

H A Ḍ R A T

**MIR MUHAMMAD
ISMAL**

Sayed Hameedullah Nusrat Pasha

“He, it is, who raised among the Ummiyyīn (the unlettered ones) a Messenger from among themselves who recites unto them His signs, and purifies them, and teaches them the Book and Wisdom, although they had been, before this, in manifest misguidance. And also, among the Ākharīn (the latter ones) from among them, who have yet, not joined them. He is the Mighty, the Wise.”

– *Holy Qur’ān, Sūrah al-Jumu‘ah: 3-4*

DEDICATED TO

***Leader of the Ummiyyīn and of the Ākharīn
– Muhammad the Chosen One –
May Peace and blessings of Allah be upon him***



Hadrat Mir Muhammad Ismail^{ra}

English rendering of *Hadrat Mir Muhammad Ismail^{ra}*
(Urdu)

Written by Sayed Hameedullah Nusrat Pasha

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The original Urdu version of this book, titled “Ḥaḍrat Mir Muhammad Ismail” was written on the instructions of Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ V – may Allah be his Helper – on the occasion of the Khilafat Centenary Celebrations in 2008. The first edition in Urdu, which was an abridged edition, was published in 2008. The second Urdu edition, with the complete text, was published by Naẓārat Nashr-o-Ishā‘at Qadian in 2009, while a third edition was published by Wakālat Taṣnīf London in 2013.

This book is the English version of the latest Urdu edition of “Ḥaḍrat Mir Muhammad Ismail”. It has been rendered into English by the author himself. The Urdu poetry of Ḥaḍrat Mir Ismail quoted in this book, has also been translated into English by the author. The author admits that any translation of poetry would have to be at the cost of the lustre of the original words.

Sayed Hameedullah Nusrat Pasha
Rabwah, 2023

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I N D E X

TITLES, NAMES, ALTERNATIVE SPELLINGS & SIMPLIFIED PRONUNCIATIONS

Ḥaḍrat: Ḥaḍrat / Hazrat: A title for reverence.

Ḥuḍūr: Ḥuḍūr / Huzur / Huzoor: Pronounced [Hu-zoor / Hu-dour]. A derivative of “Ḥaḍrat”, carrying the same sense.

Holy Prophet: Ḥaḍrat Muhammad^{sas} the Messenger of Allah

Sayyidul-Anām: Sayyidul-Anām / Sayyedul Anaam. Pronounced [Sai-yi-dul a-naam]. Means “Chief of all creation”. Refers to the Holy Prophet Muhammad.

Qur’ān: Qur’ān / Quran / Qur’an: Pronounced [Qur-aan]. The Word of God and holy scripture of Islam.

Islam: Pronounced [Iss-laam]

Sīratun-Nabī: Sīratun-Nabī / Seeratun-Nabī, pronounced [See-ra-tun-Nabī]. Refers to the “Biography and character description of the Holy Prophet Muhammad”.

Na‘t: Na‘t / Naat. Pronounced [Naat]. Refers to a poem written in praise of the Holy Prophet Muhammad.

Nabiyyullāh: Nabiyyullāh / Nabiyyullah. Pronounced [Nabi-yul-laah]. Means “prophet of Allah”.

Ummiyyīn: Ummiyyīn / Ummiyyeen: Pronounced [Um-mee-yeen], meaning the “unlettered ones”. Refers to the companions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, also known as the Ṣaḥābah.

Ākharīn: Ākharīn / Akhareen: Pronounced [Aa-kha-reen], meaning the “the latter ones”. Refers to the companions of the Promised Messiah.

Ṣaḥābah: Sahaba / Sahabah. Pronounced [Sa-haa-ba], meaning “companions”.

Jumu‘ah: Jumu‘ah / Jumuah: Pronounced [Jumu-ah]. Means “Friday”, and is also the title of the chapter 62 of the Holy Qur’an.

Masiḥ Mau‘ūd: Masīḥ Mau‘ūd / Masih Mau‘ood. Pronounced [Ma-seeh Mau-ood], meaning “Promised Messiah”.

Promised Messiah: Ḥaḍrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian.

Nabiyyullāh: Nabiyyullah. Pronounced [Nabi-yul-laah]. Means “prophet of Allah”.

Khalīfatullāh: Pronounced [kha-lee-fa-tul-laah]. Means “vicegerent of Allah”.

Khalīfatul Rasūl: Pronounced [kha-lee-fa-tur-rasool]. “vicegerent of the Messenger^{as}”

Imam Mahdi: Pronounced [Imaam Mah-dee], meaning “Guided Leader”. Refers to Ḥaḍrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian.

Mahdi: Mahdī / Mahdi: Pronounced [Mah-dee], meaning “Guided One”.

Khalīfatul-Masīḥ: Khalīfatul-Masīḥ / Khalifatul Masih: Pronounced [Kha-lee-fa-tul Ma-seeh] Successor of the Promised Messiah^{as} Ḥaḍrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as}.

Jamā‘at: Jamā‘at / Jamaat: Pronounced [Ja-maa-at], meaning “Community”.

Muṣliḥ Mau‘ūd: Musliḥ Mau‘ūd / Musleh Mau‘ood. Pronounced [Mus-lih Mau-ood], meaning “Promised

Reformer”. Refers to Ḥaḍrat Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmood Ahmad, Khalīfatul Masīḥ II.

ṣas: Abbreviation for *ṣallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam* (may peace and blessings of Allah be on him): a prayer offered on the mention of the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{ṣas}

as: Abbreviation for *‘alaihis-salām* (on whom be peace)

ra: Abbreviation for *raḍiyallāhu ‘anhu/‘anhā* (Allah be pleased with him/her) or *raḥmatullāhi ‘alaihi* (Allah have mercy on him/her)

Ṣūfī: Ṣūfī / Sufi: Pronounced [Soo-fee]. Means “mystic” or “saint”.

Taṣawwuf: Taṣawwuf / Tasawwuf: Pronounced [Ta-sawwoof]. Means “mysticism”.

Ṭarīqah: Tareeqa: Pronounced [ta-ree-qah]. Means “way”.

Silsila: Silsila / Silsilah: Pronounced [sil-si-lah]. Literally, means “chain”. Used in the sense of a “Spiritual Order”.

Durr-e-Thamīn: Durr-e-Thamīn / Durr-e-Samīn / Durr-e-Sameen: Pronounced [Dur-ray Thameen / Dur-ray Sameen]. Collection of poems written by the Promised Messiah^{as}

Ammāñ Jān: Ammāñ Jān / Amma Jan: Pronounced [Ammā Jaan], meaning “dear mother”. This is a title used for Ḥaḍrat Sayyeda Nusrat Jahan Begum, the wife of the Promised Messiah^{as}.

Aṣḥāb: Aṣḥāb / As’hab: Pronounced [As-haab], meaning “companions”.

Ismail: Pronounced [Iss-maa-eel]

Ishaq: Pronounced [Iss-haaq]

Bukhār-e-Dil: Bukhār-e-Dil / Bukhar-e Dil / Bukhar-e-Dil: Pronounced [Bu-khaa-ray Dil] Collection of poems written in Urdu by Ḥaḍrat Mir Muhammad Ismail^{ra}. All

English quotations from the anthology “*Bukhār-e-Dil*”, presented in this book, are actually English translations done by the author of this book. “*Bukhār-e-Dil*” is in Urdu.

Sayyed/Sayyeda: Spelled as: Sayyid / Sayyed / Syed / Sayed. All of these spellings are correct and all are in vogue. The diversity in spellings of names is essentially a matter of the individual’s personal choice.

A title of respect which may also be part of the bearer’s name. Used for members of the physical progeny of the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{sa}. In English, this name is pronounced [Sai-yid].

Mir: Pronounced [Meer]. A title for respect.

Ghufrān: Pronounced [Ghuf-raan], means “forgiveness”.

Sabīl: Pronounced [Sa-beel]: Means “path”.

Begum: Pronounced [Bay-gum]: Literally, means “lady”. When used as a suffix at the end of a lady’s name, it means ‘lady’. When used as a prefix before a male name, it carries the same sense as the title of ‘Mrs.’ does.

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Ḥadrat Mir Muhammad Ismail
(1881 – 1947)

1: INTRODUCTION

Allah, the one true God, as introduced to us in the Holy Qur'ān, has been described as The Gracious and The Merciful. Like He Himself, His Mercy too, is infinitely vast. In fact, His Mercy, much like His Oneness, is a defining feature of His Divinity. And among all the beautiful manifestations of His Mercy, as presented and explained to us by the Holy Qur'ān, the most enchanting and all-encompassing one of all, is the blessed being and person of His apostle, prophet and messenger, Muhammad^{sas}. Muhammad^{sas} the Messenger of God, according to Islam, is the reason for all creation. According to the Holy Qur'ān, he is the Seal of the Prophets. He is God's mercy personified. He, according to the Word of God, is Divine Mercy itself - mercy that transcends all bounds of time and space. No land or era confines the beneficence of Muhammad^{sas}, or limits his blessings. His blessings are therefore, universal and timeless. The Holy Qur'ān, hence, crowns this unique messenger of God with the unique title of *Raḥmatun-lil-Ālamīn* which means "Mercy for all worlds".

While indeed, the entire human race has been granted free access to the blessings of Muhammad^{sas}, yet, according to the Qur'ān, there are two categories of humans in particular, that were, by God's own scheme, destined to receive the greatest share of his spiritual radiance. In the 62nd Chapter or *Sūrah* of the Holy Qur'ān, called *Sūrah*

al-Jumu'ah, these two most fortunate categories of humans, have been mentioned as the *Ummiyyīn*¹ [um-mee-yeen] and the *Ākharīn*² [aa-kha-reen] respectively. The Arabic expression "Ummiyyīn", literally, means the "unlettered people" and refers broadly to the admittedly unlettered Arab people among whom the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{sas} appeared and lived. This is not, as could easily be mistaken for, a pejorative term. On the contrary, this term best describes a people not given to the artificial and pretentious refinement of what is generally known as "culture", hence, the expression "unlettered". This, in other words, is the title given to those desert-dwellers who were blessed with the rarest honour of living in the physical presence of the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{sas}. In short, "*Ummiyyīn*" refers to the Companions of the Holy Prophet or *Ṣaḥābah* [sa-haa-ba], as they are customarily called. Regarding the other group, the *Ākharīn*, or "the latter ones", Allah says, "*And a latter group from among them*"³, referring in a prophetic tone, to a foretold group of believers - the "saints of the latter days" - who in spite of not having shared the time and space of the Holy Prophet^{sas} with him in the physical sense, were by the will of God, destined to be blessed by him in an indirect manner. We learn from the Holy Qur'ān as well as from the sayings of the Holy Prophet^{sas} that this foretold party of the faithful, was destined to inherit the Holy Prophet's spiritual blessings through the medium and agency of a foretold religious guide, mentioned in the prophecies as the *Imam Mahdī* - meaning the "Guided Leader".

The Holy Prophet^{sas} had very clearly forewarned his professed followers - the Muslim Ummah - that after him,

an age of darkness would ensue, which would eventually engulf the Muslims. But, on the other hand, he also gave them the glad tidings of a Divinely guided leader - the Imam Mahdī - who would appear in that age of darkness as their Saviour, and guide and lead them out of that darkness. By means of this two-faceted prophecy, he warned his Ummah of the appearance of the Antichrist, called the Dajjal [Daj-jaal], and also gave them the good news of the *Mahdī* who would deliver them from the Dajjal. It is this great prophecy that carries in it, the promise for the final victory of Truth. Allah promised His Messenger^{sas}, and His Messenger^{sas} in turn, promised the human race of the appearance of the Mahdī. It is for this reason that in Islamic Eschatology the Mahdī is commonly referred to as the *Mau'ūd* or the "promised one". Moreover, as narrated frequently in the sayings of the Holy Prophet^{sas} (the Hadith), it was also predestined that the Promised Mahdī would come in the spirit of Jesus Christ, and his advent would, thus, figuratively symbolize the second advent of Jesus^{as}. Hence, in the prophecies of the Holy Prophet^{sas}, the Mahdī has also been metaphorically spoken of as "Jesus", "Son of Mary" and "Messiah". The terms, "Imam Mahdī" and "Promised Messiah" are, therefore, not only synonymous but also interchangeable.

Even today, monarchs and leaders bestow upon their favoured ones, titles of honour. But such titles are not necessarily founded on facts. In contrast to worldly titles, a title granted by an apostle of God, is always factual and invariably based on veracity. For instance, the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{sas} named Ḥadrat Abu Bakr^{ra} "*Ṣiddīq*" because he was, by all standards, the most truthful or

"*Ṣiddīq*" person of his time. The Holy Prophet^{sas} named Ḥaḍrat Ali^{ra} "*Asadullah*" meaning Lion of Allah, because he genuinely lived up to being the "Lion of God". In the same vein, he prophetically named the Awaited Maḥdī, the "Messiah" and "Jesus" because it was predestined by God Himself that the Awaited Maḥdī would be a spiritual replica of Jesus^{as} of Nazareth.

In order to prevent his Ummah from being misled to the erroneous conclusion that these two titles - Maḥdī and Messiah - referred to two distinct and separate individuals, the Holy Prophet^{sas} further elucidated his prophecy by stating: "*There shall be no Maḥdī other than Jesus*"⁴. A clarification in more clear terms than these was obviously not possible. In another saying of his, he declares: "*Jesus son of Mary - the Imam Maḥdī*"⁵, spelling out elaborately that the Promised Messiah and the Awaited Maḥdī would be one and the same. In short, whether we refer to the awaited guide of the latter days as the "Maḥdī", or as "Jesus the Second" or as the "Promised Messiah", it was through this foretold teacher that the spiritual blessings of the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{sas} were destined to illuminate the world afresh, in the latter days.

The "*Ākharīn*" have also been referred to in the Hadith as the *Aṣḥāb*⁶ [As-haab] or "Companions" of the Promised Messiah^{as}. The Holy Prophet^{sas} said, regarding the Second Jesus and his Companions:

"Jesus [the Second] the Nabīyyullāh [prophet of God], and his Companions will turn to and remain committed to Allah"⁷

By explicitly designating the Promised Messiah as *Nabiyyullāh*⁸ which means "prophet of Allah", the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{sas} actually prophesied the appearance of a non-law-bearing and subordinate prophet among his followers, who would be sent to revive Islam. The very concept of a "follower-prophet" or "subordinate prophet" - for which the term *Ummatī Nabī* is also used - is by its very definition, a prophet whose ministry is not independent, but rather, wholly dependent upon the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{sas}. As a "follower-prophet", the Promised Messiah was to be subsequent and subservient to his master, the Holy Prophet Muhammad. A "follower-prophet", as a concept, is in other words, uniquely a *Khalīfatullāh* (vicegerent of God) as well as a *Khalīfatur-Rasool* (vicegerent of God's Messenger^{sas}), at the same time. A "follower-prophet" is thus, someone who is simultaneously, a disciple and servant of the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{sas} and also someone to whom God speaks. This unique status of the Promised Messiah has been determined by none other than the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{sas} himself. It is obviously, therefore, of little consequence, whether or not, this concept wins the popular acceptance of people. This fact remains unchangeable that it was the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{sas} himself who decreed that the Awaited Messiah^{as} would be a "follower-prophet", subordinate to the Holy Prophet himself.

This great promise of God and of His Messenger^{sas}, was eventually fulfilled in 1889. In 1889, Allah commissioned Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as} of Qadian as the Mahdī and Messiah, in order to revive the true celestial spirit of Islam, and to spread the true message of the Qur'ān, and

to re-establish the Sunnah of the Prophet in its truest spirit. Just as Jesus^{as} the Messiah appeared thirteen centuries after Prophet Moses^{as}, so did Ahmad^{as} the Messiah appear thirteen centuries after Muhammad^{sas} - the Prophet of Islam. The “promise” was kept and a great prophecy was finally fulfilled. With the appearance of the Promised Messiah, a new flock of believers - his disciples - foretold in the Qur’ān as the "*Ākharīn*" (pronounced Aa-kha-reen), and referred to in the Hadith as the "*Aṣḥāb*" (Companions) of the Messiah^{as}, also emerged.

This great prophecy of the Holy Prophet^{sas} has been recorded in Sahih Muslim, which happens to be one of the most authentic compilations of his sayings. This Hadith also highlights a remarkable sign of the Promised Messiah and his Companions, which is their *Raghat ilallāh* or “unflinching devotion to God”. The simple message of this prophecy is that the final victory of Islam in the latter days, would be due to the devotion of the Messiah and his disciples. It would be by means of their humble prayers and supplications, and not by means of any material, political or militant struggle. The true power of the Promised Messiah^{as} and his disciples, according to the prophecy, hence, would be their relationship with God. The *Aṣḥāb* or "Companions of the Messiah", along with the Messiah^{as} himself, thus, enjoy the rare privilege of having been mentioned prophetically with great affection, by the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{sas}, an honour of immeasurable worth indeed.

This book is about the life of one such companion of the

Promised Messiah^{as}. This companion's name was Mir Muhammad Ismail^{ra} (1881-1947). He was one of the many "*Aṣḥāb*" of the Mahdī, and thus, a member of the blessed party of the "*Ākharīn*". His real name was *Sayyed Muhammad Ismail*. In Delhi, the Sayyeds, or members of the physical progeny of the Holy Prophet^{as} were, out of sheer reverence, called *Mīr*, [pronounced *Meer*] or *Khwājah*, [pronounced *Khwaah-jah*], both of which are customary titles of honour. "Sayyed", alternatively spelled in English, as "Sayed", "Syed", and "Sayyid", is actually more of a title than a name. The tradition of calling Sayyeds "*Mīr*" and "*Khwājah*" seems to have travelled along with these families who migrated from Bukhara to Delhi, several centuries ago. Since the elders of Ḥaḍrat Sayyed Muhammad Ismail^{ra} had retained the epithet of "*Mīr*" as a part of their names, so did he. Hence, he became popularly known as "Mir Muhammad Ismail".

