FIQHUL MASĪḤ

The Sayings of the Promised Messiah عليه السلام *on Jurisprudential Matters and Islamic Law*

ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF URDU


بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

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The Sayings of the Promised Messiah عليه السلام *on Jurisprudential Matters and Islamic Law*

(English translation of Urdu)

Ḥaḍrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad

The Promised Messiah and Mahdi عليه السلام*, Founder of the Aḥmadiyya Muslim Jamā'at*

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Ḥaḍrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian
The Promised Messiah & Mahdi علیہ السلام

ABOUT THE PROMISED MESSIAH عليه السلام

Ḥaḍrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad عليه السلام was born in 1835 in Qadian, India. From his early life, he dedicated himself to prayer and the study of the Holy Quran and other scriptures. He was deeply pained to observe the plight of Islām, which was being attacked from all directions. In order to defend Islām and present its teachings in their pristine purity, he wrote more than ninety books, thousands of letters, and participated in many religious debates. He argued that Islām is a living faith which can lead man to establish communion with God to achieve moral and spiritual perfection.

Ḥaḍrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad عليه السلام started experiencing Divine dreams, visions, and revelations at a young age. In 1889, under Divine command, he started accepting initiation into the Aḥmadiyya Muslim Community. Divine revelations continued to increase and God commanded him to announce that He had appointed him to be that very Reformer of the Latter Days as prophesied by various religions under different titles. He claimed to be that very Prophet who the Holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said would be raised as the Promised Messiah and Mahdi. The Aḥmadiyya Muslim Community is now established in more than 200 countries.

After his demise in 1908, the second manifestation of Divine power was demonstrated, and the institution of *Khilāfat* (Successorship) was established to succeed him in fulfilment of the prophecies made in the Holy Quran, presented by the Holy Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ, and in the book of the Promised Messiah عليه السلام, *al-Waṣiyyat*. Ḥaḍrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad أيده الله تعالى بنصره العزيز is the Fifth Successor to the Promised Messiah عليه السلام and the present Head of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community.

PUBLISHER'S INTRODUCTION

With the guidance and approval of Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ V ایدہ اللہ تعالیٰ بنصرہ العزیز, the English translation of *Fiqhul-Masīḥ* is now being published. This single volume presents the sayings of the Imām of the Age, the Promised Messiah and Mahdī, Ḥaḍrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad علیہ السلام, on matters of jurisprudence and Islamic law. These statements, delivered on various occasions and recorded in his books and *Malfūẓāt*, have been carefully compiled and translated for the benefit of the English-speaking world.

It was foretold regarding the Promised Messiah علیہ السلام that he would come as the Just Arbiter for the various sects of Islām and for all of mankind, and that all his words and actions would exemplify justice.

The Promised Messiah علیہ السلام said:

> Now you ought to think for yourselves and decide in your hearts that when you have taken an oath of allegiance at my hand, and you have accepted me as the Promised Messiah, the Judge and Arbiter, if after this, any decision or action of mine agitates or troubles your heart, then fear for your faith. Faith that is tainted with apprehensions and doubts will not bring forth any positive outcome. However, if you have accepted wholeheartedly that the Promised Messiah is truly the Arbiter, then lay down your apprehensions in the face of his verdict and action, and honour his decisions, so that you may be deemed ones who honour and respect the holy words of the Messenger of Allāh, peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him.

> The testimony of the Messenger of Allāh, peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, is enough. He gives the reassurance that the Promised Messiah will be your leader, he will be the Arbiter and Judge. If this does not comfort you, then what else will?[1]

Prepared by the International Translation and Research Office, a central department of the Aḥmadiyya Muslim Jamāʿat led by Respected Ibrahim Ikhlaf, the English translation of *Fiqhul-Masīḥ* offers English-speaking Aḥmadīs a convenient and accessible means to study the Promised Messiah's guidance on jurisprudential and religious matters. It also serves as a practical reference to locate such guidance when needed. This is a priceless resource and a beacon of light for those seeking to understand the commandments of the Book of Allāh, the noble example of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, and the teachings of the one commissioned by God in this age.

May Allāh Almighty enable us all to understand the verdicts of the Promised Messiah ؑ, show due reverence to them, and act upon them in our daily lives, *Āmīn*.

Al-Haj Munir-ud-Din Shams
Additional Wakīlut-Taṣnīf, London
June 2025

1. *Malfūẓāt*, English vol. 4, pp. 144–145, published by Islam International Publications Ltd., 2024

TRANSLATOR'S INTRODUCTION

It is through the immense grace of Almighty Allāh and the countless blessings He has bestowed upon this translation project through Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ V ایدہ اللہ تعالیٰ بنصرہ العزیز, the Fifth Successor to the Promised Messiah علیہ السلام, that we are pleased to announce the publication of the English translation of *Fiqhul-Masīḥ*, a compilation of the sayings of the Promised Messiah علیہ السلام on jurisprudential matters and Islamic law.

The following introductory notes have been prepared to provide readers with an overview of the background to this translation and an understanding of the various processes involved in bringing it to completion.

Background

The responsibility of translating this blessed compilation into the English language was entrusted to the International Translation and Research Office, a central department of the Aḥmadiyya Muslim Jamā'at, established in 2020 under the guidance of Ḥaḍrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad ایدہ اللہ تعالیٰ بنصرہ العزیز, the Worldwide Head of the Aḥmadiyya Muslim Jamā'at. The International Translation and Research Office is dedicated to researching all facets of Islām, focusing on presenting authentic Islamic knowledge from both historical and contemporary perspectives, including the analysis and translation of Islamic texts. The office serves as a spiritual and intellectual home for research and

translations, supported by a multidisciplinary approach to research and translation methods.

The initial translation of this compilation began in mid-2022 and was completed in late 2024. Throughout the translation process, I had the opportunity to frequently present key editorial questions and challenges to Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ V ایدہ اللہ تعالیٰ بنصرہ العزیز for his instructive guidance and direction.

Fiqhul-Masīḥ

Allāh the Exalted raised Ḥaḍrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian as the *Hakam ʿAdl* of the present age and entrusted him with immense religious responsibilities. His role was not merely that of an ordinary jurist; rather, he was divinely appointed to reform both the world of his time and the generations to follow.

After the passing of the Holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, his Successors and the immediate generations that followed, Muslims gradually began to adjust their trajectories away from the straight path established by the Holy Prophet ﷺ. One manifestation of this deviation was the discord and division that arose through the proliferation of jurisprudential schools and groups. This is not to suggest that these legal schools were devoid of good, God forbid; rather, the great challenge to the Muslim Ummah that accompanied the wide diversity of Islamic legal thought was that of disunity and sectarian division. Therefore, one of the key objectives of the *Ḥakam ʿAdl* was to affirm those legal matters that were sound and in accordance with the true teachings of Islām, while also identifying and correcting those aspects that no longer conformed to the original teachings, principles and spirit of the Sharīʿah.

The Promised Messiah علیہ السلام re-established the true status of the Holy Qur'ān, the Sunnah, the continuous practice of the Muslim community, and the Ḥadīth. He proclaimed the Qur'ān as the ultimate

source of guidance and discouraged excessive debate over subsidiary issues. On certain matters, he expressed a preference for one approach but refrained from rejecting others, due to his broad and accommodating jurisprudential methodology. In doing so, he acknowledged the importance of matters established through the consistent practice of the Muslim Ummah.

It was the Promised Messiah's custom to address questions from guests during his gatherings or even during his walks. He would also respond to inquiries presented to him via correspondence. On most occasions, he himself addressed questions related to jurisprudence. At times, he directed and entrusted Ḥaḍrat Hakeem Noor-ud-Deen or Ḥaḍrat Maulawi Sayyid Muḥammad Aḥsan of Amroha ؓ to respond, and their verdicts were published alongside his own in Community periodicals like *Al-Ḥakam* and *Badr*. Occasionally, he would ask one of them to respond to a question posed in his presence and then endorse their reply.

In compiling this book, not only have the sayings of the Promised Messiah ؑ on jurisprudential issues been collected, but also his sayings regarding the principles of jurisprudence and the wisdom behind Islamic teachings. Just as he presented the teachings of Islām in contrast to other religions, he demonstrated the profound wisdom of Islamic law and its natural harmony with human nature.

Originally prepared by the Jurisprudence Department in Jamia Aḥmadiyya Rabwah and published in 2015, the content of this book has been gathered from the writings, *Maktūbāt* (letters), *Ishtihārāt* (treatises and announcements), and *Malfūẓāt* (sayings and discourses) of the Promised Messiah ؑ, which were regularly published in *Al-Ḥakam* and *Badr*. Additionally, material has been sourced from biographical works and the narratives of his Companions.

The texts in the Urdu version of *Fiqhul-Masīḥ* have been sourced from their original sources, and thus they have been taken directly from the newspapers *Al-Ḥakam* and *Badr* instead of relying solely on *Malfūẓāt*. In cases where errors existed in *Al-Ḥakam* or *Badr* and were

subsequently corrected in *Malfūẓāt*, the texts with the corrections, as found in *Malfūẓāt*, have been adopted.

During the lifetime of the Promised Messiah ﷺ, two newspapers were published in Qadian: *Al-Ḥakam*, which began publication in 1897, and *Al-Badr*, which started in 1902. The discourses of the Promised Messiah were published in these two newspapers. *Al-Badr* continued under its original name until 13 April 1905, after which it was renamed *Badr* starting 20 April 1905. Accordingly, some citations in this work are marked with *Al-Badr*, while others are marked as *Badr*.

English Translation

As noted earlier, this book is a compilation of the statements and actions of the Promised Messiah ﷺ, many of which are already available in English through translations of his works published by Islam International Publications Ltd. Wherever such translations exist, they have mostly been cited in this volume. Certain stylistic adjustments—such as the inclusion of diacritics and honorifics—have been made to ensure consistency throughout the book. References are provided for both the original Urdu sources and their corresponding English translations, based on the editions available at the time of publication. In a few instances, however, we have chosen to re-translate certain extracts in order to maintain the overall tone and coherence of the present volume.

For example, in the present translation, words within parentheses ( ) are those of the original author or compiler. Any explanatory words or phrases added by the translators for clarification are enclosed in square brackets [ ]. Footnotes provided by the publisher are indicated with '[Publisher]'. Footnotes written by the Promised Messiah in the text being quoted are indicated with '[Footnote by the Promised Messiah]'.

References to the Holy Qur'ān include the name of the *sūrah* followed by the number of the chapter and verse, e.g., *Sūrat al-Jumu'ah*, 62:4, and consider the '*basmalah*', which is the invocation '*Bismillāhir–raḥmānir–raḥīm*' (In the name of Allāh, the Gracious, the Merciful), as the first verse in every chapter that begins with it.

The translation of Quranic verses in this volume has mostly been taken from 'The Holy Qur'ān, Arabic Text and English Translation' by Ḥaḍrat Maulawī Sher 'Alī ﵁, published with the alternative translation of, and footnotes to, some of the verses penned by Ḥaḍrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad ﵀, the Fourth Successor of the Promised Messiah ﵇.

Where old English terms such as 'Thy/Thee/Thou' have been used in the original translation, they have been changed to 'Your/You/You' for a more contemporary reading.

Honorifics

In this text, various honorific ligatures have been included after the names of eminent Islamic figures. The honorifics appear in many forms and are as follows:

Honorific ligature following reference to the Holy Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ:

ﷺ *ṣallallāhu 'alaihi wa-sallam* 'may the blessings and peace of Allāh be on him.'

Honorific ligatures following reference to Prophets other than the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ:

﵇ *'alaihis-salām* 'may peace be on him' (masculine singular).

﵈ *'alaihimas-salām* 'may peace be on them' (dual).

﵉ *'alaihimus-salām* 'may peace be on them' (masculine plural).

Honorific ligatures following reference to the Companions of the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ and the Promised Messiah ؑ, e.g.:

ؓ *raḍiyallāhu-ʿanhu* 'may Allāh be pleased with him' (masculine singular).

ؓ *raḍiyallāhu-ʿanhā* 'may Allāh be pleased with her' (feminine singular).

ؓ *raḍiyallāhu-ʿanhumā* 'may Allāh be pleased with them' (dual).

ؓ *raḍiyallāhu-ʿanhum* 'may Allāh be pleased with them' (masculine/mixed plural).

Honorific ligatures following reference to those deceased pious Muslims who are not Companions of the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ and the Promised Messiah ؑ, e.g.:

ؒ *raḥihmahullāh* 'may Allāh have mercy on him' (masculine singular)

ؒ *raḥimahallāh* 'may Allāh have mercy on her' (feminine singular)

ؒ *raḥimahumallāh* 'may Allāh have mercy on them' (dual)

ؒ *raḥimahumullāh* 'may Allāh have mercy on them' (masculine/mixed plural)

Honorific ligature referring to the present head of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, Ḥaḍrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad, Khalīfatul-Masīḥ V ایدہ اللہ تعالیٰ بنصرہ العزیز:

ایدہ اللہ تعالیٰ بنصرہ العزیز *ayyadahullāhu bi-naṣrihil-ʿazīz*, 'may Allāh the Exalted support him with His mighty aid.'

Readers are encouraged to recite the full salutations while reading the book.

Transliteration

When citing the names of Quranic chapters, titles of foreign books, and certain foreign terms, generally we have adopted the following system established by the Royal Asiatic Society for our transliteration:

ا at the beginning of a word, pronounced as *a, i, u* preceded by a very slight aspiration, like *h* in the English word *honour.*
ث *th*–pronounced like *th* in the English word thing.
ح *ḥ*–a guttural aspirate, stronger than *h.*
خ *kh*–pronounced like the Scottish *ch* in *loch.*
ذ *dh*–pronounced like the English *th* in *that.*
ص *ṣ*–strongly articulated *s.*
ض *ḍ*–similar to the English *th* in *this.*
ط *ṭ*–strongly articulated palatal *t.*
ظ *ẓ*–strongly articulated *z.*
ع ʿ–a strong guttural, the pronunciation of which must be learnt by the ear.
غ *gh*–a sound similar to the French *r* in *grasseye,* and to the German *r.* It requires the muscles of the throat to be in the 'gargling' position to pronounce it.
ق *q*–a deep guttural *k* sound.
ء ʾ–a sort of catch in the voice.

Short vowels are represented by:

a for ـَ (like *u* in *bud*).
i for ـِ (like *i* in *bid*).
u for ـُ (like *oo* in *wood*).

Long vowels by:

ā for ـا or آ (like *a* in *father*).

ī for ی ـــــ or ـــــ ا (like *ee* in *deep*).
ū for و ـــــ ُ (like *oo* in *root*).

Other vowels by:

ai for ی ـــــ َ (like *i* in *site*).
au for و ـــــ َ (resembling *ou* in *sound*).

The consonants not included in the above list have the same phonetic value as in the principal languages of Europe. While the Arabic ن is represented by n, we have indicated the Urdu ں as ṅ . As noted above, the single quotation mark ‘ is used for transliterating ع which is distinct from the apostrophe ’ used for ء .

Acknowledgments

I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to all the members of the International Translation & Research Office who contributed to the completion of this project. Zeeshaan Khalid had the honour of translating the work into English from the original Urdu. Mansoor Clarke worked alongside the translator in reviewing the English text against the original source. I am likewise grateful to Fateh Alam and Hassan Ahmad for reviewing sections of the manuscript, and to Zulfikar Raja for carrying out the typesetting of the book and preparing it for print.

Furthermore, I am grateful to Nadia Ghauri, Akram Ghauri and Athar Waraich for reviewing various sections of the manuscript. I also wish to acknowledge with sincere appreciation the valuable assistance of Mashood Ahmad, who edited the final draft and made significant improvements to the translation. I then personally carried out a final review of the manuscript.

I am immensely grateful to Munir-ud-Din Shams, Additional Wakīl-ut-Taṣnīf, and his team members for their continued support and guidance throughout the project. I also extend my sincere thanks to Muzaffar Ahmad and the team at Raqeem Press for their valuable advice and assistance in relation to the printing of this book. I am likewise grateful to Adam Walker for his guidance at various stages of the project.

May Allāh the Almighty reward all of them and their families for their sacrifices and bless them abundantly in this world and the hereafter. *Āmīn*.

Muhammad Ibrahim Ikhlaf
Head of the International Translation and Research Office
Farnham, UK, May 2026

FOREWORD

At a time when the Muslim world was fraught with division, disarray, and spiritual decay, Allāh the Exalted raised Ḥaḍrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian as the *Ḥakam ʿAdl* [Just Arbiter] for the revival and reformation of Islām. Internally fragmented and externally besieged, the Muslim world was staggering beneath the weight of centuries of discord. The once-unified Ummah, described in the Ḥadīth[1] as a single body, had splintered into 72 sects—not over foundational doctrines, but rather subsidiary matters.

While the Holy Qur'ān, the eternal Word of Allāh, remained preserved as a guiding light, each sect clung to its own interpretation, often blinded by prejudice. Juridical debates and differences between the *madhāhib* [schools of jurisprudence], which had once coexisted peacefully as parallel rivers, had devolved into rigid intolerance. The intellectual and moral decline had grown so severe that sincere discourse gave way to dogmatic entrenchment.

The enemies of Islām, emboldened by the political downfall and moral stagnation of Muslims, seized the moment to launch fierce attacks against it. The Promised Messiah ﷺ vividly depicted this condition of affairs, stating:

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1. The recorded sayings, actions, tacit approvals, and descriptions of the Holy Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ. The singular form is *ḥadīth* and the plural is *aḥādīth*. When referring to the entire body of such reports, the term is capitalised and written as Ḥadīth. [Publishers]

> That is why the Muslim nation was divided into sects and its unity could not be maintained. Therefore, although there is no doubt that originally there was one common teaching, due to sectarian differences, different schools of thought like Ḥanbalī, Shāfi'ī, Mālikī, Ḥanafī and Shī'ah came into existence. You can observe that every school of thought is happy with what it has, and every sect has made a castle for its doctrines, yet they do not want to come out of that even if they are presented with something better.
>
> They have enclosed themselves within their strongholds so that they may wage a fierce war against their brothers. Therefore, Allāh appointed me at this crucial time so that I might empty these forts, and that those who have distanced themselves might be brought closer, and that the sinful might be warned, and that conflicts might be ended, and that the Holy Qur'ān be established as the supreme authority and the lighthouse of the Faith.[1]

The Promised Messiah ﷺ appeared as one commissioned by Allāh at a time when the Ummah was engulfed in division, dispersion and deviation. Under divine command, he claimed to be the Promised Messiah and Mahdī whose advent had been foretold by the Holy Prophet ﷺ.

Indeed, the well-known *ḥadīth* recorded in *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī* points to his appearance.

The Holy Prophet ﷺ stated:

1. *'Āʾina-e-Kamālāt-e-Islām, Rūhānī Khazāʾin*, vol. 5, pp. 559–560

وَالَّذِي نَفْسِي بِيَدِهِ، لَيُوشِكَنَّ أَنْ يَنْزِلَ فِيكُمُ ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ حَكَمًا عَدْلاً، فَيَكْسِرَ الصَّلِيبَ، وَيَقْتُلَ الْخِنْزِيرَ، وَيَضَعَ الْجِزْيَةَ، وَيَفِيضَ الْمَالُ حَتَّى لاَ يَقْبَلَهُ أَحَدٌ، حَتَّى تَكُونَ السَّجْدَةُ الْوَاحِدَةُ خَيْرًا مِنَ الدُّنْيَا وَمَا فِيهَا[1]

> By Him in Whose hand is my soul, the son of Mary shall soon descend among you as the *Ḥakam ʻAdl* [Just Arbiter]; he shall break the cross, kill the swine and abolish the *Jizyah*; he shall distribute wealth until no one will [be left to] accept it, and one prostration will be better than the whole world and all that is in it.

A similar narration in *Sunan Ibn Mājah* contains the words **حَكَمًا مُقْسِطًا** [Just Arbiter] and **إِمَامًا عَدْلًا** [Just Imām].[2]

The Promised Messiah's claim was exactly in accordance with this prophecy. He stated:

> I have come from Allāh the Exalted as the *Ḥakam* [Arbiter]. Not long ago, the *muqallidīn*[3] would expose the faults of the non-*muqallidīn* and vice versa, while other sects clashed like ferocious beasts. They would declare one another unbelievers and consider each other impure. If a path to reassurance had truly existed, then why was there such discord and division within the same nation? Error had seeped in them, leading them astray from the path of truth. In such an era of division,

1. *Sahīhul-Bukhārī, Kitābu-Aḥādīthil-Anbiyā'*, *bāb nuzūli ʻĪsā ibn-i-Maryam*, Ḥadīth 3448
2. *Sunan Ibn Mājah, Kitāb-ul-Fitan, bāb fitnat-id-dajjāl wa-khurūj-u-ʻIsa bin Maryam*
3. Plural of *muqallid*, a term which refers to someone who follows the teaching of another. In general it refers to someone who follows one of the four main Sunni schools of Islamic jurisprudence, namely: Hanafī, Shāfiʻī, Mālikī, and Ḥanbalī. [Publisher]

> it was imperative that God Almighty himself pass judgement in this matter. And so He did, raising a *Ḥakam* among them.[1]

To resolve the jurisprudential and doctrinal differences within the Muslim Ummah, it was essential for the Arbiter to be impartial. If the Arbiter had previously been associated with a particular sect, or identified as its adherent, his judgement would not be accepted by anyone.

The Promised Messiah ﷺ stated:

> I have come as the *Ḥakam*. Is it obligatory for the *Ḥakam* to become a follower of a particular sect? Out of the 72 sects, whose *aḥādīth* should he accept? The *Ḥakam* will declare some *aḥādīth* to be unacceptable and rejected and others to be valid.[2]

On another occasion, the Promised Messiah ﷺ stated:

> The Messiah who was to appear has been named *Ḥakam* [Arbiter]. This very name itself indicates that at the time [of his advent], there would be widespread error ... and people would hold divergent opinions. His judgement would, therefore, be decisive. If the *Ḥakam* was merely to concur with everything, then why was he named the *Ḥakam* in the first place?[3]

The Promised Messiah ﷺ explained that the *Ḥakam* is a safe sanctuary who serves to provide security to people by delivering them from disagreements.

The Promised Messiah ﷺ stated:

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1. *Al-Ḥakam*, 30 September 1904, p. 2–3
2. *Al-Ḥakam*, 10 February 1905; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt,* vol. 7, p. 509
3. *Al-Ḥakam*, dated 17 November 1902, p. 2

> Allāh has sent a servant, so they can make him a judge in all that is disputed between them and to make him one of the conquerors, to submit to him with full submission and then find not in their hearts any demur concerning what he decided. That is the arbiter who came... O people, you were waiting for the Messiah, and Allāh manifested him as He wished. Therefore, submit yourself to your Lord and do not follow your desires. You do not consider game to be lawful while you are in a state of pilgrimage, so how can you assert your opinions when you have an arbiter?[1] (*Al-Hudā Wat-Tabṣiratu Liman-Yarā, Rūḥānī Khazā'in,* vol. 18, p. 338–339; Eng. Trans.: *Guidance for Perceiving Minds*, pp. 72–73)

The Promised Messiah ﷺ guided the Ummah in all aspects, correcting those beliefs and practices that had become corrupted. At the time of his advent, the Ummah had splintered into various sects and groups. Jurisprudential differences were at their peak, and the schisms among the Ḥanafīs and others were particularly evident in the Indian Subcontinent. The Ḥanafīs took great pride in their adherence to Ḥanafī jurisprudence, having themselves closed the doors of *ijtihād*[2] in religious matters, glorifying their own Imāms and rigidly following their rulings. On the other hand, the Ahl-e-Ḥadīth fiercely opposed the Ḥanafīs, engaging in frequent debates over subsidiary issues. The Ahl-e-Ḥadīth identified themselves as *muwaḥḥidīn* [proponents of strict monotheism] and would overstate the rank and significance of

1. Different opinions are like birds flying in the air, and the arbiter is akin to a safe sanctuary that safeguards from mistakes. Just as hunting is forbidden in the Sacred Mosque out of respect for Allāh's holy land, likewise, following different opinions is forbidden in the presence of the arbiter, who is infallible and has from the Lord of Glory the status of a Sacred Mosque. Rather, the position of etiquette requires that every matter be presented to him, and nothing is taken except from his hands. [Footnote by the Promised Messiah ﷺ]
2. The use of independent reasoning in Islamic jurisprudence. [Publisher]

Ḥadīth, so much so that they considered *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī* and *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* to be practically equivalent to the Holy Qur'ān. In response, the Promised Messiah ﷺ imparted guidance to both groups and directed them towards the correct path. He states:

> If we reflect on why acting upon these two books [*Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī* and *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*] is considered obligatory, we shall realise that this obligation is akin to the obligation of following all the *mujtahadāt* [independent judgements] of *Imām-e-Aʿẓam*[1], that is, the rulings of the Ḥanafī School of Jurisprudence. However, a discerning person can understand that this is not an obligation of the Sharīʿah; rather, it was introduced in recent times under the influence of certain ideas. You raise objections against the Ḥanafī School for rigidly adhering to unsubstantiated *ijtihādāt* and wrongfully engaging in *taqlīd*[2] of a single person while disregarding the clear texts of the Sharīʿah—can the same objection not be made against you? Are you not also unjustifiably stringent in your approach to *taqlīd*? Why do you not seek true insight and cognizance? You have always persistently stated that a *ḥadīth* proven to be *ṣaḥīḥ* [authentic] must be followed and that any unauthentic *ḥadīth* should be discarded. Why, then, have you now deemed all *aḥādīth* authentic unconditionally, just as the *muqallidīn* do? What evidence from the Sharīʿah do you have to justify this?[3]

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1. *Imām-e-Aʿẓam*, meaning 'The Greatest Imām,' is an honorific title referring to Imām Abū Ḥanīfah (d. 767 CE), the founder of the Ḥanafī school of Islamic jurisprudence. [Publisher]
2. The practice of adhering to the legal rulings of a qualified scholar or established school of thought without independently consulting the primary sources of Islamic law. A person who engages in *tāqlīd* is called a *muqallid*. [Publisher]
3. *Munāẓara Ludhiāna, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 4, pp. 20–21

The Promised Messiah ﷺ, as the Imām of the Age, established a distinct jurisprudential methodology that laid the foundation for the jurisprudence of the Aḥmadiyya Community. We observe the essential features of his jurisprudential methodology in his books, discourses, and sayings. In both foundational principles and practical jurisprudential matters, he gave clear guidance, instructing his community to uphold justice, balance, and moderation while remaining firmly on the straight path.

What follows is a summary of some of the key principles of the Promised Messiah's jurisprudential approach:

1. The Holy Qur'ān alone is the Criterion, Touchstone, and Ultimate Standard

The Promised Messiah ﷺ re-established the Muslim Ummah upon the fundamental principles of the Sharīʿah and enjoined that believers hold fast to the rope of Allāh, which had been abandoned. Thus, to resolve internal disagreements, he instructed that the Qur'ān alone is the true criterion and touchstone.

The Promised Messiah ﷺ stated:

> Regarding the Book [of Allāh] and the Sunnah as *ḥujaj sharʿiyyah* [authoritative evidences of the Sharīʿah], I believe that the Book of Allāh takes precedence and serves as the guiding principle. Any meaning derived from a *ḥadīth* that does not contradict the Book of Allāh will be accepted as *ḥujjah sharʿiyyah*. However, we will never accept an interpretation of a *ḥadīth* that contradicts the clear texts of the Holy Qur'ān. As far as possible, we shall strive to interpret a *ḥadīth* in a manner that aligns with and corresponds to a clear text of the Book of Allāh. However, if we come across a *ḥadīth* that contradicts the

> text of the Holy Qur'ān and we are unable to reconcile it, we will consider it *mauḍū'* [fabricated]...[1]

2. The Authority of the Sunnah and Recurrent Practice

The Promised Messiah ﷺ established the Holy Qur'ān as the ultimate criterion for assessing the authenticity of Ḥadīth. A debate on this subject took place between him and Maulawī Muḥammad Ḥusain of Batala, later published under the title *Al-Ḥaqq Mubāḥathah Dehli* (The Truth About the Delhi Debate), and recorded in Volume 4 of *Rūḥānī Khazā'in*.

In this debate, the Promised Messiah ﷺ clarified the true status of the Ḥadīth and distinguished between the Sunnah and Ḥadīth, emphasising that the Sunnah is distinct from the Ḥadīth. The Sunnah represents the practical example of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, transmitted and preserved through the recurrent practice of the Muslim Ummah. For this reason, the Sunnah occupies a uniquely authoritative position and is not subjected to the criterion of the Qur'ān in the same way as the Ḥadīth. However, the Ḥadīth must be examined in light of the standard set by the Holy Qur'ān.

Explaining the difference between the Sunnah and Ḥadīth, the Promised Messiah ﷺ states:

> In my estimation, the Ḥadīth and Sunnah are not one and the same thing as is held by traditional scholars of Ḥadīth. The Ḥadīth and Sunnah are two separate things. By Sunnah I refer only to those actions of the Holy Prophet ﷺ which possess continuity and go hand in hand with the revelation of the Holy Qur'ān. They shall always be preserved until the end of time. In other words, it may be said that the Holy Qur'ān is the Word

1. *Al-Ḥaqq Mubāḥathah Dehlī*, *Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 4, pp. 11–12

> of God Almighty and the Sunnah is the practice of the Holy Prophet ﷺ.[1]

In another instance, the Promised Messiah ؑ states:

> These people have made the mistake of considering the Sunnah and Ḥadīth to be the same, whereas they are two distinct things. Even if the Ḥadīth, which was compiled 150 years after the Holy Prophet ﷺ, had never existed, the Sunnah would not have been lost, for its chain has remained uninterrupted since the very day the revelation of the Holy Qur'ān began. As for the Ḥadīth, it consists of words uttered by the Holy Prophet ﷺ, which were later recorded in the second century after him.[2]

The Promised Messiah ؑ gave great importance to the Sunnah and the continuous practice of the Ummah in contrast with the Ḥadīth, stating:

> It is erroneous to assume that the particulars of fasting, Prayer and the like were derived solely from the Ḥadīth; rather, they would have been known [through continuous practice] since the very beginning. In truth, this sequence has nothing to do with the science of Ḥadīth, as it is naturally inherent in every religion.[3]

The Promised Messiah ؑ elaborated on the relationship between Sunnah and the continuous practice of the Ummah, explaining why

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1. *Review bar Mubāḥathah Batālavī wa Chakrhālavī*, *Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 19, pp. 209–210; Eng. Trans.: *A Review of The Debate Between Batālavī and Chakrhālavī,* pp. 6–7
2. *Al-Ḥakam,* 17 November 1902, p. 2
3. *Al-Ḥaqq Mubāḥathah Dehli, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 4, p. 26

the Sunnah holds greater significance. He elucidated that the uninterrupted chain of the successive practice within the Ummah established the Sunnah as a strong and authoritative source. He thus stated:

> There are two categories of Ḥadīth. The first category consists of those *aḥādīth* that have been fully preserved through continuous practice. That is, *aḥādīth* reinforced by an unbroken and indisputable chain of practical transmission, elevating them to a level of certainty. These encompass all essential aspects of religion, including acts of worship, covenants, transactions and the injunctions of the Sharī'ah.[1]

3. The Ḥadīth Holds Superiority Over Human Reasoning

The Promised Messiah ﷺ, on one hand, declared the Holy Qur'ān to be the ultimate criterion for evaluating the Ḥadīth, and affirmed the superiority of the Sunnah and continuous practice of Muslims over the Ḥadīth, granting them status of certainty and conclusive authority. On the other hand, he affirmed the superiority of the Ḥadīth—even those narrations deemed weak according to the criteria formulated by *muḥaddithīn* [traditional scholars of Ḥadīth]—over human reasoning and jurisprudence, because, regardless of their classification, they are attributed to the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Regarding this, he gave the following advice to his community:

> It is incumbent on my Jamā'at to follow any *ḥadīth* which does not oppose and contradict the Holy Qur'ān and Sunnah,

1. *Al-Ḥaqq Mubāḥathah Dehli, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*. vol. 4, p. 35

regardless of its authenticity and give preference to it over man-made jurisprudence.[1]

4. The Revival of the True Essence of the Sharīʿah

The Promised Messiah ﷺ received the following revelation from Allāh the Exalted:

يُحْيِي الدِّيْنَ وَيُقِيْمُ الشَّرِيْعَة

He will revive the Faith and will establish the Sharīʿah.[2]

The Promised Messiah ﷺ was informed through this revelation that the revival of religion would take place through him and the Sharīʿah will be re-established in its pristine form.

The Promised Messiah ﷺ prohibited all that opposed the Sharīʿah, considering it *bidʿah* [innovation], and exhorted his Jamāʿat to eschew it, stating:

> Whatever is done contrary to the Book of Allāh is *bidʿah*, and every *bidʿah* leads to the Fire. Islām means that one must not deviate in the slightest from the prescribed law. What right does anyone have to formulate a new Sharīʿah again and again? ... Our principle is that we accept none besides the Holy Prophet ﷺ, the Qur'ān and the path of the Sunnah.[3]

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1. *Review bar Mubāḥathah Batālavī wa Chakrhālavī Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 19, p. 212; Eng. Trans.: *A Review of The Debate Between Batālavī and Chakrhālavī*, p. 10
2. *Ḥaqīqatul-Waḥy, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 22, p. 79; Eng. Trans.: *The Philosophy of Divine Revelation*, p. 104
3. *Al-Badr*, 13 March 1903, p. 59

On another occasion, he stated:

> To abandon the righteous deeds of the Messenger of God ﷺ and to invent new methods of one's own; to forsake the Holy Qur'ān in favour of alternative litanies and poems; to substitute righteous deeds with various verbal supplications—this is not a delight for the soul, but rather a gratification of the self.[1]

The Promised Messiah ؑ forbade his Jamā'at from every form of innovation, instructing them instead to adhere to the actual Sunnah of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Accordingly, he enjoined on his Jamā'at to shun all erroneous customs, such as reciting *Sūrah al-Fātiḥah* for three days after someone's death, offering condolences 40 days after someone's passing, celebrating the birthday of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, *Taṣawwur-e-Shaikh* [contemplating one's spiritual master], *Isqāṭ*[2], *Khatm*[3], and the various innovations related to the 10th of Muḥarram (*'Ashūrā'*).

He directed them to instil the love of Allāh and His Messenger in their hearts and strongly disapproved of the excessive emphasis placed on superficial rituals. He stated that Allāh had sent him to firmly establish true faith within hearts, and it is a grave error to engage in outward practices without comprehending their essence. Allāh had sent him as a *mujaddid* [Reformer] to guide people according to the needs of the time. Thus, he stated:

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1. *Al-Ḥakam*, 31 July 1903, p. 8
2. Seeking to eliminate the sins of a dead person. [Publisher]
3. *Khatm* is a customary practice in some Muslim communities involving the collective or sequential recitation of the entire Qur'ān, often as a form of offering spiritual merit on behalf of the deceased. These gatherings are sometimes held on specific days after death, commonly the third, tenth, or fortieth day, and are usually accompanied by other cultural rituals. [Publisher]

> Whenever a Reformer (*mujaddid*) appears, they do so in view of the need of that time, not to teach people about issues relating to how they should clean themselves after answering the call of nature or ablution.[1]

Likewise, he wrote in one of his letters:

> This humble one is a *mujaddid* in both the Sharī'ah and *Ṭarīqah*[2]. *Tajdīd* [reformation] does not imply reduction or augmentation, for that is *naskh* [abrogation]. Rather, *tajdīd* means to clarify, reaffirm, and, by referring to the original sources, rectify any distortions that have crept into true beliefs and remove the various extraneous additions that have formed around them. It also entails addressing the negligence that has emerged in the performance of righteous deeds and restoring the paths and principles for seeking nearness to Allāh that have been forgotten.[3]

5. It is Compulsory to Follow the Established Analogical Deductions of the Mujtahidīn

In his role as the *Ḥakam 'Adl*, the Promised Messiah ﷺ adjudicated internal disputes and guided the Muslim Ummah toward the correct and balanced approach in resolving unresolved matters that had become points of contention.

Furthermore, the Promised Messiah ﷺ placed great emphasis on the *ijtihād* of the Ummah in well-established and widely accepted

1. *Al-Ḥakam*, dated 19 May 1899, p. 4; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt,* vol. 2, p. 19
2. Literally meaning 'way, path', signifies the path to recognising Allāh. [Publisher]
3. *Al-Ḥakam*, dated 24 July 1900, p. 3

matters of jurisprudence, particularly those derived from the *ijtihād* of the righteous and pious scholars of the Ummah that had been preserved for centuries. Thus, he stated:

> I assure all Muslims that I do not differ from other Muslims on a single injunction. Just as all Muslims regard it as obligatory to follow the clear commandments of the Holy Qur'ān, the authentic *aḥādīth*, and the well-established *qiyāsāt* [analogical deductions] of the *mujtahidīn*[1], so too do I consider it obligatory.[2]

6. Reverence for the Holy Men of the Early Generations

In his role as the *Ḥakam ʿAdl*, the Promised Messiah ﷺ issued decisive rulings on many disputed matters, and emphasised particular viewpoints. As a result, some individuals raised questions that indirectly cast aspersions on certain revered holy men of Islām. In such situations, he discouraged delving too deeply into the matter. For example, someone mentioned that certain pious figures would listen to music and asked whether this was permissible.

The Promised Messiah ﷺ replied:

> It is not good to think ill of the elders of religion like this. We should practise thinking well of others. It is proven by the Ḥadīth that the Holy Prophet, may peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, also used to listen to couplets.[3]

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1. Those Scholars of Islām who are qualified to perform *ijtihād* (reasoning) and are recognised as authorities in Islamic Law. [Publisher]
2. *Al-Ḥaqq Mubāḥathah Dehli, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 4, p. 82
3. *Al-Badr*, 17 November 1905, p. 6

Moreover, the Promised Messiah ﷺ was once asked about certain practices of the Naqshbandī order of Sufism. He replied that he did not consider such practices necessary. At this, the questioner said: 'If such practices contravene the Sharī'ah, then many eminent figures, including saints such as Ḥaḍrat Aḥmad Sarhindī, who claimed to be the *Mujaddid* of the Second Century, also engaged in such innovative practices, taught them to others, and encouraged people to follow them.'

The Promised Messiah ﷺ responded:

> A time had come upon Islām when, due to increasing conquests, an abundance of worldly wealth, and a rise in luxury and extravagance, the fervour for the name of Allāh had begun to wane in the hearts of Muslims.
>
> If, in such an era, those righteous saints adopted certain practices that they deemed beneficial in countering that widespread spiritual decline, then their actions were based on the needs of the time. Given their sincere intentions, it is best to consign their matter to the will of Allāh.[1]

Despite his disagreements with certain beliefs held by the righteous scholars of the past, the Promised Messiah ﷺ accorded great respect and importance to their piety and spiritual rank. He also acknowledged their lofty status. In particular, this honour was given to Imām Abū Ḥanīfah ؓ, who for the past thirteen centuries, had been accused by opposing scholars of being among the *ahl-ur-ra'y*[2]. The Ahl-e-Ḥadīth in particular repeatedly accused him of altering the Sharī'ah by resorting to *qiyās* [analogical reasoning].

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1. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 2, pp. 69–70
2. Lit. 'People of Opinion', *ahl-ur-ra'y* were the proponents of using independent reasoning to arrive at legal decisions. This term was used in the derogatory sense by the opponents of Imām Abū Ḥanīfah. [Publisher]

On one such occasion, in his treatise *Al-Ḥaqq Mubāḥathah Dehli*, the Promised Messiah ﷺ addressed Maulawī Muḥammad Ḥusain of Batala, stating:

> O respected Maulawī Sahib! I request you not to become upset. Had you even the slightest good opinion of the righteous Imām, Abū Ḥanīfah, you would never have used such mocking and contemptuous language against him. You are unaware of the greatness of this noble Imām. He was the great ocean, and all others are but its branches and tributaries. To call him *ahlur-ra'y* is a grave injustice! The noble Imām Abū Ḥanīfah, in addition to his profound mastery of the sciences relating to the Prophetic traditions, had an extraordinary ability in deriving rulings from the Holy Qur'ān. May Allāh have mercy on Ḥaḍrat Mujaddid Alf-e-Thānī, who stated on page 307 of his *Maktūbāt* that *Imām-e-Aʿẓam* has a spiritual affinity with the Messiah to come, in respect of deriving rulings from the Qur'ān.[1]

Ḥaḍrat Imām Abū Ḥanīfah ﷺ possessed great expertise in deriving rulings from the Holy Qur'ān. Hence, he would interpret certain *aḥādīth* in light of Quranic principles or, in some cases, refrain from deriving rulings from them. Consequently, his opponents would raise objections against him. However, in reality, his rulings were in no way contradictory to the Holy Qur'ān and Ḥadīth. Regarding this matter, the Promised Messiah ﷺ writes:

> The fact is that the aforementioned Imām Sahib, in terms of his aptitude in *ijtihād*, knowledge, insight and discernment, was superior to and greater than the other three Imāms [i.e. Ḥaḍrat Imām Mālik, Ḥaḍrat Imām Shāfiʿī, Ḥaḍrat Imām Aḥmad bin

1. *Al-Ḥaqq Mubāḥathah Dehli*, *Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 4, p. 101

Ḥanbal]. His God-given ability to issue rulings was so refined that he could precisely distinguish between valid evidence and weak argumentation. His perceptiveness carried a unique ability to understand the Holy Qur'ān, and his very nature was deeply attuned to the Divine Word, elevating him to the highest stage of *'irfān* [divine cognisance]. For this reason, he was universally acknowledged to occupy a pre-eminent rank in *ijtihād* and *istinbāṭ* [deduction]—a rank that others were unable to attain. *Subḥānallāh* [Glory be to Allāh]! How remarkable was this sagacious and godly Imām, who, perceiving the lofty and exalted indication contained in a single Quranic verse, deemed it superior to numerous *aḥādīth* that stood in contradiction to it, casting them aside without fearing the reproach of the ignorant.[1]

7. The Injunctions of the Sharī'ah are Full of Wisdom

The Promised Messiah ﷺ vigorously refuted the false notions propagated by the opponents of Islām in his time. They raised many objections against the teachings of Islām, and so the Promised Messiah ﷺ rose in its defence. The object of his monumental work, *Barāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya* is clear from its title:

البَرَاهِينُ الأَحْمَدِيَّةُ عَلَى حَقِّيَّةِ كِتَابِ اللهِ الْقُرْآنِ والنُّبُوَّةِ الْمُحَمَّدِيَّةِ

Al-Barāhīn al-Aḥmadiyya: Arguments in Support of the Holy Qur'ān & the Prophethood of the Holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.

1. *Izāla-e-Auhām*, *Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 3, p. 385

In this book, the Promised Messiah ﷺ presented irrefutable proofs of the truth and purity of Islām's teachings, demonstrating that the teachings of Islām are perfectly in accordance with human nature. Every injunction of Islām, he showed, is designed for the betterment of mankind and is wholly in accordance with the natural disposition and needs of human life. In essence, all its commandments are absolute truth. He stated:

> Of all the scriptures in the world today, the Holy Qur'ān is the only one whose divine origin can be established with irrefutable arguments. It is the only one whose principles regarding salvation are based on truth and human nature; whose doctrines are comprehensive and firmly grounded in truth and are confirmed by powerful arguments; whose commandments are nothing but the dictates of truth and whose teachings bear no blemish of idolatry, human innovations and false deities. Its teachings zealously promote the Oneness, Greatness and Excellence of God, and it is filled to the brim in establishing the Oneness of the Glorious God. It does not impute to Him anything that is contrary to His Oneness or attribute to Him any blemish, shortcoming, or unworthy attribute. It does not impose any teaching upon us without first providing adequate proof in support thereof and explains each of its principles with proofs and clear arguments and leads its followers to perfect certainty and understanding. It removes, through clear and unequivocal arguments, all the corruptions, impurities, defects and distortions that have found their way into people's beliefs, actions, sayings and deeds; and teaches all ethical and moral norms, the knowledge of which is essential for becoming truly human. It resists every prevalent evil with equal force; and its teachings are straightforward, well-founded and flawless, as if they were the very reflection of the laws of nature and a true picture of human conscience. Indeed, they are as the sun for the

> illumination of mind and heart, and make good the deficiency inherent in reason.[1]

The Promised Messiah ﷺ presented compelling evidences in support of his position and gave rational responses to all issues, such as polygamy, the Islamic injunction on inheritance (whereby a woman inherits half a share of a man), the issue of *mut'ah*[2] , and the concept of adoption.

Thus, he elucidated every matter, whether through his critiques of the practice of *Niyoga*[3], or his refutation of the opponent's counter objection to the practice of *ḥalālah*[4].

The Promised Messiah ﷺ elucidated the wisdom behind the fundamental components of Prayer and the inherent benefits of both Prayer and ablution in addition to their outward and medicinal advantages. Furthermore, he expounded on the philosophy behind the prescribed Prayer times, demonstrating how they accord with the natural conditions and rhythms of life. He also presented intellectual proofs for various religious practices, such as reciting the *Adhān* [the Call to Prayer] in the ear of a new-born, the benefits inherent in congregational Prayer, and the wisdom behind the Ḥajj.

In his books and discourses, the Promised Messiah ﷺ responded to allegations, seeking to convince such people through rational evidence who did not give heed to traditional evidence. He stated:

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1. *Barāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya, Har Chahār Ḥiṣaṣ, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 1, pp. 81–82; Eng. Trans.: *Barāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya*, Parts I & II, pp. 95–96

2. *Mut'ah* was a pre-Islamic practice of contracting a short-term marriage. The vast majority of Muslims believe it was abolished by the Holy Prophet ﷺ. However, some Shī'ah Muslims still consider it to be lawful. [Publisher]

3. A Vedic practice in which a woman can engage in intercourse with up to 11 men while her husband is still alive. [Publisher]

4. A practice among certain Muslims in which a female divorcee marries another man, consummates the marriage, and then gets a divorce, so that it becomes permissible for her to remarry a previous husband. [Publisher]

> It is perfectly clear that he who is enchanted by reason can only be satisfied by reason, and he who is misled by reason can only be guided back by reason.[1]

The Promised Messiah ﷺ demonstrated that the Islamic veil is in complete harmony with reason and human nature. In this regard, he presented an example drawn from basic human behaviour, stating:

> Just as, after numerous experiences, laws permitting divorce have now been enacted, so too shall you see a day when, out of sheer frustration, a law resembling the Islamic injunction of *purdah* [the Islamic veil] will be introduced even in Europe. Otherwise, over time, men and women will become like livestock, and it will become difficult to determine who is the son of whom.[2]

8. Reverence for the Prophecies of the Holy Prophet ﷺ

There are certain concessions and facilitative allowances in the Sharīʿah that Allāh has declared lawful, yet people have abandoned them of their own accord. For instance, the combining of Prayers has been permitted in view of human ease and need. The Promised Messiah ﷺ was sometimes required to combine Prayers not only during travel or inclement weather, but also due to pressing religious exigencies. On occasion, this practice continued for several months. Some critics objected to this, so the Promised Messiah ﷺ explained with great gentleness and compassion that he combined Prayers in accordance with the command of the Sharīʿah and in fulfilment of the great prophecy of the Holy

1. *Barāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya*, *Har Chahār Ḥiṣaṣ*, *Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 1, p. 67; Eng. Trans.: *Barāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya*, Parts I & II, p. 72

2. *Nasīm-e-Daʿwat, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 19, p. 43

Prophet ﷺ, and he did not, God forbid, treat the prescribed times of Prayer with any disrespect. He said:

> Now, as for the Prayers being combined at the present time, the actual fact is that I do not do this without guidance, inspiration and revelation from Allāh the Exalted. There are certain matters that I do not disclose; however, most things are communicated to you. As far as God Almighty has disclosed to me in relation to the combining of Prayers, I can say that the Messenger of Allāh, peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, made a magnificent prophecy in my connection which was as follows:
>
> تُجْمَعُ لَهُ الصَّلٰوۃُ
>
> Prayers shall be combined for him
>
> This prophecy is now being fulfilled.[1]

On another occasion he stated:

> One may observe that even I benefit from the relaxations given by God. I have been combining the Prayers for about two months now. This is because I am ill and also heavily engaged in writing my commentary on *Sūrah Fātiḥah*. By combining the Prayers in this way, a prophecy related in the *ḥadīth* تُجْمَعُ لَهُ الصَّلٰوۃ is also being fulfilled that when the Messiah appears, the Prayers will be combined for him. This *ḥadīth* also establishes that the Promised Messiah عليه السلام will not lead the congregation in Prayer, rather someone else will lead the Prayer, and that he will combine the Prayers out of consideration for the Messiah. As such, this is exactly what happens. On certain

1. *Al-Ḥakam*, 24 November 1902, p. 1; Eng. Trans: *Malfūẓāt,* vol. 3, p.134

days when my illness is severe and I am unable to come to the mosque at all, the Prayers are not combined. It seems from the words of this *ḥadīth* that the Noble Messenger ﷺ stated by way of affection that the Prayers will be combined for the sake of the Messiah. We ought to show honour and respect for the prophecies of the Noble Messenger ﷺ. We should not view them with an air of disregard. It would be a grave sin for us to look at the prophecies of the Holy Prophet ﷺ with contempt. God Almighty has given rise to such conditions Himself due to which the Prayers are being combined for this long. If the Prayers had been combined for only a few days, this would not have constituted a sign. I revere each and every word and letter spoken by the Noble Messenger ﷺ.[1]

9. It is Necessary to Follow the Relaxations Afforded by the Sharīʿah

The Promised Messiah ؑ always kept in view the spirit and purpose behind the commandments of the Sharīʿah and emphasised the rationale underlying divine injunctions. God did not burden humankind with difficulty or hardship by revealing the Sharīʿah; rather, He granted certain concessions and allowances. However, people tend to overlook these facilitations and instead adopt unnecessarily burdensome paths.

The Promised Messiah ؑ explained to his community that the concessions granted by God hold the same importance as His other commandments and must likewise be acted upon. On one such occasion, while instructing regarding the hospitality of a guest, he asked the visitor whether he was travelling and whether he had kept a fast. The man replied that he was indeed fasting. Upon this, the Promised Messiah ؑ said:

1. *Al-Ḥakam*, 17 February 1901, pp. 13–14

> The fact of the matter is that availing oneself of the dispensations granted in the Holy Qur'ān is also an act of righteousness. God Almighty has permitted the traveller and the sick to make up their fasts on other days; thus, it is equally necessary to act upon this injunction.
>
> I have read that the majority of the early righteous scholars were of the opinion that if one chooses to fast while travelling or during illness, he is committing an act of disobedience. This is because the objective of fasting is to attain the pleasure of Allāh the Exalted, not to fulfil one's personal desires. The pleasure of Allāh the Exalted lies in obedience to Him; therefore, one must follow every command of Allāh without making additions of his own.[1]

In regard to acting upon the concessions granted by God Almighty, the Promised Messiah ﷺ also drew attention to this point of the Sharī'ah: Allāh Almighty has placed no hardship or difficulty in religion. He stated:

> The foundation of the Sharī'ah is based on ease, not on severity.[2]

10. Reverence for the Sacred Signs of Allāh and a Sense of Religious Honour

A distinctive feature in the verdicts of the Promised Messiah ﷺ is that he did not restrict himself to the outward aspects of religious matters alone. Rather, he consistently emphasised the remembrance of divine bounties and the obligation of expressing gratitude to Allāh. For this

1. *Al-Ḥakam*, 31 January 1907, p. 14
2. *Al-Ḥakam*, 10 August 1903, p. 20

very reason, on occasion, he would hold feasts as an expression of gratitude to Allāh for the fulfilment of certain prophecies.

The Promised Messiah ﷺ also regarded his children as among the *sha'ā'irullāḥ* [the sacred signs of Allāh]. In June 1897, he commemorated the completion of his son Ḥaḍrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Deen Mahmud Ahmad's reading of the Holy Qur'ān with an *Āmīn* ceremony and feast to which family and friends were invited. On this occasion, he composed a poem, which began with the words:

حمد و ثنا اسی کو جو ذات جاودانی

Praise and glory to the One who is eternal

This poem was recited in the *Āmīn* ceremony. Afterwards, the women would recite it at home, and the men and children would recite it outside.[1]

Later, in December 1901, the Promised Messiah ﷺ held an *Āmīn* ceremony for his other children, namely, Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad, Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Sharīf Aḥmad and Ṣāḥibzādī Nawāb Mubārakah Begum. On this occasion, Nawāb Muḥammad 'Alī Khān wrote to the Promised Messiah ﷺ: 'The ceremony held on the occasion of the *Āmīn* of Bashīr, Sharīf Aḥmad, and Mubārakah bore a unique distinction, as these children were born as a result of prophecies. Thus, no matter how much joy is expressed on such an occasion, it cannot be considered an exaggeration. However, since Your Holiness is a *burūz* [spiritual manifestation] of the Holy Prophet ﷺ for us, this practice of yours will become a Sunnah for us. Therefore, I wish to request that you speak on this subject during your walk.'

The Promised Messiah ﷺ stated regarding this matter:

1. *Tarīkh-e-Aḥmadiyyat*, vol. 1, pp. 611–612

> It is an accepted principle and among the most authentic *aḥādīth*: إِنَّمَا الْأَعْمَالُ بِالنِّيَّاتِ [Actions are judged by intentions]. If someone provides food out of ostentation, seeking to display his superiority over others or desiring compensation, then such distributed food or anything similar is unlawful.
>
> However, if one spends with the intention of expressing gratitude to Allāh and seeking His pleasure, without ostentation or the desire for recompense, then there is no harm in it.[1]

On another occasion, the Promised Messiah ؑ stated:

> I also observe that Allāh the Almighty has bestowed countless favours and blessings upon me, and it is obligatory upon me to proclaim them. Thus, whenever I do something, my intention and objective is to manifest the glory of Allāh the Almighty. This was the case with the *Āmīn* ceremony as well. These children are a sign from God Almighty, and each one of them is a living manifestation of His prophecies. For this reason, I deem it my duty to honour these signs of Allāh.[2]

Moreover, the Promised Messiah ؑ was always mindful of religious honour and zeal. It was with this very spirit that he rendered immense service in the defence of Islām. At a time when the enemies of Islām were launching aggressive attacks against the faith, he rose to its defence, responding to objections against Islām through both his writings and public addresses. On certain occasions, he even engaged in debates with Hindus and Christians. One such occasion was his debate with Reverend ʿAbdullāh Ātham, which took place during the summer months. Miāṅ Khair-ud-Dīn of Sikhwan ؓ narrates regarding this

1. *Aṣḥāb-e-Aḥmad*, vol. 2, p. 551, *Sīrat Ḥaḍrat Nawāb Muḥammad ʿAlī Khān Ṣaḥib*, New Edition

2. *Al-Ḥakam*, 10 April 1903, p. 2

debate: 'There was a need for water, but he [the Promised Messiah ﷺ] would take [his own] water with him. He would not take water from the well of the Christians because they were a people who would dishonour the Messenger of Allāh, and thus, the Promised Messiah ﷺ did not like to drink water from their well.'[1]

Generally, social relations were maintained with Christians, Hindus, and other communities. However, where matters of religious honour were concerned, ties would be severed to such a degree that no contact would be maintained until they changed their ways. On one such occasion, the Promised Messiah ﷺ was asked whether it was permissible to eat with Christians and embrace them. He replied:

> I do not consider it permissible at all, as it is contrary to our sense of religious honour to embrace them while they dishonour our Prophet ﷺ. The Holy Qur'ān even forbids sitting in a gathering where Allāh and his Messenger ﷺ are mocked. Moreover, these people eat pork, so how can it possibly be permissible to eat with them?[2]

11. Avoidance of Superficial Jurisprudential Issues

The Promised Messiah ﷺ admonished his Jamā'at to act upon the true and authentic teachings of Islām. People often tend to focus excessively on outward, subsidiary, and trivial matters, and thus distance themselves from the true essence of faith. However, the Promised Messiah ﷺ did not concern himself with such superficial matters.

Traditional books of jurisprudence often contained such hypothetical discussions which, when studied, gave some the false impression that they had attained vast knowledge and had now become experts in

1. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 2, p. 198
2. *Al-Ḥakam*, 17 August 1902, p. 10

Fiqh [jurisprudence]. As a result, they would fixate on such superficial matters. This tendency was especially pronounced among the Ḥanafīs, who not only remained attached to this approach but also took undue pride in it, calling themselves *muqallidīn*. It was for this reason that the Promised Messiah ؑ avoided engaging with certain traditional juristic debates.

For instance, the Promised Messiah ؑ was once asked: 'What is the directive of Your Holiness about the edict that so many buckets of water should be taken out from a well when a rat, cat, hen, goat, or a person dies inside it? Previously, our practice was to consider the water pure unless its colour, smell, or taste changed.'

The Promised Messiah ؑ stated:

> My belief is only that which has been mentioned in the Ḥadīth. I simply do not know, nor does my jurisdiction govern the number of how many buckets to take out if this animal falls in or how many if another [animal] falls in.

It was submitted, 'Your Holiness has directed to abide by Ḥanafī *Fiqh* [Islamic jurisprudence] when the authentic Sunnah [practice of the Holy Prophet ﷺ] is not known.'

The Promised Messiah ؑ replied:

> Where is there any such determination in the prominent works of *Fiqh*. Indeed this is written in *Nijāt-ul-Mu'minīn*, yet the same book also states: سر ٹوئے وچہ دے کے بیٹھ نماز کرے [Sit and offer Prayer inserting your head into a ditch]. Does anyone act upon this injunction and is it actually permissible, whereas Prayer is not permitted for women during their menstruation and parturition. Hence, consider this issue in the same vein too. I state a principle for you that is set forth in the Glorious Qur'ān:

وَالرُّجْزَ فَاهْجُرْ[1]

And uncleanliness do thou shun

> Therefore, when the condition of the water is such that there is a danger of risk to health, then it should be cleansed. For example, if leaves or insects fall in (even though these *maulawīs* do not issue a *fatwā* of contamination on this); otherwise, there is no determination of quantity. So long as the colour, smell or taste is not changed by contamination, that water is pure.[2]

Similarly, someone once asked the Promised Messiah ﷺ: 'My brother has passed away. Shall I have a solid grave structure built for him or not?'

The Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

> If permanent grave structures are constructed for show and display, and painted with decorative patterns and designs, and built with domes, then this is forbidden. However, if someone were to suggest, like a close-minded cleric, that in every circumstance and in all places only unburned bricks must be used, then this too is forbidden.

إِنَّمَا الأَعْمَالُ بِالنِّيَّاتِ

This means, deeds are based on intentions.[3]

1. *Sūrah al-Mudaththir,* 74:6
2. *Badr*, 1 August, 1907, p. 253
3. *Dhikr-e-Ḥabīb*, p. 253

12. Conditions of Necessity May Permit the Prohibited

The Sharīʿah has given Muslims detailed guidance for every important aspect of life, whilst also taking into account human constraints and difficulties. In situations of necessity, allowance and ease have likewise been granted.

Dr. Muḥammad Alī Khān from Africa inquired that if an Aḥmadī brother is offering Prayer, and his superior comes and calls him, knocking on the door, and asks for the key to the office or to the dispensary, then what should one do in such a situation? A person was once dismissed from his job for this very reason, and then returned to India.

The Promised Messiah ﷺ stated:

> In such a case, it was essential that he should have opened the door and given the key to the in-charge (this incident relates to a hospital, that is why he said this). Because if a man's life is lost due to his delay, it would be a grave sin. It has been mentioned in the *aḥādīth* that if a man walks to the door and opens it while praying, it does not invalidate the Prayer.[1] Similarly, if one's son is in danger of some harm or is at risk of some harm by a dangerous animal that is visible, then saving the boy and killing the animal while he is praying is not a sin, and the Prayer is not invalidated. Rather, some have also written that if the horse becomes loose, tying it does not invalidate the Prayer because he can still offer the Prayer later on within the prescribed time range.[2]

1. *Musnad Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, Musnad an-Nisā', Musnadu as-Ṣiddīqah 'Ā'ishah bint as-Ṣiddīq*, vol. 8, p. 458, Ḥadīth 26499, by Maktabah 'Alam al-Kutub, 1998 [Publisher]

2. *Al-Badr*, 24 November, 1 December, 1904, p.4

The use of gold, silver, and silk out of necessity is a well-known issue. In this regard, the Promised Messiah ﷺ was asked whether the use of silver buttons and similar items is permissible. In response, he said:

> There is no harm in using it in measures up to the weight of three to four *māshas*[1], but using any more than that is prohibited. It has been permitted for women to use gold and silver as adornment, and their use for medical treatment is also not forbidden. For instance, if someone is afflicted with an illness and a physician advises him to eat from a vessel made of silver or gold, then he is allowed to use it as a remedy until he recovers.
>
> A man suffering from a severe infestation of lice once came to the Holy Prophet ﷺ, so he instructed him to wear a silk shirt, as it was beneficial for eliminating lice. (Likewise, silk clothing is beneficial for someone suffering from skin irritation.)[2]

13. Attention to Generally Accepted Standards is Necessary

In the commandments of the Sharīʿah, particular attention is paid to context and circumstance. There are numerous matters in which, if real-life conditions are not taken into account, the implementation of the Sharīʿah becomes unduly difficult. For example, the Sharīʿah grants a concession for the sick and the traveller with regard to fasting, yet it does not specify the exact nature of the illness or the limits of travel. Similarly, the allowance to shorten prayers during travel has been granted, but no specific distance has been defined. On

1. A *māsha* is a traditional South Asian unit of mass. It is primarily used in India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh for measuring gold, silver, and medicines. 1 *māsha* = 0.972 grams, so three to four *māshas* would be approximately 2.92 to 3.89 grams. [Publisher]

2. *Badr*, 28 September 1904

such matters, jurists have engaged in detailed debates. However, the Promised Messiah ﷺ readily resolved this issue by referring to the principle of '*urf* [the general understanding of society].

Once, an individual inquired that since they were compelled to travel here and there for up to a distance of 30 miles or so, what should they consider a journey and is the Islamic injunction of shortening the Prayer whilst on a journey applicable to them? The Promised Messiah ﷺ stated:

> It is my belief that an individual ought not to impose undue difficulty upon themselves. The definition of a journey is based on the general understanding of society, even if the distance itself is only a few miles. So, if this is the case, a person should follow injunctions which are applicable in the case of a journey and shorten the Prayer.
>
> إنّمَا الأعْمالُ بالنِّيَّاتِ
>
> Deeds are based on intentions
>
> At times, we will cover a distance of even two or three miles when we are walking with our friends, but no one has the slightest thought in their minds that they are on a journey. However, when a person packs their belongings and sets out with the intention that they are about to undertake a journey, they are a traveller. The foundation of the Sharī'ah is not based on difficulty. A journey is a journey by generally accepted standards.[1]

Likewise, it is essential to consider generally accepted standards in matters of buying and selling. If there is an established and widely accepted

1. *Al-Ḥakam*, 17 February 1901, p. 13; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt* vol. II, p. 106

practice that is followed by all and does not lead to disputes or conflicts, then such standards should also be adhered to.

Once, someone inquired whether it was permissible to sell a commodity, equivalent to one kilogram, to government factories such as 'The Riley Brothers' for 80 rupees while purchasing it for 81 rupees.

The Promised Messiah ﷺ responded:

> Transactions that do not lead to legal disputes, do not result in conflicts, are conducted with mutual consent, are not deemed crimes by the government, and are also permissible according to common custom, are allowed.[1]

14. Obedience to the Ruling Power is Obligatory

The Promised Messiah ﷺ appeared at a time when the Muslims had declined in every sphere: social, political, and religious. For Muslims looking back at their glorious past, it was deeply distressing for them to find themselves in a state of subjugation and weakness.

During the era when the *Khilāfat* of Banū Umayyah, the *Khilāfat* of Banū 'Abbās and the Ottoman rule extended over vast territories, rulers were often referenced in religious discussions. In some cases, the reigning king was even considered the most suitable authority in religious matters. For centuries, the Muslims ruled the Indian Subcontinent, only to later fall into ruin and decline. Due to the historical use of the terms *Dārul-Islām* [Territory of Islām] and *Dārul-Ḥarb* [Territory of War], many Muslims in the Subcontinent believed that, having lost control of India, it was no longer *Dārul-Islām* but had become *Dārul-Ḥarb*. This notion became especially prevalent in the wake of the widespread rebellion of 1857.

1. *Al-Ḥakam*, 10 August 1903, p. 19

The Promised Messiah ﷺ taught his Jamā'at to refrain from all forms of rebellion, disorder, and insubordination, exhorting them to obey the government with sincerity of heart. He repeatedly emphasised that under British rule, not only were the lives and property of Muslims safeguarded, but they also enjoyed religious freedom and security. Therefore, in accordance with the teachings of Islām, Muslims ought to completely eschew rebellion and insurrection, and it is incumbent upon them to fully cooperate with the government. The Promised Messiah ﷺ stated that he adheres to five broad principles and explained the fourth principle in the following manner:

> One should not entertain seditious thoughts against this benevolent government—that is, the British government under whose protection we live—and we must continue to obey it with heartfelt sincerity.[1]

Regarding obedience to the government, he stated:

> Obedience to the rulers and sincerity towards them is the obligation of every Muslim because they protect us and have given us complete religious freedom. In my view, it is a heavy betrayal to not be loyal and obedient to the government with heartfelt sincerity.[2]

Some people understand the Quranic injunction 'Obey Allāh, and obey His Messenger and those who are in authority among you'[3] to mean that obedience is owed to Allāh, His Messenger and Muslim rulers only. The Promised Messiah ﷺ, however, stated that the word

1. *Kitābul-Bariyya, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 13, p. 348
2. *Al-Ḥakam*, 31 July, 10 August 1904, p. 13
3. *Sūrah Āl-'Imrān*, 3:33

'*minkum*' [among you] refers to all such rulers who do not compel anyone to act in contravention to the Sharī'ah. Thus, he stated:

> Now here, there is a clear instruction to obey those in authority. If someone were to assert that the government is not implied in the words '*minkum*' (i.e. from among you), this is a blatant error on their part. Any instruction of the government which accords with the religious law of Islām is implied in the words '*minkum*'. Anyone who does not oppose us is a part of us. It is derived from the Holy Qur'ān that the government ought to be obeyed and its instructions ought to be followed.[1]

The Promised Messiah ﷺ made great efforts through his writings and discourses to clarify the pristine Islamic teachings on *Jihād*. In this regard, he authored a treatise titled *Government Angreizī aur Jihād* [*The British Government and Jihād*].[2] In this work, he elucidated Islām's teachings on *Jihād* in detail and issued a warning to those who fought against the British and engaged in rebellion against their government. The Promised Messiah ﷺ also addressed this matter in one of his poems, in which he wrote:

اب چھوڑ دو جہاد کا اے دوستو خیال دیں کیلئے حرام ہے اب جنگ اور قتال
Friends, shun the thought of Jihād;
For warfare and bloodshed have now been forbidden in the name of religion.

اب آگیا مسیح جو دیں کا امام ہے دیں کی تمام جنگوں کا اب اختتام ہے
The Messiah has come now who is the leader in Faith;
It is now the end of all fighting for religion.

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1. *Risālah-e-Indhār*, p. 15, *Malfūẓāt*, vol. 1, p. 171; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt,* vol. 1, p. 262
2. *Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 17

15. Embracing New Discoveries

The Promised Messiah ﷺ was sent in an era of immense global transformation. The nineteenth century witnessed scientific innovations at an unprecedented pace which reshaped the fabric of everyday life. Inventions such as the telegraph, the train, the printing press, photography, the phonograph, and the syringe were all signs of the age and directly linked to the advent of the Promised Messiah ﷺ.

He repeatedly declared that this was an era in which divine grace was being poured down like rain, both in spiritual and material form. These technological marvels were not just conveniences; they had, in effect, drawn the world together, collapsing distances and rendering the earth a global village.

The invention of the printing press ignited a new-found enthusiasm among followers of all religions to propagate their faiths on a wider scale. Christian missionaries, in particular, seized this moment and began producing a torrent of literature attacking Islām, which they distributed widely across India. Hindus too participated in publishing works filled with objections against Islamic teachings.

In stark contrast, the Muslim populace had sunk into such decline that not only did they fail to defend their faith, but many even viewed these new inventions with suspicion, declaring them incompatible with Islām. Among these, photography attracted especially fierce criticism. When a photograph of the Promised Messiah ﷺ was taken, it provoked widespread outrage. Accusations were hurled that he had transgressed Islamic law.

The Promised Messiah ﷺ explained this issue in light of evidence from the Holy Qur'ān and Ḥadīth, stating that the depiction prohibited in certain *aḥādīth* has no connection to modern photography. He noted that a photograph merely captures a reflection, no different from the image perceived by the eye or mirrored upon the surface of water.

The Promised Messiah ﷺ stated:

> Moreover, the instrument that is now used for taking photographs had not been invented in the time of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. It is a very useful instrument by which some diseases can be diagnosed. Another instrument has been introduced by which the image of all the bones of a person is taken to help diagnose diseases such as rheumatism and gout, and determine the nature of the illness. Similarly, many scientific benefits have been realised by means of photographs.[1]

Similarly, the Promised Messiah ؑ derived benefit from the invention of the train and regarded it a sign of his truthfulness. Furthermore, a poem was recorded using a phonograph—a poem the Promised Messiah ؑ had specifically composed for that occasion. It begins with the words:

آواز آرہی ہے یہ فونو گراف سے ڈھونڈو خدا کو دل سے نہ لاف و گزاف سے

This voice is coming from the phonograph;
Seek God from the heart; not through boasting and pomposity

The Promised Messiah ؑ deemed every invention and industry permissible, provided that it was used in accordance with the dictates of the Sharī'ah. Someone once asked him: 'Is it permitted to take pictures according to the Sharī'ah?'

The Promised Messiah ؑ replied:

> This is a new invention. There is no mention of it in the earlier Scriptures. Some materials have the God-given quality that allows a picture to be taken. If this technique is harnessed for the service of the Sharī'ah, then it is permissible.[2]

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1. *Barāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya Ḥiṣah Panjam*, *Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 21, p. 366; Eng. Trans.: *Barāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya,* Part V, p. 493

2. *Badr*, 31 December 1908, p. 5

16. The Need for New Independent Reasoning

As previously mentioned, the Promised Messiah ﷺ was sent at a time of great and rapid developments in the world, including advancements in coexistence, civilization, forms of governance, and mutual relations among people. The concept of global unity was emerging as a replacement for national unity.

Geographical borders were shifting, and subjugated nations began to aspire towards freedom and independence.

Trading methods evolved significantly, becoming markedly different from earlier practices. Currency notes replaced the barter system in trade, and changes in food and clothing led to new questions and challenges. In many countries, interest—which Islām had expressly forbidden—became legally sanctioned. Likewise, the concept of banks materialised, wherein all financial transactions were based on interest.

Amid these changing circumstances, the Promised Messiah ﷺ provided guidance to his community and set out practical guidelines for the future.

Some matters clearly involved interest, while others referred to it only indirectly. A question was put to the Promised Messiah ﷺ regarding this situation, to which he responded:

> Many [financial] matters in this country have become convoluted. In nearly every form of trade, some element of interest is involved. Therefore, there is a pressing need for fresh *ijtihād* [independent reasoning] in this era.[1]

1. *Badr*, 8th November 1904, p. 8

17. The Aḥmadī Scholars Should Practice Ijtihād

The Promised Messiah ﷺ had a natural spiritual affinity with Imām Abū Ḥanīfah and held the Ḥanafī school of *Fiqh* in high regard. However, he also stated that, given the significant changes of the times, the rulings of the Ḥanafī school are no longer applicable in many areas.

The Promised Messiah ﷺ stated:

> It is incumbent on my Jamā'at to follow any *ḥadīth* which does not oppose and contradict the Holy Qur'ān and Sunnah, regardless of its authenticity and give preference to it over manmade jurisprudence. And if they are unable to find [elaboration on] a certain matter from the Ḥadīth, the Sunnah or from the Holy Qur'ān, in such a case, they should follow the Ḥanafī school of jurisprudence, because this school constitutes the majority [among the Muslims] and this is an indication of God's will. If, because of modern developments, the Ḥanafī school of jurisprudence is unable to provide an adequate judgement, the scholars of the Jamā'at ought to determine such issues in accordance with their God-given reasoning. However, at the same time, they must exercise caution, lest they unjustly denounce the Ḥadīth like Maulawī 'Abdullāh Chakrhālavī.[1]

In light of this guidance from the Promised Messiah ﷺ, a formal body of scholars known as *Majlis-e-Iftā'* (Board of Jurisprudential Guidance) has been established within the Aḥmadiyya Muslim Jamā'at to address emerging issues through *ijtihād*. Tasked with exercising *ijtihād* on contemporary matters, this body conducts thorough research and deliberation on emerging issues. After careful study and deliberation, the

1. *Review bar Mubāḥathah Batālavī wa Chakrhālavī*, *Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 19, p. 212; Eng. trans: *A Review of the Debate between Batālavī and Chakrhālavī*, pp. 11–12

Board submits its recommendations to Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ ایدہ اللہ تعالیٰ بنصرہ العزیز. The decision issued by the *Khalīfah* then becomes part of the jurisprudence of the Aḥmadiyya Jamā'at and is binding upon all Aḥmadīs.

Fiqhul Masīḥ

THE SOURCES OF AḤMADIYYA JURISPRUDENCE

The Promised Messiah ﷺ stated:

> It is my belief that there are three components which God has bestowed on you for your guidance. First and foremost is the Qur'ān, which elaborates on the Oneness, Glory and Greatness of God ... So beware and do not take a single step contrary to the teaching of God and the guidance of the Qur'ān. I tell you truly that anyone who disregards even a small injunction of the seven hundred commandments of the Qur'ān, shuts upon himself the door of salvation.[1]

> The Holy Qur'ān: the Book of God and there is no word available to us which is as absolute and certain. It is the Word of God and untainted by doubt and speculation.[2]

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1. *Kashtī-e-Nūḥ, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 19, p. 26; Eng. Trans.: *Noah's Ark*, p. 42
2. *Review bar Mubāḥatha Batālavī wa Chakrhālavī*, *Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 19, p. 209; Eng. Trans.: *A Review of the Debate Between Batālavī and Chakrhālavī*, p. 6

The Noble *Furqān*[1] is a Book whose being *tawātur*[2] has been proved word by word, and it is recitable, doubtless, and certain revelation. He who doubts its decisiveness is in our opinion a renegade disbeliever and is among the disobedient.[3]

The second means of guidance given to Muslims is the Sunnah, that is, the practical example of the Holy Prophet ﷺ which he demonstrated to elucidate the teachings of the Holy Qur'ān. For example, the number of *rak'āt* in the five daily Prayers are not apparently evident in the Holy Qur'ān. How many *rak'āt* are to be observed in the morning and how many at other times? However, this has been clarified by the Sunnah. One ought not to be deceived into thinking that the Sunnah and Ḥadīth[4] are one and the same thing. The Ḥadīth were collected after some 100 to 150 years, but the Sunnah existed along with the Holy Qur'ān since the very beginning. After the Holy Qur'ān, the greatest favour that has been bestowed on the Muslims is the Sunnah. The obligations of God and His Messenger were two primarily. Firstly, God revealed the Qur'ān and through the agency of His Word informed His creation of His will. This was the obligation of God's law. Then, the obligation of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ was to practically demonstrate the

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1. Literally, the 'Discrimination'. Another name for the Holy Qur'ān, meaning the discrimination between right and wrong. [Publisher]
2. Lit. Recurrence. Refers to information that is transmitted by such a multiplicity of sources that it leaves no doubt as to its authenticity. [Publisher]
3. *Tuḥfah-e-Baghdād, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 7, p. 31; Eng. Trans.: *A Gift to Baghdād*, p. 95]
4. The recorded sayings, actions, tacit approvals, and descriptions of the Holy Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ. The singular form is *ḥadīth* and the plural is *aḥādīth*. When referring to the entire body of such reports, the term is capitalised and written as Ḥadīth. [Publishers]

Word of God and thus clearly expound it to the people. In this way, he provided a practical demonstration of this Word and through his Sunnah i.e. his way of practice, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ resolved matters of intricacy and difficulty.[1]

Just as the Holy Prophet ﷺ was raised to propagate [the teachings] of the Holy Qur'ān, he was also commissioned with establishing the Sunnah. Therefore, just as the Holy Qur'ān is absolute, so too is the established practice known as the Sunnah. Both these tasks were personally discharged by the Holy Prophet ﷺ.[2]

By Sunnah I refer only to those actions of the Holy Prophet ﷺ which possess continuity and go hand in hand with the revelation of the Holy Qur'ān. They shall always be preserved until the end of time. In other words, it may be said that the Holy Qur'ān is the Word of God Almighty and the Sunnah is the practice of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Since the remotest ages, it has been the practice of Allāh that when the Prophets علیہم السلام communicate His Word to mankind for its guidance, they also illustrate it through their conduct and practical example, so that the people are able to comprehend it more clearly. Thus, the

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1. *Kashtī-e-Nūh, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 19, p. 26; Eng. Trans.: *Noah's Ark*, pp. 97–98

2. *Review bar Mubāḥathah Batālavī wa Chakrhālavī*, *Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 19, p. 209; Eng. Trans.: *A Review of the Debate Between Batālavī and Chakrhālavī*, p. 7

Prophets not only follow the Word [of God] themselves but exhort others to do the same.[1]

The third means of guidance are the Ḥadīth, for many matters relating to Islamic history, morality, and jurisprudence are elaborated on by the Ḥadīth. Moreover, the greatest benefit of the Ḥadīth is that they serve the Qur'ān and Sunnah.[2]

Thus, the difference between the Sunnah and the Ḥadīth is that the former refers to the practical example of the Holy Prophet ﷺ which was demonstrated by him and which possessed continuity. In terms of its authenticity, the Sunnah is second only to the Holy Qur'ān. Just as the Holy Prophet ﷺ was raised to propagate [the teachings] of the Holy Qur'ān, he was also commissioned with establishing the Sunnah. Therefore, just as the Holy Qur'ān is absolute, so too is the established practice known as the Sunnah. Both these tasks were personally discharged by the Holy Prophet ﷺ and he considered himself duty-bound to fulfil both. For example, when the obligatory Prayers were enjoined, the Holy Prophet ﷺ demonstrated this commandment of God Almighty and illustrated through his practice the number of *rak'āt* for *Fajr, Maghrib* and all the other Prayers as well. He also demonstrated the *Ḥajj* and taught this practice to thousands from among his Companions, thereby ensuring its continuity. As such, this practical example [of the Holy Prophet ﷺ], which is clearly evident in the Ummah

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1. *Review bar Mubāḥathah Batālavī wa Chakrhālavī*, *Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 19, p. 209; Eng. Trans.: *A Review of the Debate Between Batālavī and Chakrhālavī*, pp. 6-7

2. *Kashtī-e-Nūḥ, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 19, p. 26; Eng. Trans.: *Noah's Ark*, p. 99

even until now, is known as the Sunnah. Conversely, the Holy Prophet ﷺ did not have the Ḥadīth recorded in his own presence nor did he make any provisions for their compilation ... When the age of the Companions رضي الله عنهم passed, God inspired the *taba' tābi'īn* with the desire to collect the Ḥadīth, and it was then that these narrations were gathered.

There is no doubt that the majority of the compilers of the Ḥadīth were righteous and God-fearing, and insofar as was within their ability, they critiqued [the accuracy of] narrations; they rejected those which they felt were inauthentic and refused to accept narrations from any narrator of questionable character. Despite their superb efforts, this pursuit was undertaken many years after [the life of the Holy Prophet ﷺ] and was therefore heavily subject to speculation. Yet, in spite of all this, it would be most unfair to suggest that all of the Ḥadīth are unworthy, inauthentic, useless and false. For such immense caution has been exercised in recording the Ḥadīth and such a phenomenal effort has been expended in critiquing and evaluating this corpus as is unparalleled in the history of religion. The Jews also had their own anecdotal records, and the Jewish sect that opposed Jesus was particularly known for adhering to them, but there is no evidence to suggest that Jewish scholars exercised the same diligence in collecting them as their Muslim counterparts.

It would be incorrect to think that until the Ḥadīth were compiled, people were unaware of the [number of] *rak'āt* in the obligatory Prayers or the rites of *Ḥajj*. For the Sunnah, which had taken root in them through a method of practice, had to all intents and purposes, taught every obligation and injunction laid down by Islām. Therefore, it is absolutely correct to state that if the Ḥadīth which were collected well after [the Holy Prophet ﷺ] had never even surfaced, there would be no deficiency in the fundamental teachings of Islām, for they had

> already been fully established by the Holy Qur'ān and through a system of practice. The Ḥadīth served only to enhance this light, illuminating Islām as though it were نُوْرٌ عَلٰى نُوْر [light upon light]. Further, the Ḥadīth came forth and testified to the truth of the Holy Qur'ān and Sunnah. After Islām split into numerous sects, those among them who were truthful derived great benefit from authentic *aḥādīth*.[1]

After the three guiding and established principles upon which the entire true Sharī'ah is founded, if any matter still remains unresolved, or if further clarity and guidance is required for its resolution, or if a new issue arises altogether, then, for the resolution of such matters the Promised Messiah ﷺ has provided the following guidance to the *mujtahidīn* of the Jamā'at and the *rāsikhīn fil-'ilm* [those firmly grounded in knowledge]:

> It is incumbent on my Jamā'at to follow any *ḥadīth* which does not oppose and contradict the Holy Qur'ān and Sunnah, regardless of its authenticity and give preference to it over man-made jurisprudence. And if they are unable to find [elaboration on] a certain matter from the Ḥadīth, the Sunnah or from the Holy Qur'ān, in such a case, they should follow the Ḥanafī school of jurisprudence, because this school constitutes the majority [among the Muslims] and this is an indication of God's will. If, because of modern developments, the Ḥanafī school of jurisprudence is unable to provide an adequate judgement, the scholars of the Community ought to determine such issues in accordance with their God-given reasoning. However, at the same time, they must exercise caution, lest they unjustly

1. *Review bar Mubāḥathah Batālavī wa Chakrhālavī*, *Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 19, pp. 210–211; Eng. Trans.: *A Review of the Debate Between Batālavī and Chakrhālavī*, pp. 7–9

denounce the Ḥadīth like Maulawī ʿAbdullāh Chakrhālavī. Nonetheless, they ought to reject any such *ḥadīth* which is at variance with the Qur'ān and Sunnah.[1]

The Status of the Holy Qur'ān and Ḥadīth as Authoritative Sources of the Sharīʿah

My belief regarding the Book [of Allāh] and Sunnah as *ḥujaj shariʿīyya* [authoritative evidences as per the Sharīʿah] is that the Book of Allāh holds precedence and serves as the guiding principle. Any meaning derived from a *ḥadīth* that is not in contradiction with the Book of Allāh will be accepted as an authoritative source as per the Sharīʿah. However, we shall never accept an interpretation of a *ḥadīth* that contradicts the clear texts of the Holy Qur'ān. To every extent possible, we shall endeavour to interpret a *ḥadīth* in a manner that accords with the clear text of the Book of Allāh. However, if we come across a *ḥadīth* that contradicts the Holy Qur'ān, and cannot be interpreted in any other way, we shall deem it *mauḍūʿ* [fabricated], for Allāh, the Glorious, states:

فَبِأَيِّ حَدِيثٍ بَعْدَ اللَّهِ وَآيَاتِهِ يُؤْمِنُونَ[2]

Meaning, in what discourse apart from Allāh and His commandments will they believe? This verse clearly indicates that if the Holy Qur'ān makes a conclusive and definite ruling on

1. *Review bar Mubāḥathah Batālavī wa Chakrhālavī*, *Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 19, p. 212; Eng. Trans.: *A Review of the Debate Between Batālavī and Chakrhālavī*, pp. 10–11

2. *Sūrah al-Jāthīyah*, 45:7

a matter, leaving no room for doubt, and its purport is clear, then it does not befit a believer to accept a *ḥadīth* that explicitly contradicts it. Likewise, Allāh states:

فَبِأَيِّ حَدِيثٍ بَعْدَهُ يُؤْمِنُونَ[1]

Then in what thing will they believe thereafter?

Both of these verses carry the same meaning, so further explanation is unnecessary. Based on the aforementioned verses, the position of a believer must be to accept the Book of Allāh unconditionally as an authoritative source as per the Sharīʿah, while affirming Ḥadīth as an authoritative source only with certain conditions. This is my view.[2]

The Holy Qur'ān as the Criterion for Aḥādīth Based on Utterance and Action

We must examine any utterance, action or report mentioned in the Ḥadīth and attributed to the Holy Prophet ﷺ using the same criterion. In accordance with the verse فَبِأَيِّ حَدِيْثٍ بَعْدَهُ يُؤْمِنُوْنَ [Then in what thing will they believe thereafter?], we will determine whether a *ḥadīth* based on an utterance, action or report contradicts any clear and explicit verse of the Holy Qur'ān. If it is not in contradiction [with a Quranic verse], we shall accept it wholeheartedly. However, if it appears to be contrary, we shall nevertheless attempt to reconcile it as far as possible. If, despite our utmost efforts, we find it to be in clear contradiction with the Holy Qur'ān, we shall, with regret, set aside that *ḥadīth*, for

1. *Sūrah al-Aʿrāf*, 7:186

2. *Al-Ḥaqq Mubāḥathah Ludhiāna, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 4, pp. 11–12

the status of Ḥadīth can never attain the rank and authority of the Holy Qur'ān.[1]

The Ḥadīth are Conjectural

Ultimately, the Ḥadīth is conjectural, and since it remains subject to conjecture, how can we consider it equivalent to the Holy Qur'ān in terms of transmission? A discerning person, upon merely observing the method of Ḥadīth compilation, will realise that we absolutely cannot believe in the authenticity of transmission with the same certainty with which we believe in the Holy Qur'ān. For instance, if a *ḥadīth* recorded in *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī* or *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* contradicts the explicit dictates of the Holy Qur'ān, is it not incumbent upon us to give precedence to the Holy Qur'ān due to its established authenticity?

Thus, the claim that all *aḥādīth* are acceptable based solely on principles of transmission is misleading, for we must first determine whether a given *ḥadīth* reaches a level of certainty equal to that of the Holy Qur'ān. If it were established that a *ḥadīth* possesses the same level of certainty as the Holy Qur'ān, then, without a doubt, we would be obliged to regard it as being on the same level. However, no one holds this view. All Muslims agree that the majority of *aḥādīth* are conjectural, and conjecture avails nothing against the truth.[2]

1. *Al-Ḥaqq Mubāḥathah Ludhiana, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 4, p. 12
2. *Al-Ḥaqq Mubāḥathah Ludhiana, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 4, p. 12

The Narrations of Bukhārī and Muslim are Conjecturally Authentic

Addressing Maulawī Muḥammad Ḥusain of Batala, the Promised Messiah ﷺ stated:

> When you yourself (that is, Maulawī Muḥammad Ḥusain of Batala) acknowledge that the Ḥadīth do not attain the highest level of veracity in terms of their transmission, and that they ultimately remain conjectural, then why do you insist that they should be regarded as possessing the same level of certainty as the Holy Qur'ān? Therefore, the soundest and most appropriate approach is that, since the Ḥadīth are conjectural, with the exception of a few, we should accept them only to the extent of conjecture.[1]

> You have yourself written in your magazine *Ishā'atus-Sunnah* that the view of some senior scholars regarding the Ḥadīth is as follows: 'A recipient of divine revelation is able to declare an authentic *ḥadīth* to be fabricated, and a fabricated *ḥadīth* to be authentic, based on divine revelation.'
>
> I now wish to ask you: If it is permissible to regard a *ḥadīth* recorded in *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī* or *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* as fabricated based on a vision, then how can such *aḥādīth* be considered equivalent to the Holy Qur'ān?
>
> We believe, without any doubt, that the *aḥādīth* in *Bukhārī* and *Muslim* were compiled with great care, though based on the conjecture of the compilers, and that the majority are most likely authentic. Nonetheless, how can we swear with absolute certainty that all of these *aḥādīth* are authentic without

1. *Al-Ḥaqq Mubāḥathah Ludhiana, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 4, p. 15

exception? If their authenticity is established only on the basis of conjecture rather than certainty, then how can we affirm their soundness with any degree of finality?[1]

The Disagreement Among the Four Madhāhib is Based on Ḥadīth

The Promised Messiah ﷺ stated:

It is my view that the *aḥādīth* of *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī* and *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* are authentic only to the extent of conjecture. However, any *ḥadīth* that clearly contradicts the Holy Qur'ān cannot be deemed authentic. After all, [Imām] Bukhārī and [Imām] Muslim were not recipients of divine revelation. In reality, a careful examination of their method of compiling *aḥādīth* shows, without a shadow of doubt, that it was a conjectural process, and any claim that their method yields certainty is a false claim.

All of the Muslim sects that exist in the world today, and who oppose one another, particularly the Imāms of the four *madhāhib*, have, through their own practice, testified that *aḥādīth* are conjectural. There is no doubt that the majority of *aḥādīth* reached them, but not all of them were considered authentic in their view.

So tell me: if someone denies the authenticity of a *ḥadīth* recorded in *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī*, as most of the *muqallidīn* do, would you deem him a *kāfir* [disbeliever]? If not, then how can you assert that such *aḥādīth* are of indisputable certainty simply due to the soundness of their transmission?[2]

1. *Al-Ḥaqq Mubāḥathah Ludhiana, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 4, p.12
2. *Al-Ḥaqq Mubāḥathah Ludhiana, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 4, pp. 15–16

One Should First Seek to Interpret the Ḥadīth

The Promised Messiah ﷺ stated:

> A person who is granted understanding of the Holy Qur'ān by the grace and mercy of God Almighty, and who, through divine insight, is made to realise that a particular *ḥadīth* contradicts a Quranic verse with complete certainty and conviction, is obligated, as a matter of due respect, to first attempt to interpret the *ḥadīth* in a way that reconciles it with the Qur'ān, as far as possible.
>
> If reconciliation proves impossible and cannot be achieved under any circumstance, then, compelled by truth, he must declare the *ḥadīth* to be inauthentic. This course of action is better for us. It is proper that, in the case of conflict, we first seek to interpret the *ḥadīth* in harmony with the Qur'ān. However, it would be nothing short of blatant heresy and manifest disbelief to forsake the Holy Qur'ān for the sake of *aḥādīth* that have reached us through human transmission, a transmission in which the inclusion of human words is not merely possible, but a certainty.
>
> I assure you with certainty that divine illumination constantly accompanies me. Allāh, Glorified be His name, unveils to me, as He wills, hidden verities of the Holy Qur'ān. He discloses the true meaning of certain verses to me, along with proofs, and fixes them in my heart like an iron nail. So how could I ever turn away from this divine bounty, or deny the mercy of God which descends upon me like pouring rain?[1]

1. *Al-Ḥaqq Mubāḥathah Ludhiana, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 4, pp. 21

Bukhārī and Muslim are the Product of Ijtihād by the Muḥaddithīn

Your question (i.e. Maulawī Muḥammad Ḥusain of Batala), as can be understood from your current statement and your previous remarks, is whether the *aḥādīth* recorded in the books of Ḥadīth, particularly in *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī* and *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, are *ṣaḥīḥ* [authentic] and therefore must be acted upon, or whether they are not *ṣaḥīḥ* and hence should not be acted upon.

It appears that you are trying to compel me to state and acknowledge that all the *aḥādīth* in those books are authentic and binding. If I were to say this, perhaps you would be delighted and proclaim: 'Yes, now my question has been answered!'

However, I ask myself: by what principle of the Sharī'ah can I declare all *aḥādīth* to be authentic and obligatory to act upon, without any investigation or scrutiny?

Taqwā [righteousness] demands that one should not issue a verdict regarding the authenticity or inauthenticity of anything unless one has attained full discernment and clear insight. Allāh, the Lord of Glory, says:

وَلَا تَقْفُ مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِۦ عِلْمٌ ۚ إِنَّ ٱلسَّمْعَ وَٱلْبَصَرَ وَٱلْفُؤَادَ كُلُّ أُو۟لَٰٓئِكَ كَانَ عَنْهُ مَسْـُٔولًا[1]

> And follow not that of which you have no knowledge. Verily, the ear and the eye and the heart—all these shall be called to account.

