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BOOK WRITTEN BY DR. KARIMULLAH ZIRVI

HOLY PROPHET OF ISLAM HADHRAT MUHAMMAD MUSTAFA

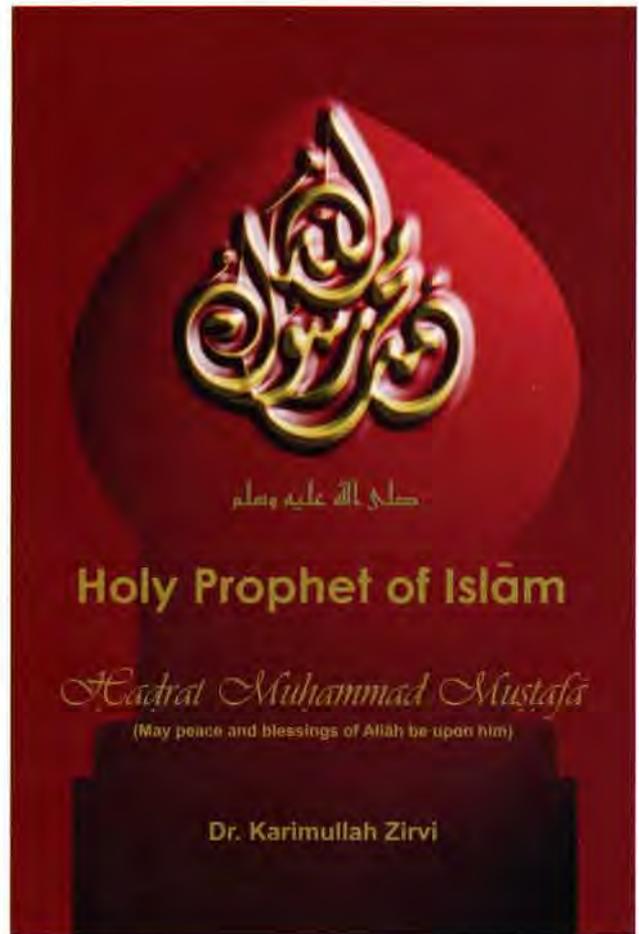
(May peace and blessings of Allah be upon him)

Foreword to the book written by Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih V^{aba}

Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih V^{aba} writes:

"It gives me great pleasure to introduce this book written with painstaking research and a grand effort by the author on the life of Muhammad, the Holy Prophet of Islam, may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him. It is a most welcome addition for the English speaking world to better understand the life and teachings of Muhammad peace and blessings of Allah be upon him...

...it is our obligation to make manifest in the English language the life and excellent example of the Holy Prophet of Islam, may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, so that the maximum number of people in the English speaking world should become aware of his life and his character...



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Acronyms for salutations used in this publication

saw:	sallallahu alaihi wasallam (Peace and Blessing of Allah be upon him)
as:	alaihissalam (Peace be upon him)
ra:	radhi allahu 'anhu (May Allah be pleased with him/her)
rh:	rahimahullahu ta'ala (May Allah shower mercy on him/her)
aba:	ayyada hullah ta'ala binasrihil aziz (May Allah strengthen him with His mighty help)
swt:	subhana wa ta'ala (Holy and Exalted)

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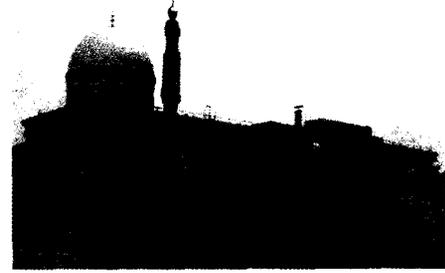


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Al-Qur'an

فَمَنْ تَمَتَّعَ بِالْعُمْرَةِ إِلَى الْحَجِّ فَمَا اسْتَيْسَرَ مِنَ الْهَدْيِ فَمَنْ لَمْ يَجِدْ
فَصِيَامُ ثَلَاثَةِ أَيَّامٍ فِي الْحَجِّ وَسَبْعَةٍ إِذَا رَجَعْتَ تِلْكَ عَشْرَةٌ كَامِلَةٌ
ذَلِكَ لِمَنْ لَمْ يَكُنْ أَهْلَهُ حَاضِرِي الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ

He who would avail himself of the *Umrah* together with the Pilgrimage, should make whatever offering is easily available. But such of you as cannot find an offering should fast three days during the pilgrimage, and seven when you return home; these are ten complete. This is for him whose family does not reside near the sacred mosque. (2:197)

COMMENTARY

The *Umrah* and the *Hajj* may be combined in two ways (a) The pilgrim who intends to perform the *Umrah* alone should enter the state of the *Ihram* and perform its rites and finish it. Then on the eighth day of *Dhul Hijjah* he should again enter into the state of *Ihram* and perform the prescribed rites of *Hajj*. This form of combining the *Umrah* and the *Hajj* is technically called '*Tamattu*' which literally means, 'availing oneself of a thing', (b) The pilgrim may perform the *Umrah* and the *Hajj* simultaneously, He should, in this case, enter into the state of *Ihram* with that intention and should remain in that state till the end of the pilgrimage. This combination of *Hajj* and *Umrah* is called *Qiran* which literally means, 'the putting together of two things'. In both '*Tamattu*' and *Qiran* it is obligatory to offer the sacrifice. In the verse under comment the word '*Tamattu*' is not used in the technical sense and covers *Qiran* also.

Fasting is mentioned in the clause, should fast three days during the Pilgrimage is distinct and separate from the fasting mentioned above. The first-mentioned fasting is meant for those who cannot shave their heads while this fasting is meant for those who are unable to offer sacrifice in case of '*Tamattu*'. The three days spoken of are preferably the 11th, 12th and 13th of *Dhul Hijjah*. The remaining seven fasts may be observed after one has returned home.

The words mean that the permission to combine *Hajj* and *Umrah* is meant not for the residents of Mecca but for those who come from outside. By some, however, the words "the Sacred Mosque" have been extended to include the whole of *Haram*, i.e., the sacred territory in and around Mecca.

Al-Hadith

Prayers for Acquiring Useful Knowledge

Hadhrat Abu Hurairah ^{ra} has related this prayer of the Holy Prophet ^{sa}:

اللَّهُمَّ انْفَعْنِي بِمَا عَلَّمْتَنِي ، وَعَلِّمْنِي مَا يَنْفَعُنِي ، وَزِدْنِي عِلْمًا ، الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ عَلَى كُلِّ
حَالٍ وَأَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنْ حَالِ أَهْلِ النَّارِ -

O Allāh! Let me benefit from the knowledge You have taught to me and teach me such knowledge which is beneficial to me and increase me in knowledge. All praise, in all circumstances, belongs to Allāh. I seek protection of Allāh from the condition of the inmates of the Fire.

(Tirmidhi Kitabudda'wat, Ibni Majah Kitabuddawat)

Hadhrat Ummi Salamah ^{ra} relates that when the Holy Prophet ^{sa} observed the *Fajr* Prayer, he used to supplicate the following at the end of the Prayer:

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ عِلْمًا نَافِعًا ، وَرِزْقًا طَيِّبًا ، وَعَمَلًا مُتَقَبَّلًا -

O Allāh! I seek from You beneficial knowledge and pure provision, and deeds that will be accepted.

(Ibni Majah Kitab Iqamatas-Salat)

Hadhrat Zaid bin Arqam ^{ra} relates that the Holy Prophet ^{sa} used to supplicate:

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ عِلْمٍ لَا يَنْفَعُ وَمِنْ قَلْبٍ لَا يَخْشَعُ وَمِنْ نَفْسٍ لَا تَشْبَعُ وَمِنْ
دَعْوَةٍ لَا يُسْتَجَابُ لَهَا -

O Allāh! I seek Your protection from the knowledge which does not benefit; the heart which does not have (Your) fear, the body which does not satiate and the supplication which is unacceptable.

(Muslim Kitabuddu'a')

SAYINGS OF THE PROMISED MESSIAH^{AS}

Blessings of Islam

I would now wish to enlarge upon the fruits of Islam. When a true seeker of God establishes himself fully on Islam and every one of his faculties begins to tread naturally upon the paths of God Almighty without any kind of artificiality, the ultimate result of his effort is that the higher manifestations of Divine guidance, freed from all obstructions, are directed towards him. Diverse types of blessings descend upon him. The commandments and doctrines, which were accepted on faith and as hearsay, are now experienced by him as realities and certainties through true visions, and definite and unambiguous revelation. The mysteries of the faith and the law are revealed to him and he is afforded a view of the Divine kingdom so that he should arrive at the stage of perfect certainty and understanding. A blessing characterises his tongue and his words and all his actions and his movements. He is bestowed extraordinary courage and steadfastness and his understanding is expanded at a high level.

The narrowness of human obstructions, meanness, miserliness, the tendency towards frequent stumbling, short-sightedness, proneness towards passion, lowliness of behaviour and every darkness of his ego are totally removed from him and he is filled with the light of Divine attributes. Thereupon, he undergoes an entire change and puts on the garment of a new birth. He hears through God Almighty, sees through Him, moves with Him and stops with Him. His anger becomes the wrath of God Almighty, and his compassion becomes the compassion of God Almighty.

When he arrives at that stage, his prayers are heard as a mark of his having been chosen, and not merely as a trial; and he becomes the proof of God on earth and personifies security from God. There is joy in heaven on his account and the highest gift that is bestowed upon him is the word of God which descends upon his heart free from any doubt, like the light of the moon shining through without any mistiness. It carries an effective sense of delight with it and bestows satisfaction, comfort and security. The difference between this converse with God and revelation is that revelation is like a perennial spring that flows continuously to the chosen ones of God. They speak with the Holy Spirit, hear through it, and all their desires are born of the Holy Spirit. It is an absolute certainty that they become the reflection of the verse:

وَمَا يَنْطِقُ عَنِ الْهَوَىٰ ۗ
إِلَّا وَحْيٌ يُوحَىٰ ۗ

Nor does he speak out of *his own* desire. It is nothing but *pure* revelation that has been revealed by God (53: 4-5).

But converse with God is different. It means that the word of God descends upon them like a continuous revelation. They hear the response to their questions from God such as a friend receives from a friend. We can only define it by saying that it is a special manifestation of God the Glorious, which is conveyed through a favourite angel. Its purpose is to give intimation of acceptance of prayer, or to communicate a new or secret matter, or to make aware of something that is to happen in the future, or to convey God's pleasure or lack of it concerning any matter, or to create certainty and understanding concerning some matter. It is a Divine voice that manifests itself in the form of converse in order to create understanding and satisfaction. It is not possible to define it any more than to say that it is a voice which proceeds from God and is experienced in delicious words full of blessings, which is not induced by any thinking or reflection or any intrusion of self and is surcharged with a Divine manifestation and Divine majesty.

[Ayena-i-Kamalat-i-Islam, Roohani Khaza'in, Vol. 5, pp. 226-233]

I believe in Islam alone as a true religion and consider all other faiths as bundles of falsehoods. I perceive that by believing in Islam fountains of light are coursing through me. Through the love of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him), I have arrived at that high stage of converse with the Divine and of acceptance of prayer which can only be achieved by a follower of the true Prophet and by no other. If the Hindus and the Christians and others were to supplicate their false gods, even unto death, they could not achieve that stage.

I hear the words of God, which the others believe in only as a theory. I have been shown and have been told and have been made to understand that Islam alone is the true faith in the world, and it has been disclosed to me that I have received all this through the blessing of following the *Khatamul Anbiya* (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) and that the equal of it cannot be achieved in any other religion for they are all false.

[Ayena-i-Kamalat-i-Islam, Roohani Khaza'in, Vol. 5, pp. 275-276]

HADITH

Hadhrat Abdullah bin Abbas^{ra} relates that the Holy Prophet^{saw} related that Allah the Blessed and Exalted informed him that He had defined and clearly explained good and evil. Therefore, whoso intended to do a good deed but did not do it, Allah the Blessed and Exalted counts it as a complete virtue, and if he intended to do it and carried it out, Allah the Most Honoured and Glorious rewards him from ten to seven hundred times and even many more times. And if he intended to commit an evil but did not carry it out, Allah the Exalted counts it as a complete virtue, but if he carried it out then Allah counts it as a single evil.

Muslim kitabal Iman bab idha hammal 'abdu bi hasanatin

Summary of the Friday Sermon Delivered by Hadhrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad, Khalifatul Masih V^{aba}, on September 11, 2009

On 11th September 2009, Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih V^{aba} delivered the Friday Sermon at Baitul Futuh Mosque, London.

After reciting verse 22 of *Surah Al-Hashr*, which is translated as follows:

“If We had sent down this Qur’an on a mountain, thou wouldst certainly have seen it humbled and rent asunder for fear of Allah. And these are Similitudes that We set forth for mankind that they may reflect.” (59:22)

Hazoor^{aba} said: Some people’s hearts become So hardened that the Holy Qur’an no longer inspires them and they lose sight of the hereafter. In *Surah Al-Baqarah*, Allah says that if you do not fear Him your hearts will also become hardened You must, therefore, free yourself from the clutches of Satan and soften your hearts with the remembrance of Allah.

Hazoor^{aba} spoke about the situation of Ahmadis in Pakistan and asked the *Jama’at* to pray for them and for the country.

Hazoor^{aba} Said: No One can win Allah’s love and approbation without fulfilling two conditions. The first is to give up pride and arrogance and adopting humility and meekness. And the second is to give Allah precedence over all other relationships and friendships.

Hazoor^{aba} said: In order to attain the love of Allah and His Prophet^{saw} it is essential that you attach yourself to the *Imam*. If you do so, you will find that you are honored everywhere and that you are able to grasp the meaning and exegesis of Divine word. The Holy Qur’an is a compendium of all verities which manifest themselves as and when mankind needs them. The Holy Prophet^{saw} says: “One who recites the Holy Qur’an and acts upon it, in heaven his parents will be given crowns that will shine brighter than the sun.” From this we can imagine what his own status would be. The Holy Qur’an is the perfect book and its teachings are in keeping with human abilities.

Hazoor^{aba} said: The teachings of the Holy Qur’an are for all times to come. It encompasses the knowledge of all books and all verities. It explains itself and provides guidance for every occasion. It is a sign whichever way we may look at it. Whoever reads it and acts upon it is guided by God on the right path.

The Promised Messiah^{as} says: “Leave all other books and read the Qur’an alone. He is without faith who does not care for the Holy Qur’an and is ever bent over other books. Our *Jama’at* should busy themselves with the recitation and understanding of the holy Qur’an. If you carry the weapon of the Holy Qur’an, the victory shall be yours. No darkness will be able to withstand its light.” May Allah enable us to do so. In the end Hazoor^{aba} spoke about the sad demise of Muhammad Tariq Islam Sahib, who had been serving as missionary of the *Jama’at* in Canada. Hazoor^{aba} led his *Janaza Gha’ib* after the *Jumu’ah* Prayer.

Eighty Nine Years Ago in The Daily Al-Fazl, June 25, 1920

THE PRINCIPLES OF QURA'NIC UNDERSTANDING

From the writings of:
Hadhrat Mirza Bashirud Din Mahmood Ahmad
Khalifatul Masih II^{ra}

Muhammad Idris Chaudhry, Valdosta, GA

A cleric who was not a member of the Ahmadiyya Community in his letter to Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih II^{ra} presented a question regarding the principles of Qur'anic exegesis and understanding.

Hazoor responded by dictating the following:

I am very glad to learn of your desire to become knowledgeable about the principles of Qur'anic understanding. If it was possible to set aside principles of the kind that would have no room for doubt, and remove all the incongruence then the companions of the Holy Prophet^{saw} would have no difference of opinion while deriving meanings of the noble Qur'an, nor would the leaders of Islam have differed from one another. However, if you are implying the principles of such sort if they are applied by a sincere and well intentioned person

to become abreast of the issues related to the principles of the noble Qur'an; and about the branches (of Islam) his step is at such a station that after reaching there he is left with no incongruence that would cause defect in his belief, or cause no hurdle in acquiring nearness to Allah the Most High; then without a doubt such principles are at hand. Their proof is found in the noble Qur'an.

First and Second Principles

That which we learn from the noble Qur'an is that the noble Qur'an is revealed in Arabic language. Therefore, when deriving meanings from the noble Qur'an, it should be kept in mind that they are in accordance with the lexicon and phraseology of Arabic. If the meanings we have come up with are against the lexicon and phraseology of

Arabic then such meanings cannot be correct. Thus, here we discover two principles, first, the meanings of the noble Qur'an we have come up with should not be against the lexicon.

Secondly, they are not contrary to the phraseology prevalent among the Arabs.

Third Principle

For the purposes of exegesis of the noble Qur'an we learn from the noble Qur'an that the works of Allah the Most High are not senseless.

Wa Ma Khaluktussamawat...

We have not created the heavens...

None of the words of the noble Qur'an neither any arrangement of the words of the noble Qur'an is devoid of meanings. Any person who says that a certain word of the noble Qur'an is extra or concludes that a certain arrangement of the words is

wrong, he is indeed farthest from real truth. He cannot possess understanding of the meanings of the noble Qur'an.

Fourth Principle

We learn from the noble Qur'an that there is no discrepancy found in the noble Qur'an. The ignorant out of their ignorance say that what is revealed by Allah the Most High should have only "much discrepancy". This is a wrong notion that what is revealed by Allah the Most High therein even a little bit of discrepancy is not permissible. They are deceived from the words of much discrepancy. Allah the Most High also says that:

*Wa ma ana bay zallamin
lilabeed*

Allah the Most High is not unjust to His servants.

It does not mean that Allah the Most High is neither a lot of nor a little bit of unjust.

Fifth Principle

We learn from the noble Qur'an that Allah the Most High is a Powerful being and not a machine. As have the philosophers promulgated the thought that in order to understand the reality of His works it is essen-

tial to keep in mind all of His attributes.

At the time meanings are ascribed to the noble Qur'an if all of His attributes are not collectively considered and their mutual relatedness is not kept in sight then might err in understanding the meanings of the noble Qur'an.

Sixth Principle

The noble Qur'an tells us that some of its parts are firm and decisive in their meanings (*Muhkamat*), while the others are susceptible to different interpretations (*Mutashabayhat*) The later should be made subservient to the foregoing. Some people have faced reluctance when deriving meanings from decisive and susceptible parts. In my opinion, meant from decisive are such verses meanings of which receive support from other verses. If you change them it brings about change in the principles governing religion. Thus, their meanings can be only one. By saying one it does not mean that a second meaning cannot be deduced, rather what it means is that all the meanings derived will have the same substance running through them. Meant from susceptible to different interpretations are those verses for

which two meanings are possible. One of the meanings is opposite to the other and under the situation both meanings are not acceptable. In such a situation we are enjoined that in the verses having two meanings which cannot be acceptable at the same time, they should be combined with those verses in which similar kind of content has been described.

