going back to the Holy Qur'an itself, while it speaks of distress being "written down" in one place, it speaks of it as coming with God's permission or knowledge or order, in another. Compare the following two verses: "No affliction befalls on the earth nor in your own souls, but it is in a book before We bring it into existence" (57 : 22); "No affliction comes about but by Allāh's permission (*idhn*)" (64 : 11). The word *idhn* used here, means, according to Raghīb, knowledge of a thing, where there is with it also *mashī'a*, i. e. permission or order. It is clear, from a comparison of these two verses, that what is called *kitāba* in one place is called *idhn* in another. Thus the writing of Allāh is only His knowledge or permission or order.

The Holy Book throws further light on this subject where it makes mention of the Divine intention to bring the faithful to perfection through adversities. Thus, speaking of the believers in particular, it says: "And We will certainly try you with somewhat of fear and hunger and loss of property and lives and fruits; and give good news to the patient, who, when a misfortune befalls them, say, We are Allāh's and to Him we shall return. These are they on whom are blessings and mercy from their Lord and these are the followers of the right course" (2 : 155-157). The principle is laid down here that the faithful are brought to perfection through adversities and trials, because we are told that Allāh intends to try the believers by means of various kinds of

THE RELIGION OF ISLAM

afflictions, and through patience in suffering, they make themselves deserving of Divine blessings and mercy. Therefore when the faithful are made to say, "Nothing will afflict us save what Allāh has written down for us" (9 : 51), it is in reference to the Divine will, as expressed above, and they are made to suffer afflictions for their own perfection. God's writing down afflictions for them means, therefore, only that the Divine law is that they will be brought to perfection through afflictions. Of like significance is 3 : 153.

Both the verses quoted above and other similar verses which speak of the writing down of afflictions for the believers, only teach that greatest lesson of life, resignation in adversities. Muslims are taught to remain absolutely contented when they have to meet adversity or death in fulfilment of their duties. If a Muslim meets adversity or even death, he must believe that it is by God's order, that being the real meaning of *kitāba* in such cases. That faith upholds a Muslim in adversity because he knows that out of an adversity which is by the order of the good God, will undoubtedly come good. There is a message in these verses that Muslims must face all adversities manfully and never despair of the mercy of God.

A few words may be added in this connection on the *lauḥ maḥfūz*, which is generally supposed to contain all the decrees of God in writing. The word *lauḥ* means a *plank*, as in 54 : 13, and also a *tablet for writing*, and *maḥfūz* means *that which is guarded*. The expression *lauḥ maḥfūz* occurs but once in the Holy Qur'an, and there it is mentioned in connection with the guarding of the Qur'an itself: "Nay! it is a glorious Qur'an in a guarded tablet" (85 : 21, 22). The word *lauḥ* in its plural form *alwāḥ* is used in connection with the books of Moses: "And We ordained

QADAR OR TAQDIR

for him in the tablets (*alwāḥ*) admonition of every kind and clear explanation of all things" (7 : 145). The *alwāḥ* of Moses and the *lauḥ* of the Qur'an are the same; only in the case of the Qur'an the *lauḥ* is stated to be *maḥfūz* or *guarded*, for which the explanation is given "that the Qur'an is protected against change and alteration" (R.). The meaning conveyed in *lauḥ maḥfūz* is therefore exactly the same as is elsewhere stated about the Holy Qur'an: "Surely We have revealed the Reminder and We will surely be its guardian" (15 : 9). The significance in both cases is that no alteration shall find a way into the text of the Holy Qur'an, and that it shall be preserved in full purity. So far as the Holy Qur'an is concerned, there is no mention in it of a *lauḥ maḥfūz* in which the decrees of God are written. Raghīb says that "the nature of it has not been disclosed to us" (R.). One thing is clear that God's writing is not of the same nature as man's writing; for man stands in need of pen, ink, and writing material, while God does not. This point has elsewhere been explained in connection with the Divine attributes, where it has been shown that though speaking, seeing, hearing and other deeds are ascribed to God, yet the nature of these deeds is quite different from that of man's deeds, for God does not stand in need of means for the doing of an act, while man does. The writing of God therefore does not stand in need of a tablet or ink or pen, and if a *lauḥ maḥfūz* is spoken of in certain *ḥadīth*, it stands only for the great and all-comprehensive knowledge of God, before which everything is as clear as a writing before man.

A very great misconception regarding the teachings of the Holy Qur'an is that it ascribes to God the attribute of leading astray. Nothing could be farther from truth. While *al-Hādī*, or the *One Who guides*, is one of the ninety-nine

THE RELIGION OF ISLAM

names of Allah, as accepted by all Muslims, *al-Mudžill*, or *the One Who leads astray*, has never been recognized as such. If *leading astray* were an attribute of God, as *guiding* certainly is, the name *al-Mudžill* should have been included in the list of His names, as *al-Hadi* is. But the Holy Qur'an, which repeatedly says that God's are all the excellent names, could not ascribe to Him what it has plainly ascribed to the Devil, *viz.* the leading astray of men. This fact is conclusive so far as the leading astray of men is concerned, but there are several other considerations which confirm it. The sinners' own confession, as repeatedly mentioned in the Holy Qur'an, is that their great leaders misled them, or that the Devil misled them. Not once do they put forward the excuse that it was God Himself Who misled them :

" When they have all come up with one another into it (the fire), the last of them shall say with regard to the foremost of them, Our Lord ! these led us astray, so give them a double chastisement of the fire " (7 : 38).

