

**Fundamentals of the
CHRISTIAN FAITH
in the Light of the Gospels**

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The Christian Faith
In Light of the Gospels

I feel indebted to Mirza Masum Beg
who very kindly undertook to render the
Urdu original into English.

— The Author

Foreword

Speaking of the Gospel of Jesus, God confirms in the Holy Quran that it was revealed by Him (3 : 3), and that Jesus was His apostle (4 : 171), and a true and righteous servant; and (19 : 30) speaking of his mother, Mary, God testifies that she was a chaste and pure woman (21 : 91; 66 : 12). These Divine declarations were intended to absolve and acquit both Mary and Jesus of the disgraceful charges which the Jews had leveled against them. These obscene and contemptuous charges had lacerated and rent the hearts of the Christians; and the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace and the blessings of God be upon him) who always stood for and supported truth, finding the Christians a target of tyranny and oppression, made up his mind to help them. The Christians had their abode at Najran, a place far-flung from Medina, and were helpless and weak, whereas the Jews who were much superior to the Christians in knowledge, wealth and number, lived in Medina along with the Holy Prophet. To stand by the weak, which was bound to provoke the wrath of the stronger nation, was certainly no small or easy task. The so-called civilized nations of the twentieth century have nothing to do with the righteousness of a cause, nor do they cherish any respect or regard for fair play and justice in favor of a weaker people subjected to oppression. On the contrary, they would stand up to support the aggression of a stronger nation to gain their selfish ends; the weeping and wailing of a weaker people, even though they may be in the right, does not excite in them any feeling of sympathy. But the Holy Prophet, who always stressed the adoption of righteousness and truth and maintenance of equity and justice, did not hesitate even for a moment to render help to the oppressed Christians, even at the risk of provoking the animos-

ity of a stronger people who were stricken with prejudice to an abnormal degree. And it was for this reason that some European writers as well as some commentators of the Holy Bible have been pleased to call the Holy Prophet “Chivalrous” for his unique heroism and courage.

There is yet another fact worth mentioning. The Holy Prophet had left behind him his word of honor that when the Muslims would conquer Egypt, they should abide by the sacred covenant already announced by him, viz., that it should be the responsibility of the Muslim rulers to protect the life, honor, and property of every non-Muslim subject of the Islamic State, that all the rights of citizenship of such subjects should be properly safeguarded, and that they should enjoy freedom of speech and conscience. All these rights and privileges were conferred on the Christian subjects of Egypt when it was conquered. However it came to pass on one occasion that the son of ‘Amr bin al-‘As, the conqueror and governor of Egypt, beat up a Christian in public. This incident threw the Muslim rulers to a severe test. When the news reached Medina, the Caliph Hazrat Umar Faruq summoned both the governor and the young prince to appear before him at Medina, where the Caliph reprimanded the governor, saying:

_ Arabic is used here.

[i.e. since how long have you assumed the authority of enslaving people born free by their mothers?] This reproof uttered by a just and truth-loving Caliph, as Hazrat Umar was, is a historical fact and shall abide and endure for all time to come. Besides this sharp admonition, the young prince was also punished in the presence of his father and the public.

This action of justice created confidence in the minds of the people: it convinced them that the rights of the non-Muslim subjects were absolutely safe and secure in the Islamic State. On the Christians of Egypt particularly it produced a very wholesome effect; they would never imagine that the Muslim rulers and their princes could also be held to account for their deeds and punished, and that too for the sake of protection of the non-

Muslims. They came to know that the Islamic law recognizes no such thing as any person's special privilege or prerogative.

Having recounted these instructive facts of history, we wish the Christians of the world in general, and those of Pakistan in particular, to recall Jesus' (peace be on him) teaching: *Love thine enemy*. Is it, then, right for them to harbor animosity and ill-will in their minds against such a kind and benevolent personality as the Holy Prophet of Islam and pour into the ears of the Muslim youth poisonous and perverted things against him? The people of Pakistan expected no such treatment at the hands of the Christians, and it is not surprising that this behavior should shock and rend the hearts of the people of Pakistan.

The Christian subjects of Pakistan are witnesses to the pleasing spectacle of Islamic toleration. They are living a life of honor and peace. They enjoy freedom of every kind, and their way of life, their religious rites and worship are not interfered with in any way. Their rights are thoroughly safeguarded and many Christians hold high positions in the country's administrative machinery. These are, undoubtedly, the fine fruits of the Holy Prophet's sublime teachings which they are enjoying to their benefit. It is, therefore, not proper for them to use offensive and bitter language in respect of this benign benefactor. We appeal to the Christians of the world in general, and those of Pakistan in particular, that they should revise and reconsider their methods and ways of preaching, and abstain from practices which injure Muslim feelings. The world today stands in need of peace and mutual goodwill more than it ever did before. The Holy Prophet's principles which have been stated in the clearest terms point out that just as God is the *Rabb* and Lord of the entire universe, so He is the *Rabb*, i.e. Cherisher, of all the nations of the world, that all the nations of the world are one great family of God, and that those who treat this great Family of the Most Beneficent God with kindness and affection are His loved ones. It has, further, been taught by the Holy Prophet that just as, for the development of our physical faculties, God has bestowed upon all nations of the world, without distinction or discrimination, the blessings of sun and moon, wind and rain, in

like manner, for the development of their spiritual and moral faculties, He has showered His spiritual bounties upon all the nations of the world in the form of Heavenly Books; and for that reason, such noble and righteous men of God have been appearing among the nations as worshipped and adored the Most High God, and rendered selfless service to His creatures. And it was for this reason that the Muslims have been commanded to believe in all the prophets and Sacred Scriptures of all the nations of the world, and to cherish profound respect for them all, and to have sincere faith that God's good and righteous men are found among all the peoples of the world. These articles of faith go a long way to bring about genuine union among the peoples of the world, and to establish real peace.

The Author

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Fundamentals of
The Christian Faith
in the Light of the Gospels

Man studies Sacred Scriptures that he may be able to get a good knowledge of the Most High God, and of the ways and means of His will and pleasure. Both these important objects can be gained through a careful study of the Gospels. First of all, the Gospels should be studied to obtain knowledge of the Most High God; for, without a knowledge of that Supreme Being, neither peace of mind nor purity of action can be achieved.

THE CONCEPT OF DIVINE UNITY IN THE GOSPELS

About the Most High God the Gospels say that He is the One True God, Who alone should be worshipped and adored, served devotedly and obeyed; and that it is senseless and irrational to raise a creature of His, whosoever he may be, to Divine heights. In this context, the following verses may be read with advantage:

Again, the devil taketh him [Jesus] up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; and saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve (Matt., 4:8-10).

This passage inculcates in an unambiguous and plain language that the Most High God is the One True God, Who alone should be worshipped and adored, and no other being excepting Him should be invoked in prayer. Besides Matthew, other Gospels, too, have laid stress upon this rational and useful doctrine:

(1) And one of the scribes asked . . . him, Which is the first commandment of all? And Jesus answered him, The first of all

the commandments *is*: Hear O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord: and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart , and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this *is* the first commandment. And the second *is* like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these. And the scribe said unto him, Well, Master, thou hast said the truth: for there is one God; and there is none other than he.... And when Jesus saw that he answered discreetly, he said unto him, Thou art not far from the kingdom of God.... (Mark, 12:28-34).

(2) And, behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? He said unto him, What is written in the law? How readest thou? And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself. And he said unto him, Thou has answered right: this do, and thou shalt live (Luke, 10:25-28).

Matthew in his Gospel (22:37-39) has also recorded this rational teaching *literatim* and then stresses its importance thus (22:40): *On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.*

(3) And this is eternal life, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent [as Prophet] (John, 17:3).

From these passages, it is clear beyond all doubt that Jesus taught and preached that man should believe in the only true God, and should worship and adore none besides Him.

DIVINE COMMANDMENT AND TRADITION

As against this Divine teaching, it is highly foolish and improper to take to any other traditional man-made teaching. Jesus, too, had sensed this inclination of the people, namely, that setting aside the Book of God, they begin to show obedience to the personal biddings of their religious preceptors. Jesus said:

For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men.... And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the

commandment of God, that ye may keep your tradition (Mark, 7:8-9).

This important caution of Jesus has also been recorded by Matthew in his Gospel (15:3-6):

Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition?.... Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition.

This word of warning uttered by Jesus himself should be sufficient to awaken the Christians to the Gospel truth, so that they should refuse to accept the dogma of Trinity which stands in defiance of the unity of God.

JESUS DID NOT TEACH THE DOCTRINE OF ATONEMENT

SIN WASHED OFF BY REPENTANCE

The other doctrine whereon Jesus has laid special stress is that man, renouncing all his sinful activities through remorse and repentance, should become as pure and clean as an innocent child whose very nature abhors sin and cherishes love for virtue. Jesus even tries to carry man much higher than this state of innocence, and inculcates that if you wish to be perfect, you must imbue yourself with Divine attributes. This is indeed an ideal teaching, which stands in bold contrast to the notion of Original Sin and the consequent dogma of Atonement. To quote Jesus' own words:

Then were there brought unto him little children, that he should put *his* hands on them, and pray: and the disciples rebuked them. But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven (Matt., 19:13-14).

Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect (Matt., 5:48).

That man should strive to become innocent and pure like children, and that he should imbue himself with Divine attributes, was the highest aim of Jesus' ministry. It will, therefore, be

the grossest injustice to Jesus to assert that he inculcated that man was sinful by nature. On the contrary, Jesus never believed that man had become rotten and impure to such an extent that it was impossible to reclaim and reform him, and that the only way to save and deliver him was that Jesus himself should lay down his life on the cursed Cross, bearing the burden of the sins of humanity. There is nothing in the Gospel to approve and endorse this doctrine. The Gospel, while directing on the one hand that man should become sinless and pure like innocent children, and should imbue himself with Divine attributes, cannot on the other hand have subscribed to the doctrine of Atonement.

MAN'S MORAL AND SPIRITUAL REFORM

The recipe which can bring about and restore man's spiritual and moral equilibrium is Repentance. It means the giving up of the wrong way, and returning to the right path. Man quits the wrong path only when he comes to believe that trudging upon it will prove injurious. He, therefore, returns to the right way, remorse-stricken. The fire of regret and repentance burns up and consumes his sins; and his mind consequently regains spiritual harmony. The human body has inherently been made healthful by the Most High God. Of course, man sometimes falls ill, but he regains health after proper treatment. Very much in the same way, God has created man sound and strong spiritually also, but whenever he falls a prey to some immoral tendency, repentance comes to his rescue and he recovers moral health. The same Supreme Being, Who has laid down a law for the physical recovery of the ailing man, has also ordained a law for his spiritual healing. And it was in view of this eternal truth that Jesus emphasized that one should have recourse to repentance for spiritual reconstruction. See what Jesus observes in this connection:

From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand (Matt., 4:17).

And Levi made him a great feast in his own house: and there was a great company of publicans and of others that sat down with them. But their scribes and Pharisees murmured against his

disciples, saying, Why do ye eat and drink with the publicans and sinners? And Jesus answering said unto them, They that are whole need not a physician; but they that are sick. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance (Luke, 5:29-32).

GOD IS PLEASED WITH THOSE WHO REPENT

Jesus (peace be on him) further said: Just as a shepherd, recovering one lost sheep, becomes happy and pleased:

I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance (Luke, 15:7).

It is obvious from these quotations that Jesus believed in the universal fact that healthy and the “whole” persons exist along with the sick, and the sinners side by side with the righteous, and that just as the healthy and the “whole” stand in no need of a physician, likewise the righteous need no repentance. Jesus also says that a sinner is healed with repentance and that when a sinner repents, there is joy in heaven over this act of the sinner.

