

“Call to the path of thy Lord with wisdom and goodly exhortation,
and argue with people in the best manner.” (The Holy Quran 16:125)

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Exponent of
Islam and
the Lahore
Ahmadiyya
Movement
for over
seventy-five
years
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The Light

& Islamic Review

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Presents
Islam as:
PEACEFUL
TOLERANT
RATIONAL
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***Maulana Muhammad Ali in the eyes of the Founder,
See pages 4 to 8***

Vol. 75

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◆ Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha‘at Islam Lahore Inc., U.S.A. ◆
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The Light was founded in 1921 as the organ of the AHMADIYYA ANJUMAN ISHA'AT ISLAM (Ahmadiyya Association for the propagation of Islam) of Lahore, Pakistan. *The Islamic Review* was published in England from 1913 for over 50 years, and in the U.S.A. from 1980 to 1991. The present periodical represents the beliefs of the world-wide branches of the Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at Islam, Lahore.

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Beliefs and aims.

The main object of the A.A.I.I.L. is to present the true, original message of Islam to the whole world — Islam as it is found in the Holy Quran and the life of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, obscured today by grave misconceptions and wrong popular notions.

Islam seeks to attract *the hearts and minds* of people towards the truth, by means of reasoning, good moral example, and the natural beauty of its principles. It neither aspires to gain political power, nor allows the use of force in support of the faith.

Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (d. 1908), our Founder, arose to remind the world that Islam is:

International: It recognizes prophets being raised among all nations and requires Muslims to believe in them all. Truth and goodness can be found in all religions. God treats all human beings equally justly, regardless of race, nationality or religion.

Peaceful: Allows use of force only in unavoidable self-defence. Teaches Muslims to live peacefully under any rule which accords them freedom of religion.

Tolerant: Gives full freedom to everyone to hold and practise any creed or religion. Requires us to tolerate differences of belief and opinion.

Rational: In all matters, it urges use of human reason and knowledge. Blind following is condemned and independence of thought is granted.

Inspiring: Worship is not a ritual, but provides living contact with a Living God, Who answers prayers and speaks to His righteous servants even today as in the past.

Non-sectarian: Every person professing Islam by the words *Lā ilāha ill-Allāh, Muḥammad-ur rasūl-ullāh* (There is no god but Allah, and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah) is a Muslim. A Muslim cannot be expelled from Islam by anyone.

Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad taught that *no* prophet, old or new, is to arise after the Holy Prophet Muhammad. However, *Mujaddids* will be raised by God to revive and rekindle the light of Islam.

About ourselves

Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at Islam Lahore has branches in the following countries:

U.S.A.	Australia.
U.K.	Canada.
Holland.	Fiji.
Indonesia.	Germany
Suriname.	India.
Trinidad.	Poland.
Guyana.	South Africa.

The Movement has members and supporters in many other countries as well. In Berlin, it has a large historical mosque constructed in the mid-1920s.

Achievements:

The Anjuman has produced extensive literature on Islam, originally in English and Urdu, including translations of the Holy Quran with commentaries. These books are being translated into other languages, such as French, German, Spanish, Russian, Chinese, Dutch and Polish.

The Anjuman has run several Muslim missions around the world, including the first-ever in Western Europe.

The Movement's unique contribution to Islamic thought is summed up on the left.

History:

1889: Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad founded the Ahmadiyya Movement.

1901: Movement given name *Ahmadiyya* after Holy Prophet Muhammad's other famous name *Ahmad*.

1905: Hazrat Mirza appoints central body (Anjuman) to manage the Movement.

1908: Death of Hazrat Mirza. Succeeded by Maulana Nur-ud-Din as Head.

1914: Death of Maulana Nur-ud-Din. Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at Islam founded at Lahore as continuation of the original Anjuman. Maulana Muhammad Ali elected as Head.

1951: Death of Maulana Muhammad Ali after fifty years of glorious service to the cause of Islam. Maulana Sadr-ur-Din (d. 1981) becomes Head.

1981–1996: Dr. Saeed Ahmad Khan, an eminent medical doctor and religious scholar, led the Movement, at a time of intense persecution.

1996: Prof. Dr. Asghar Hameed, a distinguished retired University Professor of Mathematics, and learned Islamic scholar, elected Head.

The path to world peace

Islam's contribution

**Friday sermon by Maulana Muhammad Ali
translated by Mirza Masum Baig**

When the history of the present age will be chronicled, one of its strange events will be that at a time when the Muslims were smitten with lifelessness and insensibility, and their kingdoms were crumbling down one after another, and Islam itself was in a hopeless plight having few friends to support and sponsor its cause and a large number of foes with the grim resolution of extirpating it — at such a terrible time it came into the head of a man that it was the most opportune time for spreading the light and learning of Islam in the Western world although he was entirely ignorant of those countries and their civilisation and culture. Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad *sahib*, the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement, had fought with supreme success many a battle on the field of Religion against the wrong principles preached by Christianity, Arya Samaj, Brahma Samaj and other creeds. A considerable period of time had also passed over his claim to *mujaddidiyya*. And he had also proclaimed himself to be the Messiah whose advent had been foretold in the Holy Prophet's Sayings. All this was indeed a great revolution in his life. But there was yet another important revolution which took place when he turned his keen attention towards the Western world.

Hazrat Mirza *sahib*, when he started the *Review of Religions* monthly magazine, took, as a matter of fact, the first step in implementing his great scheme of spreading Islam in the Western countries. In this Review, he vented his painful feelings in this way:

“The greatest grief which is eating up my life, as how to achieve and accomplish the object of spreading Islam among the Western nations which is, of a truth, the real aim of my advent.”

It is strange that even now Muslims have not fully realised the importance of spreading Islam in the Western countries. Why not in your own land, they argue; why go to the far-off West when so many opportunities await us nearer at home? Some of the members of our *Jama'at* too have unfortunately fallen into this way of wrongful thinking, and I state it for their information that the Promised Messiah believed

it strongly that the rising of the sun from the West, spoken of in the Holy Prophet's Sayings, really meant that the sun of Islam shall rise with all its splendour and glory from the Western hemisphere. In the past, whenever Islam made for the West, its advance was obstructed in the way. Spain was conquered and Islam stayed in that country for centuries together. It crossed over to France but its progress was checked. On another occasion, Constantinople was won, and Islam reached the limits of Vienna. Its onward march was again cut short. But the time had come, and Hazrat Mirza *sahib* had in view the Holy Prophet's tradition, when the whole of the Western world would be ablaze with the light and learning of Islam.

