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EDITORIAL COMMENT

Fareed Ahmad – Newquay, UK

The Holocaust and the self that incites to evil

27th January was Holocaust Memorial Day and it was a sombre reminder of the terrible atrocities committed by the Nazis in the Second World War. It is hoped that by keeping the memory of the atrocities alive, man's humanity will always strive to prevent such horrors from happening again. In fact this is one of the specific objectives of the commemoration, which seeks to 'ensure that the horrendous crimes, racism and victimisation committed during the Holocaust are neither forgotten nor repeated, whether in Europe or elsewhere in the world'.

Indeed few events parallel the horrors of the Holocaust. The word 'holocaust' stems from the Greek *holos kaustos* meaning 'complete destruction' usually by fire, and it is a chillingly apt description and a macabre reminder of the ruthless Nazi campaign to eliminate the Jews and other groups for twisted

ideological and political purposes. During a period of four years over six million people were shot, gassed, starved and tortured to death. One can hardly visualise the enormity of suffering and shock this persecution must have caused. It is indeed disturbing to imagine that such persecution was ever conceived and enacted by all involved.

Sadly it was not the last large scale atrocity committed by man, for the world was to witness similar horrors again, and not just once. Barely fifty years after the Holocaust, Europe witnessed another barbaric atrocity. In 1992-1995 the genocide in Bosnia by the Serbs was the worst mass murder in Europe since the Second World War – with over 200,000 Bosnians slaughtered simply for their faith. Then in Africa, in the space of just four months between April and July 1994, nearly one million Tutsis were massacred in Rwanda by Hutu extremists. The rate of murder far outpaced even

the horrors of the Nazis. The shameful fact is that this occurred under the watch of the UN – the very body that was set up after the Second World War to prevent conflict and secure peace. Whilst it could not have prevented this Rwandan massacre on its own, its dismal failure was its unwillingness to rally international help and support. Instead, in May 1994, its Security Council unbelievably refused even to acknowledge the ongoing genocide, thus effectively giving the green light for the Hutus to kill with impunity.

It is worrying to note that persecution and state-sponsored killings for the sake of twisted ideological or political purposes still continue across the world to this day. From the persecution of religious groups for their beliefs, to those killed as ‘collateral damage’ in wars and conflicts, man’s capacity to commit evil remains undiminished.

The solution provided by Islam to this unfortunate state of affairs is to spur man to begin by looking inwards and to engage in the

greater Jihad – that is the conquering of one’s inner demons and more specifically one’s ego. Only by mastering this is there any hope of people acting with justice with their fellow beings. This battle to conquer the ‘self that incites to evil’ was so eloquently set out over one hundred years ago by the Promised Messiah(as) in his inspirational treatise *The Philosophy of the Teachings of Islam* that expounded the beauty and relevance of Qur’anic teachings.

The suppression of man’s natural state i.e. the ‘self that incites to evil’ was described as the first step towards true spirituality and peace. The next step is to develop oneself in accordance with divine instructions to the state described as ‘the reproving self’ in which the natural impulses of man are subject to control so that vices are rejected and behaviour is regulated by reason. This makes him worthy of honour. The final step is the start of the spiritual state and is ‘the soul at rest’, a level at which the soul nurtures and enjoys the achievement of the success of its journey to self-improvement to the

degree that it is ‘filled with spiritual powers and establishes a relationship with God Almighty’. The monumental scale of the challenge of this journey to spirituality is plain for us all to see but the path to reaching the spiritual state has been set forth by prophets of God who have appeared in every age and in every nation.

Interestingly enough, as well as setting out the three stages to spirituality, the Promised Messiah^(as) also prophesied that within a period of three hundred years his message of the revival of the true Islam would have gained acceptance to such a degree that it would be the prevalent belief worldwide. Whilst the stages described by the Promised Messiah^(as) certainly relate to the individual one wonders if this is also reflected in the wider state of society at a particular time. Could it be that as mankind progresses from the wild to the moral state and beyond that such advancement would also be reflected in society at large?

One hundred years have already passed and we have certainly seen

the results of what happens when those who have rejected the Qur’an’s wisdom remain locked in the struggle to overcome the self that incites to evil. In view of this one hopes that even at this late hour, were men able to heed the Promised Messiah’s^(as) important message of peace then the next two periods of progress would arrive sooner rather than later, thus enabling us to witness the benefits of the reproving self and the soul at rest. If, however, the message is ignored then in our age of technical and scientific advancement one shudders to think of the catastrophic consequences that will inevitably arise and the holocausts that lie in wait for us all.

Fareed Ahmad – UK

ESSENCE OF ISLAM:

Part 16 – Matchlessness of the Holy Qur'an

Illustrated by Surah Fatihah

This series sets out, in the words of the Promised Messiah^(as), Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, a summary of his exposition of four outstanding topics: ISLAM; ALLAH, THE EXALTED; THE HOLY PROPHET^(sa) 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.

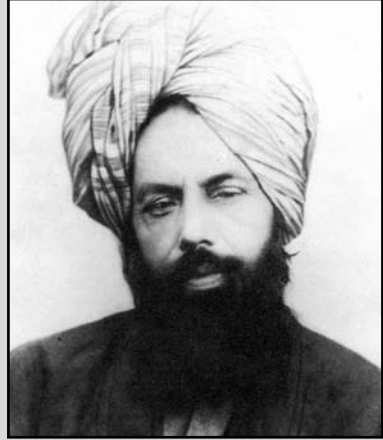
For the general benefit, we proceed to set out the quality by possessing which a writing or a speech qualifies for being held matchless and from God. Then we shall select a *Surah* of the Holy Qur'an and shall prove that it possesses, in perfection and in completeness, all those qualities of matchlessness which have been set forth in the rule. Then if someone still refuses to accept those qualities of matchlessness the burden would lie upon him to produce some other writing or speech which should possess all those qualities of matchlessness.

If a writing or speech fully resembles something which has proceeded from God and is His handiwork, that is to say, it is comprehensive of the external and internal wonders which exist in something that has been fashioned by God, it would be said that that writing or speech is of a rank which cannot be matched by human powers, for if a thing is admittedly matchless and has proceeded from God, then anything else sharing fully its qualities of matchlessness would itself be matchless. For instance, if something is in

complete accord with that which is ten yards in length, then it would be established as a certainty that that thing also is ten yards in length.

The Rose: a Wonder of Allah's Creation

Now we shall select out of the creations of God a delicate creation, that is to say, a rose, and we shall set out the external and internal wonders by virtue of which it is admitted that it is beyond human power to create its match. We shall then prove that the wonders and excellences of the *Surah Fatihah* not only match the wonders of the rose, but also exceed them. The reason why I select this illustration is that on one occasion I saw in a vision that I was holding in my hand the *Surah Fatihah* inscribed on a leaf and it was so beautiful and attractive that it appeared that the paper on which it was inscribed was loaded with soft red roses which were beyond count. When I recited any verse of the *Surah*, many of the roses flew upwards emitting an



The founder of the Ahmadiyya Muslim community was Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^(as).

The founder of the Ahmadiyya Muslim community was Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^(as). 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.

attractive sound. Those roses were very large, delicate, beautiful, fresh, and fragrant; and by their ascending upwards the heart and brain were perfumed,

overpowered, and drawn away from the world and its contents, on account of the matchless delights of the roses. From this vision, I gathered that the rose has a spiritual relationship with the *Surah Fatihah* and that is why I have selected this illustration. I shall first set out as an illustration the wonders, external and internal, that are found in the rose and shall then describe as a contrast the external and internal wonders of the *Surah Fatihah* so that a just reader should appreciate that the qualities, external and internal, that are found in the rose by virtue of which it is impossible to create its match, are found in the *Surah Fatihah* to a higher degree. Thus, I would also fulfil the indication that was conveyed to me in my vision.

It will be admitted without hesitation that a rose, like other creations of God, possesses such qualities that a man has not the power to create its match. These qualities are of two types. First, those that are manifested in its

appearance. They are that its colour is most attractive, and its smell pleases the heart, and its body is soft, fresh, delicate and clean. Secondly, there are the inner qualities with which it is invested by God, that is to say, the qualities that are inherent in it. These are that it pleases and strengthens the heart, upholds all the faculties and spirits, operates as a laxative, and strengthens the stomach, liver, kidneys, arteries, the womb, and lungs. It is very helpful in a coma and in weakness of the heart, and is useful in many other physical ailments.

On account of these two types of qualities, it is believed that the rose is so perfect that it is not possible for any human being to make a flower which should be attractive in colour and in fragrance, and should be fresh and soft and delicate and clear like the rose and in addition should possess all those qualities that are possessed by the rose. If it is asked why is it believed that human power is not able to create

its match and why is it not possible that man should be able to produce in an artificial flower all the qualities, external and internal, that are found in the rose, the answer is that this has been proved in practice, and that no philosopher or physician has been able to compound any medicines, or devise a recipe, that would produce a flower possessing the appearance and qualities of the rose.

Qualities of *Surah Fatihah* compared with the Rose

It should now be understood that these elements of matchlessness are to be found in the *Surah Fatihah*, and indeed in the briefest portions of the Holy Qur'an. First observe its external form and appreciate its colourful diction and beautiful exposition and sequence and other qualities which are essential for a good composition and which manifest themselves throughout the *Surah Fatihah*, a manifestation that cannot be exceeded and which is free from every type of coarseness and wildness of idiom. Every phrase is most

eloquent, every form of expression has its proper place, and every type of quality which enhances the beauty of its composition is found in it. The highest grade of eloquence that can be imagined is found in it in perfection and all that is needed to make its meaning clear is present. With all these good qualities, it is filled with the fragrance of truth and there is no exaggeration in it, which might have the slightest trace of falsehood. Its colourfulness is not like that of the poets which smacks of falsehood and is full of idle boasts. As the compositions of poets smell of falsehood and vain verbiage, this composition is full of the delicate fragrance of truth. This fragrance is accompanied by a beauty of exposition, propriety of diction, colourfulness, smoothness and, as in the rose, its fragrance is accompanied by the beauty of its colour and clearness. These are its external qualities.

From the point of view of its internal qualities, the *Surah Fatihah* comprises remedies for

great spiritual illnesses, and makes provision for the perfection of intellectual power and the power of action. It reforms great disorders and sets forth great insights and fine points which have been hidden from the eyes of thinkers and philosophers. The heart of a seeker is strengthened by its perusal and is healed of the ills of doubt and suspicion and error. Many high verities and fine realities which are needed for the perfection of the soul are furnished by its contents. Obviously, these excellences are such that they cannot be combined in the writing or speech of any human being. This impossibility is not mere inference, but is obvious. God Almighty has manifested the perfection of its external and internal qualities by setting out, in eloquent words, the fine points and high insights at the time of their need and in accordance with the requirements of truth. He has carried both sides, the external and the internal, to the highest grades of perfection. First, it sets out those necessary high insights

the signs of which had disappeared from previous teachings, and no thinker or philosopher had set them forth. These have not been set out without need and in vain, but they have been set out at a time when they were absolutely necessary for the reform of the conditions of the age and without their being set out the age would have faced ruin and destruction. They have not been set out imperfectly or incompletely, and are perfect in themselves. The wisdom of a wise person cannot cite a religious verity which has been left out of them. Nor is there any doubt which troubles the mind of a worshipper of falsehood that has not been set at rest. To express all these verities and fine points, of which there was great need, at the highest level of eloquence, is a great undertaking which is obviously above the capacity of human faculties.

