

THE QURĀN IN ISLĀM

سَمَلُوا هَٰؤُلَاءِ تَذَكَّرُوا إِن كُنتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ

“Ask those who are acquainted with the
Scripture, if ye know not.”

AN ENQUIRY INTO THE INTEGRITY OF THE QURĀN

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INTRODUCTION

THE foundation of Islām is the Qurān. Muhammadans treat this book with the most profound respect, and give it many high titles. Chief amongst these may be mentioned the names "Furqān," the Distinguisher; "Qurān Majīd," the Glorious Qurān; "Qurān Sharīf," the Noble Qurān; and "Al Kitāb," the Book. It is the universal belief of Muslims that the Qurān is the uncreated word of God, which He sent down to His servant Muhammad through the medium of the angel Gabriel. Many hold the language of the Arabic Qurān to be unequalled anywhere in literature, and Muhammad himself challenged the unbelievers to produce another like it in these words :—

"If ye be in doubt concerning that revelation which we have sent down unto our servant, produce a chapter like unto it, and call upon your witnesses besides God, if ye say truth." (Sūra Bakr, verse 23.)

There can be no doubt that the language of the Qurān is in places exceedingly beautiful, and Muslims the world over love to recite it in a low monotonous chant. The feat of memorizing the whole is still regarded as both praiseworthy and meritorious.

The contents of the Qurān are exceedingly varied; but it may be noted that the Jewish and Christian religions occupy

a large amount of attention. The many references to these earlier faiths are instructive, and go to show that Muhammad did not so much represent himself as the founder of a new system, as the promulgator of that faith which was held in the beginning by Abraham himself. Muhammad's references to the Jewish and Christian scriptures also go to show that in the Qurān he did not so much claim to supersede those books as to 'confirm' and substantiate them. Verses to this effect may be found all over the Qurān; indeed the most extravagant praise is bestowed upon both Taurat and Injil, and these books are ever held up as worthy of faith and obedience. It thus becomes a matter for surprise that, in spite of this fact, modern Muslims almost invariably speak of the Jewish and Christian scriptures as 'corrupted', and therefore unworthy of serious attention to-day. The reason for this attitude is obvious; for careful comparison of the Christian and Muslim scriptures shows that the Qurān, which claims to 'confirm' the preceding scriptures, in reality differs very much from them. Muhammadans have thus been driven to the expedient of denying the integrity of the Taurat and Injil in order to explain away this discrepancy. The question as to whether the Qurān has been corrupted since the time when the prophet of Arabia captivated the Arabs by his eloquence, seems never to have been seriously considered by modern Muslims; yet the slightest acquaintance with Arabic history and literature reveals the fact that the present Qurān is far indeed from being a complete and accurate copy of that Qurān which Muhammad taught his followers. In the following pages we shall proceed to establish this fact from reliable Muslim authorities, and shall show that, in fact, the present Qurān has been so mutilated and corrupted since the time of Muhammad that it can no longer be relied upon as an accurate and complete record of what he taught.

CHAPTER I

THE SEVEN READINGS OF THE QURĀN

Muhammad did not give forth the whole of the Qurān at one time; but it was recited piecemeal as circumstances demanded, over a period of some twenty-three years. Even then, his immediate disciples did not commit the whole to writing; some portions were memorized, others were transcribed upon 'palm-leaves, leather, slabs of stone,' etc.; yet discrepancies soon arose, and from the traditions we learn that within a comparatively short time serious differences arose in the reading of the Qurān, differences by no means confined to pronunciation, as some would have us believe. In the well-known book of traditions, the *Mishkāt-al-Musāhib* in the chapter called *Fajail-ul-Qurān* we read:—

”عن عمر بن الخطاب قال سمعت هشام بن حكيم بن حزام يقرأ سورة الفرقان علي غير ما أقرأها وكان رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم أقرأ فيها فلدت ان اعجل عليه ثم امهله حتى انصرف ثم لببته بردائه فجئت به رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم فقلت يا رسول الله اني سمعت هذا يقرأ سورة الفرقان علي غير ما أقرأت فيها فقال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم ارساه اقرأ فقرأ التراءة التي سمعته يقرأ فقال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم هكذا أنزلت ثم قال لي اقرأ فقرأت فقال هكذا أنزلت ان هذا القرآن أنزل علي سبعة احرف فقرأوا ما تيسر منه متفق عليه واللفظ لمسلم *

”Umr-ibn-al-Khatāb said, ‘I heard Hishām-ibn-Hakīm-ibn-Hijāmī reading Sūra Furgān in a different way from that which I was accustomed to do; but the prophet had taught

me this Sūra. Then I wished to immediately forbid him, but allowed him to read to the end. Then I seized his dress, and took him to the prophet, and said, Oh prophet of God, I heard this man reading Sūra Furqān in another way; he read it differently from what you taught me. Then the prophet said to me, 'Let him go.' He then told him to read. He then read in the manner which I had heard. Upon that the prophet said, 'It has been revealed in this way.' Again he said to me, 'Do you read also.' Then when I had read, he said, 'It was revealed in this way also; the Qurān was revealed in seven readings, read it in the way which is easy to you'."

There are many traditions relating to this seven-fold reading of the Qurān, and Muhammadan scholars have tried in various ways to explain its significance, but without success. The differences which existed in these seven different readings of the Qurān were certainly very serious; for in a tradition recorded by Nisai we learn that 'Umr boldly accused Hishām of falsehood, and asserted that he had read many words in his recitation of the Qurān which he had never learned from the prophet. In another tradition, recorded by Muslim, we learn that Ibn-Kāb, one of the most famous of the Qurān readers, heard two men reciting the Namāz in a reading different from his own. Upon reference being made to the prophet, the latter pronounced both correct, "upon which," says Ibn-Kāb, "such a revolt arose in my heart as had not existed since the times of ignorance."

From these various traditions it is clear that even during the lifetime of the prophet the Qurān was being read in various mutually conflicting ways. So grave were the differences that quarrels soon arose; for the inhabitants of Hims stood by the reading of Al-Miqdād-ibn-al-Aswad; the Kūfites by that of Ibn-Mas'ūd; the Busrites by that of Abu-Mūsa, and so on. But it would be a mistake to suppose that these differences simply consisted in the recitation of the Qurān in the various

dialects of Arabia, as some would have us believe; for there is ample evidence to show that the differences extended far deeper. Indeed we learn from the Itqān that the two men mentioned above, 'Umr and Hishām, were both of the same tribe, the Quraish, so that a supposed difference of dialect does not account for the difference recorded above. In succeeding chapters we shall show how serious these differences were, and shall relate some of the means adopted for their suppression.

