

LIFE
— of the —
PROMISED MESSIAH

By
HAZRAT MAULVI ABDUL-KARIM

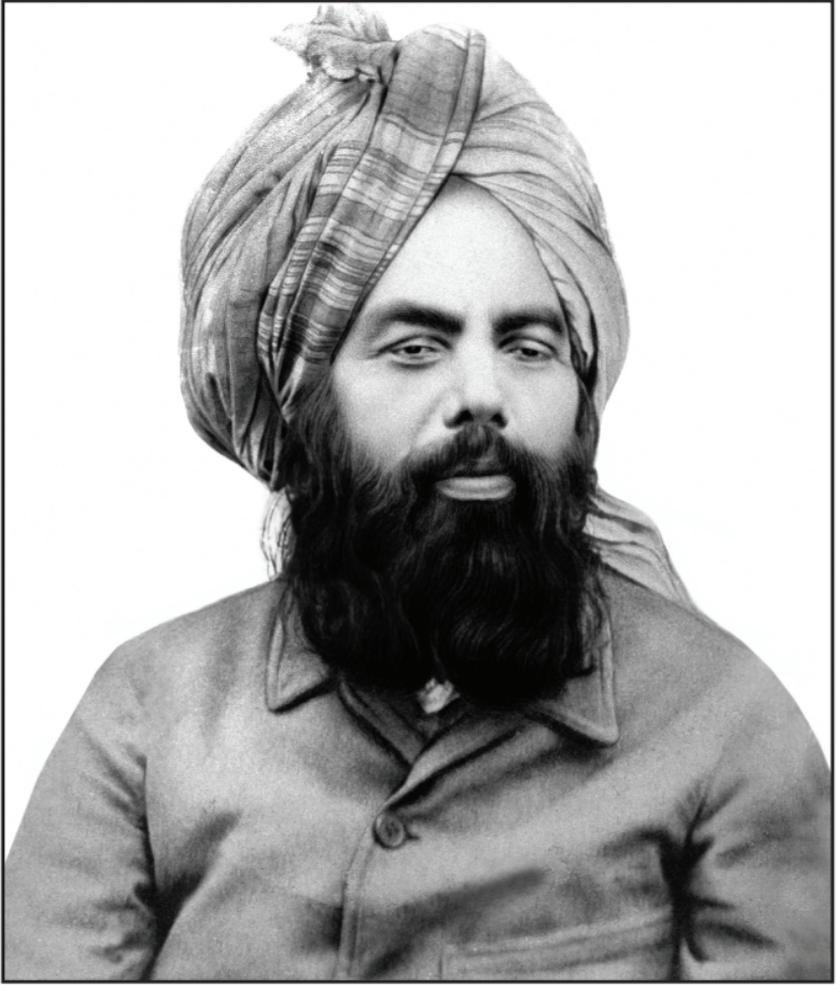
of Sialkot





Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian, on whom peace be upon him, was the Promised Messiah and Mahdi whose advent was foretold in the latter days by the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him. As the Reformer of the Age, awaited in all world religions, his mission was to unite the whole of humanity and revive the pristine teachings of Islam—a religion of peace. Moreover, as a recipient of divine revelation, he manifested divine miracles and demonstrated that God not only exists, but that one can develop a living relationship with Him even today.

Life *of the*
Promised Messiah^{as}



Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian
The Promised Messiah & Mahdi
(on whom be peace)

Life of the
Promised Messiah^{as}

Hazrat Maulvi Abdul-Karim of Sialkot

ISLAM INTERNATIONAL PUBLICATIONS LIMITED

Life of the Promised Messiah^{as}

An English rendering of

Sirat Hazrat Masih-e-Mau'ud Alayhis-Salam

Written by Hazrat Maulana Abdul-Karim^{ra} of Sialkot

First published in Urdu in January, 1900

Present English translation published in the UK, 2022

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Translated by Ayyaz Mahmood Khan

Typesetting and Design: Farhan Naseer

Cover Art: Masood Tahir

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Published by

Islam International Publications Ltd.

Unit 3, Bourne Mills Business Park,

Guildford Road, Farnham, Surrey, GU9 9PS, United Kingdom

Printed and bound by Bell & Bain Ltd., Glasgow

For further information please visit:

www.islaminternationalpublications.com

www.alislam.org

ISBN: 978-1-84880-996-3

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Hazrat Maulvi Abdul-Karim Sahib of Sialkot
(may Allah be pleased with him)

About the Author

Born in Sialkot to Muhammad Sultan and Hashmat Bibi in 1858, he was named Karim Bakhsh. Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, on whom be peace, the Promised Messiah and Mahdi—who would later become his spiritual father and master, and to whom he gave every ounce of his devotion—named him Abdul-Karim.

Hazrat Maulana Abdul-Karim Sahib of Sialkot, may Allah be pleased with him, attained his elementary education at the American Mission School, Sialkot; later, he privately studied Arabic and Persian in Sialkot and Gujranwala. After completing his education, he was appointed as a teacher of Persian at the American Mission School in Sialkot. During this time he was always keen to discuss and debate matters of theology with Christians and delivered lectures expounding the qualities and merits of Islam.

In 1886, he developed a relationship with Hazrat Hakeem Maulana Nur-ud-Din Sahib, may Allah be pleased with him, who taught him the commentary of the Holy Quran and Hadith. Ultimately, it was this

relationship of student and teacher that introduced this seeker of the truth to the Promised Messiah^{as}. Hazrat Maulana Abdul-Karim Sahib, may Allah be pleased with him, first met His Holiness, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, on whom be peace, in 1881 or 1882, at a time when the latter was writing his magnificent work *Barahin-e-Ahmadiyyah*. His affinity with the Promised Messiah^{as} then brought him to Ludhiana in 1889 where he was blessed to accept this divinely commissioned one of God. After he swore his oath of allegiance to the divinely appointed Reformer of the Age, his spiritual transformation took him to ever greater heights until he became renowned as foreranking even among the most devoted and pioneer companions of the Promised Messiah^{as}.

In 1890 when the Promised Messiah^{as} was writing his book *Izala-e-Awham*, he invited Hazrat Maulana Abdul-Karim Sahib, may Allah be pleased with him, to come to Qadian, to assist with various tasks related to the printing of the book. After this, Hazrat Maulana Sahib took up permanent residence in Qadian and bid farewell to all of his worldly ambitions, and to his homeland also, on the desire of his beloved master. From then on, Hazrat Maulana Sahib spent the rest of his life in the blessed company of his master with such selfless devotion and sincere love that to part with the Promised Messiah^{as}, even for a moment, was unbear-

able and unfathomable.

After moving to Qadian, Hazrat Maulana Sahib^{ra} devoted his life completely to the cause of the Promised Messiah^{as} and rendered valuable services to the community. He would review the proofs of books written by the Promised Messiah^{as}, translate his works into Persian and assist with correspondence. He penned articles, delivered speeches, and wrote letters expounding the teachings of Islam and demonstrating the truthfulness of the Promised Messiah^{as}. He accompanied the Promised Messiah^{as} on various journeys. He was appointed to deliver the Friday Sermon and lead the congregational Prayer services in the mosque. He would also hold discussions on matters of theology and religious importance.

Blessed with a melodious voice, Hazrat Maulana Abdul-Karim Sahib, may Allah be pleased with him, was also a formidable speaker. In his time, he was classed among the most renowned and noteworthy speakers in the Punjab. Whether he spoke in Urdu or in Persian, he was gifted with the ability to captivate his audience. In 1896 at the Conference of World Religions held at Lahore, it was he who read out the well-known treatise of the Promised Messiah^{as}, entitled *The Philosophy of the Teachings of Islam*. For one, this treatise was a matchless exposition unveiling the hidden verities of Islam; and when delivered most eloquently by a seasoned speaker

such as Maulana Abdul-Karim of Sialkot, audience members were enthralled no matter their religion. In light of God's promise, this divinely inspired exposition of the Promised Messiah^{as} reigned supreme over all other essays read out at the conference. In 1904, Hazrat Maulana Sahib^{ra} again had the opportunity to read out before a large gathering another exposition of the Promised Messiah^{as}, titled *Lecture Lahore*.

On 11 April 1900, at the occasion of Eid-ul-Adha, the Promised Messiah^{as} delivered a miraculous sermon, extempore, in the Arabic language. A masterpiece of eloquence and divine insight, this is known as the Revealed Sermon (or *Khutbah Ilhamiyyah*). Along with Hazrat Hakeem Maulana Nur-ud-Din Sahib^{ra}, Hazrat Maulana Abdul-Karim Sahib^{ra} was also instructed by the Promised Messiah^{as} to sit close and note down the words of this divinely inspired sermon as it was delivered. After the Promised Messiah^{as} had completed his sermon in Arabic, Hazrat Maulana Abdul-Karim Sahib^{ra} was blessed with the opportunity to present the Urdu translation of this sermon to the gathering.

The Promised Messiah^{as} loved this ardent devotee dearly. In 1905 when Hazrat Maulana Abdul-Karim Sahib^{ra} fell ill, the Promised Messiah^{as} took it upon himself to arrange for the most experienced physicians to treat him and supplicated profusely to his Lord for Maulana Sahib's health. The prayers and supplications

of God's chosen one bore fruits and Maulana Sahib was restored to health. But, ultimately, the decree of Allah Almighty was that Hazrat Maulana Abdul-Karim Sahib^{ra} would soon return to His Maker. On Wednesday 11 October 1905, after the Zuhr Prayer at approximately 1:30 pm, this ardent devotee of the Promised Messiah^{as} bade farewell to this transient abode and returned to his Creator, well pleased with his Lord, and He well pleased with him.

The Promised Messiah^{as} lead the funeral prayer of Hazrat Maulana Sahib^{ra}. He was the first to be buried in the blessed land of the Heavenly Graveyard (*Bahishti Maqbarah*) at Qadian.

The life of Hazrat Maulana Abdul-Karim Sahib, may Allah be pleased with him, was the epitome of service, submission, sincerity, devotion, loyalty and love. Every fibre of his being was imbued with love for God, and love for the Imam of the Age. He was among the most illustrious companions of the Promised Messiah^{as}. One incident will forever stand as a shining testimony to his selfless fidelity. In view of his exemplary abilities, when the ruler of Afghanistan, Habibullah Khan, invited Hazrat Maulana Sahib^{ra} to Afghanistan, offering him employment with a very hefty stipend. Hazrat Maulana Sahib^{ra} replied:

“Today, the wealth that I have received in Qadian is not available anywhere else in the world. After thirteen

hundred years, God Almighty has sent His divinely commissioned one among us. To leave his pure company and pursue coins of gold and silver is but to consume the carrion of this material world. It is to trade the superior for the inferior. I swear by God that if all the treasures of the world were piled before me and in return for this if I was asked to leave Qadian, I would not even spit on this heap of gold and silver.”¹

Hazrat Maulana Abdul-Karim Sahib was a shining star in the sky of Islam and Ahmadiyyat. His brilliant example will forever serve as a guiding light.

¹ *Al-Hakam*, dated 16 August 1922

Note About the Translation

References to the Holy Quran contain the name of the *Surah* [i.e. chapter] followed by a chapter:verse citation, e.g. *al-Jumu'ah*, 62:4, and counts *Bismillahir-Rahmanir-Rahim* [In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful] as the first verse in every chapter it appears.

Explanatory footnotes are clearly marked as being from the Publisher throughout the book.

The name of Muhammad^{sa}, the Holy Prophet of Islam, has been followed by the symbol ^{sa}, which is an abbreviation for the salutation *sallallahu alayhi wa salam* (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him).

The names of other Prophets and Messengers are followed by the symbol^{as}, an abbreviation for *alayhis-salam* (on whom be peace).

The names of the companions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{sa} or of the Promised Messiah^{as} are followed by the symbol ^{ra}, which is an abbreviation for the salutation *radiyallu anhu/anha/anhum* (may Allah be pleased with him/her/them).

The names of deceased pious Muslims who are not

companions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{sa} or of the Promised Messiah^{as} are followed by the symbol^{rh}, which is an abbreviation for *rahmatullahi alayhi/ alayha/ alayhim* (may Allah have mercy upon him/her/ them).

In instances, the actual salutations have been set out in full, but wherever this is not the case, they should nevertheless, be understood as being repeated in full in each case.

Publisher's Note

Life of the Promised Messiah^{as} or *Sirat Hazrat Masih-e-Mau'ud Alayhis-Salam* is a heart-warming account of the life of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian, the Promised Messiah and Mahdi, on whom be peace, written by Hazrat Maulana Abdul-Karim Sahib of Sialkot, may Allah be pleased with him.

This fond reminiscence was originally published in Urdu in the form of a series of letters written by Hazrat Maulana Sahib^{ra} addressed to the readers of *Al-Hakam*. The main text which comprises this book was first published in two editions of *Al-Hakam* dated 17 January 1900 and 24 January 1900, and then later printed in book form. The present English work is a translation of the Urdu.

The present English translation also includes in the form of an appendix an additional section which was published in an Urdu reprint of this book published on 21 April 1935.

With guidance and approval from Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih V, may Allah be his Helper, subtitles have been added to this English rendering, which were not pre-

sent in the original Urdu.

This work was rendered from Urdu into English by Ayyaz Mahmood Khan. We are grateful to Asif Mahmood Basit for reviewing this translation and providing invaluable suggestions to improve and refine the quality of the English text. Thanks are also due to Nadia Mahmood, Fatima Amatullah Naseer and Umar Nasser for copyediting this work. May Allah accept this humble service and reward all those who helped bring this work to fruition. *Ameen.*

Publisher

30 June 2021

In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, Ever Merciful

We praise Allah and invoke blessings upon His Noble Messenger^{sa}

Introduction

To write on the life and character of the Promised Messiah^{as} and suffice on a few pages is no doubt, astonishing. On hearing this name one will obviously think that a large and voluminous book is needed. However, the fact of the matter is that whatever I have written or stated serves only to pave the way for those who are worthy and truly perceptive. It is possible that another who is more knowledgeable and satiated in love may, at some point, be able to write more effectively and clearly than I on this holy and significant subject, or perhaps I may be blessed with the opportunity to complete this exposition of mine. All that I have written herein is based on my sincerest intuition and conscience—it is the essence of my honest experience. I believe absolutely that neither have I been deceived, nor have I sought to deceive others. After having verified the truth over a long period of time, my desire to support goodness and always impart good counsel to my brothers, has compelled me to serve the nation and put forth a few points in this manner. By this means, perhaps a good-natured

person may be fortunate enough to be enlightened with divine light and truth—for which the sheer grace of God Almighty has chosen our community.

In writing this treatise my real purpose, by which every particle of my body is leavened, and for the propagation of which my every strand and fibre surges forth with passion, is so that I may demonstrate the nature needed by one in whose hand we place the most valuable trust of our faith. Today, in the Punjab and all across India there are many Sufi leaders and those who claim to show God. It cannot be denied that these people also command the love of a good following of people. Even in Dhaunkal, which is situated near Eminabad, countless people congregate in large numbers. It is possible on this account for the line between truth and falsehood to be blurred in the eyes of the ordinary man, or for the complex challenges hindering a person from the path of truth and the hardships of the quest to crush their resolve and dishearten them. I have penned this biography of the Promised Messiah, on whom be peace, keeping in view the exemplary model of the Prophet Muhammad, our Noble Messenger, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, and have made it the basis of this work. In actuality, by the grace of God, I have successfully proven that the true Leader and Guide, and he who is divinely guided in this era, is our Beloved Master, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian. I

have not gone out of my way to artificially show that the life and character of the Promised Messiah^{as} is similar to the life and character of the Noble Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him. However, the fact of the matter is that the disposition of our Beloved Imam Mahdi has been fashioned by the hand of God in such a way that the same actions and words spring forth from him uncontrollably which are seen in the Noble Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, who is the Chief and Master of the Promised Messiah^{as}. We Muslims are immensely blessed by God Almighty. Allah the Exalted states:

لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِّمَن كَانَ يَرْجُوا اللَّهَ وَالْيَوْمَ الْآخِرَ¹

You have in the Prophet of Allah an excellent model, for him who fears Allah and the Last Day.