Other than being a disciple and companion of the Promised Messiah^{as}, Ḥaḍrat Mir Muhammad Ismail^{ra} also had the rare privilege of being his brother-in-law. He was the brother of Ḥaḍrat Ammāñ Jān - Sayyeda Nusrat Jahan Begum^{ra}, the esteemed wife of the Promised Messiah and Mahdī – Ḥaḍrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as} of Qadian.

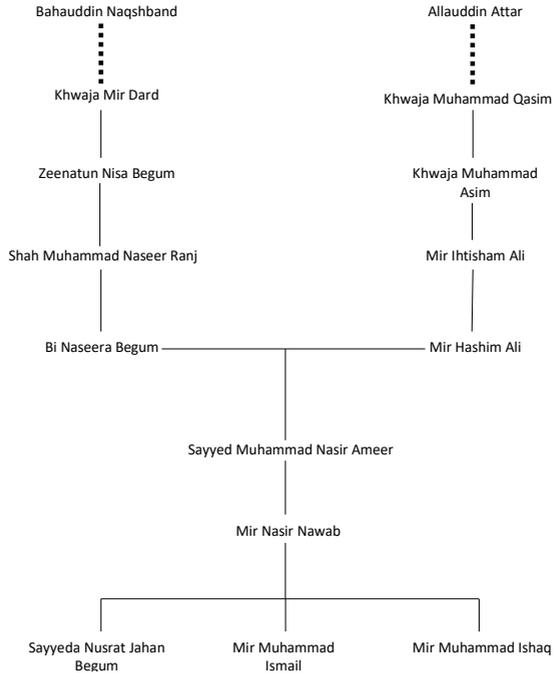
2: FAMILY BACKGROUND

Mir Muhammad Ismail - son of - Mir Nasir Nawab - son of - Sayyed Muhammad Nasir Ameer - son of - Mir Hashim Ali - son of - Mir Ihtisham Ali - son of - Khwaja Muhammad Aasim - son of - Khwaja Muhammad Qasim

ANCESTRY

The physical progeny of the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{sas}, is collectively, known as the *Sādāt*, plural for *Sayyed*. Ḥaḍrat Mir Muhammad Ismail^{ra} was born in a noble and renowned family of the *Sādāt* (Sayyeds) in Delhi, in 1881. According to his lineage, he was of Ḥusainī descent, meaning that he was from among the progeny of Ḥaḍrat Imam Husain^{ra}, the grandson of the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{sas}. The family tree of his paternal grandfather is as follows⁹ :

Family Tree of Ḥaḍrat Mir Muhammad Ismail (6 Preceding Generations)



Key:

Vertical Line: Immediately next generation

Vertical Dotted Line: Multiple generations

As can be seen from this family tree, Ḥaḍrat Mir Muhammad Ismail's father was Ḥaḍrat Mir Nasir Nawab^{ra}, his grandfather was Sayyed Muhammad Nasir Ameer, and great grandfather was Mir Hashim Ali. The father of Mir Hashim Ali was Mir Ihtisham Ali, and Mir Ihtisham Ali's father was Khwaja Muhammad Aasim (died 1738), who was a decorated army general in the Mughal Army and had earned the military title of "Nawab Khan-e-Dauran" on account of his meritorious services. Mir Hashim Ali married Bi Naseera Begum, who was the daughter of Shah Muhammad Naseer Ranj, who in turn, was the grandson of Ḥaḍrat Khwaja Mir Dard (1720-1785), an eminent saint of his time and a renowned poet as well. The marriage of Mir Hashim Ali and Bi Naseera Begum brought together two prominent families of the Husaini Sayyeds settled in Delhi, the family of Khwaja Muhammad Aasim and the family of Khwaja Mir Dard. Khwaja Muhammad Aasim was a descendant of Ḥaḍrat Sayyed Muhammad Alauddin Attar (1319-1400), a renowned saint and Khwaja Mir Dard was a descendant of Ḥaḍrat Sayyed Muhammad Bahauddin Naqshband (1317-1389), another notable saint who was also the founder of the Naqshband Order of Islamic Mysticism. Both of these sages are ranked among the greatest Muslim saints of Bukhara, both were descendants of Ḥaḍrat Imam Husain and both were spiritual leaders of the Naqshband Ṣūfī Order.

Ḥaḍrat Khwaja Mir Dard^{ra} was the maternal grandfather of the maternal grandfather of the paternal grandfather of Ḥaḍrat Mir Muhammad Ismail^{ra}. Khwaja Mir Dard's father, Ḥaḍrat Khwaja Muhammad Nasir^{ra} was another

saintly figure, also known for his poetry in Persian, who wrote under the pen-name of *Andaleeb*, meaning "nightingale". *Andaleeb* was not only a great saint of his time but also an authority on Islamic mysticism. Khwaja Mir Dard considered his father Ḥaḍrat Khwaja Nasir Andaleeb^{ra} the *Mujaddid* or Reformer of the twelfth century of Islam. Ḥaḍrat Khwaja Muhammad Nasir Andaleeb was also the founder of an order of Islamic mysticism, called the "*Ṭarīqah Muhammadiyya*" or "*Silsila Muhammadiyya*".

The history of Islam is studded with sages and saints who either followed a prevalent order of mysticism or started a new one. An order of mysticism is known either as a *Silsilah* (meaning Chain) or a *Ṭarīqah* (meaning Way). Each mystical order, while remaining within the bounds of Islamic teachings, has its own peculiar set of priorities in relation to the subtleties of worship and prayer. Ḥaḍrat Khwaja Nasir Andaleeb was a Godly person who had ample experience of Divinely revealed visions and inspirations. Once, he had a truly amazing vision. In this vision, he met Ḥaḍrat Imam Hassan^{ra}, the grandson of the Holy Prophet^{sas}. Imam Hassan^{ra} said to him:

"I am Hassan Mujtaba, son of Ali^{ra} Murtaza, and I have come to you on the wishes of the Holy Prophet^{sas}, so that I may enrich you with the gift of spirituality and enlightenment. The Family of the Holy Prophet^{sas} had reserved a special gift for you, a gift that was destined to commence with you and culminate in the Promised Mahdī^{as}".¹⁰

In the same vision, it was also revealed to Ḥaḍrat Khwaja Nasir Andaleeb that a new spiritual order had been bestowed upon him, and he was informed in this vision by Ḥaḍrat Imam Hassan^{ra} that this new spiritual order would be called *Ṭarīqah Muḥammadiyya*.¹¹

According to the details of this vision, the Holy Prophet^{sas} had sent Ḥaḍrat Imam Hassan^{ra} as his emissary to Ḥaḍrat Khwaja Nasir Andaleeb^{ra}, to convey to him a specially selected gift of spirituality and enlightenment, and was informed that this gift would commence with him and culminate in the Promised Mahdī^{as}. The details of this vision deserve to be examined in conjunction with another vision of another man of God, who appeared about two hundred years later - the Mahdī^{as}. Two hundred years after this spiritual experience of Ḥaḍrat Khwaja Nasir Andaleeb, during the late hours on 27 October 1900, Ḥaḍrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as} the Promised Mahdī had a heavenly vision in which he heard the voice of the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{sas} addressing him in the following words:

*"At the fountainhead of Hassan^{ra}"*¹²

It is for this reason that the Promised Messiah^{as} speaks of himself as having been blessed at the spiritual fountainhead of Imam Hassan^{ra}. These two visions, although two centuries apart, suggest that both Ḥaḍrat Nasir Andaleeb^{ra} and the Promised Messiah^{as}, had a common spiritual affinity for the "Path of Hassan^{ra}". In Islamic mysticism, Imam Hassan^{ra} symbolizes "peace and

peace-making”, and the Path of Hassan^{ra}, hence, refers to the Path of the Peacemakers.

Eventually, as destiny would have it, the spiritual commonality between Ḥaḍrat Nasir Andaleeb and the Promised Mahdī^{as} took the form of a more tangible relationship. In 1884, Ḥaḍrat Sayyeda Nusrat Jahan Begum^{ra}, a seventh-generation descendant of Ḥaḍrat Khwaja Muhammad Nasir Andaleeb, founder of the *Silsila Muhammadiyya* or the Muhammadiyya Order, was married to Ḥaḍrat Ahmad the Mahdī, founder of the *Silsila Ahmadiyya* or the Ahmadiyya Order in Islam. Ḥaḍrat Khwaja Mir Dard, the son and disciple of Ḥaḍrat Khwaja Nasir Andaleeb, elaborating upon the prophecy borne in his father's vision, writes:

“.....and eventually, this pristine bond of *Muhammadiyya* would epitomize in the person of the Promised Mahdī. The entire world would then, be illuminated by a single light, and the individual radiances of all preceding spiritual orders would blend into the luminance of the Great Star”
- [Maekhana-e-Dard p. 128]

The "Great Star" here, refers to the Promised Mahdī and Messiah. And so, it happened. The spiritual light of the Muhammadiyya Order, in accordance with this prophecy, merged with and blended into the light of the successive spiritual order - the Ahmadiyya Order.

The dual gift of "spirituality and enlightenment" which was bestowed upon Ḥaḍrat Khwaja Nasir Andaleeb^{ra},

reached its highest point with the appearance of the Promised Mahdī^{as}. This phenomenon, unfolded itself in three different ways. Firstly, the gift of “spirituality and enlightenment” was elevated to a higher level by means of the Mahdī^{as}, Secondly, the mystical order known as the “Muhammadiyya Order”, lived its predestined life and gave way to a new successive celestial order called the *Silsila Ahmadiyya* or the “Ahmadiyya Order”. Thirdly, by getting married to a direct descendant of Ḥaḍrat Khwaja Nasir Andaleeb^{ra}, the Promised Mahdī^{as}, in effect became his son-in-law and hence, part of his family and progeny.

The family of Ḥaḍrat Mir Muhammad Ismail^{ra}, which had the privilege of being the physical descendants of the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{sas}, had now also acquired the honour of becoming the in-laws of the Promised Mahdī^{as}. This reminds us of the following words, revealed by God to the Promised Messiah^{as}:

"God, who has bestowed upon you a marital arrangement with a noble family who are Sayyed, is the True God. Also, He has made your own descent from a noble family which is a compound mix of Persians and Sayyeds." ¹³

HIS PARENTS

Ḥaḍrat Mir Muhammad Ismail's^{ra} father, as already mentioned, was Ḥaḍrat Mir Nasir Nawab^{ra}, who was the son of Sayyed Muhammad Nasir Ameer. Ḥaḍrat Mir Ismail's mother was Ḥaḍrat Sayyed Begum^{ra}, who was the

daughter of Sayyed Abdul Kareem. His parents, Ḥaḍrat Mir Nasir Nawab^{ra} and Ḥaḍrat Sayyed Begum^{ra}, as already mentioned, were also the eminent in-laws of the Promised Messiah^{as}. Both were extremely pious and God-fearing people. Both showed great love for God and His Messenger^{as}. Ḥaḍrat Mir Nasir Nawab^{ra} was an upright and straightforward person, honest to the core. He accepted the Promised Messiah^{as} and after swearing allegiance to his own son-in-law, migrated from his hometown Delhi to Qadian, and lived there for the rest of his life. Ḥaḍrat Mir Nasir Nawab^{ra} was born in 1846 and died in 1924.

Ahmadis call Ḥaḍrat Sayyeda Nusrat Jahan Begum^{ra}, the esteemed wife of the Promised Messiah^{as}, "*Ammāñ Jān*" which means "Dear Mother". Consequently, in Qadian, the revered parents of Ḥaḍrat Ammāñ Jān^{ra} were affectionately addressed, by Ahmadis, as "*Nānā Jān*" and "*Nānī Jān*", titles used in Urdu, to address maternal grandparents. Thus, Ḥaḍrat Mir Nasir Nawab^{ra} was known to all Ahmadis as "*Nānā Jān*" and Ḥaḍrat Sayyed Begum^{ra} as "*Nānī Jān*".

In his autobiography titled "*Ḥayāt-e Nāṣir*", Ḥaḍrat Mir Nasir Nawab^{ra} lauds his wife in the following words:

"The affection showed by my wife has turned this very world into Heaven, for me"¹⁴.

Besides being an outstandingly rare accolade from a husband to a wife, these words speak volumes about the refined character of Ḥaḍrat Sayyed Begum^{ra}.

Both the parents of Ḥaḍrat Mir Muhammad Ismail^{ra} lie buried next to each other, in the *Bahishtī Maqbarah* in Qadian. Ḥaḍrat Mir Nasir Nawab^{ra} and Ḥaḍrat Sayyeda Begum^{ra} had thirteen children, only three of whom survived, a daughter and two sons, and their progeny continues till this day through these three:

- 1: Ḥaḍrat Sayyeda Nusrat Jahan Begum^{ra} (1865-1952)
- 2: Ḥaḍrat Mir Muhammad Ismail^{ra} (1881-1947)
- 3: Ḥaḍrat Mir Muhammad Ishaq^{ra} (1890-1944)

HIS SIBLINGS

Ḥaḍrat Mir Muhammad Ismail^{ra} had one sister and one brother. His sister, whom he called "*Āpā*", was Ḥaḍrat Sayyeda Nusrat Jahan Begum^{ra}, the wife of the Promised Messiah^{as}, known to Ahmadi Muslims the world over as "*Ammāñ Jān*" [*Amma Jan*]. Ḥaḍrat Ammāñ Jān^{ra} was sixteen years older than Ḥaḍrat Mir Muhammad Ismail^{ra}, and his younger brother Ḥaḍrat Mir Muhammad Ishaq^{ra} was nine years younger than him.

Ḥaḍrat Sayyeda Nusrat Jahan Begum^{ra} was born in 1865 in Delhi. In accordance with Divinely revealed tidings, Ḥaḍrat Sayyeda Nusrat Jahan^{ra} was married to Ḥaḍrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as} - the Promised Messiah - on 17 November 1884. The Promised Messiah^{as} was informed by God, regarding Ḥaḍrat Sayyeda Nusrat Jahan^{ra}:

Be grateful for "My gift". You have discovered "My Khadija" ¹⁵.

By conferring upon Ḥaḍrat Sayyeda Nusrat Jahan Begum^{ra}, the titles of "My gift" and "My Khadija", God has, through these inspired words, brought to light, her lofty spiritual status. Receiving the title of "Khadija" from God is no ordinary honour. This title from on high, unveils her inner righteousness and purity. After spending a life devoted entirely to God, she breathed her last in 1952 and lies buried in the *Bahishtī Maqbarah*, in Rabwah.

Ḥaḍrat Mir Muhammad Ishaq^{ra} was born in 1890 in Ludhiana. Besides being a *Ṣaḥābī* (Companion) of the Promised Messiah^{as}, he was also an eminent scholar, a great theologian, a translator and interpreter of the Holy Qur'ān, an expert in Islamic Jurisprudence, a successful preacher, an endeared teacher and an astute administrator. He was widely known for his hospitality in general, and for looking after orphans in particular. In 1906, Ḥaḍrat Mir Muhammad Ishaq^{ra} married Ḥaḍrat Saleha Begum, who was the daughter of Ḥaḍrat Pir Manzoor Muhammad^{ra}, the author of the famous *Qā'idah Yassarnal Qur'ān*, and granddaughter of Ḥaḍrat Ṣūfī Ahmad Jan, an acclaimed saint and contemporary of the Promised Messiah^{as}. Ḥaḍrat Mir Muhammad Ishaq^{ra} died in 1944 in Qadian, and is buried next to his parents in *Bahishtī Maqbarah* Qadian.

There was an extraordinary bond of deep love, care, affection, mutual admiration and loyalty between these three truly extraordinary siblings. May their souls abide eternally in Paradise.