Two meanings that are contrary cannot be lifted.

Seventh Principle

This too becomes apparent from the noble Qur'an that it is revealed under a distinct system. Therefore, when deriving meanings must keep an eye on afore-context, aft-context, and the verses that preceded and followed.

Eighth Principle

The meanings that the noble Qur'an itself states they will take precedence over all the rest. At some of the places the noble Qur'an itself has told the meanings.

Ninth Principle

The noble Qur'an tells us that one of the tasks of the Holy Prophet^{saw} is ,

Yu allaymu humul kitaba

Therefore, the meanings that the Holy Prophet has given out will take precedence over all the others.

Tenth Principle

We learn from the noble Qur'an that it is essential for the Muslims coming after the earlier followers of the Holy Prophet^{saw} to follow their example. Therefore, their discourse will be given added respect compared to the wisdom expressed by other people.

Eleventh Principle

In the noble Qur'an Allah the Most High says that each and every bit of the universe is His creation, and the noble Qur'an is described as His word. Between His word and His works there should be no discrepancy, Therefore, the meanings that stand opposite to the works of Allah the Most High will not be correct. In contrast only such meanings will be correct that are in accord with His works.

The topic is rather vast, however, I think, for a person gifted with understanding, this much should suffice.

{Translated from The Daily Al-Fazl, Rabwah, February 16, 2009}

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Qaseedah: A Welcome Address to the Advent of Masih Mau'ood^{as} By Naimatullah Shamas Wali^{rh} Muhammad Sharif Khan, Philadelphia

Saint Naimat Ullah Shamas Wali^{rh} lived in Kandahar, Afghanistan, in the 6th century *Hijra*. He foresaw in a vision the great happenings that would take place in the future, and described them in a long poem in the Persian language. The composition is popularly known as "*Naimat Ullah Wali's Qaseedah*." It foretells at length the great changes that would occur in socio-politico-religious spheres in India and countries there around. Maulvi Muhammad Ismael Shaheed acquired this Qaseedah and included it in his book (*Arbaeen fil Ahwallil Mahddeeyen*, published, November 1851, Calcutta).

The details of the coming events described in the *Qaseedah* exactly fall in the explanation of the Qur'anic *Ayah* 30:42:

ظَهَرَ الْفَسَادُ فِي الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ بِمَا
كَسَبَتْ أَيْدِي النَّاسِ لِيُذِيقَهُمْ بَعْضَ
الَّذِي عَمِلُوا لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ ۝

Corruption has appeared on land and sea because of what men's hands have wrought, that He may make them taste *the fruit* of some of their doings, so that they may turn back from evil. [30:42]

However, amid awesome socio-political upheavals occurring all over the world, the saint saw a glimmer of hope in the advent of a redeemer whose name he was told was to be **A H M A D**. Allah Almighty will prove the authenticity of the Promised Redeemer by the darkening of the sun and the moon, and by blessing him with an illustrious son, who will be like him, and will strive to establish Islam to its deserved high status. The love and devotion shown to the Promised Redeemer indicates that actually saint Wali^{rh} presents an *ode*: a welcome address to Hadhrat Masih Mau'ood^{as}.

The Promised Redeemer Hadhrat Masih Mau'ood^{as} in his book "*Nashan-i-Asmani*" (Heavenly Decree) quoted the full text of the Qaseedah and the testimonies of other saints prophesising the advent of a Redeemer in the 14th century *Hijra*. Hazoor^{as} gave special importance to *Naimat Ullah Wali's* poem by opening his book by quoting the poem in full, and translating and explaining some of its important parts himself.

The poem in the Persian language, consists of 55 stanzas. Hazoor^{as} translated and explained about half of the poem. When one reads through the poem with a pure heart and without preconceived doubts, they will definitely be guided to recognize the Promised Redeemer of our time.

We present the English translation of the Persian poem, preserving the English rendering of Hazoor's^{as} translations and explanations in Italics. (for the Persian text and Urdu translation of the *Qaseeda* please see *Al-Noor* USA June, 2009: 33-40).

In fact Saint *Wali's* poem is a welcome address to the advent of the Imam of our times Hadhrat Masih Mau'ood^{as} as was foretold in the Bible (Isaiah 42) and other scriptures.

The Poem

1. I see with the blessed help of the all powerful God what will happen in the future.
2. *What I write is not from knowledge gained by reading stars rather it is from what is revealed to me by God Almighty.*
3. I see chaos, disturbances and wars in Egypt, Syria and Iraq.
4. I see the rich and poor, everyone in a wretched condition.
5. I hear strange pathetic stories from all around, full of grief and sorrow.
6. I see pillage, murder, and invasion of armies in the East and West.
7. I see people with little knowledge being honoured as teachers and scholars.
8. I see faith and religion weak and defenceless, while heretics are proud of their heresies.
9. I see sincere friends of nations deep in sorrow and dejected at the plight of their peoples.
10. I see the public unconcerned at the dismissals and appointments of the public servants.
11. I see Turks and Tajiks disputing with each other and fighting.
12. I see hypocrisy, deceit and guile everywhere, among high and low.
13. I see peace in shambles in places which were once an abode of peace, the mosques and shrines, instead evil issues out of them.
14. I see only hilltops peaceful.
15. Despite the utterly sad conditions all around, I see a glimmer of hope in the news of joy which consoles me.
16. I see after some years the world will be beautified as a bride.
17. I see a majestic graceful king who knows the wisdom of past and future.
18. I do not daydream what I am describing, rather these are the interpretations of what is revealed to me.
19. *As twelve hundred years would pass, I see strange things happening all over the world, it*

means with the start of 12th century Hijra, great upheavals will start occurring in the world.

20. *During the 13th century, reformation and righteousness will disappear. Dusty storms of mischief and discontentment will blow, the rust of sin will spread, sympathy will disappear, and enmities between people will grow. One should not be disappointed and grieved at this state of affairs.*
21. *Darkness of oppression, injustice and violence will engulf countries. Rulers on ruled, kings on kings, partner on partner will extort. Justice will become rare.*
22. *Unrest will spread inside and around India. Wars and oppression, and tyranny will be on rampage everywhere.*
23. *Master will turn to slave and slave to master, the rich will turn destitute and destitute rich.*
24. *All that I foresee happening in future sickens my heart.*
25. *The Indian kingdom will fall and be replaced gradually by a less valued currency (less popular government).*
26. *I see great kings disputing each other authority.*
27. *I see the face of the moon blackened and the sun injured (eclipse of sun and moon).*
28. *I see that traders coming from far off countries are dejected and varied in the way, failing to reach destinations (because of the difficulties in the passage).*
29. *I see India wretched and Turkey rampaged by tyranny and destruction.*
30. *I see the world in the grip of famine, trees in orchards will bear no fruit.*
31. *Being dejected, I have no choice but to retire in seclusion putting my trust in God.*
32. *One should not be saddened by 13th century intrigues and misfortunes, as it is also the time when the beloved Redeemer will come. He will come when the 13th century mischief are at their height. He will bring God's blessings and kindness all over the world.*
33. *As the fall of the 13th century will come to a close, the Mujaddad of the 14th century will appear.*
34. *When his time will successfully come to an end, his son, who will be in his model and colour, will be his successor. It is destined that Allah Almighty will give him a pious son who will be in his colour. (It refers to my prophecy regarding birth of a son.)*
35. *It is destined that rich and kings will believe in him. Their love for him will make them honoured, raising their status in the world. It is according to my prophecy in which Allah Almighty told me: 'I will shower my Graces so much on you that kings will seek blessings from your clothes.' At another place it is said 'your friends and lovers will be blessed.'*
36. *I see him in my revelation that he belongs to a highly placed noble family. It is as is said in my*

prophecy written in 'Azala Auham':- **'God's vicegerent, a king who will be given a large territory and for him treasures of earth will be opened'** by kingdom here does not mean worldly kingdom, rather spiritual kingdom.

Footnote: In the scriptures it was prophesised that Christ will come as a king, but when he appeared as a poor and destitute man, the Jews outright negated him because he did not fulfil the apparent signs written in the scriptures.

37. He has prophetic qualities in body and soul, grandeur of prophethood is depicted in his personality. Knowledge and gentleness is his character, because he follows closely the foot steps of his mentor the Holy Prophet^{saw}. In form and character he has become like him. It is according to my revelation published in Braheen: **'Allah's fighter in the garb of Prophets.'**
38. His hand sparkles like a sword. I see him holding a sword, despite that the age of swords has gone. However, **'the sword' which was in the hand of Ali (may Allah bless his face), will be given to the Imam by Allah. His bright hand will do the work which was done by the sword in the early days, as if it is the hand of Ali who has reappeared.** It points to the fact that the Imam will be the **King of the Pen**, and his pen will work like a sword. This prophecy is an exact translation of my revelation published 10 years ago in Braheen Ahmadiyya: **"The Book of this saint is like the sword of Ali,"** exactly refers to me, so I am called **Ghazi** (victorious) at different places in Braheen Ahmadiyya."
39. He will refresh the religion and it will sprout out. It is according to the revelation noted at page 498, which translates, **'Islam will be proved supreme over all other religions through me.'** Then at page 491 of Braheen there is: **'God will not leave you, until the pure is distinguished from the impure.'**
40. The Promised Imam will live for 40 years from the day he is ordained. Now it should be noted that I was ordained by a revelation at the age of 40, and was given the glad tidings that I will live for nearly 80 years. So I have 40 years yet to call, of which 10 years have already passed (see Braheen Ahmadiyyah page 238). God has command over everything. As was with the Prophet Noah, the result of my calling to Allah are not yet evident, however, all the prophecies in this regard will be fulfilled at their destined time.
41. It points out that the Imam who will come at the start of the 14th century, will face opposition and rejection. At last the opponents will be sorry and dismayed at what they did. It points to the revelation published in "Nishan-i-Asmani" that is: **"I am the awarder of victories, I will give you victory, and you will see help coming from unexpected quarters. At that time people will fall in prostration crying: 'O our God! Forgive us, we were at fault.'**
42. I see the redeemer is God's hero, who will save friends and kill the enemies.
43. His advent will glorify religion and Islam will be populated by his efforts. The religion of Muhammad will be strengthened and purified. It is according to the revelation published 10 years ago in Braheen: **'Be happy that your time is nearing and the foot of the Muslims is now placed at a strong citadel.'** In another revelation: **'He it is who sent His messenger with guidance to establish His religion on all other religions'** see Braheen Ahmadiyya page 239 footnote.

44. I see the treasures of Chosroes and the wealth of Alexander wasted and is of no avail. Destitution and helplessness is everywhere (even great powers are economically bankrupted).
45. I see the Imam will redeem the world from all these difficulties to comfort humans.
46. *I read from the revelation that the name of the Imam will be Alif, Ha, Mim and Dal (A H M A D).*
47. *With the advent of the Imam the flow of the wind will start blowing in favour of Islam, and Islam will progress by leaps and bounds. Allah will pardon excesses and strengthen the faith of his followers. They will be planted by God, they will grow and their progeny will increase. They will become an honoured nation in the world. Accordingly the revelation written in Braheen 'and God will make your followers above your opponents till doomsday,' refers to the advent of the Imam. Islam will be purified and its status will be raised in the world. He who comes from God will be followed by Allah's blessings, though he will be preceded by famine and calamities which will come as God's warnings.*
48. *He will hold the office of Mahdi as well as the Messiah and both these attributes will be manifested in his life. This stanza clearly indicates that he will claim to have been appointed as Messiah by God, since for the last 1300 years to date nobody has ever claimed to be the **PROMISED MESSIAH** except me.*

Note: We have taken these few verses from long poem by Naimat Ullah Wali, it is advised that everybody should consult the full poem for his satisfaction. **May peace be upon him who follows the guidance.**

Rest of the Poem

49. I see the world converted to a big city, the justice of that king will reach to everybody.
50. I see the king and his seven ministers. The efficiency of his ministers is evident in the progress of his *Jama'at* (perhaps it refers to the seven departments of *Sadar Anjuman Ahmadiyyah* or the *Ameer Jama'at Ahmadiyyah* in the seven continents of the world?).
51. I see this beautiful man distributing the aromatic drink of the Unity of God all around the world.
52. I see the hearts of his opponents rusted, blunted and undependable, losing their sense of reasoning.
53. I see that jackals, sheep, lions and deer roam about together in the same meadow.
54. After the advent of the *Messiah* the Turkish Sultanate will weaken, its enemy Russia will not enjoy victory over its enemy for long. Soon the intoxication of its victory will fade away.
55. I see *Naimat Ullah* varied by the events occurring all around, retired in a secluded corner and resorting to prayer (**noble people have no option but to retire in peace of a corner and pray for the early advent of the Redeemer**).

HIDDEN TREASURES AND READING BOOKS

Naseer A. Tahir, MD

الَّذِي عَلَّمَ بِالْقَلَمِ ۗ

Who taught *man* by the pen
(96:5)

The Promised Messiah^{as} says:

“I have come to distribute the precious treasures hidden and buried for centuries: but only to those who yearn for it.”

The Promised Messiah^{as} further says:

“If you do not read my books at least three times, you have a kind of arrogance within you. (*Seeratul Mahdi*)

Having read these words first casually and then very carefully, and having pondered the importance of these messages, knowing very well that The Promised Messiah^{as} came to distribute these treasures of spirituality only to those who desire it, and feeling an immense need for these spiritual treasures, I finally decided that the days of procrastination are over and

I must acquire the habit of regular reading. I had always known it to be essential for learning and gaining knowledge, but like those students waking up suddenly by the jolt of approaching finals; I did it occasionally and only sporadically. The usual diversions in my life left me with little time for regular reading.

I knew all along that the smart and highly accomplished people planned their lives differently. They have an innate drive to acquire knowledge.

“The things I want to know are in books,” Abraham Lincoln said.

The Promised Messiah^{as} has admonished his followers:

About the book written by me, *Haqiqatul Wah-ee*, one who reads it word by word, I am sure, he or she will be bestowed upon a new knowledge about my status. He or she will not think of me same as he or she did before reading of the book. (*Al-Fazl. 5-09*)

The Promised Messiah^{as} has written over 80 books; over 15,000 pages. And there is more: what he said to his companions is preserved in *Malfoozat* and those are almost 5000 pages. Reading 20 pages daily — an easy task for many — will take me 1,000 days to finish reading all of 20,000 but only once. Reading them 3 times will take 3000 days: almost 10 years. It cannot be done by casual reading, I must read regularly. Once habitual I can finish the task at a greater pace.

It is not hard to acquire new habits; all it takes is consistency, something I learned over the course of the month of *Ramadan*. Waking up at early dawn for 30 days had the lingering effect on my sleeping habits. I was able to wake up for *Tahajjad* without the help of alarm clock for several days after *Ramadan*. The experts tell us that it takes six weeks to develop a habit and only two weeks to break it (except for the habits of addictions like smoking). The habit of

reading could become the most enjoyable habit. Smart people equate it to the Heavens:

“I always imagined that Paradise will be a kind of library,” said Jorge Luis Borges.

Allah expects Muslims to take care of their bodies to the best of their abilities. Obesity, weakness, and physical laziness are blameworthy afflictions. The benefits of regular exercise are well known, but many among us, out of sheer laziness and procrastination, neglect exercise of mind. Perhaps they should listen to Joseph Edison who said:

“Reading is to mind what exercise is to body.”

Reading regularly is important for gaining knowledge. All scholarly minds become so only from this single habit. Mark Twain expressed that thought best:

“The man who doesn’t read good books has no advantage over the man who can’t read.” And a similar opinion by Walt Disney:

“There is more treasure in books than in all the pirate’s loot on treasure Island.” Malcolm X confessed to this fact by saying:

“I have often reflected upon the new vistas that reading opened to me. I knew right there in the prison that reading had changed forever the course of my life. As I see it today, the ability to read awoke in me some long dormant craving to be mentally alive.”

Books are more easily available than any time before. with many available by just a click of a button. Our *Jama’at* website www.alislam.org has a host of books on its site written by The Promised Messiah~. all of the *Khulafa* and many of the Ahmadiyya scholars. Books are available in Urdu, English and Arabic. Some of us might like to join a library while others must buy their books for permanent possession. Internet sites like www.amazon.com have a star rating system to help a reader to choose a book from many available on the same topic.

While so many books on so many topics are available, what kind of books should one read? Perhaps a better question is what kind of books one should not read? A good admonishment comes from William Murray, he said:

‘A dose of poison can

do its work but once. A bad book can go on poisoning minds for generations.”

One should read books on all topics but obviously the “poisonous” books must be avoided. Hadhrat Mirza Bashir Ahrnad^{ra} relates that his father The Promised Messiah^{as} once admonished him, “being my son, you should never read novels.” (*Seeratul Mahdi* Vol 3 p241) It should be explained here that word “novel” refers to books of cheap romantic stories and it does not mean works of fiction in present day context.

Thinking about the precious treasures hidden in books of The Promised Messiah^{as} and their importance. I like what Francis Bacon, the English Philosopher said:

“Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few to be chewed and digested: that is, some books are to be read only in parts: others to be read, but not curiously: and some few to be read wholly, and with diligence and attention.”

Many of the most eloquent speakers owe their success to this single most important habit. For example, Henry Clay who ranked with them said:

“I owe my success in

life to one single fact, namely, that at an early age I commenced and continued for some years the practice of daily reading. . . . It is to this that I am indebted for impulses that have shaped and molded my entire destiny.”

Winston Churchill wrote in his autobiography that when he was 22 years old he felt himself ‘wanting in even the vaguest knowledge about many large spheres of thought. . . so I resolved to read history, philosophy, economics, and things like that.” Winston Churchill was an eloquent orator. How did he achieve mastery in this field? He answered it best himself:

“A good knowledge of facts would arm me with a sharp sword,” a sword that he used so effectively to sharpen his speeches for the appropriate occasions. Again, Churchill said, ‘I hope by preserving continuance of this practice (of reading) to build up a scaffolding of logical and consistent views which will perhaps tend to the creation of a logical and consistent mind.”

What takes a lifetime of study and research for the author is available, to the reader, in a fraction of that time. An English writer Thomas Carlyle said:

“All that mankind has done. thought. gained, or been is lying as in magic preservation in the pages of books.”

Reading feeds your mind as it nourishes your future thoughts. This was best described by Charles Lamb when he said he felt like saying grace as much before reading as before eating.

Reading books increases your knowledge, makes you think, and inspires you to achieve more in life.

