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- Proofreaders:**
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**Design and layout:**

- Tanveer Khokhar
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# Notes & Comments

## Cartoon Wars

The recent furore over the cartoons depicting the prophet of Islam as a terrorist printed in many western newspapers illustrates nothing but the blind leading the blind on one side and hypocrisy on the other. prevalent on both sides of the argument. Seeing the daily burning of embassies by maddened crowds in Muslim countries on our television screens we can declare that these cartoons were anything but funny.

Firstly, the Editor of the Danish Newspaper newspaper that published the cartoons has gone on record claiming that freedom of speech is paramount and should not be sacrificed for any reason, least of all not for the reason that it may offend people's religious sensibilities. However, *the Guardian* (UK newspaper) revealed that the same newspaper had earlier refused to publish

drawings defaming Jesus:

Under the headline, *Danish paper rejected Jesus cartoons*, Monday February 6, 2006, Gwladys Fouché reports:

‘Jyllands-Posten, the Danish newspaper that first published the cartoons of the prophet Muhammad that have caused a storm of protest throughout the Islamic world, refused to run drawings lampooning Jesus Christ, it has emerged today.

The Danish daily turned down the cartoons of Christ three years ago, on the grounds that they could be offensive to readers and were not funny.

In April 2003, Danish illustrator Christoffer Zieler submitted a series of unsolicited cartoons dealing with

the resurrection of Christ to Jyllands-Posten.

Zieler received an email back from the paper's Sunday editor, Jens Kaiser, which said: "I don't think Jyllands-Posten's readers will enjoy the drawings. As a matter of fact, I think that they will provoke an outcry. Therefore, I will not use them."

. . . But the Jyllands-Posten editor in question, Mr Kaiser, said that the case was "ridiculous to bring forward now. It has nothing to do with the Muhammad cartoons.

"In the Muhammad drawings case, we asked the illustrators to do it. I did not ask for these cartoons. That's the difference," he said.'

One can only laugh at the double standards in operation here. It is clear from the above that the editor knew that these cartoons would provoke an outcry. In a televised interview the editor refused to answer the Muslim advocate when asked if he would print a cartoon

of a Jewish rabbi wearing a nazi uniform. It is clear to us that it would be totally unacceptable to print such a cartoon in a Western newspaper. It is ironic that only this month British historian David Irving was sentenced to three years imprisonment by a Vienna court after being found guilty denying the Holocaust of European Jewry. This was in spite of his having repented his mistake in denying that the gas chambers ever existed. Theand the Mayor of London, Ken Livingston, also found himself on the wrong side of the law when he made a remark to a reporter that he was like a Nazi guard. This month he too was convicted, ordered to pay a fine and suspended from his post for some weeks were convicted for anti-Semitic remarks. It is clear that the West knows there are limits to free speech, but the law seems only to protect the sensibilities of some, while running rough-shod over those of others. So the Muslims are justified in bringing to the fore the injustice of a this particular system of free speech which appears to protect the sensibilities of the Jews, but not those of other faiths.

But in what manner should they protest? It is clear from these cartoons that Islamophobia is rife amongst certain elements of the Western media, but they are shrewd and make the most of such situations. Often the West is the oppressor yet they use the inappropriate reaction of some Muslims to depict them as the intimidators. How unfortunate it is for Muslims that they fall into the trap each time, like a fly caught in the web of deceit.

The deplorable vision of Muslim masses in frenzied arson attacks on foreign embassies and even unrelated Western business premises highlights two aspects – the malicious and bellicose role of certain elements of the Muslim clergy and the ignorance of the hooligan element amongst the mass of Muslims about the teachings of their beloved prophet. In many respects the images of riots flashed across TV screens of the world have done far more damage than any cartoon could to the true face of Islam thus fulfilling the real aim of publishing the cartoons.

The role of the group of certain Danish Imams in relation to inciting violence illustrates how low the Muslim clergy can stoop. For these so called learned men to use lies to inflame a situation amongst the Muslims is as deplorable, if not more so, as the publication of the propaganda lies in a foreign and unbelieving press. The 12 cartoons were first published on Sept. 30, 2005. Danish Muslims reacted with peaceful protests. In late October, a number of ambassadors of Muslim countries complained to the Danish prime minister and the Muslim society took the case to the law courts, claiming that the newspaper and cartoonists had violated the Danish law. Although Danish law protects free speech there is a prohibition against blasphemy and also a prohibition against expressions that threaten, deride or degrade on the grounds of race, colour, national or ethnic origin. The public prosecutor investigated the matter, but concluded that the cartoons did not violate the law.

An Egyptian newspaper printed a number of these cartoons in an

article denouncing their use in the Western media. This in itself did not result in rioting amongst Egyptian Muslims and there was no visible reaction against the newspaper. Indeed this was the correct response. An attack by the pen requires a response by the pen. The situation changed completely and violence erupted in Muslim countries only after a group of Danish imams Imams had presented their 43 page dossier, seeking support at a meeting of Arab heads of state in December. The dossier contained three cartoons that were never published. Apparently, these were extremely offensive and incendiary provocative. One shows Mohammed Muhammad<sup>(sa)</sup> as a paedophiliac demon. Another shows Muhammad<sup>(sa)</sup> Mohammed with a pig snout. The third shows a praying Muslim being raped by a dog.<sup>1</sup> It was only after this presentation that violence broke out across Muslim lands. One has to ask, what was the purpose of presenting material that had never been published? With these lies these imams Imams were blowing on embers in order to ignite a flame.

Muslims, especially their leaders, should be wary that they do not come under the description given by the Holy prophet Prophet of Islam<sup>(sa)</sup> in the following hadith:

A time will come when nothing will be left of Islam except its name. Nothing will be left of the Qur'an except its script. Mosques will be full of worshippers but they will have no fear of God and will be devoid of true guidance. Their 'ulama [learned men] will be the worst creatures under the canopy of the heaven. Evil plots will originate from them and to them will be their return.<sup>2</sup>

It is high time that the Muslim masses freed themselves from the yolk of evil-minded mullahs. Frenzied violence can never be construed as love for the Holy Prophet of Islam<sup>(sa)</sup>. True love could shouldwould be expressed if they took taketook the trouble to find out for themselves for what the Holy Prophet stood for for. How was he a mercy for mankind? How did he react in the face of abuse hurled at him? How did he

expressed love towards those who hated him? Muslims can express true love for the founder of their faith by emulating his behaviour and by sending down blessings upon him and uttering prayers for his followers and all the followers of Abraham in their prayers, and. This love can not be expressed by following the example that of his enemies who lost control of their senses out of hate.

The character of the Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup> was the Qur'an. The appropriate reaction to propaganda against Islam is laid down clearly therein. True Muslims should read and act upon these verses, not the incitement of the mullahs who, by introducing lies into their testimony to the Arab nations, fell far short of the admonition of the Qur'an:

*O ye who believe! be steadfast in the cause of Allah, bearing witness in equity; and let not a people's enmity incite you to act otherwise than with justice. Be always just. That is nearer to righteousness. And fear Allah. Surely, Allah is Aware of what you do. (Ch.5:V.9)*

The riots in Muslim countries no doubt were orchestrated by local mullahs (religious leaders). It is hard to imagine crowds coming out on the street without some organisation behind them. The Holy Prophet of Islam<sup>(sa)</sup> was very particular in observing protocol and preserving diplomatic immunity so much so that a representative who wished to become a Muslim was told to return to his country and return in a private capacity before he could be accepted as a Muslim. Thus burning down embassies and foreign flags and effigies are all un-Islamic acts. Again, the reaction is far removed from the dictates of the Qur'an. The Qur'an has given proper guidance to the Muslims on how they should react to profane or blasphemous propaganda in the following verses:

*And He has already revealed to you in the Book that when you hear the Signs of Allah being denied and mocked at, sit not with them until they engage in a talk other than that; for in that case you would be like them. Surely Allah will assemble the hypocrites and*

*the disbelievers in Hell, all together.*

(Ch.4:V.141)

*And when you see those who trifle in our Signs, then turn thou away from them until they engage in a discourse other than that...*

(Ch.6:V.69)

*And in the like manner have We made for every Prophet an enemy, the evil ones from among men and jinn. They suggest one to another gilded speech in order to deceive. And if thy Lord had enforced His will, they would not have done it; so leave them alone with that which they fabricate.*

(Ch.6:V.113)

Where has the Qur'an taught the Muslims to become inflamed with hate and carry out mindless acts of violence in response to nothing more than the profane or blasphemous speech, writing or pictures? It is clear from the above verses and many others also, that God and His Prophets are not dependent upon the protection of men. God can take care of such

people himself. Nowhere in the Qur'an has God given the mandate to man to punish people for crimes against God and nowhere has He given man the right to respond to evil speech with violence. It is purely His prerogative to punish those who oppose God and His messengers.

In his Friday sermon of 17th February, the head Head of the Ahmadiyya Muslim, Community, discussing this issue, stated that the West, having forsaken religion, the West is destroying all moral values and thereby attracting to itself its own destruction. He stated that to continue with this stance wilfully is to incite the wrath of Allah. He also cautioned the world that natural disasters are not restricted for Asia and America alone, and reminded us the world of the words of the Promised Messiah, 'O Europe you too are not safe, do not challenge the sense of honour of God'.

On the other hand, society has been given the right to punish for crimes against humanity and whereas the rioting Muslims are falling foul of the laws of the land

in this regard. The commands given to the Muslims, in the verses cited above, are: ‘sit not with them until they engage in a talk other than that,’ or ‘turn thou away from them until they engage in a discourse other than that,’ or ‘leave them alone with that which they fabricate.’ What a far cry is this from the violent response we have witnessed!

The words of the Promised Messiah<sup>(as)</sup> ring true today as they did one hundred years ago when he made the observation that it was ironic that the Christians had erred in the matter of their obligation to the Creator, while Muslims had erred in matters relating to the creation. Though, with regard to the Christians, he referred to the Creator’s rights being trampled upon by the raising of a man to the position of God, today the inevitable consequence of such a belief is that many in the West have given up their faith and atheism reigns. The punishment of such errors is in the hands of God and God alone. However, *the crime of the Muslims (of today) is that they offended mankind with their sword and named it Jihad.*<sup>3</sup>

Muslims should ponder on how it was that the Messenger<sup>(sa)</sup> of Allah transformed the hatred of his enemies into such love that is unmatched among the followers of other prophets. It was his high moral example and his abounding love for humanity at large and his weeping before God for their guidance that created the transformation. Mass violent demonstrations led by a foul-mouthed clergy, or burning flags, buildings and cars will only earn derogation and aversion to Islam.

Muslims need to rid themselves of the evil-minded men among their clergy who have little regard for the Qur’an and the example of Messenger of Allah<sup>(sa)</sup>. Take heed of the Qur’an instead, it is available to all. This is the message delivered by your Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup>.

*And say to My servants that they should always speak what is best. Surely, Satan, stirs up discord among them. Surely, Satan is an open enemy to man.*

(Ch.17:V.54)



Satan is not only an enemy of Muslims but to the whole of mankind. Those who stir up discord are exhibiting a satanic nature. In contrast to these mullahs the example of the Prophet was in accord with the following verse:

*And good and evil are not alike. Repel evil with that which is best. And lo, he, between whom and thyself was enmity, will become as though he were a warm friend.*  
(Ch.41:V.35)

The prayer of the followers of Hadhrat Ibrahim<sup>(as)</sup> (Abraham) also provides a good example for the Muslims, as the Qur'an says:

*Our Lord, make us not a trial for those who disbelieve, and forgive us, our Lord; for, Thou alone art Mighty, the Wise.*

*Surely, there is a good example in them for you - for all who have hope to see Allah and the Last Day. And whosoever turns away - truly, Allah is Self-Sufficient, Worthy of all praise.*

*It may be that Allah will bring*

*about love between you and those of them with whom you are now at enmity, and Allah is All-Powerful; and Allah is Most Forgiving, Merciful.*  
(Ch.60:V.6-8)

It is unfortunate indeed that many religious leaders amongst the Muslims do not motivate their followers to exhibit the higher and noble attributes of human nature, the display of which might attract others to the truth of Islam. Instead, we often see them at the forefront, leading exhibitions of satanic behaviour and thus they become a stumbling block and a trial, not only for those who disbelieve, but also for the believers.

God promises in the Holy Qur'an:

*He it is Who has sent His Messenger with the guidance and the Religion of truth that He may cause it to prevail over all religions, even if those who associate partners with God hate it.* (Ch.61:V.10)

Will Muslims believe their God or will they continue to depend upon

the Mullah to mislead them into further disorder? The religion of truth cannot be propagated with lies. Nor can its cause be advanced through mindless violence. History has proved that the Messengers of God always prevail and false ideologies always perish. The Muslims should first look towards ridding themselves of false ideologies that have no connection with the religion of truth propounded in the Qur'an. The war of slogans by angry mobs should now give way to the battle to win hearts through love and tolerance

***Basit Ahmad***

## References

- 1 Information of above 3 paragraphs obtained from article posted on Alter Net Feb 14 2006, entitled *The Slippery Slope of Self-Censorship* by David Morris.
- 2 *Mishkat ul-Masabih, Kitab ul-Ilm*, Translation from Al Asr May/June 1999.
- 3 *British Government and Jihad*, published May 22nd 1900 by Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad<sup>(as)</sup>.