That Islam shall spread over the Western world, has so far been a happy prophecy with Muslims. But today we are beholding the course of events with our own eyes. Islam has impressed some of those people to such an extent that they have openly adopted it as their faith. Stronger still is that undercurrent of thought which is making the Western people to think that the void which has been caused in the present day world, can be made up and filled by religion only, and for that matter by Islam exclusively. Muslims do not keep in touch with the feeling and thought of modern Europe. It is, however, a matter of fact that the Western nations notwithstanding their materialistic philosophies, have now been constrained to think that religion, true religion, and not the Communistic principles of Labour nor the political proposals of forming blocs, can solve their difficulties and resolve the puzzling problems staring them in the face. These shrewd nations saw through the mysteries of nature with a keen eye and harnessed its great forces to their service. But there is another thing so subtle and sublime that human knowledge and science cannot comprehend it by itself. It is Truth, Divine Truth for the exposition of which the most high God sent his Prophets into the world from time to time. This sublime truth last of all appeared in its perfect form in the shape of Islam, and the great task of imparting it to the world at large has now devolved upon our shoulders.

Hazrat Mirza *sahib* fully realised the paramount importance of this Divine task, and initiated a movement for carrying the truth of Islam to the Western world. The first signs of the “Rising of the sun from the West” have been visible on the horizon, and the spade work in establishing the predominance of Islam in Europe and America has been done. It is now for his followers particularly, and other Muslims generally, to give the movement a powerful impetus.

An Englishman recently published a book *Civilisation on Trial* in which he has clearly stated that religion alone, and not political stunts like the formation of the U.N., can offer a true remedy of all their ills. It is a psychological fact that only those ideas are accepted and absorbed by the human mind for which it has been prepared through assiduous labour. Religion alone can bring about this inner transformation in the human mind. With regard to Islam, the author of the above-named book has remarked that twice it stepped into the European soil, and if its forward march had not been impeded, the whole of the Western world would have gone under its sway. Racial prejudice and drinking are the two most dreadful curses of the modern Western civilisation. The writer has confessed quite candidly that Islam alone, and no other religion of the world, can eradicate these two abominable evils, as it had done in the past.

Racial complex and national prejudice is evidently the cause of all these great wars which are being waged with the malicious motive of mutual extermination and genocide. The Western thinkers of today are laying stress upon the fact that Islam alone and no other religion, can remedy and remove these national evils. Is it not a clear indication of the fact that the sun of Islam is on the point of shining forth from the Western horizon? This important knowledge, however, was vouchsafed by providence Divine to the *Mujaddid* of this age, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad. Imagine a simple, straight-forward man, living in an unknown remote village, absolutely ignorant of the European ways of living and culture, unacquainted with their knowledge and science, not knowing even a single word of their languages; this man suddenly springs upon his feet, full of fervent zeal, courage and a strong conviction that he would make the Western world bow in obeisance before Islam, and with his own hands lays down the foundation of an institution whose sole aim is the propagation of Islam among the Western nations.

As I see it, the Western peoples have much regards for things spiritual. They look upon the Bible with reverence and respect, in spite of the unreasonable, unscientific and even immoral passages found therein, for the one reason that it also contains some spiritual teaching for the good and guidance of man. What a great respect will these people pay to the Holy Quran which is saturated by far with the most sublime spiritual teachings and has not a single objectionable word nor any unscientific or unreasonable statement in it. But it is really a matter for great regret that the Muslims do not care to place the Holy Quran into

their hands. It has ever been my belief, and it is now getting stronger and stronger everyday, that a knowledge of the Islamic principles and of the beautiful teachings contained in the Holy Quran and the Holy Prophet's life, is the crying need of the human race today. We should make an all-out effort, a strenuous struggle to provide for this great and world-wide need, both with our actions and prayer. Literature on Islam in the English language is quite ready with us. It has carefully been arranged into sets, each set containing the Holy Quran, the Hadith, and the history and teachings of Islam in seven beautiful volumes. The cost of each set is Rs. 70 only, including postal expenses. If these sets be installed in five thousand libraries of the Western countries — public libraries, college and University libraries, ship libraries, etc. — we shall have paved a good way for the propagation of Islam in those countries. Side by side with this active effort, we should also pray unceasingly to the Almighty God to bring that day to pass soon when the supreme sun of Islam shall illumine the West and the East with all its grandeur and glory.

— From *The Light*, 1 February 1950.

Maulana Muhammad Ali in the eyes of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad

*The Maulana selected by Hazrat Mirza
to carry forward his mission*

Compiled by the Editor

We show in this article that the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, entrusted the task of carrying forward the mission and the work of his Movement to Maulana Muhammad Ali, and that he pronounced the Maulana to be the fit and capable man of performing this task.

1. Hazrat Mirza's first assessments of the Maulana

Shortly after the young Muhammad Ali joined the Ahmadiyya Movement, Hazrat Mirza wrote and published the following opinion about him in an announcement:

“Among the most sincere friends in our community is Maulvi Muhammad Ali, M.A., who, besides his other qualifications, has also just now passed his law examination. For the past few months, at much loss to his own work, he has been staying with me in Qadian to perform a service to religion by translating some of my writings into English. ...

“During this period in which he has been with me, I have been observing him, both openly and discreetly, to assess his moral character, observance of religion and goodness of behaviour. So, thanks be to God, that I have found him to be a most excellent man as regards religion and good behaviour. He is unassuming, modest, of a righteous nature, and pious. He is to be envied for many of his qualities.”