This verse of the Holy Quran has lifted us out from all the difficulties and ill confusions in which the people of falsehood are overcome. The utterly deficient example of Christ in his morals, deeds, social interactions and politics—in every walk of life really—ineluctably resulted in the Christian priests seizing for themselves the seat of Prophet and Messenger, in order to compensate for the deficiencies of Christ. The pure life of our Noble Messenger, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, furnishes an example to follow for a flourish-

¹ *al-Ahzab*, 33:22

ing, developed, perfectly mannered life in every field. Whether in the case of a reformer, a nation builder, a commander in war, one who seeks deeper understanding in the respect that is owed to other nations or who already possesses a deep insight in this already, a husband, a father, a magnificent friend, a beneficent man, a generous benefactor, a man who holds the power to exact revenge but then forgives, an illustrious ruler, a humble man who severs all ties to the exclusion of Allah; in short, all people find a perfect example in the character of that holy man who is Muhammad, the Pride of the Children of Adam, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him. What example of character can we find in the weak, helpless Christ, who had no real opportunity to exhibit any moral quality? Therefore, the exemplar of Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, has raised us from the lowlands of every darkness to the highlands of clear decision and divine light.

How easy now is it for us to judge every claimant on this perfect criterion? The greatest aspect of the life of the Prophet of Islam, our Noble Messenger, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, and his fundamental objective, and his life and his nourishment was nothing else but to spend every hour of his time to preach the Word of Allah and to stand against the enemies of God. Read the Quran and see how it clashes against

falsehood in the most awe-inspiring manner. It was the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, who manifested this book by acting upon it. Even if someone were unaware of the life history of the Holy Prophet^{sa}, whenever they act upon the Quran it becomes evident how great a task was assigned to the Prophet of Islam. Then, from this, one can judge just how comfortable and indolent the life of the Holy Prophet^{sa} could have possibly been. Now, for the sake of God Almighty, reflect and see who at present is walking precisely on the footsteps of the Noble Messenger, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him. Who has clinched the argument in favour of the truth of Islam against the Christians, the Arya Samaj, the Sikhs, the Jainists, the Jews, the Brahma Samaj and atheists? Who has revived through his own example the religion of Islam, the Quran, the Messenger, and miracles and wonders? In whom do we see an example of the moral qualities and deeds of Prophet Muhammad^{sa}, the Messenger of God?

Therefore, in these few pages, by the will of Allah, I have manifestly shown who, in today's day and age, is worthy of occupying the seat of God's vicegerent on earth. May Allah accept my humble effort.

Abdul-Karim

26 June 1900

Qadian

In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, Ever Merciful

The Internal Disorders of the Time that Naturally Call for a Reformer

Internal Disorders

Firstly, the people no longer possess such belief in God Almighty as would nurture righteousness and fear. God is not considered to be Powerful and Omnipotent, nor deemed to be One Who will punish the wrongdoers and One who knows what lies in the breasts of people. If this were not the case, why would the people be so bold and brazen in committing sin?

Whenever sin and Satan have ever possessed such powerful dominance over the world, and whenever vice and immorality have ever blackened and destroyed the hearts and breasts of man, the primary factor has always been that true and open-hearted belief in the existence of Allah Almighty has vanished. The era which yearned for and demanded the advent of the Prophet Muhammad, our Noble Messenger, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, cried out and called for a reformer due to the disorders of which it was a victim. In the same manner, this era also calls out for a reformer due to the manifest indecency and brazen vices which run rampant at present. Just as, in the era of past, the

Noble Messenger^{sa} showed the people their God and in doing so cut the root of every disorder, the greatest need in today's age also is for such means and factors to be made available, and for such methods to be employed, which as if, show the countenance of God to the people, and develop certainty and faith in His ever-living, powerful Being.

Hence, just as we are now in dire need of a reformer, it is equally imperative that the stature and power of the reformer who appears in this age be such that he is greater than everyone else in his ability to see God and show God. Further, this power ought to wield its influence in two ways. On the one hand, he must satisfy and satiate the hearts of people through his powerful proofs, conclusive arguments and convincing insights. His expositions and words replete with the power of the Holy Spirit ought to be such as move the heart all by itself to proclaim that there is a God; so that the spirit of truth is breathed into every heart and a holy transformation takes place in them all at once. On the other hand, this reformer ought to possess the ability to manifest powerful prophecies which encompass knowledge of the unseen, so that he may be worthy of being a vicegerent of the Most Hidden, Powerful God. It is then, in actuality, that this man will be a perfect reflection of our Noble Messenger, the Prophet of Islam. In fact, it is only such people who in reality possess the

capacity to set aright the people through their perfect example. For the Noble Messenger^{sa} also is wholly distinct from others on account of these very two abilities. On the one hand, he conquered the hearts through an academic book that is founded on solid argumentation and reason, namely the Holy Quran, and with it, he uprooted falsehood intellectually. On the other hand, along with the aforementioned, through the fulfilment of powerful prophecies, his enemies were disgraced in the outwardly and apparent sense.

نہ بعلمش کس رسید و نے بہ زور
در شکستہ کبر ہر متکبرے
یک طرف حیران ازد شاہان وقت
ہک طرف مہبوت ہر دانشورے

*No one could match him in knowledge or in strength;
he broke the arrogance of all who would be haughty.*

*On one hand, kings of the age were astounded by him;
and on the other hand, all the wise were confounded.*

Therefore, in the present age we are faced with a similar time, which calls for a reformer of the same nature and quality.

Secondly, there is terrible division and divisiveness among the people. At this time, we do not have seventy-two sects, rather every individual in himself is a sect. The state of dogmatism and personal judgement in religious affairs is such that one cleric considers

the other far removed from rectitude and drowned in error. Two clerics in the same city or village conduct themselves as if they are supporters and advocates of separate religions altogether. Backs have been turned to the Book of God Almighty and the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet^{sa}, while faces are fully turned towards carnal desire, ill tradition and habit. Day and night, the people are bent upon accusing one another of disbelief and sin as dogs brawl with one another. The enjoyments of the world and worldly position has become the centre of all their ambitions. They sport with the word of God Almighty and the Sunnah of Muhammad^{sa}, the Best of Creation, as children play with toys.

In addition to this, grave discord has consumed the Wahabis and Muqallids, the Shias and Sunnis. The rafter which supports the roof has broken, as it were, and this heavy roof might well-nigh collapse to crush them all and dispatch them to the next life.

The time now calls for a hero who would do away with these divisions. The leaders of the Muqallids advocate for their own cause while the Wahabis support their own point of view. Those who have ventured to remove these oppositions may be described perfectly by the following:

تو از چنگل گرگم در ربودی
چو دیدم عاقبت خود گرگ بودی

*You delivered me from the claw of the wolf;
when I looked closer, in the end, you too were a wolf.*

Instead of uniting the Muslims, they have disunited them even further; instead of making them firm, they have turned them more and more faithless.

At the moment, the most significant form of disorder preventing the people from uniting as one—and without unity there can be no reformation—is this very division of religion and sects. Hence, this establishes the dire need for a reformer who would put an end to these destructive divisions that ravage the community from within.

Thirdly, the affluent who could have been supporters and defenders of the nation—and who ought to have been—are essentially engrossed in fun and frivolity, and wholly absorbed in satisfying their own desires, lusts and ambitions. On account of their sin, transgression, and wrongdoings, the most imminent of chiefs and nawabs have died an untimely death, as it were, and the rest, in overwhelming majority, are sitting on their hands; no one is concerned about the supremacy of the Faith.

So our religious scholars are as I have mentioned earlier; the common people and the affluent are of the nature that I have just described. If now is not the time

for a pure and holy reformer, then when?

Fourthly, the greatest and most serious disorder is that of the Sufis and custodians of shrines. The public gives them hundreds and thousands of rupees and even they too, in overwhelming majority, like the rich, are immersed in vice and immorality, in physical comfort, and in slumber and gluttony. They have absolutely no idea of the instructions of Allah and His Messenger^{sa}; they know not what is the practice of the Holy Prophet^{sa} and what constitutes an innovation in the Faith. They are inclined to their own self-concocted notions and inauthentic views. They have formed religious denominations so harmful and as a result are put to shame so horribly that the religion of Islam observes them from afar, and laughs and cries. In reality, thousands and thousands of new religions have sprung forth in the guise of Islam, and so the enemies of Islam find ample opportunity to raise allegations against the Religion of Truth and subject it to mockery. These people do not possess even the slightest feeling or sense of the state in which Islam and the Muslims are engulfed, or of the perilous onslaughts that the external enemies of Islam are waging against the Faith—how they are bent upon destroying the very pillar upon which it stands. In short, our nation crumbles on account of their negligence. By the tongue of its present state, our nation calls for a reformer.

An External Adversary

Firstly, the greatest corruption of all, and in fact the fundamental disorder, is that of Christianity. This disorder is manifesting itself in many forms:

- i. Through schools, it is turning thousands and thousands of children away from their religion and weakening their faith.
- ii. Its missionaries and preachers are ruining the faith of simple village-folk and the uneducated.
- iii. It is setting ablaze Muslim households through the efforts of lady preachers.
- iv. Mission hospitals are perpetrating what no form of compulsion and coercion has ever done in the past.
- v. In times of famine, thousands of the poor and destitute are given food, and then led astray.
- vi. Influence has been exerted through the authorities and thousands of men renounced their faith under pressure.
- vii. Newspapers, monthly periodicals and books are responsible for destroying thousands.

Secondly, institutions of higher education are fertile ground for the spread of materialism and irreligiosity. Of the courses and textbooks that are introduced every other day, some are absolutely inclined towards atheism. Some of these books have been written explicitly with the motive to attack Islam. Since Christian priests sit as influential members on textbook selection

committees, they support the selection of such books.

In short, these colleges and universities have given the world hybrid men who are neither true philosophers, nor completely ignorant. They are people who look to Islam with an eye of contempt in the academic sense, and often practically as well; people who like the unrestrained and audacious consider the Religion of Truth and its laws to be of no use. Most of these people are completely irreligious and free from divine law.

When a certain irreligious man, who was also an M.A., was told to abstain from indecency and adopt a course of marriage, he declared like the libertines of France that marriage is nothing but an unnecessary restriction; man is free to do as he wills, like a dog.

Therefore, the colleges and universities have infected the world with a terrible plague. These sons of secular education who are leading members of society raise slogans of materialism, and organise committees and conferences for worldly objectives alone, they strive and move forward to attain the world, and it is for this purpose that they spend their wealth. If religion is mentioned to them, they become angered and infuriated. Their philosophy, metaphysics and science constitute the root of all disorders. In the present age, there is a need for a reformer who would firmly establish true knowledge in the place of these false sciences.

Thirdly, court cases and legal pursuits have massacred

exemplary qualities such as truth, righteousness, honesty, trustworthiness, brotherhood and sympathy. This has filled homes and localities, and villages and cities, with wolves, leopards, jackals and dogs in the guise of men. Those who write appeals and submissions, generally, lawyers, barristers and attorneys, encourage people to press for legal action. In this state of affairs, how can the fear of God be nurtured in the hearts? Deceitful schemes and plans are made day and night, in every home, to fight court cases, while religion and religious work has been neglected.

Fourthly, various departments, especially those for telegrams, post and rail are so heavily burdened by work that may God have mercy! One man is employed at a post where three men are required. Due to this excessive workload and extreme pressure, the room for God has been occupied and filled completely. What time do the people have for religious training, turning towards Allah, and for the fulfilment of religious obligations and objectives?

The department for the railways has given rise to grave negligence. There is no free time to be had, whether day or night, at railway stations. To remain awake during the night and work during the day, is as if, man is being taught to war against his inherent inclination to adhere to the law of nature established by God. Hence, this is a terrible form of deception which has for the most part

rendered useless the faculties of faith.

Fifthly, in relation to those in authority and prominent officials it is stated:

النَّاسُ عَلَى دِينِ مُلُوكِهِمْ

People follow the religion of their Kings.

Since higher officials are but materialistic worms of the earth and have not even the slightest concern for God or the next life, it is necessary for the citizens of this land to be subjected to the same influence. No doubt, most of the subjects of this land have become dogs of the material world.

Another Adversary—the Arya Samaj

Like the Christians, this nation also has made attacks upon Islam, and has published such vile and filthy books against Islam that would make any indignant Muslim's hair stand on end. Many a Muslim have joined them or developed a nature of the Arya Samaj. They are constantly publishing newspapers and periodicals in which the Noble Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, and the Holy Quran are insulted. Thousands of Muslims who possess only elementary understanding of their beliefs read these publications and are ruined. Since the followers of this religion hold prominent positions and serve as officers in various departments, Muslims are being grievously mistreated

at their hands. In short, a devastating storm rages on while the vessel of Islam is being hit by violent waves. In this hour, the advent of a reformer is but necessary. Peace be upon you.

Humbly,

Abdul-Karim

18 Ramadan 1317 A.H.

In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, Ever Merciful

We praise Allah and invoke blessings upon His Noble Messenger^{sa}

Life of the Promised Messiah^{as}

A Gift for the Community

My brethren! May the peace and blessings of Allah be upon you all. I regret that I have pained you to wait too long, and for so long a time have been unable to convey the holy words of my beloved master, and write about this divine community. It would have behoved me to not allow any hindrance to stand in my way in view of the abundance with which I received your letters, but many unexpected matters arose beyond my control, which prevented me from completing this work. It gives me joy, however, that my friends will now be so pleased by my letter that I trust they will not dwell over what is past. I trust that they will all pray with heartfelt emotion for a brother whose gaze remains forever fixed to find anything that would grant them pleasure and comfort and offer it to his friends, but certain trials subject him to such circumstances which turn his hand and pen averse.

My brethren! I had promised in one of my letters that I would write about various accounts and instanc-

es from the personal life of the Promised Messiah, on whom be peace. This is due to the fact that by the special grace of God Almighty, I have had the honour for many years to remain quite close to His Holiness^{as}. In addition to this, the Ever-Wise Lord has blessed me with such a perceptive and discerning heart that I do not view with a sense of indifference anything that I see or hear, whether minor or major. My incisive heart plunges into every matter and is able to bring forth from its depth the essence. I am also especially blessed in the sense that during my life, whether in public or in seclusion, neither do I ever attempt to deceive myself, nor has my heart ever strayed from its inherent nature and true character, thus showing itself to me with another face.

Over the course of my experience which has spanned a long period of time, I have observed the character of the Promised Messiah, on whom be peace, both in his internal and external affairs. Therefore, it is my desire to pen these details so they may serve as supplies and material for every intelligent, good-natured person who is a lover of the magical wonders on display in the gallery of the universe; so that with this material they are able to build a sculpture or paint an illustration themselves, and then reflect on its lines to see that such an image can represent none other than a man who is sent from Allah.

On a cursory glance it may seem odd that this subject should have anything to do with believers and followers, because their faith does not hinge upon such particulars and details. As for them, their love proclaims:

حاجت مثلاً نیست روئے دلارام را

A beautiful countenance is in no need of adornment.

However, I look into my soul and see the benefits that I have gained from a knowledge of these finer details, and how this knowledge has helped me on traversing the stations of my spiritual quest. For this reason, therefore, my desire to guide others and my passionate sympathy moves my soul to share this knowledge with my brothers as well, who by fate and the will of God have not received the opportunity that I have had by the sheer bounty of God.

It is my heartfelt belief that in this instance I shall be able to present proven remedies for many a dangerous malady, personal and domestic in nature, which have made the homes of most people—like places that have been afflicted for generation after generation with tuberculosis and lung disease—into houses of mourning and lamentation as opposed to places of comfort and tranquillity.