In this journal, for the ease of non-Muslim readers, '(sa)' or 'sa' after the words, 'Holy Prophet', or the name 'Muhammad', are used. They stand for '*Sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam*' meaning 'Peace and blessings of Allah be upon him'. Likewise, the letters '(as)' or 'as' after the name of all other prophets is an abbreviation meaning 'Peace be upon him' derived from '*Alaihis salatu wassalam*' which are words that a Muslim utters out of respect whenever he or she comes across that name.

The abbreviation 'ra' or (ra) stands for '*Radhiallahu Ta'ala anhu* and is used for Companions of a Prophet, meaning Allah be pleased with him or her (when followed by the relevant Arabic pronoun). Finally, 'ru' or (ru) for '*Rahemahullahu Ta'ala* means the Mercy of Allah the Exalted be upon him.

## *The Holy Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup> – the Grand Reformer, Perfector of Morals and his Miracles – Part 5*

This series sets out, in the words of the Promised Messiah<sup>(as)</sup>, Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, a summary of his exposition of four outstanding topics: ISLAM; ALLAH, THE EXALTED; THE HOLY PROPHET<sup>(sa)</sup> and THE HOLY QUR'AN. The original compilation, in Urdu, from which these extracts have been translated into English, was collated with great care and diligence by Syed Daud Ahmad Sahib, Allah have mercy on him and reward him graciously for his great labour of love. Amin. The English rendering is by the late Sir Muhammad Zafrullah Khan, may Allah be pleased with him, and is quoted from *The Essence of Islam*, Volume 1. All references throughout, unless otherwise specifically mentioned, are from the Holy Qur'an.

**I**n meekness and gentleness, Moses<sup>(as)</sup> stood higher than all the Prophets in Israel and no other Prophet in Israel, whether Jesus<sup>(as)</sup> or anyone else, approached the lofty station of Moses<sup>(as)</sup>. The Torah bears witness that in meekness and gentleness and in moral qualities Moses<sup>(as)</sup> was higher than all the Prophets in Israel. The third verse of the twelfth chapter of *Numbers* says: Now the man Moses<sup>(as)</sup> was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth.

God has in the Torah praised the

meekness of Moses<sup>(as)</sup> as He has not praised any other Prophet in Israel. It is true, however, that the high moral qualities of the Holy Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup> that are mentioned in the Holy Qur'an are a thousand times more exalted than those of Moses<sup>(as)</sup>. God has said that the Holy Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup> combined in his person all the high moral qualities which were found in the different Prophets and said with regard to him:

*Thou dost possess the highest moral qualities.*  
(Ch.68:V.5)

The word 'azim in Arabic idiom is used as connoting the highest quality of a thing. For instance, when a big tree is called 'azim, it would mean that it possesses all the height and width and bulk that is possible for a tree to possess. Thus, this verse means that all the high moral qualities and excellent characteristics which a human being can possess, were all present in the fullest degree in the Holy Prophet(sa). Thus, this is the highest possible praise. This is also indicated in another verse:

*...and great is Allah's grace on thee. (Ch.4:V.114)*

Meaning that: God has bestowed His grace upon thee in the largest measure and no Prophet can be equal in rank with thee.

This praise is mentioned in Psalms as a prophecy concerning the Holy Prophet(sa) as is said:

'Therefore, God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.' (*Psalms, 45:7*)

*(Barahin-e-Ahmadiyya, Ruhani*

*Khaza'in, Vol. 1 pp. 605-606, sub-footnote 3)*

### **Holy Prophet(sa) Superiority over All the Prophets**

The Holy Qur'an shows that every Prophet was a follower of the Holy Prophet(sa) as is said:

*...you shall believe in him and help him...(Ch.3:V.82)*

In this way, all Prophets became followers of the Holy Prophet(sa). (*Barahin-e-Ahmadiyya, Part V, Ruhani Khaza'in, Vol. 21 p.300*)

The Holy Prophet(sa) combines the names of all the Prophets in himself inasmuch as he possessed all their diverse excellences. So he is Moses(as) and Jesus(as) and Adam(as) and Abraham(as) and Joseph(as) and Jacob(as). This is indicated in the verse:

*...so follow thou their guidance... (Ch.6:V.91)*

Meaning that the Holy Prophet(sa) should combine in himself all the diverse guidance which other Prophets had brought.

This shows that the dignity of all Prophets was combined in the Holy Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup>; and his name Muhammad<sup>(sa)</sup> also points to this, for it means greatly praised, and great praise can only be imagined when all the varied excellences and special qualities of the different Prophets are combined in the Holy Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup>.

There are many verses in the Holy Qur'an which set forth clearly that the being of the Holy Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup> on account of its qualities and excellences, was a combination of all the Prophets. Every Prophet finding in him an appropriate relationship with himself imagined that he would come under his name.

At one place the Holy Qur'an sets forth that this Prophet has the closest relationship with Abraham (Ch.3:V.69). In a *Hadith* of *Bukhari*, the Holy Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup> says that he has a close relationship with Jesus<sup>(as)</sup> and that his being is combined with the being of Jesus<sup>(as)</sup>. This confirms the saying of Jesus<sup>(as)</sup> that the Holy Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup> would appear under his name and so it happened that when our



**The founder of the Ahmadiyya Muslim community was Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad<sup>(as)</sup>.**

The founder of the Ahmadiyya Muslim community was Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad<sup>(as)</sup>. In 1891, he claimed, on the basis of Divine revelation, that he was the Promised Messiah and Mahdi whose advent had been foretold by Muhammad, the Holy Prophet of Islam (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and by the scriptures of other faiths.

His claim constitutes the basis of the beliefs of the Ahmadiyya Muslim community.

Messiah<sup>(sa)</sup> appeared, he completed the incomplete works of the Messiah of Nazareth and bore witness to his truth and cleared him of the calumnies which the Jews and the Christians had uttered against him, and thus gave pleas-

ure to the soul of Jesus.

*(A'ina-e-Kamalat-e-Islam, Ruhani Khaza'in, Vol.5, p.343)*

Divine revelation is a mirror in which the perfect attributes of God Almighty are seen, according to the inner cleanliness of the Prophet who is the recipient of the revelation. As the Holy Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup> was higher than all the other Prophets in the purity of his soul, the expansion of his mind, his chastity, modesty, sincerity, trust, fidelity and love of the Divine, God, the Glorious, anointed him with the perfume of special excellence in excess of any other Prophet. His bosom and heart which were broader and holier and more innocent and brighter and more loving than the bosom and heart of any who had passed before him, and who were to come after him, were considered worthy that such Divine revelation should descend upon him as should be stronger and more perfect, higher and more complete, than the revelation vouchsafed to all those who were before him and all those who were to come after him, and which should serve as a clear, wide and large mirror for reflecting

Divine attributes. That is why the Holy Qur'an possesses such high excellences that the brightness of all previous books is cast into the shade before its fierce and brilliant rays. No mind can put forth a verity which is not already contained in it and no reason can present any argument which is not already presented in it. No speech can affect the hearts so powerfully as the strong and full of blessings effect it produces upon millions of hearts. Undoubtedly it is a clear mirror reflecting the perfect attributes of the Divine in which all is found that is needed by a seeker to arrive at the highest grades of understanding.

*(Surmah Chashm Arya, Ruhani Khaza'in, Vol. 2, pp.71-72, footnote)*

The Holy Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup> was the best of the Prophets and had a higher status than all the Messengers, And God desired that as by his personal qualities he was the Chief of all the Prophets, so from the point of view of his overt services, he might be proclaimed to the world as better and higher than all. Therefore, God Almighty extended his beneficence to the

whole of mankind, so that his efforts and his endeavours might be generally manifested and should not be confined to a particular people, as was the case with Moses<sup>(as)</sup> and Jesus<sup>(as)</sup>, and so that enduring severe persecution from every direction and every people, he should be entitled to the great reward which will not be bestowed upon other Prophets.

*(Barahin-e-Ahmadiyya, Ruhani Khazii'in, Vol. 1, pp. 653-654)*

It is my belief that if, leaving the Holy Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup> aside, all the Prophets who had preceded him had combined to perform the task and to carry out the reform which the Holy Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup> performed and carried out, they would not have been able to do so. They had not the heart and the strength which had been bestowed upon the Holy Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup>. If anyone should say that this shows disrespect towards the other Prophets, he would be guilty of uttering a calumny against me. It is part of my faith to honour and respect the Prophets, but the Holy Prophet's<sup>(sa)</sup> superiority to all other Prophets is the principal part of my faith and my whole being is saturated with

it. It is not within my power to exclude it.

Let my unfortunate opponent, who is sightless, say what he pleases, but our Holy Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup> performed a task which all the others combined together, or separately, could not have performed.

*That is Allah's grace; He bestows it on whom He pleases...*

*(Ch.62:V.5)*

*(Malfuzat, Vol.II, p.174)*

The Scriptures of the Jews state clearly that a saviour like Moses<sup>(as)</sup> will be sent for them. This means that he would appear at a time when the Jews would be passing through a state of suffering and humiliation as was imposed upon them in the time of Pharaoh. Then by believing in him they would be delivered from torment and disgrace. There is no doubt that our lord and master Muhammad, the chosen one<sup>(sa)</sup> was the personage for whom the Jews had been waiting throughout the ages and in whom the prophecy of the Torah was most

clearly fulfilled. When the Jews believed in him many great kings were raised among them. This is clear proof that God Almighty forgave their sins because of their accepting Islam and had mercy on them as was promised in the Torah.

*(Ayyam-us-Sulh, Ruhani Khaza'in, Vol.14, pp.302-303)*

The greatness that was bestowed upon Jesus<sup>(as)</sup> was on account of his following the Holy Prophet Muhammad<sup>(sa)</sup> for Jesus<sup>(as)</sup> was informed of the Holy Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup> and believed in him and attained salvation through his belief.

*(Al-Hakam, 30 June 1901, p.3)*

Now we compare Jesus<sup>(as)</sup> with the Holy Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup> in the matter of the treatment accorded to them by the governments of their respective days and how their prestige and Divine support were manifested. When we do this, it becomes clear that in contrast with the Holy Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup>, Jesus<sup>(as)</sup> not only fails to exhibit signs of Godhead, he even fails to demonstrate the signs of a Prophet.

When the Holy Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup> sent his message to the rulers of his time, the Roman Caesar, on receipt of the Holy Prophet's<sup>(sa)</sup> message, breathed a sigh that he was caught among the Christians and that if he had been free, it would have been a matter of pride for him to present himself to the Holy Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup> and to wash his feet like a slave.

But a wicked and evil-hearted ruler, the Chosros of Iran, was affronted and sent soldiers to arrest the Holy Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup>. They arrived in Madinah towards the evening and told the Holy Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup> that they had been sent to arrest him. The Holy Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup> disregarded what they had said and invited them to accept Islam. At that time the Holy Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup> was in the mosque accompanied only by three or four companions, but the royal emissaries were trembling in awe of him. In the end they asked what answer should they take back concerning his arrest to their lord. The Holy Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup> asked them to wait till the next day. The following morning when they came, the Holy Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup> said to them: He whom you call lord and god, is no



god. God is the Being Who is not subject to death or destruction. Your god was killed last night. My True God set up his son Sherweh over him and last night he was killed by the hand of his son. This is my reply.

This was a great miracle witnessing which thousands of people of that country believed in the Holy Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup> because in fact Khusro Pervez, the Chosros, had been killed that night. This is not a statement like the vague statements of the Gospel, but is supported by historical evidence. Mr. Davenport has also mentioned this event in his book.

As against this, the lack of esteem in which Jesus<sup>(as)</sup> was held by the rulers of his time is well known. Probably the Gospels still contain the record of Herodius sending Jesus<sup>(as)</sup> to Pilate as an accused person. He remained for a time in custody and his godhead did not come into play. No monarch said that it would be a matter of pride for him to serve Jesus<sup>(as)</sup> and to wash his feet. Pilate handed him over to the Jews. Was this his godhead? What a contrast is there

between the two persons who encountered similar circumstances, but with opposite results. In one case, a proud and arrogant monarch was incited by Satan to order the arrest of the claimant to Prophethood, but he was overtaken by the Divine curse and was murdered with great humiliation at the hands of his own son. In the second case, a person whose followers have raised him to heaven, was in fact arrested and sent into custody of the cruel police as an accused person from one town to another.