3: "ASSISTANT SURGEON"

Ḥaḍrat Mir Muhammad Ismail^{ra} was born on Monday, 18 July 1881, in Delhi. His father Ḥaḍrat Mir Nasir Nawab^{ra} later migrated from Delhi and relocated to Qadian, along with his family. He, therefore, received his early schooling in Qadian, and was brought up in the direct care of the Promised Messiah^{as}. In 1900, he completed his intermediate schooling or high school. He passed with a first division, which was considered an achievement in those days. The Promised Messiah^{as} and Ḥaḍrat Ammāñ Jān^{ra}, both, were keen to see him study Medicine. His father Ḥaḍrat Mir Nasir Nawab^{ra}, however, could not afford sending him to a medical college. On account of his scores, Ḥaḍrat Mir Ismail^{ra} had won a scholarship from the government, but the scholarship was not enough to cater for the cost of his studies in a medical college. One day, Ḥaḍrat Mir Ismail received a sealed letter from his sister Ḥaḍrat Sayyeda Nusrat Jahan Begum^{ra}, stating that she would gladly bear all the remaining expenses of his medical studies, and that she would provide this amount from her own personal resources. And so, in 1900, Ḥaḍrat Mir Muhammad Ismail^{ra} got admitted into the King Edward Medical College in Lahore, and the wishes of the Promised Messiah^{as} were fulfilled. Being a brilliant and industrious student, he was able to win scholarships throughout his student career. These scholarships, along with the amounts he received from his father and older sister, were enough to cover the expenses of his Medical

studies. Five years later, in 1905, he completed his study of Medicine and became popularly known as "Dr. Mir Muhammad Ismail". He was able to secure the first position in his final exams. In those days, in British India, Hindu students generally led in all spheres of education, while Muslim students generally lagged behind. This academic success of his, therefore, became a prominent event. On 4 April 1905, the Valley of Kangra in India was struck by a powerful earthquake. More than 20,000 people lost their lives. Ḥaḍrat Mir Muhammad Ismail^{ra} was in his last year of Medicine, when this disaster took place. Somehow, there was no news about his wellbeing, which aroused great concern at home in Qadian. The Promised Messiah^{as} and Ḥaḍrat Ammāñ Jān^{ra}, both, were deeply concerned and Ḥuḍūr^{as} prayed to God in this regard. Ḥuḍūr^{as} received the following *Ilhām* (revelation) in reply to his prayer:

"Assistant Surgeon" 16

Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāḥib^{ra} not only returned home safely, but after a few months, completed his study of Medicine and was appointed "Assistant Surgeon", thus, fulfilling God's promise to the Messiah^{as}. The Weekly Badr Qadian reported this news on 20 July 1905, under the heading which read:

"Dr. Sayyed Muhammad Ismail becomes Assistant Surgeon - a sign for the discerning ones"¹⁷



Ḥaḍrat Dr. Mir Muhammad Ismail

The "sign" lay neither in the fact that Ḥaḍrat Mir Muhammad Ismail^{ra} stood first in his Medical final exams nor in the fact that he was appointed Assistant Surgeon. Such events happen every year in all institutions for medical studies. The "sign" lay in the fact that this particular event had been foretold by God to the Promised Messiah^{as} and the Messiah had made this revelation public. It was a prophecy that was made known to the world beforehand, and it was a prophecy that had come true to the letter. The revealed words "*Assistant Surgeon*" are among those prophetic revelations of his, whose fulfilment has been undeniably witnessed by the world.

The news published in the Weekly Badr Qadian, on 20 July 1905, read as follows:

"...this good news is a cause of great joy and pride, not only for the Ahmadiyya community, but also for the Muslim community at large. Moreover, during his career as a student, Mir Ṣāḥib displayed a commendable conduct and the moral character of a true Muslim..."¹⁸

Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāḥib's appointment as "Assistant Surgeon", also became a precursor to his latter accomplishments in life. His first appointment was in Delhi, followed by Lahore, Dera Ghazi Khan, Panipat, Karnal, Sonipat, Jehlum, Attock, Muzaffargarh, Lyallpur, Gurdaspur, Gojra, Rohtak and finally Gujranwala. He served as Assistant Surgeon from 1905 to 1929, as Civil Surgeon from 1929 to 1936, and finally retired from civil medical

service in 1936.

Ḥaḍrat Dr. Mir Muhammad Ismail^{ra} held great professional fame, during this time, both as a physician of standing and as a skilful surgeon. Besides his professional competence, he was also recognized widely for his honesty, integrity and incorruptibility. His diagnosis was considered precise among his contemporary doctors, to the extent that some of his British colleague doctors proceeded with the treatment based solely on a diagnosis made by Ḥaḍrat Dr. Mir Ṣāḥib.

Syed Mir Mahmood Ahmad Nasir, a prominent scholar of the Ahmadiyya Jamā‘at, presently the head of the Jamā‘at’s Research Cell and formerly the Principal of Jamia Ahmadiyya Rabwah, in an interview with the author, narrated that when his father, Ḥaḍrat Mir Muhammad Ishaq^{ra} fell seriously ill, Ḥaḍrat Dr. Mir Muhammad Ismail^{ra} diagnosed his disease, which was a rare and relatively less known condition, on the basis of clinical assessment only, without the aid of any laboratory tests. Later on, after detailed pathological investigations, some other expert doctors in Lahore, were able to arrive at the same diagnosis which had, earlier, been made by Ḥaḍrat Dr. Mir Muhammad Ismail^{ra}.



Hadrat Dr. Mir Muhammad Ismail

Recounting Ḥaḍrat Mir Şāhib's days in Lyallpur (now Faisalabad), Ḥaḍrat Qazi Muhammad Nazeer Lyallpuri states:

“He (Ḥaḍrat Dr. Mir Muhammad Ismail^{ra}) once said to me: ‘The less privileged people do not have access to proper medical care. If any such person is ever in need of treatment, Ahmadi or otherwise, please do not hesitate to tell me. I will visit their homes if I have to and provide them treatment free of charge.’”

Ḥaḍrat Qazi Nazeer also narrates that Ḥaḍrat Dr. Mir Ismail^{ra} was so committed to serving people that he would work even on Sundays. He writes:

"Such was the impact of Ḥaḍrat Mir Şāhib's integrity and righteousness that while serving under him, hospital staff members could never imagine taking bribes.”¹⁹

During his career, Ḥaḍrat Mir Şāhib^{ra} was able to display the qualities of a sagacious administrator. Whenever he was placed in charge of a hospital, he was always able to successfully put right, all the pending administrative and financial issues, in the shortest possible time.

Once, someone came to him seeking a false medical certificate. When Ḥaḍrat Mir Şāhib^{ra} declined, that person offered money for the certificate. Ḥaḍrat Mir Şāhib^{ra} rejected the offer and firmly said, "I just cannot issue a

false certificate."²⁰

Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāḥib's^{ra} daughter, Syeda Amtullah Begum (Begum Pir Salahuddin), in an interview with the author, narrated some interesting details of her father's life. She narrated that Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāḥib^{ra} enjoyed bird hunting and was also a good swimmer. He would take his elder three daughters along when he went for bird hunting. During his stay in Rohtak, she recalled that once while Ḥaḍrat Ammāñ Jān^{ra} (Ḥaḍrat Sayyeda Nusrat Jahan Begum) had come over to stay with them, there was an unexpected flash flood. After moving Ḥaḍrat Ammāñ Jān^{ra} and his own family to a safe place, Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāḥib^{ra} returned to the flood-stricken area and began a rescue operation by himself. He swam tirelessly and alongside the Government's rescue-boats; he was able to rescue a large number of people. Syeda Amtullah Begum narrated that while the British Indian government formally acknowledged his heroic service, Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāḥib^{ra} shied away from receiving the government's acknowledgements.

Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāḥib^{ra} compiled some very interesting events from his professional life, in an autobiography of his, titled “*Āp Bītī*”. Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāḥib^{ra} retired from the position of Civil Surgeon in 1936 and settled down in Qadian, where he lived for the rest of his life.

After moving to Qadian, Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāḥib^{ra} continued to provide voluntary medical services at the Ahmadiyya Jamā‘at's medical centre, called Noor Hospital, and also



Hadrat Dr. Mir Muhammad Ismail

treated patients at his residence named "Aş-Şuffah". Ḥaḍrat Mir Şāḥib^{ra} was temperamentally hesitant in receiving any form of fee from his patients. Knowing this, his patients would quietly place an amount in his pocket, and at times, the money would even turn out to be counterfeit. Ḥaḍrat Mir Şāḥib^{ra} wholly committed his professional skills as a doctor to a lifelong and selfless service of humanity. His motivation came from the famous Hadith, as he himself admits, in which the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{sas} is quoted as having said: "Humans are, as though, the children of God" [*Kanzul- 'Ummāl* Vol 3 *Kitābuz-Zakāt*]. In a poem of his, he writes:

*Ever since, I realized that Humans are, as though,
Thy children,
I have devoted my entire time to their service.*

- [*Bukhār-e-Dil*]

These words are not a mere claim. Testifying to the truth of this claim, Ḥaḍrat Muşliḥ Mau'ūd^{ra} (Khalīfatul-Masīḥ II) had the following words inscribed on the tombstone of Ḥaḍrat Mir Ismail^{ra}:

"In spite of being an extremely successful doctor, and indeed, capable of earning a lot, he remained committed to voluntary service of the poor, and mostly refrained from private practice." ²¹

As a doctor, Ḥaḍrat Mir Muhammad Ismail^{ra} embodied the following words of his mentor and master, Ḥaḍrat

Mirza Ghulam Ahmad the Promised Messiah^{as}:

"My sole purpose, objective and desire is to serve humanity

This is my job, this is my duty, this is my way, and this is my path."

- [Durr-e-Thamīn]

Hence, it can be safely stated that not only did Ḥaḍrat Mir Şāhib's^{ra} profession, not come in the way of his spiritual pursuits, on the contrary, it propelled him in the direction of God.

4: SAINT

Mysticism, in Arabic is called *Taşawwuf*, and the mystic is known as a *Şūfī* [pronounced soo-fee]. Ḥaḍrat Mir Muhammad Ismail^{ra} was a truly great saint, an enlightened soul, a mystic and someone veritably acquainted with God. In the jargon of Islamic Mysticism, someone who is acquainted with God is known as an ‘*Ārif Billāh*, which literally means "someone who knows God". The relationship of such a person with God is beyond mere doctrine, belief or faith. On the contrary, it is founded on absolute certitude, which such a person attains only after repeated spiritual experiences and first-hand encounters with God. Such belief is not conceptual or dogmatic. It is insightful. Such belief is anchored securely in personal experience. The relationship that Ḥaḍrat Mir Ismail^{ra} had with God is evident from the events of his life, from his scholarly writings, and from his exquisitely beautiful and mystical poetry.

Ḥaḍrat Mir Muhammad Ismail^{ra} was a recipient of true visions and Divine revelation came to him. God had repeatedly spoken to him, in the state of *Ilhām* [pronounced il-haam] meaning revelation. Unassuming, as he was by nature, he was generally more inclined to keep his relationship with God, obscure from the eyes of the world. Occasionally though, he appears to narrate his spiritual experiences for the purpose of guiding and enriching other seekers of Divine Light.



Ḥaḍrat Mir Muhammad Ismail

He was committed to drawing people away from those false notions of Sufism which had found their way into Muslim thinking, and leading them towards the true ways of Islamic Mysticism, which had been revived by the Promised Messiah^{as} - the true *Taşawwuf*.

A Mystic or “Şūfi” is generally understood as someone who believes and pursues the spiritual perception of such truths and realities that are beyond the reach of human intellect. The Promised Messiah^{as} writes in his famous treatise *Ḥaqīqatul-Wahī*:

"God, who is Benevolent and Merciful, and who has invested human nature with the hunger and thirst for His perfect cognition, has also endowed human nature with two types of faculties for the purpose of arriving at that perfect cognition. The first are the rational faculties, the source of which is the brain. The second are the spiritual faculties, the source of which is the heart. The spiritual faculties reach the reality of that which cannot be discovered completely through the rational faculties."

- [*Ḥaqīqatul-Wahī*, p.6, *Rūḥānī Khazā'in* Vol.22, p.8. The Philosophy of Divine Revelation p.12.]

Hence, with reference to the above words of the Promised Messiah^{as}, a *Şūfi* would, in more simple terms, be someone who goes beyond exercising his intellectual powers in trying to get to know God, and puts to use his spiritual faculties, in his search for the absolute truth. Ḥadrat Mir Muhammad Ismail^{ra}, most certainly belonged

to this class of saints, from among the Companions of the Messiah^{as}. One can appreciate from Ḥaḍrat Mir Şāhib's writings that he was a combination of rare intellectual brilliance and refined spirituality. His thoughts and ideas are a fusion of logical deduction and mystical inspiration. He was a rationalist and a Şūfī at the same time.

In his writings and poetry both, Ḥaḍrat Mir Şāhib^{ra} has successfully expounded the most intricate and profound of esoteric truths, in the simplest and plain of words. He has been able to elaborate the subtlest of mystical themes, in such uncomplicated phraseology that they become clearly understandable for the average reader. The typically mystical trait of self-negation is also conspicuous in his writings. His humbleness compels his readers to rethink their egos and exercise genuine introspection. Wherever he proceeds to share a spiritual experience of his with his readers, it can be appreciated right away that he seeks only to rekindle hope and love in the heart of the reader, in relation to God, and to quell all elements of detachment and despondency.

Once Ḥaḍrat Mir Şāhib^{ra} had an amazing vision, which was an extremely sublime spiritual experience. As he was sitting in his study, with his pen in his hand, he went into a state of trance, in which he witnessed the most remarkable vision. Whatever he saw in this state, was, simultaneously and instantly written down by his pen, but without his will. It was as if his spiritual eyes and physical hands both were operating under the control of some external force. An angel named *Ghufrān* appeared before him. *Ghufrān* literally means "forgiveness". This angel

was sent by God to show Ḥaḍrat Mir Şāḥib the various sights and sounds of the Day of Judgement. This unique spiritual experience of his, is narrated in an article of his, titled "Glimpses of Divine Forgiveness"²².

In this vision of his, he was made to witness souls that had deservedly earned Hell, entering the gates of Paradise instead and unhindered. He was made to witness souls that were rightfully worthy of chastisement and damnation, receiving undeserved rewards from God. And all the details of whatever he witnessed had been penned by his hand, during the course of his vision, without his even knowing it. An entire essay had been written by the writer's hand, but without the writer's will. When the vision ended, it was only the last concluding sentence, which Ḥaḍrat Mir Şāḥib^{ra} wrote consciously, and that was: "And our final call is that all praise belongs to Allah, Lord of all the worlds."²³. Thus, was this miraculous article written. This is a most amazing essay, and truly deserves to be read and pondered over. This article inspires, even in the hearts of those who have lost all hope, the hope of being pardoned by God. This article leaves its reader eagerly inclined towards seeking Divine Forgiveness, along with the definite hope of finding it.

God, not only accepts the prayers of His dear servants, He at times, also informs them of their acceptance. This is one of the choicest blessings of God. The acceptance, is sometimes, indicated to the servant through a sign. So whenever, a true servant of God - a saint - receives this sign in response to his prayer, he knows that his prayer has been answered. Such a sign, therefore, embodies Divine Mercy.

For instance, Ḥaḍrat Ghulam Rasool Rajeki^{ra}, another eminent companion of the Promised Messiah^{as}, was known to have visions of a strong light, as a sign of his prayer being accepted. He would see a bright flash of light and he would know that his prayer had been accepted and latter events would prove it to be so. The sign of acceptance, however, can vary from person to person. Ḥaḍrat Muṣliḥ Mau'ūd^{ra}, Khalīfatul-Masīḥ II, has stated that the face of Ḥaḍrat Mir Muhammad Ismail^{ra} would appear before him, in a vision, as a sign of his prayer having been accepted. In this regard, Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ II^{ra} says:

"The day before yesterday, I had a vision in which I saw Dr. Mir Muhammad Ismail^{ra}, who is my maternal uncle. I have learned through experience that the names of those, whom we see in our dreams and visions, have a lot to do with the meanings they carry. And with regards to acceptance, in ninety eight percent of such cases, I tend to see him. His name is "Ismail", which means "God has heard". Whenever I pray, he is shown to me as a sign."²⁴

In those days, there were indeed, other people too, by the name of Ismail, but for Ḥaḍrat Muṣliḥ Mau'ūd^{ra}, it was "Ḥaḍrat Mir Muhammad Ismail", who was by God's will, shown as an icon of Divine mercy and acceptance. What needs to be appreciated here is the fact that God designates only such individuals, as icons of Divine mercy, who are truly worthy of this honour.

Hakeem Abdur-Raheem Mir, a devoted Ahmadi preacher and a renowned expert in herbal medicine, narrated an

amazing anecdote, to the author. This incident reveals, not only, the unshakable faith that Ḥaḍrat Mir Ismail had in God, but also the certainty he had in the truth of his mentor, the Promised Messiah. Once, Ḥaḍrat Dr. Mir Muhammad Ismail^{ra} was travelling in a train, along with another companion of the Promised Messiah. An elderly cleric, who was not an Ahmadi, also happened to board the same compartment. When the cleric discovered that these two passengers were from Qadian and were disciples of Ahmad of Qadian, he sarcastically remarked, "If Mirza Şāḥib [the Promised Messiah^{as}] was a prophet, then I suppose, the two of you would, at least, be saints". Ḥaḍrat Mir Şāḥib^{ra} responded spontaneously with calmness and certainty, "Yes, we are saints", a reply the elder was obviously not expecting. The cleric replied, "If you are saints, show a sign". Ḥaḍrat Mir Şāḥib^{ra} asked him what sign he required. The train was, at that moment, running at full speed. As a sign, the elder abruptly demanded that the running train come to an immediate halt - an unreasonable demand by any standards of logic. No sooner than he demanded this, all of a sudden, the train came to a screeching stop. The railway staff could not figure out why and how the train had stopped and they took a few minutes to investigate. Ḥaḍrat Mir Şāḥib^{ra} repeatedly asked the dumbfounded elder if he was satisfied. As soon as the flabbergasted cleric admitted, the train started to move again.

Ḥaḍrat Mir Muhammad Ismail^{ra} says in a poem of his:

*Tell these Ahl-e-Qāl to wrap up their affairs.
The age of the Ahl-e-Hāl has finally dawned
- [Bukhār-e-Dil]*

"*Ahl-e-qāl*" [pronounced ah-lay-qaal] and "*Ahl-e-ḥāl*" [pronounced ah-lay-haal] are Persian terms used in various Persian and Urdu writings on Islamic Mysticism, which require a brief introduction. "*Ahl-e-qaal*" refers generally to the religious clergy whose knowledge of the Divine does not go beyond mere words, and "*Ahl-e-Ḥāl*" refers to the people who have actually experienced The Divine. The *Ahl-e-qāl*, referred to in this poem of Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāḥib^{ra}, is the conventional clergy of his time. The *Ahl-e-Ḥāl*, in this case, of course, were the Companions of the Promised Messiah, all of whom were unquestionably true saints.

Allah says in the Holy Qur'ān:

"And those who strive in seeking Us, We do indeed, guide them to the paths leading to Us" ²⁵.