" O woe is me ! would that I had not taken such a one for a friend ! Certainly he led me astray from the reminder after it had come to me " (25 : 28-29).

" And none but the guilty led us astray " (26 : 99).

" And they shall say, Our Lord ! surely we obeyed our leaders and our great men, so they led us astray from the path. O our Lord ! give them a double chastisement and curse them with a great curse " (33 : 67, 68).

" And those who disbelieve shall say, Our Lord ! show us those who led us astray from among the jinn and the men that we may trample them under our feet so that they may be of the lowest " (41 : 29).

Now if God had really led men astray, their best excuse on the Day of Judgment would have been that they did not deserve to be punished, because it was God Himself Who led them astray. But not once is that

QADAR OR TAQDIR

excuse advanced, and it is always the guilty leaders, both from among men and jinn, who are denounced by the guilty followers as having misled them. This is another conclusive argument that it is not God Who leads men astray.

In the third place, the Holy Qur'an is full of statements to the effect that God sends His prophets and grants revelation for the guidance of the people. The general rule laid down with regard to Divine dealing with humanity is thus made clear in the very beginning : " Surely there will come to you a guidance from Me, so whoever follows My guidance, no fear shall come upon them, nor shall they grieve." (2 : 38).

It is impossible that God, Who is so solicitous for the guidance of man, should Himself lead him astray. Guiding and leading astray are two contradictions which could not be gathered together in one being. The Holy Qur'an itself draws attention to this point : " And it is not attributable to Allah that He should lead people astray after He has sent them a guidance ; He even makes clear to them what they should guard against " (9 : 115). The argument is evident. The Being Who sends guidance to a people could not lead them astray ; how, then, could it be ascribed to God that He makes men fall into evil when He sends His messengers to explain to people that they should guard against evil ?

The mistaken idea that God leads people astray *idzlal* as ascribed to God. arises out of a misconception of the meaning of the word *idzlal* when it is ascribed to God. The word *idzlal* carries a variety of meanings besides *leading astray*. It should be noted that wherever *idzlal* is attributed to God, it is only in connection with the transgressors (2 : 26), the unjust (14 : 27), and the extravagant (40 : 34), not the people generally. *Idzlal* is the causative form of *dzlal*, which

THE RELIGION OF ISLĀM

means " *swerving from the straight path*, and the word is applied to every swerving from the right path whether it is intentional or unintentional, and whether it is very small or very great ;wherefore it may be used of him who commits any mistake whatever " (R.). According to the same authority, *idzlal* is of two kinds. The first kind is that in which *dzlal* (or going astray) is the cause of *idzlal*. This again may be in two ways : (1) when a thing has itself gone astray from you, as you say, *adzalltu-l-ba'ira*, the meaning of which is, *I lost the camel*, not *I led astray the camel*, which is not true in this case ; and (2) when you judge a person to be in error or going astray ; and in both these cases *going astray* on the part of the object of *idzlal* is the cause of *idzlal* or leading astray. The second kind is that in which *idzlal* or *leading astray* is the cause of the going astray of the object of *idzlal*, and it is in this way that you embellish evil to a man so that he may fall into it " (R.). The word, as used in the Holy Qur'an, means *judging or finding one to be in error*. This was a recognized use of the word among the Arabs. Thus in a verse of Ṭarfa, the words *adzallani ṣadiqī* mean *my friend judged me to be in error* (L.A.). And in a ḥadīth it is said that the Holy Prophet came to a people *fa-adzalla-hum*, i.e., *he found them adopting a wrong course, not following the true path* (N.). Ibn Athīr gives further examples showing that *adzalla-hu* means *he found him in error* just as *ahmadtu-hu* means *I found him in a praiseworthy condition*, and *abkhaltu-hu* means *I found him a niggard* (N.). In fact, this sense of the word is recognized by all lexicologists. Explaining *adzalla-hu*, Lane says : " *And he found him to be erring, strayinglike as one says ahmada-hu and abkhala-hu* " (L.L.), and this explanation is quoted from the *Taj al-'Arūs*.

Hence, since *idzlal* cannot be applied to God in the

QADAR OR TAQDIR

sense of *leading astray*, and since it is always the transgressors and the extravagant whose *idzāl* by God is spoken of, the only significance that can be attached to that word, in this case, is God's judging them to be in error or finding them in error, or in some cases, God's bringing them to destruction, which is also an approved significance.