(Announcement dated 9 August 1899, *Majmu'a Ishtiharat*, vol. 3, p. 137, number 206)

Two months later, in another announcement in which Hazrat Mirza mentioned several of the prominent men who had joined the Movement, he writes:

“I am very happy that another good young man, having found the grace of God, has joined our community, that is Maulvi Muhammad Ali, M.A., Pleader. I have very good expectations of him. For a long time he has borne a worldly loss in order to stay in Qadian to serve the religion, and is learning the deep knowledge of the Holy Quran from Hazrat Maulvi Nur-ud-Din.

“I am sure that my foresight will not go wrong in this, that this young man will make progress in the path of God, and I am sure that by the grace of God he will prove to be so firm in righteousness and love of religion that he will set an example worthy to be followed by his peers. O God, let it be so! *Amen*, again *Amen*.”

(Announcement dated 4 October 1899, *Majmu'a Ishtiharat*, vol. 3, p. 157–158, number 208)

In this announcement, Hazrat Mirza has added here a footnote as follows:

“All those books of mine which are published after translation into English are translated by Maulvi Muhammad Ali, M.A.”

2. Expresses deepest love for the Maulana

In a letter to the Maulana in this early period, Hazrat Mirza wrote:

“I hold an extremely favourable opinion about you. This is why I have a special love for you. If your nature had not been pure in the sight of God, I could not possibly have thought so well of you, never. I love you fervently from the bottom of my heart, and often pray for you in the five daily prayers. I hope that at some future time these prayers will show their effect. ... I am busy praying, with heart-felt passion, for your welfare in this world and the hereafter, and your body and soul, and I am awaiting the effects and results of the prayer.”
(Facsimile of letter published in *Mujahid-i Kabir*, page 50)

3. Hazrat Mirza wishes to divide Movement into two!

In another early letter to the Maulana, Hazrat Mirza writes:

“It has long been my intention to divide my community into two groups. One group consists of those who are partly for this world and partly for religion, and are not able to withstand great trials, nor can they render important services to religion. The other group consists of those who enter through this door with full sincerity and faithfulness and in reality sell themselves in this path. I wish that God would include you in the latter group.”
(Letter dated 8 May 1899; facsimile in *Mujahid-i Kabir*, page 32)

In these words Hazrat Mirza has presaged the division of his following into two groups — indeed he has called it his “intention” — one tainted by worldly motives and the other purely devoted to religion, and indicated that Maulana Muhammad Ali will be in the latter group.

4. Appoints Maulana editor of *Review of Religions*

When the Maulana decided to devote his life to the cause of the religion and the Ahmadiyya Movement, and for that purpose came to settle in Qadian in 1899, Hazrat Mirza announced his proposal to start a magazine in English. He wrote:

“It was always a matter of sadness and anxiety for me that all those truths and the spiritual knowledge which have been dis-

closed to me, and are still being made known to me, have not yet benefited the English-educated people of this country or the seekers-after-truth of Europe. This pain was so intense that it was no longer bearable. But God Almighty intends that, before I pass away from this temporary abode, all my aims should be fulfilled ...

“So to fulfil this object, which is the real purpose of my life, there is a suggestion that ... a magazine in English be published for the fulfillment of the objectives mentioned above.”

(15 January 1901, *Majmu'a Ishtiharat*, vol. 3, pages 393–394, number 234)

This magazine was started under the title *The Review of Religions* and Hazrat Mirza appointed Maulana Muhammad Ali as its editor. Most of the articles in the magazine were from the pen of the Maulana, many of them being translations of writings of the Promised Messiah. In a very short time this magazine acquired renown, not only in India but abroad as well.

It should be noted that what Hazrat Mirza has called above as “*the real purpose of my life*”, he appointed the Maulana for its fulfillment.

The following incident was also recorded and published in Hazrat Mirza’s lifetime:

“The *Review of Religions* was being mentioned. A man praised it and said that its articles were of high quality. Hazrat Mirza said:

‘Its editor Maulvi Muhammad Ali is an able and learned man. He has the M.A. degree, and along with it a religious bent of mind. He always passed with top marks and his name had gone forward for E.A.C. But leaving all this he has settled here. This is why God Almighty has blessed his writing.’ ”

(7 November 1906, *Ruhani Khaza'in No. 2*, vol. 9, page 90)

5. Maulana to correct errors in publications

There were two Ahmadiyya community newspapers published in Urdu, *Al-Hakam* and *Al-Badr* (later called just *Badr*), which reported what Hazrat Mirza said during his daily conversations in gatherings of friends and visitors. An incident is recorded as follows concerning the publication of his speeches and spoken statements in these newspapers:

“Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad called in the editors of *Al-Hakam* and *Al-Badr* and emphasized to them that they must be very careful in writing down his speeches, in case something got misreported by mistake, which would then be used by the critics in their support. ... So (added Hazrat Mirza) ‘it is proper that before publishing such articles in your newspapers you should show them to Maulvi Muhammad Ali. You will benefit by this, and also people will be saved from error.’ ”

(2 November 1902, *Ruhani Khaza'in No. 2*, vol. 4, page 159)

This shows that the Promised Messiah had the fullest confidence in Maulana Muhammad Ali as correctly understanding his views and teachings, so much so that he could check if some statement or belief was being wrongly ascribed to the Promised Messiah.

6. Wants people like Muhammad Ali to be produced!

The Promised Messiah highly valued the services of Maulana Muhammad Ali and regarded them as unique, so much so that once he said:

“I wish that such people could be produced who would do the kind of work that Maulvi Muhammad Ali is doing. There is no certainty of life, and he is all alone. One cannot see anyone who can assist him or take his place.”

(*Ruhani Khaza'in No. 2*, vol. 8, page 270)

7. Appoints him secretary of the Anjuman’s executive

In 1906, by means of his will, Hazrat Mirza created an executive body, called the *Sadr Anjuman Ahmadiyya*, to be the supreme ruling body in the Ahmadiyya Movement after him. He described this body as his “successor” and wrote that: “after me, the decision of this Anjuman in every matter will be final”. He appointed the Maulana as the Secretary of the Anjuman, its chief administrative officer.