In Arabic, *Sabīl* [pronounced sa-beel] means "path", its plural *Subul* means "paths", and *Subulanā*, the term used in the above verse, means "Our paths", referring collectively to the paths that lead to God. The "paths of God" would include all such ways of worship, adoration, love and remembrance of God that bring man closer to God. People are naturally born with different aptitudes, and are therefore, prone to pursue different pathways, depending upon their natural inclinations. And this diversity of paths can flourish even within the fold of a single religion. Some people are temperamentally suited to one pathway, while others have an innate predilection for another; yet, remaining within the broader path of a single religion. *Taṣawwuf* or Mysticism is simply a religious attitude, among a variety of religious

attitudes. As already stated, in the terminology of Islamic Mysticism, a mystic or someone who treads the path of *Taşawwuf* is known as a *Şūfī*. All schools of *Taşawwuf* in Islam agree on one fundamental principle, which is that "*Taşawwuf*" is primarily an attitude, in which the "Love of God" is what dominates the believer's devotion and deeds. The *Şūfī*'s concepts, attitude, worship and actions, all, are overshadowed by his love for God. If viewed from this particular vantage point, the greatest *Şūfī* of any given era would, undoubtedly, be the prophet of that age.

Unfortunately, with the passage of time, just as other aspects of Religion suffered decline, so did *Taşawwuf*. And just as all other aspects of Religion needed revival and reform, so did *Taşawwuf*. It was to this end, that God had sent Ahmad^{as} the Messiah. The true celestial spirit of Islamic Mysticism was revived along with all other elements of the Religion of Islam. The Messianic aura of the Messiah rekindled the love of God in the hearts of his Companions, and those among them, who were naturally inclined towards *Taşawwuf*, were as though, lifted to new heights. A new brand of true *Şūfīs* had surfaced, who took upon themselves the task of treading the path of Love - the love of God. The disciple learns from his mentor, and the Companions learned the secrets of Mysticism too, from the Promised Messiah^{as}. The Promised Messiah^{as} says in a poem of his:

*"No route to God, is shorter than the route of love
This path has led seekers across many a thorny
vale"*

- [Durr-e-Thamīn]

Nothing explains true Islamic Mysticism (*Taṣawwuf*) better than this amazing couplet of the Messiah^{as}. Through the ages, Ṣūfīs, scholars and writers, have attempted to define and explain *Taṣawwuf*, but such an eloquent and succinct definition of "*Taṣawwuf*" is seldom to be found.

The soul and spirit of all concepts in Islam is "Allah" - the one true God - and the prime objective, in the life of a Ṣūfī is to attain the nearness of God, to gain an insight into His attributes and to establish a bond with Him. A Ṣūfī, thus, is focused more on the spirit of Religion than on its outward form. It would be incorrect to assume that the Ṣūfī does not indulge in the study of Religion, even more incorrect to assume that the Ṣūfī is not mindful of God's commandments, and it would be atrocious to suggest that a Ṣūfī is somehow deficient in practice and deed. These are misconceptions that have found their way into the religious thinking of Muslims, and they certainly need to be addressed. The true Ṣūfī, not only has deep insight into Religion, but also displays a conduct that matches his insight. His thoughts and deeds stand out because they perpetually orbit the Love of God, and it is this state of his that distinguishes him as a Ṣūfī. Ḥaḍrat Mir Muhammad Ismail says in a poem of his:

*Better than any quantum of knowledge or deed
Is the single teardrop of love, shed by the adorer's
eye - [Bukhār-e-Dil]*

The expression *Masih*, the Arabic for "Messiah", is derived from *masaha*, which signifies, to touch or anoint.

The Messiah is by definition, someone anointed by God, and by implication, anyone who is blessed by the Messiah, too, becomes anointed. In crude words, this phenomenon can be likened to a Midas touch, except that this is of a spiritual kind. The Companions of the Promised Messiah^{as}, who lived in his sacred company, had in a spiritual sense, been anointed by the Messiah. The spiritual potentials and qualities of each individual Companion were thereby, tremendously enhanced. Those among his Companions, who were temperamentally inclined towards scholarly pursuits, shined as eminent scholars and those among his followers who had mystical propensities shined as eminent Şūfīs. Ḥaḍrat Mir Muhammad Ismail^{ra} belonged to the latter class of *Aşhāb-e Ahmad*. Ḥaḍrat Mir Şāhib's *Taşawwuf* can be appreciated from the events of his life, from his scholarly writings, and from his poetry, all of which are imbued with the love of God. His poems, magically, tend to pass on the flame to the heart of their reader.

The collection of Ḥaḍrat Mir Şāhib's^{ra} poetry is in the form of a book, which he himself named "*Bukhār-e-Dil*". *Bukhār-e-Dil* means "Vapour of the Heart" or "Exhalation of the Heart". There is a beautiful mystical poem in *Bukhār-e-Dil*, call it a Hymn if you like, under the title "You", and the "You" here, is God. Addressing God, Ḥaḍrat Mir Şāhib^{ra} writes:

*You are the remedy of my heartache. You alone are my Beloved.
I am Your destination; and You are my destination.*

You are my fragrance, my song, and the sustenance of my heart.

My King! You are my rapture, my joy and my paradise.

You are the Cure for my malady, my sorrow, and my plight.

You are the Hope. You are the Treasure. You are the Cure. You are Bliss.

Beholding You in every single particle, my eyes so profess:

You alone exist. You alone exist. And who knows what You are?

- [Bukhār-e-Dil]

In an article titled "A night in the Tavern of Adoration" ²⁶, Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāḥib^a has narrated an extremely inspiring and amazing spiritual experience of his. This article was published in the Daily *Al-Fazl* Qadian, on 3 November 1936. This spiritual experience of his, entails a series of intermittent episodes of visions and Divine communion. The following details have been derived from this article. It was December 1920. Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāḥib was thirty-nine years old. One night, he was returning from the Masjid Mubarak in Qadian, after having offered his 'Ishā prayers. All other worshipers had left before him and he was the last one to leave the mosque. As he began to descend the stairs, he felt an indescribable surge of God's love in his heart, as if this feeling had been inspired into his heart. Then it seemed as though someone called out to him from inside the vacant mosque: "So, you leave My house, and head towards your own? And that too, during this rare

moment of solitude, which will never come again?" He heard this and hurriedly turned around to go back into the mosque. "You have forgotten the way to the Inner Sanctum. These stairs do not lead to the Tavern of Adoration, nor is this the course of the adorers", said the voice to him. Then again, God spoke to him: "If you wish to come this way, take the old stairway. Submit yourself, as a delirious lover would."

Submitting to this instruction from The Divine, Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāḥib^{ra} took to the old narrow stairway which the Promised Messiah^{as} used during his lifetime. The extreme love which the Promised Messiah^{as} had for God, rightfully qualified this particular route as the "course of the adorers". Overwhelmed by this heavenly encounter, Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāḥib^{ra} tore open his shirt, and as he stood at the base of the old stairway, he was again commanded: "O wayward and lost one, rise and ascend". Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāḥib^{ra} climbed the stairway step by step, prostrating on each step and wiping each step with his beard, as he climbed. He managed this distance in one hour, which ordinarily would take less than a minute. After entering the mosque, he indulged himself in prayer and supplication. In his intense moments of prayer, he sought the forgiveness of God, in the following words of his master and mentor, the Promised Messiah^{as}:

*O my Lord, forgive me my sin
Grant me the path to Your abode*

- [Durr-e-Thamīn Farsi]

To this prayer, God replied to him: "Gratis?" Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāḥib^{ra} submitted: "What may I offer, my Lord? Whatever is mine is already Thine." God replied, "Your life. And something that is most dear to you".

This communion was followed by the *Tahajjud* prayers. Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāḥib^{ra} was offering his prayers in the front row of the mosque, just behind the *Miḥrāb*. During the quiet moments of pre-dawn, between the *Tahajjud* and Fajr prayers, as Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāḥib^{ra} sat waiting in the mosque, he felt as if a Presence had quietly, from his right side, walked up to him and stood behind him. At this point in time, he was simultaneously, bodily in Masjid Mubarak Qadian, mentally fully awake and alert, and spiritually in an astral world. He was in both worlds simultaneously and could perceive both at the same time. As he raised his eyes, he found a huge mirror standing before him, as if the Existence standing behind him, wanted him to look into the mirror. As he looked into the mirror, he saw the image of a Light of blinding intensity, which was impossible to look at. Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāḥib^{ra}, however, forced himself to get a good look at the Manifestation. The Existence, then gently withdrew, as though tip-toeing backwards. Ḥaḍrat Mir Sahib^{ra} describes this experience in these words: "It seemed as if the Eternal Beloved had chosen to reveal His most alluring countenance to me, by assuming a form similar to the mid-day sun. In this exhibition of absolute beauty, I saw express Divine will and a flamboyant display of mercy and love". Ḥaḍrat Mir Muhammad Ismail^{ra} belonged to a class of servants of God, regarding whom God himself testifies in the Qur'ān:

"They yearn for His Countenance"²⁷

It was actually this longing of love that lent Ḥaḍrat Mir Şāḥib^{ra} the courage and the will to stare at a luminescence which the ordinary human eye would not even dare to glance at.

In the morning, upon receiving an indication from God, Ḥaḍrat Mir Şāḥib^{ra} sacrificed two rams, one white and one black. Then, following the Divine instructions he had received, he donated his house *Kunj-e-Āfiyat* to the *Jamā'at*. This was the name Ḥaḍrat Mir Şāḥib^{ra} had himself given to his favourite property. This house was "most dear" to Ḥaḍrat Mir Şāḥib^{ra} because it was located in the proximity of both, the Masjīd Mubarak and the Darul Masih. "*Kunj-e-Āfiyat*" literally means "Peaceful Corner" in the sense of a quiet spot. When Ḥaḍrat Mir Şāḥib^{ra} reached home, his eyes fell on his daughter Syeda Maryam Siddiqa, who was then about two years old. He realized instantly that his daughter was also "most dear" to him. He took her in his arms and prayed to God, "Her name is a testimony. This is what I had wished from the beginning. Pray, accept her too. Our Lord, please accept our offering. Indeed, You are the All-Hearing and the All-Knowing".

Ḥaḍrat Mir Şāḥib^{ra} describes the state of his mind and heart, after having gone through this truly overwhelming spiritual experience. He writes:

"It is sheer good fortune that someone as exalted as
He should choose to reveal His countenance to

someone as insignificant as me. That He, for what He is, should ask me, as I am, for my life. That He should ask me to offer Him, something dear to me"²⁸

After being bequeathed to the *Jamā'at*, his house "*Kunj-e-Āfiyat*" was first made the office of an important publication of the *Jamā'at*, the *Al-Fazl* newspaper. Later, "*Kunj-e-Āfiyat*" was turned into the *Jamā'at's* hospital. And so, its acceptance in the eyes of God became clear to him. His humble token had been accepted by his Lord. This property continues to remain in the service of God, till now, long after the death of Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāḥib^{ra}.

Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāḥib's eldest daughter was named Maryam Siddiqa, after Ḥaḍrat Maryam (Mary), with the intention that she would serve the cause of God. With the same hope, she had also been given another name - Nazar Ilahi - which means "Dedicated to God". Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāḥib^{ra} remained concerned, waiting for a sign, whether this offering of his, in the form of his dear daughter, had been accepted by God or not. After waiting for fifteen long years, the sign finally came, and a glaring one indeed. His sister, Ḥaḍrat Sayyeda Nusrat Jahan Begum, asked for the hand of his daughter Maryam Siddiqa, for her son Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmood Ahmad^{ra} (Khalīfatul-Masīḥ II). His dear daughter's hand had been sought in marriage to the Khalifa of Islam who was also the promised son of the Promised Messiah^{as}. In 1935, Ḥaḍrat Maryam Siddiqa was wedded to Ḥaḍrat Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmood Ahmad^{ra}. As wife of the Khalifa, Ḥaḍrat Maryam Siddiqa, known popularly among Ahmadis as "*Chotī Āpā*", was

able to contribute tirelessly towards the religious education, training and organizing of Ahmadi women, all over the world. She taught the Qur'ān to thousands of women, and was, for as long as she lived, a source of guidance and inspiration for Ahmadi women. She truly lived up to the name her noble father had given her - Nazar Ilahi.

It was now, that the offering of his "life" awaited acceptance. Ḥaḍrat Mir Şāḥib's second daughter Syeda Amtullah Begum narrated, in an interview with the author, that shortly before his death, Ḥaḍrat Mir Şāḥib^{ra} had a vision in which he saw the shadow of a hand. The shadow of the hand then, turned into the word "Allah", written in Arabic. Then, in the state of this vision, he was made to reflect over the numerical value of the word "Allah". In Arabic, each letter of the alphabet has a numerical value according to Arabic Numerology. Each Arabic letter has a number and the sum of the numbers of the letters contained in a certain word, will be the number of that word. The Arabic word "Allah" is made of the Arabic letters *Alif*, *Lām*, *Lām*, and *Hā*. The numerological value of *Alif* is 1, of *Lām* is 30, then again *Lām* is 30, and of *Hā* is 5. The summation comes to 66. Hence, in Arabic, the numerical value of the word "Allah" is 66. Then, in the same vision, it was revealed to him that the span of his life would be sixty-six years - equal to the numerical value of the word "Allah" and that the last day of his life would be Friday. He narrated this vision of his to his family members, and even had it written down.

Ḥaḍrat Mir Muhammad Ismail^{ra} died on Friday, the 18th of July 1947. Incidentally, he was also born on the 18th of July, in 1881. He died on his sixty sixth birthday. He lived in this world for exactly sixty-six years, not a day more, not a day less. He lived in this world for as many years as the numerical value of the name his True Love - Allah. The manner in which these events unfolded, could neither have been a mere coincidence, nor for that matter, a human plan. It was obviously not in his power to live for as many years as the number of the word "Allah", nor was it in his control to make the blessed day of Friday fall on the day of his death. If anything, this was sheer destiny. This was Divine Decree.

This was a sign from Heaven, that the offering of his "life" that had been demanded, had also been accepted. It is said that if someone is truly in love, he lives and dies for his beloved. Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāḥib^{ra}, too, lived every moment of his life, for his Beloved, and when his time finally came, he died, in the most literal sense, "in the name" of his Beloved.

The wonderful spiritual experience recounted in his article "A night in the Tavern of Adoration", has also been expressed by him in a poem of his. He writes:

*The heart - a flame. The eyes - a pouring cloud.
I am content neither this way, nor that way.
I tore open my apparel, in a frenzy of love.
I behaved as though my sanity had left me.
There was a time when all night I would circuit my
Beloved's abode,*

Kneeling at every step of the way, to my Beloved's temple
- [Bukhār-e-Dil]

In the concluding lines of this article, Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāḥib^{ra} writes in a somewhat admonishing tone:

“It is this door, which, after thirteen hundred years, Aḥmadiyyat has once again opened for the world. It is this path, at the end of which angels wait to receive the seekers of true love - seekers such as you. The world is completely unaware of this gift. Today, the Beloved is Himself the Seeker. The Pursued One stands awaiting His pursuers, unveiled. *Hasten towards Allah*. Lo and behold, dear ones. If you have not been able to witness the face of the Beloved, in spite of being an Ahmadi, then what joy have you found in Ahmadiyyat? And what felicity have you discovered in Faith?”²⁹

Anyone, who is truly in love, will jealously guard the honour of his beloved. We find this strikingly true about Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāḥib^{ra} too. It was in 1907, when Ḥaḍrat Mir Sahib^{ra} was working as a House Surgeon in the Mayo Hospital of Lahore, that his sister-in-law, who was also his cousin, came to visit him. She had recently lost an infant daughter. Remembering her daughter, she once remarked, "If my brother-in-law, the doctor, had been with me, my daughter would not have died". These words, obviously, were meant to show the trust she had in Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāḥib^{ra}. Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāḥib^{ra}, however, could not

approve of any such remark that even remotely appeared to belittle the Will of God. He felt as though he was being unintentionally idolized. On hearing her remark, he said: "Now, she will have a son, who will die in my hands, so that her idol breaks". It so happened that six years later, in 1913, this same cousin of his gave birth to a son. Once again, she travelled to visit her sister, who was also Ḥaḍrat Mir Şāḥib's wife. On the way, the baby was fed milk from a thermos flask, without realizing that the milk had putrefied. By the time they reached Ḥaḍrat Mir Şāḥib's place, the child was already very sick. The child was treated by several doctors, including Ḥaḍrat Mir Şāḥib^{ra}, but his condition worsened and eventually the child died.³⁰

The kind of intense vigour Ḥaḍrat Mir Şāḥib^{ra} harboured in his heart for upholding the honour of God's Oneness can also be appreciated by another incident related by his daughter Syeda Tayyeba Siddiqa (Begum Nawab Masood Ahmad Khan). She narrates that her youngest brother, Syed Amin Ahmad, the youngest son of Ḥaḍrat Mir Şāḥib^{ra}, was very weak in his infancy. Syeda Tayyeba Siddiqa was entrusted with the job of looking after her youngest brother. The child's health improved and he quickly gained strength. With sisterly pride, Syeda Tayyeba Siddiqa said to Ḥaḍrat Mir Şāḥib^{ra}, "If I hadn't looked after him, who knows what might have happened?" No doubt, these words had been uttered quite innocently, but Ḥaḍrat Mir Şāḥib^{ra} took exception to these words and replied, "For now, he will grow, but he will eventually die in your house". Syed Amin Ahmad was fifteen years younger than Syeda Tayyeba Siddiqa. It

is more likely for a sibling fifteen year older to die earlier. But in 1998, Syed Amin Ahmad died during the lifetime of Syeda Tayyeba Siddiqa. Syed Amin Ahmad died in Karachi, from where his coffin was brought to Rabwah and laid in the house of his sister Syeda Tayyeba Siddiqa. From here, his funeral was taken for burial ³¹. Both these children of Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāḥib^{ra} lie buried close to each other in the *Bahishtī Maqbarah* graveyard in Rabwah.