REPENTANCE PROCURES PARADISE

Jesus reposed full belief in the fact, as is borne out by the following verses, that a man could inherit paradise by having recourse to repentance and remorse:

Jesus saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That the publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you. For John came unto you in the way of righteousness, and ye believed him not: but the publicans and harlots believed him: and ye, when ye had seen *it*, repented not afterward, that ye might believe him (Matt., 21:31-32).

Jesus has stated here in clear words that Repentance is such a sure and sovereign remedy that it would prove efficacious for any and every ailing person in every age. John the Baptist tried this effective cure with the result that the publicans and the harlots entered the kingdom of God.

UNIVERSAL BELIEF IN THE HEALING AND UPLIFTING POWER OF REPENTANCE

The unfailing efficacy of this cure is admitted by every nation of the world. Through Repentance sinful people are ennobled and purified; even the thieves give up their life-long habit of stealing, and begin to live a new and honest life; and the liars, forsaking their degrading habit, become trustworthy and truthful. Reformatory schools profess that repentance is efficacious, jails make use of this universal cure with manifest advantage, by the grace whereof some of their wretched inmates give up their old habits, and start a better and improved life. If man's reclamation had been an impossibility, no reformatory schools would ever have been established, nor would Jesus or his forerunner, John the Baptist, have emphasized the doctrine of Repentance. We read in Matthew:

Then went out to him [John the Baptist] Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan, and were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins. But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance: and think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to *our* father...therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire (Matt., 3:5-10).

In fine, all the wise men of the world and all the apostles raised by God have found it very useful for the reclamation of a fallen man that he should repent, i.e. believing that the wrong path pursued by him is deadly and destructive, he should turn back to the right way. It is true that he repairs to this course only when the disadvantages of the wrong path become conspicuous before his eyes and he becomes fully conscious of the shame and disgrace that await him. The fire of self-reproach burns down his sins to ashes, and the tears of his regret and remorse wash off the stains produced by his transgression. Repentance was the chief cure of John the Baptist about whom the following description will prove instructive, for it has a special bearing on this subject:

He shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb. And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God [through repentance]...and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just [through repentance] (Luke, 1:15-17).

The teaching of John the Baptist bore good fruit so that even the harlots entered the kingdom of God (Matt., 21:31). To assert in the face of these hard facts that man cannot be delivered of sin is to contradict the Divine truth, and to give the lie to the teaching of the righteous prophets like Jesus and John the Baptist. Jesus has, like John, laid utmost stress upon the doctrine that man can be cleansed of sin through repentance, and become as pure and clean as an innocent child:

And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, and said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven (Matt., 18:2-3).

Jesus has indeed expounded and explained this great principle of Repentance on many occasions. He said, addressing Nicodemus:

Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born? (John 3:3-4).

It is obviously clear that Nicodemus could not understand the words spoken by Jesus. Jesus meant to say that man should bring about such a complete change by means of repentance that it may seem as if he was born again. All the prophets, as stated by Jesus himself, have agreed unanimously upon this great principle taught by Jesus and John the Baptist:

Woe unto you! for ye build the sepulchers of the prophets, and your fathers killed them. Truly ye bear witness that ye allow the deeds of your fathers: for they indeed killed them, and ye build their sepulchers. Therefore also said the wisdom of God, I will send them prophets and apostles, and *some* of them they shall

slay and persecute.... Verily I say unto you, lawyers! for ye have taken away the key of knowledge: ye entered not in yourselves, and them that were entering in ye hindered (Luke, 11:47-52).

THE LAW OF RECLAMATION

It can be easily understood from this sacred text that the law which the Most High God gave unto the prophets for the reclamation of a fallen man was the doctrine of Repentance, and he actually succeeded in bringing many a fallen man back to the virtuous path by its means, and sinners became worthy and fit to be admitted into the kingdom of God. This beneficial law which had been inculcated by the prophets is also found embedded in the very nature of man. Parents reform their children by this effective cure, and teachers succeed in reclaiming spoilt children. It is on account of this natural goodness of the human heart that convicts come to adopt a new life and become useful citizens of the State. It is the same natural law by means of which ailments of the human body are cured, and the body once again becomes healthy and "whole." In the physical as well as in the spiritual world this law of God holds good, and it has proved to be invariably true and effective. The Most High God, being merciful and compassionate, would never wish that a man who has once fallen ill should ever remain so. In the same way, it is not His law that one who has once committed a sin should continue to welter in sin, and should be condemned and thrown out of His kingdom for all time to come.

JESUS AND THE DOCTRINE OF ATONEMENT

Jesus has taught in the clearest terms that just as it is in the nature of man to forgive and forget, in like manner it is also the glory of the Most High God to forgive sins. And it is for this reason that he has laid utmost emphasis on this teaching that it is proper and meet for a person to forgive him who has offended against him or, in other words, who has committed a sin against him. Jesus has taught us to pray: O God! forgive us our sins, as we forgive them who have sinned against us. He has also warned us, saying, if we forgive not them who have trespassed against

us, the Most High God, too, will not forgive us for our trespasses. Let us ponder over the words of his prayer:

After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation...For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: but if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses (Matt., 6:9-15).

The same teaching has been reiterated in the following verses:

Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times? Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but until seventy times seven. Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king, which would take account of his servants...Then the lord of that servant was moved with compassion, and loosed him, and forgave him the debt. . . .And his lord was wroth [with another servant who had not forgiven his brother's debt of an hundred pence], and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him. So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses (Matt., 18:21-35).

Furthermore:

Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone? Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him? Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets (Matt., 7:9-12).

This teaching which constitutes real good tidings is in perfect unison with human nature and is readily accepted.

THE WAYS OF GOD'S WILL AND PLEASURE

The teaching of the prophets is not limited to repentance alone. This part of their teaching pertains only to those people who are morally sick. As for those who are not so, or have recovered after a spell of moral ailment, the most important part of their teaching is to persuade them to seek and search after the ways of God's will and pleasure. Jesus, who was one of the apostles of God, has also laid stress upon the achievement of God's will and pleasure, observing that it can be obtained only through complete submission to His commandments. He said that the Divine Word certainly gives life, that is to say, the Word of God or the Book of God, which enjoined upon men to walk in the way of God's will and pleasure, infuses a new life into them. In Jesus' own words:

(1) Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work (John, 4:34).

In this verse Jesus has stated clearly in respect of himself that he had been sent by the Most High God as an apostle, and that the purpose of his life was to do the will of God, and fulfil the work of preaching truth, entrusted to him. The highest destiny of all the prophets and in fact of all mankind is to carry out the will of God — which results in a happy and peaceful life. This sublime and ennobling doctrine contradicts and falsifies the notions of Original Sin and the consequent Atonement.

SUPERIORITY OF SPIRITUAL OVER BLOOD RELATIONSHIP

(2) Said Jesus, if his blood-relations believed not in him, they were not his relatives, and that his relatives were those who acted according to the will of the Most High God. It is stated in the Gospel according to Mark (3:31-35):

There came then his brethren and his mother, and, standing without, sent unto him, calling him. And the multitude sat about him, and they said unto him, Behold, thy mother and thy brethren without seek for thee. And he answered them, saying, Who is my mother, or my brethren? And he looked round about

on them which sat about him, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren! For whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, and my sister, and mother.

It appears from this statement of Jesus that his mother, brothers and sisters believed not in his teachings, and it was for this reason that he neither stood up to receive them, nor considered their relationship to be a point of honor and pride for himself. On the other hand, he gave preference over them to those others who accepted and acknowledged his teachings.¹ Jesus himself obeyed the commandments of the Most High God, and he required of his followers also to do the same. According to Jesus, those who do the will of God are his relations and are placed above those who claim blood relationship with him.

DIVINE WORD GIVES LIFE

(3) Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungered. And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God (Matt., 4:1-4).

Just as rain generates life in the dead soil, in the same way Divine Word brings to life the dead soil of the human heart. It is a fact of Nature that the human heart is God-conscious, and it is on account of this natural affinity that the Word of God succeeds in fertilizing the soil of human heart. And just as the development of body imparts strength to physical organs, likewise the development of mental and spiritual faculties builds up an excellent moral fabric. Teachers entrusted with the education of young

1 Jesus' indifferent attitude towards his kith and kin was not without reason. They were opposed to his teachings, which they called and condemned as a madman's raving. Mark has this sad story on record in the following words (3:20-21):

And the multitude cometh together again, so that they could not so much as eat bread. And when his friends heard *of it*, they went out to lay hold on him: for they said, He is beside himself.

children know full well that it is the proper evolution of the faculties planted in the minds of children that makes man a real man, and lifts him up to the highest plane of spirituality. The purpose of human life is achieved by unfolding and evolving these faculties which the Most High God has created in man, and it was with reference to this great aim that Jesus had said that Divine Word infuses life into the human heart. This teaching of Jesus is, of a truth, sublime and scientific. His great aim was to cultivate human faculties with the water of heavenly word, and this should be the highest goal and objective before mankind. All psychologists and educationists keep this principle in view. No educationist can subscribe to the dogma of Original Sin, which forms the basis of Atonement. This truth was affirmed by Jesus: Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God (Matt., 5:8). What a fine and elevating teaching is this, compared to which the doctrine of Atonement neither appeals, nor offers any attraction, to the people of knowledge and understanding!

ONE AND THE SAME LAW FOR THE EVOLUTION OF BODY AND SOUL

Jesus has said that the same God Who has created body has also created soul, i.e. the creator of both body and soul is one and the same Being. It is, therefore, necessary that there should be one and the same law governing the evolution of both the body and the soul. In this connection, Luke records (11:37-41):

And as he spake, a certain Pharisee besought him to dine with him: and he went in, and sat down to meat. And when the Pharisee saw *it*, he marveled that he had not first washed before dinner. And the Lord said unto him, Now do ye Pharisees make clean the outside of the cup and the platter; but your inward part is full of ravening and wickedness. *Ye* fools, did not he that made that which is without make that which is within also? But rather give alms of such things as you have; and, behold, all things are clean unto you.

The texts of the Gospel set forth lucidly that there is, in the laws governing the body and the soul, homogeneity and coher-

ence. If the soul be sick, abomination creeps into human deeds, but if the soul be healthy and pure, goodness and excellence are reflected in man's actions. Divine Word is the light of the soul. When the soul is illuminated with God's Word, goodness and virtue are mirrored in human actions. This teaching of Jesus, there is no gainsaying the fact, is at once rational and useful. It appeals to human nature and penetrates into the human soul. To inculcate and preach the unintelligible doctrine of Atonement, as against this beautiful teaching, is to belie and repudiate the shining truths taught by Jesus.

SALVATION DEPENDS ON OBEDIENCE TO DIVINE COMMANDMENTS

Salvation depends upon a true belief in the existence of the Most High God, and complete obedience to His commandments. Jesus said:

(1) And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou has sent [as a prophet] (John, 17:3).

To repose faith in the One True God and to look upon Jesus as His apostle has been inculcated in this verse. And these two articles of faith, which are of fundamental importance, are the only factors that can create moral rectitude and purity in human actions. Just as it is necessary to believe in the One True God, in the same way it is also necessary to believe in the apostle who points to the ways and means of acquiring Divine pleasure, and who himself leads the life of an exemplar.

(2) Emphasizing the importance of doing good deeds, Jesus said:

And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say? Whosoever cometh to me, and heareth my sayings, and doeth them, I will shew you to whom he is like: he is like a man which built an house, and digged deep, and laid the foundation on a rock: and when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently upon that house, and could not shake it: for it was founded upon a rock. But he that heareth, and doeth not, is like a man that

without a foundation built an house upon the earth; against which the stream did beat vehemently, and immediately it fell; and the ruin of that house was great (Luke, 6:46-49).