Man is so bereft of merit that it is not possible for him to express truthfully average matters, which are not connected with high

verities, in colourful and eloquent words, adhering all the time to truth and accuracy of statement. For instance, it is impossible for a shopkeeper, who is a high-grade poet and writer, to carry on his conversation with diverse types of customers eloquently and in colourful words, confining himself to whatever is appropriate on every occasion. Where economy of words is needed, he should speak less and where long speeches are appropriate, he should hold forth at length. When a discussion should ensue between him and his customer, he should adopt a method which should support his thesis. Or take the case of a magistrate whose duty it is to take down accurately the statements of parties and witnesses and to make appropriate comments on them and to put questions and to record answers which are appropriate for the investigation of the matter in dispute, and to set down legal arguments accurately according to the law, and to set forth the facts in their proper order and to record his opinion and the

reasons in support thereof accurately. He would find it impossible to do all this at a level of eloquence which it would not be possible for another human being to exceed. The case of human compositions is such that without vain, unnecessary and irrelevant matters, their authors cannot take a step and cannot set out anything without falsehood and idle statements. If they make an attempt it is defective like a picture which if it depicts a nose, it leaves out ears and if it depicts ears, it leaves out eyes. If truth is adhered to, eloquence has to be sacrificed, and if eloquence has to be pursued, falsehood and idle statements are piled up like an onion which is all leaves and has no substance.

Thus, sane reason determines that it is impossible to set out average matters in colourful and eloquent words while adhering to truth and the requirements of the occasion. Then it is easy to understand that to set out high insights according to the requirements of truth in colourful and eloquent language, better

than which cannot be imagined, is a supernatural task which is beyond human power and is as impossible of achievement as it is impossible to create a flower which should completely resemble a rose in its external and internal qualities. Experience testifies and sane nature accepts that in ordinary matters it becomes impossible for a person to set forth something which is necessary and true, whether it relates to a matter of buying and selling or relates to judicial procedure, and it is desired to perform this task in the best manner, in the most appropriate and suitable language at the highest degree of eloquence. Then how is it possible for a human being to set forth in a writing truthfully and accurately insights and high verities according to need, comprising Divine truths, without omitting anything that is needed for the reform of the times and for conclusive argument and for repelling the objections of opponents while observing all the rules of debate and discussion, and comprising all

necessary arguments, proofs of teachings, and the requisite questions and answers? The difficulties would be multiplied a hundred fold beyond those that we have set out in the first case, and yet it would be necessary that the beauty of the composition should be matchless and peerless, and that it should not be possible to express the subject matter in more eloquent language.

These are the qualities found in the *Surah Fatihah* and in the Holy Qur'an, which are in accord with the qualities of matchlessness of a rose. But another great quality is found in the *Surah Fatihah* and the Holy Qur'an, which is peculiar to them, and that is that to read them with attention and sincerity purifies the heart, and removes the veils of darkness, and expands the mind, and drawing the seeker after truth to God, manifests such lights and effects in him which are found only in those who are close to God and which cannot be acquired by any other means. We have given

proof in this book of this spiritual effect, and if a seeker after truth should so desire we can satisfy him and furnish fresh proof.

Internal and External Qualities of Surah Fatihah

It should also be remembered that the matchlessness and peerlessness of the Holy Qur’an has not only arguments of reason to establish it, but is confirmed by experience over a long period. For 1,300 years the Holy Qur’an has been putting forward its qualities as a challenge to the whole world that in its external and internal qualities it is matchless and peerless and that no man can produce its equal, and yet no one has come forward to take up the challenge, not even with regard to one *Surah*, for instance the *Surah Fatihah*. Now what could be a clearer miracle than that not only this Holy Word is beyond the reach of human faculties on the basis of reason, but experience over a long period also testifies to its miraculous nature.

If someone should be dissatisfied with both these types of

testimony and should take pride in his knowledge and ability, or should believe that some other writer can compose something like the Holy Qur’an, we shall proceed, as we have promised, to set forth a sample of the verities and fine points comprehended in the *Surah Fatihah*. Such a person should put forth some composition of his own as a rival to the external and internal qualities of the *Surah Fatihah*.

(Barahin-e-Ahmadiyya, Ruhani Khaza’in, Vol. 1, pp.394-403, footnote 11)

Like the Holy Qur’an, the *Surah Fatihah* comprises two types of qualities which are matchless, one external and the other internal. As we have repeatedly set forth, its external quality is that its text is so colourful, bright, fine, delicate, eloquent, sweet and smooth, and its statements and sequence are so beautiful that it is not possible to set forth its meaning in an equal or more eloquent composition. If the writers and poets of the whole world should seek to expound its subject matter on

their own in another text, which should be equal to or better than the text of the Surah Fatihah, they would find it impossible to do so, as the Holy Qur’an has put forward its claim of matchlessness before the whole world over a period of 1,300 years without a response ... The silence of its opponents over the centuries has furnished the Holy Qur’an with a degree of proof of matchlessness not possessed by the rose, for the thinkers and artisans of the world have never been invited to match anything else in this manner, nor have they been warned that in the case of their inability to do so they would be subjected to diverse types of ruin and destruction

Now we repeat the inner qualities of the *Surah Fatihah* so that they are duly appreciated by those who reflect. Be it known, therefore, that as the All-Wise has placed diverse types of benefits for the human body in the rose, such as that it strengthens the heart and faculties and souls, and is helpful in the case of several diseases, in

the same way, God Almighty has placed in the *Surah Fatihah*, and indeed in the whole of the Holy Qur’an, healing for spiritual ills and a cure for inner diseases, not to be found anywhere else, inasmuch as it is filled with those verities which had disappeared from the world without leaving any trace

It was in truth a rain of mercy which descended from heaven to save the lives of the extremely thirsty. The spiritual life of the world depends upon the descent from heaven of that life-giving water and not a drop of it is such that it is not a remedy for some ill. The condition of the world through centuries had proved that it could not remedy these diseases on its own, without the descent of this light, and could remove its darkness without a heavenly light which should illumine the world with its rays of truth, and should cause those to see who had never seen, and should cause those to understand who had never understood. This heavenly light not only presented such true insights as had

disappeared from the world, but filled many minds with these jewels of truth and wisdom, and drew many hearts to its beautiful countenance, and carried many to high stages of knowledge and action through its powerful effect. Both these types of qualities which are found in the *Surah Fatihah* and in the Holy Qur’an are such bright arguments for proving the matchlessness of the Word of God, as the qualities of the rose are admitted by everybody to be beyond human power. Indeed the truth is that as these qualities of the Holy Qur’an are obviously extraordinary and beyond the reach of human power, such qualities are not to be found in the rose.

The greatness and glory and matchlessness of these qualities is fully appreciated when they are considered together collectively. First, it should be considered that the text should be so eloquent, sweet, pure, attractive and colourful that if any human being should desire to compose such a text, which

should be comprehensive of all the meanings to be found in this eloquent text, he would find it impossible to do so. Secondly, it should be considered that the subject matter of this text should be comprehensive of such verities and fine points which should be of a very high order and no phrase or word or letter should lack wisdom. Thirdly, it should be considered that those verities should be such as are sorely needed by this age. Fourthly, it should be considered that those verities should be so matchless that no thinker or philosopher should have discovered them by his own observation or reflection. Fifthly, it should be considered that those verities should have appeared as a fresh bounty and that before their appearance the people of that age should have been wholly unaware of them. Sixthly it should be considered that the text should possess a heavenly blessing in that, by following it, a seeker after truth should be able to establish a true relationship with God Almighty, and a true affection for Him; and that such

lights should begin to shine in him as ought to shine in men of God.

When they are considered collectively, sane reason unhesitatingly confirms that it is impossible and beyond the power of a human being to produce a text which should comprise all these perfect qualities. One is filled with awe by the contemplation at one time of all these overt and covert excellences, and a wise person is assured that it is beyond human reason and imagination to produce such a combination. A rose does not inspire such awe. The Holy Qur’an possesses this speciality that its qualities that have been mentioned as proof of its matchlessness are self-obvious. When an opponent finds that not one letter of it is out of place and not in accord with wisdom and appropriateness, and that not a single phrase of it is such as is not sorely needed for the reform of the age together with such perfection of eloquence that it is not possible to replace one line of

its text with another, his heart is overcome by a great awe.

An ignorant person who has never considered these matters might perhaps ask what is the proof that all these qualities are to be found in the *Surah Fatihah*, and indeed in the whole of the Holy Qur’an. The proof is that those who considered the matchless excellences of the Holy Qur’an and found its text possessing such eloquence that they failed utterly to produce its like, and found its verities and fine points of such high degree that they did not find their match in the whole world, and observed such wonderful effects in it as are not to be found in human words, and observed this holy quality in it that it was not revealed without purpose, but descended at a time of true need, they at once admitted its matchless greatness. Those who on account of their eternal misfortune were deprived of the bounty of faith were yet so overawed by this matchless composition that in their confusion they announced that it was plain magic. A just person

finds it a strong argument in support of the matchlessness of the Holy Qur’an and a bright proof, that despite the fact that for 1,300 years the Holy Qur’an has incited its opponents to produce its match and called those who failed to do so, and yet continued in their opposition, wicked, contaminated, cursed and condemned to hell; yet the opponents chose all the humiliation and dishonour and disgrace for themselves and submitted to being called false, contemptible, shameless, wicked, mischievous, faithless and condemned to hell, but could not produce even a short *Surah* for comparison with the Holy Qur’an. Nor were they able to find fault with the merits, qualities, greatneses and verities which the Word of God presents. They were under challenge, and still are, that if they do not wish to give up their disbelief and lack of faith, they should produce the like of one *Surah* of the Holy Qur’an and should confront us with a text which comprises all those external and internal qualities which are to be found in the

briefest *Surah* of the Holy Qur’an. (*Barahin-e-Ahmadiyya, Ruhani Khaza’in, Vol. 1 pp. 403-410, footnote 11*)

To bring our argument to its completion, we will set forth some fine points and verities of *Surah Al-Fatihah*. First we will write *Surah Al-Fatihah* and then write about its profound verities. The *Surah Fatihah* runs as follows:

In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful. All praise belongs to Allah, Lord of all the worlds, the Gracious, the Merciful, Master of the Day of Judgement. Thee alone do we worship and Thee alone do we implore for help. Guide us in the right path – the path of those on whom Thou hast bestowed Thy blessings, those who have not incurred displeasure, and those who have not gone astray.

(Ch.1:Vs.1-7)

Given below are a few points of wisdom and verities in the

commentary of this *Surah* by way of illustration.

In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful...
(Ch.1:V.1)

is the first verse of this *Surah* and of all other *Surahs* of the Holy Qur’an and also occurs in the Holy Qur’an at another place. It is repeated in the Holy Qur’an more often than any other verse. It has become a practice among the Muslims that at the beginning of every action in which good and blessing is sought, this verse is recited as a sign of blessing and as a supplication for help. Thus it has become well known among enemies and friends and among old and young, so much so that even if a person is entirely unaware of all other verses of the Qur’an, there is a strong hope that he would not be unaware of this verse.

Of the perfect verities that this verse comprises, one is that the purpose of this verse is to teach the humble and unaware servants of God that there are many

attributes of the Great name of God which is Allah, and which in the Divine idiom of the Qur’an is comprehensive of all perfect qualities, and is free from all defects, and is used for the True God, One without associate, and is the fountainhead of all grace, and that two of those attributes which are set out in the verse *Bismillah*, namely *Rahmaniyyat* and *Rahimiyyat*, demand the revelation of the Word of God and the spread of its lights and blessings.

(to be continued)

The Life and Character of Hadhrat Dr. Mufti Muhammad Sadiq^(ra)

By Maulana Ataul Mujeeb Rashed – Imam of the London Mosque

(Below is an edited translation by Dr Rashid Azam, USA of the Urdu article written by Maulana Ataul Mujeeb Rashed)

Whenever Allah the Almighty raises a Prophet for the spiritual rebirth and development of mankind, He provides him with unusual support and success in his mission. It is thus stated in the Holy Qur'an:

Allah has decreed: 'Most surely I will prevail, I and My Messengers'...
(Ch.58: V.22)

Allah's Messenger may apparently look weak in the eyes of the world but ultimately he is made victorious. When Allah's chosen one stands firm and proclaims His message, he is provided with helpers who are

willing to sacrifice their lives like moths around a candle light.