Another misconception which must be removed in this connection is that relating to God's sealing of hearts. God's setting seals on hearts. The misconception in this case is that it is thought that God has created some men with seals on their hearts, while others have been created with free and open hearts. No trace of any such distinction is met with anywhere either in the Holy Qur'an or in Ḥadīth. All men are created sinless, all men are created pure, that is the express teaching of Islām. The Holy Qur'an says: "Then set thy face upright for religion in the right state—the nature (*fiṭra*) made by Allāh in which He has made all men, there is no altering of Allāh's creation; that is the right religion" (30 : 30). According to this verse all men have been created in pure nature, and a ḥadīth of the Holy Prophet, which is really an explanation of this verse, says: "Every child that is born conforms to *fiṭra* (human nature), and it is his parents who make him a Jew or a Christian or a Magian" (Bu. 23 : 80). The idea that some men are born with a seal on their hearts is directly opposed to this teaching. The Holy Qur'an does speak of God setting seals on some hearts, but it says expressly that seals are set on the hearts of the reprobate, the hardened sinners who pay no heed to the call of the Prophet. In the very beginning of the Holy Qur'an, it is stated: "Those who disbelieve, it being alike to them whether thou warn them or do not warn

THE RELIGION OF ISLAM

them, will not believe. Allāh has set a seal upon their hearts and upon their hearing, and there is a covering over their eyes" (2 : 6, 7). It should be noted that though the setting of a seal is spoken of here, yet it is in connection with those who have so hardened their hearts that they do not pay any heed to the Prophet's warning. They refuse to open their hearts to receive the truth, and do not lend their ears to listen to it, nor use their eyes to discern the truth from falsehood. As is elsewhere stated: "They have hearts but they do not (try to) understand with them, and they have eyes but they do not (try to) see with them, and they have ears but do not (try to) hear with them; they are as cattle" (7 : 179). And again, they are made to say: "Our hearts are under coverings from that to which thou callest us, and there is a heaviness in our ears, and a veil hangs between us and thee" (41 : 5). It is always the reprobate whose heart is said to be sealed: "Thus does Allāh set a seal over the heart of every proud, haughty one" (40 : 35). The fact that the cause of the seal is the sinner's own act of not heeding the warning, is made clear on another occasion also: "And there are those of them who seek to listen to thee, until when they go forth from thee, they say to those who have been given the knowledge, What was it that he said just now? These are they upon whose hearts Allāh has set a seal and they follow their low desires" (47 : 16).

All these verses show that God sets a seal upon the hearts of certain people as a result of their own actions. They do not listen to the Prophet's call, they give no heed to his warning, they do not try to understand what he says, and the result is that God sets a seal upon their hearts. If a person closes upon himself the doors of his house, he will naturally be in darkness. Just in the same manner, those who themselves close the

QADAR OR TAQDIR

doors of their hearts are visited with the natural consequence of this, the setting of a seal. The seal, therefore, being the consequence of a man's own deeds, has nothing to do with the doctrine of predestination.

I will now take some of the ḥadīth from which predestination is concluded, but I would warn the reader that Ḥadīth must be read subject to the broad principles established in the Holy Qur'an, and must be so interpreted as not to clash with the Book of God, and that in case of a clash it is the ḥadīth that must be rejected; for the words of a ḥadīth are often the words of narrators, and in such metaphysical subjects there has been a good deal of mixing up of the ideas of the narrators through a long chain of transmitters. There is a great deal of difference between ḥadīth, relating to the rules and regulations of daily life, which every man could easily understand and retain in memory, and ḥadīth relating to metaphysical subjects where the ideas of the transmitters would sometimes quite unintentionally and sometimes on account of not clearly understanding the real concept of the words, affect the narration of the ḥadīth, and where the change of a single word may sometimes change the underlying idea entirely.

Bearing this in mind we may consider the ḥadīth narrated in the Book of Qadar in *Bukhārī*, but first I would take a ḥadīth which, though not accredited by the best Ḥadīth authorities, is the stock argument of Western writers regarding predestination in Islām. This ḥadīth occurs in several different forms in *Abū Dawūd*, *Tirmidhī* and *Aḥmad*, and the gist of it is that when God created Adam, He also brought forth the souls of his children. The particular form of this ḥadīth, which appeals to the Western writers, is that occurring in one report of Aḥmad: "He said to the souls on His right hand, To Paradise