So if I were to dare interfere in this matter, and say that all the investigations carried out by the traditional scholars of Ḥadīth in their criticism of *aḥādīth*, and all the *aḥādīth* they recorded

1. *Sūrah Banī Isrā'īl*, 17:37

in their *ṣiḥāḥ* [authentic collections of *ḥadīth*], are inherently authentic and require no further examination—then upon which principles or evidences of the Sharīʿah would I base such a statement?

You know well that those Imāms exercised *ijtihād* in compiling the Ḥadīth, and a *mujtahid* can be at times correct and at other times mistaken. When I reflect deeply on what clear and definitive principle our Muslim *muwaḥḥid*[1] brothers rely upon to assert that all *aḥādīth* must be acted upon, the light of my heart testifies that the sole reason for considering them obligatory to act upon is the assumption that they do not contradict any of the clear and decisive verses of the Holy Qur'ān.

Moreover, most of the *aḥādīth* pertaining to the injunctions of Sharīʿah have reached the level of conclusiveness and certainty due to the continuity of practice, in addition to the meticulous scrutiny undertaken by the scholars of Ḥadīth in their critical examination. Otherwise, if both of these foundations were to be disregarded, there would remain no valid reason for considering the Ḥadīth to be incontrovertibly authentic.[2]

Is the Argument of Consensus Regarding the Narrations of Bukhārī and Muslim Acceptable?

After mentioning that some may argue for the absolute authenticity of the *aḥādīth* found in *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī* and *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* on the basis of *ijmāʿ*, the Promised Messiah ﷺ addressed this claim and responded:

1. Literally meaning a believer in the Unity of God. Every Muslim, by virtue of subscribing to the *Kalima-e-Tauḥīd*, is a *muwaḥḥid*. However, the term *muwaḥḥid* has been adopted by some Muslims who consider the Qur'ān and Ḥadīth to be sufficient sources of guidance and do not follow any Imām. [Publisher]
2. *Al-Ḥaqq Mubāḥathah Ludhiana, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 4, pp. 18–19

> But you yourself have written, on page 330 of your review of *Barāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya*, that *ijmā'* is not a conclusive argument.

He further stated:

> The first disagreement about *ijmā'* is whether *ijmā'* is even possible. There are those who reject the very possibility of *ijmā'*. Then, among those who accept its possibility, there is further disagreement: whether it is even possible to ascertain *ijmā'*, for a group exists that denies the possibility of verifying it.
>
> Imām Fakhr-ud-Dīn Rāzī has alluded to this difference in his work *Maḥṣūl*, where he writes: 'The fair position is that there is no means for us to know that *ijmā'* has occurred, except during the time of the Companions ﷺ, because back then the number of believers was small, and it was possible to know them all in detail.'
>
> Similarly, it is stated in *Ḥuṣūl-ul-Ma'mūl*, an abridgement of *Irshād-ul-Fuḥūl* by Imām Shawkānī: 'Whoever claims that it is possible to identify all those scholars across the world whose opinions are considered valid in matters of *ijmā'*, in regard to a specific issue where consensus is claimed, such a person has made an excessive and reckless claim.'
>
> May Allāh have mercy on Imām Aḥmad bin Ḥanbal, who plainly stated: 'Whoever claims *ijmā'* has occurred, has lied.'
>
> At this point I wish to inquire of you how can it be maintained that the *ijmā'* regarding [the authenticity of] the *aḥādīth* of *Bukhārī* and *Muslim* is authoritative, despite the fact that you yourself assert that after the Companions ﷺ, no *ijmā'* can be an authoritative source?[1]

1. *Al-Ḥaqq Mubāḥathah Ludhiana, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 4, pp. 18–19

There Was Absolutely No Consensus on the Authenticity of Bukhārī and Muslim

The Promised Messiah ﷺ stated:

> There are numerous Muslim sects that do not regard many of the *aḥādīth* recorded in *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī* and *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* to be authentic. If that is the condition of the Ḥadīth, then how can it be asserted that all *aḥādīth* are unquestionably authentic and binding without qualification? What proof from the Sharīʿah supports this idea? Is there a verse of the Holy Qur'ān that instructs: 'You must regard the *aḥādīth* of *Bukhārī* and *Muslim* to be conclusively established, and you are not to question any narration recorded in them'? Or is there any written directive from the Holy Prophet ﷺ which declares that adherence to these two books is obligatory, unconditionally and without applying the criterion of the Book of Allāh?
>
> If we reflect on why acting upon these two books is deemed obligatory, we shall find that this obligation is no different than the obligation to act on all the *ijtihādāt* [independent judgements] of *Imām-e-Aʿẓam*, that is, the *ijtihādāt* of the Ḥanafī school of jurisprudence. However, any person of sound understanding will realise that this is not a requirement mandated by the Sharīʿah. Rather, this notion has emerged only recently, under the influence of certain prevailing ideas.
>
> You raise objections against the Ḥanafī school for rigidly clinging to unsupported *ijtihādāt* and for their unwarranted *taqlīd*[1] of a single individual, all while neglecting the clear texts

1. The practice of adhering to the legal rulings of a qualified scholar or established school of thought without independently consulting the primary sources of Islamic law. A person who engages in *taqlīd* is called a *muqallid*. [Publisher]

of the Sharīʿah. But is not the very same objection applicable to you: that you too have adopted excessive rigidity in *taqlīd*, without justification?

Why do you not seek true insight and understanding? You repeatedly claim that only a *ḥadīth* whose authenticity is firmly established should be accepted, and those that are not should be set aside. Then why, in contradiction to your own standard, have you regarded all *aḥādīth* as authentic without qualification, just like the *muqallidīn* whom you censure?[1]

Are There any Fabricated Aḥādīth in Bukhārī or Muslim?

The Promised Messiah ﷺ stated:

As for your question: 'Have you, up till now, declared any *ḥadīth* from *Bukhārī* or *Muslim* to be *mauḍūʿ* [fabricated]?' I say to you with all humility: I have not, to this day, declared any *ḥadīth* in either *Bukhārī* or *Muslim* to be *mauḍūʿ*. Rather, whenever I have come across a *ḥadīth* that appears to contradict the Holy Qur'ān, God Almighty has graciously opened to me a path of interpretation.[2]

Who is the Leader Among the Righteous Predecessors in Setting a Standard for the Authenticity of Ḥadīth?

The Promised Messiah ﷺ stated:

1. *Al-Ḥaqq Mubāḥathah Ludhiana, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 4, pp. 20–21
2. *Al-Ḥaqq Mubāḥathah Ludhiana, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 4, pp. 21–22

You (Maulawī Muḥammad Ḥusain of Batala – Editor) asked me: 'Who among the *salaf ṣāliḥīn*[1] is your Imām in determining the standard for the authenticity of Ḥadīth?' In response, I say that the burden of proof does not lie upon me. Rather, I hold that every person who believes in the Holy Qur'ān, whether from among the early generations or the present day, is bound to believe that the Holy Qur'ān is the measure, standard, and touchstone for judging the authenticity of the Ḥadīth. For the Holy Qur'ān has appointed itself to this position and states:

فَبِأَيِّ حَدِيثٍ بَعْدَهُ يُؤْمِنُونَ[2]

Then in what thing will they believe thereafter?

إِنَّ هُدَى ٱللَّهِ هُوَ ٱلْهُدَىٰ[3]

Say, 'Surely, Allāh's guidance alone is the guidance.

وَٱعْتَصِمُواْ بِحَبْلِ ٱللَّهِ جَمِيعًا[4]

And hold fast, all together, by the rope of Allāh and be not divided.

ٱلْقُرْءَانُ هُدًى لِّلنَّاسِ وَبَيِّنَٰتٍ مِّنَ ٱلْهُدَىٰ[5]

1. Lit. 'righteous predecessors', a term referring to the earliest generations of Muslims, particularly the Companions of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, their Followers, and the generation after them. [Publisher]
2. *Sūrah al-A'rāf*, 7:186
3. *Sūrah al-Baqarah*, 2:121
4. *Sūrah Āl 'Imrān*, 3:104
5. *Sūrah al-Baqarah*, 2:186

The Qur'ān [was sent down] as a guidance for mankind with clear proofs of guidance and discrimination.

أَنْزَلَ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ وَالْمِيْزَانَ[1]

Who has sent down the Book with truth and also the Balance.

إِنَّهُ لَقَوْلٌ فَصْلٌ[2]

It is surely a decisive word.

لَا رَيْبَ فِيْهِ[3]

There is no doubt in it

Then is there any believer who does not hold the Holy Qur'ān as the judge over Ḥadīth? And since Allāh Himself states that His Word is the judge, a decisive statement, a discrimination between truth and falsehood, and the Balance, then is it in keeping with faithfulness not to believe in this Word of Allāh? And if we do believe in it, then it is incumbent upon us to adopt this principle: that every *ḥadīth* and statement should be laid before the Holy Qur'ān, so that we may ascertain with certainty whether it truly draws its light from the same niche of revelation from which the Holy Qur'ān proceeded, or whether it stands in opposition to it.[4]

1. *Sūrah al-Shūrā*, 42: 18
2. *Sūrah al-Ṭāriq*, 86:14
3. *Sūrah al-Baqarah*, 2:3
4. *Al-Ḥaqq Mubāḥathah Ludhiana, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 4, p. 22

Revelation is Valid Evidence for the Recipient of Revelation

Addressing Maulawī Muḥammad Ḥusain of Batala, the Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

> You have previously admitted that *ilhām* [revelation] serves as *ḥujjah sharʿīyyah* [valid evidence as per the Sharīʿah] for the one who receives it. Moreover, you have explicitly accepted—and indeed you emphatically stated while referring to a *ḥadīth* in *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī*—that the *ilhām* of a *muḥaddath* is free from satanic interference. Even so, I do not compel you to accept *ilhām* as *ḥujjah sharʿīyyah* in general. However, you yourself have acknowledged in your commentary that *ilhām* does constitute a *ḥujjah* for the one to whom it is granted. My claim, therefore, stands proven to this extent, but I have no wish to compel you.[1]

A Ḥadīth Being Ṣaḥīḥ Does Not Mean That It Has Reached the Highest Degree of Certainty

The methods employed by the Imāms to distinguish between authentic and inauthentic Ḥadīth, and the criteria they have established for evaluating their authenticity, are well-known to all. That is, they assess the condition of the narrators after examining their truthfulness or dishonesty, their level of understanding, the reliability of their memory, and other such matters—which, if detailed here, would unnecessarily prolong the discussion. However, when they declare a particular *ḥadīth* to

1. *Al-Ḥaqq Mubāḥathah Ludhiana, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 4, p. 24

be *ṣaḥīḥ* [authentic], this does not imply that the *ḥadīth* has reached the highest degree of certainty in every respect, such that there remains no possibility of error. Rather, what they mean is that, in their view, the *ḥadīth* is free from the defects and flaws typically found in inauthentic narrations. It remains possible, nonetheless, that a *ḥadīth* may not in actuality be authentic, even though it may appear to be so in general.[1]

If the Ḥadīth Are Conjectural, Why Are the Injunctions of Prayer and Fasting Not Also Regarded as Conjectural?

The science of Ḥadīth is a conjectural discipline which can be employed as useful conjecture. If, at this point, someone were to raise the objection that if the Ḥadīth do not go beyond the level of conjecture, then it follows that all deeds such as *Ṣawm* [fasting], *Ṣalāt* [Prayer], *Ḥajj* [pilgrimage], and *Zakāt* [charity]—which are known in detail primarily through Ḥadīth—must also be regarded as conjectural, the answer is that this is a grave misconception. It is deceptive to believe that these practices are known exclusively through reports. In reality, the reason for their certainty is that they have been transmitted through a continuous and unbroken chain of practice.

Even if we were to suppose, hypothetically, that the discipline of Ḥadīth had never developed, these religious practices and obligations would still have been known with certainty by means of this uninterrupted practice. One ought to reflect: before the compilation of the Ḥadīth, did people not perform *Ḥajj*? Did they not observe *Ṣalāt* and give *Zakāt*? Of course

1. *Al-Ḥaqq Mubāḥathah Ludhiana, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 4, pp. 25–26

they did. If, however, the entire Ummah had suddenly abandoned these acts of worship and they were later revived solely through narrations, then undoubtedly those practices would not carry the same level of certitude they do today.

Therefore, it is misleading to think that the details of fasting, Prayer, and other such acts were only preserved through Ḥadīth. In truth, they have remained known by virtue of continuous communal practice, and this practice is entirely independent of the science of Ḥadīth; it is something that naturally accompanies every religion.[1]

The Two Categories of Ḥadīth

There are two categories of Ḥadīth. The first category consists of those that have been fully preserved through continuous practice. That is, *aḥādīth* reinforced by an unbroken and indisputable chain of practical transmission, elevating them to a level of certainty. These encompass all essential aspects of religion, including acts of worship, covenants, transactions and the injunctions of the Sharī'ah.

The strength of these *aḥādīth* does not derive from the science of Ḥadīth alone, nor from any inherent strength in the recorded reports themselves, nor even from confidence in their narrators. Rather, their authority is due to the continued practice [of the Muslim Ummah]. I accept such *aḥādīth* to the extent that they are supported by the continuity of practice and have reached a degree of certainty.

But the second category consists of *aḥādīth* which are not associated with any tradition of continuous practice and which are accepted solely on the basis of the narrators' trustworthiness.

1. *Al-Ḥaqq Mubāḥathah Ludhiana, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 4, p. 26

I do not regard such *aḥādīth* to be beyond the level of conjecture. At best, they provide no more than probable knowledge, because the method by which they were transmitted is neither definitive nor free from doubt. It leaves significant room for error or discrepancy.

The reason is that the authenticity of such *aḥādīth* depends on the truthfulness of each and every narrator, their moral integrity, sound understanding, sharp memory, piety, purity, and a host of other conditions. The verifiable fulfilment of all these conditions, to the degree of producing complete assurance or something approaching direct perception, is practically impossible. No one can present irrefutable evidence of such complete fulfilment in the case of these *aḥādīth*.[1]

Not all Aḥādīth Are Equal in Ranks of Authenticity

The *aḥādīth* that enjoy the blessing of continuous practice have attained the level of certainty in proportion to their widespread and established implementation. As for the rest of the *aḥādīth*, they do not rise beyond the level of conjecture. At most, some of them may reach the stage of *ẓann ghālib* [strong conjecture]. Therefore, my standpoint regarding collections of Ḥadīth such as *Bukhārī*, *Muslim*, and others is the same as I have expressed before: not all *aḥādīth* are equal in terms of authenticity. Some have attained the level of certainty due to their link to an uninterrupted system of practice, while others remain at the level of conjecture due to the absence of such practice. However, I do not regard any *ḥadīth* as *mauḍū'* [fabricated] unless it plainly contradicts the Holy Qur'ān. And I testify with heartfelt

1. *Al-Ḥaqq Mubāḥathah Ludhiana, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 4, p. 35

sincerity that we possess no criterion superior to the Holy Qur'ān by which the authenticity of Ḥadīth may be assessed.[1]

Continuity of Practice within the Ummah is a Strong Proof

My objective is that a *ḥadīth* should conform to the Holy Qur'ān. However, if it appears that a hadīth supported by the uninterrupted practice of the Ummah is, on the surface, inconsistent with a specific ruling of the Holy Qur'ān, I can still accept it, for the continuity of practice is a strong proof.[2]

The Levels of Continuously Recurrent Practice

The rulings related to the continuously recurrent practice of the Ummah are not all equal in terms of evidential strength. Those practices that have been consistently and uninterruptedly observed without dispute occupy the highest rank. As for those rulings that have entered the domain of recurrent practice but are accompanied by disagreement, they fall below the top tier, in proportion to the extent of that disagreement.

For example, both the practice of performing *raf' yadain*[3] and the practice of not performing it have been acted upon.

1. *Al-Ḥaqq Mubāḥathah Ludhiana, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 4, pp. 35–36
2. *Al-Ḥaqq Mubāḥathah Ludhiana, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 4, p. 42
3. Literally 'raising the hands', a term referring to the practice of raising both hands to shoulder or ear level at specific points during the formal Prayer, particularly before and after *rukū'* (bowing). The practice is based on various *aḥādīth* and is considered Sunnah by many scholars, though schools of thought differ in its implementation. [Publisher]

Therefore, the practice which has been more widely and consistently followed from the first century of Islām to the present day will be considered of a higher rank. Nonetheless, we shall not consider the alternative practice to be an innovation. Rather, in seeking reconciliation, we adopt the position that the presence of such a difference, despite the continuity of practice, is evidence that the Holy Prophet ﷺ himself permitted multiple modes of performing Prayer, as a means of easing hardship for the Ummah, just as he allowed for recitation in seven modes. This variation was intentionally permitted to prevent difficulty for the believers.

In short, who can deny that the continuous practice of the Ummah lends strength to Prophetic *aḥādīth*, such that they rightly deserve to be called *sunnat-e-mutawārathah mutaʿāmalah* [Prophetic practice preserved through successive generations and communal implementation]?[1]

Prophetic Practice Preserved through Successive Generations and Communal Implementation

The *aḥādīth* of continuous practice—those *sunnan-e-mutawārathah mutaʿāmalah* that have been passed down under the observation of both practitioners and instructors, and which have, with varying degrees of emphasis, remained part of Muslim religious practice, generation after generation and age after age—are by no means the subject of my contention. Nor is it necessary to judge them against the standard of the Qur'ān. Even if they appear to convey additional details beyond what is explicitly found in the Qur'ān, I do not reject them. Though my

1. *Al-Ḥaqq Mubāḥathah Ludhiana, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 4, p. 87

belief remains that the Qur'ān is perfect in its teaching and that no truth lies outside of it.[1]

Has Consensus Been Reached on the Authenticity of Bukhārī and Muslim?

You assert that there is a consensus on the authenticity of *Bukhārī* and *Muslim*, and therefore we must accept them blindly. But I do not understand: who are those upon whom this consensus is based? And how has acting upon it become obligatory? The number of Ḥanafīs in the world is nearly 150 million, and they do not accept this alleged consensus. Moreover, it is you yourselves who say that a *ḥadīth* must be accepted only if it meets the condition of authenticity, whereas the Qur'ān must be believed in unconditionally, without any stipulation.[2]

Can a Lone Narration Introduce New Details Beyond the Qur'ān?

This view of mine regarding *aḥādīth* is more accommodating as compared with the view of Imām Shāfi'ī, Imām Abū Hanīfah, and Imām Mālik, inasmuch as I consider a *khabar wāḥid*[3] recorded in the *Ṣaḥīhain*[4]—which is confirmed by

1. *Al-Ḥaqq Mubāḥathah Ludhiana, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 4, pp. 80–81
2. *Al-Ḥaqq Mubāḥathah Ludhiana, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 4, p. 41
3. A *khabar wāḥid* (solitary report) refers to a hadith which does not fulfil the conditions of a *mutawātir ḥadīth*. [Publisher]
4. Refers to the two most authentic compilations of Ḥadīth, i.e. *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī* and *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*. [Publisher]

the system of recurrent practice, and pertains to injunctions, prescribed punishments, and obligations, and does not fall into the other category—to be worthy of corroborating the teachings of the Holy Qur'ān. This is not the view of the three Imāms. It should be known, however, that I do not actually hold that anything can be added to the Qur'ān, because my belief is...that it is تِبْيَانًا لِّكُلِّ شَيْءٍ [an explanation of everything], as I have stated earlier.[1]

The Meaning of Ḥadīth: Past Events, Previous Accounts, and Future Reports

The *aḥād*[2] *aḥādīth*, which are neither part of the *sunan mutawāratha mutaʿāmalah*, nor established through continuous practice, and bear no notable connection to the system of recurrent action, fall short of this level of authenticity. Now, any discerning person can easily understand that such *aḥādīth* mainly consist of historical reports, past incidents, or future prophecies... It is well-known that the *aḥādīth* which lie entirely outside the domain of obligatory practice—after excluding the *sunan mutawārathah mutaʿāmalah* and the *aḥkām mutadāwalah* [widely practiced injunctions]—are in fact those accounts, reports, and narratives which are disconnected from the firmly established system of continuous practice.[3]

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1. *Al-Ḥaqq Mubāḥathah Ludhiana, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 4, p. 100
2. Those *aḥādīth* narrated by one or a few individuals in one or more generations of the chain of transmission, rather than by a large number of people. These narrations do not reach the level of *mutawātir aḥādīth*, which are narrated by numerous individuals in each generation. [Publisher]
3. *Al-Ḥaqq Mubāḥathah Ludhiana, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 4, p. 100

A Ḥadīth That Is Not Contrary to the Qur'ān May Be Accepted

> On the other hand, even if I am highly accommodating, I would bestow only the status of conjecture to these *aḥādīth*, and the same viewpoint is held by the *muḥaddithīn* [scholars of the Ḥadīth]. A conjecture is a statement that might have an element of falsehood in it. So what kind of prudence and righteousness would it be to have one's beliefs based on conjecture and to do away with the authentic and categorical Word of God? I do not say all *aḥādīth* should be set aside like mere rubbish; rather, I say that you should accept those from among them to be authentic that do not oppose or contradict the Holy Qur'ān, lest you be ruined.[1]

The Definition of Ijmā' in Light of the Principles of Islamic Jurisprudence

The Promised Messiah ﷺ has mentioned the various definitions of *ijmā'* contained in the treatises of *Uṣūl-ul-Fiqh* [Principles of Jurisprudence], stating:

> الإِجمَاعُ اتِّفَاقُ مُجْتَهِدِيْن صَالِحِينَ مِنْ أُمَّةِ مُحَمَّدٍ مُصْطَفَى صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فِيْ عصْرٍ واحِدٍ وَ الْأَوْلَى أَنْ يَّكُونَ فِيْ كلِّ عَصْرٍ عَلى أَمْرٍ قَولِيٍّ أَوْ فِعْلِيٍّ...

> That is, *ijmā'* denotes a consensus of certain righteous *mujtahidīn* of the Ummah of Muḥammad *Muṣṭafā* [the Chosen

1. *I'jāz-e-Aḥmadī, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 19, p. 138; Eng. Trans.: *The Miracle of Aḥmad*, p. 50

One ﷺ] which was reached in one era. It is preferable that such consensus be reached in every era and that it is on a point of opinion or a point of practice.

There are two types of *ijmā'*: the first is known as *'azīmah*, that is, when they [the righteous *mujtahidīn*] explicitly express their agreement on a given point, declaring 'we agree unanimously on this view' if the point in question is an opinion; or if the *ijmā'* is on a point of practice, then some of them start to perform that practice.

The second type of *ijmā'* is known as *rukhṣah*; that is, if the *ijmā'* is on a point of opinion, then some authorities explicitly express their agreement with that opinion and others remain silent; if the *ijmā'* is on a point of practice then some start to perform the practice in question, while others refrain from showing any practical opposition; however, they neither perform that practice nor express opposition to it in word or deed for up to three days, or for a period of time which is usually taken as a sign to show that if one was opposed to something, they would surely have expressed their opposition to it within that period. This *ijmā'* is known as *ijmā' sukūtī* [tacit consensus] and it necessitates that everyone is in unanimous agreement.

But others do not consider unanimous agreement necessary, so that the object of the hadīth مَنْ شَذَّ شُذَّ [Whoever separates himself from the Community, shall be separated and cast into the Fire] remains applicable and the *ḥadīth* is not rendered false. Some are of the view that the participation of *mujtahidīn* is not a precondition, and the opinion of the common people is sufficient to hold *ijmā'*, and this is also the view of Bāqillānī. According to others, the precondition of *ijmā'* is that it can only be reached by the Companions and no one else.

According to some, the only *ijmā'* is that which is exercised by the *'itrāt*, that is, the family and descendants of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. Some maintain that it is a necessary

precondition for those who exercise *ijmāʿ* that they are from the People of Madīnah. Others believe that the passing of the age of *ijmāʿ* is a precondition for the establishment of *ijmāʿ*. As such, [Imām] Shāfiʿī holds that this precondition is necessary; he states that *ijmāʿ* can only be established once the age of *ijmāʿ* passes and all those who exercised *ijmāʿ* have died, and their *ijmāʿ* cannot be deemed valid until they all die, for it is necessary to establish that none of them recanted their view. The transmission of *ijmāʿ* also requires *ijmāʿ*, that is, there should be consensus among those who accept a given consensus .

Ijmāʿ lāḥiq [subsequent *ijmāʿ*] is valid even if preceded by *ikhtilāf sābiq* [prior disagreement], that is, if the people did not reach *ijmāʿ* on a certain point in the past, but then *ijmāʿ* was reached in a latter age, then such *ijmāʿ* is considered reliable. It is better that the system of *ijmāʿ* is implemented in every age. Some of the *Muʿtazilah*[1] have said that *ijmāʿ* can also be reached through the concurrence of the majority, as per the *ḥadīth*:

مَنْ شَذَّ شُذَّ فِي النَّارِ[2]

> Whoever separates himself from the Community, shall be separated and cast into the Fire.

Others have stated that *ijmāʿ* is nothing and cannot be achieved even with all its prerequisites. See the treatises on *Uṣūl-ul-Fiqh* penned by the Four Imāms.

It is therefore obvious from this whole exposition that the scholars have also not reached a consensus on the definition of

1. The *Muʿtazilah* were an early Islamic rationalist school known for emphasising reason and free will in theology. [Publisher]
2. *Jāmiʿ al-Tirmidhī*, *Kitāb al-Fitan*, ḥadīth 2167 [Publisher]

ijmā' and, in actual fact, the doors of both denial and acceptance are simultaneously open.[1]

The Definition of Ijmā' According to the Promised Messiah ﷺ

The Promised Messiah ﷺ stated:

> In my view, the word *ijmā'* applies to a situation where renowned Companions ﷺ make their unified opinion public, and the other Companions come to know of it but do not object to it. There is no doubt that a Companion [Ḥaḍrat 'Umar ﷺ]—who later became *Amīrul-Mu'minīn* [Leader of the Believers]—expressed his opinion, accompanied by an oath, before the Holy Prophet ﷺ, that Ibn Ṣayyād is the Promised *Dajjāl*, and neither the Holy Prophet ﷺ nor any of the Companions ﷺ rejected it. Then Ibn 'Umar and Jābir ﷺ also swore to the same effect, and many other Companions ﷺ held the same view. It is evident that this matter was not hidden from the rest of the Companions ﷺ. This is what constitutes *ijmā'* in my understanding.
>
> What other definition of *ijmā'* do you wish to hear from me? And if this does not qualify as *ijmā'* in your view, then you must present testimonies of both types: namely, reports of Companions who swore or testified, even without an oath, that Ibn Ṣayyād was not the Promised *Dajjāl*. If you cannot produce such evidence, then the proof is conclusively established against you that such an *ijmā'* did in fact occur. For had the Companions sworn the opposite, their oaths would surely have been recorded. The silence of the Holy Prophet ﷺ upon

1. *Al-Ḥaqq Mubāḥathah Ludhiana, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 4, pp. 116–118

hearing this oath is more compelling than a thousand *ijmā'*s, and more complete than the testimony of all the Companions ﷺ.[1]

Ijmā' Was Limited Only to the Era of the Companions

Ijmā' existed until the era of the Companions ﷺ; then began the age of *Faij-e-A'waj*[2], and many people deviated from the straight path. Therefore, it became absolutely imperative that a *Ḥakam* be commissioned by the Gracious God.[3]

An Ijmā' Which Opposes the Holy Qur'ān is Not Worthy of Acceptance

We cannot accept an *ijmā'* that opposes the Holy Qur'ān. The Book of Allāh is sufficient for us, and we do not heed the statements of others.[4]

The First Ijmā' of the Companions was on the Death of All Prophets

The Promised Messiah ؑ stated:

1. *Al-Ḥaqq Mubāḥathah Ludhiana, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 4, pp. 415–416
2. Literally, 'a crooked group' refers to a dark period destined to descend upon the Muslims after the first three golden centuries of Islām. According to the prophecies of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, this would be an era in which the Muslims would lose their spirituality and be misguided. [Publisher]
3. *Lujjatun-Nūr, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 16, pp. 415–416
4. *Anjām-e-Ātham, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 11, p. 133

> Ḥaḍrat Abū Bakr Siddīq ﷺ has done such a great favour to this Ummah that it cannot be adequately thanked. Had he not gathered all the Companions ﷺ in the Prophet's Mosque and recited this verse to them that all the previous Prophets had died, the Ummah would have perished. For, in that case, today's mischievous *ulamā'* [scholars] would have contended that the Companions ﷺ too believed that Ḥaḍrat 'Isā ﷺ is alive. But now, due to the presentation of this verse by *Ṣiddīq* the Great, an *ijmā'* has formed among all the Companions ﷺ that all past Prophets had died—even couplets were composed reflecting this consensus. May God shower thousands of blessings upon Abu Bakr's soul. He saved all souls from perdition. All the Companions ﷺ were included in this *ijmā'*, not even a single one of them was out of it. It was the first *ijmā'* of the Companions ﷺ and was an act deserving of the utmost gratitude.[1]

No Ijmā' Was Formed on Jesus ﷺ Being Alive in Heaven

The Promised Messiah ﷺ stated:

> If you say that there is *ijmā'* [consensus] not to act contrary to the teachings of the Four Imāms, then I have already explained the reality of such a consensus... And remember the saying of Imām Aḥmad [ibn Ḥanbal], who was God-fearing and an obedient servant of God, that one who claims *ijmā'* is a liar. Besides, we find many partial differences among the Four Imāms and find these [differences] to be outside of their *ijmā'*. So, what is your position on these issues and their claimant?... If you claim that there is *ijmā'* on the life of Jesus the Messiah ﷺ based on

1. *Barāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya Part V, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 22, pp. 285–286

an authentic source and an explicit statement, then it is a lie of yours and your ilk.[1]

Differences Regarding the Meaning of Ijmā‘

There is disagreement over the meaning of *ijmā‘* [consensus] itself. Some restrict it to the Companions ﷺ, some to the first three centuries, and some to the Four Imāms. The position of the Companions ﷺ and the Imāms is already known. The dissent of just one person suffices to break *ijmā‘*, let alone a great Imām like Imām Mālik ﷺ—who had millions of followers—believing openly in Jesus' death. Yet these people dare to claim *ijmā‘* regarding his life.[2]

The Ijmā‘ of the Companions Ought to Be Followed

Only those shall enter my Community who have embraced the religion of Islām and follow the Book of Allāh and the practices of our Chief and the Best of Mankind [Muḥammad ﷺ], and believe in Allāh, His noble and beneficent Prophet ﷺ, in the Day of Judgment, heaven and hell, and take the oath that they shall not seek any religion other than Islām and shall follow this faith, the faith which is in accord with nature, till they die holding fast to the Book of Allāh the All-Knowing, and shall follow all those precepts as are proven to have been laid down

1. *Itmāmul-Ḥujjah, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 8, p. 280; Eng. Trans.: *The Conclusive Argument*, pp. 22–23

2. *Itmāmul-Ḥujjah, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 8, p. 295; Eng. Trans.: *The Conclusive Argument*, p. 62

by the Prophet ﷺ, the Qur'ān, and by the consensus of the Companions of the Prophet ﷺ. And, whosoever turns away from these three fundamental sources, such a person throws himself into the fire, and his end is one of ruin and destruction.[1]

The Opinion of One Companion is Not a Valid Argument As Per the Law of the Sharī'ah

The valid argument per the law of the Sharī'ah is only the *ijmā'* of the Companions ﷺ, and I have already explained that consensus of the Companions ﷺ occurred concerning the point that all Prophets had died.[2]

The Only Valid Argument As Per the Law of the Sharī'ah is the Ijmā' of the Companions ﷺ

See *Tafsīr Thanā'ī*, for it strongly confirms my statement. It also says that Abū Hurairah ﷺ gives the same interpretation, though the author qualifies that Abū Hurairah ﷺ was deficient in his comprehension of the Holy Qur'ān ... and many *muḥaddithīn* [scholars of Ḥadīth] have criticized the soundness of his understanding. Abū Hurairah ﷺ had the aptitude to quote, but he was quite deficient in understanding and discernment ... It has been proven by *muḥaddithīn* that in many instances, Abū Hurairah ﷺ is mistaken and stumbles in matters that pertain to understanding and discernment. It is an

1. *Mawāhibur-Raḥmān, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 19, p. 315; Eng. Trans.: *Bounties of the Gracious God*, p. 83

2. *Mawāhibur-Raḥmān, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 19, p. 315; Eng. Trans.: *Bounties of the Gracious God*, p. 83

established norm that the opinion of just one Companion cannot be regarded as a valid argument per the law of the Sharī'ah. The valid argument per the law of the Sharī'ah is only the *ijmā'* of the Companions ﷺ, and I have already explained that consensus of the Companions ﷺ occurred concerning the point that all Prophets had died.[1]

The Interpretation of the Holy Prophet ﷺ

Now take note of the Holy Prophet ﷺ whose dreams are revelation from God, and whose interpretation is more sound, robust, and correct than all interpretations.[2]

Is it Compulsory to Act Upon a Khabar Wāḥid?

The Ḥanafī do not hold the view, under any circumstance, that a *khabar wāḥid* [a *ḥadīth* transmitted by a single authority] must be acted upon if it contradicts the Holy Qur'ān. Nor is this the position of the Shāfi'īs. Rather, a fundamental principle of Ḥanafī jurisprudence is that if a *ḥadīth* is found to have been followed continually during the majority of centuries, but not in the first century, or it is not established that it was followed consistently from the first century to the last, then nothing may be added to the understanding provided by the Holy Qur'ān on the basis of such a *ḥadīth*. Imām Shāfi'ī ﷺ was of the view that if a *ḥadīth* contradicts a Quranic verse, then, even

1. *Barāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya Part V, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 21, 410; Eng. Trans.: p. 540
2. *Barāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya Part V, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 21, p. 169

if it is *mutawātir* [transmitted through numerous continuous chains], it is rendered null and void.[1]

Aḥād Aḥādīth Which are at Variance with the Holy Qur'ān Are Not Accepted

The Ḥanafī scholars do not abandon any injunction of the Holy Qur'ān, nor do they add anything to it, on the basis of a *khabar wāḥid*, even if it is found in *Bukhārī* or *Muslim*. Imām Shāfi'ī, for his part, holds that even a *mutawātir ḥadīth* is rendered void if it stands in opposition to a Quranic verse. Imām Mālik, on the other hand, gives precedence to *qiyās* [analogical reasoning] over a *khabar wāḥid*, provided that no Quranic verse contradicts it. (See *Nūrul-Anwār, Uṣūl-e-Fiqh*, p. 150)

It is therefore evident what status the Imāms assign to such *aḥādīth* which oppose the Holy Qur'ān, regardless of whether they are found in *Bukhārī* or *Muslim*. It is quite clear that the majority of the *aḥādīth* in *Bukhārī* and *Muslim* are in fact *aḥād* reports. And Imām Mālik, Imām Shāfi'ī, and Imām Abū Ḥanīfah are of the view that a *khabar wāḥid* is wholly unacceptable when it contradicts the Holy Qur'ān.

Now tell me: can it truly be deduced that these Imāms deemed it obligatory to follow such *aḥādīth* in every case? You ought to first ask the Ḥanafīs and Mālikīs to act on all of these *aḥādīth*, and only then make such assertions.[2]

1. *Al-Ḥaqq Mubāḥathah Ludhiana, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 4, p. 94
2. *Al-Ḥaqq Mubāḥathah Ludhiana, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 4, p. 99

It is Compulsory to Act Upon the Analogical Deductions of the Recognised Mujtahidīn

I assure all Muslims that I am not at variance with them with regard to any single injunction. Just as all Muslims hold it obligatory to act upon the manifest injunctions of the Holy Qur'ān, the authentic *aḥādīth*, and the accepted *qiyāsāt* [analogical deductions] of the recognised *mujtahidīn*, so too do I consider this obligatory.

However, I do not derive the same interpretations from certain past and future reports found in the *aḥādīth* as some contemporary scholars do. This is due to divine revelation from Allāh, which I find to be in perfect conformity with the Holy Qur'ān. For if the meanings deduced by them were accepted, those *aḥādīth* would appear to contradict the Qur'ān, and indeed, they would also conflict with other *aḥādīth* of equal authenticity.[1]

A Constitution for the Jamā'at

It is incumbent on my Jamā'at to follow any *ḥadīth* which does not oppose and contradict the Holy Qur'ān and sunnah, regardless of its authenticity, and give preference to it over man-made jurisprudence. And if they are unable to find [elaboration on] a certain matter from the Ḥadīth, the Sunnah or from the Holy Qur'ān, in such a case, they should follow the Ḥanafī school of jurisprudence, because this school constitutes the majority [among the Muslims] and this is an indication of God's will. If, because of modern developments, the Ḥanafī school of jurisprudence is unable to provide an adequate judgement, the

1. *Al-Ḥaqq Mubāḥathah Ludhiana, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 4, p. 86

scholars of the Community ought to determine such issues in accordance with their God-given reasoning. However, at the same time, they must exercise caution, lest they unjustly denounce the Ḥadīth like Maulawī ʿAbdullāh Chakrhālavī. Nonetheless, they ought to reject any such *ḥadīth* which is at variance with the Qur'ān and Sunnah. Bear in mind that our Jamāʿat is closer to [the doctrines] of the Ahl-e-Ḥadīth and has no relation whatsoever with the absurd ideas of ʿAbdullāh Chakrhālavī. Everyone who is from among my Jamāʿat ought to view his doctrines regarding the hadith, with a deep sense of aversion and revulsion.

Wherever possible they ought to eschew the company of such persons, for this sect is far more misguided than others. My Jamāʿat should neither overly emphasize the Ḥadīth, like those who belong to the class of Maulawī Muḥammad Ḥusain, nor should they reject them completely like ʿAbdullāh. Rather, they ought to adopt a middle way as their guiding principle. That is to say, they ought not to consider the Ḥadīth the final authority on all matters of religion, and reject and abandon the Holy Qur'ān. Nor should they consider the Ḥadīth redundant and worthless to the point that all the traditions of the Holy Prophet ﷺ are laid to waste.[1]

Our Accepted Books

The books which we consider accepted, affirmed, and trustworthy, and in which we place our belief and confidence, are as follows:

1. *Review bar Mubāhathah Batālavī wa Chakrhālavī*, *Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 19, pp. 212–213; Eng. Trans.: *A Review of the Debate Between Batālavī and Chakrhālavī*, pp. 10–12

First and foremost is the Holy Qur'ān. However, it must be borne in mind that we do not accept or affirm the meaning of any verse of the Holy Qur'ān unless it is supported by other verses of the Qur'ān, for the Qur'ān interprets itself. Then, if such a conclusive level of certainty cannot be attained through other verses of the Qur'ān in order to determine a precise and confirmed meaning, it is a requirement that this meaning be supported by a *ḥadīth* which is *ṣaḥīḥ* [authentic], *marfū'* [attributed directly to the Holy Prophet ﷺ], and *muttaṣil* [possessing a connected chain of transmission].

In short, *tafsīr bir-ra'y* [interpretation based on personal opinion] is not at all permitted in our religion, and it is incumbent upon anyone raising an objection not to deviate from this method.

Secondly, the other books we accept: foremost among them is *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī*, for all the *aḥādīth* recorded in it that do not contradict the Holy Qur'ān are, in our view, authoritative. Second is *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, which we accept on the condition that it does not contradict the Holy Qur'ān or *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī*.

Third in rank are the books of Ḥadīth including: *Tirmidhī, Ibn Mājah, Muwaṭṭa', Nasā'ī, Abū Dāwūd*, and *Dārquṭnī*. We accept their *aḥādīth* so long as they do not conflict with the Holy Qur'ān, nor with *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī* or *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*.

These are the books of our religion, and these are the conditions upon which our practice is based.[1]

The Status of Bukhārī and Muslim

The Promised Messiah ؑ stated regarding the status of *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī*:

1. *Ārya Dharam, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 10, pp. 86–87

> *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī* however, is a most blessed and valuable collection of Ḥadīth for the Muslims ... Likewise, [*Ṣaḥīḥ*] *Muslim* and other books of Ḥadīth are also a treasury of religious knowledge and insight.[1]

He further stated:

> It becomes apparent upon reading *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī* that it contains blessing and light, indicating that these words were uttered by the Holy Prophet ﷺ.[2]

Regarding *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim,* the Promised Messiah ؑ wrote:

> *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* is reliable, provided it does not contradict the Holy Qur'ān or *Bukhārī*. As for *Bukhārī*, it is reliable so long as it does not go against the clear and explicit injunctions of the Holy Qur'ān. The remaining books of Ḥadīth may be accepted as well, as long as they do not conflict with the Holy Qur'ān or with *aḥādīth* which are *muttafaq ʿalaih* [i.e. agreed upon by both *Bukhārī* and *Muslim* in their respective collections of Ḥadīth].[3]

The Promised Messiah ؑ stated regarding the status of *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī* and *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* in relation to the Holy Qur'ān:

> It is my view that the *aḥādīth* of *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī* and *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* are authentic only to the extent of conjecture. However, any *ḥadīth* that clearly contradicts the Holy Qur'ān cannot

1. *Kashtī-e-Nūḥ, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 19, p. 65; Eng. Trans.: *Noah's Ark*, p. 105
2. *Al-Ḥakam*, 17 August 1902, p. 1
3. *Ārya Dharam, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 10, p. 60

> be deemed authentic. After all, [Imām] Bukhārī and [Imām] Muslim were not recipients of divine revelation.[1]

He further stated:

> Even if it is accepted that the eminence of both Imām Bukhārī and Muslim, and the greatness of their respective compilations, is acknowledged by the Ummah, this still does not prove that their books hold the rank of decisiveness and certainty, for the Ummah has never unanimously agreed that these books possess the rank of absolute certainty.[2]

It is mentioned in *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī*,[3] that the Holy Prophet ﷺ was affected by *siḥr* [sorcery], and it is alleged, God forbid, that his memory was impaired as a result. When this matter was mentioned before the Promised Messiah ؑ, he stated:

> To accept *Bukhārī* and *Muslim* with one's eyes closed is contrary to our doctrine. Even reason cannot accept that such a magnificent Prophet could have been affected by sorcery. Such claims—that, God forbid, the Holy Prophet's memory was impaired due to magic, that this happened and that happened—can in no way be deemed acceptable.
>
> It appears that some wicked individual inserted such things of their own accord. Though we examine *aḥādīth* with due respect and refinement, we can never accept any narration that contradicts the Holy Qur'ān or undermines the innocence of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. That was a time of compilation. True, they recorded the *aḥādīth* with thought and care, yet they could

1. *Al-Ḥaqq Mubāḥathah Ludhiana, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 4, p. 15
2. *Al-Ḥaqq Mubāḥathah Ludhiana, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 4, p. 98
3. *Kitāb-ut-Ṭibb, Bāb-us-Siḥr*

> not exercise complete caution. Now is the time for reflection and scrutiny. Gathering the traces of the Prophet ﷺ is indeed a meritorious task, but it is an established fact that those who compile are rarely able to investigate thoroughly.[1]

The Promised Messiah عليه السلام stated:

> Follow the Holy Qur'ān and the *aḥādīth* that have an established origin in the Messenger of God ﷺ. We believe that even the weakest of *aḥādīth* ought to be acted upon, provided they are not at variance with the Holy Qur'ān. We regard *Bukhārī* and *Muslim* to be the most authentic books after the Book of Allāh.[2]

1. *Al-Ḥakam*, 10 November 1907, p. 8
2. *Al-Badr*, 8 September 1904, p. 8

THE SCIENCE OF JURISPRUDENCE AND THE JURISTS

The Importance of Becoming Well-Versed in Religion

The Promised Messiah ﷺ stated:

> The members of our Jamā'at should become well-versed in religion. However, this does not mean becoming well-versed in religion in the sense commonly understood by clerics: that if someone is familiar with a few legal rulings, such as those concerning *istinjā'* [purification after relieving oneself], they are to be considered jurists in the conventional sense. Rather, what I mean is that they should ponder over the verses of the Holy Qur'ān, the Ḥadīth, and my writings, and they should become acquainted with the insights and verities of the Holy Qur'ān.[1]

The Four Imāms Were Like Four Walls That Surrounded Islām

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ writes that Maulawī Sher 'Alī ؓ related to him that once a cleric came to visit the Promised Messiah ﷺ and expressed a desire to have a private audience with him.

1. *Badr*, 25 April 1907, p. 4

When he met the Promised Messiah ﷺ, he mentioned many times during the conversation that he was a Ḥanafī and inclined towards *taqlīd* [adherence to established jurisprudence], and so on.

The Promised Messiah ﷺ said to him:

> You have repeatedly mentioned that you are a Ḥanafī, so you should know that we are not opposed to the Ḥanafīs; rather, I consider the Four Imāms to be like the four walls of a house, due to which the Muslims were saved from division and ruin. Not everyone is qualified to exercise *ijtihād* in religious matters. If it were not for these Imāms, every qualified and unqualified person would have devised their own path at will, which would have led to tremendous discord in the Ummah of Muḥammad ﷺ. However, these Imāms—by virtue of their knowledge, insight, righteousness and purity—were qualified for *ijtihād* and, by the grace of Allāh, safeguarded the Muslims from dissension and ruin. Therefore, these Imāms have served as a protective boundary for Muslims. We honour them and acknowledge their greatness and service.

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ further states: 'The Promised Messiah ﷺ held all the Imāms in great esteem; nevertheless, he considered Imām Abū Ḥanīfah ؒ to be the most distinguished among them in terms of knowledge and discernment, and he frequently praised his profound reasoning and analytical insight.'[1]

On another occasion, the Promised Messiah ﷺ stated:

> Innovations had begun to appear during the time of Imām Shāfi'ī, Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal and others. Had these Imāms not existed at that time, it would have become impossible to

1. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 1, p. 334

distinguish between the people of truth and the people of falsehood. Thousands of impure individuals would have remained mixed among them. These four figures served as a protective wall for Islām. Had these individuals not been raised, Islām would have become a confused and ambiguous religion, such that one could no longer distinguish between those who followed innovation and those who did not.[1]

The Four Imāms Were a Symbol of Blessing

The Promised Messiah ﷺ stated:

In my view, the Four Imāms were a symbol of blessing and they were possessed of spirituality. For spirituality begins with righteousness, and truly, these men were righteous and feared God, and their hearts had no relationship whatsoever with the dogs of this world.[2]

The Elevated Status of Imām Abū Ḥanīfah

The Promised Messiah ﷺ wrote in praise of Imām Abū Ḥanīfah:

Some Imāms, such as *Imām-e-Aʿẓam* [Abū Ḥanīfah] of Kufa, who is counted among those endowed with sound judgment, did not give the same level of attention to *aḥādīth*. As a result of the subtlety of his reasoning, some of his *ijtihādāt* were considered at variance with authentic *aḥādīth*. The truth is that, in terms of the strength of his *ijtihād*, knowledge, understanding,

1. *Badr*, 3 November, 1901, p. 2
2. *Al-Ḥakam*, 24 September 1901, p. 2; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt,* vol. 4, p. 9

> insight, and discernment, he was superior to the other three Imāms. The aptitude granted to him by God to arrive at correct conclusions was of such a calibre that he was able to clearly distinguish between what was established and what was not. His perceptiveness carried a unique ability to understand the Holy Qur'ān, and his very nature was deeply attuned to the Divine Word, elevating him to the highest stage of *'irfan* [divine cognisance]. For this reason, he was universally acknowledged to occupy a pre-eminent rank in *ijtihād* and *istinbāṭ* [deduction]—a rank that others were unable to attain. *Subḥānallāh* [Glory be to Allāh]! How remarkable was this sagacious and godly Imām, who, perceiving the lofty and exalted indication contained in a single Quranic verse, deemed it superior to numerous *aḥādīth* that stood in contradiction to it, casting them aside without fearing the reproach of the ignorant.'[1]

A debate took place in 1891 between the Promised Messiah ﷺ and Maulawī Muḥammad Ḥusain of Batala. During the course of the debate, the Promised Messiah ﷺ observed that Maulawī Muḥammad Ḥusain was speaking of Imām Abū Ḥanīfah ﷺ in a disrespectful manner, upon which he said:

> O respected Maulawī Sahib! I request you not to become upset. Had you even the slightest good opinion of the righteous Imām, Abū Ḥanīfah, you would never have used such mocking and contemptuous language against him. You are unaware of the greatness of this noble Imām. He was the great ocean, and all others are but its branches and tributaries. To

1. *Izālah-e-Auhām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 3, p. 385

> call him *ahl-ur-ra'y*[1] is a grave injustice! The noble Imām Abū Ḥanīfah, in addition to his profound mastery of the sciences relating to the Prophetic traditions, had an extraordinary ability in deriving rulings from the Holy Qur'ān. May Allāh have mercy on Ḥaḍrat Mujaddid Alf-e-Thānī, who stated on page 307 of his *Maktūbāt* that *Imām-e-A'ẓam* has a spiritual affinity with the Messiah to come, in respect of deriving rulings from the Qur'ān.

Pride of the Imāms, the Great Imām Abū Ḥanīfah

The Promised Messiah ﷺ wrote about Maulawī Muḥammad Ḥusain of Batala in one of his announcements:

> His seventy-six-page article contained nothing but irrelevant statements, abusive language, and fabrications. He has used foul language to such an extent that, without justification, he employed extremely disrespectful and offensive words about the righteous Imām, the *Fakhrul-A'immah* [Pride of the Imāms], and *Imām-e-A'ẓam*, Abū Hanīfah.[2]

A Conditional Instruction to Follow the Ḥanafī School of Jurisprudence

The Promised Messiah ﷺ stated:

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1. Lit. 'People of Opinion', *ahl-ur-ra'y* were the proponents of using independent reasoning to arrive at legal decisions. This term was used in the derogatory sense by the opponents of Imām Abū Ḥanīfah ﷺ. [Publisher]
2. *Majmū'ah-e-Ishtihārāt*, vol. 1, p. 196

> The Holy Qur'ān occupies the foremost position in the practical domain of the Sharī'ah, followed by the authentic *aḥādīth* that are supported by the Sunnah. If a particular matter is not found in either of these two sources, then it is my view that the Ḥanafī School should be followed, for its widespread following is itself an indication that this is the will of God. However, we do not pay attention to numerical abundance when it is in conflict with the Holy Qur'ān and Ḥadīth, because there are certain rulings in their jurisprudence that even contradict sound reasoning. In such cases, the *ijtihād* of Aḥmadī Scholars takes precedence and is to be acted upon.[1]

What is meant by the Promised Messiah ﷺ Following the Ḥanafī School of Thought?

Maulawī Bahā'-ud-Dīn of Ahmadabad asked: 'It is written in the *Maktūbāt* of Imām Rabbāni that the Promised Messiah would follow the Ḥanafī school of thought. What does this mean?' The Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

> This means that just as Ḥaḍrat *Imām-e-A'ẓam* would derive his argumentation from the Holy Qur'ān and would give precedence to the Holy Qur'ān in every matter, similarly, the Promised Messiah ﷺ would also bring the knowledge and verities of the Holy Qur'ān. As such, in another place in his *Maktūbāt*, he has clarified this point, stating that the Promised Messiah ﷺ would be granted knowledge of the verities encompassed in the Holy Qur'ān.[2]

1. *Dhikr-e-Ḥabīb*, p. 209
2. *Al-Ḥakam*, 10 August 1901, p. 8

Reformers Appear in View of the Need of the Time

> Whenever a *mujaddid* [reformer] appears, they do so in view of the need of that time and not to teach people about issues relating to how they should clean themselves after answering the call of nature or ablution.[1]

Do not Hold Prejudice Against Those Who Do Not Adhere to a School of Thought

Ḥaḍrat Pīr Sirāj-ul-Ḥaqq Nuʿmānī ؓ writes: 'One day I said to the Promised Messiah ؑ: "Your Holiness, what is your view regarding the malevolent Wahhābī[2] sect, who are non-*muqallidīn*?' (At that time, I was a staunch Ḥanafī). The Promised Messiah ؑ heard me, smiled, and remained silent. The next day, when I raised the same question again, he said:

> This sect is also from God and is not inherently evil. When people excessively stressed *taqlīd* and adherence to the Ḥanafī school, to such an extent that they practically elevated the Four Imāms to the status of prophets, then God, out of His wisdom, created this group so that the *muqallidīn* [those who adhere to *taqlīd*] may stay on the straight path and follow a moderate course. One fault they certainly possess, however, is that each one of them regards himself as a *mujtahid* and *imām*, and they go as far as to speak disrespectfully about the Four Imāms.[3]

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1. *Al-Ḥakam*, 19 May 1899, p. 4
2. A follower of the reform movement of Muḥammad ibn 'Abdul-Wahhāb (1703–1792), known for its strict emphasis on *tauḥīd* and opposition to religious innovations. [Publisher]
3. *Tadhkiratul-Mahdī*, pp. 213–214

On another occasion, the Promised Messiah عليه السلام stated:

> Once an Arab came to visit me. He was a staunch opponent of the Wahhābīs to the extent that he would curse upon the mere mention of them in his presence. On his arrival here as well, he began to vehemently insult and malign the Wahhābīs. I completely ignored this, treating him with kindness and hospitality. One day when he was filled with anger, thoroughly abusing the Wahhābīs, someone told him: 'The person in whose home you are staying as a guest is also a Wahhābī.' He fell silent upon [hearing] this. And the one who called me a Wahhābī was not entirely wrong, for after the Holy Qur'ān, I consider it essential to act upon authentic *aḥādīth*.[1]

Different Places of Prayer for the Four Schools in Makkah

It is well-known that when people see that a particular group has become widespread in the world, they often return to their original principles and approaches. For instance, today, you can observe that the Ḥanafīs, Shāfi'īs, Mālikīs, and Ḥanbalīs mix and sit with one another, despite such deep-rooted differences that even the sacred precincts of Makkah could not unite them in a single place of Prayer.[2]

1. *Badr*, dated 4 July 1907, p. 7
2. *Majmū'ah-e-Ishtihārāt*, vol. 2, p. 298

Taqlīd is also Necessary to a Certain Extent

On one occasion, a preacher who was engaged in discussion with His Holiness ﷺ was speaking to him in a manner that made it seem that His Holiness ﷺ was also a supporter of the Wahhābī sect. The man would repeatedly express his dislike for the Ḥanafīs and Wahhābīs, and would say that he was a seeker of the truth. On this, the Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

> If a person were to listen to my points of view in an affectionate and calm manner, they would find me to be a deeply compassionate person. I desire to settle matters in accordance with the Qur'ān and Ḥadīth. If a person agrees to settle issues in such a manner, whereby they accept whatever is in accordance with the Holy Qur'ān and the authentic Ḥadīth and disregard anything that contradicts them, then nothing would give me more pleasure; this is precisely what I stand for, this is the delight of my eyes.
>
> My belief is opposed to the Wahhābīs. In my view, anyone who refuses to follow a school of thought seeks to free themselves from divine law, because everyone cannot be a religious scholar who is capable of deriving and interpreting divine law. Scant knowledge does not make someone suddenly worthy of being followed. If such a person were to free themselves from following all those who are righteous and who have purified mankind, would they be justified in doing so? The mysteries of the Holy Qur'ān are not revealed except to those who are pure and holy. People who come to me must first be coloured, in a way, with the hue of Ḥanafī Islām. In my view, these four schools of thought are a blessing from Allāh the Exalted. They may be likened to four walls which surround Islām. In order to support Islām, Allāh the Exalted created such remarkable

people who were extremely pious and spiritually purified. The reason that people have become corrupted in this day and age is only because they have stopped following the Imāms.

God Almighty loves two kinds of people: firstly, those whom Allāh Almighty Himself purifies and grants knowledge; secondly, those who follow them. In my estimation, those who follow the purified are good people indeed, because their souls were purified and they were closer in era to the Noble Messenger ﷺ. I have heard with my own ears certain people using harsh language for Imam Abū Ḥanīfah رضي الله عنه, but they are wrong in doing so.[1]

Differences Amongst the Fuqahā'

The Promised Messiah عليه السلام stated:

There are so many differences of opinion among the scholars of today concerning tenets of theology that it can be said that there is a disagreement in every doctrine. As an example, there was a physician in Lahore whose name was Ghulām Dastgīr. He used to say: 'There is a custom in this country among the patients and their relatives that they ask the physician whether a medicine's properties have a hot or cold effect. Whenever I am asked this, I give a single reply: that there is disagreement. It is disagreement that has given rise to numerous sects. As an example, there is the sect of the Ḥanafīs. They have disagreements among themselves. Furthermore, there is disparity in the statements of Imām Abū Ḥanīfah himself.'[2]

1. *Dhikr-e-Ḥabīb*, pp. 277–278
2. *Badr*, 1 August 1907, p. 3

Sound Analogical Reasoning is That Which is Derived from the Qur'ān and Sunnah

A person asked: 'If a cat severs a chicken's neck and the chicken is still twitching, is it permissible to slaughter it?'

The Promised Messiah ﷺ replied:

> Know that merely applying *qiyās* [analogical reasoning] in such matters is completely forbidden in religion. The only permissible form of *qiyās* is that which is derived from the Qur'ān and the Ḥadīth. Our religion has been conveyed to us through transmission. So, if a *ḥadīth* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ exists on such a matter, then all is well and good. But if no such *ḥadīth* is established, then why compromise one's faith for a trifling matter?

وَلَا تَقُولُوا۟ لِمَا تَصِفُ أَلْسِنَتُكُمُ ٱلْكَذِبَ هَٰذَا حَلَٰلٌ وَهَٰذَا حَرَامٌ[1]

> And say not because of the falsehood which your tongues utter—'This is lawful, and this is unlawful,'[2]

The Way to Finding the Authentic Sunnah

Someone asked: 'How can the authentic Sunnah be identified when there are differences among the sects of Islām?'

In response, the Promised Messiah ﷺ stated:

1. *Sūrah al-Naḥl*, 16:117
2. *Badr*, 24 May, 1908, p. 4

When the Holy Qur'ān, Ḥadīth, Sunnah, and the righteousness and purity of a community are considered together, then one can discern what the true Sunnah is.[1]

The Authority of Qiyās

Having said all this, let me now add a word about *qiyās* [analogical deduction]. Although the Holy Qur'ān and the Ḥadīth support me, the unanimous verdict of the Companions of the Holy Prophet ﷺ is in my favour, the heavenly signs and the accompanying evidence are on my side, and the need of the hour too establishes the veracity of my claim, analogical deduction may also complete the argument. Let us therefore find out what reason has to say. Man is never prepared to believe that which has no precedent. For example, if someone comes and reports that your son was carried to the skies by a wind storm or the child turned into a dog and ran away, will you accept what he says without reasonable explanation and further enquiry? No, you won't. That is why the Holy Qur'ān instructs us:

فَاسْأَلُوا أَهْلَ الذِّكْرِ إِن كُنتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ[2]

> So ask those who possess the Reminder, if you know not.

Now just consider the question of the death of Jesus عليه السلام and his bodily ascent to heaven. Leaving aside for a moment the arguments that can be advanced about his death, it is an indisputable fact that the infidels demanded of the Holy Prophet ﷺ the

1. *Badr*, 24 May 1908, p. 4
2. *Sūrah al-Naḥl*, 16:44

miracle of ascending to heaven. The Holy Prophet ﷺ, who was the most perfect and the best of all Prophets, ought to have gone on and ascended to the heavens. Instead, he replied in words of the divine revelation:

قُلْ سُبْحَانَ رَبِّي هَلْ كُنتُ إِلَّا بَشَرًا رَّسُولًا[1]

That is, tell them that God is innocent of acting in violation of His promise particularly when He has made it impossible for mankind to ascend to the heavens. If I do this, I will be considered a liar. Now if your belief that Jesus ﷺ ascended to the heavens is correct, what explanation would you have for an antagonist clergyman who criticises the Holy Prophet ﷺ on the basis of this verse? Do not therefore entertain ideas which are not supported by the Holy Qur'ān, because in doing so you will only bring a bad name to Islām and to the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Furthermore, the earlier scriptures do not contain any precedent of this kind either, and it is not prohibited to argue in the light of these scriptures. Allāh says about the Holy Prophet ﷺ:

وَشَهِدَ شَاهِدٌ مِّنْ بَنِي إِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ[2]

> A witness from among the children of Israel bears witness

Again He says:

1. *Sūrah Banī Isrā'īl*, 17:94
2. *Sūrah al-Aḥqāf*, 46:11

كَفَىٰ بِاللَّهِ شَهِيدًا بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَكُمْ وَمَنْ عِندَهُ عِلْمُ الْكِتَابِ[1]

Sufficient is Allāh as a Witness between me and you and so is he who possesses knowledge of the Book.

يَعْرِفُونَهُ كَمَا يَعْرِفُونَ أَبْنَآءَهُمْ[2]

They recognize it even as they recognize their sons.

God Himself presents these verses as proof of the prophethood of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, then what is wrong if we were to base our reasoning upon them?[3]

Differences among the Muqallidīn and Non-Muqallidīn

I have come from Allāh the Exalted as the *Ḥakam* [Arbiter]. It was not long ago that the *muqallidīn* [those who adhere to a particular school of Islamic law] and the non-*muqallidīn* were finding faults in one another and publicly exposing them. The various sects were clashing like wild beasts, declaring one another disbelievers and deeming each other impure. If there was any path to reconciliation, then why did so much discord and division exist within a single people? Misguidance had crept into them, and they had drifted far from the truth. So, in this age of division, it became necessary for Allāh the Exalted Himself to pass judgment on the matter. And so He did, by sending among them a *Ḥakam*. Now tell me: have I added

1. *Sūrah ar-Raʿd*, 13:44
2. *Sūrah al-Baqarah*, 2:147
3. *Lecture Ludhiana, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 20, pp. 296–297

anything to the Holy Qur'ān or removed anything from it that so much passion has been stirred against me?[1]

The Grounds for Declaring Maulawī 'Abdullāh Chakrhālavī a Disbeliever

Ḥaḍrat Maulānā 'Abdul-Karīm ؓ stated that Maulawī Muḥammad Ḥusain had published a booklet in which he included an article titled '*The Day of Judgment in the Chiniyanwali Mosque*', targeting Maulawī 'Abdullāh Chakrhālavī. In the course of that article, he wrote: 'We consider him to be akin to the prophet of Qadian'—meaning that, in their view, he is a disbeliever—and he appended an edict of *takfīr* [declaration of disbelief] beneath this statement.

The Promised Messiah ؑ then asked: 'What are the grounds for this *takfīr*?'

It was reported that Shaikh Chakrhālavī had said: 'There is no need for Ḥadīth. Studying Ḥadīth is like a dog accustomed to chewing on bones. The rank of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ in bringing the Qur'ān is no more than that of a servant delivering official orders.'

The Promised Messiah ؑ responded:

> To utter such statements is *kufr* [disbelief] and a grave insult to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. It is not permissible to show such disdain for the sayings of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Even disbelievers remember the charms and incantations associated with their idols. Should Muslims then not have preserved the words of their Prophet? The Messenger of Allah ﷺ was the foremost in understanding the Holy Qur'ān. He practised its teachings and instructed others to do the same. This is what is called the

1. *Al-Ḥakam*, 30 September 1904, p. 3

Sunnah, and this is what is meant by continuous and consistent practice.

Later, the Imāms painstakingly recorded this Sunnah in words, compiling it with diligence and rigour, undertaking thorough investigation and scrutiny. That written record became known as Ḥadīth. Just look at the works of Bukhārī and Muslim and observe how much effort they put into them. After all, they were not merely recording the stories of their forefathers. Rather, to the best of their ability, they meticulously collected the sayings and actions of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, that is, his Sunnah, with precision and care.[1]

The Wahhābīs' Adherence to Outward Formalities

The Promised Messiah ؑ narrated an incident that revealed the mindset of the Wahhābīs and their lack of appropriate reverence for the Holy Prophet ﷺ. He said that once, while in Amritsar, some scholars from the Ghaznavī group offered him tea. Since his right hand had been injured in childhood and the bone was damaged, he took the cup with his left hand. Without inquiring about the reason, the Ghaznavīs immediately objected, saying that this was contrary to the Sunnah.

The Promised Messiah ؑ explained to them that manners and spiritual etiquette are also part of the Sunnah. Only then were they informed of the actual reason. Still, they objected further, saying that he praised the Holy Prophet ﷺ too much in his writings, and that such excessive praise was impermissible. They said they only believed what was established from Ḥadīth, and according to them, the rank of the Holy Prophet ﷺ was not higher than that of Jonah son of Amittai (Yūnus ibn Matta).

1. *Al-Ḥakam*, 17 August 1902, p. 11

The Promised Messiah ﷺ responded:

> Just as the physical advancements we witness today did not exist in earlier times, so too is there a progression in spiritual development, which reached its culmination in the person of the Prophet of God ﷺ. This is the true meaning of *Khātamun-Nabiyyīn* [Seal of the Prophets]. If this is their state [i.e the Wahhābīs], then how can they have genuine love for the Prophet ﷺ? And what benefit could they possibly derive [from him]?

The Promised Messiah ﷺ added:

> My heart has never been content with these people, nor have I ever wished to be called a Wahhābī. You will not find me referred to as a Wahhābī in any book. Though I have sat in their gatherings, I always sensed an air of empty rhetoric. It seemed to me that theirs was all outward show, without any real substance.

The Promised Messiah ﷺ further stated:

> Maulawī Muḥammad Ḥusain himself wrote in his *Ishā'atus-Sunnah* that a recipient of *ilhām* [divine inspiration] or *kashf* [spiritual vision] may declare a *ṣaḥīḥ ḥadīth* to be weak and a *da'īf* [weak] one to be *ṣaḥīḥ*, because he may receive confirmation of it directly from the Holy Prophet ﷺ in a state of *kashf*.

The Promised Messiah ﷺ commented:

> I do not rely on my visions and inspirations unless they are supported by the Qur'ān, the Sunnah, and authentic Ḥadīth.

> Let Muḥammad Ḥusain be asked: if ʻAbdullāh Ghaznavī is allowed to interfere in matters of Ḥadīth in this way, then what fault has the *Ḥakam* committed that he should be compelled to accept every narration indiscriminately?[1]

The Opposite Extremes of the Wahhābīs and Chakrhālavīs

It became clear, during a discussion on the Chakrhālavī sect, that they had introduced changes even in the Prayer. They had removed the *taḥiyyāt*[2] and the *durūd* [invocation of blessings upon the Holy Prophet ﷺ], along with other alterations. In response to this dangerous deviation, the Promised Messiah ؑ, out of his compassion and zeal for Islām, deemed it necessary to issue a public announcement warning against the deviation of the Chakrhālavī movement. He stated that both Maulawī Muḥammad Ḥusain and Maulawī Chakrhālavī had fallen into opposite extremes: one into excess and the other into neglect. He added that it was only by the grace of Allāh that we have been kept firm upon the straight path.

The Promised Messiah ؑ stated:

> The Prophets always come with two things: the Book and the Sunnah. One is the Word of God, and the other is the Sunnah; that is, they demonstrate the Book through their practice. The affairs of the world cannot proceed without both. The intricate matters explained by a teacher must also be illustrated through

1. *Badr*, Issue: 21 November 1902, p. 30

2. Refers to the portion of the Prayer recited during the sitting position (*qaʻdah*) following the prostrations. It begins with the words *at-taḥiyyātu lillāhi* and includes praise of God, salutations upon the Holy Prophet ﷺ and supplications for blessings. [Publisher]

practical demonstration. Just as the Word of God is certain, the Sunnah is also a certainty.

All praise belongs to God, Who has kept us steadfast upon the straight path. The Wahhābīs fell into excess, elevating Ḥadīth above the Qur'ān and placing the Qur'ān before it like a plaintiff seeking judgement. On the other hand, the Chakrhālavīs rejected Ḥadīth altogether, falling into neglect. This poses a grave danger of discord, and it is necessary to correct it. God has appointed me as the *Ḥakam*, and so I shall, by way of a public announcement, expose this error and present a detailed explanation thereafter. One must first reform themselves, then others. Reflecting upon the path to which God has guided me brings great delight. How perfectly the Holy Qur'ān declares:

فَبِأَيِّ حَدِيثٍ بَعْدَهُ يُؤْمِنُونَ[1]

In what word after this will they believe?

And in another verse:

فَبِأَيِّ حَدِيثٍ بَعْدَ اللهِ وَآيَاتِهِ يُؤْمِنُونَ[2]

In what word, then, after that of Allāh and His Signs will they believe?

This is a prophecy relating to the Wahhābīs. As for those who reject the Sunnah, Allāh has said about them:

1. *Sūrah al-Mursalāt*, 77:51
2. *Sūrah al-Jāthiyah*, 45:7

إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ اللهَ فَاتَّبِعُونِي يُحْبِبْكُمُ اللهُ[1]

If you love Allāh, follow me [i.e the Holy Prophet ﷺ]; then will Allāh love you.[2]

The Condition of the Ḥanafīs

The Promised Messiah عليه السلام stated:

> As far as the Ḥanafīs are concerned, the unfortunate thing is that inauthentic narrations and innovations in the Faith have crept into their midst. Ḥaḍrat *Imām-e-Aʿẓam*, may Allāh have mercy on him, was a righteous man of the highest order. But when his followers became bereft of spirituality, they began to adopt self invented beliefs, and they became so excessive in blindly following that they began to give precedence to the words of such people for whom the Qur'ān gave no guarantee of preservation from error, as compared to the sayings of the Noble Messenger, peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him. In view of their own vested interests and objectives, they began to interpret the sayings of Imām Sahib in whichever way they pleased. I was once in Ludhiana and a person who belonged to a family of nawābs came to meet me and during the course of discussion, he said that he was a staunch Ḥanafī. He also told me that his paternal uncle held a strong religious attachment to *Imām-e-Aʿẓam*, may Allāh have mercy on him, and when he read Imam Sahib's statement in the book *Mā Lā Budda Minhu*[3] that only wine made from barley, grapes, and two

1. *Surah Āl ʿImrān*, 3:32
2. *Badr*, Issue: 28 November–5 December 1902, p. 46
3. A book on the Ḥanafī school of jurisprudence written by Qāḍī Thanā'ullāh Pānīpatī. [Publisher]

other things—that is four types of wine—are prohibited, the man ordered various wines from abroad and drank an amount equivalent to 80,000 rupees. He did this, as if, to follow Imam Sahib truly and sincerely it appears! I seek refuge with Allāh! Aye, again! I seek refuge with Allāh.

In short, these are the kinds of interpretations that they make. Generally, it is said by way of criticism that a person can secure any religious verdict from them as they may please. In fact, they are the ones who have invented the concept of *ḥalālah*, which suggests that a man who seeks a 'legal' workaround to be with his wife again after he has divorced her, he can marry someone else only to divorce her. However, this concept is nowhere to be found in the Holy Qur'ān and in the Ḥadīth, curse has been sent upon the man who engages in the practice of *ḥalālah*.[1]

The Conduct of the Shāfi'īs

Then another sect is the one based on the Shāfi'ī school of thought. These people live a life that is akin to barbarians. There is a saying among them that 'all is forgiven to the Shāfi'ī.' In other words, there is no need for the lawful and unlawful, or anything else for that matter.

As such, the gypsies who wander our country call themselves Shāfi'ī. Just observe their ways and their character. In Amritsar, a *Muwaḥḥid* used to lead the Prayer in what is known as the Mosque of the Courtesan. He mentioned to me that on one occasion he went to Lahore where he happened to go to a mosque owned by Shāfi'īs. It was time for the morning Prayer.

1. *Al-Ḥakam*, Issue: 30 September 1901, p. 3; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt,* vol. 3, pp. 18–19

When this man was asked, he responded by saying that he was a Shāfi'ī, so they made him the Imām for the congregational Prayer. However, in accordance with the Shāfi'ī creed, when he did not remain standing to recite the *Qunūt*[1] prayer customarily said after the bowing position in the morning Prayer, the people became furious. Finally, he managed to leave the mosque only with great difficulty.

Therefore, the religion of Islām is suffering from many such internal forms of disorder and corruption, which need reformation. In fact, if a man looks at the external disorders, he becomes all the more astonished. Just look at the disorder of the Christian priests and you will become worried. In short, the coming together of all these forms of disorder manifestly tells us that in this present time, a heavenly dispensation is needed and if God had not established this Community, this would have been a cause for objection against God. However, we thank God for taking our hands and establishing this Community with His support.

فَالْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ عَلٰى ذٰلِكَ

For this, all praise is due to Allāh[2]

1. To stand in supplication, with both hands to one's side, during the formal Prayer after completing the bowing position (*ruku'*) and before falling into prostration (*sajdah*). During the *Qunūt* one may recite Quranic prayers and other prayers as well. One may offer the *Qunūt* in times of calamity or for a special purpose. [Publisher]

2. *Al-Ḥakam*, 30 September 1901, p. 3; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt,* vol 4, p. 19

The Promised Messiah's Disapproval of Debates on Trivial Matters

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ wrote that Mirzā Muḥammad Dīn, a resident of Lagar Wal in Gurdaspur district, narrated to him that Maulawī Muḥammad Ḥusain of Batala once published an announcement addressing issues such as *rafʿ yadain* [raising the hands during various movements in Prayer], saying *Āmīn* aloud, and similar matters, offering a reward of 10 rupees for a response to each. The announcement listed ten such matters. Mirzā Muḥammad Dīn said that the Promised Messiah ؑ read the announcement to him and said:

> Look at how absurd this announcement is! As long as Prayer is valid in every form, stirring up disputes over such matters only leads to corruption. What we need right now is to serve Islām, not to become entangled in such petty issues.[1]

It Is Incorrect to Declare Someone a Disbeliever Based on Jurisprudential Differences

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ wrote that Ḥāfiẓ Nūr Muḥammad, a resident of Faizullah Chak, once informed him in writing: 'A *maulawī* from Kashmir—who was also a *ḥāfiẓ* of the Holy Qur'ān—visited our village and, for several days, delivered sermons attacking the non-*muqallidīn*, that is, the Ahl-e-Ḥadīth. It should be noted that we too followed the Ahl-e-Ḥadīth school.

'The *maulawī* openly preached that seeking intercession through deceased ancestors is permissible, and that all Prayers offered behind non-*muqallidīn* must be repeated. He would cite the verse:

1. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 1, p. 541

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللهَ وَابْتَغُوا إِلَيْهِ الْوَسِيلَةَ[1]

> O ye who believe! Fear Allāh and seek the way of approach unto Him and strive in His way that you may prosper.

'I asked him one day: "What do you understand by the word *wasīlah* [means of approach] in this verse?" He replied: "The *wasīlah* refers to good deeds and the righteous people who have passed away." I said: "Do not teach people *shirk*." He responded with extreme harshness and incited the villagers against me, causing them to begin offering their Prayers separately. At that point, only my father and I would pray together.

'My father then travelled to Qadian and said to the Promised Messiah ﷺ: "Dear Sir, I entrusted my son to you so that he may become a true Muslim, but now people are calling him a disbeliever." The Promised Messiah ﷺ wrote a religious verdict on red paper and handed it to my father. The verdict stated:

> Those who declare someone a disbeliever merely for saying *Āmīn* aloud, raising the hands during Prayer, or reciting *Sūrah al-Fātiḥah* behind the imām are themselves disbelievers according to Imām Abū Ḥanīfah.

'A few days later, those very people began to pray behind me again of their own accord. Later, when I had the opportunity to visit the Promised Messiah ﷺ, he said to me:

> Miāṅ Nūr Muḥammad, people call you a Wahhābī. Tell them that you are a disciple of the leader of all spiritual guides [Sayyid 'Abdul Qādir Jīlānī], and read to them his book *Ghaniyyatut-Ṭālibīn*.

1. *Sūrah al-Mā'idah*, 5:36

'The Promised Messiah ﷺ used to greatly praise both Sayyid 'Abdul Qādir Jīlānī and Imām al-Ghazālī.'[1]

Ḥaḍrat Hakeem Noor-ud-Deen's Declaration of Being Ḥanafī

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ relates that Ḥāfiẓ Roshan 'Alī narrated: 'Once, for a certain religious need, the Promised Messiah ﷺ asked Ḥaḍrat Maulawī Noor-ud-Deen ؓ to declare that he adhered to the Ḥanafī school of thought, even though he knew that Ḥaḍrat Maulawī Noor-ud-Deen ؓ was associated with the Ahl-e-Ḥadīth.

'In response, Ḥaḍrat Maulawī Noor-ud-Deen ؓ wrote a couplet on a card and sent it to the Promised Messiah ﷺ:

به مے سجادہ رنگین کن گرت پیر مغاں گوید کہ سالک بے خبر نبود ز راہ و رسم منزلہا

'If your spiritual guide commands you to stain your prayer mat with wine, then do so—

for the seeker never ignores the etiquette of love and its traditions.'

Below this, he signed: 'Noor-ud-Deen Ḥanafī.'

'Later, when Ḥaḍrat Maulawī Noor-ud-Deen ؓ visited the Promised Messiah ﷺ, the latter asked him: "Maulawī Sahib, what are the foundational principles of the Ḥanafī school of thought?"

'He replied: "That the Holy Qur'ān is to be given precedence above all else. If the ruling for a particular matter is not found in the Qur'ān, then one must refer to the sayings and actions of the Holy Prophet ﷺ found in the Ḥadīth. Thereafter, reference may be made to *ijmā'* [consensus] and *qiyās* [analogical reasoning]."

1. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 2, pp. 12–13

'The Promised Messiah ﷺ smiled, took out the very card Maulawī Sahib had sent him, and said: "Then what was the meaning of this?"

'Ḥaḍrat Maulawī Noor-ud-Deen ؓ felt embarrassed and fell silent.'

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ further states: 'The meaning of the couplet that Ḥaḍrat Maulawī Noor-ud-Deen ؓ wrote was: "In my own view, I belong to the Ahl-e-Ḥadīth, but since my spiritual guide instructs me to refer to myself as Ḥanafī, I sacrifice my view for his and adopt the label of Ḥanafī."

'I would also like to add that before the spread of Aḥmadiyyat, the Ahl-e-Ḥadīth were more well-known across India, and there was fierce animosity between them and the Ḥanafīṣ. Constant debates, polemics, and rivalries took place between the two groups, to the extent that they had become sworn enemies, issuing hostile edicts against one another.

'Before his claim, the Promised Messiah ﷺ did not affiliate himself with either group in a partisan or sectarian manner. In principle, he would present himself as a Ḥanafī, but he never referred to himself as an Ahl-e-Ḥadīth at any time. However, in terms of beliefs and practical conduct, he was closer to the ways of the Ahl-e-Ḥadīth than to the Ḥanafīs.[1]

Dissatisfaction with the Way of the Ahl-e-Ḥadīth

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ writes that Khwājah 'Abd-ur-Raḥmān, a resident of Kashmir, informed him in a letter that his father, Miāṅ Ḥabībullāh, once told him: 'I had the opportunity to stand beside the Promised Messiah ﷺ during Prayer. Since I was a Wahhābī (Ahl-e-Ḥadīth) before accepting Aḥmadiyyat, I intended to place my foot so that it touched the foot of the Promised Messiah ﷺ. But when I moved my foot close to his, he slightly drew his foot back

1. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 1, pp. 333–334

towards himself. I felt embarrassed by this and never did such a thing again.'

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ﷺ further states: 'The Ahl-e-Ḥadīth sect is to be respected for its foundational merits. Through it, many people were freed from innovations and were guided to the Prophetic Sunnah. However, they placed excessive emphasis on certain matters to the point of exaggeration, such that those practices drifted away from the spirit of the Sharī'ah. The basic principle in Prayer is that there should be no unnecessary gaps between worshippers. People should stand close together so that space is not wasted, order is maintained, and senior individuals are not given the excuse to separate themselves from those deemed lower in rank. However, the Ahl-e-Ḥadīth have so overstressed this point that it has become almost absurd. It now appears that an Ahl-e-Ḥadīth Prayer is incomplete unless one rubs shoulder to shoulder, ankle to ankle, and foot to foot with the person next to them. Yet this level of physical proximity, rather than being beneficial, often becomes a source of discomfort and distraction during Prayer.'[1]

The Need to Re-examine the Books of Jurisprudence

Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ﷺ narrates that Miāṅ Khair-ud-Dīn of Sikhwan ﷺ informed him that the Promised Messiah ﷺ once said:

> There is a need to re-examine the books of *Fiqh* [jurisprudence] as well.[2]

1. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 1, pp. 313–314
2. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 2, p. 279

THE WISDOM IN PRAYER

The Philosophy of Prayer Timings

The Promised Messiah عليه السلام stated:

> And what are the five daily Prayers? They are a reflection of your various conditions. Your life is marked by five variations in state, which overtake you in times of trial and it is essential that you experience these diverse states.
>
> (1) Firstly, when you are warned of an impending tribulation, like the issuance of a warrant in your name by the court. This is the first state which causes a decline in your peace and happiness. This state resembles your hour of decline, for as a result your contentment begins to fade. Symbolic of this is the *Ẓuhr* Prayer, the timing of which begins when the sun begins to decline from its zenith.
>
> (2) The second change which affects you is when the time of the tribulation draws near. This may be likened to when you are apprehended as per the dictates of an arrest warrant and brought, as it were, before a judge. This is when you are overcome by fear and your blood runs cold. The light of hope and solace slowly fades away. This state resembles that part of the day when daylight grows dim and the sun can be looked at directly and it becomes clear that sunset is close at hand. This spiritual state is reflected in the *'Aṣr* Prayer.

(3) The third change that overtakes you is when all hope of deliverance from tribulation seems lost. For example, when a charge-sheet is prepared against you and your opposing witnesses testify against you in order to see you perish. By this time you begin to lose control of your senses and you already consider yourself a prisoner. So this state resembles the time when the sun sets and all hope of daylight sets with it. This spiritual state is reflected in the *Maghrib* Prayer.

(4) The fourth change that overwhelms you is, as it were, when the tribulation finally seizes you and its deep darkness engulfs you.

For example, when you are sentenced by the judge on the basis of the charge-sheet and the testimony of the witnesses, and you are handed over to a police officer to remain in custody. This state resembles that part of the day when night finally settles and complete darkness prevails. So, this spiritual state is reflected in the *'Ishā'* Prayer.

(5) Then, after you have spent a period in time engulfed by the darkness of this affliction, God's mercy finally surges forth upon you and saves you from darkness. This may be likened to when day dawns after the dark of night, and then this very light of day shines forth with all its radiance. So, this spiritual state is reflected in the *Fajr* Prayer.

Thus, in view of the five states that are prevalent in the variation of your disposition, God has prescribed for you the five daily Prayers. By this you can appreciate that the daily Prayers are specifically for the benefit of your soul. If you desire to be safeguarded from afflictions then do not abandon the five daily Prayers, for they are a reflection of your varying inner and spiritual conditions.[1]

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1. *Kashtī-e-Nūḥ, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 19, pp. 69–70; Eng. Trans.: *Noah's Ark*, pp. 110–112

The Wisdom in Congregational Prayer

Congregational Prayer has been promised greater reward because it fosters unity. To translate this unity into practical form, Islām emphatically commands that when lining up for Prayer, our feet should be aligned, the rows should be straight, and worshippers should stand close together, with the aim of merging the many into one, so that the spiritual light of one may illuminate another, thus dissolving the barriers of ego and selfishness. Remember: human beings are endowed with the capacity to absorb the light radiated by others. It is for the cultivation of this unity that we are instructed to offer daily Prayers in the local mosque, the Friday Prayer in the central mosque, *'Īd* [Eid] Prayers in the *'Īd* congregation ground, and, once a year, to gather Muslims from all corners of the world at the House of Allāh: the *Ka'bah*. The objective behind all these injunctions is none other than the establishment of unity.[1]

The Constituent Parts of Prayer

In short, Prayer is the elixir which turns a handful of dust into pure gold. It is water which washes away inner impurities. With such Prayer, the spirit melts and flows like water to fall prostrate on the threshold of the Holy One. It stands in the presence of God, bowing down and prostrating before Him. The *ṣalāt* taught by Islām is the reflection of this spiritual phenomena. The standing of the spirit signifies that it shows readiness to suffer every hardship and to obey every command for the sake of God. The bowing down of the spirit before God means that, by renouncing all other love and relationships, it has turned to

1. *Lecture Ludhiāna, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 20, pp. 280–282

God and belongs to Him alone. Its prostration is that it falls on the threshold of God and, forsaking all personal thoughts, loses the very identity of its existence. This is the Prayer which helps to establish communion with God, and this is the Prayer that Islamic Sharīʿah has depicted in the prescribed daily *ṣalāt* so that physical Prayer may inspire spiritual Prayer. God Almighty has fashioned man in such a way that the spirit influences the body and the body in turn influences the spirit. When the spirit is melancholy, the eyes shed tears; and when the spirit is glad, the face glows with happiness and one even feels like laughing. Similarly, whenever the body is afflicted with pain or distress the spirit also partakes of the suffering. When a cool breeze enlivens the body the spirit feels it too. Thus, the object of worship is that, through mutual relationship between body and spirit, the spirit may move towards the Holy One and engage in spiritual standing and prostrating. Since man has to strive for progress, such Prayer too is a kind of striving. It is quite obvious that when two objects are linked together and we pick up one of them, the other also moves. But mere physical standing, bowing and prostrating is of no use, unless an effort is made so that the spirit may also partake of these movements of *qiyām* [standing], *rukū'* [bowing] and *sajdah* [prostration]. This partaking depends upon true knowledge which in turn depends upon divine grace.[1]

Five Prayers Instead of the Five Times for Drinking Wine

It has been established that it was the Christians who brought wine to Arabia and ruined the country. It appears that the

1. *Lecture Siālkot, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 20, pp. 223–224

notion of idolatry was also reinforced by the notion of worshipping Jesus, and the Arabs became more entrenched in creature worship in imitation of the Christians. It should be kept in mind that the nomadic people of Arabia did not know anything about wine, but when Christians arrived there they gifted it to some of the new converts. Then, this evil habit spread among the people like wildfire and five times of drinking were prescribed just like the five times of Prayer. Hence, 1—*Jāshriyyah* is the wine drunk at dawn before sunrise; 2—*Ṣubuḥ* is the wine drunk after sunrise; 3—*Ghabūq* is the name of the wine drunk at noon and in the afternoon; 4—*Qīl* is the wine drunk at midday; 5—*Faḥm* is the name of wine drunk at night. With its advent, Islām effected a change and replaced these five times of drinking with five Prayers, replaced every evil with virtue and taught the name of God Almighty in place of creature worship.[1]

1. *Nūrul-Qur'ān, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 9 pp. 351–352, footnote; Eng. Trans.: *The Light of the Holy Qur'ān—Number One*, footnote from p. 25, pp. 48–49

THE CALL TO PRAYER

The Adhān is a Beautiful Means of Calling People to God

Once, as the *Adhān* was being called, the Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

> What a beautiful testimony it is! When its sound echoes through the air and reaches the hearts, it leaves a remarkable effect. None of the methods used by other religions to summon worshippers can compare to this. How can any artificial sound ever match the human voice?[1]

It Is Not Necessary to Stay Silent During the Adhān

A person was reading aloud the Promised Messiah's announcement regarding the plague when the *Adhān* began, so he fell silent. Upon this, the Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

> Continue reading. It is permissible to read during the *Adhān*.[2]

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1. *Al-Ḥakam*, 10 November 1902, pp. 7–8
2. *Dhikr-e-Ḥabīb*, p. 296

Placing the Fingers in the Ears During the Adhān

A person asked why fingers are placed in the ears during the *Adhān*?'

The Promised Messiah ﷺ replied:

> The wisdom behind this is that placing the fingers in the ears strengthens the voice. In the early days, during the time of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, the *Adhān* was called without inserting the fingers into the ears. One day, the Holy Prophet ﷺ noticed weakness in Ḥaḍrat Bilāl's voice, so he said: 'O Bilāl, place your fingers in your ears while calling the *Adhān*.' When Bilāl ؓ did so, his voice became stronger and the weakness disappeared. Thereafter, due to the Prophet's instruction, this act became Sunnah.

The Promised Messiah ﷺ further said:

> It is often observed among singers and vocalists that when they raise their voices, they place a hand over one ear in order to overcome weakness and increase vocal strength.[1]

Calling the Adhān in the Ear of a Child

Ḥakīm Muḥammad 'Umar from Firozpur inquired: 'When a child is born, Muslims call the *Adhan* in its ear. Is this practice in accordance with the Sharī'ah or is it merely a custom?'

The Promised Messiah ﷺ responded:

1. *Tadhkiratul-Mahdī*, part 1, p. 70

This practice is proven from the Ḥadīth.[1] Moreover, the words said in the ears at that time have a certain impact on the morals and conditions of man. Therefore, it is a good custom and is permitted.[2]

Is Adhān Necessary for Congregational Prayer?

QUESTION—Is it necessary to call the *Adhān* for congregational Prayer?

In response to this question, Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ II ؓ stated: 'Yes, the *Adhān* should be called. However, if those who are to join the congregational Prayer are already present, then there is no harm if the *Adhān* is not called. People have expressed different views on this matter. Once, I was on a journey with the Promised Messiah ؑ to Gurdaspur. When the time for Prayer arrived, someone asked him: "Is it necessary to call the *Adhān*?"

The Promised Messiah ؑ replied:

> The dear friends are already gathered, so what is the need?

Therefore, if the situation is like that, then there is no need to call the *Adhān*. But in general, it should be called, because it encourages people to attend Prayer.'[3]

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1. In *Sunan at-Tirmidhī*, *Kitābul-Aḍāḥī 'An-Rasulillāhi ṣallallāhu 'alaihi wa sallam*, *Bābul-Adhāni fi 'Udhunil-Maulūd*, Ḥadīth 1514; it is written as: أَذَّنَ فِي أُذُنِ الْحَسَنِ ابْنِ عَلِيٍّ حِينَ وَلَدَتْهُ فَاطِمَةُ بِالصَّلَاةِ [Publisher]
2. *Badr*, 28 March 1907, p. 4; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt,* vol. 9, pp. 204–205
3. *Al-Fazl*, 19 January 1922, p. 8

ABLUTION

The Effect of Physical Cleanliness upon the Inner Self

There are two states of man. Anyone who desires to develop an inner state of righteousness and purity must also be physically clean as well. In another instance, Allāh the Exalted states:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ التَّوَّابِينَ وَيُحِبُّ الْمُتَطَهِّرِينَ[1]

I.e. I am a friend of those who desire inner and outward purity. Physical cleanliness encourages and fosters inner purity. If an individual is neglectful in this respect and does not clean themselves after defecating for example, they would not develop the slightest inner purity. Hence, remember that outwardly cleanliness is necessary for inner purity. Therefore, it is necessary that in the least, one bathes once a week on Friday, performs the ablution before every Prayer, and uses fragrance before joining the congregation for Prayer.

The instruction to make use of fragrance on the two *ʿĪds* and on Friday is for this very purpose. The actual reason is that where there are large congregations, there is a danger of the spreading of filth. Therefore, bathing, clean clothes and

1. *Al-Baqarah*, 2:223

fragrance, will prevent the spread of noxious matter and filth. Just as Allāh the Exalted has instructed this during one's lifetime, He has established a similar rule after death.[1]

The Essence of Ablution and its Philosophy

Responding to the allegations of Padre Fatḥ-e-Masīḥ, the Promised Messiah ﷺ stated:

As for your asking how sins can be washed away by performing the *wuḍū'* [ablution]—O ignorant one!—why don't you ponder over the divine scriptures?... Ablution is merely the washing of hands, feet, and face, and had this been the only purport of the Sharī'ah that washing of hands and feet washes away sins, then this Holy Sharī'ah would have considered all the unholy people who are refractory to Islām to be free of sin upon washing their hands and feet because sins are removed by ablution. This, however, is not the purport of the Lawgiver [the Holy Prophet ﷺ].[2]

The Medical Benefits of Ablution

The observance of Prayer and performing ablution carries medical benefits as well. Physicians say that if every day a person did not wash their face, this would cause ophthalmia (an inflammation of the eye—Editor) and this is a precursor to cataract.