Any reader could well be confounded by these events, or at best, fail to appreciate the essence of these anecdotes. The fact, however, remains that the true servants of God hold the honour of God's absolute oneness above their own honour. Both these extraordinary events, obviously, occurred neither due to the wishes nor on account of the prayers of Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāḥib^{ra}. His predicting these sad events, merely shows that his spiritual perception was in perfect unison with God's will.

During the days when Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāḥib^{ra} was posted in Gurdaspur, an Ahmadi friend of his, Malik Maula Bakhsh was also living there. Malik Ṣāḥib advised Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāḥib^{ra} to try and secure a permanent posting for himself in Gurdaspur, due to fact that Gurdaspur was located near Qadian. Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāḥib replied to him: "I wish to live wherever my Lord wishes me to stay. He knows better than I do, where it is best for me to reside."³²

In 1925, Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāḥib^{ra} was transferred from Gurdaspur to Gojra. In those days, Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāḥib^{ra} used to have a motorbike with a sidecar attached to it. This was a popular means of transport in those days. One day, Ḥaḍrat Mir Sahib^{ra} had to travel to another town. So, he hired someone

to drive him, while he himself sat in the sidecar. Just when he was in the middle of nowhere, the bike broke down. It was getting dark and a forest lay ahead, with no habitation nearby. Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāḥib^{ra} was carrying a sizable amount of money with him and the risk of being robbed was very much real. With this situation at hand, Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāḥib^{ra} prayed to God for help. Just then, a car came and stopped by him. He looked up to find that it was Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ II^{ra} and Ḥaḍrat Chaudhry Zafrulla Khan^{ra}, who also happened to be travelling along the same route, to Lahore. He was instantly granted the help he was asking for - a ride. And what a ride, indeed! This was a miracle of prayer being answered. Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāḥib^{ra} later recalled: "My heart was so overwhelmed by this immaculately timed Divine help that I had to struggle to suppress my emotions".³³

Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāḥib's school of Mysticism, was thus, rooted less in the concept of "imagining the Beloved" and more in "having witnessing the Beloved". He paced the path of true Mysticism, the path which had been revived by the Promised Messiah^{as}. His mystical state was defined not by words, but by repeated personal experiences. His love for God and his persistent state of being immersed in this love, is the spirit of every single aspect of his life. His poetry, compiled under the name of "*Bukhār-e-Dil*", too, is deeply mystical - the words of a true Saint.

5: LOVE FOR THE MESSENGER OF ALLAH

The love which Ḥaḍrat Mir Muhammad Ismail^{ra} had for Ḥaḍrat Muhammad^{sas} the Messenger of God and the Seal of the Prophets is evident from every single line of the poems he has written about the Holy Prophet^{sas}. He wrote several outstanding *Na'ts* which are, by definition, poems written in the love and honour of the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{sas}. These poems, arouse in the hearts of their readers love for the Holy Prophet^{sas}, and also lay bare the deep love Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāḥib^{ra} had for the Messenger^{sas} of God. One such *Na't*, originally written in Urdu, titled "*Salām ba-Ḥuḍūr Sayyidul-Anām*", which means "Salutations to the Chief of all Creation"³⁴, is a literary masterpiece in its own right, and indeed quite unparalleled. Making reference to this particular *Na't*, Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ IV^{ra} said on the occasion of Jalsa Salana UK 2002:

"Neither have I heard nor have I ever read a *Na't* such as this, leaving aside, of course, the *Na'ts* written by the Promised Messiah^{as}. And I believe, this *Na't* will, forever, continue to win acclaim for Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāḥib^{ra}." ³⁵

This *Na't* discusses the various aspects of the life, character and glory of the Holy Prophet^{sas}, elaborately and exquisitely. This *Na't* is so marvellous that it deserves to

be presented and read in full. The complete original poem in Urdu, along with its English translation is as follows:

سلام بخضور سید الانام

بدرگاہِ ذی شان خیر الانام شفیع الوری، مرجعِ خاص و عام
بصدِ عجز و منت، بصدِ احترام یہ کرتا ہے عرض آپ کا اک غلام
کہ اے شاہ کونینِ عالی مقام
علیک الصلوٰۃ علیک السلام
حینانِ عالم ہوئے شرمگین جو دیکھا وہ حسن اور وہ نورِ جنین
پھر اس پر وہ اخلاقِ اکمل ترین کہ دشمن بھی کہنے لگے آفریں
زبے خُلُقِ کامل، زبے حسنِ تام
علیک الصلوٰۃ علیک السلام
خلاق کے دل تھے یقین سے تہی بتوں نے تھی حق کی جگہ گھیر لی
ضلالت تھی دنیا پہ وہ چھا رہی کہ توحید ڈھونڈے سے ملتی نہ تھی
ہوا آپ کے دم سے اس کا قیام
علیک الصلوٰۃ علیک السلام

محبت سے گھاسل کیا آپؐ نے دلائل سے قائل کیا آپؐ نے
جہالت کو زائل کیا آپؐ نے شریعت کو کامل کیا آپؐ نے
بیاں کر دیئے سب حلال و حرام

علیک الصَّلٰوۃُ علیک السَّلَام

نبوت کے تھے جس قدر بھی کمال وہ سب جمع ہیں آپؐ میں لامحال
صفاتِ جمال اور صفاتِ جلال ہر اک رنگ ہے بس عدیم المثال
لیا ظلم کا عفو سے انتقام

علیک الصَّلٰوۃُ علیک السَّلَام

مقدس حیات اور مطہر مذاق اطاعت میں یکتا عبادت میں طاق
سوارِ جہانگیر یکراں بُراق کہ بگدشت از قصرِ نیلی رواق
محمدؐ ہی نام اور محمدؐ ہی کام

علیک الصَّلٰوۃُ علیک السَّلَام

علمدارِ عشاقِ ذاتِ یگان سپہ دارِ انواعِ قدوسیاں
معارف کا اک قلزم بیکراں افاضات میں زندہ جاوداں
پلا ساقیا آبِ کوثر کا جام

علیک الصَّلٰوۃُ علیک السَّلَام

SALUTATIONS TO THE CHIEF OF ALL CREATION

*In the court of the glorious, the best of all,
The Intercessor, the last resort for all,
With utmost humility, with deepest reverence,
A servant of yours humbly proclaims:
O exalted King of both worlds,
Upon you be blessings, upon you be peace.*

*Even the most handsome ones felt abashed
At the sight of his beauty and radiance.
Crowned by such perfect morals
That even his foes were led to laud him.
What perfect morals! What splendid charm!
Upon you be blessings, upon you be peace.*

*The hearts of people were devoid of faith.
Idols had taken the place of God.
Misguidance had so taken over the world,
That God's Unity was nowhere to be found.
Through you, it was reclaimed.
Upon you be blessings, upon you be peace.*

*By the power of love, he entranced.
With lucid logic, he convinced.
Ignorance was eradicated by him.
Religion was perfected by him,
Expounding all the Dos and the Don'ts.
Upon you be blessings, upon you be peace.*

*The merits of Apostleship epitomized,
Combined in him, undoubtedly.*

*The attributes of beauty, the attributes of glory,
Each hue, unparalleled and peerless -
Avenging atrocity with amnesty.
Upon you be blessings, upon you be peace.*

*A Godly life, and a pious leaning,
Unrivalled in obeisance, singular in worship,
Cosmic rider of the swift steed,
That bolted across the heaven's blue hallway.
"Praiseworthy" is his name, praiseworthy his deeds.
Upon you be blessings, upon you be peace.*

*Flag-bearer of the Adorers of God,
Commander of the myriads of holy ones,
Boundless ocean of Enlightenment,
Forever beneficent -
Grant me a goblet of your Celestial Wine.
Upon you be blessings, upon you be peace.*

- [Bukhār-e-Dil]

One particular line from this poem "*Muhammad hī nām aur Muhammad hī kām*", which translates as "Praiseworthy is his name - praiseworthy his deeds", has won such wide acclaim in Urdu literature, that it has virtually become iconic. In this line, Ḥaḍrat Mir Sahib^a has used the word *Muhammad*, which literally means "praiseworthy" twice and in two separate senses, first as a proper name, referring to the Holy Prophet's name, and second as an adjective describing the character of the Prophet^{sas}. This masterly stroke, on one hand shows Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāhib's mastery over Urdu phraseology, while

on the other reveals his deep love for the Prophet^{sas} and his insight into the Prophet's spiritual status.

Another remarkable Na‘t, titled "Muhammad^{sas} *Mustafa hai Mujtaba hai*"³⁶, which means "Muhammad^{sas} is the chosen one, the favoured one", is also another masterpiece of literature and of love. The English translation of some of its verses runs as follows:

MUHAMMAD IS THE CHOSEN ONE,
THE FAVOURED ONE

Muhammad^{sas} *is the chosen one, the favoured one.*
Muhammad^{sas} *shines like the moon; steals the heart.*
Muhammad^{sas} *- paragon of beauty and virtue -*
Muhammad^{sas} *is the benefactor of Earth and Sky.*
Muhammad^{sas} *- star of the path of guidance -*
Muhammad^{sas} *is the intercessor of the Day of*
Recompense.
Muhammad^{sas} *- acme of Humanity -*
Muhammad^{sas} *is the manifestation of Divinity.*
Muhammad^{sas} *- the cause of all creation,*
To whom the Creator said: "Had it not been for
you".
Muhammad^{sas} *- possessor of the Seal of*
Prophethood,
Is thus, deservedly called the "prophet-maker".
Muhammad^{sas} *- the chord joining the two arches of*
love -
Interceding between Man and God.

Muhammad^{sas} is Mercy for all worlds.
His enemy too, is his beneficiary.
Muhammad^{sas} - the one with perfect morals -
Beauty and glory coincide and combine.
Muhammad^{sas} is thus, indeed, "Muhammad"
No wonder, blessings are invoked on him, far and
wide.

- [Bukhār-e-Dil]

In this *Na't* too, Ḥaḍrat Mir Şāhib^{ra} has, as in the previously quoted *Na't*, mentioned the name of the Holy Prophet^{sas}, twice in a single line, once as the personal name of the Prophet^{sas}, and then again, as an attribute of his. In this poem, Ḥaḍrat Mir Şāhib^{ra} has elaborately made mention of the distinctive attributes of the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{sas}, attributes on account of which, he stands out above all other prophets of God.

History tells us the Holy Prophet^{sas} had a wide deck-like platform built at the entrance of his mosque in Madina - Masjid Nabawi. His own residence was also annexed to this mosque. This was actually a roofed deck annexed to Masjid Nabawi. It was called *Aş-Şuffah*. There was a group of *Şahābah* (Companions) who virtually spent all their time on this deck. They devoted themselves to the service of the Holy Prophet^{sas}, remaining available to him throughout the hours of the day. They would spend the hours of the night in prayer and worship. In 1936, when Ḥaḍrat Mir Şāhib^{ra} retired from civil service and settled down in Qadian, he named his house "*Aş-Şuffah*". This particular choice for the name of his house depicts the

state of his heart and the intense love it harboured for the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{sa}. The poems and prose he wrote, alongside his personal disposition, all paint the picture of someone committed wholly to the sacred threshold of the abode of Muhammad^{sas} the Messenger of God.

Besides his indulgence in the worship of God, his mystic way of life, his scholarly endeavours too, were dedicated to the service of the Religion of Muhammad^{sas} - Islam. He was a copious writer. His writings constitute his lifelong "Jihad of the Pen", all for the cause of Islam. Even as a doctor, his service to humankind was, in reality, a service to the cause of the Messenger of God - Muhammad^{sas} - which was "Mercy for All".

6: ALLEGIANCE TO AHMAD

The Holy Prophet^{sas} of Islam, the Seal of all the prophets, had two principal names - Muhammad^{sas} and Ahmad^{sas}. These two names are not merely names; they are also his defining attributes. "Muhammad" means the "praiseworthy" and "Ahmad" means "one who praises most", and the corresponding attributes which these two names represent, would, in the Arabic language, be "*Muḥammadiyyat*" and "*Aḥmadiyyat*" respectively.

A close examination of prophecies leads us to conclude that at the time of the appearance of the Awaited Mahdī^{as}, it would be the attribute of "Ahmad", in other words, the "Ahmadiyyat" of the Holy Prophet^{sas}, which would be manifested. Some of the prophetic sayings of the Holy Prophet^{sas} clearly reveal that the name of the Awaited Mahdī^{as} would indeed be "Ahmad". Hence, it is mentioned in the books of Hadith that the Holy Prophet^{sas} prophesied:

"He is the Mahdī and his name will be Ahmad" ^{37A}

These words are prophetic. And the fulfilment of a prophecy is, in fact, the greatest proof of its being a true prophecy. Likewise, it is the fulfilment of a Hadith that is the primary proof of the authenticity of that Hadith. Academic technicalities are of secondary value.

Regarding the Awaited Mahdī^{as}, the Holy Prophet^{sas} is reported to have said:

"A party would defend the Faith in India. This party would accompany the Mahdī, whose name shall be Ahmad." ^{37B}

What does this Hadith prophesy? Firstly, that there would be a party of believers who would strive to defend Islam in India. Secondly, that this struggle would be performed by a party of believers, who would be in the company of the Mahdī, or in more simple words, would be the Companions of the Mahdī. Thirdly, the name of the Promised Mahdī would be Ahmad. In fulfilment of this prophecy, it was in 1889, upon Divine instruction, that the Promised Mahdī whose name was Ahmad, laid the foundations of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam, in India. The following words were revealed by God to the Promised Messiah, as an annunciation:

"O Mankind, indeed I am the Messiah of Muhammad^{sa}, and most certainly I am Ahmad the Mahdī." ³⁸



Ahmad the Mahdī
Ḥaḍrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as}
The Promised Messiah & Awaited Mahdī
(1835 – 1908)

These were Divinely revealed words, addressed to the world, through the Mahdī. The Promised Messiah^{as} and Mahdī's name was "Ghulam Ahmad", which means "Servant of Ahmad", but he was known by the name of Ahmad. Thus, came true the words of the Holy Prophet^{sas}, "He is the Mahdī, whose name shall be Ahmad".

While on one hand, a magnificent prophecy of the Holy Prophet^{sas} was fulfilled with the appearance of the Mahdī, on the other, the Muslim Ummah was faced with a serious trial - the trial of accepting freshly sent Divine guidance. The Holy Prophet^{sas} had enjoined his followers to accept the Mahdī, in the following words:

When you discover him, reach him and show allegiance to him, even if it means crawling over snow to do so. For, he indeed, is God's vicegerent - the Mahdī.³⁹

In 1889, the Mahdī appeared and along with him came into being the foretold party of believers who were destined to defend Islam. Ḥaḍrat Mir Muhammad Ismail^{ra} was a member of this blessed party. In fact, Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāhib^{ra} had the privilege of being among the foremost people who swore allegiance to Ahmad the Mahdī.

In a poem of his, Ḥaḍrat Mir Muhammad Ismail^{ra} defines an "Ahmadi" as follows:

*Servant of Allah,
Follower of Muhammad^{sa}*

*Allegiance to Ahmad^{as}
Obedience to the Caliph
Should you ask me my name -
I am "Ahmadi"*

- [Bukhār-e-Dil]

As is evident, the line "Allegiance to Ahmad^{as}", refers to the spiritual bond that each Ahmadi Muslim has with Ahmad^{as} the Mahdī. It is precisely this allegiance to Ahmad the Mahdī that distinguishes Ahmadi Muslims from the rest of the world. This bond of allegiance is known as the *bai 'at*, and it was by virtue of this bond that Ḥaḍrat Mir Ismail entered the fold of the *Ākharīn*.

God had revealed numerous secrets of the realm of the Unseen, the "*Ghayb*", as it is called in Arabic, to the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{sas} in astounding detail. With Divine consent, the Holy Prophet^{sas} would, at times, share some of these details with his disciples. For instance, the Holy Prophet^{sas} prophesied that God would Himself testify to the truth of the Promised Mahdī, and would gather his disciples from distant places, who in number, would be equal to the "People of Badr", which refers to those Companions of the Holy Prophet who participated in the Battle of Badr alongside the Prophet^{sas}. They were three hundred and thirteen. And that the Mahdī would possess a printed book, which would contain the names of his 313 disciples and the names of the places they hailed from, along with other relevant details. This remarkable prophecy has been preserved in a book called *Jawāhirul-Asrār* (Gems of the Secrets), compiled by Ali Hamza bin

Ali. The Promised Messiah^{as} has quoted this Hadith in his book *Anjām-e-Ātham* (The Death of Atham).

According to the words of this Hadith, the Holy Prophet^{sas} said:

Allah will, Himself endorse the Mahdī and will gather his disciples from distant towns. Their count would equal the count of the People of Badr, which is 313 men. He [the Mahdī] will possess a printed book, wherein will be mentioned the count of his disciples, their names, the places they belong to, and other details.⁴⁰

The first part of this prophecy, "Allah will, Himself, endorse the Mahdī", was explicitly fulfilled in 1894, when in accordance with another prophecy of the Holy Prophet^{sas}, the foretold signs of the Mahdī - the signs of the lunar and solar eclipses - took place exactly on their pre-specified dates in Ramadan. To show such astronomical signs was, needless to add, beyond the power of any mortal. These signs appeared in the eastern hemisphere in 1894. Unbelievably, they repeated themselves in the western hemisphere on exactly the same lunar dates, the very next year, in 1895. Thus, did God affirm to both, the East and the West, that the awaited God-sent guide, the Mahdī, had arrived. The God-fearing ones were left awe-struck by the glaring perspicuity of these celestial signs. The worldly sceptics, however, hesitated and chose to loiter in their maze of twisted logic.