THE RELIGION OF ISLAM

and I do not care: and He said to those on His left hand, To the fire and I do not care" (MM. 1 : 4—iii). This ḥadīth discloses such a distorted picture of Divine dealing with man that there should not be the least hesitation in its rejection. The Holy Qur'an says in plain words that it is for mercy that He created all men (11 : 119); it speaks of the Divine mercy as encompassing all things, like His knowledge (40 : 7); it tells the most obdurate sinner not to despair of His mercy, for "Allah forgives the sins altogether" (39 : 53); it describes God again and again as the most Merciful of all merciful ones (7 : 151 ; 12 : 64, 92 ; 21 : 83 ; 23 : 109, 118). Ḥadīth draws a similar picture of the indescribable mercy of God. It tells us that God wrote down, when He ordered creation, that "His mercy shall take precedence of His displeasure" (Bu. 59 : 1); it describes God as having divided His mercy into a hundred parts and as having sent into the world only one part, the whole of love finding expression in the created beings, including the love of a mother for her offspring, being a manifestation of that hundredth part, and the other ninety-nine parts finding their expression on the Day of Resurrection, so that if the unbeliever knew of the whole of Divine mercy, he would not despair of going to Paradise (Bu. 81 : 19 ; 78 : 19 ; M. 49 : 4); it draws a picture of the unbounded mercy of God when it speaks of the Holy Prophet seeing a mother pressing her child to her bosom and remarking to his Companions, "Do you think that she can throw this child into the fire?" and on their replying in the negative, added "God is much more merciful to His creatures than this woman to her child" (Bu. 78 : 18). Could God with all this mercy, which is beyond human conception, be in the same breath described as saying : "These to fire and I do not care?" Certainly these cannot be the words of the Holy Prophet. It is the error of some narrator in the long chain of the

QADAR OR TAQDIR

transmission of the ḥadīth.

In another form the same ḥadīth occurs as an explanation of a verse of the Holy Qur'an. This ḥadīth runs as follows: "Allah created Adam and then He touched his back with His right hand and brought forth from it children, and said, These I have created for Paradise and they will do the works of the inmates of Paradise; again He touched his back and brought forth children and said, These I have created for the fire and they will do the works of the inmates of the fire" (MM. 1 : 4 — *is*). If we read the verse of which this ḥadīth is said to be an explanation, we shall find that it has nothing in common with the ḥadīth except the idea of bringing forth offspring. The verse in question runs thus: "And when thy Lord brought forth from the children of Adam, from their backs, their descendants, and made them bear witness against their own souls: Am I not your Lord? They said, Yes! we bear witness" (7 : 172). It will be seen that the ḥadīth contains no explanation of the verse at all. And further, it is stated here that God declared the other portion to be for the fire because they would do the works of the inmates of fire. It does not mean that, in creating men, God had decreed one portion for Paradise and another for the fire. It denotes only the all-comprehending knowledge of God. But the verse itself speaks of something quite different, and therefore there is, again, not the least doubt that this ḥadīth is not an explanation of the Quranic verse.

The real explanation of the verse occurs in another ḥadīth, and undoubtedly there was some misunderstanding on the part of some narrator, which misled him into giving an explanation having nothing in common with the original, and indeed quite opposed to the Quranic text, of which it is alleged to be an explanation. Quoting the verse, Ubayy ibn Ka'b explains it thus: "He gathered them

THE RELIGION OF ISLAM

and made them pairs, gave them forms and made them speak so that they talked. Then He took a promise and agreement from them and made them bear witness against their souls, saying, Am I not your Lord? They said, Yes. He said, I call to witness against you the seven heavens and the seven earths, and I call to witness against you your father Adam, lest you say on the Day of Resurrection, We did not know this. Know that there is no God but I, and there is no Lord but I, and do not associate anything with Me; I will surely send to you My apostles who will remind you of this My promise and this My covenant, and I will reveal to you My books. They said, We bear witness that Thou art our Lord and our God; we have no Lord besides Thee and we have no God besides Thee" (MM. 1 : 4-iii).

If we take the verse itself, we find it so clear that not only does it need no explanation, but it even removes the obscurity of the so-called explanations; for it speaks plainly of the bringing forth of the children, not from the back of Adam, but from the backs of "the children of Adam". The verse, therefore, clearly refers to every human being as he comes into existence, and the evidence is that which is afforded by human nature itself, that God is its Creator. It thus lays down the principle that every human child is born into this world with the right impress, the impress that it must bow down to God. This is what is said elsewhere too: "Then set thy face upright for religion in the right state—the nature made by Allāh in which He has made all men; there is no altering of Allāh's creation; that is the right religion, but most people do not know" (30 : 30). Both these verses announce in clear words that every human child is born into the world in a pure state; none comes into life with the impress of hell on it. Human nature is so made that it is not compelled to follow the evil course.

QADAR OR TAQDIR

It is free from every taint. Even Ḥadīth states that "every child is born in the *fiṭra*" (the right state or the condition of Islām), and that it is his parents who later on "make him a Jew or a Christian or a Magian" (Bu. 23 : 80, 93). So every child is born a Muslim, and if he is initiated into a wrong religion or follows a wrong course, it is the action of his parents or his own action. Thus both the Holy Qur'an and the Ḥadīth cut at the root of the doctrine of predestination.

