

Albushra. E/77

Series 33

Glimpses of World Religions.

Religious Permit No. 10713

Publisher and Author. K. B. Ahmad (01152)

191-28th Street, Rangoon. (Burma)

Printed at Moe Zaw Colour Press.

Daw Than Tin (02319)

42, Kyeiktan Street, Kemmendine,

Rangoon.

Cover Printed at Thida Yezin Press,

153, 31st Street, Rangoon,

For Charity.

First Print. 2000 Copies.

July 1979.

Glimpses of World Religions.

Dedicated to

My Parents Khwaja Shamsud-din Sehgal and Aysha Begum Sethi, and to the companions of my luminous dark night.

"There is radiance and glory in darkness, could we but see; and to see, we have only to look. I beseech you to look....."

(Fra Giovanni)



Contents.

Preface i-t	o-viii
Universal Prayer.	1
Search for Knowledge	5
In quest of God.	8
Five classical proofs.	12
Seven reasons why a scientist believes in Goo	1. 12
Other scientists and philosophers.	19
Psychological aspect of religions.	43
Basic Principle.	44
The name of God.	45
God is One.	47
Nothing is like unto Him.	48
Attributes of God.	52
All things in pairs.	61
The inner self.	66
Creation.	68
Creation of Man.	72
Soul.	84
Religious and Natural laws.	89
Determinism and Free-will.	92
In praise of man.	96
Do's and Don'ts.	100
Golden rule.	112
Golden Mean.	114
Repentance.	122
Prayer	124
Prophecy and the present times.	156
Is it scientific?	172
SimilaritiesFasting, Pilgrimage etc.	182
Love, esotric, exotric and divine.	214
Before I sleep.	234



IN THE NAME OF ALLAH, THE GRACIOUS, THE MERCIFUL.

Phul ki patti say kat saktahai heeray ka jigar,

Mardi naadan par kalam-inarm-o-naazak bay asar (Iqbal)

The endeavours of a man to bring a block-head to the right path by the influence of his wise and mellifluous words are no wise better than the fruit-less efforts of one who ventures to pierce the heart of a diamond by the tender leaf of a rose.

· (Bhartr Hari, 600 A.D.)

PREFACE

- * Convey thou in the name of thy Lord, Who created.... Who taught man by the pen. (Quran ch. 96)
- * Let not the authority of the writer offend thee whether he be of great or small learning: but let the love of pure truth draw thee to read.

(Thomas A. Kempis 1377-1477 A.D.)

- * Each man's memory is his private literature, and every recollection affects us with something of the penetrative force that belongs to the work of art.
- * The profit of the books is according to the sensibility of the reader. The profoundest thought or passion sleeps as in a mine until it is discovered by an equal mind and heart.
- * Next to originator of a good sentence is the first quoter.
- * When a writer takes stuff from one writer, it is plagiarism; when he takes it from many, it is research.

No two human beings have been made or ever will make, exactly the same journey in life. Every human life is a unique adventure in thoughts and ideas. So far as human beings remain enquiring animals, there can never be Complete unanimity in our thoughts and beliefs. No two persons have ever set out with identical equipment in mind and body.

Every face is stamped with individuality and every body brings into the world a pattern on his finger tips never seen before. The same is true of his brain, and here it brings infinitely greater significance,

This book is about the spirit and soul of man at its best, as a believer, doubter, questing, wondering, and at times full of joy. On one side, "how like a god", cried Hamlet, "the beauty of the world; the paragon of animals and quint-essence of dust"; and on the other side, said Job, "Man is of few days, and full of troubles. He comes forth like a flower and is cut down; he flyeth also as a shadow, and Continueth not". Both represent Man. While Jalalud-din Rumi (1207-1273 A. D) declares in his exalted state:

My dusty body, is heavens light Angels are Jealous, to watch my flight Cherubin envy, my purity Before my valour, all demons fly!

Bhartr Hari, commentator of Brahma Suttra and poet says.

"We see that life is being wasted every day. Youth is approaching its end, the days that are past do not return. Time devours the world. The goddess of wealth is as unsteady as waves in a river. Life is as fleeting as lightning itself. Therefore, O' Lord, save me, seeking refuge in Thee, this very instant."

Here again, both represent MAN.

Man has not come into this world of his own accord. He has been sent forth. But this spirit, at times, "flashes into an existence beyond his ordinary self."

He can deliberately reject satisfaction at one level for the sake of satisfaction at another, higher

level. He does not care even if it means rejection of life itself, which he so much loves, for the sake of his faith, friend or country. He can impose severe discipline on his nature and check the drive of his wild desires. Indeed, he is capable of being unjust to, and neglectful of, himself. This is a fact. It is at such moments that all rational philosophy and scientific jargon ends and the Prophet, the mystic, the artist, the lover comes in and takes over.

I neither claim to be a saint nor philosopher. Neither good enough for heaven, nor bad enough to be thrown in hell. I am in the process of "becoming" and therefore in this insecure world where every one needs handholds and footholds for one's security, I find in the final analysis that there is nobody and no-thing worthy to depend upon except God against whom the fears and trials cannot prevail.

"I said to the man who stood at the gate of life, 'Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown'. And he replied, 'Go out into the darkness, child, and put your hand into the hand of God. That shall be to you better than light and safer than a known way."

Terms like Platos 'idea'; 'Spinozas' 'Essence'; 'Substance' and 'attribute'; 'Kants' 'Catagorical imperative' etc, leave me cold and frightened. They arouse in me a sort of suspicion that these great men are getting too much mixed up or involved in their own thoughts.

"Love, bold and fearless, took a leap and jumped into the fire.

While beauty, undecided, stood reviewing the scene". (Iqbal)

Therefore I "boast" to follow the path of the great 'lovers' of God and mankind, the Prophets and the mystics. For they represent the MAN in the ideal. They are not the product of their times. They are in time yet beyond the limitations of time. Bold, fearless and un-wavering like lion, they swim against the strong current and preach against the contemporary trends. They are the pace setters. Like granite rock they with stand the worst opposition, ridicule, calumny and abuse, but like sun, moon and the stars, they abide. As for their erst while enemies, it is well said, "They made sepulchres (for those) whom they stoned".

The famous Russian Poet Pushkin writes.

"Until Apollo calls a poet to his sacred sacrifice, he is vulgarly silent: his soul is asleep; and among the insignificant children of the world he is perhaps the most trifling. But as soon as the Divine word touches his ears, the poet's soul rouses as an awakened Eagle. He is bored amidst amusements of the world: he is a stranger to the gossips of the mob; he does not bend his proud head to the feet of the popular idol".

This is true of all 'awakened' and 'enlightened' ones.

The reader will not find high brow philosophical jargon in this book. There is a unity, however imperceptible, in diversity of quotations presented. It is a collection of things that impressed me directly and simply. Reading books has been a passion with me since I was Ten. I find that there is no better companion and friend than a good book. God bless my passion. But I have ever been mindful of the strong words of the Quran, 'Like unto an ass carrying a load of books' (62.6), and 'Why do

you say what you do not do' (68:3). The warning is applicable to any one who does not benefit from the great literature, particularly sacred literature of the world, which has unusual power to stimulate its readers to thought, feeling and action. For one can not seek divinity merely by reading books and writings but by acting upon the advice given and searching in one's own soul.

Though I am a talk maker of sorts myself būt I do not believe that the world can be saved by talk alone.

In a typical western man and his mimicking eastern follower, who has inherited English rationalist thought and values of the 18th and 19th century and who has become mentally conditioned by it or by the German philosophical thought and values of the last century and a half, this intuitive faculty, this searching of the soul, has been so starved and neglected that he has greatest reluctance to admit even its existence, and cannot imagine as to how it operates. In consequence, therefore, his religious judgment has become seriously unbalanced. As a result generally, people have no kind of contact with any form of religion or its modes of thought. The majority of people do not see any reason why religion should play any part in their lives, though many of them are not atheists, and on enquiry they profess one or other creed adopted from parents or habit or because of some social advantage.

We live in an age of hectic hurry of deafening noise, where we have no time or inclination for anything beyond the passing hour. True life grows from within. But our modern living does not allow us this inner solitude. Thank God, not all of us, however, are deprived of this right. Man is essentially a religious animal. He is actually prepared to believe and worship anything. It will be most unfortunate if he cuts himself away from his spiritual dimension. It will be an act of perfidy. An act against his

inner most nature. For to have no sense of direction in life is to destroy life.

I am a muslim and belong to the Ahmadiyya sect of Islam, but the preaching of my own philosophy of life is not the main aim and object of this book, though it is implied, but to present a few universal truths from the original sources and thereby to arouse in the reader that thought and feeling which is conducive to right action towards inner contemplation and achieving peace, call it Moksha, Nirvana or Paradise.

The book is a bouquet of scented flowers gathered from various gardens. The holy prophet said, "good word is the lost property of the believer; let him pick it up (and own it wherever he may find it". I am presenting it now to the reader in the hope that, "May be the listener (or reader) put it to better use" than me.

The great religions of the world, Judaism, Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Christianity and Islam, are inter-connected. They face the same dangers and difficulties. That which threatens one will sooner or latter endanger another. The sacred scriptures of the world are not only the guardians of the past but heralds of the future also. But by not listening to their call, or by accepting them mechanically and unthinkingly, is to prove them as "dead literature". Who would like to be instrumental in proving such frightening proposition!

What is presented is enough to gladden the heart of those who dream of a universal brotherhood of faiths. However, even if there is no possibility of such cooperation in the near future due to various national and international difficulties, lack of education or lack of confidence in the project itself, at least it will serve the purpose of curing the malady of thinking in a groove, purging religious arrogance, and arousing the sense of humility whereby we may be able to appreciate other faiths and their holy founders, beside our own.

This book has been compiled during a sort of enforced exile. Therefore the standard of presentation is not what I wished to achieve. However, as the saying is, 'something is better than nothing', I crave the indulgence of the reader to over look its short-comings. The state of my mind has been akin to that of a famous Derwaish, Baba Tahir(967-1049 A.D.) who played on his one string guitar the doleful song,—

"A nameless, homeless braggart
A Derwaish I am.
By day the world's my parish
At night with weary sigh
On bed of stones I lie.
No moth e'er knew such misery
no mad man bore such dree.
Ants have their nests for shelter
For serpents holes there be
But roof is none for me.
The stoney earth for pillow,
for coverlet the air
my only sin was loving.
Do all Thy lovers share
This torment that I bear?"

Or in Blakes wonderful verses,

Tyger, Tyger, burning bright, In the forests of the night. Did He who made the lamb, make thee?"

Anyway, I decided that while others may see 'dunghills' I would see the 'stars' and praise my Lord for His in-numerable blessings.

I have given a fairly accurate description of the Compass and Charts that I have forged out of my reading and random thoughts and by which I try to steer my own little humble craft of life. But by its use if any of the readers suffers little sea sickness or

confronts a few shoals and sandbars on the way, he should not be disheartened. He should remember that no religion vouch-safes an absolute certainity to be found at the end of the quest. It is rather the 'way', the various religions affirm. All matters pertaining to life and its manifold aspects, particularly religious and spiritual, are of a highly tricky nature and everything depends, in the last analysis, upon the man on the bridge of the boat, who has to handle the delicate instruments of the head and heart.

That Nature abhors a vacuum is true of human head as well. There is no such thing as empty head, though there are heads so impervious to new ideas that they are for all mutual purposes solid like a ball of lead. I feel that the reader has not that sort of head. For if he had, he would not be reading this book. And though there is danger that with his head vacant even for a moment, other peoples opinion will rush in from all quarters but I am satisfied that he will add from this book also. And that is something. To those who may wish to disagree with me on some 'shades of meaning' and interpretation I appeal to take the matter philosophically and above all with a little charity.

These maps and charts are good enough for me. The book would achieve its purpose and I my ample reward if by the grace of God I am blessed with a sympathizing heart who may appriciate these mystries, share my grief and joy and be my confident in the matter of this 'Mysterium Tremendum'.

I am deeply grateful to all those who have helped me to publish this book and above all to those great souls whose words and ideas I have made my own. God bless them all and their various publishers. Ameen.

KHWAJA BASHIR AHMAD

Darul Hijra No. 1, Hopper Road, Botataung, Rangoon. Phone: 13122/94 (or) 18421

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

(Arabic)

"Bismillah-ir-Rahman-ir-Rahim. Al-hamdu lillahi Rabbil alamin; Ar-Rahman-ir-Rahim; Malik-i-yaum-iddin; Iyyaka'na'budu, waiyyaka nasta'in; Ihdi-nas-siratal-mustaqim. Sirat-allazina An'amta' a'laihim, Ghairil maghzubi-a'laihim wala' azzalin.

(Trans.)

In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

All praise belongs to Allah, Lord of all'the worlds,

The Gracious, the Merciful,

Master of the Day of Judgment.

Thee alone do we worship and Thee alone do we implore for help.

Guide us in the right path. The path of those on whom Thou hast bestowed Thy blessings, those who have not incurred Thy displeasure, and those who have not gone astray.

Ameen. (Quran 1st. Chapter)

(Bible)

Hear, O Lord! my cry, give ear unto my prayer that goeth not out of feigned lips. Hold up my goings in Thy path, that my foot-steps slip not. Show Thy ways, O Lord, teach me Thy paths; and lead me in Thy Truth. Thou art the God of my salvation. Open Thou mine eyes that

I may behold wonderous things out of Thy Law. Quicken Thou me according to Thy word. Remove from me the way of lying?.

(Old Testament, Ps. 17:1-5; 22:4-5)

Our Father who 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 also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil; for Thine is the Kingdom, and the power, and the Glory, for ever'.

(New Testament, Mt. 6;9-13)

(Zend)

Apana darego jyaitim, a Kshathrem Vangh eush manangho, ashat a erejush patho, Yaeshu Mazadao Ahuro Sheti'.

Grant us long life, Great Lord! and fortitude, and the right mind, and show us the straight path over which Thou broodest, and which leads to Thee.

(Zoroaster in Gatha)

O far great heaven, we call Thee Our Father and our Mother.

(Confucius)

(Sanskrt)

'Eko Devah sarva-bhuteshu gudhah Sakshi cheta sarva-bhut-adhi-vasah, Tam Atma-stham ye-(a) nu-pashyanti dhirah, Tesham Sukham Shashvatam, na-itaresham.

Eko A-varno, bahu-dha Shakti-yogad Varnan, an-ekan nihit-artho Yo dadhati, Vi-chaiti ch-ante' Vishvam adau, Sa D'evah, Sa no buddhya Shubhaya Sam-yunaktu.

(Trans)

The one God hidden in all living being, The living witness biding in all hearts, The wise who seek and find Him in themselves.

To them, and none else, is Eternal Joy. The colourless, who from His secret store, Exhaustless, Countless colours draws (to paint, efface, repaint, the words) upon the face of space with mystic potency.

(may He endow us with the lucid mind)

(Upanishad)

"Ocean of Mercy! Ever in our hearts, Dwell Thou and so illuminate our minds that we may love, serve, worship Thee, O God, ever Thy presence may we feel near us!

Thou art our Father, Mother and Teacher,"

(Granth Sahib of the Sikhs)

(Persian)

Ba namay An Keh U namay na darad, Ba haw name Keh Khwani sar bar arad, Ba namay An-keh Wahid dar Kasir ast, Ke andar Wahdat-ash kasrat asir ast!

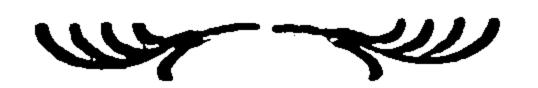
(Trans)

In the Name of Him who hath no name, Yet lifts to every name an answering head,

The name of him who is the Changeless One,

Amidst the changing many, and within.... Whose One-ness all this many is Confined,

(May we begin our loving work of Peace)



Search for knowledge, wisdom and Truth.

* Where is the pious doer? and I the estray'd one, where?

Behold how far the distance, from his safe home to here!

Dark is the stony desert, trackless and vast and dim,

Where is hope's guiding lantern? Where is faith's star so fair?

My heart fled from the cloister, and chant of monkish hymn,

What can avail me sainthood, fasting and punctual prayer?

What is truth, shall light me to heaven's straight thoroughfare?

Whither, O heart, thou hastest? Arrest thee, and beware!

See what a lone adventure is thine unending quest!

Fraught with what deadly danger! set with what unseen snare!

Say not, O friend, to Hafiz, 'Quiet thee now and rest';

Calm and content, what are they? Patience and peace, O'where?

(Hasiz of Shiraz, Tr. Arberry)

* The Quran and other scriptures reply to this enternal quest of man. 'And as for those who strive in Our path, We will surely guide them in Our ways. And verily Allah is with those who do good'. (Quran 29=70) 'And those who are given knowledge see that

whatever has been revealed to thee from thy Lord is the truth, and guides unto the path of the Mighty, the Praiseworthy.' (Quran. 34=7) "O' my lord, increase me in knowledge." (20=115)

* 'However men approach' Me, even so do I welcome them, for the path men take from every side is Mine', (Bhagavadgita 4=2)

* 'The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; and the knowledge of the holy is understanding' (Old Testament, Prov. 1-6)

* 'Ask and it shall be given you; seek and ye shall find: knock; and it shall be opened unto you'. (Matthew 7=7)

* Seek and you will find; neglect and you will lose. (Mencius, 6-1; 6),

* All things in one and one in all unreal do they pass and fall.
This path of 'Oneness! shall ye tread Ye who would free yourselves of dread Freed from the snare of 'I' and 'Mine!, Ye shall attain to power divine:
Bursting the bonds of unreality
The hidden heart of Truth ye'll see.

(Avatumsaka Sutra, Song of Manjusri. From Lotuses of Mahayana by Saunders, P. 33)

* "And whosoever of you, O men", — thus said Ahura Mazda," O holy Zarathustra! shall seize that Glory that cannot be forcibly seized, he has the gifts of an Athravan; whosoever shall

long for illumination of knowledge, he has the gifts of an Athravan; who soever shall long for fulness of knowledge, he has the gift of an Athravan"

(Avesta: Zamyad yast)

"He who knows what God is, and who knows what man is, has attained. Knowing what God is, he knows that he himself proceeded therefrom. Knowing what man is, he rests in the knowledge of the known, waiting for the knowledge of the unknown. Working out one's alloted span, and not perishing in mid career, this is the fulness of knowledge".

(Taoism, Chuang Tzu)

"So long as the brethren shall practice the limb of wisdom which is mindfulness, the limb of wisdom which is searching into things, energy, zest, calm, contemplation and equanimity,—"

"Just so long, brethren, as these.... Conditions that prevent decay shall be established and brethren are instructed in them—so long may their prosperity and not their decay be looked for".

(Digha Nikaya 11, 79-80.)

Buddhism.

How shall man become true before God? How shall the veil of falsehood be rent? By walking, O Nanak, according to the will of the Commander as pre-ordained, (Granth Sahib of the Sikhs, Japji-1)

Thou, whose breath is sweetest perfume to the spent and anguished heart,

Thy remembrance to Thy lovers bringeth ease for every smart.

I may be forgiven if my pen has gone astray or my foot has slipped for to plunge into the abyss of the Divine mysteries is a perilous thing and no easy task is to seek to discover the unclouded glory which lies behind the veil'.

(Al-Ghazali, 1058-1111 A.D.)

The Quran says:-

- * Do they not reflect in their own minds? Allah has not created the heavens and the earth and all that is between the two but in accordance with the requirements of wisdom and for a fixed term. But many among men believed not in the meeting of their Lord. (30:9)
- * Blessed is He in Whose hand is the Kingdom and He has power over all things. (67:2). Who has created seven heavens in harmony. No incongruity canst thou find in the creation of the Gracious God. Then, look again; seest thou any flaw? 'Aye look again', thy sight will return unto thee confused and fatigued. (67:4-5)

- * And He pressed the sun and the moon into service, each pursues its course until an appointed term. (13:3)
- * He it is Who brought you into being, and made for you ears and eyes and hearts, but little thanks do you give. He it is Who multiplied you in the earth and unto Him will you be gathered. (67:24-25)

It is considered fashionable now a days to claim that humanity has passed through two stages of her development, the religious and mataphysical, and has now entered the third and highest scientific stage. It is taken for granted that the essence of religion lies in fear evoked by the unknown forces of nature, superstitious belief in imaginary beings and their worship. The assertion is preposterous in view of the recognition given to a Supreme Being by hundreds of Prophets and highly educated persons from Socrates to Newton, who were certainly not superstitious, fearing neither natural forces nor any man.

Mere assertion that religion arose from man's superstitious fear of the mysterious forces of nature does not show what was that in men by which they were able to conceive those unseen super-natural beings?

If they feared snakes, for examble, they must have killed some of them and got over the fear. If they feared thunders and lightnings they feared these as such, but what was

there in them which gave them the idea of something behind the scene ie behind thunders and lightnings? If they feared death, they must have reconciled with the idea, but why they invested the dead with spirit and soul and invented another world where the dead had their abode?

The earliest evidences of ritual and grave burials have been that of Homo-Neanderthalensis, between 200000 — 75000 B.C. These skeletons have been found interred with supplies (suggestive of another life), accompanied by animal sacrifice (wild ox, bison and wild goat), with attention to an east-west axis (the path of sun!), in flexed position (as though within the womb), or in a sleeping position......in one case with a pillow of chips of flint. (see, Anthropology Today: P.108; 'Story of Man' P. 67).

This and the idea of an Eternal Being upon Whom they supposed themselves to depend did not arise from fear but from some other reason. And that reason, to my mind is man's consciousness of extreme loneliness that he would have felt in the infinite spaces all around him; consciousness of his own insignificance or, may be, at times, consciousness of not having done all one might and should have done.

Out of this cosmic anxiety and awe, in which self abasement and exaltation both played a part, came the sense of the 'sacred',

which has no animal equivalent. It is this consciousness actually that differentiates man from animals.

A time does come in man's life when he suddenly awakens, takes stock of the world around, his share in it, and pauses to ask himself, what is the meaning of all these eternal spaces and what am I doing here? In what relation do I stand to these immensities? These or atleast some such questions are the acorns and answers to these questions are the oaks that we call world religions.

Science and philosophy cannot define man's relation to the Infinite universe around him or its source. For science is the investigation and study of all such objects and phenomena that appear to demand investigation in consequence of a certain relation that religion sets up between man and the universe. Similarly, philosophy cannot define this relation, for it has always been simply the investigation of the consequences that result from the relation religion establishes between man and the universe. Until that relation is settled there is nothing on which philosophy can work.

There is an Arabic philosophical maxim, L'illahe-nnasi hujjatain; Zahiratun wa batinah; Hujjatul-Zahirah he-al-anbiya war-rasul; hujjatul batinah he-al-U'qul. For mankind there are two proofs for the existence of God; the outer is the witness of the prophets

and the messengers, and the inner is the rational mind.

Five classical proofs of the existence of God.

- 1. All motions are caused by previous motions, and so on either to a Prime Mover un-moved or to infinite regress which is inconceivable.
- 2. The contingent, which may but need not be, depends upon the necessary, which must be; the possible depends upon the actual; this series drives us back to a necessary being who is pure actuality.
- 3. The series of causes like-wise require a First Cause.
- 4. Things are good, true, noble in various degrees; there must be a perfectly good, true and noble source and norm of these imperfect virtues.
- 5. There are thousands of evidences of order in the world; even in animate objects move in an orderly way; how could this be unlesss some intelligent power exists Who created them?

Seven reasons why a scientist believes in God.

First: By unwavering mathematical law we can prove that our universe was designed and executed by a great engineering Intelligence.

Suppose you put ten pennies, marked from one to ten, into your pocket and give them a good shuffle. Now try to take them

out in sequence from one to ten, putting back the coin each time and shaking them all again. Mathematically we know that your chance of first drawing number one is one in ten; of drawing one and two in succession, one in 100; of drawing one, two and three in succession, one in a thousand, and so on; your chance of drawing them all, from number one to number ten in succession, would reach the unbelievable figure of one chance in ten thousand million.

By the same reasoning, so many exacting conditions are necessary for life on earth that they could not possibly exist in proper relationship by chance. The earth rotates on its axis at one thousand miles an hour; if it turned at one hundred miles an hour, our days and nights would be ten times as long as now, and the hot sun would then burn up our vegetation each long day while in the long night any surviving sprout would freeze.

Again, the sun, source of our life, has a surface temperature of 12,000 degrees Fahrenheit, and our earth is just far enough away so that this "eternal fire" warms us just enough and not too much!

If the sun gave off only one-half its present radiation, we would freeze, and if it gave half as much more, we would roast.

The slant of the earth, tilted at an angle of 23 degrees, gives us our seasons; if it had not

been so tilted, vapours from the ocean would move north and south, piling up for us continents of ice. If our moon was, say, only 50 thousand miles away instead of its actual distance, our tides would be so enormous that twice a day all continents would be submerged; even the mountains would soon be eroded away. If the crust of the earth had been only ten feet thicker, there would be no oxygen, without which animal life must die. Had the ocean been a few feet deeper, carbon dioxide and oxygen would have been absorbed and no vegetable life could exist. Or if our atmosphere had been thinner, some of the meteors, now burned in space by the million every day, would be striking all parts of the earth, starting fires every where.

Because of these, and a host of other examples, there is not one chance in millions that life on our planet is an accident.

Second: The resourcefulness of life to accomplish its purpose is a manifestation of all-pervading Intelligence.

What life itself is, no man has fathomed. It has neither weight nor dimensions, but it does have force; a growing root will crack a rock. Life has conquered water, land and air, mastering the elements, compelling them to dissolve and reform their combinations.

Behold an almost invisible drop of protoplasm, transparent, jelly-like, capable of motion, drawing energy from the sun. This single cell, this transparent mist-like droplet, holds within itself the germ of life, and has the power to distribute this life to every living thing, great and small. The powers of this droplet are greater than our vegetation and animals and people, for all life came from it. Nature did not create life; fire-blistered rocks and a saltless sea could not meet the necessary requirements.

Who, then, has put it here?

Third: Animal wisdom speaks irresistibly of a good Creator who infused instinct into otherwise help-less little creatures.

The young salmon spends years at sea, then comes back to his own river, and travels up the very side of the river into which flows the tributary where he was born. What brings him back so precisely? If you transfer him to another tributary he will know at once that he is off his course and he will fight his way down and back to the main stream and then turn up against the current to finish his destiny more accurately.

Even more difficult to solve is the mystery of eels. These amazing creatures migrate at maturity from all ponds and rivers everywhere—those from Europe across thousands of miles of ocean—all bound for the same abysmal deeps near Bermuda. There they breed and die. The little ones, with no apparent means of knowing anything except that they are in a wilderness of water, nevertheless start back and find their way not only

to the very shore from which their parents came but thence to the rivers, lakes or little ponds—so that each body of water is always populated with cels.

A wasp will overpower a grasshopper, dig a hole in the earth, sting the grasshopper in exactly the right place so that he does not die but becomes unconscious and lives on as a form of preserved meat. Then the wasp will lay her eggs handily so that her children when they hatch can nibble without killing the insect on which they feed; to them dead meat would be fatal. The mother then flies away and dies; she never sees her young.

Such mysterious techniques cannot be explained by adaptation; they were bestowed.

Fourth: Man has something more than animal instinct—the power of reason.

No other animal has ever left a record of its ability to count ten, or even to understand the meaning of ten. Where instinct is like a single note of a flute, beautiful but limited, the human brain contains all the notes of all the instruments in the orchestra. No need to belabour this fourth point; thanks to human reason we can contemplate the possibility that we are what we are only because we have received a spark of Universal Intelligence.

Fifth: Provision for all living is revealed in phenomena which we know today but which Darwin did not know—such as the wonders of genes.

So unspeakably tiny are these genes that, if all of them responsible for all living people in the world could be put in one place, there would be less than a thimbleful. Yet these ultra-microscopic genes and their companions, the chromosomes, inhabit every living cell and are the absolute keys to all human, animal and vegetable characteristics. How do genes lock up all the normal heredity of a multitude of ancestors and preserve the psychology of each in such an infinitely small space?

Here evolution really begins—at the cell, the entity which holds and carries the genes. How a few million atoms, locked up as an ultra-microscopic gene, can absolutely rule all life on earth is an example of profound cunning and provision that could emanate only from a Creative Intelligence; no other hypothesis will serve.

Sixth: By the economy of nature, we are forced to realize that only infinite wisdom could have foreseen and prepared with such astute husbandry.

Many years ago a species of cactus was planted in Australia as a protective fence. Having no insect enemies in Australia the cactus soon began a prodigious growth; the alarming abundance persisted until the plants covered an area as long and wide as England, crowding inhabitants out of the towns and villages, and destroying their farms. Seeking a defence, the entomologists scoured the world; finally they discovered

an insect which lived exclusively on cactus, and would eat nothing else. It would breed freely too; and it had no enemies in Australia.

So animal conquered vegetable and today the cactus pest has retreated, and with it all but a small protective residue of the insects, enough to hold the cactus in check for ever.

Such checks and balances have been universally provided. Why have not fast-breeding insects dominated the earth? Because they have no lungs such as man possesses; they breathe through tubes. But when insects grow large, their tubes do not grow in ratio to the increasing size of the body. Hence there has never been an insect of great size; this limitation on growth has held them all in check. If this physical check had not been provided, man could not exist. Imagine meeting a hornet as big as a lion!

Seventh: The fact that man can conceive the idea of God is in itself a unique proof.

The conception of God rises from a divine faculty of man, unshared with the rest of our world—the faculty we call imagination. By its power, man and man alone can find the evidence of things unseen. The vista that power opens up is unbounded; indeed, as man's perfected imagination becomes a spiritual reality, he may discern in all the evidences of design and purpose the great truth that heaven is wherever and whatever; that God is everywhere

and in everything but nowhere so close as in our hearts.

It is scientifically as well as imaginatively true; in the words of the Psalmist: The heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament sheweth His handiwork.

(A.C. Morrison: Readers Digest, Jan' 48)

Let us see what some of the great names in science and philosophy have to say about religions and religious experiences of mankind.

* Count Leo Tolstoy says, "Religion is a relation man sets up between himself and the endless and Infinite Universe and its Source. Morality is the ever present Guide to life which results from that relation."

Pascal says;—

* "Let man contemplate the whole of nature in her lofty and abundant majesty. Let him behold that blazing light set like an eternal lamp to illumine the world. Let him see the earth as a mere point in comparison with the vast orbit described by the sun, and let him wonder at the fact that that vast orbit is itself but a very faint speck compared with that described by the stars in their journeys through the firmament.

But if our vision is to stop short there, let the imagination pass beyond; it will sooner cease to function than will nature, to supply it with material. The whole visible

world is an imperceptible atom in the ample bosom of nature, of which we can form no adequate idea. Reality is an infinite sphere, whose centre is every where and whose circumference is no where. In short, the greatest sensible indication of God's omnipotence is the fact that human imagination loses itself in that thought.

"Returning to himself, let man consider what he is in comparison with all existence. Let him regard himself as a piece of flotsam in this remote region of nature, and from this little cell, the Universe, where in he happens to be lodged, let him estimate at their true value, the earth, its kingdoms and cities and himself.... What is man in the Infinite?

"On the other side let him consider the smallest mite and its extremely intricate metabolism. Subdivide it. It loses itself in invisible atoms....and see therein infinity and immensities of nature. Then see the larger animals, they also come to the similar ends.... to atoms. Thus seeing the human body seems colossus, a world or rather an All.

Reflecting this way, he will become afraid of himself. Since he is infinitely removed from comprehension of extremes, the end and the beginning of things are hidden from him teyond hope of discovery, in an impenetrable secret, he is equally incapable of seeing the nothingness whence he has been drawn and the infinite where in he is engulfed".

"He has no alternative but to perceive some appearance of the middle things. The

whole is only Known to its Author, no one else can know. Men began to explore nature, but to attain this, we must have the capacity for *NOTHING* as well as ALL. Only such person may attain to knowledge of Infinite. These extremes meet and re-unite by force of distance, finding one another in God alone"

- * "The most beautiful and most profound emotion we can experience is the sensation of the mystical. It is the dower of all true science. He to whom this emotion is a stranger, who can no longer wonder and stand rapt in awe, is as good as dead. To know that what is impenetrable to us really exists, manifesting itself as the highest wisdom and the most rad iant beauty which our dull faculties can comprehend only in their most primitive form.... This knowledge, this feeling is at the centre of true religiousness". (Einstein, "Out of my later years".)
- * "Any effort to visualise God reveals a surprising childishness. We can no more conceive an electron. We forget that this incapability is not, in itself, a proof of non existence. We are in the habit of juggling now-a-days with Electrons, Protons and Neutrons etc. Individually they are rigorously inconceivable and physicists, who inspire as much confidence today as did the priests in the past, confirm that without these particles

our material objects the forces that we employ....in other words, our whole inorganic universe become incoherent and un-intelligible. Let us not forget that these particles move in a world where time and space do not have the same value as in ours. No-body questions the reality of these, now familiar, though elusive and strange elements.

"The agnostic and the atheist do not seem to be in the least disturbed by the fact that our entire organized living universe becomes in-comprehensible without the hypothesis of God."

"The idea of God is a pure idea, like the idea of force, or of energy, and does not need to be visualized; nor can it be. It develops either spontaneously through intuition, unwarded and irrational, and is then called revelation; or else it emerges rationally from the contradictions observed between the homogeneous but tentative pattern proposed by science and objective reality which made the construction of this scheme possible".

(P.L. Du Nouy 1883-1947)

Let us see what some eminent experts have to say.

*Biology:-Le Comty du Nouy, author of "Human Destiny" stood out as a man of faithdespite his belief in human evolution and that of the earth over. millions of years. He did not ascribe to chance origin of life as he proved

that mathematical odds were impossibly great against it, and even greater against evolution at random from a one-celled organization to thinking man'. Life, evolution and mind, he could attribute only to the operation of the Divine purpose.

Anthropology:- That religion is superstitious survival of primitive time! Well, no one blames chemistry for its origin in the magic of al-chemy (and making of gold thereby!) but supposedly similar origin of religion is made a frequent reproach. Just what basis does this aspertion has?

Malinowski had the opportunity to study the actual function of religion in a surviving stone age society. He surprised all by declaring that even there, religion and magic were very different things. Magic, he learnt, is the attempt to alter facts in the belief that wishing something can make it so. Religion, on the other hand, does not try to change events. It is an attitude and mode of beha, viour towards experience beyond our control; an acceptance of Providence, developing into gratitude and trust. From this new aspect we can say that magic survives among us whenever we expect God to alter the order of nature for our benefit and religious attitude survives by our saying, 'we accept the will of our Lord, the Master of the Worlds'. Religious act (in real sense of the word) is not done for ulterior motives but for its own sake. It furnishes the most powerful means of re-establishing morals—in face of the crisis of death—and is thus gift of mental integrity. Thus, even primitive religion, evidently is not the contemptible thing that some have supposed it to be. Sprouting from such acorns as this, the great religions of the world have grown into sheltering oaks of ethical and spiritual strength".

* Physics: "My religion consists of a humble admiration for the illimitable superior Spirit Who reveals Himself in the slight details we are able to perceive with our frail and feeble minds. That deeply emotional conviction of the presence of a superior reasoning power which is revealed in the in-comprehensible Universe, forms my idea of God". (Albert Einstein.)

*Sir Arthur Eddington says that science has changed its point of view. Fifty years ago, most scientists assumed that everything was reducible to force and matter, and nothing could be true unless an engineer could make a model of it. Now, however, most of them recognize that the ultimate nature of things defies conception, and our descriptions are only convenient symbols for a reality which our limited mind and senses can never completely grasp. The external world that science takes for granted as its own is a construction of that part of our consciousness we call sensations. But there is more to the world and

our minds than that, other aspects of our awareness which at the least are equally significant—— feelings, purposes, values, religious experiences—. Those who in search for truth start from consciousness as a seat of self knowledge with interests and responsibilities not confined to the material plane, are just as much facing the hard facts of experience as those who start from consciousness as a device for reading the indications of spectroscopes and micro-metres".