In any case, the words "Allah will, Himself, endorse the Mahdī" were, no doubt, fulfilled.

The tangible signs of the eclipses on specified dates were followed by the fulfilment of the next part of the prophecy. In 1897, the Promised Messiah^{as} and Mahdī authored a book titled "*Anjām-e-Ātham*" (The Death of Atham). In this book, the Promised Messiah^{as} produced a list of three hundred and thirteen of his companions, along with the names of the places they belonged to and other relevant details. In respect of these disciples of his, the Promised Messiah^{as} wrote:

"All these companions possess the qualities of truthfulness and sincerity. And according to their ranks, which Allah knows best, some excel over others." ⁴¹

With this brief introduction of his "313 Companions", the Promised Messiah^{as} proceeded to enumerate the names and details of these Men of God, in his book *Anjām-e-Ātham*. Ḥaḍrat Mir Muhammad Ismail^{ra} is mentioned at serial number 70 of this list in the following words:

70. Sayyed Muhammad Ismail of Delhi. Student. Presently in Qadian. ⁴²

The Promised Messiah^{as} states in this book of his, in relation to the fulfilment of the prophecy of the Holy Prophet^{sas}:

Since it has been mentioned in an authentic saying of the Holy Prophet^ṣ that the Promised Messiah^{as} will have a printed book containing the names of his three hundred and thirteen Companions, therefore it needs to be stated here that today this prophecy has indeed come true.⁴³

Declaring the fulfilment of this remarkable prophecy an act of God, the Promised Messiah^{as} further writes:

It was not within my power to prepare these three hundred and thirteen sincere disciples. God Himself prepared them so that He may fulfil the prophecy of His noble Messenger.⁴⁴

Thus, was fulfilled to the letter, a great and elaborate prophecy of the Holy Prophet Muhammad^ṣ, made thirteen centuries earlier. This intricately detailed prophecy was fulfilled in the most literal sense of the word. The truth of the Word of Allah and of His Messenger^ṣ was rendered as evident as daylight. Ḥaḍrat Mir Muhammad Ismail^{ra} is privileged to be among the foretold three hundred and thirteen Companions of Ahmad^{as} the Mahdī.

In 1895, when Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāḥib^{ra} was merely fourteen years old, he got the opportunity of spending the month of Ramadan in Qadian. Even in his teens, he had a strong predilection for long hours of worship. Throughout Ramadan, Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāḥib^{ra} offered his *Tahajjud* prayers alongside the Promised Messiah^{as}, a rare privilege indeed.

Ḥaḍrat Mir Sahib^{ra} was to recall later that it was the practice of the Promised Messiah^{as} that he would offer his *Tahajjud* prayers in four sets of two *rak'ats* each, and during each of these two *rak'ats*, he would recite the *Āyatul Kursī* in the first *rak'at* and *Sūrah Ikh̄lāṣ* in the second, and during the rukū' and sajdah, he would repeatedly pray *Yā Ḥayyu Yā Qayyūm biraḥmatika astaghīth*, which means "O, the Ever-living One, the Everlasting One! With Your mercy, I seek Your help".⁴⁵

In 1900, when Ḥaḍrat Mir Sahib^{ra} was nineteen years old, the Promised Messiah^{as} delivered the famous *Khutbah Ilhāmiyyah* (the Revealed Sermon) on the occasion of *Eidul Adḥā*. The words of this exceptional sermon were revealed by God. The Promised Messiah^{as} went into a state of trance and the words of this sermon began to pour down from on high. Ḥuḍūr would merely utter the words as they came to him. Later, Ḥaḍrat Mir Muhammad Ismail^{ra} memorized this entire sermon, and had the honour of reading it out from memory in the presence of the Promised Messiah^{as}.⁴⁶

Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāḥib^{ra} stood by his Oath of *Bai'at* - the Oath of Allegiance - till his last breath. After the demise of the Messiah^{as}, he reaffirmed his allegiance to Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ I^{ra}, and subsequently, to Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ II^{ra}.

In 1906, when the Promised Messiah^{as} established the Sadr Anjuman Ahmadiyya, he personally appointed Ḥaḍrat Mir Ismail^{ra} as a member of its board of directors. Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāḥib was then, twenty-five years old. Later, Ḥuḍūr^{as} told Ḥaḍrat Ammāñ Jān^{ra} that he had appointed

Mian Mahmood^{ra} and Mir Ismail^{ra} as members of the Anjuman, so that "the others may cause no harm".⁴⁷ It appears that the Promised Messiah^{as} was led by some sort of premonition, because as latter events unfolded, it became clear that towards the end of the first Khilafat and at the commencement of the second, the "others", whatever their intentions may have been, did eventually cause harm to the unity of the Ahmadiyya Jamā'at. Clearly, Ḥuḍūr's fears were not unfounded. Following this tragic split, Ḥaḍrat Mir Sahib^{ra} wrote a series of poems, addressed to the defecting members of the *Jamā'at*, admonishing them to return to the fold of Khilafat, and restore the unity of the *Jamā'at*.

Recounting the bond of mutual love which Ḥaḍrat Mir Şāhib^{ra} had with the Promised Messiah^{as}, Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ II^{ra} wrote:

The Promised Messiah^{as} loved him dearly, and took interest in his activities. Similarly, Ḥaḍrat Mir Şāhib^{ra} also had immense love for the Messiah^{as}.⁴⁸

Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ II^{ra} proceeds to state:

Ḥaḍrat Mir Muhammad Ismail^{ra} was a Companion of the Promised Messiah^{as} and very dear to him too.⁴⁹

In 1924, Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ II^{ra} embarked upon a journey to Europe for the propagation of Islam. Before leaving, Ḥuḍūr^{as} entrusted the administrative affairs of the

Jamā'at, in his own absence, to Ḥaḍrat Mir Muhammad Ismail^{ra}, by appointing him the *Nāẓir-e-A'ālā* or Chief Executive of the Sadr Anjuman Ahmadiyya. Announcing this appointment during his Friday Sermon of 11 July 1924, Ḥuḍūr said the following words about Ḥaḍrat Mir Muhammad Ismail^{ra} :

His heart is filled with the love for the Promised Messiah^{as}. On account of this love, he has been blessed with a special gift of spirituality. Thus, has God kept him safe from such trials that others have been prone to. And I believe, he will prove to be most beneficial for the *Jamā'at* due to the blessings he has received as a result of this bond of his with the Promised Messiah^{as}.⁵⁰

Ḥaḍrat Mir Ismail^{ra}, thus, had the rare honour of being appointed a Member of the Sadr Anjuman Ahmadiyya by the Promised Messiah^{as} himself, and then subsequently, the *Nāẓir-e-A'ālā* (Chief Executive) of the same body by Ḥaḍrat Muṣliḥ-e- Mau'ūd (Khalīfatul-Masīḥ II).

The deep love Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāḥib^{ra} bore for the Promised Messiah^{as}, can be vividly seen in his writings and poems both. Regarding the Promised Messiah^{as}, he says in a poem of his titled "Our Master":

*The sun of spirituality that shined unveiled -
The beauty which left the fair ones humbled.
It all seemed like a dream but Death was sudden.
Little did we know that he was set to leave.*

We were carefree, until he was finally veiled.

- [Bukhār-e-Dil]

In another poem of his, Ḥaḍrat Mir Ismail Ṣāḥib^{ra} writes the following poignant lines in memory of his mentor, Ahmad^{as} of Qadian:

I would die for the tomb of my beloved -

The illuminating Gem of Qadian

He who was the full moon

The latter-day Mahdī of Qadian

- [Bukhār-e-Dil]

Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāḥib's^{ra} deep love for the person of the Promised Messiah^{as}, nurtured in his heart, a deep concern, care and love for his mission too. Understandably, whoever truly loves the Promised Messiah^{as}, will naturally hold his holy mission and the unity of the community he founded, dear to his heart. In 1914, upon the election of the second Khalifa, some disgruntled members dissociated themselves from the institution of Khilafat and established a separate community. Addressing these members, Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāḥib^{ra} wrote in a poem of his:

Deniers of the caliphate of Mahmood,

Your opposition is all but futile.

Why turn away from obedience?

Recall Adam to whom the angels submitted.

Each Khalifa was chosen by God,

Be he Adam or be he David,

*Be he Abu-Bakr or Nuruddin,
Or Mahmood, the delight of the prophets.
The unity of the People of Ahmad^{as} -
Is indeed, the prime objective.*

- [Bukhār-e-Dil]

Ḥaḍrat Mir Şāhib^{ra} did all that he possibly could to bring the defecting members of the Ahmadiyya Jamā‘at back to the fold of Khilafat. He wrote articles to convince them and poems to invite them and extended to them his most sincere words of counsel. For the Love of God, he did all that he could to protect, the unity of the Jamā‘at. Once again, put it in his own words:

*The unity of the People of Ahmad^{as}
Is indeed, the prime objective.*

- [Bukhār-e-Dil]

In another prayerful poem of his, Ḥaḍrat Mir Muhammad Ismail^{ra} prays for the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{sa}, and for the Prophet's dutiful servant the Mahdī^{as}, and for the Ahmadiyya Jamā‘at, in the following words:

*May the glory of the "Seal of the Messengers^{sas}" soar.
May the beauty of his servant - the Mahdī^{as} - be blessed.
May the splendour of Ahmadiyyat be so augmented,
That its magnificence stands out uniquely blessed.
May the purpose of our living be our union with God.
May our deaths be rapturous and our unions be blessed.
May the mark of the Mahdī be displayed on our face.
May our speech be pure; our demeanour be blessed.*

*O God, may the tree of Ahmad^{as} so flourish,
That each leaf be blessed and each twig be blessed.*

- [Bukhār-e-Dil]

7: *BUKHĀR-E-DIL*

Ḥaḍrat Dr. Mir Muhammad Ismail^{ra} was a mystical poet of very high standing and his poetry is in a class by itself. The collection of his poems is called “*Bukhār-e-Dil*”, which means “Vapour of the Heart”. He inherited his aptitude for writing poetry from his ancestors, many of whom were poets of repute. Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāḥib's poetry is dominated by a strong element of spirituality. His lines are scented with the love of God. His poems provide to their reader, a tantalizing flavour of mystical thought, as well as, of course, food for thought. At times, his poems tend to ignite in the hearts of their readers, the love of God. At times, they inspire down-to-earth empirical logic. And at times, they provide wise counsel to the seeker of wisdom. His style is extremely candid and pure of literary pretence. It was almost as if the vapour rising from his pure heart, somehow condensed magically, into elegant poetry. No one taught him the art of writing poetry. It was, as if innate. Initially, he adopted a pen name, *Āshnā* [pronounced Aash-naa], which means "Acquaintance", but eventually gave up using it.

Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāḥib's first poem appeared in 1903, when he was twenty-two years old. A few lines from this poem are presented here:

*What good is medication when I am no more?
If only my aching heart could, but now, find a cure.*

*So weary am I of the iniquities of the heartless,
That I, almost mistook this world for Hell.
The wine of error has left me inebriated;
I gave my word to my Love, but then, forgot
"Āshnā" humbly supplicates to You, O Lord:
Guide me along whichever path pleases You.*

- [Bukhār-e-Dil]

Ḥaḍrat Mir Muhammad Ismail^{ra} named the compilation of his own poems *Bukhār-e-Dil* which translates to "Vapour of the Heart". *Bukhār* means "vapour" and *Dil* means "heart". The title *Bukhār-e-Dil* can also be translated as "Exhalation of the Heart", and has also been translated by some renowned scholars as "Exhalations of the Soul".

"*Bukhār-e-Dil*" is an intriguing concept to begin with. The name itself explains the mood of his poetry. Explaining the reason for the choice of this unique name for his anthology, Ḥaḍrat Mir Muhammad Ismail^{ra} writes in a poem:

*"Bukhār-e-Dil" have I named this,
For this is the smoke of the fireplace of my heart.
When the love for Someone enkindled it,
These sighs and moans issued forth.
It sets alight a flame in peoples' hearts;
My poetry showers flares and sparks.
At places, are scattered pearls of wisdom;
Elsewhere, is narrated the Epic of Love.*

- [Bukhār-e-Dil]

Writers are known to dedicate their writings, whether prose or poetry to their dear ones. Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāḥib^{ra} has dedicated his anthology to God. Under the heading of "Dedication" of the book *Bukhār-e-Dil*, Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāḥib^{ra} writes:

*O You, that are the Bestower of all my bounties,
I am Your servant, You my Lord.
I write poetry to please You alone,
That You - my Benefactor - may bless me evermore.
May these lines of mine be my beneficent legacy,
O my Shelter, my Protector, my Refuge!*
- [Bukhār-e-Dil]

The line "*I write poetry to please Thee alone*", clearly explains the true purpose of his poetic ventures. His prayer to God, "*May these lines of mine be my beneficent legacy*" was, no doubt, heard, for most certainly, his poetry continues to live on and provide spiritual benefit to its readers.

الصفحہ کا نمبر
 20-K-43

لیسوا درجہ اولیٰ -
 غیر مقررہ المصنف کا نام اور جگہ - اللہ اعلم
 ۲۰. التبرکات کا لکھا ہوا ہے ۲ سوالوں پر مشتمل مدنی تھا -
 مدرسے سے سوال کا جواب میں نے الغفران کو دیا تھا کہ تم اسے کو
 دیا یا تھا اور میں نے سوال کے معنی جو صلوات فارسی
 میں ہوتی ہیں وہ وہی کو مسلم تھا کہ انہی میں تیرا
 میں لکھتا تھا اور جو عینا کہ میں دیکھتا تھا کہ وہی
 نے اب الغفران میں لکھتا تھا میں اس کے بعد
 میں منتظر رہا کہ پروردگار کے حالات پر بعد
 لکھا اب وہ اعتراض جو آگیا یا نہیں یعنی کہ
 سید ابراہیم میں لکھیں گے - مگر ابھی تک اپنے
 مجھ کو معنی کوئی اطلاع نہیں دی - اگر ضرورت
 نہیں ہے تو خیر ورنہ نہ اپنے اعتراض لکھتا

میں نے اس جواب لکھا - اور ملاحظہ فرمائیے -
 کے جواب میں یہ توفیق دینا آپ کو ہے جو اسے جواب لکھتا ہے - میں علی

Image of Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāhib's hand-written text

Ḥaḍrat Mir Ismail Ṣāḥib^{ra} has, very generously employed the use of metaphorical expression in his mystical poetry. And by doing so, he has made the otherwise intricate themes of Mysticism, more comprehensible. The fact is that matters which pertain to the spiritual realm are as concepts, always intellectually challenging, subtle and sublime. The concepts and phenomena of the material world, in contrast, are far more tangible and superficial. Thus, by using the right similitude and allegory, it becomes relatively easier to explain spiritual phenomena. Jesus too, as we all know, spoke in parables. Expressions such as "face", "locks", "abode", in relation to God, are used only in order to get the point across to the reader. The use of such terms, obviously, does not imply that God has a physical form.

The following lines, written in the remembrance of God, are a beautiful example of his mystical poetry:

*I recall those days when You revealed Your face,
 Removed the veil of Your locks covering Your face.
 You would come over, or would have me over
 Or would let me behold You in the balcony, from afar.
 Never have I returned from Your door unblessed,
 As I called out, "Lord! Lord!"
 By casting at my wretched state, a glance,
 My hopes would You enhance.
 Bitterness, moans, and heartaches are
 A panacea offered to those afflicted with love.
 Friends and rivals both, were moved to tears,
 As I wailed at the doorsteps of Your abode.*

- [Bukhār-e-Dil]

These are just a few lines from a long poem. Incidentally, the title of this particular poem is same as the title of his anthology – “*Bukhār-e-Dil*”.

Perspectives seem to change entirely, in the world of Mysticism. Let us examine, for instance, how Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāḥib^{ra} uses the expression "rival". Generally speaking, this term is not taken very kindly in the material world. With reference to worldly love, more than one suitor for one beloved, would mutually be considered as "rivals", and in all likelihood, would be anything but each other's well-wishers. In the celestial zone, however, God is the "one and only" Beloved, and all those who love Him are, in a metaphorical sense of course, mutually rivals. The difference is that when the "beloved" is God, all those who love Him, the "rivals" so to speak, also become mutually dear to each other. The term used for "rival", in Urdu, is *raqīb*. Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāḥib's mystical poetry has given a new dimension to this term, when compared with traditional Urdu poetry. The line, “*Friends and rivals both, were moved to tears*”, clearly depicts a situation of several worshipers worshiping together, presumably in the mosque, where the emotional state of one worshiper tends to stir similar emotions in the hearts of other worshipers present there. In another poem of his, using this very same expression of *raqīb*, as in rival, Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāḥib^{ra} writes:

*When I am not among my rivals, I am lost
For he, who is not Yours, cannot be mine.*

- [*Bukhār-e-Dil*]

Only someone truly in love with God can treat his *raqīb* or "rival" as a dear one, instead of a despised one. The phraseology of worldly love is employed by mystics in a figurative sense, merely in order to expound their experiences. The mystic's perspective is, however, entirely Divine.

In another mystical poem, Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāḥib^{ra} addresses God with almost unbelievable candour. He writes:

What good is Your visit, if You avoid an embrace?

What good is my visit, if You remain unmoved?