*(Nur-ul-Qur'an, No.2, Ruhani Khaza'in, Vol. 9, pp. 384-386)*

### **Miracles of the Holy Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup>**

A time was when the Evangelists proclaimed through the streets and lanes most impertinently and falsely that no prophecy had been made and no miracle had been shown by the Holy Prophet Muhammad<sup>(sa)</sup>, the chosen one. Now is a time when God Almighty in addition to the thousands of miracles of the Holy Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup> which are mentioned in the Holy Qur'an and in the *Ahadith*, has shown hundreds of signs which no opponent has been

able to counter. We have throughout proclaimed gently and meekly to every Christian and other opponent, and we still proclaim, that it is necessary for every religion which claims to be true and from God Almighty, that it should produce men who, as the deputies of their leader, guide and Messenger, should prove that that Prophet is living by virtue of his spiritual blessings and has not died.

It is necessary that the Prophet, who is followed and is believed in as an intercessor and saviour, should be everliving through his spiritual blessings. He should be so obviously seated on the throne of honour and exaltation and glory that his shining face and his sitting on the right hand of the Eternal and Ever-Living, All-Sustaining and All-Powerful God should be established by powerful Divine lights. Loving him perfectly and obeying him perfectly should necessarily produce the results that his follower should be bestowed the bounty of the Holy Spirit and heavenly blessings, and obtaining

light from the lights of his beloved Prophet he should dispel the darkness of his age and should furnish eager people with that firm and perfect and shining faith in the existence of God which burns up all desire of sin and all the passions of a low life. This is the proof that that Prophet is living and is in heaven.

So how shall we express our gratitude to our Holy and Glorious God that He bestowed upon us the strength to love and obey His beloved Prophet Muhammad, the chosen one(sa) and then by bestowing upon us a full share of the spiritual grace of that love and obedience, which is true piety and a true heavenly sign, proved to us that our dear and exalted Prophet(sa) has not died, but is sitting on the right hand of his Powerful King on the Throne of Exaltation and Glory in the highest heaven? 'O Allah, send down Thy blessings, bounties and peace upon him'.

*Allah and His angels send down His blessings on the Prophet. O ye who believe,*

*you too should invoke His blessings on him and greet him with the greeting of peace.*  
(Ch.33:V.57)

Now let someone tell us who is proved to possess such spiritual life beside our Holy Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup>. Does Moses<sup>(as)</sup> possess it? Certainly not. Does David<sup>(as)</sup> possess it? Certainly not. Does Jesus<sup>(as)</sup> possess it? Certainly not. Do Raja Ram Chandra or Raja Krishna possess it? Certainly not. Do those Rishis possess it concerning whom it is said that the Vedas were revealed to their hearts? Certainly not. It is useless to mention physical life, because the real and spiritually beneficent life is the one which, resembling the life of God Almighty, sends down light and certainty.

To attain long physical life is no matter of pride. Some of the Egyptian monuments are thousands of years old, and the ruins of Babylon are still in existence which are the home of owls, and in this country Ajudhia and Bindraban are all old cities and many old monuments are

found in Italy and Greece. Through their long continued existence, do all these monuments partake of the glory and exaltation which is bestowed on the holy ones of God on account of their spiritual life?

It is clear that the proof of such spiritual life is found only in the case of our blessed Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup>. May God's mercies in their thousands keep him company.  
(*Tiryaq-ul-Qulub, Ruhani Khaza'in, Vol.15, pp. 137-139*)

More than three thousand miracles were shown by our lord and master, the Holy Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup> and his prophecies were numberless; but it is not necessary for us to put forward those miracles which were shown in the past. One grand miracle of the Holy Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup> is that the revelation vouchsafed to all other Prophets has been cut off, and their miracles have been left behind, and their followers are empty-handed and are left only with old stories; but the revelation vouchsafed to the Holy Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup> has not been cut off, nor have his miracles been cut off, but are

always displayed through his perfect followers who are honoured with obeying him. On this account the religion of Islam is a living religion and its God is a Living God. In this age also this servant of the Lord of Honour is present. Thousands of signs in support of the Messenger of Allah and the Book of Allah have been shown by me, and I am almost daily honoured with the converse of God Almighty.

*(Chashma-e-Masihi, Ruhani Khaza'in, Vol. 20, pp. 350-351)*

When a person arrives at this exalted stage of meeting with God, he sometimes performs acts which appear to be beyond human power and have the colour of Divine Power. For instance, during the battle of Badr, the Holy Prophet(sa) threw a handful of gravel at the opposing force not accompanied by any prayer, but with his own spiritual power, which affected the opposing force in such an extraordinary manner that everyone's eyes were struck by the gravel and they were rendered sightless and began to run around in confusion and helplessness. This miracle is

referred to in the verse:

*...And thou threwest not when thou didst throw, but it was Allah Who threw...*  
(Ch.8:V.18)

meaning that it was Divine Power that was working behind the scene and it did that which was not within human power.

In the same way, another miracle of the Holy Prophet(sa) which was the splitting of the moon, was displayed by Divine Power. It was not accompanied by any prayer as it happened merely by his pointing at the moon with his finger which was filled with Divine power.

There are many other miracles which the Holy Prophet(sa) worked purely with his power and which were not accompanied by any prayer. On many occasions, he multiplied water so much by dipping his fingers into a cup of water that the whole host and their camels and horses drank of it and yet the original quantity of the water was not diminished. On many occasions, by putting his

hand upon three or four loaves of bread, he satisfied the hunger of thousands. On some occasions, he blessed a small quantity of milk with his lips and a company of people drank from it and were filled. On some occasions, by adding his saliva into a well of brackish water, he rendered it sweet. On some occasions, he healed severely wounded people of their injuries by placing his hands upon them. On some occasions, he replaced the eyeballs of people which had fallen out in consequence of some injury received in battle and healed them with the blessings of his hand. In this way, he did many other things by his personal power behind which worked Divine Power.

If the Brahmos and the philosophers and the followers of nature of today refuse to accept these miracles, they are to be excused for they cannot recognise the station at which a human being is endowed with Divine power by way of reflection. If they laugh at these things they are also to be excused for they have not progressed beyond their

childish condition and have not reached any degree of spiritual maturity. Their condition is far from perfect and they are happy that they should die in that imperfect condition.

But one pities the Christians, who having heard of some similar, but of a lower degree of events, in the life of Jesus<sup>(as)</sup>, put them forward as an argument in support of the divinity of Jesus<sup>(as)</sup> and allege that the reviving of the dead by Jesus<sup>(as)</sup> and the healing of paralytics and lepers by him was by his own power and not by any prayer, and that this is proof that he was truly the son of God and even God himself. It is a pity that they are unaware that if a human being could become God by performing such exploits then our lord and master, the Holy Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup> was much more entitled to such divinity for he performed mightier miracles than were displayed by Jesus<sup>(as)</sup>. Not only did the Holy Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup> work these extraordinary miracles himself, but he left a legacy of a long series of them among his followers till the Day of Judgement, which has been in evidence always in all

ages and will continue to be in evidence till the end of the world. The impress of Divine power which has been experienced by holy souls among the Muslims is difficult to match from among other people. Then what folly is it to believe in someone as God or as the son of God, on account of these extraordinary events? If a man can become God by performing such exploits, there would be no end to the number of gods!

*(A'ina-e-Kamalat-e-Islam, Ruhani Khaza'ain, Vol.5, pp.65-67)*

We wish to point out that the miracle of the splitting of the moon is not an event that the Muslims put forth as proof of the truth of Islam and as a principal argument in support of the truth of the Holy Qur'an. Out of thousands of internal and external miracles and signs, this was also a natural sign which is supported by historical proof. If overlooking clear proofs we are to suppose that this miracle has not been established, and if we are to interpret the relevant verse of the Holy Qur'an as the Christians or the

followers of nature, or those who repudiate external events interpret it it would do no harm to Islam. The truth is that the Word of God has wholly relieved the Muslims of the need of relying upon other miracles. It is not only a miracle in itself, but on account of its blessings and lights, it produces miracles.

The Holy Qur'an comprises in itself such perfect qualities that it is in no need of extraordinary miracles. The presence of external miracles adds nothing to it and their absence would disclose no defect in it. The beauty of the Qur'an is not decked out with the ornaments of external miracles. It comprises in itself thousands of strange and wonderful miracles which can be witnessed by the people of every age. It is not necessary to refer only to the past. The Qur'an is such a beautiful beloved that everything derives ornamentation from it and it is not dependent upon anything else for its own ornamentation.

Those who object to the miracle of the splitting of the moon have

only one instrument to make, and even that a broken one, that the splitting of the moon is contrary to the law of nature. The followers of the law of nature contend that it is obvious that so far as a man can find by the exercise of his reason there is nothing apart from nature in the law of nature, that is to say, the observation of the universe indicates that everything material and non-material by which we are surrounded is part of a wonderful system for its existence and continuance and for its effect. This system is inherent in everything and never departs from anything. Whatever nature has designed will happen without fail in the same way.

We accept all that, but does it prove that Divine methods are their law are limited to that which is our observation and experience no more? To believe that Divine Power is unlimited is of the essence of the Divine system; it ensures that the door of intellectual progress should always remain open. Then what a mistake it is to put forward the

proposition that whatever is beyond our understanding or observation is outside the law of nature! When we confess that the laws of nature are unending and unlimited, it should be our attitude that we should not reject every new thing because it is beyond our reason. We should assess the matter on its proof or lack of proof. If it is proved we should enter it in the list of the laws of nature, and if it is not proved we should confine ourselves to affirming that it is not proved. We would not be entitled to say that it is outside the law of nature. To hold anything as being beyond the law of nature, it is necessary that we should encompass all Divine laws which are eternal as within a circle and our intellect should fully comprehend all that God's Power has revealed from the beginning up to now and that He will reveal through Eternity....

We believe that the Powers of God Almighty are unlimited, then it would be madness to hope to encompass all His Powers. For if they can be confined within the

measure of our observation, then how would they be unlimited and unending? In such case, we are not only confronted with the difficulty that our finite and incomplete experience should comprehend all the Powers of the Eternal God, but there would arise a much greater difficulty that by limiting His Powers He Himself would also be limited and we would be affirming that we have discovered all the reality of God Almighty and that we have arrived at its depth and bottom. Such an assumption would be disrespectful and destructive of faith and would amount to a total denial of God.

*(Surmah Chashm Arya, Ruhani Khaza'in, Vol. 2, pp. 60-65)*

I enquire that if the Holy Prophet(sa) who had announced his claim that the moon had been split by the pointing of his finger and that the disbelievers had witnessed it with their own eyes, though they called it sorcery, was not true in his claim, then why did his opponents keep silent and why did they not call the Holy Prophet(sa) to account that he had

not split the moon and that they had not called anything sorcery, nor refused to accept anything that had happened as an event? Why did they remain silent and keep their mouths shut till they had passed away from this world? Does not their silence, which was inconsistent with their opposition and with their eagerness to contend against and question everything, certify that they were held back from speaking by some severe obstruction? What could that obstruction be except that the event was true?

This miracle occurred in Makkah when the Muslims were very weak and helpless. It is a matter of surprise that the sons or grandsons of the opponents of the Holy Prophet(sa) also did not utter anything in contradiction of the event, for if the claim of the Holy Prophet(sa) was mere falsehood and had received great publicity, they should have written and published books in exposing it. When the Muslims continued to bear witness to it openly before thousands of people, and their evidence is found recorded in the



books of that time and hundreds of thousands of Christians, Arabs, Jews, and Magians, etc. did not dare to contradict it, it is clear proof that the opponents had witnessed the splitting of the moon and that there was no room left for contradiction...

We would like to add that the event of the splitting of the moon is recorded in the reliable books of the Hindus. Beas Ji has recorded in the *Mahabharata* that in his time the moon had been split into two and had again come together. He attributed this, without any proof, to Biswamtar as his miracle... It seems that this event was well known among the Hindus even at the time of the writing of the history of *Farishtah*, whose author has recorded in his eleventh discourse, on the authority of the Hindus, that the Raja of Dharka, which was a town situated on river Phanbal in Malwa and is perhaps now known as Dhara Nagri, was sitting on the roof of his palace and he saw that the moon had suddenly split into two and had then come together. On

investigation the Raja discovered that it was a miracle of the Arabian Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup> and he became a Muslim.

*(Surmah Chashm Arya, Ruhani Khaza'in, Vol. 2, pp. 122-127)*

The miracles and signs that were bestowed by God Almighty on our lord and master, the Holy Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup> were not confined to his time, but will continue till the Day of Judgement. In the past ages, no Prophet was included among the followers of another Prophet, though he helped the faith of the previous Prophet and believed in him, but the Holy Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup> has been bestowed this special honour that he is *Khatam-ul-Anbiya*; one, because he achieved the climax of all the excellences of Prophethood; and, secondly, because there will be no Prophet after him who would bring a new law nor any Prophet who is not his follower. Everyone who is honoured with converse with the Divine, achieves it through his grace and through his mediation and is known as his follower and not as a direct Prophet. He has been accepted to

such a degree that today a minimum of 200 million people of every rank are Muslims and stand before him as his servants. Great and powerful kings who conquered a portion of the world, fell at his feet like humble slaves. Even today, Muslim kings regard themselves as his humble servants and descend from their thrones at the mention of his name.