Both science and religion have the same kind of justification. "In the mystic sense of the creation around us, in the expression of art, in a yearning towards God, the soul grows upwards and finds the fulfilment of something implanted in its nature— science can scarcely question this sanction, for the pursuit of science also springs from a striving which the mind is impelled to follow. Quite as much as religion, science depends upon faith in the unity and order of the universe".

Psychology:- Here let us turn to researches of Dr. J.B. Rhine, who shows that knowledge can reach us by other means than the senses. "Of course, Behaviourists still feel shy from religion and see in our study of thoughts and feelings as un-scientific. However orthodox psychologists are coming to accept such human values as religion. It is true that Dr. Frued claimed God to be merely father image and religion as mere rationaliza-

tion—— wishful thinking. But if one accepts this principle that all mental life is the tool of instinct, then his own theory of psycho-analysis is no better off than religion; it too, may be only wishful thinking, thus his argument cancelling itself"!

William James was the first psychologist to approach religion with open mind in his "Varities of Religious experience", and found significant agreement on essentials in various religions of the world. Different creeds emphasized different facts of a common human experience. Individuals vary in their capacity for religion as they do for music and art, but few are wholly tone-deaf or blind to it.

His findings of religious experience include, "Conversations with the unseen voices, and visions, responses to prayers, changes of heart, deliverances from fear, in-flowings of help, assurances of support, whenever certain persons set their internal attitud: in a certain appropriate way". The techniques may vary from creed to creed but the results are common to all. Confirming this Prof. C.J. Jung finds religious impulse a basic part of human nature. Man's mental health and stability depends as much on the proper expression of this religious function as on the expression of other basic drives. If such expression is thwarted, it may force un-wholesome outlet into neurosis or mass-obsessions like facism etc.

Gordan Allport, a modern psychologist recognizes that "psychology, the study of the mind, is not qualified to pass judgment upon the reach of religion beyond the mind. But it is equipped to study the role of religion in a healthy personality - A man's religion is the audacious bid he makes to bind himself to creation and to the Creator. It is his ultimate attempt to enlarge and complete his personality by finding the supreme context in which he rightly belongs"

- * Again, read william James. He says, "In Hinduism, neo-platonism, in Christian mysticism (and else-where) we find the same re-curring note, so that there is about mystical utterances an eternal unanimity which aught to make a critic stop and think, and which brings it about that the mystical classes have, as has been said, "neither birthday nor native land."
- * And here is famous Dr. Wider Penfield in some observations on the functional organization of the human brain.
- 'It is obvious that nerve impulse is somehow converted into thought and that thought can be converted into nerve impulse. And yet all this throws no light upon the nature of that strange conversion. Before certain problems the scientist will always stand in awe. Perhaps he may be forced to make another approach....to what was called in old times, "the heart". However far our successes

in these studies may go, it is my belief that the machine will never fully explain the MAN, nor Mechanisms (will be able to explain) the nature of the Spirit'.

* Dr. C. G. Jung in his "Modern man in search of a Soul", writes of his middle aged patients:—

"Every one of them fell ill because he had lost that which the living religions of every age have given to their followers and none of them has been really healed who did not (first) regain his religious out look".

* Sir Sarvapali Radhakrishnan, eminent philosopher, ex. President of India, writes:—

"The tree of knowledge of good and evil does not grow from the soil of science. Self awareness is not a proposition to be proved true or false by scientific tests. Yet it is the ultimate supposition which is indubitable (according to all prophets, seers and philosophers). Heracleitus felt that there was a mystry which the human mind cannot comprehend, an unfathomable element which human thought cannot fully penetrate. Knowledge of that mystry is not derived from any empirical observation or rational analysis of the facts observed. Socrates was a great advocate of reason but yet a profoundly religious man with mystical feeling. Belief in God is not a Scientific conclusion, but it is not in-consistent with the findings of science. Intuition completes and transforms reason.

We cannot make a science of God for god is not an object like other objects of thought.

- * Max planck says, "Science cannot solve the ultimate mystry of nature. And that is because in the last analysis, We ourselves are part of nature and therefore part of the mystry that we are trying to solve. The most penetrating eye cannot see itself any more than a working instrument can work upon itself."
- * George Berkeley (1685-1753 A. D.) says in 'Where science is Going', "I conclude there is a Mind which affects me every moment with all the sensible impressions I perceive. And from the variety, order, and manner of these, I conclude the Author of them to be Wise, Powerful, and Good beyond comprehension".

Lewis Mumford writes, "In its wildest reaches, religion concerns itself with the impenetrable substratum of reality; with what, from the stand point of science, is unknowable, the 'Mysterium Tremendum'..... From the beginning man views life, above all, his own life, with a mixture of curiosity, humility and wonder. He claims the unknown as his province and the unknown as his object, for the reason that he realizes that the true condition of man is 'beyond him' and that the fate of man is not entirely in his own hands.

Man's answer to these questions or mysteries were bound by the very terms of his

own finite nature, to be inadequate. Almost certainly, his sense of the 'whole' came forth at only a late date in his evolution and is plainly one of his most fragile and imperfect achievements, as yet. Yet each one of us, in some degree resonates to the world as a whole and picks up and transforms waves that come from distant transmitting stations: We hear their noise in our receivers, perhaps long before we have learnt the Code, or are able to spell out any part of the message. But because man has saught to prefect himself beyond the 'here and now', because he has been willing to traffic with the in-actual, the Unknown, the mysterious, he has had a better grasp of cosmic process than a more limited down to earth attitude would have given him. The little questions, for which there are definite answers, have an important practical function, yet it is only within the larger frame that they are fully significant. Nothing can be settled until everything is settled. The first step in the re-education of man is for him to come to terms with his Ultimate destiny.

Each culture has developed its own way of putting these ultimate questions about Man's nature and fate; and has assigned special values to the experiences symbolized as God, Eternity, Immortality, Being and Not Being. The answers to these questions differ in innumerable details; yet they all point to a Common substratum of human experience which

is nonetheless real because language is inept and ineffectual in coping with it..... Without some recognition of the whole, the part played by earthly life would be almost as meaningless as the severed hand, in Aristotles famous illustration, if one did not know its normal connection with the human body: the origin, by its very existence, implies the organism it serves".

Just as the anatomist, given the fragments of a human scull, can reconstruct with reasonable certainity many other characteristics of the head and even the rest of the human body, so the religious mind, repeatedly plumbing the depths of human experience, may have a faint twilight perception of the constitution of the universe itself: though no finite mind will ever grasp it fully or exhaust all its possibilities till the end of time; for time, in all its organic and human implications, is part of what must be revealed.

Man's deepest needs prompt him to this exploration: the very concept of the stellar universe as enveloping man's deliberate attempt to give a rational account of his own appearance and acts, his birth, his ordeals, his triumphs, his frustrations and his final dissolution".

The only God Whom man can worship without idolatory is the Unknown God...that Supreme power who is not a mind but something higher than mind; not a force but something higher than force; not a being but

something higher than being, something for which we have no idea".

"The expression of the divine element, the glory in nature, as found in the Vedic and Egyptian hymns, the stress which Buddha places on the inevitability of cause and effect, which Zoroaster lays on the conflict of the good and evil powers, Confucius' calm insistence on decorous virtue, the impassioned pleadings of the inspired prophet of Islam all have met some inner need of man. Unto and all of these seers appeared "tongues like as of fire"... and they all were filled with the Holy Ghost. The paths by which men climb from the shadows of the mountains base towards its towering summit, start from widely divergent points. As they mount, their ways converge. once on the cloudless peak, they all see at last, the self same God. An heathen said to St. Augustine "Under different names we adore the only divinity whose eternal power animates all the elements of the world".

* "In the earliest existing documents there already comes to light the ceaseless searching after God if haply He may be found; and the unanimity of this quest all down the ages is the surest evidence of man's need of Deity. Whatever this straining after God may signify, whether He can be expressed in human terms or not, whether He is but the projection of our own highest ideals, no study is more uplifting than the tracing through the centuries of man's eager, often crude attempt to over-

take His creator and portray Him in His blinding glory to our mortal eyes.

As far into the remote reaches of existence as we can penetrate, we find too the persistent idea of holiness and righteous living, however that ideal may vary from age to age. Strange, how this notion of holiness (Wholeness) first entered human thought! Yet, there it is, voicing itself in admonition and aspirations very like our own, in prayers that might have been written yesterday, in lives that approach the ideals of all faiths if not that of their founders.

If man's conception of God be but the projection of his own highest ideal, then he has cause for deepest humility in that this his ideal has not grown consistently in spiritual beauty through out the ages. (compare and consider for example) the ancient potters and builders of Egypt who long before Isaiah's day conceived of the Highest as Xnum (potter or builder). His manifestation was through Thoth (word), ages before St. John saw that the 'Word was God.' Amon was of ancient days "who wipeth away tears from all eyes", centuries before the God of Daniel was conceived or the God of Revelation." Thy love is in the South; Thy Grace is in the North; Thou taketh possession of all hearts", sang the old Egyptian to his God hundreds of years before we learned that 'God is love'. 'Recompense evil with Good', said Laotze, six hundred years before the 'Golden rule' and 200 years before the sermon on the mount had been pronounced, the law of Manu

had admonished man to bless when he is cursed.

Lessons of the beauty, of love and self-sacrifice and of the horrors of war, as well as conceptions of the Infinity of God and the Grace of the life of spirit fall with double force from the lips of ancient prophets, and we cannot but be touched by the sublimity of the ideals of these old prophets, philosophers preachers, seers, and poets, too far from Muhammad or Jesus in time and place to have ever touched their garments or known the virtue that went out from them". (G.H. Turnbull 1880).

* Religion has been beyond question one of the supreme attitudes and creative activities of man's spirit here on earth through the ages. Nothing else has ministered so effectively in the life of the human race to increase the depth and scope of living. Sir Oliver Lodge was speaking wisely when he said that religion has been "the pillar of fire that has gone before the human race in its march through history". The only rival in this field has been the slow refinement, the purification of love in human relationship, and that has all along been moulded and influenced by religion. Art and philosophy and music have without doubt been major influences in the depth culture of the race, but they have all three had their birth under the spur and guidance of religion and they have never attained the full measures of their range and power except under the spell of eternity, which is at the heart of religion. We shall never really

account for the origin of religion by theories of Animism, or schemes of magic or psychologies of fear, or by the long list of Pseudopsychological explanations. Ever since man was really and truly man his spirit has been and is self-transcendent. He carries a beyond within himself. There is in him an imaginative dominion over any given experience. He travels and sees beyond everything which his senses present. The moment he is conscious of a limit, he is conscious of beyond limit. From time immemorial man of this build has been aware of a more breaking in on him.

There have been moments of mutual and reciprocal correspondence with a longer life inspiring on the margins of himself. Mystical communion of this sort is as old in the race as smiling and weeping, as primitive as grave digging. There has been no great, no permanent religion that has not come to birth, and not been fed and fostered by this sort of mutual and reciprocal communion.

It is true of course that religion can become and often has become, a hinderance to culture and progress. Like everything else that is human religion sometimes goes static, plows ruts, becomes a back-wash, loses its vital contact with its original source and ground, is used for self-seeking ends, no longer has true savour or dynamic life-building quality. But that is true of every other one of man's supreme traits of life. Here as every where we

must level up to the essential quality and not level down to the degenerate form.

The religions that are living forces in the world today are Buddhism, Christianity, Confucianism, Hebraism, Hinduism, Islam Every intelligent man who is interested in the deeper aspects of human life across the world, now more or less a united whole, aught to know something about these faiths which form the inner life of vast multitudes of people". (Rufus Jones, 1863–1948).

* "Just as around our bodies there is a physical world, so around our souls is spiritual environment...all the major religions teach that. They vary widely in their descriptions of this surrounding numinous world; even monotheism, polytheism, and pantheism do not exhaust their endeavours to picture it. Confucius had little use for the 'gods' familiar in his land and time, but the spiritual environment which he called T'ien (heaven) was central to him. His commission came from beyond himself, "T'ien has appointed me to teach the doctrine", as for creation, "All things originate from T'ien". Even Buddha, who least of all the founders of religions believe in supreme being to be worshipped and depended upon, was not agnostic much less a materialist, in our sense of the word. He was immbeded in the realm of spiritual law, and to discover that law, meditate upon it, make it onc's own and live by it, was to him salvation. "He who abideth in the law falleth not from security" his cry "create for the great king of glory a palace, which shall be called 'Righteousness' is typical. So all religions worship, and in prayer and meditation find inner peace and strength.

"We kneel, how weak; we rise, how full of power", is an affirmation familiar in every major religion. As for ethical teachings the agreement between the great religions is startling to one who for the first time reads the world's sacred scriptures. Read Krishna's advice to Hindus in Gita..... If Jesus says we must become like little children, Lao Tze says, "The great man is he who does not lose his childs heart"; if the sermon on the Mount teaches un-discourageable love even towards enemies, Buddhism says, 'never does hatred cease by hating, but by non hating it does cease. That is the eternal law". If the New Testament teaches that "we cannot love God whom we have not seen without loving our brother whom we have seen", Confucius says, "he who loves best his fellow man is serving God in the holiest way he can". All the religions teach love as against hate, altruism as against selfishness, simplicity of life, freedom from avarice and greed, self committal and dedication to the highest we know and, in one way or another from Christian, Muslim and Judaic heaven to the Hindu and Buddhist Nirvana, hold out the hope of "something after death". Such common areas where mutual understanding is possible, do exist amid the infinite diversities of mankind's faiths. As

different languages have various words for the same kind of experience, and thus can be translated one into the other, so religions are not as utterly alien and estranged as they outwardly appear".

(Harry Emerson Fosdick. 1878)

- * "The ways of God are as the number of the souls in the world", is a Persian proverb and seems to have been taken from the saying of the prophet, "Atturuk-illahi kan nufusi bani Adama".
- * "As rivers have their source in some far off mountain, so the human spirit has its source, To find this fountain of spirit is to learn the secret of heaven and earth".

(Lao-Tze 604-531 B. C.)

* "Such is the First Mover; a principle upon which depend the heavens and the world of nature. Its life is such as the best which we enjoy; waking, perceiving, and thinking, and its thought, which is thought in its fullest sense, deals with that which is best in the fullest. It is an active contemplation, in which it contemplates itself; thought and its object being here identical. God's essential actuality is thus life at its very best and this state persists for ever. We say therefore that God is a living Being, Eternal and Most Good".

(Aristotle, 384-322 B. C.)

- * Thales (640-546 B.C.) was asked, what was God? "That", he said, "which hath neither beginning nor end. Of all things the oldest is God. All things are full of God. The Mind of the Universe is God".
- * "Anxiety about meaningless-ness is the characteristically human form of ontological anxiety. It is the form of anxiety which only a being can have in whose nature freedom and destiny are united. The threat of losing this—unity drives man toward the question of an infinite, unthreatened ground of meaning, it drives him to the question of God".

(Paul Tillich)

- * "The celestial order and the beauty of the universe compel me to admit that there is some excellent and eternal Being, Who deserves the respect and homage of man". (Cicero, De Divinatione. Bk. II, Ch. 72)
- * "God is to me that creative force, behind and in the Universe, Who manifests Himself as energy, as life, as order, as beauty, as thought, as conscience, as love".

(Henry Sloane Coffin, "My Idea of God".)

* "They that deny God deny man's nobility, for certainly man is kin to beasts by his body, and if he is not kin to God by his spirit, he is a base ignoble creature". (Bacon).

There is order in the universe and all order is the expression of a mind. The adoptation of means

to ends which we find in the world cannot be due to chance. It suggests an ordering and organizing mind.

- * Plato's idea of The Supreme Being. "Truth is His body and light His shadow".
- * "Learn my dear, that your mind, existing within your body, directs your body as it pleases; and it becomes you therefore to believe that the intelligence pervading all things directs all things as may be agreeable to it, and not to think that while your eye can extend its sight over many furlongs, that of the Divinity is unable to see all things at once; or that while your mind can think of things here, or things in Egypt or Sicily, the mind of the Deity is incapable of regarding every-thing at the same time". (Socrates, 470-399 B.C.)

Science including philosophy as part of it, investigates phenomena intellectualy, independently of the investigators' position or the feelings he experiences. But mans' relation to the world is not defined by intellect alone, but also by feelings, and by the whole combination of his spiritual forces. However much you may assure a man and explain to him that all that really exists is only 'idea' or that it is only play of atoms or that all things around are manifestations of light, heat and movement, but to a being that feels, suffers, rejoices, fears and hopes, all these scientific and philosophical explanations will fail to explain his place and his relation to the universe around him. This answer he receives only from religion, which says, 'it is not invain that you are created' but to find out the will of your creator and fulfil the appointed task. (Quran).

To comprehend the religious truth no pre-study of science and or philosophy is required. What is needed is a 'Child's heart' and not too much entanglement with the worldly cares.

All things may be doubted but self cannot be. The worst doubter cannot doubt himself. Cogito ergo Sum, said Descartes. Scientists have therefore grown wise and have receded from the gust and rush of Materialistic turbulence, natural to the first flush of the growth of science. The faith of some of the great scientists and philosophers has already been mentioned in the preceding pages that this world is a world Governed by Spirit and not by Matter, unless, ofcourse, we endow Matter with all the qualities of the Spirit. In that case it will mean that we have exchanged the connotation of the two words. Confucius says, 'What the undeveloped man seeks is others; What the advanced man seeks is himself'. (Ency. Brit. 14th. Edition)

Hayashi-Razan (17th. Cent. A.D.), an eminent Japanese scholar of Chinese classics says, 'The human mind, partaking of divinity is an abode of the Deity, which is the spiritual essence. There exists no higher diety outside the human mind'.

(Ency. Brit. 14th. Edition)

"The heavens are still, no sound, Where then shall God be? Search not in distant skies; In man's own heart He lies".

Shintoism. (Shao-Yung. 'The religions of Ancient China', H. D. Gibbs)

The Quran says that it is ingrained in the nature of man to believe in God, "A'lasto-bi-rabbikum? Qalu-Bla; Shahidna". "On questioning, 'Am I not your Lord? They (the Souls) say 'yea, We do bear witness'. (7:173). Sufis and savants are enraptured when reciting these verses.

However, the truth of the infinite is not easy to put into words, which are finite and are liable to be so easily and quite frequently misunderstood. No wonder that some great teachers like Gautama and others became silent when questioned in philosophical jargon. P. B. Shelley says,

"The thoughts which the word God suggests to the human mind are susceptable of as many varieties as human minds themselves. The Stoics, the Platonists, and the Epicurians, the Polytheists, the Dualists, the Trinitarians (and Unitarians), differ infinitely in their conceptions of its meanings. They agree only in considering it the most aweful and most venerable of names, as a common term to explain and express all of mystery or majesty or power which the visible world contains. And not only has every sect distinct conceptions of the application of this name, but scarcely two individuals of the same sect, who exercise in any degree the freedom of their Judgment, or yield themselve with any candour of feeling to the influencings of the visible world, find perfect coincidence of opinion to exist between them".

Considering the matter 'in depth'; what Shelley says is true and yet what is important for us is that they agree in considering it (ie. God)' the most aweful and most venerable of all names'.

Let us dip into the pages of the sacred Scriptures and see what they have to say about this First principle of all religions, without which neither we can invest life with any aim or purpose nor burden it with ethics and morals.

"The ordinance of God is what we call the law of our being. To fulfil the law of our being is what we call the Moral law. The Moral law when reduced to a system is what we call religion".

(Confucius. Chung-Yung-1.1:)

Psychological aspect of religions.

From psychological aspect religions may be divided into three definite divisions.

- 1. The First variety emphasizes social aspect of religion and tends to see religion as arising from the give and take between human beings.
- 2. The second kind stresses the individual and his personal experience.
- 3. Those who refuse to mark off religion from other aspects of psychic life.

Among this last group Islam stands pre-eminent. Khalil Gibran has put the idea beautifully when defining the teachings of the Prophet.

"And an old priest said, speak to us religion.

And he said, have I spoken this day of aught else?

Is not religion all deeds and all reflections

And that which is neither deed nor reflections

But a wonder and a surprise ever springing from
the soul

Even while the hands hew the stones or tend the loom, Who can seperate his faith from his action, Or his belief from his occupations? Who can spread his hours before him, saying, This for God and this for myself This for my soul and this other for my body? Your daily life is your temple and your religion Whenever you enter into it take with it all."

(The Prophet. P.87,88.)

Sufi savants say, 'Dast ba kaar, dil ba yaar'! ie., 'While hands the household duties tend: The mind rests elsewhere on some absent friend''.

Basic Principle.

- (1) The basic principle of Islam is given in the formula of faith-
 - "La ilaha-il-Allah; Muhammadun-Rasul-Allah"; There is no god but Allah, Muhammad is the messenger of Allah. The first part, in which the absolute Unity of Godhead is presented is the most important part, while the second part is mere affirmation of the prophetic nature of the man Muhammad. It is to safeguard muslims from the error of those who raised the status of their prophets to gods.
- (2) Zoroaster says in Gatha 29-4, "Mazdao Sakhare Mairisto"; "The Great God only is to be adorned". Parsis have a well-known saying: 'N' e'st Ezed magar Yazdan"; 'there is no god but God', which is equivalent to the first part of Islamic formula of faith.
- (3) Upanishads read, "Ekam eva a'dvitiyam"; One only, secondless, am I'. Bhagvata a'divi-

-tiyam Purana reads, "Aham eva, na mat-to (a) nyad, iti buddhyddvam anjasa, 'Know well! there is no other than Myself'.

(Bhashia Bhumika-p 53. refg. to Aranyaka Up. and Satiarath Parkash, p-20)

- (4) Old Testament, Deut. 6:4 reads "Hear O, Israel, Jehovah our God is One Jehovah".
- (5) New Testament, Mark. 12:29 reads, "Jesus answered, The first (Commandment) is, "Hear O' Israel; The Lord our God, the Lord is One".
- (6) Lao Tze in Tao-te-ching says, "Knowing the Eternal means enlightenment; not knowing the Eternal causes passions to arise, and that is evil". Chuang Tze (d. 275 B. C.) says, "The Ultimate end is God. He is manifest in the laws of nature. He is the hidden spring. At the beginning He was".
- (7) Granth sahib, sacred scripture of the Sikhs says, "Ek onkar satnam Karta Purkh"; 'There is One God, Eternal Truth is His name, Maker of all things'.

(Sacred Writings of the Sikhs, UNESCO Ed.)

The name of God.

In the tablet of the universe there is no letter save thy name,

With what name, then, shall we invoke Thee.

(Persian Poet Jaami. 1414-1492 A. D.)

(1) The Quran reads, "Innani-an-Allahu La ilaha illa ana", i.e. "Verily, I am Allah, there is go God beside ME"! (20:15)

- (2) "Then spoke Zarathustra, Tell me, O pure Ahura Mazda, the name which is Thy greatest, best, fairest, most efficacious for Prayers. Answered Ahura Mazda. My first name is Ahmi... My twentieth is Ahmi Yad Ahmi"; 'I am' and 'I am that I am'. (Haugs Essays on Parsis P. 195)
- (3) In the old Testament, Exodus 3:14 we read, "And Moses said Unto God, Behold, when I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, the God of your fathers hath sent me unto you: and they shall say to me, what is His name? What shall I say unto them? And God said unto Moses, 'I am that I am', and he said, thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, 'I AM' hath sent me unto you'.

The Hebraic words are "Ehyeh ashar Yehyeh" Jesus also said "Before Abraham was 'I AM'. (New Testament)

- (4) In the Egyptian Book of the Dead (about 2000 B.C.) the words, 'I am He Who I am' are applied to God. (see M. Yearsley, The Story of the Bible P. 79 and Breasted, History of Egypt).
- (5) Tao-te-ching reads, "Tao is Unchanging, hath no name".
- (6) Vedic Shata-patha Brahmana uses the same words, 'Yo-ham asmi so-asmi'; 'I am what I am'.
- (7) On one of the walls of the ancient shrine of Neith Sais, Egypt, some-one had engraved

"I am all that was, and is, and is to be, and My veil no man has lifted".

However, on the opposite wall, someone else, who seems to have found a richer, later faith, had written, "Veil after Veil have we lifted and ever the face is more wonderful".

'Sankara, famous commentator of Gita (788-820 A.D) only dares to utter, "Oh' Thou before whom all words recoil".

Father Heras, deciphering the ancient Mohan-Jodaro (3000 B.C.) inscriptions, says, "The self-subsistence of God is evident from the name of God as 'Iruvan' ie., "the One who exists". (University of Bombay Journal Vol. V, P-3)

God is one.

(1) The Quran says, Qul-hu-wallah-o-Ahad;
Allah-o-Samad
Lam-Ya-lid, wa lam yu Lad;
Wa Lam Yakun- lahu; Kufo-wan Ahad.
(Ch. 112)

"Say, He is Allah, the One; Allah, the independent, besought of all; He begets not, nor is He begotten; And there is none like unto Him".

Again in chapter 57 Verse 4, it reads,

- "Hu-wal Awwal-o-Hu-wal Akhir; Al-Zahir-o-wal Batin.....", "He is the First and the Last; and the Manifest and the Hidden".
 - (2) Zoroaster in Yasna 28-3, says, "The Lord before and beyond Whom there is no other". Gatha 48-7 reads; "At Hoi damam, Thyahmi adam, Ahura".

- i.e. Ahura, the beginning Thou, and the End.
 Ahunavad Gatha 37-3 reads, "To Ahura
 Mazda, the Secondless...... I sing the
 song of glory".
- (3) Old Testament, Isaiah, 48:12 reads, "Hearken unto Me O Jacob, and Israel my called; I am He; I am the First and the Last".
 - Ecclesiastes, 4:8 reads, "There is One that is Alone; and He hath not a second; yea, He hath neither son nor brother".
- (4) New Testament, Revelation 22:13 reads, "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end".
- (5) Bhagwad Gita reads,
 "Aham Atma, Guda kesha!
 Sarva-bhut-ashaya-Sthitah
 Aham Adish-cha, madhyam cha
 Bhutanam Anta eva cha.
 - "I am the self abiding in all hearts. I am Beginning, Middle and End of all".

One of the Nayaya maxim is "Yad-aparinami tad-akaranam", ie., "That which changes not, has never a cause".

Nothing is like unto Him.

(1) Laisa Kamislihi Shai...42:12.

There is a popular rhym in Arabic thus rendered by Canon Gairdner:-

'Whatever idea your mind comes at,
I tell you flat, God is not that.'
The Quran says, "La tudrik-hul-absar, Wa
Hu-wa yudrikul Absar, Wa hu-wal-LatifulKhabir".

"Eyes cannot reach Him but He reaches the eyes. And He is the incomprehensible, the all aware" (6:104).

Elsewhere it reads, 'Nah-no-Aqrabo Ilaih-i-min hablil warid'. (50:17) 'We (i.e., God) are nearer to him than even his jugular vein'.

- Again it says, "fa-ainama Tu" wallu fa' Samma-Wajh' ullah''
 "So whithersoever you turn, there will be the face of Allah''. (2:116)
 - (2) "Alone it standeth and it changeth not;
 The Mother of the world It may be called.
 The Tao hath no beginning and no End".

 (Tao-te-ching)
 - "The Tao cannot be heard, what can be heard is not Tao,
 - The Tao cannot be seen; what can be seen is not Tao,

By words the Tao may not be well expressed; What can be expressed is not the Tao. The formless gives to every form that form; Can we Know it as else than void of Form? The nameless gives to every name that name; Itself may not be named but by all names":

(Sacred Books of the East. Vol 40)

"The Tao is not exhausted by the greatest, Nor is It ever absent from the least, In all things is It found, complete diffused. How wide Its universal comprehension! How utter Its Un-fathomless-ness!

embodiment of Its great attributes,
In righteousness and in Beneficience,
Is but a small result of Its pervasion,
Its subtle working in the heart of man,
Only the perfect man know this for sure,
And only such can hold charge of the world".

(Sacred Books of the East, vol. 39)

- (3) The old Testament reads, "For, I Jehovah, change not". (Malachi. 3:6)
- (4) 'Perhaps it is, or may be it is not; or it may be that it both is not; or it is only indescribable; or though un-speakable it perhaps is; or it both is not and un-speakable or eventually, it may be that it is, and is not and un-speakable also'.

(Syad-Vada. Jainism)

(Bhu-Dhara, Jainism)

- (5) "An-Eka Manhi eka rajai, Eka manhi an-ekano, Ek-Aneka ki nahin sankhya! namo
 Siddha Niranjano!"

 'That which is one in many and many in
 one; yet neither One nor many- I bow to
- (6) Nagarjuna says in Madhiyamika karika; "A-nirodham, an-utpadam, An- uchchhedam, a- shashvatam An-ek-artham, a-nan-artham, an-agaman, a-nirgamam Na-san, n-asan, na-sad-asan na ch apy anubhay atmakam,

that!'

Chatush - koti - vi-nir - muktam

Tattvam Madhiyamikah Viduh",

"It is nor non-existent, nor existent, It is not Thus, nor is it otherwise, It takes not birth, nor grows, decays or dies. It has no stain to purify away. It is the everpure. Such is the mark of that which has no mark, the One Supreme. It cannot be suppressed, nor yet expressed. It cannot die, nor yet be brought to birth, nor is it slayable. It means not any one thing, nor yet many. It cometh not, nor even doth it go. Not being nor non-being, nor yet both, nor free from both! This wonderous mystery void of these four Conditions, is the Truth. Which those that tread the Middle path, declare".

- (7) Sankshepa Shariraka yoga Sastra reads,

 "Ashrayatva-vishayatva bhagini,
 Nir vibhaga chitir eva Kevala

 'This marvellous unique alone is subjectobject at once. It knows itself and knows
 all else too'.
- (8) Guru Govind Singh says in Jap-gi (Sikhism).

 "Chakra chihna aru varna jati, aru pati nahina jihu,
 Rupa, ranga, aru rekha, bhekha,
 Koi kahi na sakta jihu,
 A-chala-murati, Anu-bhava, prakasa,
 Amit-oja Kahi Jai!
 koti Indra-Indran Shaha shahana gani jai!
 Tri-bhuvana mahi-pa, sura nara asūra,
 N-eti, N-eti vana Tarna kahat,
 Tava sarva nama kathai kavana,
 Karma nama varnata sumat!
 Eka murati an-eka darshana
 Kina rupa an-eka

Khela khela a - Khela Khelana anta ko phira Eka".

"O' Thou Who hath no Mark, Sign, Caste or Creed;

No Clan, Tribe, Form, or Color or Outline No special shape or dress, Thou Moveless! Self luminous Eternally!

Measureless, Fathomless, All-Potency!

Lord of the Three Worlds, Waking, Dreaming, Sleep-

Angels, Men, Forests all,

Only not this, not this, of Thee declare!

Who may recite Thy names and works in full,

Since every name and every work is Thine! One art Thou, Countless yet Thy multitude! All forms are Thine through which Thou Manifest Thy self.

All merge back into Thee at End of Day!"

The attributes of God.

(1) The Quran reads, 'Wa lillah – il-Asma – ul-Husna, fad-u-ho biha', "And to Allah alone belong all perfect attributes. So call on Him by these..." (7:171)

A sufi maxim is 'Wahdat dar zat, Kasrat' dar sifat'., "In essence pure unity; attributes many."

In Holy Quran 112-attributes of God are mentioned. Some of them are given here under.

In the very first chapter of the Quran, called Sura Fatcha, four cardinal attributes are mentioned.

All-Rabb=Lord; Al-Rehman=The Gracious; Al-Rahim=The Merciful; Malik-e-Yaum-ud-Din = The Master of the Day of Judgment.

In chapter 59 verses 24 and 25 many of the attributes are mentioned in one place so the translation of the verses is given here under.

"He is Allah, and there is no God beside Him, The Sovereign (Al-Malik);

The Holy One (Al-Quddus); The Source of peace (Al-Salam); The bestower of security (Al-Mumin); The Protector (Al-Muhai-min); The Mighty(Al-Aziz); The Subduer (Al-Jabbar); The Exalted(Al-Mutakabbir). Holy is Allah far above that which they associate with Him"

"He is Allah, The Creator (Al-khaliq); The Maker (Al-Bari); The Fashioner (Al-Mussawwir); His are the most beautiful names. All that is in the heaven and the earth glorifies Him. And He is the Mighty (Al-Aziz); The wise (Al-Hakim)" some others are:—

Al-Sami = All Hearing (4.59); Al-Alim = All Knowing (4:36); Al-Basir = All Seeing (4:59); Al-kabir = All Aware (4:36);

Al-Mujib = Answerer of Prayers (11:62); Al-Samad = Besought of all, the Independent (112:3); Al-Mun'im= The bestower of favours (1:7)
Al-Ghaffar=The Forgiver (22:61); Haqul-Mobin
=Manifest Truth (24:26); Al-Latif = Incomprehensible (6:104); Al-Nur=The Light (24:36);
Al-Wadud=The Loving (11:91); Al-Qarib=
The Nearest (34:51); Al-Qayyum=self subsisting and all sustaining (40:4); Al-Hayy=The Living (2;56); Al-Huq=The Truth (10:33); Al Jalil=
Lord of Majesty (55:28); Al-Qahhar = The Supreme) 12:40); Al-Karim=The Noble (27:41);
'La-ta-Khuz-zu-hu-sinatan-wa-la-naum' Slumbers not, nor is He fatigued'. (2:256).

'Laisa bi zallamin-lil-abid', does not wrong anyone. (3:183; 10:45);

Al-Ahad=The Unique, none is like unto Him. (112:5).

(2) Some well known attributes from Hinduism are as follows. Agni=Luminous Fire; Mame=
Universal Mind; Prajapati=Lord of Progeny;
Indra=Chief of natural forces; Brahma=
Eternal, Supreme; Param Ishvara=Eternal
Lord; Param Atma=The Great Soul;
Pradhana = Source, root; Shakti = Energy;
Satyam Ratm = The Truth; Pita = Father,
Protector; Vakta=Speaker; Manta=Thinker;
Drashta=Seer; Karta=Doer; Yama=Destroyer;

(Collected from Yoga-Vasistha III. 1-5; V.8, and Gupta-vati Tika Intro.)

- (3) Victor Hugo in his 'Les Miserables' enumerates attributes of God from Old and New Testament as follows:-
 - "O You who are! Ecclesiates calls You Omnipotence. The Maccabees call You Creater; the Epistles to the Ephesians calls You Liberty; Baruch calls You Immensity; the Psalms calls You Wisdom and Truth; St. John calls You Light; Exodus calls You Providence; Leviticus, Holiness; Esdras, Justice; Creation calls You God; Man calls You Father, but Solomon calls you Mercy; and that is the fairest of all Your Names".

My humble effort yields further, Gracious (Ex. 34:6); Fire (De. 6:5); Destroyer, Kills, (1 Sa. 2:6); Salvation (Ps. 3:8); Avenger (Ps. 94:1); Just (Isa. 30:18); Law giver (Isa. 33:22); Creator (Isa. 40:28); Fainteth not (Isa: 40:28); Ever Lasting (Jer. 10:10).

(4) Bhagvad Gita reads, "They who strive for freedom from age to age and death, taking refuge in Me, know the Eternal, the All, the Highest self, the Perfect work. I am the Offering, I am the Sacrifice, I am the Oblation, I am the chant, I am the Holy Oil, I am the Fire, I am what is Offered.... I am the Father of this World, the Mother, the Guardian. I am the End of Knowledge, the Purifier, the Sacred Syllable, the Hymn, the Sacred Sentence. I am the Way, the Refuge, the Beloved, the Forth-Coming and Withdrawing, the Place, the Treasure, the Everlasting Seed".