Paradise at Home

In this respect, I should like to first write about the

domestic life of the Vicegerent of Allah. For the greatest, most commendable quality of any man stands proven if his relationship with the members of his household are most exemplary in nature and when his home becomes a paradise owing to his effective management of affairs and good morals. The greatest evidence of this is seen in homes where hearts are free from pain and anguish, where factors and causes resulting in grief, resentment, malice and jealousy are nowhere to be found. In the Book of God Almighty, which is full of wisdom, it is stated:

عَاشِرُوهُنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ²

Consort with them in kindness.

The practical example of this Book of Wisdom was our Chief and Master, a mercy for all the worlds, the Holy Prophet^{sa} who states:

خَيْرُكُمْ خَيْرُكُمْ لِأَهْلِهِ

Meaning, the most superior of you, and the one who is full of goodness and blessing, is the one whose treatment in the home reflects goodness and blessing.

It has been a period of some fifteen years since His Holiness^{as} once again undertook the heavy but delicate responsibility of domestic life. During this time, never once has there been an instance when flames of

² *an-Nisa*, 4:20

domestic conflict have arisen in his home. One might say that this is because the women of his household—and women are often considered weak and lacking in knowledge—have perhaps never done anything that would bother him. Experience and common knowledge testify to the sorts of hurtful situations that arise with women at home and between spouses due to crooked dispositions and ignorance. However, come what may, the calm and pure heart of this man deserves attention which over so long a time has never been affected even slightly by any painful or unpleasant situation in life.

If the bitter lump of flesh that is the source of every poison, the breeding ground of all spite, jealousy, malice and enmity, and which is the shortest way to hell in this world, has not been fully subdued, and if it has not been purified, cleansed and opened by the hand of the Lord of Holiness, one would question whether it is even possible for one to live a life of peace, dignity and comfort in this world which is ablaze with restlessness.

There is primarily one dangerous weakness that ought to be reformed and which is the root of all internal disorder. What is that weakness? It is the habit of constant criticism and to be quickly irritated. These flaws characterise a mean and narrow-hearted person about whom it can easily be concluded that they live a life of hell.

For ten years I have observed with a close and critical eye, and have reached the conclusion with full insight

that the pure nature of His Holiness^{as} is free in all respects from any satanic influence in this regard.

When I judge myself and look at many others, I can say that it is this very tendency to object, criticise, carp, and to be easily vexed, which has disturbed the comfort and delight of many. Every individual who is riddled with such a disposition (and few and far between are those who are unsullied by this defect) can feel the instant effect of this consuming fire and every such individual can attest to the fact that ultimately it is this very nature which is the fundamental core of all ill morals. There is nothing more devastating for the rights owed to God and His creation. In the end, it is this very bitter disposition of man which has turned the world into a house of resentment and a house of grief. Therefore, in His Book of Wisdom, where God Almighty has established that the next life is a house of peace and a house of delight, and where He illustrates its beautiful joys and comforts in comparison to the present world, He describes it in words that could not be better chosen:

وَنَزَعْنَا مَا فِي صُدُورِهِمْ مِنْ غِلٍّ إِخْوَانًا عَلَى سُرُرٍ مُتَقَابِلِينَ³

And We shall remove whatever of rancour may be in their breasts so that they will become as brothers seated on thrones, facing one another.

This means that in paradise, the very faculty shall be

³ *al-Hijr*, 15:48

removed from the breasts of man which causes enmity, malice and every kind of discord. Therefore, it can be concluded in relation to any individual who is pure of these ill characteristics now, that they are living in a paradise on this very earth. Moreover, since this faculty may be likened to a fountainhead, it can be deduced just how excellent the other moral qualities of such a man truly are.

An Affectionate Husband

The women attendants working in the home of the Promised Messiah^{as}, who are ordinary, uneducated women, of simple and straightforward nature, free from affectation and having no false pretensions about their own learning or depth of reasoning, are able to sense the aforementioned quality most vividly in His Holiness^{as}. They look at the Promised Messiah^{as} in wonder, and upon witnessing the world around them and the common practice and treatment of others in their respective spheres, often say with an air of surprise—of which I am a witness—that: “Mirza Sahib does often the will of his wife.” On one occasion, I heard His Holiness^{as} say himself: “With the exception of indecency, you ought to bear with patience all the other improprieties and discourteous behaviour of your wives .” He also once said: “I find it utterly shameful for a man to be in a state of conflict with a woman. God has made us men, and in

reality, this is a completion of His favour upon us. The gratitude that we owe for this is to treat women with kindness and tenderness.”

On one occasion, there was mention of a certain individual's rough nature and abusive language, and that he was harsh in the treatment of his wife. On hearing this, the heart of His Holiness^{as} was deeply grieved and he said: “This does not behove our friends.”

When the Promised Messiah^{as} was in Amritsar for his debate with Deputy Atham there was a large gathering on one evening at the home of the late Khan Muhammad Shah. Many friends had come from afar to see the debate. On the same day as the evening of which I would like to relate an account, the Promised Messiah^{as} was suffering from a headache, as was often the case. When devotees yearning to see His Holiness^{as} were most eagerly waiting, he blessed the audience. With immense love and devotion Munshi Abdul-Haqq Sahib, the pensioner from Lahore, began to inquire from the Promised Messiah^{as} about his pain and illness, and said: “Your work is very difficult and you are burdened by heavy obligations. You ought to take care of your physical health. A special food which gives strength must be prepared for you every day.” His Holiness^{as} said: “Yes, you are right. I have mentioned this a few times, but ladies tend to be so busy in their own work that they do not care too much about these

sorts of things.” On this, Munshi Abdul-Haqq Sahib, who was an old brother and a faithful Muslim of good nature and kind heart, and who was previously a follower of Maulvi Abdullah Ghaznavi, said: “Your Holiness, you do not instruct them in a stern and awe-inspiring manner. I, for my part, ensure that proper arrangements are made for my meals. My instructions are never disregarded and there are never any lapses in these special arrangements; otherwise, I would have them answer for their disregard.” I was sitting to one side and at the time I was pleased to hear these comments of Munshi Sahib, because this point was in favour of my beloved master. Due to my love for the Promised Messiah^{as}, even I would often think to myself that instead of simple food, excellent food should be prepared for him. I felt that for a man who was endlessly exerting his mental faculties, the simple food served in the community kitchen (*langar khanah*) could never be adequate. In this respect, I found Munshi Sahib to be a firm supporter of the view I already held, and so I spoke without thinking. In actuality, during those days my understanding of matters divine required much teaching. So, I spoke in favour of this aged and experienced saintly man who had been trained in the company of Abdullah Ghaznavi and said: “Indeed, Your Holiness! Munshi Sahib is right. Your Holiness ought to be stern and have his instructions followed.” His

Holiness^{as} turned to me, smiled and said: “Our friends ought to refrain from such manners.”

Allah the Exalted knows well that I am a sensitive individual. In those days, I held a very stereotypical outlook on honour and disgrace, and considered myself to know well and hold justified views. Only God knows how embarrassed I felt in that gathering. I was deeply disappointed in myself for supporting the view of the old and experienced, kind-hearted, saintly man.

My brothers! In relating this account, which I have done so with pure intentions, my purpose is to show the stark difference between a man who is inherently blessed with a pure disposition, who fulfils the rights due to others and who has come as a teacher of lofty morals, and others who deceive their own souls to believe that they have attained any station in the company of other spiritual mentors, or have developed good morals within themselves.

The account that I was relating earlier remains unfinished. On hearing the incident in relation to the ill-tempered friend mentioned previously, the Promised Messiah^{as} continued to speak at length about the kind treatment of women. Towards the end of his discourse, the Promised Messiah^{as} said: “As for me, I once raised my voice to my wife. At the time I felt that this louder-than-normal voice of mine was mixed with sentiments of grief. Even though I had said no hurtful or harsh

words, I later sought forgiveness from God continuously for a very long time. I offered voluntary Prayers with great humility and lowliness, and gave alms as well; for I felt that the sternness I had shown to my wife was due to some unconscious weakness in my obedience to God Almighty.”

When I heard these words and reflected over my own state, my understanding and my actions, I felt such shame and remorse that only God can know. At that moment, these words penetrated my soul like an iron stake. I realised that such extraordinary virtue, fear of God and consideration for the most intricate aspects of righteousness cannot be possessed by an ordinary person. On the other hand, I and hundreds of others like me, boast that we are adherents of Islam and followers of the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet^{sa}. While there is no doubt that we are neither intentionally insolent, nor those who arrogantly transgress the limits set by Allah, why are we devoid—or at least weak due to other ailments—in this spiritual power and sharp sense? We feel that the height of our good fortune and righteousness is merely in abstaining from the cardinal sins and vices; except for the most obvious and manifest sins, we do not lend our attention to the finer, more discrete forms of sin. However, such a condition can only be developed with telescopic vision, with complete faith, with complete insight, with complete righteousness—

with what has been bestowed upon His Holiness, the Imam of the Age, on whom be peace. In that moment, my tongue and my heart spoke in unison and accepted that even if the sublime arguments numbering in the thousands, which prove that the Promised Messiah^{as} was from Allah, and which shine more radiantly than the sun, had ceased to exist, this sole quality of possessing extraordinary righteousness and fear of Allah was sufficient to establish his truth.

A Gentle Man of Modesty

Many trained and disciplined ascetics, many religious devotees whose tongues are forever engaged in repeating couplets that profess aversion from the world and all its bounties, and express a burning passion, many who claim to have large followings, and many traditional scholars have been observed. Beyond their private quarters when they are in the presence of people, they sit like gentle cats. After some time, they will raise their heads, take a deep breath and then let out a sober sigh. Even though their admirers eagerly yearn to hear them speak, they do not pollute their 'saintly' tongues with speech, even if the occasion calls for it. Yet all the while, in their own home, they are ill-tempered wolves and leopards.

There is a famous and renowned ascetic in India who has more than 100,000 followers. He claims to possess

great nearness to God. A good-natured woman from among his closest household members was blessed with the opportunity to spend some time with the household of the Promised Messiah^{as}. She observed how His Holiness^{as} would live in the home like an angel, how he would not criticise or taunt anyone, and how he would oblige to requests as one obeys the instructions of a higher authority. On witnessing this manner of conduct, her astonishment knew no bounds and she has said numerous times in amazement: “The state of his eminence, our Shah Sahib is diametrically opposed to this. When he comes from outside into his private quarters an uproarious commotion arises. He may glare at a certain child, or be displeased with some lady attendant, or beat another child. He will argue with his wife about too much or too little salt in his food, why a certain vessel is placed here, why some other article is placed there. He will tell his wife how she is a foolish, ill-natured and uncultured woman. If ever the food does not meet his exacting standards and wishes, he will violently toss the dish before him against the wall. In short, lamentations resonate throughout the house. The women weep and wail, imploring God, so that Shah Sahib may remain outside the home and bless others’ with his presence.

The finer details of lowering one’s gaze, forgiveness and overlooking others faults is a very long and detailed

subject. Among the women who work in the home, even those of the most rudimentary understanding, believe with as much certainty as they possess of their own person that His Holiness^{as} never lifts his gaze to look at a single one of them. He could walk through the veranda for weeks, nay, months on end, and could may well pass by a group of women even daily, but he will never look at any of them. His gaze remains forever fixed to the ground. What remarkable repose, tranquillity of heart, extraordinary dignity and forbearance he possesses.

An Ocean of Grace and Repose

It is no matter how loud the clamour and commotion. Indeed, such disturbance will normally carry off the hearts of people like straw cast to the winds and draw them in towards the tumult or to the source of the noise. However, in the case of His Holiness^{as}, he is not disturbed or bothered by such racket. It is this very state for which discerning people are eagerly desirous and for which the seeker employs thousands of efforts, imploring God in tears. I have heard and observed many capable authors and seasoned writers sitting in a room while reflecting or writing, and if a bird has made its way into the room, they become so flustered and aggravated that their train of thought and direction in writing is lost completely. They will pounce at

the bird to kill it as fiercely as one would attack a lion or cheetah, or as one would attack the most provoking of enemies.

There is a venerable man perhaps known as Sufi Sahib or Qazi Sahib and the most significant thing his followers have to say about him is that he is of fragile nature and is easily angered. If anyone sits with him for even a short span of time, he becomes uneasy. He says himself that he is burdened by others. Quite some time ago, I went to see him myself and it had perhaps been no more than ten minutes since I had sat down with him that he said to me: “Is there anything else I can help you with?” There is no doubt that one who possesses a calm heart, towering dignity and forbearance holds an elixir. It is this very attribute which differentiates and distinguishes the saints.

I have observed His Holiness^{as} when he is absorbed in writing the most subtle and intricate of expositions—at times even his matchless, most articulate of books in the Arabic language. Nearby a chaotic uproar may be ensuing in full surge, children or simple women may be arguing with one another disrespectfully, or yelling; other ladies may even be engaged in altercation as women do. However, His Holiness^{as} will continue writing and remains so absorbed in his work as though he was sitting alone in quiet seclusion. All of his unparalleled and magnificent books in Arabic, Urdu and

Persian were written in these sorts of circumstances. On one occasion, I asked the Promised Messiah^{as}: “In such noise does His Holiness not feel the least disturbed in writing or thinking?” He smiled and said: “I do not hear them, why and what sort of disturbance could this cause me?”

Faith in the Support of God

On one occasion, when Miyan Mahmud was some four years of age, His Holiness^{as} was sitting inside writing as usual. Miyan Mahmud came with a matchbox accompanied by a group of children. Initially, for some time the children played and argued with one another as children do, then Miyan Mahmud did as he pleased and set fire to the written manuscripts in the room. This amused him and he began to clap in joy; all the while His Holiness^{as} was engrossed in writing and did not even raise his head to see what was being done. Before anything could be done, as the fire subsided, these valuable manuscripts were reduced to a heap of ash. Some other form of amusement then drew in the children and they went on their way. It was later on when His Holiness^{as} felt the need to consult his previously written pages for context, that the matter became apparent. The Promised Messiah^{as} asked one child but he was silent, then he asked another who also had no words out of fear. Finally, one child spoke and said: “Miyan

Sahib has burnt the papers.” All those in the home were in fear of what would happen next. In reality, due to the gravity of the situation, they were all apprehensive and expected a terrible outcome and an unpleasant situation—and no doubt, they should have. However, His Holiness^{as} smiled and said: “Wonderful. In this there must be great wisdom of Allah the Exalted. Now God Almighty desires to disclose upon me an even better exposition.” On this instance as well, one who is inclined to critical analysis ought not to pass over this incident without comparing it to the ways of others.

Similarly, on another occasion it so happened that during the days when His Holiness^{as} was writing *At-Tabligh*, Maulvi Nur-ud-Din Sahib came to see the Promised Messiah^{as}. His Holiness^{as} had penned a very important two-page exposition and he felt a sense of pride on account of the eloquence and articulacy with which God Almighty had graced his writing. The text was to be given to me for translation into Persian, but this was overlooked. The Promised Messiah^{as} placed the pages in his pocket and set out for his walk. Maulvi Sahib and many others accompanied the Promised Messiah^{as} as well. On the way back, before we had returned, His Holiness^{as} handed the papers to Maulvi Sahib so that he could read them and then give them to my humble self. On the way, Maulvi Sahib accidentally dropped these papers and upon returning to our

abode, he took a seat. His Holiness^{as}, as was his custom, went into his private quarters. I mentioned to someone that today His Holiness^{as} has not sent any pages of text; the scribe is after me and I have still to translate the relevant text. As I caught sight of Maulvi Sahib, his face was turning pale. With extreme anxiety, Maulvi Sahib rushed people back on our steps and said: "Hurry, stand up, the papers have fallen somewhere along the way." Maulvi Sahib was mortified and worried beyond measure. He thought to himself, what a humiliating oversight; what will His Holiness^{as} think about me and how utterly irresponsible I am in that I could not even hold on to one piece of paper—and such an important paper at that. When His Holiness^{as} was informed about this, he came out as normal, with a cheerful face and a gentle smile, and instead sought pardon and said: "Maulvi Sahib, you have suffered such grief on account of the paper being lost. I regret that you underwent such struggle and toil in search of these papers. It is my belief that Allah the Exalted will bestow upon me something better."