According to the rules of the Anjuman, as prescribed by Hazrat Mirza, it would have full control over all the finances of the Movement. He wrote in his booklet *Al-Wasiyya* (The Will):

“The Anjuman, which is to hold these funds, shall not be entitled to spend the monies for any purpose except the objects of the Ahmadiyya Movement, and among these

objects the propagation of Islam shall have the highest priority.”

This shows the sovereign power that Hazrat Mirza gave to the body whose secretary he appointed Maulana Muhammad Ali.

8. Gives pen to the Maulana

The Promised Messiah also regarded the Maulana as the inheritor of his knowledge, who would spread in the world the spiritual truths taught by Hazrat Mirza. A dream was related by Hazrat Mirza in which Maulvi Abdul Karim, one of his top-most followers who had died sometime earlier, gave him a pen which had a modern device attached to it that was shaped like a tube, making the pen work very easily without effort. Hazrat Mirza then relates that the following took place in the dream:

“I said: ‘I did not send for this pen’. Maulvi [Abdul Karim] *sahib* replied: ‘Maulvi Muhammad Ali must have sent for it’. I said I would give it to him.”

This pen came from heaven, as it was brought by a great disciple of Hazrat Mirza who had died, and Hazrat Mirza passed it on to Maulana Muhammad Ali. This signifies that Hazrat Mirza passed on to the Maulana the religious knowledge that he received from God and handed to him the task of broadcasting it to the world. Hazrat Mirza’s saying “I did not send for this pen” signifies that he himself would not be wielding this pen personally in his lifetime. And so it was that Maulana Muhammad Ali wielded this pen to produce legendary writings such as his English and Urdu commentaries of the Holy Quran. The feature of the pen mentioned in the dream, that it could write very easily without effort, was also clearly fulfilled in the prolific nature of the writings authored by the Maulana.

9. Directs the Maulana to write a book about Islam

It was reported in the Ahmadiyya newspaper *Badr* during the life of Hazrat Mirza that on 13 February 1907 Hazrat Mirza called in Maulvi Muhammad Ali and said to him:

“I want to fulfil the duty of the propagation of Islam to the Western people by having an English book written, and this is your work. The reason why Islam today is not spreading in those countries, and if someone does become a Muslim he is very weak, is that those people do not know the truth about Islam, nor has it been presented to them. It is

their right that they should be shown the true Islam which God has made manifest to me. ...All those arguments that God has taught me to prove Islam to be true should be collected together in one place. If a comprehensive book along these lines is compiled it is hoped that people would benefit from it greatly.”

(*Ruhani Khaza'in* No. 2, vol. 9, pages 191–192)

The Maulana eventually performed the great service of writing such a book in the form of *The Religion of Islam*, first published in 1936. In the preface of this book he mentions that Hazrat Mirza had asked him to write such a book:

“...the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian, had charged me with the writing of an English book which should contain all that was necessary for a Muslim, or a non-Muslim, to know about the religion of Islam, and to give a true picture of the religion which was largely misrepresented.”

This book was received with acclaim by many famous Islamic writers and reviewers; it prompted the following opening words in his review by Marmaduke Pickthall:

“Probably no man living has done longer or more valuable service for the cause of Islamic revival than Maulana Muhammad Ali of Lahore.”

(*Islamic Culture*, Hyderabad, India, October 1936, page 659)

Further on in this review, Pickthall wrote:

“Such a book is greatly needed at the present day when in many Muslim countries we see persons eager for the reformation and revival of Islam, making mistakes through lack of just this knowledge.”

This is independent confirmation that the Maulana’s book corrected the generally prevailing misconceptions about Islam, which was a chief objective laid down by Hazrat Mirza when he directed the Maulana to write such a book.

It can be seen that Hazrat Mirza handed to the Maulana one of the most important duties of his mission — the presentation of Islam to the West in English in one comprehensive book — telling him “*this is your work*,” and the Maulana was able to fulfil this duty to the highest standard.

10. English translation of the Holy Quran

In 1891, some five or six years before Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad and Maulana Muhammad Ali had first met, Hazrat Mirza had published his book *Izala Auham*, in which he had expressed his heart-felt desire to prepare and send an English translation of the Quran to Western countries. He wrote:

“I want to prepare a *tafsir* [commentary of the Holy Quran], have it translated into English, and sent to these people. I cannot refrain from saying plainly and categorically that this is my work; it is entirely impossible that anyone else could do it as I would or as he would who is my branch and is a part of me.”

(*Izala Auham*, page 773)

Here he declares that the person who does this work would be “my branch and a part of me”. It was Maulana Muhammad Ali who did this work, starting it in 1909, one year after the death of Hazrat Mirza, and publishing it eight years later. Not only was it hailed by many independent reviewers at that time as a marvellous, unequalled work, but even up to today, after the appearance of other translations by Muslims, this translation and commentary is still considered as surpassing all others in scholarship and quality.

Another respect in which the Maulana’s English work excels all others is that it has spawned translations in other languages so that we have this same production available (or to be shortly available) in Dutch, French, Spanish, Russian, German and Polish. This distinction is most unlikely to fall to any other translation of the Holy Quran.

Therefore the Maulana’s translation and commentary has quite clearly fulfilled Hazrat Mirza’s bold prediction in the above quotation that it would be entirely impossible for anyone else to do this work as he could or one who was his branch. It follows that Maulana Muhammad Ali clearly fulfils the description “my branch and a part of me”. The Maulana’s life and work was thus a continuation of the life and work of Hazrat Mirza, and this is what constitutes true successorship. Real and true successorship is not based on physical descent from one’s spiritual guide, or on merely making fanciful claims, but on carrying forward his mission and aims and proving yourself as a worthy successor by virtue of hard work to attain the objectives set by him.

To be continued in the next issue.

Lessons in the Quran – 9

Translation of Mr. N.A. Faruqui’s book

Mu‘ārif-ul-Qur‘ān

Translated by Dr. Mohammad Ahmad, Ohio

Al-Baqarah (The Cow)

“I, Allah, am the best Knower. This Book, there is no doubt in it, is a guide to those who keep their duty.” — The Holy Quran, 2:1–2.