The Promised Messiah^(as) was provided by Almighty God with many loving and faithful companions who were his true helpers. They are recognised as the bright stars of Ahmadiyyat, the true Islam, and their pious characters are a guiding light for all of us today. Among this fortunate and select group was a great companion of the Promised Messiah^(as), Hadhrat Mufti Muhammad Sadiq (may Allah be pleased with him). It is a great honor for me, (but not an easy task by any means), to talk about the life and character of this very unique personality. The Promised Messiah^(as) on one occasion mentioned about Hadhrat Mufti Sahib: 'He is young, pious, a very able and respected member of our

Jama'at and his good qualities cannot be fully expressed in words.' (*Zikr-i-Habeeb*, by Hadhrat Mufti Sahib, page 332)

It was the great honor and good fortune of Hadhrat Mufti Muhammad Sadiq that the Promised Messiah^(as) said this about him. On another occasion, the Promised Messiah^(as) is reported to have written to Hadhrat Mufti Muhammad Sadiq's respected mother when she requested prayers for his recovery from illness: 'I regularly pray for him. You think you love Sadiq because he is dear to you as a son but in this case my claim is that I love him even more than you do.' (*Zikr-i-Habeeb*, p. 325)

I will attempt to present to you, in brief, the life story of this beloved companion of the Promised Messiah^(as).

Brief Life Sketch: Early Life
Hadhrat Mufti Muhammad Sadiq was born at Bhera on January 11, 1872. His father, Mufti Inayatullah Sahib had passed away before the Promised

Messiah's^(as) claim to be the Messiah^(as) was made public. However, his mother, Hadhrat Faiz Bibi Sahiba, accepted Ahmadiyyat in 1897 in the presence of Hadhrat Mufti Muhammad Sadiq. When they requested permission to go back home, the Promised Messiah^(as) graciously accompanied them to the *tanga* (horse carriage) station and asked that some food should be brought for their use during their journey. When the Promised Messiah^(as) observed that the food was not packed properly, he tore a piece, without any hesitation, from the turban he was wearing and gave them the food suitably wrapped in his turban cloth. The expression of this natural love and respect for them had such a deep effect on Hadhrat Mufti Muhammad Sadiq that he chose Qadian for his life-long stay after that.

Muhammad Sadiq was the first child of this name born in the city of Bhera and was brought up by pious parents. Prayer became part of his life at an early age because of his mother's

devotion. At age 13 in 1885, he heard the name of the Promised Messiah^(as) for the first time through Hakeem Ahmad Jan Sahib and this seed of love and dedication developed into a fruitful tree later. He also met Hadhrat Hakeem Maulana Noorud-Deen Sahib^(ra) during this period. This bond became stronger when his father left him with Maulana Noorud-Deen Sahib^(ra) in 1888 at Jammu to learn from him the translation of the Holy Qur'an. This early religious education in the holy company of Hadhrat Hakeem Maulana Noorud-Deen^(ra) provided him a spiritual edge to turn him into a shining and precious person of the house of Muhammad's Messiah!

During this period, the Promised Messiah^(as) visited Jammu to enquire about the illness of Hadhrat Hakeem Maulana Noorud-Deen^(ra). The Promised Messiah^(as) had sent a message to Maulana Noorud-Deen Sahib^(ra) that he would get better after his intended visit. This is exactly what happened. However,

Hadhrat Mufti Muhammad Sadiq arrived there when the Promised Messiah^(as) had already left. After witnessing this miracle of the acceptance of the Promised Messiah's^(as) prayer Hadhrat Mufti Muhammad Sadiq desired greatly to meet him. Hadhrat Mufti Sahib narrated one of his dreams and Hakeem Maulana Noorud-Deen Sahib's^(ra) interpretation indicated the birth of a great reformer during these times. Hadhrat Mufti Muhammad Sadiq wrote to the Promised Messiah^(as) about the same clear dream but the Promised Messiah^(as) refrained from immediate interpretation. This further increased his faith and closeness to the Promised Messiah^(as).

Initiation at Qadian in 1891

His devotional love for the Promised Messiah^(as) brought Hadhrat Mufti Muhammad Sadiq to Qadian for his first meeting with him in December 1890. He was riding in his horse carriage from Batala along with an introductory letter from his teacher, Hadhrat Mualana Noorud Deen^(ra). On his arrival,

the Promised Messiah^(as) came out of his house immediately after receiving the message and met Hadhrat Mufti Muhammad Sadiq. The Promised Messiah^(as) asked about his journey and food was served after that. There was another meeting after the Prayer and he joined the Promised Messiah^(as) in the early morning walk the following day.

These short meetings changed Hadhrat Mufti Muhammad Sadiq's life and filled his heart with light and devotion and he decided to take bai'at immediately. In a separate room the Promised Messiah^(as) sat on the same bed (*charpai*) and took Mufti Sahib's hand in his own hand for his pledge to adhere to the Ten Conditions of Initiation. After this simple ceremony this 19 year young Muhammad Sadiq resident of Bhera joined the servants of the Promised Messiah^(as), the true follower of the Holy Prophet^(saw). January 31, 1891 was the brightest day in his life, the day he received a new life. He truthfully (like his name Sadiq: *the truthful*) fulfilled his

pledge of love and devotion and faithfulness made at the hands of the Promised Messiah^(as) so much so that his life became a living sign of Ahmadiyyat, the true Islam.

Some Important Events During 1891-1901

After his bai'at in 1891 Hadhrat Mufti Muhammad Sadiq had to work and stay in Jammu and Lahore for ten years. However, during this period he often visited Qadian because of his sincere love and deep desire to be in the company of the Promised Messiah^(as) to serve Islam. He would often return to be with the Promised Messiah^(as) but found it harder each time to leave. Hadhrat Maulvi Abdul Kareem Sahib on one occasion encouraging others to come to spend time in the beneficial company of the Promised Messiah^(as) cited the noble example of Hadhrat Mufti Muhammad Sadiq:

'I see Mufti Muhammad Sadiq here on any leave day he has from work. Like an

eagle, is ready to pounce upon any spare moment to snatch it away from the powerful worldly forces to be in the company of his beloved.’

(*Al Hakam*, January 24, 1900)

And he further wrote: ‘If Mufti Sahib is not a perfect picture of devotion then how can it be that he has frantically broken all chains to reach Batala – not caring whether it is day or night, summer or winter, rain or storm – sometimes arriving here in the middle of night on foot. The community should learn a lesson from this young devotee.’ (Ibid)

It is not possible here to give a detailed account of all the benefits, this young and fortunate devotee may have enjoyed in the spiritual and purifying company of the Promised Messiah^(as). Only a few instances are presented:

I have already narrated the incident of farewell of the mother of Hadhrat Mufti Muhammad Sadiq in 1897 after her Bai’at in Qadian. During the same year

when Hadhrat Mufti Sahib was in Qadian, he was asked by the Promised Messiah^(as) to make a copy of a manuscript of the Promised Messiah^(as). The Promised Messiah^(as) was writing in long hand and Hadhrat Mufti Sahib was making a neat copy. This task was begun after Isha Prayer and lasted till morning. It was like a candle lit for a moth to circuit it the whole night! What a blessed night of remembrance for this fortunate moth! Such favour can only be bestowed on select ones when Allah so wills.

Once the Promised Messiah^(as) assigned all his companions to write an essay on the topic: ‘Need for an Imam and a Reformer.’ Hadhrat Mufti Sahib also responded to this command of the Master. All essays were read out before the Promised Messiah^(as). Hadhrat Munshi Zafar Ahmad Sahib of Kapoorthala stated that the Promised Messiah^(as) was very pleased and liked Hadhrat Mufti Sahib’s essay.

There was a unique bond of love and devotion between this

Servant and Master! Once Hadhrat Mufti Sahib presented to the Promised Messiah^(as) his pocket watch as a gift. The Promised Messiah^(as) spoke very frankly and with kindness gave Hadhrat Mufti Sahib two of his watches for his use. What an act of graciousness from Master to a devotee!

Once Hadhrat Mufti Sahib arrived in Qadian and had only three days' leave. He fervently prayed to Allah from the depth of his heart to transform those three days into three years. It so happened that for those three days Hadhrat Mufti Sahib was assigned to read out to the Promised Messiah^(as) a new Commentary of the Bible. He had the good fortune to spend three days in the company of the Promised Messiah^(as) working and praying and eating together. Three days passed quickly but his devotion was now stimulated to a degree that it became impossible to leave. He resigned from his employment and permanently came to settle in Qadian in 1901.

The migration to Qadian itself presents an interesting story of devotion. Hadhrat Mufti Sahib had a respectable position in the office of Accountant General at Lahore. In 1898 he had made up his mind to migrate to Qadian but asked for the Promised Messiah^(as)'s permission to do so. The Promised Messiah^(as) advised him to stay at his position for the time being as Allah would start rewarding him for his intention. There was a need for a Second Master at Qadian High School which was filled by Hadhrat Mufti Sahib on leave from his office for three months. At the direction of the Promised Messiah^(as), Mufti Sahib applied for further leave of absence for six months but was granted only three months' leave. After Istikhara prayer he felt inner satisfaction and with the Promised Messiah's^(as) permission resigned his position in Accountant General Office, Lahore. A delegation of other Muslim office workers came to request his stay in Lahore but their plea was not accepted by the Promised Messiah^(as).

After the acceptance of his resignation, this devotee of the Promised Messiah^(as) abandoned all worldly pursuits and settled in Qadain proclaiming his commitment of giving preference to religion over worldly affairs. His heart-felt longings became reality as he joined the spiritual ocean at Darul-Aman, Qadian. This young devotee from Bhera, after many years in Jammu and Lahore, with Allah's blessings, attained the rightful position as a precious pearl of the Promised Messiah's^(as) collection of spiritual jewels.

Life Dedicated to the Service of Ahmadiyyat, the True Islam

Hadhrat Mufti Muhammad Sadiq Sahib^(ra) was dedicated to be among the first to respond to any call to serve Islam, any place at any time. He fulfilled his pledge, all his life to his best. It was a pledge taken at the hands of the Promised Messiah^(as), to give precedence to faith over this world.

During the life of the Promised Messiah^(as) he had the unique

honor to become the Promised Messiah's^(as) right hand in the propagation of Islam throughout the world. He had an excellent command of Urdu, Arabic and English languages and later also learnt Hebrew as directed by the Promised Messiah^(as). When the Promised Messiah^(as) presented the theory of Arabic being the 'Mother of all Languages', he prepared a list of Hebrew words and traced their origin in Arabic. He was also able to look up the references in the Hebrew Bible for inclusion where needed in the writings of the Promised Messiah^(as), which are a great source of continuing benefits even today.

Another service which Hadhrat Mufti Sahib performed with great skill and zeal was to gather and provide information to the Promised Messiah^(as) about any new publication or movement pertaining to religious matters. To be able to render this service to the Promised Messiah^(as) was a distinct honour.

He had great passion to announce

to the whole world about the appearance of the Promised Messiah^(as) and his mission. He was writing to people in Britain, America and Russia, besides India regularly. Thousands of people heard about the Promised Messiah^(as) and many were lucky enough to accept Ahmadiyyat this way through Hadhrat Mufti Sahib.

In addition to his personal pursuit of communicating with others, Hadhrat Mufti Sahib also used to prepare summaries of all letters for the Promised Messiah^(as) and used to take notes from him for replies. This huge task was handled by Hadhrat Mufti Sahib all alone after the passing away of Hadhrat Maulvi Abdul Kareem Sahib.

Hadhrat Mufti Sahib had a natural ability to be an effective writer. Any reader would feel as if he were there with him. His diaries are now well preserved and are a great contribution to our knowledge about the times and life of the Promised Messiah^(as). His writings provide

a wealth of information for the benefit of all generations to come.