Brothers! The root of all this is a firm belief in the existence of a Living, Omnipotent God. It is this very belief that breathes life into the faculties of man and invigorates them, and saves them from withering away into a state of degeneration, which in the end, often compels worldly people to commit many disgraceful

actions.

Fortitude in Illness

On one occasion, the Promised Messiah^{as} was suffering from a severe headache and I was also sitting with him inside. Nearby, there was excessive noise and disturbance. I submitted: “Your Holiness, this noise does not cause you pain, does it?” The Promised Messiah^{as} said: “Yes, it gives me relief when they quiet down.” I said: “Why does His Holiness not instruct them then?” His Holiness said: “You tell them in a gentle manner; I do not have the heart to say anything to them.” Even in the severest of illnesses, he will be all alone in a small room, and he will stay there so silently, that one would think he is comfortably asleep. He will not complain to anyone for not giving him attention, or for not offering him water, or for not tending to his other needs.

I have seen that when someone falls ill, those who look after the person in question seek refuge with God from the ailing man’s ill-temper, irritability, and discontent on every little thing. The person who is ill will abuse people in their frustration, glare at others with anger and as for his wife, she is struck with nothing but misfortune. The poor lady can neither find relief during the day, nor peace at night. If out of tiredness she is able to close her eyes for a moment, may the Lord have mercy—some men will raise an uproar. The help-

less lady will be utterly confounded; on the one hand, she will be exhausted, and on the other hand, she is consumed by the worry that this sick man's anger and wrath may well burst his heart. And so, the state of some among the sick, when they are suffering an illness, is one from which we seek protection from God—who is unaware of such manner of practice. Contrary to this, I have observed myself and also heard from others that just as the blessed disposition of His Holiness^{as} remains calm and tranquil, and does not cause pain to anyone when he is in a state of health, the same state of peace remains when he is ill. When he recovers from his illness, his cheerful and smiling countenance reappears in an instant, and his words of affection return. On many occasions, I have had the opportunity to arrive just after the Promised Messiah^{as} had recovered from a prolonged and severe headache. On opening his eyes, he would look at me with a smile and say: "By the grace of God, I am now feeling better." And when I would look at the Promised Messiah^{as}, it would appear from the expression and radiance on his face, and from the joy and cheerfulness in his voice, as if he had returned from a walk in the most magnificent of gardens—one which pleases the heart and grants one comfort and delight. In the beginning, these sorts of experiences would leave me extremely astonished. For I had seen many other saintly men who laid claim to fortitude and

manly spirit, yet they would don a new garb on falling ill. I had observed how even after their illness had subsided they would remain so irascible that may God have mercy. Failing none, not a single person would have anything good to say about the individual in question. Whether family, wife or children, even friends, everyone will make a gesture from afar to unassuming strangers as if saying: "Beware, there lies a black snake, stay away." The fact of the matter is that in times of illness only such people are able to preserve their mind and sense, and faith, who possess balanced morals when they are in a state of health. It has been observed that many who are taken to anger when they are healthy, transform into complete madmen and are overcome with rage completely when they fall ill. In actuality, illness is a very effective criterion to judge any person's faith, divine understanding and steadfastness. When a person speaks uncontrollably in a state of intoxication, or when one mutters in their sleep, or even the sorts of dreams one sees—all reveal one's true picture. So, in the same manner, illness also is a touchstone by which to judge between the believer and unbeliever; between the brave and coward. Most blessed indeed is the one who does not let the reins of their own passion and desires of the baser-self slip out of their hands.

My brothers! Since death is inevitable and illnesses too are unavoidable, strive to develop peace and tran-

quillity in your dispositions. Every Muslim desires to meet their end firmly attached to Islam and this is something that lies suspended between hope and fear. This can only be possible if in a state of health we endeavour to inculcate unwavering steadfastness, strength, resolve and repose. Otherwise, in that fearful hour which confounds the senses and shakes a person's beliefs and thoughts, it is difficult to maintain one's strength and tranquillity. God Almighty states:

يُشَبِّتُ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِالْقَوْلِ الثَّابِتِ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ⁴

Allah strengthens the believers with the word that is firmly established, both in the present life and in the Hereafter.

It is this very unwavering strength of character that I have shown in the life of His Holiness^{as}, the Vicegerent of Allah. He is the same man, indeed that complete man, who could not be affected even slightly by the fire of this world with all its afflictions and evils. He is the same believer whom the hellfire will address saying, O believer, pass on, for in the face of your divine light my fire is naught. O you, the chosen one of God, who carries paradise in both his pockets as the people of today carry watches, you are surely from God. Indeed, you are not from this foul and defiled world. For if this were not the case, how else can the world lay mountains of

⁴ *Ibrahim, 14:28*

trial and affliction upon your shoulders, yet they are all, in their entirety, removed from you just as clouds vanish when pierced by the bright rays of the sun. Among hundreds of thousands, the rare heart and extraordinary calm and composure, and peaceful heart that you have been blessed with is so that you may be clearly recognised as one who is not from this world, but from heaven. The people of this world have not recognised you. What they ought to have done was honour you and give place in their hearts to accept that you are the Promised Vicegerent of God, a servant of the Seal of Prophets, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, and the one who has revived Islam.

A Mountain of Magnanimity

Now, as far as overlooking the faults of others and magnanimity is concerned, how many accounts of the Promised Messiah^{as} shall I relate? On one occasion, a woman stole some rice from the home of the Promised Messiah^{as}. A thief knows in their heart the fault of their own action and for this reason, the restlessness in their posture and the manner in which they look here and there is distinct in nature. A sharp-sighted person noticed her and then apprehended her. A huge clamour arose. She was caught with a sack of rice under her arm, some 15 kilograms in weight. From every direction, people were scolding and rebuking her. His Holiness^{as}

happened to pass by for some reason and inquired about what had happened, and the entire incident was related to him. The Promised Messiah^{as} said: “She is in need, give her some rice and do not shame her. Follow God Almighty in the way that He covers up the faults of His servants.”

The Promised Messiah^{as} never takes anyone to task by saying that such and such of your actions were inappropriate; what is the meaning of this foolish nonsense. Everyone at home is in awe of the majesty of the Promised Messiah^{as}. While every woman and child knows with full certainty that His Holiness^{as} is not one to punish, their hearts are imbued with a sense of reverence, awe and respect, and they fear him as one fears a severe punisher. This fear and awe mixed with love and fondness is something, which quite simply, I can neither articulate in any worldly terms, nor can I explain it to a worldly person. Only such a believer can understand this feeling who has a relationship with God Almighty. On the one hand, the glory, majesty, awe and fear of God has been described in a manner that the thought of it breaks one’s back, and the young turn old. However, despite this, the lovers of God hasten towards him as an infant is drawn into the breast of its mother. By nature, humans flee from that which is fearful, so why then do the souls cross fire and oceans without any care at all, and passionately yearn to meet

God. The awe and magnificence of those who appear on earth as manifestations and representatives of God Almighty cannot be likened to the person whose vengeance and wrath forcibly dominates the hearts, or like a dreadful, venomous serpent, which renders unconscious smaller creatures by the magnetic effects of its terror. Notwithstanding this fact, their forbearance and humility also cannot be likened to the ill-natured, shameless person, who without question, falls in the eyes of the people and to whom the heart becomes averse. Fear of them is mixed with love and fondness, and affection for them is mixed with a sense of respect and majesty. It is for this very reason that under their shade piety, purity, chastity, righteousness and adherence to the commandments of Allah find comfort; and Satan and his offspring are forbidden from entering such places. Otherwise, could it be possible for such order to be maintained in their lives and for their homes to present the finest, most commendable examples of domestic interaction—examples that are worthy of emulation—all without any criticism, without any threats, and without any punishment? A hot-tempered person, who has no control over themselves, and who in reality, is constantly in a burning furnace, will be quick to object, and refuse to accept my words, deeming them to be impossible. For in their eyes, it is necessary for them to be as fierce as a lion, strut like a

cheetah and keep their quills erect like a porcupine, in order to maintain their apparent awe, respect and honour. However, he who holds this view has stumbled and his wicked inner-self has deceived him. If only he knew that his flock is averse to him and they are pleased when this wolf-like shepherd is not watching over them.

The Promised Messiah^{as} never demands to be provided with an account of expenses at home. He will not ask as to whether the amount that was requested from him has been spent in full, or where it was spent, or that such a large amount was taken from him on such and such occasion, or that such and such item that was purchased is less than what was requested, or that a proper account book and ledger is not maintained of income and expenditure. God Almighty has blessed the Promised Messiah^{as} with such an open heart and expansive breast that he does not concern or engage himself in such matters; prying into such materialistic affairs have no part in his life. I can accept that a materialistic person whose God is his own weak self cannot adopt such a manner of practice, nor do they have any desire to do so. If such a one does, by way of forced effort, manage to adopt such conduct, all their affairs may well-nigh be upset completely and ruined. However, the words and deeds of those who believe in the Living and Powerful God are extraordinary. The clear evidence of their honesty and that they never

fail due to their unwavering trust in God is the fact that they are the most upright in their affairs and that they are saved from all possible and probable forms of destruction and domestic ruin, which may be conceived and fathomed by a worldly person. In truth, what relation do the men of God have with concerns relating to petty matters and account books? These sorts of concerns have been fastened to the necks of the dogs of this world, as it were, due to the misfortune of their evil deeds and a lack of righteousness.

Unwavering Trust in God

One day, His Holiness^{as} said: “If the people possessed righteousness, they would set out of their homes like birds, with an empty stomach, and return with their bellies full.” In actuality, the people of this world seek fire, which has turned the sons of man into dogs that continuously go on panting. A burning from within consumes them. The root on which they stand is an utter lack of belief and trust in God’s promises, and to deem their own faculties to be the centre of their hopes and apprehensions. In short, both the seeker and that which is sought are fragile. It is only natural, that such people never attain peace. Today, in the eyes of materialists, these statements arouse mockery. Those who point out these facts are openly and easily termed half-mad and foolish. However, they are oblivious of

the spiritual science mentioned here. Worship of one's evil desires has destroyed the faculties and senses that are needed for the worship of God. In short, returning to my initial point, His Holiness^{as} trusts everyone and considers them to be truthful without question.

Courtesy and Kindness

A woman, even in the most terrible state and abhorrent condition, whom someone may be quick to judge and whom the sophisticated people of this world would be swift to brush off—preferring to close their ears before she spoke, or cover their eyes and noses before she approached them—can speak to His Holiness^{as} for hours on end. The Promised Messiah^{as} will listen to them calmly and attentively for as long as they speak, as if a nightingale were chirping the sweetest of songs, or as if a parrot were speaking fluently, engaged in an interesting imitation of someone's words. No matter how meaningless and pointless a person's words may be, the Promised Messiah^{as} will not insinuate even in the slightest that they are talking absolute nonsense and to listen any further would be an utter waste of time, nor will he reject the story that has been told to him.

Trust in Others

He will not question the lady workers who purchase household goods about the particulars of what they

have bought and whatever they have spent. Then, whatever they have returned of the money given to them, the Promised Messiah^{as} will put in his pocket, with his eyes closed. Various ignoble, low-minded and mean-natured youngsters who belong to what are seen as backward castes work in the home of the Promised Messiah^{as}. They are given substantial amounts of money to purchase household goods; they have gone to Lahore countless times to purchase essential goods, but the Promised Messiah^{as} has never held them to account, he has never been harsh with them, he has never questioned them. Allah knows the sort of heart with which this man is blessed. In truth, it is God alone who understands the deeper nature of such pure hearts, for He is the one who has created them by His distinct wisdom and will. How true indeed, when He states:

اللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ حَيْثُ يَجْعَلُ رِسَالَتَهُ⁵

Allah knows best where to place His Message.

I have reflected deeply, I have investigated, I have watched closely, I have listened carefully, and I have been a spectator to this scene with the heart and mind of a captious critic, and I must confess that on every occasion my eyes and ears have only come across what would increase my faith and understanding. Over such a long period of time, never once have I heard sounds

⁵ *al-An'am*, 6:125

from inside of altercation, or of the Promised Messiah^{as} demanding an explanation on matters of money and purchasing. Holy is Allah! What a tranquil heart and what a pure disposition, wherein Satan has never been able to erect a dwelling of ill-thinking. And what an admirable, heavenly heart he possesses, which is blessed with such tranquillity; no loss or harm is able to overcome him. It is obvious that if turning a blind eye to others and such trust in people was petty in the scales of social interaction and the hereafter; in other words, if these characteristics were detrimental to the system of the world and disliked in the sight of God, this divine community would have been upset completely. However, the constant success of this holy man, by leaps and bounds, is a testament to the fact that it is hearts of this very nature that God loves.

A Forgiving Heart

On certain occasions the Promised Messiah^{as} may happen to ask for a particular food to be prepared for him and when he does, it is imperative that the food be prepared at once due to physical weakness or ailment. At times, the Promised Messiah^{as} will not eat and wait for his dish to be prepared. Whenever he finds a moment from writing or worship, he will remember that he must still eat and will wait for his dish, in the thought that it will arrive soon. Ultimately, the time for that

meal passes and the time for dinner arrives, but even on this, he does not reprimand. He will only ask in a gentle manner and when he is given the excuse that the workers forgot, he will only smile and return.

Goodness gracious! Humble attendants and women who work inside the home cook and eat whatever their hearts desire, and they are afforded such control that one would think that the house and everything in it belonged to them. However, if ever they forget or are neglectful, the Promised Messiah^{as} does not call them to account. He will not say, even in soft words, that look here, why the lack of attention; you ought to fear God. It is these sorts of instances which make one believe with certainty that the words of our Holy Prophet, the Chief of Creation, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, are true when he says: "I eat and drink from my Lord." His Holiness^{as}, our Imam also states:

من می زیم بوجی خدائے کہ با من ست
پیغام اوست چوں نفس روح پرورم

*God stands by my side and it is in accordance
with His revelation that I spend my life;*

*He it is who has conveyed the mes-
sage, so this is why I nurture my soul.*

In reality, if this were not true, who can muster the strength to bear such burden? Except for these individuals who possess such extraordinary natures, who else

can possess the fortitude and resolve that is needed to be content in such circumstances?

Peace and Contentment

I remember that on one occasion His Holiness^{as} was busy writing when a lady attendant brought him his meal. She placed the dish before His Holiness^{as} and submitted that his food was ready. The Promised Messiah^{as} said: “Wonderful, I was feeling hungry and was just about to call.” The attendant left and the Promised Messiah^{as} became absorbed in his writing once again. A dog came over, sat down in front, and ate the food with full freedom; it cleaned the dishes very well and then stood up without a care whatsoever and walked off in a dignified gait. Holy is Allah! Even these animals have been given a sense of understanding. Even though the dog was not domesticated or trained, but only God can know how it understood for certain—and its certainty was justified—that this holy man is harmless and benign, he would not even harm an ant; how it knew that this man had never raised his hand even to strike his enemy. So, after some time when the call to *Zuhr* Prayer was made, the Promised Messiah^{as} remembered that he needed to eat, on which he called the attendant. The attendant hurriedly arrived and submitted: “It has been quite some time since I put your meal before you, and I informed you as well.” His Holiness^{as} smiled and

said: "Very well, I will eat in the evening then."

A Gracious Teacher

I am reminded of an incident which shows the forbearance, manner of training, and spiritual power of the Promised Messiah^{as}. Some two years ago, as is the custom at a certain age and due to a lack of knowledge, some of the women in the house developed a taste for telling and listening to stories. Harmless, innocent tales and decent stories to cheer the heart were being told late into the night. This soon became a habit and everyone was becoming so engrossed in these stories as if they were very meaningful discussions. When His Holiness^{as} came to know of this, he did not say anything directly to anyone of them. One evening he gathered everyone and said: "Come, today, I will tell you a story." Then, the Promised Messiah^{as} spoke to them about things of truth, fear of God and gave them other invaluable lessons. It was as though previously, all the women were asleep and now they had been awakened. All of them repented and proclaimed that they had manifestly erred. After this, all those tales that they previously related to one another vanished from memory as a distant dream. In such an instance, who is unaware of the action that a harsh reformer would exact, and the vain, useless steps he would take. An ill-natured, abusive man may appear to have succeeded in changing

people by the force of punishment, but he cannot turn his home into a paradise by such practice. The life and character of His Holiness^{as} is an exemplary model for such people.