"I am equal towards all beings; nor is any hated or favoured of Me; but they who love Me with dear love, they are in Me and I am in them".

For those who do not revel in discovering Minute differences, I submit here one of the Udanas (Arabic Shutti-hiyat; Vedic Yogarudh Okti), ecstatic utterances of ever flowing joy of realization.

(5) "Vedanta – gu, Vushita – Brahma – chario, dharmena sa Brahmano Brahma Vadam Vadeyya".

Rendered in semi peotic form it means, "He who successfully fulfils his vow of continence in body and mind, and has achieved the final Knowledge, he acquires the right, high Brahma to declare, to others who would walk the path, he may give to himself the name of Brahmana".

(Udana Sutta)

On another occasion he declares, "I' o priests! am Brahma, Great Brahma, the Supreme Being, Unsurpassed, Perciever of all things, Collector, Lord of all, Maker, Fashioner, Chief, Victor, Ruler, Father, of all beings who have been and are to be".

(Kevatta sutta of Diggha Nikaya; Buddhism in Translations, P. 311)

(6) In Zoroasterian 'Yasht' these attributes are variously listed. Most famous are;

Ahura Mazda; Frakshtya, The Sustainer; Avitanya, All pervading; Vispa Vohu, All Good; Asha-Vahistha, Supreme Truth; Khratu, Supreme Knowledge (Persian, 'Khird' as used in Urdu also); Chishti, Supreme Consciousness (!); Spana, Holy; Sevishta, All Mighty; Ava-Nemna, Invincible; Vispa-hishas, All-Seeing; Data, Creator (!); Tharata, Preserver; Durae-Darshta, Far-Seeing; Spashta, Watcher; Pata, Saviour; Znata, All-knowing; Ise-Kshathrayotema, Omnipotent Ruler; Vispo-Van, Conqueror of all; Vispa-Tash, Architect of the Universe.

All these names, attributes=gunas=sifat=glories, show that almost all are common in one another of the world religions and refer to the one Supreme Spirit, the Mysterium Tremedum.

Moreover it may be noted that these attributes are in opposite pairs which may be classified under two categories ie., Jalali and Jamali = Aishvarya and Madhurya=Majesty and Mercy; sun like blaze and splendour and moon like softness and radiance; terrific and beneficient attributes.

We have humbly tried to find the One in various Sacred Scriptures of the world: the Creator, the Preserver, the Destroyer of all objects; the Universal Mind and all pervading Spirit Who is the bearer of most beautiful and Perfect names in all languages of the world. He is the 'Ancient One' known even to Australian bushman as Atnatu, who expelled some of His sons from heaven because they neglected "His Sacred services"! Arundans called this "Great Sky dwelling Being" as Altgiramara; Fijians knew Him as Ndenji; Ugandan primitives called this 'Father of gods' as Katonda; Caribou primitives called Him Sila; Hindus call Him Param

Atman, Ishvara, Brahma or Bhagwan; Hebrews call Him Yahveh or Jehovah (ya-ho-wa, Arabic ie. O Thou Who art!) or Elohim; Christians call Him God or Father; Sikhs call Him Kartar, doer or Nirankar, Formless; Mahayanists indicate Him with Sunya or Brahma or Amitabha; Jains call Him Niranjana or Param Atma. In Taoism He is known as Tao; in Confucianism as Tai' Chi, great Ultimate; in Shintoism He is known as Amen-mi-naka-nushi, heaven centred ruling Deity or Absolute Universal Self; in Zoroasterianism. He is known as Ahura Mazda and in Islam as Allah, Khuda, Rabb or Maula.

- * "The Ultimate end is God. He is Manifest in the laws of nature. He is the hidden spring. At the beginning He was." (Chuang Tze-275 B.C.)
- * Famous physicist Robert A.Millikan says," God is the Unifying principle of the Universe. No more sublime conception has been presented to the mind of man than that which is presented by evolution, when it presents Him as revealing Himself, through countless ages, in the age-long inbreathing of life into constituent matter, culminating in man with his spiritual nature and all his God-like powers".

(The Great Design, Ed. F. Mason)

- * Sir Arthur S. Eddington says, "The old atheism is gone religion belongs to the realm of spirit and mind, and cannot be shaken". No wonder that slowly and steadily mankind is growing out of the crude concepts of old and nature worship and idolatory are on the decline.
- * "Ahmad of Qadian says, He is such God that though far He is near and though near He is far;

though One, His Manisestations are many. According to the change in man He becomes for him, so to say, a new and different God...not that He is changed, for, since Eternity He is Changeless and Persect, but when a man turns towards righteousness, there is a new manisestation of God for such a person... Wherever He sinds a miraculous change in man, He appears in His new resplendent Glory".

* "Those who live in God do not care to define. They have a peculiar confidence in the universe, a profound and peaceful acceptance of life in all its aspects. Their response to Ultimate Reality is not capable of a clear cut, easily intellegible formulation. The mystery of God's Being cannot be relatively determined. It remains outside the scope of logical concepts. Its form does not lie in the field of vision. None can see it with the eye. There is no equal to it. An austere silence is more adequate to the experience of God than elaborate description."

(Sir, Radha Krishnan)

* O' Amitya, Measure not with words
The Immeasurable; nor sink the string of thought,
Into the Fathomless; who asks doth err,
Who answers, errs. Say naught.

(Light of Asia- Sir Edwin Arnold)

* Those who know, don't say; and those who say, don't know.

(Tao-te-ching)

* It is heart that senses God, and not reason' That is what faith is; God perceptible to the heart and not the reason.

(Pascal)

I close this chapter with two interesting and thought provoking quotations.

* Should one in boldness say, Lo, I am God!
Beside the One-Eternal, Infinite,
Then let him from the throne he has usurped,
put forth his power and form another globe,
such as we dwell in, saying, 'This is Mine'.
Not only so but in this domain,
For ever let him dwell, if this he can,
Then verily he is God proclaimed'.

(Pythagoras. 6th. Cent. B.C.)

Then Vidagdha Sakalya asked him, "How many gods are there! O' Yajna Valkya"? He replied, "...three and three hundred, three and three thousand". 'Yes', he said and asked again, 'How many gods are there really...? " He said, 'Thirty three'. 'Yes' he said and asked again, 'how many gods are there really?' 'Six' he replied. 'Yes' he said and asked again, 'How many gods are there really?' 'Three', he said. 'Yes' he said and asked again, 'how many gods are there really?' 'Two' he replied. 'Yes' he said, 'but how many gods are there really?' One and half' he said. 'Yes' he said, 'būt how many gods are there really?' 'One' he said, 'Yes', he said, (but then) "Who are these three and three hundred, three and three thousand"? Yajnavalkya replied, "They are only the various powers".

(Brihad-Aranyaka Upanishad 3.9-1.)

Let us keep the subtle niceties and differences in detail for the academicians, philosophers an the priests and appriciate the One Uniting Principle. For there is no end to hair-splitting as a sufi poet has well said,...

O' Thou who art beyond all thought, concept, guess, imagination, yea, and far beyond, What we have spoken, heard or read in books The assembly is finished, and life has reached its term,

And we are as at first. at the beginning in describing Thee".

(Saadi Shirazi-1184-1291)

---:0:---

All Things in Pairs.

* (1) The Quran says, "Subhan-allazi Khalaqal Azwaja Kullaha" (36:37) and "Wa min Kulli shai-in Khalaqna zawjaini La-alla-Kum Tazakkarun". (51:50) Again, "Ja-ala fiha zawjain-e-asnaini. (13:4), that is, "Holy is He Who created all things in pairs" ... 'And of everything We have created pairs, 'everykind He made there in two sexes'.

A sufi poet says-

Bahre talkh-o-bahre shirin ham enan, Darmiyan-e shan barzakh-e-la yubghiyan.

"Oceans of sweet and bitter surge abreast, between them rests the razor-line, so they encroach not one upon other. In their middle is rest Complete",

- *(2) Manu Smirti says, –
 S'arvani cha dvam-dvani
 Dvam-dvair-ayo-jayat cha e'mah,
 Sukha-duhkhadibhih prajah!
 - "The word is made of pairs of opposites; All things occur in pairs of twos, The Maker fused duality in all, Sorrow and Joy also a pair".
 - "There is a Middle point, not hot nor cold, On the two sides of which spread cold and heat; So, of the Middle point, where there is peace,, On two sides surge seas of pain and joy".

(Maha Bharata)

* (3) "These two primordial principles in one, of light and darkness, good and ill, that seem apart from one another, yet are bound in-seperably together, in word, in action, everywhere are they in operation,

And the wise walk on the side of light, while the unwise follow the other, until they grow wise".

(Zoroaster. Gatha 30:3-4)

(4) Confucius says, Yang and yin, male and female, strong and weak, rigid and tender, heaven and earth, sun and moon, thunder and lightning, wind and rain, cold and warmth, good and evil, high and low, righteousness and human-ness, ... the interplay of opposite principles constitutes the Universe".

(Suzuki, 'History of Chinese Philosophy')

"The final principle of an undivided one is Tai-Chi, the great ridge-beam; out of it develop yang and yin".

(Wilhelm and Jung. The Secret of Golden Flower.)

* (5) Lao-Tze says, "Tao is divided into principal pair of opposites, yang and yin. Yang is warmth, light, Masculinity; also heaven. Yin is cold, darkness feminity; also earth. From the yang force arises schen, the celestial portion of the human soul: from the yin force arises Kwei or Poh, the earthly part. As a micro-cosm, man is in some degree a reconciler of the pairs of opposites'. Heaven, earth, man form the chief elements of the world. the sa tasi".

[(C. G. Jung, 'Psychological Types'.] quoted from Tao Ti-King)

* (6) The Greek philosopher Empidocles (440 B.C.) who is "extoled by antiquity as also orator, states man, physicist, physician, and poet, even as prophet and miracle worker", expressly announces love and hate as the two dynamic principles, Uniting and Seperating principles".

(Schwegler, 'History of Philosophy' Trans, Stirling)

* (7) "Male and Female created He them". (Bible)

Goethe puts it beautifully in 'Faust' to illustrate the idea of mans' dual nature, his two selves, higher and lower, altruist and egoist.

"Two souls, alas! within my bossom dwell; The one doth hanker after loves' delights, And clings with clutching organs to the world; The other, mightily, from earthly dust, Would mount on high to the Ancestral Fields".

* (8) Another ancient, Heraclitus (500 B.C.) says, "God is Day-night, winter-summer; love-hate; war, peace; repletion-want; heat-cold; life-death; youth-age; waking-sleep; creation-destruction".

To realize in mind that the very nature of world process, of all life, is necessarily, in-evitably, a mixture of joy and sorrow, good and evil, thus realizing, to experience and bear both joys and sorrows with 'equable, composed' mind, with 'Peace' at heart, and to go on discharging duties without craving for the selfish recompense; this is to transcend duality, to fling off all twins, and the three fold gunas, functions of mind, cognition, desire, action, in which primal duality is inherent and which, in turn, are inherent in duality.

Life is perpetual choice between endless pairs of 'rival ills'. Right choice, which will, in any given time, place, and circumstance, bring most happiness and least pain, which will reconcile antagonism, is the choice inspired by the spirit which stands permanently in the middle between the two extremes of nature; which impartially 'tastes' and tests all things, and holds fast to that which is good, most good. It avoids excess; excess in attachments, in loves and hates, to the objects of the senses, things other than God.

Will Durant in his 'The Story of Philosophy' ascribes to Aristotle that: 'Courage is the mean between Cowardice and rashness; discriminate liberative between stinginess and extravagance; ambition

between sloth and greed; modesty between humility and pride; honest speech between secrecy and loquacity: good humour between moroseness and buffoonery, friendship between quarellsomeness and flattery; self control between in-dicision and impulsiveness".

The Great sufi Jalalud-din Rumi whose 'Masnavi' is called by some as 'Quran in Persian Script', says:

"No evil, absolute, is in this world, all evils are but relative;
That which is hidden comes out into light, against a relieving darkness opposite;
Because there is no opposite of God;
For all such opposites are lost into Him, His supreme status ever hid, remains.
Very foundation of this varied world, is the duality of opposites; in-evitably, therefore, we must strive, And struggle for gain, against the loss".

Indeed all thinkers of East and West alike, have recognized this duality, with their heads, though the hearts of many have continued to wish, as do the hearts of all 'non thinkers', that pain and evil were somehow abolished and only pleasure and good remained!

But to achieve that the way is shown by religion which very few, alas, take.

* (9) "Our planet is carried on by action of opposing forces, harmoniously, centripetal and centrifugal pulling in opposite ways. The same is clear in vegetable world—vital pressure against the

enclosing capsule (seed). Thus opposition is not a hinderance to life, it is the necessary condition for the 'becoming' of life. The same is found in tumescene and detumescene(Physical opposites) to the erotic conflict of courtship and the social balance between sex indulgence and sex abstinence. Sex and culture are perfectly balanced. The same conflict is seen in art of architecture by the device of the arch, and in dance. In arch by two opposing forces each supporting other and in dance by every pose with maximum tension of the opposing muscular action. The same rule applies to man who is part of nature. His disregard to this law is at the cost of losing serenity".

(Havelock Ellis)

* (1) The Quran says,

"Fal-huma-ha fujura-ha wa taqwa-ha--Qad Aflaha man zakka-ha; wa qad khaba
man dus-sa ha".

(91:8-11)

"And by the soul and its perfection. And He revealed to it what is wrong for it and what is right for it. He indeed truly prospers who purified it; and he who corrupts it, is ruined".

The holy prophet said, "Istastah bi-qalbika,,. Whenever in doubt as to do or nor to do "ask your heart".

The Sufis refer to the 4th. Caliph, Ali, who said "Heart of a believer is the throne of God".

- * (2) Bible says, 'You are temples of God'.
- * (3) Upanishads say, "Atma eva are shrotavyo, mantavyo, nididh-yasitavyah ... Na-anyah ato asti Vijnata".

"The inner self (soul) is to be pondered on;

None else is there who knows or should be known".

Mahabharata reads, "Sakshinam bata kalyanam Atmanam ava-manyase! Na-hrtshayam veksi munim puranam!..."

Why knowest thou not the witness in thy heart?

Why slightest thou that ancient blessed guide within?

* (4) "The Great God has Conferred a normal sense even on the lowliest people".

(Confucius- Shu-King)

"In every heart, there dwelth a sajin (sage), only man will not stead-fastly believe it—therefore hath the whole remained burried".

[Wang=Yang-Ming as quoted by Jung]
in 'Psychological Types'.)

* (5) "No where can any cover up his sin,
Thyself in thee, man! knows whats true,
whats false,

Indeed, my friend! Thou scorn the nobler self.

Thinking to hide the evil self in thee,

From self who witnessed it— thus he who has, the self as master, let him walk with heed",

Anguttara Nikaya quoted in translation, Mrs. Rhys Davids 'Buddhism').

The whole world knows this inner self. this monitor, this soul, as conscience, intuition, still small voice, Zamir in Islam and Antar-Yami in Sanatana Dharma. That is why sages throughout the ages have advised 'know thyself' and the Prophet said, 'Man arafa nafsahu fa' qad arafa Rabbahu, ie, He who realized his inner self realized God'.

It was Socrates who said, 'The un-examined life is not worth living'. Even Huckleberry Finn said that constience' takes up more room than all the rest of a person's insides'. But man is so immersed in formalities of ritualism that he seems to have little time for intro-inspection to achieve the life of inner purity.

CREATION.

In the beautiful story of Pilgrims Progress by John Bunyan, there is the house of the 'Interpreter' which is always kept open. The ancient world was not betrayed because the traditions were false. They were either submerged, neglected, interpolated or lost. The men adhering to them scrupulously had become a dwindling minority who were over thrown and displaced by men who were alien to traditions, having never been initiated and adopted into them. In Toynbee's terrible pharse in another context, but relevant, they were believers who were 'IN' but were not 'OF' the society they dominate'(d).

I would rather be with a religion that is in the making than the one that is dying. The truth that puts claim to its universality requires to be continually re-created, re-newed and re-juvenated for every generation by creative interpreters. Else it becomes petrified; it becomes a disease from which societies seldom recover. They simply die. 'If we wish to create a new world we have the material ready at hand. The first one, too, was made out of chaos'.

- * I am he who came into being as Khepri heaven and earth had not come into being Its creatures had not come into being I lifted up myself from among them out of the watery mass, out of in-ertness I did not find a place where on I could put my feet I made a foundation in my own heart
 - I made a foundation in my own heart Very many beings then assumed forms. My father Nu (watery Abyss) made them to rest. (Egyptian)
- * The birth of the gods took place from Apsu (watery Abyss) and Tiamet, the great mother dragon of the sea. (Babylonian)
- * First was created chaos and then broad-bossomed earth. From chaos sprang Erebus and black night and from night sprang brigth sky and day whom night conceived and bare after loving union with Erebus. And earth first bare the starry heaven, that he might cover her utterly...And then in union with heaven she bare the deep oceans and Coeus... (Greek)
- * O how manifold are thy works!
 They are hidden from our face,
 O thou sole God, whose powers none other
 possesseth
 Thou didst create the earth at Thy will
 Thou existing alone.

Men and women, cattle large and small, all that go upon the earth

All that fly on high; Thou settest each man in his place;

supply his inecessities, the portion alloted to him, and his days are reckoned

Their tongues are diverse in speech

their forms likewise and the colours of their skins

Thou dost fashion the beauty of the form through Thyself alone.

For Thou art the lord of the day at its zenith

And Thou art in my heart:

(Ikhnaton. 1400 B.C.)

- * In the beginning this universe was water; the waters toiled and performed fervid devotions; when they were becoming heated, a golden egg was produced, that floated about...From this a man Prajapati was born and hence a woman. Then Prajapati tried to speak in one syllable words...then in two syllable words...The words became earth and sky. He desired a child so he laid the power of reproduction in himself. By the breath of his mouth he created gods. (Satapatha Brahmana)
- * There is a thing inherent and natural, which existed before heaven and earth, Motion-less and fathom-less
 It stands alone and never changes
 It pervades every where and never becomes exhusted

It may be regarded as the mother of the Universe.

I do not know its name If I am forced to give it a name, I call it Tao, and I name it as supreme. (Lao-Tze)

- * Of Ahura Mazdas' creatures of the world, the first one was the sky. The second water; the third earth; the fourth plants; the fifth animals; the sixth mankind. (Zoroasterianism)
- * In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. And the earth was waste and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep; and the spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, let there be light; and there was light. And God saw the light that it was good and God divided the light from the darkness. And God called the light Day and the darkness He called the Night. And there was evening and there was Morning, one day... (Genesis, 1:5)
- * In the begining was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in the darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not. (John. 1:1-5)
- * God is the originator of the universe (Quran 6:102, 3) and the universe will revert to Him: and still He will be the Creator (Q: 57:4). He desired to bring into existence a universe which should serve as a manifestation of His majesty and his light. The whole universe was a closed up amorphuous mass of pure hydrogen which God caused to split and the

galaxies with solar systems evolved into being. The earth after passing through many stages developed properties which could sustain life. The life evolved through different stages and different forms.

---:s:---

Creation of man.

- * Babylonians believed that the wrath of Iea descended upon Kalanga for his sins and therefore he was slaughtered with a big knife. From the blood sprang the man.
- * According to the Egyptians, at first god Kanum shaped man on the potters wheel. According to another myth they believed that man was born out of the rib of a cow that emerged from the river Nile.
- * Archeologists like Hunter are of the opinion that the ancient people of India, pre-Aryans believed in Bull God, who created man. This is evident from the Sumerian seals found at Harappa and Mohenjodaro which bear the engravings of a Bull upon them.

It is evident from the above that Sumerians and Egyptians believed that they were the off-springs of the cow. Similarly the Hindus of India during the period of Rig and Yajur vedas began to call the cow as mother! (The World of the Past)

* Among the ancient Greek Philosophers Anaximander and Archelaus declared that man evolutions through various stages of lower animals. Anaximander

pointed out that the man first appeared as a fish. Archelaus declared that after the ice age had passed and the climate had become warm enough, various kind of life germinated of their own volition. He went a step further and said that at first various living beings mixed sexually over a long period of time and then at a certain stage of its development man branched off to assume a quite distinct identity. Carlton in his 'The history of Man' places man's evolution some 700000 years ago; while according to 'National Geographic' man's origin extends up to four million years in the far away past: For example in lower Omo River valley Kenya remains of early homonids ranging from one million to four million years old are found (Howell and Coppens 1969). In Laetolil (Tanzania) jaw bones and teeth of old Homo 3.5 to 3.75 million years old are found (Mary Leakey 1974-75). Hadar in Ethiopia yielded 3 million old Australopithecus skeleton named by the archeologists as "Lucy" (Johnson and Taeib 1974-75). Lake Turkana in Kenya yielded Homo skull of Homo-Erectus 1.5 million years old (Leakey 1975) and another Homo skull 2 to 3 million years old (1972). In old Uvai Gorge (Tanzania) were found remains of Australopithecus boisei (1959) and Homo Habilis (1961) both being 1.8 million years old (Lous and Mary Leakey). At Transwaal Australopithecus and Africanus and Australopithecus Robustus, about 2 million years old were found. (Dart 1924 and Broom 1936).

^{*} There was a time when man was not (Q. 19:68), then a time came upon him when, though, he was but was not a 'thing spoken of' (Q.75:2) ie., he

was not remembered, not aware of itself and was not capable of recognition. Then came the stage when his procreation began to occur from 'Nutfatinamshaajin', that is, the lively male sperm drop containing a combination of various elements (Q.75:3). Clay and water played large part in his creation (Q.21:31; 32:8). Man is the culmination of a gradual process and was not created suddenly, at one stroke (Q. 71:15). Similarly mans' intellectual development also proceeded gradually. The creation of man was actually the ultimate object of the creation of at least our solar system. Gods creation comprises millions of species Q.74:32). However man is unique and occupies a position of dignity and honour among created beings for the reason that he serves as a mirror for the divine attributes and is called by Sufis and Mystics a Microcosm, meaning that man possesses the attributes of the whole creation. As a survey map, though on a small scale, indicates all features of the country which it depicts in the same way man represents all the characteristics of the universe. Jalal-uddin Rumi says,

"First into state of mineral he came;
And, then as vegetable, ages spent;
forgetting all he felt as mineral;
Then into the state of animal he passed;
oblivious of the vegetable state;
Ascending thus, stage after stage, he now,
Is man intelligent, knowing and strong;
Yet all forgetful of his previous states;
From this stage of intelligence also,
He has to rise, since it is full of greed,

And clinging to small things and jealousies; when he has done so, then a myriad paths, of knowledge wonder and great mysteries, will open out before him endlessly. He will not be allowed to lose himself He will be dragged out of his night of sleep, Into the day of wakefulness again, Till he laughs at himself in ecstacy."

* "God sleeps in the mineral, dreams in the vegetable, works in the animal, becomes self-conscious in man." (Jewish Qabala).

As the story of his having been created at one stroke is in-correct, so is the Darwins theory that he has evolved from some species of apes. The man had his distinct origin as man, however lowly he might have been at a certain time.

God created him with His two Hands (Q. 38:76) which means that he is psycho-physical being. He is cerebral, muscular, viseral; he is introvert; extrovert; promethean and the Orphic; the technical and the artistic; the constructive and the expressive, and many things beside.

Charles Fourier was not much wrong in saying that it takes 1760 partial men, that is, specialists to make one man.

Of course man was not alone. There were many of his species and therefore he had his counter-part, a pair, a wife. Though, here again, it is incorrect that she was created from his rib. Muslims have also owned this idea due to not understanding the metaphorical significance of the words used by the

Prophet. The saying of the prophet does not mention Eve but women-folk as a whole. The saying actually meant to beautifully refer to the female temprament which is like a curvature of the rib. If one would try to straighten it he may break it in the experiment. Woman being the weaker sex, she feels a sort of rivalry with her husband and a desire to dominate him by constantly picking his ears. She will hardly ever agree with him without a lively argument. Well, that is not a slur upon her, after all, is she not the mistress of the house! Male folks should take advice and put up with such verbal contests with good grace. If this spirit in her is suppressed it may harm her and as a result the peace of the household will be shattered.

This man lived in caves and hilly fastnesses. It is due to this reason that he was called Jinn (Genii) which literally means those who dwell out of sight. It is a pity that some people still allude to him as the genii of the fables. He was nothing of the sort.

The part of the earth he inhabited must have been a very lush country, literally a Garden, which people call to this day as Paradise (Q. 2:36).

Man lived in this garden in a golden age of innocence and simplicity. Hesiod remarks, 'He feasted gaily, un-darkened by sufferings and died as if falling asleep, and all good things were his'. (Works and Days.)

He was a being given to much dreaming, even while awake. This sometimes puzzled him much. He did not realize that he was to become in due course of time 'Music maker and dreamer of dreams'.

At that early dawn of mans' history, however, this propensity of dreaming landed him in more than one trouble. He realized that there was much difference between his work a day semi-social life and the life of his dreams.

To put the record straight, the words Semisocial life are used advisedly. For the proper study of mankind is man, therefore though we are talking about man in singular but actually there were quite a number of men and women around, living in a sort of society or group around our particular man whom we have chosen as an example.

The more this man thought of his dreams and wondered about the world around him and the heavens with stars, sun and moon, the more introverted he became. This mood estranged him from his wife and other fellow men. This raised the ire of his wife and the first expression of 'you don't love me' was, perhaps, in the form of nagging or may be wailing with pulling of his bushy hair. His other fellow men also might have shown their dis-approval by their oh's and Ah's.

Man was astonished at this strange behaviour of his spouse but kept his patience. This was very wise of him.

Language begins as pure expression, as a mode of emotional communion. One can ascertain this in any baby and his gurgling, burbling, sputtering and even mimicking. The act of naming is another step further. It is a god-like process. It is a kind of second creation. When one got possession of a name, one seemed to exercise a sort of command over

the object it identified. I don't know why but I feel that one of the first acts of such naming and possessing might have been Ma, Mama, Mata, Madar where from we got Ammay, mater and mother etc., and there you are, man was on his way to establish language.

The man who brought this revolution of magical words is named Adam in world's sacred scriptures. 'And Allah taught Adam all the names'. (Quran. 2:32). That is, he was taught the names of God and the qualities and properties of things.

Before proceeding further we may correct another misconception. Dear Mr. Marx was wrong to base his theory on economic struggle of mankind. Man was social first and became economic minded later. Any theory, therefore, which does not take this aspect into account and only talks of economic ills, is telling half and not the whole truth. Man does not live by bread alone.

Our examplery man Adam was the most perfect man of his generation and therefore God sent His revelation to him which was confined to a few social rules relating to the formation of an organized society and the provision of 'food, clothing and shelter' (20:119, 120). Is it not a shame that to this day the slogan of the masses all over the world is still, 'Roti, Kapra aur Makaan' ie; bread, clothing, and a shelter! Dr. Sir Iqbal gave utterance to God's Will when he said, "Arise and awaken the poor and the dis-possessed of My Universe; And shake the walls of the rich man's palaces to their very foundations. If there be a field that does not yield lively-hood to the cultivator, Go and burn to ashes every grain of

wheat that it may contain. I am disgusted with all these places of worship built in costly marble, Go, build a lowly hut of thatch and clay for my worship."

... Khwaja Ahmad Abbas, a well known Indian writer quoted Buddha saying: 'Hunger is the worst of all diseases', which reminds me that the Prophet said: Empty stomach has faltering faith. Who are responsible for such a situation? The big land lords, the Kulaks, and the policy makers who keep mixed economies in such a way that the evils of both are combined, that is, high prices of capitalism and scarcities of communism; and the black-marketeers who corrupt the officials to such an extent that moral standards are destroyed. They evade the taxes and with black hoardings manipulate the markets and create the artificial scarcities. These are the people who deprive masses not only of their bread but faith also. They hide their nefarious deeds behind the facade of building mosques, mandirs and pagodas but their such hypocritical deeds only add insult to injury; they add sacrilege to their many other social crimes.

So, Adam was the first vicegerent and the prophet of God on earth (Q. 2:31). The word vicegerent used in the Quran clearly shows that there were other human beings also living at the time. Those whose social sense was not yet fully developed refused to submit themselves to the social and cultural laws introduced by Adam. The Leader of the obstructors of this basic social reformation is called Iblis in the Quran and his lackeys are named satans:

But simple minded people take satan as some evil spirit roaming around and corrupting the men. These satanic people are the real Genii or Jinns who always oppose the reformers and the prophets.

For example, God had clearly warned Adam (Man) to beware of Iblis, who was one of the Jinn, that is, un-cultured, and told him of the dangers underlying friendly contacts with such person and his ilk. But Iblis that is the leader of the insolent ones and his followers who are depicted as satans, shaitans, maras, Ahrimans, succeeded in playing a trick upon Adam through his wife. The man chosen to execute this nefarious scheme was like a serpent, who bites the self same hand that feeds him with milk and meat.

This man with the nature of a serpent or a scorpion approached Mama Eve (Hawa) and told her that he is the well-wisher of the family and therefore he will 'tell the truth, nothing.....truth', evading the crucial 'but', that actually God forbade you both to go near that particular tree simply for the reason lest you discover the 'great Wisdom', the secret of ever-lasting life. Poor dear, Mother Eve. having no previous experience, fell pry to the flippancy of serpent's tongue and did what was forbidden; she ate the fruit. Not only that: she gave part of that fruit to her husband with the coaxing words of "darling, how nice of the serpent. It is really delicious —nice fellow-you know!" Adam under the spell of his beloved wife partook of it and the thing was done, as it is done to this day. (Q. 2:36; 7:20; Bible. Gen. 3:1, 8 etc.)

See around, dear reader! and you will find such serpents every where who, if they cannot approach the Chief or the Director etc, will give salam, shikho, namastay, with their set of teeth bare, a present of this or that to the Madam who will do the rest for the decent and considerate Mr. so and so...

In our third standard Urdu text book there used to be a nice story of a turtle and a scorpion. The scorpion was one day running up and down the river bank, which he desired to cross in a hurry. Finding no boat he begged the turtle to kindly take him along. Turtle obliged. When they reached the midstream scorpion stinged him. Turtle asked what the H... he was doing? The scorpion replied, "sorry, but it is my habit and I could not resist the temptation..." "Sure, sure," said the turtle, "and the same is with me, I cannot resist the temptation of diving a little," and there went the evil scorpion...!

That is what is in store for all satans, serpents and ungrateful scorpions roaming around the world in human form.

Blow, blow, thou winter wind Thou art not so unkind As man's ingratiude. (Shakespeare)

Adam having been created out of clay (3:60) ie., he was bestowed with good natural disposition, seeing the bad consequences of his association with the serpent-like men, immediately realised his error of judgement and prayed that his 'naked-ness', that is to say, the evil consequences of the error may not affect him and his friends. For this purpose he bagan to take

such good and appropriate steps as may cover the error. I resent remarks of some ignorant persons who blame our ancestor that he sinned. It was mere error of judgement (20:116). Moreover even in this he was not alone, Eve was more to blame than Baba Adam. But why to raise dust upon this old episode particularly when we know that God forgave Adam (7:24). Then, through Adam God made announcement that they should always be prepared to receive guidance from their God which He will send through His prophets, from time to time. Those who will follow such holy persons would neither fear nor grieve and attain salvation; while those who followed Iblis and the class of people depicted as Iblis and satans, with 'fiery natures' of rebellion (7:13) will naturally burn in fire. (2:39,40)

In short, the fact is that satan has no power to lead men astray. He is only an instrument for the manifestation of man's weaknesses, just as angels are instruments for the manifestation of his good qualities. In reality man is led astray by his own baser self for satan only calls and it is man who obeys. The function of satan is to make evil suggestions, just as the function of the angels is to make good suggestions. Angels cannot make a man good, nor can satan make him bad. They only show the way, good or bad, and man does the rest.

Satan may be likened to Arsenic. So long as Arsenic does not enter the system of man, it is valuable drug but when man makes a wrong use of it, it becomes a deadly poison. Similarly, before satan enters the spiritul system of man he is but a test-question and nothing more.

Indeed satan is only an agent deputed to expose human weaknesses and frailities. It is really a big joke that man does evil and then curses satan for it. (14:23; 7;13 etc.)

In the beginning was word, and the word was with God and the word was God, says the Bible. Leaving aside the philosophical discussion that an attribute ie,. Word cannot become the substitute of the 'Being' and that two are entirely different, we got our language alright. It united the community through the bonds of affection, sharing of the common experiences and knowledge etc, but in course of time it proved 'one of the greatest of barriers between the tribes and races of man; and mans' most universal artifact, the spoken word, because it is so deeply steeped in the individuality of experience, became an obstacle to the union of mankind, (Mumford)

History records very little in the way of mental activity on the part of the masses of mankind except a series of stampedes from affirmative errors into negative ones and back again.

Geologist Lyell made an end of Archbishop Usshers Biblical estimate of the age of the earth as 4004 B.C. and with that was toppled the other idea of the life having been breathed, literally, into the clay nostrils of Adam whereby he became a living soul.

Darwinism and Marxism challenged religions and mocked God for over half a century, giving birth to out right materialism. On the turn of the tide it is feared lest we run back in terror of Materialism, to our old superstitions. Chaf should be sifted from the grain.

We must take care that the bankruptcy of Darwinism and Marxism does not mean that God was with body and many parts; that the world was made in the year of Grace 4004 B.C; that the world's sacred scriptures are accurate scientific or historical manuals; that the legends and parables are literally true in all circumstances; and that however much we may lie and cheat and murder, it is enough for salvation that we may believe in some credo, subscribe few kyats to some religious cause and that will ensure us our place in Heaven.

Soul-Ruh-Atman-Nafs.

- * Old Testament, Gen, 2:7 reads, "And Jehovah God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life. and man became a living soul.
- * New Testament, John 3:7 reads, "That which is born of flesh is flesh; that which is born of the spirit is spirit".
- "Rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell", says Matt, 10:28.
- * Chandogaya Upanishad 6:8 reads, "The infinite is bliss...is the self...The self is without decay, death or grief".

This self is called atman in Upanishads and Bhagvad-Gita; it is compared to the size of a thumb and other small objects and is located in the heart. (The theory of the soul in Upanishads, by Rhys Davids).

* In Apology, Plato clearly makes socrates state twice over with great emphasis that the purpose

of his mission was to get men "to care for their souls."

In 4 th Century B.C. Isocrates talks of soul as normal consciousness. For Homer the heros though immortal retained their bodies. For Aristotle "soul is related to body as form to matter." (Encyl. of Ethics)

- * In zend-Avesta, the term Uruvan, ahu, fravesti and later khrat, vir, expresses various spiritual faculties or constituents of man's non-material nature. The Uruvan is generally near to the idea of soul in its widest sense. It remains after the death and bears the responsibility of reward and punishment.
- * In Akkadian-Assyrian, it is called Napasu=be wide, breath; Napistu = life, breath, soul; In Hebrew Napash = take breath, refresh your self; Nepesh = Breath, soul, life, person; In Arabic, Nafs = breath of life, soul and self, The other word is RUH = soul; In Aramaic, Naphasha = soul; Ettapash = breath; In Ethiopic, Nephsa = breath, Nephes=soul.
- * The Quran says, "Say, the soul is by the command of my lord, and of the knowledge thereof you have been given but a little," (17:86)

The Quran refutes the theory that the human souls are self-existing and eternal and that they remain, as it were, in reserve in some other universe and descend to the earth from time to time and enter into human bodies. It points out that the human soul like other created things is created by God and develops under divine guidance. It also indicates that

the birth of the soul is not a process distinct from the birth of the body. The series of developments that bring about the birth of the body also bring about the birth of the soul and provide for its progress and uplift. In (23:13, 15), it reads, 'Verily we made man from an extract of clay; then we placed him as a drop of sperm in a safe depository; then We fashioned the sperm into a clot; then we fashioned the clot into a shapeless lump; then we fashioned bones out of this shapeless lump; then we clothed the bones with flesh; then we developed it into another creation So, blessed be Allah, the best of Creators.