(3) Matthew reads to the same effect:

And, behold, one came and said unto him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life? And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? *there is* none good but one, *that is*, God: but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments....The young man saith unto him, All these things have I kept from my youth up: what lack I yet? Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go *and* sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven (Matt., 19:16-21).

And again:

(4) There came one running, and kneeled to him, and asked him, Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life? And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? *there is* none good but one, *that is*, God. Thou knowest the commandments. . . .And he answered and said unto him, Master, all these have I observed from my youth....Then Jesus . . .said unto him, One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven (Mark, 10:17-21).

(5) And they [the angels] shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; and shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth, Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father (Matt., 13:41-43).

(6) And these [i.e. the evil-doers] shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal (Matt.,25:46).

(7) I say unto you, that except your righteousness shall exceed *the righteousness* of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven (Matt., 5:20).

(8) Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven (Matt., 5:16).

From these verses it is clear beyond all doubt that Jesus, besides requiring the people to be chaste and pure, also brought home to them with great force and clarity that, without real and true righteousness, life eternal could never be achieved. Furthermore, it transpires from a study of these verses that the most desirable thing, as believed by Jesus, was that people should turn to and obey the Most High God, and adopt a life of God-fearing and good actions. This and this only is the way that pleases God and God's people. The dogma of Atonement, therefore, appears to be repugnant to the true teachings of Jesus Christ. This doctrine should therefore be renounced.

SINFUL LIFE LEADS INTO HELL

Just as noble and virtuous living gains life eternal for man, in the same way a sinful and vicious life generates the fire of hell. In this connection Gospel texts read:

(1) Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!...ye are the children of them which killed the prophets...*Ye* serpents, *ye* generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell? (Matt., 23:29-33).

(2) The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruit thereof (Matt., 21-43).

(3) They [the angels] shall gather out of his kingdom...them which do iniquity; and shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father (Matt., 13:41-43).

(4) So shall it be at the end of the world [just as from among the good fish the bad ones are cast away]: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth (Matt., 13:49-50).

(5) O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil trea-

sure bringeth forth evil things. But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof on the day of judgement. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned (Matt., 12:34-37).

(6) A woman of ill-repute came and poured perfumed ointment on Jesus' head and feet, whereupon Jesus said:

Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, *there* shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her (Matt., 26:13; Mark, 14:9; Luke, 7:37-39).

(7) When a poor widow contributed two mites which made a farthing, to be spent in the way of God, Jesus said unto his disciples:

Verily I say unto you, That this poor widow hath cast more in, than all they which have cast into the treasury (Mark, 12:43).

These verses throw a flood of light on some very vital questions, affirming that salvation depends on leading a righteous and honest life. Even the smallest good is acceptable to and has its reward with the Most High God. The doctrine of Atonement, in the face of this great truth, appears opposed to the word of God, and therefore loses ground. The following verses run in the same strain:

(8) Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels (Matt., 25:41).

(9) Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven....And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity. Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man....And everyone that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand (Matt., 7:21-26).

(10) Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or

children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's. But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time (Mark, 10:29).

(11) And ye shall be hated of all *men* for my name's sake: but he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved (Mark, 13:13).

(12) A Samaritan took mercy on an afflicted man. Jesus appreciated and admired him, saying that he acted up to the Divine Commandment which said: Love thy neighbor as thyself (Luke, 10:33-37).

It can be easily gathered from these clearly-worded verses of the Gospel that the Most High God thinks well of and requires noble deeds. His Law, in this respect, is one and the same for a Christian, a Samaritan, and any other non-Christian. People who call themselves Christians, but act not in conformity with Jesus' teachings, shall be turned out of the kingdom of God; for lip-profession has no value, no atonement will come to their rescue.

GOD FORGIVES SINNERS

God hears not the sinners, nor accepts their worship. But if a sinner should repent, and, recoiling from his evil course, reform himself, then the Most High God certainly forgives him. It is recorded in John (9:31) that God *heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth*. Likewise, it is stated in Luke (15:7) that even if one sinner should repent, and forsaking the wrong way, return to the Right Path, the Most High God becomes happy and pleased.

THE RIGHTEOUS HAVE ALWAYS EXISTED IN THE WORLD, SAYS THE GOSPEL

Whereas it is explicitly stated in the Gospel that ever since the world came into being, the righteous people have ever been present in it, the Gospel nowhere says that the whole of the human race is sinful by nature. From a study of the verses quoted below, it becomes abundantly clear that Adam himself was good and righteous; and from his seed righteous people have been born in every age.

(1) God created man [Adam] in his *own* image (Gen., 1:27).

(2) Adam. . .was the *son* of God (Luke, 3:38).

To be called and denominated as the son of God is, as a matter of fact, the highest honor which can be attained only by doing good and righteous deeds with a devoted and sincere heart. It would be highly absurd for the Gospel to say that Adam was the *son* of God and then to say, in the same breath, that he was born in sin, and so also his progeny,

(3) Adam had two sons, Abel and Cain. The Torah says about them: *The Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering* (Gen., 4:4). Abel was, in the sight of God, good and righteous, and was designated as the first martyr (refer Gen., 4:3-5; Matt., 23:35; Luke, 11:51).

It is thus evident that there were born, among the children of Adam, good as well as guilty persons, and that neither Adam nor the whole of his progeny were sinful and iniquitous. The historical truths recorded in the Bible prove conclusively that the doctrine of calling and condemning Adam and his offspring as sinful by nature is a doctrine repugnant to the Divine teaching revealed by the Most High God. For instance:

ZACHARIAS AND HIS WIFE WERE RIGHTEOUS

(4) Zacharias and his wife, Elisabeth, were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless (Luke, 1:5-6).

(5) John the Baptist was righteous and great. It was said of him through a prophecy that *he shall be great in the sight of the Lord...and shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb* (Luke 1:13-15).

These verses prove beyond question that Zacharias and his wife were both sinless and righteous, and that it is within the power of man to abide by and obey Divine Commandments, and that all blessedness and bliss lies in the observance of Divine Laws. It is, therefore, absolutely wrong to assert that the children of Adam are sinful by nature and that salvation is obtainable by atonement and not by means of righteous living.

The Church Christianity, as we have it today, condemns the best of creation by calling all the human race as inherently sinful. Such a teaching, it needs no saying, which casts disgrace on the entire humanity, certainly cannot be from the Heavenly Father.

DOCTRINE OF ATONEMENT CONTRARY TO BIBLICAL TEACHING

Both Zacharias and his wife were righteous and blameless, and their son John, too, who had been raised as a prophet by the Most High God, was righteous and great and, through his sublime teaching, people also became noble and righteous. In view of these truths stated by the Gospel, the doctrine of Atonement is evidently baseless and irrational; rather it is dead against the true and sensible teaching of the Bible. To regard such a dogma as a cardinal principle of religion and to ascribe it to Jesus Christ is highly objectionable.

MENTION OF PROPHETESSES AND RIGHTEOUS WOMEN

(6) Even Joseph, the husband of Mary, has been spoken of in the Gospel as *a just man* (Matt., 1:19), and in the same way, another man, Joseph of Arimathaea, has been called *a good and just man* (Luke, 23:50).

(7) A woman, Anna, was a prophetess (Luke, 2:36). Besides her, the Torah and the Gospel make mention of other women who were Divine Messengers and, pointing out the ways of God's will and pleasure, called upon the people to walk in the way of God. It is not, therefore, proper and meet for the Christians to call and condemn woman as the source of sin, neither is it right to believe that man has ever been such a devil.

(8) And, behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name *was* Simeon; and the same man *was* just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel: and the Holy Ghost was upon him (Luke, 2:25).

ENOCH, TOO, IS ALIVE IN HEAVEN

(9) By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God. But without faith *it is* impossible to please *him* (Hebrews, 11:5-6).

The Gospel calls Enoch as the near and dear one of God. And it is, therefore, unjustifiable and incorrect to profess and preach as a fundamental principle of faith that all the children of Adam are sinful, and that the only way to save and deliver them is to repose belief in the dogma of Atonement.

This sacred verse tells us that Enoch is alive in heaven, and the commandment of the Most High God in respect of him is that he shall not see death. If we should accept, for the sake of argument, the Christian claim that Jesus is alive in heaven wherefrom he will descend again on this earth, and then he will close his eyes in a sleep that knows no waking, it shall have to be admitted in all fairness that Enoch has been given a higher status than Jesus

(10) Melchisedec, king of Salem, priest of the most high God....; first being by interpretation King of righteousness, and after that also King of Salem, which is, King of peace; without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God (Hebrews 7:1-3).

Whereas, on the one hand, the position of Melchisedec appears to be much superior in every respect to that of Jesus, on the other hand, it also becomes decisively clear that human race is not corrupted with innate sin, that there have always been good and great men, and that some of them were even higher in status than Jesus Christ. The people of the Gospel should ponder over this very important question and see for themselves whether or not they have been setting at naught and repudiating the clear teaching of the Gospel.

(11) Jesus is called son of Joseph, son of David and son of Abraham. It proves conclusively that Joseph was a good and righteous man, as was also Prophet David of whose throne Jesus

was the rightful inheritor. Abraham is looked upon and regarded as their great progenitor by both the Jews and the Christians, and both take pride in calling themselves his progeny. Having accepted these great men as good and righteous and the near and dear ones of God, how can a sane and sensible man reconcile his conscience to the Christian notion that the whole of the human race is sinful by nature, and cannot be saved but by believing in Vicarious Atonement.

(12) It was a matter of belief with Jesus that the whole of the human race is not sinful, since both good and bad people are always found among all the nations of the world, and the sinners can return to the Right Path through repentance and become the dear ones of God. Jesus says that those who are healthy and “whole” need no physician, that is to say, those physically or spiritually sick can be cured by treatment, but there are, besides them, those who are sound in body and mind. Again, Jesus says that God’s sun shines upon the good and the bad, and His rain falls on both the righteous and the sinners. Turn to Matthew (5:44-45) and read:

Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.

To fly in the face of this clear and categorical teaching of Jesus, and believe in the dogma of Atonement, is but a great wrong.

BELIEF IN GOD REQUIRES OBEDIENCE TO HIS APOSTLE

Jesus said that for the achievement of eternal and everlasting life, it is essentially necessary that man should believe in the One True God, and it is equally necessary that one should believe in the apostleship of the prophet Jesus. In order to acquaint His servants with the ways that lead into His presence, God picks up a righteous man to be His apostle, and he, with the

blessing and grace of Divine guidance and his own excellent example, sets people on the Right Path. With reference to these two very important articles of faith, the Gospel has inculcated:

(1) And this is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou has sent [as thy apostle] (John, 17:3).

(2) Addressing his disciples, Jesus said:

He that receiveth you receiveth me, and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me (Matt., 10:40).

(3) Again:

Whosoever shall receive me, receiveth not me, but him that sent me (Mark, 9:37).

In these verses Jesus has expounded very explicitly the real purpose for which an apostle is sent, namely, to impart unto the people a knowledge of the Divine Being, and to call upon them to obey the Commandments of God, and to follow in the footsteps of this apostle. But the followers of the apostle, there is no gainsaying this fearful fact, either through mistake or having been overwhelmed with excessive love for him, invest him with Divinity instead of looking upon him as an apostle of God.

(4) He that hath received his testimony hath set to his seal that God is true. For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God (John, 3:33-34).

Here Jesus professes that he was God's apostle who appeared among his people to teach them the most important principle of the unity of God.

JESUS, A HUMAN BEING AND AN APOSTLE OF GOD.

In the verse quoted above, some very valuable truths have been stated: *first*, that Jesus was an apostle of God; *second*, that the teaching which he imparted unto the people was not his own, but it had been revealed unto him by the Most High God, and those who accepted that teaching set a seal on the fact of God's existence. And this is, of a truth, the intended purpose of religion.

