

Unity of God

And the Teachings of Muhammad^ﷺ

Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad^{ra}
Khalifatul-Masih II

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Unity of God and the Teachings of Muhammad^{sas}
(translated from Urdu)

A speech delivered by
Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad
Khalifatul-Masih II^{ra}
at Jalsa Seeratun-Nabi^{sas} in Qadian
on 2 June 1929

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Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad
Khalifatul-Masih II^{ra}

About the Author

Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad^{ra}, known as Hazrat Musleh Mauood^{ra}, was an exceptional spiritual leader with profound intelligence and insight. He served as the second successor of the Promised Messiah^{as} and guided the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community for 52 years. At the young age of 25, he was elected as the Khalifa, and under his leadership, the message of Ahmadiyyat spread globally.

One of Hazrat Musleh Mauood's^{ra} significant achievements was the establishment of the first mosque outside India, the Fazl Mosque in London, in 1924. He initiated several other groundbreaking initiatives, including English language publications such as *Muslim Sunrise*, to promote a better understanding of Islam in the Western world. Additionally, he formalised and strengthened the system of elected leadership, enabling the community to operate efficiently and effectively.

Hazrat Musleh Mauood^{ra} was a staunch advocate of justice and human rights, supporting the rights of Kashmiri Muslims and advocating for Palestinians during the creation of Israel. He recognised the critical role of education, especially for women, in empowering

individuals and communities, and established several schools and colleges including the esteemed Jamia Ahmadiyya. Moreover, he oversaw the community's migration from Qadian to Rabwah, where he erected a hospital and founded several schools and colleges.

Despite facing numerous challenges, including attempted assassination, Hazrat Musleh Mauood^{ra} remained resolute in his mission. His visionary leadership and dedication continue to inspire and guide the community. The legacy of this great man is one of progress, growth, and dedication to the mission of peace, tolerance, and love for all humanity.

Foreword

The presented work, *Unity of God and the Teachings of Muhammad^{sas}*, is a translated address delivered by Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad Khalifatul-Masih II^{ra} on 2 June 1929, during the second *Jalsa Seerat-un-Nabi^{sas}* held in Qadian. The original text of the speech, titled توحید باری تعالیٰ کے بارہ میں آئٹھ حضرت کی تعلیم can be located in volume 10 of *Anwarul 'Uloom*. The lecture is divided into two primary sections: first, the Holy Prophet's^{sas} teachings and emphasis on the Unity of God, and second, his teachings and practices regarding non-Muslims.

This succinct lecture provides a profound exploration of the critical concepts of *Tauheed*, or the Unity of God. As part of a series celebrating the noble character of the Holy Prophet of Islam^{sas}, the speaker skilfully highlights the central message that was conveyed throughout the history of religion: belief in One God. The speaker then advocates the universality of God, emphasising the importance of respecting the core teachings of the Holy Quran, which hold that divine messengers were sent to all people. By doing so, the speaker suggests that we can become better humans and better neighbours who not only comprehend the

message of divine scriptures but also embrace the virtues of all faiths. Finally, the speaker illustrates how we can achieve peace, irrespective of our religious beliefs, by following the Holy Prophet's^{sas} conduct with others.

This lecture was translated into English by the translation committee headed by Hadi Ali Chaudhary in Jama'at Ahmadiyya Canada.

It was translated by Usman Shahid who also oversaw the project. We are grateful to Fazal Masood Malik, Mujeeb Ahmad, Zakaria Virk, Shazia Rahman, Aziz Ahmad, and Amer Safir for their valuable contributions.

May Allah grant them all the best of rewards. Ameen!

Munir-ud-Din Shams
Additional Wakilut-Tasneef
London, United Kingdom
June 2023

Publisher's Note

Words included in square bracket [] are those of the translator and merely added for the purpose of clarification.

The following abbreviations have been used for salutations:

ṣas: *sallallahu ‘alaihi wa sallam*, meaning ‘peace and blessings of Allah be upon him’, is written after the name of the Holy Prophet^{ṣas}.

as: *‘alaihis-salaam*, meaning ‘peace be upon him’, is written after the names of all other prophets.

ra: *raziyallahu ‘anhul/‘anha/‘anhum*, meaning ‘may Allah be pleased with him/her/them’, is written after the names of the companions of the Holy Prophet^{ṣas} or the companions of the Promised Messiah^{as}.

All English translations of the verses of the Holy Quran have been taken from the 2004 edition of Maulawi Sher Ali’s translation.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ نَحْمَدُكَ يَا نُصَلِّي عَلَى رَسُولِهِ الْكَرِيمِ¹

*Unity of God and
The Teachings of Muhammad^{sas}*

It is the grace of God Almighty that He has, once again, enabled us to implement this initiative, which I believe will slowly but surely create peace and reconciliation in the country. Last year on this occasion, held in the same month though on a different date, I had said that the purpose of these seminars—being held concurrently across India and outside it—was to commemorate the blessed life of the Holy Prophet^{sas}. I mentioned that apart from highlighting a glorious history, such seminars would forge harmony and peace among different communities.

This year some Hindu leaders asked that if they were to hold similar conferences to commemorate the lives of their spiritual leaders, would our Jama‘at attend them as they have been attending ours?

In reply to their question, I said that one of the

¹ In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful. We praise Him and invoke blessings upon His Noble Messenger^{sas}. [Publishers]

objectives for organising such seminars is to foster unity and relationships across different communities. There is no reason our members would not attend seminars held by other communities to commemorate their revered personages who inspired change in the world. The people of our Jama'at will certainly join such seminars with an open heart, broad mind, and keen interest.

In the address I delivered at last year's seminar, I mentioned as an example that during my visit to Shimla, a seminar was held by the Brahmo Samaj to which Mrs Naidu also invited me. I attended the event and was also requested to deliver a speech. But since all the attendees understood English and very few understood Urdu—and because I was not proficient at delivering a speech in English—I could not oblige their request despite having agreed to it earlier.

Not having understood the importance of such seminars, other communities have yet to hold them on a large scale. But whenever such events are held to commemorate the lives of Hazrat Krishan, Hazrat Ramchandra, or other holy personages, to present the reforms they brought to the world, and to discuss the hardships they bore for the comfort of others, every Ahmadi will attend them with anticipation and

admiration.

It is, however, imperative that prophets be remembered as prophets and reformers as reformers rather than misidentified with prophets. In my view, if every community held such seminars on the lives of their revered figures, our seminars would become more appealing and interesting. It would enhance cooperation and reduce the labour and effort required to organise these meetings. Once the people of other faiths observe that our community attends their seminars with eagerness, remembering their religious divines with love and admiration, their attendance at our seminars will also increase. Our acknowledgement of the good merits of their holy personages will drive them to join our programs with greater sincerity and devotion.