Hadhrat Mufti Sahib also used to serve as an interpreter for any English speaking guest visiting the Promised Messiah^(as). It was a great favor from Allah for Hadhrat Mufti Sahib to benefit constantly from the blessed company of the Promised Messiah^(as) and thus also becoming very dear and close to him.

More Delightful Memories

Readings of Hadhrat Mufti Sahib's life story provides very clear and strong evidence of his deep love and dedication to the Promised Messiah^(as). The Promised Messiah^(as) in return also showed great affection and kindness towards Hadhrat Mufti Sahib. Some instances are selected as a sample presentation from the life history of Hadhrat Mufti Sahib:

Hadhrat Mufti Sahib was in Qadian on leave from his job in Lahore and one day was called in

to see the Promised Messiah^(as). The Promised Messiah^(as) after pointing towards a basket in the room, told Mufti Sahib: ‘Mufti Sahib, I have acquired this mango-basket for you to eat as much as you can.’ Hadhrat Mufti Sahib ate just a few mangoes and the Promised Messiah^(as) with tender surprise said: ‘You have eaten only so few!’

On one occasion, the Promised Messiah^(as) had a jug of milk in his hand. After filling a big tumbler, the Promised Messiah^(as), like a caring mother, said to Hadhrat Mufti Sahib: ‘I will pour some more after you finish drinking this.’ When Hadhrat Mufti Sahib could not finish even the first glass, the Promised Messiah^(as), with a loving smile on his face, remarked: ‘You drink so very little!’

On another occasion, Hadhrat Mufti Sahib was seated in Masjid Mubarak after his arrival from Lahore when the Promised Messiah^(as) said with great kindness: ‘Please just wait here. I

will get some food for you.’ Hadhrat Mufti Sahib was thinking that the Promised Messiah^(as) would send some servant with food but was pleasantly surprised to see the Promised Messiah^(as) himself carrying the food-tray. The Promised Messiah^(as) said: ‘You start eating while I bring water for you.’ This experience was too much for Hadhrat Mufti Sahib to say anything but he was unable to control his tears of joy to witness his treatment at the hands of the Mahdi^(as) the beloved of God Almighty.

I am reminded of another incident when Hadhrat Mufti Sahib was looking for someone near Masjid Mubarak to bring him some water for ablution. Perchance, the Promised Messiah^(as) came out of his house at that moment and said: ‘Do you need water?’ When Hadhrat Mufti Sahib replied in the affirmative, the Promised Messiah^(as) himself took the water jug and brought it back filled with water for Hadhrat Mufti Sahib.

There are countless incidents, one better than the other, expressing the Promised Messiah^(as)'s affection for his companions without much formality. One winter, Hadhrat Mufti Sahib came to Qadian to see the Promised Messiah^(as) and had nothing warm for cover at night. When the Promised Messiah^(as) learnt about this, he sent out two coverings (one belonging to Mahmood (Hadhrat Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmood Ahmad^(ra)) and the other used by the Promised Messiah^(as)) for Hadhrat Mufti Sahib to choose from or keep both if needed. Hadhrat Mufti Sahib kept the covering of Mahmood's only. This incident is just one illustration of the Promised Messiah^(as)'s affection for his spiritual son, Hadhrat Mufti Sahib.

Hadhrat Mufti Sahib would not miss a single opportunity to be close to the Promised Messiah^(as). His dedication and affection was boundless and the Promised Messiah^(as) appreciated his devotion to Islam. Once, on his

way back from Multan, the Promised Messiah^(as), broke his journey at Lahore but Hadhrat Mufti Sahib was not able to leave his sick-bed to come to visit the Promised Messiah^(as). The Promised Messiah^(as) went to enquire about his illness at his place and prayed for his speedy recovery. At the time of leaving, the Promised Messiah^(as) said: You are ill. Allah grants prayers in illness. Please pray for the success of our mission, too.

All the companions of the Promised Messiah^(as) occupy high status in terms of their total dedication and spirit of sacrifice for Islam and deep love for the Promised Messiah^(as). Hadhrat Mufti Sahib was one of those fortunate and great devotees who was specially blessed with a very sincere heart and was brightly guided in the service of true Islam.

Hadhrat Mufti Sahib once was present in the company of the Promised Messiah^(as) in a court of law where the Promised Messiah^(as) was offered a chair to

be seated. Hadhrat Mufti Sahib realising that it would be tiresome for the Promised Messiah^(as) sitting long in that court-room, made a footrest with his coat and turban and placed it under the Promised Messiah^(as)'s feet.

Obedience and prompt response to the commands of the Promised Messiah^(as) provided spiritual nourishment for Hadhrat Mufti Sahib. During the earthquake-days in 1905, when the Promised Messiah^(as) was residing in the garden next to Bahishti Maqbara, he gave a letter to Hadhrat Mufti Sahib and said: 'Please take this letter to Lahore.' It is narrated by another companion who was standing nearby that Hadhrat Mufti Sahib took that letter and left for Lahore at once without asking any further questions.

Some Other Characteristics and Contributions

Hadhrat Mufti Sahib's high moral character and noble personality is clearly reflected in the expression of his thoughts and feelings in an informal way.

He was blessed with a very useful habit of recording his ideas and emotions in his regularly maintained diary. He was also an avid writer of letters and essays. His writings have a unique quality and attractive beauty of their own as purified expressions of the heart.

Hadhrat Mufti Sahib joined the institution of Wassiyyat (Will) as soon as it was established under the Divine guidance by the Promised Messiah^(as) in 1906 at Qadian. Expressing his deep and sincere emotions, Hadhrat Mufti Sahib wrote in his Will that after his death, his property shall be given to the Ahmadiyya Movement for the propagation of Islam. He further wrote to highlight his feeling of devotion: 'It should be noted that bequest for my entire property is not contingent upon my burial in the Bahishti Maqbara; it is to be given in the way of Allah anyway no matter where I am buried. I consider myself nothing but Allah's useless, worthless, weak and humble human being. I shall leave my burial matters to

my Gracious and Kind God Almighty; He is also Forgiving and One who covers my failings.’ (*Badr*, Feb. 28. 1907)

People show a natural attachment to their native place. Hadhrat Mufti Sahib was born in Bhera but he had deep love and emotional attachment with Qadian, Darul-Aman, abode of peace. He had to visit Bhera in March of 1908 for some necessary business but his heart was at Qadian. He wrote about these experiences and feelings: ‘Others say to me, this is your home, place of your parents and forefathers, your native land and you should stay here at least for a while longer. They say this with love and concern but I feel lost and confused and pray to Allah to be back near the feet of the Promised Messiah at Qadian.’ (*Badr*, March 26, 1908). He expressed similar sentiments in an earlier letter: ‘I am here in my native land but I feel far away from my real place. My native folks are rejoicing to see me but my moon is hidden from my eyes.’ (*Badr*, April 2, 1905).

Hadhrat Mufti Sahib’s sentiments were a sincere reflection of his love for Qadian and his dedication to the Promised Messiah^(as).

Hadhrat Mufti Muhammad Sadiq^(ra) had an outstanding ability and effective approach for introducing people to Ahmadiyyat. He was intensely passionate about *tabligh* (preaching) and always endeavoured to utilise every situation appropriately to convey the message of Ahmadiyyat, the true Islam.

Once he entered a railway compartment for travel and saw all seats were occupied by other passengers. He stood at a spot where he was visible to everybody and began to address the passengers as soon as the train started: ‘Gentleman! I am standing before you because there is no empty seat for me to sit. However, I would like to make the best use of this opportunity to convey something very important to you... Thus all the passengers were introduced to Ahmadiyyat.’ (*Zikr-i-Habeeb*)

Once Hadhrat Mufti Sahib, accompanied by another friend, was passing through a Bazaar in Bombay and was asked to preach to a scribe who looked very busy writing petitions. Hadhrat Mufti Sahib sat in front of the scribe and asked him to write an important letter for him to the Honorable Nizam the Ruler of Hyderabad, Deccan: ‘According to the prophecy of the Holy Prophet(saw) about the Promised Messiah(as) that he will gather all Muslims under one flag of Muhammadiyat he has now appeared in Qadian and I invite you to accept his call.’ (*Zikr-i-Habeeb*)

In this wise manner, Hadhrat Mufti Sahib introduced the scribe to Ahmadiyyat and at the same time sent the invitation to Nizam of Hyderabad in India.

No one has any control or choice as to when one should be born. However, it can be stated with certainty that some fortunate souls are born during blessed times. For this reason, the companions of the Holy Prophet(saw) were the best and the

most fortunate followed by those born during the life and time of the Promised Messiah(as), the greatest spiritual son of the Holy Prophet(saw).

Hadhrat Dr. Mufti Muhammad Sadiq was one of those fortunate and unique individuals who were born during the blessed times of the Promised Messiah(as). He was the lucky one who not only derived full spiritual benefits from the times of the Promised Messiah but also had the great honour to enjoy the first two periods of the Second Manifestation, i.e., of Khilafat-i-Ahmadiyya and rendered invaluable services to Islam during his life with total dedication and devotion.

He regularly toured pre-partitioned India to promote moral training and *tabligh* activities among the Jama'at throughout the country. He conveyed the good news of the coming of the Promised Messiah and Mahdi(as) in every city and every town and every village he visited. His calling had such a

profound effect on people in India that many were fortunate enough to readily accept the message and joined the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam. Hadhrat Mufti Sahib was specially gifted by God Almighty in the effective conveyance of the message of Islam to people. He was sincere, alert and was able to apply appropriate style with wisdom to win the hearts and minds of his audience. It is not possible to draw a complete picture of Mufti Sahib's achievements in this field but I will contend with one example of his forceful style.

Hadhrat Mufti Sahib was a renowned speaker with a style of a teacher and a preacher reaching the hearts and minds of his audience. There were many who responded to his call and were given life with guidance from Allah. He visited Hoshiapur in 1913. He personified the city and addressed the residents as follows:

‘Hoshiapur! Listen to the call of this traveller and ponder

over the message carefully so that you may prosper. I am not one of your residents. I am just a visitor but I have not come here to ask for anything of you. There is no selfish motive in my visit. If you are a wealthy and rich city, I have no desire for your wealth or riches. Yes! I have heard that you are ‘Hoshiar’ (literal meaning: sensible or clever) and that is why I thought I should tell you something which would benefit you. This call is for you from a humble servant of Allah for your own good. O Ye Clever One! Listen and wake up! If you are not listening then I am calling on your ‘Doors and Walls and your Earth and your Sky’ so that they should stand as witnesses that I conveyed my message to you but you did not heed and you did not wake up to my call.’
(*Badr*, November 13, 1913)

Dedication to Tabligh

In 1907, our beloved Imam, the Promised Messiah^(as), said the task and responsibility of our

Jama'at has increased so much that I would like to see some young men dedicate their lives for *tabligh* wherever needed. Hadhrat Mufti Sahib immediately presented himself before the Promised Messiah^(as) and said: I should be sent to any part of the world if considered appropriate. (*Zikr-i-Habeeb*, page 148). In response to this offer, the Promised Messiah^(as) himself wrote with his pen: 'accepted.'

Accordingly Hadhrat Mufti Sahib spent seven golden years of his life in the United Kingdom and United States of America with great success in *tabligh*, calling people to the One God Almighty. Details of his mission and accomplishments are well-documented in our Ahmadiyya literature. His life had become a living commentary of one couplet of the Promised Messiah^(as): 'Our task today is to call in every direction (in the world) and all who are pure of heart will ultimately join us (in Islam).'

Hadhrat Mufti Sahib started his voyage to England in 1917 and thus began the golden period of *tabligh* activity in foreign lands. The journey began with prayers expressing deep and sincere emotions and dedication. Just before his departure he wrote in a letter: 'I am now prepared for the ultimate sacrifice. If my life is given in the way of Allah, my objective should be considered achieved'. (*Al Fazl*, March 22,1917).