(5) God's word came upon Jesus:

If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham. But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God (John, 8:39-40).

JESUS WAS AN APOSTLE OF GOD

Jesus answered them, and said, My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me (John, 7:16).

If I honor myself, my honor in nothing: it is my Father that honoreth me; of whom ye say, that He is your God (John, 8:54).

For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say and what I should speak (John, 12:49).

Now we know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth (John, 9:31).

These are precious truths which have been set forth with clarity to convince us that Jesus was not God, but was God's apostle, who preached that the pleasure of God can be obtained by worshipping Him and doing His will. Jesus has also stated that mankind consists of those who sin against God, and those who do His will; all mankind is not sinful. Jesus has again described himself as an apostle, and stated in categorical terms that the teaching preached by him was not his own personal word, but the Word of the Most High God, which he received and communicated to the people. The inevitable logical conclusion, therefore, is that if Jesus had called himself an apostle, he was, most surely, a human being, and the term "man" used in respect of him in John 8:40 supports the view that he was but a mortal.

(6) The Gospel has the following fact on its record:

And Jesus lifted up *his* eyes, and said, Father I thank thee that thou hast heard me. And I knew that thou hearest me always: but because of the people which stand by I said *it*, that they may believe that thou has sent me (John, 11:41- 42).

JESUS, A NEAR ONE OF GOD

The above verse is quite enlightening. Here Jesus describes himself as the *near one* of God whose prayer is answered by Him invariably, and Jesus offers his thanks to the Most High God, that his prayer and supplication may create an effect on the minds of those around him, and they may be persuaded to believe that he is a Divine messenger.

(7) Jesus cried and said, He that believeth on me, believeth not on me, but on him that sent me (John, 12:44).

The sole fact of his being sent by God as an apostle, as expounded in this verse, was that people might repose their faith in the Most High God.

(8) Said Jesus:

I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak. And I know that his commandment is life everlasting (John, 12:49-50).

Jesus has lucidly proclaimed, in this verse, that he had been sent by the Most High God or, in other words, he was an apostle of God, and that whatever he spoke, he spoke under Divine Commandment, and that it was not his own word which he spoke, but the Word of God which infuses life eternal; just as he had said according to Matthew (4:4) that:

Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. God's Word is that beneficial heavenly water which enlivens the soil of human heart. Jesus also said:

Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that receiveth whomsoever I send receiveth me; and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me (John, 13:20).

This text draws, as it were, a boundary line between the assignment of a prophet and the domain of God Almighty.

SIGN OF THE NEAR ONES OF GOD

Jesus has pointed out that the near and dear ones of God are those who obey and carry out, to their best, the commandments of the Most High God. In the verses quoted above Jesus has included himself in the list of God's chosen men and His apostles.

JESUS, NOT GOD, BUT GOD'S APOSTLE

The following sacred texts, in which the term *prophet* has been used in respect of Jesus, may now be read with advantage. When the opponents of Jesus raised objections against him, and refused to accept him as an apostle of God, Jesus said in reply that every nation had been indulging in such cruel treatment of the prophet of their age. It would be useful to reproduce below the text in which a mention has been made of the raillery and ridicule poured on him, and how Jesus calmed his conscience, saying that such an ill-treatment had invariably been meted out to the prophets.

JESUS WAS NOT GOD, BUT MAN

(1) And when he was come into his own country, he taught them in their synagogue, insomuch that they were astonished, and said, Whence hath this *man* this wisdom, and *these* mighty works? Is not this the carpenter's son? Is not his mother called Mary? And his brethren, James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas? And his sisters, are they not all with us? Whence then hath this *man* all these things? And they were offended in him. But Jesus said unto them, A prophet is not without honor save in his own country, and in his own house (Matt., 13:54-57).

A study of this sacred text discloses the hard fact that people looked upon and believed Jesus to be a man and the son of a man, saying that Jesus was born of his mother Mary, in the house of a carpenter, and that his parents had children, both boys and girls other than Jesus, and that it was odd that, being a man, a human being like themselves, he should put forth such big claims. Jesus said in reply: It is true that I am a human being. But it is also true that the Most High God picks up, from among the human beings, a man to be His prophet. I am also a prophet.

Prophets, in the past, had likewise been cruelly treated by their respective peoples. Instead of believing in them, the people deprecated and denounced them.

(2) And when he was come into Jerusalem [riding an ass], all the city was moved, saying, Who is this? And the multitude said, This is Jesus the prophet of Nazareth of Galilee (Matt., 21:10-11).

(3) The woman saith unto him, Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet (John, 4:19).

(4) For the Holy Ghost was not yet *given*; because that Jesus was not yet glorified. Many of the people therefore when they heard this saying, said Of a truth this is the Prophet (John, 7:39-40).

These texts point out very clearly that Jesus was not God, but he was sent by God.

(5) Jesus remained on the Cross for a short period of three hours. He had fallen into a state of complete unconsciousness, and was not dead, so that when his side was speared (John, 19:34), blood rushed out of his body. One Joseph of Arimathaea, an honorable counselor of the State, who was also a disciple of Jesus (John, 19:38), took and carried him in that condition to his garden, and placed him in a room (John, 19:41) hewn for him in a rock, above the surface of the ground, and a huge stone was rolled to the entrance of the room. Blood had already started circulating in his body; the fresh air of the garden further helped him regain consciousness. Jesus got up and went into the garden, but for fear of being apprehended again, he dressed himself as a gardener (John 20:15). And it so happened that two men went that same day to a village, and they talked together of all these things which had happened. And it came to pass that Jesus himself drew near, and walked along with them. But their eyes were holden that they should not know him (Luke, 24:13-16). Jesus asked them what things they had been talking of, one to another, as they walked. One of them said to him in reply that he was the only stranger in Jerusalem who knew not the things that had come to pass there in those days:

And he [Jesus] said unto them, What things? And they said unto him, Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, *which was a prophet*,

mighty in deed and word before God and all the people (Luke, 24:19).

Jesus heard this talk, and, finding it correct and true, contradicted it not; for, a prophet he was, of a truth, and prophets, not gods are crucified and slain.

(6) Then he [Jesus] said unto them [his disciples], O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken (Luke, 24:25).

Admonishing his disciples in this way, Jesus called himself a prophet, in whom prophecies were fulfilled.

(7) Jesus said:

An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas: for as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth (Matt., 12:39-40).

Describing his resemblance with Prophet Jonah, Jesus made it clear that he was also a prophet, and that he would face the same situation as fell to the lot of Jonah. Jonah was swallowed *alive* by the whale, and *alive* was he vomited out. Jesus, thus outlining his resemblance with Prophet Jonah, proclaimed that he was also a prophet and, like Jonah, he would be put into the grave *alive* and *alive* he would come out from there. Accordingly, the angels had informed the women in a vision that he was alive. Jesus did not confine his comparison to one prophet alone; he repeated his comparison with Solomon as well (Luke, 11:31). Jesus claimed that he was one of the prophets.

JESUS, THE SON OF A PROPHET

(8) While the Pharisees were gathered together Jesus asked them, saying, What think ye of Christ? whose son is he? They say unto him, *The son* of David (Matt., 22:41-42).

Jesus it is clear, was the son of Joseph, son of David, son of Abraham, son of Adam. Jesus took this reply of the people to be correct and true, that he was the son of David, i.e. the son of a prophet. Jesus was indeed a mortal born of mortal parents.

JESUS INCLUDED HIMSELF AMONG PROPHETS

(9) Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because ye build the tombs of prophets, and garnish the sepulchers of the righteous, and say, If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets. Wherefore ye be witnesses unto yourselves, that ye are the children of them which killed the prophets....Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell? Wherefore [God had said], behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and *some* of them ye shall kill and crucify....Verily I say unto you, [that the chastisement of] All these things shall come upon this generation. O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, *thou* that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee....Behold, your house is left unto you desolate (Matt., 23;29-38).

These verses make it abundantly clear that Jesus included himself among the Prophets, and also expressed his apprehension of meeting with the same treatment as was meted out to other prophets; that his opponents intended to kill him, but the end of such wicked people would indeed be disastrous and grievous. Jesus also made it clear that the Most High God expressed His sorrowfulness and grief on such people, saying, "You build the tomb of the prophets, but your fathers persecuted and killed them."

Jesus consoles himself with the following realization:

Therefore also said the wisdom of God, I will send them prophets and apostles, and *some* of them shall slay and persecute (Luke, 11:49).

This realization shows that Jesus classed himself with the Prophets.

JESUS WAS LIKE OTHER PROPHETS

(10) [Like other prophets, Jesus, the son of man] must suffer many things, and be rejected of this generation. And as it was in the day of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man....the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came,

and destroyed them all....But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed *them* all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed (Luke, 17:25-30).

These verses speak of Jesus' resemblance with the Prophets Noah [Noe] and Abraham, which means that he was a prophet like other prophets, and that just as those people who received not and rejected the Prophets were punished by God, in the same way, the denial of Jesus would draw upon his opponents the wrath and resentment of heaven.

FALSE PROPHETS

Jesus had warned his people that there would appear false prophets and false Christs and that they should not be deceived by them. His own words read:

For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many (Matt., 24:5).

For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if *it were* possible, they shall deceive the very elect (Matt., 24:24).

The Gospel of Mark, too, has the same prediction on record (13:22):

For false Christs and false prophets shall rise, and shall shew signs and wonders, to seduce, if *it were* possible, even the elect.

One gathers from these verses that the words "Prophet" and "Christ" (Messiah) are but the titles of God's Messengers and the very same titles were shared by Christ himself because he was also one of God's Messengers, and as such he was a human being. Jesus accordingly has called himself *Prophet* and Christ. Moreover, in the verses quoted above, mention has been made of the fact at the time of false prophets and false Christs, good and righteous people will also be present. It is, therefore, proved (1) that Jesus was but a prophet and (2) that the entire world is not full of sinners only, but there have been righteous persons in every nation, chosen by the Most High God. The words of Jesus that every age witnessed the presence of righteous people exon-

erate mankind from the charge of being sinful by nature. This strikes also at the very root of the dogma of Atonement.

JESUS, A HUMAN BEING

(1) The Gospels present Jesus as a human being, calling him son of Joseph, son of David, a son of Abraham, son of Adam. In his genealogy there are women as well as men, proving thereby that Jesus was but a human being, belonging to the human race. He said that he was the son of David, and had come to inherit David's throne. Once, his mother reprimanded him, saying, "Son, your father and I have been searching after you sorrowfully. Why did you treat us like that, and, without informing us, got separated from us?" The Gospel of Luke has on record the words spoken by Jesus' mother and the answer given by Jesus:

...and his mother said unto him, Son, why hast thou dealt with us? behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing. And he [Jesus] said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business? And they understood not the saying which he spake unto them (Luke, 2:48-50).

JESUS HAD A HUMAN FATHER

(2) This statement of the Gospel, *behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing*, proves conclusively that Jesus had both the parents, father and mother. And it was his mother's testimony that Joseph was his father. When the mother reprimanded Jesus, he, instead of showing regret and remorse, took them to task in return, but they could not understand his words. Jesus meant to say that they were his physical parents, and that he had a Spiritual Father also, the preaching and propagation of Whose commandments was his sacred duty to perform.

Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of passover...as they returned, the child Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem; and Joseph and his mother knew not *of it* (Luke, 2:41-43).

It has been repeated twice in these verses that Jesus had both father and mother, i.e. he was the son of Joseph and Mary.

And Jesus himself began to be about thirty years of age, being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph (Luke, 3:23).

The words enclosed within brackets had been inserted by some copyist of the Gospel in order to preach and propagate a wrong belief. But the purpose of the interpolator could not even then be achieved, for it is clear from the original text that Jesus was the son of Joseph. Mary herself testified to it, saying, *Behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing*. The record of Matthew(1:16) also shows that the copyist is wrong in inserting words of his own into the Gospel:

(3) Jacob begat Joseph, the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ.