I am delighted that more seminars are being held this year. Last year, five hundred seminars were pledged across India, but this year, we have received commitments for over nineteen hundred seminars. Considering one thousand seminars were held last year, we can deduce that people will gather at four to five thousand venues this year for the blessed event. Human eyes cannot see very far. Nor can my eyes observe the scene transpiring across India and

other countries today. Still, what I behold through the spiritual eyes bestowed by God has filled my heart with joy. What I envision is that one day, these seminars will eliminate the unrest and establish a strong foundation for peace and unity.

Not only are more seminars being held this year compared to last, but more powerful and influential people are committed to attending them. Just yesterday, we received news from Calcutta that Mr. Sen Gupta, an eminent figure in Calcutta, has confirmed his attendance. Other esteemed personalities have also registered their names through our advertisements. Similarly, scores of highly educated women have expressed interest in attending. Last year, a famous woman from Bengal with a Master's degree expressed disappointment that more academics were not invited. We have received news that dignitaries from various other places have registered for the seminars, promising to attend. Many of them have offered to help in any way they can to make these events a success.

After this introduction, I now turn to the actual topics assigned for the seminars this year. Last year, three facets of the Holy Prophet's^{sas} life were covered, and I also spoke on them. This year, two additional

facets have been proposed:

1. The Holy Prophet's teachings and emphasis on the Unity of God.
2. The Holy Prophet's teachings and practices regarding non-Muslims.

Although different speakers have been assigned to cover each topic at other venues, here (in Qadian)—owing to its exceptional significance, God-willing, I myself will speak on both topics, following the same pattern as last year when I addressed all three topics.

Regretfully, my illness and cough will prevent me from delivering as profound and extensive an address as should have been given on such a momentous occasion. Owing to this constraint, I shall briefly take up some key aspects and express my views.

IMPORTANCE OF TAUHEED

First, I wish to say something about the importance of *Tauheed*. There is a widespread misconception that religions fundamentally disagree on Divine Unity. Muslims think that many faiths reject this belief, but this view is incorrect. There may be differences in the understanding and interpretation of *Tauheed*, but fundamentally, all religions affirm the Unity of God. Even faiths generally perceived as polytheistic actually

profess *Tauheed*.

I have researched the books of Hindus, Sikhs, Jews, Zoroastrians, Christians, Buddhists, and most of all, I have studied my religion, Islam. After studying all these faiths, I have ascertained that all people and faiths converge on this fundamental belief; all ascribe to a Divine Unity. Muslims generally maintain that Christians do not believe in the Oneness of God, but I have read Christian literature which purports that Muslims are not monotheists; only they (Christians) are true monotheists. Similarly, I have studied Hindu books that claim Hindus are monotheists, others are not. The same assertions are yet made by other faiths.

At the very least, the above claims prove that all religions believe in the concept of a Divine Unity, even if they differ in its interpretation. When a community itself professes belief in *Tauheed*, it is incorrect for others to say that they do not profess it. Furthermore, the convergence of all nations and faiths on this principle proves that it is critical in the eyes of the world. One must remember that all existing faiths advance the same basic purpose: to develop a bond between humans and God. Whether that Being is called *Khuda* or God, *Parmeshwar* or *Ezid*, establishing a relationship with Him is the ultimate

object of religion.

It is evident that a faith not founded upon the Oneness of God will lead its followers along an entirely different path, depriving them of the very purpose of religion. Unless there is a focal point which is the ultimate goal, all efforts will be rendered vain. All religions concur that there is one central objective that everyone must strive to attain. Some communities worship idols, but they maintain that idols are mere intermediaries to help them reach God. The adherent of every religion declares the quest for God as the purpose of faith. A person who does not reach God is considered to have failed in the true objective of religion. In other words, a person who does not grasp the true essence of *Tauheed* cannot succeed.

As I said, these seminars aim to establish interfaith unity and harmony. Thus, I will present my subject in a manner that does not criticise anyone but instead offers the teachings of my religion on this topic.

A UNIVERSAL TEACHING

It is our stance and belief that God established all the religions in the world. The Promised Messiah^{as} wrote that there is no nation to which God did not send a prophet, a divine teacher, a sage, or a saint.

This is not merely his opinion. It is mentioned in the Holy Quran, and the Holy Prophet^{sas} and later Muslim imams held the same view. In light of this principle, arguing that the concept of *Tauheed* was non-existent before the advent of the Holy Prophet^{sas} is contradictory to Quranic teachings. Since the Holy Quran tells us prophets appeared among every people, it follows that *Tauheed* too was established among every people. If *Tauheed* is not present in certain nations today or was absent at the time of the Holy Prophet's advent, it simply indicates that those people had moved away from the concept of *Tauheed*. However, it does not indicate that the prophet sent to those people did not teach *Tauheed* at all. Every religion that declares belief in God Almighty actually teaches the Oneness of God.

There is consensus among all religions that the doctrine of Divine Unity had disappeared at the time of the Holy Prophet's advent. For example, books of Hindus mention that the world was degenerate, and its religious state had collapsed. Books of Christians write that idolatry was rampant and the disappearance of monotheism among Christians served as the impetus for Islam's propagation and success. When they witnessed the Unity of God in Islam, they embraced

it. Zoroastrians make the same point: since [their ancestors] abandoned belief in the Oneness of God, and the concept of *Tauheed* presented by Muslims was appealing, they became Muslims.

Hence, all religious scriptures mention that the world was full of idolatry and bereft of *Tauheed* at the time. The Holy Prophet^{sas} was born into an era and society that was oblivious to a Divine Unity, with no religion or scripture they could genuinely call divinely inspired. Instead, people regarded their ancestral traditions as 'religion', even though religion can only be called so if its adherents have a scripture, which they believe was revealed by God. Thus, the Holy Prophet^{sas} was born among a faithless people who did not regard the Vedas, the Torah, the New Testament or the Zend-Avesta as the Word of God. But despite being born in such a country and society, the Holy Prophet^{sas} presented *Tauheed* in a manner so exalted that even his opponents had to acknowledge its greatness.

TEACHINGS ON TAUHEED

The first point presented by the Holy Prophet^{sas} for establishing *Tauheed* is one the world has yet to correlate with the Unity of God. That is, after gaining

divine insights, the Holy Prophet^{sas} proclaimed that prophets have appeared in the world throughout history. Seemingly, this point has no connection with *Tauheed*, but in truth, it is so vital that Divine Unity cannot be proven without it; without believing that God raised prophets in Egypt, Iran, India, China, Japan, Europe, and America, the understanding of *Tauheed* cannot be complete. The Holy Prophet^{sas} laid great emphasis on this point. For example, it is said in the Holy Quran:

وَأَنْ مِنْ أُمَّةٍ إِلَّا خَلَا فِيهَا نَذِيرٌ²

And there is no people to whom a Warner has not been sent.