Husband and Wife Truly Devoted to One Another

The honourable wife of His Holiness^{as} has sworn allegiance to him and believes with sincerity of heart that he has been sent from God. Even in the gravest of illnesses and times of restlessness, her level of trust in the prayer of His Holiness^{as}, is unlike anything else. In every respect, she believes in His Holiness^{as} to be truthful and one whose truthfulness is supported by irrefutable testimony—just as the most eminent among his companions believe. Let me present to you a manifest proof of her absolute faith and firm belief in the Promised Messiah^{as}. Women, by nature, hold a very negative perception about their husband's other wife. Nothing is more horrifying and abhorrent for a woman than a co-wife. In Arabic, a partner wife is called *darrah* (which means hurt and distress). There is a prophecy of His Holiness^{as} about his marriage to another woman. By the grace of Allah, one aspect of this prophecy has already been fulfilled. The time has not yet come for the second aspect to be fulfilled so that the servants of God may rejoice. The respected wife of the Promised Messiah^{as} has prayed tearfully many times for the fulfil-

ment of this prophecy. She has declared, swearing by God Almighty, that although as a woman, she naturally dislikes this, she desires with a sincere and open heart, that the words of God are fulfilled, so that they bring honour to Islam and the Muslims, and falsehood is abolished and overcome. On one occasion, she was praying and when His Holiness^{as} asked her about her supplication, she told him of her prayer. His Holiness^{as} said: "How can you be pleased at the coming of a co-wife?" The honourable wife of the Promised Messiah^{as} said: "Whatever the case may be, all that I care about is that your words are proven to be true, even by the death of me."

Brothers! I do not see such faith, even amongst Muslim men. How blessed is this man and how blessed is this woman, whose relationship with one another is so true, so pure. What a paradise is such a home whose master is of such nature, and in which such a family resides. It is my belief that a wife is very well aware of whether her husband is good or evil, and whether he is a deceiver and a fraud, or honest and righteous. And in truth, how can anything of a man be hidden from a companion who is with him both in private and in public.

I always consider and believe it to be a very powerful argument in favour of the prophethood of the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings of Allah be

upon him, that his contemporaries, intimate friends and blessed wives believed in him with sincerity of heart. During his life and after his demise, they remained firm and loyal in their belief. The companions were bestowed with such perception and remarkable sagacity that they were able to clearly distinguish between the Muhammad^{sa} who stated: *أَنَا بَشَرٌ مِّثْلُكُمْ* (*I am but a man like you*) and the Muhammad^{sa} who proclaimed: *إِنِّي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ إِلَيْكُمْ جَمِيعًا* (*Verily, I am a Messenger of Allah, sent to you all*). On certain occasions, these discerning and sincere companions, and the wives of the Holy Prophet^{sa}, would speak to that Muhammad^{sa} who was a mere man, in a cheerful and informal manner. At times, in their general dealings, they would disagree with him and even dispute with him. Sometimes, his wives would speak to him in such an affectionate and intimate manner that the grandeur and awe of the Holy Prophet^{sa} would not prove a hindrance, nor would any formality stand between them. However, on other occasions, when in the presence of Muhammad^{sa}, the Messenger, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, they would sit before him with their heads bowed so respectfully, as if they were branches upon which birds could make their nests without a care in the world. In this realm, they believed that all their deeds would be in vain if they spoke first or raised their voice in the presence of the Holy Prophet^{sa}. They were so obedient and submis-

sive that they would forsake their will, their knowledge, their tradition and their desire in front of the authority of the Messenger, as though they were senseless and without will, in the likeness of puppets. Such sincere obedience and to slough off one's old skin of ego and self-conceit is impossible until the hearts develop living certainty and faith in an honest, guileless man who is sent from Allah. As such, I observe that the noble wife of His Holiness^{as}, believes with sincerity of heart that he is the Promised Messiah and is overjoyed to hear his glad tidings from God, and is fearful of his warnings.

In short, this divinely chosen companion holds a true relationship with God and is at one with Him. So, accordingly, the closer a friend of the Promised Messiah^{as} and more acquainted a companion, the more they recognise his honesty. The longer someone remains in his company, the more they grow in love for him and develop an honourable view of his character—far more than others.

Patience and Forbearance

His Holiness^{as} is possessed of such patience and forbearance that I have observed hundreds of times that he will be sitting alone in the courtyard upstairs writing or in reflection. It is a long-standing practice of His Holiness^{as} to sit with the door closed. On one such occasion, his son knocked on the door loudly and

said: “Father! Open the door.” The Promised Messiah^{as} immediately stood up and opened the door. The innocent stepped in, looked here and there, and then left at once. His Holiness^{as}, then closed the door as he generally does and perhaps after two minutes, the child returned again and began pushing and hitting the door, and screaming: “Father! Open the door!” The Promised Messiah^{as} stood up again with the same patience and calmness, and opened the door. Even this time, the child did not come into the room, he merely poked his head in, murmured a few things and then ran away. With great patience, His Holiness^{as} cheerfully and in good spirits closed the door, and sat down to continue his very important work. After some five minutes the child was back again, with the same urgency and noise, “Father! Open the door!” His Holiness^{as}, stood up again with the same dignity and calmness, and opened the door. He did not say a word of displeasure. He did not say: why do you come here and what do you want; after all, what is the meaning of this constant pestering and disturbance in my work? And this did not occur just once. This must have occurred twenty times, and in every instance, not a single time did His Holiness^{as} scold or rebuke his child.

A Caring Physician

On certain occasions, village ladies will come to ask for

medicine and they will knock on the door loudly and say in their simple, village tongue: “Mirza Ji! Open the door, will you.” The Promised Messiah^{as} will stand up as one obeys the call of an honourable master, and will speak to them and advise them with a cheerful face. In our country, even the educated classes give little value to the importance of time, so villagers are naturally all the more prone to waste time. Sometimes a lady will begin rambling about useless things and some will begin to complain about their own domestic issues—about their mother-in-law and sister-in-law—and this will waste a whole hour, but the Promised Messiah^{as} will sit and listen with patience and dignity. He will not openly say, or even indicate slightly that enough is enough, you should go now; you have your medicine, what more do you want, you are wasting my time. Ultimately, the lady will stand up, alarmed at how much time it has been, and then leave.

Once, quite a few village ladies came to have their children seen, and at the same time, a few of the lady attendants working in the house also came to benefit from this opportunity. At the time, the Promised Messiah^{as} needed to write a very important treatise of a religious nature, and time was of the essence. It so happened that I also came over and I was astonished to see that His Holiness^{as} was standing active and alert in the likeness of an Englishman standing on duty, ready and

vigilant, and he had five or six medicine chests open. He was dispensing various medicines from small glass vials and bottles to some, and giving essences to others. This dispensary remained open for some three hours. The clinic continued serving its patients. Afterwards, I submitted: “Your Holiness, this is a great inconvenience to you, and much of your valuable time is wasted.” Holy is Allah! He responded to me with joy and satisfaction: “This too is religious work. These are people in need. There is no hospital nearby. It is for the sake of these people that I order and store all sorts of allopathic and Graeco-Arab medication, which proves beneficial when the time comes.” The Promised Messiah^{as} went on to say: “This is a task that brings great spiritual reward. A believer must never show indolence and unconcern for such work.”

I have just mentioned children, but the conduct of the Promised Messiah^{as} towards other ordinary lady attendants is no different. Sometimes, one will come and ask for something. Then she will come again and ask for something else. Never once have I seen the Promised Messiah^{as} express annoyance and say: “You wretch! Why do you pester me? Why do you not take whatever you need once?” I have seen countless times that his own children and other children also will be sitting on the *charpoy* of the Promised Messiah^{as} and inconvenience him to sit at the foot of the *charpoy*,

while in their own childish tongue, they will tell him, for hours, stories of toads, crows and birds; and the Promised Messiah^{as} will go on listening with pleasure, as if someone was reciting the *Mathnawi* of Maulana Rum.

Compassionate Upbringing of Children

His Holiness^{as} is extremely opposed to hitting and scolding children. No matter how much a child may cry or make trouble, or complain, or make unreasonable requests, or continuously insist for something that is a figment of their imagination or beyond reach, His Holiness^{as} will neither hit them, nor scold them, nor express any signs of anger. Mahmud was perhaps three years of age when the Promised Messiah^{as} was in Ludhiana; I was there as well. It was summertime and very hot. A wall divided the men's and women's quarters. It was in the middle of the night when I woke up and heard sounds of Mahmud crying and His Holiness^{as} trying to console him by speaking to him of various things. His Holiness^{as} would pace with the child in his arms, but the child would not be pacified. After all this, the Promised Messiah^{as} said: "Look Mahmud, what a beautiful star." The child turned to its new centre of attention, became silent for a moment and then began to cry and bawl, and said: "Father! I want to go to the star." I immensely enjoyed the endear-

ing manner in which the Promised Messiah^{as} said to himself: “Wonderful. I had thought of a way to console him, but he has found a way to cry about this too.” In the end, the child cried until it tired itself and became silent. However, during this entire time, never once did the Promised Messiah^{as} say a harsh word or express displeasure.

This leads on very well to another aspect. His Holiness^{as} is strongly against punishing children. I have witnessed countless times that nothing displeases him more than when he hears about someone hitting a child. There was a man here, who once hit his son, as was his habit. When His Holiness^{as} was informed of this, he was deeply affected. He called for the man and delivered a heart-rending address. He said: “In my view, to strike a child in this manner is equivalent to associating partners with God. For the ill-natured perpetrator who hits a child arrogates themselves to a position of granting guidance, a position only held by God, and seeks to partake of God’s station of providence.” The Promised Messiah^{as} continued: “When an incensed man punishes someone for something, he will continue to grow in anger until he takes on the form of an enemy, and in proportion to the actual offence, he will overstep in punishment by miles. A person who is patient and does not lose the reins of self-control, and who is fully tolerant, forbearing, calm and composed,

does have the right to punish or reprimand a child on an appropriate occasion. However, a short-tempered, intolerant and unreasonable person is not suitable at all for the training of children.” His Holiness^{as} went on and said: “Alas! If only parents would spend as much effort in prayer as they do in seeking to punish their children, and if only they made it a constant practice to supplicate for them with a burning heart. Indeed, the prayers of parents for their children are blessed with special acceptance.” The Promised Messiah^{as} said: “I have made it compulsory upon myself to make certain prayers on a daily basis. Firstly, I pray for my own soul that God may use me for such work by which His honour and glory is manifested, and may He enable me to act in a manner that fully pleases Him. Then I pray for the members of my household that may Allah the Exalted grant me the delight of my eyes through them and that they may tread the path of His pleasure. Then I pray for my children that they may all become servants of the Faith. Thereafter, I pray for all my sincere friends by name, and then I pray for all those who are a part of this community, whether I know them personally or not.” During the course of this discussion, the Promised Messiah^{as} said: “It is unlawful for such a person to take the seat of a spiritual guide and leader, who is negligent of his followers for even a moment.” Also, he said: “Guidance and upbringing, in essence, is in the

hands of God. Nagging incessantly and persisting on a matter beyond reasonable bounds, i.e. to prohibit and rebuke children on every little thing, demonstrates that we are, as if, the masters of guidance, and will be able to bring our children on the path that accords with our own will. This is a hidden form of associating partners with God. My community ought to refrain from such a practice.” The Promised Messiah^{as} categorically said, and also gave instructions in writing, that any teacher in our school who has the habit of hitting children and does not refrain from this inappropriate action should be dismissed immediately.” The Promised Messiah^{as} also said: “I pray for my children, and see to it that they follow broad principles, etiquette and teachings; that is all, nothing more. Then I place my entire trust in Allah the Exalted. The seed of goodness that is present in each of them, according to their nature, will flourish when the time comes.”

Brothers! One ought to take a lesson from this practice of His Holiness^{as}. There are some from among our community who make very tall claims and assert themselves as having traversed all the stations of divine understanding, but when they are angered—and that too on trivial matters—they turn into ferocious beasts. They do not treat their children well. They consider it an obligation to hit them and for this they will present countless arguments. I trust they will change them-

selves after this example.

Simplicity in Living

His Holiness^{as} is completely indifferent and unconcerned with decorated homes and fancy dress. By the grace and mercy of God, His Holiness^{as} is of such rank and stature that if he so desired the bricks in his home could be made of marble and his door rugs could be of silk and satin. However, the house in which he resides is so simple that one who is predisposed to worldly definitions of elegance and refinement would not be happy to stay there for even a moment. I have seen, countless times, the wooden seat on which His Holiness^{as} sits outside during the summer time. Even if it is covered with dust or dirt, he will never object, and if someone does finally clean off the dust, he will not notice that either and take interest in the fact that today, his seat is especially clean and shining. In short, he remains so fully absorbed in his work that he does not care at all about these materialistic things. When the time came to build houses to meet the needs of guests, the Promised Messiah^{as} emphasised again and again that: "It is useless to spend money on bricks and stone. Do what is sufficient to accommodate someone for a brief period." The carpenter was cleaning wooden panels and boards with a planer but the Promised Messiah^{as} stopped him and said: "This is nothing but affectation.

It is an unnecessary delay of time. Do what is necessary.” The Promised Messiah^{as} said: “Allah the Exalted knows that I have no love for any property. I consider my properties to be the shared possession of my friends, and I desire greatly that we all come together and spend some time with one another. The Promised Messiah^{as} said: “It would please me if there were a place where my friends occupied houses on all four sides and my house was situated in the middle, with an entrance leading to every home that surrounded my own, so that I could remain in constant contact and interaction with each and every one of them.”

Brothers! All of these words are true and the events are a testament to this fact. The property, both inside and out, downstairs and on the upper level, is full of guests like a ship. His Holiness^{as} also has a portion for himself, after division of other areas. In reality, he himself lives in a very small portion of the house. He lives in his own house as one who stays in a temporary home for travellers; the traveller never entertains the thought that this is his own home.

No Pretensions in Dress

Moving on to the dress of His Holiness^{as}. Pashmina is a very expensive cloth. A materialistic person will go to great lengths and employ exhaustive means to care for it and maintain it, and will mercilessly waste away

a substantial amount of time worshipping it. To His Holiness^{as}, however, it has no greater value than a useless cloth. By closing the buttons on his waistcoat into lower holes, eventually all of the buttons break off. One day, he said with an air of wonder: "It is no easy task to reattach a button. My buttons seem to fall off quickly." Then he said: "In truth, doing one's buttons is a great waste of time." The Promised Messiah^{as} said: "My state is that I even feel regret when answering the call of nature, for all the time that is wasted. This time too could be better spent in some religious work." He also stated: "Any occupation or engagement which prevents me from religious work and takes up my time is completely unacceptable to me." His Holiness^{as} once said: "When an important task of religious nature arises, I deem food and drink, and sleep to be forbidden on me, until I have completed the task at hand." The Promised Messiah^{as} also stated: "I am devoted to the cause of religion, in fact, I live for the sake of religion. Therefore, all I desire is that nothing obstructs my way in this path."

Once in the winter season, Mahmud, who was a child at the time, put a large piece of brick in the waistcoat pocket of His Holiness^{as}. When the Promised Messiah^{as} lay down, the brick would push into his side. He turned to Hamid Ali and said: "For the last few days I have been experiencing pain in my rib; it feels like a pricking pain." He was surprised and began to pass his hands

over the body of the Promised Messiah^{as} and eventually his hands were able to identify the piece of brick, which he immediately took out of the pocket of the Promised Messiah^{as} and submitted: “It was this brick that was hurting you.” His Holiness^{as} smiled and said: “A few days ago Mahmud put this in my pocket and told me not to take it out because he said he would play with it.”