- [Bukhār-e-Dil]

The words of a true saint should never be treated as a mere display of rich imagination. A true saint, having had repeated true visions and inspirations, speaks and writes on the basis of personal experience and actuality. A true Ṣūfī's abundance of such mystical experiences virtually amounts to a spiritual embrace with the Divine. Here are a few more lines from yet another enchantingly mystical poem of Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāḥib^{ra}:

He seeks me more than I seek Him.

I yearn for each word of His; He cares for me.

*O seeker, be keen to seek and to please. For here,
You find what you ask for; moreover, sheer Grace.*

O Lord of Beauty, are You not obliged?

Or would Thou rather fend off a pauper?

All I ask of You, is Your forgiveness.

Pray, wrap my sins in Your Clemency.

- [Bukhār-e-Dil]

At times, we find in the lines of Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāhib^{ra}, apparently conflicting emotions running concurrently. For instance, he says:

*I am the unworthy one who brought infamy to his
elders;
My wretchedness is alien to the clan of the noble
Sādāt.*

- [Bukhār-e-Dil]

Yet, at another place he says:

*Were I to lift this veil of profanity from my face,
Saints would rush to untie the laces of my shoes.*

- [Bukhār-e-Dil]

To the casual reader, the above two couplets would appear to be in glaring contradiction of each other. However, it is not at all unusual to be self-negating and yet confess one's bond with God. Neither is there any pretence in the first of these couplets nor is the second couplet born out of any arrogance. The awareness of one's sins is the very basis of self-awareness, and the awareness of God's favours is the foundation of true gratitude. The seemingly conflicting streaks of intense love for God and His fear actually run parallel to each other in the heart of the true Ṣūfī. Of the two couplets, quoted above, the first one reveals the humbleness of a truly God-fearing person, while the second one depicts his cognizance of his own closeness to God. When he says “*Were I to lift this veil of profanity*

from my face”, he confesses that he has, as though, donned a mask of profanity, with the obvious intention of concealing his true relationship with God. This attitude is also typical of the true self-negating Ṣūfi.

Another striking feature of Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāḥib’s poetry is his refined sense of humour. His wit is subtle and spontaneous. Quite successfully, he expresses very profound ideas in a casual and witty manner. Here are two couplets to illustrate this. He says in a poem of his:

The desolateness of the mosque is not without reason, O cleric!

One, who quits due to your edicts, is not likely to return.

- [Bukhār-e-Dil]

In the same poem, he says:

Why debate over the reappearance of Jesus of Nazareth?

He who lives his life and dies, is not likely to return.

- [Bukhār-e-Dil]

Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāḥib^{ra} also used his poetic skills for explaining and expounding the message of the Promised Messiah^{as}. And since, the average reader finds memorizing poetry more convenient as compared to prose, the message would thus, be more easily preserved. For instance, the Promised Messiah^{as} has written that

there are three types of dreams: Divine, satanic, and psychological. The Divine ones are true, the satanic ones false, and the psychological ones merely reflect one's desires and state of mind. Ḥaḍrat Mir Šāḥib^{ra} presents this point of the Messiah^{as} in the following words:

*True are the dreams of the righteous ones.
The dreams of liars are false and confused.
But if the craving is overwhelming,
The cat has dreams of chunks of meat.*

- [Bukhār-e-Dil]

In view of his approaching departure from this world, Ḥaḍrat Mir Muhammad Ismail^{ra} wrote a "Will", in the form of a poem, addressed to his family. This is a beautiful and moving poem titled "*Khudā dārī cheh gham dārī*", which translates to "Why grieve, when God is by your side?" This poem has twenty-two stanzas of which two are as follows:

*Weep not on my demise, nor wail.
Lose not your patience, my wife, my dear.
Our parting is for now; in Heaven shall we meet,
To neither part, nor separate again.
Be with God. Unto those whom He favours,
He says, "Rejoice! Why grieve, when God is by your
side?"
My soul eagerly longs for meeting
The Lord of the beauty - The Divine.
My heart is drawn towards the abode of the
Beloved.*

*The lovers' lute has ignited a flame.
The ballad of the saints is: "Why grieve, when God
is by my side?"
The angels too sing: "Why grieve, when God is by
your side?"*

- [Bukhār-e-Dil]

This beautiful poem constitutes Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāhib's will to his family. It contains words of wisdom and counsel. It also depicts the absolute certitude he had regarding the next life, along with his yearning to meet his Lord.

There is a beautiful hymn by Ḥaḍrat Mir Muhammad Ismail^{ra}, which not only displays his love for God, but also his deep insight. A few lines are being presented here:

*My Beloved is the soul and spirit of the Realm of Love.
Whoever stays apart from Him, is but a lifeless form.
Time and Space are illuminated by His light.
He is the soul of the song, the fragrance of the garden.
He gave Man a heart. He gave the heart the ache of love.
He is the Cynosure of the heart and the cure of its ache.
Without the Dear One, even thousands of joys are bland.
Only in His presence, is one truly joyous.
If there be no passion for this life, nor desire for the next;
If there be nothing but God, only then, is one a true seeker.*

- [Bukhār-e-Dil]

The last two lines of this hymn truly describe the "true seeker" of God. These lines are the pinnacle of this hymn.

The rare spontaneity found in *Bukhār-e-Dil*, lives up to its meaning - “Vapour of the Heart”.

Like his poetry, his prose too, reflects the same purity of heart, genuineness and enlightenment. In this respect indeed, the prose written by Ḥaḍrat Mir Ismail^{ra}, equally deserves to be called the “Vapour of the Heart”. His articles and essays deal with an array of topics, ranging from deeply mystical themes to “*Sīratun-Nabī*” (Biography of the Holy Prophet^{as}), and from scholarly subjects such as the “*Muqatta‘āt* of the Qur’ān” (Segregated Letters of the Holy Qur’ān) to everyday issues such as personal hygiene.

Following in the footsteps of his guide and mentor, the Promised Messiah^{as}, Ḥaḍrat Mir Ismail^{ra} wholeheartedly participated in the “Jihad of the Pen” and proved that the pen is indeed mightier than the sword. He has left for us a treasure of insightful writings, truly worth reading.

A handwritten signature in Urdu script, written in black ink. The signature is stylized and appears to be 'Mir Muhammad Ismail'.

Signature of Ḥaḍrat Mir Muhammad Ismail

8: PERSONALITY PROFILE

Ḥaḍrat Mir Muhammad Ismail^{ra} possessed a very entrancing personality. His appearance was stately and appealing. He had a winsome and radiant face. He was of average height and stoutly built and was known for his dignified demeanour and poised gait. His voice was soft and speech was gentle. A close friend of his, Sheikh Ismail Panipati, who was a great scholar in his own right, describes Ḥaḍrat Mir Muhammad Ismail^{ra} in the following words:

His appearance was angelic and character saintly. He had a cheerful face, was extremely pleasant, extremely soft-spoken, extremely welcoming and an extremely courteous person. Anyone who would meet him just once would become an admirer. ⁵¹

The script on the tombstone of Ḥaḍrat Mir Ismail^{ra} was written by Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ II^{ra}. It reads:

The Promised Messiah^{as} loved him (Ḥaḍrat Mir Ismail^{ra}) dearly and would take keen interest in all his activities. Likewise, Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāḥib^{ra} also devotedly loved the Messiah^{as}. Among her brothers, Ḥaḍrat Ummul-Mu'minīn^{ra} loved Mir Muhammad Ismail^{ra} more dearly. He was extremely intelligent and wise.... He was among the *Ṣaḥābah* (Companions) of the Promised Messiah^{as} and among his most favoured ones. ⁵²



Ḥaḍrat Dr. Mir Muhammad Ismail

Ḥaḍrat Syeda Maryam Siddiqa states:

Ḥaḍrat Mir Muhammad Ishaq^{ra} was dear to Ḥaḍrat Ammāñ Jān^{ra} like her own son, but she was proud of Abbā Jān^{ra} (Ḥaḍrat Mir Ismail).⁵³

Ḥaḍrat Syeda Maryam Siddiqa states that if ever Ḥaḍrat Ammāñ Jān^{ra} complimented any belonging of Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāḥib^{ra}, he would instantly present it to her as a gift. Ḥaḍrat Ammāñ Jān^{ra} would do her best to evade receiving the gift but Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāḥib^{ra} would insist and have the thing delivered to her. Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāḥib^{ra} addressed Ḥaḍrat Ammāñ Jān^{ra} as “*Āpā*”, an Urdu expression, used with love and affection for an older sister. Ḥaḍrat Ammāñ Jān, according to the Delhi tradition, addressed her younger brother as "Mian". Ḥaḍrat Syeda Maryam Siddiqa narrates about her father:

“He loved his children. Yet, he was watchful too. Till the fifth grade, I received education at home. Till this day, I recall his endearing method of teaching. After teaching me, he would tell me to pass on whatever I had learned to my younger brothers and sisters. I was the eldest. He would often say that one should pay special attention to the training of the eldest child. It affects the younger children too He was so keen about proper language and pronunciation, that once, when I incorrectly pronounced the word "*ghalaṭ*" as "*ghalṭ*", Abbā Jān (Ḥaḍrat Mir Ismail^{ra}), while having his breakfast, asked me to keep repeating "*ghalaṭ*, *ghalaṭ*" for as long as he was having his breakfast. When he had his breakfast, I was given leave.”⁵⁴

In an interview with the author, Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāḥib's daughter Syeda Amtullah Begum (Begum Pir Salahuddin) stated that Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāḥib^{ra} had a personal car which he would sometimes drive around. Before acquiring the car, he learned driving from a Hindu friend of his. Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāḥib^{ra} presented this car of his, as a gift, to Ḥaḍrat Ammāñ Jān^{ra}. Ḥaḍrat Ammāñ Jān^{ra} used the car for some time and eventually presented it to the Jamā'at. On *Eidul Fiṭr*, Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāḥib^{ra} would, as a matter of rule, send an "*Eidī*" (Eid gift) and the Eid breakfast for Ḥaḍrat Ammāñ Jān, which Ḥaḍrat Ammāñ Jān^{ra} would lovingly receive.

Ḥaḍrat Mir Ismail^{ra} was extremely fond of his younger brother Ḥaḍrat Mir Ishaq^{ra}. Ḥaḍrat Syeda Maryam Siddiqa narrates:

When my uncle [Ḥaḍrat Mir Ishaq^{ra}] fell ill, I witnessed my father [Ḥaḍrat Mir Ismail^{ra}] massaging his [brother's] feet. During Ḥaḍrat Mir Ishaq's last moments, my father would visit Ḥaḍrat Mir Ishaq and emerge distressed from the room, praying. He would say, "Why are the doctors injecting him again and again, at this stage? These injections prick my heart".⁵⁵

Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāḥib^{ra} had two wives. His first wife was Ḥaḍrat Shaukat Sultan Begum and his second wife was Ḥaḍrat Amtul Lateef Begum. He married his first wife on the wishes of the Promised Messiah^{as}. He had no child from his first marriage and all his children were from his

second marriage. In fact, Ḥaḍrat Mir Şāḥib^{ra} married Ḥaḍrat Amtul Latif Begum on the insistence of his first wife Ḥaḍrat Shaukat Sultan Begum, with the hope that he may have children from his second marriage. Not only during his lifetime, but even after his death both his wives continued to live together and always cared for each other. Not once, was there any discord between them. All relatives, close and distant, bear witness to the fact that both the wives of Ḥaḍrat Mir Şāḥib^{ra} lived together so amicably that such amity is seldom found even among sisters. Ḥaḍrat Mir Şāḥib^{ra} was able to impart such noble values to his children that they looked up to both their mothers with equal reverence. Though seemingly unbelievable, it took a few years for some of them to discover which of their two mothers, was actually their real mother. His children called their elder mother "Achi Amma", which means "good mother" and addressed their biological mother as "Amma", meaning "mother". Both wives assisted each other in looking after the children and the household. So pivotal was the role of Ḥaḍrat Mir Şāḥib's personality that both his wives remained beside each other for as long as they lived. All his children remained equally attached to both their mothers till the end.

In her interview with the author, Syeda Amtullah Begum related some interesting aspects about Ḥaḍrat Mir Şāḥib's personality. She stated that he was extremely neat and tidy and meticulous. His study was always immaculately clean and organized. Not everyone was allowed to handle the cleaning of his room. He did not like things being misplaced. At home, he would mostly be clad in oriental white cotton pyjamas and a white kurta. At work, he

preferred to wear Western-style clothes. He wore the turban as well as the *Qarāqulī* cap (now popularly known as the Jinnah cap). He would carry a walking stick with him while walking. She narrated that after she got married, her father once advised her: "Always keep your dining table welcoming. Never distinguish on the basis of religion or creed. On innumerable occasions, I have had Hindu and Christian guests over for food". These words of advice, focused not only on the noble principles of inclusiveness, but also, on taking into account the food sensibilities of people from different social backgrounds. She further narrated that he enjoyed having diced bread soaked in gravy. He was equally comfortable with Western cuisine and when required, would conveniently switch to the use of cutlery. He taught his family members how to lay out the table for guests accustomed to Western cuisines.

In an interview with the author, Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāḥib's eldest son Syed Muhammad Ahmad stated that Ḥaḍrat Dr. Mir Muhammad Ismail^{ra} was a man of great integrity. Whether the matters related to finance, to the use of authority, or the use of fringe benefits, Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāḥib's level of integrity was astounding. His honesty was dictated less by legality and more by his fear of God.

Syed Muhammad Ahmad narrated that during the days of British rule in India, the railway fare for going from Qadian to Lahore was fixed at fifteen annas (there were sixteen annas to a rupee). It was also decided that the railway fare for Qadian to Batala, which came on the way to Lahore, would be two annas, while the fare for Batala to Lahore would be eleven annas. People, travelling from Qadian to

Lahore, would generally benefit from this rule, staying within the law, of course, by first buying a ticket for Batala for two annas, and then buying another ticket from Batala to Lahore for eleven annas. In all, they would thus, be spending thirteen instead of fifteen annas. Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāḥib^{ra} did not approve of this. His argument was that when your intended destination is Lahore, you should buy the ticket according to your intention. Hence, he would buy his ticket for fifteen Annas when travelling on this route.

Syed Muhammad Ahmad also stated that Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāḥib possessed a very high degree of modesty. He was essentially a shy person. He also related that Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāḥib^{ra} had a keen sense for any hidden form of idolatry. He stated that Ḥaḍrat Mirza Bashir Ahmad^{ra} (Promised Messiah's son) once said about Ḥaḍrat Mir Ismail^{ra}:

"Māmū Jān [Ḥaḍrat Mir Ismail^{ra}] could detect any streak of idolatry very promptly. He was extremely perceptive to this".

Syed Muhammad Ahmad spoke of his father as a "great counsellor". He was accessible to all and would lend wise counsel to anyone seeking it. On principles, however, he said that Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāḥib^{ra} always stood firmly. He said that the one relationship that mattered most to Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāḥib^{ra} was his relationship with God. He summed up his assessment of Ḥaḍrat Mir Ismail^{ra} in these touching words:

"He was in this world but not part of it."

In her interview with the author, Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāhib's daughter Syeda Amtul Quddoos (Begum Sahibzada Mirza Wasim Ahmad) narrated that Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāhib's *Tahajjud* prayers would start sometime after midnight. She recalled that the sound of his supplicating and his weeping and sobbing could sometimes be heard outside his room. She narrated that he would wake up his children for Fajr prayers by reciting the Qur'ān in an audible voice. She recalled that her father's recitation of the Qur'ān was beautiful and melodious. He would advise his children to recite the Qur'ān after their Fajr prayers. When his children would recite the Qur'ān, he would gently stroll through the room and when required would correct their errors in recitation.

Syeda Amtul Quddoos related that Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāhib^{ra} had made a will that all his daughters be married with the approval of the Khalifa. Three of his seven daughters got married during his lifetime. According to his will, the remaining four daughters were wedded with the approval of Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ II^{ra}, after Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāhib^{ra} had passed away.

In certain matters of principle, Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāhib^{ra} showed very little flexibility. Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāhib's daughter, Sayeda Amtul Rafique (Begum Sayed Hazratullah Pasha), narrated to the author:

Once, Abbā Jān (Ḥaḍrat Mir Muhammad Ismail^{ra}) reached home to find that Ahmad Husain (Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāhib's employee for domestic help) was having Roti and Dāl (bread with lentils) for lunch.

When he arrived at the dining table, he found a bowl of a meat-based dish waiting for him. He asked Amma how that had happened. She replied that there was just a bit of gravy, barely enough for one person. Abbā Jān left the table without eating or saying a word. From then onwards, Amma always made sure to serve the servants exactly the same food that was served to Abbā Jān.