وَلَقَدْ بَعَثْنَا فِي كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ رَسُولًا³

And We did raise among every people a Messenger.

Speaking about *Tauheed*, Allah says that He sent messengers who preached:

أَنْ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَاجْتَنِبُوا الطَّاغُوتَ⁴

² Sūrah Fāṭir, 35:25 [Publishers]

³ Sūrah An-Naḥl, 16:37 [Publishers]

⁴ Ibid. [Publishers]

‘Worship Allah and shun the Evil One.’

Thus, the Holy Prophet^{sas} presented the view that it was incorrect to presume that God sent the truth to one nation but abandoned the rest. All people and nations have been blessed with prophets and messengers.

I now want to describe how the above point relates to the Unity of God. When a nation considers that God sent prophets or *autar* to them exclusively—no one else—it also creates a delusion that this nation has its own, unique god. Once this misconception spreads among every people, it will create a sense of national gods in the world, instead of an all-embracing view that God Almighty is the Creator of all people. Every community will hold the insular belief that they have an exclusive god who belongs only to them and disregards other nations; it will present a very narrow concept of God. Conversely, we can observe that reformers appeared among every nation. There were individuals among Hindus who embraced mountains of tribulations for the welfare of others, who plunged into whirlpools of hardships to bring the drowning world to shore.

Similarly, we observe that such persons appeared among the Jews and the Christians whose lives

were devoted to serving God's creation. The same phenomenon can be observed in every religion. Whenever people's religious and spiritual condition declined, God sent individuals to bear the responsibility of reformation. Considering that all people received an identical form of remedy in their state of decadence, why would we reject the premise that these reformers were all sent by the same source? Once an individual accepts this fact, his mind cannot imagine a 'national' god. Instead, it conceptualises the Lord of all the Worlds.

Indeed, the idea that God maintained a relationship solely with one nation—that He sent a prophet among one people when they became corrupt, but disregarded other nations and sent them no prophets—evokes the concept of a national god. This is what led people to believe they had distinct gods and characterise them differently. They even began to write that their god prevailed over the god of another nation. That is, whenever a people triumphed, they declared it a victory of their god. This erroneous concept arose from not acknowledging that divine reformers appeared among every people and that God continuously guided them. It sparked relentless conflicts that ran contrary to the Unity of God. If people accept that every community

has had prophets and reformers, they can conceive the concept of One Creator, even if He is known by different names. These names are now used to construe separate gods. I still remember an incident from my childhood. A boy asked, 'What is the God of Hindus like?' I replied, 'The same as our God.' He asked, 'How is that possible when *Parmeshwar* is their god.' I said, 'We have the same God as them, but they call Him by a different name.' The boy was baffled to hear this.

This point is well illustrated by the *Mathnawi's* writer. He writes that four destitute men were begging. A person offered them a coin so they could buy something to eat. The first beggar suggested, 'Let's buy some grapes,' but the second said, 'No, we must have *Enab*.' The third expressed, 'I want *Dakh*' and the fourth mentioned his preference in Turkish. As they started to quarrel, a passerby stopped to inquire about the matter. Having heard their arguments, he understood their dilemma because he knew all four languages. He asked them to follow him, stating that he will buy what each one desired. He bought them

⁵ An extensive poem written in Persian by Jalal-ud-Deen Muhammad Balkhi, also known as Rumi. [Publishers]

grapes, which delighted them all.

Similarly, people named God differently in their respective languages, but with the passage of time these distinct names were misconstrued as unique gods. Every people proclaimed their own god, believing their god sent them such and such prophets or reformers and ignored other people. The Holy Prophet^{sas} clarified that God sent messengers to all people; they may have had different names, but they shared a common purpose and were all loved and accepted by God. In sum, by establishing this belief, the Holy Prophet^{sas} cemented the doctrine of *Tauheed*.

The second point, the gravity of which people failed to correlate with the Unity of God, is the significance of a universal religion. When the adherents of various faiths became corrupt and digressed from their original teachings, they began thinking that only their own people could receive divine guidance and others were undeserving of it. When all nations had assumed this position, the Holy Prophet^{sas} announced that the door of divine guidance is open to everyone. After receiving knowledge from God Almighty about this mission, he proclaimed:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنِّي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ إِلَيْكُمْ جَمِيعًا

Meaning, it is not that the door of guidance is open only to the Arabs and not other people. God sent me as a messenger for the entire world and all people can attain guidance.

Now, ponder over it. The notion that the door of divine guidance is open to all people will anchor the doctrine of *Tauheed* in every heart. Conversely, ascribing to the view that this door is accessible only to the Arabs and barred for Indians or Persians or Chinese will create the ideology that Arabs have their own god, distinct from the rest.

Thus, presenting a universal religion enhances conviction in *Tauheed* significantly. The Holy Prophet^{sas} championed this belief through his advent by announcing that God sent him as a mercy for the entire world. Through him, anyone, regardless of their background, can acquire guidance, climb spiritual ranks, and reach God. He removed the concept of a national god and presented a Universal God, establishing true *Tauheed*. After his advent, all faiths in the world were drawn to the Oneness of God and

⁶ Sūrah Al-A'raf, 7:159: 'Say, 'O mankind! Truly I am a Messenger to you all.' [Publishers]

continue to be inclined towards it.

These two points were based on a religious perspective and it was through these principles that the Holy Prophet^{sas} strengthened the doctrine of *Tauheed*. But merely professing God is One could not have persuaded people to accept it—not until they had the conviction that God Almighty is for all people and that the gates of His mercy are open to everyone. Accordingly, the Holy Prophet^{sas} instilled this belief.

TAUHEED FROM A SECULAR VIEWPOINT

Beyond the religious spectrum, the Holy Prophet^{sas} also presented *Tauheed* from a secular perspective. That is, through the lens of comparative religions. (This is a new field of study in which the fundamentals of all religions are collected and evaluated for similarities. For example, it can be said that belief in God is common to all faiths.) Experts in this field have postulated that religion, like the rest of the world, evolved over time. Everything made gradual progress, including religion. Initially, humans did not believe in God but instead worshipped elements of nature, claiming the latter were reflections of God; still, as humans evolved, this view shifted from elements to spirits. Gradually, this belief evolved into the concept of a single Creator.

Based on the above postulations, these academics claim that God did not declare His own existence. Instead, human beings gradually discovered Him on their own. This is the stance of experts who believe in the existence of God. Though God was present, His existence was unknown. They argue that just as humans found kerosene through discovery and it did not emerge on its own, so too did humans discover God through inquiry, and He did not disclose Himself.