Now that I know what the smart people had said about the habit of reading, the next step for me was to see this useful habit of reading as practiced by accomplished people.

Even though he was the recipient of divine knowledge The Promised Messiah~ was a devoted reader. He read books on various topics and different religions. He read and pondered the meaning of verses of The Holy Qur’an for long hours of days and nights. In his book *Ahmad the Guided One* the author Iain Adamson has quoted The Promised Messiah^{as} on page 29, “By that time (early days of his life) I had

become very fond of reading books, so much so that I paid little attention to anything else.” And in the same book on page 32 the author writes: “The principal books he studies at this period of life — from 13 to 20 — were the Qur’an, then the *Bukhari* which he read constantly. . . . By the time he was 16 he had also studied intently both the Bible and the Vedas of the Hindus and the commentaries of Christian writers.” The Promised Messiah^{as} told a friend: “In my room I have collected the objections raised against Muhanrnad^{saw}. They number nearly 3000.” And on page 34 of the same book:

“His study of the Qur’an was so intense that the driver of the bullock cart recounted that once he took Ahmad from Qadian to Batala, some 11 miles away. The journey took five hours and throughout that time Ahmad read and re-read only one page. that of the *Surah Fatihah* the opening chapter of the Holy Qur’an.’

Hakeem Nooruddin^{ra} the first *Khalifa* of Ahrnadiyyat was a habitual reader and valued rare books. He traveled extensively for the sake of his education. Being reputable both as a religious

scholar and as an *Hakeem*—knowledgeable in art of eastern art of healing—he was appointed to court of the ruler (Raja) of Kashmir. He was recognized as a highly esteemed scholar in all of India. Many of non-Ahmadi Muslim scholars of that time, even though impressed by the eloquence and richness of the writings of the Promised Messiah^{as} believed them to be written by Hadhrat Nooruddin^{ra}. Hakeem Nooruddin^{ra} wrote in *Mirqatulyaqeen fi hiyate Nooruddin*, his autobiography: I read *Bible dasateer*, Veda and books on all other religions...” (p 209) and: “I spent a lot of money, time, and worked very hard to read and re-read so much that it will surprise you to listen to details...” (p 211)

Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih the 2nd^{ra} was well versed both in worldly and religious knowledge. Those fortunate ones who listened to his speeches during *Jalsa* will vouch for that, while others can taste it from reading his numerous books. He was the *Musleh Mau'ood* and as such recipient of divine help. In his huge library were books on all topics, a library that was to be used by his sons: two of them to become the *Khalifa* later on.

The great scholar and

author of *Seerat Khai'inumabeen* and *Our God* Hadhrat Mirza Bashir Ahmad^{ra} was a son of The Promised Messiah^{as}. He did his Masters in Arabic in 1916. Before that, in 1912, while he was a student at The Government College Lahore he suddenly interrupted his education which surprised the Principal (Dean) of the college and he wrote: “An excellent student. His leaving is a loss to the College.” Mir Mahmood Ahmed Nasir described the cause of his sudden departure. Someone asked him a question about Islam or Ahmadiyyat and he could not answer it. This disturbed him so much that he decided to go back to his education of The Holy Qur'an and religion and delayed his worldly education for later. He was always fond of reading. When in 1916. Mufti Mohammad Sadiq~ donated 5000 books library to *Anjuman Ahmadiyya* and Hadhrat Mirza Bashir Ahmad^{ra} was made incharge of it, he must have cherished it.

Hadhrat Mirza Nasir Ahmadth the third *Khalifa*, did his M.A from Oxford University. Once remembering his student days he advised the Ahmadi students: At Oxford you were considered a good student if you spent 12 hours in stud-

ies after your regular classes, and mediocre if you studied for 8 hours only, and if you studied for less than that, they wondered what were you doing there?” (*Hiyate Nasir* page 101)

Discussing the reading habits of Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih 4thth Iain Adamson in his book *Man of God* wrote: “He had also discovered his father's library. In it were books discussing Darwin's Theory of Evolution, various textbooks of biology and works of Freud. . . He fell asleep on many nights with a book in his hand.” And on page 28 of the same book: “Tahir had become an omnivorous reader. He read not only classical Urdu writers but translation in Urdu of Shakespeare, Charles Dickens, Conan Doyle. and other English writers. He found Jerome K. Jerome's *Three men in a boat* uproariously funny.”

Dr. Abdus Salam was the first Muslim scientist ever to win a Nobel Prize in Physics. Abdul Hameed, his brother, has written a biography in Urdu entitled *Abdus Salam*, he wrote on page 40 which is translated here:

“He lived in New Hostel. 40 to 50 days before

his exams he had his room locked from outside. This was done by his servant Syeda and he did it very secretly. After locking Syeda would slide the key under the door, and all visitors thought Dr. Abdus Salam was not in the room and thus he could read uninterrupted."

And on page 52 of the same book it is stated:

"He reached Cambridge University in 1946. . . in spite of his in-depth understanding and knowledge in his own field, he soon realized how limited he was in general knowledge. In his opinion the faulty education system of his home country was to be blamed for the lack of his general knowledge. . . he made best use of the grand library of the University (Cambridge) and read several books on history of Islam. Islamic culture, history of great nations of the world, and the earlier scientists and scholars of the Islamic world. He even read the 18 shasters of Hinduism as translated by Max Muller. This is abundantly evident from the quotations he used freely in his writings and speeches."

To gain more knowledge is a duty for all Muslims from the cradle to the grave. To establish a regu-

lar habit of reading books is the way to gain knowledge. We must fulfill this duty and here is my plan for anyone to use:

1. I will set a target of reading 10 pages every day. The target will be increased slowly but persistently.
2. I will set aside a fixed time for reading: an hour after the *Fajr* prayer and recitation of the Holy Qur'an and an hour before going to bed.
3. Continuation and perseverance is the key to success. I will not worry if I missed a day or two, but I will just keep on going. I know the habit will develop in about 6 weeks.

We must first develop a habit of reading ourselves and then pray our children follow in our footsteps. Our children are our asset and torch-bearers of our value system for the future. Books have great influences on culture of a nation. We should value dearly what Ray Bradley said:

"You don't have to burn books to destroy a culture. Just get people to stop reading them."

HADITH

Hadhrat Abu Hurairah^{ra} relates that the Holy Prophet^{saw} said: "Each night, Our Lord descends to the lower level of the sky. When one third of the night is left, God Almighty announces: 'Who will call Me so I can respond to him? Who will beg from Me so I can give him? Who will ask Me for forgiveness so I can forgive him?'"

(Tirmadhi kitabudda'wat)

Hadhrat Abu Musa^{ra} relates that he and some others were accompanying the Holy Prophet^{saw} on a journey when people started saying the slogan '*allahu akbar*' very loudly. Noticing this, the Holy Prophet^{sa} said: "O People! Be moderate. You are neither calling someone Who is hard of hearing nor someone Who does not exist. You are extolling the greatness of a Being who is *Sami* (All-Hearing). He is close to you and with you."

(Muslim kitabudhdhikr istihba-b khafadassaut bidhdhikr)

PAY ZAKAT

JOURNEY TO THE JOURNEY OF SALAT

Rizwan Khan

When we reflect on the greatness of past saints and the unimaginable spiritual heights they reached, we are overwhelmed with a feeling of grief at the inadequacy of our own condition, and a sense of urgency to improve our own state. However, when we venture to improve our spiritual condition, we quickly find ourselves in a world foreign to us, groping in apparent darkness. We find the spiritual sphere an unfamiliar realm, and improving our spirituality proves to be a confusing and frustrating task.

Fortunately, Allah has not abandoned us. He has given us the most fundamental spiritual exercise, which is *Salat*, but this is also the first place we encounter difficulty. We observe *Salat* repeatedly every day, and though we know the words and their translation, the deeper meanings seem to elude us. It seems that there is a formula to offering prayer properly that eludes us, as if we have failed to understand its profound depths and to make a direct connection between it and our practical lives. We feel a desperate need to have someone hold our hand and guide us step by step on how to observe

Salat and how to improve our relationship with Allah.

Fortunately, Allah has not abandoned us; by reflecting on the words of *Salat* in light of the guidance He has given us, new meanings open up to us that revolutionize the way in which we observe it. Consider the opening words of *Salat*, 'I have turned my face toward Him Who created the heavens and the earth, being ever inclined to God, and I am not of those who associate gods *with God*.'; on this verse of the Holy Qur'an, the Promised Messiah^{as} has said, "Until man does not fully incline towards Allah and seek from and ask of Him, know that he is not truly worthy of being called a true Muslim and a true believer. The very reality of Islam is this, that all of man's powers, whether they be internal or external, all should be prostrate at the threshold of Allah. As a large engine runs many parts, in the same way, until man does not make every act and movement, and even his rest, under the superior power of that engine, how can he be one who accepts the divinity of Allah? And how can he truly call himself ever

inclined when he says 'I have turned my face toward Him Who created the heavens and the earth, being ever inclined to God.'" If even one part of an engine stops working, the entire engine malfunctions; similarly, if even a part of us is not in submission to Allah, our Islam, submission, is incomplete. Now, after understanding the true import of this verse and at what standard we are to be, we encounter another difficulty; the attainment of the condition that the Promised Messiah^{as} has described here seems to be a near impossibility. The words that start our spiritual journey of *Salat* seem to be the end of an even greater spiritual journey in and of themselves. Again, we are thrown into a world of apparent darkness and confusion as to how we are to attain even the initial condition required to begin *Salat*.

Fortunately, Allah has not abandoned us, for this verse is not simply an independent verse, but just as it is the end of a spiritual journey, it is also the end of a story of the Holy Qur'an which explains the process of reaching this condition. Once, Hadhrat Ibrahim^{as} had a debate with his people which extended over a period of 3 days. His people were worshipers of

heavenly bodies who were given to astrology. He hypothetically adopted their beliefs, as a form of argumentation, and made their fallacies apparent from within, one by one.

“And when the night darkened upon him, he saw a star. He said: ‘This is my Lord!’ But when it set, he said: ‘I like not those that set.’ And when he saw the moon rise with spreading light, he said: ‘This is my Lord.’ But when it set, he said, ‘If my Lord guide me not, I shall surely be of the people who go astray.’ And when he saw the sun rise with spreading light, he said: ‘This is my Lord, this is the greatest.’ But when it set, he said, ‘O my people, surely I am clear of that which you associate with God. ‘I have turned my face toward Him Who created the heavens and the earth, being ever inclined to God, and I am not of those who associate gods with God.’” 6:77-80

Now apparently, this narration has nothing to do with us, however the stories of the Holy Qur’an are not mere stories of the ancients, historical notes for our information and entertainment, rather, they carry deep teachings that provide wisdom for various aspects of our lives. This verse seems to speak of a form of idolatry that has little to do with our present age,

but the Promised Messiah^{as} has spoken of different forms of idolatry that exist. He said, “Remember, there are many types of idolatry, of which one is called *Shirk Jali* (apparent idolatry) and another *Shirk Khafi* (hidden idolatry). The general example of apparent idolatry is how idolatrous people consider idols, trees or other things as objects of worship, and hidden idolatry is that a man glorify a thing just as he does or should do to Allah or that he love a thing as Allah should be loved or that he fear it or place his trust in it”. Now, when we apply this interpretation of idolatry to these verses, a completely new interpretation appears which has precisely to do with us.

In life, we tend to excessively love the things of this world, which is the idolatry of this age. It may be asked, what is wrong with the love of material pursuits, after all, they do bring pleasure. If we haven’t noticed already, we will realize soon that they will invariably and inevitably disappoint us. Material pursuits are a pleasure we share with animals as well, whether it is the pursuit of love or the accumulation of wealth. Even in animals, the love mothers have for their children or spouses have for one another is as-

tonishing, and their examples of loyalty even put some humans to shame. The accumulation of wealth is not a concept foreign to animals either; even squirrels gather acorns which they are probably quite proud of. For us to devote our lives to worldly pursuits is like an adult devoting all of his time to childish diversions. A child can be appeased with a pacifier and amused by dangling keys in front of its face, but an adult must have refined food to be pacified and a new car with those keys. That is why Allah has referred to this world as a pastime and sport, for to be wholly occupied in it is as absurd as an adult being wholly engulfed in playing children’s games. That adult will soon become hopelessly bored with such amusements; similarly, those humans who devote themselves entirely to this world, which we share with animals, inevitably find themselves thoroughly disappointed and empty. Thus, when we find that all our efforts to find happiness and peace in this hidden idolatry have come to naught, our hearts are filled with repulsion towards these objects of our love which have so thoroughly frustrated us, and a voice calls from within, ‘I like not those that set.’ (6:77). This is the first stage, when we become aware of the emptiness of worldly pursuits despite their apparent grandeur, and when

we see the star of our hopes fall, our nature turns away from it and, in aversion to such false love, repeatedly gives expression, 'I like not those that set.'

Hadhrat Abdul Qadir Jilanith wrote about man, "So long as he finds resources in his own self, he does not turn towards the people, and so long as he finds resources in the people, he does not turn towards the Creator." Thus, when man is disappointed by the love of one worldly pursuit, he tries desperately to fill the void with a greater one. When the star of his desires sets, he turns his attention to the moon, oblivious to the obvious fact that it too will set. For instance, we make finding love the noble purpose of our life, not knowing that when the infatuation wears off, all of our naïve expectations will fall from the sky. Any one who has seen the sequel to a love story knows the difficulty writers face in picking up after 'happily ever after'. Take *Shirk* for example, the first movie is filled with love and happiness, but the sequel is little more than one domestic problem after the other. When reality hits, the impact is never pleasant. Or, we make our ambitions for wealth and power the higher purpose of our lives, but when we have attained our object, we find that void still there, only greater than be-

fore.

The Holy Prophet^{saw} said, 'If Adam's son had a valley full of gold, he would like to have two valleys, for nothing fills his mouth except dust.' In every level of society, dissatisfaction is the undercurrent which finds its extreme expression in suicide. If we would only reflect, we would realize that our lives have been little more than a succession of disappointments. When we were children, our ambitions were limitless, and we wanted to be world leaders and astronauts and so on. Then, with each impact of reality, our hopes fell. We hoped to find the perfect lover, live in the perfect home, and have the perfect job. One by one, each disappointment forces us towards conformity with our reality and circumstances. Again, our hearts are broken by the loss of what we falsely thought belonged to us, for what possession is that which can be taken away at any time by people or by circumstances; it never belonged to us in the first place. The object of a Muslim's desires exists outside of this world, in his Lord; nothing in this world can harm him. A Muslim has a characteristic of invulnerability to him, for he only exists in this world, he does not actually live here.

Thus, from these disappointments, we finally come to the realization that the pursuits of this world bring nothing but discontentment and frustration, and our hearts at last cry forth,

لَئِن لَّمْ يَهْدِنِي رَبِّي لَأَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْقَوْمِ
الضَّالِّينَ ۝

'If my Lord guide me not, I shall surely be of the people who go astray.' (6:78).

When we at last come to this realization, we think our objective is attained, that this epiphany was the purpose of our journey all along, however, we have only seen the light at a distance, we must now go towards it. We have come to know that it is only Allah who can guide us but we have not yet understood it, and there is a distinct difference between the two. Often, someone will be smoking in front of us, and at the same time he will be telling us what a terrible habit it is and how we should never do it, and he will continue smoking. He knows that smoking is harmful and that it should not be done, but he has yet to understand it, for if he understood it he would have acted on it. Similarly, though we have realized that it is only Allah who can guide us and we know that we must turn fully to and incline towards Him, we have yet to understand it; we have

yet to prove the conviction of our belief by acting on it.

Hadhrat Abdul Qadir Jilanith wrote about man in this condition, "Allah the Great and Mighty, however, tires him out in his prayer and does not accept it until he is completely disappointed in all the means of the world." When we realize that only Allah can save us from the destructive cycle of worldly pursuits, we seek his help, but we still continue to hold out hope and love in our hearts for our worldly means and objects. This is the greatest trial of all, for just as Hadhrat Ibrahim^{as} hypothetically turned to the sun, saying that it was the greatest, similarly, we hold on to our closest desires to the bitter end and part with them only with great difficulty.

We should all try this spiritual exercise the next time we are in *Sajda*, we should reflect on the fact that this position is symbolic of our complete submission to Allah, and that we must thus also bring our mind and all of its desires into submission to Allah. Then, we should search for the greatest desires within us and submit them to Allah. These desires will not be difficult to find, and a process to finding them is as follows. We are all particularly fond of certain vain desires and are most averse to abandoning them in prefer-

ence to submission to Allah, so we try to deny their very existence to protect them and we thus stunt our ability to spiritually progress. For instance, the first step to overcoming a drug addiction is admitting that one has a problem. For a drug addict, admitting that he suffers from denial is the most difficult step, for he knows that if he admits that he has a problem he will have to address it. As a result, when one tries to tell a drug addict that he has a problem, he spontaneously becomes defensive and reacts to even the implication that he has a problem. In the same way, we know our greatest sins and become extremely defensive at even the thought of those shortcomings. So, if we want to know precisely that which we must let go of to achieve the level of submission of which the Promised Messiah^{as} spoke, we need only think of that which we love most. Then, our lower self will suddenly become extremely defensive and send a wave of agitation across our minds to warn us not to even think of those useless desires, for to reflect on them is to realize their uselessness and to ultimately abandon them. This reaction leads us directly to those desires which we must rid ourselves of, those sins which we must cause

to set before we can reach the final stage of turning away from all else and towards Allah. Whether that desire is for self glorification, sympathy, love and physical pleasure, wealth and affluence, etc., the thought of bringing that desire in submission to Allah and in line with His will triggers our lower self to react with aversion, that reaction leads us precisely to what we must turn our attention away from in order to turn our attention towards Allah.

Then, when we have finally understood that all worldly desires ultimately lead to disappointment, and have despaired, in effect, of all of our means and hope in this world, then our heart at last helplessly cries out, 'O my people, surely I am clear of that which you associate with God.' (6:79). At this point, we are completely disillusioned and embittered with this world and we finally attain understanding and reach the condition necessary to begin *Salat*, and our heart gives expression to the words, 'I have turned my face toward Him Who created the heavens and the earth, being ever inclined to God, and I am not of those who associate gods with God.' (6:80).