Filled with the love of Islam and the Promised Messiah^(as), Hadhrat Mufti Sahib's achievements stand as a witness to prove his truthfulness in word and deed. He used all his God-given abilities to make the best use of every situation that *tabligh* (preaching) provided him with needed spiritual nourishment for a purposeful life. He was an effective communicator. He was a great scholar. *Tabligh* activities were conducted with supreme wisdom according to the teachings of Islam. His personality also reflected natural aura of authority and dignity in

conveying the true message of Islam.

On top of all these qualities, he was a recipient of revelation and was guided through ‘visions’ from God Almighty. He was always inclined towards Allah and used to begin all his activities, including and specially *tabligh*, with prayer (*du‘a*) to achieve successful results. His *tabligh* which sprang from his heart deeply affected other hearts.

His *tabligh* started as soon as he boarded the ship from Bombay. One Englishman accepted Islam within three days. There were also a number of other conversions during this voyage. Every sincere *Da ‘ee Ilallah* (caller to God) is supported by Allah’s signs and success. Hadhrat Mufti Sahib witnessed many such signs all his life. During the voyage, Hadhrat Mufti Sahib was confronted with a situation where he needed some money. He had no friend to turn to on board the ship but Allah. When the ship anchored at the

next port, an Ahmadi friend suddenly came to see him and before leaving, left some money in his pocket. The amount of money was exactly the same that Mufti Sahib needed.

Hadhrat Mufti Sahib was given the glad tidings right from the beginning of his journey that he would reach his destination in safety. There was an alert on the ship that it was going to sink. There was lamentation on board and every passenger was in panic. There were arguments as to who would be given priority seating on the small rescue boats. Hadhrat Mufti Sahib offered his own seat assigned to him on a rescue boat and tried to assure everybody to have no fear because God had told him that this ship would not sink because a humble servant of the Promised Messiah^(as) was also on board. This was a clear sign in favour of Islam and was a God-given opportunity for *tabligh*.

Hadhrat Mufti Sahib as a successful *Da ‘ee Ilallah* utilized fully every opportunity presented

to him and intelligently explored new ways for *tabligh* purposes. He wrote a 'thank you' letter to the King of England who just glanced at Mufti Sahib with curiosity while riding through an open procession. A speaker in London Park invited the audience to ask questions. Hadhrrat Mufti Sahib was ready to oblige. He attended open meetings at various churches and introduced people to Islam. He delivered lectures on Islam and partook in debates. He invited rich and poor to Islam and hundreds of good souls accepted Ahmadiyyat.

Hadhrrat Mufti Sahib's next stop was the United States of America. He boarded a ship in 1920 for America and witnessed a great sign from Allah in his support. The ship was caught up in a fierce and dangerous storm and passengers were heard lamenting for fear of drowning. When the ship was at the mercy of the furious waves, Hadhrrat Mufti Sahib, a gallant champion of Masih-e-Muhammadi, addressed the sea in a majestic tone: 'O Ocean! Don't you know

that a servant of the Promised Messiah is riding on you not for any personal reason but in the service of Allah's Islam? Will you then hurt him?' (*Al-Fazl*, Jan 11 1924)

Hadhrrat Mufti Muhammad Sadiq narrates that being an ordinary servant of the Promised Messiah and Mahdi^(as) he has seen the sign of the love and kindness of God Almighty: My humble prayer was heard in Heaven and it seemed to me that God's angels were descending to calm down the waves of the unruly ocean.

Hadhrrat Mufti Muhammad Sadiq had a very busy schedule in America. He faced many challenges and difficulties but at the same time he witnessed the bright glimpses of Allah's support and favours all the way. When his ship docked at Philadelphia, the U.S. Government refused his entry into America. After two months' delay he was permitted to enter. His case was widely publicised and this exposure through media provided opportunities for

preaching and Allah rewarded him with immediate fruits.

In the beginning numerous hurdles were overcome with Allah's help and his cheerfulness. Hadhrat Mufti Muhammad Sadiq Sahib wrote about these early days: Almost every night I meet with the Promised Messiah^(as) or his first Khalifa or Hadhrat Fazl-i-umar. I am with my own family at night and my days are spent among strangers. (*Al-Fazl*, April 29, 1920)

Hadhrat Mufti Muhammad Sadiq was an exemplary *Da'ee Ilallah* preacher. He walked on the roads and streets of America, and men and women, attracted by his personality and dress, would stop and say: 'Look, Jesus Christ has come.' This comment would usually serve as the starting point for preaching. Mufti Sahib would explain to the audience that he was not Jesus^(as) but an ordinary servant of the Promised Messiah^(as).

Hadhrat Mufti Muhammad Sadiq successfully established centres

of preaching in New York, Philadelphia and Chicago and conveyed the message of true Islam individually as well as collectively. He published articles in newspapers and reached people through advertisements and personal letters. He delivered lectures on Islam far and wide. He started the Journal *The Muslim Sunrise* in America and the first Ahmadiyya Mosque was constructed in Chicago during his blessed stay.

He was awarded Honorary Doctorate in recognition of his services and a Muslim leader named him 'Khalid of this New Age.' He was denied entry when he first arrived in America but before his return home his services were widely appreciated and recognised by many newspapers.

A dedicated caller to faith always remains humble and does not attribute his successes to his knowledge or personal efforts. Hadhrat Mufti Sahib in all humility used to express his gratitude for the blessings of

Allah as a true believer and His dedicated servant. He introduced a religious revolution in America and facilitated hundreds of lucky individuals to join Islam. There were tears in his eyes when his ship was about to depart, not because he did not want to leave. He cried in humility before God Almighty as he wrote: ‘I have not been able to do full justice to my assigned duty and I confess my failing in my service.’ (*Al-Fazl*, October 30, 1923)

Hadhrat Mufti Muhammad Sadiq Sahib returned to Qadian after his successful mission. He used to say that he had firm faith in God Almighty Who always shows miracles in support of His servants: ‘However it is not my miracle. It is a miracle of our leader Hadhrat Mahmood (may Allah be pleased with him) that his determination enabled me to fulfill my mission. It was his determination, his attention, his prayers and grace of Allah descending upon him and upon us, and through him that resulted in success.’ (*Al-Fazl*, December 4th, 1923)

Blessed Life of Hadhrat Dr. Mufti Muhammad Sadiq

Blessed was the life of Hadhrat Mufti Muhammad Sadiq Sahib dedicated to the service of Islam. He was very dear and close to the Promised Messiah^(as). He successfully delivered the message of Ahmadiyyat the true Islam, in India, Britain and America. He continued his *tarbiyyat* and *tabligh* activities after his return to Qadian from America at the end of 1923. He also served as the Private Secretary of Hadhrat Khalifatul Mesih II^(ra), and distinguished himself as a speaker, writer and a debater.

He had a pure soul which reflected the attributes of God Almighty. He stands as a unique and exemplary shining star in the History of Ahmadiyyat. May Allah be pleased with him. Ameen.

The companions of the Holy Prophet^(saw) are like stars of spiritual heaven and a similar status was accorded to the companions of the Promised

Messiah^(as) during the latter days.
(Holy Qur'an Ch.62 V.4)

Hadhrat Mufti Muhammad Sadiq's life will continue to serve as a beacon of guiding light for young and old in the service of Islam. He was a true pioneer in so many ways and his example will always present a challenge to young men of today who wish to learn how to give precedence to deen ('religion') over dunya ('the material world') for gaining the pleasure of Allah.

Verse references to the Holy Qur'an item count 'Bismillah...' (In the Name of Allah...) as the first verse of each Chapter. In some non-standard texts, this is not counted and should the reader refer to such texts, the verse quoted in *The Review of Religions* will be found at one verse less than the number quoted.

In this journal, for the ease of non-Muslim readers, '(saw)' or 'saw' 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 '*Rahemallahu Ta'ala*' means the Mercy of Allah the Exalted be upon him.

In keeping with current universal practice, local transliterations of names of places are preferred to their anglicised versions, e.g. Makkah instead of Mecca, etc.

Succour and Help from Allah the Almighty Is Proof of His Existence - Part 1

By Rafiq Ahmad Hayat – Ameer, UK – delivered at Ahmadiyya Muslim Convention, United Kingdom 2006

When I was researching this topic (and it is such a vast topic and there is so much material it is very difficult sometimes to see what material you use) – but when I reflected on it, I thought the purpose of our creation is to attain the love and nearness to God Almighty. When I thought further about it and I reflected on history there were numerous examples of how people were able to win Allah's affection by communicating with Him in different ways.

But one of the most beautiful examples that I came across was that of an old shepherd. One day the old shepherd was sitting and having his conversation with God Almighty and he was saying to God Almighty – O God if you were here with me I would be washing your hair, I would be

combing your hair, I would be picking out the lice from your hair – and this was an old shepherd and that was his way of showing his affection because that is what he did for his sheep that he reared. Hadhrat Musa^(as), (Hadhrat Moses) overheard this conversation and he admonished him and said this was no way to speak to God Almighty. But God immediately intervened and said to Hadhrat Musa^(as): why are you intervening in the conversation between Me and My subject, I was really enjoying this conversation and by interfering you have ruined this beautiful moment.

Many such accounts can be traced throughout history of how people through their action or through supplication to God Almighty have won His love and affection.

Therefore, it is extremely sad that whilst the society that we live in is so-called the most civilised society – we have seen great innovation in technology. Man has landed on the moon – and yet we appear to be moving away from that very Creator Who gave us everything that we have today. Therefore, it is very important that we keep reminding ourselves of that Creator. Without His Majesty, without His Succour we human beings are absolutely nothing. We cannot guarantee the very next moment of our lives until and unless we have His Blessings.

The teaching of Islam is about the Unity of God Almighty. The heart of Islam is bound by the reality of God, the One, the Absolute and the Infinite, Who is Compassionate and Merciful. He is greater than anything that a human mind can comprehend and imagine and yet, as the Holy Qur'an tells us, He is closer to us than our jugular vein. All Muslims attest to that One God, Allah the Almighty, and around this attestation revolves the total

belief of Islam. Muslims believe that He is the source of all things and all existence and He is the End to Whom everything and all things return. The Oneness of God or Allah the Almighty is a Truth that has been revealed to human beings since antiquity, and this Tawheed or the Oneness of Allah the Almighty is at the heart of all religions of the world. As the Holy Qur'an states, addressing the Holy Prophet Muhammad^(saw):

And We sent no Messenger before thee but We revealed to him, saying, 'There is no God but I; so worship Me alone.'
(Ch.21:Vs.26)

The Holy Qur'an, the Word of God for all humanity, tells us not only the Supreme Name of God as Allah but also mentions other attributes of the name of Allah, the Almighty. These names reveal different attributes of Divinity and the Holy Qur'an states:

And to Allah alone belong all perfect attributes. So call on

Him by these...
(Ch.7:V.181)

Again, Allah the Almighty enjoins us:

He is Allah, the Creator, the Maker, the Fashioner. His are the most beautiful names. All that is in the heavens and the earth glorifies Him. He is the Mighty, the Wise.
(Ch.59:Vs.25)

The attributes of Allah include those of Al-Rab that is The Lord, Al-Khaliq the Creator, Lord of Majesty, al-Jaleel. He has fashioned everything that is on earth and in the heavens with His attribute of Al-Mussawir. The two most obvious attributes that are experienced by everyone, in everyday life are Ar-Rahman and Ar-Raheem. Ar-Rahman, the Compassionate and the Gracious Who provides everything that is needed and necessary to His creatures for their existence without their asking for it and without any effort on their part. Ar-Raheem, the Merciful, Who rewards the efforts of His

creatures be they moral, spiritual or material. In our daily life, we continue to experience the Compassion and the Mercy of Allah the Almighty

The very fact is that everything we do, and indeed the very fact that we are sitting here celebrating this Jalsa Salana is in itself the manifestation of the Majesty of Allah.