Conversely, atheists assert that there is no God and that this concept was invented by humans. Atheists do not believe in the phenomenon of divine revelation either. From their perspective too, we can ascertain that the Holy Prophet^{sas} spurred an extraordinary change regarding *Tauheed*. According to the theory of evolution, it is accepted that life made slow and gradual progress, yet, the teaching of *Tauheed* reached its perfection during the time of Prophet Muhammad^{sas}. After his elucidation of the Unity of God, no new interpretation emerged, during his time or since. Thus, it must be acknowledged that the evolution of human consciousness reached its perfection in the personage of the Holy Prophet^{sas}, the attainment of which is the supreme objective for humanity. With his advent, the concept of Divine Unity was perfected. He presented

such a comprehensive commentary on *Tauheed* that no elucidation was necessary after it.

I am not implying here that the Unity of God presented by earlier sages, saints, and messengers was incomplete. A person who advances *Tauheed* in a flawed manner cannot possibly be a prophet. Every divine messenger imparted a complete concept of *Tauheed* that was perfect for his era. Assuming the theory of evolution is correct, we must admit the advent of Prophet Muhammad^{sas} brought the doctrine of *Tauheed* to its ultimate perfection.

TAUHEED FROM AN ACADEMIC VIEWPOINT

I will now present the importance of *Tauheed* from an academic perspective.

First, the field of science cannot make progress without *Tauheed*. Science is an inquiry into the natural laws governing the world. For example, fire burns objects, and water quenches thirst. Thus, uncovering the properties and functions of things is called science. Now imagine if fire had been created by one god, trees by another god, and mountains by still another—these natural elements would not be in harmony. Instead, they would clash constantly.

Conversely, if we accept there is One Parmeshwar

and all things are under His command, then it must be accepted that everything is governed by one overarching law, and this one law cannot operate without One God. If One Being is not enforcing the law upon all things in the world, science is invalid. For example, water has the property of extinguishing, while fire has the property of burning. But, if the god of fire and the god of water are different gods and both decided to alter the properties of their respective creations, how could nature run its course? Imagine one god created Magnesium to ease bowel movement, and another god produced the stomach with relevant properties to accept the effects of Magnesium; if the latter opted to change properties of the stomach, Magnesium would cease to affect bowel movements, regardless of dose intake. In short, science cannot work without accepting the concept of *Tauheed*, nor can the world progress without it.

Second, no one could venture to conduct research in a field without the concept of *Tauheed*. The belief that other objects have divine powers would inhibit scientists from conducting experiments on those objects. For example, how could a person be willing to dissect an object he considers a deity? Conversely, people will readily research those same objects if they

hold that there is One God who created everything for the benefit of humanity. As a result, the world will make advancements in sciences. Thus, the Holy Prophet's^{sas} emphasis on the Unity of God spurred such development in science that was unparalleled in the past epochs. From the era of the Holy Prophet^{sas} to the thirteen hundred years since, the world has made progress in science like never before. This advancement was only possible because of *Tauheed*. Once people understood that everything has One God who created all things for the benefit of humankind, it opened up the gates of progress in all fields and began research on every object and entity.

Besides the aspects I have mentioned above, the Holy Prophet^{sas} established *Tauheed* in still other ways. Namely, he taught the fundamental teachings of *Tauheed*. Rather than making bare assertions to believe in *Tauheed*, the Holy Prophet^{sas} showed *how* to embrace the Unity of God. Similarly, his teachings were not empty assertions to abstain from *shirk* [associating partners with Allah], they showed *how* to abstain from committing idolatry. Furthermore, he did not ask people to accept *Tauheed* blindly. He advanced the doctrine with arguments to support it. Similarly, he did not prohibit *shirk* without providing

evidence. He expounded upon its evils through arguments. For example, it is mentioned in the Holy Quran regarding *shirk*:

قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ ۚ اللَّهُ الصَّمَدُ ۚ لَمْ يَلِدْ ۚ لَمْ يُولَدْ ۚ وَكَم يُؤْتَوْنَ وَمَا يَكُنْ لَهُ كُفُوًا أَحَدٌ⁷

In these verses, four kinds of *shirk* have been described, each one followed by a refutation:

One, assuming a partnership in His Oneness by declaring the existence of another entity like Him. This is wrong because هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ Allah is One and has no partner.

Two, assuming a partnership in His attributes is incorrect because اللَّهُ الصَّمَدُ [Allah as] *Samad* is the One upon whom everything depends for their survival, and the support of God Almighty is manifested through His attributes. Even to think that other beings are essential to the survival, subsistence, or functioning of the world amounts to *shirk*.

Three, assuming a partnership in His eternal existence. To believe that God lived only in the past and was succeeded by progeny is also *shirk*. It ascribes an imperfection to God; namely, that He is mortal.

⁷ Sūrah Al-Ikhlāṣ, 112:2-5: ‘Say, ‘He is Allah, the One; Allah, the Independent and Besought of all. He begets not, nor is He begotten. And there is none like unto Him.’ [Publishers]

Four, assuming a partnership by equating someone with God. That is, to believe God has transferred His powers over to someone else, making them a partner in divinity.

These are the four main kinds of *shirk* and all other forms of *shirk* can be classified under them.

In the Holy Quran, Allah explains *Tauheed* in this manner:

اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْحَيُّ الْقَيُّومُ ۚ لَا تَأْخُذُهُ سِنَّةٌ وَلَا نَوْمٌ ۚ لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ ۗ مَنْ ذَا الَّذِي يَشْفَعُ عِنْدَهُ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِهِ ۗ يَعْلَمُ مَا بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَمَا خَلْفَهُمْ ۗ وَلَا يُحِيطُونَ بِشَيْءٍ مِنْ عِلْمِهِ إِلَّا بِمَا شَاءَ ۗ وَسِعَ كُرْسِيُّهُ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْأَرْضَ ۗ وَلَا يَئُودُهُ حِفْظُهُمَا ۗ وَهُوَ الْعَلِيُّ الْعَظِيمُ⁸

That is, there is no god but Allah. **الْحَيُّ الْقَيُّومُ** He is the Ever-Living and All-Sustaining.

لَا تَأْخُذُهُ سِنَّةٌ وَلَا نَوْمٌ There are no breaks in His works. Anyone who believes His works can be interrupted is also guilty of *shirk*, for it implies that the world could function on its own without God. Slumber seizes Him not, nor sleep.

⁸ Sūrah Al-Baqarah, 2:256: 'Allah—there is no God but He, the Living, the Self-Subsisting and All-Sustaining. Slumber seizes Him not, nor sleep. To Him belongs whatsoever is in the heavens and whatsoever is in the earth. Who is he that will intercede with Him except by His permission? He knows what is before them and what is behind them; and they encompass nothing of His knowledge except what He pleases. His knowledge extends over the heavens and the earth; and the care of them burdens Him not; and He is the High, the Great.' [Publishers]

كُلُّ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ Everything is under His absolute control. We must believe that God is the Master of every object in the universe and that no one else has any control.