It is regrettable to note that interpolations have found their way into the texts of the Gospels.

JESUS WORKED AS A CARPENTER FOR THIRTY YEARS

(4) Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary . . .? (Mark, 6:3).

It appears from this verse, read with Luke 3:23, that it was at the age of thirty that Jesus started his work of teaching and preaching. One is, therefore, naturally tempted to ask what he had been doing during the thirty years of his life. The answer to this question is furnished in Mark, 6:2-4, that he had been pursuing the profession of a carpenter, and, for that reason, people called him a carpenter:

And when the sabbath day was come, he began to teach in the synagogue: and many hearing *him* were astonished, saying, From whence hath this *man* these things? and what wisdom is this which is given unto him, that even such mighty works are wrought by his hands? Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James, and Joses, and of Juda, and Simon? and are not his sister here with us? And they were offended at him. But Jesus said unto them, A prophet is not without honor, but in his own country, and among his kin, and his own house (Mark, 6:4).

This sacred text of the Gospel tells us that before embarking upon his mission, Jesus worked as a carpenter. We are further

told that, besides Jesus, four more brothers and some sisters were also given birth to by Mary, and Joseph was the father of them all.

JESUS WAS THE SON OF A CARPENTER

(5) *Is not this the carpenter's son?*

[People said:] Is not this the carpenter's son? is not his mother called Mary? and his brethren, James and Joses, and Simon, and Judas? And his sisters, are they not all with us? Whence then hath this *man* all these things? And they were offended in him. But Jesus said unto them, A prophet is not without honor, save in his own country, and in his own house (Matt., 13:55-57).

Both Matthew and Mark state in unison that Jesus was by profession a carpenter, and the son of a carpenter. Both the Evangelists further state that children (boys and girls) other than Jesus were also born to Joseph and Mary. They also declare that Jesus claimed to be a prophet, and not the Divine Being, and that he was not the son of God, but the son of Joseph and Mary; it was, however, on account of his righteousness and rectitude that he was metaphorically called the Son of God.

(6) Jesus' childhood:

And Jacob begat Joseph, the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ (Matt., 1:16).

(7) After the birth of Jesus, his parents apprehended danger to his life as stated in Matthew (2:13-15):

...behold, the angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word: for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him. When he arose he took the young child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt: and was there until the death of Herod.

(8) It is evident from this passage that Jesus' life was in danger, and it was for this reason that his parents, Joseph and Mary, fled from their country, and took refuge in Egypt. Such flight from danger is human, not Divine.

(9) The logical conclusion, therefore, emerges that Jesus' parents knew full well that there was no Divinity in Jesus, otherwise not even a shadow of fear could ever have crossed their minds, nor would they have felt the necessity of fleeing from the enemy's country.

JESUS LIVED IN CONSTANT FEAR WHICH IS NOT AN ATTRIBUTE OF GOD

There is yet another point which deserves to be carefully considered. According to psychologists, fear of danger generated during childhood leaves a lasting impress on the mind of a man and that is possibly the reason why Jesus remained a victim of fear and apprehension throughout his life and did not preach before the people openly, but always slipped away from the scene of danger to the place of secrecy and solitude. Jesus believed that his opponents were after taking his life, and he was, therefore, always fear-stricken, and prayed to be saved from the death of dishonor and disgrace.

When he was produced in the court of Pilate, out of fear, he was mute as if he had lost his power of speech, and could not utter a single word in self-defense. Pilate, of course, was highly astonished at the plight of Jesus. Similarly, when he regained consciousness after crucifixion, fearing his recapture he disguised himself as a gardener and kept hiding here and there for forty days, finally fleeing from his country to a place of safety. Had there been any Divinity in him, he would have availed himself of this golden opportunity to challenge his opponents and make them accept and acknowledge his claim. But, having been stricken with fear, he had become miserably nervous and spiritless. This hard fact goes to prove conclusively not only that there was not a whit of Divinity in him, but that he was not even a brave and courageous man.

JESUS WAS FROM THE SEED OF DAVID AND WAS NOT GOD

(10) About the birth of Jesus, the angel gave the glad tidings to Mary in the following words:

And behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end (Luke, 1:31-32).

In this prophecy, the words, *the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David*, need careful thought. There is no mention of both God and Jesus' father David and of David's throne being given unto Jesus. This verse alone is sufficient to prove conclusively that Jesus was from the seed of David, was destined to inherit David's throne, and that he was a mortal and not at all God Almighty Whose grace was being besought by Jesus in getting back the throne of his father David.

JESUS HAD BEEN RAISED ONLY FOR THE GUIDANCE OF THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL

Besides, the sole purpose for which Jesus had been sent was to collect the "lost sheep" of the house of Israel. He set before him no other purpose. Accordingly he declared that he had come to seek the "lost sheep" of Israel and that his mission was confined to the guidance of the children of Israel. Addressing a non-Israelite woman, Jesus announced in plain language:

...it is not meet to take the children's bread and to cast *it* unto the dogs. And she answered and said unto him, Yes Lord: yet the dogs under the table eat of the children's crumbs (Mark, 7:27-28).

Jesus called the other nations *dogs* and *swine*, for he considered the Jews to be the only chosen people of God. St. Matthew supports the fact that Jesus was averse to non-Jews:

Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine (Matt., 7:6).

And it was with this purpose in view that Jesus gave the following direction to his disciples:

...Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into *any* city of the Samaritans enter ye not: but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel (Matt., 10:5-6).

In short, these passages make it clear that Jesus had come only for the guidance of the children of Israel, and to recapture and restore unto them their lost kingdom. Jesus never claimed that he had been raised for the guidance of all the nations of the world; he never professed that the entire human race was sinful by nature, and that he had come to bear the burden of their sins by laying down his life on the Cross. His mission was indeed definite.

(11) Jesus was circumcised, and his mother remained for forty days in a state of impurity. These are far from being the perfections of the Divine Being.

And when eight days were accomplished for the circumcising of the child, his name was called JESUS.... And when the days of her purification according to the law of Moses were accomplished, they brought him to Jerusalem to present *him* to the Lord; (as it is written in the law of the Lord, Every male that openeth the womb shall be called holy to the Lord) (Luke, 2:21-23). Jesus was circumcised in accordance with the law of Moses, just as his forerunner, John the Baptist, was circumcised. His mother took her bath of purification after forty days, according to the Mosaic law, and then, to offer a sacrifice, they went to the synagogue with a pair of young pigeons.

Jesus was born exactly in the human way and his mother remained in a state of impurity for forty days in common with other women of the world, the Jewish rites and rituals on such occasions having been carefully observed. At the time of Jesus' birth, nothing peculiar took place to suggest that he was an extraordinary child, to say the least of his possessing Divinity. It was later that the people deified him and his mother, notwithstanding the humanly circumstances that attended the act of delivery.

JESUS, A FOLLOWER OF JEWISH LAW

(12) Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of the passover. And when he was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem after the custom of the feast. And when they had fulfilled the days, as they returned, the child Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem (Luke, 2:41-43).

This passage and those preceding it point to the fact that Jesus, his mother Mary and his father Joseph were Jews and followed the Jewish law. How, then, can Jesus be considered God?

JESUS' MENTAL AND PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT LIKE OTHER HUMAN CHILDREN

(13) And the child [Jesus] grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him (Luke, 2:40).

That is to say, as Jesus grew up in age, his mental and physical capacities developed gradually, very much like other children.

THE GOSPELS REGARD JESUS AS A HUMAN BEING

And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man (Luke, 2:52).

It has again been repeated in this verse that the mental and physical faculties of Jesus developed gradually, and that on account of his righteousness and moral rectitude he gained favor with God and man. These qualities also show that Jesus was nothing more than a human being, and to raise him, therefore, from the plane of humanity to that of Divinity is an unjustifiable contradiction of the clear teaching of the Gospel.

NO HISTORICAL EVIDENCE OF JESUS

Of the life-story of Jesus, only this much is known, as has been stated in the foregoing pages; there is also a mention of his missionary activities, limited only to a short period of three years. No account of his life prior to this period of three years, nor that of the period following crucifixion, when he regained consciousness and escaped to the Eastern countries has ever been committed to writing by any other chronicler. It is for this reason that some European writers have stated that Jesus is not an historical personage, meaning thereby that the details of the life-story of the man who has been installed on the pedestal of Divinity are not known. The fate of his disciples, too, in this

respect seems to be no better than that of their Master; except for the fact that their names happen to be recorded in the pages of the Gospels, nothing more is known about them. But not to speak of these insignificant fellows, no one is acquainted even with the life-story of Joseph and Mary, nor of Jesus' brothers and sisters. It seems, as if, to have been ordained by God Almighty that there should remain no historical trace of the man who was to be deified by the people, nor any trace of his parents, or of his brothers and sisters, or even of his disciples.

HUMILITY AND HUMANITY OF JESUS

And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? *there is none good but one, that is, God* (Matt., 19:17).

Jesus answered, If I honor myself, my honor is nothing: it is my Father that honoreth me; of whom ye say, that He is your God (John, 8:54).

While confessing his humility and humanity, Jesus proclaimed that God was as much the Father of the Jews as He was his.

NO MENTION OF CHURCH DOGMA IN THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT

The teaching of Jesus, called the *Sermon on the Mount*, reads as follows:

(1) Blessed *are* the poor in spirit: for their's is the kingdom of heaven.

(2) Blessed *are* they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.

(3) Blessed *are* the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.

(4) Blessed *are* they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.

(5) Blessed *are* the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.

(6) Blessed *are* the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

(7) Blessed *are* the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.

(8) Blessed *are* they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for their's is the kingdom of heaven.

(9) Blessed are ye, when *men* shall revile you, and persecute *you*, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.

(10) Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great *is* your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you (Matt., 5:3-12).

The Sermon on the Mount, is very well known and renowned, on account of these notable teachings for it contains the essence of the teachings of Jesus. It is also renowned for the fact that it comprises the most ennobling doctrines.

In this important Sermon, Jesus has made no mention whatsoever of his Divinity, nor that of the doctrine of Trinity. Similarly, he has not taught that humanity is sinful by nature, and that therefore he will lay down his life on the Cross for the salvation of mankind. In fine, the principles preached by the modern Christianity are nowhere to be found in the Sermon on the Mount. On the other hand, what the Sermon on the Mount teaches goes against the modern Christian beliefs. Jesus could not have omitted to mention the prevalent Christian dogmas, if they were the fundamentals of the religion that he taught. On the contrary, the Sermon enunciates some of the noblest qualities that are part and parcel of human nature. Mankind loves virtue and hates vice. In the light of these facts Jesus cannot be held responsible for the offensive notion of the inherent sinfulness of mankind and the untenable dogma of Atonement.

SERMON ON THE MOUNT OPPOSED TO TEACHING OF CHURCH CHRISTIANITY

(1) For example, the teaching, *Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God*, is quite sufficient to give the lie direct to the doctrines of the Church Christianity. This text does not proclaim the dogma of Trinity, neither does it condemn mankind as sinful by nature. On the contrary, it teaches that man is capable of attaining purity of heart, and is, therefore, capable of having the reflection of God in the mirror of his heart. The teaching that God is pure, and with the pure only He can have His relation-

ship, has nothing in common with the prevalent dogmas of Christianity. As against this teaching of Jesus, it amounts to discrediting and disgracing him to say that he approved of Original Sin and Atonement.