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1. *Risālah Indhār, quoted from Malfūẓāt*, vol. 1, p. 164; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt,* vol.2, p. 254
2. *Nūrul-Qur'ān, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 2, p. 420; Eng. Trans.: *Light of the Holy Qur'ān—Number Two*, p. 120

> This results in many other ailments as well. Tell me, why does it feel like the end of the world for people to perform ablution? Anyone can see the excellence in this practice. In the ablution, a person must rinse their mouth with water and they must brush their teeth; this expels foul odour from the mouth and strengthens the teeth, which in turn enables one to properly chew their food so that it may be easily digested. Then, one is required to clean their nose. When a foul smell enters the nasal passages, this disturbs the mind. Now do tell me, what is so unacceptable about this? After this, they take their needs before Allāh Almighty and receive an opportunity to submit their requests to Him. During this time one has ample opportunity to make their supplications. At most, it takes one hour to offer the Prayer; although some Prayers take less than fifteen minutes. It is astonishing then that the offering of Prayer is considered to be a waste of time, even though it possesses such merits and benefits. Even if the entire day and night are wasted away in vain and useless things, or in sport and merriment, this is regarded as being occupied. If the people possessed strong faith—rather, strong faith aside, if they possessed any faith at all, why would this be their condition and why would matters reach such a plight?[1]

Washing the Feet in Ablution is Necessary

In a letter to one of his friends, the Promised Messiah ﷺ wrote:

1. *Al-Ḥakam*, 31 January 1901, p. 2; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt,* vol. 3, pp. 47–48

> A study of the issue of *masḥ*[1] shows that, according to the rules of *naḥw* [Arabic syntax], both meanings can be derived by reflecting on the verse [of the Holy Qur'ān regarding ablution]: washing the feet and wiping over them. However, when I examined the successive *āthār* [narrations] of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, it became evident that he would wash his feet. Therefore, the first meaning, that is, washing the feet, is considered the more valid interpretation.[2]

Avoiding Harmful Water

The newspaper *Badr* reported: 'Water from rains and floods gathers in depressed grounds around Qadian forming a pond which is named *dhāb* here. When this depressed land (all or part of it) is dry, the people of the village use it as a place to relieve themselves and a lot of filth gathers there that mixes with the flood waters.

'When the Promised Messiah عليه السلام went out for a walk with the members of the Community this morning, while passing by this pond, he said:

> Such water is harmful for the health of the village.

Then the Promised Messiah عليه السلام said:

> A lot of filth mixes with this water and one feels a revulsion towards using it. Though, according to *Fiqh* [Islamic jurisprudence], it is permissible to perform ablution with it as it exceeds

1. Lit. 'To wipe.' Refers to the practice of passing wet hands over one's shoes or socks during ablution instead of washing the feet, in certain situations. [Publisher]
2. *Maktūbāt-e-Aḥmad*, vol. 2, p. 543

the 10 x 10 [10 yards by 10 yards] standard determined by the jurists, yet a person who has seen the filth falling into it and is disgusted by its use, it is not a necessity for him that he use this water, just as the Noble Messenger ﷺ permitted the consumption of lizard but did not like to eat it himself.'[1]

It is Incorrect to Perform Ablution from Filthy Pond Water

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ writes that Miāṅ Faḍl Muḥammad, a shopkeeper in the Dar-ul-Fazl neighbourhood, wrote to him: 'The Promised Messiah ؑ once came out of his residence for a walk, as was his daily routine. A number of friends were waiting for him at the main gate. That day, the Promised Messiah ؑ set out towards the village of Bhaini. Along the path leading to Bhaini, near Qadian, there was a large banyan tree beside a pond. When His Holiness ؑ reached that spot, he stood beneath the tree and said: "The water of this pond is not suitable; Prayer should not be offered after performing ablution with it."

'I had previously warned many friends against using the water of that pond for ablution, but they would mock me and not take it seriously. On that day, those very friends were present and heard with their own ears the instruction of the Promised Messiah ؑ prohibiting the use of that pond's water for ablution.'[2]

1. *Badr*, 26 September 1907, p. 6; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt*, vol. 9, pp. 405–406
2. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 2, p. 304

Guidance on Purifying Water in a Well

The Promised Messiah ﷺ was once asked: 'What is the directive of Your Holiness about the ruling that so many buckets of water should be taken out from a well when a rat, cat, hen, goat, or a person dies inside it? Previously, our practice was to consider the water pure unless its colour, smell, or taste changed.'

The Promised Messiah ﷺ stated:

> My belief is only that which has been mentioned in the Ḥadīth. I simply do not know, nor does my jurisdiction govern how many buckets to take out if this animal falls in or how many if another falls in.

It was submitted: 'Your Holiness has directed to abide by Ḥanafī *Fiqh* [jurisprudence] when the authentic Sunnah [Practice of the Prophet ﷺ] is not known.'

The Promised Messiah ﷺ replied:

> When is there any such determination in the prominent works of *Fiqh* [Islamic jurisprudence]; but, yes, it is written in *Nijāt-ul-Mu'minīn*. However, in that it is also written: سر ٹوئے وچہ دے کے بیٹھ نماز کرے [Sit and offer Prayer inserting your head into a ditch]. Does anyone act upon this and is it allowed whereas Prayer is not permitted for women during their menstruation and parturition. Consider this issue in the same vein too. I state a principle for you that is set forth in the Glorious Qur'ān:
>
> وَالرُّجْزَ فَاهْجُرْ[1]
>
> And uncleanliness do thou shun

1. *Sūrah al-Mudaththir*, 74:6

> Therefore, when the condition of the water is such that there is a danger to health, then it should be cleansed. For example, if leaves or insects fall in (even though these *maulawīs* do not issue a *fatwā* of contamination on this); otherwise, there is no determination of quantity. So long as the colour, smell or taste is not changed by contamination, that water is pure.[1]

The Promised Messiah's Manner of Performing Ablution

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ writes that Ḥaḍrat Bhā'ī 'Abd-ur-Raḥmān of Qadian narrated: 'I had many opportunities to pour water for the Promised Messiah ؑ while he performed ablution. He would perform ablution with great care and precision. He would wash each limb three times and would pass wet hands only over the front part of the head. He would run his fingers through his blessed beard and wipe over his socks. At times, he would remove his socks, wash his feet, running his fingers between the toes. He would rub his teeth well with his finger and also clean his gums.'[2]

Performing Masḥ over Socks

Once, performing *masḥ* over socks was mentioned, so the Promised Messiah ؑ stated:

> It is also permissible to perform *masḥ* over cotton socks.

He then showed his blessed feet, upon which he was wearing cotton socks, and said:

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1. *Badr*, 1907, p. 12
2. *Sīrat-ul-Mahdī*, vol. 2, p. 387

I perform *masḥ* over them.[1]

Masḥ Over Ripped Socks

Ḥaḍrat Muṣleḥ Mauʿūd ؓ states: 'I observed that the Promised Messiah ؑ, if even a small hole appeared in his socks, would immediately replace them. But these days, I see people performing *masḥ* over socks that have no heels and are torn at the front as well. Why does this happen? It is because they are unaware of the injunctions of Sharīʿah. I have seen that most people do not correctly recognise the proper limits of concessions and permissibility.[2]

Continuous Flatulence Due to Illness Does Not Invalidate Ablution

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ writes: 'Dr. Mīr Muḥammad Ismāʿīl ؓ told me that on one occasion, for some reason, the late Maulawī 'Abdul-Karīm ؓ was unable to lead the Prayer, and Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ I ؓ was also not present. The Promised Messiah ؑ instructed Ḥakīm Faḍl-ud-Dīn ؓ to lead the Prayer. He replied: "Your Holiness is aware that I suffer from hemorrhoids, and as a result I continuously pass wind. How can I lead the Prayer in this state?" The Promised Messiah ؑ said: "O Ḥakīm Sahib, does your own Prayer not remain valid despite this ailment?" He replied: "Yes, your Holiness." The Promised Messiah ؑ said: "Then our Prayer will also be valid. Please lead us in Prayer."'

1. *Al-Badr*, 2 January 1903, p. 77
2. *Manṣib-e-Khilāfat, Anwārul-'Ulūm*, vol. 2, p. 45

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ﷺ further states: 'The continuous passing of wind due to illness is not considered something that nullifies ablution.'[1]

Touching One's Private Parts Does Not Invalidate Ablution

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ﷺ writes that Ḥāfiẓ Nūr Muḥammad ﷺ informed him that they once asked the Promised Messiah ﷺ: 'There is a *ḥadīth* which states that if a person touches their private parts, their ablution is nullified. What is the ruling on this?' The Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

> The private part is, after all, just another part of the body. Therefore, this *ḥadīth* does not appear to be strong.

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ﷺ further states: 'If the *ḥadīth* is indeed authentic, it does not mean, God forbid, that the statement of the Holy Prophet ﷺ is not correct. Rather, it means that this statement does not appear to have actually been uttered by the Holy Prophet ﷺ, and that there may be some weakness in the chain of transmission. And Allāh knows best.'[2]

Doubt Regarding the Cleanliness of One's Clothes

Ḥaḍrat Munshī Barkat 'Alī of Shimla narrates: 'The Promised Messiah ﷺ would seldom lead the Prayer himself. Ḥaḍrat Maulawī 'Abdul-Karīm ﷺ and Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ I ﷺ would generally

1. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 1, pp. 614–615
2. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 1, p. 320

lead the Prayer. On one occasion, Ḥaḍrat Maulawī ʿAbdul-Karīm ؓ expressed a doubt, saying: "It seems my clothes may not be clean, so I cannot lead the Prayer. Someone else should lead it." The Promised Messiah ؑ said: "If you were to offer Prayer alone in these clothes, would it be valid?" Maulawī Sahib replied: "Yes, it would be valid."

'The Promised Messiah ؑ then said: "If you are certain that your Prayer is valid in these clothes, then lead the Prayer, for our Prayer will also be valid behind you."'[1]

If the Place of Prostration is Clean, Prayer is Valid

Ḥaḍrat Qāḍī ʿAbdur-Raḥīm ؓ narrates: 'We once heard the Promised Messiah ؑ say:

> If the place of *sajdah* [prostration] is clean, then the Prayer offered there is valid. That is, if a mat, rug, or similar surface is impure or there is doubt about its cleanliness, and a clean cloth is spread only over the place of *sajdah*, then the Prayer is valid.

At that time, I reflected on the wisdom behind this verdict and understood that perhaps the Promised Messiah ؑ had inferred this ruling from the permissibility of offering Prayer while wearing shoes.'[2]

1. *Aṣḥāb-e-Aḥmad*, vol. 3, p. 189, New Edition, narration of Ḥaḍrat Munshī Barkat ʿAlī of Shimla
2. *Aṣḥāb-e-Aḥmad*, vol. 6, pp. 126–127, New Edition, narration of Ḥaḍrat Qāḍī ʿAbdur-Raḥīm

THE ESSENTIAL PARTS OF PRAYER

The Wisdom in the Essential Parts of Prayer

Explaining the wisdom in the *arkān* [essential parts of Prayer], the Promised Messiah ﷺ stated:

> In actuality, the essential parts of the Prayer are a symbolic representation of the form observed in spirituality. Man is required to stand in the presence of God Almighty and standing is also from among the etiquettes of servants. The bowing position, which is the second posture in Prayer, demonstrates that one submits themselves by lowering their head in preparation to fulfil any command that may be given to them, as it were. Moreover, the prostration expresses, through action, the greatest possible reverence, utmost humility and lowliness, which are the objectives of Prayer. These reverential practices and rites have been appointed by God Almighty to serve as a reminiscence of the deeper reality and so that the physical body may partake of the inner, spiritual essence. In addition to this, in order to reinforce in man the inner, spiritual rites, God has appointed outwardly, apparent rites. Now if in outwardly practice (which is a reflection of the manner observed at a deeper and spiritual level), one merely imitates certain apparent actions superficially and if one seeks to complete these actions only to rid themselves of a heavy burden, then do tell me, what pleasure and satisfaction can one gain from such practice? Until one is

able to feel pleasure and delight in Prayer, how can its reality be perceived? This is only possible when the soul too falls in prostration at the threshold of God with a sense of complete self-effacement and humility, and when the soul too proclaims the words uttered by the tongue. It is then that a pleasure, light and comfort is attained. It is my desire to write about this in further detail. A person undergoes various stages before they become a human being, i.e. starting as far back as sperm; in fact, even before this there are the constituent elements of the sperm, such as its nutrients, as well as their layout and construction. Then, after the sperm develops through various stages, it transforms into a child; children grow into adults, who finally reach old age. Hence, one ought to accept that it is the providence of Allāh Almighty which nurtures human life through all of these diverse stages at various times and this entire state of affairs ought to remain firmly rooted in one's mind. It is only then that a person can prove able to lay forth their own servitude in the presence of God's providence. In short, the fundamental point to note is that pleasure and delight in Prayer can only be derived when a relationship exists between man's servitude and God's providence. Until a person throws themselves before Allāh Almighty, considering their own being to be nothing more than a complete non-entity or the like thereof—this being an inherent demand of divine providence—they cannot receive God's grace and light. However, when they do receive this blessing, they experience an intense pleasure, which cannot be matched by any other.[1]

1. *Al-Ḥakam*, 12 April 1899, p. 5; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt,* vol. 1, pp. 161–162

Takbīr-e-Taḥrīmah

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ writes that Khwājah ʻAbd-ur-Raḥmān, a resident of Kashmir, informed him in writing that his father had told him: 'Whenever the Promised Messiah ؑ made the intention for Prayer, he would raise the thumbs of both his hands to his ears. That is, he would touch his ears with them.'[1]

It Is Permissible to Recite the Basmalah During Prayer Both Out Loud and Silently

Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ I ؓ stated: 'It is permissible to recite the *basmalah*[2] both aloud and silently. Our teacher, Maulawī ʻAbdul-Karīm (may Allāh forgive him and have mercy on him), had a passionate disposition and would recite the *basmalah* out loud (*jahr-an*). The Promised Messiah ؑ, however, would not recite it aloud. I also recite it silently.

'There were Companions of the Holy Prophet ﷺ who followed both practices. Therefore, I advise you not to quarrel over how it is recited. The same applies to the recitation of *Āmīn*: both modes are permissible.

'At times, Jews and Christians would express displeasure over Muslims saying *Āmīn*, so the Companions would say it very loudly. Personally, I appreciate both practices: whether one says *Āmīn* aloud or silently.'[3]

1. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 1, pp. 744–745
2. The invocation '*Bismillāhir–raḥmānir–raḥīm*' (In the name of Allāh, the Gracious, the Merciful). [Publisher]
3. *Badr,* 23 May 1912, p. 3

Raising the Hands During Various Movements in Prayer

The Promised Messiah ﷺ stated:

> It is not necessary, and it is permissible for whoever does it.[1]

He further stated:

> Whether one chooses to do this or not, there is no harm either way, for both methods have been mentioned in the Ḥadīth. This is also evident from the practices of the Ahl-e-Ḥadīth and Ahl-e-Sunnah, as one group performs *raf'yadain* [Raising the hands during various movements in Prayer], while the other does not. It appears that the Holy Prophet ﷺ at one point practiced *raf'yadain*, but later discontinued it.[2]

There is another narration related to this topic in which Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ writes that Ḥāfiẓ Nūr Muḥammad, a resident of Faizullah Chak, once wrote to him stating that he had asked the Promised Messiah ﷺ: 'What is the ruling on reciting *Sūrah al-Fātiḥah* behind the Imām, *rafa'yadain* , and saying *Āmīn*?'

The Promised Messiah ﷺ replied:

> This practice is established from the *aḥādīth* and should be followed.

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ further states: 'The practice of reciting *Sūrah al-Fātiḥah* behind the imām is established from the Promised Messiah ﷺ through continuous transmission. However,

1. *Badr*, dated 23 May, 1912, p. 7
2. *Badr*, dated 3rd April 1903

as for *rafa' yadain* and *āmīn bil-jahr* [saying *āmīn* aloud], I do not believe that the Promised Messiah ﷺ made the statement attributed to him in the narration above. Had he considered these actions obligatory, he would have continuously practised them himself. Yet there is no evidence of such continuous practice on his part. In fact, his consistent practice appears to have been contrary to these two actions.

'Therefore, I believe that Ḥāfiẓ Nūr Muḥammad's question to the Promised Messiah ﷺ may have contained multiple parts, but His Holiness ﷺ only responded to the first part: the issue of reciting *Sūrah al-Fātiḥah* behind the Imām. And Allāh knows best.'[1]

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ narrated that Miāń 'Abdullāh of Sanaur ؓ said to him: 'In the beginning, I belonged to a group of strict non-*muqallidīn* and I was very particular about *raf' yadain* and *āmīn bil-jahr*. I continued this practice for a long time, even after meeting His Holiness ﷺ. Then one day, I happened to offer Prayer behind His Holiness ﷺ. After the Prayer had concluded, he turned to me, smiled, and referring to *raf' yadain*, said: "Miāń 'Abdullāh! You have adhered to this Sunnah long enough." From that day, I abandoned the practice of *raf' yadain*, and in fact, I also stopped *āmīn bil-jahr*. I never once saw His Holiness ﷺ perform *raf' yadain*, nor did I hear him do *āmīn bil-jahr*, nor did I hear him recite the *basmalah* [i.e. *bismillāhir-raḥmānir-raḥīm*] aloud.'

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ states: 'This indeed was the way of the Promised Messiah ﷺ described by Miāń 'Abdullāh. And this practice continued among Aḥmadīs during the lifetime of the Promised Messiah ﷺ and even after his demise. No one would rebuke another over such matters. Some would practise *āmīn bil-jahr*, others would not; some would perform *raf' yadain*, though most would not; some would recite the *basmalah* aloud, but the majority did not. The Promised Messiah ﷺ used to say that all these practices are proven

1. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 1, p. 564

from the Holy Prophet ﷺ, but the ones His Holiness ؑ adhered to were those which the Holy Prophet ﷺ performed more consistently.'[1]

Reciting Sūrah al-Fātiḥah after the Imām

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ writes: 'Maulawī Sher 'Alī ؓ once narrated to me that the Promised Messiah ؑ used to strictly emphasise that it is necessary for the *muqtadīs* [congregants] to recite *Sūrah al-Fātiḥah* after the imām. However, along with this, the Promised Messiah ؑ also stated:

> Although I believe that *Sūrah al-Fātiḥah* is essential, I do not regard the Prayer of a person who does not repeat *Sūrah al-Fātiḥah* to be invalid. This is because there have been many pious and saintly people in the past who did not consider it essential to repeat *Sūrah al-Fātiḥah* [after the imām] and I cannot consider their Prayer to have gone to waste.

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ further writes: 'This humble one would like to add that the Ḥanafīs are of the belief that the *muqtadīs* should stand silently behind the imām and should listen to his recitation without reciting anything themselves. The Ahl-e-Ḥadīth, however, believe that the congregation should also repeat *Sūrah al-Fātiḥah* after the imām. Although the Promised Messiah ؑ was in support of this view of the Ahl-e-Ḥadīth, he did not share the view of the overly rigid Ahl-e-Ḥadīth that one's Prayer is completely invalidated if *Sūrah al-Fātiḥah* is not repeated.'[2]

1. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 1, pp. 147–148
2. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 1, pp. 334–335

In response to a question submitted by Ḥaḍrat Munshī Rustam ʻAlī ﷺ, the Promised Messiah ﷺ wrote in a letter:

> Although Prayer can be complete without the *muqtadīs* repeating *Sūrah al-Fātiḥah* [after the imām], precedence should be given to reciting it. If the imām is quick in his recitation, the *muqtadīs* should still repeat after him however much they can, even if it is just one or two verses, but not in a manner which would prevent them from listening to the recitation of the imām itself. If one is unable to repeat after the imām [due to the speed of his recitation] then that is something which is beyond one's own control, and though it will be sufficient, of course it will not be the highest form of Prayer.[1]

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ﷺ writes that Miāṅ Khair-ud-Dīn of Sikhwan ﷺ wrote to him: 'On one occasion, I asked the Promised Messiah ﷺ regarding the recitation of *Sūrah al-Fātiḥah* behind the imām during Prayer.

The Promised Messiah ﷺ replied:

> It is preferable to recite *Sūrah al-Fātiḥah* behind the Imām.

I asked whether Prayer is still valid if *Sūrah al-Fātiḥah* is not recited out loud? He replied:

> The Prayer may be valid, however, it is preferable for one to recite *Sūrah al-Fātiḥah* out loud. If the Prayer was to be considered invalidated due to not repeating *Sūrah al-Fātiḥah* after the imām then how did all those righteous saints who followed the Ḥanafī school attain such high standards of righteousness? Prayer can be observed in both ways, however the difference

1. *Maktūbāt-e-Aḥmad*, vol. 2, p. 471

lies as to which is superior. Likewise, reciting '*Āmīn*' in a loud voice is given preference over reciting it in a low voice.[1]

The Congregant Must Recite Sūrah al-Fātiḥah

Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ II ؓ stated: 'It is essential to recite *Sūrah al-Fātiḥah* during every formal Prayer and *rak'ah*, except when one joins the congregational Prayer in which the imām has already led everyone into *rukū'*. In such cases, those who join the formal Prayer late ought to just say *Allāhu Akbar* [Allāh is the Greatest] and then follow the imām into *rukū'*. The recitation of the imām therefore counts as the recitation of those who follow his lead. The emphasis on reciting *Sūrah al-Fātiḥah* during formal Prayer is found in various *aḥādīth*. In *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, we find that Ḥaḍrat Abū Hurairah ؓ narrated that the Holy Prophet ﷺ said:

مَنْ صَلَّى صَلَاةً لَمْ يَقْرَأْ فِيهَا بِأُمِّ الْقُرْآنِ فَهِيَ خِدَاجٌ[2]

If anyone offers Prayer in which he does not recite the Mother of the Qur'ān, it is deficient.

This means that a person who performs the formal Prayer without reciting *Sūrah al-Fātiḥah* renders that Prayer incomplete. In *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī* and *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, there is a narration of Ḥaḍrat 'Ubādah ibn as-Ṣāmit ؓ that the Holy Prophet ﷺ stated:

1. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 2, p. 153
2. *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, Kitāb-uṣ-Ṣalāt, bāb wujūbi qirā'atil-fātiḥah*

لاَ صَلَاةَ لِمَنْ لَمْ يَقْرَأْ بِفَاتِحَةِ الْكِتَابِ[1]

This means that the Prayer of a person who does not recite *Fātiḥatul-Kitāb*[2] during formal Prayer will be void ... Ḥaḍrat ʻUbādah ؓ had been assigned as the imām to lead the Prayers somewhere. On one occasion he arrived late for the congregational Prayer, at which Abū Naʻīm began to lead the Prayer. The narrator [Nāfiʻ ibn Maḥmūd bin al-Rabīʻ al-Anṣārī] states: "I was also with ʻUbādah when he joined the congregation and we stood in the rows for the Prayer. When Abū Naʻīm started reciting *Sūrah al-Fātiḥah*, I also heard ʻUbādah recite *Sūrah al-Fātiḥah* very quietly. When the Prayer finished, I asked ʻUbādah: 'While Abū Naʻīm was leading the Prayers aloud, you were also reciting *Sūrah al-Fātiḥah*. What is the reason behind this?' He responded: 'This is absolutely correct. Once, the Holy Prophet ﷺ led us in Prayer and upon its completion he sat down and then enquired from us: "When I recite the Qur'ān aloud in Prayer, do you also repeat the words quietly?" Some answered in the affirmative, whilst others said: "No." Upon this, the Holy Prophet ﷺ said:

فَلا تَقْرَءُوا بِشَيْءٍ مِنَ الْقُرْآنِ إِذَا جَهَرْتُ إِلَّا بِأُمِّ الْقُرْآنِ[3]

> When I recite the Holy Qur'ān aloud during the congregational Prayer, with the exception of *Sūrah al-Fātiḥah*, do not recite along with me any other chapter.

'The verdict of the Promised Messiah ؑ is also that *Sūrah al-Fātiḥah* ought to be recited along with the imām even if the imām is reciting

1. *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī, Kitāb-uṣ-Ṣalāt, bāb wujūbi qirā'atil-imāmi wal-ma'mūmi fiṣ-ṣalāti kullihā*
2. Lit. 'The opening chapter of the Book', another name for *Sūrah al-Fātiḥah.* [Publisher]
3. *Abū Dā'ūd,* Kitab-us-Ṣalāt, bāb man tarakal-qirā'ata fī ṣalawātihī

it aloud, unless the worshipper joins the Prayer while the imām is in *rukū'*. In such a situation, the latecomer ought to say "*Allāhu Akbar*" [Allāh is the Greatest] and then follow the imām. The imām's recitation of *Sūrah al-Fātiḥah* would be considered a substitute for his own recitation.

'This is an exception and an exception does not invalidate the rule. Similarly, another exception is when a person is unfamiliar with *Sūrah al-Fātiḥah*. For instance, the Prayer of a new Muslim convert who is yet to learn the basics of Prayer, or a child who is unable to recite the Holy Qur'ān, would be accepted merely through expressing God's greatness and praise, regardless of whether or not he recites any portion of the Holy Qur'ān, including *Sūrah al-Fātiḥah*.'[1]

Ḥaḍrat Munshī Barkat 'Alī of Shimla ؓ narrates: 'Once, during the summer, the Promised Messiah ؑ was seated in the place of honour on the rooftop of the house. The topic of discussion turned to whether it is permissible to recite *Sūrah al-Fātiḥah* behind the imām. Present in the gathering were Ḥaḍrat Maulawī Noor-ud-Deen, Ḥaḍrat Maulawī 'Abdul-Karīm, and the late Ḥaḍrat Maulawī Muḥammad Aḥsan ؓ. Various views were expressed; some in favour, others opposed. One group held that *Sūrah al-Fātiḥah* must be recited in all circumstances: if the Imām is reciting aloud, then the follower should recite silently and slowly, or recite during the pauses in the imām's recitation. Others opined that when the imām is reciting aloud, the follower should remain silent and simply listen. As far as I remember, the Promised Messiah ؑ said:

> If the imām recites *Sūrah al-Fātiḥah* aloud, then the follower should remain silent and suffice with listening. However, if the imām is reciting silently, as in *Ẓuhr* and *'Aṣr* Prayers, then the

1. *Tafsīr-e-Kabīr*, vol. 1, *Tafsīr Sūrah al-Fātiḥah*, pp. 7–9

> follower should also recite it silently. In this way, both positions are acted upon.[1]

Ḥaḍrat Pīr Sirāj-ul-Ḥaqq Nu'māni ﷺ relates that Ḥaḍrat Maulawī 'Abdul-Karīm ﷺ used to narrate: 'There was a person who used to live in Sialkot or nearby. Every day we would tell him to repeat *Sūrah al-Fātiḥah* after the imām and presented every possible argument to convince him but he failed to pay heed and would observe the Prayer with us but without repeating *Sūrah al-Fātiḥah* after the imām. Once, he went to visit the Promised Messiah ﷺ in Qadian and a discussion began on this very subject. The Promised Messiah ﷺ simply stated that *Sūrah al-Fātiḥah* should be repeated after the imām and did not present any argument from the Holy Qur'ān or Ḥadīth to support this. Hearing this from the Promised Messiah ﷺ was enough for him and he began repeating *Sūrah al-Fātiḥah* behind the imām without seeking any further explanation.

'A person once asked the Promised Messiah ﷺ whether one's Prayer is accepted even if they do not recite *Sūrah al-Fātiḥah* behind the imām.

The Promised Messiah ﷺ replied:

> The question should not be whether the Prayer is accepted or not. Rather the question ought to be whether or not one has to repeat *Sūrah al-Fātiḥah* after the imām. My view is that it must be repeated [after the imām]. Whether or not one's Prayer is accepted is a matter known only to God Almighty. Those who follow the Ḥanafī school of thought do not repeat

1. *Aṣḥāb-e-Aḥmad*, vol. 3, p. 190, New Edition, Narration of Ḥaḍrat Munshī Barkat 'Alī of Shimlah

> [*Sūrah al-Fātiḥah* after the imām]. Thousands of *Auliyā'*[1] in the past followed the Ḥanafī way and did not repeat *Sūrah al-Fātiḥah* after the imām. How did they become *Auliyā'ullāh* if their Prayers were rejected? In certain respects, the Great Imām [Abū Ḥanīfah] and I have similarities, and I have immense respect for the Great Imām. Therefore I cannot pass an edict saying that their Prayer was not accepted. In that era, all the *aḥādīth* had not yet been compiled and they did not have the same clarity on the matter as we have today. Thus, they were exempt. However, today this issue has been resolved and now if one does not recite it, their Prayer will not reach the level of acceptance. My repeated answer to this question will always be that *Sūrah al-Fātiḥah* must be repeated after the imām.

'One day I asked the Promised Messiah ﷺ: "Your Holiness—may the blessings of Allāh be upon you and Muḥammad—at what point should one repeat *Sūrah al-Fātiḥah*, to which he replied:

> You should recite it whenever you get the opportunity."

'I enquired: "Should it be when the imām takes a pause [in his recitation]?"

The Promised Messiah ﷺ replied:

> Whenever there is an opportunity, one should certainly repeat it.'[2]

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1. Literally, 'friends'. In the terminology of Islamic mysticism, it refers to very pious people or a friend of Allāh. The singular form is *walī* [friend] or *waliyyullāh* [friend of Allāh], the plural form is *auliyā'ullāh* which is sometimes abbreviated to *auliyā'*. [Publisher]

2. *Tadhkiratul-Mahdī*, part 1, pp. 179–180

With regards to repeating *Sūrah al-Fātiḥah* behind the Imām, the Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

It is necessary.[1]

Joining the Imām in Rukū‘ Suffices for that Rak‘ah to be Counted

During the course of discussion the point was raised that if one joins the Prayer while the congregation is in *rukū‘* [bowing position], will one be deemed to have completed that cycle of the Prayer? His Holiness ﷺ inquired about the views of other Muslim scholars. The beliefs of various Islamic schools of thought were mentioned. Finally, the Promised Messiah ﷺ gave a verdict in this regard, stating:

> My belief is: لَا صَلٰوۃَ إِلَّا بِفَاتِحَۃِ الکِتَاب [There is no Prayer without the opening chapter of the Book]. Whether a person is offering their Prayer behind an imām or alone, in any case, they should recite *Sūrah al-Fātiḥah*. However, the imām should not recite *Sūrah al-Fātiḥah* hastily. On the contrary, he should recite slowly so that the people who are offering the Prayer behind him can listen and recite themselves as well. If not this, the imām should pause for enough time after each verse so that everyone in the congregation can repeat each verse themselves as well. In any case, the followers of the congregation must be given enough time to listen to the recitation of the imām and then repeat those words themselves. It is necessary to recite *Sūrah al-Fātiḥah* because it is the Mother of the Book. However, an individual who—despite their effort to join the Prayer—arrives when the congregation is in the bowing position and

1. *Badr*, October 1907, p. 7

was unable to join earlier, will be deemed to have completed that specific *rak'at* of the Prayer, even if they have not recited *Sūrah al-Fātiḥah*. This is because it is recorded in a *ḥadīth* that a person who joins the congregation in the bowing position, has completed that specific unit of Prayer. Religious issues are of two kinds. On the one hand, the Noble Messenger ﷺ has instructed and emphasised that *Sūrah al-Fātiḥah* must be recited in the Prayer; it is the Mother of the Book and the essence of the Prayer. However, since the basis of religion is on ease and leniency, the Noble Messenger ﷺ has stated that if an individual, despite their effort to join the Prayer without delay, arrives during the bowing position, it will be considered as if they have completed that particular unit of the Prayer. Such an individual does not denigrate the importance of *Sūrah al-Fātiḥah*, rather benefits from the relaxation granted to those who are somewhat late to join the congregational Prayer. God has fashioned my heart in such a way that I feel a natural aversion to that which is unlawful and I cannot bring myself to do such a thing. It is clear that in the Prayer, when a person has been able to complete three parts but was delayed in a fourth due to compelling circumstances, there is no harm. An individual should accept the concessions that are given to them. However, as for the individual who is negligent on purpose and delays joining the congregation, their Prayer is corrupted anyway.[1]

Raising the Index Finger During Tashahhud

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad رضي الله عنه writes: 'Khwājah 'Abdur-Raḥmān, a resident of Kashmir, wrote to me in a letter that his father told him that when the Promised Messiah عليه السلام would sit for the

1. *Al-Ḥakam*, 24 February, 1901, p. 9; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt* vol. III, pp. 92–93

tashahhud[1], he would form a ring with the fingers of his right hand from the beginning of the sitting position, leaving only the index finger straight, and would raise it during the *tashahhud*.

'I would add that since Khwājah 'Abd-ur-Raḥmān's father had joined the Aḥmadiyya Muslim Jamā'at from among the Ahl-e-Ḥadīth, it seems he used to observe such details closely. However, Dr. Muḥammad Ismā'īl ﷺ once told me that he did not recall the Promised Messiah ؑ clenching his fingers, though it is possible that he may have done so occasionally. Allāh knows best.'[2]

Ḥaḍrat Sayyid Muḥammad Sarwar Shāh ﷺ further describes the manner in which the Promised Messiah ؑ sat and raised his finger during *tashahhud,* stating: 'The Promised Messiah ؑ would sit after the two prostrations in the same manner as he sat between the two prostrations. However, there was a slight difference: whenever he sat after the first prostration, he would place his hands open on his knees, with the fingers pointing toward the *qiblah*. Whenever he sat after the two prostrations of a *rak'at*, he would keep his left hand as before, and with his right hand, he would fold three fingers into the palm, form a ring with the middle finger and thumb, and leave the index finger straight. Then he would recite the *tashahhud* as follows:

التَّحِيَّاتُ للهِ والصّلوتُ والطّيّبَاتُ السَّلامُ عَلَيْكَ أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ وَرَحْمَةُ اللهِ
وَبَرَكَاتُهُ السَّلَامُ عَلَيْنَا وَعَلَى عِبَادِ اللهِ الصَّالِحِينَ. أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَّا إِلٰهَ إِلَّا اللهُ

All verbal expressions of reverence, all prayers, and all pure things are for Allāh. Peace be upon you, O Prophet, and the mercy of Allāh and His blessings.

1. Lit. 'Bearing witness'. Refers to the portion of the Prayer where the worshipper is sat on the ground and bears witness that there is none worthy of worship except Allāh, and that Muhammad ﷺ is the Messenger of Allāh. [Publisher]

2. *Sīrat-ul-Mahdī*, vol. 1, pp. 567–568

> Peace be upon us and upon the righteous servants of Allāh. I bear witness that there is no god but Allāh.

(As he says the words '*ashhadu allā ilāha illallāh*', he raises his index finger and points with it then puts it down as it was before)

He then recites:

وأشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ

> And I bear witness that Muḥammad is His servant and His Messenger.[1]

The Wisdom Behind Raising the Index Finger During Tashahhud

A person once asked: 'Why is the index finger raised during the *tashahhud* in Prayer?'

The Promised Messiah ﷺ replied:

> In the Era of Ignorance, before the advent of Islām, people would raise this finger as a gesture of abuse and profanity. For this reason, it came to be known as *sabbābah*, i.e. the finger used to curse. God Almighty reformed the Arabs and eliminated this practice, commanding instead that this finger be raised while proclaiming the Oneness of God. In this way, the negative association of this finger would be removed.
>
> Likewise, the Arabs used to drink wine five times a day, so God Almighty prescribed five daily Prayers in its place.[2]

1. *Risālah Ta'līmul-Islām*, printed in Qadian, July 1906, vol. 1, pp. 178–179
2. *Badr*, 24 April 1903, p. 11

Reciting Quranic Prayers While in Rukū‘ and Sujūd

Maulawī ‘Abdul Qādir of Ludhiana asked whether it was permissible to recite Quranic prayers while in *rukū‘* and *sujūd*.

The Promised Messiah ﷺ replied:

> *Sujūd* and *rukū‘* represent states of deep humility and submission, whereas the Word of God demands reverence and majesty. Furthermore, there is no evidence in the Ḥadīth that the Holy Prophet ﷺ ever recited any Quranic prayer while in *rukū‘* or *sujūd*.[1]

Praying in One's Own Language after Reciting the Tasbiḥāt in Rukū‘ and Sujūd

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ states that Miāń Khair-ud-Dīn of Sikhwan ؓ wrote to him that the Promised Messiah ﷺ stated:

> One should extensively supplicate in Prayer and the supplications should be made in one's own language, but those supplications which have been established by the Holy Prophet's own practice should be read in the same manner. For instance, saying سُبْحَانَ رَبِّيَ الْعَظِيْم [Holy is my Lord, the Most Great] while in *rukū‘* and saying سُبْحَانَ رَبِّيَ الْأَعْلٰى [Holy is my Lord, the Most High] while in *sajdah*, and thereafter one can offer supplications in their own language.

He further said:

1. *Al-Ḥakam*, 24 April 1903, p. 11

> The Quranic prayers should not be recited while in a state of *rukū'* and *sajdah* because the Holy Qur'ān is the pure word of Allāh Almighty and possesses great grandeur while the states of *rukū'* and *sajdah* reflect a state of extreme humility. Thus one should honour the Divine Word.[1]

Folding the Hands on the Chest

Ḥaḍrat Pīr Sirāj-ul-Ḥaqq Nu'mānī ﷺ writes regarding Muḥammad Ismā'īl of Sarsa ﷺ that he used to fold his hands upon his chest [during Prayer]. One day, someone asked Ḥaḍrat Pīr Sirāj-ul-Ḥaqq Nu'mānī ﷺ: 'Where did the Promised Messiah ﷺ place his hands [during Prayer]?' He replied: 'On the chest.' From that day onwards, Miāń Ismā'īl also began folding his hands upon his chest without hesitation.'[2]

Placing the Hands Above the Navel in Prayer

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ﷺ writes: 'On one occasion Maulawī Sayyid Muḥammad Sarwar Shāh ﷺ told me that Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ I ﷺ once received a letter asking whether there was any authentic narration which mentioned folding one's hands above the navel. Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ I ﷺ presented the letter before the Promised Messiah ﷺ and stated that the *aḥādīth* found in this regard are not free from scrutiny.

The Promised Messiah ﷺ stated:

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1. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 2, pp. 166–167
2. *Tadhkiratul-Mahdī*, p. 296

> Maulawī Sahib! If you pursue this matter you will certainly find something because, despite the fact that in my early years everyone around me followed the Ḥanafī school of thought, I was never keen on placing my hands below the navel; on the contrary, my personal disposition was always inclined to place my hands above the navel region. I have experienced on numerous occasions that whenever I had a natural inclination regarding a particular practice, upon researching it, I was always able to find it consistent with a *ḥadīth*, even if I had no prior knowledge of it.

Maulawī Sarwar Shāh relates that following this, Ḥaḍrat Maulawī Sahib [Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ I ؓ] left, and within barely half an hour, he happily returned holding a book and informed the Promised Messiah ؑ that he had found the *ḥadīth* and in fact, the *ḥadīth* he had found was one that met the standard set by the *Shaikhain*[1], without any criticism. He further stated that this was due to the blessings of the Promised Messiah's instruction.[2]

Ḥaḍrat Ḥājī Ghulām Aḥmad ؓ relates, 'Someone once asked that where should one fold the hands during Prayer.'

The Promised Messiah ؑ said:

> The physical postures of Prayer are important, however one's main focus in Prayer should be towards Allāh the Exalted.

Ḥaḍrat Maulawī Muḥammad Ibrāhīm of Baqapur ؓ relates: 'I once saw the Promised Messiah ؑ offering two *rak'āt* of Sunnah prior to the *Jumu'ah* Prayer. His *rukū'* [bowing], *qiyām* [standing], *qawmah*

1. Imām Bukhārī and Imām Muslim, the compilers of the two most authentic collections of Ḥadīth: *Ṣaḥiḥ al-Bukhārī* and *Ṣaḥiḥ Muslim*. [Publisher]

2. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 1, p. 92

[standing after bowing], and *jilsah* [sitting between the two prostrations] were all performed in a balanced and composed manner. Every part of the Prayer was imbued with calm and tranquillity. Then I observed how he folded his hands during Prayer: his hands were folded upon his chest, with his right hand over his left. He held his left forearm using the thumb and little finger of his right hand, while the three middle fingers of the right hand lay along the left arm, reaching all the way to the elbow joint.'[1]

1. *Aṣḥāb Aḥmad*, vol. 10, p. 257, latest edition

CONGREGATIONAL PRAYER

Where Should the Imām Stand?

It was mentioned that the Chakrhālavīs hold the belief that the imām should not stand in front [of the congregation] during Prayer, but rather in line with them, as part of the row. At this, the Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

> The very word '*imām*' indicates that he should stand at the front. It is an Arabic word, which literally means 'one who stands ahead of others'. It seems that Chakrhālavī is entirely unfamiliar with the Arabic language.[1]

The Imām Should be Mindful of Those Praying Behind Him

A question was raised concerning an imām who recites long *sūrahs* during the *Maghrib* Prayer in Ramaḍān. The *muqtadīs* [congregants] become distressed, as this time coincides with the evening meal following *ifṭār*, and those who have been fasting experience weakness due to hunger throughout the day. Among them are also individuals of frail constitution. As a result, a disagreement arose between the imām and those praying behind him.

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1. *Badr*, 28 March 1907, p. 9

> In response, the Promised Messiah ﷺ stated:
>
> The imām is at fault in this matter. He should be considerate of the condition of those praying behind him, and in such circumstances, he should not prolong the Prayer excessively.[1]

Ḥaḍrat Muftī Muḥammad Ṣādiq ﷺ writes: 'Someone once mentioned that a certain individual recites excessively long *sūrahs* while leading Prayer. Upon this, the Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

> The imām should be mindful of the weaker ones in the congregation during Prayer.

Ḥaḍrat Muftī Muḥammad Ṣādiq ﷺ further states: 'On one occasion, shortly before the demise of the late Maulawī 'Abdullāh of Sanaur ﷺ, it so happened that I led the congregational Prayer in the Mubārak Mosque. When the Prayer concluded, Maulawī 'Abdullāh came to me smiling and said: "The Promised Messiah ﷺ also used to lead congregational Prayers briefly, just as you have done."

'However, this brevity was limited to Prayer led in congregation. When the Promised Messiah ﷺ would offer Prayer individually, he would lengthen it considerably.

'Maulawī 'Abdullāh had been visiting the Promised Messiah ﷺ long before he made his claim, and during those days he would frequently stay in Qadian for extended periods. Thus, he had many opportunities to offer Prayer behind the Promised Messiah ﷺ.'[2]

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1. *Badr*, 31 October 1907, p. 7
2. *Dhikr-e-Ḥabīb*, pp. 131–132

The Promised Messiah ﷺ Appointing Ḥakīm Faḍl Dīn as Imām Despite His Illness

Ḥakīm Faḍl Dīn of Bhera ﷺ developed haemorrhoids in the latter part of his life, which prevented him from retaining his ablution. He would perform ablution once and stand for Prayer, continuing to offer Prayer despite the constant passing of wind, and would renew his ablution before each Prayer.

On one occasion, while he was unwell, the Promised Messiah ﷺ instructed him to lead the congregational Prayer. Ḥakīm Sahib responded: 'Your Holiness is aware that I am unable to retain my ablution.' The Promised Messiah ﷺ smiled and asked: 'Is your own Prayer valid or not?' Ḥakīm Sahib replied: 'Yes, my Prayer is valid, because that is the nature of my condition.' The Promised Messiah ﷺ said: 'If your Prayer is valid, then ours will also be valid. So go ahead and lead us.'[1]

Prayer Behind a Laundry-Worker

Someone asked: 'Is it permissible for a laundry-man[2] to be appointed as the imām for Prayer?'

The Promised Messiah ﷺ replied:

> This is a trivial question. Being a laundry-man is not a sin. The one who is truly deserving of leading the Prayer is one who is

1. *Dhikr-e-Ḥabīb,* pp. 23–24

2. In 19th-century India, the *dhobī* (laundry-man) belonged to a caste traditionally assigned the task of washing clothes. This work was considered lowly particularly in orthodox Hindu society. As a result, even among Muslims, laundry-workers were often stigmatised and deemed unfit for religious leadership. [Publisher]

> righteous, God-fearing, knowledgeable, and observant of religious duties. If such qualities are found in a person, then his being a laundry-worker is no flaw that should prevent him from leading the Prayer.[1]

It is Not Permissible to Adopt Imāmat as a Vocation

The Promised Messiah ﷺ stated:

> Should one enter any of these mosques with the intention of leading the Prayer, then those who hold the office of imām become deeply offended and infuriated. They do not go and offer Prayer five times; rather, it is a shop that they open at those times, and their livelihood and that of their families depends on this very shop. Accordingly, disputes concerning appointment to, or dismissal from, this vocation end up in litigation. The *maulawīs* run around filing appeal upon appeal to get the verdict of *imāmat* [the position of leading Prayers] in their favour. Thus, this is not *imāmat*; rather, it is a despicable way of earning an unlawful living.[2]

Appointing a Paid Imām

A devout and honourable Companion [of the Promised Messiah ﷺ] said: 'Your Holiness, my father constructed a mosque and would pay a stipend to the imām so that the mosque remained populated. He was not part of our Jamā'at. I too have continued to pay this stipend. What should I do now?'

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1. *Badr*, dated 23 May, 1907, p. 10
2. *Fatḥ-e-Islām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 3, p. 26; Eng. Trans.:*Victory of Islām*, p. 71

The Promised Messiah ﷺ replied:

> Do not concern yourself with anyone who leads Prayer in exchange for money: whether he is an Aḥmadī or a non-Aḥmadī, Prayer is for the sake of Allāh. If this imām departs, God Almighty shall bring forth others who will offer Prayer solely for His sake and keep the mosque populated. In my view, the Prayer of an imām who leads out of greed is not accepted, regardless of whether he is an Aḥmadī or not. The imām should be *atqā* [the most righteous and God-fearing].
>
> Some people appoint a *ḥāfiẓ* of the Holy Qur'ān during Ramaḍān and fix a stipend for him; this is not correct. However, if someone offers him something out of goodwill and pious intention, then that is permissible.[1]

It is Inappropriate to Offer Prayer Behind Those Who Take Imāmat as a Profession

The Promised Messiah ﷺ stated:

> In my opinion, it is not appropriate to offer Prayer behind those have adopted it as a profession. Such individuals lead the Prayer with their eyes on the food served to them on Thursdays and the salary they receive. Were it not for this, they would abandon *imāmat* altogether. However, if a person earns his livelihood with sincere and righteous intentions, then this itself becomes an act of worship. When a person becomes accustomed to a task and carries it out with firm resolve and consistency, the

1. *Al-Ḥakam*, 10 November, 1905, p. 6

task no longer feels burdensome; rather, it becomes easy for him.[1]

Repeating the Congregational Prayer

Ḥaḍrat Muftī Muḥammad Ṣādiq ؓ narrates that the Promised Messiah ؑ said:

> If Prayer has already been offered once in congregation at a mosque, it may be offered again, if there is a need to do so.[2]

Impermissibility of Offering Congregational Prayer Twice in Certain Circumstances

The compiler of the *Malfūẓāt* [sayings and discourses] of the Promised Messiah ؑ writes: 'During the journey to Gurdaspur, the following matters related to the Prayer were resolved in my presence:

"On one occasion, the Promised Messiah ؑ was performing ablution when the respected Maulānā Muḥammad Aḥsan ؓ, due to his poor health, stood up to offer Prayer. Thinking that he had a valid excuse, he assumed there would be no harm in praying alone. However, as he stood to pray, some brothers joined him, and thus a congregation was formed.

"When the Promised Messiah ؑ came to know that congregational Prayer had already been offered once and was now about to be offered a second time in the same place, he said:

1. *Al-Badr*, 9 January, 1903, p. 85
2. *Dhikr-e-Ḥabīb*, p. 83

> Two congregational Prayers should never be held in the same place.[1]

The following statement of Ḥaḍrat Muṣleḥ Mau'ūd ؓ clarifies why offering congregational Prayer twice in the same place is discouraged. Once, someone said to Ḥaḍrat Muṣleḥ Mau'ūd ؓ that an individual had claimed: 'If congregational Prayer has been offered in a particular place, it may not be offered there again.'

Ḥaḍrat Muṣleḥ Mau'ūd ؓ replied: 'This is not forbidden, but it is discouraged only if in a mosque. For if congregational Prayer were offered in successive groups within the mosque, whereby one group enters, offers Prayer, and departs, followed by another group doing the same, this would ultimately result in the true objective of Prayer being lost. The Promised Messiah ؑ disapproved of such a practice.'[2]

Avoiding Separate Congregational Prayers Without Due Cause

On one occasion, the Promised Messiah ؑ was in his room while Prayer commenced in the adjoining room. The number of people was small, and it was entirely possible to offer the Prayer in one room. Some companions assumed that the Promised Messiah ؑ would pray in his own room, since the voice of the imām could be heard clearly. At this, the Promised Messiah ؑ said:

> The congregation should not be divided into small groups; rather, the Prayer should be offered together. Therefore, I shall

1. *Badr*, 1 August 1904, p. 4
2. *Al-Ḥakam,* 28 March 1920, p. 3

also pray there. Separation is only permissible when there is insufficient space.[1]

Instructions for the Imām

Someone said that so-and-so recites lengthy *sūrahs* while leading Prayer. The Promised Messiah عليه السلام said:

The imām ought to be mindful of the weak during Prayer.[2]

The Imām Serves as a Representative

In response to a question posed by someone, the Promised Messiah عليه السلام said:

A person finds forgiveness by offering the Prayer behind a person who is virtuous. The formal Prayer is the key to all forms of blessing. Supplications are accepted in the Prayer. The imām is a representative; if his own heart is black, what blessings can he give to others?[3]

Offering Prayer Behind Those Who Reject the Promised Messiah عليه السلام is Forbidden

Those who label me as a disbeliever and reject me shall perish. Therefore, it does not behove any member of my Community to

1. *Badr*, 1 August 1904, p. 4
2. *Badr*, 20 April 1905, p. 2
3. *Al-Ḥakam*, 31 July, 1901, p. 4

offer Prayer behind such unworthy people. Can the living offer Prayer behind the dead? Remember that Allāh the Almighty has informed me that it is completely forbidden to offer Prayer behind one who deems me a liar, heretic, and rejects me. Rather your imām should be one from among you. This is indicated in one part of a *ḥadīth* recorded in *Bukhārī* which states:

إِمَامُكُمْ مِنْكُمْ

Your Imām will be from among you.[1]

Do not Pray Behind Non-Aḥmadīs

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ writes that Ḥāfiẓ Muḥammad Ibrāhīm ؓ told him: 'This incident likely took place in 1904. Someone asked the Promised Messiah ؑ in the Mubārak Mosque: "If the non-Aḥmadīs are offering the Prayer in congregation, how should we perform our Prayer?"

The Promised Messiah ؑ replied:

You should offer the Prayer separately.

The questioner objected: "But it is not permissible to offer the Prayer separately when a congregational Prayer is already in progress."

The Promised Messiah ؑ responded:

If their congregational Prayer had any worth in the sight of God, why would I have instructed my Jamā'at to offer the Prayer separately from them in the first place? Their Prayer and their congregation have no standing with God. Therefore, you

1. *Ḍamīmah Tuḥfa-e-Golarhvhīyyah, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 17, p. 64

> should perform your Prayer separately from them, and you may do so at any time within the prescribed Prayer times.

Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ clarifies: 'This does not mean Aḥmadīs should intentionally offer Prayer at the exact moment when another congregation is in progress in a mosque, as this may lead to discord. Rather, the instruction is that Aḥmadīs should always perform the Prayer separately and must not, under any circumstance, pray behind non-Aḥmadīs.'[1]

The Basis for the Impermissibility of Offering Prayer behind Non-Aḥmadīs

Someone inquired why the Promised Messiah ؑ had instructed the members of his Community to refrain from offering their Prayers behind those who were not from among his followers.

The Promised Messiah ؑ said:

> Those who have acted in haste and who, out of ill-thinking, have rejected this Community, which has been established by Allāh the Exalted, and who have disregarded a multitude of signs, and who are indifferent to the afflictions that have befallen Islām, have not acted righteously. Allāh the Exalted states in His Holy Word:
>
> اِنَّمَا يَتَقَبَّلُ اللّٰهُ مِنَ الْمُتَّقِيْنَ[2]

1. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 1, pp. 526–527
2. *Sūrah al-Mā'idah*, 5:28

> Meaning, Allāh the Exalted only accepts the Prayers of the righteous. This is why there is an instruction that one ought not to offer their Prayer behind an individual whose own Prayer will not reach a level of acceptance.[1]

Two men performed *Bai'at* [the Pledge of Allegiance]. One asked whether it is permissible to offer Prayer behind a non-Aḥmadī.

The Promised Messiah عليه السلام said:

> They call us *kāfirs* [disbelievers]. If we are not *kāfirs*, that *kufr* [disbelief] reverts upon them. The one calling a Muslim a *kāfir*, is himself a *kāfir*. For this reason, it is not permissible to offer Prayer behind such people. Moreover, those in their midst who remain silent [regarding us being Muslim or *kāfir*] are also included among them. It is not permissible to offer Prayer behind them either, because they harbour some opposing religious belief in their hearts which prevents them from openly joining us.[2]

There was a discussion on not offering Prayers behind someone who is not part of the Jamā'at.

The Promised Messiah عليه السلام said:

> Show steadfastness and do not offer the Prayer behind anyone who is not a follower of this Community. There is benefit and virtue in this course of action; herein lies your triumph and a manifest victory. It is this which shall prove a stepping stone for the progress of the Community. Even in a worldly context, those who are discontent with someone or displeased with their enemy do not speak to them for at least a few days, but your

1. *Al-Ḥakam*, 17 March, 1901, p. 8; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt*, vol. 3, pp. 110–111
2. *Badr*, 15 December 1905, p. 2

> displeasure and discontent are for the sake of God. If you continue to mix with them just as before, you will deprive yourself of the special attention with which God Almighty has blessed you. When a pure Community is separated from the rest, it is then that it flourishes.[1]

Offering the Prayer in Non-Aḥmadī Mosques

A person performed the *Bai'at* [pledge of allegiance] after the *Maghrib* Prayer and said: 'It has been mentioned in the *Al-Ḥakam* newspaper: "Do not pray behind non-Aḥmadīs."

The Promised Messiah ﷺ replied:

> That is correct. If the mosque is administered by non-Aḥmadīs, then offer the Prayer alone at home. There is no harm in that. All that is required is a little patience.[2]

Guidance on Offering the Prayer for Aḥmadīs Living in Isolation

Some Aḥmadīs asked whether they could offer Prayer alone.

The Promised Messiah ﷺ replied:

> Yes, you may offer Prayer alone. This is a divine Community, and God desires that you remain separate from others. The time is near when God will gather you into a Jamā'at [Community].[3]

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1. *Al-Ḥakam*, 10 August 1901, p. 3; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt*, vol. 3, pp. 236–237
2. *Al-Badr*, 10 August 1901, p. 91
3. *Al-Badr*, 16 January 1903, p. 90

Only Pray Behind Those Who Accept the Promised Messiah ﷺ

Sayyid ʻAbdullāh, the Arab, asked: ʻWhen I am in Arabia, my homeland, should I offer Prayer behind the people of my country or not?'

The Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

> Do not offer Prayer behind anyone except for those who have attested to my truthfulness.

The Arab submitted: ʻThese people have no knowledge of the position of His Holiness ﷺ. The message has not been conveyed to them.'

The Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

> First convey the message to them and then they will either decide to be among those who attest to my truthfulness, or among those who reject me.

The Arab submitted: ʻThe people of my country are very harsh in nature and my people in particular are Shīʻas.'

The Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

> You should become devoted to God. Allāh the Almighty Himself becomes the Protector and Guardian of one who is sincere towards Him.[1]

On another occasion, ʻAjab Khān, Assistant District Collector, asked the Promised Messiah ﷺ: ʻIf we find ourselves in a place where we do not know whether the people are Aḥmadī, should we offer Prayer behind them or not?'

The Promised Messiah ﷺ replied:

1. *Al-Ḥakam*, 24 September 1901, p. 6

> You should ask the imām whose status is unclear to you. If he has accepted [my claim], then you may offer Prayer behind him; if not, then do not. Allāh the Exalted desires to establish a distinct Jamā'at, so why should we go against His will? It is against divine wisdom to repeatedly associate with those whom Allāh wishes to separate us from.[1]

A question was asked: 'If, in a certain place, the imām leading Prayer is unaware of the claim and circumstances of the Promised Messiah ﷺ, should we pray behind him or not?'

The Promised Messiah ﷺ replied:

> It is your duty to inform him first. If he affirms [the truth], all the better. But if he rejects it, then do not waste your Prayer by offering it behind him. And if he remains silent, neither accepting nor rejecting, then he is a hypocrite. Do not offer Prayer behind him either.[2]

1. *Badr*, 20 February, 1903, pp. 34–35
2. *Dhikr-e-Ḥabīb*, p. 299

MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS REGARDING PRAYER

Maintaining the Prescribed Order in the Prayers is Essential

Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ II ؓ states that he heard the Promised Messiah ؑ say that if an imām is leading the *ʻAṣr* Prayer, and someone arrives at the mosque who has not yet offered the *Ẓuhr* Prayer, or if the *ʻIshā'* Prayer is in progress and someone enters who has not yet offered *Maghrib*, then he should first offer *Ẓuhr* or *Maghrib* alone and then join the imām afterwards.

The same ruling applies if a person arrives while two Prayers are being combined and one of them is already in progress. According to the *fatwā* of the Promised Messiah ؑ, if it is known that the imām is leading the *ʻAṣr* Prayer, then the person should offer *Ẓuhr* first by himself, and then join the imām. Likewise, if it is known that the imām is leading *ʻIshā'*, then *Maghrib* should first be offered alone and only then should one join the congregation.

However, if one does not know which Prayer is being offered, then he should join the congregation, and the Prayer of the imām will be counted as his own. Afterwards, the person should offer the missed Prayer on his own. For example, if *ʻIshā'* is in progress and a person enters who has not yet offered *Maghrib*, then if he knows that *ʻIshā'* is being led, he should first offer *Maghrib* alone and then join the imām. But if he does not know which Prayer is in progress and simply joins

the imām, then that will be counted as his *'Ishā'* Prayer, and he should offer *Maghrib* afterwards. The same principle applies to the *Ẓuhr* and *'Aṣr* Prayers.

It was objected at the time: 'Since it is not permissible to offer any Prayer after *'Aṣr*, then if someone mistakenly joins *'Aṣr* without offering *Ẓuhr*, how can it be permitted to offer *Ẓuhr* afterwards?'

The Promised Messiah ﷺ replied:

> It is true that as a principle, no Prayer is to be offered after *'Aṣr*. However, this does not mean that if such a situation arises accidentally, one can never make up *Ẓuhr* afterwards. In such cases, it is permissible to offer *Ẓuhr* after *'Aṣr*.

Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ II ﷺ states : 'I myself heard this ruling from the Promised Messiah ﷺ, not just once, but twice. I remember that when the Promised Messiah ﷺ was asked this question a second time, he said:

> I have already explained that maintaining the correct order of the Prayers is essential. However, if a person is unaware of which Prayer the imām is leading—whether it be *'Aṣr* or *'Ishā'*—then he should join the imām, and that Prayer will be counted for him accordingly. Afterwards, he should offer the missed Prayer separately.'[1]

The Practice of the Promised Messiah ﷺ in Offering the Sunnah Prayers

It was the practice of the Promised Messiah ﷺ to offer the *sunnah* Prayers at home before and after the Prayer. Shaikh Ya'qūb 'Alī 'Irfānī ﷺ

1. *Al-Fazl*, dated 27 June 1948, p. 3

writes that it was always the practice of the Promised Messiah ﷺ to offer his *sunnah* and *nawāfil* [voluntary] Prayers at home and he would offer the *farḍ* [obligatory] Prayers in congregation in the mosque. He continued this practice throughout his life. However, after completing his obligatory Prayer, if the Promised Messiah ﷺ saw that people were late to join the Prayer and thus had not yet finished offering their Prayer, he would offer his *sunnah* Prayer in the mosque as there was no way to leave. Also, if the Promised Messiah ﷺ intended to remain in the mosque after the Prayer, he would offer his *sunnah* Prayer inside the mosque. As this was the practice of the Promised Messiah ﷺ [to offer his *sunnah* Prayer at home], some students, owing to their short-sightedness assumed that offering *sunnah* Prayer is not necessary.

Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ I ﷺ once addressed this matter in a *Darsul-Qur'ān* [formal lecture on the Qur'ān], stating: 'It was a practice of the Promised Messiah ﷺ that immediately after offering the obligatory Prayer he would go into his home. I also do the same. However, many children, out of their lack of knowledge, have begun the habit of leaving the mosque immediately after the obligatory Prayer and I do not think that they offer the *sunnah* Prayers. They should realise that the first thing the Promised Messiah ﷺ would do upon returning home was to offer the *sunnah* Prayer and I also follow this practice.'

Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ I ﷺ then asked: 'Is there anyone here who can personally testify that the Promised Messiah ﷺ followed this practice [of offering the *sunnah* Prayer immediately upon returning home]?' At this, Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad ﷺ, who as usual was present in the *Dars*, proclaimed in a loud voice: 'Without a doubt, it was always the practice of the Promised Messiah ﷺ to offer the *sunnah* Prayer at home before leaving for the mosque, then he would offer the obligatory Prayer at the mosque, return home and immediately offer his *sunnah* Prayer again. He would attend to other tasks only after completing his *sunnah* Prayer.' After this, Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ﷺ also attested to this. Thereafter, Ḥaḍrat Mīr Nāṣir Nawāb ﷺ, Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah

Mīr Muḥammad Isḥāq ﷺ and Ḥāfiẓ Ḥāmid ʿAlī ﷺ, an old devoted companion of the Promised Messiah ﷺ, all affirmed their eyewitness testimonies.[1]

Offering Prayer between Pillars in a Mosque

Mention was made of standing between pillars of a mosque in Prayer, and it was said that some people do this.

The Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

> In extraordinary circumstances, everything is allowed. These things should not be given much consideration. The real thing is that in accordance with the desire of God, one should worship God with full sincerity. This is usually overlooked.[2]

Nawāfil Prayers are Not to be Offered After Fajr Until Sunrise

A question by an individual was presented to the Promised Messiah ﷺ as to whether a person is permitted to offer voluntary Prayers before the two *rakʿāt* [units] of *farḍ* after the *Adhān* has been called for the *Fajr* [dawn] Prayer.

The Promised Messiah ﷺ responded:

> After the *Adhān* for the *Fajr* Prayer until the rising of the sun, there is no other Prayer besides the two *rakʿāt* of *sunnah* and two *rakʿāt* of *farḍ*.[3]

1. *Sīrat Ḥaḍrat Masīḥ-e-Mauʿūd* by Ḥaḍrat Shaikh Yaʿqūb ʿAlī ʿIrfānī, pp. 65–67
2. *Badr*, February 1908, p. 1
3. *Badr*, 7 February 1907, p.4

Concluding the Prayer with Taslīm before the Imām

Once, during *Maghrib* Prayer, due to the large congregation, the voice of the imām could not reach the people standing in the last few rows. Therefore, a person [the *mukabbir*] in the middle rows, as per the custom, repeated the *takbīr* [calls of the imām] in a loud voice. During the last *rak'at* of Prayer, when the congregation was sitting [in *qa'dah*] and had finished reciting the *taḥiyyāt* [prayer] and the *Durūd Sharīf* [invocation of blessings upon the Holy Prophet ﷺ], and prior to the imām performing *taslīm*[1] at the end of the Prayer, the *mukabbir* made a mistake and performed *taslīm*. The congregation standing in the back rows followed the *mukabbir* in performing *taslīm* and some even began offering their Sunnah Prayer. Thereafter, the imām performed *taslīm*, and the *mukabbir*, who had realised his mistake, also performed *taslīm* again.

At this point, the congregation who had finished their Prayer earlier [upon hearing the *mukabbir's* first *taslīm*] inquired whether their Prayer was complete or whether they should offer their Prayer again. Ṣāḥibzādah Mirza Mahmud Ahmad ؓ, who himself was praying in the last few rows and had performed *taslīm* before the imām, said that this scenario had been presented to the Promised Messiah ؑ, and he had said:

> If, in the final *rak'ah*, after reciting the *taḥiyyāt*, one mistakenly performs *taslīm* before the imām, the Prayer is still valid. There is no need to repeat it.[2]

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1. In Urdu, the term سلام پھیرنا refers to the concluding act of the formal Prayer, whereby the worshipper turns their head to the right and left, saying, **السلام علیکم ورحمة الله**. In Islamic jurisprudential terminology, this action is known as **تسلیم** (*taslīm*). To ensure accuracy and consistency with Islamic terminology, the term *taslīm* has been adopted throughout this translation. [Publisher]

2. *Badr*, dated May 1907, p. 2

Praying Aloud in One's Own Language

An individual posed the question: 'Your Holiness, since it is your teaching to supplicate in one's own language during the formal Prayer, is it permissible for the imām to go on praying aloud in his own language (for example in Urdu) and the congregation to go on responding with *Āmīn*?

The Promised Messiah ﷺ replied:

> What is the need for reciting the prayer aloud? God Almighty has in fact directed:
>
> تَضَرُّعًا وَخُفْيَةً[1]
>
> [Call upon your Lord] in humility and in secret
>
> And:
>
> دُوْنَ الْجَهْرِ مِنَ الْقَوْلِ[2]
>
> Without loudness of speech

It was submitted: 'The *Qunūt*[3] is recited [aloud].'

The Promised Messiah ﷺ replied:

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1. *Sūrah al-A'rāf*, 7:56
2. *Sūrah al-A'rāf*, 7:206
3. To stand in supplication, with both hands to one's side, during the formal Prayer after completing the bowing position (*ruku'*) and before falling into prostration (*sajdah*). During the *Qunūt* one may recite Quranic prayers and other prayers as well. One may offer the *Qunūt* in times of calamity or for a special purpose. [Publisher]

> Yes, the supplications attributed to the Holy Prophet ﷺ that are mentioned in the Qur'ān and the Ḥadīth can undoubtedly be recited [aloud]. Other prayers that reflect a personal liking or feeling should just be recited in the heart.[1]

Reciting Supplications Aloud

Ḥaḍrat Muftī Muḥammad Ṣādiq ؓ writes: 'When I visited Qadian in the early days, there were only three or four worshippers in Masjid Mubārak, and the late Ḥāfiẓ Mu'īnuddīn ؓ would lead the Prayer. When Ḥaḍrat Maulawī Noor-ud-Deen ؓ migrated to Qadian, the Promised Messiah ؑ appointed him as the imām in his mosque, so he would lead the Prayer. Then, when Ḥaḍrat Maulawī 'Abdul-Karīm ؓ migrated to Qadian, Ḥaḍrat Maulawī Noor-ud-Deen ؓ would request him to lead the Prayer, and thus he continued to serve as the imām for as long as he lived.

'The Promised Messiah ؑ would sometimes offer the *Jumu'ah* Prayer in the Mubārak Mosque due to his ill health. The Mubārak Mosque was not large enough to accommodate all the people. Therefore, *Jumu'ah* Prayer would also be offered regularly in Masjid Aqṣā. Ḥaḍrat Maulawī Noor-ud-Deen ؓ would lead *Jumu'ah* in Masjid Aqṣā, and Ḥaḍrat Maulawī 'Abdul-Karīm ؓ would lead it in Masjid Mubārak.

'Sometimes, when Ḥaḍrat Maulawī 'Abdul-Karīm ؓ was away from Qadian and Maulawī Muḥammad Aḥsan ؓ was present, the latter would lead *Jumu'ah* in Masjid Mubārak. Later on, when Maulawī 'Abdul-Karīm ؓ settled in Qadian after migrating, he continued to serve as the imām.

'In his recitation, the late Maulawī 'Abdul-Karīm would always recite the *basmalah* aloud before *Sūrah al-Fātiḥah*, and in the final

1. *Badr*, 1 August 1907, p. 12; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt* vol. 3, pp. 305–306

rak'ah of the *Fajr, Maghrib*, and *'Ishā'* Prayers, he would often recite some supplications aloud, such as:

رَبَّنَا ٱفْتَحْ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَ قَوْمِنَا بِٱلْحَقِّ وَأَنتَ خَيْرُ ٱلْفَاتِحِينَ[1]

O our Lord, decide between us and between our people with truth, and you are the Best of those who decide

And:

رَبَّنَا هَبْ لَنَا مِنْ أَزْوَاجِنَا[2]

Our Lord, grant us of our wives and children...

And:

اللَّهمَّ انصُرْ مَنْ نَصَرَ دِيْنَ مُحَمَّدٍ

O Allāh, support him who supports the religion of Muḥammad.

And:

اللَّهمّ أَيِّدِ الإِسْلَامَ والْمُسْلِمِينَ بِالإِمَامِ الحَكَمِ العَادِلِ

O Allāh, support Islām and the Muslims through the Imām, the Just Arbiter.

Whenever Maulawī 'Abdul-Karīm ﷺ was on a journey or unable to attend the Prayer for some reason, the Promised Messiah ﷺ would

1. *Sūrah al-A'rāf,* 7:90
2. *Sūrah al-Furqān,* 25:75

instruct Maulawī Ḥakīm Faḍl-ud-Dīn ﷺ, this humble one who writes these words, or someone else to lead the Prayer. The Promised Messiah ﷺ would not lead the Prayer himself. After the demise of Ḥaḍrat Maulawī ʻAbdul-Karīm ﷺ, Ḥaḍrat Maulawī Noor-ud-Deen ﷺ served as the permanent imām.[1]

Why is it Forbidden to Recite Quranic Prayers During Prostration?

QUESTION—Why is it prohibited to recite Quranic prayers while in *sajdah* [prostration], when *sajdah* itself represents a state of complete humility?

Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ II ﷺ replied: ʻI too was once of the view that it was permissible to recite Quranic prayers during *sajdah*, until I came across a statement of the Promised Messiah ﷺ in which he forbade reciting Quranic prayers while in a state of *sajdah*. Moreover, there is a *ḥadīth* recorded in *Musnad Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal*[2] on this subject as well.

ʻEven if I had not come across these references that opposed my earlier view, I would still not accept the argument that since *sajdah* is a state of extreme humility, reciting Quranic supplications should therefore be allowed.

ʻImām Mālik believed that everything found in the sea is *ḥalāl* [lawful]. Once, a person asked him: "Swine are also found in the sea. Are they then lawful to eat?" Imām Mālik replied: "Everything in the sea is *ḥalāl*, but swine is *ḥarām* [unlawful]." The man repeated the question several times, but Imām Mālik consistently answered: "All that is in the sea is *ḥalāl*, except for swine, which is *ḥarām*."

1. *Dhikr-e-Ḥabīb*, pp. 22–23
2. *Musnad Aḥmad bin Ḥanbal*, *Musnad ʻAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib*, 1330 [Publisher]

'So my answer is the same: indeed, *sajdah* is a posture of humility, but Quranic prayers should not be recited in this state. Supplication brings about humility, whereas the Holy Qur'ān exalts an individual. Therefore, it is not permissible to recite Quranic prayers during *sajdah*.

'Since this practice has been clearly affirmed by the Holy Prophet ﷺ and the Promised Messiah عليه السلام, it is not permissible for us to adopt a stance contrary to it, even if we do not fully comprehend the wisdom behind it.'[1]

Reciting Divinely Revealed Prayers During the Prayer as a Supplication

The Promised Messiah عليه السلام said:

> Regarding the words that were revealed to me in a dream today:
>
> رَبِّ كُلُّ شَيْءٍ خَادِمُكَ رَبِّ فَاحْفَظْنِيْ وانْصُرْنِي وارْحَمْنِيْ
>
> [My Lord, everything is Your servant. My Lord, so protect me, help me, and have mercy on me]
>
> I have resolved to recite them as a supplication during Prayer, and I myself have already begun doing so.[2]

1. *Al-Fazl*, 16 April 1944, pp. 1–2
2. *Badr*, 12 December 1902, p. 54, column 3

Reciting Divinely Revealed Supplications in the Plural When They Were Revealed in the Singular

Ḥaḍrat Maulānā ʿAbdul-Karīm of Sialkot ؓ presented someone's letter which contained the question: 'Is it permissible to recite the supplication رَبِّ كُلُّ شَيْءٍ خَادِمُكَ رَبِّ فَاحْفَظْنِيْ وانْصُرْنِي وارْحَمْنِيْ in the plural form?

His Holiness ؑ replied:

> These were the original words revealed (i.e., in the singular first-person form), but a person is free to recite them however they wish. In the Holy Qur'ān, supplications have been taught in both forms. In the singular form, such as: رَبِّ اغْفِرْ لِي وَلِوَالِدَيَّ[1], and in the plural form, such as:
>
> رَبَّنَا آتِنَا فِي الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ حَسَنَةً وَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ[2]
>
> [Our Lord, grant us good in this world and good in the Hereafter, and protect us from the punishment of the Fire]
>
> Very often, when a supplication is made in the singular first-person form, what is actually intended is the plural first-person collective. For example, in the revealed supplication, the expression فَاحْفَظْنِي does not only mean 'protect me', but encompasses all that is connected to the self, such as one's home, family and relatives, limbs, faculties, and so on.[3]

1. 'My Lord, forgive me and my parents', *Sūrah Nūḥ*, 71:29
2. *Sūrah al-Baqarah*, 2:202
3. *Badr*, 26 December 1902, p. 69

Altering the Wording of a Supplication According to the Circumstances

Ḥaḍrat Mīr Nāṣir Nawāb ؓ asked the Promised Messiah ؑ: 'The revealed supplication رَبِّ كُلُّ شَيْءٍ خَادِمُكَ appeared in the singular form. If we were to recite it in the plural form and include others in the prayer as well, would there be anything wrong with that?'

The Promised Messiah ؑ replied:

> There is no harm in it.[1]

Changing Singular Words into Plural in Supplications

A question of a friend was presented to the Promised Messiah ؑ asking: 'I am an imām of a mosque. I desire to change the supplications that are in the first-person singular form, and pertain only to oneself, to plural form to also include the congregation that is following me in my supplications. What is the directive in this respect?'

The Promised Messiah ؑ responded:

> It is not permissible to change any supplication that is in the Holy Qur'ān because that is the Word of God; it should be recited as it is found in the Holy Qur'ān. However, the supplications that are recorded in the Ḥadīth, there is a choice to recite them in plural form in place of the singular.[2]

1. *Badr*, 19 December 1902, p. 58
2. *Badr*, 4 April 1907; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt,* vol. 9, p. 220

Reciting Words That Induce Tenderness During Supplication

During a discussion on the topic of supplication, the Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

> One should seek words in supplication that induce tenderness. It is not appropriate to merely recite prescribed prayers like incantations without understanding their true meaning. Following the Sunnah is essential, but seeking tenderness is also a part of the Sunnah. So pray in your own language—one that you understand well—so that passion and fervency are born in your prayer. The one who follows only the words becomes forsaken. One must be realistic. The prescribed supplications should indeed be recited for the sake of blessings, but you must also strive to reach their reality. However, if someone is well-versed in Arabic and understands it, then they should recite in Arabic.[1]

How the Witr Prayer Ought to Be Offered

Someone asked: 'How should the *Witr*[2] Prayer be performed? Is it permissible to offer just one *rak'at*?'

The Promised Messiah ﷺ replied:

> We are not aware of *Witr* being offered as a single *rak'at*. *Witr* consists of three *rak'āt*—whether a person performs the *taslīm* after two *rak'āt* and then offers the third separately, or performs

1. *Al-Ḥakam*, 10 September 1901, p. 9
2. The Prayer offered after the *'Ishā'* Prayer and before the *Fajr* Prayer. *Witr*, meaning 'odd-numbered', consists of an odd number of *rak'āt*. [Publisher]

all three *rak'āt* continuously, reciting the *Taḥiyyāt* after the second *rak'at* and performing *taslīm* after the third. Offering just one *rak'at* as *Witr* is not correct.[1]

It is Better to Offer the Witr Prayer Promptly

Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ writes that Miāń Faḍl Muḥammad, a shopkeeper in the Darul-Fazl neighbourhood, informed him in a letter that during the legal case filed by Maulawī Karam Dīn, when the hearings were taking place in Gurdaspur, he once submitted before the Promised Messiah ؑ under a *shīsham* tree: 'If a person does not offer the *Witr* Prayer after the *'Ishā'* Prayer and also misses it during the latter part of the night, then when should it be offered?'

The Promised Messiah ؑ replied:

It is best to offer it at the earliest time. That is, immediately after the *'Ishā'* Prayer.[2]

The Manner in which the Promised Messiah ؑ Would Offer the Witr Prayer

QUESTION—Would the Promised Messiah ؑ perform *taslīm* after offering two *rak'āt*, or after offering three *rak'āt*?

Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ II ؓ answered: 'He would usually conclude the Prayer with *taslīm* after offering two *rak'āt*.'

1. *Al-Ḥakam*, 10 April 1903, p. 14
2. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 2, p. 172

Maulawī Sayyid Sarwar Shāh ﷺ further added that, based on what he had heard from the Companions, the Promised Messiah ﷺ would indeed conclude the Prayer with *taslīm* after two *rak'āt* and then offer the remaining *rak'at* separately.[1]

The Witr Prayer and Qunūt Supplication

Ḥaḍrat Pīr Sirāj-ul-Ḥaqq Nu'mānī ﷺ narrates: 'One day, I asked the Promised Messiah ﷺ: "How many *rak'āt* are there in the *Witr* Prayer and how should they be offered?"

The Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

> The word *Witr* denotes 'one'; however, it is not permissible to offer only one *rak'at* [of *Witr*]. Hence, two *rak'āt* of voluntary *ṣalāt* have been attached to it, and they may be offered in two ways. The first way is how the Ḥanafīs offer them, and the second way is that one offers two *rak'āt*, concludes the Prayer with *taslīm*, and then gets up quietly and offers another *rak'at*.

I then asked: "Is it necessary to recite the *Du'ā-e-Qunūt*?" He said:

> Yes, it is necessary to recite it.

I then said: "Some clerics say that *Du'ā-e-Qunūt* cannot be proven to be from the Holy Prophet ﷺ." He replied:

> They are gravely mistaken. The *Du'ā-e-Qunūt*, i.e:

1. *Al-Fazl*, 12 June 1922, p. 7

اللّٰهُمَّ إِنَّا نَسْتَعِيْنُكَ وَنَسْتَغْفِرُكَ وَنُؤْمِنُ بِكَ وَنَتَوَكَّلُ عَلَيْكَ وَنُثْنِيْ عَلَيْكَ الْخَيْرَ وَنَشْكُرُكَ وَلَا نَكْفُرُكَ وَنَخْلَعُ وَنَتْرُكُ مَنْ يَفْجُرُكَ اللهمّ إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَلَكَ نُصَلِّيْ وَنَسْجُدُ وَإِلَيْكَ نَسْعَى وَنَحْفِدُ وَنَرْجُو رَحْمَتَكَ وَنَخْشَى عَذَابَكَ إِنَّ عَذَابَكَ بِالْكُفَّارِ مُلْحِق

> O Allāh, we beseech Your help and request Your protection and believe in You and trust in You and we laud You in the best manner and we thank You and we are not ungrateful to You. And we cast off and forsake him who disobeys You. O Allāh, You alone do we serve and to You alone do we pray and make obeisance and to You we flee and we are quick and we hope for Your mercy and we fear Your chastisement, for surely Your chastisement overtakes the unbelievers.

This is a most remarkable prayer replete with *tauḥīd* [Oneness of God]. No one can utter such words of *tauḥīd* except *Sayyidul-Mursalīn* [Chief of the Prophets] and *Sayyidul-Muwaḥḥidīn* [Chief of the monotheists], upon him be peace and blessings of Allāh. This is purely a divine teaching. May my life be sacrificed for those words and for the tongue which uttered them.'[1]

The Manner of Offering the Tahajjud Prayer

'Abdul-'Azīz of Sialkot once stated in a gathering in Lailpur that the Holy Prophet ﷺ did not perform the *Tahajjud* Prayer in the manner observed by Muslims today; rather, upon waking up, he would only recite the Holy Qur'ān. He further stated that this was also the view of the Promised Messiah عليه السلام.

1. *Tadhkiratul-Mahdī*, p. 116

This matter was presented to the Promised Messiah ﷺ by Munshī Nabī Bakhsh and Maulawī Noor-ud-Deen ﷺ for clarification. The Imām of the Age ﷺ gave the following comprehensive verdict:

> It is most certainly not my view that the Holy Prophet ﷺ would merely recite the Holy Qur'ān upon waking up. I have previously stated that if someone is ill, or there is some other valid excuse that prevents them from offering the voluntary *Tahajjud* Prayer, then they should wake up, perform *istighfār* [seeking Allāh's forgiveness], send blessings upon the Holy Prophet ﷺ, and recite *Sūrah al-Fātiḥah*.
>
> The Holy Prophet ﷺ would consistently offer *nawāfil* [voluntary Prayers], and most often he would offer 11 *rak'āt*. That is, eight *rak'āt* of *nawāfil* and three *rak'āt* of *Witr*. Sometimes he would offer them consecutively, while at other times, he would offer two *rak'āt*, sleep, rise again to offer another two, and sleep once more.
>
> In short, he would perform the *nawāfil* in intervals, rising and resting in between, just as it is practised today, a method that has continued well into the fourteenth [Islamic] century.[1]

The Earliest Time for Offering Tahajjud Prayer

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ﷺ states: 'Dr. Mīr Muḥammad Ismā'īl ﷺ told me that someone asked the Promised Messiah ﷺ about the *Tahajjud* Prayer in the month of Ramaḍān, or the matter was mentioned in his presence.

The Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

1. *Badr*, 16 November 1903, p. 335

> One should wake up for the *Tahajjud* Prayer at its earliest time, and not right before the morning Prayer.

Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ states: 'The term "earliest time" does not mean the first portion of the night, but rather the beginning of the time for offering *Tahajjud*, which is immediately after midnight. This was the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet ﷺ that he would offer the *Tahajjud* Prayer at a time which allowed him some rest before the *Fajr* Prayer. However, if adolescent youth rise shortly before *Fajr* in order to develop the habit of offering *Tahajjud*, then there is no harm in that.'[1]

Reciting the Entire Holy Qur'ān in One Rak'at

It was mentioned that some people consider reciting the entire Holy Qur'ān in a single *rak'at* to be a source of pride. Such *ḥuffāẓ* [memorisers of the Qur'ān] and reciters take great pride in this.

The Promised Messiah ؑ said:

> This is a sin and an act of boastfulness on their part. They show off just as craftspeople boast about their craftsmanship. The Holy Prophet ﷺ did not follow this practice, although had he wished, he certainly could have. But he was content with reciting short *sūrahs*.[2]

Persistently Offering the Ishrāq Prayer

The Promised Messiah ؑ wrote in a letter to 'Abbās 'Alī of Ludhiana:

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1. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 1, pp. 671–672
2. *Badr*, 19 June, 1903, p. 169

I have written before that you ought to continue practicing the *awrād* [devotional routines] which you observe, so long as they are free of any element of *shirk* [associating partners with Allāh] or innovation. It is not proven that the Holy Prophet ﷺ would consistently offer the *Ishrāq*[1] Prayer. However, it is established that he would offer it if he missed the *Tahajjud* Prayer, or upon returning from a journey. Nonetheless, striving in worship and falling prostrate at the threshold of the Generous One at all times is itself the essence of the Sunnah, [and Allāh states]:

وَاذْكُرُوْا اللّٰهَ كَثِيْرًا لَّعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُوْنَ[2]

And remember Allāh much, so you may prosper.[3]

The Wisdom in the Number of Rak'āt

A question was posed: 'Why has the number of *rak'āt* been fixed in the Prayers?'

The Promised Messiah عليه السلام said:

Allāh the Exalted has instilled other secrets in this matter. One who prays must, at some point, reach a limit and stop. Similarly, there is a limit in *dhikr* [remembrance of Allāh], but that limit is defined by that state of spiritual experience, pleasure, and longing which I have mentioned before. When that pleasure is attained, a person naturally ceases.

1. Also known as *Ḍuḥā*, *Ishrāq* is voluntary prayer offered shortly after sunrise. [Publisher]
2. *Sūrah al-Jumu'ah*, 62:11
3. *Maktūbāt-e-Aḥmad*, vol. 1, p. 528

Secondly, this matter relates to inner states, not mere words. Only one who experiences this state can truly understand it. The core principle in *dhikr* is that one should never forget Allāh the Exalted, and should always keep Him before themselves. In this way, one abstains from sin.

It is mentioned in *Tadhkiratul-Auliyā'* that a trader once purchased and then sold merchandise worth 70,000, yet he did not become heedless of God for even a moment. So remember, the true servants of Allāh are those of whom it is said:

لَا تُلْهِيْهِمْ تِجَارَةٌ وَلَا بَيْعٌ عَنْ ذِكْرِ اللّٰهِ[1]

> Neither merchandise nor traffic diverts them from the remembrance of Allāh

When a heart forges a true relationship and sincere love with Allāh the Exalted, it can never be severed from Him.

This state can be understood through this example: if any of you had a sick child, then no matter where you go or how busy you are, your heart and attention remain occupied with that child. Likewise, those who have forged a sincere relationship and true love with Allāh the Exalted never forget Him under any circumstances.[2]

Performing Tasbīḥ After the Prayer

The Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

1. *Sūrah al-Nūr*, 24:38
2. *Badr*, 24 June 1904, p. 1

The exhortations of the Holy Prophet ﷺ were always in accordance with the time, place, and circumstance. Many people have faced difficulties and raised objections because they failed to consider the context of such guidance. For instance, they claim that there is a contradiction between two *aḥādīth*, when in fact there is no contradiction; rather, the guidance is given based on the need of the situation.

Take this example: a man once came to the Holy Prophet ﷺ and asked: 'What is righteousness?' The Holy Prophet ﷺ knew that his particular weakness was lack of respect for his parents. So the Holy Prophet ﷺ said: 'Righteousness is that you respect your parents.'

Now, if someone were to conclude from this that respecting one's parents is the only form of righteousness and that all other good deeds may be ignored, that would be a false conclusion. The same applies to *tasbīḥ* [repeating glorifications like *Allāhu Akbar, Subḥān-Allāh*, etc.]. As mentioned in the Holy Qur'ān:

وَاذْكُرُوا اللّٰهَ كَثِيرًا لَّعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُوْنَ[1]

That is, remember Allāh much, so you may prosper. The words وَاذْكُرُوا اللّٰهَ كَثِيْرًا definitely refer to the remembrance of Allāh after the Prayer, and reciting it 33 times does not qualify as *kathīran* [much]. Therefore, understand well that the teaching to recite '*Allāhu Akbar*' 33 times was circumstantial and based on context. Otherwise, a person who remembers Allāh with sincere pleasure and spiritual delight is not concerned with keeping count; rather, they engage in remembrance without tallying how many times they have done so.

1. *Sūrah al-Anfāl* 46

There is a famous story about a woman who was passionately in love with someone. She once saw a hermit holding a string of prayer beads, counting each bead with his fingers. She asked him: 'What are you doing?' He replied: 'I am remembering my Beloved.' She said: 'Do you count how many times you remember your Beloved?'

Indeed, it is absolutely true that if one seeks to remember the Beloved, what need is there to count each repetition? The fact of the matter is that until the remembrance of Allāh is performed in abundance, one cannot attain the pleasure and spiritual delight that has been placed within it. As for the Holy Prophet ﷺ instructing that it be recited 33 times, this must have been a directive for a specific person on a particular occasion. Perhaps someone was not engaging in remembrance at all, so he instructed him to recite it 33 times. As for those who sit with prayer beads in hand, this practice is wholly incorrect. Anyone familiar with the life and practice of the Holy Prophet ﷺ would know that he never adhered to such formalities. Rather, he was wholly absorbed in the path of Allāh the Exalted.[1]

How Should Prayer be Offered in Areas with Unusual Timings?

Maulawī 'Abdullāh of Batala writes: 'The late Qāḍī Ḍiyā'-ud-Dīn related to me that I witnessed Sardār Faḍl Ḥaqq from Dharam Kot accepting Islām. He came to Qadian on the day of *'Īd* and accepted Islām, after which he stayed in Qadian for a few days. During that period, his relatives—who had become enraged at him becoming a Muslim—visited him and tried to persuade him to reject Islām and revert to Sikhism.

1. *Al-Ḥakam*, 24 June, 1904, p. 1

'One day, a party of Sikhs came, including elders who were well-versed in their religion. At the time, the Promised Messiah عليه السلام was residing in the Mubārak Mosque. These individuals arrived at the mosque visibly agitated and began to raise objections against Islām. They posed the question: "O Mirza, tell us what should Muslims do who live in areas where a day lasts six months and a night is likewise six months?" They presented this question as if it were an inextricable conundrum.

The Promised Messiah عليه السلام responded instantly and with ease, saying:

> There is no commandment in Islām which is beyond human capacity. Hence, if one is unable to fast for six months, then he is not required to do so, and in such a case, he will not be committing a sin. As far as the timings of Prayer are concerned, these can now be determined by means of a clock, and Prayer can be offered accordingly. The times of night and day in such regions can also be estimated with respect to the East and the West.

At this, the Sikhs fell silent and were unable to respond. Thus, the mountain of objection they had constructed was swept away by the Promised Messiah عليه السلام with the slightest breath.'[1]

1. *Aṣḥāb-e-Aḥmad*, vol. 6, pp. 112, 113, narration by Qāḍī Ḍiyā'-ud-Dīn Sahib, New Edition

The Sunnah Prayers are not Offered when Combining Prayers

QUESTION—Should the *sunnah* Prayers be offered if Prayers are being combined?

Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ II ؓ stated in response to this question: 'There was disagreement between the scholars on this point before the advent of the Promised Messiah ؑ, however, what we have seen in his continuous practice, and what he has always said in response to questions, is that when Prayers are being combined then the *sunnah* Prayers before and after the prescribed Prayer are not offered.

QUESTION—Are the *sunnah* Prayers not offered even if the *Jumu'ah* and *'Aṣr* Prayers are combined?

ANSWER—The *sunnah* Prayers offered before the *Jumu'ah* Prayers are in actuality the *nawāfil* of *Jumu'ah* and are particular to it. Therefore it is compulsory to offer *sunnah* Prayers before *Jumu'ah* Prayer in any case.[1]

Ḥaḍrat Muftī Muḥammad Ṣādiq ؓ writes: 'The following incident occurred sometime in March 1899, when I had come to Qadian from Lahore for a few days. I had been accommodated in the room between Mubārak Mosque and the Promised Messiah's room. The Promised Messiah ؑ would pass through that room on his way to offer Prayer. Apart from this, the Promised Messiah ؑ would frequently open the door and give me something to eat, like a mango or something else.

1. *Al-Fazl*, 14 October, 1946, p. 4

The Promised Messiah ﷺ was very kind and compassionate towards this humble one.

'Around this time, the Promised Messiah ﷺ once stated: "Today we should combine the *Ẓuhr* and *'Aṣr* Prayers." (Usually, when Prayers were combined in this way, the *Ẓuhr* Prayer would be offered slightly later than its fixed time and the *'Aṣr* Prayer slightly earlier. Or, the *'Aṣr* Prayer would be offered at the time of *Ẓuhr*, or the *Ẓuhr* Prayer would be delayed until the time for *Aṣr*.)

'Hence, I stood up in that very room to offer four *rak'āt* of *sunnah* in the manner of the four *rak'āt* of *sunnah* which are usually offered before the four obligatory *rak'āt* of *Ẓuhr*. The Promised Messiah ﷺ would always perform ablution and offer the first *sunnah* Prayers in his room, and then go for the [congregational] Prayer. As for the two *rak'āt* of *sunnah* which are offered afterwards, he would offer them in the mosque and thereafter sit in the mosque to meet with the brothers and converse with them.

'I had just stood up with the intention of offering four *rak'āt* of *sunnah*, and some other friends were also present in the room, because some of them would pray in the adjoining rooms due to the limited space in the Mubārak Mosque. The Promised Messiah ﷺ opened the door to go to the Mubārak Mosque and, passing by, saw me offering the *sunnah* Prayer. He said: "The Prayers will be combined, so there is no need to offer the *sunnah*."

'He said this and went ahead, then turned back and saw me praying, so he repeated:

> The Prayers will be combined, so there is no need to offer the *sunnah* Prayers.