مَنْ ذَا الَّذِي يَشْفَعُ عِنْدَ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِهِ Humans should accept that God created a system for the acceptance of our prayers, but He cannot be compelled to accept them. Only if He grants permission to pray concerning a matter can a person supplicate.

يَعْلَمُ مَا بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَمَا خَلْفَهُمْ He knows what has happened in the past and what will occur in the future. Being All-Knowing is a prerequisite for *Tauheed*. The perfect omnipotence cannot exist without perfect knowledge. Thus, believing God is omniscient is essential.

وَلَا يُحِيطُونَ بِشَيْءٍ مِنْ عِلْمِهِ إِلَّا بِمَا شَاءَ A person cannot achieve anything without the knowledge granted by God. Hence, one must understand that everything they attain will be through God.

وَسِعَ كُرْسِيُّهُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ His throne encompasses the earth and the heavens. A throne is the seat of decision-making which means every atom and particle moves under the power and direction of God. Without understanding this fine point, belief in His Oneness remains incomplete.

وَلَا يَئُودُهُ حِفْظُهُمَا His protection never ceases, continuing

forever.

وَهُوَ الْعَلِيُّ Though every particle is manifesting His power, He is so Exalted that no one can fathom His true essence through their own effort.

الْعَظِيمُ Despite being unfathomable, He is still Supreme [in the sense] that through the manifestation of His powers, anyone who strives can find Him. One can reach Him with ease and enjoy His presence.

Therefore, the above verse signifies that perfect *Tauheed* is to be in harmony and union with God Almighty. One who finds God finds absolute *Tauheed*. In this sense, union with God is synonymous with *Tauheed*.

This is the concept of Divine Unity presented by the Holy Prophet^{sas}. It involves achieving a union with God while still living in this world. Essentially, it means that a person's entire existence is centred on God, to the point where their own being feels nullified.

Tauheed means to profess God's Oneness and affirm His Unity. Besides declaring it verbally, a person must prove through action that God is their focal point. If your preferences are not aligned with His and your will is not aligned with His—your declaration of belief in the Unity of God remains hollow. True *Tauheed* requires one to prove through self-annihilation that

the Will of God transcends all.

Furthermore, the Holy Prophet^{sas} refuted *shirk* through evidence. One argument he presented to refute *shirk* is that no object in the world is independent or self-sufficient. All things are interdependent. Rainfall depends on the Sun; its heat transforms water into vapours, which rise to form clouds. Furthermore, the Sun affects the rotation of the Earth.

In the same way, everything functions in a systematic way. There is an anecdote about a saintly man who lived in Delhi. Once, he asked a disciple, ‘Do you know how to eat a *Laddu*⁹?’ The disciple replied, ‘What’s so difficult about that? Pick it up and place it in your mouth.’ The saint said, ‘That is incorrect. I will show you the right way to eat it.’ One day, he received some sweets, so he called upon the disciple and asked him to take a seat. He took a *Laddu* and placed it on a handkerchief. Next, he broke a small piece and said, ‘Mian Ghulam Ali (his disciple), have you any idea all the means which God provided for the production of this sweet? It contains oil, sugar, flour, and many other ingredients, all of which

⁹ A spherical sweet originating from the Indian subcontinent. [Publishers]

have their own production processes. God made all these provisions just so Mazhar Jaan Jaanan [the saint] could eat this one *Laddu*.' Reflecting on the intricacy of each step, he glorified Allah expressing: '*SubhanAllah, SubhanAllah*' [Holy is Allah; Holy is Allah] as if in a state of bliss. In the meantime, the interval between Zuhr and 'Asr elapsed, and he promptly proceeded to offer prayers.

In short, nothing in the world is self-sustaining, with everything following a defined order. When a child is born, countless measures exist to support its survival. If the Creator and the Sustainer of this child were not one, how would the necessary elements for its development align? This demonstrates the Unity of Creator and Sustainer as One God. Similarly, the concordance between law and order [that governs the universe] proves the Unity of God Almighty. There are countless other proofs, which I leave for now.

THE PROPAGATION OF TAUHEED

Now I will describe what the Holy Prophet^{sas} did for the propagation of *Tauheed*. And here again, I shall cite a core point. People only showed hostility towards the Holy Prophet^{sas} because he was preaching the Unity of God. Once, the disbelievers sent him a

message and said: 'If you desire wealth, we offer you a large sum; if you crave power, we accept you as our leader; if you want a beautiful woman, we will find you the most stunning one in all of Arabia; and if you are afflicted with madness, we offer you treatment. But do not criticise our idols.'¹⁰

Upon hearing this message from the Makkan chief, the Holy Prophet^{sas} was moved to tears, realising his people had put a price on his selfless service. He replied: 'Even if you place the Sun in my right hand and the Moon in my left, I would never abandon belief in *Tauheed*.' This response had such a profound effect on the Makkan chief that, despite being a staunch enemy, he advised fellow disbelievers to stop opposing the Holy Prophet^{sas} or they would be ruined.

Thus, it was for propagating the Unity of God that his enemies persecuted him. He was tortured. Children were sent to abuse him, and dogs were unleashed after him. Once, he went to Taif, and the locals tortured him so much that he was drenched in blood from head to toe. He kept falling with unbearable pain. Every time he stood up, they pelted him with stones. Even in this state, he prayed: 'O Allah, forgive them, for they

¹⁰ *Sirat Ibn Hisham*, Translated by Farid, Egypt 2000, p. 44 [Publishers]

do not know the truth.’ Despite such hardships, not once did he stop preaching the message of *Tauheed*. He always said that no matter what the opposition, he would never stop propagating the message of the Unity of God. Even in the final days leading up to his demise, the Holy Prophet^ﷺ continued to advise people not to committ *shirk* after his passing. I believe that even at the time of the Holy Prophet’s birth, God gave proof of His *Tauheed* by causing his father to pass away before his birth and his mother to pass away in his early childhood. His helpless beginning and glorious end is, in itself, a major proof of the Unity of God Almighty.

Teachings and Conduct with Non-Muslims

I will now present the second part of this subject, which relates to the Holy Prophet’s^ﷺ conduct with non-Muslims and his teachings regarding them.

FIRST TEACHING

Providing clear teachings on acknowledging the good qualities of others, the Holy Prophet^ﷺ taught that every faith has some virtues, the denial of which could lead to intolerance. It is stated in the Holy

Quran:

وَقَالَتِ الْيَهُودُ لَيْسَتِ النَّصْرَاءُ عَلَى شَيْءٍ وَقَالَتِ النَّصْرَاءُ لَيْسَتِ
الْيَهُودُ عَلَى شَيْءٍ وَهُمْ يَتْلُونَ الْكِتَابَ¹¹

Meaning that, Jews think Christians are immoral and Christians think Jews lack virtues, even though both follow the same religious text. Are there no positive teachings in their scripture?