Just as the words of turning towards something necessarily mean that we are

turning away from something else, when we say the words *wajjahtu wajhiya*, we declare that we have now turned away from every idol in our hearts. After this, Allah guides us to that which we are turning our attention towards with the words, *allazi fataras-samawati wal-arza*. *Fatara* means to create, particularly to create from nothing. In the words *as-samawati walarza*, Allah refers to all which we wrongfully worship and love in the heavens and the earth, all the means to and objects of our desires. Thus, in the words 'Him Who created the heavens and the earth,' Allah reminds us that all the false objects of our worship are in fact created by Him, and He not only created those things but He is the cause of all causes. Hadhrat Abdul Qadir Jilanith wrote, "The allotter is Allah and the executor is Allah and the creator is Allah, so He is more deserving of thanks than others. For example, one does not look towards the slave who carries a present but towards the master, the sender of the gift." Allah calls our attention to the fallacy of looking to this world as the object of our love, to not only look to the hand that feeds us but to the person behind it. Here, Allah appeals to our intellect, for, "whoever looks to the outside and the cause, and his knowledge does not go be-

yond these, is ignorant and defective in his intelligence.

The term 'intelligent' applies to a person on account of his insight into the ultimate end of things."⁸ In these words, Allah gives us the antidote to all forms of *shirk* when we encounter them, which is the use of our intellect, that whenever we find ourselves submitting to a desire, we simply remind ourselves that by itself that object of our love is empty and nothing, it is in fact Allah's power that is behind it, it is His beauty that makes it attractive.

After this, we end with the words, *wa ma ana minal mushriqeen*. Earlier, we had absolved ourselves from the action of idolatry with the words, 'O my people, surely I am clear of that which you associate with God' (6:79). Now, with the words 'I am not of those who associate gods with God.' (6:80), we absolve ourselves of those who commit idolatry; this difference represents the progress in spiritual condition from the previous verse to the present. When we try to leave a habit, we rid ourselves more easily of the harmful action than the harmful company that we keep. This is because when we leave a bad habit, we simply leave a specific action that we are accustomed

to, but when we leave bad company, we don't simply abandon that shared activity but we also sever our sentimental attachment to that friendship. Nevertheless, it must be remembered that friendships are based on circumstances, and when those circumstances are removed, friendships tend to fade away on their own. An alcoholic who gives up drinking will suddenly find himself with little left in common with his current friends. Similarly, when we leave idolatry behind, we naturally find ourselves moving away from those given to that habit. Thus, when we say these words, we give expression to the final stage of absolving ourselves of idolatry, for when we abandoned the harmful action, we purified our internal condition, but when we abandon the harmful company, we purify our external condition as well. When we say 'I am not of those who associate gods with God.', we say that we are ready to abandon every love for the love of Allah, we say that our love for Allah is so great that we only love those who love Allah. Thus, with words befitting the end of this spiritual journey away from *shirk*, we say,

wa ma ana minal mushriqin.

Allahu-Akbar.

ISHMAEL AND NOT ISAAC

Zia H Shah MD

When the boy (Ishmael) began to run about with him, Abraham said to him: Son, I have seen in my dream that I am slaughtering you. So consider what you think of it. The boy replied: Father, do what you are commanded; you wilt find me, if Allah please, steadfast. When both were ready to submit to Allah's will, and he had thrown him down on his forehead, We called to him: Abraham, you have indeed fulfilled the dream. Thus do We reward those who do their duty to the utmost. That was surely a manifest trial. We ransomed the boy with a great sacrifice, and We preserved for Abraham a good name in succeeding generations. Peace be upon Abraham. Thus do We reward those who do their duty to the utmost. Surely, he was of Our believing servants. We gave him the glad tidings of Isaac, a Prophet, and one of the righteous. (37:103-113)

The Holy Qur'an says that it was to Ishmael^{as} that Abraham^{as} said, "Son, I have seen in my dream that I am slaughtering you. So consider what you think of it."¹ The Holy Bible on the other hand wants to reserve this honor for Isaac^{as}. Which account is true, on this issue, is the

subject of this article. There are no archeological findings to make either case. Additional evidence may be there in Dead Sea Scrolls or other books of the Bible that are being discovered now but for now we have the account of the Qur'an and the Bible only to pursue this question. Interestingly, the contradictions in the Bible give an easy victory to the Holy Qur'an. Incidentally, this also helps the broader case that the Holy Qur'an is not borrowed from the Bible, but is correction of the limitations of the Bible and much more.

All the quotes from the Bible are from the New King James Version that is available online.² The accentuations in the text have been added by the author of this article. Note that in this translation Abraham is called Abram and Sarah^{as} the first wife of Abraham is also called *Sarai*. To contrast the claims of the Holy Qur'an and the Bible some basic information is necessary to grasp the discussion. The Holy Qur'an gives a wholly positive and uplifting account of Isaac and his immediate progeny but the same cannot be said for Bi-

ble when it comes to Ishmael and his immediate descendants. A chapter of the Holy Qur'an is named after the grandson of Isaac, namely Joseph the Arabic being Yusuf. The Bible gives away its prejudice in the contradictions that are seen in its account.

Abraham lived in the holy land about 2000 years before Jesus Christ^{as}. Sarah and Hagar were Abraham's wives. Sarah is mother of Isaac and Hagar is mother of Ishmael. Ishmael was 13 or 14 years older than Isaac. Isaac is forefather of many prophets including Moses, David, Solomon and Jesus Christ and represents Judaism and Christianity. Ishmael is the forefather of the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw} and represents Islam. So, who had the honor of being the sacrifice, whether it was Ishmael or Isaac is of more than symbolic importance.

We will examine the evidence in favor of Ishmael under a few headings.

THE ONLY SON WAS TO BE SACRIFICED

The Bible on more than one occasion highlights that

it was the 'only son,' the one that Abraham deeply loved that was to be offered in sacrifice.

Abraham was seventy-five years old when God commanded him for migration. He journeyed from Ur (Mesopotamia) to Haran and from there to Canaan, which God decreed to give to his posterity. Abraham migrated from Ur with a few selected members including his nephew Lot. They passed through Egypt. The king was impressed by Abraham and offered some presents and a royal lady by the name of Hagar to him. Abraham and Sarah did not have any child, so when Hagar was presented to Abraham by the king of Egypt, Sarah married her to Abraham so that they can have a child. Abraham was eighty-five when he married Hagar. All of them were earnestly supplicating God for righteous progeny. The Bible mentions the childless state of Abraham as follows:

"But Abram said, 'O Sovereign Lord, what can you give me since I remain childless and the one who will inherit my estate is Eliezer of Damascus?' And Abram said, 'You have given me no children; so a servant in my household will be my heir.' Then the

word of the Lord came to him: 'This man will not be your heir, but a son coming from your own body will be your heir.' He took him outside and said, 'Look up at the heavens and count the stars—if indeed you can count them.' Then he said to him, 'So shall your offspring be.'"³

And:

"Then the Angel of the Lord said to her (Hagar), 'I will multiply your descendants exceedingly, so that they shall not be counted for multitude.' And the Angel of the Lord said to her, 'Behold, you are with child, And you shall bear a son. You shall call his name Ishmael, because the Lord has heard your affliction.'"⁴

The first child was born to Abraham from Hagar. The Bible says, "So Hagar bore Abram a son; and Abram named his son, whom Hagar bore, Ishmael. Abram was eighty-six years old when Hagar bore Ishmael to Abram."⁵ After the birth of Ishmael, Sarah the elder wife of Abraham was also promised by God of a child, in words that confirmed sonship of Ishmael at the same time. In fact multiple promises were given to both Sarah and Hagar and their progeny:

"Then God said to

Abram, 'As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name. And I will bless her **and also give you a son by her**; then I will bless her, and she shall be a mother of nations; kings of peoples shall be from her.' Then Abram fell on his face and laughed, and said in his heart, 'Shall a child be born to a man who is one hundred years old? And shall Sarah, who is ninety years old, bear a child?' And Abram said to God, 'Oh, that Ishmael might live before You!' Then God said, 'No, Sarah your wife shall bear you a son, and you shall call his name Isaac; I will establish My covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his descendants after him. And as for Ishmael, I have heard you. Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly. He shall beget twelve princes, and I will make him a great nation.'"⁶

Ishmael was yet a child when in obedience to divine command and in fulfillment of divine plan, Abraham brought him and his mother Hagar to the bleak and barren tract where Mecca now stands. At that time there was no sign of life and no means of sustenance at the place (*Bukhari*). But God had so designed that the place should become the scene of the activities of God's last

message for mankind. Ishmael was chosen as the vehicle for the implementation of this divine plan. The prophecy in response to a prayer of Abraham was made at a time when not a blade of grass was to be seen for many miles around Mecca.

It is recorded in the history that when Abraham left his child and his wife in that barren land, Hagar ran after him and asked Abraham, 'Are you leaving us here?' He did not answer. Then she asked him again saying, 'Are you leaving us here by the command of God?' Abraham just pointed towards the sky. She understood this and said, 'Then God will not waste us,' and returned to her son. What a faithful lady she was! She trusted in God and He provided her with all the necessary things and protected them. The child grew in that atmosphere, under those circumstances and in due course this place became a town.

Abraham had seen a dream that he was slaughtering his only son. When Ishmael was twelve, Abraham came to visit them and mentioned the dream to him. The Holy Qur'an mentions the whole episode in *Surah As-Saffat* that has been quoted in the beginning of this article. By reading all the quoted verses it is clear that the honor of this sacrifice belonged to Ishmael. On the

contrary, the Bible says, "Then God said, 'Take your son, your only son, Isaac, whom you love, and go to the region of Moriah. Sacrifice him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains I will tell you about. (Genesis 22:2).'⁷

In this self-contradicting statement in Bible, Isaac has been mentioned as the 'only son,' while the reality is that Isaac was at no time of his life Abraham's 'only son.' The 'only son' was Ishmael who was, as mentioned before, thirteen or fourteen years older than Isaac. It is clear from the Bible and the Holy Qur'an that the incident took place when the son was able to do some work along with the father. It sets the age of the child at the time of the incident at about twelve years. And it was Ishmael who was the 'only son' of Abraham up to the age of twelve as Isaac was not yet born. However, after this incident God gave glad tidings about the birth of Isaac. The Holy Qur'an soon after describing the incident of the sacrifice says, "And we gave him the glad tidings of Isaac, a prophet, and one of the righteous."⁸ Not only Genesis 22:2, but Genesis 22:12, as well as Genesis 22:16 mention that this honor belonged to the 'only son.'

A year after this sacrifice, when Abraham was a hundred years old, Isaac was born. The Holy Qur'an quotes Sarah about her and Abraham's age when she heard of the prophecy about birth of Isaac, "She said, 'Oh, woe is me! Shall I bear a child when I am an old woman, and this my husband is an old man? This is indeed a strange thing!'"⁹

The Genesis also tells us that the son offered as sacrifice was not a baby.¹⁰ He in fact carried the wood of the burnt offering on his head. At the time of sacrifice Abraham was ninety-nine years old and the only son he had at that time was Ishmael.

Christian apologists allege that Hagar was not a lawful wife of Abraham, so somehow Ishmael was not the lawful son of Abraham. But the fact of the matter is that she belonged to the Egyptian royal family and the Bible itself laughs in their face when Ishmael has repeatedly been mentioned in the Bible as Abraham's son, exactly as Isaac has been mentioned as his son (Gen. 16:16; 17:23,25). Additionally, the Bible calls Hagar a lawful wife of Abraham, "Then Sarai, Abraham's wife, took Hagar her maid, the Egyptian, and gave her to her husband Abraham to be his wife."¹¹

Moreover, analogous promises were made to Abraham in regard to the future greatness of Ishmael as were made to him about Isaac. The Bible says, "And as for Ishmael, I have heard you. Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly. He shall beget twelve princes, and I will make him a great nation." (Gen. 17:20). And about Hagar we read, "Then the Angel of the Lord said to her, 'I will multiply your descendants exceedingly, so that they shall not be counted for multitude.' And the Angel of the Lord said to her, 'Behold, you are with child, And you shall bear a son. You shall call his name Ishmael, Because the Lord has heard your affliction.'" (Gen. 16:10-11). Once one diffuses the lame excuses of the Christian apologists that Ishmael was not the rightful progeny of Abraham it becomes amply clear that the son to be sacrificed was the 'only son,' Ishmael.

It seems that the interpolators of the Bible have substituted two words to steal the credit from Ishmael and give it to Isaac. Maulana Daud A Hanif, Missionary In charge for USA writes in his article *Prophets of God* in the second volume of Muslim Sunrise of 2003, "It seems that the writers of the Bible,

while claiming credit of sacrifice, have deliberately changed Isaac with Ishmael, and Moriah for Marwah, a hillock in the vicinity of Mecca."^{12, 13} So, apart from the substitution in the Bible of Isaac for Ishmael which seems to be deliberate, and of Moriah for Marwah, there is nothing in the Bible to lend the slightest support to the view that Abraham offered Isaac for sacrifice and not Ishmael.

GREAT FUTURE WAS PROMISED FOR BOTH ISHMAEL AND ISAAC

God made many promises to the Patriarch Abraham. He was born in Ur; from there he migrated with his father to Canaan. His father stopped on the way at Haran and died there. On his father's death, Abraham was commanded by God to leave Haran and go to Canaan and had the following revelation:

"I will make you a great nation; I will bless you; And make your name great; And you shall be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, And I will curse him who curses you; And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed." ¹⁴

And:

"I will surely bless you, and I will surely multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven and as the sand that is on the seashore. And your offspring shall possess the gate of his enemies, and in your offspring shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because you have obeyed my voice."¹⁵

And again:

"And the Lord said to Abraham, after Lot had separated from him, 'Lift your eyes now and look from the place where you are—northward, southward, eastward, and westward; for all the land which you see I give to you and your descendants forever. And I will make your descendants as the dust of the earth; so that if a man could number the dust of the earth, then your descendants also could be numbered. Arise, walk in the land through its length and its width, for I give it to you.'"¹⁶

We find in the Bible that circumcision was an external mark of the covenant with Abraham and Ishmael was definitely circumcised. To understand this and a lot more one should read the brief Chapter number 17 of Genesis in its entirety; the verses 19 and 21 which seem to deny the promise to Ishmael, and as such contradict

other portions of the Old Testament, have been taken out and their place indicated to maintain a clear flow of the subject:

“When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the Lord appeared to Abram and said to him, ‘I am Almighty God; walk before Me and be blameless. And I will make My covenant between Me and you, and will multiply you exceedingly.’ Then Abram fell on his face, and God talked with him, saying: ‘As for Me, behold, My covenant is with you, and you shall be a father of many nations. No longer shall your name be called Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; for I have made you a father of many nations. I will make you exceedingly fruitful; and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come from you. And I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and your descendants after you. Also I give to you and your descendants after you the land in which you are a stranger, all the land of Canaan, as an everlasting possession; and I will be their God.’ And God said to Abraham: ‘As for you, you shall keep My covenant, you and your descendants after you throughout

their generations.

This is My covenant which you shall keep, between Me and you and your descendants after you: Every male child among you shall be circumcised; and you shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskins, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between Me and you. He who is eight days old among you shall be circumcised, every male child in your generations, he who is born in your house or bought with money from any foreigner who is not your descendant. He who is born in your house and he who is bought with your money must be circumcised, and My covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant. And the uncircumcised male child, who is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin, that person shall be cut off from his people; he has broken My covenant.’ Then God said to Abraham, ‘As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name. And I will bless her and also give you a son by her; then I will bless her, and she shall be a mother of nations; kings of peoples shall be from her.’ Then Abraham fell on his face and laughed, and said in his heart, ‘Shall a child

be born to a man who is one hundred years old? And shall Sarah, who is ninety years old, bear a child?’ And Abraham said to God, ‘Oh, that Ishmael might live before You!’ ... And as for Ishmael, I have heard you. Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly. He shall beget twelve princes, and I will make him a great nation.

... Then He finished talking with him, and God went up from Abraham. So Abraham took Ishmael his son, all who were born in his house and all who were bought with his money, every male among the men of Abraham’s house, and circumcised the flesh of their foreskins that very same day, as God had said to him. Abraham was ninety-nine years old when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin. And **Ishmael his son was thirteen years old when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin. That very same day Abraham was circumcised**, and his son Ishmael; and all the men of his house, born in the house or bought with money from a foreigner, were circumcised with him.”¹⁷

From these quotations

it is obvious that Abraham had two sons, Ishmael and Isaac, Ishmael being the elder and Isaac the younger. God promised Abraham that He would multiply and bless his progeny. The promise applies to both Isaac and Ishmael, as is evident from the reading of chapter 17 of Genesis above. In the Bible in the mention about Ishmael, in between negative insinuations there is repeated mention that he was son of Abraham, that his father loved him and that God especially favored him as he was growing up:

“The child (Isaac) grew and was weaned, and on the day Isaac was weaned Abraham held a great feast. But Sarah saw that the son whom Hagar the Egyptian had borne to Abraham was mocking, and she said to Abraham, ‘Get rid of that slave woman and her son, for that slave woman’s son will never share in the inheritance with my son Isaac.’ **The matter distressed Abraham greatly because it concerned his son.** But God said to him, ‘Do not be so distressed about the boy and your maidservant. Listen to whatever Sarah tells you, ... I will make the son of the maidservant into a nation also, **because he is your offspring.**’

Early the next morning Abraham took some food and a skin of water and gave them to Hagar. He set them on her shoulders and then sent her off with the boy. She went on her way and wandered in the desert of Beersheba. When the water in the skin was gone, she put the boy under one of the bushes. Then she went off and sat down nearby, about a bowshot away, for she thought, ‘I cannot watch the boy die.’ And as she sat there nearby, she began to sob. God heard the boy crying, and the angel of God called to Hagar from heaven and said to her, ‘What is the matter, Hagar? Do not be afraid; God has heard the boy crying as he lies there. Lift the boy up and take him by the hand, for I will make him into a great nation. Then God opened her eyes and she saw a well of water. So she went and filled the skin with water and gave the boy a drink. **God was with the boy as he grew up.** He lived in the desert and became an archer. While he was living in the Desert of Paran, his mother got a wife for him from Egypt.”¹⁸

The land of Canaan was given over to the sons of Abraham, and the external sign of the covenant which God made with Abraham was circumcision of all males. All these promises were fulfilled. The progeny of Isaac multi-

plied exceedingly. From among them arose the Prophets, Moses, David, Ezekiel, Daniel and Jesus. For two thousand years they ruled over Canaan. Their hold on it was never really abolished, though for a short time it became weak until the advent of Islam and then the Muslims that is the Ishmaelites had control of the Canaan or the Promised Land until the recent creation of Israel.