CHAPTER II

THE RECENSIONS OF ABŪ-BAKR AND 'USMĀN

From the third chapter of the Misbkāt we learn that for some time after the death of the prophet, the Qurān continued to be preserved in the memories of the people, and was still recited in various conflicting ways; but in the famous battle of Yamāmah a great number of the Qurān reciters were slain. Then 'Umr, fearing lest another battle should still further reduce the number of those able to recite the Qurān, so that much of it might be lost, came to Abū-Bakr and importuned him to order the Qurān to be collected into one book. At first Abū-Bakr objected. "How can I do a thing which the prophet has not done?" he asked; but at last, yielding to the entreaties of 'Umr, the Khalif gave orders to Zaid-ibn-Sābit, who had been an amanuensis of the prophet, to search out the Qurān and bring it all together. This the latter did, "collecting it from leaves of the date, white stones, and the hearts of men." This copy of the Qurān was given to the Khalif Abū-Bakr, after whose death it passed into the possession of the Khalif 'Umr, who in turn gave it into the keeping of his daughter Hafsa, one of the widows of Muhammad.

This valuable tradition of Al-Bukhārī makes it clear that Abū-Bakr, for the first time, collected the whole Qurān into

one book; but he apparently made no critical study of the text with a view to reducing the various readings to one uniform standard. On the contrary we learn from Al-Bukhārī that within a short period the discrepancies and contradictions which existed in the various readings of the Qurān became of a still graver nature; until at last the Khalif 'Usmān took steps to allay the doubts which began to arise in the minds of the people. The means which 'Usmān adopted were drastic in the extreme, and simply consisted in transcribing one complete copy of the Qurān, and then burning all other copies! For this purpose the Khalif appointed a committee, with Zaid at its head, to do the work. In the case of any difference of opinion Zaid, who was a native of Medīna, had to give way, and the final decision lay with the Quraish members of the revision committee, or with the Khalif himself. A significant illustration of the latter's interference is given in one of the traditions. It was the Khalif's expressed desire to preserve the Qurān in the Quraish dialect, the dialect of the prophet himself. It is recorded that 'Alī wished to write *تابوة* with *ة*; the others preferred *ت* as *تابوت*; but 'Usmān decided in favour of the latter as being according to the Quraish dialect. But it so happens that the word *تابوت* is not an Arabic word at all, but was borrowed by Muhammad with many other words from the Rabbinical Hebrew! It is simply the Hebrew for 'ark,' and is so introduced into the story of Moses in Sūra XX. This little incident will serve to show how far the compilers of the Qurān were successful in preserving the book in the Meccan dialect, the language of Gabriel and of Muhammad.

We now give below the tradition concerning 'Usmān's recension of the Qurān as recorded by Al-Bukhārī, so that the reader may see for himself the serious condition of the Qurānic text at that time, and may judge of the extraordinary and arbitrary methods adopted by 'Usmān for its rectification.

”و عن انس بن مالك ان حذيفة بن اليمان قدم علي عثمان وكان يغارني اهل الشام في فتح ارمينه واذر بيجان مع اهل العراق فانزع حذيفة اختلافهم في القراءة فقال حذيفة لعثمان يا امير المؤمنين ادرك هذا الامة قبل ان يختلفوا في الكتاب اختلاف اليهود والنصارى فارسل عثمان الي حفصة ان ارسلي اليها بالصحف ننسخها في المصاحف ثم نردها اليك فارسلت بها حفصة الي عثمان فامر زيد بن ثابت و عبد الله بن الربيع وسعيد بن العاص و عبد بن الحارث بن هشام فنسخوها في المصاحف وقال عثمان للوسط لقرشين الثلاث ان اختلفتم انتم وزيد بن ثابت في شيء من القرآن فاكتبوه بلسان قريش فانما نزل بلسانهم ففعلوا حتي اذا نسخوا الصحف في المصاحف رد عثمان الصحف الي حفصة وارسل الي كل ائمة بمصحف مما نسخوا و امر بما سراه من القرآن في كل صحيفة او مصحف ان يعرف قال بن شهاب فاخبرني خارجة بن زيد بن ثابت انه سمع زيد بن ثابت قال فقدت آية من الاحزاب حين نسخنا المصحف قد كتب اسمع رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يقرأ بها فالتمسناها فوجدناها مع خزيمة بن ثابت الانصاري - فالمحققناها في سورتها في الصحف رواية البخاري *

“Anas-ibn-Mālik relates: ‘Huzaifah came to ‘Usmān, and he had fought with the people of Syria in the conquest of Armenia; and had fought in Azurbaijan with the people of ‘Iraq, and he was shocked at the different ways of people reading the Qurān, and Huzaifah said to ‘Usmān, “O ‘Usmān, assist this people before they differ in the Book of God, just as the Jews and Christians differ in their books.” Then ‘Usmān sent a person to Hafsa, ordering her to send those

portions which she had, and saying, "I shall have a number of copies taken, and will then return them to you." And Hafsa sent the portions to 'Usmān, and 'Usmān ordered Zaid-ibn-Sābit, Abdulla-ibn-az-Zubair, Said-ibn-Alās and Abd-ibn-al-Hāris-ibn-Hishām; and he said to the three Quraishites, "When you and Zaid-ibn-Sābit differ about any part of the reading of the Qurān, then do ye write it in the Quraish dialect, because it came not down in the language of any tribe but theirs." Then they did as 'Usmān had ordered; and when a number of copies had been taken, 'Usmān returned the leaves to Hafsa. And 'Usmān sent a copy to every quarter of the countries of Islām, and ordered all other leaves to be burnt. And Ibn-Shahāb said, "Khārījāb, son of Zaid-ibn-Sābit, informed me saying, 'I could not find one verse when I was writing the Qurān, which I had heard from the prophet; then I looked for it, and found it with Khuzaimah, and I entered it into Sūra Al-Ahzab'."