Thus, the Holy Prophet^{sas} emphasised the importance of recognising the positive aspects of others religions, and it is wrong for one to assert that other faiths lack any virtue. The Holy Prophet^{sas} brought a universal teaching that reassured and comforted all nations. It is disheartening to tell adherents that their religion is bereft of all good qualities. In this regard, the principle presented by the Holy Prophet^{sas} is to acknowledge the merits of every faith. Thus, he has done a great favour to all people.

SECOND TEACHING

Second, the Holy Prophet^{sas} forbade us from saying that the followers of other religions are unauthentic in

¹¹ Sūrah Al-Baqarah, 2:114: 'And the Jews say, 'The Christians stand on nothing;' and the Christians say, 'The Jews stand on nothing;' while they *both* read the *same* Book.' [Publishers]

their belief. Though all other religions have become distorted, most of their followers consider their faith authentic to this day. In the Holy Quran, Allah has praised some Jews and Christians. It describes that among the Jews, some are so honest that they would not betray you even if you entrusted them with a mountain of gold. This illustrates that some Jews genuinely believed in the truth of their religion. Nowadays, Muslims too have developed the false notion that the followers of other faiths, despite considering it false, refuse to abandon their religion. But in reality, ninety-nine percent of Hindus, Christians, and Jews regard their religions as the absolute truth.

Similarly, it says in the Holy Quran that among the Christians, some weep upon hearing the remembrance of Allah, and their hearts are filled with fear of Allah. Could such people be lying about their beliefs? By providing this teaching, the Holy Prophet^{sas} has taught us to respect and regard the sentiments of non-Muslims.

THIRD TEACHING

Third, the Holy Prophet^{sas} enjoined Muslims to acknowledge that divine messengers appeared among all people and to belief, in principle, that prophets

were raised in all nations. Thus, the Holy Prophet^{sas} introduced the notion of international law in the sphere of religion.

During the last war [World War I], Russia's form of government changed. Unfortunately, other countries did not recognise the newly founded republic. Their pleas fell on deaf ears. One may wonder about the benefit of being acknowledged by other countries and why Russia is trying so hard to attain it. It has great advantages, because a government recognised by other nations starts receiving benefits accorded to states that fall under international law.

The Holy Prophet^{sas} was the first person to acknowledge the rights of all faiths and declare that all religions were divinely instituted. Granted, he opposed the erroneous concepts [that had evolved with time], but he still respected the sentiments of others and established their rights. This was a significant right he established for all non-Muslims.

FOURTH TEACHING

Fourth, the Holy Prophet^{sas} taught that one must never resort to abusive language in the heat of an argument. Allah says:

وَلَا تَسُبُّوا الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ فَيَسُبُّوا اللَّهَ عَدْوًا بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ¹²

Meaning, when you argue with non-Muslims, do not revile their deities, even if they are presented as equals to God. Otherwise, they will abuse your God, too. In this way, the Holy Prophet^{sas} forbade the use of offensive language.

FIFTH TEACHING

Fifth, the Holy Prophet^{sas} taught not to fight against a people because of religious differences. Before the advent of the Holy Prophet^{sas}, it was considered rightful to destroy anyone that diverged from your faith. But the Holy Prophet^{sas} put an end to this [barbaric] custom. It was through the Holy Prophet^{sas} that God Almighty declared:

وَقَاتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ الَّذِينَ يُقَاتِلُونَكُمْ وَلَا تَعْتَدُوا¹³

That is, you may fight but only against those who fight against you. Never fight anyone because of religious differences.

Thus, the Holy Prophet^{sas} granted freedom of

¹² Sūrah Al-An'ām, 6:109: 'And revile not those whom they call upon besides Allah, lest they, out of spite, revile Allah in *their* ignorance.' [Publishers]

¹³ Sūrah Al-Baqarah, 2:191: 'And fight in the cause of Allah against those who fight against you, but do not transgress.' [Publishers]

conscience to non-Muslims. Regardless of a person's faith, no one has the right to kill or harm them in any manner.

SIXTH TEACHING

Sixth, the Holy Prophet^{sas} opened the door of guidance to the entire world. Before his advent, people considered religion to be their exclusive domain. But the Holy Prophet^{sas} made it inclusive without discriminating against anyone. Therefore, the Holy Quran states:

إِنِّي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ إِلَيْكُمْ جَمِيعًا¹⁴

Meaning, I am sent as a Messenger for all the people of the world. I can show the path of guidance to all.

SEVENTH TEACHING

The seventh right he established for non-Muslims was declaring that promises made with them, not just Muslims, must be honoured. People, including Muslims who do not ponder over the Holy Quran, make an error in judgement. They consider it perfectly acceptable to breach contracts made with others. But

¹⁴ Sūrah Al-A'raf, 7:159: 'truly, I am a Messenger to you all from Allah.'
[Publishers]

the Holy Prophet^{sas} prohibited this practice. It is recorded in the Holy Quran:

وَأَمَّا تَخَافَنَّ مِنْ قَوْمٍ خِيَانَةً فَانْبِذْ إِلَيْهِمْ عَلَى سَوَاءٍ¹⁵

That is, if a people with whom Muslims have entered into an agreement dishonour it, they should be notified that the agreement has been annulled. Under no circumstances are Muslims permitted to make a surprise attack [but if attacked, Muslims are permitted to retaliate]. When Abu Sufyan came from Makkah to renew the Treaty¹⁶ with Muslims, the Holy Prophet^{sas} could have chosen not to disclose his intention and launch a surprise attack against the enemy. But by replying, ‘Abu Sufyan, you have agreed to renew this treaty, not I’, the Holy Prophet^{sas} gave him prior notice of the measures to follow.

Nowadays, if a country plans to attack another, it often announces that it has good relations with that country. This was the case with Italy when it announced that it was on good terms with Turkey just

¹⁵ Sūrah Al-Anfāl, 8:59: ‘And if thou fearest treachery from a people, throw back to them *their covenant* with equity.’ [Publishers]

¹⁶ Refers to the flagrant breach of the Treaty of Hudaibiya by the Makkans who instigated the war. [Publishers]

three days before attacking it. Conversely, when Abu Sufyan made his announcement, the Holy Prophet^{sas} could have remained silent and still been justified in his actions. However, he spoke up and informed them of his plans to retaliate.

EIGHTH TEACHING

The eighth teaching of the Holy Prophet^{sas} is that Muslims and non-Muslims have equal civil rights, a virtue not found in earlier teachings. The Jews were forbidden from charging interest to fellow Jews but permitted to take it from non-Jewish people. But the Holy Prophet^{sas} prohibited taking interest from Jews, Christians, Muslims, or anyone else. He instructed that everyone should be treated by the same standard. In this way, he affirmed that Muslims and non-Muslims have the same civil rights.