In Qadian, Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāhib's immediate neighbour was Ḥaḍrat Maulvi Sher Ali^{ra}, another illustrious *Ṣahābī* (Companion) of the Promised Messiah^{as}. Ḥaḍrat Maulvi Sher Ali^{ra} was a prominent religious scholar and has to his credit, translating the Qur'ān into English. Till this day, his translation of the Qur'ān is considered to be among the best. Regarding Ḥaḍrat Mir Muhammad Ismail^{ra}, Ḥaḍrat Maulvi Sher Ali^{ra} testifies:

The refined manner in which he [Ḥaḍrat Mir Ismail^{ra}] fulfilled his neighbourly responsibilities, I find it to be simply beyond words. ⁵⁶

Ḥaḍrat Hafiz Mukhtar Ahmad Shahjahanpuri^{ra}, another *Ṣahābī* (Companion) of the Promised Messiah^{as} states:

Ḥaḍrat Mir Muhammad Ismail^{ra} was extremely righteous and extremely humble and accommodating too. He was ever prepared to provide people with whatever religious or spiritual assistance he could. He had a very special bond with the Promised Messiah.⁵⁷

Ḥaḍrat Dr. Ghulam Ghaus^{ra}, another great *Ṣaḥābī* of the Promised Messiah^{as} narrates:

From among the *Ṣaḥābah* (Companions), he (Ḥaḍrat Mir Ismail^{ra}) probably made the highest amount of financial contribution to the Jamā'at. I doubt whether there would be any scheme of the *Jamā'at* towards which he had not contributed.⁵⁸

Ḥaḍrat Maulana Ghulam Rasool Rajeki^{ra}, a renowned *Ṣaḥābī* of the Promised Messiah^{as} wrote the following words about Ḥaḍrat Mir Ismail^{ra}:

With regard to obedience of God, worship and true insight, he [Ḥaḍrat Mir Ismail^{ra}] was the best example of a true Muslim servant of God...With regard to his vast kindness towards God's creatures; he exemplified the compassionate servant of God.⁵⁹

Ḥaḍrat Maulana Jalaluddin Shams^{ra}, a prominent scholar and preacher of the Ahmadiyya Movement, states about Ḥaḍrat Mir Ismail^{ra}:

Ḥaḍrat Mir Muhammad Ismail^{ra} - may Allah redeem him and illuminate his tomb - was an illustrious Companion of the Promised Messiah^{as}, and a true devotee of Muhammad^{sa}, Ahmad^{as} and Mahmood Muṣliḥ Mau'ūd^{ra}....He was a shining star of the Ahmadiyya Movement, which guided people, and he shone brightly in the centre of the sky of

Ahmadiyyat. He excelled in all the disciplines of spirituality. He had immense love for the Holy Qur'ān. He was a scholar who practiced what he preached. He was a Ṣūfī. He was committed to devoted worship. He was soft-spoken and eloquent.⁶⁰

Ḥaḍrat Maulana Abul Ata Jalandhari, another esteemed scholar of the Jamā'at states about Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāhib^{ra}:

Ḥaḍrat Mir Muhammad Ismail^{ra} was among the prime saints.... His spirituality influenced those who were in his company. Sitting in his company provided a unique sense of elation. Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāhib^{ra} was an embodiment of the Love of God.... He was least interested in dry superficial discourses. He was an enlightened and insightful religious scholar.⁶¹

Another prominent scholar of the Jamā'at, Maulana Ghulam Bari Saif writes:

When I was a student, someone once asked, who the greatest Ṣūfī among the *Ṣahābah* of the Promised Messiah^{as} was. I do not recall what answer was given, but then, the questioner himself replied: "Ḥaḍrat Mir Muhammad Ismail^{ra}".⁶²

It is extremely important for the Ahmadi youth and children to acquaint themselves with the lives and biographies of the Companions of the Promised Messiah^{as}. This was an assembly of pure souls, all of whom have now

left this temporal world. On one hand, the study of their biographies rejuvenates our faiths. On the other, we are compelled to consider that if this was the level of the disciples of the Mahdī^{as}, what might have been the state of the Mahdī^{as} himself?

Addressing a gathering of Ahmadi children, Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ IV^{ra}, made reference to Ḥaḍrat Mir Muhammad Ismail^{ra} and said:

Ḥaḍrat Mir Muhammad Ismail^{ra} was the brother of Ḥaḍrat Ammāñ Jān. Dr Mir Muhammad Ismail^{ra} was a very accomplished person. He possessed many unique qualities. A whole book needs to be published on his biography. He was a humourist. He was a poet. He was a skilled surgeon and a remarkable teacher. He was a very scholarly person with deep knowledge of the Qur'ān. ⁶³

9: "OUR BELOVED"

Ḥaḍrat Dr. Mir Muhammad Ismail^{ra} had received glad tidings from Allah that he would live for as many years in this world as the numerical value of the word "Allah". According to Arabic Numerology the numerical value of the word "Allah" is sixty-six. He had also been informed, beforehand, by Allah that his departure from this world would be on Friday. Ḥaḍrat Mir Ismail^{ra} was born on 18 July 1881. In precise accordance with these visions, he died on Friday 18 July 1947, which happened to be his sixty-sixth birthday too. He was exactly sixty-six years old when he died - not a day more, not a day less. He dwelled in this world for as many years as the numerical value of the personal name of the Almighty – Allah. This was, unquestionably, an expression of rare love by God for his servant. When the curtains were raised, Ḥaḍrat Mir Ismail moved on into the next world to behold and unite with his True Love - Allah.

On Friday 18 July 1947, Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāḥib^{ra} embodied this line of the Promised Messiah^{as}:

Today, I have become the Beloved's, and the Beloved has become mine.

- [Durr-e-Thamīn]

Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāḥib^{ra} had overtly expressed his desire that

he be buried close to the grave of the Promised Messiah^{as}.
In a poem of his he says:

May it so be that my grave is near that of the Messiah.

- [Bukhār-e-Dil]

In another poem, written in honour of the Messiah^{as}, he writes, addressing the Messiah^{as}:

*In thy feet, O my radiant full moon,
May I be granted a little room?*

- [Bukhār-e-Dil]

While Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāḥib^{ra} was skimming through his final moments, Ḥaḍrat Muṣliḥ Mau'ūd^{ra} was with him, praying. His funeral prayers were led by Ḥaḍrat Muṣliḥ Mau'ūd^{ra} and Ḥuḍūr^{ra} himself entered the grave to lay the body to rest. The final prayers, after the burial were also led by Ḥaḍrat Muṣliḥ Mau'ūd^{ra}. Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāḥib's grave is in *Bahishtī Maqbarah* Qadian, next to his mother's, and towards the feet of the grave of the Promised Messiah^{as}. Thus, did God fulfil this desire and prayer of Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāḥib^{ra}.

Five days before the death of Ḥaḍrat Mir Ismail^{ra}, a very saintly Companion of the Promised Messiah^{as}, Ḥaḍrat Maulana Ghulam Rasool Rajeki^{ra} was praying for Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāḥib^{ra}, when he received a revelation from God in this regard. Ḥaḍrat Maulana Rajeki^{ra} narrates:

“A state of trance descended upon me. At that moment I felt that someone had come very close to my ear to speak to me. The words came in a most eloquent and powerful tone. I was made to understand that this is the voice of Allah the Exalted. Hence, with utmost compassion and mercy, Allah thus spoke:

*‘Mir Muhammad Ismail is **Our beloved**. There is no need to worry about his remedy. We are his remedy.’*” ⁶⁴

In reality, what afflicts someone who is truly in love, is the malady of separation, and the only cure for this affliction is union.

The events of the life of Ḥaḍrat Mir Muhammad Ismail^{ra} personify the following lines written by the Promised Messiah^{as}, in which he addresses God:

We have rendered ourselves naught, in order to meet Thee

That some cure for this ailment of separation may be found

- [Durr-e-Thamīn]

This poignant couplet is as true about the life of Ḥaḍrat Mir Ismail^{ra} as it is about his death. May Allah redeem him, and show him mercy, and illuminate his resting place, and elevate his status, and enter him into the lofty and bountiful Heaven, *Āmīn*.

How true were the prophetic words of the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{sas} in relation to the latter-day Jesus^{as} - the Promised Messiah^{as} - when he declared that "*Jesus [the awaited] the prophet of Allah and his Companions would ever remain inclined towards Allah*"⁶⁵, implying that the Promised Messiah^{as} and his Companions^{ra} would, in all circumstances, remain wholly committed to God. The appearance of the Promised Messiah^{as} came in an age when the human race was largely engrossed in worldly pursuits. Materialism and Atheism were on the rise. If mankind exhibited any proclivity, it was towards material gains and the appeasement of material desires. In such a climate, we observe that the Promised Messiah^{as} and his Companions^{ra} immersed themselves wholly in the state of *Raghabat-ilallāh* or "Devotion to Allah".

These were the *Ākharīn*, or the "latter ones", whose mention God had made prophetically in *Sūrah al-Jumu'ah* of the Holy Qur'ān. These were the blessed souls, who in spite of the barrier of time and space that separated them from the *Ṣaḥābah*^{ra} of the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{sas}, did inherit their spiritual blessings, through the medium of the Awaited Mahdī and Messiah. And these indeed, were the fortunate ones whose mention is found in the Hadith of Sahih Muslim, as the *Aṣḥāb* ⁶⁶ of the Foretold Messiah. Undoubtedly, this grand prophecy made by the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{sas} was fulfilled in a glorious way. The blessed life of Ḥaḍrat Mir Muhammad Ismail^{ra} stands as a testimony to the veracity of the prophetic words of Muhammad^{sas} the Messenger of God.

*O Allah, send Thy peace and blessings on
Muhammad and the People of Muhammad*

*Our final call is:
Praise belongs to Allah – Lord of all the worlds*

THE FAMILY OF ḤAḌRAT MIR MUHAMMAD ISMAIL

WIVES

Ḥaḍrat Mir Muhammad Ismail^{ra} had two wives:

1. **Ḥaḍrat Shaukat Sultan** (1887 - 1967): She was born in 1887. She was also a cousin of Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāḥib^{ra}. Her father was Syed Bashiruddin Ahmad, and her mother was Rif'at-un-Nisa Begum. Rif'at-un-Nisa Begum was the sister of Ḥaḍrat Mir Nasir Nawab^{ra}. Ḥaḍrat Mir Ismail^{ra} married Ḥaḍrat Shaukat Sultan upon the wishes of the Promised Messiah^{as} and Ḥaḍrat Ammān Jān^{ra}. In fact, when the Promised Messiah^{as} realized that Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāḥib^{ra} was reluctant due to the fact that Ḥaḍrat Shaukat Sultan was not an Ahmadi at that time, Ḥuḍūr wrote a letter to Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāḥib^{ra}, strongly recommending this match. She was wedded to Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāḥib^{ra} in July 1906. This marriage bore no children. Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāḥib's children, all of whom were from his second marriage, were all, very closely attached to Ḥaḍrat Shaukat Sultan, their elder mother, and addressed her as "*Achī Ammān*", meaning "Good Mother". The affection between Ḥaḍrat Shaukat Sultan and her step-children was mutual. Hailing from a literary family of Delhi, Shaukat Sultan Begum was remarkably conversant with the Urdu language. She died in 1967 and is buried in *Bahishtī Maqbarah* Rabwah.

2. Ḥaḍrat Amtul Latif Begum (1902 - 1964): She was born in 1902. Her father was Ḥaḍrat Mirza Muhammad Shafī Dehlvi^{ra}, who was a *Ṣaḥābī* (Companion) of the Promised Messiah^{as} and also had the privilege of serving the Jamā‘at as *Muḥāsib* Sadr Anjuman Ahmadiyya Qadian. Her mother was Ḥaḍrat Khurshid Begum^{ra}. Ḥaḍrat Amtul Latif Begum was wedded to Ḥaḍrat Mir Ismail in 1917. Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāḥib^{ra} was blessed with seven daughters and three sons from this marriage. Her children addressed her as "*Amma*", meaning "Mother". Both the wives of Ḥaḍrat Mir Ṣāḥib^{ra} are buried next to each other in *Bahishtī Maqbarah* Rabwah.

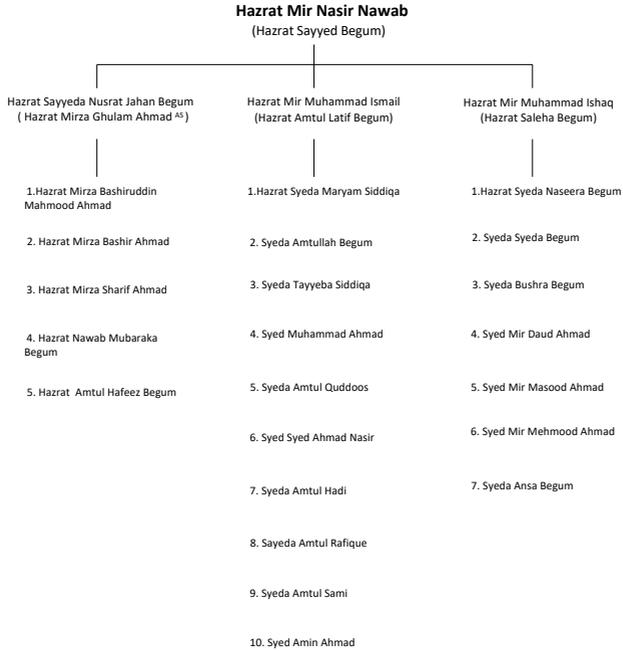
CHILDREN

Ḥaḍrat Mir Muhammad Ismail^{ra} was blessed with ten children:

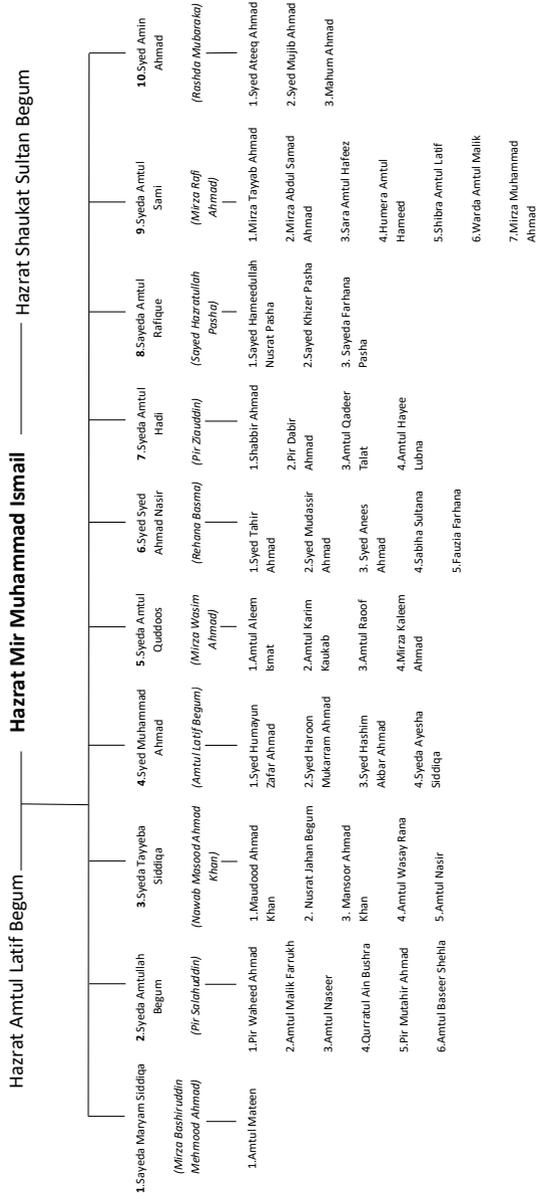
- 1. Syeda Maryam Siddiqā** (daughter): Born: 7 October 1918, died: 3 November 1999. Married to Ḥaḍrat Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmood Ahmad^{ra}, son of Ḥaḍrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as} the Promised Messiah & Mahdī^{as}. She is popularly known among Ahmadis as "*Chotī Āpā*".
- 2. Syeda Amtullah Begum** (daughter): Born: 31 March 1920, died: 31 May 2012. Married to Pir Salahuddin, son of Pir Akbar Ali.
- 3. Syeda Tayyeba Siddiqā** (daughter): Born: 7 July 1922, died: 21 January 2000. Married to Nawab Masood Ahmad Khan, son of Ḥaḍrat Nawab Muhammad Ali Khan^{ra}.
- 4. Syed Muhammad Ahmad** (son): Born: 28 March 1925, died: 13 July 2017. Married to Sahibzadi Amtul Latif Begum, daughter of Ḥaḍrat Mirza Bashir Ahmad^{ra}.

5. ***Syeda Amtul Quddoos Begum*** (daughter): Born: 16 April 1927. Married to Sahibzada Mirza Wasim Ahmad, son of Ḥaḍrat Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmood Ahmad^{ra}.
6. ***Syed Syed Ahmad Nasir*** (son): Born: 5 March 1929, died: 29 October 1987. Married to Sahibzadi Rehana Basma, daughter of Ḥaḍrat Mirza Aziz Ahmad^{ra}.
7. ***Syeda Amtul Hadi*** (daughter): Born: 18 August 1931. Married to Pir Ziauddin, son of Pir Akbar Ali.
8. ***Sayeda Amtul Rafique*** (daughter): Born: 18 February 1935, died: 6 May 2015. Married to Sayed Hazratullah Pasha, son of Sayed Şāḥib Husaini.
9. ***Syeda Amtul Sami*** (daughter): Born: 6 March 1937, died: 3 October 2012. Married to Sahibzada Mirza Rafi Ahmad, son of Ḥaḍrat Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmood Ahmad^{ra}.
10. ***Syed Amin Ahmad*** (son): Born: 13 August 1939, died: 27 July 1998. Married to Sahibzadi Rashda Mubarakā, daughter of Nawab Muhammad Ahmad Khan.

Progeny of Hazrat Mir Nasir Nawab (Till Second Generation)



Progeny of Hazrat Mir Muhammad Ismail (Till Second Generation)



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3. Urdu translation of "*Durr-e-Thamīn Farsi*" (*The Promised Messiah's Persian poems*)
4. *Bukhār-e-Dil* (*Anthology of Ḥadrat Mir Ṣāḥib's poetry*)
5. *Āp Bītī* (*Autobiography*)
6. *Kar na Kar* (*Dos and Don'ts*)
7. *Arba ‘īn-e-Atfāl* (*Forty Hadiths for children*)
8. *Madhhab kī Ḍarūrat* (*Need for Religion*)
9. *Dukh Sukh* (*Sorrow and Joy*)
10. *Jāmi ‘ul-Adhkār* (*Collection of prayers*)
11. *Ḥifāzat-e-Rīsh* (*Care of the beard*)
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