The above verses explain that a man is born as the result of the nourishment which man and woman (parents) take to sustain life and to maintain their strength. This nourishment produces in the human body matter by means of which procreation takes place. When this matter enters into the womb, a portion of it which is charged with the faculty of procreation adheres to the womb (Fertilized egg) and begins to draw sustenance. Within a few days it begins to thicken and grows into a flexible substance in which bones begin to form and latter on, when these bones are clothed with flesh, the stages of physical procreation are completed. Simultaneously with this development a sort of distillation takes place as the result of which this growth develops animal characteristics and ultimately result in the birth of an intelligent human being. This clearly means that the soul does not enter the body from outside but is a distillation from the substance from which it is distilled and has the effect of bestowing upon that substance animal characteristics and of

converting it into a human being endowed with reason and intelligence and the faculty of progress. To illustrate this one may, as a rough comparison, draw attention to certain chemical processes whereby certain substances combine to form a new substance possessing distinct qualities of its own. For instance alcohol is distilled from beet, wheat, corn or treacle. It possesses qualities quite different from those of the basic substance from which it is manufactured. Whereas the raw material of the alcohol is liable to rot, alcohol is preservative. Again while the use of raw material does not directly affect mans' intelligence, alcohol is very potent in that respect.

Those who deal with this subject propound two theories. One is that human souls are not created by God but are eternal and self-exsisting like God himself. God causes these eternal souls to enter human bodies at the appropriate time. The second theory is that souls are created and not self exsisting but God created the requisite number of them at the same time as He created the universe, and that these souls are kept in reserve and out of this reserve God causes some to enter into human bodies from time to time. The propounders of these theories repudiate any suggestion that physical condition and physical development have any effect upon the development of the soul. The Quran lays down that (a) the birth of the soul is the ultimate stage of the evolution of the human body in the course of its creation. It does not enter the body from outside but is born as a consequence of the changes that the body goes through in the course of its development, yet is something distinct from the body and not merely the motive power of the body; (b) it emphasizes the fact that the condition and development of the person bear the closest relationship to his spiritual condition and physical development. It is ture that every human body is bound at a certain time and stage to develop a soul, but if care is devoted to the development of the human body along healthy and hygienic lines, the personality resulting from it will be more dynamic and more intelligent than if such development is neglected. This idea of the soul opens up new avenues for man's intellectual and spiritual development.

Some people assert that the soul has not faculties of its own and can therefore not be affected by any changes in the body. This is not correct. To say that soul possesses no faculties is meaningless. If it possesses no faculties it can have no independent existence. It certainly possesses faculties but is able to manifest them only through the body. The electricity may be cited as an example, which can manifest itself only through other substances. In the same way the faculties of the soul find expression in various ways through the body.

On man's death his soul enters a new universe, and assumes a new body which may be compared to our present soul. That body is different from the physical body that is adjusted to the requirements of our present life. Perfect souls will immediately attain to the state described as Paradise, and those souls as are as yet imperfect will go to hell, which is a state of healing for spiriturl ills. As the process of healing is completed in respect of each soul, it will also attain Paradise; till eventually all souls will have.

attained Paradise and the State of hell will be altogether terminated.

*Religious and Natural Laws.

God has put into motion two kinds of laws for the purpose of reminding man of his duties and of helping him along the path of progress. One of these is the law of Nature which is related to man's material progress. Since this law is not related directly to man's spiritual advancement, a contravention of this law results in material prejudice to man but does not involve Gods displeasure or anger. The whole of the material universe is invested with the appropriate impetus of this law and is impelled by it. No direct revelation is made by God concerning the detail of this law. One thing, however, God has made amply clear that everything in nature has been made subservient to man (14: 33, 35; 16: 11-15). It is for this reason that Dr. Iqbal boasts before God,

'Thou didst create the night, but I made the lamp; Thou didst give to the world deserts and barren hills,

I embellished them with flower-beds, gardens and orchards;

I am he who makes mirrors out of Thy stones, And I turn the poisons into medicinal cures.'

The second law is the law of Shariat ie., Religions law; that regulates man's spiritual progress. A contravention of this law involves divine displeasure, for it is only by conformity to this law that man can succeed in fulfiling the purpose for which he has been created. Contravention of this law arrests his pro-

gress towards that object. But every contravention of religious law has not the effect of depriving a man altogether of his chances of achieving his purpose and objective. The law of sharait collectively helps man to attain spiritual purity and exaltation. Just as every contravention of the law of nature does not necessarily involve a man in complete ruin and destruction nor does every carelessness in the matter of diet induce disease, in the same way not every contravention of the law of shariat draws upon man the wrath of God or deprive him of all chances of reaching his goal. Where an extensive system is designed to bring about a certain result, its failure in one respect may be corrected or compensated for by its success in another and the desired result may be achieved. The human body, for instance, is a complex organisation and human life depends for its healthy continuance upon various factors like food, water, air etc. On occasions one or more of these factors become tainted but this does not necessarily result in the organism becoming diseased. The defect produced by dificiency in one factor may be over powered by the healthy working of other factors. The same is the case with the religious law. It comprises rules and principles which are collectively designed for the spiritual advancement of man. Short of repudiation of the kingdom of God or of the authority of his prophets any defect that may be produced in human conduct by an error or weakness is remedied. If the defect is serious, it can only be remedied through true repentence and sincere prayer.

In addition to these two laws, there are two other laws which are constantly in operation, namely, the

social law and the moral law. But these are in fact the extentions of the boundries of the law of nature and the law of shariat. The moral law is the extension of the Religious laws and the social law is the extension of the law of Nature. They act and re-act upon each other to a large degree. Many rules of social law are based upon morality and many rules of moral law are based upon sociology. Since man has been intended to live as a member of society, he is in need of both these sets of laws. The social law being the continuation of the law of nature, man has been permitted a very large choice in the framing of it. The moral law being related to the law of shariat (religious law), its fundaments are governed by that law, though some of its details are left to man's choice. The whole system of the universe runs on the basis of these laws. The law of nature and the religious law are both appointed by God and man has no choice, or share in framing them. The social law and the moral law however, are a combination of divine commandments and human regulations, and in this manner by associating human co-operation with the divine design the very best guidance is furnished for the running of the universe. So long as these two streams continue to run in parrallel channels, the world goes on progressing in peace and man is able to set up a beneficient system upon earth which is in accord with the kingdom of God, but when these two streams begin to run in opposite directions, or in other words, when hūman reason is diverted from the course which runs parallel to divine guidance and is thus deprived of the divine blessings, the world becomes a prey to conflict and discord. It is ruled then neither by God nor by man but becomes subject to the sway of satanic forces; for man can claim to be human only so long as he follows divine guidance. When he ceases to do that, he descends to the level of the brutes.

Determinism and Free will

To enable man to attain nearness to God it was necessary to leave him free to choose his course of action. Man is free in the matter of the law of Shariat and has no choice where the operation of the law of nature is concerned. He is subject to compulsion in this last sphere for the reason that his spiritual progress is not related to the operation of the law of nature. He has been given free choice of action in the sphere of the religious laws and ordinances in as much as he can become the object of divine favour and bounty only by acting upon the religious laws, for no reward can be earned unless there is free choice in the matter of action. What a man is under the compulsion to do, can earn him no reward.

The Quran recognizes the fact that man's spiritual welfare and progress is affected by his material surroundings and to the extent to which it is affected, limitations are placed upon his actions, but it also teaches that man's actions are appraised by God with reference to his background and environment. For instance if a millionaire spends a small portion of his wealth in the service of humanity and a poor man possessing the equivalent of the small portion, spends half or three quarter.

of it in the cause of his fellow-beings, they will not, in the sight of God, be entitled to an equal reward. The millionaire devoted a thousandeth part of his wealth to the winning of the pleasure of God while the poor man gave nearly all for the purpose. The reward earned by each of them will be in proportion to the sacrifice made by each. It is not the volume of work and action but their background which is important. God does not over look the handicaps to which a man is subject and which limit the scope of his actions, nor the conveniences which a man enjoys and which facilitate his actions.

The universe is running according to Eternal Divine laws (al-kitab). In discharge of one's obligations towards God and men, one should observe equity and justice; avoid extremes and follow the golden mean. 'All is from Allah' means that God is the final controlling power in the universe and whatever good or evil befalls man is attributable either to the general laws of nature ordained by God or to one or other of his special decrees. God has endowed man with natural powers and faculties by making a right use of which he can achieve success, but when he makes a wrong useof them, he is involved in trouble. For 'every soul is pledged for what it has earned'. 'Whoso does right, it is for his own soul; and whoso does evil, it will only go against it. And thy Lord is not at all unjust to His servants'. (41:47)

Predestination, therefore, does not mean to sit! down with folded hands. Allah renders aid both to muslims as well as all non-muslims. All good:

works and efforts of all sorts of people be they Muslims, Christians, Jews, Hindus, Buddhists etc., bear fruit according to their scope and magnitude. Whosoever does an atoms weight of good will have its reward and whosoever does an atoms weight of evil will have his punishment. Good works drive away the bad effects of evil deeds. Moreover, Allah has promised that good works will prosper and bring ten-fold, even, seven hundred fold reward while punishment for evil will be only a like thereof. Further more, those who do evil in ignorance and repent thereafter sincerely and make amends, Allah will show mercy by forgiving them: (Quran. 2:262; 4:41; 4:79, 80; 6:161; 57:23,24; 74:39)

The idea of predestination is explained by Rumi in an anecdote as follows. "One day in mid-morning a nobleman ran into Solomons judgment hall, his face pale with anguish, his two lips blue.

Solomon asked him, 'Sir, what has happened'? Azrael, the angel of death, has looked upon me so angry and baleful, said the nobleman., 'well, what is your wish', asked Solomon. 'Declare it'.

The man said, 'Please command the wind to transport me to Hindustan; it may be that coming there, your servant will save his soul alive'.

Solomon ordered the wind to bear him swiftly over the waters to the depths of India.

The following day when his court was in session, Solomon spoke to Azrael thus, 'Did you look on that true believer so balefully to drive him wanderer from his home?

Said Azrael, 'When did I look balefully on him'?. I beheld him with astonishment as I passed by, for God had commanded me saying, 'This very day seize his spirit in Hindustan'. So, I said to myself in wonder, 'Even though he had a hundred wings, for him to be in India this day is a far journey'.

Rumi says, 'From whom shall we flee? From ovrselves? Impossible.

From whom shall we snatch ourselves? From God? Impious.

The days build the years, and the years make the character, and the character decides the choice. As Bergson puts it:

"It is right to say that what we do depends on what we are, but it is necessary to add that we are, to a certain extent, what we do, and that we are creating ourselves continually". Or, in George Eliots words:

'Our deeds still travel with us from a far, And where we have been makes us what we are.'

The two sets of causes are always interacting at every moment; usually co-operating, but often conflicting; sometimes the one dominant, sometimes the other.

If we wish we can group together external factors and say that they constitute 'Determinism'; and when we group together internal factors we call them 'Free Will'.

That solves the problem of Evil. Freedom could not but include the liberty to make mistakes, other-

wise there would be no freedom at all. Let us not, therefore, invent scape-goats for our own errors and heap them upon Satan, sinful Adam. or such figments as chance or fate and least of all God. Free will and determinism is like a game of cards. and the The hand that is dealt you represents determinism way you play your hand represents Free Will.

The quantum theory, now accepted by practically all physicists, has revealed even in the electron a degree of indeterminateness and irresolution which is almost human.

Surely, we have created man in the best make; Then, if he works iniquity, we reject him as the lowest of the low. (95:5,6)

--:s:---

In Praise of MAN.

Our ignorance and self will and vicious pride Destroy the harmony of part and whole In vain we seek with lusts un-mortified A vision of the One Eternal Soul.

(Nicholson)

Years ago I read somewhere a remark by Sir Arnold Toynbee that our civilization is only skin deep and mankind has not yet broken all ties with its animal past. "Scratch a little and underneath we are still the same old beasts". The truth of the statement is borne by the fact that even today violent rage, atleast temporarily, brings on our naively

animal past to fore-front. Thomas Mann calls it 'frightfully radical duality' between the brain and the beast in man-in all men. This feeling of identification with animal past lingers in primitive societies in the cult of Totem animals and was carried over into the religions of man-kind in the form of lion-headed or hawk-headed gods of Egypt and in the Sacred Bulls of Assyria, Greece and Persia and thence to India in the form of Sacred Cows.

People do sometimes attempt by their 'unthinking' behaviour to relapse into the sub-human. But it is a known fact that we can not now recapture our animal consciousness. We cannot get rid of our memory and expectancy. Psychological evolution is irreversible in its main tendency. Take sleeping pills, No.4 shots or what not, we cannot get rid of self consciousness. Even sleep will not help as Job amply proved centuries before Jesus," when I say, my bed shall comfort me, my couch shall ease my complaint, then Thou searest me with dreams and terrifiest me through visions." (gob 7:13-14)

"Man may seem detestable as joint stock companies and nations; Knaves, fools and murderers there may be; men may have mean and meagre faces; but man in the ideal, is so noble and so sparkling, such a grand and glowing creature, that over any ignominous blemish in him all his fellows should run to throw their costliest robes". (Moby Dick)

Let us see man in the world scriptures. Only digest is presented.

* Buddhism: Dhammapada 1-2,. Man is the product of his thinking. All that he is, all his ideals, likes and dislikes, his very self is the result of thought.

- * Christianity: Math. 6:26; 19;4; Mark 10:6; 14:38; Romans 8:14-16; Cor 3:17; Hebrews 2:6-8; James 3:9. Man is a little lower than the angels. He is the measure of all values. It is for him that the world was created...Man is God's workman on earth. If man fails, all fails.
- * Comfucianism: Shu King 5:4:1: Lun Yu 4:15:2; Meng Tze. 6-1-2-2;6.1.15.1.

Heaven has made man good. His original nature is good, but many depart from it. The earthly in man pulls him down and away from heaven. Those who follow the heavenly part of themselves are great, while those who follow the eathly part, are evil.

* Hinduism; Chandogaya Upanishad, 3:4:1; Gita. 2:23-25.

Man is the highest of the animals. He is an animal with an immortal soul which cannot be hurt by the world. There is nothing nobler than humanity.

* Jainism:- Uttaradhyayana Sutra, 10:20; 23:38.

Most people are enamoured of pleasure and do not reach the moral heights possible for man. Self is the enemy to greatness and is as dangerous as pride, anger and greed. Self is to be subdued.

* Judaism:- Gen. 1:27-28; Psalms, 8:1-6; Ecc. 7:29.

Man is a creation of God, made in the likeness of God. He has been made a little less than the divine. As sons of the living God, men are clay in the hands of God, The Potter, to do with us as He wills.

* Islam:- The Quran 95:5; 2:31; 32:10; 17:71; 87:3.

Man is created in the best make and is vice-gerent of God on earth. Divine spirit is breathed into him and is superior to all other creation, having un-limited capacity for progress. "Indeed we have honoured the children of Adam, and carried them by land and sea, and given them of good things and exalted them far above many of those whom We have created"...(Quran 17:71)

* Sikhism: - Rahira; Guru Arjan Singh, Rag Asa.

Man's body is the dwelling place of God. God is the soul of man, His eternal nature.

* Taoism:- Kwang Tze 5:3-5.

Man is both human and divine. The divine in him is eternal and of infinite worth. The human may pass away but the divine is ever lasting. His goodness comes from God:

* Zoroasterianism:- Yasna. 31:11; 43:15.

The wise One created man to be like Him. The mind of man enclosed in a body comes from the divine. Thus, man should serve only the good and flee from all that is wicked.

It is self realization through self knowledge, and this depends on our obedience to the law, which constitutes our real, noble and glowing being. Thus only we can fulfil the purpose for which we were created, and become in fact what we are in possibility'. The spiritual is rooted in the ethical and the ethical is the realm of rational man alone.

There is no trace to be found of the ethical in the rest of creation.

"What God prescribes is what man, when he is truly man, desires. The ideally desirable is ultimately the only possible course of action, for all violations of it are ultimately suicidal."

(John Marshall on Socrates in "History of Greek Philosophy".)

---:o:---

Do's and Don'ts

Commandments of all world religions, on the subject of ethics, do's and' don'ts, Vidhi and Nisheda, mamurat and mam-nuaat are identical for all practical purposes, though evolutionary progress is here, as else where, discernable.

Before quoting from the scriptures of living world religions let us read from an ancient do-cument.

The 'Memphite Theology' which dates back probably to 3400 B.C. (First Egyptian Dynasty), is oldest extant piece of literature. It represents Ptah, the God of Memphis as the heart and tongue of the gods, out of which all other gods come into being. The reference to 'heart and tongue', symbolises 'mind and speech' and gives a glimpse of an articulate intelligence behind the creation... a fore-runner of the Logos doctrine.

An elementary sense of justice is found in the words, "Indeed all the divine order came into being through what the heart thought and the tongue commanded...(thus justice was given to) him who does what is desired and (punishment to) him who does what is not desired. Thus life was given to him who has peace, and death was given to him who has sin "(Quoted from J.A.Wilson, 'the Burden of Egypt'.)

There is a negative confession, about 2000 B.C., which actually is an affirmation of innocence rather than a confession of sins. Anyway, it is searching in what it sets forth as moral ideal. How many of us (whatever religion we may profess) could truthfully affirm freedom from all sins enumerated therein?

It reads, "The deceased must declare that he has not done iniquity or violence, stolen from God or man, made light bushel or acted deceitfully, removed neighbours land mark, uttered falsehood, pried into the matters of others, or spread rumours, given way to wrath, stirred up strife, struck fear into others, caused another to weep, judged hastily, saught personal distinction, laid waste the land or spoiled the water, mis-used slave (today it will mean servant), turned deaf ears to right and truthful words, committed fornication, murder, or killed sacred animal, cursed king, despoiled mummies or blasphemed God."

Then comes affirmation, which again is as good as a confirmation required by follower of any world faith. It says, "I affirm that I fed the poor, gave

water to the thirsty, offered garments to naked and boat to mariner, offered sacrifice to god; I am clean of mouth, hands, therefore let it be said of me by those who shall behold me, 'Come in peace'.' (The Book of the Dead p. 258. Sacred Books of the East. Vol. II)

The last words 'come in peace' are exactly those in the Quran, "Thou O' soul at peace enter my garden." (89:28-31)

The Quran recognizes that in its initial state man has animal tendencies and his nature is 'prone to evil' and transgression. This lower state is called 'Nafsi-Ammarah' (12:54). To raise him from animal to civilised state, from grossness to virtue, the Quran first teaches Adab (manners). Then in his second state which is called 'Nafsi-Lawwamah' (75:3), self accusing or self blaming state of soul, another higher set of morals are prescribed till he attains to the highest state called 'Nafsi-Mutma'innah' (89:28) ie., the soul at rest and complete peace, "when the love of God becomes its sustenance and it drinks deep at this fountain of life and is therefore delivered from Death." For full exposition of moral life I would strongly recommend to the reader to read, 'The Philosophy of the Teachings of Islam' or at least my 'Two Lectures' both available in English and Burmese.

Some negative and positive injunctions of the Quran are presented below. But, first a guide line from the Holy Prophet.

Holy Prophet is reported to have said that the doers of good works are divided into three classes.

Some of them do good works with the desire to enter Heaven, whereas others do so in order to excape the punishment of Hell. But there is yet another class of people whose good works proceed wholly and solely for a desire to earn the pleasure of God, their Lord and Master (Kathir, V. 5, P. 112). For these fortunate lovers of their Creator, Paradise will be but an additional thing and not the object and goal of their life.

- * La-taqtalu auladakum;-do not kill your children (6:152; 17:32)
- * La-taqtalu anfusa-kum; do not commit suicide (4:30)
- * Wa-la-taqrabuz-zina;-And do not go near adultry (17:33)
- * Wa-bil-walidain-e-Ihsana; And show kindness to parents (17:24)
- * Wa-aufu-bil-ahdi; And fulfil your covenants (17:35)
- * Wa-auful-kaila-iza kiltum wazinu bil Qistas-il-mustaqeem; and give full measure, weigh with a right balance (17:36)
- * Wa-la-tamshi fil-arzi-marhan, inna-ka-lan tak-hriqal-arza wa lan tablughal jibala tula: and walk not in the earth haughtily, for thou canst rend the earth, nor canst thou reach the mountains in height. (17:38)
- * Kibr, arrogance— pride is an evil repeatedly allied with Satan and enemies of the prophets. From second chapter to 74th, it is denounced more than 30 times.

- * I jtani-bu kasiran-minal zannay, Inna ba'azal zannay ismun, wa-la-ta jas-sa-su wa-la yaghtab:avoid most of suspicions; for suspicion in some cases is a sin... and spy not, I nor back bite one another (49:13). The Quran compares back-biting with eating the flesh of one's dead brother. All paths of friction and disunity among the communities could be closed effectively if only this small portion of the Quran was strictly observed by all people. It is reported that a person asked the Prophet whether it was back-biting to mention a defect or shortcoming from which another did in fact suffer. The Prophet replied that that was exactly what backbiting meant, for if the defect or shortcoming did not in fact exist, the person attributing to another would be guilty both of slander and of backbiting'. The Prophet excellently defined a true muslim as 'one from whose hands and tongue his fellows apprehend no harm." (Islam for Modern Man)
- * wa-llahu la yohibbu kulla mukhtalin fakhur:- Allah does not love any self conceited boaster. (57:24)
- * Wa-la-talmizu anfusakum wa-la-tanabazu bil alqab,:— defame not, nor call one another by nick-names. (49:12)
- * Ya-ayyohal lazina Amanu Inna 'mal Khmro-wal maisaro wal ansabo wal azlamo rifsun min amalis' shaitan:— O Ye who believe! Wine and the game of chance and idols and divining arrows are an abomination of Satan's handiwork...(So shun each one of them that you may prosper.) (5:91)

- * Waj 'tanibu Qaulaz' zur:- Shun all words of untruth. (22:31)
- * Inn' allaha la yohibbu man kana Khwwanan Asima:— Allah loves not one who is perfidious and a great sinner. (4:108)
- * Wa' la-tass' ir Khaddaka lil naas, wa la tamshi fil arz marhan:— and turn not thy cheek away from men in pride nor walk in the earth haughtily. (Surely Allah loves not any arrogant boaster.) (31:19)

Surely success does come to the beleivers; (23:2)

- * Alla-zina hum si sala-te-him khashi' un:- who are humble in prayers (23:3)
- * Walla zina hum li-zzakat-e-fa' ilun:— and who are active in paying Zakat Tax. (23:4)
- * Walla zina hum li' furujihim hafizun:- and who guard their chastity. (23:5)
- * Walla-zina hum li' amanat-e- him wa Ahdi-him ra'un:— and who are watchful of their trusts and their covenants. (23:9)
- * In-nallaha yu' hibbu 'tawwabina wa yohibbul mut' tat' hirin:— Allah loves those who turn to Him and loves those who keep themselves clean (in and out). (2:223)
- * Wal Kaziminal ghaiza wal afina anin' naas:-and those who suppress anger and pardon men. (3:135)
- * Kunu Qawwa' mina bil Qisti Shuhuda lillah-e-wa lao ala anfusikum a 'wil' Wali' dain wal aqra-bain:—Be strict in observing justice and be witnesses for Allah, even though it be against yourselves or against parents and kindred: (4:136)

* Was 'shkuru'li (2:153)wa sa-ya jzi-allaho-sshakirin:—be thankful to ME; and Allah will certainly reward the garteful. (3:145)

The Holy Prophet said, "He who is not grateful to men (his benefactors), is not grateful to God."

- * Uddu rabba 'kum tazarru' an wa khusiah:- Call upon your Lord in humility and in secret. (7:56)
- * Wa' la tufsidu fil arz-e-ba 'da Islahi' ha:-and create not disorder in the earth after it has been set in order. (7:57)
- * In-allaha ma 'assa' birin:-surely, Allah is with the patient (steadfast). (2:154)
- * Fss' lihu baina huma bil adl-e-waqsitu: make peace between them with equity and act justly. (49:10)
- * Inna' mal muminuna Ikh watun fass' Iihu baina Akhwai' kum:-Surely all believers are brothers, so make peace between brothers. (49:11)
- * Wa yadra' una bil hasanat is -sa'iyate':-repel evil with good. (13:23)
- * Wa-man yuqa-shuha nafsi-hi fa' ula' ika hum-ul mufli' hun:—and whoso is rid of the covetousness of his own soul-it is these who will be successful. (59:10)
- *. Wa' la tata mannao-covet not. (4:33)
- * Wa' zaru Zahir-al-Ism-e-Wa' batinahu:-and eschew open sins as well as the secret ones. (6:121)
- * Inna-hu la yohibbul mu' tadin: He (Allah) does, not love trangressors. (7:56)
- * Al' fitnato asshada minal Qtl:-mischief making is worst than murder. (2:192)

- * Kunu ma'as'Sadiqeen:-Be always in the company of the righteous. (9:119)
- * The prophet said: Paradise lies under the feet of mothers.
- * "It is not righteousness that you turn your faces to the East or the West, but truly righteous is he who believes in Allah and the last day and the angels and the Book and the prophets, and spends his money for love of Him (Without selfishness), on the kindred and the orphans and the needy and for way-farer and those who ask for charity and for ransoming the captives; and who observe prayer and pay zakat and those who fulfil their promises when they have made one, and the patient in poverty and afflictions and the steadfast in time of war; it is these who have proved truthful and it is these who are the God-fearing." (2:178)
- * And worship Allah and associate naught with Him, and show kindness to parents, and to kindred, and orphans, and the needy, and to the neighbour that is a kinsman and neighbour that is a stranger, and the companion by your side, and the way-farer and those whom your right hands possess, ie, servants etc. (4:37) The prophet said, "The Gabriel advised me so many times about the rights of a neighbour, that I almost believed he is going to be made an heir of one's property."

(Bukhari and Muslim)

* The hypocrites seek to deceive Allah, but He will punish them for their deception. And when they stand up for prayer, they stand lazily and to be seen of men, and they remember Allah but little, (4:143)

- * Woe to those who pray, but are unmindful of their prayer. The like to be seen of men. (107:5,6,7)
- * Repel evil with good. (13:23; 28:55; 41:35)

* Hinduism:-

"Dharmat arthat cha kamah cha Sa kim-artham na sevyate'? Pleasure and wealth both depend on righteousness; Why not pursue it then?

Samasika Dharma 'duty of man' in brief enjoined by Manu is the same as preached by five Yamas of Yoga and Panch-shila or Tila of Buddhism and Jainism. These are, again, found in Islam, Judaism and Christianity. Manu Says,

Ahimsa, Satyam, Asteyam,
Shaucham, Indriya-nigrahah,
Etam samasikam abravit-Manuh (Manu-smirti)

'Harmlessness, Truth, honesty, cleanliness, restraint of senses from wrong ways. This is the whole duty of man, for every one, says Manu.'

At another place he says, Dhrtih, Kshama, damah, asteyam, Shaucham, indriya-nigrahah, Dhih, Vidya, Satyam, a'krodhah, Dashakam Dharma-Lakshnam. (Manu Smirti)

Fortitude, forgiveness, rule over the mind, Not taking others goods against their will, Cleanliness, control over senses also, Alert Intelligence, learning, truthfulness, Not giving way to anger-these are ten, Unfailing marks of Dharma'. Mahabharata, Bhagavad-Gita and Puranas expand the list to twenty.

'Acharya devah bhava, pitr devah bhava, mtr devah bhava'. Let thy teacher, thy father and thy mother be like unto guardian angels to you. (Upanishad)

* Jainism. Resolved, to refrain from taking life,
From speaking the untruth,
From taking what is not given freely,
From all un-lawful love, and
From owning goods beyond need.'

Samanta Bhadra and Maha Purana etc. give twenty dos and donts.

1. Kshama...forgiveness; 2. Mardava...gentleness; 3. Arjava ... Straightness; 4. Satya ... Truthfulness; 5. Shaucha... cleanliness; 6. Samyama...self control; 7. Tapas...asceticism; 8. Tyaga...renunciation; 9. Akinchanya...discarding all possessions; 10. Brahmacharya...(sex) continence.

The Opposite ten are,. 1. Krodha or Krurata... anger cruelty; 2. Mana or Ahamkara...Pride; 3. Maya or Chhalakapta ... deceit; 4. A Satya ... Falsehood; 5. Lobha or Trshna ... greed; 6. A sam yama or Indriya svachhandata...Indulgence; 7. Suku-marata... excessive sensitiveness; 8. Sam' graha...acquisitive-ness; 9. Mamata...possessive-ness (this is mine); 10. Ku' shila...Bad manners and character.

Sutra Kritanga 1.3.2.4. reads, 'the child should support his parents'.

* Buddhism. 'Pan-atipata Veramani, Musa vada veramani, adinnadana veramani sura meraya majja pamadatthana veramani, kamesu michchhachara veramani'.

Sir, Edwin Arnold's beautiful translation of the above is as follows,

Kill not for pitys sake and lest ye stay
The meanest thing upon its up-ward way.
Bear not false witness, slander not, nor lie,
Truth is the speech of inward purity.
Give freely and receive, but take from none,
By greed or force of fraud, what is his own.
Shun drugs and drinks which work the wit abuse,
Clear mind clean bodies need no soma juice.
Touch not thy neighbours wife, neither commit
sins of the flesh unlawful and unfit.'

* Na hi verena verani sammant iha kada chana, A verena cha sam manti; esa dhammo sanatano. Never by hates are hates extinguished' Only by love may hate be changed to love. and cease as hate, such is the Eternal law.

Buddhist Bhikshus are to cultivate five more shilas or virtues, which are; To avoid 1. eating except at fixed times, 2. Seeing and hearing dance; 3. Perfumes, flower garlands and other self decorations, 4. High seats and luxurious couches and 5. Gold and Silver. These maka Dasha-Shila or Ten Virtues. There is yet higher state of Ten Paramitas, ie., Extreme Perfections. Dana, Sila, Nekkama, Parma, Viriya, Satya, Khanti. Addhitthana, Metti, Upekha. One example will suffice here. For example, Dana (Charity) should be of such quality that one may give away even life to who so ever ask for it... Maha-mangala sutta preaches, 'To shun the vicious, serve the wise, honor the worthy, and do blameless deads, and to serve father-mother reverently'.

- * Confucianism. The five Wu-chang, ethical commandments are I. Jen...service or doing good to others. 2. Yi...truthfulness 3. Li...proper conduct 4. Chih...knowledge-wisdom 5. hsian...trustworthiness (Prof. Tan Yu Shang in Vishva Vani).
- 'Filial devotion and respect of the elders are the very foundations of an un-selfish life'. (Analects... Lun Yu 1.6.)
- * Judaism and Christianity. The ten commandments, are accepted by both religions and are:-
 - 1. Thou shall have no other God beside Me.
- 2. Thou shall not take the name of thy Lord, God in vain.
 - 3. Thou shall not make yourself graven images.
- 4. Thou shall remember the sabbath day to keep it holy.
 - 5. Thou shall not kill.
 - 6. Thou shall not bear false witness.
 - 7. Thou shall not steal.
 - 8. Thou shall not commit adultry.
- 9. Thou shall not covet thing that is thy neighbours.
- 10. Thou shall honor thy father and mother. Some other in junctions are as follows:
- 1. Be not among the wine bibbers, among gluttonous eaters of flesh, for the drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty. (Prov. 23; 20. 21.) At last it (wine) biteth like a serpent, and stingth like an ader. (Prov. 23:32)
- 2. Whoso keepth his mouth and tongue, keepth his soul from trouble. (Prov, 21:23)

- 3. Back-biters are hateful of God. (Rom. 1:30)
- 4. Be not hasty in thy spirit to be angry for anger resteth in the bossom of fools. (Ecc. 7:8)
 - 5. Much patience in afflictions. (Cor. 6:4)
- 6. Blessed are the peace makers for they shall be called the sons of God. (Ecc. 3:8)
- 7. Hatred stirreth up strife; but love covereth all sins. (Proverbs)

* Zoroasterianism.

Illumination and all that is good,
Lord Mazda, Thou givest unto him,
The hero, valiant in righteous war,
Who always thinks, hears, speaks of rectitude.
Who knows the self, is wise, and controls tongue,
And tells truth in soft words,

They who seeing yet blind spread around, Intolerance and insolence and hate. By evil words of their un-briddled tongues, Know them to be devils on this earth, Disseminators of the creed of hate.

Obedience, peace, charity, humility, truth, and righteousness should prevail in every home and children should respect their parents. (Yasna. Gathas, 31:19; 49-4; and 44-7; 60-2.5)

--:0:---

The Famous Golden Rule.

* Confucianism. When a disciple asked the great master if there was one word which may serve as a

rule of practice for all times, Confucius replied, Is not the word reciprocity?... Do not to others what you do not want done to yourself. This will save you from arousing ill-will in the minds of others and your public and private life will be safe. (Analects, Lun Yu, 5:11; 12:2)

- * Taoism. Pity the misfortunes of others; rejoice in the well being of others; help those who are in want; save men in danger...even though you were in their place. (Tai-Shang-Kan)
- * Zoroasterianism. That which is good for all is good for me. (Yasna. Gatha. 43.1)
- * Buddhism. All shrink from suffering, all love life. Remember that thou too are like them. Make thine own self the measure of others, and so abstain from causing hurt to them. (Dhammapada, 129, 130)
- Judaism. A rabbanical story says that a man once boasted that he could repeat the whole law while standing on one foot. When challenged, he recited, what you hate, do to no man. Thou shall love thy neighbour as thyself. (Lev. 19:18)
- * Christianity. Whatever you would want men to do to you, do even so to them. (Matt. 7:12)
- * Hinduism. Do not wish to others what you do not wish done to yourself. Wish for others what you desire for yourself. This is the whole Dharma. (Mahabharata and Bhagvata Purana.)
- * Jainism. One should treat all beings as he himself would be treated. Since all beings hate pain, he should kill nothing. (Sutra Kritanga, 1-10-1-3)

* Islam. The Holy Prophet put it in positive as well as negative form. He said, 'The noblest religion is this that thou shouldst like for others what thou likest for thyself; and what thou feelest painful for thyself, hold that as painful for all others'. At another time he said,' One is not true believer unless he loves his neighbur as he loves himself'. (Hadith)

The above sayings are the basis of a Persian saying, 'Har cheh ba khud napasandi, ba deegran ma pasand, ie., whatever you do not like for yourself do not for others too.

* Sikhism. In a slightly varying form it also preaches, 'Friend, bear no hate to any one. The One God dwells in every heart'. (Granth sahib Bawan Akhri)

---;0;---

The Golden mean.

"Religion is the wholesome ordering of human life; the guide to furnish us with our daily duties in the round of common occupation; the lamp to light us along our road and to show us where to place our steps". (Foude; Short studies in Great, Subjects, vol. III, page 198)

All religions begin as liberating movements: liberation from sheer superstition to following of mere customs of the fathers (as Quran puts it) and out-right acceptance of false beliefs. But, unfortunately, with the passing of time, the selfsame liberating movements become over conservative, rigid, narrow, insisting on the non-essentials to the deteri-

ment of what is essential. Naturally in their turn they lose grip upon the intelligence of the adherents and thereby lose their allegience. Politics and Science in one garb or the other, lead the masses farther away from religion. However, as the saying is "extreme darkness is the harbinger of dawn", it is at such times that a reformer, a reviver comes and restores balance between the two extremes of Materialism and blind despotic ritualism.