In short, the Promised Messiah^{as} is not captivated by fine clothing. There is no doubt that a materialistic person who is unaware of the actual truth may apparently see the Promised Messiah^{as} in elegant dress and thus fail to reach the depth of the matter and may well-nigh consider—judging by his own state of affairs—that His Holiness^{as} was interested in exquisite clothing. However, those who sit with him day and night know well his lack of interest in this respect. One day he said: “I would wear clothes which were cut and tailored at home, but now by the will of God, people bring clothes for me. Allah Almighty knows well that I do not consider these clothes to be any different from what I would wear before.”

A Paragon of Humility

The nature of His Holiness^{as} is filled with such humility and modesty, and is so self-effacing that no greater example can be seen. He sits on the ground, while others sit on the rug or above him. The blessed heart of the

Promised Messiah^{as} does not even perceive such things. Some four years ago, the members of his household had gone to Ludhiana. It was the month of June and the house had been newly built. In the afternoon I lay down on a traditional indian-style bedstead (*charpoy*) that was present there at the time. His Holiness^{as} was pacing back and forth. When I woke up, the Promised Messiah^{as} was lying on the ground below my *charpoy*. I stood up out of respect. The Promised Messiah^{as} very affectionately asked: "Why have you stood up?" I said: "When you are lying on the ground, how can I sleep on the *charpoy*." The Promised Messiah^{as} smiled and said: "I was standing on guard for you. The boys would make noise and I would stop them so that your sleep would not be disturbed."

At the Mubarak Mosque, there is no formal seat for the Promised Messiah^{as}. A stranger is unable to recognise the Promised Messiah^{as} by any physical means of distinction. The Promised Messiah^{as} always sits in the right-hand corner of the mosque when sitting in the row for Prayer all by himself, as one who swims in the river of contemplation, calm and collected. I often sit in the *mehrab* of the mosque and for this reason I am usually right in front of the main entrance. Many a time, strangers who are brimming uncontrollably with ardour come straight to me, and then they either realise their mistake by themselves or someone from among

those present in the mosque directs them to the man who is truly worthy of their attention.

Heavenly Gatherings

The gatherings of His Holiness^{as} are characterised by grandeur and dignity along with openness and informality, all at the same time. Every one of his humble followers feel that His Holiness^{as} loves them the most and everyone will say whatever their heart desires to him freely. Even if someone goes on for hours with their own story, no matter how meaningless it may be, the Promised Messiah^{as} will continue to listen with full attention. Often in accordance with their own limited strength of heart and patience the audience will grow weary and begin to stretch and yawn, but His Holiness^{as} will not show by any action whatsoever—not even for a moment—any signs of fatigue. The gatherings of His Holiness^{as} do not show an image of him sitting dejected and serious, and the audience sitting around him as if they were lifeless portraits on the wall. In fact, as and when appropriate, he delivers addresses and on various occasions, he will deliver very powerful and impassioned addresses in refutation of the false doctrines of other Faiths, as though he were waging an onslaught against a grand army—a stranger would feel as if they were witnessing an ensuing battle. The gatherings of His Holiness^{as} are coloured in the

hue of prophethood (may peace and blessings be upon the Prophet of Islam).

The mosque of Prophet Muhammad, the Chief of Mankind, was also his royal court where all necessary matters were dealt. If an ascetic in the wilderness, who had broken all ties with the world, and in his own fancy felt that his useless meditation made him a godly man, were to step into the mosque of the Prophet when he was discussing matters of war, and instructing his companions to assemble and sharpen their weapons, would he be able to understand that the Holy Prophet^{sa} is so merciful and benevolent that his right to the title 'A Mercy for Mankind' was a true claim, and that he was a protector of the rights owed to God and His creation more so than anyone else in the world? Now, in the same manner, there was once an occasion when an individual came to our mosque who was infatuated and accustomed to ascetics and the custodians of shrines seen in the world today. The man was surprised to see the people conversing with His Holiness^{as} so freely and said to him: "There is a lack of respect in your mosque, people speak to you without fear." His Holiness^{as} responded: "It is not my practice to sit in a fierce and frightful manner so that people should fear me as they are terrified of a carnivorous beast. I extremely detest the idea of sitting like an idol. I have come to abolish idol worship, not so that I should become an idol myself

and people worship me. Allah the Exalted knows well that I do not give myself preference over others even in the slightest. In my opinion, there is no worse an idol worshipper and no one more wicked than an arrogant person. An arrogant person does not worship any God at all; in fact, he only worships himself.”

A Model of Respect

His Holiness^{as} refers to his followers with great deference and respect, and mentions with regard the names of all who are both present or absent. I have heard countless times when His Holiness^{as} is speaking to his esteemed wife, if some devotee of his must be named during the course of discussion, he refers to them with great respect, just as he would address the person if they were before him. He does not use the word ‘tu’, which is a disrespectful manner of address in Urdu, for anyone. As per his custom, he will state in his writings, ‘my honourable brother, Maulvi Sahib’ or ‘Maulvi Sahib, my brother, whom I love for the sake of Allah.’ As such, in ordinary speech also, he will say: “My honourable Maulvi Sahib was saying...” I have often witnessed ascetics and religious leaders consider it a dishonour to themselves and degrading of their status to refer to a disciple respectfully. A rude and disrespectful ascetic named Kesar Shah had a very brash son of twenty-four or twenty-five years of age who indulged in alcohol use

and every other moral vice. The youngster once came to Sialkot. The late Sheikh Allahdad Sahib, Office Supervisor, was an esteemed man of the city and was held in high regard due to his position. Unfortunately, due to a lack of knowledge in religion, he was a disciple of the boy's father. The boy visited Sheikh Allahdad Sahib at home and I observed myself that whenever he would address Sheikh Sahib he did so by rudely saying, hey, Allahdad, do this or do that.

Hence, many religious leaders and Sufis, as if, consider it a sin to address their followers with respect and dignity. In such a long period of time, never once have I heard His Holiness^{as} call upon or speak to anyone in the gathering by saying 'tu', which is the disrespectful form of address in Urdu for 'you.' The members of our community ought to pay special attention in this regard, especially those of our friends who are from Lahore. I have seen that they do not refer to each other with due respect.

A young man just visited Qadian some time ago and during the course of discussion, whilst various friends were being mentioned, he referred to a certain individual using the singular pronoun and the singular verb form, as one refers to insignificant, ordinary people. It is unfortunate that many people are still unmindful of the deeper reality in how respect fosters purity and cleanliness of heart, and sows the seed of love within.

They deceive their own souls when they entertain the notion or verbally assert that they are friends who enjoy a frank relationship with the person to whom they are referring so informally. If such people wish to become a pure community and if they are hopeful of blessed days, then let them eradicate all distinctions between the high and low-ranking, let them crush under their feet all notions of caste and of nobles and commoners. They ought to meet everyone equally with honour and respect, and refer to one another and say the names of one another even in their absence with reverence. When this becomes their state, God Almighty will make them a true reflection of the following verse of the Holy Quran:

وَنَزَعْنَا مَا فِي صُدُورِهِمْ مِّنْ غَلٍ⁶

And We shall remove whatever of rancour may be in their breasts.

It is then that they will become examples of sacrifice and reformers for the world.

Blessed Audience with a Man of God

Audience with His Holiness^{as} is generally held in the mosque. If His Holiness^{as} is not feeling unwell, he regularly offers his five daily prayers in congregation at the mosque. He is emphatic in urging others to offer their

⁶ *al-Hijr*, 15:48

Prayers in congregation. He has mentioned countless times: "Nothing grieves me more than not offering the Prayer in congregation." I remember that during the days when fewer people visited, His Holiness^{as} would say with a deep sense of yearning that if only we had our own congregation with which to offer our five daily prayers. He would say: "I am engaged in supplication, and trust that Allah the Exalted will accept my supplication." Today, by the grace of God, in all of the five daily prayers, our own members attend in no less a number than eighty or ninety. After fulfilling his obligation, His Holiness^{as} will return inside immediately and become engaged in his writing work. After the *Maghrib* Prayer, His Holiness^{as} remains in the mosque. He eats his meal in the company of his devotees. After offering the *Isha* Prayer he returns to his home. He also has his afternoon meal with his companions. During this time also, something or other will come up and he will deliver an address on the matter. Every expression of His Holiness^{as} makes it evidently clear that he has no love for rank and position. He sits in public only to fulfil the command of God Almighty. On one occasion he said: "If God Almighty gave me a choice and asked whether I prefer seclusion or publicity, I swear by the Holy Being of God that I would choose seclusion. It was God Himself who pulled me out into the public sphere. Who can know more than God the

pleasure that I attain in seclusion? I remained in solitude for almost twenty-five years, and never once, even for a moment, did I desire to be placed on a seat in the court of fame. I am naturally averse to sitting amongst a group of people, but I am bound by the Master's command." His Holiness^{as} further states: "When I sit in public or go for a walk, and engage in discussions with others, I do all of this out of obedience to the command of Allah Almighty."

Kindness and Courtesy

His Holiness^{as} always responds in a very gentle manner to any seeker who poses a religious question irrespective of how impertinent the person may be in his discussions, even when the matter being discussed relates to the claim of His Holiness^{as}. He patiently endeavours to help his guests understand his point of view. On one occasion, an Indian who took great pride in his own scholarship and portrayed himself as having seen the world and being very well informed and experienced, flung open the door of discussion with His Holiness^{as} in a very disrespectful manner. After a brief discussion, he repeated numerous times the comment that you are a liar in your claim and I have seen many charlatans like you; I have experience with many others like you. In short, this was the uncouth manner in which he spoke. However, His Holiness^{as} did not so much as show even

the slightest facial expression indicating displeasure and listened to the man's comments very calmly and then spoke in a very tender manner.

No matter how foolish or inappropriate someone's words may be, no matter how disjointed and unmeasured someone's work in verse or prose, while listening or afterwards in private, His Holiness^{as} has never expressed contempt or reproach. On many occasions, certain listeners in the audience become irritated by the excruciating and horrible work that is being presented and leave; and then they will whisper comments of disapproval to one another. After the gathering has come to an end, many others also will give vent to their opinions without holding back. However, the forbearing and appreciative being of this man who is a reflection of God's attributes has never made any such insinuation or indication.

Passion for Service to the Faith

Any friend who offers any kind of service, or brings a verse that they have written, or writes an article in support of the truth, receives appreciation from His Holiness^{as} who expresses immense joy. He says time and again: "If any individual gives us even a single word in support of the Faith, I find it to be more valuable than a pouch of pearls and gold coins." In essence, the centre of all his efforts is religion and service to its

cause. He states: "A person who desires that I should love them, and that my humble and fervent prayers reach the heaven in their favour, must assure me that they are able to serve the Faith." His Holiness^{as} has said on oath many times: "I love everything for the sake of God Almighty, whether it is my wife, my children, or my friends. My relationship with everyone is for the sake of Allah Almighty."

A Caring Disposition

Anyone who develops a relationship of love with His Holiness^{as} and forms a strong bond with him is always left embarrassed by the love that His Holiness^{as} showers on them in return, and then considers his own love to be much lesser and insignificant. There is no relative in the world who has more concern for the good and benefit of a dear one than the concern of His Holiness^{as} for his followers. The condition is that one must be a believer and righteous, and a servant of the Faith. Of course, His Holiness^{as} remains concerned for the good and prosperity of all people in general, but he holds a special love and relation with the believers. Last October I became ill and had gone to Sialkot for a few days during that time. My condition grew more fragile. My dear and honourable friend Mir Hamid Shah Sahib, Deputy Superintendent, District Sialkot, wrote a letter to His Holiness^{as} about my illness. I feel obliged

to record here the letter that he wrote in response because in my view this letter is a strong proof of His Holiness^{as} being a manifestation of Allah.

إِنَّمَا الْأَعْمَالُ بِالنِّيَّاتِ

Deeds are based on intentions.

The letter read as follows:

My honourable brother,

Maulvi Abdul-Karim Sahib

Peace be on you, and the mercy and blessings of Allah.

Just now, at about 2 o'clock, I am in receipt of the letter which my brother Syed Hamid Shah Sahib has written about the condition of your illness. As soon as I read the letter, I was saddened with grief to such extent as can be known only by God Almighty. May Allah the Exalted shower His special mercy. I will pray with special attention. The fact is that from all the people of my community, the two of you are the only ones who have devoted your lives to me in the service of religion; you are one and the other is Maulvi Hakim Nur-ud-Din Sahib. There is no third as of yet. And so, who can know, except for God Almighty, the anguish that I feel, the restlessness from which I suffer? May Allah Almighty grant you health and have mercy, and may He give you a long life. Ameen, and again, Ameen.

Give me swift news of your full recovery.

Sincerely,

Mirza Ghulam Ahmad

Qadian

24 October 1899

Gratitude is due to God. By the prayer of His Holiness^{as} I regained my health. As such, from among the circle of our noble friends, not a single one would disagree when I say that His Holiness^{as} holds the hand of each and every one of us, and this is always the case.

His Holiness^{as} may read out before a gathering an exposition that he has written or the text of an announcement. Often he reads out his work to his devotees before sending it to print and if anyone critiques the work or raises something, this very much pleases His Holiness^{as}. And in this quality, I have found His Holiness^{as} to be unmatched. A Muslim cleric or worldly writer becomes enraged if anyone criticises them, and they consider themselves to be immune to error.⁷

⁷ There is something remarkable of the relationship between His Holiness^{as} and his devotees. On one occasion, he said: "It is my belief that any individual who makes a vow of friendship with me even once, I have such regard for this vow, that irrespective of their nature and no matter what they become, I cannot sever my ties with them. If the individual cuts off their ties with me themselves, in that case I am helpless. Otherwise, my belief is that if one of my friends had collapsed in the market after consuming alcohol and there was a crowd of people around him, I would pick him up and take him away without fear of reproach by any critic." Then, he said: "The

Reformation that Touches the Hearts

His Holiness^{as} does not address anyone directly and reproach them if they commit an error or mistake. If someone's action displeases him, in different ways, he will deliver an address in general terms. If the individual is blessed, he will understand himself and will feel remorse for his action. When His Holiness^{as} delivers an address to counsel and teach his companions, each and every one of them feels with certainty that they are the one whose weaknesses are being discussed

bond of friendship is a most valuable gem. One must not waste it away easily. No matter how unpleasant a friend may be to you, one ought to forgive and forget." Our brothers ought to take an important lesson from this example. To become angry with one another on petty matters and when incensed, to treat one another like the uncultured and impure is contrary to the bond that has been established by the hand of Allah. It is regrettable that even now there are many who have not yet understood the secret of how a nation is built. Our principle ought to be that even if a dog utters that name which today, we hold dearer than the world and all its bounties, we should feel no hesitance in kissing its face. Then how inappropriate is it for us to argue or harbour ill feelings to one another. Seth Sahib* sought permission to return to Madras on the 10th of January for some important work. He had also received a telegram from Madras in this connection. His Holiness^{as} said: "It is absolutely imperative for you to remain here during this blessed month.**" His Holiness^{as} said: "I am ready to make such a prayer in your favour that would even move mountains." Then, he said: "During these days, I sit with my friends less than usual and remain in solitude for longer. This is truly to the benefit of my friends. I pray in seclusion with time and freedom, and spend a better part of the night in prayers." (Author)

* Hazrat Seth Abdur-Rahman of Madras, may Allah be pleased with him

** i.e. in Ramadan

by His Holiness^{as}. As such, this wholesome method of reformation and purification takes place in the most excellent of manners; no one is faced with trial, no one's dignity and honour is injured so that the vein of ignorance would further provoke them and make them more brazen in sin.