THE CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS OF ABRAHAM’S LIFE

And remember when his Lord tried Abraham with certain commands which he fulfilled. He said, ‘I will make thee a Leader of men.’ Abraham asked, ‘And from among my offspring?’ He said, ‘My covenant does not embrace the transgressors.’” (2:125)

This verse of the Holy Qur’an summarizes in a nutshell the chronology of the salient events of the life of Abraham as is explained in this section. He was seventy-five years old when God commanded him for migration. He journeyed from Ur (Mesopotamia) to Harran and from there to Canaan. Abraham was eighty-five when he married Hagar; and he was eighty-six years old when Hagar bore Ishmael to him.¹⁹

According to the Holy Qur’an Allah tried Abraham

with certain commands before giving him the covenant, as is said, "And remember when his Lord tried Abraham with certain commands which he fulfilled. He said, 'I will make thee a Leader of men.' Abraham asked, 'And from among my offspring?' He said, 'My covenant does not embrace the transgressors.'" ²⁰ This will imply that the sacrifice took place before the covenant and before the circumcision as described in Chapter 17 of Genesis quoted above. According to Bible Abraham was 99 years old at the time of his and Ishmael's circumcision. Abraham was a hundred years old when his son Isaac was born to him. ²¹ If the time of sacrifice was before the circumcision as the Holy Qur'an states then the case is sealed in favor of Ishmael. The group circumcision is described in the chapter 17 of the Bible and it is in Chapter 18 of Genesis that the promise of Isaac is given:

"Then the Lord said, 'I will surely return to you about this time next year, and Sarah your wife will have a son.' Now Sarah was listening at the entrance to the tent, which was behind him. Abraham and Sarah were already old and well advanced in years, and Sarah was past the age of childbearing. So Sarah laughed to herself as she thought, 'After I am

worn out and my master is old, will I now have this pleasure?' Then the Lord said to Abraham, 'Why did Sarah laugh and say, 'Will I really have a child, now that I am old?' Is anything too hard for the Lord?'" ²²

However, the Bible does not talk about the sacrifice until Genesis 22. The words used for this trial are similar to the Holy Qur'an, "Some time later God tested Abraham. He said to him, 'Abraham!' 'Here I am,' he replied." The Qur'anic chronology is much more logical that God tried him and when he passed the trial, gave him the covenant and made circumcision an external marker for the covenant. In the Biblical chronology the cart is before the horse. The covenant has been settled and agreed and then God chooses to try Abraham!

THE LOVING RELATIONSHIP OF THE FATHER AND THE SON

When we contrast the story of the Bible and the Holy Qur'an of the events close to sacrifice itself, it becomes apparent which one is the literal word of God and which one is in keeping with the temperament of a prophet of God.

In the Holy Qur'an we read, "When the boy (Ishmael) began to run about with him, Abraham said to him: Son, I have seen in my dream that I am slaughtering thee. So consider what thou thinkest of it. The boy replied: Father, do what thou art commanded; thou wilt find me, if Allah please, steadfast. When both were ready to submit to Allah's will, and he had thrown him down on his forehead, We called to him: Abraham, thou hast indeed fulfilled the dream." ²³ These verses speak of a loving relationship between the father and the son and the willingness of both to honor the words of God.

The mention in the Genesis in the Bible is, "My father: and he said, Here am I, my son. And he said, Behold the fire and the wood: but where is the lamb for a burnt offering? And Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering: so they went both of them together. And they came to the place which God had told him of; and Abraham built an altar there, and laid the wood in order, and bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar upon the wood. And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son." ²⁴ Here the father is being deceptive to the son and has to use coercion to offer the sacrifice.

Whereas, the Qur'anic description is sublime and humane, demonstrating mutual love and respect between the father and the son, the Biblical hint of coercion and treachery in the sacrifice story, gives opportunity to the atheists to laugh at the issue. According to Richard Dawkins in his book *the God Delusion*:

“Such unpleasant episodes in Abraham's story are mere peccadilloes compared with the infamous tale of the sacrificing of his son Isaac (Muslim scripture tells the same story about Abraham's other son, Ishmael). God ordered Abraham to make a burnt offering of his longed-for son. Abraham built an altar, put firewood upon it, and trussed Isaac up on top of the wood. His murdering knife was already in his hand when an angel dramatically intervened with the news of a last-minute change of plan: God was only joking after all, 'tempting' Abraham, and testing his faith. A modern moralist cannot help but wonder how a child could ever recover from such psychological trauma. By the standards of modern morality, this disgraceful story is an example simultaneously of child abuse, bullying in two asymmetrical power relationships, and the first recorded use of the Nuremberg defense: 'I was only obeying orders.' Yet the legend is one of the great foundational

myths of all three monotheistic religions.”²⁵

Dawkins' criticism is ill founded as it was this sacrifice event and earlier the duel between the sons of Adam that are the root cause of the value of human life. It is precisely this even that has established the morality on this issue for billions of people including Dawkins' ancestors. The 'Law' is in making, if you will! Secondly, Dawkins wrongfully attributes the details of the Biblical story to the Holy Qur'an also. He raises questions about the psychological impact on the child and bullying in the asymmetrical relationship that does not apply to the Qur'anic description at all. In the Qur'anic story Ishmael had consented in a very loving manner for the sacrifice. Thirdly, Dawkins brings out the Nuremberg trial. Andrew Conway Ivy (1893-1978) was appointed by the American Medical Association as its representative at the 1946 Nuremberg Medical Trial for Nazi doctors. He writes about origin of human morality in one of his articles:

“Only in a moral world, a world of responsibility, can man be free and live as a human being should. Men are truly equal and free only as creatures of God, because only as the children of God and only in

the sight of God and ultimate moral law are men truly equal. If God and the ultimate moral law are denied, there can be no absolute argument against slavery, against 'might makes right' and man's greedy exploitation of man. If human beings have no absolute intrinsic value, no absolute intrinsic freedom of decision, no absolute liberty, no absolute duties, they possess only extrinsic value and may be used as chattels, slaves or serfs by those who have the intelligence and power. Rights given to man by God can be taken away only by God, but rights given to man by man or man-made institutions can be denied or taken away by man or man-made institutions. Unless inalienable rights come from the Ultimate, from the Creator, it is irrational to say that human beings have rights which no man-made institution may ignore or deny. Man has no absolute claim of intrinsic worth and dignity, no absolute duties and responsibilities, except as a creature of God.”²⁶

For Dawkins to criticize the very source of the inalienable rights that he enjoys is to cut the very branch that he is sitting on. Andrew Conway Ivy argues that intrinsic worth of human life does not lie in the ramblings of fundamentalist atheists but in divine law:

“In the absence of a belief in the intrinsic worth and dignity of the individual,

the doctrine of 'superior orders' and the doctrine that the welfare of the State is the supreme good and end, and that the end justifies any means. This was the dilemma at Nuremberg. How could the Nazi leaders and doctors who were responsible for the atrocities be indicted and convicted when they were obeying Nazi law and orders? They could be indicted and convicted only under the Eternal Natural Law of God, called in condescension to the atheistic Russian representatives the Laws of Humanity. If man-made law is the sole source of basic human rights, why condemn the Nazi assault on Jews, Gypsies, Poles, and political enemies? Why condemn the assault on the Hungarian Patriots? Under Nazi laws Jews had no rights. Under Red Communist laws the Hungarian Patriots had no rights. Under the communist governments behind the 'iron curtain' no human being has inalienable rights. If inalienable rights exist, what made them inalienable? If man did not create the world, how can he delegate to himself the creation of his worth, dignity, rights, duties, freedom of choice, and liberty? You always get into a causal chain which leads to God."²⁷

Dawkins is looking at it in the present day context not in the social milieu of 2000 BC. It was monotheism that assigned human dignity for children as well as for the grown ups, otherwise human sacrifice was in vogue to please different Gods and human life did not have any intrinsic value. This dream of Abraham and subsequent sacrifice of a lamb was an effective design of God to put an end to human sacrifice that were common in many societies even in the eighth century of the common era. It was Islam that put an end to human sacrifice of young brides that were thrown in Nile in Egypt.

In reality, Abraham was not required to fulfill his vision in the literal sense. It was only a practical demonstration of his intention and preparedness to sacrifice his son which was desired of him. The vision had already symbolically been fulfilled in Hagar and Ishmael having been left by Abraham in the valley of Mecca, a land of arid and barren waste. That brave act had, in fact, symbolized the sacrifice of Ishmael. The other purpose of the divine command to Abraham first to sacrifice his son, and then to abstain from it, was to abolish human sacrifice, a most inhuman practice

prevalent among most nations at the time.

MUSLIMS CELEBRATE THE INCIDENT AND NOT THE JEWS OR CHRISTIANS

In the religious ceremonies of the Jews and the Christians, no trace of the supposed sacrifice of Isaac by Abraham is found. Muslims, who are the spiritual descendants of Ishmael, commemorate with great fervor his intended sacrifice, by slaughtering every year rams and goats all over the world on the tenth day of the Muslim month of *Dhul-Hijjah*. This universal sacrifice of quadruplets by Muslims, at the time of Hajj, establishes the fact that it was Ishmael and not Isaac whom Abraham offered for sacrifice.

The early Jews had no reason to celebrate sacrifice of Isaac as it did not happen. Later day scribes inserted these details in the Bible for Isaac; but as in any forgery or crime they left many clues at the crime scene. Some of these have been pointed out in the apparent contradictions of the biblical account and we pray to God that additional clues may be revealed in the study of Dead Sea Scrolls and the banned

books of the Bible.

EPILOGUE

So, what is the big deal whether it was Ishmael or Isaac, who was offered for sacrifice? If it were only a matter of history perhaps we would have ignored these details; but it continues to be a burning issue for the present and foreseeable future. What is at stake is the religious future of the world and how the promise of Allah to Abraham would be fulfilled in our times! Would it be fulfilled through the spiritual progeny of Ishmael or that of Isaac? That is the burning question? One clue is immediately apparent. Circumcision was to be the external marker of the covenant with Abraham so those who have shied away from it are not the recipients of this God's grace.

The first Christian Church Council in Jerusalem, held in approximately 50 AD decreed that circumcision was not a requirement for Gentile converts. This became known as the 'Apostolic Decree' and is one of the first acts differentiating early Christianity from Rabbinic Judaism. The Coptic Christians continue to practice circumcision. Once one moves away from the twisted logic that Ishmael was not heir to Abraham, then it becomes immediately obvious that he was the son

intended to be sacrificed as the Old Testament mentions three times that the 'only son,' was to be sacrificed. Khalifatul Masih II Hadhrat Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmood Ahmad^{ra} writes in his book *Muhammad in the Bible*:

"After the seventh century A.D., however, the sons of Isaac, and those who observed the letter of the Law of Moses had to withdraw from Canaan. The sons of Ishmael, instead, became its political as well as its spiritual leaders. The fact that the sons of Israel had to surrender the land of Canaan shows that they had become unworthy of the promise which God had made to them through Abraham. This promise was that Israel would remain in possession of this land until the Last Day, and the promise was true. The Last Day in the divine promise, therefore, cannot mean the day which is to mark the end of the world, but the day on which the Law of Moses was to be superseded by the promulgation of a new Law for the guidance of the world. In the language of divine revelation the advent of a new Law is often described as the birth of a new heaven and a new earth."

In the Holy Qu'ran it is stated, "And We have already written in the Book of

David, after the Reminder, that My righteous servants will inherit the (Promised) land."²⁸ Here the reference in the words, 'in the book of David' is to Psalms 37:9, 11,22 & 29. Khalifatul Masih II^{ra} continues his description in the context of this verse of the Holy Qur'an:

"Therefore, when the prophecy said that the sons of Israel would retain their hold over Canaan until the Last Day, it meant that their hold would continue until the advent of a new Law-giving Prophet. In the utterances of David we have a hint of this meaning of the prophecy. The promise contained in Genesis that Israel would retain possession of Canaan until the Last Day is expressed differently. Thus in Psalms (37:29) we read:

The righteous shall inherit the land, and dwell therein forever.

The promise of eternal possession is not for Israel as such but for the righteous. This utterance of David, in fact, was a clear warning that the days of Israel's dominance were numbered. The Prophet seemed to point out that the Divine Promise, after a time, was to be understood not in a racial but in a spiritual sense; that the sons of Ishmael were going to inherit the promises made to Abraham by inheriting the truth

and a new covenant was going to be initiated through them. If our interpretation of the prophecy is not correct, then the question is, Why did God make the sons of Ishmael—and believers in the Message of the Qur'an—dominant in Palestine? The prophecy was quite clear. The sons of Isaac were to hold Palestine until the Last Day. The question is, Why did they not? Why did God allow a transfer of political power from the sons of Isaac to the sons of Ishmael?"²⁹

Muslims retained the control over the Holy land for almost thirteen hundred years before the creation of state of Israel. This historic fact is strong evidence that the promise to Abraham has now moved to the house of Ishmael. The state of Israel has been created in accordance with another Qur'anic prophecy and is the exception rather than the rule.³⁰ Hasdhrat Khali-fatul Masih II^{ra} concludes the chapter titled, *God's Promise to Abraham* in the book *Muhammad in the Bible* with the following words:

"In short, the prophecy of Abraham promised blessings to both Isaac and Ishmael. According to this promise, the sons of Isaac

were established over Canaan and the sons of Ishmael over Arabia. But when the Last Day arrived for the sons of Isaac, then, in terms of the prophecy of David, the promise was transferred from Israel to Ishmael. The claim of Israel was now only a racial claim. The claim of Ishmael was spiritual."³¹

To read the whole of the book go to the following link:

<http://alislam.org/library/books/muhammadinbible/MITB.pdf>

The Holy Qur'an highlights that it was promised in the very beginning that the covenant to Abraham will not apply to those who are not righteous, "And remember when his Lord tried Abraham with certain commands which he fulfilled. He said, 'I will make thee a Leader of men.' Abraham asked, 'And from among my offspring?' He said, 'My covenant does not embrace the transgressors.'"³²

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IS NOT ALLAH SUFFICIENT FOR HIS SERVANT?

Mansura Bashir Minhas, Miami, FL

The subject revelation of the Promised Messiah^{as} is significant in every Ahmadi's life. Some have it inscribed in jewelry, while others choose to display it as plaques in their homes. This verse of the Qur'an carries exceptional value in the personal life of the Promised Messiah^{as} as well as the *Jama'at* Ahmadiyya he founded, which has flourished and prospered as a result of staying steadfast to the Divine message laid down in this revelation. It ascertains how Allah has fulfilled His promise to the Guided Reformer and Messiah of the age.

These revealed words of the Holy Qur'an are extremely gripping and in the hardest of times, we all turn towards our Lord and ask for His help. And these words provide comfort and solace while battling with trials and tribulations. Whenever we feel, depressed or lose faith in ourselves and this world, this prayer reminds us that Allah Almighty will listen to our silent prayers and we feel the weight shifting and the lessening of our worries and anxieties. Such faith in Allah

grips us through trials; the faith in Him, that He will stand by in all our grievances, losses and miseries and pave the way. *Such is the Lord ... such is Our Creator* - the One who blesses unlimitedly and dismisses all our follies.

Every human goes through the state of mind where they tend to feel helpless and overwhelmed in the face of great adversity, sorrow or hardship. Even a person of the stature of the Promised Messiah^{as} was not immune to this state of mind. In June 1876, he received a revelation from Allah informing him that his father would die soon. He was worried since it entailed hardship for his family. His father's business, upon which his family subsisted, would come to an end. While he was in that state of anxiety, Allah revealed to him:

أَلَيْسَ اللَّهُ بِكَافٍ عَبْدَهُ ۗ

Is not Allah sufficient for His servant? (39:37)

The key word in this

revelation - '*Kafi*' is derived from the Divine attribute of Allah, '*Al-Kafi*', which means - The Sufficient. This reassured the Promised Messiah^{as} that Allah would take care of him through all hardships. As *Jama'at* Ahmadiyya has progressed, we see how Allah has fulfilled this revelation in the Promised Messiah's personal life and his *Jama'at* has also become the true recipient of this revelation as it passed through hard and difficult times and eventually triumphed as a result of adhering to this Divine message.

When Allah reveals something to his messengers, the Almighty also requires that their followers adhere to the message laid down in the revelations. *Tawakkul alallah* (having unwavering faith in Allah), requires great courage. Even though we have faith in the truth of this revelation, it can be somewhat challenging to put into practice in our personal lives. We become impatient and start questioning Allah and lose faith at the slightest of distress. Lack of *Twakkul alallah* is the root cause of major

disputes—be it family disputes, issues with co-workers at our work places as we become competitive and strive to gain an edge and even in regional conflicts. Countries go to war over water, land and other resources such as oil, gas, minerals. This all ensues due to a lack of faith in Allah and overlooking of His Divine attribute of *Kafi*; that HE will provide for us nevertheless.

True believers not only merely state that Allah is their sole provider, but their lives also bear testament to this and their character is a true reflection of their faith. Their deeds and actions demonstrate their *Iman* (faith) that Allah is sufficient. They strive to stay steadfast as they encounter hardships; be it financial setbacks, loss of loved ones or any other unbearable tragedy.

The success of *Jama'at* Ahmadiyya is due to its unwavering belief in Allah being *Kaafi*, which has allowed it to triumph and achieve astounding success as it has been established in all the continents of the world. *Jama'at's* opponents have tried hard, and done every thing conceivable to stop this progress, but Ahmadis stay steadfast and demonstrate *Tawakkal* in

Allah and never ever react or retaliate. Their lives are being taken, they suffer the worst form of discrimination in Pakistan, Bangladesh, Indonesia and elsewhere, but they stay steadfast and their *Iman* never wavers. This proves that they are on the right path and they are indeed a party of true believers. They have a belief in a Living God - a God who listens to their earnest prayers and provides for them always. This allows them to face the utmost hardships with extreme strength and fortitude.

The Promised Messiah^{as} became Allah's beloved due to his supreme and ardent love and devotion for the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw}. We see this attribute come into play in the life of the Holy Prophet^{saw} when he was in great danger and it appeared as if his safety was not possible. Had he not been a true Prophet of God, he would not have survived these incidents. Similarly, there are many occasions in the life of the Promised Messiah^{as} that his honor and life were in danger. But, in light of his perfect obedience to his Master Hadhrat Muhammad^{saw}, Allah demonstrated His attribute of *Al-Kafi* to the Promised Messiah^{as} and he always emerged safe and victorious.

Indeed even after the Promised Messiah's^{as} passing, every time hostility raises its head, Allah's help saves his Community from any bad consequences of enmity. Despite opposition and restrictions on governmental levels, *Jama'at* Ahmadiyya continues to prosper and thrive. Despite meager financial resources, *Jama'at* continues to spread the true message of Allah throughout the world. Its success is unparalleled and quite intriguing for the worldly eye which can only correlate such astounding success to huge financial investments, as propagation of any message to the far-flung places of the world is no small feat. This is sheer evidence of the fact that Allah's help is with *Jama'at* Ahmadiyya and this is true Sign of the Living God of Islam which is apparent all the time and which each Ahmadi feels and the world also senses.