This 'Just balance', which is called 'golden mean', is found to be the watch word of nearly all living world religions. The Holy Quran says,' La ta' tadu inn-Allaha la Yohibbul mu' tadin. (2:191), that is "God loves not those who go beyond due bounds". The Holy Prophet said, "Khairul-Umure ausatoha", that is, "only those acts are good and safe to do, the golden mean which studiously pursue".

A Sanskrt proverb says, 'Ashrayen madhyamam virtim', ati sarvrtra varjayet', that is 'Follow the middle path; avoid extremes'. In Gita, Shri Krishna preaches to Arjuna, "He who avoids extremes in feed and fast; in sleep and waking, and in work and play; He wins yoga, balance, peace and joy". Again in Upanishad we read, "Tasmad vidvan Bharati n-ati-vadi". And in Manu Smirti, "Ati-vadans-itiksheta; that is, "the wise man avoids extremes in speech and acts and when others press him to extremes in heated speech, he passes by, in quiet, answering not. About this last advice read the Quran which says, "Wa iza khataba-hum-ul-jahiluna qaala salama". (25:64); That is, "when ignorants

address them (they simply) convey 'peace' (and pass by). For where ignorance is bliss, it is folly to be wise.

Bible says, "Be not righteous over much; neither make thyself over wise". (Ecc. 7:16). "Give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food sufficient for my wants; lest I may be full and deny Thee and say who is Jehovah". (Prov. 30:8, 9).

The teachings that Gautama Buddha introduced are expressly known as "Majjhima pati-pada (Sanskrt Madhya-ma paripati), "Middle path", so much so that one of the Buddhist philosophical schools is known as madhyamika, "the middle way school".

Confucius was Contemporary of Gautama Buddha, and his doctrines are compiled under the heading of "The doctrine of the Mean", by his grandson Kung Kei.

In Shi Ching; Li-Chi, Confucius says, "Commit no excess; do nothing injurious; there are few who will not then take you for their pattern.... The will should not be gratified to the full; pleasures should not be carried to excess".

Lao-Tze says in Tao Teh Ching, "Continuing to fill a pail after it is full, the water will be wasted Continuing to grind an axe after it is sharp, will wear it away. Excess of light blinds the eye. Excess of sound deafens the ears. Excess of Condiments deaden the taste. He who possesses moderation is lasting and enduring. Too much is always a curse, most of all in wealth".

Dr. Will-Durant in his' The story of philosophy page 87-88) writes, "This doctrine of the Mean...

appears in almost every system of Greek philosophy. Plato (speaks of it as) harmonious action.... The seven wise men had the motto, 'Meden agen', that is 'nothing in excess', engraved on the temple of Apollo at Delphi'.

A Latin Maxim is 'In Medio Veritas', ie., 'Truth is in the Middle'.

"Limited as we are in every way, this middle state between two extremes is present in all our faculties. Our senses perceive no extreme. Too loud noice deafens us; too much light dazzles us; too great or too short distance alike impede our vision; too Iong or too short discourse alike give rise to obscurity; too much truth bewilders us (I know some people who cannot understand that nothing minus four leaves nothing!); first principles are too evident for our grasp; too much pleasure upsets us; too much concords in music are dis-agreeable. Too many kindnesses annoy us, for we like to have the wherewithal to over pay our debts,". (Tacitus, Annals, V-18; "Benefits are acceptable so long as they can obviously be re-paid; When kindness becomes too great, its reward is hate". Author.)

But what we mean by 'mean point'? Is it some fixed point between fifty percent excess and fifty percent of deficiency? This will mean that courage, for example, is half cowardice and half rashness. Temprance is not half self indulgence and half complete abstinence. The true mean is at the tension of push and pull of attraction and resistence among the extremes. The outcome is imprecise and inconclusive, and there is little reason to think that

the wisdom of the world can ever rise above these imperfections.

"We feel neither extreme heat nor extreme cold. Excessive qualities are prejudicial to us and are not detected by the senses; we no longer feel but suffer from them. Extreme youth and extreme old age hinder the mind, as also too much and too little education. In short extremes to us are as if they don't exist, they bear no relation with us; they escape us, or we them"

"Let us then not look for certainity and stability:
Our reason is ever deceived by fickle shadows, nothing can establish the finite between the two infinities which both enclose and flee therefrom. If this is understood clearly we shall remain at rest, each in that state in which nature has placed him. Our lot is cast between two extremes". (Pascal.)

For Aristotle there were cartain things always and un-conditionally wrong, admitting no mean point. These were malice, envy, and shameless-ness, being the wrong emotions, and adultry, theft, and murder being the wrong acts. (Nico. Eth. 11—8). He never preached 'turning the other cheek' and advocated 'growing angry on the right occasion and with the right people, in the right manner, at the right time and for the right length of time'. (Ibid. 4-5): My God!

In an advanced history paper a question was once asked 'what is the significance of Danda (Stick or punishment) in a society preaching A' himsa (non-violence)?' I remember one answer paper which began.

with the injunctions of the Smirtis in which punishments of severe nature were prescribed for those untouchables who dared to recite Vedas with their unclean tongues, punishments for those who may even refer to other faith than that of the Vedas. Then, as a contrast, the paper referred to Mahabharata preaching: Brahma being the creator of this world, therefore all beings are His children. Then it referred to Dharma Edicts of Emperor Asoka on the one side and the historical punishments that he metted out to those who raised their head against his rule; his conquests and taking of prisoners of war etc. Then it again referred to Mahabharata and pointed out that Shri Krishna urged Arjuna to fight against the wrong doers and oppressors, and concluded that A' himsa did not mean the neglect of duty. It only meant that innocents must not be hurt.

The extreme preachers of A' himsa are Jainism and Buddhism, but no Jain or Buddhist king or Governor or judge was found wanting in observing the rule that 'duty varies with the circumstances' and, therefore, murderers, habitual thieves, rebels and disturbers of peace must get their due punishment. What is needed is to be honest and above personalities. Let out the ego and let in the God, and then if duty requires giving, seemingly, pain to other, do it, because that is Dharma, that is A'himsa. Be like a surgeon who, if necessary, would not flinch from operating on his only son.

All scriptures preach harmless-ness, non-violence, peaceful living, and the love of fellow beings, and yet the same scriptures teach to be steadfast, resolute, 'defend oneself and the loved ones, nay, defend even

him who is stranger and oppressed'. There is no inconsistancy in these double-headed injunctions. Himsa (harming) should be clearly distinguished from Danda (punishment) to the guilty, the criminal and the oppressor and aggressor. One should be good and be good to others as well, so far as is possible but if the State starts being good to the wicked and the insolent, it cannot remain in power for long. No law will prevail and society will become impossible. For man, as stated earlier, in his fallen position, in his un-cultured state, is like unto an animal. 'It expects much from others'. He is selfish and highly egoistic.

* The disease of men is this that they neglect their own field, and go to weed the fields of others, and that what they require from others is much, while what they lay upon themselves is very light'.

(Mencius. 113.)

The Quran clearly refers to such people who 'preach to others goodness but easily forget themselves,' (ata'marunan-nasa bil-birray wa tansauna anfusakum). People easily forget that another corollary of the golden rule is to refrain from suspicions, fault finding, carping, cavilling, back-biting, ill-natured criticism, scandal-mongering, slandering and rebeling against the established authority of the land. All these habits are too common and too destructive of friendliness and human happiness.

There is no other quirck of human nature so common or so malicious as to be guilty of judging others. To achieve serenity one should over come this dirty habit.

Another point which we should bear in mind is that: 'To attempt to correct others while one's own virtue is clouded, is to set one's own virtue a task for which it is in-adequate'. (Taoism. Kwang-tze). 'He who smites will be smitten; he who shows rancour, will find rancour; from re-viling comes re-viling, and to him who is angered comes anger.' (Buddhism. Udana—Varga). 'Faults mustard seed like, in others you see well; but your own, large as Bel fruit, you see not'. (Mahabharata. Vidura- Niti). 'How can you say to your brother, let me cast out the mote that is in your eye, when you yourself behold not the beam that is in your own eye'?

(Luke. 6:42)

Lao Tze said. 'Recompense injury with kindness'. Confucius asked, 'What then will you return for good?' and added his own view: 'Recompense injury with Justice, and return good for good'. After all, did'nt he who is known as Prince of Peace say at one occasion, 'I bring not peace but a sword,' (N. Testament) and Old Testament teaches to take tooth for tooth and an eye for an eye.

Hinduism teachs,

The poisoner, the incendiary,

The robber whoso commits assault,

with lethal weapons, and ravisher,

And one who forces to oust people from homes, All these should be slain unhesitatingly.

(Mahabharata.)

The Quran says, 'Surely, the curse of Allah is upon the cruel and unjust, 'who slay their own brothers and turn out a section of their people from their homes, backing up one another against them with sin and transgression.'

To return hate with love is high ideal but it is also a fact that at times it is impossible to put up with aggressors and oppressors.

In short, the best way out of this seemingly inconsistancy is prescribed by the Quran which says, "The recompense of evil should be proportionate to evil done; but if man forgives a transgressor, under the circumstances which are calculated to effect a reformation in his conduct, and which do not lead to disorder or disturbance, the reward of such person (ie., forgiver) is with God. However, verily, God does not love the transgressors." (42:41)

--:0:--

Repentance.

Dosteovskys' Ivan said, "If there is no God, all is permitted"; only one should be careful. But the problem of ethic is whether it is desirable to be good as well as careful, and if so, how men are going to be persuaded thereof.

Life of mankind seems to be divided into two periods; in the first we indulge, in the second we preach; passion yields to caution, and the great currents of desire become winds of speech. But the religions preach. 'Dar Jawaani tobah kardan shaywa' i paighambar ist;' ie,. 'To be repentant while still young is the way of the prophets'. Actually the door of repentance is never closed and therefore even the old sinners can hope for the mercy of God, as it is said,

"Baaz a, baaz a, har an chih hasti baaz a, Gar kafir-o-gabr-o-but parasti baaz a Ein dargah-i-ma dargah-i-naa ummedi nist, sad baar agar tobah shikasti baaz a." ie,. 'Come back, come back, Whatever you are come back, Unfidel or worshipper of fire or stones Come back
My house is not the house of despair Even if you broke vows hundred times Still repent and come back to ME.'

The above is Persian translation of the Quranic verse, "O my servants who have committed excesses against their own souls, despair not of the mercy of Allah. Surely Allah forgives all sins. Verily He is most Forgiving, Merciful.

* "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper, but whoso confesseth shall have mercy".

(Bible. Prov.)

* Except ye repent, ye shall all perish. Repent ye, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive, and to cleanse us from all un-righteousness." (Bible)

* "When in the wrong, do not hesitate to make amends". (Confucius.)

(Treasure-house of Living Religions.)

* Burning remorse, confession and amends, and expiation in the proper way, sacred studies and ascetic life, Thus are washed sins of sinners".

(Manu-smirti. xi-46)

In the initial stages this can only be achieved through love and fear of God. The agnostics and the atheists consider God as figment of imagination and therefore consider fear of such figment laughable and doing good out of His fear objectionable. But they easily forget that they themselves are 'careful' of the police-man.

I have asked many times of my atheist friends that let us suppose that there is no God and no after life. In such case the condition of us both would be alright, for there would be neither the Judge nor the Judgment Day. But suppose there is God, after all, then what would be your condition? I have never received a reasonable answer to this simple proposition.

Prayer.

"He that has planted ears, shall He not hear?
He that formed the eye, shall He not see?
(Psalm. 94:9)

Thy own hand hath sprinkled Over human souls this salt of love Why wonder, if their love agonies Rise aloud to the heavens above.

(Ahmad of Qadian)

Some years ago it occured to me to compile a booklet containing prayers and supplications of the Holy Prophet from the Quran and the books of traditions. I have changed my mind and with joy present a universal book of prayers.

Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (1835-1908) has written exhaustively upon the subject of prayer, dispelling many doubts about its efficacy. However, scepticism about the efficacy of prayers is very old. In the Bible of The World Religions, P.27. it is related that an ancient Hindu gentleman gave up belief in prayers simply because he could not cure his baldness through prayers.

Among the moderns Mr. Kenneth Paton once charged that: public prayer is simply a case of the leader banking his shots against an imaginary God in order to address his remarks more effectively to his audience. (Values Men Live By). Unfortunately some muslim modernists like Sir Syed Ahmad Khan also fell prey to the similar way of thinking.

Muslim Namaz and Doa, Christian prayer and supplication, Vedic Sandhya-Upasana, are essentially and almost exactly the same. They all pray to the Ultimate Source or Reservoir of all pervading intelligence that is 'All Good', for right intelligence, righteous will, inner illumination, true guidance, protection from evil temptations and strength of mind and character to do the right thing at the right moment.

A prayer Common to several religions which arises from simple and honest heart is to dispel darkness and bestowal of Light.

- * Allaho Nurus'samawaati wal Arz...
 Yahdi' Allaho Li' Nurehe man yasha.
 ie,. Allah is the light of the heavens and the earth. Allah guides to his light whomsoever He wills.
- * Rabbana At'mim lana Nurana. ie,. Our Lord, Perfect our light for us.
- * Yajal-lakum Tamshuna Bihi wa yagh'fir lakum. ie,. Allah will provide for you a light wherein you will walk, and will grant you forgiveness.

 (Quran. 24:36;66:9;57:29.)
- * Aum, Tamasah Ma Jyotih Gamaya.

 Astad Ma Sad Gamaya.

 Mrtyoh Amrtam, Aum.

 ie,. Lead me from darkness into light.

 Lead me from unreal to the Real.

 Lead me from mortal to The Immortal.

 (So be It)

(Brihadarany Upanishad. 1.3.38)

Prakasatmithaya Satya Prakasnam Prabha Karah Prakasyati yo Vismam Prakasatam.

ie,. That luminosity which illumines all luminaries.

By its power of luminosity, that which illumines the universe.

May He shine in full. (Sankara).

Muslims say, Jalla-Jalalahu, ie.,

May He shine from Glory to Glory

- * Light is sown for the righteous and gladness for the upright in heart. (Psalms. 97:11)
- * The path of the righteous is as the dawning light, that shineth more and more into the perfect day. (*Prov.* 4:18)

- * Do you not seek a light, O Ye who are surrounded by darkness! (Dhammapada.)
- * And it was Plato's Socrates who prayed, "Give me beauty in the inward Soul".
- * Grant me, Thou Maker of plants and water, Immortality, O Mazda.

(Zoroaster. Yasna. 18:4)

* Ocean of mercy, dwell within our heart, Ever, and give such light unto our mind, That we may love, serve, worship Thee, Our God,

Thou art our Father, Mother, Master, all. (Sikhism. Granth Sahib)

NOBODY should try to assess another person and his hopes until he has first heard his prayers. Any one going through the prayers and supplications of the Prophets and the Saints can gleam of their personality, character and their lofty ideals. It will be hard for a sane person to remain unmoved; hard not to love them.

Although there are millions who, even in this age of scepticism, observe prayers as ordained by their various religions but if asked they will be found wanting in 'Faith' in the efficacy of the prayers. The reason here is that these gentlemen merely observe a ritual. They feel, in good faith no doubt, that it is a duty and that duty they have fulfilled by various acts prescribed in their religion and that is all.

The Holy Prophet summed up the matter in a short sentence saying 'supplication (Doa) is the essence of Prayer'. If a prayer remains merely a ritual, it only

guides to a theoretical Supreme Being. Such Theoretical deity neither saves men from sin nor fills any heart with higher ideals. Only when prayer becomes a supplication, a communion that the theoretical deity becomes LIVING FORCE that bestows life and vitality. It is well said that God hears no more than the heart speaks. If the heart be dumb, God will certainly be deaf. We should remember that without God we cannot and without us God will not. Desire and co-operation is necessary.

The Quran Says, "And as for those who strive in our path—we will surely guide them in Our ways". (29:70)

"And your Lord says, "Pray unto me; I will answer your prayer". 'And when My servants ask thee (that is The Prophet) about Me, say, I am near. I answer the prayer of the supplicant when he prays to Me." (29:70; 40:61; 2:187.)

There is no restriction as to the caste or creed of a person. A man of any faith can benefit from this open door policy. "Knock and the door shall be opened unto you", says the Bible.

Some one has put the idea beautifully in Urdu:

"Hamain to shaikh -o-brahman sabhi ki sunn lay'ni.

Yeh kyon? keh aas na toarain pukaar'nay waalay."

ie,. I have taken upon Myself to listen to every one Be he a shaikh or a Brahmana

Why so? Because none of those who call upon me

May ever despair and give up hope.

IT is generally objected that this kind of proof of the existence of God is, at the most, satisfactory to the individual concerned who experiences it. But the objection is lame in view of the fact that on the eye witness testimony of two ordinary persons a man is convicted of, say, murder, and loses his life on the gallows. How is it that in the case of fulfilled prayers of many millions, the existence of Him Who accepts and fulfils the prayers may remain in doubt!

PRAYER covers the whole of a man's life. There is no thought, feeling, yearning or desire, which if affect our real interest or happiness, we may not lay before God and be sure of His sympathy. His nature is such that our often coming to Him does not tire Him. Though it may tire the man. The Prophet is reported to have said "Let every one of you ask his Lord for all that he needs, even for the thongs of his sandal when it is broken" (Mishqat)

A person given to doubt may question this plea to God for a shoe lace which can be had from the leather merchant or general store. He may say that no amount of prayer will give him shoe lace which comes under natural law of means and methods. "If there is an order of nature (which every one accepts) then prayer and supplication is a part of it. Why exclude only prayer but not other things from it? A house fly has properties and can do various things but not prayer? How is it?"

"What is prayer? prayer is a responsive relationship between God and a godly person. The Grace of God-His Beneficience-first draws a person to God. The person responds with gratitude and sincerity and God draws near to him. In prayer this relationship achieves a quality of its own and gives rise to its own peculiar consequences. Suppose a man becomes involved in ome great difficulty. He turns to God full of conviction, hope, love, loyalty, courage and confidence. He achieves an unusual awareness. Gone are his indifference and forgetfulness. Penetrating through veils of indolence, he advances in the field of selflessness and ultimately finds himself close to God, and no oneno-thing-else is any where near him. His soul bends at God's feet. The magnetism gifted to him produces responsiveness in the Divine. He draws divine Grace towards himself. Almighty God then attends to the object of his prayer. The prayer begins to have effect. The first effect is to move the appropriate means towards the end. Did the man pray for rain? Then acceptance of prayer moves the natural means to rain. Prayer moves the means...what are called miracles are often examples only of the acceptance of prayer. So are the many thousands of miracles of the prophets and saints witnessed from the beginning of time until today, examples of the acceptance of prayer. My own experience in this matter is relevant too. For, I have seen prayer work more swiftly than fire and water. In fact, of means that nature has provided, prayer is the most potent, the most effective. There is nothing like prayer."

(Barakat—ul—Doa)

"If it is said that prayers also go unheard and remain without effects or results. The reply is that this is true of medicines also. Have medicines closed the door of death altogether? Yet, is there any one who will deny that medicines have their powers and

their properties. It is true that everything has its laws, its measures. But this has not made sciences useless or un-important, nor made means and methods un-reliable. Think a little deeper and you will find that physical means, on the one hand and spiritual means on the other, are equally under the law of natural measures and decrees. If there is a sick person and he is decreed to get well, conditions, conducive to health become available in full. These include the responsiveness of the sick man's body itself. Given to this responsiveness the medicine works wonders, it hits the target, as it were. So it is with prayer. For the prayer also means that conditions making for acceptance assemble where God has willed their acceptance. The physical and spiritual worlds are both subject to an order of cause and effect. The mistake.....that people make...is that they accept the physical order of causes but deny the spiritual order. (Ibid)

THE HOLY PROPHET is reported to say: 'A servant is granted answer provided he does not ask for anything sinful or for breaking of relations and provided he does not demand an answer quickly. 'On being asked what "quickly" meant, he replied, "It is when he says, oh' he has prayed and prayed and does not think he will be answered, so he grows weary in such circumstances and gives up prayers". (Muslim)

In Aeschylus a wicked man's prayer is quoted as "Oh' no god hears my prayers." (Aesch, Ag. 356).

On another occasion the Prophet said: "Three supplications are answered, there being no doubt

about it, that of a parent, that of a traveller, and that of one who has been wronged."

(Tirmidhi, Dawood and Majah.)

About the grieviously wronged person he is reported to have said, "Beware of the supplication of one who is wronged, for there is no veil between it and God." (Mishqat). These above mentioned sayings of a great Prophet guide us towards some of the important laws governing acceptance of prayers or their rejection.

There are other conditions that a supplicant should fulfil such as piety, truthfulness, conviction, love, patience, concentration, last of all comes the all important condition that the end or object prayed for oneself or for another person is good in the knowledge of God for it often happens that a prayer fulfils all other conditions except this one, that the object and the consequences are not good in the sight of God. If a beloved child cries and supplicates his mother to let him play with burning coal or with a poisonous serpent or if a child wants the mother to let him take a powder which mother knows to be deadly poison, will she let him? No, however attractive the things may be to the child."

We ignorant of our real selves, beg often our own harms, which the Wise God denies for our own good and thus we benefit from the rejection. I experienced a shock when as a young boy I heard a mother (a far relation) cursing her children with tearful eyes. After her anger subsided I asked her: suppose God would have accepted your prayer and

wiped out your children? she smiled and said 'Oh, He is not like me to take my words seriously." Yet, even after some 4 decades I shudder to think what would have happened to that lady had her tearful prayer been granted then and there.

There is a special beauty in praying for others, especially one's enemies. In the first case, by making request to God for others, one will find that in a subtle way one got something for himself. In the second case, one is cleansed of anger and malice. It is wonderful to note that almost in all religions the prayers of the prophets and seers are generally for collective "We" and "Us" rather than simple "I" and "Me", and even where "I" is used the intention is clearly for all.

"To Pray and supplicate is in accord with Natural laws. We find that when a child cries and shows much distress, milk gushes forth from the mothers breasts. Similarly the milk of divine Blessings pours forth for him who goes before Him with genuine need and tearful eyes..." There is a sacredness in tears. They have the eloquence of thousand tongues. They are the messengers of over whelming grief of deep contrition and of unspeakable love. Every tear has a cleansing virtue, particularly those of repentence.

It is wrong that every prayer and supplication of the prophets and saints was granted as requested. "God is not a Cosmic bell boy for whom we can press a button to get things done for us". One should bear in mind that the relationship between God and saintly persons is like unto that of two

sincere friends. Sometimes one accepts the wish of other and at another he desires that his wish may be carried out. Such persons who think that all their wishes may be carried out are extremely selfish and disrespectful. Has there been any prophet who did not wish, desire and pray for the people to whom he appeared? Did all of them were able to reform themselves? No. A great number of them always remained in ignorance. For they were not heedful to the divine message.

THE PROPHET said, "He who remembers his Lord and he who does'nt, are like the living and dead." (Bukhari and Muslim)

WELL, I wish to be among the living and wish the same to all.

TO ME, supplication is as much an instinct of my nature as it is a duty enjoined by my Lord. It is my language of worship, as man; my language of dependence, as a creature; of submission, as a humble subject; of confession of weakness, as a sinner; of thankfulness as the recipient of mercy and grace; and of supplication, as a needy being.

AT TIMES certain of my thoughts are nothing but out pouring at the feet of my Creator and Mentor. Whatever the attitude of my physical body, the soul is at its knees; holy, humble, penitant, believing, loving, earnestly beseeching and tearfully begging for something and at times nothing in particular but simply to be whole in body and soul and immerse with ALL—THE UNITY—and be no more.

"BLESSED ARE those prisoners (Of worldly passions) who do not tire of supplications because one day they will be equitted; blessed are those blind

who do not tire of praying for one day they will begin to see: blessed are those in the graves who ask for help through prayer for one day they will be raised from their graves; blessed are you (dear reader) when you do not get tired of praying, your soul becoming liquified, your eyes shedding tears and your bossom burning with great emotion and compelling you to seek solitude in dark rooms or in jungles or in the wilderness, and you become like mad...because one day the blessing of God will shower upon you. The God towards whom we call is ALMIGHTY, Most Merciful, full of modesty and loving kindness. If you show faithfulness and seek from HIM with love and chastity, surely HE will respond with ten fold love and kindness." (A Lecture, Sialkote)

There is no other better way of prayer than the ritual prayer. But prayer does not consist it forms only...prayer is the drowning and unconsciousness of the soul, so that all these forms remain without. At such times there is no room even for Gabriel, who is pure spirit. "Absorption in the Divine unity is the soul of prayer." (Masnavi Rumi)

JECUS said, "When thou prayest, thou shalt not be the hypocrites are; for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the street, that they be seen of men. But when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou shut thy door, pray to thy Father in secret....

The Prophet once said to a new convert who was shouting his prayers at the top of his voice, "Brother, Allah is not deaf; you need not shout so loudly."

ORDINARILY; prayer in secret and solitude is sincerest and full of deep emotion. But congregational prayer is useful for unity, fellow feeling etc. Solitary studying has its own uses; so has joint class-room study.

Alexis Carrel, M. D. Nobel Laureate, author of MAN, THE UNKNOWN, says, "Prayer is not only worship, it is also an invisible emanation of man's worshipping spirit-the most powerful energy that one can generate. The influence of prayer on the human mind and body is as demonstrable as that of secreting glands. Its result can be measured in terms of physical buoyancy, greater intellectual vigor, moral stamina, and deeper understanding of the realities underlying human relationships. A tranquillity of bearing, a facial and bodily repose, are observed in those whose inner lives are enriched by prayer. Within the depths of Conciousness a flame kindles. And man sees himself. He discovers his selfishness, his silly pride, his greeds, his blunders.

He develops a sense of moral obligation, intellectual humility. Thus begins a journey of the soul towards the realm of Grace.

(New York Reader's Digest, March. 1941)

Longing, I sought Thy presence,
Lord, with my whole heart I call and pray,
and going out toward Thee,
I found Thee coming to me on the way.

(Yehuda Halevi, 1085—1140 A.D.)

'The best prayers have often more groans than words'. (John Bunyan. 1628—1688 A.D)

'You have never wept while tasting bread?
Or lain awake for agonizing nights?
You know not then, these heavenly Powers.'
(Goethe.)

O' rather say,
One went to brag
th' other to pray
One stands up close and treads on high
Where th' other dares not lend his eye
One nearer to God's altar tred
The other to altars God.

(R. Crashaw 1613—1649 A.D.)

In preparation as you talk to him, He will talk to you;

And often you should be silent and let Him speak,

So that you may listen in the stillness of your heart.

(F. Fenelon, 1651-1715 A.D.

O'idod, Grant us the serenity to accept What can not be changed,

The courage to change what can be changed And the wisdom to know one from other.

(Reanhold Niebuher)

God be in my head, And in my understanding God be in mine eyes, And in my looking God be in my mouth, And in my speaking God be in my heart, And in my thinking God be in my end, And at my departure.

(Sarun Primer)

* Vedic Rishi Declares:-

"Yatah Abhy-udaya-nis shreyasa Siddhih Sa Warmah."

Religion is that which serves happiness here as well as in the hereafter.

(Isha Upanishad - Vaisheshika Sutra)

* The Quran teaches to pray,

"Rabbana Atina fid'duniya hasanatan-wa fil akhirati Hasanatan, wa qina Azaban-Nar.

Our Lord grant us good in this world as well as good in the world to come and protect us from the torment of the fire. (2:202)

* New Testament teaches to pray,

"Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name, Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so on earth. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts as we also have forgiven our debtors. And bring us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.

(Mathew. 6: 9, 13)

Obviously by the declaration of all world religions, right conduct in this world is necessary condition of welfare in the next world. Affairs and welfare of this world are by no means to be neglected and despised. Therefore it is natural and right that we should pray for and exert ourselves to win well being in both the worlds.

* Shema Israel: Adonai Elohemu Adonai Eihad: Hear O Israel, the Lord is our God, the Lord is One.

Bless Jehovah, O my Soul;

And all that is within me, bless His holy name.

Bless Jehovah, O my Soul.

And forget not all his benefits;

Who forgiveth all thine iniquities;

Who healeth all thy diseases;

Who redeemeth thy life from destruction;

Who crowneth thee with tender mercies;

Who satisfieth thy desires with good things;

(Psalms. 102: 2, 5)

We fix our minds in worship on the Lord, Of Right and Might, of Wisdom and Power, Who gives us Conscience to do godly deeds, And also gives detachment from the world, And patient resignation whence we gain, Solace in time of weakness and pain.

(Zoroaster; Gatha. 34)

Papah aham, papa-karma aham,
Pap-atma, papa-sambhavah,
Pahi mam, pundarik-aksha,
Sarva-pap-harah bhava.
Sinful am I, sin acting, and sin-born.
Sin natured. Cleanse Thou me from all my sins.

(Mahabharata)

"Our Lord, do not punish us, if we forget or fall in to error, and,

Our Lord, lay not on us a responsibility as Thou didst lay upon those before us; Our Lord, burden us not with what we have not the strength to bear; and efface our sins, and grant us forgiveness and have mercy upon us;

Thou art our master; so help us Thou against the disbelieving people".

(Quran. 2;286,7)

"And remember when Abraham said, My Lord, make this a town (Mecca) of Peace and provide with fruits such of its dwellers as believe in Allah and the Last Day".

(Quran. 2; 127)

"And remember the time when Abraham and Ismail raised the foundations of the House praying......

"Cur Lord, make us submissive (Muslimain) to Thee and make of our offspring a people submissive (Muslimatan) to Thee. And show us our ways of worship, and turn to us with mercy; for Thou art oft returning with Compassion and Merciful".

"And Our Lord, raise up among them a messenger from among themselves who may recite to them Thy Signs and teach them the Book and wisdom and may purify them, surely, Thou art the Mighty, The Wise. (Q. 2:127, 129, 130)

"Moses Said," My Lord, open out for me my heart,

And ease for me my task,

And loose the knot of my tongue,

That they may understand my speech.'

(Quran. 20: 26, 27, 28, 29)

* "And Moses Said, Our Lord, Thou hast bestowed upon Pharaoh and his chiefs embellishment and wealth in the present life, with the result, our Lord, that (instead of doing good) they are leading men astray from Thy path. Our Lord, destroy their riches and attack their hearts—and they are not going to believe until they see the grievious punishment."

(10:89)

* "Noah Said,...

My Lord, I have called my people night and day, But my calling them has only made them flee from me all the more. And every time I called them that Thou mightest forgive them, they put their fingers into their ears, and covered up their hearts, and persisted in their iniquity, and were disdainfully proud.

Then I called them to (righteousness) openly, Then I preached to them in public, and also spoke to them in private,

Noah Said, My Lord, they have disobeyed me, and followed one whose wealth and children have only added to his ruin.

And they have planned a mighty plan....

And they have led many astray; so increase not the wrongdoers but (only) in error....

My Lord, forgive me and my parents, and him who enters my house as a believer, and the believing men and the believing women; and increase Thou not the wrongdoers but in perdition."

(Quran. 71; 6 to 10; 22 to 25 & 29)

* And (Solomon) said, "My Lord, grant me the will and power to be grateful for thy favours which Thou hast bestowed upon me and upon my parents, and to do such good works as would please Thee, and admit me, by Thy mercy, among Thy righteous servants."

(Q. 27:20)

* "My Lord, make me observe prayer, and my children too. Our Lord, bestow Thy Grace on me and accept my prayer."

"Our Lord, grant forgiveness to me and to my parents and to the believers on the day when the reckoning will take place. (14:41,42)

- * When going to bed, the Prophet used to pray, "My Lord, my soul is submissive to Thee, and I have turned my face toward Thee, entrusted all my affairs to Thee and committed my back to Thee out of desire for Thee and fear of Thee. There is no refuge and no place of safety from Thee except by having recourse to Thee. I believe in Thy book and in Thy Prophets whom Thou hast sent." (Mishqat)
- * On waking he used to pray, "All praise is due to Allah, Who has caused us to come out a state resembling death after He had made us enter it, and unto Him is the final return. On taking any medicine he used to declare, 'In the name of Allah, He is the Healer.'

These and many other prayers for all occasions 'strickingly illustrate the Holy Prophets own attitude of mind and the values that determined his conduct!'

Another of his prayer was:-

- * "Allahumma musarrifal Qulubi sarrif Qulubana ala Ta'atika." O God, turner of the hearts. Turn our hearts towards Thy obedience and Praise. (Mishqat-Muslim)
- * "Allahummastar auratana wa amin rauatana."
 O God, Cover our faults and give us security
 from all things of fear. (Bukhari)
- * My God, make me live the life of a humble (Poor) man and let death come to me when I am poor. (Tirmidhi).
- * "O Lord my God, place light in my heart, in my eyes, and my ears; light be on my right and left, above me and below me, in my front and behind me and complete Thy light for me."

 (Bukhari & Muslim)
- * Rabbi ajalni mubarakan haisa ma kunto. My Lord, keep Thy blessings upon me where ever I may live. (Ahmad of Qadian)
- * Rabbi kullo shai-in khadimuka, Rabbi fah fazni wan-surni warhamni.
 - O MY Lord, Everything is Thy servant, therefore, My Lord, protect me, help me, and have mercy upon me. (Ahmad of Qadian)

Aum-Amin-Ameen. All three words Vedic, Christian and Muslim mean the same, that is, so be it, and I think the Burmese word 'Thadu' also means the same.

- * Prayer is not a magical device by which we get what we privately want at the cost of the reliability of the natural order or of the common good. Prayer is an intellectual discipline in truthfulness and a moral discipline in unselfishness. It is the endeavor to find what is true and right and then to conform to these realities. (Willard L. Sperry)
- * Prayer is soliloquy...contemplation and poetry, says George Santayana.

Some intelligent and honest men give up prayer for two reasons, (1) there seems to them to be no objective God or divine reality as commonly conceived, that is, God as a person and, (2) such objective and divine reality as they acknowledge cannot be communicated within the sense which prayers seems to presuppose.

Such unconvinced friends who find error in prayer as auto-suggestion or pure introspection and have objections against traditional way of prayer, may benefit by Mr. J.R. Pratts' words. "There is a kind of worship that is perfectly objective and sincere and that is quite as possible for the intelligent man of today as it was for the ancients, namely that union of awe and gratitude which is reverence, combined perhaps with consecration and a suggestion of communion, which most thoughtful men must feel in the presence of the Cosmic forces and in reflecting upon them."

Each and every one of the world religion has advised its votaries to contemplate and meditate. A digest of their teachings is given here—under.

* According to Buddhism: Great are the rewards of contemplation. One who trains himself in the art of meditation will penetrate the heart of the truth and discover great spiritual riches.

Mahapari nibanna sutta. 1.12,14,18, Dhamapada 36,3.27,372

* Christianity teaches: Thinking on great things of life results in greatness. If one would be good, he must contemplate the good. All virtues will be strengthened by meditation upon them. This, too, is the way to clear understanding.

(Romans. 12:2, Timothy. 4-13-15 etc.)

* Confucianism says: One should avoid bad, evil thoughts. He should at all times think that which is good. Careful Consideration of the end as well as the beginning and middle will save one much trouble.

(Shu-King. 5-17-2;5-18-2; Lun-yu,2-2)

* Hinduism teaches: Those who do not meditate can have no steadiness of peace. The Great and the wise meditate constantly on the Divine. This is the source of strength and the way to knowledge of the supreme One.

Rig Veda 3:62.10; Brihad Aranyaka Upanishad 2.4.5; Gita. 2.5,3.66.4.24 etc.

* Jainism says; Contemplation is the means of obtaining stability of mind. Even though one is severally persecuted, he must obey the law of Silent Meditation.