In my previous lesson, I had discussed the significance of the name *Al-Baqarah* (The Cow), and its relationship with the ills of the modern age. The words, “I, Allah, am the best Knower (*Alif-Laam-Meem*),” and “This Book (*Dhalik-al-Kitabu*),” were also discussed.

Authenticity of the Holy Quran

Today we will learn about the remaining part of this verse:

“This Book, there is no doubt in it”.

This statement is a parenthetical clause as it relates to “This Book” and also to the subsequent words, “is a guide to those who keep their duty.”

Let us first consider what having “no doubt” about the Book means. It is mandatory for a revealed book to tell us who it was revealed from, the mode of revelation, who the recipient of the revealed word was, the language of revelation, the time of revelation etc. We observe that no other scripture fulfils these criteria. For example, the Bible does not tell us who it was revealed from. The current four gospels do not give us a clue to this. In fact they are named after the names of their authors, and are clearly the record of events in the life of the Messiah. They were translated from books existing in Greek and Latin which were not the mother tongues of Jesus or his people. If they were revealed in his language, they would have been either in Aramaic or Hebrew. From amongst the four gospels which have information contradicting each other, one cannot decide on the authenticity of any one of them. In fact, none of them can be authentic. In addition to being translations, they cannot be the revealed word of God in their present form, because they were authored by human beings, and present different versions of the life history of the Messiah.

On the contrary, the Holy Quran has left no doubt about itself regarding these matters. It meets all the requirements that I had outlined earlier in this discussion. For example, in the verse I recited in the beginning of our lesson today, we are informed that Allah is the One revealing this book. These questions have been answered with further clarification in the following verses of the Holy Quran:

“And surely this is a revelation from the Lord of the worlds. The faithful spirit has brought it, on thy heart that thou mayest be a warner. In plain Arabic language.” (26:192–195)

Before commenting on these verses, I would like to cite a few more references from the Holy Quran:

“Whoever is an enemy to Gabriel — for surely he revealed it to thy heart by Allah’s command.” (2:97)

This verse is addressed to the Israelites now professing enmity to the Angel Gabriel, who had brought revelation to the prophets of Israel for two thousand years, because he was now bringing it to Holy Prophet Muhammad. It is pointed out that he was now descending upon the heart of the Holy Prophet Muhammad only by the command of Allah. Likewise, in the following verses it is stated:

“And believe in that which has been revealed to Muhammad.” (47:2)

“The month of Ramadan is that in which the Quran was revealed.” (2:185)

“Surely We revealed it on the Night of Majesty.” (97:1)

All these verses prove that Allah, Who is the Lord of the worlds (*Rabb-ul-alameen*), is the One revealing the Holy Quran. The Quranic message is, therefore, for all nations, and is meant to advance them spiritually from a lower to a higher state of development in this life, and the life Hereafter; the Angel Gabriel being the one bringing this message from Allah to the heart of the Holy Prophet Muhammad. It is revealed in Arabic which has been chosen because it can express the wisdom and knowledge of Allah in a most comprehensive and easily understandable manner. The Holy Quran was revealed in the month of Ramadan on the Night of Majesty (*Lailat-ul-Qadr*). Thus there is not a single detail about its revelation which is left out. Where mention is made of the Holy Quran being revealed to the blessed heart of Prophet Muhammad, it is stated, “So that you can become the warner.” Why is this so? This is because the heart

upon which such a powerful revelation descended, itself trembled with humility due to the awe inspired by the Divine word. The Holy Prophet on his return from the cave of Hira, a distance of four or five miles from Makka, was still trembling after having received the first revelation. According to Bukhari (book of the Sayings of the Holy Prophet), the muscles in the neck and shoulders of the Holy Prophet were still trembling with fear, and he asked his wife Hazrat Khadija to cover him up. In spite of being covered up he remained tremulous for quite a while. The same condition re-occurred at the time of the second revelation. According to his wife, Hazrat Ayesha, even afterwards when he became more accustomed to it, he would still break out into a sweat on a cold day. Only the heart of a person who is greatly impressed by the power and dignity of the Divine word is thus capable of warning the rest of humanity.

Another matter in which there can be no doubt concerning the Holy Quran is whether this is the same book from the first to the last letter which was revealed to the Holy Prophet Muhammad. The first point that I would like to mention in this regard is that the Holy Quran is the only scripture in which it has been written down that Allah Himself will protect this Book:

“Surely We have revealed the Reminder, and surely We are its Guardian.” (15:9)

No other revealed scripture has made such a claim. The followers of other books now admit that their originals have been lost and what remains behind is only the translation. Interpolations have occurred in them, and even today changes are being made in them intermittently. Recently the editorial board of the well-known *Readers Digest* eliminated forty percent of the Bible in their edition. In comparison, even critics of Islam admit that no other book in the world is as well preserved today as the Holy Quran. This is because, besides the Divine promise of its preservation, the following measures were taken:

1. The Holy Prophet, as soon as he received a Quranic revelation, would call in one of the scribes, and instruct them to have it written down in its proper location under his own direction. Other revealed scriptures were not written down right away, but in most cases hundreds of years later.

2. The Holy Quran is the only revealed scripture that can be committed to memory, and since the time of the Holy Prophet hundreds of thousands of people have memorized it.

3. The Holy Quran is the only scripture copies of which were circulated worldwide, but no discrepancy can be found amongst the various copies in circulation. This could not have happened without Divine intervention and protection. Thus neither friend nor foe can doubt the authenticity and complete preservation of the Holy Quran.

Meaning of the word *Taqwa*

The Holy Quran “is a guide to those who keep their duty (*hudal-lil-muttaqin*).” The word *taqwa* (verbal noun of *muttaqin*) is mentioned frequently in the Holy Quran. It is therefore important to understand its meaning. In simple language the word *taqwa* means protecting the self from elements which are injurious, painful or detrimental to it. Such injury in case of the human soul is caused by evil and sinful behavior, therefore by definition of Quranic Law (*Shariat*), *taqwa* is defined as guarding against evil, *muttaqi* being one who is careful of, or has regard for, or keeps his duty. Sometimes it is understood as meaning fear, because sin is something one should be most fearful of committing. Harmful and injurious behavior, and bad habits are things that human intellect and nature dislikes. Why does man, then, get involved in these? One reason for this is lack of knowledge that such a path ultimately leads to suffering and fire (that envelops the heart in this life as discontent, and assumes the more palpable form of hell fire in the life Hereafter).