'He said this and entered the mosque. I concluded my Prayer with *taslīm* while still standing and did not complete the *sunnah*. All the people present in the room at the time were notably affected by the fact

that the Promised Messiah ﷺ did not like *sunnah* Prayers to be offered when the Prayers were being combined.'[1]

It is Inappropriate to Open the Qur'ān and Read from It During Prayer

On one occasion, Dr. Mirzā Ya'qūb Baig said to the Promised Messiah ﷺ: 'I do not know the longer *sūrahs* of the Qur'ān by heart, but I wish to recite them during the Prayer. Can I open the Qur'ān and place it on a table in front of me, or hold it in my hand and set it aside after the recitation—then go into *rukū'* and *sujūd*—and pick it up again for the second *rak'at*?'

The Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

> There is no need for that. You should memorise some *sūrahs* and recite them repeatedly.[2]

Breaking Prayer at the Call of the Imām of the Age

Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ relates: 'Miāń 'Abdullāh of Sanaur ؓ told me: "I was offering the *sunnah* Prayers before the *Ẓuhr* Prayer in the Mubārak Mosque when the Promised Messiah ﷺ called me from within *Baitul-Fikr*. I broke my Prayer and went to him, saying: 'Your Holiness, I have broken my Prayer to come to you.' He replied: 'You did well.'"

Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ further states: 'This humble one notes that *Baitul-Fikr* is a room within the residence of the Promised Messiah ﷺ, adjoining the Mubārak Mosque from the

1. *Dhikr-e-Ḥabīb*, pp. 63–64
2. *Dhikr-e-Ḥabīb*, p. 174

northern side. In the early days, His Holiness ﷺ would often sit in this room and enter the mosque through its small inner door. Miāṅ ʻAbdullāh of Sanaur ؓ stated that this incident occurred in the early days of the Promised Messiah's mission.

ʻThis humble one affirms that breaking Prayer in response to the call of a divinely appointed messenger is a matter grounded in the Sharīʻah. The reality is that *ʻamal ṣāliḥ* [a righteous deed] does not only refer to a specific act, but to obedience to Allāh and His Messenger.'[1]

Interrupting Prayer Due to Necessity

Dr. Mīr Muḥammad Ismāʻīl ؓ once informed Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ that on one occasion, the *Ẓuhr* or *ʻAṣr* Prayer was in progress in the Mubārak Mosque when the Promised Messiah ﷺ broke his Prayer and exited through the small door to his residence. A short while later, he returned after performing ablution. When the imām had completed the Prayer with *taslīm*, the Promised Messiah ﷺ made up the portion of the Prayer he had missed. It is not known whether he had unintentionally joined the Prayer without performing ablution, or whether he had gone to relieve himself.[2]

Breaking Prayer in Cases of Extreme Necessity

Dr. Muḥammad ʻAlī Khān ؓ from Africa inquired that if an Aḥmadī brother is praying and his in-charge comes from outside and knocks on the door and asks for the key to the office or the dispensary, then at such a time, what should he do? Such an incident had in fact occurred:

1. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 1, p. 163
2. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 1, p. 783

one individual continued offering his Prayer instead of opening the door, and as a result, he lost his job and was sent back to India.

The Promised Messiah عليه السلام said:

> In such a case, it was essential that he should have opened the door and given the key to the in-charge (this incident relates to a hospital, that is why he said this). Because if a man's life is lost due to his delay, it would be a grave sin. It has been mentioned in the *aḥādīth* that if a man walks to the door and opens it while praying, it does not invalidate the Prayer.[1] Similarly, if one's son is in danger of some harm or is at risk of some harm by a dangerous animal that is visible, then saving the boy and killing the animal while he is praying is not a sin, and the Prayer is not invalidated. Rather, some have also written that if the horse becomes loose, tying it does not invalidate the Prayer because he can still offer the Prayer later on within the prescribed time range.

The Editor of *Al-Badr* wrote: It should be remembered that this is for critical situations or dire needs. It should not be the case that every type of need is given priority and Prayer is disregarded and turned into child's play. Otherwise, there is a strict prohibition of attending to other occupations during Prayer, and Allāh the Exalted knows every heart and intention very well.[2]

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1. *Musnad Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, Musnad an-Nisā', Musnadu as-Ṣiddīqah 'Ā'ishah bint as-Ṣiddīq*, vol. 8, p. 458, Ḥadīth 26499, by Maktabah 'Alam al-Kutub, 1998. [Publisher]

2. *Al-Badr*, 24 November 1904, p. 4; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt* vol. 7, pp. 54–55

It is Permissible to Offer Prayer with Shoes On

It was mentioned in a sitting with the Promised Messiah ﷺ that the Amīr of Kabul had entered a *Khānqāh*[1] in the city of Ajmer wearing his shoes and had offered Prayer in various parts of the room without removing them. The caretakers of the *Khānqāh* took offence at this.

The Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

> The Amīr was in the right in this matter, because offering the Prayer with one's shoes on is permissible according to the Sharī'ah.[2]

Offering Prayer with Pān in One's Mouth

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ writes: 'Dr. Mīr Muḥammad Ismā'īl ؓ once told me that the Promised Messiah ﷺ was, on one occasion, afflicted with a severe bout of coughing, so much so that his breathing seemed almost constricted. However, when he placed *pān*[3] in his mouth, he would experience some relief. During that episode of coughing, he would perform Prayer with *pān* in his mouth so that he could complete the Prayer calmly and with ease.'[4]

1. A *khānqāh* is a spiritual retreat or lodge traditionally associated with Sufi orders. [Publisher]
2. *Badr*, 11 April 1907, p. 3
3. A traditional snack made from betel leaves with fennel, lime and rose petals. [Publisher]
4. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 1, pp. 605–606

Women Should Stand in a Separate Row Behind the Imām

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ writes that Munshī Ẓafar Aḥmad of Kapurthala informed him in writing: 'On one occasion, the Promised Messiah ؑ was staying in the city of Jalandhar. I went to him on the upper floor [of his residence]. When in seclusion, the Promised Messiah ؑ would prolong his Prayer significantly, as well as the *rukū'* and *sujūd*.

'It so happened that a maidservant—who was, I believe, named Mai Tābi and was very elderly—offered Prayer while standing beside His Holiness ؑ on the Prayer mat, and then left. I remained seated there for a while. When His Holiness ؑ concluded the Prayer, I asked whether it was permissible for a woman to offer Prayer standing beside a man, or should she stand behind him? He replied that she should stand behind him. I told him that Mai Tābi had just offered Prayer beside him and departed. He responded that he was not even aware of her coming or going.'[1]

A Separate Row for Women in Prayer

Ḥaḍrat Mīr Muḥammad Isḥāq ؓ states: 'During my early years, it happened on dozens of occasions that the Promised Messiah ؑ led the women [of his household] in the *Maghrib* and *'Ishā'* Prayers. I would stand to his right, and the women would stand behind.'[2]

1. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 2 p. 122
2. Monthly *Al-Furqān*, September–October, 1961, p. 49

A Woman Standing Beside a Man During Prayer in Cases of Necessity

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ writes that Dr. Mīr Muḥammad Ismā'īl ؓ told him: 'I observed on numerous occasions that when the Promised Messiah ؑ would lead Prayer at home, he would have Ḥaḍrat Ummul-Mu'minīn ؓ stand to his left and follow him in Prayer. This was despite the well-known jurisprudential ruling that a woman should not stand beside a man in Prayer; rather, she should stand behind him, even if she is the only follower. Conversely, if the sole follower is a man, he should stand to the right of the imām.' I asked Ḥaḍrat Ummul-Mu'minīn ؓ about this, and she confirmed it. She also mentioned that the Promised Messiah ؑ had once said to her: "At times, I experience dizziness while standing, so you may pray beside me."'[1]

The Imām Reciting the Basmalah and Qunūt loudly

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ writes: 'Qāḍī Muḥammad Yūsuf of Peshawar informed me in a letter that during the time of the Promised Messiah ؑ, Maulawī 'Abdul-Karīm of Sialkot ؓ would generally lead the Prayer. He would recite the *basmalah* and *Qunūt* aloud, and the Promised Messiah ؑ would be offering Prayer behind him.'

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ affirms: 'The Promised Messiah ؑ would not object to anyone in such matters. He would say: "All these methods are established from the practice of the Holy Prophet ﷺ." However, in his own practice, the Promised Messiah ؑ

1. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 1, pp. 636–637

would adopt the method which he believed the Holy Prophet ﷺ followed most frequently.'[1]

Observing Qunūt During Prayer

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ writes: 'Dr. Mīr Muḥammad Ismā'īl ؓ related to me: "Maulawī 'Abdul-Karīm ؓ, for as long as he lived during the lifetime of the Promised Messiah ؑ, would observe *Qunūt* in every obligatory Prayer. He would recite it aloud in the *Fajr*, *Maghrib*, and *'Ishā'* Prayers. In *Qunūt*, he would begin with Quranic supplications, followed, typically, by supplications from the *aḥādīth*. At the end, he would invoke blessings upon the Holy Prophet ﷺ, and then proceed to prostration. I now present the supplications he would frequently recite:

رَبَّنَا آتِنَا فِي الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً وَفِي الآخِرَةِ حَسَنَةً وَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ[2]

Our Lord, grant us good in this world as well as good in the world to come, and protect us from the torment of the Fire.

رَبَّنَا وَآتِنَا مَا وَعَدتَّنَا عَلَى رُسُلِكَ[3]

"Our Lord, give us what You have promised to us through Your Messengers...

1. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 1, p. 735
2. *Sūrah al-Baqarah*, 2:202
3. *Sūrah Āl 'Imrān*, 3:195

رَبَّنَا ظَلَمْنَآ أَنفُسَنَا وَإِن لَّمْ تَغْفِرْ لَنَا وَتَرْحَمْنَا لَنَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ[1]

And if You forgive us not and have not mercy on us, we shall surely be of the lost.'

رَبَّنَا هَبْ لَنَا مِنْ أَزْوَاجِنَا وَذُرِّيَّاتِنَا قُرَّةَ أَعْيُنٍ وَاجْعَلْنَا لِلْمُتَّقِينَ إِمَامًا[2]

Our Lord, grant us of our wives and children the delight of our eyes, and make us a model for the righteous.

رَبَّنَا لاَ تُؤَاخِذْنَآ إِن نَّسِينَا أَوْ أَخْطَأْنَا...[3]

'Our Lord, do not punish us, if we forget or fall into error...'

رَبَّنَا اصْرِفْ عَنَّا عَذَابَ جَهَنَّمَ إِنَّ عَذَابَهَا كَانَ غَرَامًا[4]

Our Lord, avert from us the punishment of Hell, for the punishment thereof is a lasting torment.

رَبَّنَا افْتَحْ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَ قَوْمِنَا بِالْحَقِّ وَأَنتَ خَيْرُ الْفَاتِحِينَ[5]

So O our Lord, decide between us and between our people with truth, and You are the Best of those who decide.

1. *Sūrah al-A'rāf*, 7:24
2. *Sūrah al-Furqān*, 25:75
3. *Sūrah al-Baqarah*, 2:287
4. *Sūrah al-Furqān*, 25:66
5. *Sūrah al-A'rāf*, 7:90

رَبَّنَا لاَ تَجْعَلْنَا فِتْنَةً لِّلْقَوْمِ الظَّالِمِينَ[1]

In Allāh do we put our trust. Our Lord, make us not a trial for the wrongdoing people.

رَبَّنَا لاَ تُزِغْ قُلُوبَنَا بَعْدَ إِذْ هَدَيْتَنَا[2]

Our Lord, let not our hearts become perverse after You have guided us; and bestow on us mercy from Yourself; surely, You alone are the Bestower.

رَّبَّنَا إِنَّنَا سَمِعْنَا مُنَادِيًا يُنَادِى لِلإِيمَانِ أَنْ آمِنُواْ بِرَبِّكُمْ فَآمَنَّا[3]

Our Lord, we have heard a Crier calling us unto faith, 'Believe ye in your Lord,' and we have believed."

اللَّهُمَّ أَيِّدِ الْإِسْلَامَ وَالْمُسْلِمِيْنَ بِالإِمَامِ الْحَكَمِ العَادِلِ

O Allāh, support Islām and the Muslims through the Imām, the Just Arbiter

اللَّهمَّ انصُرْ مَنْ نَصَرَ دِيْنَ مُحَمَّدٍ وَاجْعَلْنَا مِنْهُمْ واخْذُلْ مَنْ خَذَلَ دِيْنَ مُحَمَّدٍ وَّلَا تَجْعَلْنَا مِنْهُمْ

O Allāh, help those who help the religion of Muḥammad, and make us among them. And forsake those who forsake the religion of Muḥammad, and do not make us among them.

1. *Sūrah Yūnus*, 10:86
2. *Sūrah Āl 'Imrān*, 3:9
3. *Sūrah Āl 'Imrān*, 3:194

'This humble one affirms that the penultimate supplication refers to invoking the advent of the Promised Messiah عليه السلام. However, after his advent, it should be understood as: 'O Allāh, enable the Muslims to believe in him.'

Observing Qunūt in Certain Circumstances

The Promised Messiah عليه السلام stated:

> Nowadays, the *Qunūt* should be observed in the Prayers due to the prevalence of the epidemic.[1]

The purport of the Holy Qur'ān is that when punishment befalls a person, repentance at that time cannot deliver them from it. Repent before the punishment of Allāh descends and the door of repentance is closed. If there is such fear of the law of the world, then why do we not fear the law of Allāh? When a calamity descends, its taste must be endured. Everyone should endeavour to rise for *Tahajjud* and include the *Qunūt* in the five daily Prayers. Repent from all those things that incur the displeasure of Allāh.[2]

Supplicating by Raising the Hands after Prayer

Ḥaḍrat Muftī Muḥammad Ṣādiq رضي الله عنه writes: 'The Muslims in India generally believe that it is impermissible to supplicate in a language other than Arabic—such as Urdu, Persian, or English—during the Prayer, from the first *takbīr* until the concluding *taslīm*, except for the prescribed supplications in Arabic. It is common practice for people to

1. *Al-Badr*, No. 15, vol. 2, 1 May 1903, p. 115
2. *Al-Ḥakam*, 24 July, 1901, pp. 1–2

raise their hands after concluding the Prayer and pray in their own language, expressing their inner emotions and heartfelt desires. However, the Promised Messiah عليه السلام said repeatedly:

> It is permissible for a person to supplicate in his own language during the Prayer, after reciting the prescribed Prayers—whether in *sujūd*, while standing after *rukū'*, or in any other posture of the Prayer—because one is best able to express heartfelt emotions and passion in his own language.

Someone once said: "The clerics say that offering supplication in one's own language during the Prayer invalidates it."

The Promised Messiah عليه السلام said:

> Their Prayer is already invalid, for they do not understand what they are saying. The Prayer is not invalidated by supplicating in any language.

The Promised Messiah عليه السلام further stated:

> He who hastily recites the Prayer in Arabic without understanding its meaning, deriving neither delight nor spiritual pleasure, and then makes lengthy supplications after concluding the Prayer, is like a man who enters a royal court and presents a petition—written by someone else—before the king, reading it out like a parrot, without understanding it. He then bids farewell to the king and leaves. Once outside, he begins to say: 'I wish for this' and 'I ask for that'. He should have made all his requests when he was standing in the presence of the king.

The Promised Messiah عليه السلام also stated:

> The example of those who do not supplicate during the Prayer, but extend their supplications after it, is like one who overturns a cart so that its wheels face the sky, and then tries to make the horse pull it.[1]

Supplicating in One's Own Language during Prayer

The Promised Messiah عليه السلام said:

> It is not necessary for a person to make their supplications in the Arabic language. As the fundamental purpose in the Prayer is to arouse emotion, tears and humility, one ought to supplicate in one's mother tongue. One possesses a special attachment to one's mother tongue and has a command over their own language. No matter how well-versed and extremely proficient an individual is in another language, a feeling of disassociation forever remains. Hence, one ought to supplicate in one's mother tongue.[2]

A question was posed as to whether it was permissible to supplicate in the Prayer in one's own tongue.

The Promised Messiah عليه السلام said:

> All languages are created by God. One ought to offer supplications in the Prayer in a language that one understands well. For this has an influence on the heart, in order to produce humility and meekness. The Word of God must be recited in Arabic and you should remember its meaning, but you are of course

1. *Dhikr-e-Ḥabīb*, pp. 197–198
2. *Al-Ḥakam*, 24 December, 1900, p. 2; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt*—Volume III, pp. 33–34

free to offer supplications in your own language. Those people who offer their Prayer in haste and then offer long supplications after it has ended are unacquainted with the deeper reality in this connection. The time for supplication is in the formal Prayer. Supplicate profusely during the Prayer.[1]

Supplicate in Your Own Language as Well as Making Traditional Supplications in Prayer

The Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

One must supplicate during the Prayer in their own language, because supplicating in one's own tongue stirs emotion. *Sūrah al-Fātiḥah* is the word of Allāh the Exalted, so it must be recited in Arabic, just as it is. The portion of the Holy Qur'ān recited afterwards should also be in Arabic. Similarly, the prescribed supplications and *tasbīḥāt* [prescribed words of glorification] should be recited in Arabic as well. However, you should also learn their translation.

In addition to this, one must also supplicate in their own language in order to develop humility and devotion, for a Prayer without humility is not Prayer. People nowadays have made it their custom to nod their heads through the Prayer quickly as if paying a tax, and then engage in lengthy supplications afterwards. This is a *bid'ah* [innovation]. Nowhere in the noble *aḥādīth* is there any mention of supplicating after concluding the Prayer.

The ignorant consider Prayer a burdensome toll and separate supplication from it. In truth, Prayer itself is supplication.

1. *Al-Ḥakam*, 24th May, 1901, p. 9; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt*—Volume III, pp. 187–188

A person should supplicate to be delivered from spiritual and worldly trials and from every calamity during the Prayer itself. Supplication may be offered at every stage of the Prayer: after the *tasbīḥ* in *rukū'*, after the *tasbīḥ* in *sujūd*, after the *taḥiyyāt*, and while standing after *rukū'*. Make many supplications so that you may attain countless blessings. In supplication, the soul should pour itself forth upon the threshold of Allāh like water. This kind of supplication purifies and refines the heart. If one is blessed with such supplication, they may remain engaged in it for hours. We must beseech Allāh to be saved from the snares of sin. Supplication is the cure that eradicates the poison of sin.

Some foolish people think that if a person supplicates in their own language during the Prayer, it invalidates the Prayer. This is an utterly mistaken belief. In fact, it is their own Prayer that is invalid.[1]

On another occasion, the question was asked: is the practice of supplicating after the Prayer found in Islām or not?

The Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

We do not deny that the Holy Prophet ﷺ did supplicate. However, the entire Prayer is *du'ā'* [supplication]. Nowadays, it is observed that people rush through the Prayer and hastily rid themselves of it. Then, in the supplications that follow, they display such exaggerated humility and meekness that a traveller could cover two miles during the time they spend supplicating. Some people even become irritated by this conduct, and this is not commendable.

Humility and meekness are, in reality, a part of the Prayer itself. Yet people fail to exhibit these during the Prayer, and

1. *Dhikr-e-Ḥabīb*, pp. 202–203

they do not supplicate within it. In doing so, it is as if they render the Prayer void.

One may supplicate in their own language during the Prayer, after reciting the prescribed supplications.[1]

Abandoning the Practice of Leading Supplication By Raising Hands After Prayer

At the beginning of the blessed era of the Promised Messiah ﷺ, Ḥaḍrat Maulawī ʻAbdul-Karīm ﷺ would lead people in supplication by raising his hands after the Prayer, and the Promised Messiah ﷺ would also sometimes raise his hands in supplication. Later on, however, the Promised Messiah ﷺ kindly and gently explained this matter, after which Ḥaḍrat Maulawī ʻAbdul-Karīm ﷺ discontinued this method of supplicating.

In this regard, the following narration by Pīr Iftikhār Aḥmad of Ludhiana ﷺ is noteworthy. He writes:

ʻBy the grace of Allāh, I remember a time when the Promised Messiah ﷺ was seated in Mubārak Mosque, and we, his humble attendants, were also sitting with him, including Maulawī ʻAbdul-Karīm ﷺ. The Promised Messiah ﷺ delivered a discourse on the topic of supplicating during the Prayer, and the summary of his address, in my own words, is as follows:

> It has become a custom that people do not supplicate during the Prayer itself. They offer it quickly, as a mere formality and habit, and then, after concluding the Prayer with *taslīm*, they begin lengthy supplications with great humility. However, in truth, supplication should be done during the Prayer, because the Prayer itself is a form of *duʻā'*. The purpose of Prayer is that

1. *Badr*, 1 May 1903, p. 114

one should entreat their Lord to grant them goodness in both this life and the next.

It is like a man who enters the royal court of a king but does not present any request while in his presence. Then, once he exits, he begins making his petitions. There is no proof that the Holy Prophet ﷺ would raise his hands in supplication after the five daily congregational Prayers.

'Prior to this address of the Promised Messiah ؑ, it was the practice that supplications were made with raised hands after the five daily Prayers. The imām—i.e., Maulawī 'Abdul-Karīm of Sialkot ؓ—the Promised Messiah ؑ, and all the *muqtadīs* [congregants] would raise their hands and supplicate after concluding the obligatory Prayer with *taslīm*. I recall that everyone would raise their hands in supplication together, as I too used to raise my hands in the same manner.

'The Promised Messiah ؑ did not make even the slightest indication in his address towards Maulawī 'Abdul-Karīm of Sialkot ؓ, nor did he say: "Why do you do this?" or "You must refrain from this in the future." However, after hearing the speech of the Promised Messiah ؑ, Maulawī 'Abdul-Karīm ؓ ceased raising his hands in supplication, and this practice has been followed ever since.'[1]

It Is an Innovative Practice to Raise the Hands to Supplicate after Prayer

A question was posed: 'We usually supplicate after the Prayer, but here people neither supplicate nor offer *nawāfil* [voluntary Prayer].'

The Promised Messiah ؑ said:

1. *Iftikhārul-Ḥaqq*, by Ṣāḥibzādah Iftikhār Aḥmad of Ludhiana, pp. 494–495

The main point is that I do not prohibit supplication. Rather, I myself supplicate, and the Prayer is in itself a supplication. The truth is that I have advised the members of my Community regarding a certain *bidʿah* [innovation] that has become common in India: people do not pay due regard to the moderation and composure required in the various postures of the Prayer. Rather, they perform it as if pecking at something, like a tax they are reluctant to pay. They offer the Prayer in such haste that it appears they dislike it.

The Prayer should be a source of pleasure, joy, and spiritual ecstasy. However, the way in which people perform it today deprives it of heartfelt humility and transforms it into something flavourless and tedious. Therefore, I have advised my Community not to offer the Prayer in a manner that causes boredom or inattentiveness. Instead, they should strive for heartfelt humility that brings true delight and spiritual fervour.

The prevailing trend is that people do not strive for heartfelt humility during the Prayer. Rather, they quickly complete the Prayer and then extend long supplications afterwards. Yet, the very purpose of the Prayer—which is the spiritual ascension of a believer—is to supplicate during the Prayer. For this reason, the *Ummul-Adʿiyah* [mother of supplications] اهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ [Guide us on the right path] is included in it. One cannot attain nearness to Allāh unless they establish the Prayer. Allāh has said أَقِيمُوا الصَّلٰوةَ [observe the Prayer], because lapses occur frequently in the Prayer, but those who establish the Prayer benefit from its spiritual reality and become wholly absorbed in supplication.

The Prayer is like a drink—if someone tastes it even once, they cannot bear to go without it. They become intoxicated and absorbed in it. If one has truly tasted it once in their life, that taste never leaves them.

Undoubtedly, a believer should supplicate constantly, whether standing or sitting. But the manner in which people supplicate after the Prayer in this country is indeed peculiar. Some people supplicate for such long periods in the mosque that one could travel half a mile in the time it takes them to finish.

I have advised the members of my Jamā'at to offer the Prayer in the best possible manner, because it too is a form of supplication. What is the reason that some people have been offering Prayer for 30 years, yet remain deprived of spiritual benefits, as if they had never prayed at all? Why is it that humility, meekness, and the effects of spirituality never manifest in them? The only reason is that they offer the kind of Prayer that Allāh has cursed, for the word *wail* [woe] has been used for [those who offer] such Prayers.

If someone possesses a priceless jewel, would they discard it for a few pennies? Certainly not. Rather, they would safeguard that jewel while also preserving their pennies. Therefore, one must offer the Prayer in a proper and complete manner and understand its reality well.'

QUESTIONER: '*Sūrah al-Fātiḥah* is certainly a supplication, but those who are not acquainted with Arabic should also supplicate.'

The Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

I have already told my Jamā'at not to pray like parrots. The Prayer will not be blessed until you articulate your wishes in your own language, in addition to the recitation of the Holy Qur'ān, which is the word of the Magnificent Lord, and the recorded supplications that the Holy Prophet ﷺ would recite frequently. Therefore, it is essential for all those who do not

know Arabic to supplicate in their own language and put forth their entreaties after the traditional *tasbīḥ* during the *rukū'* and *sujūd*, and also during the *taḥiyyāt*, *qiyām* [standing], and *jilsah* [sitting position]. Hence, in accordance with this teaching, the members of my Jamā'at supplicate during Prayer in their own language, and so do I. Although Arabic and Punjabi are both the same to me, one has an attachment to one's mother tongue. Hence, one ought to present their needs and requests before Allāh, with humility and meekness, in their own language.

I have repeatedly exhorted that you should offer the Prayer with attention and sincerity, for it is through this that humility and delight arise. You offer the obligatory congregational Prayer, and thereafter, you may prolong the *sunnah* and *nawāfil* as you wish. The Prayer ought to be marked by tearful supplication, so that the state which is the true objective of the Prayer is brought about. The Prayer repels sin, for Allāh has stated: إِنَّ الْحَسَنَاتِ يُذْهِبْنَ السَّيِّئَاتِ that is, good deeds remove evil. The word *ḥasanāt* here means the Prayer.

However, the current condition is such that a person who regularly offers Prayer is generally considered a deceiver, because even the general public is aware that the Prayer being offered by people today is of the kind that Allāh describes as deserving of *wail* (woe), for it has no positive spiritual effect.

I do not wish to waste time in debating trivial linguistic matters, for in the end, after death, we must all appear before Allāh. For instance, when an ill person visits a doctor and uses the prescribed medicine, but after 10 or 20 days sees no benefit, they realise there has been some error in diagnosis or treatment. What, then, of those who have been offering Prayers for years, yet show no apparent spiritual transformation?

It is my view that if someone offers the Prayer for just 10 days, fulfilling its conditions, then their heart will be illuminated. But people can be seen offering Prayer for up to 50 years

and yet they remain immersed in worldly affairs and base lives. They do not know what they are saying in their Prayer. They do not understand the meaning of *istighfār* and are unfamiliar with its significance.

There are two types of dispositions: one is inclined towards habit and tradition. For example, if a Muslim's clothes brush against a Hindu, the latter discards their food, even though it is unaffected. This is the state of most people today, as they are bound by custom and heedless of substance.

Whoever believes that it is an innovation to supplicate within the Prayer and not after it, should know that this is not an innovation. In the time of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, he taught people supplications in Arabic, which was their mother tongue, and thus they made rapid spiritual progress. But when Islām spread to other lands, that progress slowed. The reason was that acts of worship were reduced to mere rituals and habits; their essence and inner spirit were lost. You may observe, for instance, an Afghan offering the Prayer, yet remains entirely unaware of the effect of Prayer.

Know this: custom is one thing and the Prayer is something else entirely. There is no better way of attaining nearness to God Almighty. The Prayer is the key to nearness, and through it, revelations and divine communion are granted. But if one does not offer the Prayer with its proper conditions and understanding, then what they are doing is merely following custom and habit, loving the Prayer only in the way that Hindus love the Ganges.

We do not deny supplication. Indeed, we believe in the efficacy of supplication more than others do, for God Almighty states: ادْعُونِي أَسْتَجِبْ لَكُمْ [Pray unto Me; I will answer your Prayer]. But it is absolutely true that God Almighty has not prescribed supplication after the Prayer, nor is it proven from the Sunnah that the Holy Prophet ﷺ practised this regularly.

If it had been established that he did so, and then someone chose to abandon it, that would be disobedience.

The Holy Prophet ﷺ did indeed supplicate outside of Prayer when required. We believe that much of his time was spent in supplication, but the Prayer in particular is the treasure house of supplications granted to the believer. Thus, one should not turn to other supplications until they have reformed their Prayer, because if obligatory acts are missed because of voluntary ones, then the obligatory must take precedence.

If someone offers the Prayer with sincerity, then by all means, they may supplicate afterwards if they so wish. I do not prohibit this. I only emphasise that the Prayer itself should be given precedence, for that is our objective. But in this age, people have lost appreciation for the Prayer and have thus become distant from Allāh. The Prayer is the *mi'rāj* [spiritual ascension] of the believer. Through it, the heart finds tranquillity. The Prayer comprises the praise of Allāh, the affirmation of human servitude, seeking forgiveness, and invoking blessings upon the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. That is, it contains everything needed for spiritual progress.

There is much in my heart about this subject which words cannot fully convey. Some people understand it, others do not, but I do not tire of expressing it, for it is my duty. I expound on it again and again, and those who are fortunate and have been granted discernment will come to understand it.[1]

1. *Al-Ḥakam*, 24 October 1902, pp. 11–12

It is Not Permitted to Offer the Prayer in Any Language Other Than Arabic

QUESTION—A person penned a booklet in which he stated that all the words of the Prayer ought to be recited in one's own language.

The Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

> We do not agree with such an approach at all. The Holy Qur'ān is a blessed book and it is the word of the Magnificent Lord. It must never be abandoned. I have only permitted supplicating in one's own language for those who are unlettered and unable to articulate their entreaties properly. Such people may supplicate in their own language.
>
> The condition of the people who author booklets like these is like that of a person named Fatḥ Muḥammad. His aunt was rather elderly and once asked him the meaning of the *kalimah* [the declaration of faith], as she had no idea what it meant. When he explained its meaning, she said: 'Was Muḥammad a man or a woman?' Upon being told that he was a man, she said in astonishment: 'Does this mean I have been repeating the name of a non-*maḥram* man all my life?' This is the condition of the Muslims.[1]

1. *Al-Ḥakam*, 24 October 1902, p. 12

COMBINING PRAYERS

The Prophecy Regarding the Combining of Prayers for the Promised Messiah

The Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

> Gratitude is due to Allāh a thousand times (on the occasion of writing the commentary of *Sūrah al-Fātiḥah* in 70 days) that the prophecy of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was fulfilled on this occasion. That is, there were many days during this 70-day period when I was unable to write the commentary due to the ailments I was afflicted with, and I was compelled to combine those Prayers which may permissibly be combined.
>
> Thus, the prophecy of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, which is found in *Durr-e-Manthūr*, *Fatḥul-Bārī*, *Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr*, and other books, was fulfilled, wherein it is stated: **تُجْمَعُ لَهُ الصَّلٰوةُ**—meaning: 'The Prayer will be combined for the Promised Messiah.' Now our opponents from among the clerics ought to tell me: do they or do they not believe that this sign of the Promised Messiah ﷺ has appeared through the fulfilment of this prophecy? And if they do not believe, then let them present a parallel example—of someone who claimed to be the Promised Messiah ﷺ and then combined Prayers for two months—or even an example without such a claim.[1]

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1. *Majmūʿa-e-Ishtihārāt*, vol. 2, p. 497

Combining Prayers due to Illness

The editor of *Tashīdhul-Adhān* wrote: 'Since, for some time, the health of the Promised Messiah ﷺ often worsens in the second part of the day; therefore, he offers *Maghrib* and *'Ishā'* Prayers in congregation at home. He cannot come outside [to the mosque]. One day after *Maghrib* Prayer, he addressed some women and what he said is worth noting.

The Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

> No one should entertain the misgiving that I lead the Prayers combined in my home every day without going out. The Noble Prophet ﷺ foretold that the one who would come would offer combined Prayers.[1] Accordingly, I have had Prayers combined outside for six months; now I thought this prophecy should also be fulfilled among the women. Since it is unlawful to offer combined Prayers without necessity, God made me ill and thus fulfilled the prophecy of the Noble Prophet ﷺ. It is every Muslim's duty to fulfil the words of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, because if it is not fulfilled, the Holy Prophet ﷺ would be considered—God forbid—a liar.
>
> Therefore, everyone should fulfil what is in his power according to the words of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, and God Himself also provides the means—as He made me ill—to fulfil the words of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. As the Noble Prophet ﷺ once said to a Companion, 'What will your condition be at the time when the gold bracelets of Chosroes will be placed on your hands?'[2]

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1. *Musnad Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal*, *Musnad al-Mukthirīn min aṣ-Ṣaḥābah*, *Musnad Abī Hurairah*, Ḥadīth 7890, vol. 6, page 246, Dār al-Ḥadīth, Cairo [Publisher]
2. *Asad al-Ghāba fi Ma'rifat al-Ṣaḥāba*, *Bāb al-Sīn wa al-Rā'*, 1955. Sarāqah bin Mālik, vol. 2, page 414, Dārul-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, Beirut, Lebanon [Publisher]

After the death of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, when the Kingdom of Chosroes was conquered, Ḥaḍrat ʻUmar ؓ put the gold bangles that had come as spoils of war on him. Although the prohibition of wearing gold bracelets for men in Islām is just like other prohibitions; yet, since this was said by the Noble Prophet ﷺ, it was fulfilled. In the same way, every other human being should also try to fulfil the words of the Holy Prophet ﷺ.[1]

Combining Two Prayers is a Sign of the Mahdī

Let all my brethren know that the *Ẓuhr* and *ʻAṣr* Prayers have been combined for some time now, approximately six months or thereabouts. I am aware that some visitors or newly joined followers, who are not acquainted with our objectives, may harbour suspicions that we are combining the Prayers out of laziness, just as some of the non-*muqallidīn* do when they see a light cloud in the sky or when they must appear before a court, and they deem it permissible to combine Prayers even without rain or any valid excuse. However, I say with full truth and sincerity that we have no need to enter this debate, nor do we wish to engage in it, because naturally and in accordance with my innate temperament, I prefer Prayer to be observed at its appointed time, and am most passionate about timely Prayer. In fact, even during heavy rain, I still prefer that the Prayer be offered at its prescribed time.

Though the Shīʻah and the *muqallidīn* have held extensive debates on this matter, this holds no concern for us, as they are lazy by nature. Whenever they find a *ḥadīth* that is easy and beneficial to them, they cling to it and dismiss the more demanding

1. *Badr*, 7 June 1906, p. 5; Eng. Trans: *Malfūẓat* vol. 8, pp. 390–391

ones as fabricated or weak. We do not adopt such an approach. Rather, our enduring position concerning *aḥādīth* is that any narration which does not contradict the Qur'ān and Sunnah should be acted upon, even if it is weak.

If we are combining the Prayers now, I do not do so without divine disclosure, revelation, or inspiration from Allāh. There are matters I do not openly disclose, but the majority of them become evident on their own. What God Almighty has disclosed to me regarding the combining of Prayers is that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ made a magnificent prophecy regarding me: تُجْمَعُ لَهُ الصَّلٰوةُ [The Prayer will be combined for him] and this has now been fulfilled.

It is my belief that if Allāh discloses to me something—such as the soundness or unsoundness of a *ḥadīth*—then even if formalistic scholars or *muḥaddithīn* consider it fabricated or flawed, I will regard the *ḥadīth* that contradicts what has been divinely revealed to me as the one that is inauthentic.

For example, the *muḥaddithīn* have criticised the [authenticity of the] *ḥadīth* لَا مَهْدِيَّ إِلَّا عِيسَى [There is no *Mahdī* but *'Īsā*], yet Allāh the Almighty has revealed to me that it is indeed authentic. This view of mine is not a mere invention of my own. Rather, it is an established principle, that those granted divine visions and revelations are neither in need of the critical assessments of the *muḥaddithīn* nor bound by them. So long as this remains the case, I declare in the clearest terms that whatever I do, I do under the inspiration and direction of God Almighty. The prophecy recorded in the *ḥadīth* تُجْمَعُ لَهُ الصَّلٰوةُ is among the signs of the Promised Messiah and Mahdī. It refers to the fact that he would be so occupied with religious service and divine matters that the Prayers would be combined for him. Now that this sign has been fulfilled and such circumstances have arisen,

it should be regarded with reverence and honour, not with mockery and denial.[1]

The Prophecy of Prayers Being Combined for the Promised Messiah

The Promised Messiah ؑ stated:

Just as one fulfils the obligations owed to God, so too one should accept the relaxations that are afforded by Him. Where obligations are prescribed by God, it is God Himself who gives exemptions as well. One may observe that even I benefit from the relaxations given by God. I have been combining the Prayers for about two months now. This is because I am ill and also heavily engaged in writing my commentary on *Sūrah Fātiḥah*. By combining the Prayers in this way, a prophecy related in the *ḥadīth* تُجْمَعُ لَهُ الصَّلٰوةُ is also being fulfilled that when the Messiah appears, the Prayers will be combined for him. This *ḥadīth* also establishes that the Promised Messiah will not lead the congregation in Prayer, rather someone else will lead the Prayer, and that he will combine the Prayers out of consideration for the Messiah. As such, this is exactly what happens. On certain days when my illness is severe and I am unable to come to the mosque at all, the Prayers are not combined. It seems from the words of this *ḥadīth* that the Noble Messenger ﷺ stated by way of affection that the Prayers will be combined for the sake of the Messiah. We ought to show honour and respect for the prophecies of the Noble Messenger ﷺ. We should not view them with an air of disregard. It would be a grave sin for us to look at the prophecies of the Holy Prophet ﷺ with contempt.

1. *Al-Ḥakam*, 24 November 1902, pp. 1–2

> God Almighty has given rise to such conditions Himself due to which the Prayers are being combined for this long. If the Prayers had been combined for only a few days, this would not have constituted a sign. I revere each and every word and letter spoken by the Noble Messenger ﷺ.[1]

It is Obligatory to Benefit from the Concession of Combining Prayers

The Promised Messiah ؑ stated:

> It is obvious that this humble one had stayed in Aligarh for only a few days as a sojourner. It was an obligatory act for me to comply with whatever concessions the Sharī'ah of Islām has granted to sojourners, the persistent deviation from which is declared to be a form of apostasy. Therefore, I did the very thing that I should have done. I cannot deny that I occasionally combined two Prayers during the circumstances of a few days' stay in the lawful manner prescribed, and sometimes I offered the *Ẓuhr* and *'Aṣr* Prayers jointly towards the end of the prescribed time for *Ẓuhr*, whereas some 'esteemed' believers occasionally combine their Prayers even at home without the stipulations of travel or rain. At the same time, I cannot deny that I did not make an absolute commitment to be present in the mosques [for congregational Prayers] during these few days, yet I did not abandon the practice altogether despite my medical infirmity and travel status.[2]

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1. *Al-Ḥakam*, 17 February, 1901, pp. 13–14; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt*, vol. 3, p. 107
2. *Fatḥ-e-Islām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 3, p. 25; Eng. Trans.: *The Victory of Islām*, p. 70

The Appearance of the Sign of 'Prayers will be Combined for Him'

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ stated: 'Munshī Ẓafar Aḥmad of Kapurthala ؓ informed me in a letter that on one occasion, Prayers were being combined in Qadian for a number of days during the time of the Promised Messiah ؑ. Maulawī Muḥammad Aḥsan ؓ wrote to Maulawī Noor-ud-Deen ؓ, saying: "The Prayers have been combined for several days. What response should we give if people raise objections?"

'Ḥaḍrat Maulawī Noor-ud-Deen ؓ replied: "You should ask him [i.e., the Promised Messiah ؑ]." Maulawī Anwar Ḥassan of Shahabad was acting as the messenger for this correspondence, and it was through him that I came to know of this matter. So, I brought it to the attention of the Promised Messiah ؑ, but he did not say anything at the time.

'Later, after the *'Aṣr* Prayer, when the Promised Messiah ؑ was sitting on the roof of the mosque as was his routine, he expressed his displeasure over such objections arising in people's minds.

'The Promised Messiah ؑ said:

> Has it not been mentioned in the Ḥadīth that Prayers will be combined for him? The instruction for combining Prayers is general, and from this it becomes evident that the Promised Messiah will be so immersed in his work that he will be compelled to combine the Prayers.'

On that occasion, Sayyid Muḥammad Aḥsan ؓ was weeping bitterly and repenting.'[1]

1. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 2, p. 119

Moderation in Combining Prayers

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ stated: ‘Shaikh Karam Ilāhī of Patiala ؓ informed me in a letter: ‘When I performed *Bai‘at* at the hand of the Promised Messiah ؑ in Ludhiana, I took advantage of a private moment with him and asked: “Before joining the Naqshbandī order through *Bai‘at*, I used to be with the Ahl-e-Ḥadīth, commonly known as Wahhābīs, and since then, I have become used to combining the Prayers. What is your guidance in this regard?”

‘The Promised Messiah ؑ said:

> In my view, both parties—those who support combining the Prayers and those who oppose it—have gone to opposite extremes. On the one hand, those who combine the Prayers have become so lax that they do so without any valid reason or legitimate excuse based on the Sharī‘ah. To the extent that even if they are enjoying a smoke of the *hookah* or playing cards when the *Adhān* is called, they do not interrupt these pastimes. Rather, they resolve to combine the Prayers, regardless of whether they will manage to offer the second Prayer or end up missing both. This is a dreadful habit. Negligence in a fundamental obligation like the Prayer indicates heedlessness and weakness of faith.

He continued:

> On the other hand, the Ḥanafīs, in their opposition and stubbornness towards the Ahl-e-Ḥadīth, are ready to miss a Prayer altogether but will not combine them, even if the necessity is valid and the excuse is legitimate. Someone should ask them: Why is it that during the *Ḥajj*, everyone combines the Prayers while correctly performing the rites of the *Ḥajj*? If combining

was truly impermissible to the extent that their actions imply, then why has it been allowed in those sacred places?

The truth is that the deciding factor is the presence or absence of necessity; this is the standard in this matter.[1]

The Distance at Which Prayers Can Be Combined

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ writes: 'Munshī Ẓafar Aḥmad of Kapurthala informed me in a letter: When the Promised Messiah ؑ came to Kapurthala from Ludhiana, he only stayed for one day and then returned to Qadian. I went to Kartarpur station with Munshī Arorā and Muḥammad Khān; I do not remember whether anyone else accompanied us to Kartarpur.

'At the station, we offered the *Ẓuhr* and *'Aṣr* Prayers combined behind the Promised Messiah ؑ. After the Prayer, I asked: "What is the distance at which it is permissible to combine or shorten the Prayers?"

The Promised Messiah ؑ said:

> This depends on a person's condition. For example, if someone is weak, lacking in strength, and elderly, then even at a distance of five or six miles they may shorten the Prayer. The Holy Prophet ﷺ once shortened the Prayer at Muzdalifah, even though it is situated close to Makkah.[2]

1. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 2, p. 87
2. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 2, pp. 34–35

Combining Prayers in Cases of Necessity

A person said that one of his senior managers was very uncompromising and would be irritated by his going to offer Prayer.

The Promised Messiah عليه السلام stated:

> God Almighty has permitted the combining of Prayers in cases of necessity. In such a case, you may combine the *Ẓuhr* and *'Aṣr* Prayers.[1]

The Number of Prayers Combined at the Battle of the Ditch

In response to an allegation raised by Fateh Masih, a Christian missionary, the Promised Messiah عليه السلام wrote:

> As for your satanic insinuation that all four [obligatory] Prayers were missed while the Trench was being dug, firstly, such is the sorry state of knowledge of you people that you have used the word *qaḍā'*. O ignorant one, *qaḍā'* means to offer a Prayer; skipping a Prayer is never referred to as *qaḍā'*. If someone is not able to offer a Prayer, then the word *faut* [expired] is used. This is the reason why I published an announcement offering a reward of five thousand rupees, because even such ignorant people raise objections against Islām who till now have not even come to know the meaning of *qaḍā'*. How can an imbecile, who cannot even articulate words in their proper context, be qualified to quibble over intricacies?
>
> As far as the objection of four Prayers being combined at the time when the Trench was being dug is concerned, the

1. *Badr*, 9th January 1903, p. 82

answer to this idiotic cavil is that God Almighty says religion does not encumber; that is, it does not impose such stringency as would cause man's ruin. This is why He has ordained that Prayers should be combined and shortened in exigencies and afflictions. Regarding this particular occasion, however, there is no trustworthy *ḥadīth* which mentions that four [obligatory Prayers] were combined. In fact, it is written in *Fatḥul-Bārī Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, that what happened was that one Prayer—that is, the *'Aṣr* Prayer—was offered later than usual when its time was running out.

Had you been standing right now in front of me, I would have sat you down and asked you whether there is a consensus regarding the narration concerning the lapse of four Prayers. Combining four Prayers is in itself permissible according to the Sharī'ah; namely, *Ẓuhr* with '*Aṣr*, and *Maghrib* with *'Ishā'*. Yes, in one *ḍa'īf* [weak] narration it is mentioned that *Ẓuhr*, '*Aṣr*, *Maghrib*, and *Ishā'* were offered together, but other *ṣaḥīḥ* [authentic] *aḥādīth* refute it. The only thing proven is that the '*Aṣr* was offered at the very last minute.[1]

1. *Nūrul-Qur'ān, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 9. pp. 389–390; Eng. Trans.: *The Light of The Holy Qur'ān*—Number 2, pp. 87–88

THE ISTIKHĀRAH PRAYER

The Importance of Istikhārah

The Promised Messiah ﷺ stated:

> These days most Muslims have abandoned the Sunnah [Practice] of *Istikhārah*[1] whereas the Holy Prophet ﷺ used to perform the *Istikhārah* with respect to any upcoming matter. This was also the practice of the *Salaf Ṣālihīn* [Righteous Predecessors, i.e. the first three generations of Muslims]. Given the abounding atmosphere of atheism, people commence a project feeling so proud of their learning and wisdom, but then they sustain a loss due to their lack of knowledge of factors completely hidden from view. In fact, this practice of *Istikhārah* was initiated in place of those awful customs that the idolaters carried out before commencing a project, but now the Muslims have forgotten it even though a sound understanding is bestowed through *Istikhārah*. Success is attained by carrying out the project according to it. Some people begin a project based on their own understanding and then they come and ask for my advice in the middle. I respond by saying they should complete the task with the knowledge and understanding the project was

1. Seeking guidance from Allāh through prayer in matters requiring a decision. [Publisher]

commenced with. What is the need for seeking advice after the fact?[1]

The Method of Performing Istikhārah Before a Journey

The Promised Messiah ﷺ, addressing a guest, stated:

You ought to perform *Istikhārah*, for *Istikhārah* is equivalent to a good omen. The Hindus seek omens and the like by engaging in *shirk* [associating partners with God]. Therefore, the followers of Islām desisted from such practices and introduced *Istikhārah* in their place.

The method of *Istikhārah* is to offer two *rak'āt* of voluntary Prayer. In the first *rak'ah*, one ought to recite قُلْ يَا أَيُّهَا الْكَافِرُونَ [*Sūrah al-Kāfirūn*], and in the second *rak'ah*, one should recite قُلْ هُوَ اللّٰهُ أَحَدٌ [*Sūrah al-Ikhlāṣ*]. During the *taḥiyyāt*, he should recite the following prayer:

'O Allāh, I seek good from You through Your knowledge, and I seek power from You through Your power, and I ask You from Your immense grace. For You have power and I have none; You have knowledge and I have none. You are the Knower of the unseen. O Allāh, if You know that this matter is good for me in my religion, my livelihood, and the outcome of my affairs, then decree it for me, make it easy for me, and bless it for me. But if You know that this matter is bad for me in my religion or my livelihood, then turn me away from it.'

If that task is good for the person, then Allāh will open his heart towards it; otherwise, his heart will feel uneasy about it. The heart is a strange thing. While a person has control over his hands and can move them as he pleases, he does not possess the

1. *Badr*, 13 June 1907, p. 3; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt*, vol. 9, pp. 290–291

same control over his heart, for it is Allāh who governs hearts. At times, the heart inclines towards something, and at others, it does not. It is Allāh the Exalted who causes these winds to blow from within.[1]

Performing Istikhārah Before Every Significant Undertaking

Ḥaḍrat Maulawī Sher ʻAlī ؓ relates: 'It was the practice of the Promised Messiah ؑ that he would always supplicate before undertaking any significant matter. This supplication would follow the method of *Istikhārah* prescribed by the Sunnah. *Istikhārah* means to seek goodness from Allāh the Exalted. It is not necessary to see a dream, as some Sufis of this age mistakenly believe when performing *Istikhārah*. This is not the method taught by the Sunnah. The true objective should be to obtain goodness from Allāh the Exalted. Through the prayer of *Istikhārah*, Allāh the Exalted facilitates the means and simplifies matters that are good and blessed for the person, removing obstacles and causing the heart to feel ease and comfort.

'*Istikhārah* is usually performed at night after the '*Ishā*' Prayer. The supplication of *Istikhārah* is recited in two *rakʻāt* of voluntary Prayer, after reciting the *taḥiyyāt*, the *durūd* [invoking blessings upon the Holy Prophet ﷺ], and the other supplications prescribed by the Sunnah. Thereafter, the person should go to sleep straight away, and it is not appropriate to engage in further conversation. *Istikhārah* can also be performed at another time if required.'[2]

1. *Al-Badr*, 2 January 1903, p. 78
2. *Sīrat Ḥaḍrat Masīḥ Mawʻūd*, by Ḥaḍrat Shaikh Yaʻqūb ʻAlī ʻIrfānī, pp. 508–509

Istikhārah During the ʻAṣr Prayer

On one occasion, Abū Saʻīd, who was commonly known as Abū Saʻīd the Arab, was sent to Lahore at the time when Karam Dīn had filed a court case against the Promised Messiah ﷺ. His task was to collect copies of certain newspapers. He was instructed to perform *Istikhārah* before departing. At that time, the *ʻAṣr* Prayer was approaching, and people were gathered in the Mubārak Mosque. The suggestion for his journey was made during that very gathering.

The Promised Messiah ﷺ instructed Abū Saʻīd to perform *Istikhārah* during the *ʻAṣr* Prayer. He did so and then set off for Lahore. He returned successful in the task for which he had been sent.[1]

The Sūrahs Recited in Istikhārah

Once the Promised Messiah ﷺ explained the method of *Isktikhārah* to a person, stating:

> Recite قُلْ يٰٓاَيُّهَا الْكٰفِرُوْنَ [*Sūrah al-Kāfirūn*] in the first *rakʻat*. In the second *rakʻat* recite قُلْ هُوَ اللّٰهُ اَحَدٌ [*Sūrah al-Ikhlāṣ*], then supplicate during the *taḥiyyāt* for the attainment of your objectives.[2]

The Promised Messiah's Method of Performing Istikhārah

The Promised Messiah ﷺ wrote in a letter to Ḥaḍrat Seith ʻAbd-ur-Raḥmān of Madras:

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1. *Sīrat Ḥaḍrat Masīḥ Mawʻūd*, by Ḥaḍrat Shaikh Yaʻqūb ʻAlī ʻIrfānī, pp. 508–509
2. *Dhikr-e-Ḥabīb*, p. 23

I hope that you will travel here after three days, and after having performed *Istikhārah* in accordance with the Sunnah, which is essential before undertaking a journey. Travelling without *Istikhārah* is not permissible.

In this respect, my method is that one should perform a complete ablution and then offer two *rakʿāt* of voluntary Prayer. In the first *rakʿah*, after reciting *Sūrah al-Fātiḥah*, one should recite قُلْ يَا أَيُّهَا الْكَافِرُونَ [*Sūrah al-Kāfirūn*]. In the second *rakʿah*, after reciting *Sūrah al-Fātiḥah*, one should recite قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ [*Sūrah al-Ikhlāṣ*]. After the *taḥiyyāt*, one should supplicate as follows:

'O Allāh, You are the possessor of grace, bounty, and power. I seek good regarding this journey from You, for You know its end and I do not, and You have power over all things while I have none. So, O my Lord, if You know that this journey is blessed for me—both materially and spiritually, and in terms of its outcome—and that it contains no harm, then facilitate it for me, bless it for me, and protect me from all evil. But if You know that this journey is harmful for me—either in my religion or my worldly life—and that there is something undesirable in it, then turn my heart away from it, and turn it away from me. *Āmīn*.'

The wisdom behind repeating this supplication over three days is that sincerity is attained through repetition. These days, most people are heedless of *Istikhārah*, even though it has been taught just like the formal Prayer has been taught. My practice is that *Istikhārah* must be performed even if one is travelling only 10 *kos* [approximately 20 miles], as countless trials may arise on a journey. Allāh has promised to take care of the one who performs *Istikhārah*, and His angels protect such a person until they reach their intended destination.

Although this entire supplication is in Arabic, if one does not know it by heart, it is sufficient to say it in one's own

language, clearly stating the journey and the destination one intends to travel to.[1]

The Simple Method of Istikhārah

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ writes: 'Mirzā Dīn Muḥammad informed me: "When I became accustomed to visiting the Promised Messiah ؑ and also began to study under him, he instructed me to tell the members of the households of Mirzā Ghulām Murtaḍā and Mirzā Ghulām Muḥyid-Dīn to perform *Istikhārah* every night before going to sleep, and that I should ask them each morning whether they had seen a dream. He would also instruct me to perform *Istikhārah* myself.

"The method of *Istikhārah* he taught me was to repeat the words يَا خَبِيرُ أَخْبِرْنِي [O All-Aware, inform me] just before sleeping, and to go to sleep in that state without saying anything else. Each morning, I would go around and ask the members of the household about the dreams they had seen, and then I would go to the Promised Messiah ؑ and narrate them to him. His Holiness ؑ would interpret the dreams, and I would return to them and relay the interpretations."'

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ further states: 'Mirzā Ghulām Murtaḍā and Mirzā Ghulām Muḥyid-Dīn were brothers. Mirzā Ghulām Murtaḍā was the father of the Promised Messiah ؑ and Mirzā Ghulām Muḥyid-Dīn was his paternal uncle. In those days, the family was divided across these two households. Mirzā Gul Muḥammad is the only surviving son of Mirzā Ghulām Muḥyid-Dīn.

'I also affirm that the traditional *Istikhārah* prayer is lengthy, but evidently the Promised Messiah ؑ taught Mirzā Dīn Muḥammad this shortened version to make it easier for him.'[2]

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1. *Maktūbāt-e-Aḥmad*, vol.2, pp. 349–350
2. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 1, pp. 628–629

It Is Wrong to Perform Istikhārah After Witnessing Clear Signs

A letter arrived from someone in which he wrote that he wished to perform *Istikhārah* regarding the Promised Messiah ﷺ, to determine whether he is truthful or not.

The Promised Messiah ﷺ stated:

> There was a time when I myself wrote about the method of *Istikhārah* in one of my books, saying that if people were to perform *Istikhārah* in that manner, Allāh would surely disclose the truth to them. However, now what need remains for *Istikhārah* when divine signs are descending like rainfall, and thousands of wonders and miracles have manifested? Is there any need for *Istikhārah* in such circumstances? Performing *Istikhārah* after the appearance of clear signs is an affront to Allāh the Exalted.
>
> Would it be appropriate for someone to now perform *Istikhārah* to determine whether Islām is a true or false religion? Or to ask through *Istikhārah* whether the Holy Prophet ﷺ was a true Prophet sent by Allāh or not? Thus, after such overwhelming signs, turning to *Istikhārah* is not permitted.[1]

1. *Badr*, 2 May 1907, p. 2

THE ISTISQĀ' PRAYER

During the course of a discussion regarding intense heat and lack of rain, the Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

> It is the Sunnah to perform the *Istisqā'*[1] Prayer on such an occasion. I will also join the Jamā'at in the performance of this Sunnah, but I intend to go out and pray and supplicate in solitude. The joy experienced in humbling oneself and supplicating before God Almighty in solitude is not found when sitting among people.[2]

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ writes: 'Muftī Muḥammad Ṣādiq ؓ told me: "Once, during the time of the Promised Messiah ﷺ, we offered the *Istisqā'*, and the Promised Messiah ﷺ also participated. Maulawī Muḥammad 'Alī may have led the Prayer. People wept profusely during this Prayer. I did not however see the Promised Messiah ﷺ weep, owing to his remarkable self-control. I remember that some time after this Prayer, clouds gathered in the sky and it began to rain, perhaps even on the very same day.'[3]

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1. Literally, 'seeking water' or 'asking for rain'. In Islamic usage, it refers to the prayer offered in supplication for rain during times of drought. [Publisher]
2. *Badr*, August 1905, p. 2; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt,* vol. 7, pp. 282–283
3. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 1, p. 393

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ﷺ narrates regarding this occasion: 'Dr. Mīr Muḥammad Ismā'īl ﷺ informed me that the *Istisqā'* Prayer was once offered during the time of the Promised Messiah ﷺ under the Banyan tree where the *Jalsa* for ladies used to be held in previous years. This humble one affirms that the *'Īd* Prayer was also offered on multiple occasions during the time of the Promised Messiah ﷺ under that same tree and in the adjacent field. Funeral Prayers were also commonly offered there.'[1]

1. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 1, pp. 622–623

THE KUSŪF PRAYER

After the lunar eclipse that occurred in Ramaḍān, Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Ayyūb Baig ﷺ came to Qadian with his brother, hoping to witness the great sign of the solar eclipse with the Promised Messiah ؑ and to offer the *Kusūf* Prayer[1] with him. Regarding this, he writes:

'I offered the *Kusūf* Prayer with the Promised Messiah ؑ, which was led by Maulawī Muḥammad of Amroha ﷺ on the roof of Masjid Mubārak. This Prayer, along with its associated devotions, lasted for approximately three hours. Many of the brothers had applied black paint to glass and were busy watching the eclipse through it. When a faint shadow became visible through the glass, someone informed the Promised Messiah ؑ that the eclipse had begun. His Holiness ؑ looked through the glass and observed a very faint darkness. He said sorrowfully: "I have seen the eclipse, but it is so faint that it will be hidden from the eyes of the general public, and as a result the sign of this magnificent prophecy will become ambiguous." He mentioned this concern repeatedly. Shortly thereafter, the darkness began to spread until the greater part of the sun became darkened. At this, the Promised Messiah ؑ said: "Last night I saw an onion in a dream, which signifies sadness, and this came to pass with the faintness of the darkness at the beginning of the eclipse."'[2]

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1. The Prayer offered during a solar eclipse; distinguished from *khusūf*, which refers to a lunar eclipse. [Publisher]

2. *Aṣḥāb-e-Aḥmad*, pp. 93–94

SHORTENING THE PRAYER

The Definition of a Journey

A written question from someone was submitted to the Promised Messiah عليه السلام. The individual inquired that since they are compelled to travel here and there for up to a distance of thirty miles or so, what should they consider a journey and is the Islamic injunction of shortening the Prayer while on a journey applicable to them?

The Promised Messiah عليه السلام stated:

> It is my belief that an individual ought not to impose undue difficulty upon themselves. The definition of a journey is based on the general understanding of society, even if the distance itself is only a few miles. So, if this is the case, a person should follow injunctions which are applicable in the case of a journey and shorten the Prayer.
>
> إِنَّمَا الْأَعْمَالُ بِالنِّيَّاتِ
>
> Deeds are based on intentions
>
> At times, we will cover a distance of even two or three miles when we are walking with our friends, but no one has the slightest thought in their minds that they are on a journey. However, when a person packs their belongings and sets out with the intention that they are about to undertake a journey, they are a

traveller. The foundation of the Sharī'ah is not based on difficulty. A journey is a journey by generally accepted standards.[1]

The Minimum Distance of a Journey

A question was presented: 'Should one shorten the Prayers even if one travels only three *kos* [approximately two miles] on a journey?'

The Promised Messiah ﷺ answered:

Yes. One should carefully examine his intent. In all these issues, one should carefully observe *taqwā* [righteousness]. Everyday travel in relation to your work is not a journey. A journey is when one undertakes a specific travel and leaves his home only for that purpose, and it is commonly considered a journey. I go for a walk every day for a couple of miles, but this is not a journey. On such an occasion, one should take into account his conscience and if it gives the verdict without any unease that it is a journey, then he should shorten [the Prayer].

One should follow the dictum اسْتَفْتِ قَلْبَكَ[2] (Take the verdict of your conscience). Even in the presence of a thousand *fatwās*, still the satisfaction of the heart of a believer with all its pure intention is a wonderful thing.

It was submitted that people have different circumstances—some do not consider nine or ten *kos* to be a journey; for others, even three to four *kos* is a journey.

The Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

1. *Al-Ḥakam*, 17 February 1901, p. 13; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt,* vol.3 , pp. 106–107
2. *Musnad Aḥmad bin Ḥanbal*, Ḥadīth 8985 [Publisher]

> The Sharī'ah has not trusted these points. The noble Companions [of the Holy Prophet ﷺ] have considered three *kos* to be a journey.

It was submitted: Your Holiness! Do you shorten the Prayers when you go to Batala?

The Promised Messiah عليه السلام said:

> Yes, because that is a journey. What I say is that if a doctor or an administrator travels to several villages as part of his tour, he cannot add up all his travel and call it a journey.[1]

Ḥaḍrat Pīr Sirājul-Ḥaqq Nu'mānī رضي الله عنه narrates that he once asked: 'What is the distance at which the Prayers should be shortened?'

The Promised Messiah عليه السلام replied:

> There is a difference between a journey and a casual walk. If someone travels with the intention of a journey—such as covering three *kos*, like the journey from Ludhiana to Phillaur—then the Prayer should be shortened. This was the practice of the Companions رضي الله عنهم.
>
> There are some people who are weak, or elderly, or women who are pregnant. For them, even a single *kos* can constitute a journey. However, if a person simply goes for a walk, then the Islamic injunction of shortening the Prayer does not apply to him, even if he walks eight *kos* [approximately 14 miles].[2]

1. *Badr*, 23 January 1908, p. 2; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt*, vol. 10, p. 119
2. *Tadhkiratul-Mahdī*, vol. 1, pp. 116–117

Shortening the Prayer in a Religious Centre is Permissible

A question was asked regarding shortening the Prayer: Should those who come here for a visit shorten the Prayer or not?

The Promised Messiah ﷺ stated:

> If someone comes here for three days, it is permissible for them to shorten the Prayer. In my view, if a journey is undertaken with resolve, then it is permissible to shorten the Prayer, even if the journey is only three or four *kos* [approximately seven miles]. However, this walk of ours is not considered a journey.
>
> If the imām is a resident, then the full Prayer must be offered behind him. The official tours undertaken by administrators [for the purpose of work] do not qualify as journeys; they are like someone taking a stroll in their garden. In any case, there is no shortening of the Prayer without a valid reason. If one begins to shorten the Prayer on official tours, they will be compelled to do so constantly, for which we have no basis. How can officials be regarded as travellers?
>
> Sa'dī has said:
>
> منعم بکوہ و دشت و بیاباں غریب نیست ہر جا کہ رفت خیمہ زد و خوابگاہ ساخت
>
> *'A ruler is not a stranger, whether in the mountains or in the deserts and wildlands;*
>
> *Wherever he goes, he pitches a tent and establishes a place to rest.'*[1]

1. *Al-Ḥakam*, 24th April, 1903, p. 10

The Duration for Which Prayers May Be Shortened During a Journey

When asked for how long the Prayer may be shortened, Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ II ؓ stated: 'One may shorten the Prayer for as long as they are on a journey. If a person intends to stay somewhere for fewer than 15 days, then they should shorten the Prayer. However, if they intend to stay for longer, then they must offer the full Prayer.'[1]

Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ II ؓ once shortened the Prayer whilst on a journey and stated: 'I will shorten the Prayer when leading it. It has been 14 days since I arrived here, but I do not know when I will leave. Therefore, I will shorten the Prayer. The Promised Messiah ؑ also once shortened the Prayers in Gurdaspur for over two months, as he too did not know when he would return.'[2]

Shortening the Prayer During a Temporary Stay

The Islamic injunction of shortening the Prayer applies if the intention is to stay somewhere for less than 15 days. A ruling of the Promised Messiah ؑ on this issue is clarified in the following *fatwā* (This ruling was requested by *Nāẓir Ta'līm-o-Tarbiyyat* [Director of Education and Moral Training] in Qadian from the *Muftī* of the Jamā'at, Ḥaḍrat Sayyid Sarwar Shāh, on 2nd December 1937):

QUESTION—The late Ḥāfiẓ Sahib (i.e., Ḥaḍrat Ḥāfiẓ Roshan 'Alī) issued a verdict that the Prayers should be shortened during a stay of up to 14 days. It has been narrated from Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ I ؓ

1. *Al-Fazl*, 18th March, 1916, p. 15
2. *Al-Fazl*, 25th March, 1944, p. 4

and the Promised Messiah ﷺ that the Prayer can only be shortened for three days, and if a traveller intends to stay at a place for four days, then the complete Prayer should be offered. Ḥāfiẓ Sahib was our *Muftī*, and we have not come across any formal refutation of his ruling. So which ruling should we follow? Some are of the view that the word of a *Muftī* cannot be contravened, and the ruling must conform to the *fatwā*. But what authority does he have to differ from a Prophet or a Khalīfah? We are, in any case, bound by the administrative system, but how can this difference be resolved? If someone asks us about it, we will be in a difficult position.

Ḥaḍrat Sayyid Muḥammad Sarwar Shāh ﷺ issued the following ruling in response:

ANSWER—If there is a difference between the ruling of a *Khalīfah* and the verdict of a *Muftī*, then the ruling of the *Khalīfah* is to be followed. For the *Khalīfah* is the true *Muftī*, and the *Muftī* is but his appointee, serving as his deputy in issuing rulings. Likewise, if there is a difference, arising from misunderstanding, between the word of the *Khalīfah* and the Founder of the Jamā'at, then preference must be given to the word of the Founder, because he is the original source and the *Khalīfah* is his representative. The deputy follows the head; he is not equal to or above him.

Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ I ﷺ belonged to the Ahl-e-Ḥadīth denomination prior to joining the Jamā'at, and the view of the Ahl-e-Ḥadīth is that a traveller is to be considered a resident if they intend to stay more than three days. Hence, he gave this same verdict even after joining the Jamā'at.

However, when the Promised Messiah ﷺ was staying in Gurdaspur during the legal proceedings with Karam Dīn and travelled to Lahore for a change of environment, he was still on a journey and would usually combine and shorten the Prayers. Perhaps on the third day, members of the Lahore Jamā'at requested him to deliver a lecture, to which he

agreed. Khwājah Kamāluddīn then went to the Deputy Commissioner to seek permission and invite him to attend. The Honourable gentleman granted permission but said that he could not attend on the upcoming Sunday, and if the lecture were held the following Sunday, then he and the Superintendent would attend.

Khwājah Sahib relayed this to the Promised Messiah ﷺ, who said: 'The court proceedings are still some time away, so I can extend my stay here.'

Thus, the Promised Messiah ﷺ decided to stay for ten days. At the time, he was unwell and informed his companions from inside his room without coming out. When the *Adhān* was called for *Ẓuhr* Prayer, he sent word saying: 'I am unable to come for Prayer, so you may go ahead and offer it.'

When the *iqāmah* was called and Maulawī 'Abdul-Karīm ؓ of Siālkot led the Prayer, someone in the row said '*subhanallah*' during the sitting between the two *sujūd*, as if to indicate that the complete four *rak'āt* should be offered. After concluding the Prayer, Ḥaḍrat Maulānā Noor-ud-Deen ؓ said to Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ II ؓ: 'Please go and ask your father whether, in light of the decision to stay here until next Sunday, we should offer the complete Prayer or two *rak'āt* only.'

He went and returned with the message: 'My father says that you should only offer two *rak'āt*, because we did not intend to stay here for 15 days.' Thus, two *rak'āt* were offered for the *'Aṣr* Prayer.

Following this decision of the Promised Messiah ﷺ, the *fatwā* was established in the Jamā'at that if a traveller intends to stay in a place for more than 15 days, they are to be considered a resident. If the intended stay is less than that, they are still considered a traveller.[1]

1. Signed: Ḥaḍrat Sayyid Muḥammad Sarwar Shāh Sahib, *Muftī-e-Silsilah*, Fatwā no. 55, 2 December 1937. Cited from the Register of *Fatāwā, Dārul-Iftā'*, Rabwah

Shortening Prayer During Continuous Travel

A question of an individual was presented before the Promised Messiah ﷺ that if someone is always travelling due to their employment, is it permissible for them to shorten their Prayers?

The Promised Messiah ﷺ responded:

> A person who is traveling day and night and is employed for this purpose, he cannot be deemed a wayfarer during the state of his travel. He should offer the full Prayer.[1]

A question by a gentleman, Muḥammad Saʿīd-ud-Dīn, was presented before the Promised Messiah ﷺ: 'My brother and I are always travelling to trade perfumes. Should we shorten our Prayers?'

The Promised Messiah ﷺ responded:

> A journey is that which a person encounters from time to time for some purpose, not that it is his profession to be here today and somewhere else tomorrow for trade. It is against *taqwá* [righteousness] that such a person should count himself among the travellers and spend his entire lifetime shortening his Prayers.[2]

Combining the Prayers Before a Journey

The Promised Messiah ﷺ travelled to Gurdaspur today after combining the *Ẓuhr* and *ʿAṣr* Prayers. He was accompanied by Ṣāḥibzādah Miāṅ Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud ﷺ. They lodged at the guest house

1. *Badr*, 7th February, 1907, p. 4; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt,* vol. 2, p. 108
2. *Badr*, 28th August, 1903, p. 250; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt,* vol.9, p. 205

near the station, and the *Maghrib* and *'Ishā'* Prayers were also offered in combination.[1]

A Local Resident Should Offer the Full Prayer

Dr. Muḥammad Ismā'īl Khān ﷺ was residing in Gurdaspur, while some members of the Jamā'at, who had arrived from Qadian, were shortening the Prayer due to being in a state of travel. Doctor Sahib asked about this issue.

The Promised Messiah عليه السلام said:

A resident should offer the full Prayer.

Thus, Doctor Sahib would offer two *rak'āt* of Prayer in congregation, and then offer the remaining two *rak'āt* afterwards. On one occasion, the Promised Messiah عليه السلام noticed that Doctor Sahib still had two *rak'āt* left to offer, so he said:

Wait a moment so Doctor Sahib can complete two *rak'āt*.

After this, the next Prayer was offered in congregation. When two Prayers are combined, the *sunnah* and *nawāfil* Prayers are not offered.[2]

The Limit of Shortening the Prayers in a Journey

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ﷺ writes that Miāń Khair-ud-Dīn of Sikhwan ﷺ informed him in a letter that he asked the

1. *Al-Badr*, 28th August, 1903, p. 250
2. *Al-Badr*, 1st August 1904, p. 4

Promised Messiah ﷺ about the Islamic injunction of shortening the Prayer during travel.

His Holiness ﷺ stated: 'You should only shorten the Prayer while on a journey which is regarded as a journey in the general understanding of society.'

I inquired: 'Is there a fixed distance in miles for it to be considered a journey?'

He replied: 'No. Whatever you consider to be a journey according to common societal usage, it is valid to shorten the Prayer in that.'

I asked: 'I come to Qadian from Sikhwan—can I then shorten the Prayer?'

He replied: 'Yes. In fact, I believe that even if a woman travels from Qadian to Nangal, she may shorten the Prayer.'

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ﷺ further states: 'Sikhwan is approximately four miles from Qadian, while the village of Nangal is perhaps even less than a mile away. Evidently, the statement of His Holiness ﷺ regarding shortening the Prayer en route to Nangal means that if someone sets out from Qadian with the intention of undertaking a journey, then the Islamic injunction of shortening the Prayer becomes applicable, even if one only travels as far as Nangal. It does not mean that one may shorten the Prayer merely when going to Nangal to run some errands. It is also possible that, in the case of a woman, he regarded the journey to and from Nangal as sufficient to warrant shortening the Prayer, on account of her natural weakness. And Allāh knows best.[1]

1. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 1, pp. 551–552

The Injunction to Shorten the Prayer During Journeys Is Not Limited to Situations of Fear

Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ﷺ writes: 'Qāḍī Amīr Ḥusain told me: "In the beginning, I was of the view that the Islamic injunction of *qaṣr* [shortening the Prayer] does not apply when travelling under normal circumstances; rather, it only applies in times of war, when there is fear of disorder. I would frequently discuss this issue with Maulawī Sahib (Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ I ﷺ)."'

Qāḍī Amīr Ḥusain continued: 'I once visited the Promised Messiah ﷺ in Gurdaspur, where he was attending court in relation to the case filed against him by Karam Dīn. Maulawī Sahib and Maulawī 'Abdul-Karīm were also present. When it was time for the *Ẓuhr* Prayer, the Promised Messiah ﷺ said to me: "Qāḍī Sahib, you should lead the Prayer."'

"I resolved in my heart: 'Today I have the opportunity to settle this issue once and for all, so I will not shorten the Prayer, I will offer it in full.' I raised my hands with this firm intention in mind. The Promised Messiah ﷺ was standing behind me on my right. He stepped forward and whispered into my ear: 'Qāḍī Sahib, you are going to offer two *rak'āt*, are you not?'

"I replied: 'Yes, Your Holiness, I will offer only two *rak'āt*.' And so, from that moment, the issue was resolved, and I abandoned my previous position."'[1]

1. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 1, pp. 24–25

THE PROMISED MESSIAH'S MANNER OF PRAYER

Ḥaḍrat Muftī Muḥammad Ṣādiq ﷺ narrates: 'In the early days, when there were no more than three or four worshippers in Qadian at the time of Prayer, Ḥāfiẓ Mu'īnuddīn Sahib ﷺ used to lead the Prayer in Masjid Mubārak, while Miāṅ Jān Muḥammad of Kashmir ﷺ served as the imām in Masjid Aqṣā. It is reported that at times, the Promised Messiah ﷺ himself led the Prayer, though this was before my arrival in Qadian.

'In the latter years of his life, when he was generally unable to leave his home, the Promised Messiah ﷺ would lead the women of his household in the *Maghrib* and *'Ishā'* Prayers, offering them combined. As imām, the Promised Messiah ﷺ would not recite the *basmalah* aloud, nor would he perform *raf'yadain* [raising the hands more than once in Prayer]. Instead, he would fold his arms over his chest and raise his index finger during *tashahhud*. For the rest, he would offer Prayer in the apparent manner of the Ḥanafīs.

'Ḥaḍrat Maulawī 'Abdul-Karīm ﷺ, on the other hand, would always recite the *basmalah* aloud, and in the final *rak'ah*, after *rukū'*, he would stand and recite certain supplications aloud. The Promised Messiah ﷺ, along with other early elders of the Jamā'at, offered Prayer behind Maulawī 'Abdul-Karīm ﷺ for many years. This is why some companions of that period, such as Sufi Ghulām Muḥammad ﷺ,

missionary to Mauritius, continue to follow the same style of Prayer to this day.'[1]

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ writes: 'Maulawī Sher 'Alī ؓ related to me: "In the early days when I arrived in Qadian, the Promised Messiah ؑ would stand in the first row with the other *muqtadīs* [congregants] during Prayer. Later on, however, due to certain incidents, he began to offer Prayer while standing beside the Imām in the small room [of the mosque]. When that small room was later demolished and incorporated into the rest of the mosque, he continued to stand next to the imām during Prayer."'

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ further states: 'This humble one affirms that in the early days, Masjid Mubārak was very narrow and somewhat rectangular in shape. There was a small room on its western side which was part of the mosque, though a dividing wall had effectively made it a separate space. During Prayer, the imām would stand in this room, while the rest of the congregation would stand behind him in the main section of the mosque. When the mosque was expanded at a later stage, this inner wall was removed and the room was joined to the main mosque.'[2]

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ writes: 'Dr. Mīr Muḥammad Ismā'īl ؓ told me that during the time of the Promised Messiah ؑ, Maulawī 'Abdul-Karīm ؓ would lead the people in the five daily Prayers and the *Jumu'ah* Prayer. In most cases, Maulawī Noor-ud-Deen ؓ would lead the two *'Īd* Prayers. The Promised Messiah ؑ would generally lead the *Janāzah* Prayers himself.'[3]

1. *Dhikr-e-Ḥabīb*, pp. 24–25
2. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 1, pp. 270–271
3. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 1, p. 440

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ﷺ writes: 'My revered mother told me: "The Promised Messiah ﷺ used to offer the *sunnah* Prayers that are performed before and after the obligatory Prayers at home, though sometimes he would offer the *sunnah* after the obligatory Prayers in the mosque." I asked her: "Did he tend to prolong the *sunnah* Prayers, or did he generally offer them briefly." My mother said: "He would generally offer them briefly."'[1]

Ḥaḍrat Munshī Barkat 'Alī of Shimla ﷺ narrates: 'Once, I had the opportunity to offer the *Jumu'ah* Prayer in Masjid Aqṣā. Perhaps Ḥaḍrat Maulawī Noor-ud-Deen ﷺ, Khalīfatul-Masīḥ I, led the *Jumu'ah* Prayer. The Promised Messiah ﷺ sat near the grave.[2] I seized the opportunity to sit next to him and observe how he offered Prayer. I observed that he folded his arms on his chest such that his fingers did not reach his elbows, and his neck was slightly inclined to the left. When he was in the sitting position, the fingers of his right hand were clenched, and when he recited the *shahādah* he raised his index finger. As far as I remember, he would say *Āmīn* aloud.

'On the very same day, something else occurred. When the *Jumu'ah* Prayer had concluded—possibly due to unfavourable weather or some other matter—the question arose: Can the *'Aṣr* Prayer be combined with the *Jumu'ah* Prayer? The Promised Messiah ﷺ asked Maulawī Noor-ud-Deen ﷺ about this matter, though I do not recall his response. The Promised Messiah ﷺ said: "Combine the *'Aṣr* Prayer" and so both Prayers were combined.'[3]

1. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 1, pp. 4–5
2. The grave of Mirzā Ghulām Murtaḍā, the Promised Messiah's father, which is in the courtyard of Masjid Aqṣā, Qadian. [Publisher]
3. Narration by Ḥaḍrat Munshī Barakat 'Alī of Shimla, *Aṣḥāb-e-Aḥmad*, vol. 3, pp. 192–193

Ḥaḍrat Bhaī ʻAbd-ur-Raḥmān of Qadian ؓ narrates: ʻThe Promised Messiah ؑ would offer the *sunnah* and *nawāfil* Prayers—except for the *Jumuʻah* Prayer—in his residence. He would usually offer the *sunnah* Prayers that precede the obligatory Prayers at home, and then return home again to offer the *sunnah* Prayers that follow. However, in the early days, when His Holiness ؑ would sit in the mosque after the *Maghrib* Prayer until *ʻIshā'*, he would offer the *sunnah* Prayer that follows *Maghrib* in the mosque. He would offer two brief *rakʻāt*, but they were performed with due care and in a well-composed manner. There was no sign of haste or rushing in them. Rather, they were offered with calmness and composure, though they were not prolonged.

ʻIn addition to these two *rakʻāt*, I saw His Holiness ؑ offer *sunnah* Prayers in Masjid Mubārak, and his Prayer was always light and concise. I had the honour of offering Prayer in congregation behind His Holiness ؑ. Since the early days, we would need to make a special effort for these occasions, and most of us would try to find a place to stand next to the Promised Messiah ؑ.

ʻI never saw the Promised Messiah ؑ performing *rafʻ yadain* during Prayer, and I never heard him saying *Āmīn* aloud. He would always raise his forefinger during the *tashahhud*, but I never saw him stiffen it or move it around. He would raise it lightly, usually once, but sometimes twice. In my view, he would raise it twice if the *tashahhud* was being recited twice, such as when the imām prolonged the *tashahhud*. His Holiness ؑ would always fold his hands over his chest, and I never saw him fold his arms below the navel. He would always fold them above it.

ʻHis Holiness ؑ would not lead the Prayer himself. He had appointed the late Maulawī ʻAbdul-Karīm ؓ as imām. He would also not lead the *Jumuʻah* Prayer himself. It was generally led by Maulawī ʻAbdul-Karīm, though on some occasions, Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ I or Maulawī Aḥsan of Amroha ؓ would also do so. There was a time when the *Jumuʻah* Prayer used to be offered in two places: Masjid Aqṣā—which was the central mosque—and the Mubārak Mosque.

The Promised Messiah ؑ would not lead the Prayer in either of the two places. Likewise, the Promised Messiah ؑ would seldom lead the *'Īd* Prayer, though he would usually lead the Funeral Prayer. As far as I can recall, I never saw the Promised Messiah ؑ offering a Funeral Prayer behind anyone.'[1]

A Detailed Outline of the Prayer of the Promised Messiah ؑ

Ḥaḍrat Sayyid Muḥammad Sarwar Shāh ؓ writes in his booklet *Ta'līmul-Islām*, detailing the manner in which the Promised Messiah ؑ would offer Prayer:

'At this point, it suffices for me to say that the Chosen Servant of Allāh offers this form of worship in a particular manner, such that it serves as sufficient proof for those of understanding and resolves all disagreement. Rather than stating with each detail that this is the practice of the Promised Messiah ؑ, I affirm at the outset that the description of Prayer I am about to present conforms entirely to his practice, which is as follows:

'When he begins Prayer, he faces the *qiblah* and says '*Allāhu Akbar*', raising both hands until his fingertips reach the level of his ears. He then folds them over his chest—either across his breast or just below—so that the right hand rests over the left. His three middle fingers of the right hand usually reach the elbow or just short of it, and he holds the left wrist with his thumb and little finger. If someone were to position their hands slightly higher or lower, or fold them slightly forward or back, or grip the forearm fully with all fingers, no objection is raised.

'After folding his hands, he begins Prayer by reciting:

1. *Narration of Ḥaḍrat Bhaī 'Abd-ur-Raḥmān of Qadian, Aṣḥāb-e-Aḥmad*, vol. 9, pp. 155–156, New Edition

سُبْحَانَكَ اللَّهُمَّ وَبِحَمْدِكَ وَتَبَارَكَ اسْمُكَ وَتَعَالَى جَدُّكَ وَلَا إِلَهَ غَيْرُكَ

Holy are You, O Allāh, and all praise belongs to You; blessed is Your name, and exalted is Your station. There is none worthy of worship except You alone.

'Or he recites the following:

اللَّهمَّ باعِدْ بَيْني وبَيْن خَطاياىَ كَمَا باعَدْتَ بَيْنَ المشرِقِ والمغرِبِ اللَّهمَّ نقِّني مِن خَطاياىَ كما يُنقَّى الثَّوبُ الأبْيَضُ مِنَ الدَّنَسِ اللَّهمَّ اغسِلْ خَطاياىَ بالماءِ والثَّلجِ والبَرَدِ

O Allāh! Put a distance between me and my sins as You have distanced the east from the west. O Allāh! Purify me of my sins as a white garment is purified of dirt. O Allāh! Wash away my sins with water, snow and hail.

'He then recites:

أَعُوْذُ بِاللهِ مِنَ الشَّيطَان الرَّجِيم

I seek refuge with Allāh from Satan the accursed.

'He then recites the *basmalāh* and *Sūrah al-Fātiḥah* until the words **وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ** [nor those who have gone astray]; then he recites a *sūrah* or some verses from the Holy Qur'ān. He recites the supplication **اهْدِنَا** [Guide us on the right path] with deep focus and at times repeats it. While still standing, he offers supplications—with profound humility, earnestness, and concentration—either in his own language or in Arabic, before *Sūrah al-Fātiḥah* or before or after another *sūrah*.

'Then he says "*Allāhu Akbar*" and goes into *rukū*' [bowing], grasping both knees with his hands, his fingers spread, keeping his arms straight, and ensuring his back and head remain level. He then recites:

سُبْحَانَ رَبِّيَ الْعَظِيمِ

Holy is my Lord, the Most Great.

'Or he recites:

سُبْحَانَكَ اللّٰهُمَّ رَبَّنَا وَبِحَمْدِكَ اللّٰهُمَّ اغْفِرْلِي

Holy are you, Our Lord, and with Your praise; O Lord, forgive me.

'He recites the above three times or more. While in the position of *rukū'*, he supplicates as he wishes: in his own language or in Arabic. Then, standing upright, he says:

سَمِعَ اللّٰهُ لِمَنْ حَمِدَهُ

Allāh listens to him who praises Him.

'He then recites:

رَبَّنَا وَلَكَ الْحَمْدُ

O our Lord, Yours is the praise.

'Or he recites:

اللّٰهُمَّ رَبَّنَا لَكَ الْحَمْدُ

O Allāh, Our Lord, Yours is the praise.

'Or he recites:

اللَّهُمَّ رَبَّنَا لَكَ الْحَمْدُ حَمْدًا كَثِيرًا طَيِّبًا مُبَارَكًا فِيهِ كَمَا يُحِبُّ رَبُّنَا وَيَرْضَى

Our Lord, Yours is the praise, the praise which is bountiful, pure and blessed, just as our Lord loves and is pleased with.

'Alternatively, he recites other traditional phrases. Thereafter, he supplicates in his own language or in Arabic as he desires. Then he says *"Allāhu Akbar"* and moves into prostration—placing either his knees down first followed by his hands, nose, and forehead, or his hands down first followed by the knees, nose, and forehead—and says:

سُبْحَانَ رَبِّيَ الأَعْلَى

Glory to my Lord, the Most High

'Or he recites:

سُبْحانَكَ اللَّهُمَّ رَبَّنَا وَبِحَمْدِكَ اللَّهُمَّ اغْفِرْلِي

Glory be to you, O Allāh, Our Lord, and with your praise, O my Lord forgive me

'He recites one of these at least three times—or more in odd numbers. It is mentioned in a *ḥadīth* that one is closest to their Lord during prostration, and that supplications made therein are accepted the Promised Messiah ﷺ fervently supplicates during prostration—in Arabic or his own language.

'During prostration, he keeps his feet upright with the toes pointing towards the *qiblah*. He places his head between his hands, which are apart from his sides, and his elbows raised above the ground. However, if he becomes tired due to the length of the prostration, he rests his elbows on his knees for support.

'Then he says *"Allāhu Akbar",* lifts his head and sits in the kneeling posture: keeping his right foot upright and spreading his left foot flat on the ground, sitting upon it. He places his hands upon his knees and recites while seated:

اللَّهُمَّ اغْفِرْلِي وَارْحَمْنِيْ واهْدِنِيْ وَعَافِنِي وَارْفَعْنِيْ وَاجْبُرْنِي وَارْزُقْنِي

O My Lord forgive me and have mercy on me and guide me and grant me security and raise me up and make good my shortcomings and provide for me.

'Or he recites:

اللَّهُمَّ اغْفِرْلِي

O My Lord, forgive me.

'He repeats one of the above supplications three times, and may also supplicate in his own language as he desires. Then he says "*Allāhu Akbar"* and enters into prostration again, performing it as he did the first time and reciting as before. He also supplicates in the second prostration.

'Then he says *"Allāhu Akbar"*, stands up, and offers the second *rak'ah* exactly as he offered the first, except that he does not recite *"Subḥānaka Allāhumma"* or *"A'ūdhu billāh'*. After the prostrations, he sits just as he did between the two prostrations, with one difference: after the first prostration, he places his hands on his knees with the fingers open and pointing towards the *qiblah*. But when sitting after the two prostrations of the second *rak'ah*, he places his left hand as before, while with his right hand he closes three fingers into the palm, forms a ring with the thumb and middle finger, and raises the forefinger straight.

'He then recites the *taḥiyyāt* as follows:

التَّحِيَّاتُ لِلَّهِ وَالصَّلَوَاتُ وَالطَّيِّبَاتُ السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ وَرَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ وَبَرَكَاتُهُ السَّلَامُ عَلَيْنَا وَعَلَى عِبَادِ اللَّهِ الصَّالِحِينَ ، أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ

All Salutation is due to Allāh and all Prayer and everything pure. Peace be upon you, O Prophet, and the mercy of Allāh and His blessings; and peace be on us and on all righteous servants of Allāh. I bear witness that there is none worthy of worship except Allāh...

'As he recites this, he raises the forefinger and points with it, then returns it to its previous position. He continues:

وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ

...and I bear witness that Muḥammad is His servant and Messenger.

'If he intends to offer three or four *rak'āt*, he says *"Allāhu Akbar"* and rises to offer the remaining *rak'āt* as he offered the second. Upon completing the final *rak'ah*, he sits as before—keeping his right foot upright and spreading the left flat on the ground—and again recites the *taḥiyyāt*.

'However, if he is offering only two *rak'āt*, this is the final sitting. In that case, after the *taḥiyyāt*, he invokes blessings upon the Holy Prophet ﷺ, saying:

اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِ مُحَمَّدٍ كَمَا صَلَّيْتَ عَلَى إِبْرَاهِيمَ وعَلَى آلِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ إِنَّكَ حَمِيدٌ مَجِيدٌ، اللَّهُمَّ بَارِكْ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِ مُحَمَّدٍ كَمَا بَارَكْتَ عَلَى إِبْرَاهِيمَ وعَلَى آلِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ إِنَّكَ حَمِيدٌ مَجِيدٌ

O Allāh, bless Muḥammad and the people of Muḥammad, as You blessed Abraham and the people of Abraham. Surely, You are the Praiseworthy, the Glorious.

> O Allāh, prosper Muḥammad and the people of Muḥammad, as You prospered Abraham and the people of Abraham. Surely, You are the Praiseworthy, the Glorious..

'After this, he does not recite any prescribed supplication but prays as he wishes, though he certainly does supplicate. He then turns his head to the right and says: *"as-salāmu 'alaikum wa raḥmatullāh"*, and turns his head to the left and repeats: *"as-salāmu 'alaikum wa raḥmatullāh"*.

'Thus, his Prayer begins with the words *"Allāhu Akbar"* and concludes with *"as-salāmu 'alaikum wa raḥmatullāh"*. This is the manner in which the Promised Messiah ﷺ, his scholars, devoted followers, emigrants, and those companions who remain in his company day and night, offer the Prayer. As I have already mentioned, there is some disagreement concerning how the hands are to be folded; however, the Promised Messiah ﷺ and his aforementioned companions fold them in the manner described above.

'It should also be kept in mind that there is a difference of opinion regarding *raf' yadain*—that is, the raising of the hands to the ears when saying the *takbīr* upon entering into *rukū'*, rising from *rukū'*, going into *sujūd*, and upon standing up for the third *rak'ah*, just as the hands are raised for the opening *takbīr*. The disagreement lies in the fact that some people perform *raf' yadain* at these points, while others do not. The Promised Messiah ﷺ and his companions do not perform *raf' yadain* at these stages, but if someone were to do so in their presence, they would not object.