Ayaranya Sutra. 1-8.2-12 Uttara-dhyayana sutra. 29-25

* Judaism preaches, Meditation brings understanding. One should contemplate God in all His Greatness at all times. This is enjoyable and brings the greatest of peace and happiness. To meditate upon the Laws of the Lord is the duty of all believers.

(Psalms.19=14.46=10.63=1-6:Proverbs.23-7etc.)

* Islam teaches, Meditate upon God and the signs of God, that is, the world around you, that you may find peace. It repeatedly asks the believers to reflect, meditate, and think of the beauties and bounties of God around you. Meditation must be in humility and constant if one would reap its true rewards.

(Quran, 13:4,5 and 29 etc.)

* Zoroasterianism; - Keep the plan and purpose of the Lord always in mind. Meditate upon them day and night. Then you will come to clear understanding.

(Yasna. 34-8, 44-8)

* "Prayer (and meditation) is mans' rational prerogative:" said Wordsworth; "It moves the arm which moves the world," adds James Montgomery.

Long tarries destiny; but comes to those who pray, wrote Aeschylus; and pagan Homer said in "Iliad" he who hearkens to gods the gods give ear;

Fenelon in 'Advice Concerning Prayer' points out that; "To pray is to desire; (that is true) but it is to desire what God would have us desire. In other words, let not that happen which I or you wish, but that which is right." Our wishes and desires are sometimes very foolish indeed. Think of a foolish mother who once said to her son "I wish I was dead so as to see how you could get along without me'. Or the man who meeting most of his relatives and friends on a funeral remarked, "How nice; I wish we could meet more often."

Shakespeare in Hamlet points out, "My words fly up, my thoughts remain below/words without thoughts never to heaven go."

For most of us, our every day, day time existence consists of an unbroken series of obstacles. It is only exceptionally when we are free from distractions, in the silence and darkness of the night, or of the night's psychological equivalent, that we become aware of our own souls and along with them, of what seems the soul of the World.

There is in God, (some say),
A deep but dazzling darkness,
As men may say it is late and dusky,
because they see not all clear,

O, for that night where I in Him, might live invisible and dim.

(Henry Waugham)

- * How should I praise Thee, Lord, how should my rhyms, gladly engrave Thy love in steel, If what my soul doth feel sometimes, My soul might ever feel.
- * John Kepler when studying astronomy said, "O' God I am thinking Thy Thoughts after Thee."

But soul cannot always feel what it feels sometimes; mortal breath cannot express the passion at such moments inspired, and the perfect height cannot be lived on—it can only be visited. Our minds are so made that they cannot remain at their highest pitch. Consistently rewarded, virtue would cease to be virtue. And if the soul did not have its long weary and anxious spells of 'feeling the flesh and the flesh feeling the chain' there would be no such things as heroism and endurance—

* "Abide with me fast falls the even-tide; The darkness deepens; Lord, with me abide, When other helpers fail, and comfort flee, help of the helpers, O' abide with me.

(Henry Francis Lyte)

So long as the bee is outside the petals of the lily and has not tasted the sweet nectar, it hovers round the flower emitting its buzzing sound: but when it is inside the flower, it noiselessly drinks its nectar; So long as man quarrels and disputes about the dectrines and dogmas, he has not tasted the nectar of true faith; when he has tasted it, he becomes quiet and full of peace. (Ramakrishna)

* GOD is the one in whom all is lost and yet the one in whom all is found.

(Edward Caird. 1835-1908)

* Those who lose every thing for the sake of God, get back everything and much more besides.

(Ahmad of Qadian. 1835-1908)

True wisdom lives far from mankind, out in the great loneliness, and it can be reached only through suffering. Privation and suffering alone can open the mind of a man to all that is hidden to others.

'In the darkest night of the soul there is always 3 'o' clock in the morning.'

Fra Giovanni said, 'there is radiance and glory in darkness, could we but see; and to see, we have only to look. I beseech you to look...'

"Some form of stimulation to produce unease and restlessness is necessary for any kind of growth and learning. Rats and cats are taught through starvation and by electric shock. Biological self-affirmation needs a balance between courage and fear. Islam teaches that the righteous live between 'hope and fear'. Hebrews, 12=5,6 reads 'my son, despise not the chastening of the Lord; for whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth'. In Ch. 53 of Isaiah, servant of the Lord is depicted as, 'despised and rejected man, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief".

The Quran reads, 'Do men think that they will be left off alone because they say, 'We believe' and that they will not be tested? And we did test those who were before them, so Allah will surely distinguish those who are truthful and He will surely distinguish the liars (from the truthful).' (20: 3,4)

"And We will try you with something of fear and hunger and loss of wealth and lives, and fruits. But give tidings to the patient, who when misfortune over takes them say 'surely to Allah we belong and to Him shall we return". (2=156,157)

But here as else where 'hope deferred maketh the heart sick'. The capacity to make use of suffering to strengten rather than to weaken depends largely in the individuals ability to fix his aim on something beyond the suffering, or in other words, to make sense out of it. It is this function that religion performs par-excellence. Under no other form can the human mind project an aim so ultimate, all embracing and profound than in his conception of the Divine.

Those who deny the existence of a Purposeful and Benevolent God using the argument of the existence of evil and suffering should try to see the other side of the picture also. How is it that man who was a mere beast only a few thousand years ago has transformed and risen to the heights of love and selflessness? It is this capacity, of religion to transform suffering that explains the hold that it has on the human spirit. It is this

that makes credible what otherwise would be incredible, that is, christian martyrs meeting wild beasts with joy and singing, the jews wresting sublime concepts of Jehovah out of the sorrows of the exile, Muhammad turning his flight from Mecca into glorious victory, christ finding triumph on the cross. Suffering has been the great matrix out of which have emerged life's greatest activities.

Even as the malignant growth of evil threatens, confuses, and attacks and spreads in the world, the light of grace is active through the innocent, the persecuted, the humble and the oppressed.

In short, life is a grindstone: whether it grinds you down or polishes you up depends on what you are made of. To a brave man, good and bad luck are like his right and left hand. He uses both and benefits thereby.

Here is a glory of a meditative mind.

* But first a hush of peace a soundless calm descends;

The struggle of distress and fierce impatience ends,

mute music soothes my breast - unuttered harmony,

that could never dream, till earth was lost to me.

Then draws the Invisible; the Unseen its truth reveals;

My outward sense is gone, my inward essence feels;

Its wings are almost free, its home, its harbour found,

measuring the gulf, it stoops, and dares the final bound.

O' dreadful is the check, intense the agony, when the ear begins to hear, and the eye begins to see;

when the pulse begins to throb, the brain to think again.

the soul to feel the flesh, and the flesh to feel the chain. (Emily Bronte.)

* In one salutation to Thee my God, let all my senses spread out and touch this world at Thy feet. Like a rain cloud of July hung low with its burden of unshed showers let all my mind bend down at Thy Door in one salutation to Thee. Let all my songs gather together their diverse strains into a single current and flow to a sea of silence in one salutation to Thee. Like a flock of home sick cranes flying night and day back to their mountain nests let all my life take its voyage to its Eternal Home in one salutation to Thee O' my Lord.

(Tagore 1861—1941)

- * "O God! whatever share of this world Thou hast alloted to me, bestow it on Thine enemies: and whatever share of the next world Thou hast alloted to me, bestow it on Thine friends. Thou art enough for me."
- * "O' God, if I worship Thee in fear of hell, Burn me in hell. And if I worship Thee in hope of paradise,

exclude me from the paradise.

But if I worship Thee for Thine Own sake, withhold not Thine Everlasting beauty from me.

(Rabia Basri, 717--801 A.D.)

That which we dare invoke to bless, our dearest faith, our ghastliest doubt, He, they, one, all, within, without, The power in darkness whom we guess, I found him not in world or sun, or eagles' wings, or insect eye, Nor through the questions men may try, The petty cobwebs we have spun. If ever when faith had fallen asleep, I heard a voice "believe no more", And heard an even breaking shore, that trumbled in the Godless pit. A warmth within the breast would melt, the freezing reason's colder past, And like a man in wrath, the heart, stood up and answered, "I have felt." (Lord Tennyson. 1809--1892)

* We know that even our nearest friends enter into us but partially, and hold intercourse with us only at times; whereas the consciousness of a perfect and enduring presence, and it alone, keeps the heart open. Withdraw the object on which it rests, and it will colapse again into its state of confinement and constraint; and in proportion as it is limited, either to certain seasons or to certain affections the heart is strained and distressed.

If it not be over bold to say it, HE WHO is Infinite can alone be its measure. He alone can answer to the mysterious assemblage of feelings and thoughts which it has within..... Life passes, riches fly away, popularity is fickle, the senses decay, the world changes, friends and relatives die. One alone is constant. One alone is true to us. One alone can be true. One alone can be all things to us. One alone can supply our needs. One alone can train us up to our full perfection. One alone can give a meaning to our complex and intricate nature. One alone can give us tune and harmony. One alone can form and possess us.

(Cardinal J. H. Newman. 1801.-1890)

* 'Lord, make me an instrument of Thy Peace: Where there is hatred, let me sow love. Where there is injury, pardon. Where there is doubt, faith. Where there is despair, hope. Where there is darkness, light. Where there is sadness, joy. O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console; to be understood, as to understand: to be loved, as to love: for it is in giving that we receive, it is in pardoning that we are pardoned, and it is in dying that we are born to Eternal life. Amen!.

(St. Francis of Assisi)

* All religions, all life, all art, all experiences come down to the effort of all the human soul to break through its barriers of loneliness.

of intolerable loneliness, and make some contact with another soul, or what all souls seek, which is by any name GOD.

(Chapter of the Orthodox)

Burn then, little lamp; glimmer straight and clear. Hush, a rustling wing stirs, me think the air; He for whom I wait, thus ever comes to me; Strange power; I trust Thy might; trust Thou my constancy. (Emily Bronte.) And now a little shock.

I begin to suspect that a man's bewilderment is the measure of his wisdom. (The House of Seven Gables.)

GOD give me unclouded eyes and freedom from haste. God give me a quick and relentless anger against all pretense and all pretentious work and all work left slack and unfinished. God give me a restlessness whereby I may neither sleep nor accept praise till my observed results equal my calculated results or in pious glee I discover and assault my error. God give me strength not to trust in God! (Martin Arrow Smith's Prayer.)

With the people, and especially with the priests, who have Him daily upon their tongue, God becomes a phrase, a mere name, which they utter without any accompanying idea. But if they were penetrated with His Greatness, they would not dare to name HIM.

(Goethe.1749-1832,)

I found GOD from the fact of my purposes being defeated and my problems being solved.

(ALI--4 th. Caliph)

Prophecy and the present times.

Whenever there is decay of righteouess, O Bharata, and there is exaltation of un-righteousness, then I come forth: for the protection of the good, for the destruction of evil-doers, for the sake of firmly establishing righteouess, I am born from age to age. (Bhagvad Gita.)

* Verily, God will send a Reformer and re-constructor in my nation, at the end of every century, who will re-new and revive the religion.

(The Prophet, in Abu Dawood.)

Pro=forth+phanu=to speak, to tell. Prophet is one who speaks for another, especially for God, hence prophecy means to foretell. In Arabic as well as Hebrew prophet is called Nabi, formed from the word Naba, signifying 'to announce', so, too, the Assyrian word 'Nabu', meaning 'to call', 'inform', command. The prophets, accordingly, were speakers, announcers, informers, in the highest sphere of human interests viz religion, foretelling of events inspiring awe and making the hearts tremble with fear. (Lane, Kulliyat, Raghib.)

Generally all prophets of the living world religions, but more particularly the prophet of Islam, have warned graphically against the trials and tribulations of our present age and prescribed the remedy thereof, which is no other than turning to One God for help and guidance. 'Let him who hopes to meet his Lord act righteously, and let him make none sharer of the worship due unto his Lord'. (18=111)

- (a) Shri Vyas Ji in Mahabharata relates that according to the Rishis the signs of Kaliyug (Iron age, denoting the age of physical and moral deterioration) are that at such time irreligiosity becomes rampant, falsehood, deceit, harmfulness, anger and covetuousness increase. Even Brahmans neglect religious duties of meditation, fasting and sacrifice. Rulers become neglectful of the welfare of their subjects, having no initiative and courage. Their sole aim of life becomes amassing of wealth. Grain and fruits lose taste. Girls become pregnant at an early age of eight years. Climates change and scarcity of goods becomes worldwide problem. People imitate mahatamas (saints) simply by growing long nails and hair. Women become lax in morals. Men neglect their legal wives and enjoy company of the prostitutes. Pubs flourish while the temples are found empty of worshippers...children consider their parents as fools ... at such time the advent of Kalki Autar will take place, who laced with spiritual powers, fight the powers of evil and destroy them'.
- (Mahabharata, Urdu Ed. P 686, 90)

 (b) 'There will come a time, brethren, when the descendants of those humans will have a life-span of ten years. Among humans of this life-span, maidens of five years will be a marriageable age. Among such humans these kinds of tastes (savours) will disappear: ghee, butter, oil of tila, sugar and salt. ... Among such humans the ten moral courses of conduct

will altogether disappear, the ten immoral courses of action (as given in vibhanga. Ed.) will flourish excessively: there will be no word for 'moral' among such humans...far less any moral agent. Among such humans, brethren, they who lack filial and religious piety, and show no respect for the head of the clan...' tis they to whom homage and praise will be given: just as today homage and praise are given to filial minded, to the pious and to them who respect the heads of their clans.

Among such humans, brethren, there will be no (reverence and bar to inter-marriage with) mother, or mother's sister, or mother's sister -in-law, or teachers (guru) wife, or fathers sister-in-law. The world will fall into promiscuity, like goats and sheep, fowls and swine, dogs and jackals. Among such humans, brethren, keen mutual enmity will become the rule, keen ill-will, keen animosity, passionate thoughts even of killing, in a mother towards her child, in a child towards its mother, in a father towards his child, and in a child towards his father, in brother to brother, in brother to sister, in sister to brother. Just as a sportsman feels towards the game (deer) that he sees, so will they feel'. (Digha Nikaya. iii = 72 - 19. 20; 75. 6; Anagata-Vamsa. Pali text Society, 1886.)

(c) Guru Gobind singh Ji says in Dassam Granth; "When people forget God, when every one praises himself and looks down upon all others, when people give up worship and become atheists, then God will send twenty fourth Reformer. 'Rachey ans Mehdi Mir; Raswant

hath lambir'. ie, at such time Mehdi Mir will appear. The words Mehdi Mir in the original mean Mirza Mugal which is ascertained from the fact that Baba Nanak referred to Emperor Babur as 'Mir' at more than one place in Janam Sakhi. 'Tawrait Injeel Zabur parh sun dithey vaid. Rehya Furqan katibray Kalyug main parwaan'. ie I have read and heard the old and New Testament and the Vedas. Furqan (ie Quran) is the praised guidance for the era of Kal-yug. (Janam Sakhi Bala, Urdu, P. 147)

By the way, the copy of the Quran which Baba Nanak used to read constantly, is preserved at the Sikh Temple, Guru Har Sihai, Dist. Ferozepur, India.

(d) The earth shall quake before them; the heaven shall tremble: the sun and the moon shall be dark, and the stars shall withdraw their shining.

(O. T. Joel 2=10)

(e) And there shall be signs in sun and moon and stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, in perplexity for the roaring of the sea and the billows, men fainting for fear, and for expectation of the things which are coming on the world, for the powers of the heavens shall be shaken and then shall they see the son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. But when these things begin to come to pass, look up, and lift up your heads; because your redemption draweth night...But take heed to yourselves

lest haply your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness and cares of this life, and that day come on you suddenly as a snare...(Luke. 21=25 to 28 and 34; Also refer Matthew. 24=29, 30)

But the day of the Lord will come as a thiet, in which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall be dissolved with fervent heat, and the earth and the works that are therein shall be burned up. (Pe.3=10). But according to his promise, we look for new heaven and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. (Pe. 3=13)

Then said he unto them, nation shall rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom, and there shall be great earth quakes, and in divers places famines and pestilences... (Luke 21 = 10,11)

The pestilence means plague is clear from O. T. Zachariah, 14=12 'and this shall be the plague where with Jehovah will smite all the peoples'. As a sign of the second coming of the Messiah, plague is mentioned in Matthew, 24=8; Rev.22=8.

About 20 years ago, one morning, a christian gentleman of a revivalist movement came to my place at 31 st street and presented some religious literature. A small dialogue took place between us, and on hearing that he believed that spiritual manifestation of Christ has already taken place, I embraced and congratulated him. A little puzzled he asked me if I was not a muslim. I said, I am, and that I belong to the Ahmadiyya movement in Islam. Upon this he excused himself on the plea that he had to visit a number of other places also

and that he will come some other day to exchange views. I regret that that promised day never dawned.

(f) The Quran. In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful. When the heaven is cleft asunder, and when the stars are scattered, and when the rivers are made to flow forth into canals, and when the graves are laid open, each soul shall know what it has sent forth, and what it has held back. (Chapter 82=1)

'When the sun is wrapped up, and when the stars are obscured, and when the mountains are made to move, and when the she camel, ten months pregnant, are abandoned, and when the beasts are gathered together, and when the seas are made to flow forth one into the other, and when people are brought together, and when the girl child buried alive is questioned about, for what crime was she killed? And when books are spread abroad, and when the heaven is laid bare...then every soul will know what it has brought forward. (81=2-15)

'An inquirer inquires concerning the chastisement which shall fall upon those who believe not, which none can repel. It is from Allah, Lord of Great Ascents......They see it to be far off, but WE see it to be nigh. The day when the sky will become like molten copper and the mountains will become like flakes of wool, and a friend will not inquire after a friend, though they will be in sight of one another. A guilty one would fain ransom himself from the torment of that day by offering his children and his wife, and brothers, and his kinsfolk,

who might give him shelter, and all those who are on earth, if only thus he might save himself. But no: surely, it is a flame of fire, stripping off the skin, even to the extremities of the body. It will overtake him who turned his back and retreated, and hoarded wealth and with-held it!(70=2-4,7-9)

The Prophet said, when the Doomsday is near the following signs will appear.

- (a) Only the distinguished people and one's own acquaintances will be saluted (With muslim greeting of Salam).
- (b) Business of every kind will become common, so much that a wife will be assistant to her husband in the business.
- (c) Pepole will lack the noble feeling of mercy, co-operation and relationship.
- (d) People will act contrary to what they put down in writing and what they say (ie they will break agreements).
- (e) False witnesses will become common.
- (f) And they will try to conceal the true witnesses! (Al-adab-al-mufrid)

The Prophet said, 'Islam took its birth from among the poor, and it will return to its poverty. Blessed are those who are humble'. (Muslim)

'There is a time coming when people will take on wordly affairs in the mosques (Which is strictly forbidden, Ed.) So never sit in their company, for God has nothing to do with them'. (Sho' bal Eiman)

'Mosques will be richly decorated but empty of the worshippers. The Quran will be recited by rich voiced reciters but it will not go beyond their throats'.

All mischief will begin from among the priests and will revert unto them. Women will have hairdos like horse tails'.

Ibn Mardawaih reports on the authority of Ibn Abbas that the Holy Prophet said that in the latter days excessive deference would be shown to the rich. Huzaifa bin al-Yaman reports that men will be praised for virtues which they did not possess.

Again Ibn Mardawaih reports on the authority of Abu Huraira that one of the prophecies of the holy Prophet about the latter days relates to the increase of adultry and of illegitimate births.

It is reported on the authority of Bukhari that the Prophet foretold that the Messiah and Mehdi will be from among the muslims. He gave a sign for the time of his appearance:

'For our Mehdi there are two signs which have never taken place ever since the earth and the heaven came into existence. One is that in the month of Ramadhan (Muslim Fasting) the moon shall be eclipsed on the first of its nights and the sun on the middle of its days'.

(Abu Dawood)

Appearance of plague in the latter days is mentioned in the Quran 27=83, 'And when the sentence is passed against them, We shall bring forth for them a germ out of the earth, which

shall wound them, because people did not believe in our signs'.

The sign of double occulation took place in the old world when on the 21st March 1894 the moon and on the 6th of April the sun eclipsed. Again in 1895 it was repeated in the new world on 11th and 26th March. (The story of Eclipses. By G. F. Chambers, London, 1902).

That all these prophecies of various world scriptures, briefly enumerated above, allude to the present times is corroborated by glaring facts.

It is during the 19th century that we see a world wide political and religious awakening. Religious revivalist movements like Sanatan Dharm and Brahmo Samaj among the Hindus, 7th Day adventists and Jehovah's witnesses among the christians and Wahabi movement among the muslims, all called their respective communities towards the Unity of God and simpler faith of meritorious deeds shorn of blind ritualism and innovation. As a matter of fact the religious literature of this period shows speculation and anxious expectation for the appearance of Kalki Autar of the Hindus, Messiah of the christians and Masih-Mehdi of the muslims.

Raja Ram Mohan Ray, considered by Tagore as father of modern India, was well versed in Persian, had working knowledge of Arabic and acquainted with the Mu'tazila school of muslim thought. In 1820 he wrote a tract against 'The prevailing system of Hindu Idolatory'. In Germany, a famous Biblical scholar, Bengel Johann Albrecht

(Died 1751), basing his researches on the revelation of N.T., announced that the second advent would take place about the summer of 1836. This created a great stir among the christians all over the world. But when this time passed away uneventfully, most of the christian scholars and thinkers began to say that it was not physical but spiritual advent that was meant, and that the time of this spiritual appearance also had already passed. (Talmud by Joseph Berkeley, London, 1878).

Muslims were not wanting in their enthusiasm for the appearance of their Masih-Mehdi, Their expectation was, rather, more acute in view of the fact that they had lost their political power all over the world resulting in a sense of despondency. A deep lethargy had set in among the masses. Theologians and scholars began turning the pages of scriptures, searching for the signs of the appearance of the expected one and at the same time pray to God for the deliverance from slavery and degradation. Nawab Siddiq Hassan Khan of Bhopal State, referring to the famous saying of the prophet 'al-ayato ba' dal mi 'atain' (Mishqaat), wrote in his book 'Hijajul-Karamah' that masih-Mehdi should appear in 13 th century Hijra. Then in his book 'Iqtirabus-sa'at, he wrote 'though 13th Century has passed un-eventfully, but possibly he may appear in the beginning of the 14th century.'

The prophet had fore-warned muslims of their slavish imitation of others in a well known hadith 'L'tat' a-banna min qabli-kum', surely, you will follow the ways of those who went before you, (Bukhari).

Commenting upon this and other sayings of the prophet, eminent scholar, Abul Kalam Azad, ex. President of the Congress Party and senior minister in Nehru cabinet, wrote in his Tazkira;

"Each one of these prophecies has been fulfilled. 'Islam began from poverty and will revert to it', the era began quite a long time ago and its explanation you have read in its commentry. Those who still wait, await in heedless expectation. Accursedness of yahud, straying away of the Nusara, idolatory of the polytheists, increase of the misleading priests, their cunning mechanizations and calls towards innovations; leadership without the example of the prophets, sectarianism and imitation like that of the jews, arrogance like that of the christians, mischief of the philosophical doubts of the Greeks, mischief of arts that reach idolatory, and the mischief of the worshipping of the tombs, in short, there is not a single of these abominations that has not visited the muslim society; and not one mis-guidance that has not penetrated them. All steps that the people of the 'Book' took. muslims have exactly taken, so much so that 'if they put finger in scorpions hole, muslims followed' as the prophet had said. Even that ugly period has already arrived that; my followers will resemble polytheists 'so much so that they will begin to worship idols, like the ancient idols La at and Uz' za'. May our lives and souls be showered upon the most blessed prophet, really muslims today resemble polytheists, and all those wrong ways and. the worship of the idols that was wiped away by the prophet, 'has raised its head again''.

"It is long time ago when even the prophecy that the nations will conspire to attack and destroy you, and call one another for this nefarious purpose, like hungry beggars gathering over a dish of food' has been fulfilled. Thousands of blessings upon him who foretold that 'at that time you will be a big community', 'however, your hearts will be diseased with 'Wahn'. Then he told the meaning of the word 'Wahn' and said, 'it means, love of the world and fear of death'. Then the learned author comments. How devoid of sense and light of wisdom are those heedless people who read and listen to all these sayings of the prophet but think that they concern some time which will come in the far future near the end of the world and for which mankind should wait many centuries more'! (Reproduced from Urdu Albushra, Nov.' 62).

The famous Arabic lexicon 'Taj' al Arus' under the word 'Taht' cites a saying of the prophet which means, the hour of Resurrection will not come until those belonging to the poor and labourer class shall prevail and the rich classes shall perish'. This clearly means that the truth of the Promised Messiah whose time has been stated as marking the approach of the 'Hour of Resurrection', shall not prevail unless workers and labourers have ascendency over the rich and wealthy. Look around and judge yourself, dear reader, whether the time has come or not.

According to the Ahmadiyya Muslims all these prophecies were fulfilled in the person of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (1835-1908), who

claimed in the year 1889 that he was the Promised Messiah for the Christians and Mehdi for the muslims (Jesus in Kashmir, by author, P.42). He wrote in his book Kishti-e-Nuh (Noah's Ark) in 1902: "God sent two signs and two witnesses of the truth of this humble servant: This was 10 years ago, in the month of Ramadhan (Fasting) when the sun and the moon were eclipsed in the single month (exactly according to the prophets' prophecy referred above. Author).

"These two signs appeared in heaven, one during the days of the solar eclipse, the other during the nights of the lunar eclipse. In addition, two signs were shown on the earth. This also was in fulfilment of a prophecy made by prophets of the past. One of these relates to the disappearance of the camel as a means of transport. 'And when the she camel ten month pregnant are abandoned' and will not be used as transport for, they are now going to have a railway from Mecca to Medina. The second sign is the sign of the plague, in accordance with the word of God which says, "There is not a township but We shall destroy it before the Day of Resurrection, or punish it with a severe punishment" (17:59). In short, God changed the old means of transport by sending the railway and He also sent the plague, these two earthly signs were to make the earth a witness, equally with heaven. Fight not God therefore".

Muhammed Zafrulla Khan, ex. President of the International Court of Justice, commenting upon the verses 70:1-4, 7-99, quoted above, (P.162) writes in his book Islam for the Modern man', "It is characteristic of the Quran that wherever an attribute of God is mentioned it has reference to the subject matter of the context. It is not without significance that the attribute"Lord of Great Ascents" is mentioned in connection with this warning of a severe chastisement. The nature of chastisement is described in the succeeding verses, but the mention of this attribute shows that the chastisement will have an element of great heights, or gradual ascents, about it. The skies becoming like molten copper would indicate, among other things, the generation of intense heat. Mountains becoming like flakes of wool would signify tremendous impacts which would blow up and scatter Mountains. Stripping off of the skin even to the extremities of the body would appear to point to some of the effects of 'radiation'. The swiftness with which the horror might spread is indicated by its overtaking those who turn back and seek to escape". (P-200).

Referring to the verses 18:100-111 of the Quran, he writes, "Here the chastisement is described as taking the form of peoples surging against each other, in consequence of which veritable hell would be let loose, and the earth would be converted into a barren waste".

"The remedy indicated is, 'Your Lord is only One God. So let Him who hopes to meet

his Lord act righteously, and make none sharer of the worship due unto his Lord".

"God's purpose is to lead mankind into His Grace and Mercy. His purpose is not to punish. Misfortunes and calamities follow upon defaults and transgressions, but the gates of God's Mercy are ever open, and every one may enter therein through humble supplication, sincere repentance, and righteous action. Direct Communion with God is the spiritual remedy. 'Why should Allah punish you if you make proper use of His bounties and if you believe? Surely Allah is Appriciating, All Knowing" (4:148). 'When those who believe in Our Signs come to thee (O' Prophet) say, 'Peace be unto you, your Lord has charged Himself with Mercy, so that whoso among you does evil in ignorance and repents thereafter and amends his conduct, then He is Most Forgiving, Merciful." (6:55).

"God constantly reveals Himself in a new State. All His attributes are manifested continuously. None of them ever falls into disuse. Having revealed Himself as the Creator of nuclear power, He surely could go on to reveal Himself as its Guardian and Controller, for all is within His power and under His control. Of Him do beg all that are in the heavens and the earth. Every day He reveals Himself in a different state." (55:30).

"He surely has power to inspire the minds of those who are today in control of

nuclear power, and are in a position to determine and direct its application, to agree upon measures which would ensure that such power shall be used only for the beneficient service of man, and shall not be employed for his destruction. He also has power to drive away from positions of authority those who continue to resist His will, and to oppose His designs. "Say, O Allah, Lord Sovereignity, Thou bestowest sovereignty upon whomsoever Thou pleasest; and Thou takest sovereignty from whomsoever Thou pleasest. Thou exaltest whomsoever Thou pleasest and Thou abasest whomsoever Thou pleasest. Thy hand is all good. Thou surely hast power to do all things. Thou makest the night pass into day, and makest the day pass into the night. Thou bringest forth the living from the dead, and bringest forth the dead from the living: and Thou bestowest upon whomsoever Thou pleasest without measure. (3:27-28). We must, therefore, turn to Him, to Him alone, the True, the Living, the One God, and humbly beseech Him to make our night pass into day, and to bring us forth alive out of death". (P. 203)

"Having assurance and guarantee of the accessibility to Him, at all times and in all contingencies, of comprehensive Divine guidance, man has nothing to fear from the rapid advance of science and technology. These are but instruments bestowed by Divine bounty, to be availed of for the fostering of human welfare in

every sphere of life. So viewed and put to beneficient use, they will continue to be multiplied as bounties and will not become the instruments of ruin and destruction. 'If you will put my bounties to proper use, I will surely multiply them unto you: but if you misuse or abuse them, then know that My punishment is severe indeed'." (14:8)

Is it scientific?

'That question has so cowed down and scared religion that many modern minded believers instinctively throw up their hands at the mere whisper of it. When a prominent scientist comes out strongly for religion all the churches thank God and take courage as though it were the highest possible compliment to God to have Eddington or Einstein believe in Him.' (Fosdick)

Today time is bringing about a subtle change and slowly science itself is becoming religious and the religion more scientific. Human nature is restless and desires change. When old words become hackneyed and lose their significance people invent others to show modernity. Take for example the word demon. What strange associations it conjures up in the mind of a modern man. The bushman his medicine man and the witch doctor, with all their wild dancing, drum beating and the roots and herbs and much hocus-pocus beside. The modern man curtly rejected it as sheer non-sense and superstition. Yet the same

scientific people now take the old word demon as a matter of fact when they read it inserted in the medical dictionary as 'hystero-demonology'. The demon of the witch-doctor was superstition, hystero-demonology is scientific and modern, therefore all should bow down before the new god of science and tremble.

In every religious literature terms like 'conversion', 'change of 'heart', 'second birth', 'regeneration' are found. The scientists and agnostics had their belly full of laughs and labelled these as the fables of the past. Now that psychology is coming to the fore-front after much groping, many mistakes and corrections, and has developed the technique of psycho-analysis, the old fable has become an honourable scientific fact and nobody dare raise an eye brow for the word 'second birth' is re-placed by the scientific word 're-education'.

All religions enjoin charity to deserving causes. It is variously named in different religions as patre, dana, khairat etc. The pious people build mosques, churches, temples, pagodas, rest-houses, hospitals, dig tanks and wells for the welfare of the community and dedicate them as such. Now, what is Existentialism which has lately swayed a group of intellectuals of the contemporary period? It is a philosophy of solving the problems of the human personality in relation to the world...setting aside the solving of the fundamental problem of the world itself. According to Jean Paul Sartre, an existentialist philosopher, human existence had no meaning a-priori but that human

beings gave meaning to it by their free choice. (Existentialism. P. 58). Some of the existentialists do not believe in God or the Absolute. The main theme of their philosophy centres round the problems of human personality and human freedom. So, the dana, khairat, charity of the world religions has taken a new form of . 'endowments' and 'donations', to alleviate the human misery. A new ism is thus born under the modern name of Humanism. It seems that the existentialists abandoned their attempt to tackle the problem of Reality mainly due to their defeatist mentality or because they could not get, according to them, 'satisfactory answers' from their brother philosophers to the problems of Reality, the source of all Good.

Then there are the logical positivists who have launched their crusade against the traditional philosophy. They are fed up with sentences of meta-physics which to them have become meaningless because they are not rigidly verified by the empirical methods. Ludwig Witgenstein observed that all flaws in the conclusions of the traditional philosophy were due to un-satisfactory use of language. He desired logically perfect language which may have correspondence between the structure of the sentence and the structure of a fact. Rudolph Carnap went a step further and suggested that philosophy should be re-placed by logic of science, which should logically analyse the sentences of the science. (Logical Syntax of Language. P. 277). A. J. Ayer suggested that the philosophers should give up speculation itself

regarding the nature of the First Priciples, for they are not in a position to assess the value of any scientific theory. In agreement with Carnap, he further suggested that the function of philosophy was not to speculate on the conclusions of science but to develop into a logic of science.

(Länguage, Truth, and Logic. P. 51 and 152).

The good points of the existentialists and the logical positivists should not be denied. Purging of defects is never a bad thing. But excess of everything is bad. Logical Positivists over did their task with as perverted enthusiasm as Dr. Frued did concerning his theory of pan-sexuality. There could be hardly any progress in human knowledge if science remained mainly on correlational level and were not followed by any speculative adventure. Behind every great discovery one would find 'immagination' and 'intuition' of a great mind.

Similarly, if religion merely depends on faith and no works, its fate is as in danger as is that of existentialists and logical positivists, which are, in my opinion, mere interludes in the history of intellectual drama of mankind.

What a prophet and a seer grasps through revelation and intuition in a second, science discovers after laborious work of research in decades. Heaven never helps the man who will not act, (Sophocles. Fragment. 288), and the Bible says, 'God is no respector of persons, (Acts. 10:34). In the Quran wherever faith is mentioned it invariably accompanies with the word, 'wa amalis-

salih' ie, good and correct practice thereof. It is not the health, wealth, beauty, large family, many friends, and high caste, that is measure of one's respectability among mention before God; but, the most honourable among men in the sight of God is he who is most righteous.' says the Quran.

Plato says, isuddenly a light, as if from a leaping fire, will be en-kindled in soul: (Epistles.7). Plutarch says, 'The priniciple of knowledge that is conceptual pure and simple, flashes through the soul like, lightning and offers itself in a single moments experience of apprehension and vision'. (De-Aside. 77).

'Take for example one simple fact that the 'planets are orbs, they revolve in fixed orbits', said the Quran, 21:34. Science and astronomy arrived at this conclusion after thousand years. The Quran says, 'Allah is the light of the heavens and the earth', 24:36; Bible had said it centuries before Jesus. Today physicists have concluded that 'all is radiation'. Is radiation God? No, No. I am only pointing out that scientists are coming round at last nearer to the religious truths. George Bernard Shaw writes in "The Quintessense of Ibsenism-

"The notion that inspiration is something that happened thousands of years ago, and was then finished and done with never to occur again; in other words, the theory, that God retired from business at that period and has not since been heard from, is as silly as, it, is, blasphemous. He ho does not believe that revelation is continuous

does not believe in revelation at all, however familiar his parrots tongue and pew-sleepy ear may be with the word."

The day does not seem far when, like hystero-demonology the word revelation may also turn up as a scientific fact, though under some modern scientific name. Consider for example the following two instances.

Karl Friedrich Gauss, the great mathematician, described in a letter to a friend how he proved a theorem on which he had worked un-successfully for four years.

"At last two days ago I succeeded, not by dint of painful effort but so to say, by the grace of God. As a sudden flash of light the enigma was solved. For my part I am unable to name the nature of the thread which connected what I previously knew with that which made my success possible."

Friedrich August Von Kekule, professor of chemistry in Ghent relates.