It is quite in consonance with this principle that Islām recognizes that all children, whether born of believing or unbelieving parents, go to Paradise if they die before attaining to the age of discretion. Even if this had not been expressly stated, it would have been a foregone conclusion of the principle laid down above on the basis of the Holy Qur'an and the ḥadīth that every child is born with a pure nature, a Muslim. But there is a clear ḥadīth to that effect. It is related that the Holy Prophet saw in a vision an old man at the foot of a large tree and around him were children, and in the vision he was told that the old man was Abraham and the children that were around him were the children who came *'ala-l-fiṭra, i.e., before attaining to the age of discretion*. "At this some of the Muslims asked him: And the children of polytheists, too, O Messenger of Allāh!" The Prophet replied: "The children of polytheists as well" (Bu. 91 : 48). Being with Abraham clearly meant being in Paradise; and according to the express words of the Holy Prophet, they included the children of polytheists, to say nothing of the children of the people of the Book. According to another ḥadīth, when the Holy Prophet was questioned about the children of the polytheists, he is reported to have said: "When Allāh created them, He knew what they would do" (Bu. 23 : 93). These words have been variously interpreted,

THE RELIGION OF ISLĀM

but it would be wrong to give them a significance contradicting the plain words of the first ḥadīth. At any rate, it does not mean that God knew what they would do after attaining to majority, as it is against facts. The fact is that God knew that they would die before attaining to majority, and this exactly seems to be the meaning of the words, as the Faṭḥ al-Barī has explained. God knew that they would die in the condition in which they were born, *i.e.*, the condition of Islām, because He knew that they would not attain to the age of discretion, when they would be able to judge between right and wrong and adopt the one course or the other.

It would be difficult to consider here all the ḥadīth relating to qadar. I will therefore take only *Bukhārī*, the most reliable collection of Ḥadīth. In the first place, *Bukhārī* does not relate a single ḥadīth speaking of faith in qadar, and thus the question that faith in qadar is one of the fundamentals of Islām is disposed of, for faith in qadar is unknown both to the Holy Qur'an and to the most reliable collection of Ḥadīth. Next I would take the various ḥadīth which *Bukhārī* has related in his *Jāmi'* in book 82, called *Qadar*. Not a single ḥadīth related in this chapter lends any support to the theory that a good or an evil course has been chalked out beforehand and is forced upon man. The ḥadīth related here, as well as in other collections, generally speak either of the Divine knowledge of things or of the Divine command prevailing over all. The most well-known ḥadīth from which predestination is concluded is that speaking of an angel being in charge of the embryo. This ḥadīth relates that "an angel is sent to the embryo, and he is commanded with four things; his sustenance and his term of life and whether he is unhappy or happy" (Bu. 82 : 1). The same ḥadīth occurring elsewhere is in the following words : "Then an angel is sent and he is commanded

QADAR OR TAQDIR

with four words. It is said to him, Write down his actions and his sustenance and his term of life and whether he is unhappy or happy" (Bu. 59 : 6). In the first place, this ḥadīth cuts at the root of predestination, for if everything has already been written down in a Divine decree, why should an angel be sent at the time of birth to write down these things? As regards the writing of actions in the state of embryo, there seems to be a clear mistake; for the Holy Qur'an plainly speaks of angels writing down the deeds when they are done, and in this connection not one, but two angels are spoken of: "When the two receivers receive, sitting on the right and the left" (50 : 17); "And surely there are keepers over you, honourable recorders, they know what you do" (82 : 10-12). But that an angel is sent in the state of embryo seems to mean that the Divine knowledge of things is all-comprehensive, so much so that He knows all about a man even in the embryonic state. The angel's record, as already shown, does not mean actually writing down in a book; it is only expressive of Divine knowledge. As the properties of the seed are all in the seed, so even the embryo shows what the man will develop into. No human eye can see these hidden potentialities; but nothing is hidden from God.

Another ḥadīth bearing on the subject is that which speaks of Adam's argument with Moses. Moses is reported to have said to Adam that it was his own fault that caused him to get out of the garden, to which Adam replied: "Dost thou blame me for a matter which had been ordained for me before I was created" (Bu. 60 : 31). It is added in the report that Adam prevailed over Moses in argument. A reference to the Holy Qur'an will show that Adam's fault was not really the cause of his children living in a particular state, for it is after forgiveness of Adam's fault that mankind are told to live

THE RELIGION OF ISLĀM

in that particular state, the state of *hubūṭ* as it is called, which is the state of struggle with the devil. It is not actually a *fall*, though there is in it the liability to fall, but there is also along with it the chance to conquer, and to subjugate the devil and thus rise to perfection. Man could be placed in one of the two conditions. He could be made to live either in a state in which there would be no struggle, but then there would be also no chance to conquer, no hope of rising to great spiritual heights, or he could be placed in a state of struggle in which there is the liability to fall and the chance to conquer and rise to greatness. This latter condition is called the state of *hubūṭ*¹ in the Holy Qur'an. Adam was no doubt placed in a garden and he could be spoken of as going forth from it, but his posterity was never placed in that garden and therefore they could not be spoken of as going forth from it. No one can be spoken of as going forth from a condition or a place in which he has never been. Therefore the *hubūṭ* is quite different from getting out of the garden, and it is after forgiveness even of Adam's fault that the *hubūṭ* of mankind is spoken of. Thus 2 : 36 speaks of Adam's fault ; 2 : 37 speaks of the fault being forgiven, and 2 : 38 speaks of the *hubūṭ* of Adam's children. I quote the last two : " And Adam received some words from his Lord, so He turned to him mercifully, for