'Another issue on which there is contention is the recitation of *Āmīn* aloud behind the imām. However, the established practice of the Promised Messiah ﷺ—which itself serves as a decisive argument in support of its correctness, as any discerning believer would confidently declare that this practice is favoured by Allāh, the All-Knowing—is

that he does not say *Āmīn* aloud, nor does he object to anyone who does.'[1]

1. *Risālah Ta'līmul-Islām*, Qadian, July 1906, vol. 1, No. 5, pp. 171–181

FRIDAY PRAYER AND ʿĪD

Making Preparations for Friday Prayer

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad Sahib ؓ narrates: 'My mother told me that the Promised Messiah ؑ would apply perfume and change his clothes on Fridays.'[1]

Offering Two Rakʿāt of Sunnah Before the Friday Prayer

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad Sahib ؓ narrates that Miāṅ Khair-ud-Dīn of Sikhwan ؓ wrote to him in a letter : 'I have frequently seen the Promised Messiah ؑ offer only two *rakʿāt* of Prayer in Masjid Aqṣā on Fridays. Generally, people offer four *rakʿāt* before the *Jumuʿah* Prayer, but I have only ever seen His Holiness ؑ offer two. It is possible that these two *rakʿāt* were offered as *taḥiyyatul-masjid*[2], for in the case of other Prayers, he would offer the *sunnah rakʿāt* at home before coming to Masjid Mubārak.'[3]

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1. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 1, p. 61
2. lit. 'Greeting the Mosque', a recommended two-unit voluntary Prayer offered upon entering a mosque before sitting down, performed as a gesture of respect and honour for the sanctity of the mosque. [Publisher]
3. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 2, p. 258

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ writes that Dr. Mīr Muḥammad Ismāʿīl ؓ told him: 'The Promised Messiah ؑ once said regarding the *sunnah rakʿāt* offered before the *Jumuʿah* Prayer that they are *taḥiyyatul-masjid*; hence, he would offer only two *rakʿāt*.'[1]

Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ II ؓ stated regarding the *sunnah rakʿāt* offered before the *Jumuʿah* Prayer: 'It is certainly mentioned in the Ḥadīth that the Holy Prophet ﷺ offered two *rakʿāt* in the mosque before the *Jumuʿah* Prayer.[2] However, there is also a narration from Ḥaḍrat 'Ā'ishah ؓ which states that the Holy Prophet ﷺ would come to the mosque after having offered four *rakʿāt* at home.[3] Though Imām Bukhārī and Imām Muslim have given preference to the narration which mentions four *sunnah rakʿāt*, offering only two *rakʿāt* is also permissible. Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ I ؓ would always offer four *rakʿāt* of *sunnah* before offering the *Ẓuhr* Prayer in congregation, and I too offer four *rakʿāt*. So long as Allāh has granted us strength, why should we not offer them? However, I have personally seen the Promised Messiah ؑ offer two *sunnah rakʿāt* before *Ẓuhr* hundreds of times, and with consistency. The truth is that the two *rakʿāt* offered by the Promised Messiah ؑ far surpassed the *rakʿāt* we offer in quality. Thus, the Promised Messiah ؑ would offer the minimum number of *sunnah rakʿāt* established in the Ḥadīth, so that he could devote the remaining time to propagating the message of Islām.'[4]

1. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 2, p. 258
2. *Saḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, *Kitāb al-Jumuʿah*, *bāb idhā raʾā al-imāmu rajulan jāʾa wa huwa yakhtubu amarahu an yuṣalliya rakʿatain*, ḥadīth 930
3. *Saḥīḥ Muslim*, *Kitāb Ṣalāt al-Musāfirīn wa Qaṣruhā*, *bāb jawāzu al-nāfilati qāʾiman wa qāʿidan wa fiʿlu baʿḍi al-rakʿati qāʾiman wa baʿḍuhā qāʿidan*, ḥadīth 730
4. *Al-Fazl*, 10 December 1929, p. 8

Offering the Jumuʿah Prayer with Only Two People

A question was submitted: if there are only two Aḥmadīs in a village, can they offer the *Jumuʿah* Prayer in congregation or not?

The Promised Messiah ﷺ inquired of Maulawī Muḥammad Aḥsan ﷺ, who replied: 'The Prayer offered in congregation by two people is generally accepted, so the *Jumuʿah* Prayer is also valid.'

The Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

> Yes, they may offer it together. Jurists have stated that three people are required for a congregation, but if there is only one person, he may ask his wife or others to stand behind him and complete the number.[1]

On another occasion, a question was asked regarding the *Jumuʿah* Prayer: in a place where there is only one or two male Aḥmadīs and a few women, is it correct to include women in the congregation and offer the *Jumuʿah* Prayer?

The Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

> It is permissible.[2]

A Congregation Is Necessary for the Jumuʿah Prayer

A person inquired by letter that he was the only person in his area to have entered into *Baiʿat* of the Promised Messiah ﷺ, so should he offer the *Jumuʿah* Prayer alone or not offer it at all?

The Promised Messiah ﷺ stated:

1. *Badr*, 14 March 1907, p. 5
2. *Badr*, 5 September 1907, p. 3

> A congregation is necessary for the *Jumuʿah* Prayer. If there are two *muqtadīs* [congregants] and a third person to lead as imām from among the Jamāʿat, then they may offer the *Jumuʿah* Prayer. Otherwise, it should not be offered (i.e. it is not permitted to offer congregational Prayer or the *Jumuʿah* Prayer behind non-Aḥmadīs).[1]

Aḥmadīs Offering the Jumuʿah Prayer Separately

The question was presented: 'Some mosques are of the kind that have concluded either legally or through mutual understanding that Ahmadīs and non-Ahmadīs have the option to offer their Prayers separately there, each with their own congregations and their own imāms. At such a place, what should be done for *Jumuʿah* [the Friday Prayer] as it is not permitted to offer two separate *Jumuʿah* Prayers in the same mosque?

The Promised Messiah عليه السلام said:

> The people who declare you as *kāfirs* [disbelievers] and do not offer Prayers behind you, they do not consider your *Adhān* and your *Jumuʿah* Prayer to be valid anyhow. For this reason they will go ahead and offer their own Prayers. And since they call a believer a *kāfir*, they have themselves become *kāfirs* according to the Ḥadīth. Thus, from your perspective as well, their *Adhān* and Prayer are as good as non-existent. You should call your own *Adhān* and offer your *Jumuʿah* with your own imām.[2]

1. *Al-Badr*, 9 January 1903, p. 83
2. *Badr*, 2 May 1907, p. 2

Offering Ẓuhr Prayer after Friday Prayer as a Precaution

Someone's question was presented that some people offer [*Ẓuhr* Prayer as] a cautionary Prayer following *Jumuʿah* [the Friday Prayer]. What is the directive regarding this?

The Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

> In accordance with the injunction of the Holy Qur'ān, the Friday Prayer is obligatory on every Muslim. When the Friday Prayer has been offered, then the command is to go and engage in your businesses. Some people think that the Friday Prayer and its sermon are not allowed under the rule of the British as the sovereign is not a Muslim. It is surprising that they deliver the sermon and observe the Friday Prayer in peace and then they say that it cannot be offered. They further say that there is a doubt whether the Friday Prayer was valid or not, therefore, they also offer the *Ẓuhr* Prayer, and they name this the 'cautionary' Prayer. Such people are caught up in doubt. Their Friday Prayer is lost in doubt and their *Ẓuhr* Prayer is the same. Neither this nor that was attained. The essential point is to observe the Friday Prayer, but there is no need for the cautionary Prayer.[1]

On one occasion, it was mentioned to the Promised Messiah ﷺ that some Muslims are so credulous that on Friday they offer the *Jumuʿah* Prayer, and then—out of fear that their *Jumuʿah* Prayer may not be valid—they go on to offer the full *Ẓuhr* Prayer as well. They have named this the 'precautionary Prayer'.

Upon hearing this, the Promised Messiah ﷺ stated:

1. *Badr*, 2 May, 1907, p. 2; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt,* vol. 9, pp. 290–291

> This is wrong. No Prayer is valid in such a manner, for it is necessary that the worshipper be firm and resolute in their intention when performing a specific Prayer. But if a person is doubtful in their intention, then how can that Prayer be accepted?[1]

On another occasion the Promised Messiah ﷺ stated:

> What is this precautionary Prayer? There are only two obligatory *rak'āt* of the Friday Prayer. There is no such thing as precautionary *rak'ats* that are obligatory.

The Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

> On one occasion, in Ludhiana, Miāń Shihāb-ud-Dīn, who was a very firm believer in God's unity, offered this precautionary Prayer after the Friday Prayer. I was displeased and said to him: 'What is the meaning of this? You were always a very firm believer in God's Oneness.' He responded by saying: 'I did not offer this Prayer as a precaution for the Friday Prayer, but as a precaution against being beaten.'[2]

Ḥaḍrat Muftī Muḥammad Ṣādiq ﷺ narrates: 'In the early days, around the year 1893, when the number of Aḥmadīs was very small, it so happened, that an impoverished Aḥmadī who lived as a dervish in a village mosque would also visit Qadian from time to time. He asked [the Promised Messiah ﷺ]: "On Fridays, people offer two *rak'āt* for the *Jumu'ah* Prayer, and then they also offer four *rak'āt* for the *Ẓuhr* Prayer, which they refer to as a 'precautionary Prayer'. What is the ruling on this?"

The Promised Messiah ﷺ stated:

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1. *Al-Badr*, 11 September 1903, p. 366
2. *Al-Ḥakam*, 10 August 1901, p. 7; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt* vol. 3, pp. 243–244

> There is no need to offer *Ẓuhr* Prayer after the *Jumuʿah* Prayer. Those who harbour doubt are deprived of both: neither their *Jumuʿah* nor their *Ẓuhr* is accepted. The precautionary Prayer is meaningless. However, since you are a poor man, you may offer a precautionary Prayer with the intention of avoiding someone unjustly becoming angry with you and perhaps striking you.[1]

Jumuʿah Prayer in Two Places

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ relates that Miāṅ ʿAbdullāh of Sanaur ؓ once informed him: ʿIn the early days, the Promised Messiah ؑ would personally call the *Adhān* and lead the Prayer himself. It is said that His Holiness ؑ initially appointed Ḥaḍrat Maulawī Noor-ud-Deen ؓ as the imām. However, Maulawī Sahib interceded on behalf of Maulawī ʿAbdul-Karīm ؓ, who was then appointed and continued to lead the Prayer until his demise in 1905. The Promised Messiah ؑ would stand to the right of Maulawī ʿAbdul-Karīm ؓ, and the rest of the congregation stood behind them. In his absence, and after his demise, Ḥaḍrat Maulawī Noor-ud-Deen ؓ would lead the Prayers.

ʿAs for the *Jumuʿah* Prayer, it was the practice of the Promised Messiah ؑ in the early days—and on certain days when he was in good health, and also in the later years of his life—that he would attend the *Jumuʿah* Prayer in the large mosque known as Masjid Aqṣā, led by Maulawī ʿAbdul-Karīm ؓ. Subsequently, as His Holiness ؑ was often unwell, Maulawī ʿAbdul-Karīm ؓ began to lead the *Jumuʿah* Prayer in Masjid Mubārak specifically for him, while Ḥaḍrat Maulawī Noor-ud-Deen ؓ led the general *Jumuʿah* congregation in Masjid Aqṣā.

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1. *Dhikr-e-Ḥabīb*, pp. 40–41

'In Maulawī 'Abdul-Karīm's absence, the *Jumu'ah* in Masjid Mubārak was led by Maulawī Muḥammad Aḥsan ؓ, and in his absence, by Maulawī Muḥammad Sarwar Shāh ؓ. Ḥaḍrat Maulawī Noor-ud-Deen ؓ generally continued to lead the *Jumu'ah* in Masjid Aqṣā until the demise of the Promised Messiah ؑ.

'The *'Īd* Prayers were generally led by Maulawī 'Abdul-Karīm ؓ. After his demise, Ḥaḍrat Maulawī Noor-ud-Deen ؓ would lead them. As for the Funeral Prayer, whenever the Promised Messiah ؑ himself attended, he would personally lead it.'[1]

The Reason the Jumu'ah Prayer Was Offered in Two Locations in Qadian

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ writes: 'During the final days of the Promised Messiah's life, the *Jumu'ah* Prayer was being held in two locations. One was Masjid Mubārak, where the Promised Messiah ؑ himself would join the Prayer, and Maulawī Sayyid Muḥammad Aḥsan or Maulawī Sayyid Sarwar Shāh ؓ would lead. The second location was Masjid Aqṣā, where Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ I ؓ acted as the Imām.

'The reason for the *Jumu'ah* Prayer being held in two separate places was that the Promised Messiah ؑ was generally unable to go to Masjid Aqṣā due to his frail health. Because of its small size, Masjid Mubārak could not accommodate all the worshippers. Hence, the *Jumu'ah* Prayer would be held in two locations.

'The incidents mentioned in the above narration date back to the time when Masjid Mubārak was still under development. In those days, the *Jumu'ah* Prayer offered in Masjid Mubārak would take place in the outer hall in the southern part of my current residence.'[2]

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1. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 1, p. 148
2. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 1, pp. 588–589

Ḥaḍrat Muṣleḥ Mauʿūd ؓ states regarding these circumstances: 'During the life of the Promised Messiah ؑ, the *Jumuʿah* Prayer would sometimes be held simultaneously at Masjid Mubārak and Masjid Aqṣā. This would happen when the Promised Messiah ؑ was unable to go to Masjid Aqṣā due to illness or for some other reason.'[1]

Jumuʿah Prayer During a Journey

Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ II ؓ states: 'It is permissible to offer the *Jumuʿah* Prayer during travel, and it is also permissible to omit it. I have seen the Promised Messiah ؑ both offer the *Jumuʿah* Prayer whilst on a journey, and omit it as well. On one occasion, the Promised Messiah ؑ travelled to Gurdaspur to attend a legal case. He said: "We shall not offer the *Jumuʿah* Prayer today because we are on a journey."

'Then a man, who was by nature frank and outspoken, came to the Promised Messiah ؑ and said: "I have heard that you said we would not be offering the *Jumuʿah* Prayer today?"

'In those days, Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ I ؓ [who usually led the *Jumuʿah* Prayer] was also residing in Gurdaspur, but on that particular day he had travelled to Qadian for a specific task. That man thought the reason for not offering *Jumuʿah* was because Maulawī Noor-ud-Deen ؓ was not present, so he said: "Your Holiness, I too know how to lead the *Jumuʿah* Prayer."

'The Promised Messiah ؑ replied: "Perhaps you do, but we are on a journey."

'The man said: "Indeed, I know it very well and I have led it on many occasions." When the Promised Messiah ؑ saw his strong desire to lead the *Jumuʿah* Prayer, he said: "Very well, let us offer it today."

'In short, I witnessed the Promised Messiah ؑ both offering and omitting the *Jumuʿah* Prayer during journeys. Whenever we offered

1. *Daily al-Fazl*, 18th December 1930, p. 5

the *Jumu'ah* Prayer while travelling, I would always offer the *sunnah* Prayers before the obligatory Prayer. In my view, they should be offered because they differ from ordinary *sunnah* Prayers and represent reverence for the *Jumu'ah* Prayer.'[1]

A Proposal for a Break to Offer the Jumu'ah Prayer

Ḥaḍrat Muftī Muḥammad Ṣādiq ؓ writes: 'During the years 1895–1896, the Promised Messiah ؑ sought to persuade the government to allow Muslims employed in government offices a two-hour break on Fridays to offer the *Jumu'ah* Prayer. To this end, he wrote a petition and began collecting the signatures of fellow Muslims.

'However, Maulawī Muḥammad Ḥusain of Batala issued a public announcement stating: "This is indeed a virtuous task, but it should not be carried out by Mirzā Sahib—we shall undertake it ourselves."

'In response, the Promised Messiah ؑ issued a public statement in which he said:

> We are not concerned with who is named for the task, but rather with the task itself. If Maulawī Sahib wishes to take charge of the matter, we shall withdraw our efforts.

'Accordingly, the Promised Messiah ؑ suspended his own activities. Sadly, however, Maulawī Sahib did not take any action, nor did any other Muslim cleric. As a result, the matter remained unresolved.'[2]

1. *Al-Fazl*, 24 January 1942, p. 1
2. *Dhikr-e-Ḥabīb*, Ḥaḍrat Muftī Muḥammad Ṣādiq, pp. 42–43

A Petition to the Government Requesting a Holiday for the Jumuʿah Prayer

The Promised Messiah ﷺ made numerous efforts for Friday to be recognised as a day of leave so that the *Jumuʿah* Prayer could be offered. In this regard, he sent a formal petition to the Viceroy of India, Lord Curzon, in which he praised the excellence of his administration and stated:

> This government is, in truth, a fountain of beneficence for Islām. It is a matter of great joy that the Honourable Lord Curzon has taken such notable steps which the Muslims shall never forget—such as returning the Bādshāhī Mosque in Lahore to the Muslims, handing over another mosque which had been under the control of the railway department, and donating a valuable lamp for the Bādshāhī Mosque from his own personal funds.
>
> Words cannot express the gratitude and love Muslims feel for him because of these generous acts. However, there remains one desire which Muslims hope will be fulfilled at the hands of the one who has fulfilled their previous wishes. That desire pertains to Friday, which is a grand festival in Islām.
>
> The Holy Qur'ān has specified this day as a holiday. There is a chapter in the Holy Qur'ān titled *Sūrah al-Jumuʿah*, which contains the command that when the call to Prayer is made on Friday, one must leave aside all worldly occupations, gather in the mosques, and offer the *Jumuʿah* Prayer with all its prerequisites. Whoever fails to do so is a grievous sinner and stands at the threshold of leaving Islām.
>
> The Holy Qur'ān places greater emphasis on the *Jumuʿah* Prayer and listening to the sermon than it does on even the *ʿĪd* Prayers. Thus, since the inception of Islām, Friday has been a day of leave for Muslims. In this country too, Friday remained

a holiday for 800 years—i.e., throughout the period of Muslim rule. Even now, Friday remains a holiday in the Patiala State.

There are three major religious communities in this country: Hindus, Christians, and Muslims. The government has granted Sunday as a holiday for Hindus and Christians so that they may observe their religious customs. However, the third community, Muslims, are deprived of their religious holiday, namely Friday. Is there a single Muslim in British India who does not sigh and lament: "If only Friday were a day of leave!"

The hope of the Muslims has grown stronger during the Curzon era, for Lord Curzon is the Viceroy of this land. They believe that just as the Honourable Lord has returned their mosques with great kindness and sympathy, he shall also realise the ultimate purpose of the mosque—namely, the observance of *Jumuʿah* Prayer—through his hands.

A mosque is like a dining table upon which food is placed, and the real nourishment is the *Jumuʿah* Prayer. The primary objective of the mosque is the establishment of this Prayer. Does our noble Viceroy find it befitting to offer us the table but not the food? Such hospitality is incomplete, and we do not believe that a generous and broad-hearted man such as he would be content with this deficiency. If this compassionate Viceroy—of whom we hardly expect to find another equal in the future—does not attend to this opportunity for generosity, then it is inconceivable that Muslims will ever see their hope fulfilled under another Viceroy. The fulfilment of this wish would draw the hearts of Muslims in love and loyalty to the British government.

Should this kindness—on top of all the previous favours—be extended to the Muslims, namely that Friday is declared a public holiday, then such a favour would be worthy of being inscribed in gold. If the government grants Muslims a day off on Friday in commemoration of that day—even if not a full

> day, then at least a half day—I cannot imagine a gesture more pleasing to the hearts of the people. But since the generosity of the government is not narrow in scope... granting a full day's leave on such a blessed occasion seems well within possibility. This indeed is what the Muslims hope and expect.[1]

If One Does Not Know the Second Sermon of the Friday Prayer

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ says that Munshī Ẓafar Aḥmad of Kapurthala ؓ informed him in a letter: 'After meeting the Promised Messiah ؑ, I would frequently visit Qadian. On some occasions, I used to lead the *Jumuʿah* Prayers, and the only people behind me would be the Promised Messiah ؑ and Ḥāfiẓ Ḥāmid ʿAlī ؓ. I once said: "I do not know how to recite the *Khuṭbah Thāniyah*[2]."

The Promised Messiah ؑ said:

> You may recite some verses, then sit down and recite *durūd* [invocation of blessings upon the Holy Prophet ﷺ].

'In those days, Ilāhī Baksh, the accountant, ʿAbdul-Ḥaqq, the accountant, and Ḥāfiẓ Muḥammad Yūsuf were all followers of Maulawī ʿAbdul-Ḥaqq Ghaznavī. They used to visit Qadian quite frequently. It often happened that I would arrive in Qadian and they would already be there.'[3]

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1. *Al-Ḥakam*, 24 January 1903, pp. 5–6
2. The second sermon of the *Jumuʿah* Prayer, delivered after the short pause between the two sermons. [Publisher]
3. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 2, p. 29

Performing All the Prayers Missed in One's Lifetime at Once

Someone asked a question: 'What is meant by *qadā'-e-'umrī* [performing all the Prayers missed in one's lifetime all at once], which people offer on Friday [before *'Īd-ul-Aḍḥā*]?'

The Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

> In my view, this is all nonsense. The correct answer to this question is that which Ḥaḍrat 'Alī ﷺ gave when someone complained to him about a person who was offering Prayer at a time when it is forbidden to do so. Ḥaḍrat 'Alī ﷺ responded: 'I do not wish to be the one who fulfils the verse:
>
> أَرَأَيْتَ الَّذِى يَنْهَى عَبْدًا إِذَا صَلَّى [1]
>
> Have you seen him who forbids a servant [of Ours] when he prays?'
>
> A missed Prayer cannot be made up for in the way people assume; only a missed fast may be compensated. One who deliberately abandons Prayer for a whole year, thinking that they can make up for it on a specific day, is sinful. However, if someone truly repents and regrets their past negligence, and makes up those missed Prayers with a firm intention never to abandon Prayer again, then there is no harm in doing so.[2]

A person asked the question: 'For six months I had abandoned *ṣalāt* [obligatory Prayers]. Now that I have repented, should I perform all of those Prayers now?'

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1. *Sūrah al-'Alaq*, 96:10–11
2. *Al-Badr*, 1 May 1903, p. 114

The Promised Messiah ﷺ responded:

> There is no *qaḍā'* [expiation] for *ṣalāt*. Now, *taubah* [repentance] alone suffices as its remedy.[1]

Women's Exemption from the Obligation of the Jumuʿah Prayer

One person asked if the *Jumuʿah* Prayer was obligatory upon women.

The Promised Messiah ﷺ replied:

> In this respect, one ought to consider the consistent practice of the Ummah. When something has been established by the Sunnah and the Ḥadīth, what further explanation can be given? Since the Holy Prophet ﷺ has exempted women [from the obligation of *Jumuʿah*], then the obligation remains upon men alone.[2]

ʿĪd-ul-Fiṭr in Qadian

The *Al-Badr* newspaper of Qadian described a joyous ceremony held on the occasion of *ʿĪd-ul-Fiṭr*:

'Before the *ʿĪd* Prayer, the Promised Messiah ﷺ had sweet rice prepared for all the brothers, which everyone ate together. Some teachers from the *Taʿlīmul-Islām* School collected *Ṣadaqah-e-Fiṭr*—a charitable donation that every believer is obliged to give before the *ʿĪd* Prayer—for the orphaned students. Around eleven o'clock, the *Jariyullāhi fī Ḥulalil-Anbiyā'* [Champion of Allāh in the Mantle of the Prophets]

1. *Badr*, 24–3 December 1908
2. *Al-Badr*, 11 September, 1903, p. 366

arrived at Masjid Aqṣā dressed in simple clothes, wearing a *chogḥah* [a loose long robe]. All the brothers rushed to greet him, kiss his hand, and wish him a blessed *ʻĪd*. Thereupon, Ḥakīm Maulawī Noor-ud-Deen ؓ led the *ʻĪd* Prayer, reciting seven *takbīrāt* [saying "*Allāhu akbar*"] in the first *rakʻah* and five in the second. As was his practice, the Promised Messiah ؑ would raise his hands up to his ears with each *takbīr*.'[1]

The Takbīrāt Recited on the Two Occasions of ʻĪd

Ḥaḍrat Pīr Sirāj-ul-Ḥaqq Nuʻmānī ؓ wrote under the heading *Beloved Narrations of Our Beloved Ahmad*: 'I clearly remember that Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ I ؓ would lead the Prayer on both occasions of *ʻĪd*. The Promised Messiah ؑ once said to me under the banyan tree:

> Maulawī Noor-ud-Deen leads the Prayer every time, so tell Muḥammad Aḥsan to lead the Prayer today and also to deliver the sermon.

I conveyed this to Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ I ؓ, and he said: "All right." Then the Promised Messiah ؑ said to Maulawī Sahib [Muḥammad Aḥsan of Amroha] to lead the Prayer, and he did so.

Before the Prayer, Maulawī Sahib said: "It is mentioned in *Bukhārī* that seven *takbīrāt* are to be recited in the first *rakʻah* and five in the second, so if you permit, I will follow this practice."

The Promised Messiah ؑ replied:

> There is no harm in this; you may do so.

1. *Al-Badr*, 9 January 1903, p. 85

The *ʿĪd* Prayer had always been offered in accordance with the Ḥanafī practice, in which three *takbīrāt* are recited. However, from that year onwards, it became common to recite seven *takbīrāt* in the first *rakʿah* and five in the second.[1]

The Sermon-Deliverer and the Imām May Be Different People

Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ writes that he offered the *ʿĪd* Prayer in Masjid Mubārak in a large congregation behind Ḥaḍrat Maulānā ʿAbdul-Karīm ؓ, but the Promised Messiah ؑ delivered the Sermon.[2]

1. *Al-Ḥakam*, 14–21 May 1919, p. 6
2. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 2, p. 367

MOSQUES

The Nature of Mosques

The Promised Messiah ﷺ stated:

> At present, our Jamā'at is in great need of mosques. A mosque is the House of God. In whichever village or town one of our mosques is built, you may consider that the foundation for the progress of the Jamā'at has been laid.
>
> If you wish to spread Islām in a village or town where there are no Muslims, or only a few, then build a mosque there. God Himself will draw Muslims to it, on the condition that the mosque is built with a pure intention and sincerity, and that it is constructed solely for the sake of Allāh. If selfish motives or evil desires play any part in it, then no blessing will be found therein. But if built sincerely, Allāh will bless it.
>
> It is not necessary for a mosque to be adorned or made of brick and stone. A piece of land may simply be designated, its boundaries outlined, and a roof of bamboo or similar material may be constructed to provide shelter from rain. Allāh the Almighty does not love extravagance. The mosque of the Holy Prophet ﷺ was made from the leaves of date palms and remained like that for a long time. Ḥaḍrat 'Uthmān ؓ was fond of construction and so he rebuilt it in his era using stone and bricks. It has occurred to me that the disposition of the Prophet Solomon ﷺ closely resembled that of Ḥaḍrat

'Uthmān ﷺ, and perhaps due to this similarity, both were enthusiastic about such matters.

In short, members of our Jamā'at ought to have separate mosques, where an imām from among us delivers guidance and admonition. The members of the Jamā'at ought to pray together in the same mosque, united, for there is great blessing in unity and congregation. Disunity leads to discord. In this era, we must excel in unity and harmony and overlook petty matters that give rise to conflict and division.[1]

Joining Part of a Mosque to a House

A person asked the question: 'My grandfather made a part of his house into a mosque, but now that it is no longer needed, can I join it to the house?'

The Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

Yes, you may join it.[2]

Requesting Donations for the Construction of a Mosque

A letter was received from somewhere stating: 'We would like to build a mosque, and for the sake of blessings, would like you to donate in this cause as well.'

His Holiness ﷺ stated:

I can give to this cause; I have no issue in doing so. However, we are already faced with many large and important expenses

1. *Al-Badr*, 24 August 1904, p. 8
2. *Al-Ḥakam*, 17 October p. 11

which must be fulfilled. In comparison to these expenses, spending on these sorts of works seems to me superfluous. How can I take part in such endeavours? The mosque that is being constructed here by the hand of God—which is the Aqṣā Mosque—takes precedence. People ought to send money for this purpose instead and partake in spiritual reward. My true friend is one who heeds my advice, not one who gives preference to their own point of view. A man came to Imām Abū Ḥanīfah and stated that he was building a mosque. The man said: 'We would like you to give a donation in this cause as well.' Imām Abū Ḥanīfah excused himself saying: 'I cannot give you anything,' even though he could have given much if he so desired. The man said: 'I do not ask for much, just give us anything as a blessing.' Finally, he gave the man a coin that was approximately equivalent to two *annas*. In the evening, the man came back with the coin and said: 'Good sir! The coin that you have given me has turned out to be a counterfeit.' When Imām Abū Hanīfah ﷺ heard this, he was overjoyed and said: 'That is wonderful. The fact is, I did not want to give anything in the first place. There are enough mosques already, and I felt that this new undertaking was an act of extravagance.'[1]

1. *Al-Ḥakam*, 24 May, p. 9; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt* vol. 3, pp. 188–189

THE FUNERAL PRAYER AND BURIAL

Following the Sunnah of Reciting Sūrah Yā Sīn

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ﷺ writes that Miāń ʻAbdullāh of Sanaur ﷺ told him: ʻI was in Qadian at the time of the birth of Bashīr *Awwal*.[1] Around midnight, the Promised Messiah ﷺ came to the mosque and said to me:

> Miāń ʻAbdullāh, my wife is now experiencing labour pains. You stay here and recite *Sūrah Yā Sīn*, and I will go and recite it at home.

He added:

> Reciting *Sūrah Yā Sīn* lightens the pain of the sick, and for this reason, it is also recited when someone is near death so that they do not suffer. The pain ceases before the recitation of *Sūrah Yā Sīn* finishes.

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1. Literally, 'the First Bashīr', Bashīr *Awwal* was the son born to the Promised Messiah ﷺ on 16 Dhū al-Qaʻdah 1304 AH. His birth and death were foretold in the prophecy about the Musleḥ-e-Mauʻūd (the Promised Reformer). [Publisher]

Thereafter, the Promised Messiah ﷺ returned home and I began reciting *Sūrah Yā Sīn*. Not long after, he entered the mosque again, smiling, before I had completed the recitation, and said to me:

We have been granted a boy.

After this, the Promised Messiah ﷺ returned home, and I was so overjoyed that I climbed onto the mosque roof and began to shout at the top of my voice: "Congratulations! Congratulations!"'[1]

Some Misconceptions About Death

The Promised Messiah ﷺ stated:

> [Matters such as] Death on Friday, complete awareness at the time of death, the colour of the face being bright at the time of death—cannot be considered as sure signs of faith because even atheists die on this day, fully conscious, faces bright. The fact of the matter is that some diseases like tuberculosis are actually such that those suffering from them remain conscious till the very end; in fact, some forms of the plague are also of this very nature.
>
> I have personally witnessed instances when a patient was made to recite the *Kalimah* [creed of Islām] and *Sūrah Yā Sīn* [Chapter 36 of the Holy Qur'ān] was read out to him [because death was presumed nigh], but thereafter he survived and returned to his previous sinful life. This indicates that he had not truly repented, or else he would not have behaved in this way. Actually, the recitation of the *Kalimah* at such a time does

1. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 2

not mean one has come to believe. This type of declaration of faith at a time of fear is not accepted.[1]

Washing the Deceased with Lote Leaves

Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ﷺ writes that Mīr Shafī' Aḥmad , the researcher from Delhi, informed him in a letter: 'When the Promised Messiah ﷺ passed away, I was in Lahore, staying at the residence of Khwājah Kamāluddīn. Upon his demise, another young Aḥmadī and I went to fetch lote leaves to prepare for the *ghusl* [ritual washing]. I do not recall which elder had asked me to collect them. I was weeping the entire time as I gathered leaves from the lote trees behind the Islāmiyah College. The leaves were then boiled in warm water, and the blessed body of the Promised Messiah ﷺ was washed with that water.'[2]

Offering the Funeral Prayer for Everyone

Upon the demise of one of Qāḍī Sayyid Amīr Ḥusain Muḥammad's young children, the Promised Messiah ﷺ attended the funeral and personally led the Funeral Prayer. It was his general practice that whenever he was present at a funeral, he would lead the Prayer himself. On this occasion, there were approximately 10 to 15 people present. After the Prayer, someone approached the Promised Messiah ﷺ and requested him to pray for him.

The Promised Messiah ﷺ responded:

> I have offered the Funeral Prayer for everyone.

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1. *Badr*, 16th January, 1908, p. 3; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt* vol. 10 pp. 135–136
2. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 1, p. 749

By this, he meant that he had prayed for all those in attendance during the Funeral Prayer.[1]

The Funeral of Jesus of Nazareth

Dr. ʻAbd-us-Sattār of Raia narrated: ʻMunshī Raḥīm Bakhsh, who had once been a staunch opponent of the Jamāʻāṭ, accepted the death of Jesus ﷺ after reading the book *Tuḥfah-e-Golarhvīyyah*. He said to me: "Let us offer the Funeral Prayer for Jesus." I told him that I would respond only after seeking the guidance and opinion of the Promised Messiah ﷺ.

The Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

> The Funeral Prayer is merely a supplication for the deceased. There is no harm in it, so let him offer it.[2]

Supplicating in the Family Cemetery

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ﷺ writes: ʻMaulawī Sher ʻAlī ﷺ related to me: "On one occasion, the Promised Messiah ﷺ went out for a walk heading in a direction far to the east, which was unusual. During the walk, he stopped at the cemetery located near the place where the *ʻĪd* Prayer is held. He stood in the southern section of the graveyard and remained there supplicating for a while."

ʻI asked him: "Was His Holiness ﷺ directing his Prayer to any particular grave?" Maulawī Sahib responded: "I do not believe so. It occurred to me that he was praying for his family members who are buried there."'

1. *Dhikr-e-Ḥabīb*, pp. 161–162
2. *Al-Ḥakam*, 10 November 1902, p. 7

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ﷺ further states: 'This humble one affirms that Shaikh Yaʿqūb ʿAlī ʿIrfānī ﷺ wrote that the Promised Messiah ﷺ once offered supplication at the grave of his mother in that cemetery. Maulawī Sher ʿAlī ﷺ also mentioned that when the Promised Messiah's daughter Amatun-Naṣīr passed away, he personally carried her body to the same cemetery for burial. As he reached the grave site, someone came forward to relieve him of the burden, but he said:

I will carry her myself.

Ḥāfiẓ Roshan ʿAlī ﷺ also related that on that day, the Promised Messiah ﷺ showed them the grave of a saintly figure from among his family members.'[1]

Reflection on the Custom Known as 'Chehlum'

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ﷺ states that Miāṅ ʿAbdullāh of Sanaur ﷺ told him that there is a custom among some people known as *Chehlum*, in which food is distributed on the 40th day after someone passes away. The non-*muqallidīn* strongly oppose this custom, arguing that if one wishes to feed others, they may do so on any other day.

In response to this, the Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

> The wisdom behind feeding the poor on the 40th day is that it marks the final departure of the deceased's spirit. Just as food is distributed when a girl is sent off as a bride, so too food is offered when the soul takes its final leave, so that the reward

1. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 1, pp. 203–204

may reach the departed soul. It is as though the spirit's connection to this world is completely severed within 40 days.

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ further states: 'This humble one affirms that the Promised Messiah ؑ merely described the wisdom behind the custom; he himself did not observe such traditions or rituals.'[1]

Visiting Graves

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ writes that Kanīz Fāṭimah, wife of Mīr Qāsim 'Alī, wrote in a letter sent through *Lajnah Imā'illāh* Qadian: 'When His Holiness ؑ visited Delhi in 1905, he accepted my *Bai'at* [pledge of allegiance] on a Friday and prayed. A large crowd of opponents had gathered outside. I kept glancing at his face, observing how he sat composed like a lion despite the noise and tension outside.

The Promised Messiah ؑ said: "Tell Shaikh Ya'qūb 'Alī to bring the cart."

Mīr Sahib asked: "Your Holiness, why do you need the cart?"

He replied: "I want to go to the *Quṭb* Cemetery."

I said: "There are so many people gathered outside, how will you pass through them?"

He said: "I will pass through them. You will see."

Mīr Qāsim 'Alī had his own cart, and two more carts arrived. We all got into the carts with the family of the Promised Messiah ؑ. His Holiness ؑ first visited the grave of the father of Mīr Nāṣir Nawāb ؓ and offered supplication there for a while, seated with his eyes closed.

He then went to the grave of Niẓām-ud-Dīn Auliyā' and thoroughly observed the cemetery. The attendants of the cemetery asked His Holiness ؑ: "What is your opinion of Niẓām-ud-Din?"

1. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 1, pp. 167–168

He replied: "I believe that he was a holy man."

He then gave the attendants some money, though I do not know how much. After this, he proceeded to the *Quṭb* Cemetery with the attendants. They respectfully helped him down from the cart and escorted him inside.

Women were allowed to enter the Niẓām-ud-Din Auliyā' Cemetery, but not the *Quṭb* Cemetery. The attendants invited His Holiness عليه السلام to partake in food, but he said:

> [Due to my condition] I am only able to eat certain types of food, but I thank you for your kind invitation.

He again gave them some money. In the evening, His Holiness عليه السلام returned home, and some of the attendees escorted him part of the way.'[1]

Seeking Help from the Dead Is Incorrect

The Promised Messiah عليه السلام said:

> God has nowhere mentioned seeking help from the dead. Rather, He has mentioned only the living. It is a great favour of God Almighty that He entrusted Islām to the living. Had He entrusted it to the dead, who knows what calamity might have befallen it! Are there few graves of the dead in the world? Are there only a small number of graves in Multan? Indeed, it is well-known of that city:

1. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 2, 199–200

گرد، گرما، گداو گورستان

Dust, heat, beggars, and graveyards.

I too have visited Multan. Whichever shrine one visits, one is immediately surrounded by attendants seeking charity. Then look at what is happening, by the 'blessings' of the dead, in Pakpattan. Go and visit Ajmer and see how rampant innovations and newly-invented practices are!

In short, if you focus on the dead, you will come to the conclusion that their visitors are involved in nothing but innovations and forbidden acts. The straight path prescribed by God Almighty is the path of the living, not the dead .Whoever wishes to attain nearness to Allāh, the Ever-Living, the Self-Subsisting, must seek out the living, for our God is Living, not dead.

It is no wonder that those whose god is dead and whose scripture is dead, in turn seek blessings from the dead. But a true Muslim—whose God is Living, whose Prophet is Living, whose Book is Living, and whose religion includes a chain of the living in every age, such that a living person appears in every era to establish living faith in the existence of Allāh—if such a Muslim turns away from the living and begins searching through decaying bones and graves, it is indeed a matter of astonishment.[1]

Seeking the Fulfilment of Wishes Through Offerings at Graves

QUESTION—Is it permissible to visit a cemetery or not?

1. *Al-Ḥakam*, 24 July 1902, pp. 10–11

The Promised Messiah ﷺ responded:

> Visiting graves in order to seek the fulfilment of one's wishes by making offerings is not correct. However, if one visits graves for the sake of taking moral lesson and remembering their own death, then it is permissible.[1]

Taking the Deceased to the Graveyard by Cart

The Promised Messiah ﷺ stated:

> God forbid, if they die from this disease [the Plague], he is a martyr. There is no need to bathe the corpse nor to clothe it with a new shroud. Keep the deceased in their clothes and, if possible, lay a white sheet over them. Since the noxious effect increases in the corpse of the deceased, all of the people should not gather together around him. According to the need, two or three people may carry the deceased's bed and the others can join his *Janāzah* [Funeral Prayer] from afar; for example, a hundred yards away.
>
> The *Janāzah* is a supplication, and for this, it is not necessary for a person to stand right up close to the corpse. In places where the graveyard is at a distance, such as in Lahore, the deceased may be taken in a vehicle or a cart, if possible. There should be no crying and wailing over the deceased, for it is a sin to object to an act of God.[2]

1. *Al-Ḥakam*, 31 May 1903, footnote, p. 9
2. *Badr*, 4 April, 1907

The Sunnah of Visiting Graves in the Morning

One morning, during his visit to Delhi, the Promised Messiah ﷺ visited the men's section of the house, during which someone suggested taking a recreational tour of Delhi.

The Promised Messiah ﷺ replied:

> It is inappropriate to go around by way of sport and pastime. However, there are graves of some great saintly people here. So, I will also go and visit them.

He instructed this humble one [Ḥaḍrat Muftī Muḥammad Ṣādiq ؓ] to make a list of such saintly people so a visit may be arranged [to their graves]. The attendees gave the following names:

1. Shāh Waliyyullāh Sahib
2. Khwājah Niẓām-ud-Dīn Sahib
3. Respected Quṭb-ud-Dīn Sahib
4. Khwājah Bāqī Billāh Sahib
5. Khwājah Mīr Dard Sahib
6. Respected Nasir-ud-Dīn Sahib Charagh Delhi

Hence, arrangements were made for carriages, and the Promised Messiah ﷺ, accompanied by the Companions, boarded the carriages and first visited the shrine of Ḥaḍrat Khwājah Bāqī Billāh. On the way, the Promised Messiah ﷺ spoke about visiting graves:

> There is a spirituality in the graveyard, and visiting the graves in the morning is the Sunnah [Practice of the Holy Prophet ﷺ]. It is meritorious in the sight of Allāh and reminds a person of his station. Man is a traveller in this world. Today he is above the ground, but tomorrow he is below it. It has been mentioned

in the sacred *ḥadīth* that when a person visits a grave, he should say:

السَّلَامُ عَلَيكُمْ يَا أَهْلَ الْقُبُورِ مِنَ المُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُسْلِمِينَ وَإِنَّا إِنْ شَاءَ اللهُ بِكُمْ لَلَاحِقُونَ

> Peace be upon you, O inhabitants of the graves from among the believers and the Muslims! And, God willing, we are bound to join you.[1]

What should One Pray for at a Grave?

Regarding the Promised Messiah's journey to Delhi, the editor of the *Badr* newspaper writes: 'When we arrived at the shrine of Khwājah Bāqī Billāh, many graves were close to each other and often at the same level as the ground. I observed very closely that the Promised Messiah ﷺ walked carefully between the graves so as not to step on any grave. Upon reaching Khwājah Sahib's grave, he raised his hands in Prayer and offered a lengthy Prayer. After the Prayer, I asked what one should pray at the grave, and he replied:

> One should pray for the forgiveness of the person in the grave and pray to God for oneself also. Man stands in need of praying before God all the time.

A poem about the late Khwājah Sahib is written on the gravestone. After praying, the Promised Messiah ﷺ read that poem and ordered this humble writer to copy it.'[2]

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1. *Badr*, 31 October 1905, p. 1; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt,* vol. 8, pp. 22–23
2. *Badr*, 31 October 1905, p. 1; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt* vol. 8, p. 23

On another occasion, the diarist of the *Badr* Newspaper wrote: 'The Promised Messiah ﷺ once set out in the morning for a walk with some of his companions and visited the grave of the late Maulawī 'Abdul-Karīm ﷺ. There, he raised his hands and offered supplication. After the Prayer, someone in attendance asked a few questions which are worth recording here.

QUESTION—What should one recite when standing at a grave?

ANSWER—One ought to pray for the deceased, that Allāh the Exalted forgives their shortcomings and the sins they committed in the world, and also pray for those they have left behind.

QUESTION—Which verse should one recite in the supplication?

ANSWER—These are all mere formalities. You should pray in your own language—whatever you understand best and that stirs your emotions. Pray sincerely for the deceased.'[1]

Building Solid Grave Structures for the Purpose of Protection

A question from someone was presented to the Promised Messiah ﷺ stating: 'My brother has passed away. Shall I have a solid grave structure built for him or not?'

The Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

1. *Badr*, 19 January 1906, p. 6

If permanent grave structures are constructed for show and display, and painted with decorative patterns and designs, and built with domes, then this is forbidden. However, if someone were to suggest, like a close-minded cleric, that in every circumstance and in all places unburnt bricks must be used, then this too is forbidden.

إِنَّمَا الْأَعْمَالُ بِالنِّيَّاتِ

This means, deeds are based on intentions. I believe that, in certain cases, it is proper to have constructed graves. For example, certain regions are prone to flooding. In certain other places dogs, badgers and the like will dig out corpses and take them away. Even the dead must be honoured. If such circumstances arise, it is permissible to construct solid graves so long as no pomp and pretension is intended and the purpose is to save oneself from grief. Allāh and His Messenger ﷺ have stated that even the corpse of a believer is to be given its due respect. Otherwise, if this respect was not important, what need would there be to wash the dead, shroud them and perfume them—just cast them before animals like fire-worshippers. A believer never desires dishonour for themselves. Care and protection is important. So long as a person's intention is pure God does not punish them. You may observe that the wisdom of God so determined that constructed domes be built over the grave of the Noble Messenger ﷺ. Many saints also rest in built tombs, such as Niẓām-ud-Dīn, Farīd-ud-Dīn, Quṭb-ud-Dīn and Mu'īn-ud-Dīn رحمهم الله. These were all righteous men.[1]

1. *Al-Ḥakam*, 17 May 1901, p. 12; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt* vol. 3, pp. 182–183

Protection and Restoration of Graves

Ḥaḍrat Nawāb Muḥammad ʻAlī Khān ؓ sent a letter to the Promised Messiah ؑ regarding the repair of certain graves, in which he wrote:

'The condition of the graves in *Bahishti Maqbarah* [the Heavenly Graveyard] is poor. Water enters the graves due to nearby drainage channels, which are necessary for the trees. Moreover, the surface of the graves is two feet lower than the water level. As a result, many graves collapse due to routine irrigation and rainfall.

'Previously, the graves of Sahib Nūr and Ghauthān collapsed, and I had them restored. Now, once again, some graves have caved in. It is clear that the water enters the graves through these channels. While Mīr Sahib is expected to prevent the daily risk of such collapse, I write this letter because these graves have collapsed from ordinary rain; what will happen in the event of a flood?

'Therefore, I respectfully submit that if His Holiness grants permission, I can construct permanent brick structures over the graves of my family members and some others as well. Whatever you command, I shall act accordingly.'

In reply, the Promised Messiah ؑ wrote:

> I see no harm in building them with brick in order to safeguard them from flooding, for: إِنَّمَاالأَعْمَالُ بِالنِّيَّاتِ [Actions are judged by intentions]. As for the objections of opponents, those never cease regardless.[1]

1. *Maktūbāt-e-Aḥmad*, vol. 2, p. 310

Reciting Sūrah al-Fātiḥah at the Time of Someone's Demise

A question was presented that after the death of a person some people remain gathered at a place and do *Fātiḥah Khāni*.[1] *Fātiḥah Khāni* is a Prayer for forgiveness, so what harm is there in this?

The Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

> What I see there is nothing except for backbiting and vain talk. Then there is the question whether the Noble Prophet ﷺ or the Noble Companions ﷺ or the Great Imāms followed this practice. If not, then what is the need to aimlessly open the door to innovations? My belief is that there is no need for this custom. It is not permissible. Those who cannot attend the Funeral Prayer, may supplicate in their own accord, or offer the Funeral Prayer in absentia.[2]

The Spiritual Reward of Distributing Food Reaches the Deceased

A written question was presented to the Promised Messiah ﷺ as to whether or not it is permissible, during the days of *Muḥarram* to distribute flatbread and the like as a means of spiritual reward for the souls of the *Imāmain*[3] .

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1. *Fātiḥah Khāni* is a practice observed by some Muslims involving the recitation of *Sūrah al-Fātiḥah* and other Quranic verses as a means of seeking Allāh's forgiveness for the deceased. This practice is typically performed collectively, especially following the death or on the anniversary of someone's passing. [Publisher]
2. *Badr*, 5 May 1907, p. 5; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt* vol. 9, pp. 261–262
3. A title of honour which refers to Ḥaḍrat Imām Ḥasan and Ḥaḍrat Imām Ḥusain. [Publisher]

The Promised Messiah عليه السلام said:

> It is generally true that distributing food for the sake of someone who has died becomes a means of spiritual reward for the deceased. However, this should be done without customs that promote association of partners with God. It is not permissible to adopt such customs as are practiced by the Rāfiḍīs [the Shī'ah].[1]

An individual's question was presented: 'Is it permissible for a person to cook food and feed others so that its spiritual reward reaches the soul of Sayyid 'Abdul-Qādir?'

The Promised Messiah عليه السلام replied:

> The spiritual reward of feeding others reaches the dead. It is permissible to cook food and feed others so its spiritual reward reaches the past saints; however, every matter is based upon intention. If a person sets a particular date for this kind of feeding and considers himself as the provider of their needs, then it is an idol; it is forbidden to take and give such kind of food and is associated with *shirk*. Again, one must consider the intention in setting an exact date. For example, if a person is employed and they can take leave only on a Friday, then there is no harm that they set the day of Friday for such works. In short, as long as the act does not contain idolatry, only then is it permissible to feed another for the spiritual reward to reach someone.[2]

1. *Badr*, 8 August 1907, p. 5
2. *Badr*, 8 August, 1907, p. 5; *Malfūẓāt* vol. 9, pp. 333–334

Giving Charity and Reciting the Qur'ān on Behalf of the Dead

QUESTION—Can charity, almsgiving, and recitation of the Holy Qur'ān benefit the deceased?

ANSWER—The *ṣadaqah* [charity] given on behalf of the deceased reaches the deceased, but it is not proven from the Holy Prophet ﷺ and the Companions that the recitation of the Holy Qur'ān on behalf of the deceased reaches the deceased. Instead, prayer should be made on behalf of the deceased. Giving charity and supplication on behalf of the deceased is proven by the practice of 124,000 Prophets, but the charity a person gives in his own life with his own hands is better because through it, a person sets a seal upon his faith.[1]

Ḥaḍrat Pīr Sirāj-ul-Ḥaqq Nu'mānī رضي الله عنه writes under the heading *Beautiful Narrations of Beloved Ahmad*: 'On one occasion, the Promised Messiah عليه السلام was, as per his routine, seated in Masjid Mubārak after the *Fajr* Prayer. A person stood up and asked: "There are people who recite the Qur'ān with the intention of conveying the spiritual reward of their recitation to the souls of the deceased. Does that reward reach them?"

The Promised Messiah عليه السلام replied:

> There is disagreement among the early scholars on this matter...In my view, words do not reach the deceased, nor does the spiritual reward of the words of Allāh. The Holy Qur'ān was revealed to be acted upon; not to be recited like a parrot. If conveying reward to the deceased were one of its objectives, it would have been explicitly mentioned in the Qur'ān. The Holy Qur'ān was revealed to the Holy Prophet ﷺ, and he was its

1. *Badr*, 19 January, 1906, p. 6; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt* vol. 8, p. 339

most deserving recipient. Regarding him, it is said: **أَنَا أَوَّلُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ** [I am the first of the believers]. Furthermore, the Holy Qur'ān states:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَمَلَآئِكَتَهُ يُصَلُّونَ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ ۚ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا صَلُّوا عَلَيْهِ وَسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا[1]

The meaning of the verse is that Allāh and His angels send blessings upon the Prophet. O ye who believe! You too should invoke blessings upon him and salute him with peace.

Invoking blessings upon the Prophet is, in essence, a form of supplication, and the salutation of peace also signifies supplication. While supplication has been mentioned, nowhere has it been stated that Allāh and His angels convey the reward of Quranic recitation to the Prophet. Nor does the verse state: 'O ye who believe! You should also send peace to the soul of the Prophet by reciting the Qur'ān.'

The reward of reciting the Qur'ān is not transmitted in this way; rather, one ought to supplicate, and only supplication has been mentioned in the *aḥādīth*.

For instance, the phrase **السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكُم يَا أَهْلَ الْقُبُور** [Peace be upon you, O dwellers of the graves] and the invocation of blessings upon the Prophet **اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ** [O Allāh, bestow Your blessings upon Muhammad], have been taught so that, by acting upon them, one may attain nearness to Allāh, strengthen their connection with Him, and pass through the various stages of spiritual development. That being said, the reward of charity does indeed reach the deceased.[2]

1. *Sūrah al-Aḥzāb,* 33:57

2. *Al-Ḥakam*, 14–21 May, 1919, p. 8

Condolences for the Bereaved

A question was submitted to the Promised Messiah ﷺ: 'If, by divine decree, someone suffers a bereavement, is it permissible for others to prepare food in their homes for the bereaved?'

The Promised Messiah ﷺ replied:

> Not only is it permissible, it is necessary, as an expression of brotherly compassion.[1]

An Aḥmadī Dying of the Plague

The Promised Messiah ﷺ stated:

> The objection of our opponents—that why do some members of our Community die from the plague—is entirely unfounded. I have never prophesied that no one who performs the *Bai'at* at my hand will ever die from the plague. However, I do say that people of the highest rank are not afflicted with such diseases; no *nabī* [prophet], *ṣiddīq* [truthful one], or *wālī* [saint] has ever died from the plague. There was an outbreak of plague in the time of Ḥaḍrat 'Umar ؓ, but did it affect Ḥaḍrat 'Umar ؓ in any way? None of the senior companions were stricken with the plague. 124,000 prophets have passed; can anyone claim that a single one of them died of the plague?
>
> Indeed, there is no doubt that when such diseases spread, some believers of a lower rank may become afflicted with them; however, they die as *shuhadā'* [martyrs]. Thus, God Almighty forgives their shortcomings and sins, just as He did in the wars which the Holy Prophet ﷺ fought against the disbelievers.

1. *Badr*, 11 July 1907, p. 3

Despite the prophecy that the disbelievers would be cast into hell as a result of these wars, some Muslims were also killed in them. Yet none of the highest-ranking companions, such as Ḥaḍrat Abū Bakr ﷺ or Ḥaḍrat ʻUmar ﷺ, were martyred, nor was the Holy Prophet ﷺ.

It is therefore evident that people of the highest rank do not typically embrace martyrdom in such wars. In the same way, if someone from our Jamāʻat is afflicted by the plague, they are counted as martyrs and Allāh will surely grant them their reward.[1]

The Angels Offer the Funeral Prayer of an Aḥmadī Martyr

It was mentioned that in some small villages there is only one Aḥmadī household, and the opponents are so obstinate that they say: 'If an Aḥmadī dies, we will not offer their Funeral Prayer.'

The Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

What benefit will an Aḥmadī derive from a funeral Prayer led by such opponents? A funeral is a supplication, so what effect will the supplication have of one who, in the estimation of Allāh, is among the *maghḍūb ʻalaihim* [those who have incurred His displeasure]? The angels themselves offer the funeral Prayer of an Aḥmadī martyr. So do not concern yourselves with such people and place your full trust in your Lord.[2]

1. *Badr*, 16 May 1907, p. 3
2. *Badr*, 16 May, 1907, p. 3

Offering the Funeral Prayer of Non-Aḥmadīs

The Promised Messiah ﷺ stated:

> If the deceased did not openly reject us or declare us disbelievers, then there is no harm in offering their funeral Prayer, for only God knows the unseen.

He further stated:

> Do not greet or eat with those who declare us disbelievers and openly revile us. However, there is no harm in conducting business transactions with them, as this does not constitute showing favour.
>
> As for those who appear to remain neutral, they in reality reject us too. And as for someone who does not accept us but says, 'I believe him to be a righteous person,' then he too is among the opponents, for such people are hypocritical in nature. Their principle is:
>
> با مسلماں اللہ اللہ با برہمن رام رام
>
> They say 'Allāh, Allāh' in the company of Muslims, and 'Rām, Rām' when with Hindus.
>
> Such people have no relationship with God. Outwardly they say that they do not wish to hurt anyone's feelings, but remember, whenever someone joins one of two groups, it is inevitable that someone's sentiments will be hurt.[1]

One another occasion, the Promised Messiah ﷺ stated:

1. *Al-Badr*, 16th May 1907, p. 3

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ gave his shirt to a hypocrite and offered his Funeral Prayer, for it is entirely possible that he repented while breathing his last. It is incumbent on a believer to always think good of others, and this is why it is permissible to offer anyone's Funeral Prayer, except if someone is a bitter opponent [of our Community] or if there is a risk of discord, in which case their Funeral Prayer should not be offered. The members of our Community are under no obligation; rather, they may offer the Funeral Prayer of non-Aḥmadīs by way of benevolence towards them. The object of Prayer is:

وَصَلِّ عَلَيْهِمْ إِنَّ صَلٰوتَكَ سَكَنٌ لَّهُمْ[1]

> And pray for them; your Prayer is indeed a source of tranquillity for them

The meaning of صَلٰوۃ here is the *janāzah* Prayer, and the words سَكَنٌ لَّهُمْ [a source of tranquillity for them] indicate that the Prayer of the Holy Prophet ﷺ grants peace and tranquillity to a sinner.[2]

Offering the Funeral Prayer of an Opponent who Dies of the Plague

A person asked: 'The plague has struck our village and most of the people who are dying are those who declare disbelief and oppose the truth. Should their Funeral Prayer be offered?'

The Promised Messiah ؑ stated:

1. *Sūrah al-Taubah*, 9:103
2. *Al-Badr*, 15 May, 1903, p. 30

This is *farḍ kifāyah* [a collective obligation]. If even one member of the family attends, then the obligation is deemed to have been fulfilled on behalf of all. In the present case, it should be noted that firstly, the deceased is stricken by the plague, and Allāh the Exalted has forbidden going near such individuals. Secondly, he is an opponent, so it is inappropriate to interfere unnecessarily. God Almighty says that such people should be left alone, and if He so wills, He will Himself turn their hearts and make them your friends; that is, they will become Muslims.

Allāh the Exalted has established this Jamā'at on the precepts of Prophethood. Flattery serves no purpose; in fact, through flattery one compromises a part of their faith.'[1]

The Question of Offering the Funeral Prayer of a Non-Aḥmadī

Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ II ﵁ states: 'The question of whether or not the Funeral Prayer of a non-Aḥmadī can be offered is often raised. In this regard, a difficulty arises because the Promised Messiah ﵇ has, in certain cases, permitted offering the Funeral Prayer. Undoubtedly, there are some texts that appear to support this, and a letter has also been discovered in this regard, which will be examined. However, the established practice of the Promised Messiah ﵇ is to the contrary.

'One of his sons[2]—who accepted him [but only] verbally—passed away. I recall that when he died, the Promised Messiah ﵇ was pacing and saying: "He never caused any mischief; in fact, he was always obedient to me. Once, I fell gravely ill, to the point that I lost consciousness

1. *Al-Badr*, 15 May, 1903, p. 130

2. Mirzā Faḍl Ahmad, son of the Promised Messiah ﵇ from his first wife, and brother of Mirzā Sulṭān Aḥmad who performed *Bai'at* in the era of the Second Khalīfah. [Publisher]

due to the severity of the illness. When I came to consciousness, I found him standing beside me, weeping bitterly." The Promised Messiah ﷺ also said that he held him in great regard. Despite this, he did not offer his Funeral Prayer, even though he was more obedient than some Aḥmadīs.

'It is evident from the Holy Qur'ān that when a person accepts Islām outwardly but the disbelief hidden in their heart becomes manifest, then it is not permissible to offer their Funeral Prayer. How then can it be permissible to offer the Funeral Prayer of a non-Aḥmadī?'[1]

On another occasion, Ḥaḍrat Muṣleḥ Mau'ūd ﷺ stated: 'It is said that the Promised Messiah ﷺ once led the Funeral Prayer of a non-Aḥmadī, but it is possible that he did so at someone's request. Can anyone state on oath before Allāh that they informed the Promised Messiah ﷺ of the deceased being a non-Aḥmadī, asked him to lead the Funeral Prayer, and he still led it? The truth is that someone likely requested him to lead the Funeral Prayer, and he did so under the impression that the deceased was an Aḥmadī. This must have been the case.

'Everyone knows my stance that I do not consider it permissible to lead the Funeral Prayer of a non-Aḥmadī. Even I once encountered a similar situation: a student told me his mother had passed away and requested that I lead her Funeral Prayer. I accepted his request, but later learned that she was not an Aḥmadī. That same student had previously asked me to pray for her guidance and acceptance of Aḥmadīyyat, but I had not recalled that at the time. Thus, if the Promised Messiah ﷺ ever led the Funeral Prayer of a non-Aḥmadī under similar circumstances, it cannot be used as proof against us. However, if any trustworthy individuals swear that they clearly told the Promised Messiah ﷺ that a non-Aḥmadī had passed away and asked him to lead the Funeral Prayer, and he knowingly agreed, then we would accept that. But has anyone borne witness to this?

1. *Anwār-e-Khilāfat, Anwārul-'Ulūm*, vol. 3, pp. 148–149

'In the absence of such testimony, it cannot be established that the Promised Messiah ﷺ considered it permissible to offer the Funeral Prayer of a non-Aḥmadī. The strongest evidence for this view is that when the body of the Promised Messiah's own son was brought to him and he was requested to lead the Funeral Prayer, he refused. Furthermore, there is a letter from Maulawī 'Abdul-Karīm of Sialkot ﷺ stating that the Promised Messiah ﷺ did not lead the Funeral Prayer of Sir Sayyid Aḥmad Khān. Did he declare the Promised Messiah ﷺ a disbeliever? No—his view was that no one should be declared a disbeliever. However, when news of Sir Sayyid's death was received, and a proposal was made to offer his Funeral Prayer, the Promised Messiah ﷺ expressed his displeasure. Maulawī 'Abdul-Karīm in a letter to an individual, wrote as follows:

"When the Promised Messiah ﷺ was informed of the deceased's passing, he remained silent. Our members in Lahore had unanimously written a letter urging strongly that the Funeral Prayer be offered there, and that a circular be issued asking all members in every city to do the same. The rationale was that this would demonstrate to the youth that our Community is peace-loving and conciliatory. Upon hearing this, the face of the Promised Messiah ﷺ turned red, and he said:

> If others act in this way out of hypocrisy, they may escape divine punishment. But if we do the same, the wrath of God will surely descend upon us.

He further said:

> We are under the command of a higher power; we cannot do anything without His command. We speak no ill of him and leave his matter to Allāh.

He concluded:

> The transformation we are waiting for cannot be attained unless Allāh is pleased with us, even if the entire world is pleased with us.[1]

One one occasion, Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ II ﵁ stated: 'How can we possibly offer the Funeral Prayer of a non-Aḥmadī?'[2]

Offering The Funeral Prayer of One Whose Circumstances Are Dubious

A question was asked: 'Can the Funeral Prayer be offered for someone who is not of this Community?'

The Promised Messiah ﵇ stated:

> If he opposed this Community, spoke ill of us and thought ill of us, do not offer his Funeral Prayer; if he was silent and unprejudiced, you may offer his Funeral Prayer on the condition that the imām of the Funeral Prayer is from among you. Otherwise, there is no need to offer it.

Another question was asked: 'If there is an imām somewhere who is unaware of the circumstances of His Holiness [and his Community], should we offer Prayer behind him or not?'

> It is compulsory for you to make him aware [of my claim], and if he accepts, then so be it. Otherwise, you ought not to waste your Prayer by offering it behind him. If such an imām remains silent, neither accepting nor denying, then he is a hypocrite. Do not offer Prayer behind him.

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1. *Al-Fazl*, 28th March 1915, p. 8
2. Jalsa Sālāna Speech, 27 December, 1916; *Anwārul-'ulūm*, vol. 3, pp. 422–423

> If someone dies who is not from among you, and there are people among the non-Aḥmadīs who can lead and offer his Funeral Prayer, and they do not like one of you to lead it, and there is fear of a dispute arising, then leave that place and engage yourselves in some good work of your own.[1]

In the era of Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ II ؓ, the *Majlis-e-Iftā'* [Council for Issuing Religious Edicts] submitted a recommendation to him in light of the following verdict of the Promised Messiah ؑ, which he accepted:

'In the view of the *Majlis*, the expression 'a person whose circumstances are dubious' in this letter refers to an individual who has not formally joined the Aḥmadiyya Jama'āt but does not reject the Promised Messiah ؑ. Rather, he associates with Aḥmadīs, agrees with them in their view of the truthfulness of the Promised Messiah ؑ, and to some extent considers him to be truthful. The Promised Messiah ؑ did not see any apparent harm in offering his Funeral Prayer, although he did affirm that it was preferable to abstain.

'In regard to such individuals, the Aḥmadiyya Jama'āt follows the latter part of his guidance, namely that it is preferable to abstain. However, in appropriate circumstances, there is no harm in acting upon the earlier part as well, and permission for this may be sought, on the condition that the imām is an Aḥmadī. If it is not possible for an Aḥmadī to act as the imām, then offering the Funeral Prayer of such a person is not permitted.

Letter of the Promised Messiah ؑ dated 23 February 1902:

> One who openly reviles, declares disbelief, and vigorously rejects the truth, such a person's Funeral Prayer must not be offered under any circumstances. However, in the case of a person whose circumstances are dubious, who perhaps resembles

1. *Al-Ḥakam*, 30 April 1902, p. 7

a hypocrite, there is no apparent harm in offering their Funeral Prayer, as a funeral is ultimately a supplication. Even so, it is better to abstain from it.[1]

It Is Possible to Speak to the Dead through the Faculty of Vision

Ḥaḍrat Muftī Muḥammad Ṣādiq ؓ narrates that the Promised Messiah ؑ would say:

> The souls maintain a connection with their graves, and I speak from personal experience when I say that one can converse with the dead. However, this requires spiritual vision and an inner faculty of perception which is not possessed by everyone. The soul is connected both with the grave and with the heavens, where it is assigned a station.[2]

Benefiting From the Dead

A person asked, 'Can a person benefit in his life from a connection with someone who is dead or from the connection with his spiritual guide, and does the other person also receive a benefit?'

The Promised Messiah ؑ replied:

> Sufis say that a person can gain benefit even after death. In fact, they say that the circle [of beneficence] is limited while a person is alive and that after death, that circle widens. Everyone acknowledges this. Accordingly, this is acknowledged to such

1. *Farmūdāt Muṣleḥ-e-Mauʿūd*, p. 119
2. *Dhikr-e-Ḥabīb*, p. 187

an extent that when Jesus descends from the heavens, since he will not know Arabic, what will he do?

Some say that he will study to acquire knowledge of Arabic and that he will also study Ḥadīth and *Fiqh* [Islamic Jurisprudence]. Some say that it will be a matter of shame for him to be the disciple of a *maulawī*. For this reason, it is believed that he will sit in the grave of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and gain benefit while sitting there.

However, both these things are actually wrong. This much is proven from this, however, that they believe that benefit can be derived from graves. Nonetheless, it should be remembered that this matter should not be by way of *shirk* [associating partners with Allāh], as it is generally seen.[1]

Moving a Corpse From One Place to Another

Ḥaḍrat Muftī Muḥammad Ṣādiq ؓ states: 'Mirzā Ayyūb Baig was the only fortunate individual who passed away several years before the establishment of *Bahishtī Maqbarah* [the Heavenly Graveyard], yet the Promised Messiah ؑ granted permission for his remains to be transported, from the city of Fazilka in the Firozpur District, in a casket, to be reburied in *Bahishtī Maqbarah*. May Allāh elevate his rank in Paradise.'[2]

1. *Al-Ḥakam*, 10 December, 1905, pp. 2–4; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt* vol. 8, p. 181
2. *Dhikr-e-Ḥabīb*, p. 7, footnote

Briefly Revealing the Face of a Dead Person who is Buried

A person once asked Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ II ؓ: 'Nearly six months have passed since my mother passed away, and now we intend to transport the casket to Rabwah. I was not at home at the time of her passing; can I open the casket to see her face?'

Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ II ؓ replied: 'It is permissible to view the deceased. The Promised Messiah ؑ once allowed the face of Mirzā Ayyūb Baig to be seen, even though the body was not placed in a casket. As for the condition of the body, that is a matter for a doctor to assess, not a *mufti*. If the condition of the corpse has deteriorated, it may have a harmful effect on the one who views it.'[1]

When the body of Ḥaḍrat Maulawī 'Abdul-Karīm ؓ was exhumed for reburial in *Bahishtī Maqbarah* [the Heavenly Graveyard], some individuals expressed a desire to see his face. Ḥaḍrat Pīr Sirāj-ul-Ḥaqq Nu'mānī ؓ writes in this regard: 'When the coffin of Maulawī 'Abdul-Karīm ؓ was taken out for burial in *Bahishtī Maqbarah*, many people requested to view the body inside the coffin. However, the Promised Messiah ؑ did not approve of this idea. When the people persisted in their request, he reluctantly granted permission. Even so, it is not known whether they actually viewed the body, as I too did not approve of this insistence. Their demand, in my view, was both futile and contrary to the wish of the Promised Messiah ؑ.'[2]

1. *Farmūdāt Muṣleḥ-e-Mau'ūd Darbarah Fiqhī Masā'il*, p. 131
2. *Al-Ḥakam*, 14–21 May 1919, p. 7

Raising the Hands in Supplication After the Burial

Ḥaḍrat Pīr Sirāj-ul-Ḥaqq Nuʿmānī ﷺ writes that on the day the body of Ḥaḍrat Maulawī ʿAbdul-Karīm of Sialkot ﷺ was exhumed and reburied in *Bahishtī Maqbarah*, the Promised Messiah ﷺ stood near the grave and supplicated with raised hands before the coffin was removed. He also supplicated in the same manner after the burial.[1]

1. *Al-Ḥakam*, 14–21 May, 1919, p. 7

FASTING AND RAMAḌĀN

The Promised Messiah ﷺ stated:

> Sincerely observe your fasts for the sake of God. Let everyone who is liable to pay the *Zakāt* do so, and anyone upon whom the *Ḥajj* has become obligatory and who face no hindrance ought to perform the pilgrimage.[1]

Sighting of the Crescent Moon

A clear and straight path has been laid for mankind by God Almighty to make religious obligations simple and accessible. He has not subjected His creation to purposeless predicaments and complications. For instance, in the matter of fasting, He has not decreed that unless one is certain—through astronomical calculations—that the moon is at the stage of the 29th or 30th night, one must disregard actual visual sighting. It is clear that placing mankind in such difficulty through reliance on intricate astronomical systems serves no purpose and is, in fact, extremely burdensome. It is also evident that these calculations are susceptible to human error.

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1. *Kashtī-e-Nūh*, *Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 19, p. 15; Eng. Trans.: *Noah's Ark*, p. 26

Therefore, it is in the interest of mankind that they do not depend on astrophysicists and astronomers. Rather, they should rely on the sighting of the moon with the naked eye and, in accordance with the divine command, should not exceed the count of 30 days. It must be remembered that the sighting of the moon with the naked eye takes precedence over the speculative conclusions of science. This emphasis on the reliability of direct sighting led European scientists to invent instruments like telescopes and microscopes, and through these, they quickly uncovered truths about the universe which others, such as the Hindus, were unable to discern over thousands of years of philosophical speculation.

Now you realise the blessed nature of the faculty of sight, and God Almighty emphasised it in order to draw attention to its immense benefits.

Just consider for a moment: if the Europeans, like the Hindus, had considered the faculty of sight to be useless and relied instead on abstract speculation penned in seclusion, how would modern knowledge concerning the sun, moon, and stars have come to light? Once again I emphasise: open your eyes and observe how blessed this faculty of sight is, and what marvels it makes possible.[1]

Error in Sighting of the Crescent Moon

A friend from Sialkot once asked the Promised Messiah ﷺ: 'The moon was not sighted here on Tuesday. It was only sighted on Wednesday, even though Ramaḍān had already begun that day. Therefore, we observed our first fast on Thursday. What should we do now?'

The Promised Messiah ﷺ replied:

1. *Surma Chashm-e-Ārya, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 2, pp. 192–193

> After the month of Ramaḍān, you should observe an additional fast in compensation for the one that was missed.[1]

Testimony of the Crescent Sighting

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ﷺ states that Miāṅ Khair-ud-Dīn of Sikhwan ﷺ once wrote to him saying: 'Once, instead of sighting the moon ourselves, we started to observe the fast on the testimony of some non-Aḥmadīs. The very same day, we reached Qadian around the time of *Ẓuhr* Prayer and mentioned that we were fasting. His Holiness ﷺ also entered the mosque and [realising that we were fasting] books of Ḥadīth were brought to the mosque and pondered upon with deep concentration [for the purpose of finding an appropriate ruling on the matter], because nobody had observed the fast in Qadian that day.

At that moment, I was asked: "Did you sight the moon by yourself?" I replied: "Some non-Aḥmadīs saw it." The moment I uttered that reply and said that the non-Aḥmadīs had sighted the moon, the books were closed and the Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

> I thought that perhaps you observed the fast after sighting the moon yourself. That is why I began to research.'[2]

Delay in Suḥūr

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ﷺ states that Munshī Ẓafar Aḥmad of Kapurthala ﷺ wrote to him: 'I used to reside in a room

1. *Al-Badr*, 31 October 1907, p. 7
2. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 2, p. 265

adjacent to Masjid Mubārak. Once, while I was eating *suḥūr*[1], the Promised Messiah ﷺ came in, and upon observing what I was eating, he asked: "Do you eat *dāl* [lentils] with bread?" Immediately, the manager of the kitchen was summoned and asked: "Is this what you serve my friends? Not all of those present here are travellers. From now on, ask each and every one of them what kind of food they are accustomed to, and what they would prefer to have for *suḥūr*, and prepare their meals accordingly."

Thereafter, the manager brought more food for me, but by then I had finished eating, and the *Adhān* [call to Prayer] had already been made. His Holiness ﷺ said:

> Eat; do not worry. The *Adhān* was called early.[2]

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ states that Dr. Mīr Muḥammad Ismā'īl ؓ informed him: 'In 1895, I had the opportunity to observe the entire month of Ramaḍān in Qadian. During that month, I offered the *Tahajjud* Prayer—meaning the *Tarāwīḥ*—behind His Holiness ﷺ.

'The Promised Messiah ﷺ had the habit of offering *Witr* during the early part of the night, while during the latter part of the night he would offer eight *rak'āt* of *Tahajjud*, in sets of two. In the first *rak'ah*, he would regularly recite *Āyatul-Kursī* (from اللّٰهُ لَا إِلٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ to وَهُوَ الْعَلِيُّ الْعَظِيمُ), and in the second rak'ah he would recite *Sūrah al-Ikhlāṣ*. During prostration, he would often supplicate: يَا حَيُّ يَا قَيُّومُ بِرَحْمَتِكَ أَسْتَغِيث ('O Living and Self-Subsisting God, I seek Your help through Your mercy'), and he would recite this in such a way that I could easily hear his voice.

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1. *Suḥūr* is the pre-dawn meal Muslims eat before fasting from dawn till dusk. The term used in Urdu is سحری (*seḥrī*). In this translation, we have adopted the Arabic term *suḥūr*, which is widely understood in the Muslim world. [Publisher]

2. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 2, p.127

'Moreover, he would have *suḥūr* after *Tahajjud*, sometimes prolonging it until the *Adhān* for *Fajr* was called, and on other occasions, he would continue having *suḥūr* even as the *Adhān* was being completed.'

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ﷺ further states: 'I infer from this that it is permissible to eat *suḥūr* until the onset of dawn becomes visibly clear on the eastern horizon, and that the matter has no direct link with the *Adhān* for the *Fajr* Prayer. This is because the *Adhān* for *Fajr* is generally given at the break of dawn, and people naturally begin to associate this *Adhān* with the ending point of *suḥūr*. In Qadian, the *Adhān* is usually given immediately after the break of dawn, and on some occasions it is even made prematurely by mistake. Thus, in such circumstances, the Promised Messiah ﷺ would not restrict himself based on the *Adhān*, but would continue *suḥūr* until the time of dawn had become visibly manifest.

'The true purport of the Sharī'ah in this matter is not to cease eating based on astronomical approximations of dawn, but rather when dawn becomes '*tabayyana*' [clearly distinguishable]. The word *tabayyan* itself conveys that cessation of *suḥūr* is linked to clear visual confirmation of the break of dawn.

'As recorded in a *ḥadīth*, the Holy Prophet ﷺ stated: "The call of Bilāl should not prevent you from *suḥūr*; instead, continue eating and drinking until you hear the *Adhān* of Ibn Umm Maktūm." Ibn Umm Maktūm was blind and would only call the *Adhān* when people around him cried out: 'It is morning! It is morning!'"[1]

An Example of Exercising Caution Regarding the Time of Suḥūr

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ﷺ states that Ḥāfiẓ Nūr Muḥammad of Faizullah Chak ﷺ told him: 'Once, during the month

1. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 1, pp. 295–296

of Ramaḍān, someone called the *Adhān* for the *Fajr* Prayer well before the actual time of *suḥūr*. The Promised Messiah ﷺ entered the mosque and said:

> I had just brought a glass of milk to my lips when I heard the *Adhān*, so I immediately set the glass down.

Someone said: "Your Holiness, there is still time left to eat and drink," to which the Promised Messiah ﷺ replied:

> I do not find it appropriate to consume anything after the *Adhān* has been called."

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad Sahib ؓ further states: 'If this narration has been transmitted correctly, then it appears that the Promised Messiah ﷺ adopted this precautionary measure out of personal piety. Otherwise, it was his usual practice to determine the end of *suḥūr* by the break of dawn and not by the timing of the *Adhān* for *Fajr*. He would also emphasise that, in accordance with the guidance of the Quranic verse, one ought to stop eating when the break of dawn becomes visibly clear. As the saints say: "There is a difference between *fatwā* [a religious edict] and *taqwā* [righteousness]."'[1]

The Prohibition of Fasting on a Journey Is a Commandment

It was inquired of the Promised Messiah ﷺ what the instruction was in relation to fasting whilst on a journey. The Promised Messiah ﷺ responded by saying:

1. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 1, p. 520

As far as the Qur'ān teaches, we learn:

فَمَنْ كَانَ مِنْكُمْ مَّرِيْضًا اَوْ عَلٰى سَفَرٍ فَعِدَّةٌ مِّنْ اَيَّامٍ اُخَرَ[1]

> In other words, a person who is ill or on a journey is not to fast. This is an order.
>
> Allāh the Exalted has not stated that anyone who is able should fast, and a person who is unable should abstain. In my view, a traveller should not fast. In general, however, since most people do fast whilst on a journey, a person may fast while they are travelling, considering this to be the established practice. However, the commandment of عِدَّةٌ مِّنْ أَيَّامٍ أُخَرَ (to fast the same number of other days when fasts are missed in Ramaḍān) must be kept in consideration."

On this, Maulawī Noor-ud-Deen Sahib ؓ said: 'A person ought to fast a few days every month anyway.'

Editor's Note: I would like to say, however, that on another occasion, the Promised Messiah ؑ has also said that a person who burdens themselves and fasts while they are on a journey, as if, seeks to please God by force and not through obedience to His command. This is wrong. True faith lies in doing what God commands and refraining from whatever He so commands.[2]

1. *Sūrah Al-Baqarah*, 2:185

2. *Al-Ḥakam*, 31 January 1899, p. 7; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt,* vol. 2, pp. 13–14

Acting Upon The Holy Quran's Exemptions is Righteousness

Upon learning that Shaikh Muhammad Chittu[1] had come from Lahore and other friends had also come, the Promised Messiah, may peace and blessings be upon him, came out to greet them, highlighting his exemplary moral character. The purpose was to go for a walk, so an opportunity would arise to meet with friends. Since the people already knew that the Promised Messiah ﷺ would come outside, most friends were present in the small mosque, knowing that the Promised Messiah ﷺ would be coming out.

When the Promised Messiah ﷺ emerged, the companions ran towards him as usual. He looked at Shaikh Sahib, and after offering the customary greeting of peace, the Promised Messiah ﷺ said, 'Are you well? You are indeed from among my oldest acquaintances.'

BABA CHITTU—I am grateful.

THE PROMISED MESSIAH ﷺ—(Addressing Ḥakīm Muḥammad Ḥusain Qureshi) It is your duty that he should not suffer any kind of inconvenience. Make full arrangements for his food and accommodation. Tell me what is needed and urge Miyāń Najm-ud-Dīn to prepare what is suitable for his food and what he likes.

HAKĪM MUḤAMMAD HUSAIN—Most assuredly, Your Holiness. God willing, there will be no difficulty.

1. Earlier, he was a member of the Ahl-e-Ḥadīth sect. Later he adopted the Chakrhalāvi doctrine. When he presented himself before the Promised Messiah ﷺ, he belonged to the Chakrhalāvi sect. [Publisher]

THE PROMISED MESSIAH عليه السلام—(Addressing Baba Chittu): You are a traveller, so you would not be fasting?

BABA CHITTU—No, I am fasting; I am observing the fast.

THE PROMISED MESSIAH عليه السلام—The essential thing is that acting upon the exemptions of the Holy Qur'ān is also righteousness. God Almighty has given the one who is travelling or sick the permission and exemption to fast at another time, so this commandment should also be followed. I have read that most great scholars have given the verdict that it is a sin for someone to fast while travelling or during illness, because the purpose is [to win] the pleasure of Allāh the Exalted, and not do as one should himself please, and the pleasure of Allāh the Exalted is in obedience. Therefore, whatever command He gives should be obeyed, and one should not add things of his own to it. Here is what He has ordained:

مَنْ كَانَ مِنْكُمْ مَرِيضًا أَوْ عَلَىٰ سَفَرٍ فَعِدَّةٌ مِّنْ أَيَّامٍ أُخَرَ[1]

There is no restriction in this that travel should be of such and such type or illness should be this or that variety. I do not observe the Fast when travelling and when I am sick. So, even today, my health is not good, and I did not fast. When I walk about, the sickness is reduced somewhat, so I am going out [for a walk]. Will you go, too?

1. But whoso among you is sick or is on a journey *shall fast* the same number of other days (*Sūrah al-Baqarah*, 2:185). [Publisher]

BABA CHITTU—No, I cannot go. Please, you go. This commandment is there, no doubt, but there is no hardship involved in the journey, so why not observe the Fast?

PROMISED MESSIAH عليه السلام—This is your own opinion. The Holy Quran has not mentioned anything about hardship or lack thereof. You are very old now. Life cannot be relied upon. A person should adopt the path that pleases Allāh the Exalted and leads to the straight path.

BABA CHITTU—The only reason I have come is to get some benefit from you. If this is the right path, it should not be that I die in [a state of] negligence.

PROMISED MESSIAH عليه السلام—Yes, this is very good. Let me come back after a short walk. Please make yourself comfortable.

(After saying this, the Promised Messiah عليه السلام went for a walk.)[1]

There was a discussion regarding the fasting of the sick and the traveller. Ḥaḍrat Maulawī Noor-ud-Deen رضي الله عنه said: 'Shaikh Ibn 'Arabī has stated that if a person who is sick or is a traveller observes a Fast during the days of Ramaḍān, it is still obligatory for him to fast upon regaining health after the month of Ramaḍān as God Almighty has said:

فَمَنْ كَانَ مِنْكُمْ مَّرِيْضًا اَوْ عَلٰى سَفَرٍ فَعِدَّةٌ مِّنْ اَيَّامٍ اُخَرَ[2]

One who is sick from among you or is on a journey, they are to fast in the days after the month of Ramaḍān. God Almighty has not said here

1. *Al-Ḥakam*, 31 January 1907
2. *Sūrah al-Baqarah*, 2:185

that a person who is sick or is travelling and who fasts in these days out of stubbornness or to fulfil his heart's desire, he does not need to fast afterwards. This is the clear directive of God Almighty that he should keep the fasts afterwards as they are obligatory on him in any case. If he observe the fasts during [Ramaḍān], that is something additional and is the desire of his heart. The directive of God Almighty about fasting afterwards, is not abrogated thereby.

The Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

> The person who fasts in the month of Ramaḍān while being sick or on a journey disobeys the clear directive of God Almighty.
>
> God Almighty has very clearly stated that the sick or the traveller is not to fast. They are to fast after their recovery or the completion of their journey. One should comply with this directive of God as salvation is attained through grace. No one can attain salvation by displaying the force of their actions. God Almighty has not said whether the sickness is minor or major, and the journey is short or long; rather, it is a general directive, and it should be acted upon. If the sick or the traveller fasts, the *fatwā* of disobedience will be applied on them.[1]

The Instruction of the Promised Messiah ﷺ to Break the Fast at Ẓuhr Time

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ writes that Miāṅ Raḥmatullāh, the son of Miāṅ 'Abdullāh of Sanaur ؓ, narrated: 'Once the Promised Messiah ﷺ came to Ludhiana during the blessed month of Ramaḍān... We had begun fasting that day in Ghoshgarh before setting out for Ludhiana. Whether it was through my father or someone else, this I cannot now recall, His Holiness ﷺ came to

1. *Badr*, 17 October 1907, p.7; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt* vol. 9, pp. 460–461

know that all those who had travelled from Ghoshgarh were fasting. His Holiness عليه السلام said:

> Miāń ʻAbdullāh! Just as Allāh has commanded us to fast, He has also commanded us to break the fast while on a journey. Therefore, you should all break your fasts.

This occurred after the *Ẓuhr* Prayer.'[1]

The Instruction of the Promised Messiah عليه السلام to Break the Fast After ʻAṣr

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad رضي الله عنه writes that Miāńʻ Abdullāh of Sanaur رضي الله عنه once told him: 'Once, in the early days, during the month of Ramaḍān, a guest came to stay with the Promised Messiah عليه السلام. He was fasting at the time and most of the day had already passed. Perhaps even the time for *ʻAṣr* had elapsed. His Holiness عليه السلام instructed him to break his fast. The guest replied that only a little time remained in the day and questioned the need to break the fast at that point. His Holiness عليه السلام responded:

> Do you wish to please Allāh by your stubbornness? Allāh is not pleased by obstinacy, but by obedience. If He has said that a traveller should not fast, then he should not fast.

Upon this, the guest broke his fast.'[2]

1. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 2, p. 125
2. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 1, p. 97

The Instruction of the Promised Messiah ﷺ to Break the Fast During a Journey

Ḥaḍrat Munshī Ẓafar Aḥmad of Kapurthala ؓ relates: 'Once, during the month of Ramaḍān, I had the opportunity to visit the Promised Messiah ﷺ in Ludhiana along with Ḥaḍrat Munshī Aroray Khān and Ḥaḍrat Khān Muḥammad Khān ؓ. I was fasting, but the other two were not. We arrived to meet His Holiness ﷺ, and there was only a short time left until sunset. They informed him: "Ẓafar Aḥmad is fasting."

'His Holiness ﷺ immediately went inside and returned with a glass of sweetened drink and instructed me to break my fast, saying:

It is not permitted to fast while on a journey.

'I complied and broke my fast in obedience to his instruction. Later, since we had settled there, we began fasting again. At the time of *iftār*, His Holiness ﷺ brought three glasses on a large tray. As we prepared to open our fast, I said to him: "Your Holiness, one glass will not suffice for Munshī Jī (Munshī Aroray Khān)." Smiling, His Holiness ﷺ went back inside and returned with a large pitcher full of sweet drink and personally served it to Munshī Jī, who drank the entire pitcher, convinced that it was being given to him directly by the hand of the Promised Messiah ﷺ.'[1]

Breaking a Fast Whilst on a Journey

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ writes that Miāṅ Faḍl Muḥammad (a shopkeeper in the Dar-ul-Fazl neighbourhood)

1. *Aṣḥāb-e-Aḥmad*, vol. 4, p. 224, latest edition, narration by Munshī Ẓafar Aḥmad of Kapurthala

informed him in writing: 'During the legal proceedings against Maulawī Muḥammad Ḥusain of Batala, we had to attend a court hearing in the town of Dhariwal. It was a hot summer day in the month of Ramaḍān. Many friends from surrounding areas had gathered in Dhariwal, and most of them were fasting.

'At that time, a lady from a well-known Sikh family in the town of Kahndi extended an invitation to the Promised Messiah ﷺ. His Holiness ﷺ accepted the invitation. The hostess served sweetened rice and other dishes.

'Some companions mentioned to His Holiness ﷺ that they were fasting. He responded:

> It is not permissible to fast while on a journey.

Thus, all the companions broke their fasts.'[1]

A Traveller May Abstain from Fasting Without Fear of Reproach

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ﷺ writes that Malik Maulā Bakhsh (Pensioner), through Maulawī 'Abd-ur-Raḥmān Mubashir, wrote: 'The Promised Messiah ﷺ once came to Amritsar during the month of Ramaḍān. His lecture was held at the Mando Babu Ghanya Lal Hall (now known as Vande Mataram Pal). Due to the journey, His Holiness ﷺ was not fasting.

'During the lecture, Muftī Faḍl-ur-Raḥmān presented a cup of tea to the Promised Messiah ﷺ. His Holiness ﷺ did not notice it at first, so Muftī Sahib moved it closer. Even then, His Holiness ﷺ remained focused on his lecture. Finally, Muftī Sahib placed the cup directly in front of him, upon which His Holiness ﷺ took a sip.

1. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 2, p. 303

'This caused an uproar among the audience. People began shouting: "Is this the sanctity of Ramaḍān? He does not even fast!" The lecture came to a halt, and His Holiness ﷺ withdrew behind a curtain. The vehicle was brought to a side entrance, and he got in. The crowd erupted in chaos and began throwing stones and bricks. One of the vehicle's glass windows was shattered, but His Holiness ﷺ reached his destination unharmed.

'Later, it was said that a non-Aḥmadī *maulawī* said, "Today, the people have made Mirza a prophet", though I did not hear this myself.

'We exited the building with Ḥaḍrat Hakeem Maulawī Noor-ud-Deen ؓ and told him that the crowd was still throwing stones and that it would be best to wait. He replied: "They were throwing stones at the one they wanted to hit. He has now gone. Why would they hit me?" Since it was Muftī Faḍl-ur-Raḥmān who had offered the tea, everyone kept questioning him: "Why did you do it?" I too asked him the same. The poor man became distressed from repeatedly being asked.

'Later, the late Miāń 'Abdul Khāliq told me that when the matter was presented to the Promised Messiah ﷺ that Muftī Sahib had disrupted the lecture, His Holiness ﷺ said:

> Muftī Sahib did no wrong. In fact, Allāh has commanded that a fast should not be kept while travelling. Allāh the Almighty created an opportunity, through my action, for this commandment to be made known.

Thereafter, Mufti Sahib was emboldened.'[1]

1. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 2, p. 147

Fasting While on a Journey but Temporarily Settling Somewhere

Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ II ﷺ said: ‘A question has been asked about the Promised Messiah ؑ issuing a verdict that a sick person or a traveller should not fast, and that it would be considered an act of disobedience if they did so, while an announcement bearing my name has appeared in the *Al-Fazl* newspaper stating that those Aḥmadīs who travel here for the *Jalsa Salāna* may observe the fasts, but there is no harm if they do not.

‘First, let me clarify that no edict of mine was published in *Al-Fazl* in this regard. Rather, a ruling of the Promised Messiah ؑ was published, which I narrated. The fact is, in the early days of my *Khilāfat*, I used to prohibit fasting while travelling because I had observed the Promised Messiah ؑ not allowing travellers to fast.

‘Once, I witnessed that Mirzā Ya‘qūb Baig arrived during Ramaḍān while fasting. He arrived close to the time of *‘Aṣr*, and the Promised Messiah ؑ instructed him to break his fast, saying:

> It is not permissible to fast while on a journey.

‘This incident led to a lengthy discussion, and Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ I ﷺ began to fear that someone might falter. As a result, the very next day he presented a reference from Ibn ‘Arabī, which contained the same explanation.

‘This event had such an impact on me that I began advising against fasting while on a journey. Then, on one occasion, Maulawī ‘Abdullāh of Sanaur ﷺ came to Qadian during Ramaḍān and said to me: “I have heard that you prohibit guests from fasting, but I personally recall someone asking the Promised Messiah ؑ, ‘Should I fast while staying here in Qadian?’ The Promised Messiah ؑ responded:

> Yes, because Qadian is like a second home to Aḥmadīs.”

Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ II ؓ continued: 'Though Maulawī 'Abdullāh ؓ was a very close companion of the Promised Messiah ؑ, I did not rely on his statement alone. I investigated further, and upon gathering more testimonies, I came to know that the Promised Messiah ؑ allowed people to fast while temporarily residing in Qadian, but not on the day of arrival or the day of departure. Therefore, I was compelled to abandon my previous stance.

'Later, when the *Jalsa Salāna* coincided with the month of Ramaḍān, the question arose once more: should the attendees fast? Someone recalled that during the lifetime of the Promised Messiah ؑ, when the Jalsa fell in Ramaḍān, they personally helped serve *suḥūr* to the guests. In light of the Promised Messiah's own ruling, I permitted the *Jalsa* attendees to fast.

'Indeed, classical scholars allowed fasting during travel, and many contemporary non-Aḥmadī clerics do not even consider modern travel to fall within the category of "journey." Still, the Promised Messiah ؑ did not permit fasting while on a journey, though he did allow it during a temporary stay in Qadian. Therefore, it is inappropriate to adopt one of his rulings while ignoring the other.'[1]

There is a narration in *Sīratul-Mahdī* about the above-mentioned edict: Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ writes that the wife of the late Dr. Khalīfa Rashīd-ud-Dīn narrated through *Lajna Imaʿillah*[2] Qadian: 'It was the year 1903 when I and the late Doctor Sahib arrived in Qadian from Roorkee for a four-day stay. The Promised Messiah ؑ asked us: "Were you observing fasts while on the journey?" We replied in the negative. His Holiness ؑ provided us with accommodation in the 'pink room' (*gulābi kamrah*). Doctor Sahib mentioned that we

1. *Al-Fazl*, 4 January 1934, pp. 3–4

2. Literally, 'Maidservants of Allāh'; the women's auxiliary organisation of the Aḥmadiyya Muslim Community. [Publisher]

would begin fasting the following day. His Holiness ﷺ replied: "Very well! But you are still on a journey."

'Doctor Sahib explained that we would be staying for a few days and that we very much wished to fast while here. His Holiness ﷺ responded: "Alright. I will arrange Kashmiri *parathas* [fried bread] for you." We began to wonder what the *parathas* would be like. When the time for *saḥūr* came, having offered the *Tahajjud* Prayer, we found the Promised Messiah ﷺ in our room [which was in the basement] carrying the food himself. Ḥaḍrat Maulawī 'Abdul-Karīm of Sialkot ؓ used to live on the third floor of the house. His eldest wife, Karīm Bībī Sahiba, known as *Maulawiani*, was from Kashmir and made excellent *parathas*. His Holiness ﷺ had requested her to prepare them for us. As they were prepared, His Holiness ﷺ would bring them to us himself, freshly cooked, saying: "Enjoy your meal."