Guidance for the Dutiful

It is, therefore, essential that mankind should be given such knowledge. This is one meaning of ‘guidance for those who keep their duty.’ Guidance, however, is of no use unless it is followed. For example, a doctor instructs us to take a certain medication and follow certain dietary guidelines. If the patient does not act upon this advice, he cannot benefit from it. Matters relating to the inner self, or soul of man, are beyond his comprehension, unless knowledge in this regard is given by Allah, Who created the human spirit. This is the reason why the Holy Quran, in another verse, has been called “Light, guiding thereby” (42:52). *Nur* means the light which illuminates matters relating to the inner self.

Thus the Holy Quran not only gives guidance, but provides the inner light with the help of which man can follow the right path and reach his destination. It can protect him from going in the wrong direction, and warn him of pitfalls and dangers that lurk in the way. In fact, all human faculties of action are two-

fold, i.e., we can utilize them to do good or evil. Let us, for example, take the faculty of speech which distinguishes mankind from the rest of creation. We can use the power of speech to tell the truth or lie, to abuse verbally, or to speak to someone with love. We can talk with it behind people’s backs or remember them for their good qualities. We can use it to disturb law and order, or to create peace and harmony among fellow beings. Thus all human faculties may be used for good or for evil. Therefore, for a person who is *muttaqi* i.e., wants to guard against evil, what greater beneficence is there that he is made aware of the difference between right and wrong in all of his actions. This is the meaning of guidance towards the right path. This Book provides guidance to, and distinguishes between, the right and wrong of every action.

Some people raise the objection that for someone who is already guarding against evil, what is the purpose of telling him about good and evil. As I have already stated, man despite his intention to guard against evil, falls prey to evil and wrongdoing because of incomplete and incorrect knowledge in this matter. For matters relating to the inner self of man, there is need for that inner light which can only be provided by the One Who has created the human spirit. Those who raise such objections are not familiar with the real meaning of the Arabic word *hidayat* or guidance. It means guiding one on the right path with pleasure and kindness till one reaches the desired destination. *Muttaqi* is the one who intends to, and wants to, guard against evil, but he has yet to walk on the right path and reach his destination. The spiritual wayfarer, who guards against evil, does not ever reach a point where he is not in need of guidance from the Holy Quran. After the broad and general directions, the Holy Quran also gives guidance in finer matters of spiritual purification.

As I have mentioned, every human faculty is capable of good or evil. Thus when man benefits from the light of Quranic guidance and guards against evil in all his actions, what remains behind is called righteous action (*amal-i-salih*), the reward for which is paradise (peace and contentment of the heart in this life and the more palpable heavenly blessings of the Hereafter).

E-mail correspondence

Compiled by the Editor

We frequently receive comments and questions by e-mail at our WWW site. Sometimes the replies that we give lead to further communication by e-mail. Some such correspondence during this summer which may interest our readers is compiled below. I have purposely omitted the names and addresses of these correspondents in most cases, since they may not wish these details to be publicized.

1. Praise for Web site from Los Angeles

From the Los Angeles area, the following message was received:

As-salaamu alaikum!

I am a 41-year-old man who was raised a Christian. I have been fascinated with al-Islam for many years. A few months ago, I stumbled upon your website, and was captivated! I love the tolerance and peace the Lahore Ahmadi Muslims preach. I purchased a copy of Maulana Muhammad Ali's translation of Holy Quran, and am enjoying it immensely!

Please send me a price list of your publications — in particular, the Manual of Hadith.

Thank you, and may Allah bless you richly for your efforts.

2. About Qadiani beliefs

The following is another e-mail message sent by one Niaz Azeez:

I have been interacting with Qadiani Ahmadis for the past few weeks, in an attempt to find out about Ahmadiyyat from the Ahmadis themselves. I didn't know about the existence of the Lahori Ahmadiyya Jama'at. My main intent was to confirm whether Ahmadis really considered non-Ahmadis to be disbelievers, and Hazrat Ahmad to be a prophet, since their web-site did not answer the question directly, and I had heard about Ahmadiyyat only from Sunni Muslims, who may not give me a correct and truthful picture of Ahmadiyyat.

After a few discussions, I forced their viewpoint out of them. I was shocked to hear what they said: that it is imperative to acknowledge Hazrat Ahmad as the prophet, to be a "true Muslim".

They use the words "true Muslim" and "true Islam" very cleverly, since there's no such thing as a "false Muslim", and by one who's not a "true Muslim" they imply a "non-Muslim". Just imagine, a person who believes in Allah, and worships Him, and Him alone, and testifies that Muhammad *salla-Allahu-alaihi wasallam* is the messenger of Allah, and that the Quran is the Word of Allah, and follows the Quran and the Sunnah to the best of his abilities, and seeks refuge in Allah and Allah alone, ceases to be a believer by just one thing — not acknowledging that Hazrat Ahmad is the prophet of God. And in the same breath, they insist that there has been no addition to Islam, the Islam taught to us by God, through His Prophet Muhammad (SAW), despite such a significant addition to such a basic tenet of faith. I had a very difficult time trying to make them understand how illogical it sounded.

I believe that whatever reforms Hazrat Ahmad tried to introduce, they were not of a scale that would be descriptive of a prophet of God. He could be better described as a reformer, whose mission was to erase certain misconceptions that were introduced into the faith of Muslims.

Now I have come to know about the other face of Ahmadiyyat — the Lahori Ahmadiyyat. I think it is highly unfortunate that the Pakistan Government (in fact most of Sunni Muslims who have happened to hear about Ahmadiyyat) have included you along with the Qadianis as non-Muslims. Regarding the Qadianis I am not sure who has branded whom as non-Muslims. After making such outrageous claims, I don't know if they deserve to consider it persecution that they are called non-Muslims (when in fact it is exactly what they are doing to Muslims all over the world).