In this character of His Holiness^{as}, there is a most excellent lesson for those, who on noting a minor fault—in the garb of reformation—pounce on others such as would put to shame even a carnivorous beast, and who instead of spreading harmony, create disorder. Such 'reformation' does not bring any spiritual reward and is worse than if they were to engage in war and conflict so as to attract something as terrible as divine chastisement and punishment. It is unfortunate, for I have found most Muslims clerics, and especially those who do not subscribe to the four main Islamic schools of thought, to be harsh and severe in preaching and accustomed to abusive language. If they see anyone with a moustache that is slightly longer than it should be, or trousers that are longer than their ankles, and if the person in question enters one of their mosques, it is as if they have stepped into the forbidden land of Yaghistan, and now only God can bring them back alive from the Khyber Pass or Ali Masjid.⁸ Alas! When

⁸ Yaghistan (literally, the land of the rebels) represents the various tribal regions along the border of British India and Afghanistan, inhabited by the rebel Pakhtuns. The Khyber Pass has historically

these very same people deliver speeches on the life and character of the Prophet of Islam, who was a mercy for all of mankind, they will relate the hadith in which a man urinated in the mosque of the Holy Prophet^{sa} but he said nothing to him, yet they do not practice even a shred of this example in their own lives.

I remember well that when Dr Fazl-ud-Din Sahib, Assistant Surgeon, was stationed in Sialkot, on one occasion he travelled to Jammu for some work, and took me along as well. He stayed with Maulvi Nur-ud-Din Sahib. During those days Abdul-Wahid Ghaznavi was there as well. Dr Sahib was wearing a heavy and loose fitting *shalwar* at the time. We had only just arrived; in fact, we were still standing and were yet to sit down, when Maulvi Ghaznavi Sahib appeared before us. He had a walking stick in his hand. As soon as he approached us, with a frown on his face, he touched Dr Sahib's *shalwar* with his walking stick, and in a stern and harsh manner, but in a subdued voice, he said in his Afghani-styled Urdu: "Your trousers are covering your ankles; this is forbidden." Dr Sahib was a free-natured man and had no concern or care for such traditions whatsoever. As a result, he was so livid that if it were not for the esteem he had for Maulvi Sahib, he would have done well to explain to Abdul-Wahid the meaning of enjoining good on others.

been the passage for invasions of the Indian subcontinent; Ali Masjid is the lowest point of the Khyber Pass. [Publisher]

So, in this respect, our Imam follows perfectly in the footsteps of the Holy Prophet^{sa}, the Chief of Mankind, the Master of the pure, and with firm resolve and prayer, he remains concerned for those who err. This is to such extent that by means of inspiration or through some other means, Allah Almighty Himself will enable him to reform others.

His Holiness^{as} does not make double meaning statements nor does he make any gestures with his eyes. Never has His Holiness^{as} taunted anyone or addressed someone in a gathering and said that he is displeased with them or that a certain action of theirs is bothersome, or that such and such habit of theirs is inappropriate. The Promised Messiah^{as} has been addressed by God and this revelation is recorded in *Barahin-e-Ahmadiyyah*:

فَبِمَا رَحْمَةٍ مِنَ اللَّهِ لِنْتَ لَهُمْ وَلَوْ كُنْتَ فَظًّا غَلِيظَ الْقَلْبِ لَانْفَضُّوا مِنْ حَوْلِكَ⁹

It is by the mercy of Allah that you are gentle with them. If you had been harsh and hard-hearted, they would have scattered away from around you.

In truth, the being of His Holiness^{as} is so brimming with gentleness and forbearance, and so inclined to turn a blind eye to the faults of others, that no greater example can be fathomed. An individual who seeks to serve as the shepherd of a flock and wishes to gather diverse people, can never be successful until they pos-

⁹ *Aal-e-Imran*, 3:160

sess a gentle nature. I have heard some of my respected friends; in fact, many complain that no one listens to them, and despite the various favours they do to others, they are unable to win over hearts; the people flee from them. Such people ought to emulate the character of His Holiness^{as} in overlooking the faults of others and adopt his forgiving nature. They should forsake at once the habit of criticising and reproving others, and making double meaning statements, and taunting, and expressing displeasure towards others in public. This quality, in reality, is a glass bottle or lantern, which can hold within it a thousand genies and fairies in subjugation, or it is a talisman which cannot be escaped once under its spell.

Pleasure in the Company of Guests

Often when His Holiness^{as} goes for a walk, he delivers addresses when appropriate, and always keeps his gaze fixed to the ground—he does not look here and there unrestrainedly. He has been given such strength from God Almighty that he can walk for miles and miles on foot. His Holiness^{as} never wants his devotees to leave him. When they come to him, he is pleased, and bids them permission to leave unwillingly. He is extremely happy with those who come to visit him often. This year, very few people visited in December. His Holiness^{as} expressed deep regret at this and said: “At

present, people are ignorant of our objective and are unaware of what I would like to see them become. The objective that I seek and the purpose for which God Almighty has raised me cannot be fulfilled until people come here again and again, and do not tire in the least from travelling here.” Then, he stated: “Anyone who believes that it is burdensome for them to come here, or who thinks that their staying here will burden me, should fear, for they are guilty of associating partners with Allah. I believe that even if the entire world was to become my household, it is God Almighty who would see to my affairs. I am not burdened in the least. The presence of my friends gives me immense pleasure. Such an idea is an evil thought that must be thrown away from the heart. I have heard people say: ‘Why should we sit here and burden His Holiness? We are useless; why sit here and break bread for nothing?’ Such people must remember that these are satanic thoughts which Satan plants in their hearts so that they may be turned away from here.”

One day, Hakeem Fazl Din Sahib submitted: “Your Holiness, what do I do sitting here idle? If you instruct, I shall return to Bhera. There at least I can teach the Holy Quran. Here, I feel a sense of extreme embarrassment, because I am of no use to you, and perhaps I may be guilty of sin, sitting here idle.” His Holiness^{as} said: “Your sitting here is a jihad and your ‘uselessness’ is a

great task.”

In short, His Holiness^{as} expressed disappointment with great anguish and regret at those who had not come and said: “These people who make excuses are of the same ilk as those who made excuses before the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, saying:

إِنَّ بُيُوتَنَا عَوْرَةٌ¹⁰

Our houses are exposed and defenceless.

God Almighty, however, refuted these people in the following words:

إِنَّ يُرِيدُونَ الْإِفْرَارًا¹¹

They only seek to flee away.

Brothers, I am also disappointed immensely at the state of those of my brothers who fail to come here often. I often think, where shall I find the words to assure them of the benefits of staying here in Qadian? True knowledge and true religious doctrine can only be learned here and nowhere else. I look at Mufti Sadiq Sahib (may Allah protect him and bless him). Whenever he has a day off from work, he is here. Mufti Sahib is like a burglar always watching for an opportunity to snatch some freedom from the strong hands of worldly

¹⁰ *al-Ahzab*, 33:14

¹¹ *al-Ahzab*, 33:14

pursuit so that he may receive the honour to visit his beloved master. O dear brother, may God bless your resolve, determination and effort, and make you a man who is worthy of being followed and a source of pride. His Holiness^{as} has also stated: "From Lahore, it is only Mufti Sadiq Sahib who has devoted himself fully to me." I am astonished. Does Mufti Sahib make a hefty income? Does Mufti Sahib not have any dependants who look to him for their needs? Mufti Sahib is still a young man, and in this age, young people have many aspirations. So then if this quality of Mufti Sahib is not proof of his absolute love, why else would he break all the shackles that tie him down and arrive in Batala brimming with ecstasy, without any consideration for night or day; cold or heat, rain or storm? Even in the middle of the night, he will reach Qadian by foot. The community ought to take a lesson from the character of this passionate young man. His Holiness^{as} once said: "Who has told our friends that life is long? No one knows when death will come crashing down on them. It is appropriate, therefore, to consider the time that one is given to be a blessing." He also said: "These days will not come again and will become nothing more than distant tales."

Brothers! For the sake of God, make amends and part yourselves from the superficial relationships of this world. Always remember, that here lies the everlasting

relation that will bear fruits. Nothing else matters, all other attachments will vanish into longing and desire or become a collar around the neck in the form of sin.

One aspect of the character of His Holiness^{as} is that he desires very much for people to come and stay with him, and in my estimation this is a very powerful argument in favour of his truthfulness. His Holiness^{as} knows full well with all his soul that he is commissioned by Allah and that he is truthful. A single day would be enough to make a false man anxious, and he would quickly seek to push people away so that his hollow nature would remain concealed.

Patience and Self-Restraint When Confronted by Opposition

In his gatherings, he will never speak of any of his adversaries and if someone else mentions one of them, he does not speak ill of them. This also is a manifest proof that the heart of His Holiness^{as} is not consumed by fire. Otherwise, the manner in which the nation has inflicted grief upon him and the conduct shown by the Muslim clerics towards him is such that if His Holiness^{as} were to feel these pains in the manner of a worldly person, he would writhe and suffer day and night, he would find reasons to mention these enemies in his discussions, he would lose his senses, and all his work would be disturbed. Even the idolaters of Arabia could not present anyone in opposition to the Holy Prophet^{sa}, the

Chief of Mankind, who was as foul-mouthed as Zatlali. However, I can swear on oath that the filthy pamphlet that he published against His Holiness, the Promised Messiah^{as} did not disrupt his work and engagements even in the slightest. If someone were to read the clear mention of these harmful perpetrators, one may think that perhaps His Holiness^{as} speaks of these pernicious individuals day and night. However, in the likeness of a magistrate, who after fulfilling his assigned duty, has no reason to remain preoccupied in a previous verdict in favour, or dismissal or punishment—and in truth, who has no personal attachment or bias—His Holiness also writes to refute falsehood and establish the truth, for the sake of God, and in doing so he has no personal, vested interest. One day, His Holiness^{as} said: “I possess such control over myself, and God Almighty has made my soul so true a Muslim, that if someone were to sit before me and went on uttering—for an entire year—the most filthy and obscene profanities that one could imagine, ultimately, they would be embarrassed themselves and would have no choice but to concede that they were unable to weaken my patience.”

Courage in the Face of Adversity

In steadfastness, strength of heart and resolve like the Prophets, peace and blessings be upon them, His Holiness^{as} is never affected by frightful and awful

situations. Even the most terrifying and grievous of circumstances are unable to disturb his thoughts and make him unmindful of his work. The case of attempted murder which was falsely orchestrated against His Holiness^{as} by the Christian priests, and also supported by certain thoughtless, so-called Muslims and Aryas, would have been enough to crush any man, strain his heart and confound him. As for His Holiness^{as}, when he was in the midst of the aforementioned—whether in writing, in daily life, in meeting his devotees cheerfully and affectionately—none of his actions changed at all. No one could even imagine at the time that a court case had been filed against him. If ever a dreadful report was conveyed to him from a friend that so and so has given such and such information, or at such and such place a terrible conspiracy is being hatched against His Holiness^{as}, or that some person has injured their own head in the mountains of Shimla with the intention of staining with his evil blood the mantle of honour worn by His Holiness^{as}, he would never listen to these reports with a frightened heart. In fact, His Holiness^{as} says: “Nothing transpires on earth until it is first decreed in heaven; nothing can happen without the will of God Almighty. He will not disgrace and waste His servant.” And this has been a resolute structure which has served as an impregnable fortress of security for His Holiness^{as}. I have accompanied His

Holiness^{as} to various cities and have been with him in unpleasant situations. Whether it was the ungrateful and impetuous people of Delhi, or whether in the face of the collective, novel, hurtful efforts of opponents in Patiala, Jalandhar, Kapurthala, Amritsar, Lahore and Sialkot, the astonishing patience, forbearance and steadfastness of His Holiness^{as} is such that he has never, either in seclusion or in public, even slightly mentioned that so and so person or community has committed such and such impropriety against him or that such and such person has made so and so comments about him. I could always see, quite clearly, that he was a mountain; feeble, cowardly mice simply do not have the capacity to make burrows in this mountain. On one occasion, His Holiness^{as} said in Jalandhar: “At a time of trial, it is the weak-hearted from among my community for whom I worry. My state of affairs are such that even if I were to hear a clear voice saying: ‘You are forsaken and not a single one of your desires will be fulfilled,’ I swear by God’s Being that there would be no decrease in my passion and love for God or in my service to the Faith, because I have already seen God.” Then, he recited the following verse:

هَلْ تَعْلَمُ لَهُ سَوِيًّا¹²

Dost thou know any equal of His?

¹² *Maryam*, 19:66

Submission to the Will of God

His Holiness^{as} cares for and nurtures his children in such a manner that anyone who looks at him with a cursory glance would think that perhaps no one in the world loves their children more. When they are ill he gives them so much attention, and becomes so absorbed in caring for them and giving them medicine, as if he has no other care in the world. However, a discerning eye can see that all of this is for the sake of Allah Almighty, and in this, His Holiness^{as} has in view the importance to protect and care for God's weak creation.

The firstborn daughter of His Holiness^{as}, whose name was Ismat, fell ill in Ludhiana with cholera. His Holiness^{as} would tend to her and would run to and fro to care for her as if he would never be able to live without her. A materialistic person who in ordinary, worldly terms is infatuated and preoccupied with his children could perhaps not have shown a greater example of toil and labour. However, when she passed away, His Holiness^{as} stepped away as if nothing had happened and did not dwell over what was past.

Such resignation and submission to the destiny and decree of God cannot be possible for anyone except those who are sent from Allah.

Overlooking the Faults of Others

No matter how great a loss caused by the error of a

servant, His Holiness^{as} will forgive them and will not reprimand them even slightly. Once he gave Hamid Ali some envelopes and postcards to take to the post office. The forgetful Hamid Ali became busy with something else and lost sight of the responsibility that was entrusted to him. After one week or so, Mahmud who was still a child, came running with some envelopes and postcards, and said: “Father, we have found some letters in a pile of rubbish.” When His Holiness^{as} saw the letters, they were the same letters just mentioned. Some of these letters were registered mail, for which His Holiness^{as} was awaiting a response. His Holiness^{as} called Hamid Ali, and showed him the letters, whereafter he very gently said to him: “Hamid Ali, you have become quite forgetful. You should do your work carefully.”

Indignation for the Honour of Faith

There was only one thing that affects, rouses and angers His Holiness^{as}, and that is an affront to the sacred things of Allah, or a dishonour of the sacred Signs of Allah. Once His Holiness^{as} said: “It would be easier for me to see my property destroyed and my children cut to pieces before my eyes, than to see the Faith dishonoured and seen with contempt, and then for me to do nothing.” During the days when the hurtful and vile book *Mother of the Believers*—which was noth-

ing more than injury and offence, and presented not a single rational argument—was published and received, on reading this book His Holiness^{as} felt such grief that he verbally expressed: “Bitter has my comfort become.” It is due to this very grief and inclination towards the Divine that God Almighty has now given His Holiness^{as} a weapon to uproot the great falsehood of our time, a grave association of partners with God (that is, the concept of the divinity of Christ and atonement). That weapon is the Ointment of Jesus and the discovery of the Tomb of Jesus^{as} in Kashmir. It is not long before this Tomb of Jesus^{as} causes mourning in the homes of all those who worship this falsehood. The hearts of the Muslims will be soothed, and they will forget the anguish that this vile and offensive book has caused.

A Model of Civic Duty

The relationship of His Holiness^{as} with people of other communities is so exemplary that no better example is possible. He desires the best for all, irrespective of their religion. The prosperity of all humanity as a whole is the centre of his aspirations, and his prime objective and obligation. In every misfortune, the Hindus of Qadian find a good and trustworthy counsellor in the person of His Holiness^{as}. Some of the Hindus from the Arya Samaj here in Qadian are opponents of Islam and

consider His Holiness^{as} to be an eminent and staunch Muslim, and know in their hearts that he is a man who will uproot false religions. However, when His Holiness^{as} prescribes them a medicine, they trust him as much as they would a Rishi of their own faith.

His Holiness^{as} always advises his devotees, both verbally and in writing—and in fact, greatly emphasises—that you must not wrong any living creature and your tongues and deeds must not deceive or inflict injury.