From this tradition, recorded by Bukhārī, we learn several important facts. Thus it is clear that when 'Usmān perceived with dismay that the differences in the reading of the Qurān were becoming more and more serious day by day, he ordered Zaid and three others to again compile an authoritative edition of the Qurān. The fact that these scholars had to consider a variety of readings, to weigh their authority, and, if necessary, discard them in favour of the Meccan readings shows to what an extent corruptions had crept into the text. Having completed his recension, 'Usmān then collected all the copies of the older editions he could find, and burnt them. He then ordered a number of copies to be made from the new edition, and distributed them throughout the Muhammadan world. From this narrative it is clear that the Qurān compiled under the direction of 'Usmān, and still current, differed very materially from the readings which were current in different parts of Arabia at that time: other-

wise it is inconceivable that the Khalif should have taken the trouble to collect and burn them in the manner recorded by Bukhārī. The result is that Muslims to-day are shut up to the arbitrary edition circulated by 'Usmān, and are quite unable by critical study to arrive at any satisfactory decision as to how far 'Usmān's recension agreed with that compiled under the direction of Abū-Bakr, or with the various Qurānic readings current in Arabia. This at least we know, that the Shiāhs have constantly charged 'Usmān with suppressing and altering various passages of the Qurān favourable to 'Ali and his family. Thus in the book 'Faniki-kitāb-Debistān' it is written, " 'Usmān burnt the Qurān, and excised from it all those passages in which was related the greatness of 'Ali and his family." Shiāh books quote numerous passages which have been altered in this way, but for which this little book contains no room. The reader may find them in the writings of Ali-ibn-Ibrāhīm-ul-Qāmī, Muhammad-Ya'qub-ul-Kulaini, Shaikh-Ahmad-ibn-'Ali-Lālit-ul-Tabrāsī and Shaikh-Abū-'Ali-ul-Tabrāsī. This two-fold witness of the Shiāhs on the one hand, and of Bukhārī on the other, leaves no room for doubt that the Qurān which we possess to-day is far indeed from being free from corruptions and omissions.

Further, from the significant fact that 'Usmān burnt all the copies of the Qurān which he could find, and circulated only the one copy compiled by himself, we learn that he, at any rate, did not accept the story of the 'seven readings,' nor credit the prophet with having called seven mutually conflicting readings of the Qurān equally correct. The fact is, any unbiassed study of the whole story makes it clear that, not Muhammad, but his immediate followers circulated the story which attributed to him such a foolish statement in order that Muslims should not stumble at the astounding sight of a Qurān, sent down from God, appearing in different contradictory texts.

Additional light is shed upon this subject by a tradition of 'Ali, which runs thus, "At the time that Abū-Bakr became Khalif, 'Ali was sitting in his house. When the former came to visit him, 'Ali addressed him thus, 'I saw that people were adding to the word of God, and I resolved in my mind that I would never wear my outer cloth again, except at the time of Namāz, until I had collected the word of God'." These various traditions make it perfectly clear that the differences in the reading of the Qurān were by no means confined to pronunciation, but that certain persons were in the habit of 'adding' words of their own at the time of reciting the Qurān. From Islāmic history we learn that 'Ali did actually carry out his intention of making a collection of the Qurān; and it is a matter for sincere regret that 'Ali's compilation is not to be found to-day. That it would have differed materially from the present Qurān is practically certain; for it is recorded that when 'Umr asked him to lend his copy in order that other copies might be compared with it, he refused, saying that the Qurān he possessed was the most accurate and perfect, and could not be submitted to any changes and alterations which might be found necessary in the other copies. He further said that he intended to hand down his copy to his descendants to be kept until the advent of the Imām Māhdi.

CHAPTER III

THE READING OF IBN-MAS'ŪD

Amongst the many proofs of the corruption of 'Usmān's Qurān may be mentioned the facts connected with the edition of Ibn Mas'ūd. In the 20th Chapter of the 24th portion of the Mishkāt-ul-Musāhib a tradition of the prophet is recorded, in which he named ten of his most prominent and faithful

followers, and assured his hearers that the salvation of these ten was assured. These ten names are famous in history as, 'Asharah Mubashsharah,' 'the ten who received glad tidings.' Of these ten Abdulla-ibn-Mas'ūd was one. He is described as a great scholar and friend of the prophet. In the Mishkāt a tradition of Muhammad is recorded to this effect,

”عن عبد الله بن عمر ان رسول الله صلعم قال استقرعوا القرآن من اربعة من عبد الله بن مسعود سالم مولاي بن حذيفة وابي بن كعب ومعاذ بن جبل *“

“Abdulla-ibn-'Umr related that the prophet (upon whom be blessing and peace) said, 'Learn the Qurān from these four, Abdulla-ibn-Mas'ūd, Sālim-mula-ibn-Hazīfa, Ubī-ibn-Kāb, and M'āj-ibn-Jabal'." From this tradition, which could be supplemented by others to the same effect, it is clear that Ibn-Mas'ūd was a faithful disciple of the prophet, and had carefully and perfectly learned the Qurān from his master. There is a tradition in the collection of Muslim to the effect that Ibn-Mas'ūd once said, "I swear by the name of the one God that there is no Sūra in the book of God which I do not know, and concerning the revelation of which I am ignorant; nor is there a single verse which I do not know."

In another tradition Ibn-Mas'ūd is reported as saying, "The companions of the prophet well know that I know the Qurān better than they all." There is also a tradition recorded by 'Umr to this effect,

”رسول الله صلعم قال من احب ان يقرأ القرآن غملاً كما انزل فليقرأه علي قراءة بن أم عبد *“

“The prophet of God (on whom be blessing and peace) said, 'Let him who wishes to read the Qurān as it was sent down, read according to the reading of the son of the mother of Abd (i.e., Abdulla-ibn-Mas'ūd)'."

From the cumulative evidence of these different traditions it is clear that the Qurān reading of Ibn-Mas'ūd was the correct one, and that, at that time at least, it was free from additions or corruptions. Yet the astounding fact confronts us that Ibn-Mas'ūd was a bitter opponent of 'Usmān's recension of the Qurān; that he, in fact, not only refused to have anything to do with it, but consistently refused to hand over his own copy to the Khalif. Not only so, but when the latter gave orders for the collection and destruction of all copies of the Qurān except his own, Ibn-Mas'ūd immediately advised his own disciples, the people of Iraq, to hide their copies of the Qurān, and not to give them over to destruction, in these words,

“يا اهل العراق اكنتمو المصاحف التي عندكم وغلظها”

“O people of Iraq, hide your Qurāns, and shut them up under lock and key.”

