

of them "believed in a Creator and a creation, but denied Allah's prophets and worshipped false gods, concerning whom they believed that in the next world they would become mediators between themselves and Allah." And Ibn Hisham, the earliest biographer of Mohammed whose work is extant, admits that the tribes of Kinanah and Koreish used the following words when performing the pre-Islamic ceremony of *ihlal*:<sup>1</sup> "We are present in thy service, O God. Thou hast no partner except the partner of thy dread. Thou ownest him and whatsoever he owneth."

As final proof, we have the fact that centuries before Mohammed the Arabian Kaaba, or temple at Mecca, was called *Beit-Allah*, the house of *God*, and not *Beit-el-Alihet*, the house of idols or gods. Now if even the *pagan* Arabs acknowledged Allah as supreme, surely the Hanifs (that band of religious reformers at Mecca which rejected all polytheism and sought freedom from sin by resignation to God's will) were not far from the idea of the Unity of God. It was henotheism<sup>2</sup> in the days of paganism; and the Hanifs led the way for Mohammed to preach absolute monotheism. The Koran often calls Abraham a Hanif and stoutly affirms that he was not a Jew or a Christian (Surahs 2:129; 3:60, 89; 6:162; 16:121, etc.). Among the Hanifs of Mohammed's

<sup>1</sup>*Sirat*, Part II., p. 27.

<sup>2</sup>"The adoration of one god above others as the specific tribal god."—C. P. Tiele.