(2) In the same way, another principle enunciated in the Sermon on the Mount, *Blessed are the peace-makers: for they shall be called the children of God*, deserves to be carefully considered. It shows very clearly that man, by being noble and righteous, and by inspiring peace and harmony among people, can be called the son of God; also that every man, by achieving these sublime qualities, can attain this position of honor of being called the Son of God. It was only on account of having achieved these excellent qualities that Jesus, too, became worthy of being called the Son of God, and it was for this reason that the words: *He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest* (Luke, 1:32), had been added to the message giving the good news of the birth of Jesus. Jesus had been generous in calling upon every man to become the son of God by acting upon his valuable advice.

(3) Blessed are ye, when *men* shall revile you, and persecute *you*, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great *is* your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you (Matt., 5:11-12).

In this verse, Jesus has given the glad news to those who suffer persecution in the way of God, that their's will be a great reward in heaven. This heartening news for the faithful who suffer persecution in the way of God does not harmonize with what the modern Christianity preaches. At the same time, this fine teaching shows that Jesus classed himself with the prophets and said unto his disciples: "If people should persecute you and me, it will be just in accordance with the law of God—suffering in the way of God brings a unique reward."

(4) Jesus said in the Sermon on the Mount: *Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled* (Matt., 5:6). This observation has drawn a true picture of

human nature. Man does hunger and thirst after righteousness and does hate evil, because God created man in His own image and conferred on him a nature that loves good and hates evil. This remarkable doctrine proves like others that Jesus never believed in Original Sin and the consequent Atonement.

JESUS OPPOSED TO THE DOCTRINE OF ATONEMENT

(5) Unjust and unreasonable attitude has been condemned by him:

Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition? . . . Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition (Matt., 15:3-6).

St. Mark has also recorded in his Gospel this reprimand uttered by Jesus in the following words:

For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men....And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition (Mark, 7:8-9).

The followers of Jesus Christ, keeping in view this grim warning uttered by him, should reconsider and revise their articles of faith. It is certainly not meet for them to give preference to the traditions of men over the clear and rational commandments of Jesus.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE TERM “SON OF GOD”

ONLY A METAPHOR

It is a common way of speech that a good and righteous man is called the *Son of God* and a vile and wicked man, the *Son of the Devil*. It is the actions of a man that earn him either of these appellations. These terms have been used by way of a metaphor, a figure of speech, and it is a great error on the part of those who hold these metaphorical terms to be of literal significance; they build up the edifice of their belief on a sandy foundation, which is bound to crumble down and fall.

JUDAS ISCARIOT, CALLED SON OF A DEVIL

Both these terms, the *Son of God* and the *Son of Devil*, have been used in the Gospel. In Luke (8:12) a man has been called *the devil* but, even after having been called *the devil*, he remains a human being all the same, and no transformation whatsoever is wrought in him.. The speaker means only to say that he is, like the Devil, wickedness personified. In John (6:70) Jesus is reported to have said in respect of a disciple of his, Judas Iscariot: *And one of you [i.e. the twelve disciples] is a devil*. Jesus had used these stinging words for the reason that there was devilry in the mind of that disciple, and he was to betray his holy Master for a mean sum of thirty lucre. Judas Iscariot did not, of course, change his species, but remained a human being, unaltered in the least. It was on account of his unfaithfulness and betrayal that he was called a devil.

CALLED THE CHILDREN OF THE DEVIL

In the same metaphorical way, the Jews have been called the children of the devil for the reason that they had fallen away from righteousness and rectitude:

They answered and said unto him, Abraham is our father. Jesus saith unto them, If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham. But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God; this did not Abraham. Ye do the deeds of your father. Then said they to him, We be not born of fornication; we have one Father, *even* God. Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me; for I proceeded forth and came from God....Why do ye not understand my speech? . . .Ye are of *your* father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do (John, 8:39-44).

This text makes it clear that metaphor or figure of speech is quite different from actuality. The Jews were justified in believing themselves to be the children of Abraham, but as their actions were not like those of Abraham, Jesus did not consider them children of Abraham. This was a metaphorical use of the term. The Jews say: "We be not born of fornication, we have one

Father, *even* God.” Jesus retorted in reply: “You believe not that the Most High God is your Father; for, your actions show that your father is the devil, and his lusts you do and fulfil, and listen not to my words, for you are not of God.” In short, the terms *son of the devil* and *son of God* should not be taken literally, much less to be made a basis for a religious belief.

SIGNIFICANCE OF BECOMING THE SON OF GOD, AND BECOMING THE SON OF THE DEVIL.

It is recorded in John (13:2) that the devil put into the heart of Judas Iscariot to betray his Master, which shows that Judas Iscariot was, in fact, a human being, and the devil had filled his heart with wickedness, so that he was, as it were, the devil incarnate. This statement has also been repeated in Luke (22:3) as: *Then entered Satan into Judas*. Now, turn to Matthew:

Blessed *are* the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God (5:9).

Love your enemies . . .and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven (5:44-45).

These verses make it clear that by adopting the life of righteousness and noble deeds, a man can become the Son of God. These verses indicate also that Jesus Christ counted himself among the prophets, and held that people had ever been persecuting and killing the prophets, and that similar plans were being made against him. Most significant facts indeed!

Jesus, to quote another example, rebuked Peter, and called him Satan. When Peter took Jesus away, and began to rebuke him:

...[Jesus] turned about and looked on his disciples, he rebuked Peter, saying, Get thee behind me, Satan: for thou savorest not the things that be of God, but the things that be of men (Mark, 8:32-33).

It was on account of Peter’s unfaithfulness and disloyalty that Jesus called him Satan; otherwise he was every whit a human being and no physical change took place in his body. His faith,

however, was weak, in consequence whereof devilry had crept into his heart. It was for this reason that he cursed and swore against Jesus, *saying, I know not this man of whom ye speak* (Mark, 14:71). These lucid texts reveal that it is erroneous to found one's faith on metaphorical expressions.

THE RIGHTEOUS CALLED ANGELS AND CHILDREN OF GOD

And Jesus answering said unto them, The children of this world marry, and are given in marriage: but they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage: neither can they die any more: for they are *equal unto angels*; and are *the children of God*, being the children of the resurrection (Luke, 20:34-36).

Jesus has taught in these verses that on the Judgement Day the righteous will be like unto angels, and will be regarded as the children of God. Just as a man, in consequence of his evil actions, becomes the devil, very much in the same way, by adopting a life of righteousness and good deeds he becomes equal to angels, and gains the lofty position of becoming the son of God. This is how Jesus achieved that position and deserved to be called the Son of God.

And [thou] shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David (Luke, 1:31-32).

Jesus, in this verse, has been called the son of David; and the happy news has also been given that he would inherit the throne of David, proving thereby that he was a human being, and the son of a human being, but would on account of his righteous life and goodness, be called the Son of God. This sacred verse has established beyond the least shadow of doubt that Jesus belonged to the human species. The Gospels teach that every man, by adopting a life of righteousness and fear of God, can become worthy of being called the Son of God. At another place in the Gospel, it is recorded that when Jesus was baptized of

John in the river Jordan, a voice came from heaven announcing for that righteous deed the good gift: “*Thou art my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased*” (Matt., 3:14).

And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan. And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heaven opened, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon him: and there came a voice from heaven, *saying*, Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased (Mark, 1:9-11).

It was on account of Jesus’ having performed this good act that this glad tidings came from on High, but prior to the performance of this deed, he was not considered worthy of this title. Jesus, of a truth, was a human being, as his ancestors, too, were human beings. In other words, he was, physically speaking, a mortal man, and remained even so all through his life, but it was on account of his excellent and pure life that the happy title, *Thou art my beloved son*, was conferred upon him. Just as we call the *Aulia Allah* (i.e. the saintly people) the children of God, in the same way, the Most High God calls His righteous servants generally and His apostles particularly as His children. It is recorded in Exodus, 4:22, *Thus saith the Lord, Israel is my son, even my firstborn*; and in Genesis, 1:27, about Adam, *God created man in his own image*; Adam has therefore, been called, in the Gospel according to Luke (3:38), *Adam which was the son of God*.

ENOCH’S ASCENSION AND FAITHFULNESS

And with regard to Enoch it has been stated that :

By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death;...for before his translation he had this testimony, that he had pleased God. But *without faith it is impossible to please him* (Hebrews, 11:5-6).

MELCHISEDEC LIKE UNTO THE SON OF GOD

And in respect of Melchisedec, king of Salem, it is written:

...first being by interpretation King of righteousness, and after that also King of Salem, which is King of peace; without

father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God (Hebrews, 7:2-3).

NO EXCLUSIVE DISTINCTION FOR JESUS

In brief, the term *Son of God* has ever been used not only in respect of the prophets and apostles of God, but also in respect of every righteous man. Jesus, therefore, enjoys no exclusive distinction in this respect. Turn to the Gospel according to Matthew once again:

Blessed *are* the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God (5:9).

Pray for them which despitefully used you, and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven (5:44-45).

Jesus, according to the Gospel, was a mortal and his genealogy has been given as: Jesus son of Joseph, son of David, son of Abraham, son of Adam; and it was for this reason that he repeatedly called himself *Son of Man*. His disciples, too, liked upon and regarded him as a human being, and addressed him as *Master*. His mother said: *Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? behold thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing*. Peter, his most trusted disciple said of Jesus: *I know not the man*. Likewise, Justice Pilate asked *whether the man were a Galilean* (Luke, 23:6). And when Jesus was hanged upon the cross, the centurion said, *Certainly this was a righteous man* (Luke, 23:47); but Mark records (15:39) that the centurion said, *Truly this man was the son of God*. This proves conclusively that a righteous man and son of God are identical terms in their significance.

Furthermore, Jesus was circumcised. He was also baptized, and for thirty years he carried on the profession of a carpenter, and people called him *carpenter* and *the son of a carpenter*. In fact all activities of Jesus were that of a human being.

HUMAN TO THE BONE OF HIS BACK

Jesus, like all other men, ate bread and drank water and wine. It is stated repeatedly in the Gospel: He sat down at meat; he ate a piece of broiled fish; he prayed for bread; he hungered, and came to a fig tree, but found no fig thereon, for it was not the fig season; when he regained consciousness after having been taken down from the Cross, he disguised himself for fear of recapture; he felt hungry, and asked for food, saying: *Have ye here any meat?* When his disciples were affrighted and thought that they had seen a spirit, Jesus said unto them: *Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have* (Luke, 24:39). At the time of his arrest, as well as at the time of his crucifixion, Jesus was in a state of great agony and distress. It is exactly the picture of an afflicted human being. When produced before Justice Pilate, he could not utter a single word, being overwhelmed with fear. Such shortcomings are only human, and it was on account of these shortcomings on the part of Jesus that the faith of his disciples faded and failed; some betrayed him into the hands of the enemy, some denied and denounced him, and all of them, in the hour of trial, forsook him and fled (Matthew, 26:56; Mark, 14:50). Even after crucifixion, the disciples entertained doubts about him, and Jesus reprimanded them as people of little faith. His own mother believed not him (Luke, 8:21); and his kith and kin, too, called him mad, and refused to accept his claim (Mark, 3:21). In a word, the Gospels present Jesus as a mortal, Who has raised as a prophet for the good of the children of Israel.

JESUS ON THE JUDGEMENT DAY

In his teachings, Jesus has laid great stress on the point that resurrection shall surely take place when the good and righteous shall be separated from the evil ones, *which do iniquity*, and the righteous shall shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father, and enter the Garden of Paradise, but the doers of evil shall be cast into the fire of hell. As for himself, Jesus is reported to have said that even on that day he would be one like unto

other men. Turn to the Gospel according to Luke, Chapter 23, and read verses 42 and 43:

And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, Today shalt thou be with me in paradise.

Again:

But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom (Matt., 26:29).

These texts show clearly that Jesus was a mortal, and that he will live in paradise like other mortals.