It is recorded that the Khalif forcibly seized and burnt Ibn-Mas'ūd's Qurān, and so unmercifully chastised the companion of the prophet that he died a few days later from the beating he received. But the significant fact remains that Ibn-Mas'ūd not only refused to give up his perfect copy of the Qurān in favour of an arbitrary compilation made by 'Usmān, but also urged his disciples to continue reading his own edition. The whole narrative makes it clear that 'Usmān's Qurān differed very considerably from the reading which Ibn-Mas'ūd had learnt from the prophet; for on no other hypothesis can the former's unmerciful treatment of this great theologian be explained. We shall have occasion, later on in this little book, to point out some of the grave differences between the readings of Ibn-Mas'ūd and 'Usmān; it must suffice here to remind the reader that Ibn-Mas'ūd's Qurān contained neither Sūra Fātiha, nor Sūras Talaq and Nas. One cannot but wonder at the temerity of the Khalif in thus destroying the

very Qurān which the apostle himself had taught men to follow, and in substituting another which differed seriously from it.

In spite of the drastic measures adopted by 'Usmān for the suppression of all other copies of the Qurān except his own, the reading of Ibn-Mas'ūd continued for many years to be preserved amongst his followers, the people of Iraq. Thus in the year 378 of the Hegira a copy of Ibn-Mas'ūd's Qurān was discovered at Bagdad, which proved, on examination, to differ materially from the editions then current. It was at once burnt midst the acclamations of the deluded people.

Not only, however, did 'Usmān's Qurān differ from the accurate copy of Ibn-Mas'ūd, but it differed also from the previous recension which had been made by Abū-Bakr. In the traditions it is related that Abū-Bakr's Qurān remained, at his death, in the custody of Hafsa, his daughter, but upon the death of the latter, Merwān, the Governor of Medina, demanded the copy from her brother, Ibn-'Umr, and immediately burnt it, saying, “If it be published abroad, people finding differences will again begin to doubt.” Thus we see that the Qurān current all over the Muhammadan world to-day agrees neither with that of Abū-Bakr, nor with that of Ibn-Mas'ūd, nor with that, now unfortunately lost, which was collected by 'Ali. The current Qurān is, in fact, mutilated and corrupted to such an extent, as we shall further prove in subsequent pages, that it is no longer worthy of faith and acceptance as the complete Qurān taught in the beginning by Muhammad himself.

CHAPTER IV

THE TESTIMONY OF IMĀM HUSAIN CONCERNING THE
VARIOUS READINGS OF THE QURĀN

We saw in the preceding chapters that the Khalif 'Usmān, shocked at the grave differences which had crept into the reading of the Qurān, applied a drastic remedy by compiling one authoritative copy, and then burning all the rest. But even these measures were ineffectual; and in spite of 'Usmān's recension, the 'seven readings,' at least in a modified form, still continued to exist. These various readings are known as the 'Haft Qirā'at', and the readers, through whom these various readings have been handed down, are known as Qāris. Some were natives of Mecca, some of Medīna, some of Kūfa, and some of Syria; and the different readings of the Qurān continue to be known by the names of those who gave them currency. Thus the reading current in India is known as that of 'Asim, or of Hafaz, his disciple; whilst the qirā'at current in Arabia is that of Nāfi, a native of Medīna. Jalāl-ud-dīn, on the other hand, in his famous commentary, follows the qirā'at of the Qāri Imām-Abū-'Umr. Many of the differences are merely in pronunciation, but in not a few cases grave differences in meaning still exist. Thus in Sūra Fātiha the Qāris Ya'qūb, 'Asim, Kisa'i and Khalaf-i-Kūfi approve of the reading مَالِك (mālik); whereas every other Qāri reads مَلِك (malik).

We will now fulfil our promise to give specific examples of the many differences which exist even in the present text of the Qurān; though the reader should bear in mind the fact that even if that were now perfect, it would signify little, seeing that 'Usmān's recension itself has been proved absolutely untrustworthy. Before giving detailed examples of the present corruption of the Qurānic text, however, we here quote

some pregnant remarks upon the subject from the introduction to the famous commentary of Imām Husain. The great commentator writes thus,

”و چون قراة جائزالتلاوت بسيار است و اختلافات قرات در حروف و الفاظ بیشمار درین اوراق از قرات معتبر روایت بکراز امام عاصم رحمة الله علیه درین دیار بصفت اشتهاار و رتبت اعتبار دارد ثبت میگردد و بعض از کلمات که حفص را با او مخالفت است و معنی قران بسبب ان اختلاف تغییرکلی می یابد اشارتی میروند“

“And as the readings which are authorized to be read are various, and *their difference in letters and words innumerable*, trustworthy readings according to Bakr, approved by Imām 'Asim, prevalent in this country and reliable, are inserted in these pages (of this commentary). And a few such passages, which, on account of the difference, *entirely alter the meaning of the Qurān*, and opposed by Hafaz, are also referred to.”

From these candid remarks of the great commentator Kamal-ud-dīn Husain it is clear that a number of various readings still exist in the Qurān, and that in words and letters 'innumerable' corruptions have crept into the text. Not only so; but the great scholar freely confesses that in a number of cases the meaning of the Qurān is quite altered thereby. The Imām further informed us that various readings are current in different countries, some of which are trustworthy, whilst others are not. Others of the readings to be referred to by him, he tells us, are opposed to the reading of Hafaz, that is, of the reading current in India to-day; but which reading, of all these conflicting copies, really represents the original Qurān circulated by 'Usmān, not to speak of that Qurān taught by Muhammad himself, neither

Imām Husain nor any other Muslim scholar is able to tell us. One thing however is certain: these discrepancies do exist, and thereby prove incontestably that the boasted Divine protection of the Qurān, as a matter of fact, does not exist.

A study of the Traditions throws considerable light upon this perplexing problem, and shows how many of these differences arose; whilst the total disappearance of whole verses and Sūras is also largely accounted for by a reference to the same authorities. Thus in a tradition preserved by 'Umr we read,

”هشام يقرأ سورة الفرقان فقرأ فيها صروفاً لم يكن نبي الله صلعم اقرأ فيها قلت من أقرأك هذا السورة قل رسول الله صلعم قلت كذبت ما كراك أقرأك رسول الله صلعم *“

'Umr said, "Hishām read certain verses in Sūra Furgān which the prophet had not taught me. I said, 'Who taught you this Sūra?' He said, 'The Prophet of God.' I said, 'Thou liest; the prophet of God never taught it thee thus'." As a matter of fact Islāmic history contains many references to the various readings of the Qurān. Thus we read that a certain Qurān reader named Ibn-Sanabud was once reading the Qurān in the great Mosque of Bagdad; but his reading not agreeing with the reading of that place, he was severely beaten and cast into prison, and only released upon his renouncing the reading with which he was familiar. These various readings differed not only in pronunciation, but in a number of cases the whole meaning of the Qurānic passage was altered. We now proceed to give a few examples of such passages, which are referred to by Husain, Baizāwi and other learned Muhammadan authorities in their writings.