NINTH TEACHING

The ninth teaching instructs about freeing slaves. The Holy Prophet^{sas} did not differentiate between Muslim and non-Muslim slaves when setting them free. While it is said that the Holy Quran mentions a command to free enslaved Muslims, this applies only in specific situations where Muslims have suffered greatly. But

the general directive of the Holy Prophet^{sas} is to free all slaves. As an example of this principle, after the Battle of Hunain, the Holy Prophet^{sas} freed thousands of prisoners of war, even though they were adversaries.

TENTH TEACHING

The tenth teaching emphasises that in an Islamic country, Muslims should bear greater responsibility than non-Muslims. This responsibility includes:

1. Participating in warfare when necessary.
2. Donating one-tenth of their agricultural yield.
3. Paying Zakat, which is a portion of their accumulated wealth.

While Muslims are obligated to perform the above duties, non-Muslims are only required to pay a tax of 2.5%, which is significantly less than what Muslims are required to pay. In return for this, non-Muslims receive protection and security from the Muslim community.

Today, many European countries impose a tax of 10% or higher on their citizens. However, the Holy Prophet^{sas} imposed a higher tax rate and mandatory military service for Muslims and a lower tax rate and no military obligation for non-Muslims.

CONDUCT WITH NON-MUSLIMS

I shall now explain the Holy Prophet's conduct with people of other faiths. As time is running out, I will only present a few examples.

The **first example** is that through his actions, the Holy Prophet^{sas} honoured non-Muslims who were virtuous. It is recorded that when some idolaters were taken as captives after the battle against At-Taiyy tribe, the daughter of Hatim Taiyy was among them. She asked if the Holy Prophet^{sas} knew whose daughter she was. He replied: 'No, whose daughter are you?' She said: 'The daughter of a man who assisted those in hardships: Hatim.' Hatim was not a Muslim, but the Holy Prophet^{sas} freed her because of her father's compassion for others. Fearing captivity, her brother was on the run. The Holy Prophet^{sas} immediately supplied her with the means to travel, and asked her to bring him back. When he returned with his sister, the brother was so touched by the kind treatment that he became a Muslim.

It is evident that the Holy Prophet^{sas} recognised the excellent qualities of non-Muslims through his conduct and treated them with kindness because of their virtues.

The **second example** is an incident about a

Christian delegation from Najran who came to visit the Holy Prophet^{sas}. According to historical records, the group in question used disrespectful language during a discussion with the Holy Prophet^{sas}. When it was time for their prayer, some of them stood up to leave the mosque to offer their prayer service elsewhere. However, the Holy Prophet^{sas} encouraged them to remain in the mosque and offered them space to perform their prayer. As a result, the Christian delegation placed their crosses before them and conducted their worship inside the mosque.¹⁷

Today, mosques and temples are a source of strife, but the Holy Prophet^{sas} permitted the Christians to offer worship in the mosque as per their rituals. Given the Holy Prophet's^{sas} practical example, our community announced that non-Muslims are free to visit the London mosque. Still, some Muslims objected to it, saying, 'This is not a mosque, but rather a *dharamshala*.'¹⁸

This was the conduct of the Holy Prophet^{sas} towards non-Muslims. How can anyone allege that he took lives or inflicted cruelty? Would such a person allow

¹⁷ *Zurqani*, Muhammad Abdul Baqi, vol 4, p. 41, Egypt, 1909 [Publishers]

¹⁸ A shelter for travellers or a hostel [Publishers]

people to worship the cross before his very eyes—in his own mosque that he called ¹⁹أَخْرُ الْمَسَاجِدِ and in which praying has greater blessings than other mosques? But in the presence of the Holy Prophet^{sas}—the Divine Messenger sent by God to establish His *Tauheed*—the Christians performed their prayer service with the cross before them. The Holy Prophet^{sas} said there is no harm in it, and they may worship in the mosque. But today, even the most open-minded people lack the strength of faith to allow others to pray in their places of worship.

The **third example** is that the Holy Prophet^{sas} always advised Muslims to show excellent conduct towards neighbours, regardless of their religion. He stressed this point so much that his companions always remembered to follow it. It is recorded that once, Hazrat Ibn Abbas^{ra} came home and noticed his family had received raw meat from somewhere. He asked if they had shared some of it with their Jewish neighbour. When he repeated this question a number of times, it prompted his family to inquire about the reason for his insistence. Hazrat Ibn Abbas^{ra} replied that he heard the Holy Prophet^{sas} say: ‘Angel Gabriel

¹⁹ ‘Last of the mosques’, i.e. the best [Publishers]

emphasised the rights of neighbours so many times that I began to think they might be allocated a share in inheritance.’

This was the Holy Prophet’s conduct with non-Muslims. He also showed utmost regard for the sentiments of others. In the presence of Hazrat Abu Bakr^{ra}, a Jew once said: ‘I swear to Moses who was given superiority over all other prophets.’ Hearing these words, Hazrat Abu Bakr^{ra} slapped him. When the matter reached the Holy Prophet^{sas}, even a person like Hazrat Abu Bakr^{ra} was rebuked. Consider the scenario carefully. This was a Muslim government in which a Jew expressed superiority of Moses^{as}. Worse, he spoke in a tone provocative enough to infuriate a tender-hearted person as Abu Bakr^{ra} into slapping the Jew. But even so, the Holy Prophet^{sas} scolded Abu Bakr^{ra}, questioned his action, and told him the Jew had a right to hold any belief he liked.

The **fourth example** is an incident that occurred after the Battle of Khaybar.²⁰ A Jewish woman cooked a meal for the Holy Prophet^{sas} and mixed poison in the meat. When the meal was presented, a companion

²⁰ Sahih Muslim, Kitab-us-Salaam, Bab-us-Samm Hadith 2190b, English translation. [Publishers]

named Bishr^{ra} took a bite, but the Holy Prophet^{sas} immediately recognised the poisoned meat through divine revelation and did not eat it. The woman asked how he knew, and he pointed to a meat bone. She explained that she had merely wanted to test the Holy Prophet^{sas}. If he discovered the truth, it would mean he was a true prophet of God, and if he died, it would prove he is an imposter and the world would be rid of him.

Hearing this explanation, the Holy Prophet^{sas} said to spare her, even though Bishr^{ra}, a companion ready to sacrifice himself for his master, died. Despite her intention of harming him and his companions to root out Islam, the Holy Prophet^{sas} showed her mercy. This was a remarkable example of the Holy Prophet's^{sas} magnanimity.