JESUS LOWER THAN ANGELS

The following text which speaks of Jesus as having been made lower than the angels, lends further support to the fact that he was a human being :

Jesus who was made a little lower than the angels (Hebrews, 2:9).

THE EFFECT WHICH JESUS PRODUCED ON HIS KITH AND KIN, AND DISCIPLES

HOW JESUS TREATED HIS MOTHER

Jesus' mother reprimanded him for his indifferent behavior even when he was a young boy, saying: Son, *Why hast thou thus dealt with us? behold thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing* (Luke, 2:48); whereon Jesus, rather than express regret and apologies, gave reply, from which it appears that on account of his excessive religious zeal there was left in him no respect or feeling of affectionate regard for his parents. His disrespect for his mother can likewise be seen from the following words in which he addressed her, on the occasion of a marriage celebration, saying: *Woman, what have I to do with thee?* (John, 2:4). This statement evidently is devoid of all reverence and respect. But still more piquant and pungent was the allegation which Jesus had flung against his mother and near relatives, saying,

that since they walked not in the way of God's will and pleasure, his relation with them had altogether been snapped and that his near and dear ones were those who had accepted and believed in him. He said:

Who is my mother? and who are my brethren? And he stretched forth his hand toward his disciples, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren! For whosoever shalt do the will of my Father . . . the same is my brother, and sister, and mother (Matt., 12:48-50; Mark, 3:35; Luke, 8:21).

Jesus had indicated, in this way, that his mother and other relatives who had refused to accept his teaching, commanded no respect nor regard in his eyes.

Towards the close of his life, too, Jesus, while committing his mother Mary into the care of John, had accosted her in the same strain, saying:

Woman, behold thy son! Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother! (John, 19:26-27). It appears from this incident that there was, in the sight of Jesus and his disciples, no particular position for his mother Mary; for, otherwise, he would have felt no need of committing her to the care of his disciple. Moreover, the language employed by him on this occasion betrayed his indifference and disregard towards his mother. These narratives produce no wholesome effect on the impressionable minds of the younger folk, nor does any good example of Jesus come before their eyes to emulate.

EFFECT ON OTHER RELATIVES

They looked upon and regarded him as mad:

And when his friends heard *of it*, they went out to lay hold on him: for they said, He is beside himself (Mark, 3:21).

For neither did his brethren believe in him (John, 7:5).

These facts prove that Jesus failed to produce any good impression on the minds of his parents, brothers and sisters, and it was on this account that they refused to believe in him, and stood against him. If Jesus were God, his kith and kin, by their close contact, should have beheld in him signs of Divinity, but it

is most surprising to find instead that they were not only not favorably impressed by him, but remained opposed to him to the end of life.

All great men produce deep impression upon the minds of their companions and comrades, and those who come within the sphere of their influence, cannot be deeply impressed. On the other hand, a man who cannot produce any good effect upon his companions cannot be said to be a man of great personality. It is recorded in the Gospel that Judas Iscariot, a disciple of Jesus, betrayed him into the hands of the enemy only for a paltry sum of thirty pieces of lucre; and Peter swore at and cursed Jesus, saying, *I know not this man*. We read in the Gospel according to John (13:26-27):

When he [Jesus] had dipped the sop, he gave *it* to Judas Iscariot, *the son* of Simon. And after the sop Satan entered into him.

Satan or greed, then, persuaded Judas to betray his Master into the hands of his enemies. In the same way, Jesus said unto Peter: *Get thee behind me, Satan*. This Satan, too, played false with his Master, and swore at and cursed him, saying, *I know not this man*:

He [Peter] began to curse and to swear, *saying*, I know not this man of whom ye speak (Mark, 14:71).

This faithlessness and infidelity of the meanest kind was not limited to Judas Iscariot and Peter only, but other disciples, one and all, were birds of the same feather. When Jesus was struck down with calamity and affliction, and was extremely downhearted, his disciples, seeing his helplessness and despair, forsook him and fled, fearing that they, too, might be apprehended. Both Matthew (26:56), and Mark (14:50) have recorded: *Then all the disciples forsook him, and fled*. By their shameful and faithless conduct, the disciples proved unquestionably that Jesus' company could not illuminate their hearts with the light of knowledge and faith. Their faith was, as a matter of fact, so feeble and weak that even after crucifixion, when Jesus regained consciousness, he upbraided them for their

littleness of faith and stone-heartedness. Turn to Mark (16:14), and read:

Afterward he appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart.

Of this disgraceful and disappointing treatment which he had received at the hands of his disciples, Jesus had made mention on many a previous occasion also:

And he saith unto them, Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith? (Matt., 8:26).

O thou [i.e. Peter] of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt? (Matt., 14:31).

[Jesus] said unto them, O ye of little faith, why reason ye among yourselves, because ye have brought no bread? (Matt., 16:8).

And he said unto them, Know ye not this parable? and how then will ye know all parables? (Mark, 4:13).

And he said unto them, Why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye have no faith? (Mark, 4:40).

And Jesus answering said, O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you, and suffer you? (Luke, 9:41).

And their words seemed to them as idle tales, and they believed them not (Luke, 24:11).

And this sad state of affairs was witnessed when Jesus, having regained his consciousness after crucifixion, perceived and felt that even up to the last day of his life, his disciples had suffered from faithlessness and unbelief. Such were the disconcerting conditions which Jesus had to face and experience. It is not known whether it was due to the low mental level of the disciples that they could not assimilate and absorb Jesus' teaching, or whether Jesus himself was incapable of influencing them. One thing, however, is evident that there was not even an atom of Divinity in Jesus; otherwise such disconcerting conditions could never have arisen.

DISCIPLES' REBUKE AND RENUNCIATION

Many therefore of his disciples, when they had heard *this*, said, This is an hard saying; who can hear it? . . . From that *time* many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him (John, 6:60-66).

And Peter took him [Jesus], and began to rebuke him (Mark, 8:32).

The disciples rebuked Jesus, on another occasion as well, for he had allowed a woman of ill-repute to anoint his body with an ointment , saying that the precious ointment which had been wasted in that way could be sold, and the money so gained distributed among the poor. The reply which Jesus gave unto them was neither satisfactory nor desirable. He said:

Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, *this* also that she hath done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her (Mark, 14:9; also Matthew, 26:10-13).

To the Jews' objection that his disciples washed not their hands when they took meals, Jesus said that real purity was a matter of the heart, and that outward cleanliness was immaterial and insignificant. Upon this, *his disciples rebuked him and said:*

Knowest thou that the Pharisees were offended, after they heard this saying? (Matt., 15:12).

Jesus appears to have been a target of his disciples' rebukes; and this is not creditable.

IMPRESSION WHICH JESUS CREATED ON THE JEWISH MIND

JESUS' UNCIVIL LANGUAGE

The causes which led the Jews to take up cudgels against Jesus may be listed as below:

(1) The sharpness and acrimony in his speech had reached such a high pitch that it proved too much for the Jews to put up with it. A few examples may be cited: Jesus said unto the Jews

that they were not the children of Adam, but the brood of the Devil. This statement was highly provocative and painful.

(2) Jesus addressed the Jews over and over again, calling them *Serpents and a generation of vipers; hypocrites; and evil and adulterous generation*, etc., and proclaimed that they would be smitten with distress and destruction of every kind in this world, and the damnation of hell in the hereafter.

UNDUE FAVOR TO AN ADULTEROUS

(3) Jesus showed undue favor to an unchaste woman who was caught red-handed committing adultery; and it was obviously an open defiance of the Law of Moses. The Jews were highly offended to find the laws laid down in the Torah being flagrantly violated.

ANOINTED BY A HARLOT

(4) A woman of the town anointed Jesus' body with a precious ointment, and cleaned his feet with her hair, whereupon the Jews fell into a rage and said that he could not even know that she was a foul and fallen woman; and his disciples, too, took objection to it, saying, that the precious ointment could well be sold, and the money thus obtained distributed among the poor. But the reply returned by Jesus was not only unreasonable but undesirable:

And Jesus said, Let her alone; why trouble ye her? she hath wrought a good work on me. For ye have the poor with you always, and whensoever ye will ye may do them good: but me ye have not always. She hath done what she could: she is come aforehand to anoint my body to the burying. Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached throughout the world, *this* also that she hath done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her (Mark, 14:6-9; also Matt. 26:10-13).

VIOLATION OF THE SABBATH

(5) There was yet another objection which the Jews had against Jesus, that he did not observe the sanctity of the sacred Sabbath; and he said to them in reply:

The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath (Mark, 2:27).

NO EXTERNAL CLEANLINESS

(6) The Jews also took exception to the fact that his disciples took meals with unwashed hands, and Jesus said unto them in reply that the real purity was a matter of the heart and that the outward ceremonial practice was not of any worth or value (Matt., 15:10-11). This statement of Jesus was neither reasonable nor useful, for it destroyed all distinction between what was permissible and what was forbidden, and also cut across the very idea of external purity and cleanliness.

PLUCKING OF OTHERS' CORN

(7) His disciples entered, without permission, into the cornfields of the people, and plucked and ate the ears of corn on the Sabbath day, which was unlawful and forbidden. This was a double offence (Matt., 12:1-2).

RIDING A STOLEN ASS

(8) The Jews also remonstrated that Jesus had no right to send his disciples to snatch away an ass without the owner's permission, and that therefore Jesus mounted and rode a stolen ass (Matt., 21:2-3).

A WINE-BIBBER

(9) The Jews accused him, saying, that he was gluttonous and a wine-bibber (Matt., 11:19).

JESUS' WISHING DESOLATION OF JERUSALEM

(10) Jesus invoked curses for the desolation and destruction of Jerusalem which was the most sacred city of the Jews. This

caused great mental pain and vexation to them. He was therefore responsible for arousing feelings of hatred and animosity against him in the minds of the Jews who could not tolerate open violation of the sacred laws of the Torah.

ACCUSED OF CALLING HIMSELF THE SON OF GOD

(11) The Jews were greatly incensed and inflamed for the reason that Jesus called himself the Son of God which was blasphemy (Matt., 9:3; 26:65; Mark, 2:7; Luke, 5:21; John, 10:33). Jesus tried to explain as best as he could that it was merely a metaphorical statement. He said that the Most High God even called them gods who communicated the Word of God to the people, saying : *Ye are gods; and all of you are the children of the Most High God* (Psalms, 82:6). But the Jews did not accept this interpretation.

CHARGE OF HIGH TREASON

(12) The Jews alleged that Jesus claimed to be the inheritor of the throne of David, which meant that , although he lived within the domain of the Roman Empire, he had a design to pave the way for the establishment of a new government. They launched a vigorous propaganda against and provoked the wrath of the Roman Government against him. Jesus was charged, first, for the blasphemous claim that he was the Son of God, and, secondly, for his endeavors to establish a government of his own. On the insistence of the Jewish nation and their learned doctors, the Roman government ordered judicial trial of Jesus. He was arrested and produced in the court of law to answer the allegations leveled against him. He stated that to be called the Son of God was merely a figure of speech, so that in the Torah the learned doctors had even been called gods: *Ye are gods; and all of you are the children of the Most High*. With regard to the other allegation, Jesus deposed that it was not his purpose to establish any earthly kingdom, but he wanted to set up a kingdom of God. In other words, Jesus recanted and explained that all men being children of God, he was one of them, and he never meant to found a new government.

THE CRUCIFIXION

In this way, Jesus dissociated himself from both the claims, but the learned Jewish doctors refused to accept his explanation. They put strong pressure on Pilate who sat in judgement, to order the crucifixion of Jesus. Pilate was, thus, obliged to pronounce the sentence of death against Jesus by being hanged upon the cross. Accordingly, Jesus was put upon the cross, his hands and feet nailed to it.