In the celebrated commentary of Imām Husain we read that in the first rūkū of Sūra Ambiya the current reading is, "قال ربي يعلم;"

but according to the reading of Bakr we should read, قل ” Say thou (O, Muhammad), My Lord knows.” ربي يعلم

Here we have a concrete example of a serious difference in the text of the Qurān, which totally alters the meaning of the passage. According to the one reading God addresses the prophet, and orders him to say, "My Lord knows," whilst in the other, the prophet is represented as affirming in his reply to the unbelievers that, "My Lord knows."

From a host of others we quote one more example from the same authority. In the first rūkū of Sūra Azhāb we read,

”النبي اولي بالمؤمنين من انفسهم وازواجه امهاتهم *“

"The prophet is nigher unto the true believers than their own souls, and his wives are their mothers." But the Imām Sāheb tells us that according to the copy of Ubi and the reading of Ibn-Mas'ūd we should read several additional words in this passage, viz., "وهو اب لهم" "and he (Muhammad) is their father." The reader will now perceive why Ibn-Mas'ūd refused to give up his Qurān to the Khalif 'Usmān; and, remembering the high encomiums passed upon the former's Qurān by the prophet himself, will readily believe that these words have disappeared from the present Qurān. If, then, our Muhammadan brethren, in spite of these undoubted defects in their sacred book, can still continue to read and believe in the same, upon what process of reasoning, we ask, do they object to read the Injil because, as they think, it has been altered in some places?

CHAPTER V

THE TESTIMONY OF KĀZĪ BAIZĀWĪ CONCERNING
THE VARIOUS READINGS OF THE QURĀN

Those who have read the commentaries of the famous Muhammadan scholar Kāzī Baizāwī well know that he, also, has pointed out many variations in the different copies of the Qurān. We give below a few examples from the writings of this well-known commentator.

It is a matter for surprise that in the very first chapter of the Qurān, a chapter the excellences of which Muslim writers are never tired of relating, and which every good Muhammadan should repeat in his daily prayers, a number of various readings exist, and have caused no little perplexity to Muhammadan scholars. Thus we learn from the Kāzī that in verse 5, in some copies we have “مرات”, whilst in others the word is spelt “سراط”. Yet it is perfectly certain that both readings cannot be correct.

Again, in verse 6 of the same Sūra, Baizāwī tells us that the words “سراط الذين انعمت عليهم” (Sirāt allazīna anamta alaihim) have in some copies of the Qurān been changed to “مرات” “سراط” (Sirāt man anamta alaihim). What, then, becomes of the supposed freedom of the Qurān from corruption, in view of such facts; and where, we ask, is the much-vaunted Divine protection of the Qurān? Is it not perfectly clear that in some copies the word ‘الذين’ (allazīna) has either been changed to ‘من’ (man); or else in other copies the original word ‘من’ (man) has been corrupted into ‘الذين’ (allazīna)?

Again, Baizāwī tells us, in the eighth verse of the same Sūra, a serious variation of reading occurs. According to Baizāwī

the current reading “لا الضالين” (lā azzālīna) has been, in some copies, changed to “غير الضالين” (ghair azzālīna). Granting that in these examples the meaning has not been altered to any extent, the fact still remains that certain words have been substituted for others in this important Sūra of the Qurān. Both were not in the original copies.

In the twenty-first verse of Sūra Bakr, Kāzī Baizāwī points out another important corruption of the text. The received reading is “عبدنا” (abdenā) “our servant;” but Baizāwī tells us that in some copies the word appears in the plural as, “عبادنا” (abādenā), “our servants.” In the latter case, the whole verse would read thus: “If ye be in doubt concerning that (revelation) which we have sent down unto our servants,” thus making others besides Muhammad the recipients of the Qurānic revelation.

In the fifth verse of Sūra Nisā another important corruption of the Qurānic text is to be seen. Baizāwī tells us that in this verse the words “فان انستم” (fān anastum) “If you see,” have in some copies been altered to “فان احستم” (fān ahastum) “If you know.” Such corruptions of the Qurānic text are numerous, and prove beyond question that the text of the Qurān is far from perfect. Indeed, as we shall afterwards prove, it has been so corrupted and mutilated that the present edition is absolutely untrustworthy as a complete copy of that Qurān which the prophet of Arabia taught his followers.

In the fifteenth verse of Sūra Nisā, Baizāwī points out another grave variation in the different copies of the Qurān, which is worthy of notice. It is there written “وله اخ او اخت” “and he has a brother or a sister.” But the Kāzī informs us that, according to the readings of Ubi and Zaid-ibn-Mālik

two other words should be added to those quoted, *viz.*, “من الأم” “from a mother.” In his comment upon the passage Baizāwi himself explains it as having this meaning. Thus the illustration before us affords an interesting example of the way in which various readings sometimes come into existence through the insertion of marginal explanatory words into the text itself for the purpose of rendering the meaning more lucid.

The ninety-first verse of Sūra Māida furnishes another example of the corruption of the text of the Qurān. It is there written that the expiation of an oath should be the feeding of ten poor men, but if the offender has not wherewith to carry out this demand of the law, he may fast three days instead. Thus in the current copy of the Qurān we read, “نصيام ثلاثة أيام” “three days’ fast.” But the famous legist Abū Hanifa reads an additional word here, so that the offender should be made to fast “three days together.” Thus Abū Hanifa reads, “ثلاثة أيام متتابعات”. This variation in the reading is a most serious one, for it touches, and alters, the very laws of Islām. Thus Abū Hanifa and all his followers teach a three-days’ continuous fast; whilst Baizāwi and others look upon this teaching as false, and opposed to the Qurān. Who is to say, after this lapse of time, which reading represents that of the original Qurān?

In the 154th verse of Sūra Anām the current Qurān reads, “إن هذا صراطي” “Truly this is my way”; but Baizāwi here quotes two readings which differ from this text. In the first we read, “هذا صراط ربكم” “This is your Lord’s way,” and in the second, “هذا صراط ربك” “This is thy Lord’s way.” The reader will observe that in the second and third readings here quoted by Baizāwi, one word ‘ان’ is missing altogether,

whilst two other words ‘ربكم’ and ‘ربك’ have been added. Little wonder is it that ‘Usmān, shocked at the many discrepancies, which, as early as his time, appeared in the reading of the Qurān, should seek to reduce them all to one uniform text; it is as little a matter for surprise that the Khalif failed so ignominiously to effect his purpose. Many of these corruptions of the Qurānic text bear upon their face the evidence of the clumsy hand of the forger; and reveal, by their very nature, the reason for their existence. Thus in Sūra T. H. we read, “قال يا بنوم” “He (Aaron) said, O my mother’s son.” But in Sūra Arāf, verse 149, we find only “قال ابن ام” “He said, my mother’s son.” A close examination of these passages shows that in the first the usual interjection of address which accompanies the vocative, *viz.*, يا is properly present, but is absent from the second. Thus it becomes clear that, in order to preserve the elegance and beauty of the language of the Qurān, the usual interjection of address should be added to the second passage also. Now Baizāwi makes it clear that this has actually taken place, and that some good Muslims, in order to remove this reproach from the Qurān, have actually added the necessary word in their copies of the Qurān. Thus Baizāwi tells us that Ibn-Amar, Hamza, Kisai and Abū-Bakr read in this place “يا ابن ام” “O, my mother’s son.” Either our inference is correct, or else we must assume that the word ‘يا’ ‘O’ is correctly found in the copies of the scholars mentioned, but has, like many other words, been lost from the current copy of the Qurān; in either case we have here a striking example of the uncertainty which surrounds the present text of that book.

Again in Sūra Jonas, verse 92, we have a striking example of ‘tabrif lafzi’ or corruption of the text of the Qurān. It is there written that the death of Pharoah in the Red Sea

remained as a 'sign' for the warning and instruction of all who should come after him. Thus in the current Qurān we read, "لَمِّنْ خَلَقَكَ آيَةً" "A sign for those who come after thee." But Baizāwī tells us that some copies of the Qurān read, "لَمِّنْ خَلَقَكَ آيَةً" "A sign for Him who created thee." Here the meaning of the Qurān is entirely altered; and the perplexed Muslim must ever remain in ignorance as to which of these rival readings represents the original Qurān.

Yet another extraordinary variation of reading is found in verse 36 of Sūra Kahaf. In current copies of the Qurān the passage reads,

"لَكِنَّا هُوَ اللَّهُ رَبِّي وَلَا أُشْرِكُ بِرَبِّي أَحَدًا"

"But God is my Lord, and I will not associate any with my Lord." But the Kāzi tells us in his commentary that in some copies the passage reads thus,

"وَلَكِن هُوَ اللَّهُ رَبِّي وَلَكِن أَنَا لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ رَبِّي"

"But God is my Lord; but we are not God; He only is our Lord." Comment on this extraordinary corruption of the Qurānic text would be superfluous. The reader may judge for himself.

Another serious wilful corruption of the Qurān is made evident by Kāzi Baizāwī's comment on verse 38 of Sūra Y. S. The passage alluded to runs thus, "وَالشَّمْسُ تَجْرِي لِمُسْتَقَرٍّ لَّهَا" "And the sun hasteneth to his place of rest." No educated Muslim believes that the sun moves by day, and rests during the time we call night; but a liberal view of this passage would suggest that it simply speaks in popular language, and does not attempt to impart scientific truth. But some zealous followers of the prophet, not content with this explanation and seeking to remove a fancied imperfection from the pages of the Qurān, have adopted the drastic expedient of adding a

word to the passage. Thus Baizāwī informs us that in some copies of the Qurān the word "لَا" "No" is added in this place, so that the meaning becomes: the sun has no place of rest!

Before we conclude this chapter we shall give yet one more example of the corruption of the text of the Qurān as furnished by Kāzi Baizāwī. In the first verse of Sūra Kamar the current Qurān reads,

"اقْتَرَبَتِ السَّاعَةُ وَانْشَقَّ الْقَمَرُ"

"The hour approacheth; and the moon hath been split in sunder." It is well known that controversy long and bitter has taken place between different sections of Muslims over the meaning of this passage. Some affirm that we have here clear testimony to a wonderful miracle performed by Mubammad in the splitting of the moon. Others, instead, contend that the whole passage has a future signification, and that all that the passage teaches is that at the judgment day the moon will be split asunder. What was needed to make the passage undoubtedly refer to a past event was the addition of some word having that meaning. Now, strange to relate, Baizāwī tells us that precisely this has taken place and in some copies the word "قَدْ" "now" or "just now" appears; so that the passage reads "the moon has now been split asunder." Is it not clear as the day that some Muhammadan controversialists, in order to fortify their own opinion, and at the same time glorify the prophet, have here inserted in their copies of the Qurān this word "قَدْ"? If this inference, to which we are surely shut up, be correct, does not the whole incident throw a lurid light on the treatment to which the scriptures of Islām have been subjected in the past; and does it not show the baselessness of the extravagant claims which are sometimes made by Muslims regarding the integrity of the Qurānic text? Examples similar to those

given above could be multiplied. Space, however, will not permit of further illustration here. We have shown enough to prove to every unprejudiced and open-minded reader that the Qurān has been greatly corrupted, and that Sunni and Shiah alike agree in affirming that numerous differences exist in different copies. Many reliable scholars even admit that in many cases the text of the Qurān has been wilfully corrupted by unscrupulous Muslims. Thus Baizāwi, Malam and Abul Fida all refer to one such person Abdulla-ibn-Zaid-ibn-Sarih by name. He was, they tell us, an amanuensis of the prophet, and used to maliciously alter various passages of the Qurān. But not only is the text of the Qurān, as it exists to-day, open to serious doubt; and not only do innumerable varieties of reading exist with respect to the present text; but we shall now proceed to prove from reliable Muhammadan sources that large portions of the original Qurān are missing altogether from the present copies; that, in fact, the present Qurān only represents a portion—and that corrupted—of the original book which was delivered by Muhammad to his followers.

CHAPTER VI

THE TESTIMONY OF THE TRADITIONS TO THE QURĀN

The reader will remember that the Khalif 'Usmān collected one copy of the Qurān, and then burnt all the rest. He then circulated his own compilation throughout the Muslim world. This action of the Khalif has ever since been condemned in the strongest terms by the Shiahs, who affirm that many passages referring to 'Ali and his family have been expunged from the Qurān. A complete chapter of the Qurān, now absent from the present copies, and containing many references to the supremacy of 'Ali, may still be seen. It is called

“سورة النورين” “Two lights,” by which Muhammad and 'Ali are meant. The reader may find this remarkable Sūra quoted in full in pages 11-13 of the book “Tabqiq-al-Imān.” It is most probable that this Sūra was present in 'Ali's copy of the Qurān; but unfortunately that is no longer available. The Shiahs, however, believe that when Al Māhdi, the last Imām, appears, the complete Qurān will once again be given to the world.

Any study of the traditions makes it clear that, in the time of Muhammad, the Qurān was very much larger than it is to-day. Thus a tradition of Abi-Abdulla recorded by Hasham-ibn-Shālam relates that,

“ان القرآن الذي جاء به جبريل الي محمد صلى الله عليه وسلم سبعة عشر الف آيات *”

“There were 17,000 verses in that Qurān which Gabriel delivered to Muhammad, upon whom be blessing and peace.” But according to Baizāwi the present Qurān only contains 6,264 verses; so that we learn from this important tradition, which is supported by others to the same effect, that the present Qurān is only about two-thirds the size of the original volume!

In another tradition it is recorded that,

“محمد بن نصر عنه انه قال كان في لم يكن اسم سبعين رجلا من قريش باسماءهم واسماء اباهم *”

“Muhammad-ibn-Nasar heard from him (Abi-Abdulla). He said, In Sūra Lam Yakin there were (once) the names of seventy Quraish, and the names of their fathers.” A search reveals the fact that this list of names has disappeared absolutely from the present copy of the Qurān. The obvious explanation is that they formed a part of that large portion of the Qurān which has been lost, and which is referred to in the tradition quoted above.

In the famous book called *Itqān*, and written by Jalāl-ud-Dīn, it is stated that there once existed a verse in Sūra Akhrāb in which the punishment for adultery was laid down. This famous verse, which is known as 'Ayat Al-Rajam', is referred to frequently in the traditions, and there is not the slightest doubt that it once formed a part of the Qurān. The passage in the *Itqān* referred to above runs thus,

” فيها آية الرجم قال وما الرجم قال اذا زينبا الشينخ والشينخ فارجموهما * “

“In it (Sūra Akhrāb) was Ayat Al-Rajam. He (Ibn-Kāb) said, ‘and what is Al-Rajam?’ He (Ibn-Jish) said, ‘If any married man or woman commit adultery, stone them.’” This verse is not found in the present copies of the Qurān; yet the evidence that it really formed a part of the original book is overwhelming. For instance, it is stated that ‘Umr knew it to be a genuine part of the Qurān, but as he was unable to find any Qurān reader to substantiate his opinion, he refused to incorporate it in the book. In the work *Kitāb-fatah-al-Bari* it is written,

” بقول عمر هذا انه كانت عنده شهادت في آية الرجم انها من القرآن فلم يلحقها بنص المصحف بشهادت وحده * “

“Umr said, He had evidence that Ayat Al-Rajam was a part of the Qurān; but on his own unsupported testimony he did not (dare to) put it in the book.” These traditions show us that the present ideas of the marvellous power of memory said to be possessed by men (*Hāfiz*) of the prophet's day need to be seriously modified; for here we have an undoubted verse of the Qurān for the authenticity of which not a single *Hāfiz* could be found to vouch. There is, however, more than one tradition which records the testimony of Ayesha, the favourite wife of the prophet, with reference to this verse. One tradition runs thus,

” قالت عايشة كانت الاخراب نقرني زمن رسول الله مايتي آية فلما كتب عثمان المضاعف ما يقدر الا علي ما اثبت وكان فيها آية الرجم * “

“Ayesha said that the Sūra Akhrāb which she was reading was incomplete. In the time of the prophet it contained two hundred verses. And when ‘Usmān wrote the Qurān, he accepted nothing except what he found authenticated, and in it was Ayat Al-Rajam.” This testimony of the favourite wife of the prophet fully substantiates the statements made above as to the incompleteness of the present copy of the Qurān; for whereas Ayesha tells us that in the time of Mubammad Sūra Akhrāb contained two hundred verses, the present Qurān only contains seventy-three. Ayesha further adds her testimony to ‘Umr's to the fact that Ayat Al-Rajam once existed in this Sūra; but, needless to say, no trace of it can be found in the present current edition of the Qurān. Another tradition, recorded in *Kitāb Mubajarāt* explains the disappearance of this celebrated verse. It is there recorded that,

” عن عايشة قالت لقد نزلت آية الرجم ورضاعته الكبير مشراً ولقد كان محيقتة تحت سريري فلما مات رسول الله صلعم وتشاغلنا بموته دخل داجن فاكلها * “

“Ayesha said, Ayat Al Rajam and Ayat Rajaeta were sent down and committed to writing; but the paper was underneath my seat; and when the prophet (upon whom be blessing and peace) died, and we were busy with his funeral, a goat entered (the house) and ate it up”! We do not care to comment further upon this verse. The reader must either be devoid of all literary sense, or blinded by prejudice, if he fails to see how such facts as we have recorded above absolutely shatter all claims to a Divine protection of the Qurān. Lest this language should be deemed exaggerated, we quote a few

more traditions from reliable authorities, which will enable the reader to see that we are only stating plain facts. There is a well-known tradition of Ibn-'Umr's to the following effect,

”عن ابن عمر قال لا يقولوا احذكم قد اخذت القرآن كله ما يدريه ما كله قد ذهب منه قرآن كثير ولكن يقل قد اخذت ما ظهر منه *“

”Ibn-'Umr said, Let no one of you say, 'I have the whole Qurān'. That which is known is not the whole, for a great part has been taken from it; but say, I have that which has been saved (made manifest) from it.”

Yet another tradition runs to this effect,

”بن جیش قال ابی بن کعب کاین تعد سورة الاخراب قلت ائذین و سبعین اية و ثلاثاً و سبعین اية قال انکانت لتعدل سورة البقر *“

”Ibn-Jīsh said, Ibn-Kāb said, 'How many verses are there in Sūra Akhrāb?' I said, 'Seventy-two or seventy-three.' He said, 'Sūra Akhrāb was (once) equal to Sūra Bakr.'” This well-known tradition is found in the famous work of Jalāl-ud-Dīn Seyuti, known as the Itqān. It tells us that Sūra Akhrāb, now containing seventy-two or seventy-three verses, was once equal to Sūra Bakr which contains two hundred and eighty-six verses. Thus it is seen that from this one Sūra alone over two hundred verses have absolutely disappeared.

There is also a well-known tradition of Ibn-Abbas to the effect that,

”قال سالت علي بن ابي طالب لم لم يكتب في براءة بسم الله الرحيم قال انها امان و براءة منزلت بالسيف و عن مالك ان اولها لما سقط مع البسم الله فقد ثبت انها كانت تعدل بقرة لطلوها *“

”He (Ibn-Abbas) said, 'I asked Ali-ibn-Abi Talib, why was not the Bismilla written in Sūra Barāt'. He said, 'Because the Bismilla is for faith, but Sūra Barāt was sent down for the sword (war). And there is a tradition from Mālik that when the first portion of Sūra Barāt was destroyed, then the Bismilla was lost with it; but if it had been proved, then verily it would have been equal in length to Sūra Bakr.'”

In the traditions collected by Muslim, in the book Al-Jakāt, there is a tradition to the effect that a Qurān reader named Abū-Mūsā-Ashāri addressing a number of Qurān readers at Busra said,

”انا كنا فقرء سورة كنا نشبهها في الطول و الشدة ببرائة فانيتها غير اني قد حفظت منها و كنا نقرا سورة كنا نشبهها باحد من السبحان فانيتها غير اني ند حفظت منها *“

”We used to read a Sūra equal in length and threatenings to Sūra Barāt, then I forgot it wholly except one verse and we also used to read another Sūra that was equal to one of the Musabbehāt; so I forgot that too, saving one verse which I recollect.” Needless to say, none of these chapters appears in 'Usmān's collection.

In the history of the famous traditionist Al-Bukhārī another tradition affirms the total loss of a large number of verses from Sūra Akhrāb. It runs as follows,

”و اخرج البخاري في تاريخه عن حذيفة قال قرآن سورة الاخراب علي النبي فنسيت منها سبعين اية ما وجدتها *“

”And Bukhārī has written in his history a tradition from Hazīfa that he said, I was reading Sūra Al-Akhrāb before the prophet, but I forgot seventy verses from it, and I did not obtain them (again).”

Yet one other tradition deserves to be inserted here before we bring this little book to a close. It concerns, not the past,

but the future history of the Qurān. It is related from Ibn-Māja (Chapter Jahab-al-Qurān and Al-Alam) as follows :

”عن حذيفته بن اليمان قال رسول الله علم يدرس الاسلام كما يدرس و شق الثوب حتي لا يدرك ما صيام ولا طهارة ولا نسك ولا عدته وليسري علي كتاب الله عز وجل في ليلته فلا يبق في الارض منه اية * “

“Hazifta ibn-Imān said, The prophet of God (on whom be blessing and peace) said, Islām will become worn out like the hem of an old garment, until (at last) people will not know what is the meaning of fasting, or prayer, or sacrifice or almsgiving; and in one night the word of God (Qurān) will disappear, and not a single verse of it will be left upon the Earth.”

We do not intend to comment further on the traditions we have quoted above. They are sufficient to reveal to every open-minded truth-seeker the present condition of the Qurānic text. Muslims are generally taught to believe that the Qurān has been Divinely protected from all change. Indeed the Qurān itself makes this weighty claim in these words :

“We have surely sent down the Qurān, and we will certainly preserve the same (from corruption)”.

Whilst in another place we read,

“This book, the verses whereof are guarded against corruption,...is a revelation from the wise and knowing God.” The same preposterous claim is made in the traditions; and in the book *Fazail-ul-Qurān* we read, “Even if the Qurān were cast into the fire, it would not be burned” !

Let the reader judge of the value of these claims for the integrity of the Qurān in the light of the testimony from Muslim authors which has been adduced in this little book, and he will see that in claiming to be Divinely protected from

all change the Qurān condemns itself, and proves its human origin. The reader desiring further information on this important topic may procure from the Panjab Tract Society, Lahore, the following Urdu publications : *Hidāyat-ul-Muslimin*, *Minār-ul-Haqq*, *Mizān-ul-Haqq*, *Tahqiq-ul-Imān*, *Taḥrīf-i-Qurān* and *Tawīl-ul-Qurān*. Let the reader, then, with all earnestness, pursue the study of this all-important subject; for those whose opinions and comments we have quoted are the foremost of the scholars of Islām, and their testimony cannot lightly be set aside. We have seen what men like Kāzī Baizāwi, Imām Husain, Muslim, Bukhārī and Jallāl-ud-Dīn have to say with regard to the Qurān. We have seen how, even in the life-time of Muhammad himself, grave differences arose in the various readings of the Qurān; we have traced the history of the unsuccessful attempts made to reduce them all to one uniform text; we have noted how gravely the recension of ‘Uṣman differed from that of Abū Bakr and the copy of Ibn-Ma’sūd; and we have seen, upon the testimony of the greatest commentators of the Qurān, how the present text contains “innumerable” differences of reading, many of which entirely alter the meaning of the passages concerned; and, finally, we have noted the consensus of testimony, afforded by the traditions, to the fact that large portions of the Qurān have disappeared altogether. Such being the case, surely it is the highest wisdom for Muslims to turn to that scripture in the hands of the ‘People of the Book’ which Muhammad himself commanded men to believe and follow. Manifestly they were uncorrupted at the time of the Arabian preacher, as his repeated references to them clearly show; and that they have not been corrupted since that time is equally certain; for copies still exist in the great Museums of Europe which were written long before the time of Muhammad, and these agree with the Gospels current to-day.

Let the reader, ere he closes this little book, consider carefully the Qurānic passage which adorns the title page. It is there written, "Ask those who are acquainted with the scripture, if ye know not." Then is it not your highest wisdom, O Muhammadan reader, to follow this teaching of the Qurān, and seek in the Gospels the way of eternal life? Not only are Muslims in general thus advised to seek a solution of their doubts by a reference to Christians; but the Qurān pictures Muhammad himself as receiving the same admonition. In Sūra Jonas, verse 92, it is written,

”فَإِنْ كُنْتَ فِي شَكٍّ مِمَّا أَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ فَسْأَلِ الَّذِينَ يُقْرَأُونَ
الْكِتَابَ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ *“

"If thou art in doubt concerning that which we have sent down unto thee (O Muhammad), ask them who are reading the Book before thee." We have seen, in the preceding pages, that there is ample reason to doubt the testimony of the Qurān as it exists to-day; let Muslims then, with fearless resolution, turn to the Gospels and learn from them of the wonderful love of God as revealed in Christ Jesus. Jesus Himself said, "Heaven and earth shall pass away; but my words shall not pass away." It is in the Injīl that we have the perfect revelation of the character and will of God; it is in the Injīl that we find revealed the way of eternal life; for it is there we learn that God so loved the world that He gave the Lord Jesus Christ, that whosoever believeth on Him might not perish, but have everlasting life. Reader, listen to the loving invitation of the Saviour Himself, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."