'I felt humbled, and Doctor Sahib was similarly overcome, but the kindness and hospitality of His Holiness ﷺ filled us with euphoric delight. During that time, the *Adhān* was called, but His Holiness ﷺ said: "There is still time to eat."

He explained:

Allāh Almighty says in the Holy Qur'ān:

كُلُوْا وَاشْرَبُوْا حَتّٰى يَتَبَيَّنَ لَكُمُ الْخَيْطُ الْأَبْيَضُ مِنَ الْخَيْطِ الْأَسْوَدِ مِنَ الْفَجْرِ[1]

> Eat and drink until the white thread becomes distinct to you from the black thread of dawn.'

But most people do not act upon this. You may eat, there is still plenty of time. The *Adhān* has been called early.

1. *Sūrah al-Baqarah*, 2:188

'His Holiness ﷺ remained close to us as we continued eating. Doctor Sahib kept requesting His Holiness ﷺ to sit, saying: "I will collect the *parathas* from the maid," or "My wife will do so," but His Holiness ﷺ refused to sit and continued to serve us most generously. The meal also included a delicious curry and *sawaiyāṅ* [sweet noodles].'[1]

Ḥaḍrat Sayyid Muḥammad Sarwar Shāh ؓ states that the Promised Messiah ﷺ said about fasting:

> If somebody stays somewhere for more than three days, they may fast, but they may not do so if they are staying for less than three days. If somebody who is staying for less than three days observes fasts in Qadian, then there is no need to fast again [in compensation].[2]

Breaking the Fast upon Feeling Ill

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad Sahib ؓ states that Dr. Mīr Muḥammad Ismā'īl ؓ told him: 'Once, in Ludhiana, the Promised Messiah ﷺ was observing fasts, when suddenly he felt weak and light-headed causing his limbs to turn cold. Although the sun was about to set, he broke his fast immediately. His Holiness ﷺ would always adopt the easier course permitted by the Sharī'ah."

In this regard, Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ said: 'Ḥaḍrat 'Ā'ishah ؓ narrates in a *ḥadīth* that if the Holy Prophet ﷺ ever had two lawful ways to choose from, he would choose the easiest of the two.'[3]

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1. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 2, pp. 202–203
2. *Fatāwa Ḥaḍrat Sayyid Muḥammad Sarwar Shāh Sahib*, Register no. 5, Dārul-Iftā', Rabwah
3. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 1, p. 637

The Permissibility of Fasting During Mild Illness

Ḥaḍrat Munshī Ḥabīb-ur-Raḥmān ؓ states: 'Once I happened to spend the last *'ashrah* [ten days] of Ramaḍān in Qadian. In those days, His Holiness ؑ regularly suffered from intermittent fever during the day. After the *Ẓuhr* Prayer, he would begin to feel unwell and experience fever. As such, His Holiness ؑ would join the *Ẓuhr* Prayer in congregation, but [due to his poor health] he was unable to join us for the remaining Prayers of the day. He would sit before the *Ẓuhr* Prayer, awaiting the arrival of the worshippers.

'I had made it a habit to pray near him, and never did I miss the opportunity of sitting close to him. I recall that on one occasion I was late, but by the grace of Allāh, I was still able to reach and sit close to him. Whenever His Holiness ؑ came for the *Ẓuhr* Prayer, I would ask after his health. He would reply, "I am feeling cold," and at times he would say, "You should offer your Prayer; I am feeling quite cold."

'Even though he was unwell, he would regularly observe fasts. One day I said to him: "You have been suffering from a fever for quite a while; would it not be better to break your fast when you are feverish?" To this His Holiness ؑ replied:

> I do not feel any discomfort from fasting. In fact, it gives me relief. I feel neither hunger nor thirst. It is true that I experience greater pain during the nights, and that is why I fast.

'When the fever would finally abate in the morning, His Holiness ؑ would go out for a walk.'[1]

1. *Aṣḥāb-e-Aḥmad*, vol. 10, pp. 397–398

The Practice of the Promised Messiah ﷺ Regarding Fasting During Illness

Ḥaḍrat Muṣleḥ Mau'ūd ﷺ was once asked whether the Promised Messiah ﷺ used to observe fasts, considering that he suffered from poor health. He replied: 'His Holiness ﷺ used to observe fasts with great devotion. However, due to severe frailty towards the end of his life and the progressive worsening of his illness, he did not fast during the last three years of his life: in 1905, 1906, and 1907.[1]

'In the year when the Promised Messiah ﷺ began experiencing episodes of fever, he did not observe the fasts of Ramaḍān and instead offered *fidyah*. In the following Ramaḍān, he resumed fasting, but after completing eight or nine fasts, the fever returned. He therefore discontinued the remaining fasts and offered *fidyah*. The same occurred the next year: he fasted for 10 or 11 days before the fever forced him to abandon the remaining fasts, for which he again offered *fidyah*. In the year after that, he observed 13 fasts, but at the time of *Maghrib* Prayer on the 13th day, an episode of fever occurred once more, causing him to break his fast and offer *fidyah* for the remaining days. After that, he continuously observed the full month of fasts in the years that followed. However, in the final two or three years of his life, due to physical weakness, he did not fast and instead offered *fidyah*.'

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ﷺ asked his mother: 'After abandoning fasts in the early years due to illness, did His Holiness make up the missed fasts?' She replied: 'No, he simply offered *fidyah*.'

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ﷺ further added: 'I would like to note that the initial episodes of migraine and fever had already weakened His Holiness's physical condition. As a result, when he stopped fasting, it was evident that he did not feel strong enough to make them up in later months. Yet when Ramaḍān would arrive again, his spiritual yearning for worship would compel him to resume fasting,

1. *Al-Fazl*, 12 June 1922, p. 7

only to be interrupted once more by recurring fevers, forcing him to discontinue fasting and offer *fidyah* instead. Allāh knows best.'[1]

The Traveller and the Sick Can Offer Expiation

The Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

> Allāh the Exalted has based the Sharī'ah on ease. The sick or the traveller who can afford it should give *fidyah* in place of the fast. The expiation is to feed a poor person.[2]

What is the Objective of Offering Expiation?

The Promised Messiah ﷺ stated:

> Once I reflected on the purpose behind *fidyah* and came to understand that it serves to procure the means for observing fasts. Allāh the Almighty is the One who bestows all faculties, and it is incumbent upon us to seek everything from Him alone. He is All-Powerful. If He so wills, He can grant the strength to even the most feeble person to observe the fasts. *Fidyah* is offered as a means to attain such divine enablement, which comes solely by the grace of Allāh the Exalted.
>
> Therefore, it is most befitting for the one who is deprived of fasting to turn to Allāh and supplicate: 'O my Lord! This is Your blessed month and I am being deprived of its blessings. I do not know whether I will live to witness the next Ramaḍān, or whether I will ever have the opportunity to make up these

1. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 1, p. 59
2. *Badr*, 7 October 1907, p. 7

missed fasts.' I am certain that Allāh the Exalted will grant such a person the strength and ability to fast.[1]

Expiation in Lieu of the Fast

Ḥaḍrat Muṣleḥ Mau'ūd ﷺ stated: '*Fidyah* does not absolve one from the obligation of fasting. Rather, it is a provision for those who, due to a legitimate excuse as per the Sharī'ah, are unable to partake in the blessed worship of Ramaḍān alongside other Muslims. These excuses are of two types: temporary and permanent.

'Fidyah should be given in both cases, according to one's financial means. However, if the excuse is temporary, and health is later restored—even if one, two, or three years have passed—then the person must observe the missed fasts. The only exception is for one whose condition was initially temporary, but later deteriorated into a permanent state of illness. Whoever possesses the means and falls under the category of a traveller or the ill should feed a poor person as *fidyah* during Ramaḍān, and then observe the missed fasts on other days.

'This was the practice of the Promised Messiah ؑ: he would offer *fidyah* for missed fasts, and then, when able, he would observe them as well. He would also advise others to do the same.'[2]

To Whom Should Fidyah be Given?

A question was asked: 'The expiation for one who is incapable of fasting is the feeding of a poor man. Is it permissible to send this amount to the orphans' fund in Qadian?'

The Promised Messiah ؑ said:

1. *Al-Badr*, 12 December 1902, p. 52
2. *Tafsīr-e-Kabīr*, vol. 2, p. 389

> It is the same whether they feed a poor person in their own town, or send it to the fund for the poor and the orphans.[1]

The Labourer Falls Under the Category of the Sick

Sometimes Ramaḍān coincides with seasons in which labourers experience an increased workload, such as when sowing, cultivating, or harvesting crops. Those who earn their livelihood through such labour often do not observe the fasts. What is expected of such people?

The Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

> **الْأَعْمَالُ بِالنِّيَّاتِ** [Deeds are judged by their motives]. People tend to conceal their actual conditions. Every person should assess their situation with *taqwā* [fear of God] and sincerity of heart. If a substitute worker can be arranged, then that should be done. Otherwise, such a person is treated as one who is ill, and should make up the fasts when they are physically able.

Commenting on the verse: **وَعَلَى الَّذِينَ يُطِيقُونَهُ**[2] [for those who are able to fast only with great difficulty], the Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

> This verse refers to those who are unable to bear the burden of fasting.[3]

1. *Badr*, 7 February 1907; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt* vol. 9, p. 107
2. *Sūrah al-Baqarah*, 2:185
3. *Badr*, 26 September 1907, p. 7

What Age Should One Start Fasting?

Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad, Khalīfatul-Masīḥ II ؓ states: 'In my view, compelling a child under the age of 12 to fast is unjust. Likewise, compelling a child between the ages of 12 and 15 to fast is also an error. One should begin training children to fast around the age of 15, and by the age of 18, fasting should be considered obligatory.

'I remember that when we were young, we too were eager to fast, but the Promised Messiah ؑ would not allow us to do so. Instead of urging us to fast, he would always impress upon us the majesty and sanctity of fasting.'[1]

Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ II ؓ writes: 'It should be remembered that the Sharī'ah prohibits young children from observing fasts. However, as they near the age of puberty, they should begin to experience fasting gradually. From what I recall, the Promised Messiah ؑ permitted me to fast for the first time when I was 12 or 13 years old. But there are some foolish individuals who compel their children to fast at the age of six or seven, thinking they will earn spiritual merit for this. In reality, this is not a virtuous act; rather, it is cruelty, because that age is a time for physical growth and development.

'Certainly, the pre-pubescent period is one in which fasting begins to take on an obligatory nature. At that stage, children should be made to experience the fast. If we consider the practice and permission of the Promised Messiah ؑ, we see that the appropriate age for this begins at 12 or 13, and children should fast a few days each Ramaḍān until they reach 18, which in my opinion is the age when fasting should become regular.

'I remember that when I first began fasting, the Promised Messiah ؑ only allowed me to fast for one day. At that age, children

1. *Al-Fazl*, 11 April 1925, p. 11

are eager and enthusiastic about fasting, and they desire to fast more. But it is the responsibility of the parents to restrain them. Later, there comes a stage when the parents should encourage them to fast a few days to build up their stamina, but should still ensure that they do not fast for too many days.

'Others should also refrain from criticising such children for not observing the entire month, because if a child fasts excessively at a young age, it may hinder their ability to fast later in life. There are also some children who are naturally weaker in build. I have seen children brought by their parents who claim their child is 15, but physically the child appears only 7 or 8. In my opinion, such a child may not be fit for regular fasting until the age of 21.

'Conversely, some children are so robust that although they are only 15, they appear to be 18. If such children were to take my words literally, that fasting should begin at 18, they would not be wronging me or God Almighty, but rather doing injustice to themselves. Likewise, if someone criticises a young child for not fasting, they are only wronging themselves.'[1]

Prohibition of Fasting at a Young Age

Ḥaḍrat Nawāb Mubārakah Begum Sahiba ؓ writes: 'The Promised Messiah ؑ did not approve of children fasting before reaching maturity. He used to say that fasting for one or two days was sufficient. When I kept my first fast, Ḥaḍrat Ammāṅ Jān ؓ (my revered mother) held a grand *iftār* and invited all the women of the Jamā'at for dinner.

'A year or two later, during Ramaḍān, I again observed a fast and informed the Promised Messiah ؑ. At the time, he was seated in a room, and near him on a small table were two *pān*, likely prepared by Ḥaḍrat Ammāṅ Jān. He picked up one *pān*, handed it to me, and said:

1. *Tafsīr-e-Kabīr*, vol. 2, p. 285

"Eat this. You are weak and not yet of age to fast. Break your fast." So I ate the *pān*.

'I then told him: "Ṣāliḥa is also fasting." (She was our aunt and the respected wife of my youngest maternal uncle). The Promised Messiah ﷺ replied: "Call her as well." I called her, and she came. His Holiness ﷺ handed her the second *pān*, saying: "Here, eat this. You are not obligated to fast." At that time, I was around 10 years old.'[1]

Six Fasts of Shawwāl

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ said that he heard from his mother [Ḥaḍrat Nuṣrat Jahān Begum Sahiba ؓ]: 'The Promised Messiah ﷺ would narrate to us details of his youthful days and mention that during that period, he found out, or was guided, that progress in his spiritual mission required fasting. He used to say:

> I fasted for six consecutive months without informing anyone, neither family members nor friends. Whenever breakfast would arrive from home in the morning, I would give it to someone in need. I would only eat dinner.

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ also asked his mother whether the Promised Messiah ﷺ observed *naflī* [supererogatory] fasts in his later years. She replied: 'Yes, he would observe supererogatory fasts even in his later years, particularly the six fasts of *Shawwāl*, which he observed with steadfast commitment. If ever he needed to pray for something significant, he would do so while fasting. However, in the last two or three years of his life, due to physical weakness and frailty, he was unable to fast, even during Ramaḍān.'

1. *Taḥrīrāt-e-Mubārakah*, pp. 227–228

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ further stated: 'In *Kitābul-Barīyyah*, the Promised Messiah ؑ himself wrote that he once fasted for eight to nine consecutive months.'[1]

Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ II ؓ said: 'It was the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet ﷺ to fast six days in the month of *Shawwāl* immediately after *'Īd*. Reviving this Sunnah is an obligation upon our Jamā'at. On one occasion, the Promised Messiah ؑ encouraged the observance of the six fasts of *Shawwāl* throughout all of Qadian, just as Ramaḍān was observed.

'In the final years of his life, due to advanced age and declining health, the Promised Messiah ؑ was unable to observe these fasts for two or three years. Therefore, let those who are unaware take heed, and let those in heedlessness awaken. These six fasts [of *Shawwāl*] are to be observed by all, except those with valid excuses like illness or weakness. If one is unable to observe them consecutively, one may also observe them with intervals in between.'[2]

Looking in a Mirror While Fasting

A question was presented to the Promised Messiah ؑ: 'Is it permissible to look in a mirror while fasting?'

He replied:

It is allowed.[3]

1. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 1, p. 14
2. *Al-Fazl*, 8 June 1922, p. 7
3. *Badr*, 7 February 1907, p. 4

Applying Oil to the Hair or Beard While Fasting

The Promised Messiah ﷺ was asked if it was permissible to apply oil to one's hair or beard while fasting.

The Promised Messiah ﷺ replied:

It is permissible.[1]

Using Eye-drops While Fasting

It was asked: 'If a fasting person suffers from an ailment in the eye, is it permissible to apply eye-drops?'

The Promised Messiah ﷺ replied:

The question itself is flawed. The one who is sick is not required to fast.[2]

Using Fragrance While Fasting

He was asked: 'Can a fasting person apply fragrance?' He replied:

It is allowed.[3]

1. *Badr*, 7 February 1907, p. 4
2. *Badr*, 7 February 1907, p. 4
3. *Badr*, 7 February 1907, p. 4

Applying Surma While Fasting

A question was asked: 'Is it permissible for a fasting person to apply *surma* [*kohl*] to the eyes?'

The Promised Messiah ﷺ replied:

> It is *makrūh* [disliked]. What is the need to apply *surmah* during the day? It can be applied at night.[1]

Tarāwīḥ Prayer

Akmal Sahib of Goleki wrote to the Promised Messiah ﷺ asking: 'Although there is emphasis on rising during the night for Prayer, labourers, farmers, and those engaged in similar occupations often find it difficult. Is it permissible for them to offer the 11 *rak'āt* of [*Tarāwīḥ*] Prayer in the earlier part of the night instead of the latter portion?'

The Promised Messiah ﷺ replied:

> There is no harm; it may be offered in the earlier part of the night.[2]

Rak'āt of Tarāwīḥ

Someone asked about the *Tarāwīḥ* Prayer, that if it is *Tahajjud,* then what is your view about 20 *rak'āt* [units of *ṣalāt*], because *Tahajjud* is only 11 or 13 *rak'āt* including *Witr*.

The Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

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1. *Badr*, 7 February 1907, p. 4
2. *Badr*, 18 October 1906, p. 4

> The everlasting Sunnah [practice] of the Holy Prophet ﷺ is only the 8 *rak'āt*. He used to offer them at the time of *Tahajjud*, and this is the preferred method. However, it is also allowed in the earlier part of the night. In one narration it is stated that the Holy Prophet ﷺ offered them at the earlier part of the night. 20 *rak'āt* were introduced later, but the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet ﷺ was indeed that which has been stated earlier.[1]

Tarāwīḥ is Tahajjud

Someone wrote a letter to His Holiness ؑ, the summary of which was the question: How should one offer Prayers on a journey and what is the commandment regarding *Tarāwīḥ*?

The Promised Messiah ؑ replied:

> To offer two *rak'āt* during travels is the Sunnah [practice of the Holy Prophet ﷺ]. *Tarāwīḥ* is also Sunnah. Observe it, and sometimes offer it at home by yourself because *Tarāwīḥ*, in reality, is *Tahajjud* and not a new Prayer. Perform the *Witr* Prayer whichever way you do now.[2]

Reading from the Qur'ān to Correct the Imām During Tarāwīḥ

The question was asked whether it was permissible for someone who is not a *ḥāfiẓ* [one who has memorised the Qur'ān] to look at the Qur'ān and correct the imām during *Tarāwīḥ* in Ramaḍān.

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1. *Badr*, 6 February 1908, p. 7
2. *Badr*, 26 December 1907, p. 6; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt* vol. 10, p. 30

Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ II ﷺ replied: 'I have not seen a *fatwā* [religious verdict] of the Promised Messiah ﷺ on this matter.'

At this, Maulawī Muḥammad Ismā'īl (*Maulawi Fāḍil*) responded that the Promised Messiah ﷺ had indeed permitted it.

His Holiness ﷺ then said: 'If it is permitted, then it can be very beneficial. Instead of having only one person seated for the entire *Tarāwīḥ* to listen to the imām, four individuals could each listen to two separate *rak'āt*, and in this way, each one would still be able to participate in six *rak'āt*.'

When asked whether *Fiqh* [Islamic jurisprudence] allowed for such a practice, His Holiness ﷺ replied: 'The real objective is to cultivate in people the habit of listening to the Holy Qur'ān. The *fatwā* of the Promised Messiah ﷺ is one of necessity, like that for a person who cannot pray standing; they may pray sitting, and if even that is not possible, then while lying down. Similarly, if a person has impurity on their clothes and cannot remove it, they are permitted to pray in that state. This is not an issue of jurisprudence; it is a matter of necessity.'[1]

Accidentally Consuming Food or Drink Does Not Invalidate a Fast

A question was presented from a letter: 'Whilst sitting inside during the time of *suḥūr*, in the month of Ramaḍān, I inadvertently continued to eat and drink. When I went out I came to know that the break of dawn had occurred. Do I need to fast again as an expiation or not?'

The Promised Messiah ﷺ responded:

> Eating and drinking unknowingly does not necessitate fasting again as an expiation.[2]

1. *Al-Fazl*, 21 February 1930, p. 12
2. *Al Ḥakam*, 24 February 1907, p. 14

Fasting on the Day of the Holy Prophet's Demise

QUESTION—Is it necessary to fast on [the day of] the Holy Prophet's demise?

ANSWER—It is not necessary.[1]

Are the Fasts of Muḥarram Compulsory?

It was asked if it is necessary to observe the first 10 fasts of *Muḥarram*?

The Promised Messiah ﷺ replied:

It is not compulsory.[2]

I'tikāf

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ writes that his mother [Ḥaḍrat Nusrat Jehān Begum Sahiba ؓ] related to him: 'I never saw the Promised Messiah ﷺ observe *I'tikāf*.' Ḥaḍrat Miāṅ 'Abdullāh of Sanaur ؓ also relayed the same to Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ.[3]

1. *Badr*, 14 March 1907, p. 5
2. *Badr*, 14 March 1907, p. 5
3. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 1, p. 62

Speaking During I'tikāf

A question was presented to the Promised Messiah ﷺ: 'Can a person discuss his worldly business whilst observing *I'tikāf*?'

The Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

> They can do so for some extreme necessity; and can leave to visit the sick or to attend to the calls of nature.[1]

Guidance Concerning I'tikāf

Dr. 'Ibādullāh of Amritsar and Khwājah Kamāl-ud-Dīn were both observing *I'tikāf*.

The Promised Messiah ﷺ said to them:

> It is not compulsory that one must just sit inside [the mosque] without stepping out. You may sit on the roof where there is sunlight and discuss important matters, for it becomes cold here on the ground. One must take care of important things, and indeed, all the works of a believer are forms of worship.[2]

Leaving I'tikāf to Attend a Court Case

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ﷺ writes that Ḥaḍrat Maulawī Sher 'Alī ﷺ said: 'Once, during the time of the Promised Messiah ﷺ, Ḥakīm Faḍl-ud-Dīn of Bhera was observing *I'tikāf*. During those days, he had to leave the *I'tikāf* to attend a court case.

1. *Badr*, 21 February 1907, p. 5
2. *Al-Badr*, 2 January 1903, p. 74

As he was preparing to leave for court around the time of *'Aṣr*, the Promised Messiah عليه السلام smiled and said:

> If you were going to leave for a court case, then what was the need to observe *I'tikāf* in the first place?[1]

1. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 1, p. 97

ZAKĀT

Emphasis on Fasting, Ḥajj and Zakāt,

Sincerely observe your fasts for the sake of God. Let everyone who is liable to pay the *Zakāt* do so, and anyone upon whom the *Ḥajj* has become obligatory and who face no hindrance ought to perform the pilgrimage.[1]

The Significance of the Term 'Zakāt'

Zakāt is so called because when man gives *Zakāt*—gives away his beloved possessions for the sake of God—he is freed from the impurity of miserliness. And when the impurity of miserliness—which man is naturally prone to—departs from within a person, he attains a certain degree of purity and so acquires an affinity with God who is Holy in His Being.[2]

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1. *Kashtī-e-Nūh*, *Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 19, p. 15; Eng. Trans: *Noah's Ark—An Invitation to Faith*, p. 24

2. *Barāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya Part 5, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 21, pp. 203–204; Eng. Trans: p. 283

Zakāt on Jewellery

Someone asked whether or not *Zakāt* is payable on jewellery. The Promised Messiah ﷺ stated:

> Such jewellery is exempt from *Zakāt* that is in use, or that is lent to someone to use on the occasion of a wedding.[1]

The Promised Messiah ﷺ stated:

> The verdict regarding jewellery that is regularly worn and at times lent to poor women is that *Zakāt* is not obligatory upon it. However, as for jewellery which is worn and not lent to others, it is preferable to pay *Zakāt* on such items, as they are used solely for personal benefit. This, indeed, is the practice in my own household: every year, we pay *Zakāt* on the jewellery in our possession.
>
> As for jewellery that is hoarded like wealth, there is no difference of opinion; *Zakāt* is unquestionably due upon it.[2]

The Zakāt Due on a Loan

A question of an individual was presented before the Promised Messiah ﷺ: 'Is it obligatory to pay *Zakāt* on funds lent to a person?' The Promised Messiah ﷺ replied:

No.[3]

1. *Al-Ḥakam*, 30 April 1902, p. 7
2. *Al-Ḥakam*, 17 November, 1905, p. 11
3. *Badr*, 21 February 1907, p. 5

Zakāt is not Payable on Pending Money

One person asked whether *Zakāt* is due on the capital employed in trade that is with the buyers and awaiting receipt.

The Promised Messiah ﷺ replied:

> There is no *Zakāt* on capital that is tied up [in receivables] until it comes into one's possession, but a trader should not avoid *Zakāt* through pretexts and excuses. They do, after all, bear their expenses from the same capital according to their status and stature. They should make an assessment of their cash in hand and receivables with *taqwā* [righteousness] and try to please God Almighty by paying the appropriate amount of *Zakāt*. Some people use excuses and pretexts even with God. This is not right.[1]

Zakāt for a Sayyid

The question was asked whether an impoverished *Sayyid*[2] is deserving to receive *Zakāt*. The Promised Messiah ﷺ replied:

> In truth, it is forbidden. If there is an extreme situation, and they are starving, then it is permissible in such a straitened situation. Allāh the Exalted says:
>
> إِلَّا مَا اضْطُرِرْتُمْ إِلَيْهِ[3]
>
> [Except that which you are forced to].

1. *Badr*, July 1907, p. 5; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt* vol. 9, p. 298
2. A descendant of the Holy Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ. [Publisher]
3. Save that which you are forced to (*Sūrah al-An'ām*, 6:120). [Publisher]

> The *fatwā* from the Ḥadīth is that *Zakāt* should not be given to a *Sayyid*.[1] If a *Sayyid* receives some other kind of remuneration, then what is the need to take *Zakāt*, but if the condition is extreme then it is another matter altogether.[2]

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad Sahib ؓ writes that Dr. Mīr Muḥammad Ismā'īl ؓ informed him that the Promised Messiah ؑ would say:

> Although it is forbidden for members of the Sādāt family to receive *Ṣadaqah* or *Zakāt*, in this day and age, when there is no arrangement for their livelihood, if a *Sayyid* is dying of hunger or has no other means of income, then he may be helped through *Ṣadaqah* and *Zakāt*. In such cases, there is no harm in it.[3]

Purchasing Books of the Promised Messiah ؑ for Distribution from a Zakāt Fund

The Promised Messiah ؑ stated:

> The people of my Jamā'at who owe *Zakāt* on jewellery, cash, or property, etc., should realize that none is more poor, helpless and needy in these days than Islām. Everyone knows what warning the Sharī'ah gives to those who do not pay *Zakāt* and the punishment for not doing so. And it is very likely that the

1. In *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, *Kitāb al-Zakāh, Bāb Taḥrīm al-Zakāh 'alā rasūlillāh wa 'alā ālihī wa hum banū hāshim wa banū al-muṭṭalib dūna ghairihim*, it is written as: كِخْ كِخْ ارْمِ بِهَا، أَمَا عَلِمْتَ أَنَّا لا نَأْكُلُ الصَّدَقَةَ
2. *Al-Ḥakam*, 24 August, p. 5; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt* vol. 9, p. 351
3. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 1, p. 718

> one who does not believe in *Zakāt* may revert to disbelief. It is therefore imperative to help Islām by spending the *Zakāt* on purchasing these books and distributing them free of cost.[1]

An Affluent Person Cannot Benefit from Zakāt

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ writes: 'Dr. Mīr Muḥammad Ismā'īl Sahib ؓ informed me that the Promised Messiah ؑ would say:

> Just as it is impermissible for members of the Sādāt family to take *Zakāt* or *Ṣadaqah*, likewise, an affluent person is also not permitted to benefit from such funds.

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ affirms: 'I myself heard His Holiness ؑ say:

> These days, even a *Sayyid* may benefit from *Zakāt* or *Ṣadaqah* funds out of sheer necessity, when no other means of livelihood are available.[2]

Zakāt Should be Sent to the Centre

The Promised Messiah ؑ wrote:

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1. *Nishān-e-Āsmānī*, *Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 4, p. 409: Eng. Trans.: *Heavenly Sign*, p. 80
2. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 1, p. 566

> Those upon whom *Zakāt* is liable should send their contributions here.[1]

Zakāt is not Payable on a House or Jewels

A question was submitted in a letter: 'I have a share of 500 rupees in a house, is *Zakāt* due on this share?' The Promised Messiah ﷺ stated:

> *Zakāt* is not payable on houses and jewels.[2]

A somewhat detailed response to this question is recorded in the *Badr* newspaper. It states that the Promised Messiah ﷺ, in reply to a question, said:

> Regardless of how many thousands of rupees a house may be worth, no *Zakāt* is due on it. If it is rented out, then *Zakāt* is applied on the income. Similarly, no *Zakāt* is due on merchandise that is stored inside the house. Ḥaḍrat 'Umar ﷺ used to settle accounts every six months, and *Zakāt* would be levied on cash.[3]

The Meat of Ṣadaqah is the Right of the Poor People

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ﷺ writes that the wife of 'Abdul 'Azīz (Former Village Registrar of Sikhwan) informed me in a letter through *Lajnah Imā'illāh* Qadian: 'Once I fell ill here in Qadian

1. *Kashtī-e-Nūh*, *Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 19, p. 83; Eng. trans: *Noah's Ark—An Invitation to Faith*, p. 134
2. *Al-Ḥakam*, 24 February 1907, p. 13
3. *Badr*, 14 February, 1907

and sacrificed two animals by way of *Ṣadaqah*. I asked His Holiness ﷺ if the meat of *Ṣadaqah* could be sent to the *Langhar Khanah*[1]? His Holiness ﷺ stated:

> This is the poor people's right and so it should be distributed among the poor.

It was thus distributed among the poor."[2]

It is Permissible to Buy Items Given as Alms

A person submitted to the Promised Messiah ﷺ: 'I rear hens and offer one-tenth of them in the name of God, and a portion of flour is separated daily in our house for alms. Is it permissible that I purchase those chicks and the flour myself and send that amount in the related category [of alms]?'

The Promised Messiah ﷺ replied:

> To do so is permissible.

Note: It should be understood in this respect that actions are dependent upon intention. If someone buys it themselves as the purchase and sale are both in their hands, and they can buy them for any small amount they wish, then it will be a sin.[3]

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1. The *Langar Khānah* is the charitable institution established by the Promised Messiah ﷺ to provide free meals and lodging for guests, seekers of truth, and visitors. [Publisher]
2. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 2, p. 191
3. *Badr*, 24 October 1907, p. 3; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt* vol. 9, p. 465

The Promised Messiah ﷺ Forbade his Progeny from Benefiting from Ṣadaqah

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ writes that Dr. Mīr Muḥammad Ismā'īl ؓ related to me that the Promised Messiah ﷺ considered it impermissible for his family members to benefit from *Ṣadaqah*.[1]

1. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol.1, p. 619

THE HAJJ

Emphasis on the Ḥajj

The Promised Messiah ﷺ stated:

> Sincerely observe your fasts for the sake of God. Let everyone who is liable to pay the *Zakāt* do so, and anyone upon whom the *Ḥajj* has become obligatory and who face no hindrance ought to perform the pilgrimage.[1]

The Wisdom in the Fundamental Rites of the Ḥajj

Responding to objections made by the opponents of Islām regarding its teachings, the Promised Messiah ﷺ stated:

> The lecturer raised another objection to the Black Stone which, according to Muslim belief, descended from Heaven. I do not know how he will benefit from making such an objection? Some narrations figuratively state that it is a heavenly stone, but it is established from the Holy Qur'ān that no stones exist in Heaven; in fact, Heaven is a place the like of which cannot be found in this world, and nothing of Heaven can be found in this world. Rather, heavenly bounties are such which no eye has

1. *Kashtī-e-Nūh, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 19, p. 15; Eng. trans: *Noah's Ark*, p. 25

ever seen, no ear has ever heard, and no one has ever thought of. The stone of the *Ka'bah*, that is, the Black Stone, is representative of a spiritual matter. (Footnote: Allāh the Exalted has placed many examples in the Islamic Sharī'ah of essential injunctions. As such, man has been commanded to sacrifice himself in the way of Allāh with all his faculties and with all his being. Hence, manifest sacrifices have been instituted to represent these inner states, but the true nature of sacrifice is that which Allāh has expounded upon:

لَنْ يَّنَالَ اللّٰهَ لُحُومُهَا وَلَا دِمَآؤُهَا وَلٰكِن يَنَالُهُ التَّقْوٰى مِنكُمْ[1]

This means that the meat of your sacrifice will not reach Allāh, nor will its blood reach Him, but your *taqwā* [righteousness] will reach Him. That is to say, you ought to fear Allāh as if you are about to die in His way. And just as you slaughter animals with your hands, so you should slaughter yourselves in the way of Allāh. Whenever *taqwā* falls short of this stage, it will be deficient.)

The truth is that man was created to worship Allāh, and worship is of two types: (1) Subservience and humility (2) Love and self-sacrifice. To show subservience and humility, Allāh has ordained Prayer, which physically puts each part of one's body in a state of humility and submission, to the extent that the prostration of the body in Prayer has been made parallel to the prostration of the heart, so that both the body and the heart participate in this worship. It should be clear that the prostration of the heart is not vain and frivolous. First of all, it is accepted that just as God is the creator of the spirit, so too he is the creator of the body, and He possesses the right

1. *Al-Ḥajj*, 22:38

of *khāliqīyyat* [the divine attribute of Creatorship] over them both. In addition to this, the body and the spirit are influenced by each other. Sometimes, the prostration of the body gives rise to the prostration of the spirit, and sometimes the prostrations of the spirit gives rise to the prostration of the body, for the body and the spirit are like mirrors facing each other. For example, when one puts on a face of laughter, sometimes he bursts into actual laughter which is connected to the cheerfulness of the spirit. Likewise, when a person feigns weeping, sometimes he really begins to weep in a way which is connected to the anguish and tenderness of the spirit. Hence it is evident that subservience and humility of this sort contained in worship and physical actions influence the spirit, and spiritual actions influence the body. In the same way, the love and self-sacrifice in the second type of worship influence the spirit and the body. When in love, a person's being revolves around its beloved and kisses its threshold. As such, the Holy *Ka'bah* has been provided as an example for the true lovers [of God], and God says, 'Look, this is My house, and the Black Stone is the cornerstone of My threshold.'

(Footnote: the threshold of God is the source of bounties, that is, all bounties are acquired from His threshold. This is why the *mu'abbirīn* [interpreters of dreams] have written that if one sees in a dream that they are kissing the Black Stone, they will acquire spiritual knowledge, for the Black Stone symbolises the fountainhead of knowledge and bounty.)

This commandment has been given so that one may physically express their fervent love and affection. Hence, pilgrims physically circle around the place of the *Ḥajj* [the *Ka'bah*], and their expressions show that they have become infatuated and lost in the love of God. They forego adornment, shave their heads, and display the expressions of those who have become enraptured as they perform circuits of love around the *Ka'bah*,

and they kiss its stone perceiving it to be the cornerstone of God's threshold. This physical fervour brings about a spiritual warmth and love; so while the body circulates around His house [the *Ka'bah*] and kisses the cornerstone of [His] threshold, at the same time, the spirit revolves around the true Beloved and kisses His spiritual threshold. In this way, there is no aspect of *shirk* [association of partners with Allāh]. A person may kiss even a letter they receive from a dear friend. Muslims do not worship the Holy *Ka'bah*, nor do they seek anything from the Black Stone. Rather, these are considered to be physical examples bestowed by God and nothing more. Just as we prostrate on the ground, but the prostration is not for the earth; in the same way we kiss the Black Stone, but the kiss is not for the Stone, for the Stone is merely a stone which can neither benefit nor harm anyone, but we kiss it because it originates from the Beloved One Who has made it an example of His threshold.[1]

The Conditions of the Ḥajj

Allāh the Exalted has revealed many injunctions, some of which are not easily practicable for everyone, such as the *Ḥajj*. The *Ḥajj* is obligatory only upon one who is able to undertake it. The route must be safe, and one must also ensure that sufficient provision is left for the dependants he leaves behind. Only once these necessary conditions are fulfilled can a person perform *Ḥajj*.[2]

1. *Chashma-e-Ma'rifat*, *Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 23, pp. 99–101
2. *Al-Ḥakam*, 31 July 1902, p. 2

Why the Promised Messiah عليه السلام Did Not Perform Ḥajj

In response to the objection raised by opponents regarding why the Promised Messiah عليه السلام did not perform the *Ḥajj*, he stated:

> Do they wish for me to set aside the foremost service to which God has appointed me, and instead begin a different task? Let it be known that those who are recipients of divine revelation do not act in the same way as the general public; rather, they carry out every task according to divine guidance and instruction. Although they fulfil all the injunctions of the Sharī'ah, they may prioritise one command over another by the Will of Allāh. If I were to perform the *Ḥajj* now, it would be an act of disobedience to the command of Allāh. In *Ḥujajul-Kirāmah*, it is written regarding the verse مَنِ اسْتَطَاعَ إِلَيْهِ سَبِيلًا[1] that if there is a danger of missing the Prayer, then the *Ḥajj* is no longer obligatory. Many of those who travel for *Ḥajj* these days miss numerous Prayers during their journey. The first and foremost duty of those divinely commissioned is to propagate the message. How many times did the Holy Prophet ﷺ perform the *Ḥajj* during his 13-year stay in Makkah? Not even once.[2]

One person submitted that the opposing *maulawīs* object as to why Mirza Sahib [the Promised Messiah عليه السلام] does not go for the *Ḥajj*? The Promised Messiah عليه السلام replied:

> These people raise this criticism with mischief. The Holy Prophet ﷺ was in Madīnah for ten years. The journey between Madīnah and Makkah was only two days, but he did not perform the *Ḥajj* for ten years though he could have arranged for

1. *Sūrah Āl 'Imrān*, 3:98
2. *Al-Badr*, 8 May 1903, p. 122

> a ride, etc. Having sufficient funds is not the only condition for mankind to perform the *Ḥajj*; rather, it is also necessary that there be no fear of any mischief, and the means are available to reach there and perform the *Ḥajj* in peace. When the innately savage scholars are issuing *fatwās* for my murder here and do not even fear the Government, then what will they not do there? But what concern do they have with the fact that I do not perform the *Ḥajj*? Will they accept me as a Muslim and join my Jamāʿat if I perform the *Ḥajj*? If so, then let all these Muslim scholars first write an agreement that if I were to perform the *Ḥajj* they will then offer *taubah* [repentance] at my hand and join my Jamāʿat and become my followers. If they write so and confirm it on oath, I will go and perform the *Ḥajj*; Allāh the Exalted will create the means of ease for me so that the mischief of the *maulawīs* is dealt with for the future. It is not good to unjustly criticize with mischief. This objection of theirs not only falls on me, but also on the Holy Prophet ﷺ, as the Holy Prophet ﷺ performed the *Ḥajj* only in his last year.[1]

In response to the objection of the opponents that he did not perform the *Ḥajj*, the Promised Messiah ؑ stated:

> This objection reveals the extent of your understanding of Sharīʿah, for you appear to believe that lack of financial means is the sole ground on which exemption from the *Ḥajj* is permitted. Engrossed in worldly pursuits, you have remained unaware of even the basic teachings of the Qur'ān, the Ḥadīth, and the classical works of Islamic jurisprudence, which clearly state that in addition to financial incapacity, there are several other legitimate reasons granted by Allāh for being excused from performing the *Ḥajj*. Among these are concerns related to one's health

1. *Badr*, 8 August 1907, p. 8; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt* vol. 9, pp. 324–325

and the absence of safety during travel or within Makkah itself. Allāh the Almighty states: مَنِ اسْتَطَاعَ إِلَيْهِ سَبِيلًا [those who are able to make their way there].

It is astonishing that, on the one hand, these malicious *'ulamā'* secure a ruling from Makkah branding me a *kāfir* [disbeliever], and on the other, insist that I must proceed for the *Ḥajj*. They are fully aware that such a verdict, having originated in Makkah, renders the city a source of danger and *fitnah* [turmoil] for me, and God requires us to avoid regions plagued by such disorder. Hence, this objection is incomprehensible. These very critics are well aware that the Holy Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ refrained from undertaking the pilgrimage during times of unrest. Both the Qur'ān and Ḥadīth make it clear that one must avoid areas of strife. What then is this insidious scheme whereby they proclaim me a *kāfir* to the people of Makkah, and then repeatedly criticise me for not having performed the *Ḥajj*? We seek Allāh's protection from their wickedness.

It is worth reflecting on why they are so perturbed by the fact that I have not gone for the *Ḥajj*. There seems to be no other motive than this: that if I were to travel to Makkah, they hope that I would be targeted by a faction of mischief-makers who would publicly declare me a *kāfir* and call for my execution. Were there to be a Divine command, I would place complete trust in God and abandon all caution. However, in the absence of such instruction, it is incumbent upon me to act in accordance with the guidelines of the Sharī'ah. Avoiding places of danger is the established practice of the prophets. In Makkah, authority lies in the hands of those who share the same hostile views as those who declare me a disbeliever. If people here deem me worthy of death, can we expect those there to act differently? Allāh says:

وَلَا تُلْقُوا بِأَيْدِيكُمْ إِلَى التَّهْلُكَةِ[1]

> And do not throw yourselves into destruction with your own hands.

Willingly advancing towards ruin would be sinful. To disobey a clear command of Allāh is a transgression. The obligation of the *Ḥajj* is conditional upon the fulfilment of specific prerequisites, whereas the injunction to avoid destruction and disorder is unequivocal and unconditional. Therefore, one must reflect deeply: should we act upon a conditional command while knowing its criteria are unmet, or obey an absolute directive of the Qur'ān?[2]

Do Not be Perturbed at the Hardships You Are Faced With on the Way to the Ḥajj

Shaikh Faḍl Karīm, who had the honour of performing the *Ḥajj* this year [1908], was in Dārul-Amān [Qadian] for a few days. He met the Promised Messiah ﷺ before *Ẓuhr* Prayer and narrated, in full, the details of the excruciating hardships that the pilgrims had to endure that year. He said that soon after exiting the British territory and entering Turkish territory, they encountered such hardships that it can be said with certainty that they are likely to end up stopping the *Ḥajj* altogether, at least for Indian residents. He mentioned the unbearable restrictions of quarantine in the Turkish territory, the extreme greed and avarice of the doctors and officials there, their total disregard for thousands of lives for their personal benefit, and the destruction of food and clothing in the disinfection by steam procedures or the theft of their money. Indian pilgrims found it difficult to get something even

1. *Sūrah Al-Baqarah*, 2:196
2. *Ayyāmus-Ṣulḥ*, *Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 14, pp. 415–416

by paying three times more than what the Egyptian pilgrims would pay. Though the Sultan had provided wells every two miles, workers and administrators there would not give even a glass of water without charging for it. Despite the provision of guards and police postings by the Sultan, there was total lawlessness to the extent that one could not stay alive even if he deviated a few yards from the main road. The harsh treatment directed particularly towards Indians, physical beating for minor issues, having no recourse nor redress, use of derogatory words like *kadhdhāb* [a great liar] and *baṭṭāl* [deceiver] etc., are such adversities that it made for a terrible ordeal. After listening to this entire account, the Promised Messiah عليه السلام said:

> I advise you that all these matters of hardship should not result in any wavering or weakness in the strength of your faith. This is a trial from God Almighty. It should not tarnish the holy beliefs. Because of these difficulties, the reverence of that holy site should not diminish in your hearts. There was a time worse than this when the same holy site was in the control of the impure idolaters. They had made it a house for idols. All these hardships and adversities are the stages towards the auspicious times and life to come. Look, before the advent of the Holy Prophet ﷺ ... the condition of the world had become precarious. Disbelief, idolatry, strife, and impiety had grown beyond limits. It was after that darkness that a light appeared in the world. Similarly, we should hope that Allāh the Exalted will bring forth some means of improvement after these difficulties too, and that He creates some means of reformation. In fact, there had been another similar perilous and critical time for the same holy and sacred site which was pointed out to the Holy Prophet ﷺ by God Almighty:

أَلَمْ تَرَ كَيْفَ فَعَلَ رَبُّكَ بِأَصْحَٰبِ ٱلْفِيلِ [1]

Have you not seen how your Lord dealt with the People of the Elephant?

Thus, it is now the third such occurrence. Allāh the Exalted will certainly turn His attention to it. And His turning to it will, indeed, be in the form of wrath.[2]

Giving Precedence to Visiting the Promised Messiah ﷺ Over Ḥajj

The Promised Messiah ﷺ wrote about Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah ʻAbdul-Laṭīf ؓ, the *Shahīd* [Martyr]:

It was because he had accepted me as the Promised Messiah and following the injunction of the Holy Qur'ān: **أَطِيعُواللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ** [Obey Allāh and His Messenger], that he postponed his intention of going to the *Ḥajj* for another year in the future. Every sensible person will agree that if a person on his way happens to meet and recognise the Promised Messiah who had been awaited by the Muslims for the last 1,300 years, it becomes incumbent upon him, according to the behest of the Holy Qur'ān and the Ḥadīth, that he should not proceed further without the permission of the Promised Messiah ﷺ, and may postpone the sacred journey until permission is granted to him.[3]

1. *Sūrah Al-Fīl*, 105:2
2. *Al-Ḥakam*, 22 April 1908, p. 1
3. *Tadhkiratus-Shahādatain*, *Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 20, p. 49

The Spiritual Reward of the Company of Divinely Commissioned Ones is More Than That of Voluntary Ḥajj

The Promised Messiah ﷺ once wrote in a letter in response to certain questions from Ḥaḍrat Nawāb Muḥammad ʿAlī Khān ؓ :

> If you perform the *Istikhārah* for forty days with your mind turned to God in accordance with the conditions laid down in the [book] *Nishān-e-Asmānī* [The Heavenly Sign], I will address a prayer in your behalf. It would be well and good if this *Istikhārah* was performed in my presence so that I should be able to pay more attention to you. For you, it is not at all difficult; people sometimes go to perform non-obligatory *Ḥajj* for minor reasons, but here the reward is greater than the reward for non-obligatory *Ḥajj*, and if one is careless, there is the danger of incurring loss and harm because this Movement is heavenly and the commandment is emanating from God.[1]

Performing Ḥajj on Behalf of the Deceased

The relatives of a deceased Aḥmadī from the city of Khoshab wrote in a letter to His Holiness ﷺ that the deceased had made a firm decision to perform the *Ḥajj*, but death did not grant him respite to do so, so is it permissible for someone, whose expenses are paid, to be sent to perform the *Ḥajj* on behalf of the deceased?

The Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

1. *Āʾina-e-Kamālāt-e-Islām*, *Rūḥānī Khazāʾin*, vol. 5, pp. 351–352; Eng. Trans.: *Mirror of the Excellences of Islām*, p. 412

> It is permissible, and the deceased will attain the spiritual reward of the *Ḥajj*.[1]

Ḥajj-e-Badal[2] was performed on behalf of the Promised Messiah ﷺ after his demise. Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ wrote: '[My] mother told me: "Once, the Promised Messiah ﷺ, in the final days [of his life], expressed in front of me the intention to perform *Ḥajj*. Hence, I managed [to get someone] to perform *Ḥajj* on his behalf after his demise." My revered mother sent the late Ḥāfiẓ Aḥmadullāh to perform *Ḥajj-e-Badal* on behalf of His Holiness ﷺ and bore all the expenses herself. Ḥāfiẓ Sahib was an old companion and passed away a long time ago.[3]

It is evident from another narration that Ḥāfiẓ Aḥmadullāh Khān had already performed *Ḥajj* himself before performing *Ḥajj-e-Badal*.[4]

1. *Badr*, 2 May, 1907
2. *Ḥajj* performed on behalf of someone who is unable to undertake it themselves. [Publisher]
3. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 1, p. 44
4. *Sīrat Ḥaḍrat Ammāṅ Jān* by Shaikh Maḥmūd Aḥmad Irfānī, vol. 1, p. 249

MATTERS PERTAINING TO SACRIFICE

The Wisdom in Sacrifice

Allāh the Exalted has placed many examples in the Islamic Sharī'ah of essential injunctions. As such, man has been commanded to sacrifice himself in the way of Allāh with all his faculties and with all his being. Hence, manifest sacrifices have been instituted to represent these inner states, but the true nature of sacrifice is that which Allāh has expounded upon:

لَنْ يَّنَالَ اللّٰهَ لُحُومُهَا وَلَا دِمَآؤُهَا وَلٰكِن يَنَالُهُ التَّقْوٰى مِنكُمْ[1]

This means that the meat of your sacrifice will not reach Allāh, nor will its blood reach Him, but your *taqwā* [righteousness] will reach Him. That is to say, you ought to fear Allāh as if you are about to die in His way. And just as you slaughter animals with your hands, so you should slaughter yourselves in the way of Allāh.[2]

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1. *Sūrah Al-Ḥajj*, 22:38
2. *Chashma-e-Ma'rifat*, *Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 23, pp. 99–101

The True Sacrifice is Purifying the Hearts

لَنْ يَّنَالَ اللّٰهَ لُحُومُهَا وَلَا دِمَآؤُهَا وَلٰكِنْ يَنَالُهُ التَّقْوٰى مِنكُمْ[1]

> Meaning that purifying the hearts is the true sacrifice. The sacrifice of flesh and blood is not true sacrifice. While common people sacrifice animals, the elect sacrifice their [own] hearts.[2]

The Superiority of Islām Over All Other Religions in Sacrifice

The Promised Messiah ﷺ, in a sermon that he delivered on *'Id-ul-Adhā*—known as *Khuṭbah Ilhāmīyyah* [the Revealed Sermon]—stated:

> In my opinion, these sacrifices that are made in our illustrious Sharī'ah are beyond the realm of estimation, and they are far superior to the sacrifices made by those belonging to the earlier nations of prophets. The abundance of these sacrifices has reached a point that the face of the earth has been covered with their blood; so much so that if all of it were to be amassed and irrigated, streams would flow out and rivers would gush forth with it and all of the plains and valleys of the earth would be inundated with blood. In our religion, this deed is counted among those that are a means of attaining *qurb* [nearness] to Allāh the Most Holy.[3]

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1. *Sūrah Al-Ḥajj*, 22:38
2. *Barāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya* Part V, *Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 21, p. 424; Eng. Trans: p. 561
3. *Khuṭbah Ilhāmiyyah*, *Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 16, pp. 32–33; Eng. Trans.: *The Revealed Sermon*, pp. 473–474

Sacrifice Is Obligatory Only for Those Who Have the Means

A request from an individual was presented: 'I paid a small amount as a contribution in a sacrificial offering but they excluded my share due to my being an Aḥmadī. If I were to contribute this amount to the fund for the needy in Qadian will this serve as my sacrifice [of an animal]?'

The Promised Messiah ﷺ responded:

> A *qurbāni* can only be done by sacrificing an animal and not by contributing to the fund for the needy. If that amount is sufficient then slaughter a goat as an offering. If it is insufficient and you cannot afford more, then such a sacrificial offering is not obligatory upon you.[1]

Offering Qurbānī Jointly with Non-Aḥmadīs

Someone presented his question: 'Is it permissible that we collaborate with non-Aḥmadīs, meaning sacrificing some animal like a cow by contributing small sums of money?'

The Promised Messiah ﷺ replied:

> What urgency has arisen that you join with the others [non-Aḥmadīs]? If it is obligatory for you to do *qurbānī*, you can sacrifice a goat. If you cannot afford even that, then *qurbānī* is not obligatory on you anyway. They expel you from their fold and declare you to be disbelievers, they do not like to join you, then what need do you have to join with them? Put your trust in God.[2]

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1. *Badr*, 14 February 1907, p. 8; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt* vol. 9, p. 131
2. *Badr*, 14 February 1907, p. 8; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt* vol. 9, p. 130

The Required Age of a Sacrificial Lamb

An enquiry was presented: 'Is a one year old lamb acceptable for sacrifice?'

The Promised Messiah ﷺ replied:

> Get the opinion of Maulawī Sahib. There are different views about it between the Ahl-e-Ḥadīth and the Ḥanafī [sects].

Note by the editor of *Badr*: According to the research of Maulawī Sahib, the Ahl-e-Ḥadīth do not consider a lamb less than two years of age acceptable for sacrifice.[1]

Fasting on 'Īd-ul-Aḍḥā

Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ II ﷺ states about abstaining from food on the day of *'Īd-ul-Aḍḥā* up until eating the meat from the sacrificed animal: 'Maulawī Muḥammad Ibrāhīm Baqāpūrī wrote to me that people abstain from eating food on the morning of *'Īd-ul-Aḍḥā*, despite it not being a Sunnah, therefore, it ought to be announced that this is not a Sunnah. However, it is an established practice of the Noble Prophet ﷺ that when in good health he would eat after slaughtering, but this is not a fast insofar as one who does not observe it becomes a sinner. Rather, it is a voluntary and recommendable fast. Whosoever is able to, can observe it, but whosoever cannot observe it, such as an ill person, an elderly person or the like, they are not obliged to observe it. This abstinence from food is not totally meaningless as Maulawī Baqāpūrī has written. I have seen the Promised Messiah ﷺ observing this practice. Moreover, it is widespread among the Muslims, and it was not conceived out of nothing; in fact, it is a voluntary and recommendable

1. *Badr*, 23 January 1908, p. 2

act which the Holy Prophet ﷺ practiced recurrently, and by following which one attains spiritual reward. However, one who is unable to does not incur sin.[1]

The Day on Which ʻAqīqah Should Be Performed

A question was asked regarding when an *ʻAqīqah* [sacrifice of an animal upon a child's birth] should be done?

The Promised Messiah عليه السلام answered:

> On the seventh day. If for some reason it is not possible, then whenever God grants the ability. It is found in one tradition that the Holy Prophet ﷺ did his own *ʻAqīqah* at the age of forty years. Such narrations should be looked at benevolently so long as it does not contravene the Holy Qur'ān or the authentic *aḥādīth*.[2]

The Promised Messiah عليه السلام Performing ʻAqīqah on Behalf of Someone

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad رضي الله عنه writes that Munshī Ẓafar Ahmad of Kapurthala wrote to him in a letter: 'Once I stayed in Qadian for around one month. Maulawī 'Abdullāh of Sanaur رضي الله عنه was also there. Maulawī Sahib sought permission for me to leave and I did the same for him. The Promised Messiah عليه السلام instructed us not to leave. During this period, Maulawī Sahib received a letter informing him of the birth of a boy in his house, upon which he sought permission to leave so he could do an *ʻAqīqah*.

1. *Daily Al-Fazl*, 17 of January, 1941, p. 4
2. *Badr*, 13 February 1908, p. 10

The Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

It is not necessary to leave for this purpose. Instead, you should remind me on the seventh day and write to his family telling them to shave the boys head on the seventh day.

'His Holiness ﷺ asked for two lambs on the seventh day and had them slaughtered, and then told Maulawī Sahib to inform his family.'[1]

The Number of Lambs Required for the 'Aqīqah

Someone's question was presented to the Promised Messiah ﷺ as to whether it was allowed to sacrifice only one lamb for the *'Aqīqah* upon the birth of a son?

The Promised Messiah ﷺ stated in reply:

Two lambs are certainly required in the *'Aqīqah* for a boy, but it is only for one who has the resources for it. If one does not have the means to buy two lambs and can buy only one, then it is permissible for him to slaughter just one. And if he happens to be so poor that he cannot sacrifice even one, it is not obligatory for him to sacrifice. The poor are exempted.[2]

The Sunnah of Slaughtering Two Lambs for the 'Aqīqah

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ writes: 'Miāń Khair-ud-Dīn of Sikhwan ؓ wrote to me in a letter stating: "I once asked the Promised Messiah ﷺ about the *'Aqīqah* of a boy. He stated:

1. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 2, p. 38
2. *Badr*, 26 December 1907, p. 2; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt* vol. 10, p. 24

Two lambs ought to be slaughtered for the *ʿAqīqah* of a boy.

"I asked if slaughtering just one lamb was permitted? His Holiness عليه السلام did not reply. When I asked him again, he said with a smile:

It is better to not do the *ʿAqīqah* at all.

"He did not issue a verdict on the permissibility of slaughtering just one lamb. My aim in seeking this verdict was so, that the underprivileged could do the *ʿAqīqah* by slaughtering one lamb."[1]

1. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 2, p. 155

NIKĀḤ (MATRIMONY)

The Promised Messiah ؑ stated:

> The ultimate objective for which Islām has established *Nikāḥ* [matrimony] is so one can relieve his carnal desires in a lawful manner, just as it was established in the law of nature since the beginning, so that by attaining chastity and piety one can be safeguarded from impermissible and unlawful ways of fulfilling one's desires. Can it be said about He who stated in his Holy Word: نِسَآؤُكُمْ حَرْثٌ لَّكُمْ meaning 'your wives are a tilth for you', that he only intended that people fulfil their desires [through women] and they have no other purpose? Is amusement the only purpose of a tilth, or is it that one may harvest from the seed they have sown? I say again, the one who stated in his Holy Word مُحْصِنِينَ غَيرَ مُسَافِحِينَ that is, your objective in marriage should be that you achieve chastity and purity, and guard yourselves from the adverse consequences of carnal desires, your objective not being to engage in such practice without any pure purpose, succumbing to your carnal desires like animals; is it conceivable that such a wise God intended to turn Muslims into lustful people? For such things have not only been mentioned in the Holy Qur'ān, but they have also been narrated from the Holy Prophet ﷺ in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* and *Bukhārī*, our reliable books of Ḥadīth, and there is no need to repeat them as we have already written about it in this tract of ours. The Holy

Qur'ān was revealed in order to bring back to God Almighty those who were overwhelmed by their carnal passions and eradicate all injustice[1]

The Wisdom in the Quranic Description of Women as a Tilth

The Promised Messiah ﷺ stated:

The Holy Qur'ān...contains the verse:

نِسَآؤُكُمْ حَرْثٌ لَّكُمْ فَأْتُوا حَرْثَكُمْ أَنَّى شِئْتُمْ[2]

Meaning 'Your women are your tilth for yielding your offspring. Thus, approach your tilth in whatever manner you please.' Bear this similitude of a tilth in mind; in other words, do not copulate with them in a manner that prevents the conception of a child. In early Islām, some men would restrain themselves from ejaculating and would ejaculate after withdrawing themselves. This verse has forbidden them from doing so and has thus regarded women as a tilth, that is, land which yields every type of produce. Thus, in this verse God has unequivocally stated that, because a woman is likened to a tilth that yields offspring as its produce, it is impermissible to prevent this tilth from bearing children. Indeed, if the woman is ill and it is certain that pregnancy will risk her death and if there are any other preventative factors, then these would be considered as

1. *Ārya Dharam, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 10, p. 44
2. *Sūrah al-Baqarah,* 2:224

exemptions. Otherwise, according to Islamic law, it is unlawful to practice birth control.

Every sensible person can appreciate that God Almighty described a woman as a tilth because children are born of her. One of the purposes of matrimony is that righteous servants of God may be born who remember Him. Another purpose specified by God Almighty is that husband and wife may safeguard themselves against illicit looks and conduct. There is a third purpose, which is that, because of their mutual attachment, they should spare themselves the pangs of loneliness. All these injunctions are found in the Holy Qur'ān and we need not elaborate any further.[1]

An Engagement is No Substitute for the Nikāḥ

QUESTION—It is a custom in our country that when the official engagement is announced and the girl is given jewellery and clothes, then this is considered a substitute for the *Nikāḥ* and the girl cannot be married to anyone else after that.

ANSWER—Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ II ﷺ stated: 'This assertion is meaningless, and an engagement is not a contract as per the Sharī'ah. So long as the parents agree and the girl agrees, no one else has the right to interfere.'[2]

Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ II ﷺ once stated when deciding a case: 'If the woman wanted to have her *Nikāḥ* annulled ... there was no need to enter into such a dispute, for the two had not yet been intimate with

1. *Chashma-e-Ma'rifat, Rūhānī Khazā'in*, vol. 23, pp. 292–293
2. *Register Hidayāt Ḥaḍrat Muṣleḥ Mau'ūd*, 26–6–1954

each other. During that period, if a disagreement had arisen then they ought to have readily annulled the *Nikāḥ*, because a *Nikāḥ* of this sort is equivalent to an engagement. This is the verdict of the Promised Messiah ﷺ which has been verbally conveyed to me.[1]

The Bride's Consent Is Necessary for Nikāḥ

A case was once presented before the Promised Messiah ﷺ regarding a girl whose marriage had become a matter of disagreement within her family. Her mother and one of her two brothers supported her marriage to a certain boy, while the other brother opposed the match and wished for her to marry someone else. The girl had reached the age of maturity, and the matter was brought before the Promised Messiah ﷺ for guidance. He inquired: 'Which of the two brothers does the girl agree with?' It was said that she supported the brother who shared her mother's view. Upon hearing this, the Promised Messiah ﷺ stated:

> The girl should be married to the boy whom she and that brother are both in favour of.[2]

It is Impermissible to Arrange a Nikāḥ Between an Aḥmadī Woman and Non-Aḥmadī Man

A question was presented concerning an Aḥmadī girl whose parents were non-Aḥmadī. They insisted on marrying her to a non-Aḥmadī, whereas the girl wished to marry within the Jamā'at. The dispute persisted for years, and by the time she reached the age of twenty-two, the matter remained unresolved. Tired of this prolonged disagreement,

1. *Farmūdāt Muṣleḥ Maw'ūd Darbārah Fiqhī Masā'il*, pp. 191–192
2. *Al-Ḥakam*, 10 July, 1903, p. 1

the girl arranged her *Nikāḥ* with an Aḥmadī man. The question arose: Was this *Nikāḥ* permissible?

The Promised Messiah stated:

> The arrangement of this *Nikāḥ* was permissible.[1]

It Is Sinful to Arrange the Marriage of an Ahmadī Woman to a Non-Aḥmadī Man

The Promised Messiah ﷺ stated:

> There is no harm in accepting a girl in marriage from non-Aḥmadīs inasmuch as it is permitted to marry the women of the People of the Book. In fact, it is beneficial in that one more person attains thereby to guidance. We should not give our girls in marriage to a non-Aḥmadī. If you can, you may take [one from them]. There is no harm in taking one, but there is sin in giving one.[2]

Do Not Marry Your Daughters to Non-Aḥmadī Men

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ﷺ writes that Miāṅ Faḍl Muḥammad (Shopkeeper, Dārul-Faḍl Neighbourhood) told him in a letter: 'My son 'Abdul Ghafūr was of young age and his maternal grandmother insisted upon marrying her granddaughter [her sons daughter] to him, but I would not approve. As such, once she went to the Promised Messiah ﷺ and said: "I want to marry my maternal

1. *Badr*, 31 October, 1907, p. 7
2. *Al-Ḥakam*, 14 April 1908, p. 2; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt* vol. 287

grandson to my paternal granddaughter, but his father does not agree." The Promised Messiah ﷺ summoned me and asked:

> Why do you not accept this marriage proposal?

I said: "Your Holiness, this family are opponents [of the Jamā'at] and use harsh language against us, this is why I rejected their proposal." His Holiness ﷺ stated:

> You may take a girl from the opponents, but you cannot give one to them.

Meaning, you may accept a girl in marriage from the opponents but you cannot give one of your girls in marriage to the opponents.'[1]

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ writes that Miāṅ 'Abdullāh of Sanaur ؓ told him: 'Some time ago, following the death of the first wife of Miāṅ Ẓafar Aḥmad of Kapurthala, and while he was searching for a new wife, the Promised Messiah ﷺ said to him: "There are two girls in our household. I shall bring them here so you may see them, and you may marry whichever one you like."

'Accordingly, the Promised Messiah ﷺ called both girls and had them stand just outside the room. He then entered the room and said: "They are standing outside; you may look at them through the slats in the wooden curtain."

'Miāṅ Ẓafar Aḥmad looked at them both, after which the Promised Messiah ﷺ dismissed them. Then he asked Miāṅ Ẓafar Aḥmad: "Now tell me, which one do you prefer?"

'Since Miāṅ Ẓafar Aḥmad did not know their names, he replied: "I prefer the one with the oval-shaped face."

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1. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 2, pp. 170–171

'The Promised Messiah ﷺ then asked for my [Miāń 'Abdullāh of Sanaur] opinion, but I responded: "Your Holiness, I did not see them." The Promised Messiah ﷺ then said: "In my opinion, the one with the round face is better."

'He further added: "A person with an oval-shaped face tends to lose their beauty after illness or similar conditions, but the beauty of a round face generally remains preserved."'

Miāń 'Abdullāh of Sanaur ؓ added: 'No one else was present besides the three of us: the Promised Messiah ﷺ, Miāń Ẓafar Aḥmad, and myself. His Holiness ﷺ had invited the girls in a dignified manner and dismissed them in such a way that they had no idea of the matter under discussion. However, Miāń Ẓafar Aḥmad ultimately did not marry either of the two, and a long time has passed since this incident.'[1]

A Match of Similar Social Standing Is Preferable but Not Necessary

A question by a friend was presented; an Aḥmadī wished to marry one of his daughters to a *ghair kufw* [unequal stature] partner belonging to an Aḥmadī family, whereas a match of his own *kufw* [equal standing] was available. What is your directive regarding this?

The Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

> It is better to make a *kufw* match rather than a *ghair kufw* one, providing the match is what was wished for. However, this is not something obligatory. In such matters, every person can well understand their interest and what is needed for the betterment of their children. If they do not deem anyone appropriate in *kufw* matches, there is no harm in looking elsewhere. It

1. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 1, pp. 240–241

is not correct to force such a person that they must marry their daughter among their *kufw*.[1]

The Natural Necessity of Marriage

The Promised Messiah ﷺ wrote addressing Pādre Fateḥ Masīḥ:

> You then object by citing Ḥaḍrat ʻĀ'ishah Ṣiddīqah ؓ, that it was against the Sharīʻah for His Exalted Holiness, the Prophet of Allah ﷺ to touch his body with hers and suck her tongue. To what extent must I lament such sordid bigotry? O imbecile! All such acts are permissible in a lawful and proper marriage. What sort of an objection is this? Don't you know that virility and masculinity are praiseworthy qualities of a man? Being a eunuch is not any meritorious quality, just as being deaf or mute is not counted as merit. Of course, this objection is very serious that the Messiah ﷺ, being devoid of the greatest of masculine traits, could not demonstrate any practical example of the sincere and perfect interaction with one's wife. And this is why European women, taking advantage of extremely shameful licentiousness, exceeded the limits of moderation in every direction. Ultimately, it amounted to unspeakable promiscuity and debauchery.
>
> O imbecile! To be amorous towards your wives out of human nature and its true and pure emotions, and to utilize all the lawful means of a comely relationship is a natural and instinctive quality of man. The founder of Islam ﷺ also utilized it and set an example for his followers.
>
> The Messiah, on account of his deficient teaching, left this shortcoming in his words and deeds, but as this was a natural

1. *Badr*, 11 April, 1907, p. 3; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt* vol. 10, p. 227

instinct, Europe and Christianity had to devise rules for it on their own.

You can now see, in all honesty, what it was that resulted in this filthy promiscuity.

Country upon country has turned into a sordid brothel of harlots. Thousands upon thousands are seen mounting each other in broad daylight like animals in places like Hyde Park.

And finally—being fed up with this illicit freedom—lamenting and regretting, having suffered the consequences of cuckolding and dark deeds for years, they eventually had to get laws of divorce promulgated.

What is this the result of? Is it the consequence of the social code given by the blessed *Muṭahhar* [Holy] and *Muzakkī* [who purifies others], the *Ummī Nabī* ﷺ [Unlettered Prophet] whom you criticise at the instigation of the wickedness of your inner self? Is it the Islamic countries that are permeated with this stench and toxic atmosphere? Or is it the effect of the unnatural and half-baked teachings of a gravely defective and unworthy book, the Pauline Gospel? Now, go kneel and picture the Day of Reckoning and reflect.[1]

The Permissibility of Marriage at a Young Age

The Promised Messiah ؑ wrote addressing Pādre Fateḥ Masīḥ:

Mentioning Ḥaḍrat ʻĀ'ishah Ṣiddīqah ؓ, you have written of her marriage ceremony at the age of nine. First of all, there is no evidence of the Holy Prophet ﷺ himself saying that she was nine years old, nor is there any Divine revelation to that effect,

1. *Nūrul-Qur'ān, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 9, pp. 392–392; Eng. Trans.: *The Light of the Holy Qur'ān*, pp. 91–93

nor is it established through narration that are *mutawātir* [i.e. possessing multiple chains of transmission] narrations that she was indeed nine years old. It is only quoted from one narrator. The Arabs, being illiterate, did not keep written calendars and a variance of two or three years is, therefore, insignificant in view of their circumstances. The same is the case in our country where most of the illiterate people cannot accurately account for a difference of two to four years. Nevertheless, even if we concede under the assumption that it was precisely nine years by counting every day, even then no intelligent person would object. There is, however, no cure for stupidity.

I will demonstrate this to you within my journal by proving that there is a consensus of opinion among contemporary research physicians that girls can attain puberty even by the age of nine years. In fact, the bearing of children can take place even as early as seven years of age. Physicians have proven this through a great many observations. Moreover, hundreds of people have personally witnessed this fact with their own eyes in this very country that there are girls aged eight and nine years who have given birth to children.

Nevertheless, upon you be no pity whatsoever nor should there be!—for not only are you an absolute bigot, but also an imbecile of the highest degree. To this day you still fail to realize even this much that the laws of government are framed in accordance with the wishes of the people in keeping with their traditions. As for your repeated mention of the British government, it is absolutely true that we are grateful to the British government and are its well-wishers and will remain so as long as we live. However, we do not consider this government immune from error, nor do we consider its laws to be based on scholarly research. On the contrary, the basis for promulgating laws is the majority opinion of [its] subjects. No revelation descends upon the government, exempting it from error in [the promulgation

of] its laws. Had these laws been so infallible, why would newer and newer laws perpetually continue to be promulgated?

In England, the age for female puberty has been declared to be 18 years, but in tropical regions the girls attain puberty much earlier. Should you consider the laws of the government as revelation from heaven, being immune to the possibility of error, then please do inform me through reply mail so that I—by presenting a brief comparison between the Gospel and these laws—might be of some service to you. In short, the government has not yet issued any such proclamation that its laws are also free from error and oversight like the Torah and the Gospel. Should you be in receipt of any such declaration, then kindly send me a copy of it as well.

Thus, if the laws of the government are not free from error like the Books of God, then the reason behind quoting them is either stupidity or prejudice, but you are incapable [of comprehending this]. If the government had such confidence in its laws, why didn't it censure those physicians who recently declared after extensive research in Europe, that the age of puberty is nine years: nay, rather, seven for some women? Also, in objecting to [a girl marrying at] the age of nine, you could not cite any reference from the Torah or the Gospel; you merely mentioned an ordinance of the government. This shows that you no longer believe in the Torah and the Gospel, for you should have otherwise proved the prohibition [of marriage] at the age of nine either from the Torah or the Gospel.[1]

1. *Nūrul-Qur'ān*, *Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 9, pp. 377–379; Eng. Trans.: *The Light of the Holy Qur'ān*, pp. 91–93

The Age of Ḥaḍrat ʻĀ'ishah at Marriage: A Response to an Objection

In response to the objection of certain Hindus that the Holy Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ married the then-nine-year-old Ḥaḍrat ʻĀ'ishah for the purpose of engaging in intimacy with her, the Promised Messiah عليه السلام said:

> This objection has been made simply as a result of ignorance. If the ignorant and foolish objector had consulted a medical expert or physician before raising such a question, he would have realised that the only result of his objection would be to expose himself as an imbecile in the eyes of any well-informed individual.
>
> Dr. Moon—a distinguished physician and expert in the natural sciences, and a highly regarded researcher among the English—has written that in warm climates, girls typically reach marriageable age by eight or nine years of age. His book is in my possession, and since you [the objector] also reside here [in Qadian], if you are sincerely seeking the truth you may come and see it for yourself.
>
> More recently, another physician, the author of *Maʻdinul-Ḥikmat* [The Mine of Wisdom], has recorded the same findings in his book *Tadbīr Baqā'-e-Nasl* [The Strategy for the Preservation of Progeny]. On page 46, he writes that medical research has shown that girls as young as eight and nine—or even five and six—have been known to menstruate. This book too is also in my possession, and whoever wishes to read it may do so. In these books, the opinions of numerous other doctors have also been cited in support of this conclusion.
>
> Since this research is widely known and easily accessible to anyone with intelligence, there is no need to go into extensive detail at this point.

As for the claim that Ḥaḍrat ʿĀ'ishah was nine years old at the time of her marriage—it is based on reports which are utterly unfounded and without substance. It is neither substantiated by any reliable *ḥadīth* nor by the Holy Qur'ān.

Furthermore, Dr. Wah has recorded an incident in *The Lancet*, issue no. 15, published in April 1881, which he personally witnessed. He relates that he delivered a child from a woman who had begun menstruating at the age of one, became pregnant at the age of eight, and gave birth to a son at the age of eight years and 10 months.[1]

Fairness in Polygamy

An Aḥmadī once asked the Promised Messiah ﷺ: 'Does the commandment of fairness in polygamy, in line with the verse الرِّجَالُ قَوَّامُونَ عَلَى النِّسَآءِ[2] [Men are guardians over women] mean that a man should act as a just ruler and treat each wife as he deems appropriate, or does it mean something else?'

The Promised Messiah ﷺ stated:

In practice, one must treat all wives equally, regardless of the degree of love felt for them. This means maintaining fairness in matters such as clothing, food, companionship and even conjugal relations. These rights are such that if a person truly understood them, he would prefer to remain unmarried for life rather than marry. Only one who lives with constant mindfulness of God Almighty can hope to fulfil these obligations.

It is a thousand times better to live a life of hardship than to indulge in pleasures that may incur divine chastisement.

1. *Ārya Dharam, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 10, pp. 63–64
2. *Sūrah al-Nisā'*, 4:35

The teaching of polygamy has only been given so that man may avoid falling into sin. In truth, the Sharīʿah has permitted polygamy solely as a remedy: if one sees within himself a tendency to fall into temptation, and he finds his gaze constantly drawn elsewhere, then to safeguard himself from adultery, he may marry a second time. However, he must not destroy the rights of the first wife.

The Torah also establishes that one must be even more considerate to the first wife, for it is with her that one spent his youth, and his connection with her is stronger. If, in such a situation, one sees that taking another wife would deeply grieve and emotionally wound his first wife, then, if he is able to remain patient—without falling into sin or neglecting a genuine need—and out of consideration for her he foregoes remarriage, then this is commendable. Indeed, it is better not to marry again.

One must not misuse a divine permission by employing it contrary to its purpose, nor should one turn it into a veil for base desires. Be aware that such an approach is sinful. God Almighty has repeatedly warned that one's motivations should not be driven by lust; rather, righteousness should be the foundation for all action. If someone marries again solely to satisfy carnal desires, using the Sharīʿah as a cover, what result will there be other than giving other nations cause to object: 'Muslims are concerned with nothing but marrying multiple women.'

Adultery is not the only sin; even openly entertaining lustful thoughts in the heart is sinful. The share of worldly enjoyment in a believer's life ought to be minimal, as indicated in the verse:

فَلْيَضْحَكُوا قَلِيلًا وَّلْيَبْكُوا كَثِيرًا[1]

Meaning they should laugh little and weep much. But one who constantly indulges in worldly pleasures and spends his nights and days immersed in his wives—how will he ever develop humility and tearfulness of the heart?

Many people go to extremes in following an idea, only to drift far from the actual will of God. Yes, God has permitted certain things, but that does not mean one should devote one's entire life to them. God Almighty describes His true servants thus:

يَبِيتُونَ لِرَبِّهِمْ سُجَّدًا وَّقِيَامًا[2]

Meaning they spend the entire night before their Lord, prostrating and standing. So, how can one who remains absorbed in his wives night and day ever spend the night in worship as desired by God? Such a person, in essence, makes his wives partners with God.

The Holy Prophet ﷺ had nine wives, yet he would spend the night entirely in worship. One night, it was Ḥaḍrat 'Ā'ishah's turn, and when a portion of the night had passed, she awoke and, not finding the Holy Prophet ﷺ beside her, suspected that perhaps he had gone to visit another wife. She began searching the homes of the other wives but did not find him. Eventually, she discovered him in the graveyard of Baqī', prostrating and weeping before God.

Look how the Holy Prophet ﷺ left his beloved and youthful wife and went to the resting places of the dead to weep

1. *Sūrah at-Tawba*, 9:82
2. *Sūrah al-Furqān*, 25:65

before his Lord. Can anyone say that such a man married to fulfil his passions?

In short, remember well: God does not desire that you be overcome by carnal desire. If there is a genuine need for the sake of righteousness, then one may marry again, but only with this intention.[1]

Polygamy Was Restricted by Islām

In the same way, we will respond to the allegation regarding polygamy with the usual answer: in most nations before the dawn of Islām, men practiced polygamy and had hundreds of wives, some even thousands. Islām did not increase this number, but rather reduced it. In fact, it is the distinct superiority of the Qur'ān that it has rejected an unlimited and indefinite number of wives.[2]

The Need for Polygamy and Its Wisdom

The followers of the Ārya Samāj express strong aversion to polygamy, yet even they acknowledge its necessity. They admit that certain circumstances compel a man to take more than one wife. It is essential for man, who is the noblest of creation, to adopt the most effective path for the preservation of his progeny and save himself from becoming childless.

It is a well-known fact that sometimes a wife is unable to bear children, or she bears children who die in infancy due

1. *Al-Badr*, 8 July, 1904, p. 2
2. *Ḥujjatul-Islām*, *Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, p. 47; Eng. Trans.: *A Conclusive Argument in Favour of Islām*, pp. 11–10

to illness, or she gives birth to daughters only. In such cases, it becomes necessary for a man to take a second wife, particularly when childlessness would be a matter of sorrow for him and would diminish his estate, lineage, or status. Moreover, many other reasons may arise that make polygamy necessary... The Holy Qur'ān has granted permission for polygamy in order to fulfil human needs. One such need is that, in certain cases, polygamy serves as a means of sustaining and continuing one's lineage, for just as a river is formed by many drops, so too are nations formed by generations of offspring. Without doubt, polygamy is among the best means for ensuring the increase of progeny. Thus, polygamy is an excellent path to attaining that blessing which, in other words, is referred to as abundance of offspring ... Even among the revered figures of Hinduism, those known as Avatars, polygamy was practiced. It is said that Krishna had thousands of wives; and even if we treat this as an exaggeration, it would still imply he had at least 10 or 20. The father of Rājah Rām Chandra also had two wives. As far as I am aware, no prohibition against polygamy is to be found in the Vedas. Had there been any, why would these saintly figures have contravened its teaching? Likewise, Bābā Nānak Sahib, regarded as a pious man by the Hindus, had two wives.

Critics often allege that polygamy leads to injustice and that monogamy is the ideal system. I find it strange that such people interfere unnecessarily in the private affairs of others. They know full well that Islām permits a man to marry up to four wives, not as a requirement, but as a lawful provision. This is well understood by every Muslim man and woman.

If a woman wishes, she has the right to set the condition before marriage that her husband will not marry another woman under any circumstance. Should a man break this condition, he would be guilty of breach of contract. However, if no such condition is laid down, and the woman is content with

what the Sharī'ah allows, then outsiders have no right to interfere. In such cases, the familiar saying applies: If husband and wife are content, what concern is it of the judge?

Any person of sound understanding will appreciate that God has not made polygamy obligatory; He has merely permitted it. If a husband, for valid reasons and in accordance with Divine law, wishes to avail himself of this permission, and his wife is displeased, she has the right to seek divorce and free herself from that anxiety. Similarly, if the woman he wishes to marry is unwilling, she is perfectly free to decline the proposal.

No one is under compulsion. But if both women agree, what right does anyone else have to raise objections? This is a matter of personal rights. If someone takes two wives, it does not harm God in the least; if there is any loss, it would be borne by the first or second wife. If the first wife feels that her rights are in jeopardy, she can seek redress through divorce or legal separation. If the second wife feels the situation is not in her favour, she is the best judge of her own interests.

To say that polygamy necessarily entails injustice is baseless. God Almighty has enjoined that a man who takes more than one wife must treat them with justice and equity, and if he cannot, then he should suffice with one. It is ignorant and prejudiced to allege that polygamy stems from lust. I have seen with my own eyes that those who were inclined towards illicit desire were able to safeguard themselves from immorality through this blessed system, and thus led lives of righteousness and purity.[1]

The Promised Messiah ﷺ stated:

Among the Arabs, it was common practice to take hundreds of wives, and no obligation was felt to treat them equitably. As

1. *Chashma-e-Ma'rifat*, *Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 23, pp. 244–247

a result, women lived in great hardship and suffering, as noted by writers such as John Davenport and other European observers. The Holy Qur'ān reduced this unlimited practice by limiting the number of wives to four, and even then laid down the condition:

فَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ أَنْ لَّا تَعْدِلُوا فَوَاحِدَةً[1]

If you fear you will not deal justly, then marry only one

When one reflects on the era in which the Qur'ān was revealed and considers the extremes of polygamy then prevalent across the world, particularly the injustices perpetrated against women, one cannot help but acknowledge that the Qur'ān conferred a tremendous favour upon humanity by addressing these wrongs and limiting the excesses of that time.

Nevertheless, nature itself at times places a person in a position where he may desire progeny, and for this, marriage to another wife may become necessary. It is well-known that in some cases a man's first wife may be infertile, or may suffer from a chronic illness that renders physical relations impossible, such as certain cases of uterine prolapse, where even light contact can cause immense pain, sometimes for years. In other instances, a woman may age prematurely, or experience successive pregnancies with little recovery time in between. In these circumstances, a man may naturally require a second wife.

For this reason, Islām has permitted polygamy, but strictly on the condition that justice and fairness are observed among the wives. This permission is not granted for the pursuit of desire, but rather as a mercy and a practical safeguard for one's

1. *Sūrah An-Nisā'*, 4:4

natural and social needs. It is designed so that a person is not deprived of the wisdom inherent in the Divine Law when natural necessities arise.

Those who are unaware of the extent to which polygamy was rampant and unregulated among the pre-Islamic Arabs may raise ignorant objections against the teachings of Islām. However, those who are acquainted with the historical record will readily acknowledge that the Holy Qur'ān curtailed such practices rather than encouraged them.[1]

The Promised Messiah ﷺ stated:

No family line can endure forever by confining itself to the principle of one wife for everyone. In fact, there is always someone in the family who encounters the difficulty that his wife turns out to be barren and unable to have children. This shows that humanity has attained sustenance and endurance with the principle of polygamy. Had it been forbidden to have more wives than one, humanity would have come close to extinction by now. Research would demonstrate the degree to which this useful and blessed principle has protected humanity and how it has restored fertility to dwindling families, and how strongly this principle supports and helps righteousness.

This blessed practice fully makes up for the deprivation of physical needs which man incurs as a result of the physiological limitations of women, like the periods of pregnancy, menstruation, and childbirth. It gives to the man his due right by reason of his nature. There are many other reasons which oblige a man to have more than one wife. For example, if the wife of a man becomes unpleasant to look at as the result of age or disease, the motivating power of the man, on which depends the activation

1. *Ārya Darham, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 10, pp. 44–45

of the woman's function, becomes inactive and suspended. But if the man is unattractive, the woman does not suffer, for the active power has been given to man and gratification of the woman rests in his hands.

If a man's potency is weak or at fault, the woman, according to the Quranic teaching, can get a divorce. But if the husband is able to provide full satisfaction, the woman cannot complain against his taking a second wife, for she is unable to meet the frequent needs of man, which establishes man's right to have a second wife. For those who are exceptionally potent and of a righteous and pure temperament, this practice is not only lawful but necessary.[1]

Polygamy Is a Concession and Not an Obligation

An objection was raised that the permission granted in Islām to marry up to four wives is the source of moral decline.

The Promised Messiah ﷺ responded:

Islām does not command anyone to marry four wives; rather, it has permitted marrying up to four wives as a matter of need. Nowhere has it been declared necessary or obligatory to bear the burden of four marriages. The true purport of the Quranic injunction is that human needs vary, and so, in view of these varying circumstances, permission has been granted to marry one, two, three, or four.

I fail to understand how people who claim to be Muslims raise such objections; indeed, they themselves become critics of Islām. They appear oblivious to the multifaceted considerations

1. *Āina-e-Kamālāt-e-Islām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 5, pp. 281–282; Eng. Trans.: *Mirror of the Excellences of Islām*, pp. 322–23

a lawgiver must weigh when devising a legal system. Suppose a man has one wife and she develops an illness—say leprosy, syphilis, blindness, or a chronic condition—or she becomes unable to bear children, or perhaps she falls into moral corruption such as adultery. In such a case, should that man remain bound to her with no lawful recourse? What solution do such critics offer in these situations? And what does their own religion propose? What kind of religion is it that fails to account for the realities and needs of human life? This is where the glory and wisdom of the Holy Qur'ān becomes evident. There is no human need for which it has not provided a legal path.

Today, even in England, where previously polygamy was condemned, it is gradually being practised out of necessity. Not long ago, it was reported that a British Lord married a second wife and, though convicted, he eventually emigrated to America. Should one not reflect: are there not real circumstances in which polygamy becomes necessary? It is to address such needs that the perfect and comprehensive book, the Holy Qur'ān, was revealed.

Indeed, the continuation of many family lines across generations has only been possible due to polygamy. Had this practice been forbidden, it is likely that large swathes of humanity would have faced extinction.

It will become clear through further reflection how this blessed institution has protected and preserved the human race, how it has rebuilt homes on the verge of ruin, and how it has helped maintain righteousness.

There are natural limitations in women with regard to their ability to fulfil the continual physical needs of men, such as during pregnancy, menstruation, or post-partum recovery. This blessed teaching provides a lawful means of fulfilling those needs, preserving both individual virtue and social harmony.

Moreover, there are further circumstances which can necessitate a second marriage: for example, when a woman becomes disfigured due to age or illness, thus rendering conjugal life untenable for her husband. If a man is disfigured, it does not harm the woman in the same way, for he retains the capacity for intimacy. If, however, he is impotent, the woman is granted the right to seek divorce, as per the injunctions of the Holy Qur'ān. But if a man remains capable of fulfilling his conjugal responsibilities and desires to marry again, the woman has no rightful cause to object, for she alone cannot satisfy his continuous needs. Thus, the man's right to marry again remains intact.

In short, this teaching is not merely permissible; it is a duty for those strong, God-fearing individuals who seek to safeguard their chastity and preserve righteousness.[1]

Maintaining Justice Between Wives is Essential

In relation to polygamy the Holy Qur'ān explicitly states two, three, or four. However in the same verse justice has also been instructed. If an individual cannot maintain justice and their love becomes one-sided, or if their income is insufficient, or if their faculties of virility are weak, then one must not marry more than one woman. In my estimation it is better for man to not put himself into trial by his own hands, because Allāh the Exalted states:

إِنَّ اللّٰهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُعْتَدِينَ

Surely, Allāh loves not the transgressors.

1. *Al-Ḥakam*, 28 January, 1903, p. 15

> ...Now, if an individual becomes preoccupied in wives just because he is permitted to marry more than one, then this too is wrong. All people are not able to understand the will of Allāh Almighty. This permission is not granted so that men may become so utterly infatuated with women that they are enslaved by their own carnal pleasures. In the same vein, however, God does not desire for man to adopt asceticism either, but rather, He desires for us to act in moderation and refrain from indulging in unnecessary preoccupations. If Allāh the Exalted makes an exception for the Prophets, peace be upon them, then those foolish ones who raise allegations against them are guilty of misleading others in error. One may observe in the Torah how the Jewish priests were given special privileges and the Brahmans from among the Hindus also enjoy special concessions. Therefore, it is foolish to object against any special exceptions made for the Prophets, peace be upon them, because their greatest distinction, which separates them from other ordinary people, is that they are Prophets.[1]

The Obligation to Fulfil the Rights of Women

The Promised Messiah ﷺ stated:

> I urge my Community to practise polygamy because it is mentioned in the *ḥadīth* that one should increase the Ummah through marriage and progeny. Moreover, there are certain people who are compelled by circumstances to marry more than one wife, either to safeguard themselves from indecency or wandering glances, or due to other needs for which the Sharīʿah grants permission. It must, however, be remembered

1. *Al-Ḥakam*, 6 March, 1898, p.2; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt* vol. 1, p. 242

that polygamy has been permitted as a remedy, not for the pursuit of pleasure or indulgence.

إِنَّمَا الأَعْمَالُ بِالنِّيَّاتِ

Actions are judged by intentions

If one marries with the sincere intention of raising pious offspring and increasing the servants of faith—not for personal gratification—then there is no harm in it. However, it is imperative that one maintains fairness in all matters between his wives, be it clothing, expenditure, food, housing, companionship, or even conjugal relations. Love cannot be regulated, for it lies beyond the control of man, but in all other worldly matters, equity is a binding obligation.

If one cannot fulfil these rights, then he should suffice with one wife. Indeed, fulfilling the rights due to women is a clear and categorical commandment. So much so, that if one fears he cannot do justice, then it is better for him to remain unmarried. It is a thousand times better to lead a life of hardship than to indulge in such pleasures as would invoke divine chastisement.

If one finds himself slipping and overtaken by carnal desires, and his eyes are constantly drawn to what is unlawful, then he may take another wife to save himself from falling into sin, but this should not come at the expense of his first wife's rights. Rather, he should be even more compassionate to the first wife, considering she bore the burdens of his youth and stood by him in his early days.

One must show such sympathy and honour to his first wife that, if he feels the need to marry again, yet fears that doing so would break her heart, then if he can endure this trial—without falling into sin and while suppressing his natural

inclinations—for the sake of her comfort, this restraint would be more virtuous. Indeed, it would be better for him not to marry again.

The purpose of the Quranic permission for polygamy is to keep you steadfast in righteousness, and to help you attain the higher spiritual objectives of marriage: producing righteous offspring, strengthening family ties, and fulfilling the rights of others.

Therefore, to achieve these noble aims, permission has been granted to marry one, two, three, or four wives. But if one is unable to treat them equitably, then marrying more than one becomes sinful and reprehensible. Instead of earning reward, he will incur punishment, for though he disliked one form of sin, he succumbed to another by acting unjustly.

To cause someone emotional anguish is a serious matter. And the relationship between parents and their daughters is extremely delicate. One need only imagine how many hopes and prayers fill the hearts of parents when they entrust their daughter to another's care.[1]

Polygamy as a Means of Preventing Sin

The Promised Messiah ﷺ stated:

For example, people object to polygamy and allege that Islām has permitted a man to marry a large number of women. I challenge any brave champion who raises allegations: can you show me where the Qur'ān says that a person must marry more than one woman? It is true, however, and perfectly normal, that in many circumstances an individual is faced with a genuine need

1. *Dhikr-e-Ḥabīb*, pp. 205–206

to marry more than one wife: for example, if a woman has lost her sight; or has been struck with a serious illness, which has rendered her unable to fulfil her domestic responsibilities and the husband out of sympathy does not wish to divorce her; or if a woman has become afflicted with dangerous ailments of the womb that make it impossible for her to fulfil the natural needs of her husband. Now, if permission to marry a second time had not been given, do tell me, would this not fuel the proliferation of fornication and immorality? Therefore, a religion or Sharī'ah which prohibits polygamy most certainly encourages fornication and immorality. However, Islām seeks to cleanse the world of immorality and promiscuity; and therefore, in such circumstances, permits a man to marry more than one wife. In the same vein, when a man is unable to have children, many disputes arise in the family of such a person after his death, and at times, the matter escalates to conflict, even murder and bloodshed. In such a case, it is necessary for such a man to marry more than one wife so that he may have children. In fact, when such circumstances arise, righteous and noble women grant permission themselves. The more one reflects over this matter, the more clear and logical it will appear. Christians have no right to criticise this permission, because those men whom the Christians hold as Prophets and divinely inspired, in fact, even the elders of the Messiah عليه السلام married seven hundred wives, while others are reported to have married three hundred. If the Christians respond by saying that these men were sinners and transgressors, they will have a difficult time explaining how the revelations that are attributed to them can be deemed true. There are certain denominations among the Christians who do not deem it permissible to dishonour the Prophets in this manner. The fact is, the Gospel does not even expound this teaching openly; the women of London have been forceful in opposing multiple marriages, and this has resulted in an aversion to the practice.

However, look at the outcomes for yourself. In London and Paris, what is chastity and piety worth?[1]

Objecting to Marriage with an Already Married Man Is Incorrect

A question was presented: 'If someone is already married, we will not give our daughter in marriage to him.'