1. The word *hubūṭ* has the same meaning as *nuzūl* (T' A.) which means *alighting* in a particular place or a particular condition, there being this difference that in *nuzūl* there is the idea of an honourable entry into a state (R.). In the Holy Qur'an, *hubūṭ* is used always in connection with Adam and his progeny living in a particular state, except on one occasion where it is used for the Israelites in the simple sense of alighting in a city or living in a settled state and resorting to agriculture. The Israelites asked Moses to pray to God that they may have " what the earth grows," " its herbs and its cucumbers " etc., and the reply is : " Enter (*ihbiṭū* from *habṭ*) a city, so you will have what you ask for " (2 : 61). It will be seen that the word *habṭ* or *hubūṭ* is used here simply in the sense of entering or alighting in a place or a condition, without any idea of fall or disgrace being attached to it.

QADAR OR TAQDIR

He is the Oft-returning to mercy, the Merciful. We said, Go forth (*ihbitu*) from this all, so surely there will come to you a guidance from Me, then whoever follows My guidance, no fear shall come upon them nor shall they grieve" (2 : 37, 38). Elsewhere also : " Then his Lord chose him, so He turned to him mercifully and guided him. He said, Get forth you two therefrom, all (of you), one of you is an enemy to another : So there will surely come to you guidance from Me, then whoever follows My guidance, he shall not go astray, nor be unhappy" (20 : 122, 123). Thus Adam's reply to Moses was that it was not due to his fault that men had to live in a state of struggle with the devil, for such was the Divine scheme even before he was born.

I will not go into details of the rest of the ḥadīth of Bukhārī. Many of these ḥadīth are wrongly interpreted. For example, in one ḥadīth it is said that when the Holy Prophet was questioned about the children of polytheists who died before attaining to the age of discretion, his reply was : " Allāh knows best what they would do " (Bu. 82 : 3). These words are misinterpreted as meaning that since God knew that after attaining to the age of majority they would be polytheists, therefore they would go to Hell. This significance is contrary to that of the very next ḥadīth, which says that all children who die before attaining majority are in Abraham's lap. The meaning of the words quoted is simply that Allāh, knowing that they would die in infancy and would not be guilty of any sin, would deal with them accordingly. Another ḥadīth tells us of the death of a grandson of the Holy Prophet, and of the Holy Prophet's comforting the child's mother with the words : " Allāh's is what He takes away and Allāh's is what He gives ; every one has a term of life, so let her be patient " (Bu. 82 : 4). This ḥadīth makes no mention at all of any decree of good and

THE RELIGION OF ISLĀM

evil deeds. It speaks of a term of life, for every person in God's knowledge has a term of life.

Many other ḥadīth of a similar nature are wrongly supposed to lend support to the doctrine of predestination. I will mention only one more. The Holy Prophet is reported to have remarked in a certain company that there was not a man but his place in fire or in Paradise was written down. Thereupon a man said : " Shall we not rely then (and give up the doing of deeds), O Messenger of Allāh ? " The Prophet said : " No : do work, for to every one it is made easy " (Bu. 82 : 4); and then he recited the following verse : " Then as for him who gives in charity and guards against evil and accepts the good word, We will facilitate for him the easy end. And as for him who is niggardly and considers himself free from need (of Allāh) and rejects the good word, We will facilitate for him the difficult end " (92 : 5-10). Now if any conclusion of predestination could be drawn from the words of the ḥadīth, the verses quoted by the Holy Prophet, in support of what he said, negative any such conclusion, for they plainly speak of two different ends for two different kinds of workers. The words of the Holy Prophet himself lead to the same conclusion, for he laid stress on works. Nor do his concluding words—to every one it is made easy—lead to any other conclusion, for the meaning is that to the worker of good, the good end, and to the worker of evil, the evil end, is made easy, as plainly stated in the verses quoted in support of his assertion.

We come now to the real question. It has been shown, firstly that though the Holy Faith in qadar finds no place in the Qur'ān and *Bukhārī*. Qur'ān speaks of qadar or taqdīr, these words by no means carry the significance of predestination or of a decree of good and evil for man ; secondly, that the qadar or taqdīr of which the

QADAR OR TAQDIR

Holy Book speaks is of a general nature, a law prevailing in the whole of the universe, a limitation under which the whole of creation is moving onward, and that therefore qadar or taqdir has nothing to do with the good and evil deeds which are special to man; thirdly, that there is, in the Holy Qur'an or in the most reliable ḥadīth, no mention at all of imān or faith in qadar or taqdir; and fourthly, that it is never mentioned as one of the fundamentals of religion like faith in God and His angels and His books and His apostles and a life after death. Qadar or taqdir is spoken of simply as a Divine law prevailing in the universe, like many other laws, and no question concerning faith in them arises. It must also be clearly understood that the fundamentals of religion are all fully explained in the Holy Qur'an itself; and a thing cannot be accepted as a fundamental of Islām of which there is no mention in the Holy Book. Ḥadīth is only a secondary source of the religion of Islām and, as a matter of fact, it deals only with secondary matters of religion or its details. The great principles, the basic doctrines, must all be sought from the Holy Qur'an, which neither mentions qadar among the fundamentals of Islām, nor even speaks of a faith in qadar. It is only in Ḥadīth that we find mention of qadar, and even here the most reliable of all Ḥadīth collections, the *Bukhārī*, does not contain any ḥadīth mentioning faith in qadar as an article of faith. Thus to both the Holy Qur'an and the *Bukhārī*, faith in qadar is unknown, and therefore to speak of it as a fundamental of Islām is a mistake.