"I turned my chair to the fire and dozed. Again the atoms were gambolling before my eyes. This time the smaller group kept modestly in the background. My mental eye rendered more acute by repeated visions of this kind could not distinguish larger structures of manifold formations, long rows sometimes more closely fitted together all twining and twisting in snake—like motion. But look! What was that? One of the snakes had seized hold of its own tail, and the form whirled

mockingly before my eyes. As if by a flash of lightning I awoke. Let us learn to dream, gentlemen."

The serpent biting its tail gave us the revolutionary idea that the molecules of certain important organic compounds are not open structures but closed chains or 'rings' ——like the snake biting its tail. The prediction is considered one of the corner stones of modern science.

The symbolical, metaphorical, figurative speech of the world's sacred literature has been a sitting target for criticism by the scientifically oriented persons. But as an eminent saint Maulana Nooruddin said that a man who finds fault in another person to ridicule, never dies till he has indulged in the self-same fault himself; the scientists are pushed to a point where their language fails them and symbols are used in such. profusion that Ludvig Wittgenstein had to raise a cry against in-accurate symbols in scientific and philosophical language. However accurate the symbol, it remains a symbol and no one can deny their importance. Metaphors and symbols (a) asure vastness of meaning in the fewest words,... (b) they add beauty and grace to the style, (c) they provide finite beings with food for thought and intuition without which no scientific or religious; development and persection is possible. [3:8]:1 Plato in his seventh letter makes out that the knowledge of the essential truth cannot be reduced: to writing.

Every religion has to speak the language which its adherents will understand and set its theology in such form as is intelligible to its generation. The use of symbols and images is forced on us by our own nature and constitution. Our thinking and feelings are intimately related to the world of things in which we live. By reference to the things seen we give concrete form to the intuition of the reality that is unseen. Symbolism, metaphor, figurative speech is an essential part of human life. Language itself is symbolism. Draw a cross, a crescent, a double triangle into a star, a lotus; flower and every educated man will recognize that they signify some of the well known religions of the world.

But religion becomes every where ruthless priest—craft, when instead of leading the people on from lower to higher stages, from forms to Formless, from symbols to Reality, every effort is made by its custodians to stultify them with debasing superstitions and fears, and madden them with murderous bigotries, in order that they may be preyed upon more easily. Vested increst of the priest is to keep the people contented and complacent. If the religion is in any sense the opium of the masses' it is the priest who stands guilty of having prepared the whole prescription.

For example, Zoroasterianism eschews all worship of forms yet established Agyari, Atash-Bahram, visible flame, symbol of spiritual fire of life and consciousness. The same symbol is used in Agni-Hotra, fire ceremony of Hinduism despite:

clear principle. laid down in Brhad aUpanishad, 2.3.1, Myat murtam tat mrtam; Atha A-murtam, tat A-mrtam; ie., while forms are all changing, mortal; while Formless is Unchanging, Immortal. Thus, abusus optimi pessimus, the best, fallen, becomes the worst.

Mme. Alexandra Neele in her book, With Mystics and Magicians in Tibet, relates that when she asked the Lama as to the efficacy of merely mechanically turning the prayer wheel, the Lama replied, the person at his or her stage, in-capable of rising higher in mind feels he is praying when turning the wheel. That is something. It is first step towards introspection and meditation.

When I pointed out to late Archbishop Carlos A.M.Tennyson that many Buddists go to Pagodas and pray for all kinds of things, he replied, 'they are ignorant people who do not yet understand that Buddha was only a teacher, a guide, and though we pay homage to him as a great teacher but we do not take him as god and therefore he cannot bestow any favours.'

The Quran reads: "And who is more astray than those who, instead of Allah, pray unto such as will not answer them till the day of Ressurrection, and they are even unconscious of their prayer? And when mankind are gathered together they will become enemies to them, and will deny their worship." 46:6.7.

Though all world religions recognize the difference between literal and figurative speech in their scriptures but in the Quran it is clearly

mentioned. The verse 3:8 lays down that there are in it verses decisive in meaning. Muhkamaat, ie, (a) such verses that are made secure from Change or alteration, (b)those which have no ambiguity or possibility of doubt, (c) and those which aft clear in meaning and decisive in exposition. On the other hand it contains verses that are susceptible to different, though concordant interpretations, Mutashabihaat, ie,. (a)that the phrase, sentence or word which is susceptible to different, though, concordant interpretation, (b) that whose parts resemble or are concordant with one another, (c)that whose true significance bears a similarity to a sense which is not meant, (d) or that of which true meaning is known only by referring it to what is termed as Muhkamaat, ie, decisive verses. (e) or that which cannot be rightly understood without repeated consideration. (Agrab, Lane and Mufridat)

The Prophet explaining the point further said, Thus were they ruined who have gone before you. They interpreted certain parts of their scriptures with a manner as to make them contradict the other part. But the Quran has been so revealed that different parts of it should corroborate with one another, so do not reject any truth by making one part contradict the other. Act on what you understand thereof and refer that which you do not understand to those who know better (than you). (Musnad Ahmad bin Hanbal)

Other Similarities.

All major world religions, except Buddhism, believe in the revealed status of their sacred scriptures. The Quran is called Kalam-allah, the word of God, Jewish Torah, Christian Gospel, and Hindu Vedas, Brahma Vakya. The arrangement of these scriptures is also on similar lines ie,. Sura and Ayat; chapter and verse; adhyaya and mantra. All have voluminous commentries called Tafsirs, commentries, bhashyas, talmuds; science' of theology and exegesis ie., fiqah in Islam and mimamsa in Hinduism. All accept four fold sources of religious injunctions ie,. Quran, Hadith, Ijma and Qiyas; Revelation, Tradition, canonical regulations and learned opinion; Shruti, smirti, sadachara and atma-tushti. This corresponds to modern legalism ie,. Statutes, custom, precedent and equity.

All religions enjoin Zikr, litanies, jap. Aye, it is in the remembrance of Allah that hearts find comfort, 13: 30; The believers glorify and praise their Lord. 25: 59. Again the Quran says, O ye who believe fasting is prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you so that you may become righteous. 2: 184. In 22: 35 it says, for every people We appointed rites of sacrifice, but in 22: 38 it points out that: The flesh of sacrifice reaches not God but it is your righteousness that reaches Him.

Hinduism, Judaism, Buddhism, Christianity and Islam, all observe fasts, sabbath, Roza, upavasa. All, including Zoroasterianism but excluding

Buddhism and Jainism, sacrifice animals on certain occasions. However one cannot resist to remark that very few realize the real significance of sacrifice; letter is given preference over the spirit. The Old Testament says, 'Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice and to hearken better than the fat of the rams'. (I Sam. 15:22).

To the Jews and Christians, the Sabbath day now is not the day of prayer and rest but of wanderings and pagan joys.

The profound meaning of the sacrifice is that one may slaughter the animal, the beastly in man himself; the lower, the baser selfish nature of oneself; his lust, anger, pride and treachery should be slain; in short, he should sacrifice his baser self to attain the higher stage of Ideal Man. Animal sacrifice is the symbol of all this.

Regarding foods in general I may mention one unique feature of Islam which I could not find else-where. The Quran does not stop at only allowing certain foods as Halal ie, permissible, but says that your food should be Tayeb ie, it not only should be permissible but above that it should be honestly acquired, whole-some, and agreeable. 2: 169. For example, the flesh of goat and sheep is permissible for muslims, but if it has become rotten or petrified, it is not permissible. The same applies to even vegetables and pulses made into curry, which have gone rotten or do not agree with ones metabolism; they may be permissible, Halal, but they are not Tayeb ie, pure and beneficial for the person.

The Quran says, for every people We have appointed ways of worship which they observe, 22: 68. Every world religion has rites, ceremonies and the way of sitting and standing, kneeling and prostrating; reciting various prayers during Namaz, Sandhay, Upasana, Prayer. If Muslims have sajdah, prostration, the others have asana or modern pew.

All world religions have their holy places, sacred shrines, pavitra-puris; Hindus have Hardwar, Kashi, Conjeevaram, Dwarka, Muttra, Badri-nath etc. Buddhists have Lumbini, Buddha Gaya, Sarnath and Kushinara or nagara; Muslims have Kaaba in Mecca, and Medina and Baitul Muqqadis in Jerusalem is sacred to Jews and Christians also. Christians have Bethelhem, Nazerath, Gennesareth, Calvary and Papal seat at Rome. Sikhs have Golden Temple at Amritsar. Beside these very important places, every religion has many minor shrines and holy places. But here as elsewhere, the human heart runs to excess and converts good into mere form worship and much ritualism.

- * O' Lord pardon my three sins,
 In contemplation I clothed in form
 Thee, Who art Form-less.
 In praise described Thee
 Who art in-effable.
 And in visiting shrines
 I ignored that Thou art Omni-present. (Sankara.)
- * I laugh when I hear that the fish in the water is thirsty,

You do not see that the real is in your own house,

and you wander from forest to forest endlessly, The truth is, go where you will, Benares or Mecca,

If you do not find God in your own heart, The whole world is meaningless to you.

(Kabir. 1450-1518. A. D.)

* Religion does not consist in a patched coat or in a yogi's staff, or in ashes smeared on the face and body; Religion does not consist in earings worn or a shaven head, or in blowing on the horns, religion does not consist in mere words; he who looks on all men as equals, is religious. Religion does not consist in wandering to the tombs or sitting in particular attitudes in contemplation; religion does not consist in wandering in foreign countries, or in bathing at places of pilgrimage. Abide pure amid the impurities of the world; thus shall you find the way of religion.

(Guru Baba Nanak. 1469-1538. A. D.)

The purpose of Haj in Islam was that men from all quarters of the world should assemble at this central house of the worship of One God and thus be reminded of their common humanity and common relation with The Lord of The Worlds. Differences which divided nations from nations were all to be forgotten and all draw closer to one another in one common bond. The Haj provided the pilgrims of different lands and diverse

nationalities with an excellent opportunity to cultivate acquaintance with one another and discuss matters of common interest. The objects and places spoken in the Quran as 'signs of God' serve as symbols to impress upon the minds of the pilgrims their inward significance. This was made excellently clear by the eminent sufi saint Junaid of Baghdad, in his conversation with a person who had returned from Haj.

* From the hour of your leaving home for Mecca, have you been journeying away from your sins also? 'No'. Then you made no journey. At every stage of halt, did you advance a stage towards God? 'No'. Then you have not covered any stage. When you changed your ordinary clothing and put on your pilgrims garb, did you discard your vices and put on your virtues? 'No, sir'. Then you did not put on your pilgrims garb. When you stood near mount Arafaat, did you stand in contemplation of God? 'No'. Then you did visit mount Arafaat. When you circumambulated Kaaba, did you behold all aspects of the immaterial spirit? 'No'. Then you did not circumambulate. When you ran between the two hills Safa and Marwa, did you achieve considerateness and purity? 'No'. Then you did not run between the two hills: When you reached the place of sacrifice, did you sacrifice your wordly desires? 'No'. Then you did not make any sacrifice. When you threw pebbles, did you cast away all your sensual ideas and thoughts?'No'. then you did

not throw the pebbles and you have not performed the pilgrimage.

Let us read the delightful stanzas of Rumi's Shams Tabriz.

"Ai-Qaum! ba Haj raftah! Kuja-ed, kuja-ed! Ma-shuq hamin ja-st, bi-ayed bi-ayed! Ma-shuq-e-to hamsaya-e-to diwar ba diwar; Dar badiyah sar-gashtah chera ed chera ed! Anan keh talab-gar-i khuda ed, khuda ed, Hajat ba talab n-ist, shuma ed; shuma ed! Chizay keh na gardid gum-az bahre cheh joyed? Kas ghair-i-shuma n-ist, kuja ed, kuja ed!...". O Friends, pilgrims to the Shrine, where thou goest, where!

Come back, Come back, beloved is here itself! He is your neighbour, living wall to wall, blessing all,

And you wander in wilderness, what is it, oh what!

Ye, who seek God, it is in your own selves. Ye need not search, verily, you are (like unto) Him.

Why should you search what was never lost, There is none else than Ye, do not doubt. The wise see in their hearts the face of God, And not in images of stone and clod. Who in themselves, alas! can see Him not, They seek to find Him in some outer spot".

* If man talk much about the teaching, but did not act in accordance with it, he is but a cowherd counting anothers cattle. He is not the disciple of the Blessed One. But if a man can recite but little of the teaching, yet

puts its precepts into practice, riding himself of craving, hatred, and delusion, and possessed of knowledge and serenity of mind, cleaving to nothing in this or any other world, he is the disciple of the Blessed One. (Dhammapada. Sacred Books of The East. 'Way of Virtue'. K. J. Saunders)

Ahmad of Qadian says in his Malfuzaat, "What is the use of such people as attend the mosques for prayers and in the same sacred precincts indulge in vain talk and back biting. Where is the observance of Tqwa (rightcousness and fear of God,) in such prayers if the worshippers' talk is such as to bleed the heart of another brother; his actions such as to lead to character assassination of a respectable man; and his writings such as to add fuel to mutual hatred". At another place he cites a saying of the holy Prophet; Rubba Qaari-in yal-anahul Quran'. ie, there are some reciters of the Quran upon whom the Quran sends curses. The holy Quran was and is a blessing for man-kind but as for those who do not act upon its teachings, mere reading or reciting becomes a curse.

Dostoevsky in his book The Idiot, relates about a man who was so much taken up with the idea of possessing the watch of a fellow traveller that he approached him cautiously from behind and praying fervently, God, forgive me for Jesus' sake, cut the fellow's throat and took his watch.

I read somewhere an Hasidic saying, God loves the thief who breaks the lock open; I mean, the man who breaks his heart for God'. But man, forgetting that he is born good, instead of breaking his own heart for the sake of God and His creatures, breaks the heart of others by his cruelty. Believe me or not, I know some children of Allah who during their sacred month of Fasting, broke open the locks of their elder right in the sacred precincts of the mosque and dispossessed him not only of all his possessions but also his room and considered it a great victory.

In both cases, seemingly quite religious people forgot the admonition of the sacred scriptures that murdering and dis-possessing people of their land and homes brings curse of God. (1 Jo. 3: 15; Quran. 2: 85, 86,).

All world religions are at onement about man's birth, death and an after life. Every religion teaches about heaven and hell, swarga and naraga, thukha bon and dukha bon, Jannat and dozakh.

At the birth of a person and at his demise certain rites are performed by the followers of all world faiths. But despite all these similarities and the hidden thread of unity underlying all faiths, world religions are far apart from one another.

Apart from many other reasons one which looks childish is that we do not listen properly to one anothers point of view. We give importance to the appearances and neglect the inner meanings of what we believe. There is much food for thought in the fact that God has bestowed upon us one tongue but two ears and two eyes. We should cultivate the habit

of talking less and listening more. There is wealth of wisdom in the saying of Maulana Noor-ud-din that: it is note worthy that none of the followers of the Holy prophet were deaf.

I remember of an interesting conversation with two well educated Buddhist friends in high Governe ment posts. The talk was about 'personality' with its religious connotation. As a diversional tactic, to put my argument more effectively, I asked the senior of the two friends if Buddhism believed in hell. He promptly replied, 'oh, yes, you have jehennah we have Avicci'. I asked what goes to Avicci? But instead of replying to my question my friend counterquestioned me, 'Mr. Ahmad, how many doors has your Jehennah'? For a moment I was non-plused and protested, but to no avail and had to say that our Jehennah is said to have seven doors. 'There you are', shouted my friends triumphantly, 'you know, Avicci has 19 doors and each door has a name'. Then they began to count the names but could not remember and to remind them they called another friend... Oh God, alright, you win', I said a bit fed up, and added, 'but even with 19 doors, I think, it is not a very pleasant place to live in', and we laughed together. That was the end of our quite serious enquiry about a religious matter. The talk simply bogged down.

The mention of hell, narga or avicci reminds me that though nobody in his right mind would like to be tortured in it but if I am offered (God forbid) to choose between hell and the prospect of being born again as dog, hog, rat or cat, as retributive

punishment for my ommissions and commissions, I would rather promptly accept a bed in hell in preference to the other alternative. I accept and it is sensible that symbolically a man goes through many psychological states. For example, those who are greedy correspond to the state of a dog; those who are filthy are like hogs and pigs; mischievious and cunning are like rats and foxes. But to be really born again and again as such and many other animals, well as I said before, hell is better prospect. I mean comparatively. Late G. B. Shaw is reputed to have once remarked, 'Oh God, could'nt you think of an easier way of producing children'; Well. I may exclaim, 'Oh God, could'nt you think of some simpler way of punishing the recalcitrants? After all we are, by Thy Grace, quite civilized now. The days are gone when our fore fathers used to get rid of the old and the rotten by one bang of the club on the head. Today we do the same job by revolvers, cyanide fumes and electric chairs.

This re-birth as dogs and hogs etc. is not scientifically proved fact. The evolution is non-reversible. The dead corpses simply do not turn into embryos again. If it does happen at all, Iwould like to know what is that which transmigrates? Secondly, if it is retribution, no rat, cat, even man knows due to what sin it or he is born as such and therefore there is no sting in the punishment. To split the hair, my wild mind would like to know that even if the sin becomes known for which a man, for example, was born as dog, but what are the peculiarities of that one sin that changes one man into a pariah dog, the other

into spaniel dog, the third into a bull-dog, the fourth into alsatian, and the fifth into a hunting dog etc etc. I am afraid that once a man gets into this cycle of re-birth paradise will not only be lost but lost for ever. For once a man is born as a tiger, for instance, he will kill and that also cowardly, which will throw him into lower and lower states of re-birth. But apart from the above-mentioned reasons, what brings a mild heart attack is the possibility of a man marrying his own dead grand-ma or grand daughter or may be sister, who knows. Or a peasant may own a bullock who was really his own papa or grand-papa, whom he may be cursing and beating.

However there is one ray of hope for mankind if this theory is proved correct. If really people are re-born into animals and vegetables due to their sins then the food problem of the world is as good as solved. If there is scarcity of say, sheep and goat or of the draught animals, the government has simply to promulgate an emergency law and declare that all 'good' citizens may forth—with start indulging in such and such sins or criminal acts, so that atleast the next generation may benefit from their 'meritorious' deeds... The idea is bristling with great possibilities.

And lastly, for I must end this section of the book somewhere, all world religions are not only far apart from one another but divided among themselves into sects, sampradays, panths, firquas, and if sub-sects are also taken into account, they literally come to hundreds. In Islam they number over three hundred and the same is true of Hinduism and Christianity. The only point in favour of these sects could be that every sect acts as a moral check on its neighbour; competition is as whole-some in religion as in commerce. The Quran says that the righteous enjoin good and forbid evil and compete with one another in good works. 3: 115.

Some of the readers may be interested to know the sectarian differences but this is not the topic of the present book. I am trying my hand at building bridges, not walls.

.....0....

Tolerance.

- * 'The humble, meek, merciful, just, pious and devout souls are every where of one religion and when death has taken off the mask, they will know one another, though the diverse liveries they wore here makes them strangers. (William Penn. 'Some fruits of Solitude'.).
- * In seeking foothold for self, love finds a foothold for others; seeking light for itself, it enlightens others. (Analects).

Buddhist Emperor Asoka in his 12 th Edict proclaimed, 'His sacred Majesty the King does reverence to men of all sects, whether ascetics or house – holders, by gifts of various forms of reverence; his sacred majesty however cares not so

much for gifts or external reverence as that there should be a growth in the essence of the matter in all sects...He who does reverence to his own sect, while disregarding the sects of others, wholly from attachment to his own, with intention to enhance the glory of his own sect, in reality by such conduct inflicts the severest injury on his own sect. Concord, therefore, is meritorious, to wit, hearkening willingly to the law of purity as accepted by other people. (Quoted by Sir, Radha Krishnan)

* The Quran says, 'There is no compulsion in religion 2=257. For you your faith and for me my religion.' 109: 7.

In the famous Fare-well address delivered in the 9th year of Hijra, muslim era, The Prophet said, "Even as the fingers of the two hands are equal so are human beings equal to one another. No one has any right or any superiority to claim over another. You are all brothers.... Even as this month is sacred, this land is in-violate and this day is sacred, so has God made the lives and the property and honour of every one sacred. To take any man's life or his property or attack his honour is as unjust and wrong as to violate the sacredness of this day, this month and this sacred territory. What I command you today is...meant for all times. What I have said to you, you should communicate to the ends of the world. May be those who have not heard me may benefit by it more than those who have heard'. (Albushra. Jan' 63, reproduced.)

In a letter to the chief of Bahrain, the prophet said. I have prayed for your people. Try therefore to teach them the ways and practices of Islam. Protect their property... as for the Jews and the Magians, they have to pay only the tax. Do not, therefore, make any other demands on them. As for the general population, those who have not land enough to maintain them, should have four dirham each and clothing to wear. (Zurqani and Khamis). The Prophet laid down that priests and religious functionaries and religious leaders are not to be interfered with. (Tahavi).

* All religions must be tolerated ... for in this country every man should get to heaven in his own way. (Carlyle, 'Fredrick the great').

Mostly terminology is all that often divides us and stirs us up to a wasteful dissipation of energy. We must weigh the matter carefully and see whether there is really anything that alienates from one another and whether there is any basis for our spiritual edification.

Every question has two in-evitable sides. Wisdom consists in re-conciling the two by just comparison and compromise between them, in accord with the requirements of time, place and circumstance.

Going through some of the sayings of Rumi, Hallaj, Eckart and others, we feel that it was natural that the orthodox Christians and muslims of their day accused them of heresy. In muslim history there are very few great spiritual teachers who were not dubbed as infidels and heretics

during their life time but euologized to heaven afterwards. Perhaps it is due to our psychological peculiarities that there are always two opposing tendencies in the human way of thinking and feeling, exoteric and esoteric, traditional and mystical. The opposition of these two tendencies or tempraments is more than often too deep and strong for any form of re-conciliation. It needs education, training, and pious influence of self-less teachers and masters to overcome this human tendency.

Only the man of Allah, God, not by birth but by worth, the man who has realized the truth can educate and guide the people. Happy and blessed are the people who have such selfless guides and teachers, not professional religionmongers, sowers of hatred and dissention, or pedagogues, pedants, spreaders of false and vicious ideas and useless and mis-leading knowledge. Only such men who realize that we are all parts of one another, as head, arms, trunk and legs unto one another (Veda); that all creatures are the members of the family of God (Quran); children of Adam are members and limbs of one another (Saadi); will build the strong foundations for world understanding and world peace. But, alas, such awakened ones are few and far between. The heaven is full of stars but comets are rare.

Indeed when men of God are abroad, men of law need be very few. Moral laws implanted in the heart, make legal laws, imposed from without, largely unnecessary. Impulsion from within is far

better, far more effective, than compulsion from without.

* The scriptures were revealed to be the manuals of morality, not for reciting section by section only on festivals and on the graves," (Saadi).

But that is what is happening all around us. It is easier to be virtuous when one is poor. A man can sometimes resist temptation if it is expensive. But let our pockets bulge, while the solitude of the crowd conceals us from our neighbours eyes, and we shall seek forgetfulness in every pretty face and itch to demonstrate our manhood by drinking to our death. Morals have become customs which are more preached than practiced. They are duties which we require of our neighbours.

To ease the pricking of the conscience people tend to blame fate or satan for their moral lapses, and the government for all social and economic ills. Plato had some such people in mind when he wrote: "Types of governments correspond to the types of human nature. States are made, not from trees and rocks but from the character of their citizens which turn the scale and draw everything after them". To be good citizens requires good character and the character is built first at home in the lap of the mother and then at the feet of the teacher. The educators should remember that "the aim of education is not to teach people what they do not know, it is teaching them to behave as they do not behave." (Ruskin).

In the training of character care should be taken that many notes have to be harmonized to

make good music, gentleness and courage, boldness and prudence, inquisitiveness and reverence, tolerance and firmness, confidence and humility, stability and freedom. It is difficult task to make a man and more difficult to make a gentleman, for a refined, almost definitive description of a gentleman is 'one who never inflicts pain'.

To have peace of mind is good. But what is peace of mind? Idiots have full peace of mind, and so have those who undergo leucotomy. Happiness of mind is not opposite of un-happiness of mind but positive and negative aspects of the emotional circumstances. We should seek equillibirium between the different aspects of our nature. A man wants tons of money in order to be happy and his whole effort and the best time of his life are devoted to the earning of that much money. Happiness is forgotten. The means are taken for the end. "Either contentment or the dust of the grave can only fill the greedy eye of the worldly minded." (Saadi).

On the other hand we read that when Alexander the Great visited and enquired that contented, humorous ancient sage Diogenes, what he could give him, Diogenes, enjoying the blessed rays of the sun at the mouth of his tub, begged the great conqueror of Asia, to move out of his sunlight.

* The one and only real and profound theme of the world and of human history, a theme to which all other themes are subordinate..... remains the conflict between belief and un-belief. All epochs dominated by belief, in whatever shape, have a radiance and bliss of their own, and bear fruit for their people as well as for posterity. All epochs over which un-belief, in whatever form, maintains its miserable victory, even if they boast and shine for a while with false splendour, are ignored by posterity because nobody likes sterile things". (Goethe, The Disinherited Mind. P. 77).

* Indeed, unless there is more abundant life before mankind, this world of material things in space and time is a bad joke beyond our understanding, a vulgar laugh braying across the mysteries." (C.E.M. Joad.' God and Evil:).

How could one say that the Bodhisattva ideal as presented beautifully by Santideva is but mere verbosity.

* "I would be the protector of the un-protected, a dyke, a bridge for them who seek the farther shore; a lamp for them who need a lamp, a bed for them who need a bed, a slave for all beings who need a slave". (The Path of Light. Eng. Tr. L. D. Burnet. P. 44).

The price of benevolent wisdom, of philanthrophic learning is not money but love, reverence and obedience.

Islam chiz kya hai, Khuda kay liay fana.

Tarkay raza'i khwaish pa'i marz'i'ay Khuda. je,. What is Islam? it is to die to ones self for the sake of God; it is to relinquish our will for God's will. (Ahmad of Qadian).

Religion should be worn as a winning smile, as a beautiful ornament, out of the gladness of ones' own heart, to gladden the hearts of others who behold it, not as a repelling frawn or as a menacing weapon stimulating fear and cruelty all around. It should be worn principally in the heart, as philanthrophic love and piety, not flaunted like sign boards and lables, upon the face or fore-head in different ways, or wearing hair on head or lips or chin, as differentiating paints, or badges of clothes, for self display and religious advertisement with a purpose to emphasize seperative tendencies. "Attempts must be made by various correct methods to do away with bogus acts of charity and social work or vain-glorious show, bogus piety and hypocritical religiosity..." (Correlation of Man and His environment. P. 48). The best charity, aid, help is that which is not followed up with taunt or injury nor has any strings attached, says the Quran. 2:263.

- * In my fathers house are many mansions. (Bible)
- * For them who fear their Lord there are lofty mansions built over lofty mansions. (39:21.)

Humanity, Insaaniyat, Manushiyata, is stamped on the face of every human new born infant. There is no mark on his fore-head to show that he or she is a Hindu, Muslim, Christian, Jew or Buddhist. The Prophet said, 'Kullo mauludun yu' ladu alaa fitra' til Islam, 'ie., every child is born acknowledging the nature of peace and submission to God. It is the parents and or the environment

or both that makes them Jews, Mulims or christians. Rumi says, 'Ruh ba aql ast-o-ba ilm ast yaar; Ruh ra ba Turki-o-Tazi che kaar'; ie,.

Persian or Turk or Arab are not known, nor Hindu, Muslim, christian to the soul. Wisdom and virtuous deeds make souls life, neither racial names, nor communal strife,

Doubt and faith both turn round and end in One. Interpretations may be different but the dream is same to all. All great teachers of humanity advise us to think, not of them, but of their teaching and preaching. Ali, the fourth Caliph of Islam is said to have advised, 'Unzur Ela Ma Qala; La tanzur ela man qala' ie, listen to what is said, do not see who says it. And the Prophet advised, 'Khuz ma safa, da' ma kadar; gather all that is good and cast aside the bad.

Let the followers of all world faiths be loving, simple, straight of heart and a little reasonable, a bit charitable and they will fill not only their own homes but all the world with love and joy fulfiling the great plan and purpose of Divine Will, ie, universal peace which in Arabic is called Islam.

The worst aspect of our conflicts is that they are mostly all about words and names and utterely non-essential forms and superficial trivialities. Let men only endeavour quietly, with charity, to understand instead of hastily and excitedly misunderstand each other. Only then they will be able to appriciate and instead of hating they will honour

and revere the founders of all world religions and appriciate their teachings, as originally preached by them.

* Once upon a time an Arab, a Hindu, a Turk, and a Persian happened to become fellow travellers on the road of life. Long trudging in the dusty, sandy, stoney, and thorny road made them hungry and thirsty. Unfortunately they did not know each others mother language.

By signs and symbols they communicated their distress to one another and took out few coins that they had among them. Here the crucial question arose as to what they should buy. The Arab said one word repeatedly Unaab. The Turk growled Uzaam. The Persian shouted Angur. The Hindu became annoyed and roared Draksha ... So the faces frowned, eyes reddened and the fists were clenched....

A God Sent fruit vendor passed by and hearing their altercation, rushed between them and placed before them the basket of fruit that he was selling. Immediately the fists un-clenched, voices sweetened, and smile appeared on the faces. For it was self same fruit grape that they were fighting for.

Let us not allow the consoling, ennobling, all uniting spiritual religions degenerate into selfish, superstition breeding, deceiving, dividing priest-craft. Dr. Sir. Muhammad Iqbal says.

"Religion is either constant exalting of the name of God in the vast expanses of the heavens and the earth, Or the resigned mournful prayer of the priest in the lap of the dust.

The former is the prayer of the self conscious, God intoxicated man,

The later is the religion of the priest, plants and earth rooted stones."

The great souls whom history records as examples for the future had three common qualities. They were un-selfish, steadfast in their beliefs and un-stinting in their help to others.

A western poet says about the man of God, And Prophet like the loved one stood, With dauntless words and high, that shook the sere leaves from the wood As if a storm passed by.

And here is Rumi's Shams Tabriz and the man of God,

The man of God is drunken without wine,
The man of God is full without meat.
The man of God is a king neath dervish cloak
The man of God is a treasure in a ruin.
The man of God is not of air and earth,
The man of God is not of fire and water.
The man of God is a boundless sea,
The man of God rains pearls without cloud.
The man of God hath hundred moons and skies,

The man of God hath hundred suns.

The man of God is concealed, O Khwaja,

The man of God do thou seek and find.

The world sorely needs such dauntless men as teachers and examplers and not the hypocrites,

Ibnul waqt, the children of time and circumstance, changing sides like weather-cocks.

To enjoy the benefits of providence is wisdom; to enable others to enjoy them is virtue. He who is in-different to the welfare of others does not deserve to be called man. The best way of worshipping God is to ally the distress of the times and to improve the condition of mankind. This is true religion to cleanse oneself with pure thoughts, words and deeds. He needs no other rosary whose life is strung with beads of loving thoughts. Let me quote here a poem about king Abu bin Ad-ham who renounced his kingdom and turned Dervaish.

Abu bin Ad-ham, may his tribe increase, Awoke one night from a deep dream of peace, And saw within the moon-light in his room, Making it rich, like lily in full bloom, An angel writing in a book of gold. Exceeding peace had made Bin Ad-ham bold, And to the Presence in the room he said, 'what writest thou?' The vision raised its head, And with a look made all of sweet accord, Answered, 'The names of those who love the Lord'.

'And is mine there?' asked Abu. 'Nay, not so.'
Replied the angel. Abu spoke more low,
But cheerily still, and said, I pray thee then,
write me as one who loves his fellow-men',
The angel wrote and vanished. The next night,
He came again with a great wakening light,

And showed the names which love of God had blest.

And, lo, Bin Ad-ham's name led the rest:

* Lives of great men all remind us, We can make our lives sublime, And departing, leave behind us, Foot-prints on the sands of time.

Against this tradition of the law of life and love there are great adversaries arrayed against man. They tempt him with total promise that in a short and glorious struggle, they will take him into the earthly heaven wherein he will realize his hopes. Therein lies the conflict, the temptation. The confusion of these two realms is an ultimate dis-order. Such false promises falsify the life. of the spirit.

Those who chose the life of the spirit, though a small minority in all ages, transcend hair-splitting casuistry of the faqih, the jurist, the priest Being led by the spirit they are redeemed people who follow in the words of Confucius, 'what their hearts desire, without transgressing, what is right'. It is these for whom it is said that 'sin shall have no power to delight them'. Actually their satan becomes converted to Islam.

The prophets, saints and seers and the philosophers have little to offer by way of practical advice and specific guidance for the immediate, urgent and particular issues of daily life. As a matter of fact, atleast the Quran discourages seeking regulations of everything by Divine commandment. 5: 102. This kind of wisdom can

be had from the world scriptures by analogy and inference. No systematic and comprehensive statements are there in the classics. Even an encyclopedia of all the teachings of all the prophets will not, however, be able to teach a man, how to decide the problems which he faces from day to day. The masses generally demand such detailed codes of conduct which they feel are necessary for their comfort, convenience and the peace of their mind. These codes written by scribes, faqihs, casuists are made available by all world religions but it should be remembered that they are addressed to those in whom 'reason has lost its perfect hold over the lower part of their soul'.

"Have the religions of mankind no common ground? Is not there every where the same enrapturing beauty, beaming forth from many thousand hidden places? Broad indeed is the carpet which the all loving One has spread, and beautiful colours He has given. There is but One Lamp in His house, in the rays of which, whenever we look, a bright assembly greets us. Diversity of worship has divided the human race into countless nations; from all their dogmas we may select one, "Divine Love". (Radhakrishnan).

"I recognize God in the pleading look of a dog as well as in the lovely face of a woman... in the irridescent wings of a butterfly and in the early morning frost which means its death, I see Him in the rose and the hand of the "child who plucks it before it has blossomed."

I see Him in the revolution of our time which seeks to wipe out old injustices and in the end achieves a modicum of justice. I see Him in the smouldering eyes of a man who vows revenge upon his rival in love and in the poised hand of the surgeon who removes a bullet from the body, after the duel. I see Him in the master hand of Leonardo, as he fixed an un-earthly smile upon the lips of his divine creation and in the caricatures which he made of man's features. I see Him in playful kitten which seeks its play-fellow in the mirror and in the murderous eyes with which it follows the movements of a Robin. I recognize God in the inspiration which He sends me as if in a dream and in the long labour by which I must carry it out". (Emil Ludvig).

Artus Thomas in life of Appollonius (1611 A. D.) says, Socrates was right in thinking that man's first necessity was to know how to behave like a man; lest wishing to act the angel, he should act the beast'.

According to Islamic terminology a man is called Admi ie, progeny of Adam. But he needs to become Insaan ie, he should cultivate in himself two loves (Ins), the love of God and the love of the creatures of God. A touch, a grain, a speck, a jot, a tittle of that divine love is far more explosive element than all the pounding, dissecting, grinding, pulverizing, atomising of the physicist.

"Every path I view with eyes of love. perchance along this one he might have walked."

There are seconds, they come five or six, perhaps seven, at a time, when one suddenly feels the pressure of the eternal harmony perfectly attained. It is not something earthly and it cannot be endured for longer time in one's physical aspect. One must either change or die. There is in such moments something higher than even love. If it lasted more than few seconds, the soul could not endure it and must depart. In such moments one lives through a whole life time and would stake his life to have it happen again.

Naked and alone we came into exile. In her dark womb we did not know our mother's face; from the prison of her flesh we have come into the unspeakable and incommunicable prison of this earth. Which of us has known his brother? Which of us has looked into his father's heart? Which of us has not remained for ever prison-pent? Which of us is not for ever stranger and alone? O' waste of loss; in the hot mazes, lost, among the bright stars on this most weary un-bright cinder, lost; Remembering speechlessly we seek the great forgotten language, the lost love-lane-end into heaven, a stone, a leaf, an unfound door. Where? O' when? lost, and by the wind grieved; ghost, come back again....."