I think it is wrong that you have been bracketed along with the Qadianis, when you certainly don't consider Hazrat Ahmad as a prophet, and have added nothing new to the beliefs of Muslims to be branded as heretics.

But I am not convinced about the truth in Hazrat Ahmad's claim to be a Mujaddid, in view of all the controversies surrounding it. But I am not calling Hazrat Ahmad a liar, or one guided by Satan. I believe that only Allah knows the truth about him, and pray to Him that He always guides me along His path, and never lets me go astray.

Mr Niaz Azeez is very fortunate in possessing the clarity of mind to see through the Qadiani deception. To trap the unwary, the Qadianis deny that they regard other Muslims as non-Muslims outside the fold of Islam, and give the explanation that they only mean that other Muslims are not true or good Muslims. But at the same time they use terms such as “true Muslim” in such a devious way that it can only mean “Muslim”. So the same statement gives to an outside enquirer the impression that they regard other Muslims as Muslims, while to the Qadianis’ own hardened followers that statement is only repeating their existing beliefs (that other Muslims are non-Muslims).

Let me relate a personal experience of two years ago while I was in Columbus, Ohio. An exchange of views, which in fact turned out to be more like a debate, was arranged between some Qadiani representatives and myself. At the end I put it to one of the Qadianis: “You don’t say the funeral prayers of Muslims who are not in your Movement”, to which he replied: “We say funeral prayers for every *Muslim*”, stressing the word *Muslim* just as I have italicized it (although it is not possible to reproduce in print the manner in which he emphasized *Muslim*). An ordinary Muslim hearing this would think that he meant any Muslim, but those in the know are aware that by *Muslim* he meant a Muslim as recognized by the Qadianis, i.e. only someone who is in their movement.

We are delighted that Mr Niaz Azeez has been able to see the difference between our beliefs and the Qadiani creed, and we thank him for his fair and generous comment about our Movement and Hazrat Mirza, and echo the prayer at the end of his letter.

3. From U.S. Air Force convert to Islam

A long letter was received from a gentleman of “Dominican/African-American” origin serving in the U.S. Air Force, currently stationed at a base in Tucson, Arizona. He describes his conversion to Islam in 1994 and then relates his experiences with various groups of Muslims (Nation of Islam, the Warith Deen Muhammad group, orthodox Sunni Muslims), ending in his disillusionment with all these groups. Regarding the orthodox Sunni Muslims, he writes that he was given Abdullah Yusuf Ali’s translation and commentary of the Quran as the authoritative one to read. He continues:

When I had finally decided to actually sit down and read the Quran from cover to cover this was the translation that was presented to me. I had

never read the Quran prior to this except with an extraction here and there and I felt that this translation and commentary was not stimulating my understanding. I was being told by fellow Muslims that this was the best translation because it was the only one that was approved by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and they should know better than anyone. I could not buy into that and so I decided to discontinue my attendance and once again I went back to becoming a nominal Muslim.

In the last part of his letter he describes how he came into contact with the Qadianis in Tucson, what they said about us, and finally how he stumbled across our Web site:

Several months ago I was driving around Tucson and I got lost and I drove upon a mosque that I never knew was there. I thought it was beautiful. I had noticed a banner on the outside with the words “Love for all, hatred for none” below the *kalima* which was displayed in Arabic calligraphy and at the bottom it read “Ahmadi Muslims”. I decided that I would do some research via the Internet and see what were they all about. And so I did just that. I read a substantive amount of Ahmadiyya literature and anti-Ahmadiyya literature and attended the *khutbahs* at their mosque (if I did not have to work; for it is even further away than the Sunni mosque). I must say that I was so impressed and convinced about their understanding and interpretation of Islam that I was ready to give the *bai’at*. But when the day came I hesitated, I was scared, I was unsure, I did not answer the phone when they called my home. Why? It was that day that I realized that in my heart I was sure that Mirza Ghulam Ahmad was the Promised Messiah, but I was not ready to accept him as a Prophet of Allah. Something within was telling me that something was wrong about this picture. And it was that same day that I recalled a previous event when I asked the Imam about “the Split” in the Movement and how he pretty much beat around the bush about the differences. All he told me was that the schism between the Qadianis and the Lahoris was strictly political. The Qadianis accepted the Khalifate and the Lahoris do not. He said the Lahori Movement is dead and Allah had showed whom He favored by the success of the Qadianis compared to the Lahoris. I left it at that and moved on. One week ago I decided to do some more reading about Ahmadiyya and I saw that the Lahoris had set up

their own web-site and my eyebrows were raised and I smiled. Within eight hours I read and went through the whole site.

Of course I must first give all praise to Allah, but I would like to thank you for letting all this information accessible to truth seekers such as myself. May Allah reward you immensely for your efforts. I am most grateful. Be sure that you will be hearing from me as I continue my research into the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement.

Our correspondent has encountered another typical Qadiani tactic, namely to tell people that the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement does not exist anymore, and that their success proves that they are the ones favoured by God. But what is that success which the Qadianis claim? It is not success in making people bow down to God or to follow the Holy Prophet Muhammad, but in making them into merely the slaves and worshippers of a man, namely their *khalifa*.

The Lord of All-encompassing mercy

by Miss Sarah Ahmad, Lahore, Pakistan

All religions of the world lay stress on the love and mercy of God, but it is in Islam that these great Divine attributes find their final and perfect expression. No other sacred book projects the preponderance of the quality of mercy in the Divine Being as much as the Holy Quran; indeed no Divine attribute receives such prominence in the Holy Quran as the attribute of *mercy*.

Almost every chapter of the Quran opens with the expression *Bismillah ar-Rahman ar-Rahim* — In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful. Maulana Muhammad Ali explains the meanings of *Rahman* and *Rahim* in his English commentary of the Quran in the words: '*Rahman* indicates the greatest preponderance of the quality of mercy, and *Rahim* is expressive of a constant repetition and manifestation of the attribute. The Prophet is reported to have said: "*Al-Rahman* is the Beneficent God Whose love and mercy are manifested in the creation of this world, and *Al-Rahim* is the Merciful God Whose love and mercy are manifested in the state that comes after", i.e. in the consequences of deeds of men. Thus the former is

expressive of the utmost degree of love and generosity, the latter of unbounded and constant favour and mercy.'