There is indeed one ḥadīth which shows that faith in

Faith in qadar is a qadar is of later growth. In his second doctrine of later growth. book, the book of *Faith*, Bukhārī relates the following ḥadīth from Abū Huraira: "The Holy Prophet was one day sitting outside among a number of people when there came to him a man and said, What is

THE RELIGION OF ISLAM

faith? The Holy Prophet replied, Faith is this that thou believe in Allāh and His angels and the meeting with Him, and His messengers, and that thou believe in life after death" (Bu. 2 : 37). The ḥadīth is a lengthy one and I have quoted only the first portion which relates to the subject of discussion. Now this same ḥadīth is also related in *Muslim* through three different channels. In the first channel, the four narrators are the same as in *Bukhārī*, and the words of the ḥadīth are also almost the same: "The Holy Prophet was one day sitting outside among a number of people when there came to him a man and said, What is faith, O Messenger of Allāh! The Holy Prophet replied, That thou believe in Allāh and His angels and His book and the meeting with Him, and His messengers, and that thou believe in the life after death" (M. 1 : 1). In his second channel, the first three narrators are again the same as in *Bukhārī*, and the ḥadīth is narrated in the words quoted above. In his third channel, only the first two narrators are the same, the rest being different, and a change is introduced into the words of the ḥadīth, the portion relating to the Prophet's reply now assuming the following form: "That thou believe in Allāh and His angels and His book and the meeting with Him, and His messengers, and that thou believe in the life after death and that thou believe in qadar, in the whole of it" (M. 1 : 1). It will be noticed that when the narrators are the same as in *Bukhārī* (with the exception of the last narrator from whom Muslim took his words), the words of the ḥadīth are almost the same, there being only an addition of the words "and His book." These words have either been added by one of Muslim's narrators, as the natural result of faith in messengers of God, or they have been left out by one of *Bukhārī*'s narrators, as being included in faith in the Divine messengers. Otherwise, the fundamentals of faith

QADAR OR TAQDIR

are exactly the same and so even the words in both narrations. Even when Muslim has only Bukhārī's three top narrators, the words of the ḥadīth are still the same. But in the third channel, where only two top narrators of Bukhārī, Abū Huraira and Abū Zar'a, are retained, the ḥadīth is changed, and quite a new element is introduced into it by the addition of *faith in qadar*, which the original does not contain. This shows beyond the shadow of a doubt that the words "faith in qadar" were added by the third narrator, and that these words were not spoken either by Abū Huraira or even by the next narrator, Abū Zar'a, and thus there remains not the least doubt that the inclusion of faith in qadar among the fundamentals of faith, is an addition of about the end of the first century of Hijra. There is no doubt that discussions about qadar arose later, and it was during these discussions that, through inadvertence or otherwise, some narrator put these words into the mouth of Abū Huraira.

The same ḥadīth has again been narrated by Muslim through quite a different channel, with an introductory note from the last narrator Yaḥyā ibn Ya'mar, as follows: "The first man who held the view of qadar in Baṣra was Ma'bad al Juhani, so I and Ḥumaid ibn 'Abd al-Raḥmān went out on a pilgrimage, and we said that if we meet any Companion of the Holy Prophet, we will question him about what these persons say regarding qadar, and it was granted to us to meet 'Abd-Allāh ibn 'Umar entering the mosque" (M. 1 : 1). The note then goes on to say that the narrator asked 'Abd-Allāh "about people who say there is no qadar¹ and that the affair begins just

1. These people are here spoken of as denying qadar, but the name given to them by later theologians is Qadariya which would mean "upholders of qadar." Hence it was that the Mu'tazila, who later on became the upholders of this theory, argued that the name Qadariya could not be applied to them but to the upholders of the doctrine of qadar. The orthodox argument on the other hand was that the Mu'tazila, or their

THE RELIGION OF ISLĀM

now." Then the same ḥadīth is related in different words, and the part of it under discussion runs thus: "That thou believe in Allāh and His angels and His books and His messengers and the last day and that thou believe in the qadar, the good of it and the evil of it." It will be noticed that the words "meeting with Him (*liqā'i-hi*)" are omitted in this ḥadīth, while to the belief in the qadar of Abū Huraira's ḥadīth are added the words *khairi-hi wa sharri-hi* i.e., *the good of it and the evil of it*. The introductory note is too clear. Discussions were being carried on relating to qadar, and a party had arisen which entirely denied qadar. 'Abd-Allāh ibn 'Umar lived till the 73rd year of the Hijra, and on being questioned about the matter, he is alleged not only to have upheld qadar. but also to have related a ḥadīth which mentioned belief in qadar as one of the fundamentals of Islām. Bukhārī has not accepted this ḥadīth, while Muslim, granting the correctness of Bukhārī's ḥadīth, which does not make any mention of qadar, has shown that Ibn 'Umar's ḥadīth cannot be relied upon, and probably anxiety to silence opponents had led to indiscretion on the part of some controversialist.