The **fifth example** is that whenever the Holy Prophet^{sas} went to war, he directed his army to neither desecrate the places of worship nor harm their religious leaders, women, elders, or children. Before the advent of Islam, it was a custom to kill priests and monks, but the Holy Prophet^{sas} abolished this custom. If he were hostile to other religions as painted by the opponents today, would he have instructed that leaders of these religions should be spared? He would have said, 'Kill

them first'. Instead, he instructed only to fight those who take up arms against you and to leave those who are engaged in the service of religion.

The **sixth example** highlights the disregard for the feelings of the opposing party in worldly conflicts. The defeated party is oppressed, and their emotions are suppressed. The British government is considered civilised, yet there is a statue in Lahore of Lawrence²¹ holding a sword that bears an inscription directing a question to the Indians: 'Will you be governed by the pen or the sword?' This statue and inscription are seen as insulting by the people of India because it implies that force will be used to rule over them if they reject the government. Despite repeated efforts to have the statue removed, the government has refused to do so.

On the other hand, let's consider the greatness of the Holy Prophet^ﷺ. He was subjected to countless forms of abuse by the Makkans. For 13 years, he and his companions endured torture at their hands. Women were murdered with javelins thrust into their bodies brutally, and men were tied up with ropes and dragged across scorching sands, made to lie on burning coals,

²¹ John Laird Mair Lawrence, 1st Baron Lawrence (born March 4, 1811, Richmond, Yorkshire, England—died June 27, 1879, London), British viceroy and governor-general of India (1864-1869). [Publishers]

hauled over rough terrain, and had their eyes gouged out. The persecution became so intense that the Holy Prophet^{sas} ultimately fled his hometown. Yet, the Makkans would not leave him in peace, even in his new city. They incited the locals against him and even tried to enlist the support of Caesar and Chosroes²² against him.

In the end, the tides turned, and the Holy Prophet^{sas} led an army of 10,000 holy men into Makkah. At this moment, memories of all the acts of oppression and violence committed against them came flooding back, and their blood boiled with the desire for revenge. One of the regimental commanders said, ‘The Makkans will show no mercy. Today, we will avenge the tortures.’ At this, Abu Sufyan approached the Holy Prophet^{sas} and complained that the commander’s comments had caused him distress. The Holy Prophet^{sas} called for the commander and told him, ‘You are relieved of your duties because you have disregarded the feelings of the Makkan disbelievers.’

Remember, it was unclear how Makkans would react to the Muslim army. Nor was the outcome of the march to Makkah certain. Still, upon the complaint

²² Imperial titles of Roman and Persian emperors [Publishers]

of a Makkan chief—that a Muslim officer has hurt his feelings—the Holy Prophet^{sas} relieved the person

of his duties. Can such a noble example be shown in the entire history of wars? Not even a corporal or lance corporal, far less a commander, was ever disciplined for standing on a battlefield and making a war cry against the enemy.

CONCLUSION

I will end my speech by sharing an incident. The victory in Makkah was the last chance to destroy the enemy's power, but observe the love and kindness that the Holy Prophet^{sas} showed them. Abraham Lincoln is a well-known figure in Western history. During his time, a war was fought between two groups, one in favour of slavery and the other against it. Lincoln was among the abolitionists. It is said that when the South lost the war, he approached them with humility. Even as the outcome was being determined, he was praying. When his army suggested they visit the conquered party with a marching band, he declined and said that such a pompous display would cause them distress. This was one of Lincoln's exceptional traits. However, he never personally suffered torture at the hands of his

opponents.

On the other hand, when the Holy Prophet^{sas} entered Makkah with his army, it was owing to the treacherous actions of his enemies who had mistreated Muslims and caused harm to him and his followers for nearly quarter of a century. However, when the Holy Prophet^{sas} approached the outskirts of Makkah, he gathered his leaders and declared: 'Enter the city without me, and do not harm anyone.' As he saw the city and realised that the residents of Makkah did not plan to fight, he fell down in prayer.

It is said that Lincoln also prayed while he proceeded, but his situation is not comparable to the Holy Prophet's. He did not experience even a fraction of the cruelty inflicted on Prophet Muhammad^{sas}. Despite this, the Holy Prophet^{sas} [showed mercy to his enemies and] prevented bloodshed. Four Muslim regiments entered Makkah, but the Holy Prophet^{sas} did not join any of them. Instead, he entered alone, avoiding any grandeur, and prayed at the Ka'bah. He then declared: 'Anyone who stays in their home will be granted amnesty.' Non-Muslim residents of Makkah, who had tried to assassinate the Holy Prophet^{sas} for 13 years and continued to plot against him for another 7 years after he moved 200 miles away, came to see

him. They were asked how they wanted to be treated, even though their punishment could have been severe. They asked to be treated like the brothers of Prophet Joseph^{as}, and the Holy Prophet^{sas} replied,

لَا تُثْرِبُ عَلَيْكُمْ الْيَوْمَ²³

Meaning, you are forgiven and free of any charges. This was the conclusion to the war between the Holy Prophet^{sas} and his long-standing enemies.

People who allege that Islam was spread through the sword should listen. If anyone exemplified clemency in response to the sword, it was Muhammad^{sas}. If anyone repaid a lifetime of abuse and cruelty with forgiveness, it was Muhammad^{sas}. It is my hope that in the future, even his opponents will celebrate the greatness and holiness of his character rather than object to it.

Let us pray for an end to conflicts and work towards peace by promoting brotherhood and respecting each other's rights rather than denying them.

(*Al-Fazl*, December 5-8, 1944, Qadian)

²³ Sūrah Yūsuf, 12:93: 'No blame *shall lie* on you this day.'; Commentary of *Mawahib-ul-Ladunniyyah*, vol. 2, p. 302, Azhariyya Press Egypt. [Publishers]

Glossary

Autar a term used in Hinduism meaning the incarnation of a deity in human or animal form to counteract an evil in the world.

Brahmo Samaj a theistic movement within Hinduism, founded in Calcutta [now Kolkata] in 1828 by Ram Mohun Roy.

Dharamshala (in South Asia) a building devoted to religious or charitable purposes, especially a rest house for travelers.

Qadian birthplace of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as}, the founder of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, located in India.

Shirk in Islam, idolatry, polytheism, and the association of other deities with the One God.

Tauheed in Islam, the Oneness of God, in the sense that He is one and there is no god but He, as stated in the shahādah: ‘There is none worthy of worship save God and Muhammad^{as} is the Messenger

of Allah.’ Tauheed further refers to the nature of God—that He is a unity, not composed, not made up of parts and uncompounded.

Zakat an obligatory tax required of Muslims, one of the five Pillars of Islam. Zakat is levied on five categories of property—food grains; fruit; camels, cattle, sheep, and goats; gold and silver; and movable goods—and is payable each year after one year’s possession.