A Muslim is required to begin every important affair with *Bismillah*, and so seek the assistance of Allah. Other Divine attributes repeatedly occurring in the Quran are *As-Salam* (the Author of Peace), *Al-Mumin* (the Granter of Security), *Al-Ghafur* (the Pardoning) and *Al-'Ufuww* (The Forgiving).

The Quran speaks of Allah as "the Lord of all-encompassing mercy" (6:148) and as "the Most Merciful of those who show mercy" (7:151). Allah's love for His creation is clearly evident from the compensation He has promised for our deeds:

"Whoever brings a good deed will have tenfold like it, and whoever brings an evil deed, will be recompensed only with the like of it, and they shall not be wronged." (6:161)

While evil must have its evil consequence, it is only its like, but virtue brings a tenfold reward. According to a saying of the Holy Prophet, evil is pardoned or recompensed with its like, while good brings from a tenfold to a seven-hundred fold reward (Bukhari, 81:33). Thus the verse mentions only the maximum punishment of evil and the minimum reward of good. Moreover, we are rewarded for our good intentions even if we are unable to translate them into deeds, but we are not called to account for the evil thoughts that come into our minds, as long as we do not purposely cultivate them. We have an opportunity to fight our evil inclinations and it is a signal victory if we succeed in suppressing them, by Allah's help. This is why the believers are taught to seek the protection of Allah, Who is the Possessor of power over all things, from the promptings of Satan. Even if one has done wrong, one is not to despair, for there is always time for sincere repentance if one realizes the error of one's ways, as Allah consoles the sinners in the Holy Quran:

"Your Lord has ordained mercy on Himself, (so) that if any of you does evil in ignorance, then turns after that and acts aright, then He is the Forgiving, the Merciful." (6 :54)

A similar assurance is given in 7:153 which says:

"And those who do evil deeds, then repent after that and believe — thy Lord after that is surely Forgiving, Merciful."

There is evil in the world and the evil-doers must receive their due, so that Allah is described as being "Swift in calling to account" (13:41), but just mark the

contrast between the Divine quality of mercy and that which is Severe in requiting evil as expressed in 7:156:

“He said: I afflict with My chastisement whom I please, and My mercy encompasses all things.”

In fact, it is proclaimed in 11:119 that Allah created all men to have mercy on them:

“Except those on whom thy Lord has mercy; and for this did He create them.”

Some are guided to the right path by His mercy, while to the others, who go over to evil and make themselves deserving of hell, mercy comes only after suffering. For the truth is that even chastisement is a phase of Divine mercy, because it seeks not to punish, but to correct the evil-doers, who get into distress and difficulty by their own hands by stubbornly insisting on going against the ways which Allah showed them through His mercy. Therefore, they must pass through the ordeal of hell to purge them of evil and make them fit for the spiritual progress which is the real goal of human life.

It may be pointed out in this context that the punishment of hell is by no means everlasting, as some people seem to think as a result of their misinterpretation of the verses of the Holy Quran. The fate of the iniquitous and the righteous is spoken of in 11:105–108:

“On the day when it comes, no soul will speak except by His permission; so (some) of them will be unhappy and (others) happy. Then as for those who are unhappy, they will be in the Fire; for them therein will be sighing and groaning — abiding therein so long as the heavens and the earth endure, except as thy Lord please. Surely thy Lord is Doer of what He intends. And as for those who are made happy, they will be in the Garden abiding therein so long as the heavens and the earth endure, except as thy Lord please — a gift never to be cut off.”

A limitation is thus placed upon the duration of the abiding in hell in the words *except as thy Lord please*, which clearly show that the punishment of hell is not everlasting. It may be argued that the same is also said of those in paradise, but the statement in that case is immediately followed by another, *A gift never to be cut off*, showing that there is no limitation upon the eternity of paradise — another remarkable instance of the tremendous mercy of Allah.

Another thing which must be absolutely clear is that the Holy Quran does not portray hell as a place merely for undergoing the consequences of what has been done; it is also a remedial plan to heal the spiritual diseases that a person has incurred by his own negligence. Thus the purpose of its chastisement is not to torture those who dared to go against Divine commandments, but to purify them and awaken them to a higher life making them fit for spiritual advancement. In fact, a little consideration reveals that it is of no consequence to Allah whether a person does good or evil: good is enjoined because it aids the progress of man, and evil is prohibited because it retards that development. If a person does good, it is to his own benefit; and if he does evil, he himself suffers from it. Hence, Allah’s concern for our deeds springs from His mercy and according to the teaching of the Quran and the Sayings of the Prophet, all those in hell, whether Muslims or non-Muslims, shall ultimately, when they are fit for a new life, be released from it. A Saying of the Prophet is recorded in *Kanz al-Ummal* (vii, 245):

“Surely a day will come over hell when there will not be a single human being in it.”

And there is another Saying of the Prophet:

“Then will Allah say: The angels and the prophets and the faithful have all in their turn interceded for the sinners and now there remains none to intercede for them except the most Merciful of the merciful ones. So He will take out a handful from the Fire and bring out a people *who never worked any good*.” (Bukhari, 97:24)

According to this hadith the Beneficent exercises His mercy even towards those who have never done anything to deserve it !

No religion gives an erring soul the solace and comfort which is to be found in Islam. There is sheer contentment and immense peace of mind in the teachings which rescue a sinner from abysmal misery, with the tidings that one should never despair of the infinite mercy of Allah. I will conclude with a beautiful verse of the Quran disclosing the all-comprehensive mercy of Allah, before which the sins of men become quite insignificant:

“Say: O My servants who have been prodigal regarding their souls, despair not of the mercy of Allah; Surely Allah forgives sins altogether. He is indeed the Forgiving, the Merciful.” (39:53)

May He forgive ours! (*Ameen*)

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