The Promised Messiah ﷺ stated:

This means they wish to place a limit upon [the divine injunction]: مَثْنَىٰ وَثُلَٰثَ وَرُبَٰعَ[2] [Two, three, or four].[3]

How Much Mahr Should Be Given?

A person inquired about the appropriate amount for the *mahr*.[4]

The Promised Messiah ﷺ stated:

There is no objection to that which is agreed upon by mutual consent. The lawful *mahr* is not a fixed amount stipulated in the Quranic texts or in *aḥādīth*; rather, it refers to the standard rate of *mahr* as customarily observed by people at any given time.

The problem in our country is that people harbour ulterior motives. They fix the *mahr* at hundreds of thousands of rupees

1. *Al-Ḥakam*, 10 January 1899, p.8; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt* vol. 3, pp. 4–5
2. *Sūrah Fāṭir*, 35:2
3. *Al-Ḥakam*, 10 February 1907, p. 4
4. The obligatory gift or dower that a husband must give to his wife as part of the Islamic marriage contract. [Publisher]

merely as a display of ostentation. Such amounts are written only to intimidate and to subdue the husband. However, this practice carries other grave consequences: at times the bride's family does not intend to receive the *mahr*, nor does the husband intend to pay it.

In my view, if such a dispute arises, the husband should not be compelled to pay the *mahr* unless it is proven that he willingly consented to the stated amount. The decision should take into account his financial capacity, prevailing customs, and social norms, for the Sharīʿah and the law do not cater to ill intent.[1]

The Mahr Should Be Set According to the Husband's Means

QUESTION—What should be done if a woman does not renounce the *mahr* owed to her?

ANSWER—This is the woman's right, and it should be paid to her. Ideally, the husband should pay it at the time of marriage; otherwise, he should pay it afterwards. In Punjab and India, it is considered an act of nobility for women to waive the *mahr* owed to them by their husbands, either at the time of their death or sometime before it. This is merely a custom that reflects generosity of spirit.

1. *Badr*, 8 May 1903, p. 123

QUESTION—If a woman's *mahr* is two *man* (approximately 80 kilograms) of mosquito fat[1], how is it to be paid?

ANSWER—

لَا يُكَلِّفُ اللّٰهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا[2]

Allāh burdens not any soul beyond its capacity

This principle ought to be borne in mind when fixing the *mahr*, and due consideration should be given to the financial means of the husband. If he cannot afford 10 rupees, how can he possibly be expected to pay one hundred thousand rupees? As for mosquito fat, it is not a viable form of *mahr* at all, and falls under the category addressed by the aforementioned verse.[3]

Payment of Mahr Is Obligatory

A gentleman enquired that a man wished to have his *mahr* forgiven by his wife, but she would say, 'If you give half of your good deeds to me, then I will forgive it.' The husband kept saying that he had very few good deeds; in fact, he had none at all. Now the woman has passed away; what should the husband do?

The Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

1. The question regarding 'two *man* of mosquito fat' appears to have been posed in jest, as such a substance is not realistically obtainable. The Promised Messiah ﷺ nevertheless responded in a serious manner. [Publisher]
2. *Sūrah al-Baqarah*, 2:287
3. *Al-Badr*, 16 March, 1904, p. 6

> He should give her *mahr* to her heirs. If she has offspring, they too can take their share according to Islamic law among the heirs, and by the same principle, the husband can also take his share.[1]

The Mahr Cannot Be Waived Before It Is Paid

Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ II ﷺ stated: 'Forgoing the *mahr* before it is paid is meaningless. This money is the woman's right, and it ought to be given to her first. Then, if she so wishes, she may give it back. This is the verdict of the Promised Messiah ؑ. Once, the late Ḥakīm Faḍl Dīn told the Promised Messiah ؑ that his wives had relinquished their *mahr*.

The Promised Messiah ؑ said:

> First you ought to give them the *mahr*, and if they then give it back, then it will be accepted that they have relinquished their right.

'When he gave them *mahr*, they took it and said: "We will not forgo it."

'Some jurists are of the view that if the husband gives the *mahr* and it is returned to him instantly, then this is not permitted. Rather, if it first stays in the wife's possession for some time and is then returned, it is permitted.'[2]

Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ II ﷺ wrote in his judgement of a case: 'I hereby rule that the full amount of the *mahr*, i.e. 500,000 rupees, is due to the claimant, as this is a woman's right as per the Sharī'ah. In some

1. *Al-Badr*, March 1905, p. 2
2. *Farmūdāt Ḥaḍrat Muṣleḥ Mau'ūd Darbārah Fiqhī Masā'il*, p. 209

instances, her forsaking the *mahr* cannot be accepted, because, in view of the principles of Sharīʿah, her being dependent [on her husband] significantly detracts from the weight of her decision to forsake. This is the verdict of the Promised Messiah ﷺ; therefore, it is meaningless to forsake the *mahr* before it is paid, particularly since it is widely acknowledged in our country that the *mahr* is just symbolic. In fact, some women consider it an affront to accept the *mahr*.'[1]

The Announcement of the Nikāḥ is Necessary

Miāṅ Allāh Bakhsh of Amritsar enquired: 'Your Holiness, what is your opinion on musical instruments being played during the wedding ceremony?'

The Promised Messiah ﷺ stated:

> The jurists have deemed it permissible to announce the *Nikāḥ* [Islamic marriage] by beating a *daff*[2], as such an announcement can later serve as testimony in the event of litigation. What matters is the underlying purpose: is it being done to make the *Nikāḥ* publicly known, or merely to show off? It has often been observed that marriages conducted in secrecy lead to complications. When issues later arise, questions are raised about the validity of the *Nikāḥ*. Hence, the use of the *daff* or other simple means of announcement may prevent such problems and provide public proof of the *Nikāḥ*. In such cases, playing musical instruments is not forbidden.

1. *Farmūdāt Ḥaḍrat Muṣleḥ Mauʿūd Darbārah Fiqhī Masāʾil*, p. 209
2. The *daff* is a simple, single-sided frame drum traditionally used in the Arab world. It is typically played with the hands and produces a soft, rhythmic beat. [Publisher]

The same rationale lies behind the distribution of sweets at the time of engagement: to inform others and avert future confusion. Unfortunately, these customs have now lost their original intent and have become hollow formalities, often mixed with other practices. These acts, when done with the right purpose, are not mere customs; they are essential for affirming the marriage. Know that the Sharīʿah does not object to any act that benefits mankind, for its entire purpose is the betterment of humanity.

Fireworks, dancing, and similar practices are strictly prohibited because they are not beneficial, and in fact, are harmful. Playing instruments is only permissible when the aim is to publicly announce the *Nikāḥ* and preserve legitimate relationships. Without such recognition, the risk of adultery increases, and Allāh has expressed immense displeasure at adultery... Therefore, some form of announcement for the *Nikāḥ* is absolutely necessary.

If, however, the purpose behind such practices is display, immorality, or anything contrary to righteousness and *taqwā*, then they are impermissible. The Sharīʿah is founded on ease, not difficulty:

لَا يُكَلِّفُ اللهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا[1]

Allāh burdens not any soul beyond its capacity.

There is no categorical evidence declaring musical instruments to be unlawful. The reason for their impermissibility lies in their common association with ostentation and immoral gatherings. Since the jurists have allowed the *daff*, and the default ruling on

1. *Sūrah al-Baqarah*, 2:287

> worldly matters is permissibility, it is therefore permitted to use it for announcing a marriage.[1]

Walīmah

The definition of *Walīmah* was also inquired from the Promised Messiah ﷺ. In this regard he responded:

> *Walīmah* entails that the one who is having his *Nikāḥ* [getting married], feeds his friends after the *Nikāḥ*.[2]

Similarly, on another occasion, the Promised Messiah ﷺ stated:

> Take the example of marriage. There is no expense involved in this. Both sides agree and accept, and the *Nikāḥ* takes place. After this the *walīmah,* a practice of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, but if one does not have the means, he is excused.[3]

The Permissibility of Girls Singing at Weddings

The Promised Messiah ﷺ was asked: 'What is the ruling on girls singing at the house of the groom's family or the bride's family?'

The Promised Messiah ﷺ stated:

> The ruling is the same as mentioned earlier: if the songs are not indecent or immoral, there is no harm in them. When the Messenger of Allah ﷺ came to Madīnah, the girls welcomed

1. *Al-Ḥakam*, 10 February 1907, p. 11
2. *Al-Ḥakam*, 10 February 1906, p. 11
3. *Badr*, 6 February 1908, p. 6

him with songs of praise. On one occasion, a companion recited verses of poetry in a melodious voice, and Ḥaḍrat ʻUmar ؓ stopped him. The companion replied: 'I recited these verses in the presence of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and he did not stop me.' In fact, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ once heard him and said: '*raḥimahullāh*' [May Allāh have mercy on him]. Whoever the Holy Prophet ﷺ uttered these words about would attain martyrdom. Thus, as long as the songs are not indecent or immoral, they are not forbidden. However, men should not be present in such gatherings of women.

Remember: anything with even a hint of indecency or immorality is forbidden. [A Persian poet states:]

بزہد وورع کوش وصدق وصفا ولیکن میفزائے بر مصطفی

You may strive to advance in abstinence, piety and virtue as much as you like;

But you can never surpass the Chosen One [*The Prophet* ﷺ]

These are matters for which one can take a verdict from their own heart. Whatever is contrary to righteousness and divine pleasure, and brings no benefit to creation, is forbidden. One who is extravagant commits a great sin; one who is ostentatious also commits a sin. In short, anything tainted by extravagance, ostentation, indecency, or the entailing of harm to creation, is forbidden; and whatever is free from these traits is not forbidden, for the standard ruling in all matters is one of permissibility.[1]

1. *Al-Ḥakam*, 17 October, 1902, p. 8

Playing Musical Instruments and Setting Off Fireworks at Nikāḥ Ceremonies

A question was asked regarding the use of musical instruments and fireworks at the time of a *Nikāḥ*.

The Promised Messiah ﷺ stated:

> Our religion is based on ease, not stringency, and it is necessary to bear in mind that إِنَّمَا الْأَعْمَالُ بِالنِّيَّاتِ [Deeds are based on intentions]. Musical instruments were not generally prevalent in the era of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. A *Nikāḥ* announcement that is free from immorality and indecency is permissible; indeed, in certain cases, it becomes necessary due to marital disputes being brought before the courts, which often have implications for inheritance. Therefore, it is imperative that the marriage is announced. However, the announcement must not include anything that may give rise to indecency or immoral behaviour. Displays involving vulgar dancing or fireworks fall into the category of indecency and extravagance, and are therefore not permissible.

The Promised Messiah ﷺ was then asked a further question: Can musical instruments be played when the procession departs from the groom's house or after the announcement of the *Nikāḥ*?

The Promised Messiah ﷺ replied:

> It is pointless to ask such questions and delve into such details. You should reflect upon your intentions. If the aim is to make a display of grandeur, then it is excessive. But if the aim is merely to announce the marriage, then there is no harm in playing instruments when setting off from the house. Musical instruments

were used during Islamic battles as a form of announcement, and this too was for a purpose.[1]

Official Registration of the Mahr

Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ writes: 'This humble one affirms that when His Holiness ؑ gave our sister Mubārakah Begum in marriage to Nawāb Muḥammad 'Alī Khān, the *mahr* was fixed at 56,000 rupees. His Holiness ؑ officially registered the *mahr* agreement, and numerous people were recorded as witnesses to it. Following the demise of His Holiness ؑ, when our younger sister Amatul-Ḥafīẓ Begum was married to Khān Muḥammad 'Abdullāh Khān, the *mahr* was fixed at 15,000 rupees, and the *mahr* document was again officially registered.

However, when we three brothers were married during the lifetime of the Promised Messiah ؑ, the *mahr* was not documented for any of us, nor was it officially registered. The *mahr* was fixed at 1000 rupees each. In truth, the amount of *mahr* would mostly be fixed in view of the husband's financial circumstances, and to some extent, the financial circumstances of the wife. The documenting and registration of the *mahr* depends on personal circumstances.

Since Nawāb Muḥammad 'Alī Khān Sahib's property was not situated in an area ruled by the British Government, but was in an independent state, there was the potential risk of losing his property through disputation. Therefore, His Holiness ؑ deemed it necessary to officially document and register the *mahr*. In normal circumstances, even if it is not officially registered, it is better to at least record the *mahr* in writing and have testimonies of credible people attached to it. The reason for this is that the *mahr* is a loan that the husband is

1. *Al-Ḥakam*, 24 April 1903, p. 10

obligated to pay, and similar to any other loan, it is generally advisable for the *mahr* to be documented in writing.'[1]

The Stipulation of Additional Conditions at the Time of the Nikāḥ Ceremony

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ writes that Miāṅ Khair-ud-Dīn of Sikhwan ؓ informed him in a letter: 'Tābī was a maid in the house of the Promised Messiah ؑ. A marriage was arranged between one of her granddaughters and a man named Faqīr Muḥammad from Qadian. His Holiness ؑ instructed Faqīr Muḥammad to bring stamped paper, and when he brought it, His Holiness ؑ drafted a statement in Faqīr Muḥammad's name in my presence in the Round Room. The statement read: "I marry this woman and I bear the responsibility of paying the *mahr* of 500 rupees and her expenses. I will not take another wife in marriage without her consent." (Or perhaps it was written: "I will not take another wife in marriage during her lifetime.") Then His Holiness ؑ gave me the statement to transcribe onto the stamp paper, so I did.'

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ added: 'It is permissible to lay down additional conditions at the time of *Nikāḥ*, and the Promised Messiah ؑ has stated:

> A condition may be laid down by the woman at the time of *Nikāḥ* that "my husband will not marry another wife during my lifetime," as polygamy is permitted in Islām, but it is not an injunction.'[2]

1. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 1, pp. 338–339
2. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 1, p. 590

The Promised Messiah ﷺ Acting as the Walī for a Woman

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ writes that Miāṅ Raḥmatullāh, son of Miāṅ ʻAbdullāh of Sanaur ؓ, informed him in a letter: ʻḤaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ I ؓ delivered the sermon on the occasion of my *Nikāḥ*, and the Promised Messiah ﷺ himself carried out the *ījāb qabūl* [the declaration of offer and acceptance] on behalf of my wife, because he was her *walī* [guardian]. I consider myself extremely fortunate for this and am grateful to Allāh the Exalted. His Holiness ﷺ must have officiated many marriages, but I am not aware of anyone else being treated in the same way. This was all due to the Promised Messiah's kind consideration for my late father.'[1]

Remarriage Is Preferable for a Widow

The Promised Messiah ﷺ once specifically gave advice to women, stating:

> If a woman's husband dies, even if that woman is young, marrying another husband is considered to be so bad as if it is a great burdensome sin. And she remains a widow and childless all her life, thinking that she has done something highly meritorious and becoming of a chaste wife. However, for her to remain a widow is a severe sin. It is a highly meritorious act for women who become widows, to marry and have another husband.
>
> Such a woman is indeed very blessed and righteous who, being a widow and of older age, fearful of evil thoughts, marries someone and does not fear the curses of evil women. Women who hinder obedience to the commands of God and

1. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 2, pp. 125–126

> His Messenger are themselves accursed and disciples of the devil through whom he does his work. A woman who loves the Messenger of Allah ﷺ should find an honest and righteous husband after becoming a widow and remember that being engaged in the service of her husband is a hundred times better than remaining engaged in *waẓīfahs* [repetitive reciting of prayers] as a widow.[1]

Someone's questions were presented to the Promised Messiah ؑ: 'In what situations is the *Nikāḥ* of widows obligatory? At the time of her *Nikāḥ* should her age, children, existing property, and living expenses be considered or not? Meaning, is the widow compelled to marry in all circumstances even if she is aged, or has many children, or has sufficient wealth?'

The Promised Messiah ؑ responded:

> The injunction concerning the *Nikāḥ* of a widow is the same as that for a virgin. As some nations consider the *Nikāḥ* of a widow dishonourable, and this evil custom has spread widely, hence, a command has been given for the *Nikāḥ* of a widow, but this does not mean that every widow must be married. Only they will be wedded that are capable of marriage and for whom *Nikāḥ* is necessary. Some women are widowed at an old age, and some have other circumstances which inhibit a *Nikāḥ*. For example, a widow has a disease that makes her incapable of marriage, or she has many children and relations that her state is such that she cannot contemplate another husband.
>
> In such situations, there is no compulsion that a woman must be unnecessarily bound to marriage. However, this evil

1. *Al-Ḥakam*, 10 July, 1902, p. 7; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt* vol. 8, p. 417

> custom must be eradicated that a widow is forcefully kept without a husband all her life.[1]

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ writes that Mughalānī Nūr Jān, wife of Mirzā Ghulāmullāh, informed him in writing through *Lajna Ima'illah* Qadian: 'Four women once came from Peshawar and asked about the issue of widow remarriage. Two of them were young and financially well-off widows. I took them to the Promised Messiah ؑ. He said:

> Young women should be married.

I said: 'What if she does not wish to marry? Or if she has young children, who will raise them?' He stated:

> If a woman is absolutely certain that she can live a life of chastity and piety, then she is allowed not to marry. However, even then, it is better for her to marry.[2]

A Sikh Woman May Remain in Matrimony With a Muslim

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ writes that Miāṅ Khair-ud-Dīn of Sikhwan ؓ informed him in a letter: 'When Sardār Sundar Singh of Dharam Kot Baggah (Batāla) accepted Islām, he was given the Islamic name Faḍl Ḥaqq. His wife, however, insisted on remaining upon the faith of her forefathers, that is, the Sikh religion. Sardār Faḍl Ḥaqq Khān desired that she accept Islām. One day, the Promised Messiah ؑ said:

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1. *Badr*, 10 October 1907, p. 11
2. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 2, p. 231

> If she does not wish to accept Islām, then she is not compelled to do so. She may continue to live in your home and follow her religion. This is permitted in Islām.

Attempts were made to bring her back, but she refused to return to live with Sardār Faḍl Ḥaqq. Eventually, Faḍl Ḥaqq married again in Lahore and had children from that marriage.'[1]

The Marriage of Sāḥibzādah Mirzā Mubārak Aḥmad at a Young Age

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ﷺ writes that the wife of the late Dr. Khalīfah Rashīduddin informed him in writing through the *Lajnah Imā'illāh* in Qadian: 'When the marriage of Mirzā Mubārak Aḥmad to Maryam Begum, the daughter of the late Dr. 'Abdusattār Shāh (the wife of the Second Khalīfah), took place, I had come for a visit from the city of Agra. The marriage ceremony was held after the *Maghrib* Prayer. When I came to offer congratulations, a lady came to the Promised Messiah ﷺ, carrying Maryam Begum in her arms. He was resting on a wooden bed in the courtyard of the house of Umm Nāṣir. He placed his hand on the head of Maryam Begum and smiled.'[2]

Remarrying After Divorce

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ﷺ writes that Rasūl Bībī, widow of Ḥāfiẓ Ḥamīd 'Alī, informed him through Maulawī 'Abd-ur-Raḥmān Jutt: 'Once, the Promised Messiah ﷺ came to our village, Kuralian. Miāṅ Ghulām Dīn from the village of Ghulām Nabī had

1. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol.2, p. 257
2. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 2, pp. 244–235

divorced his wife named Ḥassū, and the Promised Messiah ﷺ had come there to reconcile between them. He stayed there, reunited them in marriage, and continued advising them until late at night.”’[1]

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ writes that Dr. Mīr Muḥammad Ismā‘īl ؓ informed him: ‘When the late Maulawī ‘Abdul-Karīm remarried for the second time, he divorced his wife shortly afterwards for some reason. After a considerable period, perhaps close to a year, the Promised Messiah ﷺ wished to reunite that lady with Maulawī ‘Abdul-Karīm. Upon investigation, it was discovered that the divorce was not irrevocable (*bā’in*) but revocable (*raj‘ī*). Consequently, their marriage was officiated once again, according to the desire of the Promised Messiah ﷺ.’

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ further states: ‘This humble one affirms that Maulawī ‘Abdul-Karīm did not have children from his first wife, and the Promised Messiah ﷺ desired that he should have children. Therefore, he encouraged him to marry again.’[2]

The Practice of Ḥalālah is Unlawful

The Promised Messiah ﷺ stated:

> The practice of *ḥalālah*[3] was prevalent in the Arabian Peninsula before Islām, but Islām unequivocally prohibited this vile

1. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 2, pp. 116–117
2. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 2, p. 761
3. A practice among certain Muslims in which a female divorcee marries another man, consummates the marriage, and then gets a divorce, so that it becomes permissible for her to remarry a previous husband. Such pre-planned marriages of convenience are forbidden in Islām and the Holy Prophet ﷺ has sent curse on those who engage in this unlawful practice. [Publisher]

practice. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ cursed those who engaged in *ḥalālah*. It is narrated from Ibn ʻUmar that the act of engaging in temporary marriage is akin to adultery. It is also narrated from ʻUmar that those who practice *ḥalālah* should be stoned. If a person who practices *ḥalālah* marries a divorced woman, his contract of marriage will not be valid until he marries her legitimately. However, if he intends to marry her temporarily and then divorces her to make her lawful for her previous husband [the one who divorced her], such a marriage can never be valid. The one who engages in this act is no different from someone committing adultery with that woman, and the one who encourages her to engage in such an act is pushing her towards adultery.

In short, *ḥalālah* is strictly forbidden according to the consensus of Islamic scholars. Imāms and scholars of the past, such as Qatādah, ʻAṭā, Imām Ḥasan, Ibrāhīm al-Nakhaʻī, Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī, Mujāhid, Shaʻbī, Saʻīd ibn Musayyib, Imām Mālik, Laith, Thawrī, Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, and others from among the Companions, their successors (*tābiʻīn*), and those who followed the successors (*tabaʻ tābiʻīn*), all affirm its prohibition. In Islamic Sharīʻah and Arabic lexicography, the term '*zawj*' is used for a person who solemnises a marriage with the intention of making the woman his legitimate wife, considering all rights, and ensuring that the marriage contract is genuine and real, not a deceptive manoeuvre for someone else. As for what is mentioned in the Qur'ān: حَتَّى تَنْكِحَ زَوْجًا غَيْرَهُ[1] [until she marries another husband], its meaning is that just as marriage contracts are entered into, in universal principle with good intentions for one's own benefit, similarly, if a person does not marry the divorced woman and does not divorce her willingly, the first husband is not allowed to marry her again. (Note: I

1. *Sūrat al-Baqarah*, 2:231

have previously mentioned that if the three divorces are pronounced within three periods of purity (*ṭuhr*), meaning within three consecutive menstrual cycles, then the woman will be permanently separated from her husband. However, if her other husband also divorces her by his own choice in this specific situation, only then can she remarry her first husband. Otherwise, it is not permissible. This condition aims to discourage divorce, allowing it only in cases where someone is faced with a serious issue and willingly accepts the permanent separation. The three-month period has been specified because, if someone intends to divorce in a fit of anger, the anger subsides within this time frame.)

So, the verse does not imply that this person is paving the way for the previous husband, and he should not marry her with a sincere intention. The marriage will only be valid if the individual undertakes it with a strong and lasting determination, considering his legitimate goals. If someone marries through some trickery, the marriage will not be valid in Islamic terms and will be considered adultery. Those who seek to associate Islām with the charge of *ḥalālah* should remember that this is not the doctrine of Islām. *Ḥalālah* is unequivocally prohibited according to the Qur'ān, *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī*, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, and other authentic narrations. Those who commit it deserve the punishment of a fornicator.[1]

Giving a Gift to the Person Who Officiated the Marriage

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ narrates that his mother told him: 'The Promised Messiah ؑ was informed [by divine revelation] prior to our marriage, that his second marriage would take

1. *Ārya Dharam*, *Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 10, pp. 66–67

place in the city of Delhi. He mentioned this to Maulawī Muḥammad Ḥussain of Batala, who, at the time, kept a record of girls belonging to the Ahl-e-Ḥadīth denomination. He put forward the name of Mīr Nāṣir Nawāb, who was closely acquainted with him and belonged to the Ahl-e-Ḥadīth. The Promised Messiah ﷺ wrote a letter to Mīr Nāṣir Nawāb. Initially, Mīr Sahib declined the proposal due to the difference in age, but eventually he consented. The Promised Messiah ﷺ travelled to Delhi to marry me, accompanied by Shaikh Ḥāmid ʻAlī and Lālah Malāwa Mal. Maulawī Nadhīr Ḥussain officiated the marriage on Monday, 27th Muḥarram, 1302 AH, and I was 18 years old at the time. After the *Nikāḥ*, the Promised Messiah ﷺ presented five rupees and a prayer rug as a gift to Maulawī Nadhīr Ḥussain.'

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ further states: 'This humble one affirms that at that time, the Promised Messiah ﷺ was approximately 50 years old. My mother told me: "Your uncle [the elder brother of your father] passed away a year or a year and a half before my marriage." This humble one further affirms that my uncle passed away in 1883, during the final period of the publication of *Barāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya*. As for my mother's marriage, it took place in November 1884. I learned from my mother that it was initially decided that the marriage would take place on a Sunday, but he [the Promised Messiah ﷺ] requested that it took place on a Monday.'[1]

Relations Between a Husband and His Wife During the Menstrual Cycle

OBJECTION—Muslims do not isolate themselves from women during menstruation.

1. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 1, p. 51

In response, the Promised Messiah ﷺ stated:

> I fail to understand the basis of this objection raised by such fabricators. Why do they not fear Allāh the Exalted when uttering falsehoods? Allāh the Exalted says:
>
> فَاعْتَزِلُوا النِّسَآءَ فِي الْمَحِيضِ وَلَا تَقْرَبُوهُنَّ حَتَّى يَطْهُرْنَ[1]
>
> That is, avoid intimacy with women during their menstrual cycle and do not approach them with the intention of intercourse until they have become pure. If the Vedas contain an equally clear instruction for this separation, let someone come forward and show it to us.
>
> This verse, however, does not mean that merely touching one's wife with one's hand—without the intention of intercourse—is also forbidden. To exaggerate the matter to the point where basic civility is disrupted, and to consider a menstruating woman as though her touch were venomous and instantly fatal, is the height of ignorance and foolishness.
>
> If touching a woman without intent of intercourse were also forbidden, poor women would be subjected to immense suffering: if one of them were to fall ill, no one could take her pulse; if she collapsed, no one would lift her; if she were in need of a massage for pain in her limbs, no one would attend to her; and if she were to die, no one would bury her, for they would be regarded as impure to such an extent that even touching them would be considered prohibited.
>
> All such ideas are the ignorant notions of foolish people. The truth is that it is only intercourse that is forbidden to a

1. *Sūrah Al-Baqarah*, 2:223

husband during menstruation. As for love towards one's wife and the expressions thereof, these are not forbidden in the slightest.[1]

Is Marriage by Exchange Permissible if the Mahr Has Been Given?

Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ II ؓ states: 'Islām indeed disapproves of a marriage in which one gives his daughter in marriage to the son of another person on the condition that the other person, in return, marries their daughter to his son. However, as the Promised Messiah ؑ has explained, if the decisions of both parties take place at different times and there is no stipulation that the daughter's marriage is conditional upon exchange, then there is no harm in it.'[2]

Prohibition of Temporary Marriage

The Promised Messiah ؑ stated:

God Almighty has only instructed us in the Holy Qur'ān to contract recognised, formal marriage. However, a sect from within the Shī'ah school of thought practises temporary marriage—meaning, a marriage that is contracted for a fixed duration, after which divorce takes place. They refer to this practice as *Mut'ah*. Yet, they have no evidence for this from the Word of God Almighty.

Despite this, *Mut'ah* still falls under the form of marriage, albeit one in which the time of divorce is predetermined. In

1. *Ārya Dharam*, *Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 10, pp. 48–49
2. *Al-Fazl*, 15 January 1918, p. 4

contrast, the practice of *Niyog*[1] has no relation to divorce whatsoever.[2]

The Promised Messiah ﷺ stated:

In our religion, a *Nikāḥ* [of this type] where the time of divorce is fixed is prohibited. This is categorically forbidden by the Holy Qur'ān. In pre-Islamic Arabia such marriages were practiced but were prohibited in the Holy Qur'ān and have become unlawful after the revelation of the Holy Qur'ān. Today, only a few Shī'ah sects follow it, but they are caught in a custom of ignorance. It is not justified for a learned person to point out the faults of someone else in order to cover up his own faults.[3]

Islām Has Never Permitted Temporary Marriage

The Promised Messiah ﷺ stated:

Mut'ah refers to a marriage contract that is entered into for a fixed, limited duration. It is known that *Mut'ah* was permitted during the early days of Islām for only three days, at a time when the Muslim population was extremely small. Authentic *aḥādīth* confirm that this allowance was similar to the concession of consuming carrion in cases of extreme hunger, and just like such desperate allowances, it was later prohibited, permanently, similar to the prohibitions of pork and alcohol.

1. The Arya Samāj practice allowing a married woman to indulge in conjugal relations with other men in order to have children. [Publisher]
2. *Nasīm-e-Da'wat, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 19, pp. 442–443
3. *Sanātan Dharam*, *Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 19, p. 470; Eng Trans.: *The Sanātan Faith*, p. 11

There is absolutely no basis for *Mutʿah* within the Quranic injunctions of marriage. The Holy Qur'ān, in its guidance on marriage, has clearly laid out the rights of the husband over the wife and of the wife over the husband, but nowhere does it mention the regulations of *Mutʿah*. Had *Mutʿah* been a valid institution in Islām, its rules and procedures would have been recorded in the same detailed manner as those of formal marriage. Any sincere reader of the Qur'ān and Ḥadīth must recognise that no trace of the regulations of *Mutʿah* is to be found in either of these sources.

It is now abundantly clear that if temporary marriage (*Mutʿah*) were truly sanctioned by the Islamic Sharīʿah, then its rulings would have been documented and it would have been mentioned in relation to matters such as inheritance. The absence of such rulings makes it manifest that *Mutʿah* is not part of Islām. Even if we accept a few isolated *aḥādīth*, they only show that, due to extreme necessity, some companions were permitted to contract *Mutʿah* when far from their homes and wives, and that too only once and for a maximum of three days. Afterwards, it was prohibited permanently, just as pork and alcohol are prohibited. Exceptional circumstances do not establish a lasting ruling within Islamic law, and so the rulings of *Mutʿah* were not preserved in either the Qur'ān or Ḥadīth.

In reality, *Mutʿah* was a common and widespread practice in Arabia before Islām. The Islamic Sharīʿah came to reform Arab customs gradually. When a few companions found themselves in need of *Mutʿah*, the Holy Prophet ﷺ permitted it administratively and as a personal judgement (*ijtihād*), in view of the then-prevailing customs, particularly because no divine revelation had yet been revealed prohibiting it. However, a few days later, detailed commandments on marriage were revealed that directly contradicted and nullified the institution of *Mutʿah*, and these verses decisively established its prohibition.

It is worth emphasising that even though *Mut'ah* was briefly allowed for three days, this permission was not granted through divine revelation or inspiration. Rather, it was an existing societal custom, and the Holy Prophet ﷺ, in a moment of exigency, considered it to be a form of temporary marriage and not an unlawful or immoral act. *Mut'ah* does not resemble a situation in which a married woman engages in sexual relations with a stranger while her husband is still alive. Rather, it involved contracting a marriage with a virgin or a widow for a limited time. The Holy Prophet ﷺ allowed it in that specific context, judging it not to be inherently contrary to the spirit of marriage. Nonetheless, God Almighty intended to uproot *Mut'ah* as He did hundreds of other improper customs of pre-Islamic Arabia, and thus declared it forbidden until the Day of Judgement.

Moreover, it should be borne in mind that *Mut'ah* bears no resemblance to the practice of *Niyog*. In *Niyog*, a married woman is made to engage in intimate relations with another man while her husband is still alive. In contrast, *Mut'ah* involves a woman, either a virgin or a widow, who is not married to anyone else at the time. She enters into a marriage contract for a specified duration. One must reflect: in what way does *Mut'ah* resemble *Niyog*? What connection do the two have?[1]

Islām Did Not Promote Temporary Marriage

The Promised Messiah عليه السلام stated in response to objections raised by Christians:

Ignorant Christians do not know that Islām did not promote *Mut'ah*, rather it reduced it in the world as much as possible.

1. *Ārya Dharam*, *Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 10, pp. 67–70

Before Islām, the practice of *Mut'ah* was common not only in Arabia but in many nations of the world. It was a practice whereby one contracted a marriage for a specific period of time and divorced the woman at the end of it. One of the reasons why this practice was so widespread was that people who went to other countries with armies, or who stayed abroad for long periods of time for trade, needed time-limited marriage, or *Mut'ah*.

Sometimes the cause was also that the women of foreign lands would inform beforehand of their unwillingness to return with them; therefore, the wedding was contracted with the intent that divorce would become effective on a specific date. Hence, it is true that some Muslims also acted upon this ancient custom on one two occasions.[1] However, this was not on the basis of any revelation or Divine communication, but only as a casual following of an ancient custom that was in vogue among the people.

Nevertheless, *Mut'ah* means nothing more than a marriage contracted up to a specified date. Ultimately, it was forbidden by Divine revelation.[2]

An Adopted Son Does Not Become a Biological Son

In response to the objections of the Āryas, the Promised Messiah علیہ السلام stated:

1. Note: This act was resorted to at a time of extreme need, just as someone dying of hunger may eat carrion. [Footnote by the Promised Messiah علیہ السلام]
2. *Nūrul-Qur'ān* Number II, *Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 9, p. 450; Eng. Trans.: *The Light of the Holy Qur'ān*, pp. 154–155

We now turn to refuting the objection raised by the Āryas, which is filled with fabrication and falsehood, concerning the marriage of Ḥaḍrat Zainab ؓ. These objectors have based their criticism on two claims:

(1) If an adopted son divorces his wife, then it is not permissible for the adopter to marry her. (2) Zainab was displeased with the idea of marrying the Holy Prophet ﷺ, and when she expressed her reasonable reluctance, the Holy Prophet ﷺ allegedly fabricated a claim of divine revelation to justify the marriage.

We respond to both these claims as follows:

The reply to the first point is that the belief held by some—that an adopted son becomes equivalent to a biological son, and is therefore subject to all the legal rulings applicable to real sons—is entirely false and baseless. The laws of nature themselves refute this absurd claim. The organs of a child are derived from the organs of the biological father and reflect his qualities. If the biological father is white like an Englishman, the child inherits that whiteness; and if the father is dark-skinned, the child too shares in that complexion. If the father suffers from a hereditary disease, the child is also afflicted. In short, the features and traits of the child are exclusively derived from the biological father, just as wheat grows from wheat and chickpeas from chickpeas.

Thus, to consider someone born of one man's sperm as the child of another is a denial of fundamental reality. Real facts cannot be altered by mere verbal claims. If someone were to say that he mistook rat poison for chalk, the poison would not become chalk simply due to his belief. And if he consumes it under that misconception, he would certainly die.

So when God Almighty created Person X from the sperm of Person Y, and made him Person Y's son, no amount of human pretension can turn him into the son of Person Z. If Person Y

and Person Z are sitting together and a decree is issued ordering the execution of Person X's father, who is his biological father, Person Z would immediately disclaim any paternal relationship with Person X, saying, 'He is Person Y's son, not mine.'

It is clear that no one can have two fathers. If the adopter becomes the actual father, on what basis is the real, biological father stripped of his paternity? In summary, the notion that someone can become another's child merely by declaration is among the most egregious distortions of God's natural order. As long as reason cannot accept that an adopted child becomes identical to a real child, those who raise objections must first prove this claim before challenging us.

In reality, the burden of objection lies on them: how can the sperm of one man take on the legal characteristics and relational consequences of someone else's son? First resolve this absurdity, then come forward with your criticism.

It should also be noted that Zaid, the first husband of Zainab, was formerly a slave of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, whom he had graciously freed. The Holy Prophet ﷺ would occasionally refer to him as his 'son' in order to remove the social stigma of slavery. Out of honour and high-mindedness, the Prophet adopted this wise approach to elevate Zaid's status in society. However, a corrupt custom had taken hold in Arabia whereby if a teacher, master, or owner verbally referred to someone as their son, people would consider him a true son.

This custom was baseless and harmful, built on a foolish delusion: that all human beings are members of a single human family, so those of the same age are 'brothers', the elders 'fathers', and the young 'sons'. But would anyone claim that if a Hindu respectfully calls an elder 'father', or a peer 'brother', then all the legal consequences of familial relations follow from those words? Would his friend's daughter then become forbidden for him to marry, having now become his 'sister'? Would

inheritance rights follow from such a casual declaration? Would he now be her heir, or she, his?

If this were true, it would become absurdly easy for any opportunist to falsely claim that a childless wealthy man is their 'father', in order to inherit his entire estate. If verbal claims alone could establish parenthood, what would stop someone from becoming a father merely by declaration, just as they claim to become sons?

Indeed, it would be more fitting for those in need to abandon theft and robbery and simply declare publicly that a childless man with property worth hundreds of thousands or millions is their father. If such a person truly became their father by verbal claim, then by the rules of their religion, they would inherit everything after his death. But if no such inheritance results, it must be accepted that this belief is false.

Similarly, people can deceive others by adopting someone and pretending a false bond exists.[1]

Marriage is Permissible with the Divorced Wife of the Adopter

The Promised Messiah ﷺ stated:

God Almighty has already declared in the Holy Qur'ān that the wives of your sons who are from your own loins are forbidden to you, as stated in the verse:

وَحَلَآئِلُ أَبْنَآئِكُمُ الَّذِينَ مِنْ أَصْلَابِكُمْ[2]

1. *Ārya Dharam*, *Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 10, pp. 55–58
2. *Sūrah an-Nisā'*, 4:24

Meaning only the wives of your sons that are from your loins are forbidden to you.

Since this ruling had already been revealed in the Qur'ān, and the incident concerning Zainab occurred later, it is evident to every fair-minded person that the Qur'ān had already legislated on the matter beforehand. Open the Qur'ān and observe: the story of Zainab appears in the later part of the Qur'ān, whereas the law stating that the wife of an adopted son is not prohibited appears earlier. This verse was revealed before Zainab had even married Zaid. Open the Qur'ān and read both verses for yourself, and reflect with a sense of shame.

Then, in *Sūrah al-Aḥzāb*, God Almighty states:

مَا جَعَلَ اللّٰهُ لِرَجُلٍ مِنْ قَلْبَيْنِ فِي جَوْفِهِ وَمَا جَعَلَ أَزْوَاجَكُمُ
اللَّائِي تُظَاهِرُونَ مِنْهُنَّ أُمَّهَاتِكُمْ وَمَا جَعَلَ أَدْعِيَاءَكُمْ أَبْنَاءَكُمْ
ذَلِكُمْ قَوْلُكُمْ بِأَفْوَاهِكُمْ وَاللّٰهُ يَقُولُ الْحَقَّ وَهُوَ يَهْدِي السَّبِيلَ*
ادْعُوهُمْ لِآبَائِهِمْ هُوَ أَقْسَطُ عِنْدَ اللّٰهِ[1]

Meaning, Allāh has not made for any man two hearts in his breast, so if you say to someone that 'you are my heart', it does not mean you now have two hearts. The heart remains one. Likewise, those [wives] from who you keep away, by describing them as your mothers, are not your mothers, and in the same way, Allāh has not made your adopted sons your true sons. That is merely a word of your mouths; but Allāh speaks the truth, and He guides to the right path. Call them by the names of their fathers. That is more equitable in the sight of Allāh.

This is the teaching of the Qur'ān. Since God Almighty wished to establish a practical example through His Prophet ﷺ

1. *Sūrah al-Aḥzāb,* 33:5–6

to remove the remnants of this ignorant custom from people's hearts, He did so through the case of the Holy Prophet's freed slave, whose marriage became strained and eventually ended in divorce. When her husband divorced her, God Almighty arranged her marriage with the Holy Prophet ﷺ.

This arrangement does not mean that the Holy Prophet ﷺ forcibly brought Zainab into his home, against her will. This accusation is the fabrication of those who lie without any fear of God Almighty. If their claim is sincere, let them bring evidence from authentic *aḥādīth* or from the Qur'ān itself. They are unaware that Islām strictly forbids any official from conducting a marriage without the mutual consent of both parties.

In summary, no one becomes the son of another, nor does a woman become someone's mother, merely by verbal declaration. We ask the Āryas: if one of you, in a moment of anger or mischief, calls his wife his mother, does she thereby become unlawful to him, and is divorce automatically established? This belief is clearly false, for according to Ārya doctrine, divorce does not occur under any circumstance, even if a man were to call his wife his mother or grandmother a thousand times.

So if a woman does not become a mother or grandmother by mere words, how can it be accepted that the sperm of one man becomes the son of another just by verbal assertion? How then can the wife of such a man become forbidden to the adopter? There can be no contradiction in the word of God. Therefore, just as a woman does not become a man's mother merely through his words, likewise a person cannot become someone's son by a mere declaration.[1]

1. *Ārya Dharam, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, pp. 58–60

DIVORCE

The Wisdom in Allowing Divorce

The Promised Messiah ﷺ stated:

> If a woman causes harm or distress, how can we imagine that God Almighty would be displeased with us for divorcing such a woman? I attribute hardness of heart to the one who clings to a woman of that kind, not to the one who, under such circumstances, removes her from his home. To remain bound to a woman where there is no harmony or compatibility is a greater cruelty than divorce. Divorce is a lesser affliction chosen in place of a greater one. All contracts are nullified when their conditions are violate, so what rational argument is there to suggest that the marriage contract cannot be annulled? Why should the nature of the marriage contract be considered fundamentally different from other types of agreements? It is true that Jesus ﷺ permitted divorce only on the condition that the woman was adulterous, but nonetheless, he did permit it. The purpose of marriage is unity and tranquillity, not continued agitation and turmoil due to ceaseless conflict and indecision.[1]

1. *Ārya Dharam*, *Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 10, pp. 53–54

The Wisdom Behind Granting Men the Prerogative of Divorce

The Promised Messiah ﷺ stated:

> The objector raised another objection against the Holy Qur'ān: that divorce has been placed at the discretion of the husband. Perhaps his intent was to argue that, if men and women are intellectually equal, then granting this right exclusively to men is undoubtedly objectionable.
>
> In response, it must be stated that men and women are not equal in rank or role. The consistent testimony of historical human experience has shown that men generally surpass women in physical strength and intellectual capacity, exceptions being extremely rare. Thus, given that men are superior in both outward and inward faculties, it is more just and fitting that the prerogative of divorce rests with the man in cases of separation.
>
> Across cultures and civilisations, human nature itself has favoured that, when necessary, it is the man who initiates divorce. Furthermore, men have been assigned an additional responsibility towards women—that is, to ensure their complete material comfort and well-being—as affirmed by God Almighty in the Holy Qur'ān:
>
> وَعَلَى الْمَوْلُودِ لَهُ رِزْقُهُنَّ وَكِسْوَتُهُنَّ [1]
>
> Meaning, it is incumbent upon the man to ensure the provision of sustenance and clothing for women. This shows that men have been appointed as the nurturers and caretakers of women,

1. *Sūrah al-Baqarah,* 2:234

responsible for their welfare and comfort, and that they stand in relation to women as masters and benefactors. Men have been naturally endowed with faculties and strengths far superior to those of women. For this reason, they have historically been the ones to lead in various roles since the dawn of humanity. The unique physical endowments granted to men have not been shared equally with women.

Moreover, the Holy Qur'ān states that even if a man gives his wife a mountain of gold out of kindness and generosity, he may not reclaim it after divorce. This reveals the tremendous honour and dignity Islām affords to women, so much so that man, in a sense, has been made a servant to woman.

In all circumstances, men are commanded in the Holy Qur'ān:

وَعَاشِرُوهُنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ[1]

That is, treat your wives with such goodness that every fair-minded person recognises your treatment as generous and just.[2]

Why a Woman Is Not Given Independent Authority to Annul a Marriage

The Promised Messiah ﷺ stated:

Among Muslims, *Nikāḥ* is a contractual agreement with essential conditions on both sides. The husband is required to pay the *mahr*, provide clothing and food, cover all household expenses,

1. *Sūrah an-Nisā'*, 4:20
2. *Chashma-e-Ma'rifat, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 3, pp. 286–288

uphold good conduct, and adhere to the faith of Islām. The wife, in turn, is expected to maintain chastity, purity, virtuous behaviour, and obedience.

Just as all contracts and covenants can be annulled when their terms are violated, so too can the contract of marriage be dissolved upon breach of its conditions. The only distinction is that if the man violates these conditions, it is not permissible for the woman to annul the marriage independently. Just as she cannot contract a marriage without a guardian, she must likewise seek dissolution through legal authority. The reason for this limitation in her authority is attributed to her natural inclination towards hastiness and a comparative deficiency in reasoning.[1]

Grounds for Divorce Are Not Limited to Adultery

The Promised Messiah ﷺ stated:

The Gospel stipulates that a wife may not be divorced except in the case of adultery. However, the Holy Qur'ān, in its wisdom, does not limit divorce to that one circumstance alone. If enmity arises between husband and wife, and mutual harmony is lost; or if one's life is endangered; or if, even without committing adultery, the woman exhibits behaviour that may lead to it, such as improper mingling with men, then in all such instances, the Qur'ān has placed the discretion of divorce in the hands of the husband, should he deem it necessary.

Nonetheless, the Qur'ān strongly enjoins against hastiness in issuing divorce. It is clear that the teachings of the Qur'ān are perfectly in harmony with human nature. Abandoning this

1. *Ārya Dharam*, *Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 10, p. 37

guidance inevitably leads to moral and social decline. This is why even certain European governments have eventually been compelled to legislate for divorce.[1]

A Woman's Right to Mahr After Divorce

The Promised Messiah ﷺ stated:

> Even if someone alleges that Muslims divorce their wives without cause, they must bear in mind that God Almighty has commanded believers to refrain from vain acts, as He says in the Qur'ān:
>
> وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ عَنِ اللَّغْوِ مُعْرِضُونَ[2]
>
> The Qur'ān sternly warns against divorcing women without valid reason. It is also important to reflect that Muslim men typically spend significant sums on marriage, each according to his means, and are obligated to pay the *mahr*, a substantial sum that may amount to thousands or even hundreds of thousands. This *mahr* is the wife's legal right and must be given to her unconditionally in the event of divorce.
>
> Moreover, the Qur'ān commands husbands not to reclaim what they had previously given their wives upon divorce, as those possessions belong solely to the wife. If there are children from the marriage, the man is also responsible for their maintenance. Therefore, no sensible Muslim man resorts to divorce

1. *Chashma-e-Ma'rifat, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 23, pp. 413–414
2. 'And who shun all that which is vain.' *Sūrah al-Mu'minūn*, 23:4

unless the woman has become a source of hardship and has made his life intolerable.[1]

The Law of Divorce Is a Mercy

The Promised Messiah ﷺ stated:

According to the Gospel the only ground for divorce is adultery and the hundreds of other factors that might create severe hostility between a man and woman are ignored. Ultimately, this shortcoming has proved unsustainable for the Christian people and now, in the United States, it has become necessary that a law pertaining to divorce be enacted. So reflect, where does this law now leave the Gospel? O women, do not despair. The book that you have been given does not require man-made amendments like the Gospel. It safeguards the rights of men just as it safeguards the rights of women. If a woman is displeased by her husband's multiple marriages, she is at liberty to seek a divorce through the authorities.[2]

The Necessity of Divorce

The Promised Messiah ﷺ stated:

Such tribulations naturally arise in every nation and community, and they cannot be resolved except through the allowance of divorce. For instance, if a woman is adulterous, how can her

1. *Ārya Dharam*, *Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 10, p. 40
2. *Kashti-e-Nūḥ*, *Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 19. pp. 80–81; Eng. Trans.: *Noah's Ark*, p. 130

husband's sense of honour tolerate her engaging in adultery, day and night, while remaining his wife? Similarly, if a man's wife persists in hatred to the extent that she even plots his murder, is it possible for him to live peacefully with such a woman? Certainly not. When a person of honour sees that his wife has degraded to the point that other men can embrace and kiss her with her willing consent—even if she has not yet committed actual adultery, but deliberately creates opportunities for it—no honourable man could accept remaining married to such a corrupt woman.

The relationship of a wife with her husband is dependent upon three foundations: chastity, obedience, and mutual consent. If any one of these three is compromised, maintaining the marital bond becomes impossible. A wife is like a limb of the husband's body. If a limb becomes decayed or a bone breaks in such a way that it cannot be repaired, then what remedy remains other than amputation? And it is well-known that no one willingly amputates a part of their own body; it is only done in the face of overwhelming necessity.

God Almighty, the All-Wise, Who has commanded marriage for the welfare of humankind and Who desires the union of man and woman, has likewise permitted separation in the face of manifest corruption. In such cases, separation becomes like the extraction of a decayed tooth, or the removal of a diseased limb, in order to prevent an unbearable harm. A connection that yields no benefit, and instead produces the opposite of what is intended, cannot truly be called a union.[1]

1. *Ārya Dharam*, *Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 10, pp. 65–66

Stating the Reasons for Divorce is Not Necessary

A man once divorced his wife, and her family submitted a complaint to the Promised Messiah ﷺ, alleging that the divorce had been issued without any reasonable cause. Upon investigation, it became clear from the man's own statements that he no longer wished to remain with her, regardless of what penalty he might incur for it. The wife's family had hoped, by making this complaint, to facilitate reconciliation.

The Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

> Others cannot fully comprehend the matters that take place between a husband and wife. At times, there may be no serious fault in the woman, but a lack of harmony between their temperaments leads to discord in their companionship. In such cases, it is permissible for the husband to divorce her.
>
> At times, the woman may be pious, devout in worship, chaste, and pure, yet the husband, even while his heart aches and he sheds tears at the time of divorce, harbours an aversion towards her. In such cases, he is still permitted to divorce her.
>
> Differences in temperament are also recognised in the Sharīʿah, and therefore, we cannot interfere in such matters. It is of no benefit to grieve over what has already passed. However, if there is a dispute over *mahr*, then it must be resolved fairly between the two parties.[1]

The Permissibility of Divorcing an Elderly Woman

The Promised Messiah ﷺ stated:

1. *Al-Badr*, 1 May 1903, p. 117

And the objection that the Holy Prophet ﷺ had resolved to divorce his wife, Saudah, on account of her advancing years, is completely wrong and contrary to facts. Those who have reported such accounts could not provide the evidence as to whom the Holy Prophet ﷺ had revealed such an intention. The fact of the matter, as recorded in credible books of Ḥadīth, is that Saudah, on her own, felt apprehensive in her heart that due to her old age, her condition was no longer attractive, and that the Holy Prophet ﷺ on account of the natural revulsion that is expected of human nature, would perhaps divorce her. It is also possible that she had imagined some other basis for the revulsion on account of which the fear of divorce took root in her heart; for, the psyche of women is beset with much suspicion and doubt in such situations. Therefore, she submitted on her own that she desired nothing other than being raised in the Hereafter as one of his wives. Accordingly, the following *ḥadīth* is narrated in *Nailul-Autār* on page 140:

قَالَت سَوْدَةُ بِنْتُ زَمْعَةَ حِينَ أَسَنَّتْ وَخَافَتْ أَنْ يُفَارِقَهَا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ: يَا رَسُولَ اللهِ وَهَبْتُ يَوْمِي لِعَائِشَةَ، فَقَبِلَ ذَلِكَ مِنْهَا... وَرَوَاهُ أَيْضًا (ابْن) سَعْدٍ وَسَعِيدُ بْنُ مَنْصُورٍ وَالتِّرْمِذِيُّ وَعَبْدُ الرَّزَّاقِ. قَالَ الْحَافِظُ فِي الْفَتْحِ: فَتَوَارَدَتْ هَذِهِ الرِّوَايَاتُ عَلَى أَنَّهَا خَشِيَتِ الطَّلَاقَ[1]

Meaning that, when Saudah bint Zam'ah grew apprehensive that she would perhaps be separated from the Holy Prophet ﷺ

1. There is a scribal error in the first edition; the original words of the *ḥadīth* have been inserted here in conformity with the actual text as they appear in *Nailul-Autār, Kitābul-Walīmah wal-binā' 'alan-Nisā' wa 'ishrātihinna, Bāb al-Marā'tu Yaumahā li darratihā' au-Tuṣaliḥuz-Zauja 'ala isqātihi*, pp. 140–141, by Muḥammad bin 'Alī ash-Shaukānī. [Publishers footnote in the English Translation]

due to her advancing years, she said to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ that she had conceded her turn to ʻĀ'ishah, and he accepted her request. Ibn Saʻd, Saʻīd ibn Manṣūr, Tirmidhī, and ʻAbdur-Razzāq have also reported the same narration. And it is written in *Fatḥul-Bārī* that the reports concur in stating that Saudah had on her own grown apprehensive of being divorced. Now, it is clearly evident from this *ḥadīth* that there was actually no intent expressed by the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Rather, it was Saudah herself who had persisted in this belief out of her very own accord, reflecting upon her condition of advancing years. Even if we ignore the concurrence and mutually supporting nature of these narrations, and assume that the Holy Prophet ﷺ had resolved to divorce Saudah due to the natural revulsion on account of her old age, there is still nothing wrong in it, nor does this fact run contrary to any moral state, because logically it is not objectionable for a husband—when he is not able to fulfil the obligations of the marital relationship due to the development of some impediment of any kind in the fundamental premise on which the relationship between a husband and wife is established—to take appropriate action, while constrained by the precepts of righteousness.[1]

Do Not Hasten in Divorce

The Promised Messiah ؑ gave the following counsel to his Community:

Treat your wives with kindness, both spiritually and materially. Continue to pray for them, and avoid divorce, for the one who

1. *Nūrul-Qur'ān*, *Rūḥānī Khazā'in,* vol. 9, pp. 380–382; Eng. Trans.: *Light of the Qur'ān* Number II, pp. 79–80

> hastens in issuing divorce is a wicked person, greatly disliked in the sight of God Almighty. Do not hastily sever the bond that God Himself has joined together, as if breaking a filthy or defiled vessel.[1]

The Promised Messiah's Disapproval of Hasty Divorce and Injustice in Marriage

The Editor-in-Chief of *Al-Badr* wrote:

'It has been observed on numerous occasions that whenever someone sought to sever ties with his wife over trivial reasons, it would cause the Promised Messiah ﷺ great grief. On one such occasion, a man who was travelling wrote to his wife, declaring that if she did not join him immediately upon receiving the letter, he would divorce her. Upon hearing of this, the Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

> How can one expect such a person to maintain a firm bond with us when he is so ready to sever his own marital bond in an instant?

'Just a few days prior, a man had enthusiastically entered into a second marriage with a kind-hearted woman. Yet, over a trifling matter, he resolved to end the marriage within 10 months. The Promised Messiah ﷺ was deeply aggrieved by this attitude and stated:

> I am extremely angry about this, so much so that I can scarcely contain myself. It is utterly disgraceful for someone belonging to our Community to behave in such a cruel and deceitful manner.

1. *Ḍamīmah Tuḥfah Golarhvīyyah*, *Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 17, p. 75

'The following day, the Promised Messiah ﷺ gave the ruling:

> Let the second wife be accommodated in a separate house. He must provide for her just as he provides for the first wife, and he should alternate nights between them. She is not a maid or servant; she is a wife and must not be made dependent upon the first wife.

'Similarly, a few years earlier, a man married a second woman with the intention of having children. However, when disputes escalated due to jealousy from the first wife, the man divorced the second wife. The Promised Messiah ﷺ expressed strong disapproval and guided the man to reconcile. He returned to her and remarried her. By the grace of God, she continued to reside in the household from that day onward.'[1]

Divorce Conditional upon a Stipulation

The Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

> If there is a condition that if such and such happens then one would be considered divorced and, if that condition is actually met, then the divorce becomes effective indeed. For example, if a person says that if he ate such and such fruit then he would be considered divorced. If he then indeed eats such fruit, the divorce becomes effective.[2]

Ḥaḍrat Pīr Sirāj-ul-Ḥaqq Nu'mānī ؓ states: 'The Promised Messiah ﷺ once stated during a debate with Maulawī Muḥammad Ḥussain of Batala:

1. *Al-Badr*, 26 June 1903, p. 178
2. *Badr*, Issue: 12 June 1903 , p. 162

> The belief of Maulawī Batālvī—that Ḥadīth takes precedence over the Holy Qur'ān—is invalid under all circumstances. It must be understood that the Holy Qur'ān, being a revealed and recited scripture, was fully compiled during the lifetime of Muḥammad, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. Moreover, it is the literal word of God Almighty.
>
> By contrast, *aḥādīth* were neither treated with the same level of formal compilation during the Holy Prophet's lifetime, nor were they preserved in the same manner. They were not granted the same rank as the Holy Qur'ān, as they are transmitted through chains of narrators.
>
> If a person were to swear that the Holy Qur'ān is indeed the literal word of God—and stipulate that, if it is not, his wife should be divorced—then divorce would not take effect, according to the Sharī'ah. However, if someone were to take the same oath regarding the Ḥadīth, claiming that they are the words of the Holy Prophet ﷺ verbatim, and that if not, divorce should be enacted, then in that case, the divorce would unquestionably take place.

'This is a summary of the Promised Messiah's statement.'[1]

Divorce and Ḥalālah

Someone once asked: 'If a man pronounces three divorces at once, is the divorce valid?'

In response, the Promised Messiah عليه السلام stated:

> If a man issues three separate pronouncements of divorce, observing the prescribed *'iddah* [waiting period] between

1. *Tadhkiratul-Mahdī*, p. 161

each, as taught in the Holy Qur'ān, then after the completion of the three divorces, the marital relationship is definitively terminated. However, if after the waiting period another man marries her and, for some reason, subsequently divorces her, the first husband is then permitted to remarry her. But if the second husband enters the marriage with the intention of facilitating her return to the first husband, or divorces her to enable the first husband to marry her again, then this arrangement is termed *ḥalālah*, and is forbidden.

In contrast, if a man pronounces three divorces in a single sitting, he is afforded the facility to remarry her after the waiting period. This is because such a divorce is not in accordance with the command of God Almighty and His Messenger ﷺ and is therefore deemed irregular.

By reflecting on the Holy Qur'ān, it becomes clear that God Almighty deeply abhors the severance of the marital bond. Hence, He has placed numerous conditions upon divorce: it must be pronounced three times, with a set period between each pronouncement; the spouses should continue to reside in the same household, among other conditions. These provisions exist so that anger may subside over time and reconciliation may become possible.

It is often observed that when disputes arise among close relations and are taken before the authorities, wise officials may advise the parties to return after a week. The wisdom behind this is that in the intervening time, tempers may cool and reconciliation may occur. Immediate adjudication might not serve the greater good. In the same manner, God Almighty grants both husband and wife ample time before final separation so that each may reflect on what is ultimately beneficial.

God Almighty states in the Holy Qur'ān:

اَلطَّلَاقُ مَرَّتَانِ[1]

Meaning, divorce is twice. Then, either keep her in an acceptable manner or release her with good treatment. If reconciliation is not achieved even after this extended period, it signifies that both parties are truly unwilling to reconcile.[2]

Divorce Should be Spaced over Intervals

The Promised Messiah ﷺ presented the following Quranic verses related to divorce and explained them as follows:

وَالْمُطَلَّقَاتُ يَتَرَبَّصْنَ بِأَنْفُسِهِنَّ ثَلَاثَةَ قُرُوءٍ[3]

And divorced women shall wait concerning themselves for three monthly periods.

اَلطَّلَاقُ مَرَّتَانِ فَإِمْسَاكٌ بِمَعْرُوفٍ أَوْ تَسْرِيحٌ بِإِحْسَانٍ[4]

Divorce is twice. Then, either keep her in an acceptable manner or release her with good treatment.

In these three waiting periods, estimated to be three months, divorce is to be issued twice, meaning the husband may pronounce divorce after each menstrual cycle. As the third month approaches, he must act with caution: he may either pronounce the third and final divorce, thereby releasing her with kindness

1. *Sūrah al-Baqarah*, 2:230
2. *Al-Ḥakam*, 10 April, 1903, p. 14
3. *Sūrah al-Baqarah*, 2:229
4. *Sūrah al-Baqarah*, 2:230

and severing the relationship permanently; or he may withhold the third divorce and retain the woman in his home with good conduct. He is not permitted to reclaim any money he had given to her prior to divorce. If he proceeds with the third divorce following the third *qur'* [menstrual period], she will no longer remain his wife. Thereafter, it is unlawful for him to take her back unless she marries another man.[1]

Issuing Three Divorces at Once Is Not Permissible

In response to a question, the Promised Messiah ﷺ stated:

A single divorce is not considered complete; rather, there must be three menstrual cycles before it is deemed final. Some jurists have allowed the issuing of three divorces at once, but they also clarified that if, after the waiting period, the husband wishes to reconcile with the same woman, it is permissible for her to remarry him, and she may also marry someone else if she chooses.

However, if a woman has been divorced three times, then according to the Holy Qur'ān, her former husband is not permitted to remarry her unless she marries another man and that second husband divorces her without prior intent. If the second husband divorces her with the premeditated intention that she return to her first husband, this is referred to as *ḥalālah*, and it is forbidden. The permission granted by some jurists for issuing three divorces simultaneously is based on the assumption that the husband did not follow the proper Islamic procedure outlined by the Sharī'ah.

1. *Ārya Dharam, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 10, pp. 52–53

> It is clearly evident from the Holy Qur'ān that God Almighty strongly disapproves of divorce, for it disrupts the lives of both husband and wife. Therefore, the Qur'ān prescribes that divorce should be pronounced three times, spaced out over three menstrual cycles, so that both parties are given ample time for reflection, and reconciliation remains possible, should they determine that it is in their best interest.[1]

A person sent a written query to the Promised Messiah ﷺ, seeking guidance regarding a situation in which, in a state of intense anger, he had unintentionally pronounced three divorces to his wife. However, both husband and wife were now distressed and no longer wished to separate.

In response, the Promised Messiah ﷺ wrote:

> The ruling is that if someone issues three divorces in a single sitting, such a divorce is not valid and contradicts the teachings of the Holy Qur'ān. Therefore, he may reconcile with his wife. However, a new *Nikāḥ* [marriage contract] must be solemnised. This is the consistent verdict we issue, and it is the correct one.[2]

Marriage After Divorce

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ writes that Rasūl Bībī, the widow of Ḥāfiẓ Ḥāmid ʿAlī, informed him through Maulawī ʿAbdur-Raḥmān Jatt: 'The Promised Messiah ﷺ once came to our village, Karaliyāń. Miāń Chirāgh Dīn, from the village of Ghulam Nabi, had divorced his wife named Ḥassu. The Promised Messiah ﷺ came

1. *Al-Badr*, 24 April 1903, p. 105
2. *Badr*, 31 January, 1907, p. 4

specifically to reconcile between them. He stayed there, their marriage was solemnised once again, and he continued advising them until late at night.' [1]

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ narrates that Dr. Mīr Muḥammad Ismā'īl ؓ informed him: 'When Maulawī 'Abdul-Karīm entered his second marriage, he divorced his wife [i.e. his second wife] shortly thereafter for some reason. A considerable time passed—possibly close to a year—after which the Promised Messiah ؑ wished to reunite the couple. Upon further inquiry, it was discovered that the divorce was not *ṭalāq bā'in* [irrevocable divorce] but *ṭalāq raj'ī* [revocable divorce].[2] Their marriage was therefore solemnised again in accordance with the Promised Messiah's wishes.'

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ further states: 'This humble one affirms that Maulawī 'Abdul-Karīm did not have any children from his first wife, and the Promised Messiah ؑ desired that he have offspring. For this reason, he encouraged him to marry.'[3]

Annulment of the Nikāḥ of a Minor

The question was presented that if the *walī* [guardian] of an underage boy or girl arranges their *Nikāḥ* [marriage], then, if a need arises, whilst they are still minors, can the *walī* petition for a divorce?

The Promised Messiah ؑ replied:

1. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, pp. 116–117
2. The words *bā'in* and *raj'ī* have not been used here as technical terms; rather, *bā'in* in this context refers to *ṭalāq al-battah* (an irrevocable or final divorce). [Compiler of *Sīratul-Mahdī*]
3. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 1, p. 761

Yes, the *walī* has the right to do so.[1]

1. *Al-Badr*, 25 July 1907, p. 11; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt* vol. 9, p. 320

DIVORCE INITIATED BY THE WIFE (KHUL‘)

A Woman’s Choice in Khul‘

The Promised Messiah ﷺ states:

> The Islamic Sharī‘ah did not leave the option of divorce solely in the hands of men, allowing them to divorce their wives if they perceive corruption or discord. In fact, Islām has also given women the choice to seek divorce through the judge. When a woman obtains divorce through a judge, it is termed *Khul‘* in Islamic terminology. If a husband is found to be unjust, physically abusive without cause, treating his wife intolerably, or if there is any other significant discord for various reasons, such as the husband being impotent, changing his religion, or any other evident cause that makes it unbearable for the woman to remain in the marriage, she has the right to request separation. This can be done either by her directly or through one of her legal guardians filing a complaint before the judge. It becomes the duty of the judge to investigate and, if warranted, order the separation and annulment of the marriage based on the woman’s valid complaint. However, in such cases, it is essential to summon the husband to the court to explain why his wife seeks separation.

> Now observe how the concept is based upon justice. Just as Islām disliked a woman being married without the consent of her guardian—be it her father, brother, or close relative—it also disapproves of a woman separating from her husband on her own initiative like men. Islām has taken precaution and care when it comes to separation, emphasising the necessity of recourse to a judge to prevent harm to the woman due to the potential deficiency in her reasoning.[1]

The Promised Messiah ﷺ stated in the discussion of *Khul'* within the elucidation of objections raised against polygamy:

> He who marries two women does not burden Allāh in the slightest. If there is any discomfort in this matter, it falls upon either the first or the second wife. Thus, if the first wife feels that this marriage has infringed upon her rights, she has the option to resolve the matter through divorce. If her husband does not grant her a divorce, she has the right to seek *Khul'* through the judiciary. Similarly, if the second wife experiences hardship, she is best aware of what is beneficial or harmful to her.[2]

The Wisdom Behind Seeking Khul' Through the Ruler

The Promised Messiah ﷺ stated:

> Marriage is a contract entered into by Muslims, and its essential conditions for the man include the payment of *mahr*, commitment to provide clothing, food, and expenses, adherence to Islām, and maintaining good conduct. For the woman, the

1. *Chashma-e-Ma'rifat, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 23, pp. 288–289
2. *Chasma-e-Ma'rifah, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 23, p. 247

conditions include chastity, purity, virtuous behaviour, and obedience.

Just as all contracts and covenants are liable to annulment upon the breach of conditions, the marriage contract too can be annulled if its conditions are violated. The only difference is that if the man breaches these conditions, it is not permissible for the woman to annul the marriage on her own initiative, just as she cannot contract a marriage independently. Rather, she must seek the annulment through the legal authority, just as she enters into marriage through the guardian. The reason for this limitation in her authority is attributed to her natural hastiness and a comparative deficiency in intellect.[1]

It is Necessary Not to Hasten in Seeking Khul‘

Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ﵀ narrates that Dr. Mīr Muḥammad Ismā‘īl ﵀ told him: ‘Once, a servant girl from a low social class, who had recently converted to Islām, came to me in Lahore accompanied by Miāṅ Mi‘rāj-ud-Dīn. We discussed the matter of her marriage, and the late Ḥāfiẓ ‘Aẓīm Baksh of Patiala suggested: “You may marry her to me.” The Promised Messiah ﵇ permitted it, and the *Nikāḥ* was announced.

‘However, the next day, the woman refused to go with her husband and sought *Khul‘*. Khalīfah Rajab Dīn of Lahore presented the matter before the Promised Messiah ﵇ in Masjid Mubārak.

The Promised Messiah ﵇ said:

> She should not hasten. Let her be patient for a while. If matters do not improve in any way, then *Khul‘* can be granted.

1. *Ārya Dharam, Rūḥānī Khazā’in*, vol. 10, p. 37

'At that moment, Rajab Dīn—who was a very straightforward man—gestured with his hand, indicating that the woman was alleging that Ḥāfiẓ Sahib was wholly lacking in manliness. Upon this, The Promised Messiah ﷺ permitted the *Khul'*.'

Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ﷺ further states: 'Nevertheless, as a precautionary measure, they were brought together again, but the woman remained dissatisfied, and ultimately, the *Khul'* was granted.'[1]

1. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 1, pp. 740–741

INHERITANCE

A Sinful Woman's Right to Inheritance

A person presented a situation to the Promised Messiah ﷺ seeking his guidance. A person named Zaid passes away childless, but has a sister who married during his lifetime. She lives in her brother's home as she is unable to get along with her husband. She continues to live there until Zaid dies. After the death of Zaid, that woman marries another person without formally divorcing her existing husband, which is impermissible. Is this sister of Zaid among the people who have the right to Zaid's inheritance or does she not deserve her share?'

The Promised Messiah ﷺ responded:

> She should get her share as prescribed by the Sharī'ah because she lived with her brother during his lifetime and her share does not become invalid due to her sinfulness. She should get her prescribed share. The rest of her affair is with God. Her first husband can carry out legal procedures through the authorities. Her rightful share cannot be affected.[1]

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1. *Badr* Newspaper, 26th September, 1907, p. 6; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt* vol. 9, pp. 409–410

Adopted Children Do Not Inherit

There was mention of someone, that they did not have children and they had named someone's son as their own and had made the child the heir of their property.

The Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

> This act is forbidden according to the Sharī'ah. According to the Islamic Sharī'ah, it is completely forbidden to name someone else's son as your own.[1]

The Issue of an Orphaned Grandchild

Abū Sa'īd, the Arab, who had come from the city of Rangoon, asked: 'Someone raised an objection to me, saying that there is no provision for a *waṣīyyat* [bequest] in Islām for a grandchild. Thus, if the grandchild is an orphan and the grandfather passes away, the inheritance goes to the surviving children, thereby depriving the orphaned grandchild, despite the fact that he is an orphan and the son of the deceased child.'

The Promised Messiah ﷺ responded:

> The grandfather has the option to give his grandchild whatever he wishes through a bequest. Sons have been made the heirs after the passing of their father in order to maintain an established order. Had this not been the case, the order would have collapsed, for it would imply that the grandson of the deceased would inherit, and if he in turn had children, they too would inherit. What fault would the grandfather have in all this?
>
> This is the law of Allāh, and there is no harm in it whatsoever. Otherwise, if we reasoned this way, we are all children

1. *Badr* Newspaper, 17 October, 1907, p. 7

of Adam, and all rulers are likewise children of Adam, thus we could all lay claim to a share in their sovereignty.

As the bond of kinship naturally weakens somewhat after the immediate son—when it reaches the level of grandchildren—it becomes largely symbolic. God Almighty, knowing beforehand that such a weakening of lineage and relationship would occur, established this system accordingly. Nonetheless, God Almighty also laid down another law to instruct kindness and compassion in such cases, as mentioned in the Holy Qur'ān:

وَإِذَا حَضَرَ الْقِسْمَةَ أُولُو الْقُرْبَى وَالْيَتَامَى وَالْمَسَاكِينُ فَارْزُقُوهُمْ مِنْهُ وَقُولُوا لَهُمْ قَوْلًا مَعْرُوفًا[1]

Meaning, when other relatives and orphans are present at the division then provide for them something out of it [the inheritance]. Thus, a grandchild whose father has passed away is certainly deserving of this compassion due to his orphaned state. While it is true that others may also fall under the definition of orphans without a designated share, God Almighty has not deprived anyone of their due. Nevertheless, as the ties of kinship weaken, the corresponding right diminishes.[2]

The Wisdom Behind a Female's Share Being Half That of a Male

The Holy Qur'ān has commanded concerning the share of children's inheritance that a male shall have as much as the share of two females.

1. *Sūrah an-Nisā'*, 4:9
2. *Badr*, 2 January 1903, p. 76

The Promised Messiah ﷺ explained the wisdom behind this commandment, stating:

> This is because a daughter receives a share not only from the estate of her parents but also from that of her in-laws. Thus, she secures a portion from both her parents' household and her in-laws' household, thereby making her overall share equivalent to that of a male.[1]

1. *Chashma-e-Ma'rifat, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 23, footnote p. 212

THE ISLAMIC VEIL

Philosophy of the Islamic Veil

The Promised Messiah ﷺ stated:

> Therefore, God Almighty has not instructed us that we might freely gaze at women outside the prohibited degrees and might contemplate their beauty and observe all their movements in dancing etc. but that we should do so with pure looks. Nor have we been instructed to listen to the singing of these women and to lend ear to tales of their beauty, but that we should do so with a pure intent. We have been positively commanded not to look at their beauty, whether with pure intent or otherwise, nor to listen to their musical voices or to descriptions of their good looks, whether with pure intent or otherwise. We have been directed to eschew all this as we eschew carrion, so that we should not stumble. It is almost certain that our free glances would cause us to stumble sometime or the other. As God Almighty desires that our eyes and our hearts and all our limbs and organs should continue in a state of purity, He has furnished us with this excellent teaching. There can be no doubt that unrestrained looks become a source of danger. If we place soft bread before a hungry dog, it would be vain to hope that the dog should pay no attention to it. Thus God Almighty desired that human faculties should not be provided with any occasion for secret functioning and should not be confronted

with anything that might incite dangerous tendencies. This is the philosophy that underlies the Islamic regulations relating to the observance of the veil. The Book of God does not aim at keeping women in seclusion like prisoners. This is the concept of those who are not acquainted with the correct pattern of Islamic ways. The purpose of these regulations is to restrain men and women from letting their eyes to rove freely and from displaying their good looks and beauties, for therein lies the good both of men and of women. It should be remembered that to restrain one's looks and to direct them only towards observing that which is permissible is described in Arabic by the expression *ghaḍḍ-e-baṣar*, which is the expression employed in the Holy Qur'ān in this context. It does not behove a pious person who desires to keep his heart pure that he should lift his eyes freely in every direction like an animal. It is necessary that such a one should cultivate the habit of *ghaḍḍ-e-baṣar* in his social life. This is a blessed habit through which his natural impulses would be converted into a high moral quality without interfering with his social needs. This is the quality which is called chastity in Islām.[1]

A Response to Allegations Against the Islamic Veil

To raise allegations against the Islamic concept of the veil is foolish on the part of these people. Allāh the Exalted has not given any such instructions in relation to the veil that are objectionable. The Qur'ān instructs Muslim men and women to lower their gaze. When both men and women do not cast glances at one another, both will remain protected. The Qur'ān

1. *Islāmī Uṣūl Kī Filasafī*, *Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 10, pp. 343–344; Eng. Trans.: *The Philosophy of the Teachings of Islām*, pp. 47–49

is not like the Gospel, which commands a person to not look with lust. It is regretful that the writer of the Gospel was unable to realise that a 'lustful glance' means nothing. It is the glance itself which arouses lustful thoughts in a person. The outcome of this teaching is not hidden to those who read the newspapers; they are probably aware of the utterly shameful displays that are reported to take place in London's parks and Parisian hotels. The Islamic veil does not at all mean that women be imprisoned as though they were locked in jail. The purport of the Holy Qur'ān is that women cover themselves and refrain from gazing at men that are beyond the permissible bounds. Women are not barred from leaving the house to tend to their societal needs. They are welcome to go out and about, but must control their gaze. Islām has made no distinction between men and women in acts of virtue, nor have they been prohibited from being like men in goodness. Where does Islām state that women should be bound in chains? Islām cuts at the root of lust. Just look at what is happening in Europe. We are told that people fornicate like they were dogs and alcohol is so widespread that if liquor stores were put in a line they would extend for three miles. What teaching has lead to this result? Is this on account of the veil or due to removing the veil?[1]

Observing the Islamic Veil in Certain Circumstances

During the outbreak of plague in India, some Muslims objected that, in certain situations where female nurses were unavailable, male doctors would touch Muslim women in order to check their pulse.

The Promised Messiah ﷺ addressed this objection, stating:

1. Speech delivered at *Jalsa Salana*, 28 December 1899; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt*. vol. 2, pp 165–164

In such cases and circumstances, in the face of God's wrath when thousands of people are dying, such extreme measures regarding the veil are not permissible. It so happened that the wife of a king died and there was no one to carry away her dead body; what use is the veil in such circumstances? As the proverb goes, 'what a man will do when faced with death.' It has been narrated in a *ḥadīth* that a baby in the mother's womb can be delivered by a man if required. Our religion is not one of difficulty and anyone who creates inconveniences is guilty of making their own religious law, as it were. The government also has not violated any injunctions relating to the veil and their rules are softened as required. When the people put forth their recommendations for reform, the government listens to them carefully and deliberates over them in an appropriate manner according to the dictates of wisdom at that time. Someone ought to tell me where checking a pulse for medical purposes is prohibited in the injunctions of the veil.[1]

Avoiding Excessive Formality in Observing the Islamic Veil

Miāṅ 'Abd-ur-Raḥmān narrates that Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ mentioned that Sayyid Bhaī 'Abd-ur-Raḥmān of Qadian ؓ used to narrate, saying: 'Whenever our noble Imām would go out during his stay in Lahore, he would always invite me. He would depart when I informed him that I was ready. This became his regular practice, and I too adhered strictly to the appointed times and would wait for him. His Holiness ؑ had instructed that a seat be installed for me behind the carriage. Thus, the back step of the carriage was designated for me.

1. *Risāla-e-Indhār*, speech by the Promised Messiah ؑ, May 1898; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt* vol. 1, pp. 262–263

'Initially, I would stand on it facing backward, so that my back was towards His Holiness ﷺ and the ladies, taking care to ensure that the ladies would not be inconvenienced. Since the esteemed wife of His Holiness ﷺ and other honourable ladies would sit with him on a seat towards the rear of the carriage, the reason for standing with my back turned was to avoid causing any disturbance to them.

'However, on one occasion, His Holiness ﷺ noticed my manner and said to me:

> O Miāṅ 'Abd-ur-Raḥmān, there is no need to stand with your back turned in this manner. Such formality is unnecessary. The commandment of observing the Islamic veil during travel is not extremely stringent, and there is no need for such affectation. Religion is meant to be easy. Just as women are commanded to observe the veil, men are also commanded to lower their gaze. You may stand upright without undue formality.'

Sayyid Bhaī 'Abd-ur-Raḥmān of Qadian ؓ continued: 'After that, I began to stand upright, mindful of the Islamic concept of the veil. Some of the ladies had small children in their laps and so I would assist them by carrying the children when disembarking the carriage, but did so in a very formal manner. His Holiness ﷺ advised me against doing so with such formality, and so in accordance with this, I would take and return the children to the ladies in a more relaxed manner.'[1]

The Limits of the Islamic Veil

Ḥaḍrat Nawāb Muḥammad 'Alī Khān ؓ narrates: 'I once asked the Promised Messiah ﷺ about the Islamic veil. He demonstrated to me,

1. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 2, pp. 384–385

using the end of his turban to cover the face and the area below the nose, and said:

> This is how the veil should be: the forehead should be covered, the eyes left exposed, and the rest of the face covered.

Prior to this, I had asked Maulawī Noor-ud-Deen about the same matter, and he had explained it to me using an actual veil.'[1]

The Veil Observed by the Mothers of the Believers

Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ narrates that Dr. Mīr Muḥammad Ismā'īl ؓ told him that the Promised Messiah ؑ once said during an address:

> The particular aspect of the Islamic veil that involves remaining within the home, mentioned with the words وَقَرْنَ فِي بُيُوتِكُنَّ[2] [And stay in your houses], was specific to the Mothers of the Believers (*Ummahāt-ul-Mu'minīn*). Other women are not obligated to observe this type of veil; rather, they have been commanded to observe a veil that requires only the concealment of their adornments.[3]

1. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 2, p. 48
2. *Sūrah al-Ahzāb*, 33:34
3. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 1, p. 766

Avoiding Undue Harshness in the Matter of the Islamic Veil

Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad narrates that Ḥaḍrat Maulawī Noor-ud-Deen ؓ, the First Khalīfah, told him: 'Once, the Promised Messiah ؑ was travelling. Upon reaching the railway station and learning that there was still some time before the train's arrival, he began to walk with his wife. Seeing this, Maulawī 'Abdul-Karīm—known for his zealous and passionate temperament—came to me and said: "There are many strangers present here; please request His Holiness ؑ to seat his wife in a more secluded place." I replied: "I cannot say that; you may convey it to him yourself." Thus, Maulawī 'Abdul-Karīm had no choice but to approach His Holiness ؑ directly. He said: "Your Holiness, there are many people here; please seat your wife in a separate place."

The Promised Messiah ؑ responded:

> Do not concern yourself with this. I do not approve of observing this kind of *purdah* [Islamic veil].

Ḥaḍrat Maulawī Noor-ud-Deen ؓ continued: 'Maulawī 'Abdul-Karīm returned to me with his head lowered. I said to him: "Maulawī Sahib, have you received your answer then?"'[1]

Shaking Hands with a Non-Maḥram Woman Is Not Permissible

Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ narrates that Ḥaḍrat Maulawī Sher 'Alī ؓ informed him that Dr. Muḥammad Ismā'īl Khān once asked the Promised Messiah ؑ: 'An elderly English lady works with me at

1. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 1, p. 56

the clinic. Sometimes she shakes hands with me. What is the ruling of the Sharī'ah regarding this?'

The Promised Messiah ﷺ replied:

> This is not permissible. You should apologise politely and say: 'This is not allowed in our religion.'[1]

Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ II ﷺ said: 'Touching women is prohibited. You should inform people about this beforehand, and do so in the best possible manner. Once, a European woman came to meet the Promised Messiah ﷺ, and he instructed that she be informed of this ruling beforehand. The Holy Prophet ﷺ was asked whether the *Bai'at* from women was taken by holding their hands, and he forbade it. This is an excellent example for us, and it does not in any way diminish respect for women.'[2]

Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ II ﷺ states: 'Just as when a person is compelled by extreme hunger to consume the meat of a dead animal or pork, the harmful effects for which the Sharī'ah has forbidden these things may still affect the believer. The only way to be safeguarded is to attach oneself to God, the Forgiving, the Merciful, and to pray: "O Lord, I have availed myself of Your dispensation, consuming what is forbidden only to save my life. Have mercy on me by Your grace, and protect my soul and body from its harmful effects."

'For this reason, Allāh concludes [the Quranic verse] by saying: إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ[3] [Surely, Allāh is Most Forgiving, Merciful] so that man does not become complacent but continues to seek forgiveness and divine protection.

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1. *Al-Fazl*, 14 September 1916
2. *Al-Fazl*, 14 September 1915, p. 5
3. *Sūrah al-Baqarah*, 2:174

'Perhaps it was in light of this concession that the Promised Messiah عليه السلام stated:

> If a pregnant woman finds herself in a critical situation and is forced to seek the help of a male doctor, but she refuses and dies, her death will be deemed suicide. Similarly, if someone is on the verge of death due to extreme hunger and consumes pork or carrion, there is no sin upon him.[1]

1. *Tafsīr-e-Kabīr*, vol. 2, pp. 345–346

BUYING, SELLING, AND COMMERCIAL TRANSACTIONS

Hoarding is Not Permissible

Someone asked, 'Some people trade grain, buying it and storing it, and then they sell it when it becomes expensive. Is such trade permissible?'

The Promised Messiah عليه السلام said:

> It has been deemed *makrūh* [undesirable]. I do not like it. For me, the Sharī'ah [Islamic Law] is one thing and *Tarīqat* [Righteous Conduct] is another. Even momentary ill-intent is not permissible and this [way of trading] is a kind of ill-intent.
>
> Our objective is to eliminate ill-intent. It is written about Imām-e-A'ẓam [Abū Ḥanīfah] رحمه الله that he was once washing off the very tiniest amount of filth that was on his garment. Someone said that you have never issued a *fatwā* [religious verdict] for [cleaning] something so tiny. What a subtle response he gave in reply: 'That is *fatwā* and this is *taqwā* [righteousness].'
>
> Thus, one should be mindful of the subtleties of *taqwā*; security lies in this alone. If he does not care about the little things, then one day those little things will make him commit big sins, and he will perish due to the development of unscrupulousness and carelessness in his disposition. Your goal should

be to achieve the highest levels of *taqwā*, and for this, attention to the subtleties of *taqwā* is essential.[1]

Custom in Buying and Selling

A person inquired whether it was permissible to sell a commodity, equivalent to one kilogram, to government factories such as Riley Brothers for 80 rupees while purchasing it for 81 rupees. The Promised Messiah ﷺ responded:

> Transactions that do not lead to legal disputes, do not result in conflicts, are conducted with mutual consent, are not deemed crimes by the government, and are also permissible according to *'urf* [common custom], are allowed.[2]

The Seller Determines the Price of His Goods

A question was presented that some traders who sell in the streets and alleys or in marketplaces charge some customers more and some less for the same item. Is this permitted?

The Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

> The owner of the item has the right to fix and ask a price for his item as he pleases, but both parties must agree at the time of sale, and the seller must not deceive in any way. For example, it should not be the case that an item does not have the stated properties, or that the buyer is deceived in any other way, or a lie is spoken. It is also not permitted to cheat a child or a

1. *Al-Ḥakam*, 10 November, 1905, p. 5;Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt*, vol. 7, p. 473
2. *Al-Ḥakam*, 10 August 1903, p. 19

stranger by deception which is described as لگا دا—[*laggā dā*] in this land. This is not allowed.[1]

Profit on Capital Employed in Commerce

At *Ẓuhr* time, Ḥaḍrat Hakeem Noor-ud-Deen ؓ enquired of the Promised Messiah ؑ regarding a matter on behalf of a gentlemen. He explained that there was a man who possessed a sum of approximately 22,000 rupees. A Sikh wished to employ this money in trade, and, in order to reassure him, proposed that the money should remain in his own possession, but be utilised strictly in accordance with the Sikh's instructions. Accordingly, he would purchase whatever goods were specified and dispatch them wherever directed, and any money received in return would remain as a trust. At the end of the year, the Sikh would give him 2,600 rupees as profit.

They had come to seek a *fatwā* [religious verdict] that he may proceed to form this partnership, provided that the sum that would be received after one year did not constitute interest.

The Promised Messiah ؑ said:

> Since he will also have to do work himself and his labour is involved, and he will also invest time, the cost of each person's time and labour depends on their status. People charge tens of thousands and even hundreds of thousands of rupees for their work and time. Therefore, the money he offers to him is not interest in my view. And I issue a *fatwā* of its justification. Interest refers to the money taken for free without labour (in exchange only for making funds available). Nowadays, most issues have been turned upside down in this country. All

1. *Badr*, 16 May 1907, p. 10; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt*, vol. 9, p. 277

commerce has some share of interest involved in it. Therefore, a new *ijtihād* [interpretation] is needed at this time.[1]

Blessings Lie in Good Intentions

A question was posed on behalf of a jeweller, who explained that in the past he would charge a lower fee for crafting jewellery, but would then slightly alloy the gold with cheaper metals. He stated that he has now abandoned this practice and instead charges a higher fee. However, some customers tell him that they are willing to pay the agreed fee and permit him to alloy the gold as he used to. The question is whether he should act upon their consent or refrain from doing so.

The Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

You must never engage in adulteration again, and inform people that you have refrained from it. Those who ask you to adulterate are inclined towards sin, so do not do it even if they request it. It is God Who bestows blessings. When a person abstains from sin with good intentions, God surely blesses him.[2]

Profiting from Pledged Items is Permissible

A question was asked regarding *rahn* [pledging a possession as security].

The Promised Messiah ﷺ responded:

The current conditions of *rahn* are permissible. In former times, there was a law that if farmers harvested their crops, the rulers would collect taxes from them; but if there was no harvest, they

1. *Badr*, 8 November, 1904, p. 8; Eng. Trans. : *Malfūẓāt* vol. 7, pp. 5–6
2. *Al-Ḥakam*, 24 April 1903, p. 10

would be exempted. Now, however, the rulers collect what they demand irrespective of whether the crops are harvested or not, and they do not forgo their claims.

In the same way, this form of *rahn* is also permissible today, because sometimes the pledged crops yield a harvest, and sometimes they do not. The *murtahin* [the creditor holding the pledge] bears the risk of both profit and loss. Therefore, under fair conditions, *rahn* is permissible. In this present era, the government deals with farmers like contractors: sometimes the farmer profits, and at other times he incurs a loss. In this fair arrangement, *rahn* is undoubtedly permissible. When a milk-giving animal or a horse for riding may be held in *rahn* with possession, and the *murtahin* may benefit from its milk or its use as a mount, then the pledge of land is even more evidently admissible.

Then the Promised Messiah ﷺ was asked regarding pledging jewellery. He replied:

As long as the benefit derived is permissible, whether it is from jewellery or any other item, there is no need for unnecessary formalities. If someone benefits from jewellery by wearing it, then they must also pay *Zakāt* on it. *Zakāt* on jewellery is obligatory. My wife paid 150 rupees in *Zakāt* on her jewellery just yesterday. Thus, if one uses jewellery, they must also pay *Zakāt* on it. If a goat is held in *rahn* and he drinks its milk, then he must also provide it with grass.[1]

1. *Al-Ḥakam*, 24 April 1903, p. 11

Time Limitation as Security

QUESTION—A person pledged a house for 2000 [rupees] and wished to stipulate that the pledgee would not be required to return the pledged amount for two years. Is it permissible to set such a condition in pledging or not?

ANSWER—Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ II ؓ responded: 'The jurists have ruled that specifying a time limit in pledging is not permissible. Rather, when the pledger repays the amount, he is entitled to reclaim the pledged house from the pledgee immediately.

'However, the Promised Messiah ؑ permitted such a specification. When the Mother of the Believers, Ḥaḍrat Ammāṅ Jān ؓ, pledged properties to Mirzā Niẓām-ud-Dīn, she enquired of the Promised Messiah ؑ whether a time limit could be stipulated, and he permitted it.

'Thus to me, such a condition is permissible, provided that the pledge itself is legitimate. If the pledge is not legitimate from the outset, then specifying a period of two years or any other similar condition is meaningless, for the pledge itself would be invalid from the very first day.'[1]

The Pledge Must be Taken Possession of and Documented

Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ narrated: 'Ḥāfiẓ Roshan 'Alī narrated to me that Ḥaḍrat Maulawī Noor-ud-Deen, the First Khalīfah ؓ, once pledged a well for the irrigation of agricultural land for 3,000 rupees from someone. However, he did not take any receipt from him,

1. *Al-Fazl*, 26 June 1946, p. 3

nor did he write any document or agreement, and he left the well under his supervision.

'After some time, when he demanded the income derived from the well, that person completely refused Ḥaḍrat Maulawī Noor-ud-Deen's claim and even denied that he had ever pledged the well from him.'

'The narrator said that Maulawī Noor-ud-Deen ؓ used to remark: "One of the brothers informed the Promised Messiah ؑ about this incident, expressing sorrow over the loss I suffered.

The Promised Messiah ؑ said:

> You are concerned about his financial loss, whereas I am concerned about the loss of his faith! Why did Maulawī Sahib put the other party in a position that led them towards betrayal? And why did he not obtain a written acknowledgment from him, as Islām commands? And why did he not formally take possession of the well from him?[1]

Pledging an Orchard for 30 Years

Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ said: 'My mother informed me that His Holiness ؑ needed money to accomplish some religious tasks. So he said to her: "Give me your jewellery, and I will pledge to you this orchard of mine." He summoned the deputy clerk of the court in Qadian and had the pledge written in her name. Afterward, he informed her that he had set the duration of the pledge for 30 years and would not release the pledge during this period.'

Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ further states: 'This humble one affirms that jurists generally do not permit the determination of the duration of a pledge. Thus, if we seek to reconcile the statement of the Promised Messiah ؑ with the statements of the jurists, the matter can

1. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 1, pp. 145–146

be understood as follows: he did not include the duration as one of the conditions of the pledge itself, but rather recorded it as an additional act of kindness. Every person has the right to show generosity as they wish.

'For example, in the Sharī'ah, if someone lends money to another, they cannot demand more than the original amount, as the additional amount would constitute usury. However, if the borrower voluntarily gives the lender something extra at the time of repayment, the Sharī'ah not only permits it but also encourages it. Additionally, it occurs to me that the primary purpose of pledging in the Sharī'ah is to provide security. Therefore, jurists generally do not allow specifying a fixed term for a pledge. Nevertheless, a study of the Sharī'ah reveals that when permission for something is granted due to a specific circumstance, that permission can later be broadened. For instance, the shortening of the Prayer during travel was originally due to the danger faced during military expeditions. However, once the shortening of Prayer was established due to necessity, Allāh later extended this concession to all travel without requiring the condition of danger.