When God, Who is the Master of the heaven and the earth, sends His servants to this world to propagate His message, He assures them in every way and declares to them in every matter:

أَلَيْسَ اللَّهُ بِكَافٍ عَبْدَهُ ۗ

'Is not Allah sufficient for His servant?' (39:37).

He also states:

وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِتَعْدَاتِكُمْ ۗ وَكَفَىٰ
بِاللَّهِ وَلِيًّا ۗ وَكَفَىٰ بِاللَّهِ نَصِيرًا ۝

'And Allah knows your enemies full well. And sufficient is Allah as a Friend, and sufficient is Allah as a Helper.' (4:46).

We witness Divine support and help for the Promised Messiah^{as} and his *Jama'at* of true believers every step of the way. May Allah enable us to be completely obedient to the one who is sent by Allah as the Messiah and Mahdi. May He may keep us in His mercy and grace and continues to make us those who attain His nearness. *Ameen*.

**HUMANITY
FIRST**

NEEDS

DONATIONS

AND

VOLUNTEERS

YORK/HARRISBURG LAJNA PRESIDENT ATTENDS A RECEPTION AT THE INVITATION OF MR. JOE BIDEN, VICE PRESIDENT, USA

By the grace of Allah, Farzana Safiullah Sahiba, Lajna President, York/Harrisburg was invited to a reception at the Vice-President's residence to commemorate the 15th Anniversary of the Violence Against Women Act on September 29, 2009, Washington DC. She was chosen among 120 guests from throughout the country for her work with *Lajna Imaillah* and with other Muslim Domestic Violence Organizations. She met with Joe Biden and gave him a copy of the Philosophy and Teachings of Islam and also discussed future meetings with him to discuss needs of the AMC. He said he doesn't do these kinds of appointments and added that was the truth! She found him to be very congenial and receptive. She also met Anthony Brown, Lt. Gov of Maryland, who too was very enthusiastic, and gave him a copy of the Philosophy and Teachings of Islam book. Farzana briefly met Attorney General Eric Holder and Al Franken (Senator from Minnesota). She had a productive conversation with Rev. Marie Fortune, Director of the Faith & Trust Institute and gave her also a copy of the Philosophy and Teachings of Islam book. Farzana was wearing her formal Islamic dress at the event.

Alhamdulillah it was a very productive evening.

أَلَيْسَ اللَّهُ بِكَافٍ عَبْدَهُ

Is not Allah sufficient for His servant?

Sumbul Jattala, (Waqf-e-Nau)
LA Inland Empire Chapter

أَلَيْسَ اللَّهُ بِكَافٍ عَبْدَهُ

We are so preoccupied with the worldly belongings,
In this society, we waste our time in materialistic things,
Where has that gotten us now, let us think for a second;

أَلَيْسَ اللَّهُ بِكَافٍ عَبْدَهُ

We lose our focus in what we believe,
We lose the spirit of faith we all have,
We ignore His commandments in the Holy Qur'an
We stay in bed; not getting up before dawn,

أَلَيْسَ اللَّهُ بِكَافٍ عَبْدَهُ

Now the world is facing a crisis of its own making,
and we are relying on humans to solve our problems;
But all we really need is - the help of Allah^{swt},
and the example of the Prophet^{saw},
and the guidance by the Mahdi^{as},
and, the blessings of the Khilafat;
with the strength of our 'Soldiers of Islam'

أَلَيْسَ اللَّهُ بِكَافٍ عَبْدَهُ

If we have strength in our hearts,
And listen through our ears,
And see the vice of society with our eyes;
And beseech Allah for help;
to keep our "Spiritual Fountain of Faith"

* 'Soldiers of Islam' is referring to Waqf-e Nau Mujahideen

In Memory of My Beloved Late Father:

Khan Sahib Qazi Muhammad Rashid

His Memories Stay with Us Every Step of the Way

Saliha Qanita, Wife of Rashid Ahmad Bhatti, Philadelphia

Remember the Good Things of Your Deceased Ones

The time of death is predestined. No one among the creations is exempt from it. Blessed is he who spends the time of his life seeking pleasure of Allah the Exalted and triumphantly appears before his Lord.

My late father (*Abba Jan*) was one of those people who were abundantly successful in gaining the real objective of life and personified the fulfillment of the following verse by his sacrifices:

فَمِنْهُمْ مَّنْ قَضَىٰ نَحْبَهُ

There are some of them who have fulfilled their vow. (33-24)

The deceased people have a right to be remembered by their good deeds in order to persuade, in-

spire, and motivate others.

Family History

My late father, Khan Sahib Qazi Muhammad Rashid Retired Civilian Gazetted Officer (C.G.O), former Wakilul Maal II, Tehrik-e-Jadid Rabwah was born to Hakim Maulvi Muhammad Azam Ansari and Sakina Bibi on September 3rd, 1897 in the rural town of Haji Purah, District Sialkot. He was the eldest among four brothers and two sisters. Late Maulana Muhammad Saeed Ansari, Missionary Borneo, Malaysia, Singapore and Indonesia was his youngest brother. He acquired education up to primary school in the rural town of Mundi Karal, District Gurdaspur.

As my grandfather was a *Hakim* and had a friendship with Hadrat Khalifatul Masih I^{ra}, he sent Abba Jan to Qadian for further education. He studied from the sixth to ninth grade in Qadian. It was in

Qadian where he was drawn to Ahmadiyyat. Abba Jan loved the Holy Quran since his childhood. He mentioned to my elder brother that when he got admission in the Talimul Islam High School Qadian, he lived in a village by the name of Dallah close to Qadian. In those days, Hadrat Khalifatul Masih I^{ra} used to deliver *Dars-e-Qur'an* (lecture on the Holy Qur'an) after the *Asr Salat* in Masjid Aqsa which was known by the name of '*Dars* for Mian Abdul Hayee'. Since my father had to go back every day to his village after school, he was unable to attend the *Dars*. After school, he would put his school bag in his desk and walk light-handed to his village.

Sahibzada Abdul Hayee was his class-fellow and knowing that my father had excellent handwriting he would give his *Dars* notes to my father to neatly copy them in his notebook. My

father because of his excellent memory greatly benefited from these notes in spite of being unable to personally attend the *Dars*.

Abba Jan used to say that he probably benefited more from the *Dars* because of copying the notes than those who personally participated in the *Dars*. Because of the blessings of this *Dars*, *Abba Jan's* association with the Holy Qur'an lasted his whole life. He became ill when he was in the ninth grade forcing him to privately appear in the matriculation examination which was known as the Entrance Examination in those days. Allah the Exalted blessed him with extraordinary vision and great memory. He had memorized all 70 verses of the renowned Arabic *Qaseeda* written by Promised Messiah^{as}, which he usually recited before going to bed. By the special Grace of Allah, he entered the *Bai'at* of Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih I^{ra} in 1911 at the age of only 14 even before his parents. *Alhamdulillah!*

Association With Khilafat and Jama'at Related Services and Distinctions

Abba Jan joined the Ordinance Depot with the help of Hadhrat Khan Sahib

Maulvi Farzand Ali. He started his service from Ferozepur, India and slowly progressed to Civilian GAZETTED OFFICER before his retirement. Though he dedicated his life for the *Jama'at* in 1944 but Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih II^{ra} asked him to complete his service. While in service, the British Government awarded him the title of 'Khan Sahib' and a medal in 1945. He served as *Ameer Jama'at* Rawalpindi, Quetta, and Poona (India) and *Naib Ameer* for Nowshera. Once Hadrat Khalifatul Masih II^{ra} in a Friday sermon during the *Jalsa Salana* said the following complementary words about him:

"Though the *Ameer* of Rawalpindi *Jama'at* is a young clerk, he has such an influence on the *Jama'at* that all the *Jama'at* members follow his gestures very obediently. This is how an *Ameer* should be."

Abba Jan retired as C. G.O. on December 24th, 1952 from Nowshera. He constructed his house in Rabwah and served for many years as *Wakilul Mal II Tehrik-e-Jadid*. At the time of the *janaza* of my father, Professor Hamidullah, *Wakil-e-Aala Tehrik-e-Jadid* told my elder brother that he obtained his earlier training of *Mal* from the de-

ceased.

By the special blessings of Allah the Exalted, he was committed to one third *Wassiyat* (*Wassiyat* # 1535). He also abundantly participated in other *chanddas* as well. He not only had the honor of being part of the five thousand *mujahideen* of *Tehrik-e-Jadid*, but also included his family members, parents, and elder sister in this blessed scheme and continued paying on their behalf all his life. He would first take money out of his paycheck for charities and then spend the rest on his household. In this connection, he enjoyed full cooperation of our dear mother. *Alhamdulillah!*

When the *Daftar Awwal* of *Tehrik-e-Jadid* (1934 - 1944) was about to end, he included his youngest daughter Qanita Shahida (now wife of Ataul Mujib Rashid, *Imam Masjid Fazal* London), who was born on February 2nd, 1944 in the *Daftar Awwal* by paying her full 10 years dues in aggregate. Most probably Qanita Shahida was the youngest ever member of the five thousand *Mujahideen* of *Tehrik-e-Jadid*. (In my view, it was because of the blessings of this contribution that Allah the Exalted granted her with so many opportunities to serve

Jama'at and awarded her so many distinctions.) Similarly he made his seven children members of *Daftar Awwal* of *Tehrik-e-Jadid*. May Allah further reward her in abundance!

He was always ready to act upon every instruction received from the *Markaz* and participate in every scheme. In November 1941, while Abba Jan was posted in Mumbai before the end of the Second World War, the ship boarded by Maulvi Muhammad Din (Missionary Albania) from Mumbai sank after a few days. The survivors were transported back to Mumbai. Maulvi Muhammad Din did not survive. Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih II^{ra} assigned the duty of verification of his martyrdom to *Abba Jan*. *Abba Jan* had the honor to send the report about the drowning of a man with the green turban to Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih II^{ra} in Qadian with the testimony of an eye witness. Ahmad Ali Sahib of Rawalpindi writes in an article published in *Al-Fazl* of April 16th, 1966:

In 1941, when Khan Sahib was posted in Khartoum (Sudan) during the Second World War, an opponent falsely reported that Khan Sahib belonged to a group that was invol-

ved in scheming against the British Government. When the police brought a 200 page report against him to his British officer, the officer returned the report and wrote highly appreciative comments in favor of Qazi Muhammad Rashid stating that the group mentioned in the report is a real well-wisher of the government and had helped the government in many critical matters.

He also wrote that:

“Qazi Muhammad Rashid is his duty clerk. He knows one thing about him that he had never seen a more resolute and truthful Muslim than him in his entire service in India.”

Thereafter he writes:

“Once probably in 1951, the opponents decided to hold a *Jalsa* in Nowshera against our *Jama'at*. Maulvis came from outside and pasted greatly inciting flyers on the city walls. One day before the *Jalsa*, the leading members of the *Jama'at* approached the higher authorities without success. In the evening, he went to Khan Sahib and discussed the situation. He said that if there was any other

higher authority left whom they could meet. Ahmad Ali Sahib asked him that who else they should meet with. He said that there is one authority higher known as ‘All-Knowing God’; why not meet Him?

So, please take his request to all of the *Jama'at* members that he will offer *Tahajjud* Prayers tonight at the place where the opponents wanted to hold the *Jalsa*. If they want to participate in the *Tahajjud*, they should come at 2 AM. About 40 *Jama'at* members gathered and offered *Tahajjud* led by Khan Sahib in great earnestness and humility. It sparked their spirituality like electricity.

By the Grace of Allah, the next day the government issued Sec. 144 moratorium on all kinds of gatherings and processions. *Al-hamdolillah!*

Ahmad Ali Sahib further describes in his article that Abdul Rashid Khan Sahib mentioned an incident of 1936 that after the earthquake of Quetta, the Government of Baluchistan issued a directive to all offices expressing great concern about Muslims probably about the distribution of compensation for the fear

of inadvertently treating them unfairly according to their *Shariah* law since they were the only nation that observed the *Shariah*. Therefore, they desired to consult with some scholar knowledgeable in the *Shariah* law to advise the government. The commanding officer of the Quetta Depot sent the name of Qazi Sahib with a forceful recommendation without even consulting him. In this way, Abba Jan was nominated by the Government to perform this important task and got this golden opportunity to serve Muslims at large. *Alhamdulillah!*

Also, Abdullah Khan Sahib of Rawalpindi once told Ahmad Ali that the *Jama'at* held a *Jalsa* to celebrate the *Siratun Nabi* day in Quetta which was heavily participated by non-Ahmadi *Pathans*. Though the speeches of most of the speakers were very good, but the speech made by Qazi Sahib had such a distinctive charm that after the *Jalsa* all the *Pathans* surrounded him and out of reverence they touched his feet and knees, and demanded *ta'viz*. Qazi Sahib repeatedly told them that he did not give *ta'viz* to people and only prays for them.

Let me present an example of his obedience to *Khilafat*. Hadhrat Musleh

Mau'ood^{ra} asked a number of people to find a marriage-partner for Abul Munir Noorul Haq without success. Finally Hadhrat Musleh Mau'ood^{ra} himself proposed my elder sister Safia Siddiqah for him and told him that he is going to write to a person who would never say 'No' to him and prefer to shed his blood for my perspiration.

Abba Jan was posted in Sikandarabad Deccan at that time. Hazoor wrote to *Abba Jan* about the proposal and mentioned Maulvi Abul Munir Noorul Haq and asked him if he knew him. *Abba Jan* replied with great devotion that he did not know him, neither did he need to know him, and that it is enough for him to know his leader.

Thus this match made by the Khalifatul Masih^{ra} with his prayers proved greatly blessed. *Alhamdulillah!*

Abba Jan was a devout Ahmadi and a big believer in prayers. He would not let any opportunity of preaching go by. He always preferred faith over worldly matters. He had a great fervor for serving the humanity and a great trust in God. He greatly cared about the rights of God and the rights of fellow human beings. He was very obedient to his parents, treated well his

relatives and was good in hospitality.

Marriage and Children

In 1919, he was married to Amatul Hamid Begam, the elder daughter of Hadhrat Maulvi Muhammad Abdullah Botalvi and Amatul Aziz (both were companions of the Promised Messiah^{as}). My mother had the honor of drinking the blessed leftover *lassi* (yogurt drink) of the Promised Messiah^{as} and also the honor of weaving the cotton for the Ahmadiyya Flag in 1939.

His *Nikah* was announced by Hadhrat Musleh Mau'ood^{as} on the day of *Hajj* in Masjid Mubarak Qadian. Allah the Exalted blessed this couple with 10 children. One child died in the early age and another daughter, Razia Afifa who was married to Khalid Hadayat Bhatti died on January 1954 in Rabwah at the age of 21 and was buried in the *Bahishti Maqbara*.

إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ

Surely, to Allah we belong and to Him shall we return.

Here, for the sake of encouraging people to pray for my grandfather, Hakim

Maulvi Muhammad Azam Ansari, I would like to mention that from the time of the birth of his first grandson Mubarak Ahmad, he daily offered two *rak'ats* of *Nafal* (supplemental *Salat*) without any break. May Allah greatly elevate him in rank in the paradise! *Ameen!*

Our *Abba Jan* took great care of the education and training of his children. In spite of being a Punjabi, he taught Urdu to his children 82 years ago to help further education and also studying and understanding of the books of the Promised Messiah^{as}. He also informally taught us numerology. God enabled him to become successful in all aspects. He provided a religious environment at home; arranged for higher education and admitted eight of his children in the *Wassiyat* program during his life, and advised his youngest son to do *Wassiyat* at the age of 18 which he did. He used to say that my children are raised to help the *Jama'at*, not as burden to the *Jama'at*.

He had a wish that all of his children would dedicate their lives for *Jama'at*. Two of his sons dedicated their lives during the time of Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih II^{ra}, and two during the time of Hadhrat Khalifatul

Masih IIIth. So Mubarak Ahmad Ansari M.Sc. Retired Professor of Chemistry TI College Rabwah, currently serving as Professor at the *Jamia Ahmadiyya* Canada, and Rafiq Ahmad Saqib, M.Sc. Chemistry, currently living in Rabwah, worked for about 13 years at TI College Rabwah and also served for 20 years as Principal Fazal-e-Umar Secondary School Kano, Nigeria. Both of them dedicated their lives during the lifetime of *Abba Jan*. The third brother, Munir Ahmad Munib, former Principal Ahmadiyya Bashir High School Kampala Uganda (currently Professor *Jamia Ahmadiyya* Rabwah) and the fourth brother, Dr. Laeeq Ahmad Ansari served in Gambia Ivory Coast and Kenya (currently serving at Fazal-e-Umar Hospital Rabwah) dedicated immediately after completion of his education. Similarly three of his son-in-laws, the late Maulana Abul Munir Noorul Haq, Lutfur Rehman Shakir Retired Lab Technician Fazal-e-Umar Hospital Rabwah (now living in Germany) and Maulana Ataul Mujeeb Rashid (*Imam Masjid Fazal* London) were devotees. This is merely because of the great blessings of God that He bestows on His chosen ones.

Here, I consider it

necessary to mention a few faith-inspiring incidents related to my brothers. In 1954, while *Abba Jan* was serving as *Wakilul Mal II Tehrik-e-Jadid*, he gave the good news to Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih II^{ra} that his son, Mubarak Ahmad Ansari, who dedicated his life earlier in 1944 had passed his M.Sc. Hazoor asked him to bring him the next morning. The next day, Hazoor interviewed him and asked a few questions. The first question was that whether he had any interest in teaching. My brother said, "No". Both of them were silent after that. My brother felt that his answer was not appropriate. He felt the silence like a mountain on his chest but he did not find courage to break it. After a moment, Hazoor himself broke the silence and said, "If you are entrusted the job of teaching, will you try to develop interest in it?" My brother was relieved and said, "Yes, by all means". Hazoor asked him to start his service the following day at the College. This was the beginning of his career.