It is difficult to say what meaning faith in qadar carried. The words occurring in one ḥadīth are "that thou believe in qadar, in the whole of it," and in a second, "that thou believe in qadar, in the good of it and the evil of it." A third version, "that thou believe in qadar in the good of it and the evil of it, being from Allāh," which is ordinarily

predecessors, who questioned the qadar of God, set up a rival qadar of man, inasmuch as they believed that man was the creator of his own deeds. But perhaps the word qadar was used by these disputants in the sense of *qudra*, i. e., *power*, and the two contending parties had gone to two extremes, those who upheld the absolute power of God, refusing that man had any free choice, and those who upheld the theory of the absolute power of man over his deeds. The truth lies midway between these two extreme views.

QADAR OR TARDIR

met with in the books on '*aqaid*, I have not been able to trace to any *hadith*. It is very probable that the latter two additions were even later than the first formulation of belief in qadar. If we take the word qadar in the original sense in which it is used in the Holy Qur'an, a belief "in qadar, in the whole of it" would only mean that one must believe that everything in this universe is subject to a law and under a limitation, God alone being the Controller of all. If we take the next form, "that thou believe in qadar, in the good of it and the evil of it," "the good and the evil" does not refer to the good or evil deeds of man, but to the good or bad circumstances under which man is placed to work out his destiny. The original words *khair* and *sharr* have been freely used in the Holy Qur'an in this sense. I give a few examples: "Surely man is created of a hasty temperament, being greatly grieved when evil (*sharr*) afflicts him, and niggardly when good (*khair*) befalls him" (70 : 19-21); "And man prays for evil *sharr* as he ought to pray for good (*khair*) and man is ever hasty" (17 : 11); "And if Allah should hasten the evil (*sharr*) to men as they desire the hastening on of good (*khair*), their doom should certainly have been decreed for them" (10 : 11); "Every soul must taste of death, and We try you by evil (*sharr*) and good (*khair*) by way of probation" (21 : 35). In fact, *khair* is anything which brings good and its opposite is *sharr* (R.); and *khair* or *sharr* means *doing good* or *doing evil* only when a word meaning *doing* is added to it, the equivalent for which is '*amal*. The good of qadar and the evil of qadar, therefore, mean only whatever of good fortune or evil fortune comes to man. The meaning would therefore be that whatever of good or evil fortune comes to man, it must be accepted as coming from God; in other words a man must completely surrender himself to the Divine

THE RELIGION OF ISLĀM

will under all circumstances. This, as already shown, is one of the great lessons of life which has been taught to the Muslim.

The first man who formulated the orthodox views which are accepted by the general

Ash'ari's view.

body of Muslims was Imām Abu-l-

Ḥasan Ash'arī, after whom his followers are known as Ashā'ira, and he plainly states this to be the significance of a faith in qadar; for, speaking of the beliefs of Ahl Sunna and the followers of Ḥadīth, he says: "And that good (*khair*) and evil (*sharr*) are by the qadza' of Allāh and by His qadar, and they believe in the qadza' of Allāh and His qadar, in the good of it and the evil of it, the sweet of it and the bitter of it, and that they do not control for themselves any profit or any loss" (MI. p. 292). Evidently the words "sweet" and "bitter" (*huluw-wi-hi wa murri-hi*) and the words "profit" and "loss" are added to explain that by good and evil, *khair* and *sharr*, are meant good fortune and evil fortune, ease and hardship, not good and evil deeds done by man. This contentment under all conditions is, as already shown, one of the great lessons of life taught to a Muslim, but it is neither a doctrine nor a principle of faith.

This much is certain that belief in qadar does not mean belief in predestination; for predestination, for which the Arabic word is *jabr*, has never been the belief of the Muslim community. The Jabariya, or believers in predestination, have, on the other hand, been recognized as a heretical sect. A strict predestinarian, who believes that man has no control at all over his actions, would deny the very basic principle of religion, that is, the responsibility of man for his actions. The orthodox position has always been the middle one. Man has a free will, but that will is exercised under certain limitations. It is only the Divine will that can be called

QADAR OR TAQDIR

an absolutely free will, a will under no limitations, but everything created, and therefore everything human, is subject to qadar, to a Divine measure of things, to limitations imposed upon it by a Higher controlling Power. Man is the possessor neither of absolute knowledge, nor of absolute power, nor yet of absolute will. All these attributes belong properly to God. Human knowledge, human power and human will are all subject to limitations, and these limitations are placed upon man by the Divine measure which is called qadar. It is only in this sense that a Muslim can be said to have *faitu* in qadar.