When we search through the chronicles of human history, we notice time and again, the succour and the help of the Divine saves humanity from impossible situations. Let me take an example from the Exodus of the Israelites from Egypt. The phenomenon of parting of the sea is mentioned in the Holy Qur'an and Allah reminds Moses^(as):

And, remember the time, when We divided the sea for you and saved you and drowned Pharaoh's people while you looked on.
(Ch.2:V.51)

I have chosen this famous incident, because it is accepted across all the religious divides. There are many references to this incident in the Holy Qur'an. And this constitutes one of the great signs of the succour of God Almighty to his people. When Moses^(as) struck the sea with his rod as the Holy Qur'an says, or stretched his hand as the Bible says, the sea parted and Moses^(as) was commanded to cross quickly. When the armies of Pharaoh arrived, in their enthusiasm to overtake the Israelites they jumped in to try to cross the sea. The waters came rushing back and the armies were drowned. We know that the striking of the water by Moses^(as) was only symbolic and the receding of the sea with low tides coincided with that time and Moses^(as) and Israelites crossed in safety and the oncoming army of Pharaoh drowned in the returning tide.

Since time immemorial we have witnessed that man unfortunately has always asked for the proof of the existence of God Almighty.

When you look at the history of the various prophets you find that again and again there are numerous examples of people who disbelieved and have asked for proof, and unfortunately even to this day these sad circumstances continue. Although we live in a very affluent society now in the West it would appear that the affluence, instead of taking us closer to God Almighty is taking us away from Him. If you look at the Churches and the Synagogues and also some of the Mosques you find that people are abandoning them. It is indeed the Grace and Mercy of Allah that through accepting the Promised Messiah^(as) the Ahmadi Muslims by the Grace of Allah are flocking to the Mosques. Every mosque that we have built seems to become insufficient in accordance with the ever growing Jama'at and we are having to build to a greater capacity to make room for the ever growing number of people who wish to worship Allah Almighty.

Therefore, one thing that the modern society will find is that

although affluence brings them better living conditions they also find that they do not have the peace of mind, the inner peace, and there is a failure to understand that the inner peace can only be achieved by supplicating to God Almighty and developing a very deep and close relationship with Him. That is the only true way of finding inner peace.

The fact is that when Allah the Almighty sends His Messengers to the world, He takes on Himself the responsibility of their protection and protection of their mission. He provides them succour and help at every opportunity. That is why if we want to see the existence of Allah Almighty from such instances, we should look at the lives of His Messengers. In one of the recent Friday Sermons, Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih V emphasised this point. He quoted the verse from the Holy Qur'an,

Most surely, We help Our Messengers and those who believe, both in the present

life and on the day when the witnesses will stand forth.
(Ch.40:V.52)

This verse holds out a very forceful promise from Allah the Almighty to His Messengers and their followers that Allah's succour and help will always be with them. The existence of Allah the Almighty is always manifested through His Messengers and is also revealed through those who believe in the Messengers sincerely and without any questions. See how Allah the Almighty came to the assistance of Hadhrat Ibrahim^(as), the Patriarch of all Prophets. The Holy Qur'an describes vividly how Allah's succour came, when his people decided to burn him,

We said, 'Turn cold, O fire, and be a source of peace for Abraham.
(Ch.21:V.70)

How the fire became cool, we are not told and it does not concern us here. It is enough to know that Allah the Almighty brought about such factors into play that

caused the fire to become harmless but Hadhrat Ibrahim^(as) was led to safety. It will always remain an enduring mystery and a great heavenly miracle and one of the great signs of the existence of the Divine.

When we go through the Surah Al-Anbiya (Chapter 4) we read about the trial and tribulations of Allah's Messengers from Noah^(as) to Jesus^(as). All the Prophets like Job^(as), Zakaria^(as), Issac^(as), Jacob^(as), Lot^(as), Solomon^(as), David^(as) and many others have been mentioned. We notice how often Allah the Almighty manifested Himself to come to the aid of his beloved Messengers, how He alleviated their sufferings, how He removed all the impediments from their paths and how often He came to their assistance and delivered them from different ordeals.

If someone says that these are the stories of the ancient times let me show them the time of the Holy Prophet of Islam^(saw), the greatest of all the prophets and the Seal of the prophets. The previous pro-

phets were sent with a particular mission for selective people. Our beloved Prophet Muhammad^(saw) was sent for all humanity for all times to come. His life and times have been carefully observed and recorded. His mission was the greatest of all the prophets, and likewise, the help and succour that he received from Allah the Almighty was at its pinnacle. At every step, Allah manifested Himself and came to his aid. When the Makkans wanted to kill him, and when he was forced to emigrate from Makkah to Madinah – the Quraish had plotted to kill the Holy Prophet Muhammad^(saw), rather than allow him to emigrate to Madinah but they did not reckon with the protection, the succour and assistance that Allah the Almighty was giving to him. The Holy Qur'an reminds us of this incident in these words:

And remember the time when the disbelievers plotted against thee that they might imprison thee or kill thee or expel thee. And they planned and Allah also planned, and

Allah is the Best of planners.
(Ch.8:V.31)

Here begins one of the greatest adventures history has known in the cause of truth and religious conviction. It is one of the noblest and most beautiful. All of you have heard this incident a number of times – when the Quraish threatened to attack the Holy Prophet(saw) he left Hadhrat Ali(as) behind to sleep in his bed and to stay behind so that he could return all things left with the Holy Prophet(saw) to their rightful owners.

Hadhrat Abu Bakr(as) and the Holy Prophet(saw) left and took refuge in the cave of Thaur. The young men of Quraish who were chosen to kill the Holy Prophet(saw) came close to the cave fully armed and ready to kill. When they saw the cave entrance, it was covered with cobwebs and a pair of wild pigeons had made their nest on the threshold. Is this not a sign of God Almighty protecting His Messenger? At that moment Hadhrat Abu Bakr(as) expressed

concern but the Holy Prophet(saw) said: ‘Do not grieve, God is with us.’ According to some Ahadith, it is reported that when the Quraish party arrived at the cave entrance, Hadhrat Abu Bakr(as) exclaimed: ‘If any one of them looks at his feet, he will find us,’ and that the Holy Prophet(saw) answered: ‘O Abu Bakr, how can you fear for two men whose constant companion is God Himself?’. So there are ample signs where God through His succour has helped the Messenger in some very difficult positions.

The Holy Qur’an mentions this in chapter 9, verse 40:

If you help him not, then know that Allah helped him even when the disbelievers drove him forth while he was one of the two when they were both in the cave, when he said to his companion, ‘Grieve not, for Allah is with us.’ Then Allah sent down His peace on him, and succoured him with hosts which you did not see, and humbled the word of

those who disbelieved, and it is the Word of Allah alone which is supreme. And Allah is Mighty, Wise.

Allah the Almighty has vividly and unconditionally given His Word that through His succour and protection, He will always manifest Himself to the believers.

It must be remembered that the messengers of Allah come not to create conflict but to bring peace and tranquillity to the human race. They are men of God and the purpose of their coming is to win the hearts and minds of the people and show them the path to righteousness so that they can attain the nearness of Allah. It was the same mission with which the Holy Prophet^(saw) was sent. But he did not come for only one section of humanity, he was sent as a blessing to all of mankind. Fighting battles was not his mission. He only wanted to show people the path of righteousness and to help them attain knowledge about their Creator. Unfortunately, the nonbelievers

would not leave him alone. First they wanted to kill him in Makkah and then when he emigrated to Madinah with the help and protection of Allah, they would not leave him alone and pursued him with the intention of destroying his mission. He had to defend himself and his followers. A well-equipped army of Makkans marched to Madinah with the intention of wiping out the Muslims and Islam. The Muslims, ill-equipped and ill-armed amounted to no more than 313 while the fully armed and well-equipped Makkan force was over 1000. The two armies met at Badr. The Holy Qur'an refers to the battle of Badr in the following manner:

Certainly, there was for you a Sign in the two armies that encountered each other, one army fighting in the cause of Allah and the other disbelieving, whom they saw to be twice as many as themselves, actually with their eyes. Thus Allah strengthens with His aid whomsoever He pleases. In

that surely is a lesson for those who have eyes.
(Ch.3:V.14)

The victory at Badr was not due to any skill or superiority of Muslims but it was a glorious sign of Allah the Almighty for the whole world to see. Just as Moses^(as) pointed his rod to sea and the sea parted, similarly, the Holy Prophet Muhammad^(saw) threw a few pebbles towards the enemy and the wind converted them into a storm that routed the Makkan army. The Holy Qur'an describes that instance:

So you killed them not but it was Allah Who killed them. And thou threwest not when thou didst throw, but it was Allah Who threw that He might overthrow the disbelievers and that He might confer on the believers a trial from Himself – a goodly trial - Surely Allah is All-Hearing, All-Knowing.
(Ch.8:V.18)

The life of the Holy Prophet Muhammad^(saw) and the succour

and help that he received from Allah requires a book and then even that would not be sufficient to describe all the Divine help and succour that Allah gave to the Holy Prophet Muhammad^(saw)

When we look at the lives of the companions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad^(saw), we see their total belief in Allah and His Messenger and we notice that their lives were guided and protected at all times with succour of Allah the Almighty. They had the 'eyes' that the Holy Qur'an mentions and they could see that Allah the Almighty strengthened their faith.

The pious, the saints and the believers who have developed a true relationship with Allah the Almighty and who achieved the nearness of Allah have all received Divine succour and protection and they have testified to the existence of Allah on the basis of their personal experience. The Chief of all the saints, the Promised Messiah^(as), a true servant of the Holy Prophet^(saw) of Islam, a person whose life was totally dedicated to the Holy

Qur'an and the Sunna of the Holy Prophet^(saw), who walked in the shadow of the Holy Prophet Muhammad^(saw) until he truly became his shadow – it was because of his love, his dedication and his devotion to the Holy Prophet^(saw) that Allah the Almighty trusted him with the task of revival of Islam. When we look at the life of the Promised Messiah^(as), we see how time and again, Allah the Almighty came to his assistance and how at difficult times, Allah provided succour for him. That truly proves the existence of Allah the Almighty even to the disbelievers.

At the saddest time of his life when the Promised Messiah^(as) knew that his father was going to die, a concern crept into his mind about his own future. He was left wondering as to who would provide him comfort after his father, when suddenly, in all His Majesty, Allah Almighty sent this revelation to him:

Is Allah not sufficient for His servant?

It was an admonishment from a friend and a promise as well. Allah provides for His servants. Those who achieve closeness and nearness of Allah, Allah becomes responsible for them. The help and succour that the Promised Messiah^(as) received time again in his life, stands as a clear proof of the existence of Allah the Almighty. Indeed, the life of the Promised Messiah^(as) is a vast catalogue of Allah's assistance and help to him at every step.

(to be continued)

The Purity of the Text of the

HOLY QUR'AN PART 4

From the Review of Religions, 1907

It has already been shown that when any verse of the Holy Qur'an was revealed to the Holy Prophet^(saw), he used to send for one of his scribes to dictate it to him. Thus every verse of the Holy Qur'an was written in his presence. We also learn from numerous traditions that whenever a passage was revealed, it was recited by the Holy Prophet^(saw) to those who happened to be present at the time, whether friends or foes, and many of his followers committed it to memory at once, others again learning it from those who heard it from the mouth of the Holy Prophet^(saw).

The importance of the Holy Qur'an for the companions lay not only in the fact that it was a code of moral and social laws for them of which it was sufficient for them to know the general purport.

They believed every word and every letter of it to proceed from no other than the Divine source, and hence every word of it was for them a heavenly treasure they had on earth, and, therefore, they secured it in the securest of places, *viz.*, their hearts. For its sake they suffered all kinds of persecution and forsook their friends, their relatives, their properties, their homes. Every new verse revealed breathed new life into them. Hence they tried their utmost to keep themselves acquainted with every fresh revelation.