In 1956, *Abba Jan* gave another good news to Hazoor when his second son, Rafiq Ahmad Saqib passed his M.Sc. Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih II^{ra} asked Hadhrat Mirza Nasir Ahmad, Principal TI College Rabwah to take Qazi

Sahib's second son in his staff which he did though there was no position available at that time. After serving there for about 13 years, he was sent to Nigeria (West Africa), where he served for 20 years. (All praise for Allah). In 1968, the third son, Munir Ahmad Munib after completing his education, he appeared before Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih III^{ra} and offered to devote his life after listening about Hazoor's speech regarding the Nusrat Jehan Scheme and the need of teachers in Africa. His request for dedication was accepted and he was sent to Kampala Uganda (East Africa) and first appointed as a science teacher, and later the Principal. The fourth son, Dr. Laeeq Ahmad completed his MBBS from Nishtar Medical College Multan (because of riots in 1974, he completed a part of his course in Bahawalpur and Lahore that was left incomplete). One day Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih III^{ra} sent for Mubarak Ahmad Ansari to see him. Hazoor mentioned to ask Dr. Laeeq to dedicate at least three years for the Nusrat Jehan Scheme as the *Jama'at* was in need of doctors in West Africa. So, Dr. Laeeq Ahmad Ansari appeared himself before Hazoor and dedicated three years and

was sent to Gambia (West Africa). After three years, Hazoor wrote to him urging him to dedicate another three years, which he obliged. After three years, he dedicated his entire life for the sake of *Jama'at*. *Al-hamdolillah!*

Abba Jan loved Holy Qur'an and recited it very frequently. In his final years, a daily get together with a few of his retired friends was arranged to ponder over the Holy Qur'an that included Hadhrat Sheikh Fazal Ahmad Batalwi^{ra} (father of Laeeq Ahmad Tahir, former Principal *Jamia Ahmadiyya* U.K.) and Haji Malik Muhammad Abdullah former *Na'ib Nazir Baitul Mal* Rabwah, Khawaja Ubaidullah Engineer (father-in-law of Maulana Jalalud Din Shams, *Khalid-e-Ahmediyyat*) and a few others.

On January 20th, 1971, (*Abba Jan* had already passed away at that time) Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih IIIth personally attended the wedding ceremony of my third brother Munir Ahmad Munib with Amatul Hakim Laeeqa, daughter of Maulana Abul Ata. Looking at the sign of '*Baitul Ata*' at the entrance, Hazoor liked the words '*Baitul Ata*' and said pointing to our house next door that it should be

named '*Baitul Wafa*'.

Abba Jan had a great literary taste. Having sufficient proficiency in Urdu, English, Arabic and Persian, he composed very rich poetry in these languages. For example, I am quoting here few verses from one of his long Urdu poem composed in 1959 at the third birthday of his first grandson, Mubashar Ahmad Shahab.

حمد و ثناء اسی کو جو صنعت جہاں ہے
صنعت ہے اس کی ظاہر صانع مگر یہاں ہے
اک دقت تھا کہ بچہ کوئی نہ اپنے ہاں تھا
دشت کدہ وہی اب پُر رونق آشیاں ہے
ماہی کی تختیاں سب تو نے بھلا دیں یارب
ان کی بجائے برب اک مٹھی داستاں ہے

اولاد پہلے دی پھر اولادِ نافلہ دی
لبریز قلب میرا از شکرو امتاں ہے
ابا کا سایہ سر پر اس کے رہے خدایا
یارب بہ سلامت پوتے میرے کی ماں ہے
ماں باپ خوشیاں دیکھیں اور ان کے والدیں بھی
اور سب پہ فہلِ ربی جو جزئہ بیکساں ہے

All praise and glorification for Him who is the Creator of the universe

His creation is evident but the Creator is hidden

There was a time when I was childless

That haunted place has now turned into a bustling abode

O my Lord, you removed all my past hardships from my memory
Instead, now there is a sweet tale on my lips

You first gave me children, and now a grand child

My heart is brim-full with gratitude and contentment

May Allah keep him under His shelter forever

Along with my daughter-in-law who is the mother of my grandson

The father and mother may see happiness and so do their parents

And blessings of the Lord, Who is the shield for the helpless

At the end of this poem is an advice to all his children:

تم سب کو پیارے بچہ میری ہے یہ وصیت
اللہ کو یاد رکھنا مسلم کا یہ نشان ہے
دنیا ہے ایک جیلہ اک مزبلہ کثیفہ
ہاں اک کیف گندی جو جائے امتحاں ہے

حرم و ہوا د لالچ خود غرضی خج نفسی
یہ ماہ آتشی ہیں یہ فوج رہزناں ہے
اس سے نہ دل لگانا عقبنی کا گھر بنانا
دارالقرار وہ ہے جانا ہمیں جہاں ہے
کرتے رہو عبادت اللہ کی اطاعت
درآیہ مَسْخَلْفَتْ... جو غرض اُس وجاں ہے

کچھ کہ دیا زہاں سے باقی بھرا ہے دل میں
یارب تو خوب جانے دل کی کہ رازداں ہے

This is my advice to all of you my dear children

Remember Allah, which is the hallmark of a Muslim

The world is a filthy place, a heap of dirt

Yes like a sewer drain, a place of trials

Avarice, greed, selfishness and stinginess

These are serpents of the sleeve and bunch of robbers

Do not set your heart on it; build house in the hereafter

The house worth living is the one where we all have to go
Continue worship and obey Allah

The verse contains the purpose of life of all of us

I said a few things; rest of it is in my heart

O Lord, You being the knower of the secret, know well what's in my heart!

Abba Jan composed his last poem in the Persian

language in 1964 at the time when his youngest daughter Qanita secured first position in BA from

the Punjab University among boys and girls and won two gold medals. In that poem in addition to glorifying Allah, he greatly appreciated the attention, prayers and efforts of Hadhrat *Choti Apa* (Director *Jamia Nusrat College Rabwah* and wife of Hadhrat *Musleh Mau'ood^{ra}*) and Mrs. *Frakhanda Shah* (Principal).

Chaudhry Shabbir Ahmad, *Wakilul Mal Awal Tehrik-e-Jadid* writes in daily *Al-Fazal*, April 19th, 1966:

"It was probably in 1949 when I had to go to Nowshera for service. On Friday, I found out that the *Jumu'ah* Prayers would be offered at the house of an elder of the *Jama'at* by the name of Qazi Muhammad Rashid. So I found my way to his house. Before this I had no acquaintance with Qazi Muhammad Rashid. In my first impression I saw signs of godliness and *taqwa* apparent from the appearance, looks, motions, and gestures of Qazi Sahib who rose to deliver the sermon. When he opened his lips, every word of the sermon penetrated straight to

my heart. The sermon was very heartening and extensive from the point of view of delivery and content. I was surprised to find out that the person delivering the sermon was not one of the scholars from the center, but an officer of the government. His knowledge of Arabic, Urdu and religion was so comprehensive that no aspect of any issue required further explanation. These were my initial impressions from my first meeting with Qazi Muhammad Rashid.

His Death

My *Abba Jan* remained ill for about a month. During his illness, he advised *Ummi Jan* to bathe him with plenty of water and take special care of *purdah* (*sattar*). And that the ladies who observed *purdah* from him during his life should not see his face after his death. His burial should not be delayed. No one should cry loudly on his death. On February 23rd 1966, he was taken to the PAF Hospital Sargodha in the Emergency Ward for treatment, where he passed away on February 25th on a blessed Friday at the age of 69 and a half years.

إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ

“Surely, to Allah we belong and to Him shall we return.”

His body was taken to Rabwah the same day where his funeral was lead by Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih IIIth after the *Isha* Prayer. Because of his meritorious services, he was buried in the *Qit'a Khas* of the *Bahishti Maq-barah*. *Al-hamdolillah!*

I would like to mention here that when his body reached our house in Rabwah from Sargodha, our maternal uncle, Maulana Abul Ata' Jalandhary, *Khalid-e-Ahmadiyyat* consoled my elder brother by reading the verse of the Holy Qur'an,

وَمَا تَدْرِي نَفْسٌ بِأَيِّ أَرْضٍ تَمُوتُ

And no soul knows in what land it will die. (31:35).

It was probably the night of February 24th, when Chaudhary Muhammad Arshad, Professor TI College Rabwah, had a dream that the funeral of Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih I^{ra} is taking place in an open ground led by Hadhrat Promised Messiah^{as}. Considering it a strange dream he inquired about its interpretation from Hadhrat Alama Hafiz Sayyad Mukhtar Ahmad ShahJahanpuri^{ra}. Hadhrat Hafiz Sahib said that someone would pass away today having some resemblance to Hadhrat

Khalifatul Masih I^{ra}. When the news of *Abba Jan's* death was received, he said, “This is the fulfillment of the dream”.

His Character

Our uncle, late Maulana Abul Ata, *Khalid-e-Ahmadiyyat* expressed his views in the following words that were published in *Al-Fazl* on March 18th, 1966:

My marriage to my current wife, who is the sister of the wife of Qazi Sahib took place in 1930. I had closely known him since then. He was in the habit of serving the *Jama'at* quietly. To spend in the way of Allah was his practice. He preached often in his circle. He greatly possessed the quality of *Taqwa*. He set an example in good treatment of relatives.

He then writes:

Qazi Sahib maintained relationship of great sincerity and obedience with our father-in-law Maulvi Muhammad Abdullah Botalvi until his death. Hadhrat Maulvi Sahib had a great desire that the houses of his sons and daughters should be together in Rabwah. He was greatly pleased when I and Qazi Sahib bought plots next to each other. Qazi Sahib, who was my brother-in-law was also greatly pleased that the three

brothers and two sisters would live close to each other. Two years ago, when the construction of *Baitul Ata* started, Qazi Sahib took great interest in it and gave valuable suggestions and was greatly pleased on its completion. Hadhrat Qazi Sahib spent his life remembering Allah. He greatly cared about the education and training of his children. It was a special blessing of God that he remained highly pleased with his children during his life and also left the world pleased with them. In essence, as far as household and children are concerned, Hadhrat Qazi Sahib is counted among greatly blessed people.

He further writes:

When I was about to travel to East Pakistan (Bangladesh), he was very weak. I informed him (about my travel plans) and left praying for him. My wife was also ill in those days. By the blessings of God, my wife recovered in 4 or 5 days, but the illness of Qazi Sahib progressed further. Maulvi Abul Munir Noorul Haq told me that Qazi Sahib kept asking about my return. He would ask how many days left before I return. When I got back in the evening of February 22nd, he was very weak and not fully conscious. When I inquired him about

his health, he repeated 'Salam' three times. Thereafter he said 'Sala-m' to one of his sons by his name. Then he said, "Salam to my sister." I was greatly moved and visibly overwhelmed with tears on hearing his last words. I said to him that he had fulfilled his responsibilities towards his relatives in the best possible way.

In the end, English translation of the letter that *Abba Jan* wrote to Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih II^{ra} on the demise of his adult daughter Razia Afifa is given below and also the translation of the hand-written response of Hazoor is given:

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

*We praise Allah and
invoke His blessings upon
His noble Prophet^{sa}
My benefactor and
affectionate father! My
leader and lord! My
beloved guide!
Allah may help you with
His powerful support!
Allah may increase your
happiness and your desire
for His love!*

Assalamo Alaikum
Warahmatullah Wa
Barakatohu!

O my dear father! Today
at 6:35, daughter of your

servant, i.e. my daughter,
Razia Afifa departed for
her Real Creator.

إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ

"Surely, to Allah we
belong and to Him shall
we return."

We are pleased with the decree of our dear God who is the only support we have. Once the time of the funeral is set, a humble request will be presented to Hazoor. Hazoor, please pray for the elevation of her ranks in the paradise and Allah may cover her with His mercy. And keep her in the hereafter in the feet of the one whose *ummah* she belongs (Peace and blessings be upon him), and the one whose *Jama'at* she belongs to (Peace be upon him).

All of us bereaved are praying earnestly for the health, well-being, long life, and success in the religious service of Hazoor Anwar. *Khilafat* is a great blessing. Allah may keep Hazoor under His protection and keep it always as the center of our happiness. *Wassalam*

We are all grateful for Hazoor's affection towards all of us. May Allah abundantly reward

Hazoor for comforting our hearts. *Ameen.*

Your most humble servant

Khaksar,

Muhammad Rashid
(signed)

Thursday, January 21st,
1954

Hazoor's response (written on the back of the letter)

إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ

"Surely, to Allah we belong and to Him shall we return."

Her condition apparently was critical and as I heard this was the second attack of typhoid. Allah the Exalted may grant patience to the bereaved family and become their patron.

Khaksar,

Mirza Mahmud Ahmad
(signed)
Khalifatul Masih II

I pray to Allah the Exalted to make us and our children steadfast Ahmadi Muslims firmly attached to *Khilafat. Ameen!*

SISTER TAHIRA LATIF PASSES AWAY

Sister Tahira Lateef wife of Dr. Yusef Lateef, passed away on Thursday, October 29, 2009 at home.

إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ

She was born in Yazoo City, Mississippi, on January 16, 1936, the daughter of the late Leon and Mary Simpson of Chicago, IL. Mrs. Lateef was raised and educated in Yazoo City, MS and Chicago, Illinois. While in Illinois, she earned a B.A. in Visual Arts from the University of Chicago, and taught art classes at Parker High School. She moved to New Jersey upon her marriage to Yusef A. Lateef in 1972. Mrs. Lateef received a M.A. from the William Patterson College in Patterson, NJ in 1975. After giving birth to her only child, she and her family moved to Shutesbury, MA in 1977. She became a *moosi* in 1982, while temporarily living in Nigeria, Africa from 1981-1985. Upon returning to USA, she was an active substitute teacher at Amherst and Easthampton public schools from 1985 to 1989. In 1987, she earned a Master ÇÖs degree in Education. Art was her hobby and she enjoyed teaching art classes as well. She was a member of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam community since 1971. For 12 consecutive years, she held the duty of *Tahrik-e-Jadid* Secretary for *Lajna Imaillah* USA. She often cooked meals and donated food to community churches and the survival center in Amherst, MA. She was in charge of Social Services for the Boston, MA *Jama'at* for many years, as well. She had also performed *Hajj* pilgrimage twice, most recently in 2003.

She leaves her husband of thirty-seven years, Yusef A. Lateef;, her son, also named Yusef A. Lateef, both of Shutesbury; her mother, Mary Simpson; five brothers, Leon Simpson, Jr. of Denver, CO, Earl Simpson of Alexandria, VA, Mylon Simpson, Jerome Simpson, Eugene Simpson, all of Chicago, IL; two sisters, Marguerite Simpson, Mattie Broome both of Chicago, IL; and many nieces and nephews.

Funeral services and visitation were held privately on Friday, October 30, 2009 at the Mack Funeral Home, 91 Vernon St., Gardner, Massachusetts. She was buried in *Maqbara Moosian* in Sykesville, Maryland on Nov. 3, 2009. Many members from far off Ahmadiyya *Jama'ats* including *Lajna* members attended the funeral service at the burial site. Many of her relatives were in attendance along with her husband and the only son also named Yusef Lateef. May Allah elevate her ranks in paradise and give strength and patience to her husband and son.

USMAN KHALID, PIONEER AHMADI

**Aziza Ahmad, Milwaukee, WI
and Jameela Hamid, Philadelphia, PA**

It was brought to our attention that our father has not been introduced to you, as he was a pioneer Ahmadi. His name is Usman Khalid. He passed away September 8, 2009. He was 96 years old when he passed away. He was one of seven children. His father died when he was 8 years old. When he became older he had to work to help his mother take care of his siblings. He came from a devout Baptist background. Yet he lived a mundane life. When he accepted Islam the change was so positive in his life, that Ameena Khalid (his wife) saw such a positive change and the beauty of Islam that she accepted as well. Our father had a strong conviction. When he decided to do something he did it. Decidedly, he said that he was going to stop smoking and he did such a strong will power.

Islam became his religion in 1947. His mother and siblings didn't accept his new religion, but our father became stronger in his faith. Finally they said nothing about his faith, they were silent.

Usman Khalid always had a thirst for knowledge. He studied Ahmadiyyat, learned how to read Holy Qur'an in Arabic, as well as his prayers. He memorized *Surahs* from the Holy Qur'an and helped teach others what he learned. He became the educational secretary, and later the president of the St Louis *Jama'at*. He was the president for a number of years.

He was an advocate for Islam, always preaching about Ahmadiyyat. On Sundays, he would go out with the other brothers wearing sandwich signs, saying "JESUS DID NOT DIE ON THE CROSS, HE IS BURIED IN SHRINAGAR KASHMIR" "THE PROMISED MASSIAH HAS COME ACCEPT HIM." The signs were heavy, yet he wore them and passed out literature on the streets of St Louis Missouri a very prejudiced state. We remember hearing our father say "people would spit on us, curse us, and throw away the literature" Usman loved preaching so much. He worked for the Mount Santo Chemical Company. My uncle, by marriage, also

worked there. He was against Islam and always spoke ill about Ahmadiyyat whenever he could. Well, Usman Khalid was fired from his job. And my uncle said "you were fired from that job because you preached your religion on the job." Usman replied "Allah gave me that job and he will give me another." It wasn't long before he was blessed with a job at Southwestern Bell Telephone Company, where he worked until he retired. Our father said "*Alhamdulillah* this is from Allah."

He was very dutiful about giving money to Allah. Whatever scheme was needed, he contributed to it. He told us "subscription is like one of your bills. You pay it every paycheck, Allah gives us the money and we must give a portion back to Allah" Also "Never make a pledge that you can't fulfill" "Allah says why do you say what you do not, therefore pledge whatever you feel you can pay, because it's a promise to Allah. You can always pay more later."

When missionaries or guests came to St Louis,

usually they came to our house. Our father would drive them to the radio stations, newspapers, companies, or any place they wanted to go. He would sit outside in the car while they went inside. He was very dutiful to Ahmadiyyat.

In his later years he couldn't prostrate for Salat, yet he was always praying. We remember hearing him saying *Sura Al-Fatiha* in his 96th year. He often thanked Allah for letting him live long enough to spend time with his daughters, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. He was always thankful to Allah.

After our mother Aameena Khalid, also a devout pioneer Ahmadi, passed away, our father went to live with his daughter Jameela Hamid wife of Munir Hamid (*Na'ib Ameer*, may Allah have mercy on him) Usman Khalid went to Philadelphia in 1995. In 2009, he breathed his last breathe. We acknowledge the most valuable thing he has given us in life, it wasn't diamonds and it wasn't gold, it is Ahmadiyyat the true Islam. Which showed us how to develop closeness with our Creator. We thanked our father for this. We are very grateful to Allah for allowing us the years that we had with our father, Usman Khalid

SENATOR DAVID VITTER ATTENDS AN EVENT HELD BY AHMADIYYA MUSLIM COMMUNITY IN NEW ORLEANS

Mobashir Ahmed

The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community of New Orleans held its monthly meeting on November 1, 2009. The keynote speaker was the United States Senator David Vitter. We invited many Muslim leaders of the eclectic mix of sects and from several mosques in New Orleans. Several non Muslim and non Ahmadi Pakistanis, Indians, Arabs and African American constituents attended the function. Our on-going objective is to provide orientation to the high level Government and Legislative officials about our faith and practices. Senator Vitter has been a loyal supporter of ours and has helped us in approaching the Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and many relevant senatorial staff members in highlighting the conditions and treatment of minorities in Pakistan.