It is worthy of consideration whether this glory, this splendour, these thousands of heavenly signs and divine blessings can be bestowed upon a false one. We take great pride in the fact that the Holy Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup> to whom we have attached ourselves, was bestowed great grace by God. He is not God, but through him we have seen God. His religion which has come to us is a mirror of Divine Powers. Had it not been for Islam, it would have been difficult in this age to appreciate what Prophethood is and whether miracles are possible and whether they are part of the law of nature. This puzzle was resolved by the eternal grace of that Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup> and it is due to him that we are not mere story-tellers

like other people, but enjoy the support of God's light and His heavenly help. We are unable to express adequately our gratitude that God Who is hidden from others, and the inner power which is beyond the concept of others, and the Lord of Glory, have been disclosed to us by the Holy Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup>.

*(Chashma-e-Ma'rifat, Ruhani Khaza'in, Vol. 23, pp. 380-381)*

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# *Rebuttal of Maududian Philosophy - Part 3*

*This is the third extract from the Murder in the Name of Allah by Hadhrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad, dealing with Maulana Maududi's misinterpretation of the Islamic concept of Jihad.*

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Armed conflict, war and threats of war were forced constantly on the Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup>. After he migrated to Madinah, the pagans of Makkah and the Jews of Madinah, encouraged by the hypocrites, busily plotted against Islam. They inspired hatred against Muslims and worked pagan Arabs up to a fever pitch against the Holy Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup>. All the defensive actions the Muslims were forced to take, obstructed the Prophet's<sup>(sa)</sup> basic mission. Muslims needed peace but, as our examination will show, that peace was deliberately disturbed to prevent them from spreading the new faith.

1. Islam's enemies used every means of communication against Islam. For the Arabs, poets were historians, genealogists, satirists, moralists and founts of wisdom<sup>1</sup>. The poet was the 'kindler of battle'<sup>2</sup> and 'the journalist of the

time'<sup>3</sup>. The Ansar (the Muslims of Madinah) were accused of dishonouring themselves by submitting to an outsider. Asma bint Marwan of Umayyah b. Zayd composed verses taunting and insulting Medinite Muslims. She said:

'Cowards<sup>4</sup> of Malik and Nabit  
And cowards of Awf and  
Khazraj  
You obey a stranger who does  
not belong to you  
Who is neither a Murad nor a  
Mad'hij<sup>5</sup>  
Do you – when your own  
chiefs have been murdered –  
hope in him  
Like the greedy people  
looking towards a cooking pot  
of meal soup?  
Is there no man of honour  
among you who will take  
advantage of an unguarded  
moment

And cut off the gulls' hopes?'<sup>6</sup>

The centenarian poet of Khazrajite class, Abu Afale, taunted the Medinites with the following verses:

'I have lived a long time, but I have never seen  
Either a house or gathering of people  
More loyal and faithful to  
Its allies, when they call on them,  
Than those of the Children of Qayla<sup>7</sup> as a whole.  
The mountains will crumble before they submit.  
Yet here is a rider come among them who has divided them.  
(He says) 'This is permitted, this is forbidden'  
To all kinds of things  
But if you had believed in power  
And in might, why did you not follow  
Tubba?'<sup>8</sup>

Tubbas were south Arabian kings of great reputation. Abu Afak, in effect, asked the Ansar, 'Once you resisted Tubba, now what has happened to you that you have accepted the claims of a Makkah

refugee?' While Asma and Abu Afak were putting the Ansar to shame, the Jewish poet Ka'b b. al-Ashraf<sup>9</sup>, enraged by the Muslim victory at Badr, went all the way to Makkah to rouse the Quraish against the Holy Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup>. He played on the Arab weakness for vengeance:

'Badr's mill ground out the blood of its people.  
At events like Badr you should weep and cry.  
The best people were killed round their cisterns.  
Don't think it strange that princes were left lying  
How many noble, handsome men,  
The refuge of the homeless, were slain,  
Liberal when the stars gave no rain.<sup>10</sup>

2. The vendetta, as we have observed earlier, was one of the pillars of pre-Islamic Arab society. So, whenever a pagan combatant was killed by a Muslim in armed conflict, his heirs took an oath to avenge his death and the whole tribe accused Islam of his death. The fact that conflicts were

initiated by pagans themselves was conveniently forgotten.

3. The Holy Prophet's<sup>(sa)</sup> mission was restricted to a small area of Arabia because of the general hostility to him. Missionaries could not take the message of Islam to the whole of the peninsula.

4. Many Arabs had accepted Islam, but fear of war made them afraid to declare their new faith.

5. Conversion to a new religion requires commitment and courage, even when honour and life itself are not at risk. Here, acceptance of Islam demanded more than the joining of a religious society: it meant taking up arms in its defence. Since Muslims at this time were unarmed and weak, it was suicide to join them.

6. Self-defence kept the Muslims so busy that very little time was left for spreading the faith.

If our premise is correct, the ending of hostilities should have immediately boosted the spread of

Islam. As we shall see, this is exactly what happened. Makkah was conquered in January 630. That, according to the orientalist and enemies of Islam, was the turning-point in Islamic history. If that were true, one could indeed say that the sword had played a role in the spread of Islam. But history tells a rather different story. Hostilities between the Muslims and the pagan Arabs ended with the truce of Al-Hudaybiah<sup>11</sup> (March 628). The terms of the truce appeared to be so degrading that 'Umar could not contain himself, and asked the Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup>: 'Why yield we in such lowly wise against the honour of our religion?' The Makkans thought it was a victory. But it was this respite from armed conflict which gave the Holy Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup> much more time to spread the faith. The extent of his success can be gauged by the 10,000 Muslims who marched to Makkah with him in January 630. Previously, his largest force had been 3000 men. This was the strength of the Muslim army which defended Madinah when it was besieged by an army of 10,000 pagan Arabs.<sup>35</sup> The additional 7000 men were

obviously converted to Islam during the two-year truce. People like Amr b. al-As and Khalid b. Walid were converted at this time. The success of this peaceful penetration by Islam was so great that a puzzled Montgomery Watt counts it ‘among the imponderabilia’ and adds: ‘Foremost among the reasons for this success of Muhammad’s was the attractiveness of Islam and its relevance as a religious and social system to the religious and social needs of the Arabs.’<sup>13</sup> Watt also says, as if directly addressing Maulana Maududi himself:

‘Had Muhammad not been able to maintain and strengthen his hold on the Muslims by the sway of religious ideas of Islam over their imaginations, and had he not been able to attract fresh converts to Islam, the treaty of Al-Hudaybiah would not have worked in his favour... Any historian who is not biased in favour of materialism must also allow as factors of supreme importance Muhammad’s belief in the message of the Qur’an, his belief in the

structure of Islam as a religious and political system, and his unflinching devotion to the task to which, as he believed, God had called him . . . This expedition and treaty mark a new initiative on the part of Muhammad.<sup>14</sup>

It is sad to note that while an orientalist puts the Holy Prophet’s<sup>(sa)</sup> success down to ‘the sway of the religious ideas of Islam’, a leading Muslim of Maulana Maududi’s stature insists that it was through the sway of the sword after the battle of Hunayn that teeming thousands of Arabs accepted Islam. If these were the people whose souls were cleansed with the blade of the sword, then these were also the people who were the first to revolt after the Prophet’s<sup>(sa)</sup> death. That answer to the Maulana’s argument, however, does not explain the revolt.

In the past, travel was difficult. There were no roads and therefore one’s safety could not be guaranteed. It was, therefore, impossible for every Arab to come to the Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup> to learn about Islam at first hand, nor for the

Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup> to visit every region of the peninsula. The Arab custom was that either a tribal delegation would be sent to the Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup> or a Muslim delegation would be sent to the tribes to deliver the message of Islam. There were discussions and debates, and after every question had been asked, the tribe accepted whatever the members of the delegation or the elders of the tribe decided. So there was a large number of converts who had no opportunity of benefiting directly from the Prophet's<sup>(sa)</sup> teaching; they had never even seen him. They did not even have the chance to spend time with the Prophet's<sup>(sa)</sup> Companions. Religion is a personal experience and is learned especially by example and inspiration – things not available to the new converts. Misfortune was compounded by the death of the Holy Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup> soon after their conversion. The Arab horizon was more than a little darkened by the passing away of Muhammad<sup>(sa)</sup>. We can learn a great deal from that period of history. When people reject the prophet of their time and extinguish his light by force, they are severely punished for it.

One result of that punishment is that most people see the light of *iman* (belief) when the source of that light is about to be extinguished. Sometimes people only recognise a prophet long after his death. What a punishment! To persecute a prophet while he is alive; to accept him only after he has gone.

Since Maulana Maududi joined the worst enemies of Islam by arguing that the sword played a part in the preaching of Islam, let us re-examine the Prophet's<sup>(sa)</sup> life to see if at any stage people were converted against their will.

The division of the Holy Prophet's<sup>(sa)</sup> life into two periods, the Makkan and the Madinite, seems logical, but it is in reality an over-simplification. After the Hijrah, the Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup> and the Emigrants had escaped persecution, but the struggle for survival was not over. It would be more logical to divide the Prophet's<sup>(sa)</sup> life into three phases: the first being the time up to his migration to Madinah, and the second the time from his migration to the truce of

Hudaybiyah, which was also a period of persecution; the third from the truce to the surrender of Makkah. (Though the Muslims were allowed to fight back, they were no match for the pagan opposition. Madinah was the only town where Muslims lived, but they did not control it. The three Jewish tribes and the non-Muslim members of the Aws and the Khazraj dominated the town. The size of the opposing armies at the battle of Badr<sup>15</sup> represented their actual strength. Therefore, this period should be considered an extension of the Makkan period of bitter struggle.) The third period begins with the truce of Hudaybiyah and ends with the surrender of Makkah. It was a period of peace. The Makkan pagans did not attack the Muslims, though a few skirmishes took place with the Jews and some Arab tribes who broke their agreements with the Muslims.

The first period of persecution lasted thirteen years. During that time there was no question of conversion by force. Even the orientalist agree with that. In fact, people accepted Islam in spite of

Makkan persecution. Muslims who accepted Islam in Makkah at that time are known as *Muhajirs* (Emigrants) and it is an historical fact that no Emigrant was unwillingly converted.

The Muslims offered armed resistance during the second period of their persecution. A critic might think that during that armed conflict at least some might have been forced into accepting Islam. But the history of the period is fully documented. The majority of Muslims in Madinah belonged to two Arab tribes, the Aws and the Khazraj. These were the people who had invited the Holy Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup> to Madinah. When they met him at Aqbah, he said: ‘I make with you this pact on condition that the allegiance you pledge me shall bind you to protect me even as you protect your women and children.’ The Khazrajite chief, Barm, who rose to reply, took the Prophet’s<sup>(sa)</sup> hand and said:

‘By Him who sent thee with the truth, we will protect thee as we protect them. So accept the pledge of our allegiance, O



Messenger of God, for we are men of war, possessed of arms that have been handed down from father to son.’

These were the people who travelled all the way from Yathrib (Madinah) to Makkah to offer their swords to the Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup> and who are now known as Ansar (Helpers).

A few Jews in Madinah and a small number of Arabs from outlying towns also became Muslims, but none of them accepted their new faith under duress or as a result of armed conflict. During this period, the spread of Islam in Makkah was relentless and, despite greater persecution, the Makkan Arabs continued to accept Islam. Again, force did not enter into it.

The conversion of prisoners-of-war is the only remotely possible exception. Before we look at it, let us clear up one misunderstanding. The words *ghazwah* and *sariyah* do not mean ‘war’ or even ‘armed conflict’. They only mean ‘an expedition’. Scouts, patrols, missions, rescue parties, the

chasing of highwaymen – even a single Companion’s journey to preach – are grouped under these titles. Expeditions were known as *sariyah*; if the Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup> himself led them, as *ghazwah*. For instance, the first expedition the Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup> led was to Al-Abwa, where his mother was buried. He was accompanied by sixty Muhajirs. The Holy Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup> stayed there for a few days and signed a treaty of friendship with the chief of the Banu Damrah. Soon after, the Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup> had to follow Kurz alFihri. As Watt points out: ‘It was an attempt to punish a freebooter of the neighbouring region for stealing some of the Madinite pasturing camels.’<sup>16</sup> The expedition, again in the words of Watt, ‘illustrates the dangers against which he (the Holy Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup>) had to be constantly on guard’.<sup>17</sup>

There were about fifty such expeditions between Hijrah and the truce of Hdaybiyah. Of them, three conflicts assumed the dimensions of fullscale war. Badr, Uhud and Ahzab. In the armed conflict with B. Mustaliq over 100 prisoners were taken, but all of

them were freed without ransom. In some minor expeditions where one or two prisoners were seized, they too were released without any conditions. It was at the battle of Badr that seventy-two prisoners-of-war were taken. Two of them were executed for past crimes; the rest were freed after a ransom was paid. That, in some cases, was limited only to teaching the children of Ansar how to read and write.