Those among them who followed the profession of trade or any other profession spent a part of the day in the transaction of their affairs and the rest in the company of the Holy Prophet^(saw). Many of them had made special arrangements among themselves to be

kept apprised of the new revelations that came to the Holy Prophet^(saw). The second Caliph, Omar, tells us, according to a report of Bukhari, that he and one of his neighbors from among the Ansar living in one of the suburbs of Madinah used to go in turns to the Holy Prophet^(saw), each of them remaining in his company for a day while the other did his work. 'When I went to the Holy Prophet^(saw), I brought to him the news of that day relating to revelation and other things, and when he went, then he brought me the news' (*Bukhari*). There were also companions who after the flight to Madinah had no work to do because of the interruption of their business by their persecutors. They passed their whole time in the mosque and were ever ready to commit to memory any fresh revelation that the Holy Prophet^(saw) might announce.

The Holy Prophet^(saw) himself laid the greatest stress upon the learning, reciting and teaching of the Holy Qur'an. Muslim relates in his *Sahih* a tradition from Aqba

bin Amir who said that one day 'the Holy Prophet came out and we were in the *Suffah* (an appertenance) of the Mosque, and he asked, 'which of you likes to go every day to Bathan or Aqiq, and bring two female camels with large humps upon their backs, without doing any wrong to any body or to a relative?' We replied: 'O Messenger of God, we all like it.' He said: 'Does not one of you come in the morning to the mosque, and teach or repeat two verses of the Book of God, which is better for him than two camels, and three verses are better than three camels, and four verses than four camels: in this way is any number of verses better than the same number of camels'.

Bukhari reports Othman as saying that the Holy Prophet^(saw) said: 'that the best man among you is he who has learnt the Qur'an and teaches it.' Other traditions to the same effect and adjudged to be trustworthy by both Bukhari and Muslim run as follows: 'Ayesha says that the Holy Prophet^(saw) said: 'The skilful in reciting the Qur'an are classed with the

scribes who are honoured and virtuous; and he who reiterates in reciting the Qur'an on account of his inability to recite it has a double reward.' Ibn-i-Omar reported that the Messenger of God^(saw) said: 'No one is to be envied but two persons – one, a man to whom God has given the Qur'an, and he recites it day and night and acts upon it, and the other a man whom God has given wealth and he spends it in the way of God day and night'.

'Abu Musa Ash'ari reported the following words from the Holy Prophet^(saw): 'The condition of a Muslim who reads the Qur'an is like the fruit of the orange tree, its taste is agreeable and so also is its odour; and the condition of a Muslim who does not read the Qur'an is like the date which has a sweet taste but has no odour.'

The last tradition compares the Muslim who acts upon the injunctions of the Holy Qur'an but does not recite it, with him who both acts upon it and recites it, and thus it shows that it was not simply acting upon the Holy

Qur'an on which the Holy Prophet^(saw) laid stress, but he made its simple recitation equally important. The recitation was needed not only to guard the text of the Holy Qur'an, but also to keep its injunctions fresh in the mind.

Various other traditions of undoubted authenticity, showing that the recitation of the Qur'an was an important obligation which lay upon every Muslim, are contained in the books on traditions. Bukhari has a chapter named the 'chapter on *istidhkar* of the Qur'an and its *ta'ahud*' that is 'reciting the Qur'an frequently and returning to it time after time.' In this chapter various traditions are related enjoining the frequent recitation of the Holy Qur'an. The same renowned and trustworthy traditionist has another chapter headed: 'the teaching of the Qur'an to children,' a third with the heading: 'the most excellent of men is he who recites and teaches the Qur'an,' and a fourth which is headed: 'the reading of the Qur'an from memory.' For the

sake of brevity I give simply the headings of the chapters and refrain from quoting the traditions narrated by the learned collector to prove the various assertions contained in them. These headings are sufficient to show that committing the Qur'an to memory was enjoined by the Holy Prophet^(saw) upon all his followers and it was considered by the companions to be a duty fraught with great religious merit. Hence it was necessary that every one of them should commit to memory at least some parts of the Holy Book. Though even now there are thousands of men in every Muslim country who can repeat the whole of the Qur'an from memory, the particular conditions of Arabia facilitated the task to a far greater extent. This is admitted, even by a hostile critic: 'Passionately fond of poetry but without the ready means for committing to writing the effusions of their bards, the Arabs had long been used to imprint these, as well as the traditions of genealogical and tribal events, on the living tablets of the heart. The recollective faculty was thus

cultivated to the highest pitch; and it was applied, with all the ardour of an awakened spirit, to the Coran.'⁽¹⁾

It appears from the above traditions that the Holy Prophet^(saw) desired that his companions should try to excel each other in their knowledge of the Holy Qur'an. There were other reasons which made the companions vie with one another in committing the Holy Book to memory.

The office of *imamat* or leading public prayers was as a rule bestowed upon the man who had greater knowledge of the Holy Qur'an. All authentic traditions establish this point. One tradition tells us that in a certain tribe an eight year old boy used to lead the prayers because he knew a greater portion of the Holy Qur'an than any other member of that tribe. This boy Amru bin Salma thus relates his own story: 'We, (i.e., the tribe to which the narrator belonged) had alighted in a place by water, and people who went to the Holy Prophet^(saw) passed by us.

When they returned they used to repeat to us the revelations which they heard from the Holy Prophet^(saw). I had a good memory and so while there I committed to memory a great portion of the Holy Qur'an from these visitors. After a time my father also went to the Holy Prophet^(saw) with some people of his tribe to declare their acceptance of Islam. The Holy Prophet^(saw) taught them the prayers and told them that the prayers should be led by a person who knew more of the Qur'an than others. On account of what I had already committed to memory, I satisfied this condition. So they made me their *imam*.⁽²⁾ These people were among the later converts to Islam. Bukhari also tells us that the office of *imamat* was conferred upon deserving persons irrespective of their nationality or position in society. The distinction to have the office of *imamat* (the leading of congregational prayers) conferred on one was a practical incentive to a greater knowledge of the Qur'an. Similarly when a new tribe accepted Islam, the man who was chosen to be sent to

them to teach them the doctrines and principles of the new faith was one who was most acquainted with the Qur'an. These were not the only ways in which the reciters of the Qur'an were honored in those early days. There are many traditions which show that the reciters of the Qur'an were highly honoured and respected in every way among the companions.

These were the reasons which led a great number of the companions of the Holy Prophet^(saw) to engrave the words of the Qur'an on the tablets of their hearts. The Holy Prophet^(saw) himself set an example in frequently reciting the Holy Qur'an in public as well as in private. It was not only in prayers that long portions of the Holy Book were recited. We have on record instances showing that he recited certain chapters when travelling on the back of a camel⁽³⁾ and that he loved to hear others recite the holy Word. According to one tradition he kept waking on a certain night to listen to a person who was reciting the Qur'an in the Mosque (Bukhari, chapter on

the 'forgetting of the Qur'an'). Another tradition also related by Bukhari represents Abdulla as saying: 'The Messenger(saw) of God, said to me: 'Recite to me the Qur'an.' I replied, 'What! should I recite to you and to you it has been revealed?' He said, 'I love to hear others recite it.' Thereupon I began to recite the chapter entitled Women.'⁽⁴⁾

These anecdotes show that the Holy Prophet(saw) induced his companions by his own example to recite the Holy Qur'an. These inducements were not without their effect. The Muslims treasured the Word of God in their hearts and its reading and teaching became very common. So common had the recitation of the Qur'an become indeed that when the Holy Prophet(saw) spoke of the disappearance of the knowledge of the Qur'an at some future time, Ziyad, son of Labid, one of the companions, at once cried out: 'How would knowledge disappear, O Messenger of God, 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?' This question arose out of a misapprehension of the words of the Holy Prophet(saw) who meant, not that the words of the Holy Qur'an would disappear, but that people would cease to act in accordance with the spirit of those words. This tradition related by *Tirmidhi* and some other collectors of tradition has already been quoted, and it shows that every verse of the Holy Qur'an had such a wide publication among the companions and was so generally known to them that they could not even think how any part of it could disappear.

There are also traditions which show that the injunctions of the Holy Prophet(saw), relating to the committing of the Holy Qur'an to memory and its frequent recitation, were so literally carried out by the companions that he himself had to give them directions against a course which might be a burden to them. In a tradition related in the Bukhari (chapter headed: 'In how many days should the Qur'an be read') it is stated that one of the

companions of the Holy Prophet^(saw) who finished the recitation of the whole of the Qur'an once every night was expressly enjoined by him to finish it at the least in three or five or seven days and was forbidden to go through the whole once every night. This tradition shows clearly that there were companions who could recite the whole Qur'an in a single night. The direction given by the Holy Prophet^(saw) that the recitation of the Holy Qur'an should not be finished in less than three days was meant to inform them that it should be read thoughtfully.

Similarly in a report received through a different chain of reporters, the same companion Abdulla, son of Amru, is represented as asking the Holy Prophet^(saw) how much time he should take to finish one reading of the Qur'an. The Prophet told him that he should finish it in thirty days. He replied that he could do it sooner whereupon the Holy Prophet^(saw) lessened the time by five days. Thus he continued to express his ability to finish the

Qur'an sooner and the Holy Prophet^(saw) went on lessening the limit every time by a few days till he reached the number five (according to another report three).⁽⁶⁾ Ibn-i-Masood relates that the Holy Prophet^(saw) said: 'Read the Qur'an in seven days and do not read it in less than three days.'⁽⁶⁾ According to another report Ayesha said that: 'the Holy Prophet^(saw) did not usually finish the Qur'an in less than three days.'⁽⁷⁾ All these traditions show clearly that the companions vied with one another in the frequent recitation of the Qur'an and that many of them could recite the whole in a single day. In fact, so frequently was the recitation of the Holy Qur'an resorted to that injunctions became necessary to stop a too rapid recitation. It is also clear from these traditions that the whole of the Qur'an was committed to memory by many of the companions, otherwise it could not be spoken of as being finished in a stated interval of time. That it was recited from memory is clear from the fact that it was recited at night.

These conclusions are further supported by many trustworthy traditions which relate that there were numerous men among the companions who could recite the Holy Qur'an from memory. These men were called the *Qurra* or the reciters, and they were known to have committed the Qur'an to memory. The author of the *Fath-ul-Bari* explains the word *Qurra* as meaning: 'persons noted for committing the Qur'an to memory and for teaching it to others.' Of course the word also signified persons having a sound knowledge of the Qur'an. Seventy of the *Qurra* were treacherously put to death at the *Bir Mauna* by a tribe of the unbelievers. This is a fact testified by the most trustworthy and authentic traditions related by Bukhari and other reliable collectors. The fact that such a large number of them was murdered in the life-time of the Holy Prophet^(saw) shows that there were hundreds of them among the companions.

In the chapter headed 'the *Qurra* from among the companions of

the Holy Prophet' Bukhari relates several traditions. In the first of these, Abdullah, son of Amru (who, as we have already seen, had committed the whole of the Qur'an to memory) is reported to have said when speaking of Abdulla, son of Masood: 'I shall ever love him, for I heard the Holy Prophet^(saw) say: Learn the Qur'an from four men, from Abdulla son of Masood, Salim, Muadh and Ubayy son of Kab.'⁽⁸⁾ This, of course, did not imply inability on the part of the other companions to teach the Holy Qur'an, nor did the words mean that none of the companions besides these four retained the whole of the Qur'an in his memory.

In fact to be a good teacher of the Holy Qur'an, it was not sufficient that a person should be able to recite the Holy Book from memory. What was further necessary was that he should have a good understanding and a sound knowledge of the Holy Qur'an. The tradition only shows that the four men named could teach any and every chapter of the Holy

Qur'an and hence they themselves also knew the whole of it. Probably they were named because they always tried to learn the revelations directly from the Holy Prophet(saw). One of them Abdulla, son of Masood, it is reported in the very next tradition, used to say that he received over seventy chapters of the Holy Qur'an directly from the mouth of the Holy Prophet(saw). It was probably on account of some such peculiarity that the Holy Prophet(saw) named four men only, for other traditions tell us that there were many other companions, who could recite the whole of the Qur'an from memory.