It was quite apparent that while many Non-Ahmadi Pakistani attended the function they seemed curious as to how this small community can muster such influence within the highest level of Government. Several of them enquired about the feasibility of seeking similar propinquity with these leaders. Our success with these officials clearly shows the unimaginable blessings *Allah Ta'ala* has bestowed upon our small community.

The audience was engaging and asked copious questions on various topics. The Senator's Chief of Staff provided the contact information in case of any assistance needed by the community. We presented him with a copy of the Holy Qur'an and several books of the Promised Messiah^{as}. A scrumptious luncheon buffet was served which undoubtedly received many accolades and generous compliments.

GOD'S MIRACULOUS TREATMENT TO SOME PEOPLE

Maulana Naseer Ahmad Qamar, London, UK

Translated by: Belal Khalid

It is proven from the Holy Qur'an and the *ahadith* of the Holy Prophet^{SAW} that when a person gets closer to God, he reaches a stage when God the Exalted becomes his hands and feet, and eyes, ears and tongue. It means that all of his limbs and powers are fully subservient to the will of Allah the Exalted. The Promised Messiah^{AS} has described the reality and the details of this stage in his book *A'ina Kamalat-e-Islam* in the following words:

“When all the limbs are colored in the submission to God to the extent as if they have become an instrument of God manifesting God's acts from time to time or as if they are a clear mirror where God's wills appear in the form of a pure and perfect image. When submission and services to God attain this stage of perfection, it becomes appropriate to say about the faculties and limbs of a person

possessing such qualities that with the blessings of acquiring Divine color his eyes have become the eyes of God and his tongue has become the tongue of God and his hands have become the hands of God and his ears have become the ears of God and his feet have become the feet of God when looked at from the manifestation of communion perspective. It's justification is that all of the limbs and faculties after being fully aligned to His Will and becoming a personification of His Desires are apt to be called His image. As limbs of a person are fully submissive to his wishes and desires, similarly a perfect person after reaching this stage becomes perfectly attuned to God the Exalted's wishes and desires.”

(A'ina-e-Kamalat-e-Islam, Ruhani Khazain, Vol. 5, pp. 62)

Hazoor^{AS}, while de-

scribing the three grades of the perfection of good fortune, i.e. *fana* (extinction of the self), *baqa* (revival), and *liqa* (communion) says about the attributes exhibited during *liqa*:

“In the grade of *liqa*, sometimes a human being exhibits acts showing a Divine color apparently beyond the capacity of a human being. For example our master and lord, the Best of the Prophets and the Seal of the Prophets^{SAW} threw a fistful of rocks towards the disbelievers in the battle of Badr. That fistful was thrown by his spiritual powers, not by his prayers. This act exhibited Divine powers and had such an extraordinary impact on the army of the enemy that there was not a single person among them whose eyes were safe from it, and all of them were acting as if blinded by it and started running losing their senses in a state of great

anxiety and concern. The Majestic Allah points towards this miracle in the following verse of the Holy Qur'an:

وَمَا رَمَيْتَ إِذْ رَمَيْتَ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ رَمَىٰ

"And you threw not when you did throw, but it was Allah who threw ..." (8:18)

Meaning that Divine powers were working behind the scenes. It was not a work of a human being. Another similar miracle exhibited by the Holy Prophet^{saw} was the miracle of *Shaq al-Qamar*, which was also exhibited by the same Divine powers without any prayers. It was exhibited merely by pointing of a finger that was full of Divine powers. There are many such miracles that were exhibited merely by the personal powers of the Holy Prophet^{saw} without any prayers. Many times, just by dipping his fingers in a bowl of water he increased the water so much that the entire army and the camels and the horses drank from it and it still remained there as if untouched. Many times, he blessed a few pieces of bread by touching them, and thousands of hungry and thirsty people ate it. Many times, he fed milk

to a large party after blessing it by touching it by his lips. And many times, he turned bitter wells into sweet wells by putting his saliva into them. Many times, he restored badly wounded people to health by touching them by his hands. Sometimes he restored the sight of those people who had lost their eyeballs during battles by the blessings of his hands. He did many such acts using his personal powers that had Divine powers blended with them."

(*A'ina-e-Kamalat-e-Islam, Ruhani Khazain*, Vol. 5, pp. 65-66)

Hazoor^{as} describing the reality of these authoritative miracles says:

"The real explanation of these authoritative miracles is that due to the intensity of communion this person is so much colored in the color of the Majestic and Glorious God in a metaphorical sense that the Divine manifestation permanently occupies him and the real Beloved embraces him lifting the intervening veil because of the extreme proximity. He puts the same blessings that He Himself pos-

sesses in his sayings, actions, motions, food, clothes, house and time and all of his belongings. At that stage, everything that touches him is blessed even without his prayers. His house is blessed and the thresholds of his doors are full of blessings. Blessings descend on the doors of his house which he witnesses every day and he smells them. When he travels, God is with him with all of His blessings and when he arrives at his home, he brings a river of Divine enlightenments with him. In essence, he is a strange person, and no one knows his secrets except God the Exalted."

(*A'ina-e-Kamalat-e-Islam, Ruhani Khazain*, Vol. 5, pp. 69)

Hazoor^{as} after describing that these miracles were exhibited in their most perfect form, purity, and count at the hand of the Holy Prophet^{saw}, says that these miracles were not limited to the person of the Holy Prophet^{saw}. Rather the being of the Holy Prophet^{saw} was gracious and these extraordinary events continued in his *um-mah* because of the blessings of their love for him and obedience to him. So, Hazoor says:

“Our guide and leader not only himself showed these authoritative miracles, but also left a long chain of these extraordinary events in his *ummah* till the Day of Judgment that have been manifesting in every era according to the needs of the time and will continue manifesting until the last days of the world. It is hard to find the parallel of the extent to which the lights of the Divine powers have illuminated the pious spirits of this *Ummah* in any other *Ummah*.”

(*A'ina-e-Kamalat-e-Islam, Ruhani Khazain*, Vol. 5, pp. 67)

So we see that in this age many such authoritative miracles appeared at the hands of the Promised Messiah^{as} and after him, these signs appeared at the hands of the second manifestation, i.e., the true *Khilafat* of Ahmadiyya, Islam, and are still continuing. Hazoor^{as} describing different forms of these authoritative miracles says:

“When someone becomes recipient of the grade of *liqa*, Divine matters are definitely executed by him at the high times of this posi-

tion and some of these extraordinary miracles are definitely witnessed by those who spend a portion of their lives in the close company of such people. At the high times of his status, some of the Divine attributes are vested in that person in metaphorical sense to the point that his mercy becomes the mercy of God the Exalted and his punishment becomes punishment of God the Exalted. And sometimes without any prayers, he says for a thing to be created and it gets created, and if he looks with displeasure at someone, some kind of punishment overtakes him. And if he looks at someone with mercy, he becomes recipient of Divine mercy. As when God says *kun* (be), it indiscriminately produces the desired results permanently, similarly his saying of *kun* in the high time and pinnacle of his state doesn't go fruitless.”

(*A'ina-e-Kamalat-e-Islam, Ruhani Khazain*, Vol. 5, pp. 68, 69)

In reference to the above saying of Hazoor:

“Some of these extraordinary miracles are definitely witnessed by

those who spend a portion of their lives in the close company of such a person”, this humble person says that though such extraordinary miracles exhibited by the *Khulafa-e-Ahmadiyyat* are spread out in the entire world, this humble servant of *Khilafat-e-Ahma-diyya* also had the good fortune of observing these authoritative miracles. For the sake of remembering the bounties, this humble person will mention three such events related to the three *Khulafa* of Ahmadiyyat that were personally witnessed by this humble servant. These events provide a clear proof of the truthfulness of the *Khulafa* of Ahmadiyyat and their closeness to God Almighty, their lofty status, their love and affection for their workers, and the sanctity and the blessings associated with the *Khilafat*. “This enlightenment of *Khilafat* may continue to grow.”

- In 1978 when I passed the examination of *shahid*, our principal, Malik Saifur Rehman arranged a meeting of the entire class with Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih IIIth. All of the students sat in rows on the rug on the floor. On the left side of Hazoor, Malik Saifur Rahman Sahib was sitting on a chair. He introduced all the students one by one to Hazoor.

When my turn came, Malik Saifur Rahman Sahib introduced me as Naseer Ahmad Qamar. Hazoor in his particular style looked at me with his loving and smiling face with his beautiful and blessed eyes and asked, "Are you the son of Bashir Ahmad Qamar?" I said, "Yes." Hazoor said, "Are you Kashmiri?" I again said, "Yes." (My father had migrated from Rajuri Kashmir. Hazoor said Kashmiri in that reference.) Thereafter Hazoor said, "You are also African!" I said, "Yes." (In those days my father was serving in Ghana as Missionary. I understood that Hazoor had said that in that reference. This was also a loving expression of Hazoor's affection.) Thereafter Hazoor looking at this humble worker with his adorable smile, loving, enlightening, and mesmerizing eyes said, "So you are Kashmiri as well as African and." After a little pause he said, "God only knows what the future is going to bring."

Apparently, these were ordinary loving words, but

*Guftah ou guftahi Allah
bawad*

So it is like saying:

*Az halqoom Abdullah
bavad*

these blessed words of the holy Third *Khalifa*th of the chosen Messiah of God transformed into a prized treasure and a grand prophecy in my favor. Its background is that when my father returned from Ghana, he went back twice to Ghana for a term of three years each as a missionary. So, I was still an 'African'. In 1984 (my father was still in Ghana at that time), after the migration of Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih IVth from Pakistan to UK, Hazoor appointed this humble person to UK and I moved to UK in May, 1985. So I became British as well. Thereafter my father was appointed as missionary of Fiji, so I became Fijian. In August, 1987, Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih IVth honored this humble worker by appointing me as his Private Secretary. When I got the honor of accompanying Hazoor from 1987 to 1994 on his visits to Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Switzerland, Germany, Belgium, France, Holland, Ireland, Portu-

gal, Spain, America, Canada, Mauritius, Tanzania, Uganda, Kenya, Guatemala, Japan, Fiji, Australia, Singapore, India etc., further interpretations of the vastness hidden in the following words of Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih IIIth "God only knows what the future is going to bring" became even more evident. *Alhamdulillah, Allahumma Zid Barak.*

- My family came to London from Pakistan in the second week of July, 1988. Two or three days later, my family met with Hazoor. At that time I had only two daughters. In those days, the *Jalsa Salana* of UK *Jama'at* was held in the end of July in Islamabad (Tilford). A week before the *Jalsa*, Hazoor came to Islamabad to inspect the arrangements of the *Jalsa*. This humble person also accompanied Hazoor as his private secretary. When Hazoor passed by the quarter where my family was staying, my two daughters were standing outside the quarter. Hazoor suddenly turned towards them and lovingly said to them, "Where is your brother?" He himself

then remarked, “*Insha Allah* he will arrive before the next *Jalsa*.” At that occasion the photographer took a picture of Hazoor with the daughters on Hazoor’s request. This all happened very quickly, spontaneously and without any planning. In the end of August, 1988, Hazoor had to go to the tour of different countries of Eastern Africa including Mauritius and others for more than a month in regards to the centenary celebrations of the *Jama’at*. Hazoor gave this humble person the honor to accompany him. Time was passing, and there were no signs of pregnancy of my wife. So I wrote a letter to Hazoor and mentioned the incident reminding Hazoor of the time when Hazoor has told my daughters about the arrival of a brother, and requested him to pray that Allah the Exalted might fulfill Hazoor’s words, his desire, and his prayers in our favor. Hazoor read my letter while going through his mail and forwarded the letter to me saying, “Allah may give more than one brother!” When I got home, I told my wife

about Hazoor and said that God would *Insha Allah* bless us with at least two boys. It did happen exactly as Hazoor has said. Allah the Exalted fulfilled both the things said by Hazoor with grandeur. So, exactly as Hazoor had said. On July 4th, 1989, just before the next *Jalsa*, a boy was born to my wife. When the baby was born, I was with Hazoor at Atitlan in Guatemala. On the way back to Los Angeles from there I received the news about the birth of the boy. Hazoor expressed great joy on hearing this news and named the boy with his own pen, “Mustansar Ahmad Qamar”. By the blessings of God, this boy is included in the *Waqf-e-Nau* Program and is studying at the *Jamia Ahmadiyya* U.K. at this time. Thereafter God gave another brother to my daughters in December, 1990. Hazoor named him Lubib Ahmad Qamar. He is also included in the *Waqf-e-Nau* Program by the grace of God. Allah may keep them healthy, progress them in knowledge and deeds, they may have a special love for *Khilafat* and always

advance in sincerity and loyalty.

- One of my maternal cousins developed depression in her prime youth. Because of the failure to diagnose the disease on time, the disease advanced. Because of her disease, her entire family in addition to her sisters and parents were going through great pain and hardship. Doctors said that if she got married her depression might slowly go away and her health might improve. First, it was hard to find a match because of her illness, and second, when few matches were suggested, she refused to get married because of a certain fear in her mind. In February, 2004, just before going to Pakistan on leave with my family we appeared before Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih V^{aba}. At that occasion we also mentioned the illness of our dear cousin and mentioned that she had been suffering from this disease for the past 15 years and all the relatives were going through great pain because of her. We also mentioned that according to doctors she might get better if she was married. When the entire

situation was presented to Hazoor, Hazoor said to arrange for her marriage. My wife mentioned to Hazoor that who would marry her in that condition. Also she did not want to get married, and if she felt better and agreed to a proposal, she would refuse later. My wife earnestly requested Hazoor for prayers in a very painful voice. Hazoor, who was looking down moments ago suddenly raised his head and looked directly at me and said, "Now that you are going, make sure she gets married." When Hazoor said this, his face was glowing and was brightly lit with enlightenment. There was a particular grandeur in his words, and an unusual authority. In response, I only affirmed and requested for prayers. When we came out of the room after the meeting, my wife said, "How did you say 'yes'? She never agrees to marriage and moreover she is sick. We are only going for a few days, how are we going to find a match? How will this happen?" I said, "I felt an unusual thing in Hazoor's words. These words were said with an

unusual spiritual agitation. You just see, Allah the Exalted will produce some means for it. Hazoor's spiritual state in which Hazoor looked at us with mercy and love gives me the conviction that God the Exalted will have mercy upon us and show us a miracle." We started the journey with prayers. We were to stay only for three weeks at the house of *Mamoon Jan*. During our stay, we arranged for the cleaning, white washing of the house and doors, put new curtains in different rooms. Time passed really fast till the time that only five days of stay were left when an acquaintance mentioned a match to *Mamoon Jan* for the girl. *Mamoon Jan* told the person pointing towards me that I would make the decision in this matter. I remember that it was a Friday. I met the boy and according to the commandment of God the Exalted to talk straight, I went into details of the girl's ailment. I also mentioned that the girl was older than him. He more or less already knew almost all the things from his relatives. He was pleased with the fact

that the girl's relatives did not hide anything from him. In spite of girl's sickness, he was ready to marry the girl with full contentment of heart. Thereafter the girl was told all the facts about the boy, and she agreed to the marriage. However, after a while she expressed her hesitation in front of her siblings and mother. They all came to me in a state of worry. My wife said, "God knows what fear this girl harbors in her mind. Sometimes she agrees and thereafter she refuses. We came here only for a few days. You should not get in the middle of this. You are a life devotee. If something happens tomorrow, you would be blamed without any reason." But I had Hazoor's glowing face in front of my eyes and the words that came from Hazoor's blessed face, "You arrange for her marriage." My *Mamoon Jan*, even before listening about our meeting with Hazoor had left the entire matter in my hands. I explained to my wife that this appears to be God's decree that the marriage is arranged through me according to Hazoor's words. In

short, we called the girl and asked again. She happily expressed her agreement to the marriage. Then we made the girl and the boy sit next to each other in front of all the relatives and asked everyone to express if they had any concerns or questions so they could be addressed. In short the proposal was accepted. The boy and his relatives wanted to have the marriage ceremony while we were there. So the next day, which was a Saturday, all the clothes and jewelry were bought. The *Nikah* and reception were arranged on Sunday with modesty. The groom side feast was arranged on Monday and we left on Tuesday. With the grace of God, that beloved niece now has two healthy sons and is happily married.

Everyone who heard the story of this marriage was surprised at how it all took place in such a short time. I had only one answer that it was because of the words uttered by the blessed mouth of Allah's beloved person and our Imam, Hadhrat Khaliqul Masih V^{aba}, during his special moments which Allah the Exalted fulfilled.

لِلّٰهِ الْخَمْدُ فِي الْاَوْلى الْاٰخِرَةِ

It is true:

اُن سے خدا کے کام سبھی مجزولہ ہیں
یہ اس لئے کہ عاشق بار یگانہ ہیں
ان کو خدا نے غیروں سے بھٹا ہے امتیاز
ان کے لئے نشاں کو دکھاتا ہے کارساز

God's entire treatment to them is miraculous

It is because of their unique love for their friend

God has granted them distinction over all

The Almighty God exhibits signs for them

It is not possible for this humble person to express my gratitude to God Almighty for enabling me to observe so closely these authoritative miracles of his beloved ones due to their closeness to Him, but also for showing these illustrious signs in our houses, and families with His blessings. Allah the Exalted may continue enabling us and our coming generations to receive the blessings of the true *Khilafat*. *Ameen*.

The Holy Prophet^{saw} Joined *Hilful Fudul* Association During His Youth

When Muhammad^{saw} was 15 years old, a skirmish broke out between the *Quraish* and *Hawazin* tribes at the occasion of a fair known as, "*Ukaz Fair*". Despite the fact that war was prohibited during *Hajj*, this war not only started during the *Hajj* season, it continued for four years but with intervals. This war is known as the Battle of Fijar. The length of this senseless war made people think of ways to stop it. A meeting was called by Az-Zubair, an uncle of Muhammad^{saw}. The concerned people gathered in the house of 'Abdullah ibn Jad'an, a wealthy resident of the town. In this meeting a society was formed to help the oppressed, the poor and the needy. The society was named, '*Hilful Fudul*' after the common name, '*Fadl*' of all its members. The members of this association took a responsibility under oath to do the following:

"They will help those who were oppressed and will restore them their rights as long as the last drop of water remained in the sea. And if they do not do so, they will compensate the victims out of their own belongings."

Muhammad^{saw} having sincere concerns about the conditions of the poor and the needy became a member of this society.