The third period began with the truce of Hudaibiyah and ended with the surrender of Makkah. Twenty-two expeditions were made during this period. Of them, only three conflicts saw any prisoners-of-war being taken. The Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup> had sent Dihyah b. Khalifah al-Kalbi as an envoy to Caesar. On his return journey, Dihyah was robbed of Byzantine presents he was carrying for the Holy Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup>, by Al-Hunayd and other members of the tribe of Jurham. The Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup> sent an expedition under Zayd b. Haritha to punish Al-Hunayd and his allies. The prisoners taken in the resulting skirmish were freed after they repented. Bashir b. Sad

successfully led an expedition against the Ghatfan, who were in alliance with the Jews of Madinah and the pagans of Makkah. A small number of prisoners were taken, but it is not known what happened to them. Similarly, an expedition was sent to punish B. Bani Kilab. A group of B. Uraynah, who lived among the B. Kilab, came in distress to Madinah and accepted Islam. As they were suffering from a fever, they were sent to the Prophet's<sup>(sa)</sup> pasture grounds to enjoy good food and milk. But, when they recovered their strength, they cruelly killed the herdsmen and stole fifteen camels. They were punished. There was probably a small number of prisoners, but the details are not known.

This rather detailed examination shows that from the Hijrah to the surrender of Makkah, not a single prisoner-of-war was forced to convert. There is no evidence to suggest that the filth of their soul was removed by the blade of the sword. Rather, these prisoners were allowed to return to their paganism.

The final period of the Holy Prophet's<sup>(sa)</sup> life began with Makkah's surrender – or the day of the conquering of hearts. That Islamic victory over the Makkans conclusively proved that the spreading of Islam was not even remotely connected with violence. Not one person was converted by force.

Abu Sufyan, the arch-enemy of Islam, who became a Muslim on the eve of the Prophet's<sup>(sa)</sup> triumphant entry into Makkah, watched the Muslim army from a vantage point near the city. The Holy Prophet's<sup>(sa)</sup> uncle, Abbas, was with him. What Abu Sufyan saw there has been vividly described by Martin Lings:

‘Troop after troop went by, and, at the passing of each, Abu Sufyan asked who they were, and each time he marvelled, either because the tribe in question had hitherto been far beyond the range of influence of Quraish, or because it had recently been hostile to the Prophet, as was the case with the Ghatafanite clan of Ashja, one of whose

ensigns was borne by Nuaym, the former friend of himself and Suhayl.

“Of all the Arabs,” said Abu Sufyan, “These were Muhammad's bitterest foes.”

“God caused Islam to enter their hearts,” said Abbas. “All this is by the grace of God.”<sup>18</sup>

Was it the sword which converted them? And when the Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup> entered Makkah with his 10,000 men, did he avenge the thirteen-year persecution? The idea of settling scores was certainly in the minds of some. When Sad ibn Ubada saw Abu Sufyan he said: ‘O Abu Sufyan, this is the day of slaughter: the day when the inviolable shall be violated: the day of God's abasement of Quraish.’ When Abu Sufyan repeated to the Holy Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup> what Sad had said, the Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup> replied: ‘This is the day of mercy, the day on which God has exalted Quraish.’ A general amnesty was proclaimed. Using the words of Joseph<sup>(as)</sup>, as reported in the Qur'an, Muhammad<sup>(sa)</sup> said:

Verily I say as my brother Joseph said, *this day there shall be no reproach on you. May Allah forgive you. He is the Most Merciful of all those who show mercy.* (Ch.12:V.93)

Washington Irving, by no means a sympathetic observer of Islam, describes the Holy Prophet's<sup>(sa)</sup> entry into Makkah in the following way:

‘The sun was just rising as he entered the gates of his native city, with the glory of a conqueror, but the garb and humility of a pilgrim. He entered, repeating verses of the Koran, which he said had been revealed to him at Medina, and were prophetic of the event. He triumphed in the spirit of a religious zealot, *not a warrior.*<sup>19</sup>

Makkan leaders who opposed the Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup> with every means at their disposal were not only magnanimously pardoned but also, as even Montgomery Watt admits: ‘were not forced to become Muslims; they and

doubtless many others remained pagan, at least till after Al-Jiranaḥ’.<sup>20</sup> Maxime Rodinson agrees with Watt: ‘No man seems to have felt under constraint to embrace Islam.’<sup>21</sup>

Had there been even the remotest hint of conversion by force in our primary sources of *hadith* or *sirah*, the critics of Islam would have had a field day. Now compare again the opinions of Irving, Watt and Rodinson with what Maulana Maududi said on the subject ‘When every method of persuasion failed, the Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup> took to the sword. That sword removed evil and mischief and the filth of the soul.’

The conquest of Makkah will be engraved on the pages of history forever. That day will continue to absolve the Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup> – the Mercy for Mankind – from charges of violence and force which Maulana Maududi has imputed to him. That a non-Muslim orientalist, Stanley Lane-Poole, should have to put right Maududi’s mistake is a tragedy of great magnitude which should sadden the heart of every Muslim. Lane-Poole says:

‘The day of Muhammad’s greatest triumph over his enemies was also the day of his grandest victory over himself. He freely forgave the Quraish all the years of sorrow and cruel scorn to which they had inflicted him, and gave an amnesty to the whole population of Makkah.’<sup>22</sup>

The last phase of the Prophet’s<sup>(sa)</sup> life begins with Makkah’s conquest and ends with his death. There were seven expeditions during this time. There was no fighting at all in three of them and no prisoners were taken. In the remaining four, more than 6000 prisoners were seized. What happened to these prisoners? Maududi’s logic would lead us to believe that this would have been the perfect occasion for removing filth from prisoners’ souls and converting them to Islam. History tells us something different.

At the battle of Hunayn, 6000 prisoners were taken. The Holy Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup> had spent his infancy with one of the clans of this tribe as a foster child. Among the

prisoners, an old woman protested to her captor saying, ‘By God, I am the sister of your chief!’ The woman was produced before the Holy Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup>, who realised it was indeed one of his foster-sisters, Shayma’. The Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup> spread his rug and bade her be seated. With tears in his eyes, he asked about Halimah, his foster-mother. There was no word of reproach. The Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup> did not ask why the tribe had not thought of its foster-son before going to war. Instead, he said: ‘So far those who have fallen unto me and unto the sons of Abd ul-Muttalib, they are yours; and I will plead with other men on your behalf.’ When other Muslims heard about this they said: ‘What belongs to us, belongs to the Holy Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup>, and they immediately presented their captives to him. Thus all 6000 prisoners were freed. The sword played no part in their conversion. The Holy Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup> gave his foster-sister camels, sheep and goats as presents. Harith, the brother of the Holy Prophet’s<sup>(sa)</sup> foster-father, insisted that the whole tribe of Hawazin be considered his foster-kinsmen. Their leader, Malik, who had

escaped to Taif, was recalled and given 100 camels. The Holy Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup> also put him in command of the already increasing Muslim community in Hawazin. Many others also received gifts.

Similarly, sixty-two prisoners were brought to Madinah from the expedition of Uyaynah b. Hisn. They asked for mercy and were released.

In the expedition to Puis, a centre of idol worship, Adi, the leader of the opposing tribe, Tayy, escaped but one of his sisters was captured. When she was brought to Madinah she threw herself at the Prophet's<sup>(sa)</sup> feet and begged for mercy. She said: 'My father freed the prisoners, provided hospitality for guests, fed the hungry and gave comfort to those in distress. He never turned away anyone who came to his door seeking help. I am the daughter of Hatim.'

The Holy Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup> spoke kindly to her and ordered her release, saying: 'Her father loved noble ways, and Allah likewise loves

them.' The Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup> gave her a camel and fine garments. Since she did not want to be released alone, all other captives taken with her were also freed. All this was done because she was the daughter of a great poet, whose hospitality and generosity made Arabs proud. When Adi heard of his sister's treatment he entered Islam and the Holy Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup> confirmed his chieftancy of Tayy.

Surveying the orientalist's conflicting opinions about the Prophet's<sup>(sa)</sup> personality, Maxime Rodinson has observed: 'Everyone has shaped him after their own passions, ideas or fantasies.'<sup>23</sup> This observation applies more to Maulana Maududi, a Muslim, than it does to non-Muslim orientalists. His passion for political authority was fed on his childhood impressions of fading Hyderabad glory and strengthened by the political struggle of his younger days, when he first admired Gandhiji and then opposed Hindu communalism. This so dominated his thinking that in his account he converted the life of the Holy Prophets<sup>(sa)</sup> – a blessing for all mankind – into that

of a warrior. . . a warrior putting the world to rights with the blade of a sword.

## Notes

1. Will Durant, *The Age of Faith*, op.dt., 159.
2. Joel Carmichael, *The Shaping of the Arabs*, a Study In Ethnic Identity (New York,1967),3 8.
3. Maxime Rodinson, *Mohammed*, trans. Anne Carter (New York, 1971), 194.
4. The word used by Asma is much more abusive.
5. Two Yemenite tribes.
6. Ibn Hisham, *Kitab Sirat Rasul Allah*, ed. F. Wustenfeld, 2 vols. (Gottingen, 1856-60), 995-6.
7. The two Ansar tribes, the Aws and Khazraj.
8. Ibn Hisham, op.dt., 995. The translation is by Anne Carter, in Maxime Rodinson, *Mohammed*, op.cit., 157. Like 'Pharaoh' (Egypt) and 'Caesar' (Rome), 'Tubba' was the name given to the ancient kings of south Arabia.
9. K'ab's mother belonged to the Jewish tribe an-Nadir. Though his father was an Arab, he was accepted as a member of Banu an-Nadir.
10. Ibn Hisham, op.cit., 548-9; trans. A. Guillaume, *The life of Muhammad* (London: Oxford University Press, 1970).
11. As the result of a dream, the Holy Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup> decided to go on umrah (smaller pilgrimage) to Makkah with 1400 to 1600 men. He camped at the edge of the sacred territory of Makkah, at Al-Hudaybiyah, where envoys between Muslims and Makaans came and went. Finally, a truce was signed, forcing the Muslims to retreat that year on condition that they would be allowed to return to Makkah for hajj the following year.
12. The battle of Ahzab or the Trench on 30 March 627.
13. W. Montgomery Watt, *Muhammad at Medina*, op.cit., 69.
14. ibid.,51-2.
15. Muhammad Yusuf, op.cit., 363-4; and Mu Inuddin Aqil, op.cit., 27.
16. W. Montgomery Watt, *Muhammad at Medina*, op.cit., 4.
17. ibid.
18. Martin Lings, *Muhammad, his life Based on the Earliest Sources* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1983), 297.
19. Washington Irving, *Mahomet and His Successors*, 2 vols. (New York: G.P. Putman's Sons, 1868), vol. 1, 253.
20. W. Montgomery Watt, *Muhammad at Medina*, op.cit., 68. The valley of Jiranah is about ten miles from Makkah and the spoils of the battle of Hunayn were sent there to be stored.
21. Maxime Rodinson, *Mohammed*, op.cit., 262.
22. Stanley Lane-Poole, *Selections from the Qur'an and Hadith*, (Lahore: Sind Sagar Academy,n.d.),28.
23. Maxime Rodinson, *Mohammed*, op.cit., 312.

# PROPHETS

## of God

Part 2

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*A brief introduction to some of the major prophets. Last month we looked briefly at the life of Prophet Noah<sup>(as)</sup>. In this issue, we look at Hadhrat Ibrahim<sup>(as)</sup>.*

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**By Daud A Hanif – USA**

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### **Hadrat Ibrahim (Abraham) <sup>(as)</sup>**

The followers of three principle religions of the world, Judaism, Christianity and Islam, hold Abraham<sup>(as)</sup> in great reverence. He was a native of Ur. Ur in present day is called Al-Muqayyar (or Mughair), and is about two hundred miles south east of Baghdad in Iraq.

Abraham<sup>(as)</sup> was brought up in the house of his uncle Azar. The Bible mentions different name of Abraham's father that is Terah (Genesis 11:26) Tharah (Luke 3:34) and ecclesiastical history

mentions Athar as his father. The Holy Qur'an mentions Azar as his *Ab* (Ch.6:V.75). *Ab* in Arabic is equally applicable to father, uncle and grandfather. His paternal uncle ran a shop where idols were sold and Abraham<sup>(as)</sup> observed the crafting of idols at his uncle's home. The idols were made by humans and sold to public as their gods. One day his uncle left Abraham<sup>(as)</sup> at the shop to attend to customers. An old man came to the shop and said: *'I want to buy an Idol.'* Abraham<sup>(as)</sup> asked him, *Which one would you like to have?* Abraham<sup>(as)</sup> showed that idol to him. He was about to buy that idol when Abraham asked the man: *'How old are you?'* The man replied: *'Seventy years.'* Upon this Abraham<sup>(as)</sup> told him: *'This idol was made only yesterday. Won't you feel ashamed while bowing down before a day-old idol?'* These words of Abraham<sup>(as)</sup> had a great effect on the old man and he did not buy the idol and went home. Such was the dislike of idols to Abraham<sup>(as)</sup> even during his youth. He would voice his displeasure time and again. In the beginning he discussed this issue very politely but later had bitter



discussions with his uncle. His uncle mostly ignored such religious discussions but at the end warned Abraham<sup>(as)</sup> of severe consequences. However, Abraham's<sup>(as)</sup> uncle was very much impressed by his noble character and offered him his daughter Sarah in marriage.

### **Abraham<sup>(as)</sup> Appointed as Prophet**

Abraham<sup>(as)</sup> lived a pious life and was always engaged in doing of good. He walked on the path of righteousness but most of the people of his time were bent towards the world. The unity of God taught by Noah<sup>(as)</sup> had vanished from the surface of the world and people were groping in darkness, engaging themselves in the worship of idols. God appointed Abraham<sup>(as)</sup> a Prophet to stamp out the worship of idols from the society.

Since his childhood, Abraham<sup>(as)</sup> had abhorred idols and now he was commissioned to uproot the worship of idols from society. He wasted no time and embarked on the task in full earnest. He went to his father and said: *'Dost thou*

*take idols for Gods? Surely I see and thy people in manifest error.'* (Ch.6:V.75)

Abraham<sup>(as)</sup> spoke in public and private about the futility of idol worship. His method of argumentation was mostly sarcastic. During his evening meetings, Abraham<sup>(as)</sup> used to invite those who worshipped the sun and the moon and other heavenly bodies as their gods to his house. During one of these discussions, on seeing a star he observed: *'O this is my Lord.'* *But when it set, he said: 'I do not like those who set'* (Ch.6:V.77). Then he saw the moon rise with spreading light, he said: *'Can this be my Lord?'* *But when it set, he said: 'If my Lord guide me not, I shall surely be of the people who go astray'* (Ch.6:V.78). *'And when he saw the sun rise with spreading light, he said: 'Can this be my Lord? This is the greatest.'* *But when it also set, he said: 'O my people! Surely I am clear of that which you associate with God'* (Ch.6:V.79) Thus he exposed the false beliefs of his people. He spoke ironically to taunt them of their folly.

## Discussion with the King

Abraham<sup>(as)</sup> was a great iconoclast. His people worshipped the sun and the stars, their chief god being Merodach (Madruk), originally the god of the morning and the spring sun (*Enc. Bib. & Enc. Rel. Eth*, ii p. 296). They believed that all life depended on the sun. Abraham<sup>(as)</sup> very wisely asked the infidel King that if he, as he claimed, controlled life and death, then let him reverse the course of the sun on which all life depended. The King was in a fix. He could not say that he could not accept Abraham's<sup>(as)</sup> challenge to bring the sun from the west to the east, for that would have demolished his claim of being the controller of life and death. At the same time, if he had said that he could do so, it meant that he claimed to exercise control over the sun which would have been a great blasphemy in the eyes of his people who worshipped the sun. Thus he was completely confounded and did not know what to say. He was defeated squarely.

## Debate with People

Under the guidance of God,

Abraham<sup>(as)</sup> continued his mission diligently. One of his great debates is recorded in the Holy Qur'an as follows:

*“When he said to his father and his people, ‘What are these images to which you are so devoted?’*

*They replied, ‘We found our fathers worshipping them.’*

*He said, ‘Indeed, you yourselves as well as your fathers, have indeed been in manifest error.’*

*They said, ‘Is it really the truth that thou hast brought us, or art thou one of those who jest?’*

*He replied, ‘Nay, your Lord is the Lord of heavens and the earth, He Who made them; and I am one of those who bear witness to that; and, by Allah, I will certainly plan against your idols after you have gone away and turned your backs.’*

*So he broke them into pieces, all accept the chief of them, that they may return to it.*

*They said, ‘Who has done this to our gods? Surely, he must be a wrongdoer.’*

*They said, 'We heard a young man speak ill of them; he is called Abraham.'*

*They said, 'Then bring him before the eyes of the people, that they may bear witness.'*

*Then they said to Abraham, 'Is it thou who hast done this to our gods, O Abraham?'*

*He replied, 'Aye, somebody has surely done this. Here is their chief but ask them if they can speak.'*

*Then they turned towards one another and said, 'You yourselves are surely in the wrong.'*

*And their heads were made to hang low for shame and they said to Abraham, 'Certainly thou knowest well that these do not speak.'*

*He said, 'Do you then worship, instead of Allah, that which cannot profit you at all, nor harm you? Fie on you and on that which you worship instead of Allah! Can you not understand?'*

(Ch.21:Vs.53-68)

It should be remembered that Abraham<sup>(as)</sup> always spoke to idol worshippers with irony and

sarcasm. In this debate he 'seems to have rebuked his people and to have brought home to them the futility of their idolatrous practices, first by breaking the idols and then by challenging their votaries to ask those idols, if they could speak, to tell them who had broken them.'

### **Abraham<sup>(as)</sup> Thrown in the Fire**

This infuriated his opponents. The chiefs, instead of accepting the truth, were enraged and said, 'Burn him and help your gods if at all you mean to do something.' But Allah commanded: 'O fire, be thou a means of coolness and safety for Abraham!' The Qur'an says:

*And they had sought to do evil to him, but we made them the worst losers.*

(Ch.21:V.71)

### **God frustrated their plans and saved Abraham<sup>(as)</sup>**

'How the fire became cool we are not told. Timely rain or a stormy hurricane might have extinguished it. In any event God did bring about circumstances, which led to

Abraham's deliverance. There is always an element of mystery in heavenly miracles; and the manner of Abraham<sup>(as)</sup> being saved from the fire was indeed a great miracle. That Abraham<sup>(as)</sup> had been cast into the fire is credited not only by the Jews, but also by the eastern Christians – 25th of the second Canun, or January being set apart in the Syrian Calendar for the commemoration of the event.' (Hyde, *De Rel. Vet Pers.*, p. 73)

Abraham<sup>(as)</sup> was seventy-five years old when God commanded him to migrate. He journeyed from Ur (Mesopotamia) to Harran and from there to Canaan, which God decreed to give to him till posterity. This journey had a precise objective. In pursuance of Divine plan and design, all the great Prophets or their followers, at one time or another, have to migrate from their homes. In the like manner Abraham<sup>(as)</sup> was asked to migrate.

Abraham<sup>(as)</sup> migrated from Ur with a few selected members including his nephew Lot. They passed

through Egypt. The king was impressed by Abraham<sup>(as)</sup> and offered some presents and a royal lady by the name of Hagar to him.

Abraham<sup>(as)</sup> and Sarah did not have any child, so when Hagar was presented to Abraham<sup>(as)</sup> by the king of Egypt, Sarah married her to Abraham<sup>(as)</sup> so that they could have a child. Abraham<sup>(as)</sup> 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<sup>(as)</sup> as follows:

‘And Abraham said, “Behold, to me thou hast given no seed: and, lo, one born in my house is mine heir.” And, behold, the word of the Lord came unto him, saying, “This man shall not be thine heir, but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir.” And He brought him forth abroad, and said, “Look now towards heaven, and count the stars, if thou be able to count them,” and he said unto him, “So shall thy seed be.”” (*Genesis 15:3-5*)

God heard their prayers. The angel spoke with Hagar and said, says the Bible:

‘And the angel of Lord said unto her, I will multiply thy seed exceedingly, that it shall not be numbered for multitude. And the angel of the Lord said unto her, Behold, thou art with child, and shalt bear a son, and shalt call his name Ishmael; because the Lord hath heard thy affliction.’  
(*Genesis 16:10,11*)

The first child was born to Abraham<sup>(as)</sup> from Hagar. The Bible says:

‘Abraham was fourscore and six years old, when Hagar bare Ishmael to Abraham.’  
(*Genesis 16:16*)

### **Promises of God with Sarah and Hagar**

After the birth of Ishmael, Sarah the elder wife of Abraham<sup>(as)</sup>, was also promised by God of a child. In fact multiple promises were given to them for their progeny. The Bible says:

‘And I will bless her, and give thee a son also of her: yea, I will bless her, and she shall be a mother of nations; kings of people shall be of her. Then Abraham fell upon his face, and laughed, and said in his heart, shall a child be born unto him that is an hundred years old? And shall Sarah, that is ninety years old bear? And Abraham said unto God, O that Ishmael might live before thee! And God said, Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed; and thou shalt call his name Isaac: and I will establish My covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him. And as for Ishmael, I have heard thee: Behold, I have blessed him and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly; twelve princes shall he beget, and I will make him a great nation.’  
(*Genesis 17:16-20*)

### **Abraham<sup>(as)</sup> Settles His Only Son in Makkah**

Abraham<sup>(as)</sup> did nothing of his own accord, other than what he was

commanded by God. He took Ishmael and his mother Hagar to the appointed land in the wilderness of Arabia and while settling them there offered the following prayer:

*Our Lord, I have settled some of my progeny in an uncultivable valley near Thy Sacred House – Our Lord, – that they may observe prayer. So make men’s heart incline towards them and provide them with fruits and that they may be thankful. Our Lord, certainly, Thou knowest what we conceal and what we make known. And nothing whatever is hidden from Allah, whether in the earth or in the heaven.*  
(Ch.14:Vs.38-39)

Ishmael was yet a child when in obedience to Divine command and in fulfillment of Divine plan, Abraham<sup>(as)</sup> brought him and his mother Hagar to the bleak and barren tract where Makkah 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 prayer was made at a time when not a blade of grass was to be seen for many miles around Makkah. Yet the prophecy met with fulfillment in a marvelous manner, for the choicest fruits now reach Makkah in plenty, in all seasons.

It is recorded in the history that when Abraham<sup>(as)</sup> 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<sup>(as)</sup> just pointed towards the sky. She understood this and said: ‘*Then God will not waste us*’ and returned to the baby. 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<sup>(as)</sup> Sacrifices His Son**

Abraham<sup>(as)</sup> had seen a dream that he was slaughtering his only son. When Ishmael was mature, Abraham<sup>(as)</sup> came to visit them and mentioned the dream to him. The Holy Qur'an mentions the whole episode as follows:

*And he prayed, My Lord, grant me a righteous son. So We gave him the glad tidings of a forbearing son. And when he was old enough to work with him, he said, 'O my dear son, I have seen in a dream that I am sacrificing thee. So consider what thou thinkest of it!' He replied, 'O my father, do as thou art commanded; thou wilt find me, if Allah pleases, of those who are patient.' And when they both submitted to the will of God, and he [Abraham] had thrown him down on his forehead. We called to him, 'O Abraham. Thou hast, indeed fulfilled the dream.' Thus, indeed, do we reward those who do good."*  
(Ch.37:Vs.101-106)

On the contrary the Bible says:

'And He said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest and get thee into the land of Moriah and offer him there for a burnt-offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of.' (*Genesis 22:2*)

In this self-contradicting statement, 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 thirteen 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<sup>(as)</sup> 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 says:

*And we gave him the glad tidings of Isaac, a Prophet, and one of the righteous.*  
(Ch.37:V.113)

A year later, when Abraham<sup>(as)</sup> was hundred years old, Isaac was born. Genesis 22:6 tells us that the son offered as sacrifice was not a baby. He in fact carried the wood of the burnt offering on his head, and Genesis 22:12 describes that the son offered as sacrifice was the only son. Here it does not mention any name. At the time of sacrifice, Abraham<sup>(as)</sup> was ninety-nine years old and the only son he had at that time was Ishmael. It seems that the writers of the Bible, while claiming credit of sacrifice, have deliberately changed Ishmael with Isaac, and Marwah (a hillock in the vicinity of Makkah) to Moriah. Moreover, in the religious ceremonies of the Jews and the Christians, no trace of the supposed sacrifice of Isaac by Abraham<sup>(as)</sup> is found. Muslims, who are the spiritual descendants of Ishmael, commemorate each year with great fervour his intended sacrifice, by slaughtering rams and goats all over the world on the tenth day of Dhul-Hijjah. This universal sacrifice of quadrupeds by Muslims establishes beyond dispute the fact that it was Ishmael and not Isaac whom Abraham<sup>(as)</sup> offered for sacrifice.

In reality, Abraham<sup>(as)</sup> 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<sup>(as)</sup> in the valley of Makkah, a land of arid and barren waste. That brave act had, in fact, symbolised the sacrifice of Ishmael. The other purpose of the divine command to Abraham<sup>(as)</sup> 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.

### **Abraham<sup>(as)</sup> as a Law-Bearing Prophet**

Abraham<sup>(as)</sup> followed the law of Noah<sup>(as)</sup> up to fifty years. Thereafter, when:

*God tried him with certain commands, which he fulfilled, God said: ... I will make thee a leader of men. Abraham asked, 'And from among my offspring?' God said, 'My covenant does not embrace*



*the transgressors.'*  
(Ch.2:V.125)

In the great trial of sacrifice of his only son, Abraham's<sup>(as)</sup> conduct proved par excellent. The time demanded a new law so God chose Abraham<sup>(as)</sup> for it. The House of God had fallen to ruins and it required reconstruction. Under the command of God, Abraham<sup>(as)</sup> and Ishmael rebuilt it on the old foundations (Ch.2:V.128). God enjoined on him saying:

*'... Associate not anything with Me and keep My House clean for those who perform the circuits, and those who stand up and those who bow down and fall prostrate in prayer.*  
(Ch.22:V.27)

**Abraham<sup>(as)</sup> proclaims pilgrimage (Hajj) for mankind.**  
God instituted pilgrimage (Hajj) for mankind through Abraham<sup>(as)</sup>. He ordered him saying:

*And proclaim unto men the Pilgrimage. They will come to thee on foot, and on every lean*

*camel, coming by every distant track.*  
(Ch.22:V.28)

Thus the pilgrimage as an institution began with the Patriarch Abraham<sup>(as)</sup> and has continued without a break to this day. The gathering in Makkah every year of many hundreds of thousands of Muslims from every distant land bears an irrefutable testimony to the fulfillment of this prophecy.

### **Shariah of Abraham<sup>(as)</sup>**

The laws introduced through Abraham<sup>(as)</sup> were contained in the Scriptures, but these have not been preserved as they were intended for a limited period only. However they are mentioned as Scriptures of Abraham<sup>(as)</sup> in the Holy Qur'an (Ch.87:V.20). The Holy Qur'an tells us that the Scriptures contained the following:

*Verily, he, truly prospers who purifies himself, and remembers the name of his Lord and offers Prayers. But you prefer the life of this world, whereas the Hereafter*

*is better and more lasting. This, indeed, is what is taught in the former Scriptures. The Scriptures of Abraham and Moses.*  
(Ch.87:Vs.15-20)

Abraham<sup>(as)</sup> taught a simple form of unity of God to his people. The laws of Abraham<sup>(as)</sup> remained in force till the time of Moses<sup>(as)</sup> when other laws were introduced.

### **Rise and Fall of Abraham's Progeny**

Hadrat Abraham<sup>(as)</sup> was very much concerned about the renaissance of his people. He supplicated to God saying:

*... 'My Lord, show me how Thou givest life to the dead.' He [God] said, 'Hast thou not believed?' He [Abraham] said, 'Yes, but I ask this that my heart may be at rest.' He [God] answered, 'Take four birds and make them attached to thyself. Then put each of them on a hill; then call them; they will come to thee in haste.' ...*

(Ch.2:V.261)

This is a vision of Abraham<sup>(as)</sup> in which he was shown the way to train his followers and regenerate them. The interpretation of 'taking of four birds' in this vision meant that his posterity would rise and fall four times, a phenomenon that was to be witnessed twice among the Israelites, and to be repeated twice later on among the followers of the Holy Prophet of Islam<sup>(sa)</sup> who was a descendent of Abraham<sup>(as)</sup> through Ishmael. The power of the Jews, the progeny of Abraham<sup>(as)</sup> through Isaac, was crushed twice, first by Nebuchadnezzar and then by Titus (17:5-8) (*Enc. Brit.* under 'Jews'). Each time God raised them after their fall, the second revival having been brought about by Constantine, the Roman Emperor who accepted Christianity. Similarly, the power of Islam was first rudely shaken when Baghdad fell to the Tartar hordes, but soon it recovered from the crushing blow. The victors became the vanquished and the grandson of Hulagu Khan, the despoiler of Baghdad, was converted to Islam.

The second fall came when there was a general and wholesale

decline of Muslims both in the spiritual and political field (Commentary, 2:262). God has raised the Promised Messiah<sup>(as)</sup> in the latter days for the second renaissance of Islam, which is to take place through peaceful means.

### **The Promised Victory**

The Holy Qur'an states:

*And already We have written in the Book of David, after the exhortation, that My righteous servants shall inherit the land.*  
(Ch.21:V.106)

This is a divine decree and nobody can alter the decree of God. In our assessment, the hearts of dwellers of Palestine will be won over by true Islam, that is, Ahmadiyyat and those truly righteous followers of God will inherit it.

### **Abraham's<sup>(as)</sup> Prayer for a Great Prophet Among His Progeny**

The Holy Qur'an says:

*And, our Lord, raise up among them a Messenger from among themselves, who may recite to them Thy signs and teach them*

*the Book and Wisdom and may purify them; surely, Thou art the Mighty, the Wise.*  
(Ch.2:V.130)

In this verse Abraham<sup>(as)</sup> prayed for a great Prophet with specific missions. This was later fulfilled in the person of Muhammed<sup>(sa)</sup> a descendent of Ishmael, on whom the fiery law (Deuteronomy 33:2) for all mankind was revealed in the form of the Holy Qur'an.

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# *The Purity of the Text of the* **HOLY QUR'AN**

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From the Review of Religions, 1907

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## **1. The Divine Promise of Protection.**

*Verily, it is We Ourselves Who have sent down this Exhortation, and most surely We are its Guardian.*  
(Ch.15: V.10)

The fulfilment of the promise contained in the verse quoted above is such a clear fact in the history of the Holy Qur'an, that even a man like Sir William Muir who undertook the writing of his *Life of Mahomet* to assist the Christian Missionaries in their evangelical work among the Muslims has been compelled to admit that 'there is probably in the world no other work which has remained twelve centuries with so pure a text,'<sup>1</sup> and to endorse the verdict of another Christian writer, Von Hammer, 'that we hold the Qur'an to be as surely Mahomet's

word, as the Mahometans hold it to be the Word of God.'<sup>2</sup> The question naturally arises, what were the circumstances which helped in the transmission of the Qur'an to tell us exactly as it was revealed to the Holy Prophet(sa)? These circumstances relate to two different periods in the history of Islam, viz., the lifetime of the Founder who was the recipient of the Divine revelation, and the time of his early successors who with the utmost faithfulness handed down to posterity the Qur'an as it was left by the Holy Prophet(sa) at the time of his death.

Before describing these circumstances, however, it seems necessary to make a few remarks on the verse quoted in the beginning of this article as an answer to certain objections against its true interpretation by an anonymous Christian writer,<sup>3</sup> who

makes the allegation that the word *az-zikr* in this verse does not mean the Qur'an, but every revelation sent down to any prophet of God at any time. This misinterpretation of the word is due to an ignorance of the context. The word *zikr* no doubt means 'any book of the prophets,' but it especially means the Qur'an<sup>4</sup> and the context shows clearly that it is the latter significance which *az-zikr* bears in the verse under discussion. It is the tenth verse of the fifteenth chapter which opens thus: 'These are the signs of the Book, and of the lucid Qur'an.'

From the sixth to the ninth verse the chapter reads as follows:

*And they said, 'O thou to whom this exhortation has been sent down, thou art surely a madman. Why dost thou not bring angels to us, if thou art of the truthful? We do not send down angels but with the requirements of justice, and when We do send them, the disbelievers are not respited.*  
(Ch.15: Vs.7-9)

Now the promise of guarding in

the last sentence is evidently regarding the same *zikr* that is spoken of in the first sentence as having been sent down to the Holy Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup>, and thus there remains not the least doubt as to the truth of the fact that by the *zikr* in the verse under discussion is meant only the Holy Qur'an.

This conclusion is borne out by many other verses of the Holy Qur'an which contain similar promises regarding the Holy Book. Thus in the forty-first chapter of the Holy Qur'an entitled 'Ha Mim, As-Sajdah', we read:

*Surely, those who distort Our signs to seek deviation therein, are not hidden from Us. Is he, then who is cast into the Fire better, or he who comes to Us safe on the Day of Resurrection? Do what you will. Surely He sees all that you do. Those who disbelieve in the Reminder – the Qur'an – when it has come to them are the losers. And truly, it is a mighty Book.*  
(Ch.41: Vs.41, 42)

This and such other verses clearly show that the Holy Qur'an announced in the very beginning the Divine promise of its protection from all kinds of destruction, corruption or alteration. Hence from the earliest times, the Muslims have looked upon these verses as containing a promise that the Holy Qur'an shall be perfectly guarded against all attacks to destroy it or to alter its text. Thus both Mujahid and Qatada, the earliest authorities on commentary, agree in this interpretation of both these verses, and state that by guarding the Qur'an in Ch.15: V.10, and by not allowing falsehood to approach the holy Book from before or behind in Ch.41: V.42, it is meant that no word shall be added to it which is not part of the Divine revelation and no word shall be omitted from it which is part of the Divine revelation, granted to the Holy Prophet, Muhammad<sup>(sa)</sup>.

Both these authorities and all the other authorities on the commentary of the Holy Qur'an, also agree that by *az-zikr* in both these verses is meant the Holy Qur'an.<sup>6</sup> Therefore, we have

evidence here that the earliest authorities to whose opinion we can have access understood these verses in the same sense in which the Muslims understand them today, and any attempt to throw discredit upon that meaning or to attach any other significance to the words of the verses quoted above is fruitless.

The author of the *Tawil-ul Qur'an* further contends that the existence of a promise does not prove its fulfilment and hence the promise itself is not an evidence. This is, no doubt, true, but there are other circumstances which, when considered in connection with the promise itself, afford a conclusive proof of its fulfilment. If the promise had not been fulfilled, and there had been any alteration in the text of the Holy Qur'an, one of two things must have happened, *viz.*, either those who had witnessed these alterations would have lost their faith in the Holy Qur'an as the Word of God or they would have given some interpretation other than their apparent interpretation to the verses quoted above. But we know for certain, neither of these

things happened. The earliest authorities like Mujahid and Qatada, as we have already shown, consider these verses to contain a promise that the text of the Holy Qur'an shall never be tampered with, and no other meaning is mentioned by any of the earlier authorities. Therefore, we have clear proof that no other sense was ever attached to these words by the Companions of the Holy Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup> for if it had been, we should have had some report to that effect. To cite another instance of this from the earlier history of Islam, let me refer to a prophecy contained in Hadith [Tradition]. There is a tradition to the effect that the Holy Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup> said to his wives:

اسرعن لحوقا  
بی اطولکن ید

The apparent significance of these words being 'the quickest of you in joining me, (i.e., after death) will be she whose hands are the longest.'<sup>7</sup> It was in this sense that the Holy Prophet's<sup>(sa)</sup> wives took these words, for they immediately began to measure their hands to compare their lengths. But

tradition tells us that they were wrong in attaching this significance to these words which, it afterwards turned out, really meant that 'the quickest of you in joining me (after death) will be she who is the most extensive of you in giving,<sup>8</sup> the most charitable. It was in accordance with the latter significance that the prophecy was fulfilled and tradition has not failed to give us the right interpretation, though the prophecy formed no part of the Qur'an. Therefore, we are right in concluding that if the prophecy regarding the protection of the text of the Qur'an from being tampered with had not been fulfilled in the apparent sense of the verses which contain that prophecy, the matter was of so overwhelming an importance that we would have had numerous Companions attaching a different significance to the words of the prophecy and telling posterity that the words were not to be taken in their apparent significance. But in the large collection of traditions, we do not meet with a single report to that effect, leaving aside the question of its credibility. It is impossible that if the prophecy

had not been fulfilled in the literal significance of the words, not only should thousands of Companions have passed over the occurrence in silence, but the earliest authorities who learned the Holy Qur'an from the Companions themselves should have positively stated that the verses under discussion meant that no alteration would find its way into the Holy Book.

It is clear from the above that the Companions of the Holy Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup> understood the prophecy relating to the guardianship of the Holy Qur'an in the apparent sense of the words of the prophecy. Therefore, if the text of the Holy Qur'an had been tampered with before their eyes, they could not have believed in the prophecy or in the word which contained it as the Word of God. But history does not show that any such thing ever happened or that any party of the Companions of the Holy Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup> or any single Companion ever expressed any doubt as to the truth of the Holy Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup> on that ground. There is no such obscurity about the history of Islam that we should be

justified in thinking that such an important occurrence, if it had happened, could have been left out or remained hidden from the knowledge of posterity. Nor could the Companions have kept silence on witnessing such an obvious failure at the prophecy, for we see them expressing their doubts freely even in the presence of the Holy Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup>. This assertion is amply borne out by the circumstances of the famous truce of Hudaibiyya. The Holy Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup> saw in a vision that he and his Companions were performing a pilgrimage. As he was always certain of the truth of his visions and revelations and knew the present vision to be from God, he set out on a journey for Makkah to perform the pilgrimage with over fourteen hundred of his Companions. When he reached Hudaibiyya, the Quraish came out against him and told the Holy Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup> that they would not allow the pilgrims to proceed further. Here a truce was arranged between the two parties by which not only the Holy Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup> agreed to return to Madinah without performing the pilgrimage, but the other terms also were



unfavourable to the Muslims. The acceptance of these conditions caused a murmur among the Companions of the Holy Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup> for by them they were to return without performing a pilgrimage. Umar gave expression to their views and coming in the presence of the Holy Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup>, he asked him how it was that he agreed to go back without performing a pilgrimage while he had promised to them on the basis of his vision that the pilgrimage would be performed. His doubts were only removed when he was informed by the Holy Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup> that the vision did not promise a pilgrimage during that very year, but gave promise only of a pilgrimage and that therefore it could not be falsified by their mere inability to perform the pilgrimage on that occasion. It was on learning this explanation that the Companions of the Holy Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup> were satisfied.<sup>9</sup> This tradition shows clearly that the Companions of the Holy Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup> expressed their doubts freely when they were not satisfied about anything. It is, therefore, certain that if there had been the least alteration in the text

of Holy Qur'an, grave doubt would have been entertained as to the truth of the prophecy and reports of these doubts would no doubt have been transmitted to posterity. But the utter absence of all such reports shows clearly that no doubt was ever entertained and that accordingly no alteration had ever taken place in the text of the Holy Qur'an as it had been taught to the Companions by the Holy Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup> himself in his life-time.

One tradition is cited by the author of the *Tawil-ul-Qur'an* in support of his assertion that by the guarding of the Holy Qur'an was not meant the guarding of its text from being tampered with. This tradition he takes from the Ibn-i-Maja, a second class authority on Tradition. The tradition says that a time will come when the Holy Book, i.e., the Qur'an, will be entirely taken away and not a single verse of it will be left. From this tradition, he concludes that if the Holy Qur'an can be entirely taken away without doing any harm to the promise contained in the words, '*Verily We sent down the Qur'an, and verily We shall be its guardian,*' this promise could

not be inconsistent with the loss of any portion of the Divine revelation or any alteration in its text. The fallacy of this argument lies in this that by the taking away of the Holy Qur'an is not meant the taking away of its words but the taking away of the spirit. That this is the true purport of the words of the tradition is clear from other and more authentic traditions. Thus both *Bukhari* and *Muslim* relate a tradition which expressly says that the knowledge of the Qur'an shall be taken away not by the disappearance of its words, but by the death of the learned men. Another report mentioned by Baihaqi says that a time will come when nothing will remain of Islam but its name and nothing will remain of the Qur'an but its letter<sup>11</sup>. A third tradition which is related by Tirmadhi, Ahmad and Darimi besides Ibn-i-Maja, (the latter being the sole authority on which the author of the *Tawil-ul-Qur'an* relies) supports the same conclusion in equally clear words. When the Holy Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup> spoke of the disappearance of knowledge, one of the Companions asked him how the knowledge of the Qur'an

would disappear when they were reciting it constantly and teaching it to their children who in their turn would teach to their children.<sup>12</sup> The Holy Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup> told him that what he meant by the disappearance of the knowledge of the Holy Qur'an was that people would no more act upon its injunctions or make it the guiding rule of their lives. All these traditions clearly show that the the Holy Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup> never meant when he spoke of the disappearance of the knowledge of the Holy Qur'an, that the Holy Book would itself disappear from the earth. What he meant was that people would not act upon it.

All these considerations point to but one conclusion, *viz.*, that the Companions of the Holy Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup> clearly understood the promise contained in the Holy Qur'an as to its being guarded by Almighty God in the apparent sense of the words of the promise, and as no one ever expressed any doubt as to the fulfilment of this important promise, it also follows that no alteration whatever took place in the text of the Holy Qur'an after the death of the Holy

Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup>. Hence it is that the Muslims of all generations have laid great stress upon this promise. Its existence combined with a few other historical circumstances of unquestionable truth affords the strongest proof that the text of the Holy Book has never been tampered with. There is another consideration which affords indirect evidence of the fulfilment of this promise. At one and the same time two important promises of protection were made to the Holy Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup> – a promise of protecting the person of the Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup> against the evil designs and the attacks of his enemies, and the other a promise of protecting the text of the Holy Qur'an from being tampered with. The fulfilment of the first promise related to the life-time of the Holy Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup> and that of the second to the time which followed his death. The mission of the Holy Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup> was confronted with two great dangers, *viz.*, that the Holy Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup> should be killed by his enemies and thus the work which he had begun and the Divine revelation which was granted to him should remain incomplete, or that after his death

the Holy Book should be changed and altered as had been the case with the previous books. Some of the prophets before him were murdered and the books which others had left after them for the guidance of their followers had been tampered with. But the mission of the Holy Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup> was safeguarded against both these dangers by the two promises referred to above.<sup>13</sup> Now it is easy to see that the fulfilment of the first promise was far more difficult than that of the second, but no one can deny that it was clearly fulfilled. Various attempts were made upon the life of the Holy Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup> both at Makkah and at Madinah but they were all brought to naught. The fulfilment of this promise in the life-time of the Holy Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup> was an assurance to his Companions that the second promise would also be fulfilled, for the Mighty God Who could frustrate all the designs of powerful enemies against a helpless and solitary man to fulfil the promise concerning the safety of the Holy Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup> could not fail to bring to fulfilment the equally important promise of guarding the Holy Qur'an against

any alteration. The fulfilment of these two promises clearly establishes the Divine origin of the world which contains them.

## References

1. The Life of Mahomet, by Sir William Muir, 3rd Edition, Introduction page xxi.
2. Ibid, page xxvi.
3. The author of the *Tawil-ul-Qur'an* or *Interpretation of the Qur'an*, an Urdu writing published in 1905 by the Punjab Religious Book Society, Lahore.
4. See Lane's Arabic-English Lexicon under the word *zikh*.
5. The word *Sihir* is again used here for the Holy Qur'an as the context shows clearly the translation from Rodwell.
6. See Commentary of Ibn-i-Jareer, Vol. XIV, page 6 and Vol. XXIV, page 71, 72.
7. The tradition is thus stated in *Sahih Muslim*:

'It is reported by Ayesha, the mother of the faithful that the Messenger of God<sup>(sa)</sup>, said that "the quickest of you to join me will be she whose hands are the longest," She said that the wives of the Prophet began thereupon to measure their hands in order to find out who had the longest hands. She also said that Zainab proved to be the one with the longest hands for she used to give away with her hands and was charitable.'

The following interpretation of this

tradition is given by Nawawi:

'The meaning of this tradition is as, follows: The wives of the Holy Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup> thought that the length of hands in the prophecy was to be taken literally and therefore, they began to measure the length of their hands. Sauda was the one who had the longest hands literally while Zainab had the longest hands in giving alms and doing charitable deeds, and Zainab was the first who died after the Holy Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup>. Then they understood that the length of hands signified extensiveness in giving and charity. The lexicographers explain such phrases as '*such a one has lengthy hands*' as meaning that such a one is very generous and charitable.' (*Nawawi on Muslim*). Bukhari and its well-known commentary Fath-ul-Bari also agree that the prophecy was first taken in a literal sense, but that it afterwards appeared that the words conveyed a different significance. (Bukhari, chapter of sadaqat or charities).

8. For this significance of the words of the tradition, see Lane's Arabic-English Lexicon, under the root 't-w-l' page 1897, 3rd column.
9. The pilgrimage as promised by the vision was performed by the Holy Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup> a year afterwards. The episode relating to the expression of doubts by Omar is thus given in the *Sahih Bukhari*:

'Then Umar, son of Khattub said: "So I came to the prophet of God, may peace and the blessings of God be upon him, and said to him, art thou not the prophet of God truly? He said, Yes, I am. Again I said, are we not in the right and our opponents in the wrong? He said,

yes. Then I asked him, why should we then accept such unfavourable terms in our religion? He said: Verily, I am the Messenger of God and I do not disobey Him and He is my Helper. I said, Didst thou not speak to us that we would go to the Temple and make circuits round it? He said, Yes, but did I tell you that we would reach it this year? I said, No! Then He said, thou shouldst no doubt reach the Temple and make circuits round it”

*(Bukhari Kitab ul Shuroot or the Book of Conditions)*

10. The tradition runs as follows:

‘Abdullah, son of Amru, reported that the Messenger of God<sup>(sa)</sup> said that God would not take away knowledge by its actual removal from among men, but He would take away knowledge by taking away learned men’.

*(Mishkat. Kitab-ul-Ilm.)*

11. This tradition is also given in *Mishkat Kitabul Ilm* and is also follows:

‘It is reported by Ali that the Messenger of God<sup>(sa)</sup>, said that a time would come over men when there would remain naught of Islam but its name and naught of Qur’an but its words; their mosques would be well stocked with people but they would be waste because of the absence of guidance; their learned men would be the most mischievous of those under the canopy of heaven; from among them would come forth the great tribulation and into them would it return.’

12. The original tradition is as follows:

‘Ziyad, son of Labid, reported that the

Messenger of God<sup>(sa)</sup>, spoke of something which he said would happen at the time of the disappearance of knowledge. I said, O Messenger of God, how would knowledge disappear when we read the Qur’an and teach it to our children and our children would teach it to their children, so on till the Judgment day. The Prophet said, ‘May thy mother be bereft of thee, O Ziyad! I thought that thou wast one of the most wise men in Madinah. Do not these Jews and Christians read the Torah and the Injil, but they do not act upon anything contained in these books.’

*(Mishkat Kitabul-Ilm)*

13. The Divine promise to protect the person of the Holy Prophet<sup>(sa)</sup> against the evil designs of his enemies is expressly contained in the following verse::

*O Messenger! convey to the people what has been revealed to thee from thy Lord; and if thou do it not, thou hast not conveyed His Message at all.*

(Ch.5: V.68)

The same promise is contained in various other verses of the Holy Qur’an.

# AN ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE CHAIRMAN

## *Central Committee Centenary Khilafat Ahmadiyya*

*Assalamu alaikum warahmatullahi wabarakatuhu*

I have the honour to make an important and urgent announcement with the permission and blessings of Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih V, *Ayadahullahu Ta'ala*.

In his book *The Will*, the Promised Messiah<sup>(as)</sup> says:

‘I am a personification of His (that is Allah’s) Power. And after I am gone there will be some other persons who will be the manifestation of the Second Power [of Allah].’

In fulfilment of this prophecy of the Promised Messiah<sup>(as)</sup>, after the death of the Promised Messiah<sup>(as)</sup>, Hadhrat Maulana Nooruddin<sup>(ra)</sup> was elected as his first successor and Khalifa and at his election, the members of Jama’at (community) Ahmadiyya made a solemn commitment to him that they would remain loyal and faithful to him and that any command of his would be for them no less than the command of the

Promised Messiah<sup>(as)</sup> himself. Thus Khilafat was established in Jama’at Ahmadiyya and by the grace of Allah with the passage of time and at every turn of history, Khilafat Ahmadiyya continued to gain strength and got established more firmly. The hundred years of the Khilafat will be completed in 2008. For this infinite favour of Allah, the Mighty, and for the innumerable blessings and beneficence which were showered by Allah on the Jama’at, as well as for the substantial progress which Jama’at has made under the guidance of Khilafat, it is incumbent upon us that we express our sincerest gratitude to Allah both in our hearts and in our actions.

Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih V *Ayadahullahu Ta'ala* has decided that in 2008 Jama’at Ahmadiyya should celebrate the 100th anniversary of Khilafat Ahmadiyya all over the world. And for this Hudur *Ayadahullahu Ta'ala* has approved a plan which has already been sent to all the Jama’ats of the world.

At the completion of the first 25 years of the Khilafat of Hadhrat Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmud Ahmad, the Musleh Maud<sup>(ra)</sup>, the silver Jubilee of Khilafat Thaniya [Second] was celebrated in 1939. On that occasion, Jama'at Ahmadiyya presented to their beloved Imam a sum of Rs.300,000 as a token of its thanksgiving with a request to Hudur that he should kindly accept it and spend it as he deemed fit.

Now on the occasion of the coming Centenary to be celebrated at the completion of 100 years of Khilafat Ahmadiyya, it shall be appropriate that, in keeping with our tradition, and showing our gratitude to Allah practically, we should, on behalf of the Jama'at, present to Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih V *Ayadahullahu Ta'ala* a befitting amount of money as a token of our thanksgiving to Allah with a request that this humble present to Hudur by the Jama'at is made as an expression of gratitude to Allah and that Hudur may accept it and spend it as he likes.

The Central Committee for Centenary of Khilafat Ahmadiyya, appointed by Hudur *Ayadahullahu Ta'ala* has approved that the amount of this token of our thanksgiving should be no less than one million

sterling pounds. With the permission of Hudur, this humble one on behalf of the Central Committee of the Jubilee makes this appeal to the worldwide Ahmadiyya Jama'at that we should raise this fund to be presented to Hudur as a token of our thanks to Allah. I hope that Jama'at Ahmadiyya who, by the grace of Allah, fully realises the blessings of Khilafat, and in view of the love which every member of the Jama'at has for Khilafat, shall positively respond to this appeal. The members of the Jama'at can contribute to this fund individually, or they can participate in this scheme at Jama'at level. The representatives of various countries who are present here are requested to make this appeal to the members of the Jama'at when they return to their respective countries.

Wassalam

Yours sincerely

*[sd] Hameedullah*

*Chairman*

*Central Committee*

*Centenary Khilafat Ahmadiyya*

*Qadian, 27 December 2005*

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