To take an example, Abu Bakr(ra) is not named in the above tradition, but it is a fact that he retained the whole of the Qur'an in his memory. It was Abu Bakr(ra) whom the Holy Prophet(saw) appointed on his death-bed to lead the public prayers. Now authentic traditions, as already stated, show that the person appointed to lead the prayers was always one who knew more of the Qur'an than his

audience. In cases where several persons had equal knowledge, as, for instance, when they all knew the whole of the Qur'an by heart, other tests were, applied. Now tradition tells us that there were men among the companions who could recite the whole of the Qur'an from memory. Therefore Abu Bakr(ra) could not be appointed to lead the prayers if his knowledge of the Qur'an were not as extensive. Hence it follows that Abu Bakr(ra) also could recite the whole of the Qur'an from memory. There are many other indications such as the building of a mosque in the yard of his house where he used to recite the Holy Qur'an every day, his keeping constant company of the Holy Prophet(saw), which shows that Abu Bakr(ra) knew the whole of the Qur'an by heart.

Similarly, Abdullah, son of Omar, retained the whole of the Qur'an in his memory and finished it every night and the Holy Prophet(saw) having come to know this told him to finish it once in a month.⁽⁹⁾ In fact, many persons are mentioned as being able to recite

the whole of the Qur'an from memory in the life-time of the Holy Prophet^(saw), among these being the four Caliphs, *vis.*, Abu Bakr, Omar, Othman and Ali, and such renowned companions as Talha, Sad, Ibn-i-Masood, Salim, Abu Huraira, while three women, *viz.*, Ayesha, Hafsa and Umm-i-Salma are also named in the same category^(saw). Several other persons are also named from among the Helpers as being able to recite the whole of the Qur'an from memory. But it is not to be supposed that only those persons were the reciters whose names have been preserved to us in traditions. Seventy of them were killed by treachery in the life-time of the Holy Prophet^(saw) and about the same number fell in the battle of *Yamama* which was fought a few months after the death of the Holy Prophet^(saw). Among these was also Salim whose name is clearly mentioned among those who could recite the whole of the Qur'an, yet when Omar made a representation to Abu Bakr^(ra) for the collection of the Qur'an, he did not particularly name Salim, but only said that death had taken

away many of the *Qurra* (reciters) in the field of *Yamama*.⁽¹⁰⁾ Had there been none among the slain except Salim who could recite the whole of the Qur'an from memory, Omar would not have spoken of the reciters generally.

There is only one tradition whose evidence is considered to be conflicting with that furnished by all the traditions cited above. This tradition which is narrated by Bukhari runs as follows:

‘Anas reported that the Holy Prophet^(saw), died while none had collected the Qur'an with the exception of four men, Abu-Darda and Muadh son of Jabal, and Zaid son of Thabit and Abu Zaid.’

In a tradition to the same effect reported by the same authority the name of Ubayy, son of Kab, is mentioned in the place of Abu-Darda. This tradition apparently contradicts many other traditions if the ‘collecting’ of the Qur'an is taken to be equivalent to the committing of the whole of the Qur'an to memory and no

limitation is placed upon the meaning of the tradition. The word ‘*jama*’ which means collecting is generally applied in the traditions with reference to the Holy Qur’an in the sense of collecting different manuscripts into a single volume, but it may also mean the retaining of the whole of it in memory. Taking the word in its ordinary significance, *viz.*, collecting the different written chapters into a single volume, the tradition does not negate the existence of any number of reciters who retained the whole of the Qur’an in memory. There is no difficulty in accepting this interpretation except that when steps were taken for the collection of the Qur’an in the caliphate of Abu Bakr^(ra), no collection prepared in the lifetime of the Holy Prophet^(saw) was brought in to facilitate the heavy task before Zaid who was chosen for collecting the scattered manuscripts of the Holy Qur’an into one volume. But the fact is that Zaid sought the manuscripts that were written in the presence and by the direction of the Holy Prophet^(saw) and thus the objection

vanishes. But even if the ‘collection of the Qur’an’ in the tradition under discussion is taken to mean the recitation of the entire Qur’an from memory, there is no difficulty. The meaning is made clear by another tradition which gives the circumstances under which these words were spoken by Anas.

There were two rival tribes at Madinah, the Khazraj and the Aus, and Anas belonged to the former. Before the advent of Islam their relations were hostile, but on their conversion to Islam they both became one. Still the old feelings of rivalry were sometimes stirred up, and it is to one such occasion that the tradition relates. The Aus prided themselves in the possession of certain members, four in number, who had earned a good fame. As against this the Khazraj named four of their men who had collected the Holy Qur’an or who could recite the whole of it from memory. Accordingly the claim was made only against the single tribe of Aus. This conclusion is corroborated by the fact that the

four men named all belonged to the tribe of Khazraj, and the exclusion of such famous men as Abdulla son of Masood, Salim and others from among the refugees shows clearly that the claim was advanced only for one tribe as against a rival tribe.

Even if we admit for the sake of argument the existence of certain differences in the various traditions quoted above, the one conclusion upon which they all agree is absolutely certain, *viz.*, that among the companions of the Holy Prophet^(saw) there were certain persons, whether their number amounted only to four or to more than that, who retained in memory the whole of the Qur'an as taught by the Holy Prophet^(saw), and who at his death had the whole of it engraved on the tablets of their hearts. Thus while every companion committed to memory a certain portion of the Holy Qur'an, certain companions committed to memory the whole of it. The entire Qur'an was, therefore, not only guarded by the comparatively few men who could recite the whole of it from memory, but the whole body of

companions had the whole of it safe in their memories by every one having a certain portion. All this was done in obedience to the injunctions of the Holy Prophet^(saw) who laid great stress upon the reciting of the Qur'an and the committing of it to memory. And these measures to guard the text of the Holy Qur'an were in addition to writing. It may also be pointed out here that the gradual revelation of the Qur'an afforded a facility in committing it to memory. The interval between the revelation of two verses or two chapters afforded the companions an opportunity to repeat it as often as they liked. The entire Qur'an was revealed in the long period of twenty-three years, and if Muslim boys of the age of ten or twelve years can even now commit the whole Qur'an to memory within one or two years, the Arab possessors of wonderfully retentive memories to whom the importance of the Qur'an was far greater than to any Muslim of a later age could not find it difficult to commit it to memory within the long period of twenty-three years especially

when it was given to them gradually.

The recitation of the Qur'an and its committing to memory were not, however, only optional, for the Qur'an formed a part of public as well as private prayers. Five times a day the Muslims had to pray publicly, while prayers in the latter portion of the night were of a private nature. The recitation of portions of the Holy Qur'an in all these prayers was obligatory, and thus every Muslim had of necessity to repeat certain portions of it every day. Now we know it for a fact that generally very long portions were recited in the prayers, especially in the prayers said during the latter part of the night. The Holy Prophet^(saw) is himself related to have often recited the long chapters in the beginning of the Qur'an in the latter part of the night, *i.e.* in the *tahajjud* prayers. One tradition relates that he read nearly a third part of the Qur'an in a single *rak'at*. His companions also followed his example. Thus one companion is mentioned in an anecdote left of him to have

recited the chapter entitled the 'Cow' which forms the twelfth part of the Qur'an in his *tahajjud* prayers. Even in the public prayers long chapters were recited. One tradition relates that while leading prayers, the Holy Prophet^(saw) read the chapter entitled the 'Women' before the chapter entitled: 'The Family of Imran.' Now these two chapters form nearly an eighth part of the Qur'an and such a large portion read in a single prayer shows how frequently every part was in its turn recited in public prayers. There are many traditions from which it appears that such long chapters as the 'Cow' which forms a twelfth part of the Qur'an were read in a single *rak'at* in the morning prayers. The evening prayers are the least suited for the recitation of the longer chapters, but even in these the Holy Prophet^(saw) recited such chapters as the 'Tur' or the 'Mount' which contains nearly fifty verses. In imitation of the Holy Prophet^(saw) his followers wherever they had the occasion to lead the prayers recited very long chapters. One of them recited the second chapter,

i.e., ‘the Cow’ in the prayer of the nightfall and a complaint was made against him by one who tired by a whole days’ labour wanted to go to rest sooner. In their private prayers also the companions recited long chapters. Thus not only was it necessary that every one of them should commit the whole or a certain portion of the Holy Qur’an to memory, but the part so committed was always kept fresh in memory by constant recitation in prayers, though as we have already seen the Qur’an was frequently recited by the companions even outside prayers. Therefore, even if the Holy Qur’an had never been written, no verse could have been lost, so great was the publicity which every verse of it received and so often was it recited by the Holy Prophet^(saw) and his companions in public as well as in private. One tradition relates how a certain chapter was learned by heart by a companion from its frequent recitation in the prayers. In fact, if there had been no other means of giving publicity to the Qur’an, its mere recitation in prayers was

sufficient to give it such a publication as would have guarded it against every possible alteration or loss.

References

1. *Muir’s Life of Mahomet, Introduction*, page xvi
2. This tradition as related by Abu Dawood – and it is also related by Bukhari.
3. ‘I saw the Messenger^(saw) of God, may peace and blessings of God be upon him, and he was reciting the chapter entitled ‘Victory’ while on the back of his camel.’
(*Bukhari*)
4. See Bukhari .
5. The tradition as found in the Musnad of Darimi.
6. See Fathul Bari Vol. IX page 53.
7. *Idem*.
8. Vide the Sahih Bukhari, chapter Al-Qurra.
9. This tradition is narrated by Nisai and the chain of reporters through whom he received it is admitted to be trustworthy.
10. Vide the Sahih Bukhari: ‘Abu Bakr said, Omar came to me and said that death had worked vehemently among the reciters of the Qur’an in the battle of Yamama.’

Letter to *The Times*

newspaper - September 19th 2006

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Sir, In the midst of the current sensitive situation in the world, Pope Benedict has certainly added fuel to the fire by his latest comments about Islam.

In the light of clear guidance in the Holy Qur'an, the Word of Allah, it is absolutely wrong to say that the Holy Prophet of Islam ever commanded his followers to 'spread by the sword the faith he preached'. The Holy Qur'an admonishes: 'There is no compulsion in religion.'

It appears very naïve of the Pope to choose a 14th-century Byzantine Christian emperor for a quotation against Islam if he himself did not mean it. If the Pope simply wants to condemn the militant and terrorist activities being done, without any justification, in the name of Islam, he is most certainly right to do so. But the religion of Islam does not approve of militancy or terrorism. The right of fighting in self-defence is, no doubt, granted in Islam. And no one can object to this basic human right.

I wish the Pope had not made these derisive comments which reflect poorly on his credibility and judgment.

ATAUL MUJEEB RASHED
Imam, the London Mosque

WASIYYAT

*English translation of a poem composed by Maulana Ataul Mujeeb
Rashed, Imam of the London Mosque*

Wasiyyat is a heavenly scheme
A means to gain entry to Paradise
Respond to this call, O my friends
Our revered Imam is making this call
Make a Will, do make a Will
Urge everyone to do the same

It is a way to gain proximity to God
A source of His Forgiveness and Grace
It makes one's good deeds shine
The light of God illumines the hearts
Make a Will, do make a Will
Urge everyone to do the same

The Messiah of our times received a glad tiding
Through revelation he was given this Sign
How great is this Mercy and Grace of God
We have been given a key to His Paradise
Make a Will, do make a Will
Urge everyone to do the same

Be not unnerved by its conditions
God shall dispel all worries and grief
We shall bathe eternally in Blessings
Day and night shall rain God's Grace
Make a Will, do make a Will
Urge everyone to do the same

(Translation by Mr. Khalil Muluck)

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