The wholesome and genuine relationship that His Holiness^{as} holds with the ruler of the time (the British Government) is clearly manifest in his books and in the announcements that he publishes regularly. Over a period of ten years, either in privacy or in public, I have never once heard him speak ill of the government or any government official, either by way of insinuation and hints or explicitly. He has written treatises in Arabic and Persian, and spent thousands of rupees to publish them and send them to the lands of Syria, Arabia, Afghanistan, etc., in which he has articulately supported the British government and emphatically urged all the nations of this land to accept their benevolent rule.

Brothers! Since I am pressed by a great many other responsibilities, on this, I must suffice. If God Almighty grants me further insight and enables me to take up my pen once more, I shall write on this subject again. I pray

Hazrat Maulvi Abdul-Karim

to God Almighty that He accepts this work and makes it a source of guidance for many. *Ameen.*

Abdul-Karim

Qadian

6 January 1900

Conclusion

Although it was my intention that now whatever else I would write, would be shared in my next letter, the affection and encouragement I have received from my brothers—and also the reality that life is short—has compelled me to not put the matter off.

My brothers, yesterday was a strange and extraordinary day in Qadian. The ‘favours’ and ‘kindness’ that our neighbours shower upon us are not easily forgettable, nor fully repaid with gratitude, but yesterday, their vindictiveness and cruelty has discovered a new and unexpected course of action. They have erected a wall of unburnt bricks blocking the passage leading to the mosque, which is also a public road. This incident took place on 8 January 1900. In doing so, they have shown themselves to be champions in laying thorns in the path of goodness. Now, our guests must walk around to the other side of the village and must take a very long route to reach the Mubarak Mosque. As often is the case, His Holiness^{as} was suffering from a headache yesterday. As is our habit, in view of these pressing circumstances, we were certain that God would send

Translation: The mill will revolve and divine decree will descend. Indeed, the grace of God will come and no one can turn it away. Say: By my Lord, verily, this is the truth. This will neither change, nor remain hidden.' A matter will descend which will surprise you. This is revelation from the Lord of the high heavens. My Lord does not err, nor does He forget. It is a manifest victory. And we have given them respite until a fixed term. You are with Me and I am with you. Say: All matters are in the hand of Allah; and then leave him in his error, and pride and arrogance. He is with you and He knows all that is secret and most hidden. There is none worthy of worship except Him. He knows everything and sees everything. Allah is with those who are righteous and with those who do good fully and in every respect. We sent Ahmad to his people but they turned away and said: He is a wicked liar. They bore witness against him and fell upon him like a fierce storm. My Beloved is near. He is near but hidden.

Some of these revelations support and attest to the truth of the prophecy, the fulfilment of which is awaited by all. He who reflects can derive the deeper reality of these words himself.

An Appendix

Spiritual Discipline

One day there was mention of expenses. One of our honourable friends said: “I manage in such and such amount.” Various people made various remarks on how they manage their expenses. His Holiness^{as} said: “Allah the Exalted knows well that I possess such tolerance as far as food is concerned that I can very easily eat twice a day on one paisa alone.” His Holiness^{as} said: “Once, I was intrigued at heart to see the extent to which a human being can bear hunger. To test this, I ate nothing for six months—I would have a morsel or two every now and then. After six months, I estimated that I could extend this state of affairs to even six years. During this time, I continuously received my meals from home twice a day but I desired to keep this state of mine a secret. The inconvenience that I would have to bear in order to maintain this secrecy was perhaps worse than the pain others feel in hunger; I would distribute those two meals to two or three people in need. In this state, I would offer my five daily prayers in the

mosque and none of the people who knew me could tell by any signs that I was eating nothing.” He continued: “Whenever God Almighty has raised a person for a certain task, He has granted them with the appropriate faculties in order to prepare them, and make available to them the necessary ingredients that enable the fulfilment of the goal or task at hand. Those people who do not truly possess the necessary qualities inherently by nature and then indulge in religious exercises, ultimately turn mad and lose their senses.” In this context also, His Holiness^{as} said: “Physicians associate certain natural factors with sleep. However, I observe that when it is the will of God Almighty to speak with me, at such a time, though I am in a state of complete wakefulness, God suddenly induces in me a state of drowsiness and light slumber, and pulls me out of this physical realm completely, so that I am able to relate to the spiritual realm. Then, after God has finished speaking, He returns my physical consciousness and senses so that I, as the recipient of revelation, may preserve it. Then, He casts a state of drowsiness over me again, whereafter He awakens me once again, so that I am able to memorise the revelation. In this manner, therefore, on certain occasions, this will happen even fifty times. This is the power of God. He is above and beyond the phenomenon of sleep as we observe in nature, and physicians and doctors cannot understand its deeper essence.”

Tending to the Poor

His Holiness^{as} does not turn away a beggar and gives whatever he has available. One day after the *Asr* Prayer, His Holiness^{as} stood up as usual and stepped into the entrance leading to his home. Unexpectedly, a beggar said in a soft voice: "I am a beggar." His Holiness^{as} had an important task at hand, and then the beggar's voice was drowned in the voices of others who had stood up after the Prayer and were speaking to one another as they tend to do. In short, His Holiness^{as} quickly went inside and could not give his full attention. However, when he had entered his home, that faint voice which had only just touched his ears earlier began to leave an ever deeper impress upon his heart. He hurriedly returned and called Khalifah Nur-ud-Din Sahib and said: "There was a beggar here earlier. Find him." The beggar had left after His Holiness^{as} had gone inside. Nonetheless, Khalifah Sahib searched for him but to no avail. In the evening, when His Holiness^{as} remained seated in the mosque as per his custom, the same beggar returned and asked to be given something. His Holiness^{as} quickly took something out of his pocket and handed it to him. It was evident now that His Holiness^{as} was immensely overjoyed and a burden had been removed from his shoulders. After some days, he mentioned: "The other day when that beggar could not be found there was such a burden on my heart that I

felt extreme unease. I was fearful that I had committed a sin by not paying attention to the beggar and by going into my home too soon. I am thankful to Allah the Exalted that he returned in the evening. If not, God knows how perturbed I would have been. I had also prayed to Allah Almighty so that He would bring the person back to me.”

A Reflection of Muhammad^{sa}

At present I stand in a delicate situation. In this state, if I stand in the house of God and speak falsehood with the book of God in my hand in the presence of the Promised Messiah^{as} sent by God, there would be no one more accursed than I. And so, I truthfully proclaim that in the person of this Leader, who is a chosen one of God, I observe such a living example of the character and conduct of Muhammad^{sa} the Messenger of Allah, that I can say it is as though the Messenger of Allah himself has returned. I feel a sense of pride in stating—and my friends know that this source of pride is justified—that I have been blessed with a greater opportunity than others to acquaint myself with the personal life of His Holiness^{as}, our Imam. It is this very fact that has instilled within me a firm belief in the truth of His Holiness^{as}. In his every affair, I have witnessed the same steadfastness, towering dignity, strength, tranquillity, repose and composure which the companions of the

Holy Prophet^{sa} saw in the Prophet of Islam.

There has been threat of arrest, conspiracies to kill him, false cases of attempted murder, verdicts of disbelief, vile and disgraceful announcements and letters are received full of abuse, which if read or heard, would disturb any person's mind. Similarly, many other unpleasant situations have arisen which would distress even the mightiest of men. However, in such times, never have I seen His Holiness^{as} look towards another person and so much as express even the slightest signs of concern. I swear by God that certain troubling matters have saddened me in the past, but upon witnessing the pure and cheerful countenance of His Holiness^{as}, my disposition has instantly become so delighted and joyful, as if I had just seen the most pleasing of sights.

In short, this holy man, when sitting at home, is content, when he is amidst his companions, he is content and cheerful, when he is in court, he is content and cheerful, when he is with the superintendent of police who is searching his home, even then, he is content and cheerful. Now I ask, if natures like this do not stand as proof that they are from God, then from where do such dispositions emanate?

If someone were to sit in a shop at the market place and observe, they will see that people unrestrainedly glance here and there in the likeness of stray dogs. You will observe, however, that when this divinely appoint-

ed man of God goes on his way, his eyes are firmly fixed to the ground as though he were a mountain of dignity and grace.

Strength of Character

God Almighty knows well that my only purpose, insofar as I am capable, is to share in some way with those of my friends who are not present here the pleasure and delight that intoxicates me. I wish to show them that the pleasure that I gain from the pure company of this holy man is not illusory or the fancy of self-deception, as impatient critics would be quick to allege. In fact, I clearly observe a pure transformation in my moral state.

Just today, I was saying to my dear brother, Mufti Sadiq, that among the countless lessons we learn from the holy life of the Promised Messiah, on whom be peace, there is one magnificent lesson of which we are in dire need if we are to be deemed humans—and cultured humans at that. What is that lesson? It is steadfastness and extraordinary patience in the face of trials, tribulations and adversities that would shake our lives, or weaken our fortitude, or overcome and crush our spirit.

Those who have written about the subject of good morals, on keeping this faculty alive, and on further developing and nurturing it, have penned many ways to do so, but the truth is that nothing compares to a living

model and the practical life of an exemplary individual. I observe the multitude of terrifying trials and tribulations with which His Holiness^{as}, our Beloved Messiah, is faced. On certain occasions, he receives news of something which would apparently confound a man or throw an ordinary person into utter despair. Yet the heart of this holy man who is the Promised Messiah does not waver in the least. Whether he is writing a book or whether there are matters that require his attention, nothing can hinder or obstruct him from completing the tasks at hand. There is no interruption or disturbance in his coming to the mosque five times a day for Prayer, in meeting his companions as usual with a smiling countenance, and nothing changes in the way that he speaks to them with affection and kindness, and with forbearance and informality. At home, he does not express any annoyance whatsoever when the children ask question upon question, and disturb and bother as children do. Never does he speak to his honourable wife in a voice that would carry even the slightest tinge of harshness or severity. Nothing of this nature can be seen in the character of His Holiness^{as}.

I remember vividly that on the day that the district superintendent came to Qadian to search the home of the Promised Messiah^{as}, there was no prior news or knowledge of the impending search, nor could there have been. On that morning, our respected Mir Sahib

heard from somewhere that today a warrant would be coming along with handcuffs as well. Mir Sahib was shocked and became extremely perturbed. He hurried in to inform the Promised Messiah^{as}, and as he was overcome by emotion, he expressed the matter at hand with grave difficulty. His Holiness^{as} was writing *Nur-ul-Quran* at the time and he was engaged in a very subtle and delicate subject. The Promised Messiah^{as} raised his head, smiled and said: “Mir Sahib! People wear bangles of silver and gold on occasions of worldly joy. I shall deem that I have put on bangles of iron in the way of Allah Almighty.” Then, after a pause, the Promised Messiah said: “But this will never happen, because the government of God Almighty has its own ways of wisdom. God does not allow His divinely commissioned vicegerents to be humiliated.”

I have accompanied His Holiness on his travels to Delhi, Patiala, Ludhiana, Amritsar, Sialkot, Kapurthala and Jalandhar. Countless incidents of unpleasant nature have arisen, but this Lion of Allah the Lord of Dominance, viewed all of these situations with no concern whatsoever. I swear on oath that it is these very endearing ways that have captivated me completely. On a daily basis, this ungrateful nation, either in writing or verbally, make hurtful statements, but the footsteps of this divinely appointed man of God do not stumble even in the least.

Contrary to this we observe that the normal state of ordinary people is that when faced with even a hint of grief or the most insignificant of disappointments, they lose their senses, their work is disturbed, they are unable to eat or drink, and their stomach becomes upset. They rave at home, and will stare angrily at people, and strike others. In short, everything falls apart.

The late Sir Syed (who towards the end of his life could not conceal the true state of his heart when the covering from his lips was removed) suffered a fall so great due to a financial loss sustained by his college that this broke his back. As such, this demonstrated that he too was a shortsighted materialist who worshipped the idol of worldly designs and nothing more. When this idol of his was demolished, he himself was broken as well. He could not exhibit even for a moment the impeccable steadfastness which is the essential hallmark of Prophets, the pious and those commissioned by God. Mr Beck states that after this financial loss, he never again saw Syed Sahib laugh, or strong and cheerful at heart. I remember that I was also present at the educational conference that was held at Aligarh College when Syed Sahib expressed his utter despair.

It is possible that one who is unaware of belief in Allah and divine attributes may be unable to understand these matters and consider me guilty of unduly criticising Syed Sahib. However, one who possesses

knowledge of divine truths and the verities of faith can understand that the living spirit which underpins all forms of prophethood, spiritual leadership and sainthood, and the key to all success is steadfastness. And the root of this steadfastness is the faith and certainty that a pious man possesses in the words and promises of God. It is this very steadfastness or belief in the words of God which for the Holy Prophet^{sa}, our Chief and Master—who came to guide a people that were struck by misfortune—served as a torch in the dark and dreadful nights of Mecca, and ultimately lead him to the bright and brilliant days of life in Medina, and made his holy person a perfect example of success for all times.

Then came the dark hour when the Prophet of Islam, the Sun of Truth, hid his countenance, and panic ensued, be it among the most prominent of companions or others, and when many sagacious and far-sighted individuals were apprehensive and perplexed as regards the appropriate course of action. This was a time when Hazrat Ali^{ra}, the Lion of Allah—dubbed a hero of distinct rank by the Prophet of Islam—could not leave the body of his deceased master, and was powerless to step out of the home. Indeed, at such a time it was this very steadfastness which stood by Hazrat Abu Bakr, the greatest among the Truthful, may Allah be pleased with him, the second Adam of Islam, and he

saved the sinking vessel of Islam.

I truthfully proclaim that it is this very steadfastness which continues to move the claim of the Promised Messiah^{as} to greater strength, vigour and grandeur. Is this a hidden matter? Just observe the signs accompanying the claim of the Promised Messiah^{as} in 1890, and look at the state of affairs now.

How many a tempest raged on during this time. Muslim clerics, poets, writers of prose, Sufis, people threatening physical injury; in short, people both near and far left no stone unturned in their attempts to destroy this claimant, or at least to weaken and muffle the sound of his claim. How is it that even though hostility and opposition continues to increase with every passing day this has no effect at all? A coward, a fabricator, a liar cannot stand so firm and resolute for so many years. He who drinks from the water of worldly streams sooner or later becomes weary and fatigued, and finally accepts defeat. But my Messiah, my Master, may Allah Who is Oft-Returning with compassion help him, has only just reached his prime now in 1899. Verdicts of disbelief, the conspiracies of his enemies, malicious court cases filed against him by his opponents, and a host of other schemes and machinations, have become a fertilizer for his field, as it were.

Those who in their own foolishness and on account of their own lack of foresight raise a hue and clamour

that now prophethood is no more, ought to wait a little while longer. They shall see, and God-willing, swiftly indeed, the manner in which God stands as a Helper and Guardian by the man whom He has sent, and how He desires to make the world believe that Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, without a doubt, is the Promised Messiah and Awaited Mahdi.



Hazrat Maulana Maulvi Abdul-Karim Sahib of Sialkot, may Allah be pleased with him, was an illustrious companion of the Promised Messiah, on whom be peace. He was a great scholar and an eloquent speaker, the like of whom were few and far between in India at the time. His love and devotion for the Promised Messiah, on whom be peace, knew no bounds. He abandoned all of his worldly ambitions, including lucrative offers of employment, to remain in Qadian with his master, the Promised Messiah, saying: "Today, the wealth that I have received in Qadian is not available anywhere else in the world."

An endearing, intimately personal account of the life of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, on whom be peace, told by Maulana Abdul-Karim of Sialkot, may Allah be pleased with him. In this moving and heart-warming story, we gain unique insight into the personal life of a man who claimed to be the Promised Messiah and Mahdi, divinely commissioned at the turn of the fourteenth century to unite humanity and rekindle the bond between God and His creation.

Hazrat Maulana Sahib brings readers into the home of the Promised Messiah and shows, how even in his most informal moments, he was an affectionate husband, a loving father, and a gracious guide. This compelling and passionate account shines a light on the pristine character of a man who left behind a legacy of faith and devotion to God, compassion for humanity, and perseverance in the face of adversity.

ISBN 978-1-84-880996-3



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