(Thomas Wolfe. 'Look Homeward Angel.)

God is love in essence, love is God in solution. In so much as we love we are in God and God in us; and in so far we do not love we are without God, be it in this or any other world. The ideal church of all religions and philosophies is the same. It is the union of all who love in the service of all who suffer.

Lower love of the lower self, one's own mean, base, small, seperative, egoistic self, Khudi, Aham-kara, desires to take; higher love of the awakened self desires to give. "He wants my body, I want his soul". The conflict between pleasure and duty, preya and shreya, khud-gharzi and be-gharzi, lobha and nibban, head and heart, selfishness and selflessness, egoism and altruism; this conflict is dissolved and the antagonists are re-conciled only when the ego and alter recognize themselves; when Ammara, the lower self, becomes Mut ma' inna (at peace). Then joy becomes duty and duty becomes joy, law becomes love and love becomes the law.

One day several sufis met Saintess Rabia Basri running and carrying fire in one hand and water in the other. They said to her, O lady of the world to come, where are you going and what is the meaning of all this? She replied.

"I am going to set fire to Paradise and drown hell with water, so that those two veils should completely vanish from before the eyes of the way-farers, and so that their end or purpose be known to them, and that the servants of God see Him without any motive of hope or fear.

Ibrahim Ad-ham, the king who took the path of renunciation says, "O God Thou knowest that in mine eyes the eight Paradises weigh no more than the wing of a gnat compared with that honour which Thou hast shown me giving me Thy love".

Famous Attar, himself a saintly person, commenting upon one of the sayings of Ad-ham, writes.

Three veils must be removed from the pilgrims heart before the door of happiness is opened to him. First, that should the dominion of both the worlds be offered to him as a gift, he should not rejoice, since whosoever rejoicest on account of any created thing is still covetous, and the covetous man is debarred from the knowledge of God. The second veil is this, that should he possess the dominion of both the worlds and should it be taken back from him, he should not sorrow for his impoverishment, for this is the sign of wrath, and, he who is in wrath is tormented. The third veil is this, that he should not be beguiled by any praise or favour, for whosoever is so beguiled is of mean spirit, and such a one is veiled from the truth. The pilgrim must be high minded." (Browne. History of Persia;).

It is foolish to think or propose that at a certain time saints are relieved of the duties of religion such as prayers and fasting etc. The secret of all such sayings lies in what has been

said above. At first the lower self does not even consider about the religious duties but once started on the way he feels hardships in these various activities. But if one persists diligently, a time comes when it becomes routine and then at still higher stage it becomes joy and is likened to food and drink for the soul; water for the fish. It is at this stage that law is abrogated for such a person ie, it does not now seem a duty but a ritual of love and love becomes its inner as well as outer garment.

Joy of divine love and mergence in One is the final cure of all world's sorrows. The sacred scriptures are full with the expression of this love divine. But the language of the mystic makes extensive use of figurative speech and paradox, for the experience is in-effable. He is forced to be a poet conveying his message in riddles and talking at the same time that his experience is like something else. It is just as in love and the description of the beloved.....Note Rumi's lovely lines.

'With Thy sweet soul, this soul mine Hath mixed as water doth in wine Thy love has pierced me through and through

Its thrill with bone and nerve entwine I rest a flute on Thy lips A lute I, on Thy breast recline.

Let the scientist hold his head in his hands, moan, groan and cry. The psychologist may tend

to favour the explanation that this semantically unfortunate view is an imperfectly sublimated sex impulse. But those who know will take these lines in purely spiritual sense.

In the Quran, the righteous are likened to Mary, mother of Jesus, and Asiya, wife of Pharaoh. Ignorant people comment and criticise such passages not knowing the inner meaning. The wife of the Pharaoh stands for those believers who, though passionately desire and pray to get rid of human weaknesses yet cannot fully dissociate themselves from the evil influence depicted by Pharaoh and are at the stage of Nafsi-lawwamah ie,. self accusing soul, that criticises every false move. Mary, mother of Jesus represents those righteous people of the world who having closed every avenue of sin and having made peace with God. are blessed with divine inspiration. It seems that Cardinal Newman was giving explanation of the Quranic verses when he wrote. "If soul is to go on to higher spiritual blessedness it must become woman.....yes, however much manly you may be among the men".

* A Hindu saintly lady sings,.

"Meera kay prabhu gabira gambhira, Aadhi raat ko darshan dain' gay Prema nadi ke tira Hirday rakho tum dhira.'.

ie,. Be patient O' my heart, for Meera's Lord is very shy and comes not till mid-night, when he will show his beauty on the lush bank of the stream.

* Another susi poet sings,

"Paralysed be the arm that knows not rest In tender curve around the loved one's neck Be blind the eyes that tasted not the bliss of the sweet vision of loved one's kiss.

* St. John of the Cross sings,

Upon an obscure night fevered with loves anxiety O hopeless happy plight I went none seeing me by night secure from sight and by secret stair, disguisely without a light to guide save that which in my heart burnt in my inside That light did lead me on more surely than the shining of noon-tide Where, well I know, that one did for my coming bide upon my flowing breast wholly for him and save himself for none There did I give sweet rest to my beloved one The fanning of cedars breathed there on All things then I forgot My cheek on his, who for my wooing came All ceased and I was not leaving my cares and shame Among the lilies and forgetting them".

In Brihad Upanishad this divine bliss is depicted, "as loving man and wife, when they embrace, are dissolved in one feel of love

and forget all else; the soul when it embraces God and feels its unity, it passes beyond all sorrow and all desires, for all desire is for ever fulfilled."

Atra eva svarga, atra eva narakha, ie,. heaven is here in us and so is hell, says Upanishad. The sufi saint says:

They err who say heaven is on high wherever is the joy of beloved There the heaven is nigh.

* Umar Khayyam says.

I set my soul into the invisible some letter of that after life to spell And by and by my soul returned to me. Answered, myself am heaven and hell.

Once again a note of warning is necessary. The story of all world faiths is that of every new success and the course it takes. After preliminary advocacy by their founders who are the best demonstrators and combine great power of presentation also, their popularity becomes, so to say, top heavy, that is, the numbers who believe in them by heresy, with little understanding and less personal effort out run those who trouble to become real practitioners. The new faith then tends to have, round this small core, ever thicker layers of conventional adherents. Finally these outer layers in the great religions tend to become so extensive that practically every standard can be found formally associated with the original pure teaching. It is at this point when decadence sets in and perverted ideas begin to penetrate once again.

The language of love, prem, ishq, devotion to god is so similar to erotic utterances of kama, carnal love of person that the two become, practically, in-distinguishable. In conduct also, since it is easier to roll down than climb up, facilis descensus averni, in the case of even sincere and earnest cultivators of spiritual love, it only too often runs into the carnal desires.

There are only two poles to the human axis, the cerebro-spinal column. The soul has only two courses open; to travel laboriously towards the upper pole, the pineal gland and regain the lost paradise or to slide down easily towards the lower pole and thence to sexual pleasures. When the soul makes an effort to ascend, but fails to gain assured foothold, and slips, it takes down with it a sensuous enjoyment keener and more alluring than the ordinary. A western author has correctly observed that: there is no voluptuousness like the mystic voluptuousness.

Religious and mystical experiences of many brides of Christ, milk-maids of Krishna etc. become too often experiences of carnal voluptuousness. Some of the worst perversions take place under the cover of Vama-marga (Left-hand path) in the east and 'black mass' in the west. In Vajra-yana and a yezidi sect similar practices are found. Love attempted to be transferred from physical to super-physical, too frequently falls back to the physical plane with added momentum. What psycho-analyists call 'transference', is partial illustration of the same fact. Emotions which

should flow towards physical spouse, or super physical ideal, begin to flow towards physical psycho-analyser, or physical guru, priest or teacher.

Finer super-physical love, so far as it does not become wholly, predominantly transmuted from psychical to the spiritual, experiences all the ecstacies, agonies, elations, depressions, deadly jealousies, humble re-conciliations, bitter wrongs, generous forgivings, shames, restorations of trust, in short, all the in-numerable shades of all sorts of passions and emotions that form turbulent retinue of the carnal love. Only in the case of psychical love, these are all of correspondingly subtler quality; atleast they aught to be, though they often are not, as witness the violent, even murderous feuds caused by jealousy between the immediate followers and disciples of every founder of religion.

In fact jealousy and love are very closely related. They are the two links of the major human passions. Jealousy is, in a sense, the very culmination of miseries. It is responsible for the most extensive failures of humanity; failures with far reaching consequences and on very large scale, as in politics. Gates of beseiged towns and forts have often been opened to the enemy by jealousy. Battles have often been lost through treachery born of jealousy. The word envy or jealousy occurs almost on every page of Plutarch's 'Lives'; name of no other human emotion occurs so often.

Jealousy lay at the root of satan's haughtiness. Superiority of Adam ignited a fire of hatred in his heart and so he took upon himself the task of mis-leading the progeny of Adam.

"The wretch after having burnt down his own harvest seeks to snuf out other peoples candles". (Rumi)

In the Quran, chapter 113, mankind is taught to pray against this one human evil propensity and to invoke assistance of God to protect from the evil designs of the mischief makers, and the nefarious designs of the envious.

In short, to guard against this slipping back from the upper to the lower part of the pole is the advice of the wise ones; to 'self examine before thou art examined', warned the Prophet. Introspection is necessary. To constantly keep a watch as to what is going on within one's own heart and mind is most important.

History is repelete with the stories of the wolves in sheeps clothing. It is the history of the 'Martyrdom of Man', at the hands of its trustees, its mothers and fathers, its priests and its rulers, its educators and protectors. Mahabharata says.

If the child goes trustfully to sleep with head upon the parents knee But if same parent cut off that innocent head How and to whom the child may complain;"

Maulana Rumi says,

"Many a fiend doth wear the human shape; Do not give thy hand of trust indiscriminately."

"Our astute friends act smartly double part Quran under the arms, sin in the heart Intent on setting by ears, all fools Like chess players pushing their pawns and tools."

Hafiz says,

"These sermon orators who do display Such brilliance on pulpit and platform When retire to their private rooms In very different way they perform".

Centuries ago plato had noted, 'Many are the wand bearers, but few are the God possessed'.

Guru-Gita reads, 'Many the Guru-s who take away the pupils goods but, alas, very few who take away his heart ache'.

It is only another example of the eternal struggle of good and evil in every aspect of life. The Prophet and the Saint versus the priest and the Charltan.

The error of egoism is very subtle and highly dangerous. The Persian word for God is Khuda which should be clearly distinguished from Khudi (Egoism). A hairs breadth divides heaven from hell. Both are ever present in us. Now one prevails, now the other. Wish to save is heavenly, wish to

be saviour may lead one straight to hell. In Zend-Avesta, Islam, and Hinduism, this is known as 'razor sharp bridge', Pulsiraat. "strait is the gate and narrow is the path which leadeth unto life; and few there be that find it" (Bible).

.....0.....

- * "Would God that all the Lord's people were prophets." (Num: 11; 29)
- * Would God that all of you were Mehdi-s and Messiah-s." (Ahmad of Qadian)

* By the fleeting time,
Surely man is in a state of loss
Except those who believe
and do good works
and exhort one another to accept truth
and exhort one another to be steadfast.
(Quran. Ch. 103.)

--:0:---

* A certain Arab chief met Majnun in the desert and asked: what have you seen unworthy in the nature of man that you should assume the manner of a brute and forsake the enjoyment of the human society? Majnun wept and answered: many of my friends

reproach for my love for Laila. Alas, that they could one day see her, that my excuse might be manifest for me. "Would to God that such as blame me, could behold thy face. O thou ravisher of hearts, that at the sight of thee they might, from in-advertancy, cut their fingers instead of the apple in their hands. Then might the truth of the reality bear testimony against the semblance of fiction; as to what manner of person that was for whose sake you were upbraiding me".

The chief became inquisitive and resolved to see Laila himself. He got the opportunity and found that she was just a simple nice girl of tawny complexion and feeble frame of body. He was much dis-heartened and talked about it to Majnun. Majnun said. O Chief, to contemplate the charms of Laila you should see her through the eyes of Majnun, then only the spectacle might be illustrated to you: "Thou canst have fellow feeling for my disorder; a companion to suit me must have the self-same malady, that I may sit by him the live-long day repeating my tale. For by rubbing the two pieces of dry fire-wood one upon the other they will burn all the brighter".

"The anguish of the wound is not known to the hail and hearty; we must detail our aches and pains only to fellow sufferers. Till your condition may in some sort resemble mine, my state will seem to you an idle fable, compare not my pain with that of another man. HE HOLDS SALT ON HIS PALM BUT I HOLD IT ON A GASHED WOUND." (Saadi)

In the famous Masnawi of Maulana Rumi the poem 'The Lament of the Reed Flute' is a symbol of the soul's sorrow at being parted from the Divine Beloved. It has been translated beautifully by Arberry and Sir William Jones. The later's translation is here-under.

"Hear, how you reed in sadly pleasing tales, departed bliss and present woe bewails With me, from native banks untimely torn love warbling youths and soft-eyed virgins mourn.

O let the heart, by fatal absence rent, feel what I sing, and bleed when I lament. Who roams in exile from his parent's bow'r pants to return, and chides each ling' ring hour My notes in circles of the grave and gay have hailed the rising, cheer'd the closing day. Each in my fond affection claimed a part but none discern'd the secret of my heart. What though my strains and sorrows flow combin'd

Yet ears are slow, and carnal eyes are blind. Free though each mortal form the spirit roll but sight avails not. Can we see the soul? Such notes breath'd gently from you vocal frame,

breathe'd said I? No. 't was all enliv'ning flame. 'tis love, that fills the reed with warmeth divine

'tis love, that sparkles in the racy wine. Me plaintive wand'rer from my peerless maid, the reed has fir'd, and all my soul betray'd. He gives the bane, and He with balsam cure, Afflicts, yet soothes, impassions, yet allures. delightful pangs His am'rous tales prolong, and Laili's frantick lover lives in song. Not he, who reasons best, this wisdom knows, Ears only drink what rapturous tongues disclose. Not fruitless deem the reed's heart-piercing pain,

So sweetness dropping from the parted cane. Alternate hope and fear my days divide, I courted grief and anguish be my bride. Flow on, sad stream of life, I smile secure, Thou livest, Thou, Purest of the Pure. Rise vigorous youth, be free, be nobly bold, Shall chains confine you, though they blaze with gold:?

Rumi by speaking of the reed in both real and temporal senses, has stated his philosophy of life at the very commencement of his great work. The opening lines are at once a statement of his philosophy of sufism and that of music. The reed mourns because it reminds the soul of its reality and its home. The whole secret of the life is in the reed as life is in the body. As intoxication is in the wine, so is the frenzy of love in the reed. Every heart suffering the pangs of seperation is moved by music. The logical contradiction in the bases of life becomes one and harmonised in music, as it embraces and unites two opposite states of pleasure and pain. It is poison as well as its antidote. The reed has two mouths; one touches the truth that is in the player, the other throws out its cry into the external reality. To listen rightly and let the soul

melt under its fire is not given to every man. Stars are many but comets appear only after long intervals. 'Many are the wand-bearers but few are God-possessed', said Plato. The right hearing reveals secrets of life which, if they were declared openly, would upset all systems of knowledge and conduct.

"Sirr-e-pinhaan ast andar zer-o-bam

Fash gar goyam, jehan barham kunam".

ie, 'in the cadences of music is hidden a mystery: Which, should I declare it, would upset the world.' (Rumi)

At another place Rumi says about Rubaab, Mandoline; "Khushk taaro, Khushk chbab'o Khushk poast

Az kuja mi aayed ein aawaz-e-doast."

ie,. It is dry string, dry wood, and dry skin.

Wherefrom then, comes voice of the beloved."

What Abt Vogler thinks of music, seems true of all life and the creation.

"I know not if, save in this, such gift is allowed to man,

That out of three sounds he frames, not a fourth but a STAR."

Since Adam and Plato the search of the Ideal has not yet come to an end. Mirza Ghalib, famous poet of the sub-continent, says.

"I seek to find a minstrel
Whose every breath is flame.
Whose notes may strike upon my heart,
Like thunder bolts from heaven:"

And yet, however miraculously endowed a poet may be, there is always, beyond the farthest reach of his powers of expression, a great region of the un-expressed and in-expressable. The rest is always an awe inspiring Silence, dumb-founding Silence.

"Of the world Dawning, neither I nor thou Can read this mystic reed illegible, With screen between, is talk of me' and 'thee',

Screen of this gross flesh, blood and bone, When the veil lifts, there is no more thou and I

But all universe grows into only I."

(Omar Khayyam)

Just as civilization is the result of progressive development from the savage state to a higher level of culture, in the same way religion, which is one of the integral parts of civilization, gradully develops from the lower to higher stage. The great religions of the world exhibit some features which they have inherited from their predecessors. There has been no entirely new religion since the beginning of the world. The elements and roots of religion were there as far back as we can trace the history of mankind.

Confucius said, 'I only hand on, I cannot create new things'. Upanishads read, 'Cows are of many colours but the milk of all is the same—white. So those who proclaim truth use various forms to explain it but the Truth in all is ONE'. Zoroaster, in Yasna 16: 3, declared, 'We worship former religions of the world devoted to rightcousness'.

Jesus said, 'I come not to destroy the law or the prophets, but to fulfil them'. And Ecclesiasts reads. 'Is there anything whereof it may be said, see, this is new? It hath been already of old time, which was before us... There is no new thing under the sun'. J. E. Carpenter in his 'The Place of Christianity in the Religions of the world' quotes Justin the Martyr, saying. 'Whatever things have been rightly said, among all men, are the property of us christians:

The Quran says. 'And they say, 'None shall ever enter Heaven unless he be Jew or a christian: These are their vain desires. Say, produce your proof if you are truthful'. 'Nay, whoever submits himself completely to Allah, and is the doer of good, shall have his reward with his Lord. No fear shall come upon such, neither shall they grieve. And they say, 'be ye Jews or christians that you may be rightly guided'. Say, 'Nay, follow ye the religion of Abraham, who was ever inclined to God, he was not of those who set up gods with God. Say ye, 'We believe in Allah and what has been revealed to us, and what was revealed to Abraham and Ishmael, and Isaac and Jacob and his children, and what was given to Moses and Jesus, and what was given to all other prophets from their Lord, we make no difference between any of them, and to Him we submit ourselves. (2: 112, 113, 136, 137)

"O people of the Book, come to a word equal between us and you that we worship none but God, and that we associate no partner with Him;

and that some of us take not others for Lords, beside God." (3=65)

"I (the Prophet) believe in whatever Book Allah has sent down, and I am commanded to judge justly between you. Allah is our Lord and your Lord. For us is the reward of our works and for you the reward of your works. There is no quarrel between us and you. Allah shall gather us together and to Him is the final return". (42=16)

Allah, God, Jehovah, Brahma, is One. If the word God reminds someone of anthropomorphism, call Him or It as The Absolute, The Ultimate, or The Truth, it does not matter provided no particular philosophical or meta – physical connotation is given to The Great Word.

All phenomena are aspects of the same Allah, and every phenomena has its ultimate reference to the same.

As all beings in final analysis proceed from the Ultimate Reality, so they tend to return to the same original source. Yet the difference of the Creator and the created remains. Samkara says, "O Lord, even after realising that there is no real difference between the awakened individual soul and Brahma, I beg to state that I am your and not that you are mine. The wave belongs to the ocean and not the ocean to the wave". A sufisaint says.

"The chosen ones of God may not be God Yet neither are they far away from God," Reality can be perceived to certain extent even by reason, provided it is un-clouded, impartial and is comprehensive.

Zen Buddhism can be of much help to those who are lost to the habit of thinking in particular grooves. People may laugh upon some of the koans as nonsensical but really sometimes it is necessary to use the ritual of leg-pulling and nose tweaking, as Mr. Koestler puts it, as a form of psycho-therapy for too self-conscious people who tie up themselves in knots.

A disciple went to Master Tosu and asked: What is Buddha? Prompt came the reply: A Buddha. He asked: What is Tao? The reply was: The Tao. He asked: what is Rose?...a Rose, is a Rose.

People are admonished: 'saunter along and stop worrying. If your thoughts are tied, you spoil what is genuine. The ignorant man ties himself up.....if you work on your mind with your mind, how can you avoid an immense confusion.

Zen method of shock-treatment has no equal or atleast I could'nt find anything like it elsewhere. One interesting episode of some Dervishes and a learned cobbler comes to mind.

Some Dervishes were passing through a town when suddenly the sandal strap of the leader broke down. The leader sent one of his disciples' to go to that particular cobbler and to ask him 'to repair the sandal of God'. The obedient disciple approached the cobbler and said as told. 'Oh, the blasphemy', cried the cobbler and calling the nearby muslims, gave good thrashing to the disciple, who

retreated with bleeding nose and reported to the leader. Now the teacher got up and went to the cobbler and repeated, 'kindly mend the sandal of God'. 'Haa', shouted the cobbler, 'so the God now comes himself', and got up to repeat the earlier performance but the Dervish begged him to be calm and being a learned man, to repeat a particular part of the Quran known as Ayatul-Kursi. The cobbler repeated the verses and as he read the words that meant, 'and everything in the heaven and the earth belongs to Allah', the Dervish stopped him and said, 'now tell me does this sandal belongs to Allah or to your father? Mend it'.

The effort of the way-farer, pilgrim on the path of God, to empty his mind of all its contents is but an effort to make room for a new content, which he looks to God directly to bestow. And though it is for God to bestow light, it is for man to open his eyes and ears to that measure of revelation which by the divine good pleasure is vouch-safed to him.

Real knowledge cannot be obtained through logic; perceptual experience is a better guide to it than reason.

A mere intellectual understanding of the truth is not enough. The truth must be directly grasped, personally experienced, intuitively penertated into; for only then it will be distilled into life and determine its course.

The real aim of life is that one should perceive Reality through spiritual experience so that it should again become one with Allah, The Creator.

Pure experience is the mind seeing itself as reflected in itself. It is an act of self-identification, a state of such-ness. This is possible only when the mind is purged of all pre-conceived ideas, devoid of all its possible contents except itself. But to say except 'itself' is a puzzle. What is this 'itself; Here one may reply in the words of St. Augustine, 'When you ask, I do not know; but when you do'nt, I know'. It is the state of losing one's self as artist or a poet of genius loses himself in his object and lets it draw or write.

This spiritual perception is called Love. Knowledge of the Reality is inherent in love. This love is the main spring of all religions and that of higher morality. Without love morality becomes merely formal and mechanical. Reason without love remains in utter darkness.

It was love's philosopher, Plato, who said, 'He whom love touches not, walks in darkness.' (Symposium, 197). All things are futile, all things must die, but love alone eludes mortality. It warms the heart with un-speakable solace, even more when it is given than when it is received.

In man there is to be found a simple, divine substance having no affinity with other natures, and we can enjoy thereby a class of pleasure having no similarity to other pleasures. The love producing this pleasure is excessive in the extreme, being like to distraction, and it is called and known as Utter Passion or Divine Love. It is like this.....

"When the substance, deposited in man is purified of the turbidity of nature, and love for the various sorts of appetites and favours is banished from it, there occurs to it a sincere yearning for its like and it occupies itself in contemplating, with the eye of perception, the majesty of pure good, the Source of All Good, and the illumination of that Presence are effused upon it. Then there results to it a pleasure that cannot be related to any other pleasure, and it attains to the affore-mentioned degree of union. At such times it knows no further disparity between using and forsaking the bodily nature; however, it is more fitted to that lofty degree after total seperation, for complete purity can result only after departing this transient life". (Khwaja Nasiruddin Tusi)

* Khwaja Moinud-din Chishti, famous saint and reformer of the sub-continent sings;

"Guftamash taa chand dar purdah nihaan khwahi shudan

Waqt aan aamad keh digar ru-na-poshaani ze man

Guft, man be-pardah am, gar pardah beeni aan tu'i

Ta tu hasti, dar hazaaran pardah pinhaani ze man."

ie,. I said, my Lord, how long wilt Thou keep Thy face veiled?

Sure it was time Thou un-veiled to Thy humble servant.

He said; I am ever without a veil and if you see the veil, then it is your self

Till your self remains, thousand veils make me un-seen

For My Self is only by the selfless seen.

Mention of a few mystical experiences and remarkable visions of muslim saints will not be out of place here.

* "I said to God, 'O my heart'; He said, 'It must become roast'. I said, 'O my eyes'. He said, 'They must become a cloud of rain'. I said, 'Oh my body'. He said, 'It must become a waste'. I said again to God, 'My heart is no more'. He said, 'abandon the roast'. I said, 'My eyes are no more'. He said, 'Abandon the cloud of rain'. I said, 'My body is no more'. He said, 'Abandon the waste'.

I said, 'Never, O God, until I see Thee with Thy attributes will I become concentrated on myself or on any matter whatsoever; for in duality seperation in-evitably occurs:

* "I rose up in the night. I fixed my gaze on my own perceptions, and saw that my perceptions, like hand trained birds, were departing to the essence of God. Their feathers and wings were burning, and the effect of that was beating at my brain and bones; and my head and teeth began to ache. I could neither endure without God's passionate madness, nor could I reach Him".

(Baha-al-din Walad. 1160, AD.)

* One of the devout who had deeply plugned his head into the cowl of meditation and had

been immersed in the ocean of vision was asked by a cheering friend 'What gift hast though brought us from the garden of bliss?

He replied, I intended to fill the skirts of my robe with roses from the rose bush, for my friends, but the perfume of the flowers intoxicated me so much that I let go the hold of my skirts. (Saadi 1184-1291 A.D.)

* Punja dar punja-i khuda daram, man chi parwa-i-mustafa daram. (Dewan Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti)

I have my hand in the hand of GOD, What do I care for intercessor.

Here is another of Rumi's beautiful poems plucked, of all the places, from Hegels 'Philosophy of Mind'. It was translated into German by Ruckert and re-translated into English by Wallace with the help of Miss May Kendall.

I saw but One in all sea-billows wildly streaming, I saw but One through all heavens starry spaces gleaming.

I looked into the heart, a waste of worlds, a sea.....

I saw a thousand dreams, yet One amid all dreaming.

And earth, air, water, fire, when Thy decree is given,

Are molten into one; against Thee none hath striven.

There is no living heart but beats un-failingly,

In the one song of praise to Thee, from earth and heaven.

As one ray of Thy light appears the noonday sun, But yet Thy light and mine eternally are one. As dust beneath Thy feet, the stars that sweep on high,

Yet only One, and One for ever, Thou and I. The dust may turn to stars, and stars to dust decay,

Yet art Thou with me, and shall be One for Aye. How may the words of life that fill heaven's utmost part,

Rest in the narrow casket of one poor human heart?

How can the suns own rays, a fairer gleam to fling,

Hide in the lowly ore, the jewel's covering? How may the rose grow all its glorious bloom unfold,

Drinking in mire and slime, and feeding on the mold?

How can the darksome shell, that sips the salt sea-stream.

Fashion a shining pearl, the sunlight's joyous beam?

O heart, should warm winds fan thee, shouldst thou floods endure,

One element are wind and flood; but be thou always pure.

I'll tell thee how from out the dust God moulded man.....

Because the breath of love He breathed into his clay.

I'll tell thee why the spheres their whirling paths began....

They mirror to God's throne Love's glory day by day.

I'll tell thee why the morning winds blow over the grove,

It is to bid love's roses abundantly,

I'll tell thee why the night broods deep the earth above,

Love's bridal tent to deck with sacred canopy. All riddles of the earth dost thou desire to solve?

Then in thy heart the love of the One self evolve.

Life shrinks from death in woe and fear.
Though Death ends well Life's bitter need,
So shrinks the heart when love draws near,
As though,'twere death in very deed.
For wheresoever love finds room,
There self, the sullen tyrant, dies.
So let him perish in the gloom,
Thou to the Dawn of Freedom rise.

-;0;-

Before I sleep.

God keep a clean wind blowing through my heart night and day.
Cleanse it with sunlight
Let the silver rain wash away

Cobwebs and the smothering dust
That the years leave, I say.
God keep a clean wind blowing
Through my heart night and day.
Wind from far green pastures
And from shaded pools where still waters are;
Winds from spaces out beyond
the first twilight star.

Bitterness can have no place in me Nor grief stay.

When the winds of God rush through and sweep them away.

God keep a clean wind blowing
Through my heart night and day. (Shacklton)

* I am a lamp on the water: at what ghat didst Thou place me on the stream? Where is the harbour at which Thou settest me afloat? In the dark night speaks but the garland of the waves, and under it ever flows the stream like aflowing, deep dark night. My only companion is the little flame, and no bank and no end is near.....

O' Ocean in which all rivers find their destination, Friend! End of all endless movement, how many bends of the river are still before me? And Thou, with what call will Thou reveal Thyself to me? Thou will take me from the water and there, under the protection of Thy arm, near Thy breast, will extinguish the burning of the whole long journey. (East Bengal Boatman's Song)

*

(John Steinbeck)

- * "O Cyprus Rose, light of the world, beware. Somewhere the archer draws the bending bow. Silent and swift the fatal arrows go, And one shall find thy marble bosom bare. But oh, forget not, insolent with glory, The wind that opes the Rose, the tulip breaks, From off the bough the almond blossom shakes; And Death the ending of love's sweetest story." (Kamal)
- Life is given us; we spend it like whirling atoms and stars restlessly circling, dancing to various tunes.

 Each atom dancing in the plain...or on the air.

 Behold it well, like us insane...It spinneth there,

 Each atom, whether glad it be...Or sorrowful.

Circleth the sun in ecstacy...In-effable

- * We have only one story. All novels, all poetry, are built on this never never ending contest in ourselves of good and evil. And it occurs to me that evil must constantly re-spawn, while good, while virtue, is immortal. Vice has always a new fresh, young face; while virtue is as venerable as nothing else in this world.
- * I believe that there is one story in the world, and only one, that has frightened and inspired us, so that we live in a pearl white serial of continuing thought and wonder. Humans are caught—in their lives, in their thoughts, in their hungers and ambitions, in their avarice and cruelty and in their kindness and

generosity too—in a net of good and evil. I think this is the only story we have and that it occurs on all levels of feeling and intelligence. Virtue and vice were the warp and woof of our first consciousness, and they will be the fabric of our last, and this despite any changes we may impose on field and river and mountain, on economy and manners. There is no other story. A man, after he has brushed of the dust and chips of his life, will have left only the hard, clean question: 'was it good or was it evil?' 'Have I done well, or ill?'' (East of Eden)

I expect to pass through this world but once. Any good therefore, that I can do, or any kindness that I can show to my fellow creatures, let me do it now, let me not defer it, for I shall not pass this way again. (Anon)

Our ancestor Adam was really a brilliant and inspired man. He had firsts in more than one thing. We owe a deep debt of gratitude to this first benefactor of mankind; he arranged to bring death into the world. What other end can anything have? The transitoriness of things is essential to their physical being, and is not at all a thing to be sad about. Our life comes from the Unseen, and goes to the Unseen, its middle part only being manifest. What is there to mourn in this, says Garuda Purana.

All that is on earth shall pass away, And there will remain only

*

The Person of thy Lord, master of Glory, and Honour. 55: 27, 28.

- * What could be truly sad is to have some healthy, pious impulse frustrated in the midst of its carrier, otherwise the best advice is to live your life to the utmost of its possibilities; do your work diligently, never playing a monkey trick upon any one, and then take your hat. (G. B. S.)
- * Never put a man in the wrong; he will hold it against you for ever.
- * There is in man's soul a deep seated will to holiness which refuses to bend before injustice, tyranny and un-truth. Keep this sense of holiness fresh and innocent and leave the rest to God.
- * Let nothing come between you and the light. Respect 'men and brothers only. When you travel to the celestial City, carry no letter of introduction. When you knock, ask to see God, none of the servants. In what concerns you much, do not think that you have companions; know that you are alone. (Thoreau)
- * It is permissible to gather the blessings of life with both hands provided we have the courage to leave them just as gladly. Temporal life is given to us; we give it back and gain the immortal. What a bargain!

Life is real, Life is earnest,
And the grave is not its goal.
Dust thou art, to dust returnest,
Was not spoken of the soul.

*.

*

"Love's pigeon to my heart doth fly. A message from my lover giving, And gladly for His sake I die, With Him for ever to be living.

(Iraqi. 1600 A.D.)

The day I was born, every body was happy while I cried alone.

Let me live so that in the last hour, while others may weep,

I may be the one smiling and peacefully sleep. (An Arab Poet)

* The tumult and following tranquility of a storm at sea symbolises spirits experience in its journey out of and back to God.

"Happy was I, in the pearls heart to lie,
Till, lashed by life's hurricane,
Like a tossed wave I ran.
The secret of the sea
I uttered thunderously.
Like a spent cloud on the shore
I slept, and stirred no more. (Rumi)

Haasil-e-umram seh sukhan baish nist, Khaam budam, pukhta shudam, soakh'tam. ie, The ultimate achievement of whole my life

may be summed up in three sentences. I was raw; I matured; and I burned. (In Divine Love). (Rumi)

* All praise belongs to Allah.

Lord of the heavens, and Lord of the earth.

The Lord of all the worlds. 45:37

And peace be upon those of His servants whom He has chosen. Ameen. 27: 60

"Love will not let His faithful servants tire Immortal beauty draws them on and on From glory to glory, drawing nigher At each remove and loving to be drawn. When truth shines out words fail and nothing tell,

Now hear the voice within your hearts-Farewell.

Farewell. Farewell.

Botataung, Rangoon. October' 1976/79.

Available.

- (1) Teachings of Islam, Burmese English and Chinese.
- (2) KabaAye Two Lectures, Burmese and English.
- (3) Character of Holy Prophet and his 40 sayings, Burmese and English:
- (4) Legacy of Islam, Burmese.
- (5) Jesus in Kashmir, Burmese, English.
- (6) Life of Ahmad, Burmese.
- (7) First and Last of Quran, Urdu.
- (8) Muslim Prayer, Burmese, Urdu, Tamil.

Ahmadiyya muslim mission, 191-28th street Rangoon.

___:o:__

* 'Glimpses of World Religions' is unique in that it is most thought provoking even for free thinkers. This scholarly work should find a place on the book shelf of anyone who wishes to know something of all the religions of the world.

Sd. U Maung Maung Pye. (Journalist and man of letters)

* It is a fact that the teachings of the great Leaders of world religions maketh the basic laws of civilised nations for peace and happiness. We should therefore study and have broader knowledge of the great religions of the world, and Mr.K.B.Ahmad's book Glimpses...' is a unique book we really need in this modern world.

Sd. Dhamma Ghosaka U Maung Maung, Well-known writer on Buddhist literature.

* 'Glimpses.....'is authoritative exposition of the essentials of all religions and therefore an effective means of eliminating conflicts and fostering peace.

Gir ja Shankar Sharma, B.A., B.L.

President, Social Welfare oard,
All Burma Hindu Central Board, Rangoon.

* I recommend Mr.K.B.Ahmad's book'G'impses...'
to all young and old for inter-religious understanding.

Zora Singh.

Vice President Sikh Temple Trust.

E.C.member Hindu Central Board, Rangoon.

* 'Glimpses...' is a valuable contribution to the work of bringing love and peace to the world through appriciation of the teachings of world religions.

Dr. B. C. Dewan jea, Retd. Major, C/o District Free Masons Lodge, Rangoon.

Cover Printed by (Mg Tin Win) Mya Kan Tha Press (Regd 1887.) No. 136, 31 st Street, Rangoon: