

News and Notes

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Members of the Missionaries to Muslims League.

Series XXI

March, 1933.

1st March = 4th Zu'l-Qa'dah (11th mo.), 1351, A.H.

"Dost thou believe on the Son of God."?

A CLOSE study of the narrative in which this question occurs (John, ch. 9) throws much light on the manner in which our Lord used to appeal for the allegiance of men. In the Greek the personal pronoun comes first in the sentence and yields a meaning something like this: "And you, do *you* believe on the Son of God?" There would seem to be, here, a delicate reference to the rough treatment this man had received at the hands of the Pharisees; for when he had stood up for the One who had given him sight they rounded on him with, "And so *you* would teach us—*you*, born in utter depravity!" (Moffat's trans. The pronoun here, too, is placed prominently). And Pharisees had not only ex-communicated the man, they had summed up Jesus also—"this fellow" (v. 29), "only a sinner" (v. 24).

It matters little for our immediate purpose which reading of the Greek MSS. at this place we retain—'Son of God,' or 'Son of Man.' Both, apparently, had wide currency at the beginning of the 3rd century, but the latter title, "Son of Man," has the weightier support and is, in all probability, the original.

The significance of either, in the question of Jesus, is that our Lord, under its cover, tried to find out whether the cured man considered the One who had healed him to be worthy of his confidence. That this is so is made abundantly clear in the recorded conversation. The man, who already knew that it was one "called Jesus" who had cured him (ver. 11), put another question: "And who is he ('Son of Man,' 'Son of God'), Sir, that I may believe on him?" Jesus said unto him: "Thou hast both seen him and he it is that speaketh to thee." At that he said, 'I believe, Lord,' and worshipped Him. Thus our Lord secured the information He desired. Lost to Judaism, the man had been won over, *on the merits of the case*, to the cause of Jesus, who was, now, his only refuge and staunch friend.

This conversation recalls another which also has a very distinct bearing on our present theme, *viz*: the question of John in prison and the manner of Christ's reply (Luke 7 : 18-23). John, in anxiety, sent through his disciples to inquire, "Art thou the Coming One, or are we to look out for another?" Here we see how our Lord put the onus of coming to a conclusion upon John himself: 'Go, tell John what ye have seen me doing and heard me saying.' What Jesus did *not* do was to reply: Go, and tell John that I am the 'Son of God' (or 'Son of Man'). Not that He disclaimed either title, but such a name and such a claim would not, just then, have settled the question for John. He had to reach an independent judgment *on the merits of the case*.

That, it seems to us, is the line we ought to take in preaching the Gospel to non-Christians, and especially to Muslims. In other words, we conceive the supreme business of the missionary to be the presentation of Jesus to men; not, first, to tell them what we think of Him, nor yet what we call Him, nor even what He is called in the Gospel records (the proper time will come for us to speak of these things). Jesus is to be 'lifted up' by us that He may draw men to Himself. In the words of Paul, we are to 'placard' Him before men—"this MAN Christ Jesus," Teacher, Healer, Friend of sinners, Crucified, Risen, Living.

We must give the non-Christian the opportunity to come freshly to Christ through the knowledge of His perfect manhood, looked at apart from dogma. Most of us from the West did not have that chance in our early years and this fact has, at times, created difficulties for us. Dogma properly follows, and never should precede, intimate knowledge of Christ.

For reasons already stated such a procedure need not make us unduly anxious. We are sent not to defend Christ (He needs no defence), but to commend Him. He will win men's allegiance, not on the ground of the high titles we may give Him, *but on His merits*. This was manifestly the case with His disciples. It was not His practice to speak of Himself as 'Son of God' in His early contacts—that would have been to bar the question of His significance before the matter had had a chance to be considered. "Who do men say that the Son of Man is?" (Mt. 16 : 13); "What think ye of Christ?" (Mt. 22 : 42), are questions intended to lead His followers to commit themselves to their own considered judgment *after* He had been some time with them. In other words, Peter's characterization of Jesus as 'The Christ, the Son of the Living God' was the fruit, not the foundation, of his faith in Him. And so it should always be. It is the most natural as well as the most reasonable way.

If this be so, then to expect the spiritually blind, or the prejudiced and fanatical Muslim to accept the statement (whether made on one's own initiative or in a rejoinder) that Jesus is the 'Son of God' is not only to court failure, it is to show plainly that one has not yet learned the quiet, preparatory method of the Master.

Both Jesus and Paul disclose to us the process whereby men came to give to Christ the Name that is above every name. When Peter made his 'great confession' Jesus was deeply moved and exclaimed: 'Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jonah! for it was my Father in heaven, not flesh and blood, that revealed this to thee' (cp. Moffat's trans. Mt. 16: 17). Paul uses precisely similar language to explain how he had come to the same conclusion: "It was the good pleasure of God to reveal His Son in me." (Gal. 1: 15).

But why *this* name, this title? Why not some other? Why still retain this? But can we think of a better? Consider what it signifies, or rather, first, what it does not signify. Jesus, is not 'Son of God' by virtue of the manner of His birth. If we can only get this fact indubitably clear for ourselves it will help us greatly on those occasions when the opportunity offers to talk over the matter quietly with Muslims.

Actually, this Messianic title came to have rich new meaning (i) because of Jesus' unique standing with God. Throughout those years when He moved about among them He was seen by His disciples to be related to God and to the power of God in an intimacy that was deeper, clearer, more all-embracing and all-absorbing than anything ever experienced by man. And as Dr. Moffatt has said: "When Jesus spoke of Himself as the Son of God or the Son of Man or Christ, He was conscious of a unity of will with God the Father which invested Him with resources and responsibilities infinitely larger than any enjoyed by the most godlike of our race." (Prologue to *Everyman's Life of Jesus*.) It was therefore only natural that this One, whose life was so bound up with God that He habitually spoke of Him as 'Father'—it was only natural that He should claim the relationship of 'Son'—only natural that His disciples should so speak of Him; natural, too, that we, in our day, cannot find for Him a more fitting or more comprehensive Name.

(ii) But such intimacy is only possible where there is *likeness of character*, and the Name holds this further significance—the *character of God* was, and is, revealed in the *character of Jesus*; the heart of the Father in the love of the Son. Jesus was 'Son of God' emphatically because He was ethically one with the Father. How much of the purpose and plan of God is acknowledged in the declaration: "the Son of God loved me and gave Himself for me"!

The fitting time to talk about such things with non-Christians is when God has already touched a man's heart through the fact of Christ. That is another point brought out by the prominence given to the pronoun in the question put by Jesus to the man who had been blind. "What do *you* think?; never mind about the Pharisees, do *you* believe?" God's Spirit was already at work in the man's heart and he needed only to be led on to know the Lord.

We ourselves need to have more *confidence* in this method of the Master. Let us do our part in that patience which is born of faith

and hope, and the Living Christ will certainly do His. "I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto myself;" and when He by His incomparable grace attracts men they do fall down before Him and worship Him. After all, our chief concern should not be about the *name* men give to Him, but whether they yield Him their unfeigned allegiance.

F. W. H. Myers expresses this truth so admirably:—

'Who that one moment has the least descried Him,
Dimly and faintly, hidden and afar,
Doth not despise all excellence beside Him,
Pleasures and powers that are not and that are,—

'Ay, amid all men bear themselves thereafter
Smit with a solemn and a sweet surprise,
Dumb to their scorn and turning on their laughter
Only the dominance of earnest eyes?'

An Authentic Letter of Henry Martyn.

REV. Wm. Carey, great-grandson of Carey of Serampore, has graciously loaned to The Henry Martyn School a letter, in original, by Henry Martyn. It is written on a large sheet of paper, 16in. x 10in., bearing a watermark CURTIS & SON 1803. The sheet for the purposes of the letter was folded in half, and the actual writing occupies pages 1—3. This four page document was folded down, for transmission, to the size of 5in. x 3½in. and the overlapping edges at the back were secured by the impress of a small oval seal on red sealing-wax. The front bears the inscription in Henry Martyn's handwriting: *Rev. Mr. Chamberlain, Cutwa*.* Postal clerks have added the place of destination in Bengali and Urdu, and the word *Insured*. Other hands have added the notes: *from H. Martyn* (in faint pencil), and *Mr. Martyn*.

We desire to share the contents of this precious epistle with our readers:

Danapoor, Dec. 6, 1806.

MY DEAR SIR,

I have so little to say about myself that I should hardly prevail upon myself to trouble you with a letter, had I not remembered a promise you obtained from me of hearing of my arrival at Danapoor. I found Mr. Creighton out without difficulty, or rather he found me by

* John Chamberlain had joined Carey, Marshman and Ward at Serampore in January, 1803. Henry Martyn arrived in Calcutta in May of the year in which he wrote this letter. The first man to welcome him to Bengal was William Carey. Ed. N. & N.

sending a man to meet me—and with him and his two friends I spent some days very agreeably. Without meeting with any thing remarkable afterwards, I arrived here by the gracious providence of God on the 26th of last month. I was able to distribute but few tracts by the way. Most were afraid, and of those who were willing, the generality refused the tracts when they saw they were in the *Deva nagree* character. Those in the Persian character were universally refused. A few *nagree* testaments I was happy to leave in the different places.

I find myself here in a sphere so vast that I cry out with unfeigned astonishment *who is sufficient for these things*, and am somewhat dispirited at finding myself at a stand; not knowing what course to take to acquire the language of the people—for the fine language of my Mussulman moonshee is as unintelligible as English to the country people, and I have very limited opportunities of being much with them as I cannot be absent a night from this station without permission from the Commr. in chief. However, these are small difficulties. Our great obstacle is the dominion which Satan has obtained over the hearts of men, and if the time is approaching for God to make them willing by his power, every valley shall be exalted and every mountain and hill shall be made low. As yet as far as I can pretend to judge, there is little or no appearance of the natives being a people prepared for the Lord—and yet through the supporting power of God, I think I am willing to continue throwing in the net at the Lord's command all the night of life, though the end may be that I shall have caught nothing. I hope and trust that want of success will not damp your spirits. Your labour is with the Lord and your work with your God. May he be with you in your solitude—and refresh your soul with foretastes of his glory—and whatever you suffer from depression of spirits know that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren which are in the world. John in the desert isle of Patmos could be in the Spirit, on the Lord's day and at other times too I daresay. So we though deprived of the solace of a Christian friend are not thereby cut off from the sweet presence of the Lord. Wishing you all success in the common cause and much divine consolation in your own soul I conclude by saying that I am

Your affectionate though unworthy fellow-labourer in the Gospel,
H. MARTYN.

A Survey of Existing Literature in Urdu for Muslims.

I.

IN accordance with our preliminary notice in the January issue we now publish the first instalment of the new Survey. This list aims at showing the material found to fall naturally under the first four heads of the *minimum programme*. It will be seen that, at present, sections 3 and 4

are practically not represented. We hope that something to meet the need will be forthcoming during the current year.

Following brief descriptive notes on each item we have added certain abbreviations in brackets, the explanations of which are as follows:—

M. Specially written for Muslims. E. Also available in English.

S. Suitable for Muslims. W. from *What God hath Used* (Nile Mission Press, Cairo. 3s.)

PR. To be had from Punjab Religious Book Society, Lahore.
250 (etc) number of copies in stock.

I. LIVES OF CHRIST.

1. *Haqiqi Dost*. (The Best Friend). Bevan Jones. 1932, 2nd ed., (total 10,000), 96 pp., $4\frac{3}{4} \times 7\frac{1}{4}$. One anna. Compiled from the Gospels. A continuous narrative in 10 chapters, in simple, chaste and legible Urdu. [M.E.PR. 4,000].

2. *Khushi Khabari*. (Glad Tidings). 1932, 2nd ed., (total 10,000), 68 pp., $4\frac{3}{4} \times 7\frac{1}{4}$. Two pice. Compiled from the Gospels. Four chapters in the words of Scripture. Clear type [PR. 3,000].

3. *Malik-ul-Muhabbat*. (The King of Love). Padwick. 1926, 1st ed., (5,000), 154 pp., $7\frac{1}{4} \times 9\frac{1}{2}$. Plain, paper covers, 8 as. With Copping's coloured pictures: paper, 12 as., stiff boards, 1-0-0; cloth, 1-4-0. Written in large clear type for boys and girls. The Urdu is, in places, difficult for children. [M.PR. 4,000].

BOOKS ABOUT CHRIST.

4. *Ek Tarikhi Waqi'a aur uska Ikhlaqi Natija*. (A historical Fact and its Moral Effect). Trans. of Arabic lecture by Upson, Cairo, 1926, 1st ed., (5,000) 32 pp., $4\frac{3}{4} \times 7$. Two pice. For thoughtful readers. Deals with the Fact of Christ; His characteristics; and influence on His followers. [M.W.PR. 3,600].

5. *Haqiqat-ul-Masih*. (The Fact of Christ). Carnegie Simpson's popular book, trans., by the late Padri Talibuddin. 1907, 1st ed., (1,000), 168 pp., $5\frac{1}{4} \times 8\frac{1}{2}$. Reduced to 4 as. In large clear writing. A real bargain. [S.E.PR. 350].

6. *Isa ki Sirat*. (The Character of Christ). Trans. of Horace Bushnell's essay. 1930, 5th ed., (total c. 5,000), 48 pp., $4\frac{3}{4} \times 7$. One anna. A valuable study. [S.PR. 2,800].

7. *Khudawand ki Mulaqaten*. ('Picturesque Interviews with Jesus'). Rollin H. Walker, trans. by B. L. Rallia Ram. 1930, 215 pp., $4\frac{3}{4} \times 7\frac{1}{4}$. Illustrated, large 'type.' Stiff covers, 8as. Cloth 12 as. [S.E.PR. 360].

8. *Masih ke Nam*. (The Names of Christ). Zwemer. 1930, 2nd ed., (total 10,000), 16 pp., $4\frac{3}{4} \times 7\frac{1}{4}$. One pice. The names and titles of Christ in the Quran, expounded by 99 names given to Him in the Bible. [M.W.PR. 4,000].

9. *Masih Mazhab ki Sadaqat*. ('Christ and Christianity'), B. B. Roy. 1916, 2nd ed., (total 4,000), 24 pp., $4\frac{3}{4} \times 6\frac{1}{4}$. One pice. Deals with the character and claims of Christ. [S.PR. 250].

10. *Guldasta-i-Injil*. (A Gospel Bouquet). James Dayal. n/d. 1st ed., (1,000), 38 pp., $5\frac{1}{4} \times 8\frac{1}{2}$. 4 as. An attempt to render the Gospel story in popular verse. Part I, up to Matthew's call. Has not been completed. [S.P.R. 100].

II. O.T. NARRATIVES.

11. *Masnawi Yusufstan*. (The Story of Joseph in Verse). Kedar Nath Minnat. n/d. 10 pp., $6\frac{1}{2} \times 9\frac{3}{4}$. Six pice. Composed by a leading Indian Christian poet. [S.P.R. 75]

12. *Hayat-i-Daud*. (The Life of David). Rev. F. B. Meyer. Trans. by M. L. Rallia Ram, 1906, 1st ed. (1,000), 190 pp., $5\frac{1}{4} \times 8\frac{1}{2}$. Reduced to 4 as. The Urdu needs to be revised. [S.P.R. 600].

13. *Ribqah*. (Rebecca). L.T. Mead's Series *Voices out of the Past*, No. III. Trans. by Md. Ismail, 1904, 1st ed., (1,000), 40 pp., $4\frac{3}{4} \times 6\frac{1}{4}$. Two pice. For women; the Urdu might with advantage be revised. [S.P.R. 230].