THE DAMNED DEATH

Crucifixion was undoubtedly a matter of great triumph for the Jews. They proclaimed that, according to the Law of Moses, one who was killed upon the cross became accursed of God, and that one accursed of God was rejected and renounced by the Most High God. Jesus, therefore, the Jews contended, was accursed of God, condemned as a sinner of the worst kind, and cast into hell. Such is the fate of a false prophet, they said.

DISCIPLES' MONSTROUS INTERPRETATION

It was simply impossible for the disciples of Jesus to deny these heart-rending and humiliating events which had been witnessed and beheld by all the people. They were, however, stricken with gnawing grief and great distress, and they looked as if death had come upon them. These hard and harrowing facts, which had actually taken place before their eyes, could not be denied by them, but they hit upon and devised a plan of making these dreadful events the basis of their belief. They said that there is of course no gainsaying the fact that, according to the law of Moses, one who is killed upon the cross becomes accursed of God, and is reckoned among the sinners, and cast into the furnace of hell. They accepted all this but held that it was all done for the sake of their deliverance. In their view it was a Providential plan, in pursuance whereof Jesus, bearing the burden of the sins of humanity, bore a curse on himself, and was cast into hell.

JEWISH CHARGE, THE BASIS OF CHRISTIAN BELIEF

It is indeed a matter for great regret that the false charges which the Jews had brought up against Jesus were not only admitted and acknowledged by the Christians, but were made the basis of their belief, as shown below:

(1) He that is hanged is accursed of God (Deut., 21:23).

(2) Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed *is* every one that hangeth on a tree (Galatians, 3:13).

(3) Then delivered he [Pilate] him [Jesus] therefore unto them to be crucified....And he bearing his cross went forth into a place called *the place* of a skull....Where they crucified him [Jesus], and two other with him, on either side one (John, 19:16-17).

(4)...they had crucified him....And with him they crucify two thieves....And the scripture was fulfilled, which saith, And he was numbered with the transgressors. And they that passed by railed on him, wagging their heads, and saying,...Save thyself and come down from the cross. . . .He saved others; himself he cannot save. Let Christ the King of Israel descend now from the cross, that we may see and believe. And they that were crucified with him reviled him (Mark, 15:24-32).

These texts of the Holy Bible prove beyond any doubt that one who is killed upon the cross becomes accursed of God, and is cast off from Divine Presence into the bottomless pit. It can thus be seen that current views held by the Church run counter to and contravene the Word of God. That what constituted the condemnation of Jesus should become the fundamental principle of the Christian faith is simply inconceivable. The Christians in the face of these accusations and facts can never prove to the Jews the truthfulness of Jesus and his religion. The Christians should, therefore, consider this point seriously.

THE GOSPELS CONTRADICT CHURCH DOCTRINE

(1) JESUS TAKEN DOWN ALIVE FROM THE CROSS

It is very strange that even the Gospels annul the basis of the Christian faith on the doctrine of Jesus' damned death on the Cross, and state quite clearly that Jesus, when taken down from the Cross, was alive. He was, however, in a state of unconsciousness, and when his side was pierced with the sharp point of a spear, living red blood gushed out and streamed down—an indication that he was still alive. And how could he die by remaining on the Cross only for a few hours? One Joseph of Arimathaea, who was a counselor of State and a disciple of Jesus, through his influence, obtained the wounded body of Jesus from Pilate, and laid in that unconscious state in a room-like tomb hewn out in the rock of his garden, and rolled a stone on to its entrance (Matt., 27:57-60).

(2) FORTY DAYS AFTER REGAINING CONSCIOUSNESS

The spear of the soldier had already set the blood in circulation, and the fresh air of the garden helped Jesus regain consciousness. He stayed in that room only for one day, and the next day, fearing his recapture and, therefore, disguising himself as a gardener, he left the place. He spent forty days in hiding in the neighborhood during which period he would at times suddenly appear among his disciples and would slip away as suddenly from there (Luke, 24:31).

(3) HIS FLESH AND BONES

By showing his wounds to the disciples, Jesus tried to assure them that he was neither a demon nor any other evil spirit. He observed that a spirit hath not flesh and bones (Luke, 24:37-43); God Who is a spirit has neither bones nor flesh (John, 4:24). Now God is Incomprehensible and Unseen. Jesus did not possess Divine qualities, to be looked upon as God or a spirit.

(4) JESUS' PICTURE IN THE MUSEUMS OF EUROPE AND AMERICA

Picture galleries of almost all European and American museums have a picture of Jesus in common where blood is shown dripping down his body on to and near his feet. This picture clearly suggests that Jesus was alive, not dead, when taken down from the Cross. This fact, to which the whole Christian world is a witness, is quite enough to prove that the Church doctrine which has been based on the death of Jesus on the Cross is baseless, fanciful, and untrue.

CONCLUSION

From the texts of the Gospel made use of in the foregoing pages, the following truths shine forth conspicuously:

(1) Jesus taught with all the force at his command that the Most High God was the One True God, and He alone should be worshipped and adored (Matt., 4:10). He stresses:

Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength (Mark, 12:30).

And when the man whom he had addressed accepted and acknowledged this great truth, saying:

Well, Master, thou hast said the truth: for there is one God; and there is none other but he (Mark, 12:32).

Jesus was happy and pleased with him that he had spoken discreetly, and gave him the glad tidings that with such a true belief *he was not far from the kingdom of God* (Mark, 12:34). Jesus further emphasized that to serve the One True God only and to love His Creatures were two such commandments of the Most High God whereon hanged all the Law and prophets (Matt., 22:37-40).

(2) In this remarkable talk Jesus inculcated that his teaching was very much the same which had been inculcated in the Torah and the Books of the Prophets, and that when God is One and Only One, the teaching of the Prophets who had received light

and guidance from the same Divine Source is also one and the same; and that his teaching was not different from what the Prophets had taught before, nor against it; and there could not, therefore, be any justification for the people not to believe in him. It is thus clear that Jesus did not hold it permissible to worship a stone, a tree, or a person, except the One True God.

(3) According to Jesus, little children are innocent and pure; they love goodness, and hate evil. He therefore exhorted the people to become, like children, sinless and pure (Matt., 19:13-15). Jesus further enjoined upon the people to rise even above this state of sinlessness and purity, by imbuing themselves with the attributes of the Most High God (Matt., 5:48).

This rational and advantageous teaching of Jesus manifest the great truth that man is by nature pure and clean, that by remaining true and conforming to the rule of his nature he can live a life of peace and contentment, and that he can further develop his condition by imbuing himself with Divine qualities. In the light of such a charming and illuminating teaching, the irrational doctrine of Atonement is neither acceptable nor is it proper to ascribe it to Jesus Christ. Jesus, on the contrary, enjoins upon the people to be righteous; for, it is only the righteous who will shine like the sun on the Day of Resurrection (Matt., 13:43); they will be installed on high, lofty positions as a recompense and reward for their good deeds. Jesus said that the righteous shall enter into life eternal (Matt., 25:46), which the unrighteous shall be denied. Moreover, the wicked are base and cowardly: “[they] flee when no man pursueth: but the righteous are bold as a lion” (Proverbs, 28:1), and strong as the great mountains (Psalms, 36:6). And it was for this reason that Jesus laid great stress upon adopting the life of righteousness and good deeds. As for himself, Jesus said: *My meat is to do the will of him that sent me* (John, 4:34); *for, man shall live by the word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God* (Matt., 4:4). Jesus further said:

Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven (Matt., 7:21).

(4) As announced by Jesus himself, the purpose of his mission was to secure, for the benefit of the Children of Israel, the throne of his father, David, and to seek after and search the lost sheep of the House of Israel. His mission was definite and limited, and not meant for the entire mankind.

Jesus has declared that man is sinless and pure by nature; he has never said that the entire human race is sinful by birth, and that he had come to sacrifice his own life for their redemption. On the other hand, he has clearly taught in the Sermon on the Mount that it was by the adoption of a life of good deeds that man can get and reach the stage where he could be called the son of God (Matt., 5:9), and blessed with the happy eternal life (Matt., 5:10).

In contribution to the Christian doctrines in vogue, the Holy Bible has installed man on a position of loftiness and elevation. In the Book of Genesis, Adam's dignity has been stated in very distinct and unambiguous terms, saying:

And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness:....and God created man in his own image (Genesis, 1:26-27).

In the same way, the Gospel according to St. Luke (3:38) has called Adam as the one loved by God: *Adam which was the son of God*. And of the two sons of Adam, Abel has been said to be righteous (Matt., 23:35). In the Book of Genesis (4:3-5) it has been stated that the Most High God accepted his offering, and that he was the first martyr; but Cain, the other son of Adam, turned out to be a malefactor. It should be clearly noted that if Adam were sinful by nature, Abel could not have been righteous and a dear one of God. The fact of the matter is that Adam was a near and dear one of God, and so became his son Abel. The contrast of the two sons of Adam clearly points to the fact that, among the progeny of Adam, there will be both good and bad people. Jesus accepts this without any reservation. He said: *He*

[God] maketh his sun to rise on the evil and the good (Matt., 5:45). That there are people both good and bad among every nation and in every country, is a fact universally observed and accepted. Is it, therefore, right to condemn the entire humanity as sinful? The Holy Bible gives the names of some great and good personages besides Adam and Abel. About Israel the Most High God said: *Israel is my son, even my firstborn* (Exodus 4:22), and with reference to Enoch, it was said:

By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death...for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God. But without faith *it is* impossible to please *him* (Heb., 11:5-6).

In the same way, it has been said of Melchisedec:

...first being by interpretation King of righteousness, and after that also King of Salem, which is King of peace; without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God (Hebrews, 7:2-3).

In respect of Anna St. Luke records (2:36):

And there was one Anna, a prophetess, . . .which departed not from the temple, but served *God* with fastings and prayers night and day.

Likewise, Joseph, the husband of Mary, has been spoken of as a righteous man (Matt., 1:19), and of another person, Simeon by name, it is written:

...there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name *was* Simeon; and the same man *was* just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel: and the Holy Ghost was upon him (Luke, 2:25).

About John the Baptist, Jesus said: *Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist* (Matt., 11:11). He turned many a heart towards God so that even harlots who led an immoral life, through the Baptist's teaching, got their way into Paradise. And in respect of the Baptist's parents, Zacharias and Elisabeth, it is written in the Gospel:

And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless (Luke, 1:6).

In short, according to the Torah and the Gospel, there have ever been in the world great and righteous personages; hence the Church doctrine that the entire human species is besmeared with inherent sin stands obviously against the clear and categorical teaching of the Bible, as also against our daily observation. This doctrine which condemns the whole human race as base-born and sinful is not only without any sense or argument, but is also defamatory and offensive. It is certainly the grossest injustice to ascribe and impute such a teaching to Jesus.

(5) Jesus was of course impaled upon the Cross, but he did not die because of this. He had fallen into a state of complete unconsciousness; and it was after one day and two nights that he regained consciousness. That Jesus when taken down from the Cross was still alive, is borne out manifestly by the scarlet blood which gushed out of his side when a soldier pierced it with his spear. This testimony of the flowing blood can be witnessed even today: the painting of Jesus, with the blood dripping down his feet, hangs in the picture galleries of the Western world. This picture will ever continue to proclaim that Jesus certainly did not die upon the Cross and, therefore, the doctrine of Atonement which has its basis on the supposed death of Jesus on the Cross does not deserve to be considered a whit more than mere whim and fantasy. Moreover, this deleterious doctrine casts a slur on Jesus himself for it asserts that Jesus, bearing the burden of the sins of the whole human race, became himself accursed of God, and went into hell for three days (Galatians, 3:13). To call this true and righteous prophet of God as a man accursed and condemned to hell is indeed an insolence of the worst kind. It is simply inconceivable that a man who had been raised by the Most High God to keep off and save people from the furnace of hell fell into it himself.