14. *Halat-un-Nisa-i-Sabiqah*. (Women of Olden Time, Part I.) Miss M. R. Greenfield, 1879, 1st ed., (2,000), 148 pp., 5×8 . One anna. For women; the Urdu needs to be revised. [S.P.R. 325].

15. *Waqi'at-i-Buzurgan-i-Baibal*. (Story of the Patriarchs). 1922, 2nd ed., (total 2,000), 24 pp., $4\frac{1}{4} \times 5\frac{1}{4}$. Illustrated, one anna. For children; the language and the writing should be improved. [S.P.R. 800].

16. *Musa ka bachpan*. (Childhood of Moses). Trans. by E. P. Janvier, 1926, 1st ed., (2,000), 32 pp., 5×7 . One anna. For children and young people: an English drama rendered into easy Urdu. [S.P.R. 200].

17. *Musa ki hikayat*. (The Story of Moses), 1922, 2nd ed., (total 2,000), 24 pp., $4\frac{1}{4} \times 5\frac{1}{4}$. Illustrated, one anna. For children; the language and the writing should be improved. [S.P.R. 650].

18. *Drama Yusuf*. (Joseph and his brothers), Dayal Chand, 1931, 1st ed., (1,000), 40 pp., $4\frac{3}{4} \times 7$. 4 as. For children and young people; in the form of an interesting drama. [S.P.R. 800].

III. INSTRUCTION FOR INQUIRERS.

19. *Muntakhabat-i-Baibal*. (Selections from the Bible). 1879, 2nd ed., (total 2,000), 200 pp., $3\frac{1}{2} \times 5\frac{3}{4}$. Cloth cover, one anna. A dainty manual, printed on rice paper; intended to inform inquirers concerning the teaching of the Bible on God, man, sin, salvation, etc. Needs revision in line with new translation of the Scriptures. [S.P.R. 188].

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NOTE.—It is hoped that there will shortly be issued an Urdu translation of the *Book of Instruction for Catechumens*, containing graded lessons in the Life and Teaching of Christ for inquirers, by the late Canon W. H. T. Gairdner and Miss Padwick (Cairo). The English edition of this work can be obtained from P.R.B. Society, Anarkali, Lahore. Re. 1-8-0, plus postage.

IV. CHRIST THE CONQUEROR OF FEAR.

NOTE—The staff of the Henry Martyn School have undertaken to adapt, for use in India, a series of leaflets under this general title, prepared by Rev. J. L. Macintyre, C.M.S. Missionary in Nigeria, Egypt and Transjordan.

NOTE.

H. M. S. Course, Darjeeling.—Those who purpose attending the Course will receive more help from the lectures if they can manage to read *The People of the Mosque* in the interval. We are glad to report that about a dozen persons, connected with nine different societies, have expressed their intention to join.

For Prayer.

PRAYER is requested for a highly-educated man holding a prominent position in the Muslim community, though at heart a Christian—that he may be given courage to declare himself, and that a sphere of usefulness may be found for him. (India.)

PRAY for the Extension Course of the Henry Martyn School to be held in Darjeeling in the months of May and June, that much blessing may be derived by the students.

NEW MEMBERS.

Rev. Geo. Wilson,	I.P.M.	Ahmedabad, Bombay.
Rev. J. W. Bowman,	A.P.M.	Saharanpur, U.P.
Rev. M. R. Ahrens,	A.P.M.	Lahore.
Miss M. V. Hunter,	The College	Ilkley, Yorks (Eng.)
Miss B. Kidgell,	C.E.Z.M.	Ernakulam, Cochin.

Any notification of change of address, names of new members or remittance of subscription, etc., should be sent to the Superintendent, Orissa Mission Press, Cuttack, India, and NOT to the Secretary of the League. The annual subscription to the League is Rs. 2-0-0 (English 3s. od.).

Matters of interest to members of the League, items of news and requests for prayer should be sent (if possible, early in the month) to the Hony. Secretary:—

Rev. L. Bevan Jones,
5, Egerton Road,
Lahore,
Panjab, India.