'Thus, although the foundation of pledging is security, God Almighty has broadened its allowance after opening its door. However, these are jurisprudential matters, and I do not deem it appropriate to express further opinion on them.'[1]

Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ further stated: 'I have seen the pledge document by which the Promised Messiah ؑ pledged his orchard to our mother. It is a registered document in government records, dated 25 June 1898. The value of the pledge is 5,000 rupees, comprising 1,000 rupees in cash and the remainder in jewellery. The pledge document was written with the following words:

"I declare that I will not release the pledge for 30 years. After that, if I wish, I may repay the pledged amount and release it at any time

1. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 1, pp. 263–264

within one year after the 30 years have elapsed. Otherwise, after the expiration of this period—i.e., after 31 years—the pledged property will be sold for the debt amount, and I shall have no right to ownership over the pledged property in the 32nd year. I have made the pledge effective for the pledgor from today, and I will ensure its registration with the government offices as well.

The pledgor shall be entitled to the benefits of the pledged property as long as the pledge remains, and she shall pay the government agricultural taxes from the autumn of 1955 according to the *Bikrāmī* calendar [the Indian calendar], and she shall benefit from the crops."'

Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ further states: 'It is evident from this writing that it does not contain the precise wording suggested by the Promised Messiah ؑ, but perhaps one of the court scribes wrote it in a manner reflecting his intent.'[1]

Land Division by Drawing Lots

Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ narrates that Pīr Iftikhār Aḥmad ؓ told him: 'I once saw Mirzā Niẓām-ud-Din during the early days of the Promised Messiah 's claim, standing in the alley near his residence. The Promised Messiah ؑ came out from the courtyard of his house, holding two sealed envelopes in his hand. He presented them to Mirzā Niẓām-ud-Din to choose one. Mirzā Niẓām-ud-Din selected one envelope, and the Promised Messiah ؑ immediately returned to his house with the other.'

Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ further states: 'I learned from my mother that the two envelopes related to the division of the orchard, because half of it belonged to the Promised Messiah ؑ and the other half belonged to Mirẓā Sulṭān Aḥmad. Thus, the Promised Messiah ؑ divided it by drawing lots, with Mirẓā Niẓām-ud-Din acting as

1. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 1, p. 338

the agent for Mirẓā Sulṭān Aḥmad. According to this division, the Promised Messiah ﷺ acquired the southern part of the orchard, while Mirẓā Sulṭān Aḥmad acquired the northern part.'[1]

It Is Not Permissible to Sell Crops to the Needy at a Higher Price

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ﷺ narrates that Miāń Khair-ud-Dīn of Sikhwan ﷺ informed him in writing: 'We, the three brothers (myself, my late brother Miāń Jamāl-ud-Dīn, and Miāń Imām-ud-Dīn), sometimes engaged in trade based on religious jurisprudence. We would purchase crops and lend them to the poor, with the intention of collecting the loan amount back from them at a slightly higher price after the harvest of their next crops. We continued this practice even after the claim of the Promised Messiah ﷺ, buying crops in the same manner to lend to the poor as we had done previously.

'Once, I travelled to Qadian, and it occurred to me to seek the Promised Messiah's guidance on this matter. I presented the details to him. The Promised Messiah ﷺ responded: "What need do you have for such matters?"

'The tone with which he answered still echoes in my mind; it was clear that he strongly disapproved of this practice. Upon returning home, we abandoned this practice completely and never engaged in it again.'[2]

1. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 1, p. 263
2. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 2, pp. 249–250

The Ruling on Employment in a Department that Produces and Sells Alcohol

A letter reached the Promised Messiah ﷺ from a person who worked as a deputy manager in a department that produced and sold alcohol, asking: 'Is this job permissible for me?'

The Promised Messiah ﷺ replied:

> All such matters in India at present fall under the category of necessity. Neither the person in charge of this department nor the deputy in charge produce alcohol, nor do they sell it, or consume it; rather, they oversee it administratively. This is obligatory for them due to their government position. Thus, in view of the country's condition and prevailing circumstances, it is permissible as a form of necessity. However, a person must continue praying to God Almighty that He provides better means and alternatives. The government does have positions that are unrelated to such matters. One should persistently engage in seeking forgiveness from God Almighty.[1]

The Ruling on Commission for Exchanging Currency

A question was presented to the Promised Messiah ﷺ: 'There is a common practice whereby a small amount of money is taken or given as commission when exchanging one currency for another, such as converting pounds into rupees, or vice versa. Is taking or giving this type of commission permissible?'

The Promised Messiah ﷺ replied:

1. *Al-Badr*, 26 September 1907, p. 6

This is permissible and does not fall under usury. This is because the person provides a necessary service by arranging the banknotes or providing coins in exchange for notes. It is therefore not objectionable if he takes a reasonable amount as commission, since he spends time and effort maintaining the various denominations of notes and coins.[1]

1. *Al-Badr*, 26 September 1907, p. 6

INTEREST, INSURANCE, AND BANKING

The Ruling on Interest

The Promised Messiah ﷺ was asked about the issue of interest, considering that people sometimes encounter situations in which dealing with interest is unavoidable.

The Promised Messiah ﷺ:

> We cannot declare it permissible, for it is utterly impermissible. However, there is a type of interest that is permissible in Islām: namely, that when giving a loan, no condition should be stipulated. Thereafter, if the borrower, out of goodwill, voluntarily gives something extra when repaying the debt, it is allowed. This was the practice of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. For instance, if he borrowed [an amount equivalent to] 10 rupees, he would sometimes repay it ten-fold.
>
> The forbidden form of usury is that in which conditions and agreements for extra payment are set in advance.[1]

1. *Al-Badr*, 24 August 1904, p. 8

Multiplying Interest

Someone mentioned to the Promised Messiah ﷺ that Sayyid Aḥmad Khān had written that the verse أَضْعَافًا مُّضَاعَفَةً[1] [that which multiplies itself] refers specifically to the prohibition of compounded interest.

The Promised Messiah ﷺ replied:

> It is incorrect to say that only interest which multiplies itself is forbidden while ordinary usury is permissible. That is not the intention of the Sharīʿah at all. It is like the expression: 'Do not commit one sin after another,' which does not imply that committing a single sin is acceptable. Therefore, if someone receives an amount of this sort from the government, it is not interest unless that person had first given the money with the intention of taking interest. But if the government gives it out of goodwill or as a favour, then this is not considered interest.[2]

Provident Fund

A person raised a question: 'Employees working in the railways have one part deducted from 16 parts of a rupee every month. After some time, this money is returned to them along with an additional amount. What is the ruling on this?'

The Promised Messiah ﷺ replied:

> In Sharīʿah, usury is defined as lending someone money with the intention of deriving benefit from it, and the rate of interest is also predetermined. Wherever this definition applies, it is usury. However, if someone borrows without promising to pay

1. *Sūrah Āl ʿImrān*, 3:131
2. *Al-Badr*, 27 March 1903, p. 75

an additional amount, and then voluntarily gives something extra when repaying, this is not usury. The prophets have always been attentive to conditions.

So, for example, if the king takes a certain amount and later returns it with something extra, and the creditor did not give it with the intention of receiving a surplus, then this is not usury; rather, it is an act of generosity from the king.

The Holy Prophet ﷺ never borrowed anything except that he would always return it with something extra. It should be clearly understood that one must not intend to take something extra. But what is received without request or stipulation does not fall under the category of usury.[1]

Taking an Interest-Bearing Loan for Trade Is Prohibited

A question was asked: 'What is the ruling on investing interest-based money in trade in cases of necessity?'

The Promised Messiah ؑ replied:

It is *ḥarām* [unlawful]. However, if money is taken from someone known to the borrower, without any agreement to repay more than the original amount—and likewise, the giver does not expect anything extra—then, if the borrower returns slightly more out of goodwill, it is not considered usury. Rather, it falls under the Quranic principle:

هَلْ جَزَآءُ الْإِحْسَانِ إِلَّا الْإِحْسَانُ[2]

Is the reward of goodness anything but goodness?

1. *Badr*, 27 March 1903, p. 75
2. *Sūrah al-Raḥmān*, 55:61

Then another person asked: 'If the need for interest becomes urgent, and affairs cannot proceed without it, what is the ruling in that case?'

The Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

> God Almighty has forbidden it for the believers. A believer is one who remains steadfast in faith, for Allāh the Exalted is his Guardian and Provider. Millions of people in Islām have lived their entire lives without ever taking or paying interest. Were their needs not fulfilled? Allāh commands: do not take interest, and do not pay it. Whoever engages in it is, in effect, preparing for war against God Almighty. If a person possesses true faith, God shall reward him for it. Faith is a deeply blessed quality. Allāh says:
>
> أَلَمْ تَعْلَمْ أَنَّ اللّٰهَ عَلٰى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ[1]
>
> Do you not know that Allāh has the power to do all that he wills?
>
> So if someone wonders: 'What am I to do in such a situation? Does that mean God's command is in vain?' No, the truth is that God's power is immense. Interest is not even worth mentioning. If God were to command, 'Do not drink the water of the earth,' then He would send water from the sky instead.
>
> Just as Allāh has provided lawful alternatives in every hardship, He also creates a way out for those in financial need without them falling into sin. If one's faith remains tainted, it will be weak. A person cannot abandon sin unless God grants him the strength to do so. Otherwise, he can come up with excuse after excuse for every sin, saying: 'I cannot leave it,' or 'If I do, I will not survive.'

1. *Sūrah al-Baqarah*, 2:107

Look at shopkeepers and pharmacists, they sell expired goods for years and deceive customers. Government employees take bribes. All of them offer the excuse that they cannot survive without these means. If one were to gather all their excuses, the conclusion would be that it is impossible to live by the Book of God. But this is not true. God makes things easy for the believer. All the righteous have experienced that God provides a way out in times of distress and difficulty. People do not value God as they should. Their reliance on sinful alternatives outweighs their reliance on God.

Faith in Allāh is a remedy. If people valued it, they would preserve it just as they preserve rare and miraculous medicines. I have personally experienced, on many occasions during illness, a state of great distress, with frequent passing of urine and diarrhoea. In the end, I supplicated to Allāh. The next morning, I received the revelation:

دُعَاءُكَ مُسْتَجَابٌ

Your prayer is answered.

Immediately, the affliction ceased, and strength replaced weakness. This is the power of God. God is indeed wondrous; He deserves greater honour than all chemical prescriptions and other remedies. At one point, I even thought that this remedy is worthy of being kept secret. However, I then felt that this would be miserly. Rather, beneficial knowledge should be shared openly so that Allāh's creation may benefit from it.

This is the difference between the God of Islām and the gods of other religions. Their gods do not speak. Only Allāh knows what true faith is. The God of Islām today is the same as He was in the past. His power has not diminished, nor has He aged, nor has He suffered decline of any kind. Whoever

truly believes in such a God would be willing to be thrown into fire for Him, just as our master Abraham عليه السلام was thrown into fire. I too was thrown into fire when the false murder case was brought against me. Had I been sentenced to 5 or 10 years in prison, my entire Community would have been destroyed. All nations united together to kindle this fire. Was this any small fire? Who was with me besides God? I received the same revelations as our master Abraham, and eventually I received the revelation: إبراء [Exoneration]—and I was assured that everything is in His hands.[1]

Using Interest Paid by Banks for the Propagation of Islām is Permissible

Shaikh Nūr Aḥmad [of Jalandhar] mentioned the interest banks invariably paid and asked what should be done with it. Upon this, the Promised Messiah عليه السلام said:

My belief is that such money should be spent on the cause of propagating the Faith, and this is indeed what Allāh the Exalted has instilled in my heart. Interest is undoubtedly forbidden, but that applies to one's self. That which goes into the possession of Allāh the Exalted cannot remain forbidden because the prohibition of things is for man and not for Allāh the Exalted. So, interest is totally forbidden for one's self, wife, children, friends, relatives and neighbours. But if this money is spent purely for the cause of propagating religion, there is no harm, especially given the situation that Islām has become very weak. And then another problem is that people do not even give *Zakāt*. I see that two calamities are taking place at this

1. *Al-Badr*, 27 March 1903, p. 75

time, and two prohibitions are being violated. Firstly, *Zakāt*, which had to be given, is not being given, and interest, which was not to be taken, is being taken. That is, the right of God Almighty is not being given, and that which was not a man's right is being taken.

When this is the situation, and Islām is suffering from a dangerous weakness, I deliver the *fatwā* [religious edict] that such monies received from the bank as interest should at once be spent on the propagation of religion. The *fatwā* I have given is not of general applicability; otherwise, both the taking and the giving of interest are forbidden. But in this age of the weakness of Islām, when the means of financial growth have not come into being and Muslims are not paying attention [to such needs], it is not forbidden to employ such money in the work of Islām.

According to the meaning of the Holy Qur'ān, what is forbidden is the interest spent for one's own benefit. Remember that just as taking interest is not permissible, giving it to others is also not allowed. However, handing over such money to God Almighty is correct, and the only way to do this is for it to be spent on the propagation of Islām. An example of this is when *Jihād* is taking place, and the ammunition and gunpowder are with an evil-doer; at that time, it is not right to refrain from its use thinking that this ammunition and gunpowder are prohibited. Instead, it would be appropriate to make use of it. The *Jihād* of the sword no longer remains valid at this time, and God Almighty has given us a government which has given us every type of religious freedom. Now is the time for a *Jihād* of the pen, so we can spend it [interest] on propagating the Faith.[1]

1. *Al-Ḥakam*, 24 September 1905, p. 9; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt*, vol. 7, p. 353

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad رضی اللہ عنہ writes: 'Miāṅ Ghulām Nabī Sethī, who used to trade in Rawalpindi and has now moved to Qadian, gave me a handwritten letter of the Promised Messiah علیہ السلام which he had sent to him in April 1898. This letter contains a foundational ruling from the Promised Messiah علیہ السلام regarding interest, which I now present below:

> I hope that Allāh the Almighty will create a way out for you because of your good intention and fear of Him. Until then, it is necessary to remain steadfast and persist in seeking forgiveness.
>
> I believe there is a better way to handle interest, and that is not to spend what you receive from interest on yourself or your trade. Instead, keep it set aside separately. If you are compelled to pay interest, then pay it from this amount. And if it increases in the meantime, then there is no harm in spending it on a religious cause that serves no personal interest but is solely for the propagation of religion. I have previously issued the same *fatwā* to my Community, that the type of interest which is forbidden by Allāh is that which a person spends on himself. It is forbidden for a person to sustain himself with interest-based money, to spend it on his children, his food, his clothing, his buildings, or to give it to others with the intention that they eat or clothe themselves with it.
>
> However, it is not forbidden to spend interest-based money in a manner by which it is returned to Allāh without benefiting anyone personally. It must be spent for the propagation of religion. The Noble Qur'ān makes clear that Allāh the Exalted is the Owner of everything. Whatever reaches Allāh becomes purified, except that which has been unjustly taken from others without their consent, such as theft, highway robbery, or looting. Such wealth is not fit even to be spent in the cause of Allāh or in the service of religion.

> But what is taken with people's consent may be spent for the propagation of the religion of Allāh. Consider how desperately we need funds today to confront the opponents who are actively publishing material against our faith. It is as if we are in a war against them. There is no harm in using such funds to support this kind of struggle. This is my *fatwā*...
>
> By allowing the spending of money gained through interest for the propagation of religion, I do not mean that one should intentionally engage in usurious transactions. Rather, what I mean is that if someone is compelled, as you have been, or if someone happens to inherit money that was gained through interest, then it may be spent in the way I have explained, and he will also be deserving of spiritual reward.[1]

The Promised Messiah ﷺ received a letter from a person asking about interest. It stated that, since in relation to [receiving] interest from banks, the Promised Messiah ﷺ has permitted it keeping in mind the current circumstances and the condition of Islām, one should make use of the doctrine of necessity. Thus, since this principle is extendible, can it be made use of to initiate the taking and giving of interest due to necessities of a personal, national, or business character?

The Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

> In this way people wish to open the door of consuming the unlawful and the unclean so that they may go about doing whatsoever they wish. I have not allowed that bank interest may be taken and consumed by any individual due to unavoidable need. What I have said is that it is permissible to use interest on bank accounts for the propagation of Islām and fulfilment of other religious needs. And that is only if funds cannot be obtained for religious needs through other means. This is so

1. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 1, pp. 402–403

because for Allāh, nothing is unlawful. And as far as personal, national, or trade matters are concerned, interest is absolutely prohibited. The reasoning that I have provided is similar to the fact that it is unlawful by the Sharīʿah to burn a living being in fire, but in case of a war, it is permissible for a Muslim to make use of guns and cannons because the enemy is also using them.[1]

Insurance

The Promised Messiah ﷺ was asked about insurance, to which he replied:

The Sharīʿah has permitted agreements and responsibilities, with the exception of usury and gambling. In gambling, there is no sense of responsibility, whereas responsibility is necessary in worldly trade and transactions. Secondly, attention must be paid in such matters to the Quranic instruction not to pry into matters. For instance, if someone is invited to a meal and the invitee begins to suspect that the host's wealth might come from unlawful sources, the spirit of hospitality would be entirely ruined.

Among the names of Allāh is *Sattār* [the Concealer], and this too must be remembered. Otherwise, those who are firmly established upon the straight path are few in the world, while those whose realities are veiled are many.

It is also mentioned in the Qur'ān:

وَلَا تَجَسَّسُوْا[2]

1. *Badr*, 6 February 1908; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūzāt*, vol. 10, pp. 142–143
2. *Sūrah al-Ḥujurāt*, 49:13

Meaning, do not spy lest you suffer hardship.[1]

Life Insurance

A letter was presented to the Promised Messiah ﷺ in which it was written: 'To His Holiness the Promised Messiah and the Blessed Mahdi ﷺ: In March 1900, I took out a life insurance policy for 2,000 rupees. The stipulations were that I would pay the annual premium of 46 rupees till I die; my heirs would receive 2,000 rupees at my death and I would not be eligible to receive this money during my lifetime. I have paid about 600 rupees in premiums to the insurance company so far. If I break this contract now, I am eligible for only one third of this money according to the contract; meaning that I will receive 200 rupees and the remaining 400 rupees would be lost. But since I have pledged at your hand that I shall give precedence to religion over this world, I do not wish to continue to be involved in something that is in contravention to the commandments of God and His Messenger after learning the truth about this issue. You are the *Ḥakam* [Arbiter] and *'Adl* [Judge]; therefore, I most humbly request that a verdict be issued as may be appropriate, so I could act accordingly. In reply to this, the Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

> The form in which the life insurance is being practiced and what is known about it—I do not see any apparent justification for it because it is a [form of] gambling. Although he has spent a substantial sum of money—yet, should he continue, this money would make him commit even more sin. In order to save himself from further sin in his life he should surrender it and take whatever proceeds he can get at this time.[2]

1. *Al-Badr*, 27 March 1903, p. 76

2. *Al-Badr*, 27 March 1903, p. 76; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt*, vol. 10, pp. 195–196

Ruling on Interest from Banks and Commercial Enterprises

A person sent a lengthy message inquiring whether the interest earned from banks or commercial enterprises was permissible, stating that Muslims were facing significant losses in business matters due to its prohibition.

The Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

> This matter pertains to *ijtihād* [personal interpretation]. Unless all its aspects are thoroughly studied, and all types of losses and benefits derived from it are presented to me, I cannot express my opinion on whether it is permissible. Allāh the Exalted has created thousands of ways to earn wealth, and it is incumbent upon Muslims to seek out these avenues and avoid interest. Faith is contingent upon adhering to the straight path, and turning away from the commands of Allāh in this manner is a sin. For example, if the trade of swine were to become the most profitable venture in the world, would Muslims engage in it? However, if it were truly the case that abandoning interest would lead to the destruction of Islām, then it could be permitted in view of the Quranic injunction:
>
> فَمَنِ اضْطُرَّ غَيْرَ بَاغٍ وَّلَا عَادٍ[1]
>
> > But whoso is driven by necessity, being neither disobedient nor exceeding the limit.
>
> Yet this matter is not significant; rather, it relates to personal motives and ambitions. Presently, I am engaged in matters of far greater religious importance, concerned for the faith of the

1. *Sūrah al-Baqarah*, 2:174

people, and cannot divert my attention to such trivialities. If I were to neglect great religious tasks and focus on these inconsequential matters, it would be like a king who, in building a palace in a jungle infested with lions, wolves, snakes, and flies, neglects to deal with the wild beasts and instead busies himself with killing flies, what then would be his fate? It must be conveyed to this inquirer that he ought to prioritise his faith, spend a few days here to enlighten his heart and mind, and refrain from preoccupying himself with such thoughts.[1]

It Is Necessary Not to Engage in Usurious Debt Under Any Circumstances

Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ﷺ says: 'Miāń Khair-ud-Dīn of Sikhwan ﷺ informed me in writing: "Once, I asked about taking a loan on interest. The Promised Messiah ﷺ replied:

It is not permissible.

"I then said: 'Sometimes a person may be compelled. For example, if a farmer does not possess money and he must pay government dues, and a policeman is standing over him, and no one is willing to lend him money except a usurer, what should he do in such a situation?'

The Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

A state of compulsion may indeed arise, but one should seek forgiveness from Allāh and not take a loan on interest.[2]

1. *Al-Ḥakam*, May 1902, p. 11
2. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 2, pp. 198–199

Fine for Non-Payment of Debt by the Due Date

Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ II ﷺ explained a verdict of the Promised Messiah ﷺ as follows:

QUESTION—Person X gave Person Y goods to sell at a specified price, but after selling them, Person Y did not pay Person X the due amount, and nearly a year has passed. Does Person X then have the right to demand a fine from Person Y or to withhold the money? If so, has the Sharī'ah specified any percentage for the fine? The Promised Messiah ﷺ writes in a footnote on page 10 of his book *Arya Dharam*:

> He must pay a fine commensurate with the profit that the money could have earned during the period it was withheld and not invested in trade.

ANSWER—I (Ḥaḍrat Maulawī Sayyid Sarwar Shāh—the narrator) presented this matter to Ḥaḍrat Amīrul-Mu'minīn [Khalīfatul-Masīḥ II ﷺ], and he said: 'There is a fine line between this and commercial interest, and not everyone can grasp the essence of that distinction. Therefore, the ruling we have established is more appropriate: the judge should consider whether the debtor has caused harm to the creditor. If so, the judge may impose a fine, but the fine must be deposited into the public treasury, not given directly to the merchant.'[1]

Taking Interest to Avoid the Calamity of Interest

A question was asked: 'Is interest permissible? Hindus take it from us, and if we do not take it, all our money will go to the Hindus.'

1. *Farmūdāt Muṣleḥ Mau'ūd Darbārah Fiqhī Masā'il*, pp. 303–304

Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ II ﷺ responded: 'Our stance on this matter differs from others. What I am about to say reflects the Aḥmadī belief, and we are not concerned with what other scholars may say, for we disagree with them. The Founder of our Community decided that interest, in itself, is forbidden. The Turks previously ruled that bank interest was not to be considered interest. The Ḥanafī scholars once issued a *fatwā* that, so long as India remained under English rule and was thus regarded as *Dārul-Ḥarb*, it was permissible to take interest from non-Muslims. However, circumstances have now changed to the extent that no one even questions this matter any longer; people engage freely in taking and giving interest. We, however, say that whether it is bank interest or any other form, both are forbidden.

'Nevertheless, the Founder of the Community issued a ruling drawn from other Islamic principles. At times, a person encounters a situation of calamity, and it is foolish to simply declare that "this is forbidden and that is permitted" without considering the practical reality. For example, if someone falls into an area of impurity extending several metres, and it is said to him that walking in impurity is forbidden, then how is he to escape? In the same way, the Founder of the Aḥmadiyya Community decided that if a person takes interest for the sole purpose of extricating himself from the calamity of interest itself, it is permitted. For instance, if he must pay interest at a rate of 20%, but can instead take a loan from a bank at a rate of five percent, then he should do so. It is hoped that through this he will save himself from the greater calamity of excessive interest.'[1]

Life Insurance

Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ II ﷺ states: 'All types of insurance that we have come across so far are impermissible. However, if a company

1. *Al-Fazl*, 25 January 1929, p. 6

stipulates that the policyholder will share in the profits and losses of the company, then insurance may be permissible. Nevertheless, there is a type of insurance that becomes permissible in cases of necessity. For example, the government may require employees in certain sectors to take out insurance. As long as this requirement is beyond their control, it is permissible. There is a verdict of the Promised Messiah ﷺ regarding this matter. He stated that, in cases where one is compelled to contribute to the private fund, any additional amount received on it should be accepted.'[1]

Charging Different Prices for Advance and Deferred Payment

On February 14, 1907, the editor-in-chief of the newspaper *Badr* published an announcement stating that if someone paid for the newspaper in advance, the price would be lower, and if paid later, it would be higher. The announcement read: 'If the payment for purchase of the newspaper is collected in advance it would facilitate the running of the newspaper. Some of those individuals who do not pay in advance and make promises to pay later, do not go beyond just making promises. And in order to get payment from some, so much difficulty is encountered in repeated correspondence and keeping records of the reminders sent to them that in order to offset the cost of this extra effort, and to reduce the loss to some extent and to compensate the expense, the cost of the newspaper *Badr* has been increased by one rupee for those who will pay later, that is, four rupees instead of three rupees will be charged from those who pay afterwards. A member from Lyallpur asked whether this method of payment is not a form of interest.'

This matter was presented to the Promised Messiah ﷺ, and he responded as follows:

1. *Al-Fazl*, 7 January 1930, p. 4

In my view, this has nothing to do with interest. It is the prerogative of the proprietor to charge whatever price they wish, particularly if there is inconvenience in collection afterwards. If someone wishes to obtain the newspaper, they can also pay in advance. This matter is in their own hand.[1]

1. *Badr*, 14 February, 1907, p. 4; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt*, vol. 9, pp. 127–128

OBEDIENCE TO AUTHORITY

The Five Principles of the Promised Messiah عليه السلام

The Promised Messiah عليه السلام stated:

> I have repeatedly announced that I have five prominent principles:
>
> **First:** Belief in the Oneness of God Almighty, without any partner, transcendent from all deficiencies, death, illness, incapacity, pain, sorrow, and other unworthy attributes.
>
> **Second:** Firm belief that our master and prophet, Muhammad ﷺ is the seal of the divine prophethood, the bearer of the final divine law, and the guide to the true path of salvation.
>
> **Third:** Advocating for the religion of Islām with rational proofs and heavenly signs, considering thoughts of invasion, *Jihād*, and warfare as absolutely forbidden and prohibited in this era, and regarding adherence to these thoughts as a clear error.
>
> **Fourth:** Not contemplating evil and corruption against this benevolent English government under whose auspices we live, and obeying it with sincerity of heart.
>
> **Fifth:** Sympathy towards all human beings, exerting utmost effort for the well-being of every individual as much as possible in this world and the hereafter, supporting peace and security,

and promoting good morals in the world. These are the five principles taught by this Community.[1]

Good Treatment of Rulers and Relatives

A person asked: 'How should we treat rulers and relatives?'

The Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

Be kind to everyone. Obedience to rulers and maintaining sincerity towards them are both obligations upon every Muslim, because they protect us and have granted us religious freedom in all its forms. I consider disobedience to the government and a lack of heartfelt sincerity towards it to be a great betrayal.

Relatives have rights as well, and thus good treatment of them is also necessary. However, one must distance oneself from them in matters that are contrary to the pleasure of Allāh the Exalted. Our principle is to maintain ties with everyone and to treat all of God's creation with kindness.[2]

The Issue of Living Under British Rule

During a discussion on the topic of *Jihād*, some groups were mentioned who consider killing every disbeliever with the sword as being part of a religious war and consider living in the British countries as heresy and disbelief.

On this, the Promised Messiah ﷺ, said:

1. *Kitābul-Bariyyah*, *Rūḥānī Khazā'in,* vol. 13, pp. 347–348
2. *Al-Ḥakam*, 31 May 1904, p. 13

The notion that we avoid disbelief by living in isolation, and that living under British rule means being forced to witness acts of disbelief and *shirk* with our own eyes, and to hear *shirk*-laden speech with our ears—this notion, in my view, is entirely unfounded. This is because the current government has, until now, afforded everyone religious freedom. Each individual is at liberty to peacefully propagate their faith and to do so with security and tranquillity. The government provides no allowance for religious prejudice. Numerous living examples testify to this.

Once, the Christian priests themselves made a false case of murder against me. The case was before an English Christian judge and the lieutenant governor of that time was also a man with a priestly disposition. Nevertheless, the judge gave the verdict in my favour, acquitted me entirely, and went so far as to say that he could not abandon justice for the sake of Christian priests. Thereafter, another case was decided. Previously, it had been before Hindu magistrates. I do not know under whose influence they ignored clear and obvious grounds, and imposed a fine upon me. Ultimately, however, when the matter was taken on appeal before an English judge, he acquitted me. He expressed regret over the magistrate's proceedings and said that so much time had been wasted on a case which ought to have been dismissed at its initial stage.

It shows that these people still have the substance of justice and fairness. If there had been any religious prejudice or malice, it would have at least been employed against me. This is a Jamā'at of around 300,000. Then the people of Afghanistan keep coming and swearing allegiance, and because it is a new sect, the Government's attention should have been directed towards it. However, observe that I have faced about eight cases in which, except for one or two, the rest were all filed against me by my opponents, but I have won all of them. And the British were

the ones who made decisions in my favour. Although I consider all these achievements to be from God—for what could these people have done had He not willed it?—those who served as the means, and through whose hands His help came to me, also merit being thanked.

In my opinion, nay, I am confident that there is no prejudice in these [British] people, and the future situation is known only to God, and that is why I say that if these [Muslim] people only want to serve the Faith and their purpose is to please God, then what is the use of sitting in hiding? They should take up some way to serve the Faith. There is absolutely no restriction of any kind from the Government. Preach to the [non-Muslim] people and complete the argument against them.

The idea that the Government jails people who engage in preaching is entirely wrong. Not at all. Yes, of course, those who create disorder are worthy of being detained due to their conduct. What is the Government's fault in this? The current state of Christianity is that it is dying on its own. Their great and erudite scholars have become staunch enemies of the Trinity, and modern learning has instilled in their hearts that an artificial 'God' is no longer of any use. The condition of the Christian priests is that they are working only for the sake of provisions. If their salary is late by so much as a single day, they leave work and write books against Christianity.[1]

Who are the Authorities?

QUESTION—What is meant by *ulul-amr* [those in authority]? Some say that every *maulawī* is *ulul-amr*, and others say no one is.

1. *Al-Ḥakam*, 31 May 1904, p. 13

ANSWER—The truth is that in Islām, it has continued to be the practice that the kings of Islām, who hold the reins of government in their hands, should be obeyed. So, they are a class of *ulul-amr*, but the real *ulul-amr* are those whose lives are pure and are given a discernment and cognisance and who get orders from God Almighty; that is, the Appointees of God.

The kings hold the reins of government and have full involvement in administrative affairs, but what can they do for religious affairs? The true *ulul-amr* are indeed those by following whom one obtains the eye of cognisance and man moves away from sin. Consider both these things with regard to *ulul-amr*. If a person rebels against the reigning king, the result will not be good for him because it will lead to mischief, and Allāh the Almighty does not like mischief. Similarly, if one opposes the one appointed by God, one suffers the loss of faith because opposing them inevitably pits such a one against God.

QUESTION—So, should the *maulawīs* of this time be considered *ulul-amr*?

ANSWER—اوخویشن گم است کرا رہبری [They are lost themselves; how will they guide someone else!] The truth is that until Allāh the Exalted opens someone's eyes, the eyes do not open. These people have understood religion to be the name of a few rituals, although religion is not the name of rituals. There are times when things are understood to be mere rituals and habits, and these people are becoming like this. Those who were taught Prayer and Fasting during the time of the Holy Prophet ﷺ had a different mindset. They would embrace the essence and were, therefore, quick to benefit. Then, after a period, that same Prayer and Fasting, which was the means of attaining purity of the highest degree and nearness to God, was taken as a ritual and habit. So, what is needed

at this time is that man should search for the essential purpose of religion, which is its kernel.[1]

The Promised Messiah ﷺ stated:

> In worldly terms, *ulul-amr* means the king, and in spiritual terms it means the Imam of the age. Since anyone who is not against our objectives and is physically useful to our faith, is one of us, that is why, my advice to the Jamā'at is that they should consider British rule as *ulul-amr* and should obey them sincerely, for they do not interfere with our religious affairs.[2]

Obedience to Those in Authority

The Promised Messiah ﷺ stated:

أَطِيعُوا اللهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَأُولِي الأَمْرِ مِنْكُمْ[3]

> Obey Allāh, and obey His Messenger and those who are in authority among you.

> Now here, there is a clear instruction to obey those in authority. If someone were to assert that the government is not implied in the words *minkum* (i.e. from among you), this is a blatant error on their part. Any instruction of the government which accords with the religious law of Islām is implied in the words *minkum*. Anyone who does not oppose us is a part of us. It is

1. *Al-Ḥakam*, 17 August, 1905, p. 6; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt*, vol. 7, pp. 323–324
2. *Ḍarūratul-Imām*, *Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 13, pp. 293–494; Eng. Trans.: *The Need for the Imam*, p. 37
3. *Sūrah an-Nisā'*, 4:60

derived from the Holy Qur'ān that the government ought to be obeyed and its instructions ought to be followed. In fact, what the Muslims should have done is send memorials expressing gratitude to the government for their efforts to thwart the plague. But instead of showing thankfulness, the people have shown ungratefulness. There appears to be no reason for their displeasure except for their objection that male doctors touch Muslim women to check their pulses. Firstly and foremost, the government has heard this complaint with full attention and has even dealt with it by appointing female nurses. However, I would like to make clear that even if this was not the case, there would still be no room for objection. In such cases and circumstances, in the face of God's wrath when thousands of people are dying, such extreme measures regarding the veil are not permissible.

It so happened that the wife of a king died and there was no one to carry away her dead body; what use is the veil in such circumstances? As the proverb goes, 'what a man will do when faced with death.' It has been narrated in a *ḥadīth* that a baby in the mother's womb can be delivered by a man if required. Our religion is not one of difficulty and anyone who creates inconveniences is guilty of making their own religious law, as it were. The government also has not violated any injunctions relating to the veil and their rules are softened as required. When the people put forth their recommendations for reform, the government listens to them carefully and deliberates over them in an appropriate manner according to the dictates of wisdom at that time. Someone ought to tell me where checking a pulse for medical purposes is prohibited in the injunctions of the veil.[1]

1. *Risālah-e-Indhār*, pp. 15–16, speech by the Promised Messiah ﷺ; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt,* vol. 1, pp. 262–263

Expressing Outrage at the Killing of Two Innocent Englishmen

It was reported that a Pathan had murdered two innocent Englishmen in the region of Peshawar. On this, the Promised Messiah ﷺ addressed a gathering and said:

> This incident where two Englishmen have been murdered, is this *Jihād*? It is vile people like these who have given Islām a bad name. What this man ought to have done was care for these individuals and treat them in such an excellent manner so that they could have observed his morals and good conduct, and then become Muslims themselves. The duty of a believer is to crush his own ego.
>
> It is written that Ḥaḍrat ʻAlī ؓ was engaged in battle with a disbeliever. Ḥaḍrat ʻAlī ؓ had subdued the man and just as he was about to bury his sword into the man, he spat on Ḥaḍrat ʻAlī ؓ. On this, Ḥaḍrat ʻAlī ؓ got up from the man's chest. The man was surprised and asked: 'O ʻAlī! What is the matter?' 'I was fighting you for the sake of God,' responded Ḥaḍrat ʻAlī ؓ, 'but now that you have spat on my face, my own ego has a part in this, so I have left you alone.' This act of Ḥaḍrat ʻAlī ؓ had a deep effect on the man.
>
> Whenever I hear such reports about these sorts of people, I am extremely grieved at the fact that they have become greatly distanced from the Holy Qur'ān; they believe that the killing of innocent human beings results in spiritual reward.
>
> Certain individuals from among the Muslim clergy call me 'Antichrist' because I have not deemed it permissible to wage war against the British. But what I find extremely regrettable is that these people call themselves *maulawīs* (religious scholars) and then give Islām a bad name. Someone ought to ask them, what harm have the British done to them? What suffering have

they caused them? It is a shame that a people whose arrival in this land has given us every kind of peace and comfort, and whose coming delivered us from the bloodthirsty claws of the Sikhs, and who provided us every opportunity and facility to propagate our religion, have been thanked for their favour with the killing of innocent British officials.

I openly declare that those people who have no fear in spilling innocent blood and who do not fulfil the rights due to a benefactor are fully accountable before God Almighty. The task of the Muslim clergy ought to be to publicise this point with collective agreement and to admonish the uninformed and ignorant that they live their lives under the shade of the British government in security and freedom; thus, they are thereby obliged to the government, and owe it a debt of gratitude for its gifts. They ought to tell them that this blessed sovereignty is a true supporter in the dissemination of virtue and guidance. Therefore, any thought of waging war against this government is a terrible act of rebellion and is absolutely unlawful. The Muslim scholars ought to advise the ignorant both verbally and in writing and should not cause the world undue harm by defaming Islām. I consider the British government to be a heavenly blessing and deem it an obligation to value it.

It is a shame that the Muslim clergy have failed to undertake this task themselves, and when I endeavoured to dispel these ignorant notions from the hearts of people, they have called me an Antichrist—only because I am grateful to this kind government. But what harm can their opposition do to me? I have published scores of treatises on this subject in Arabic, Persian, Urdu and English, and have distributed thousands of announcements throughout various lands and cities, and not because I seek honour from the government. In fact, God Almighty knows well that I perform this task considering it to be an important obligation, and even if I have to bear

> hardship to perform this service, I do not care in the least. For God has stated that the recompense of goodness is goodness the like thereof. Therefore, it is an obligation of the Muslims to show full obedience and loyalty to the British government.[1]

The Need to Appreciate the Freedom Granted by the Government

On one occasion, after Respected Maulawī ʿAbdul-Karīm of Sialkot ؓ had finished reading out the memorial which the Promised Messiah ؑ had penned to rectify the points stated in the memorial by the *Anjuman Himāyat-e-Islām* in regards to the book *Ummahāt-ul-Muʾminīn*[2], the Promised Messiah ؑ said in a raised voice:

> This memorial has been written to defend Islām and the Muslims at large, and to establish the true honour of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and the greatness of the Holy Qurʾān, and to demonstrate the pure and immaculate face of Islām. Hence, this memorial has been read out before you with the sole purpose of seeking your counsel. Is it advisable at present to write a rebuttal to this book or better to submit a memorial to the government calling for action to be taken against the authors of such books and banning their publication? Anyone from among you is most welcome to put forth their arguments freely.

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1. *Al-Ḥakam*, 17 April 1900, pp. 10–11: Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt* vol. 1, pp. 222–223
2. In 1897, Aḥmad Shāh Shāiq, a Muslim turned Christian, wrote an extremely offensive and hurtful book attacking the wives of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and named it *Ummahāt-ul-Muʾminīn—Darbār-e-Muṣṭafāʾi Kay Asrār*, i.e. *Mothers of the Believers—The Mysteries of the Court of Muṣṭafā*. One thousand copies of this book were sent free to Muslims in India. [Publisher]

Only one person from the congregation spoke and said: 'If the publication of this book is not banned, it will go on being reprinted forever.'

To this, the Promised Messiah عليه السلام said:

> If we truly do not bring a halt to the publication of this book, which is only possible for all intents and purposes if a rebuttal is written against it, let alone once, we can approach the government even a thousand times to solicit aid so that the publication of this book may be banned, but its publication will continue. Even if for some time the book is banned, such a proposal will be no less than a lethal poison for many weak-natured people and generations to come. For when they come to know that a certain book could not be rebutted and then the government was called upon to ban it, they will develop a kind of ill-will towards their own religion.
>
> Therefore, my principle has always been to write a rebuttal to such books and benefit from the sincere support which the government has already given us, i.e. freedom. We ought to pen such an ample response to the book that its supporters feel ashamed themselves to reprint it. Take, for example, the case of Dr Clark; when they realised that the case had lost its credibility and when their mirage of deception faded away, they did not even present the wife and son-in-law of Ātham as witnesses. Hence, my opinion and the verdict of my heart is that a crushing rebuttal ought to be given in the softest and kindest terms. Then, if God so wills, they will lose the courage themselves to reprint the book.[1]

1. *Malfūẓāt,* vol. 1, pp. 158–159; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt,* vol. 1, pp. 247–248

Is India Dār-ul-Ḥarb?

The Promised Messiah ﷺ stated:

> Every Muslim must remember that in the context of government, we do not consider India to be *Dār-ul-Ḥarb* (i.e. the Abode of War). This is my belief. Although other scholars who oppose me have fiercely disagreed with me on this issue, and have spared no opportunity to cause me grief, I cannot hide the truth out of fear of these temporary pains and present grief. It is my faith that in the context of rule, India is certainly not *Dār-ul-Ḥarb*—not in the least. Just think about the court case filed against me. If the very same lawsuit had been filed against me under the Sikh reign and if one of their Gurus or a Brahman stood against me in court, executing me without any investigation or inquiry would be no significant matter. However, it is truly an excellence of the British empire's rule that a doctor, who is also a renowned reverend, stands against me in court, but I am not treated harshly at all in the investigations and proceedings of the court. Captain Douglas was not concerned in the least of the reverend's own eminence, or of his position or rank; and so he expressed to Mr. Le Marchand, who is a high ranking officer of police in Gurdaspur, that he felt uneasy at heart about the case and that ʻAbdul-Ḥamīd should be questioned again. Ultimately, in view of justice, the Captain acquitted me.
>
> Then, the British do not prevent us from practising the tenets of our faith; in fact, they have brought with them many blessings on account of which I have received ample opportunity to propagate my religion. I have been granted such peace and comfort that is unheard of in previous reigns. In this case, it is gravely unjust and far from Islamic teachings and morals that we should be ungrateful to them. Remember! A human

being who is not grateful for the goodness shown by another of their own kind cannot be grateful to God Almighty either. For he can observe the good done by man. How then will he be able to show gratitude for the favours of that Being Who is the most hidden of all and whom he cannot even see? Therefore, as far as government is concerned, I do not consider this land to be *Dār-ul-Ḥarb*.

However, in my view, India is a *Dār-ul-Ḥarb* as far as the pen is concerned. The Christian clergy wage a horrific war against Islām and they have stepped into this field of battle with the lances of the pen, not with spears and arrows. Therefore, the weapon with which we ought to enter this field of battle is the pen and nothing but the pen. I hold that it is the responsibility of each and every Muslim to participate in this war. Such attacks are made against Allāh and His chosen Messenger that I am overwhelmed with grief and my heart trembles. Can we sit at rest after seeing such offensive books as *Mothers of the Believers—The Mysteries of the Court of Muṣṭafā*, which is a book whose very title resembles those of obscene novels. It is astonishing, however, that even in the estimation of the government, books such as *The Mysteries of the Court of London* are deemed worthy of being banned from publication, but a book which hurts the sentiments of 80 million Muslims is not banned. I do not desire in the least to make such a request of the government; in fact, I deem such a request to be most inappropriate as I have made evident in my memorial. However, I raise this issue because it is the duty of the government themselves, nonetheless, to monitor such writings. In any case, the government has granted complete freedom that if a Christian writes a book for the purpose of raising allegations against Islām, a

Muslim is free to pen a rebuttal and write books in refutation of the Christian faith.[1]

Avoid Every Form of Rebellion

The Promised Messiah ﷺ published the following announcement titled *Important Advice to My Jamāʿat*:

I observe that in these days some ignorant and mischievous people, mostly from among the Hindus and some from the Muslims, engage in certain actions against the Government that reek of mutiny; rather, I sense that at some point a treacherous hue will develop in their nature. Therefore, I strongly advise the members of my Community who are present at various places in the Punjab and India, and by God's grace their numbers have reached many hundreds of thousands, that they ought to distinctly remember my teaching that I have been instilling in their minds for approximately twenty-six years, verbally and in writing, that they fully obey this Government as this Government is a beneficent government.

This sect of mine has reached hundreds of thousands [in number] in a few years under the shadow of their protection, and it is the favour of this Government that under its shade we are safe from the claws of the unjust people. It is the wisdom and prudence of God Almighty that He selected this Government so that under its shadow this Aḥmadiyya Sect may safeguard itself from the bloodthirsty onslaughts of the aggressors and make progress. Can you imagine that living under the rule of the Ottoman Emperor or even by making your home in Makkah or Madīnah, you could remain safe against the attacks

1. *Al-Ḥakam*, 31 May 1901, pp. 2–4; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt,* vol. 1, p. 222–223

of the mischievous people? No, not at all. On the contrary, you would be cut into pieces with the sword within just a week.

You have heard how Ṣāḥibzādah Maulawī ʿAbdul-Laṭīf—who was an honourable, revered and renowned chief in the State of Kabul, whose followers numbered around 50,000 when he joined my Jamāʿat—was stoned mercilessly on the orders of Amīr Ḥabībullāh Khān, solely on account of the fault that he opposed *Jihād* [i.e. waging battles] in accordance with my teaching. So, do you have any expectation from such people that you would be afforded any prosperity under such rulers? On the contrary, you have been decreed *wājibul-qatl* [worthy of death] according to the *fatwās* of all the opposing Islamic *ʿulamā'* [scholars].

Hence, it is the grace and beneficence of God Almighty that this Government took you under the shade of its protection just as King Najāshī, who was a Christian, had provided refuge to the Companions of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. I am not indulging in flattery of this Government, as some ignorant people imagine, nor do I desire any recompense from it; rather, I see it as my duty as required by justice and faith that I render thanks to this Government and advise my Jamāʿat to be obedient.

Therefore, remember this and remember it well! Such an individual cannot remain in my Jamāʿat who harbours any mutinous inclination against this Government. In my opinion, it would be extremely unprincipled conduct for us not to be grateful for the beneficence of the Government through which we are protected from the claws of the aggressors, and under whose shade our Jamāʿat is making progress. Allāh the Exalted states in the Holy Qur'ān:

هَلْ جَزَآءُ الْإِحْسَانِ إِلَّا الْإِحْسَانُ[1]

Meaning that, the reward of goodness is goodness, and it is also set forth in the Noble Ḥadīth that the one who is ungrateful to man is also ungrateful to God.[2]

Just think about this, that if you leave the shade of this Government, where is your haven? Try to come up with the name of a state that will offer you refuge? Every Islamic state is bent upon killing you as you have been decreed as *kāfirs* [disbelievers] and apostates. Therefore, value the God-given bounty and recognize with certainty that God Almighty has indeed established the British Government in this country for your well-being. If a calamity befalls this Government, then that calamity will also annihilate you. These Muslims who oppose the Aḥmadiyya Sect, you have heard the *fatwās* of their *'ulamā'*—that is, in their view you are *wājibul-qatl* [worthy of death]—and in their eyes even a dog is worthy of mercy but you are not. The *fatwās* of the entire Punjab and India—nay, rather the fatwas of all Muslim countries—concerning you are that you are *wājibul-qatl*, and to murder you, loot your property, forcefully marry your wives, dishonour your dead, and to forbid them from being buried in Muslim graveyards is not only permissible, but they are all actions of great reward.

So, it is these British, whom people call *kāfirs*, that save you from these bloodthirsty enemies, and you are saved from being murdered by the fear of their sword. Just try living under the shelter of some other empire and see how you are treated. The British Government is a mercy for you; therefore, it is a blessing for you and your shield from God. Thus, value this shield

1. *Sūrah al-Raḥmān*, 55:61

2. In *Sunan at-Tirmidhī*, *abwābul-birri waṣ-ṣilāti ʿan-rasūlillāhi sallallāhu ʿalaihi wa sallam*, Ḥadīth 1954; it is written as: مَنْ لَا يَشْكُرُ النَّاسَ لَا يَشْكُرُ اللّٰهَ. [Publisher]

with all your heart and soul. The British are a thousand times better than the Muslims who are your adversaries as they do not think that you merit being murdered. They do not wish to dishonour you. It was not too long ago that a [Christian] priest had brought a case of 'intent to murder' against me in the court of Captain Douglas. That wise and just-minded Deputy Commissioner discovered that the case was completely false and fabricated. He, therefore, acquitted me with honour, rather gave me permission, if I so desired, to prosecute those who had made a false case against me to have them punished. So, it is clear from this example, how justly and equitably the British treat us.

And remember that, in my opinion, there is no other issue that defames Islām more than the issue of *Jihād* in Islām. The religion whose teaching is excellent; the religion that God has shown miracles to manifest its truth and is continuing to show them—what need does such a religion have for *Jihād*? At the time of our Prophet ﷺ transgressors attacked Islām with the sword and desired to annihilate Islām with the sword. Therefore, those who wielded swords were indeed killed by the sword. So that war was only a defensive war. To spread such ideologies now without any basis, that some bloodthirsty Mahdi will come and capture the Christian kings are simply fictitious tales that have corrupted and hardened the hearts of the Muslims opposing me. And those who hold such beliefs are dangerous men, and such beliefs may, at some time, become the cause of mutiny for the ignorant; rather, they certainly will be. Therefore, I am striving to free Muslims from such beliefs.

Remember, that religion cannot be from God in which there is no compassion for humanity. God has taught us to

be merciful on the earth so that we are shown mercy in the heavens.[1]

The Promised Messiah's Advice to Expelled Medical School Students

The editor-in-chief of the newspaper *Badr* writes: 'Two students ('Abdul-Ḥakīm and another) from among those medical school students who had agreed to stop going to school upon becoming angry with their teachers, presented themselves before the Promised Messiah ﷺ in Qadian on the 21st of May. They mentioned this incident and the Principal's permission to re-enter till 31 May.'

The Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

> Such actions are attributed nowadays to rebelliousness against the Government and should be avoided. In my view, this matter should not be allowed to develop any further now. And taking advantage of the Principal's permission, you should re-enter the school. The teachers with whom you expressed your displeasure must have been warned internally, and I do not expect they will misbehave towards you in the future. The Government does not let such people go without investigation, even if such a thing is not publicly expressed.
>
> Apart from this, you should learn good morals so that if they have misbehaved towards you and if you ever get an opportunity to exercise such authority, you should behave well with your students and subordinates. And the oaths you have taken in the spirit of opposition are unlawful. It is a sin to remain firm on an illegal oath. God has ordered that illegal oaths and promises be broken in Islamic Sharī'ah. It is not good to waste time.

1. *Al-Badr*, 9 May 1907, p. 6

Do not put yourself in trouble and [re-]enroll yourself in school.[1]

A Stern Warning Against Participating in Strike Action

The newspaper '*Badr*' wrote in its issue dated 14th March 1907, titled '*Mischief at Aligarh: Azīz Aḥmad Excommunicated from Baiʿat*': 'Maulawī Ghulām Muḥammad, a student at Aligarh College, mentioning the strike of the students there and their opposition to the teachers, submitted to the Promised Messiah ﷺ that none of the students from this Jamāʿat (the Aḥmadiyya sect) participated in the strike. Miāṅ Muḥammad Dīn, 'Abdul-Ghaffār, etc., all remained separate from this, but 'Azīz Aḥmad continued to participate with those students, and despite our counselling him, did not desist. In some newspapers such articles had been published that the grandson of the Promised Messiah ﷺ is at Aligarh College. Therefore, due to everyone generally knowing the relationship of 'Azīz Aḥmad with the Promised Messiah ﷺ, the members there expressed surprise that 'Azīz Aḥmad participates in such mischief. Upon this, the Promised Messiah ﷺ, Mirza [Ghulam Ahmad], said:

> By joining the mischievous students, the path 'Azīz Aḥmad has taken in opposing his teachers and officers is completely against my teaching and advice. Therefore, since the day he joined this rebellion, he is separated from my Community and expelled from the *Baiʿat* [Pledge of Allegiance]. I am pleased with the students who acted upon my teaching on this occasion. Many people come and enter into the *Baiʿat,* but when they do not act upon the conditions of *Baiʿat* they automatically become expelled therefrom. This indeed is the condition

1. *Badr*, 24 May 1906, p. 2; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt*, vol. 8, p. 374

of ʻAzīz Aḥmad, which is not unique. As for this matter that he is my grandson and thereby related to me, let it be clear that I do not have any regard for such relations. All my relations are for the sake of Allāh the Exalted. The father of ʻAzīz Aḥmad himself is averse to me and I do not consider him my son, so what meaning does it hold that ʻAzīz Aḥmad is my grandson? ʻAzīz Aḥmad should have first consulted me in this matter or should have observed the example that was established in Lahore Medical College, where, when the students in Lahore had gone on strike against their professors, I had directed the students who are members of this Jamāʻat that they must not participate in the strike and that they must return to college immediately, seeking forgiveness from their teachers. So they acted upon my directive, and they presented such a good example by entering the college that other students also immediately returned. ʻAzīz Aḥmad must know this incident as it was published in the newspaper. If he did not know, then it was necessary for him to have first consulted me or to have followed the advice of his companions. His going to Aligarh also was with the directive and advice of his father, and not my directive at all. Similarly, participation in opposition to teachers was not due to any relation with me, and for this reason he is excommunicated from *Baiʻat* until he does *taubah* [repentance] from his action, seeking forgiveness from his teachers. Albeit, other students, Maulawī Ghulām Muḥammad, etc., consulted me before going to Aligarh. I had advised them that there is no harm in going there if they avoid the company of the other students there and do not participate in any wickedness. A person goes to the toilet to relieve himself but safeguards himself from the filth.

Then the Promised Messiah عليه السلام said, addressing me (Ḥaḍrat Muftī Muḥammad Ṣādiq, the editor-in-chief of the newspaper—the compiler):

Publish these matters in the newspaper for public awareness.

Note: After this incident, Mirzā ʿAzīz Aḥmad requested forgiveness for his mistake in a letter to the Promised Messiah ﷺ, and he forgave him.[1]

Treat Rulers and Followers of All Religions with Kindness

Chaudhry ʿAbdullāh Khān, the Mayor of Behlolpur village, posed a question: How should we treat rulers and relatives?

The Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

> Our teaching is that you should treat everyone with kindness and obey rulers sincerely, because they protect you, and lives and property are safeguarded due to them. Treatment of relatives should also be good because they too have rights. As for those who are not pious, are involved in innovations and polytheism, and oppose us, you should not offer Prayer behind them, but you must still treat them with kindness. Our principle is to be kind to everyone, and whoever cannot treat people with kindness in this world, what reward can he expect in the Hereafter? One should always think of the welfare of others, but caution should be exercised in matters of faith.
>
> Just as a doctor diagnoses the illnesses of every patient—whether Hindu or Christian—and treats them regardless, likewise, general principles of kindness should be observed in dealings with others.
>
> If someone says that the disbelievers were killed during the time of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, then the answer is that they

1. *Badr*,14 March 1907, p. 5; *Eng. Trans.*: *Malfūẓāt*, vol. 9 , pp. 182–184

> were criminals who were punished for their malice, their harming of Muslims, and their unjust killings. However, if disbelief is expressed simply, without malice or harm, it does not incur worldly punishment.[1]

Definition of Bribery

Ḥaḍrat Maulawī Noor-ud-Deen ؓ said: 'There is a question that people often ask, namely that sometimes they face circumstances where, if they do not give a bribe to an employee, they are unable to conduct their day-to-day affairs.'

The Promised Messiah ؑ replied:

> The definition of bribery, according to me, is when something is given to unlawfully destroy the right of another or to usurp the rights of the government. However, if no one's right is violated and no injustice is committed, but something is given only to protect one's own legitimate rights, then there is no harm in it, and it is not bribery. It is similar to walking along a path and encountering a dog; in such a situation, one might toss a piece of bread to the dog, in order to distract it, so that one may continue walking safely along his way, thus avoiding any potential harm.[2]

Do not Violate the Rights of the Government

The Promised Messiah ؑ said:

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1. *Al-Ḥakam*, 17 August 1902, p. 9
2. *Al-Ḥakam*, Issue: 17 August 1902, p. 8

> Offering bribery is absolutely forbidden, for it constitutes a grievous sin. In my view, bribery refers to that which violates the rights of the government or the rights of other individuals, and I strictly prohibit such actions. If, however, one presents something to another as a gift or offering, without any intention of usurping another's rights, but rather with the objective of safeguarding one's own rights and protecting oneself from harm, then I do not consider this to be prohibited, nor do I regard it as bribery. The Sharī'ah does not forbid a person from avoiding the oppression of others; rather, it enjoins:
>
> لَا تُلْقُوا بِأَيْدِيكُمْ إِلَى التَّهْلُكَةِ[1]
>
> And cast not yourselves into ruin with your own hands[2]

Learn the Language of the Nation and the Government

The Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

> It should be known that since the established rule in this country has now assumed the form of a national government, the language of the national government also, therefore, assumes national significance. Consequently, it has become necessary for you to learn English as well, so that you may be able to clearly convey your demands to the authorities, and so that you may be able to assist and benefit the government.[3]

1. *Sūrah al-Baqarah*, 2:196
2. *Al-Hakam*, 17th August 1902, p. 9
3. *Al-Ḥakam*, 12 May, 1899, p. 4

Landlords' Tributes to Patwaris

A person who is a member of the Jamā'at [Aḥmadiyya] and is a *Patwari* [Land Records Officer] by profession, wrote a letter to the Promised Messiah ﷺ. He asked: 'There is a certain compensation fixed for *Patwaris* by the government, but it has become a common practice that *Patwaris* charge more than that or beside it in certain cases. Farmers are happy to pay this even without asking. Is this practice permissible?'

The Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

> If we suppose that information of such payments were to reach the regulatory authorities and there is, according to law, a fear of setting him up for a trial, then it is not permissible.[1]

Offering Voluntary Prayer for the Governor or Ruler

Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ﷺ relates: 'Mīr 'Anāyat 'Alī narrated to me: "Once, the Promised Messiah ﷺ travelled to Malerkotla accompanied by approximately eight or 10 individuals, and I too was part of this journey. At that time, the railway had not yet reached Malerkotla. His Holiness ﷺ travelled in response to an invitation sent by the mother of Nawāb Ibrāhīm 'Alī Khān through her servants to His Holiness ﷺ in Ludhiana, requesting that he visit Malerkotla, observe the condition of her son, and pray for him. Nawāb Ibrāhīm 'Alī Khān had been suffering from an ailment that affected his mental state.

'The Promised Messiah ﷺ boarded the carriage of Qaḍī Khwājah 'Alī from Ludhiana at around 10 or 11 o'clock in the morning, and arrived in Malerkotla around three in the afternoon. When morning came, Nawāb Ibrāhīm's mother instructed her servants to prepare a

1. *Al-Ḥakam*, Badr 24 May, 1908, p. 8: Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt*, vol. 10, pp. 560–561

carriage for His Holiness ﷺ so that he could travel to the garden to visit Nawāb Ibrāhīm ʻAlī Khān. However, the Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

> There is no need for a carriage; we shall go on foot.

ʻThus, he walked accompanied by a large crowd. Upon reaching the garden, His Holiness ﷺ stopped with his companions. Nawāb Ibrāhīm came out with his entourage. Upon seeing the Promised Messiah ﷺ for the first time, he initially stepped back, but then advanced, greeted His Holiness ﷺ, and asked: "Has the fourth part of *Barāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya* been printed?" His Holiness ﷺ replied that it had not yet been printed but would be published soon, God willing.

ʻNawāb Ibrāhīm then said: "Come, let us sit inside." Thus, the Promised Messiah ﷺ entered the residence with Nawāb Ibrāhīm and they remained together for about half an hour. Since no one else entered with them, we do not know what conversation took place. Thereafter, His Holiness ﷺ returned on foot with the people to the central mosque, while Nawāb Ibrāhīm went out for a stroll.

ʻUpon reaching the mosque, the Promised Messiah ﷺ instructed everyone to perform ablution and offer two *rakʻāt* of Prayer, saying:

> Pray for the health of Nawāb Ibrāhīm, who is the ruler of your city, and I shall also pray.

In short, he prayed along with everyone, and afterwards, despite the people's insistence, he did not remain in Malerkotla but returned swiftly to Ludhiana.[1]

1. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 1, pp. 311–312

Obeying the Laws of the Government

The Promised Messiah عليه السلام said:

> With regard to following the government's instructions during the days of the plague: If the plague breaks out where you reside, then I advise you to be among the first to obey the laws of the government. We have heard that altercations with the police have occurred in many places. In my view, acting contrary to the laws of the government amounts to rebellion and constitutes a grievous crime.[1]

Strike by the Traders of Sialkot

It was mentioned that the traders in Sialkot had shut down their businesses to protest the increase in import duty, but reopened them on their own after suffering the loss of a few days.

The Promised Messiah عليه السلام said:

> It was unwise on their part to act in this manner against the Government from which they themselves had to backtrack. In reality, taxes affect the public. Even when famine strikes due to natural causes, traders increase their prices. Why do they not shut their businesses at such times?[2]

1. *Al-Ḥakam*, 24 July 1901, p. 1
2. *Badr* 27 December, 1906, p. 3; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt*, vol. 9, p. 17

LAWFULNESS AND UNLAWFULNESS

The Permissibility of Good Things

The Promised Messiah عليه السلام said:

> A thing that is impure is unlawful, and a thing that is pure is lawful. God Almighty does not declare anything pure to be unlawful; rather, He has made all pure things lawful. However, when impurities contaminate that which is pure, it then becomes unlawful. For example, the beating of a drum to announce a marriage is lawful. But when dancing and other inappropriate practices are added to it, it becomes unlawful. If it is carried out in the manner directed by the Noble Prophet ﷺ, then it is not unlawful.[1]

The Rule Regarding Permissibility of Consuming Aquatic Animals

A question was presented whether aquatic animals are lawful to consume or not.

The Promised Messiah عليه السلام replied:

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1. *Badr*, 31 October 1907, p. 8

> There are countless aquatic animals. There is a single rule regarding them that God Almighty has stated in the Holy Qur'ān that, eat only those from among them that are good, pure, and beneficial. Consume those and not the rest.[1]

Permissibility is the Basis for Everything

Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ relates: 'Dr. Mīr Muḥammad Ismā'īl ؓ narrated to me: "The Promised Messiah ؑ used to respond to questions regarding what is lawful and unlawful by saying:

> Know that, according to the Sharī'ah, the fundamental principle in matters is permissibility, unless there is a reason for prohibition or unless a clear directive explicitly forbids a particular thing. Otherwise, the matter is governed by the principle:
>
> إِنَّمَا الْأَعْمَالُ بِالنِّيَّاتِ
>
> Actions are judged by intentions.
>
> If the intention is pure, the action is accepted; if it is impure, the action is to be rejected.

Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ further states: 'This humble one affirms that the general approach of the Promised Messiah ؑ was to follow, in most cases, the principle of **إِنَّمَا الْأَعْمَالُ بِالنِّيَّاتِ**, except in matters where the Sharī'ah has given a clear ruling. He would often repeat this statement in his responses regarding religious matters.'[2]

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1. *Badr*, 5 September 1907, p. 3; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt*, vol. 9, p. 357
2. *Sīratul Mahdī*, vol. 1, p. 511

The Rabbit is Lawful

Someone once asked the Promised Messiah ﷺ about the permissibility of eating rabbit.

He replied:

> The default ruling regarding all such matters is one of permissibility; and there is no prohibition unless proven by clear and definitive textual evidence.[1]

The Prohibition of Alcohol and Gambling

The Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

> The Noble Qur'ān has categorically forbidden alcohol, which is *Umm-ul-Khabā'ith* [the mother of all vices]. This distinction belongs solely to the Noble Qur'ān, for it decisively forbade this vile substance—the wickedness of which today causes all of Europe to cry out in spontaneous anguish—and it also categorically prohibited gambling.[2]

Taking Usury from Other Nations is also Prohibited

> Just as Islām forbids Muslims from taking usury from their own people, it likewise prohibits them from taking it from others. God Almighty stated that the matter does not only revolve around the prohibition of usury alone. If your debtor is in need, then either pardon his debt or grant him an extension until he

1. *Badr*, 14 November, 1902, p. 19
2. *Chashma-e-Ma'rifat, Rūhānī Khazā'in*, vol. 23, p. 267

is capable of repayment. Just as forgiveness for the sins of one's own people is mentioned in the Noble Qur'ān, the same ruling applies to other nations. As Allāh the Exalted states in the Qur'ān:

وَلْيَعْفُوا وَلْيَصْفَحُوا أَلَا تُحِبُّونَ أَنْ يَغْفِرَ اللهُ لَكُمْ وَاللهُ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيم[1]

Meaning, let them forgive and pass over [the offence]. Do you not desire that Allāh should forgive you? And Allāh is Most Forgiving, Merciful.[2]

The Prohibition of Alcohol

The Promised Messiah ﷺ stated:

The limits regarding the drinking of alcohol and gambling were not established among the followers of the two earlier scriptures (the Torah and the Gospel—compiler), because those scriptures suffered from a deficiency: they did not prohibit these vices, nor did they prevent those steeped in indulgences from committing them. Consequently, these two nations would drink alcohol like water, and gambling too exceeded all bounds. However, the Noble Qur'ān categorically prohibited alcohol, which is *Umm-ul-Khabā'ith* [the mother of all vices]. This distinction belongs solely to the Noble Qur'ān, for it decisively forbade this vile substance—the wickedness of which

1. *Sūrah an-Nūr*, 24:23
2. *Chashma-e-Mar'ifat, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 23, p. 387

today causes all of Europe to cry out in spontaneous anguish—and it also categorically prohibited gambling.[1]

The Harms of Alcohol

A discussion arose regarding alcohol, and someone said: 'These days, biscuits are also being made with alcohol.'

The Promised Messiah عليه السلام said:

> Alcohol is the bitter enemy of human modesty, chastity, and moral integrity. It utterly strips people of their nobility and reduces them to the level of dogs, cats, and donkeys, making them like such animals as a result of its consumption. If the epidemic of such biscuits spreads across the world, it will open the door to thousands of sins for those who had never committed them before. Modesty and the fear of shame had previously prevented some people from consuming alcoholic beverages, but now they purchase these biscuits and slip them into their pockets. Indeed, the Antichrist has left no stone unturned in filling the world with debauchery and immorality. Thereafter, the matter rests with God; He does what He wills.
>
> How clearly the greatness of Islām shines forth! It is narrated that once, a man who reeked of alcohol objected to Islām, and the prescribed punishment was carried out against him because he had objected to Islām after drinking alcohol. But now, such evils have surpassed all bounds. They drink alcohol, commit adultery, and indulge in every form of vice, yet they still dare to object to Islām.[2]

1. *Chashma-e-Ma'rifat, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 23, p. 267
2. *Al-Ḥakam*, 28 February, 1903, p. 15

The Wisdom Behind the Prohibition of Swine Flesh

The Promised Messiah ﷺ stated:

> One matter to be kept in mind in this context is that in the very name of this animal, God has indicated the reason for the prohibition of its flesh. The Arabic word for swine is *Khinzīr* which is a compound of *Khanz* and *Arā*, which means: I see it very foul. *Khanz* means 'very foul', and *Arā* means '[I] see it'. Thus the very name that God Almighty gave to this animal at the beginning points to its uncleanness. It is a curious coincidence that in Hindi this animal is called *Su'ar*, which is a compound of *Sū'* and *Arā*. This also means: I see it very foul. It should not be a matter of surprise that the Arabic word *Sū'* should have found its way into Hindi. We have established in our book *Minanur-Raḥmān*, that Arabic is the mother of all languages and that many Arabic words are to be found in all languages. Thus *Sū'* is an Arabic word and its equivalent in Hindi is bad. This animal is also called bad in Hindi. There is no doubt that at the time when Arabic was the universal language this animal was known in this country by an Arabic name which was synonymous with *Khinzīr*, and so it has continued to this day. It is possible that in Sanskrit this word might have undergone some transformation, but the true word is *Khinzīr* which proclaims its own meaning. It is not necessary to enter into a detailed exposition of the foulness of this animal. Everyone knows that it eats filth and is utterly shameless. Thus the reason for the prohibition of its flesh is obvious, as by the law of nature its flesh would have a foul effect on the body and the soul of one who eats it.[1]

1. *Islāmī Uṣūl Kī Filasafī*, *Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 10, pp. 338–339; Eng. Trans.: *Philosophy of the Teachings of Islām*, pp. 38–39

The Unlawfulness of Swine in the Torah and Gospel

> Another abomination which he [Paul] introduced into this religion was that he made the eating of swine lawful, whereas the Messiah had declared swine to be an unclean animal. This is what he meant when he used the expression, 'Do not cast pearls before swine'. While he compared the holy teachings to pearls, he likened unclean and impure people to swine. The truth is that the Greeks used to eat the flesh of swine, just like the people of Europe today, and it was in order to win their hearts that Paul declared it to be lawful, even though the Torah had forbidden it forever and had even forbidden anyone to touch it.[1]

Do Not Persistently Inquire About What Is Permitted and Prohibited

One of the brothers asked, 'Your Holiness, is it permissible to eat sheep and other animals that are sacrificed in the name of anyone other than Allāh, or at graves, and then sold and slaughtered?'

The Promised Messiah ﷺ replied:

> The Sharī'ah is founded upon ease, not hardship. The intended meaning of أُهِلَّ بِهِ لِغَيْرِ اللَّهِ[2] [on which the name of any other than Allāh has been invoked] refers to animals slaughtered in shrines, temples, or in other places where the name of anything other than Allāh is invoked. The consumption of such meat is not permissible. However, animals that are bought and sold

1. *Chashma-e-Masīḥī*, *Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 20, p. 375: Eng. Trans.: *Fountain of Christianity*, p. 52
2. *Sūrah al-Baqarah*, 2:174

through trade, the consumption of their meat is *ḥalāl* [lawful], and there is no need to undertake unnecessary investigation.

Take, for example, confectioners. At times, their methods provoke aversion and disgust, yet people still eat their products. You may have seen them preparing sweets while touching their filthy garments. In traditional methods of producing sugar, people trample it underfoot. Similarly, crude sugar is prepared by individuals of poor hygiene who add leftover cane juice and other such things to it. God knows what else they do, yet all of these things are used. If one delves too deeply into such matters, everything becomes forbidden. Islām does not impose burdens beyond one's capacity; rather, the Sharīʿah is founded upon ease.

After this, when the questioner began to ask further detailed questions on the same topic, the Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

Allāh has also stated لَا تَسْأَلُوا عَنْ أَشْيَآءَ[1] [O ye who believe! ask not about things which, if revealed to you, would cause you trouble].[2]

Breastfeeding as a Cause of Marital Prohibition

Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ relates: 'Dr. Mīr Muḥammad Ismāʿīl ؓ informed me: "The marriage of the eldest son of Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ I ؓ, Miāṅ 'Abdul Ḥayy, was solemnised during his youth with Ḥāmidah Begum, the youngest daughter of Sayyid Pīr Manẓūr Muḥammad. It later became apparent that the two were foster siblings. The scholars of the Jamāʿat then investigated the matter,

1. *Sūrah al-Mā'idah*, 5:102

2. *Al-Ḥakam,* 10 August 1903, p. 20

specifically, what constitutes *radā'ah* [breastfeeding], i.e., what amount of milk renders a relationship unlawful due to nursing, and whether breastfeeding had in fact occurred in this case. After due research and inquiry, it was confirmed that they were indeed foster siblings, and thus the marriage was annulled."'

Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ further states: 'As far as I recall, the Promised Messiah ؑ was inclined to the opinion that if a small quantity of milk was suckled once, then such breastfeeding does not establish prohibition. His Holiness ؑ was inclined to allow the marriage to remain valid. However, Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ I ؓ adopted a more cautious approach in matters of jurisprudence. Therefore, the Promised Messiah ؑ permitted the annulment of the marriage.'[1]

Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ II ؓ relates: 'The Promised Messiah ؑ officiated the marriage of Ḥāmidah Khātūn, daughter of Sayyid Pīr Manẓūr Muḥammad, with the late Miāṅ 'Abdul Ḥayy, son of Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ I ؓ. After the marriage had taken place, the mother of 'Abdul Ḥayy recalled and said, "I breastfed the girl." When this matter was presented to the Promised Messiah ؑ, he said:

> This is contingent upon خَمْسُ رَضَعَاتٍ [five breastfeedings] meaning that the child must have been nursed five separate times. It does not mean that the child was breastfed once in five gulps, but that there must be five separate nursing sessions at different intervals. Indeed, the requirement is for five complete breastfeedings.

Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ II ؓ continues: 'However, Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ I ؓ, in accordance with the opinion of the *fuqahā'*

1. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 1, pp. 562–563

[jurists], held that even if five gulps were taken in one session, the same juristic criterion would be fulfilled.

'In summary, the expression خَمْسُ رَضَعَاتٍ [five breastfeedings] was understood in one way by the Promised Messiah ﷺ and in another way by Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ I ﷺ. Since the matter pertained to marriage, and Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ I ﷺ considered the jurists' explanation more compelling, he was so deeply affected and stressed by the situation that he developed stomach issues. In the end, the Promised Messiah ﷺ permitted the annulment of the marriage, stating:

> This is a jurisprudential matter, and it is not necessary that my interpretation alone be deemed correct.[1]

Definition of Bribery

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ﷺ relates: 'Munshī Muḥammad Ismā'īl of Sialkot ﷺ informed me in writing that the Promised Messiah ﷺ said regarding bribery:

> Bribery is when someone gives something to another in order to usurp the right of another person. However, if someone gives something to an ill-intentioned official, merely to safeguard his own rights, then his case is like that of a person who throws a piece of bread before a dog that is about to bite him.'[2]

Adultery Leads to the Loss of Progeny

The Promised Messiah ﷺ stated:

1. *Al-Fazl*, 3 September 1960, p. 4
2. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 2, p. 307

> Everyone can understand that adultery is a most shameless act whose perpetrator, being blinded by his carnal passions, commits an unholy deed that adulterates the lawful human species with the unlawful and causes the spoiling of one's progeny. This is why the Sharīʿah has declared it to be such a major sin that whoever commits it is prescribed a penalty in this very world.
>
> Evidently, it is not enough for the perfection of a believer that he should only abstain from adultery, since adultery is the work of extremely corrupt and shameless people, and it is such an obvious sin which even the most ignorant of the ignorant consider to be evil and no one but a faithless person will be audacious enough to commit it. Shunning it, therefore, is a matter of ordinary decency and no great excellence.[1]

Hunting Birds After Reciting Takbīr

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ relates that Dr. Mīr Muḥammad Ismāʿīl ؓ informed him: 'The Promised Messiah ؑ used to say regarding birds hunted with a slingshot that they should only be hunted after reciting *Takbīr*. He would say:

> The ruling regarding the slingshot and the rifle is the same as that of the arrow. That is, if the prey dies before it can be slaughtered, it is still *ḥalāl*.

'This discussion arose because Sayyid Bhaī 'Abdur-Raḥīm ؓ used to hunt birds with a slingshot. I said, "Many birds die before they can be slaughtered, and Bhaī 'Abdur-Raḥīm ؓ leaves them, considering them unlawful."

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1. *Barāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya*, Part 5, *Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 21, p. 209; Eng. Trans.: pp. 289–290

> The Promised Messiah عليه السلام said:
>
> It is sufficient to recite *Takbīr* at the time of launching the shot; even if the bird dies before slaughtering, it is *ḥalāl*.

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad رضي الله عنه further states: 'What is meant here is that if the prey dies before slaughtering—in other words, if the hunter was unable to perform the slaughter—then it is still *ḥalāl*, provided *Takbīr* was recited prior to the shot. This does not mean that one should refrain from slaughtering if slaughter is still possible.'[1]

The Promised Messiah عليه السلام also said in response to a question:

> If a person fires a bullet after reciting *Takbīr*, and the prey dies, it is permissible.[2]

The Slaughter of Animals is Necessary

Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ II رضي الله عنه said: 'It is not permissible to eat the meat of an animal which has been decapitated by a sword or that has died by strangulation. The Holy Qur'ān prohibits this. When some individuals who were travelling to Europe asked the Promised Messiah عليه السلام about such meat, he forbade its consumption. Therefore, do not consume it.

'However, if Jews or Christians slaughter an animal from the neck, it is permissible in any case, whether they pronounce *Takbīr* or not. You may mention the name of Allāh and eat it.'[3]

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1. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 1, pp. 599–600
2. *Al-Ḥakam*, 10 February 1907, p. 4
3. *Al-Fazl*, 14 September 1915, p. 4

The Meat of Cows that Eat Filth is Forbidden

The Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

> There is a filth-eating cow called *Jalālah*. It is written that its meat is forbidden. This shows that animals that are used as food, like sheep and chickens, should be safeguarded against eating filth whilst they are being reared.[1]

The Consumption of Prohibited Substances as Medicine

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ narrates: 'Dr. Mīr Muḥammad Ismā'īl ؓ informed me that the Promised Messiah ﷺ once prepared a medicinal tablet for a person suffering from tuberculosis. In it, he mixed some bitter local remedies along with quinine, camphor, and opium. He used to say that prohibited substances become permissible when used in the form of medicine for treatment, in order to save the life of a patient.'

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ further states: 'This humble one affirms that the Promised Messiah ﷺ also issued a verdict regarding alcohol, that if it is prescribed by a physician as a medicine, then it is permissible. However, he also wrote about his grandfather, Mirzā Ghulām Muḥammad, that during the illness in which he passed away, a doctor prescribed alcohol for him, but he refused to take it. The Promised Messiah ﷺ praised this decision, noting that he chose death over alcohol. From this, it becomes evident that issuing a *fatwā* [religious verdict] is one thing, while adopting *taqwā* [piety] is another.'[2]

1. *Badr*, 29 September 1905, p. 3; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt*, vol. 7, p. 376
2. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 1, p. 615

Intoxicants Harm Faith

The Promised Messiah ﷺ stated:

> It is narrated in the Ḥadīth:
>
> مِنْ حُسْنِ إِسْلَامِ الْمَرْءِ تَرْكُهُ مَا لَا يَعْنِيهِ[1]
>
> That is, part of the excellence of one's Islām is leaving that which is not necessary. The same applies to *pān*, *hookah*[2], tobacco, opium, and similar substances. True simplicity is for a person to abstain from these things, for they expose one to trials and cause unnecessary difficulties, even if, hypothetically, no other harm were assumed. For instance, if someone is imprisoned, he will be given food, but not opium or other intoxicants. And even if he is not in prison but in a similar restricted environment, he will face the same difficulties.
>
> A person should not corrupt good health with harmful substances. How beautiful is the ruling of the Sharīʿah, which regards that which harms the body—foremost among them being alcohol—as harmful to faith itself. It is absolutely true that there is enmity between intoxicants and *taqwā*. The harm of opium is severe. Indeed, according to medicine, it is even

1. *Sunan at-Tirmidhī, bāb fīman takallama bi kalimah yuḍḥiku bihā an-nās*, Ḥadīth 2239. [Publisher]
2. A traditional smoking device, also known as a water pipe or *shīsha*, used for smoking flavoured tobacco. The apparatus typically consists of a water-filled base, a vertical tube, a bowl for tobacco, and a hose for inhaling the smoke, allowing the tobacco smoke to pass through water before being inhaled. [Publisher]

more harmful than alcohol because it destroys all of a person's faculties.[1]

Prohibition of all Intoxicants

The Promised Messiah ﷺ stated:

> Eschew all immoderation and abstain from every type of intoxicant. It is not alcohol alone that ruins a person. Opium, ganja, *charas*, *bhang*, *tarhi*,[2] and all other addictions are similarly destructive. They ruin the mind and destroy lives. So, shun all such substances.[3]

The Use of Intoxicants Reduces Lifespan

The Promised Messiah ﷺ stated:

> How wonderful is the Quranic teaching that has safeguarded human life from the harm of vile and detrimental substances. Intoxicants, such as alcohol and others, significantly reduce a person's lifespan, destroy his faculties, and make him old before his time. It is a great favour of the Quranic teaching that it has saved millions of people from the diseases and afflictions arising from the use of such intoxicants.[4]

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1. *Al-Ḥakam*, 10 July 1902, p. 3
2. Opium, ganja, *charas* and *bhang* are derived from Indian hemp; *tarhi* is an intoxicating drink derived from coco, a nut water or any palm juice. [Publisher]
3. *Kashtī-e-Nūḥ*, *Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, pp. 71–70; Eng. Trans.: *Noahs Ark* , p. 113
4. *Al-Ḥakam*, 10 March 1903, p. 9

The Harms of Opium

The Promised Messiah ﷺ stated:

> Those who indulge in opium claim that it agrees with their nature. The truth is that it does not agree at all; rather, it continues its harmful effects and ultimately destroys their faculties.[1]

A Practical Example of Avoiding Intoxicants

The Promised Messiah ﷺ stated:

> Once, a friend of mine suggested that opium could be useful in the treatment of diabetes, assuring me that there would be no harm in using it medicinally. I thanked him sincerely for his concern, but I expressed my apprehension, saying: 'If I were to begin using opium for the treatment of diabetes, I fear people would mockingly say: "The first Messiah drank wine, and the second Messiah consumed opium."'
>
> Therefore, when I placed my trust in Allāh in this matter, He did not leave me in need of such vile substances. Whenever illness would afflict me, God would speak to me, saying: 'Look—I have healed you.'[2]

The Dangers of Smoking

A man from America published an advertisement listing the numerous proven harms of smoking.

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1. *Al-Ḥakam*, 17 October 1902, p. 12
2. *Nasīm-e-Da'wat, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 19, pp. 434–435

> The Promised Messiah ﷺ listened to it and stated:
>
> I am listening to this announcement because many teenagers and educated youth are afflicted with this harmful habit, adopting it merely as a fashionable practice. Let them take heed and protect themselves from loss and harm after hearing such information.

He also stated:

> Tobacco smoke indeed harms the internal organs, and Islām forbids indulgence in vain pursuits. It brings only harm; therefore, abstaining from it is preferable.[1]

Someone once asked: 'Since the Qur'ān states: إِنَّ الْمُبَذِّرِينَ كَانُوا إِخْوَانَ الشَّيَاطِينِ[2] [Verily, the extravagant are brothers of satans] and since smoking is a form of extravagance, should it therefore be declared *ḥarām* [unlawful]?'

In response, Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ II ؓ said: 'You may declare it unlawful, but I cannot go beyond the verdict of the Promised Messiah ﷺ. The Promised Messiah ﷺ condemned it and considered it *makrūh* [reprehensible], so I cannot issue a ruling contrary to his verdict.

'You know that one cannot stop a moving train all at once; it must be brought to a halt gradually. Likewise, the train of cigarette smoke, constantly puffing away, will come to a stop little by little. There is no doubt that it is extremely harmful and has a very damaging effect on the nerves. However, there is presently a prevailing current in support

1. *Al-Ḥakam*, 28 February 1903, p. 16
2. *Sūrah Banī Isrā'īl*, 17:28

of it, and people are being carried along by this trend. When the tide turns against it, people will naturally distance themselves from it.'[1]

Smoking Hookah

There was a discussion on smoking *hookah*, and the Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

> It is best to relinquish this habit. It is an ill practice. The mouth smells as a result. My revered father of late had composed his own poetic couplet in this regard which he would recite, and it expressed the ill nature of this habit.[2]

Miāń 'Abdullāh of Sanaur ﷺ relates: 'I used to smoke *hookah* excessively, and Shaikh Ḥāmid 'Alī ﷺ also partook in the habit. One day, Shaikh Ḥāmid 'Alī ﷺ mentioned my excessive smoking to the Promised Messiah ﷺ. The next morning, when I visited His Holiness ﷺ and sat massaging his feet, he instructed Shaikh Ḥāmid 'Alī ﷺ: "Prepare the *hookah* properly and bring it." When Shaikh Ḥāmid 'Alī ﷺ brought the *hookah*, the Promised Messiah ﷺ said to me: "Smoke it." I felt shy, but he said: "If you are accustomed to it, why be embarrassed? Smoke it without hesitation." I managed barely a single puff, at which His Holiness ﷺ said: "Miāń 'Abdullāh, I personally dislike this habit."'

Miāń 'Abdullāh ﷺ continues: 'Since that day, I gave up smoking *hookah*. His words instilled in me a strong aversion to it. Some time later, I developed gum disease, which I mentioned to His Holiness ﷺ, saying: "Previously, when afflicted with this condition, I would smoke *hookah* and it would bring relief."

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1. *Al-Fazl*, 5 November 1960, p. 4
2. *Al-Ḥakam*, 10th September 1901, p. 9; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt*, vol. 3, p. 253

'His Holiness ﷺ responded: "If someone uses *hookah* as a remedy for illness, then he has an excuse. Its use is permissible as long as the excuse remains valid." So, I used it as a form of medicine for a while and then discontinued.'

Miāń 'Abdullāh ؓ further states: '*Hookah* was also used in the home of His Holiness ﷺ. Once, he showed me a broken *hookah* hanging on a hook, and smiling, he said: "We broke it and executed it by hanging."'

Miāń 'Abdullāh ؓ further states: 'Perhaps one of the maids had been in the habit of smoking *hookah*.'[1]

An Elderly Guest Permitted to Smoke the Ḥookah

Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ relates: 'Dr. Mīr Muḥammad Ismā'īl ؓ told me that the Promised Messiah ﷺ strongly disliked the *hookah*, and on certain occasions even expressed displeasure at some individuals because of it. However, once, when Sayyid 'Abd-ur-Raḥmān of Madras came, His Holiness ﷺ permitted him to smoke it if he wished, as he was an elderly man who had long been accustomed to it. There was a risk that he might fall ill if he did not smoke, since he was generally in poor health and suffered from diabetes and a tumour.'[2]

Quit Smoking Gradually

Ḥaḍrat Pīr Sirāj-ul-Ḥaqq Nu'mānī ؓ relates: 'During the period when I would write replies to letters on behalf of the Promised Messiah ﷺ, members of the Jamā'at would, among other things, ask about smoking. They would say that they were accustomed to it and inquired about the

1. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 1, p. 91
2. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 1, p. 664

Promised Messiah's ruling on the matter, adding that they were prepared to quit if instructed.

The Promised Messiah ﷺ instructed:

> I receive letters on various topics. Some request prayers, and my practice in such cases is to pray immediately upon receipt of them, and to continue praying whenever the person comes to mind. Therefore, you should write in response that I have prayed and will continue to pray, and that they should remind me to pray for them. Some letters seek guidance on religious matters. If I have already given you an answer to a particular question, then always include my previous answer without consulting me again. If a new issue arises, then ask about it. Some people write simply to enquire after my health, so you should reassure them. Some do not necessarily expect a reply; they merely wish to be remembered. So in those cases, no response is necessary unless they explicitly request one. Some letters concern me directly; I will read and respond to those myself.

In view of the above, the Promised Messiah ﷺ replied to the inquiry about smoking:

> There is no new ruling regarding the *hookah*. It is better to give it up gradually, in such a manner as does not cause difficulty.[1]

Using Tobacco and Pān

Ḥaḍrat Pīr Sirāj-ul-Ḥaqq Nu'mānī ﷺ wrote: 'Once, someone mentioned at *Dārul-Amān* (Qadian) that His Holiness, *Imāmul-A'immah* [the Leader of the Leaders], our beloved Promised Messiah ﷺ, had

1. *Tadhkiratul-Mahdī*, pp. 7–8

issued a *fatwā* declaring the use of tobacco to be *ḥarām*. Since I used tobacco with *pān* as a remedy for dental pain, I felt somewhat uneasy upon hearing of its prohibition. I thought to myself: "If the Promised Messiah ﷺ has declared it forbidden, then it must be abandoned."

'I went straight to him, leaving all other matters aside. As soon as I arrived, he opened the door himself and asked: "What brings you here?" I said:"Have you declared tobacco to be *ḥarām*?" He replied: "No. Where did you hear that?" I said:"So-and-so just told me."

'The Promised Messiah ﷺ then summoned that individual, and upon inquiry, it was revealed that he had heard it from a woman.

The Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

> There has been a misunderstanding. Yesterday, I mentioned that many people write to ask about the ruling on tobacco—whether it is *ḥarām* [forbidden], *makrūh* [disliked], or *jā'iz* [permissible]. Let it be known to members of our Jamā'at that it is always preferable to avoid all vain indulgences as far as possible.
>
> We do not wish to create a new Sharī'ah by issuing decrees of permissibility or prohibition without evidence. This is the practice of certain clerics who are like the *Dābbat-ul-Arḍ* [Beast of the Earth]. They invent new religious laws from themselves and then accuse me of claiming prophethood. If they would only reflect, they would realise who is truly laying claim to prophethood and apostleship—me, or them?
>
> Unless there is a clear statement regarding the permissibility or prohibition of something in the Sharī'ah, proven from the Holy Prophet ﷺ, then if anyone imposes a religious ruling without justification, we deem it to be *laghw* [vain]. Had tobacco existed in the time of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, it too would have been declared *laghw*.'

'The Promised Messiah ﷺ then asked me: "Do you consume it?" I replied: "I use a small amount with *pān*." He asked: "Since when?" I said: "For five or six years." He inquired: "Why do you use it?" I responded: "For relief from toothache. When I write in a notebook, my head remains lowered, which worsens my nasal congestion and cold symptoms. But the discomfort lessens slightly when I have some tobacco and *pān* in my mouth."

'The Promised Messiah ﷺ smiled and asked: "Can you not leave it?" I said: "I can, but it causes pain in my teeth." He advised: "Take aconite for a few days instead. It is also harmful, but if the two poisons combine, you may find it possible to abandon both of these harmful substances [i.e. tobacco and *pān*]." I said:"I have no objection to quitting it, but the pain becomes severe. As you know, I fasted for 11 days during Ramaḍān and refrained from *pān* during the day, only taking it at night, and the pain was quite intense." The Promised Messiah ﷺ affirmed: "Yes, it must have been."'[1]

The Use of Health-Enhancing Remedies Is Permissible

The Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

> The opponents, such as Munshī Ilāhī Bakhsh and his associates, object that I use *bīd mashk*[2], *kewra*[3], and similar medications. I

1. *Tadhkiratul-Mahdī*, pp. 8–10
2. The term '*bīd mashk*' (بید مشک) in Urdu refers to the musk willow, scientifically known as *Salix aegyptiaca*. This plant is renowned for its fragrant catkins, which have been traditionally used in various cultural and medicinal applications. [Publisher]
3. *Kewra* (کیوڑہ) is an aromatic extract derived from the *pandanus* flower. It is commonly used in South Asia for its fragrance in food, perfumes, and traditional medicine. [Publisher]

am astonished that they object to the consumption of lawful and wholesome things.

If they were to contemplate and reflect upon the condition of Maulawī ʻAbdullāh Ghaznawī, they would feel ashamed when comparing him to me. Maulawī ʻAbdullāh was excessively preoccupied with women, so he consumed large quantities of eggs and poultry, even expressing the desire to marry again in the latter part of his life. As for me, there is ample testimony in my favour whenever I require *kewra* or its equivalents. I only take *kewra* and similar substances when I sense some discomfort in the brain or there is a constriction in the heart.

God—the One, without partner—knows that I do not need these substances for anything else. When I exert myself greatly while sitting, I suddenly experience such an episode, and at times, my condition borders on unconsciousness. I am thus compelled to take them as treatment. I also go out for a walk every day for the same reason. As for Maulawī ʻAbdullāh's consumption of poultry, grapes, and eggs, it was only due to his repeated marriages, nothing more. The Prophets ﷺ too made use of such things, but they did so whilst wholly devoted to God.

Whenever the Holy Prophet ﷺ was distressed, he would at times strike his hand upon ʻĀ'ishah's thigh and say to her: 'Comfort me, O ʻĀ'ishah.' The entire world was hostile to the Holy Prophet ﷺ, and had there been no means of comfort for him, it would be wholly contrary to the glory of God. Such is the wisdom of God Almighty; just as a bit of pepper is added to camphor so that it does not evaporate.[1]

1. *Al-Ḥakam*, 10 July 1902, p. 3

Consuming Wholesome Foods

Shaikh Yaʿqūb ʿAlī ʿIrfānī ﷺ, describing the eating habits of the Promised Messiah ﷺ, wrote: 'The Promised Messiah ﷺ did not eat merely for the sake of pleasure. Rather, the objective of eating and drinking was to sustain life. Numerous incidents suggest that he made use of certain items in ways that would not bring pleasure to the taste. This was evidence that he only consumed such things out of necessity and for the preservation of life. Once, he received a large quantity of apples. If I recall correctly, they had been sent by Miāń Ḥājī ʿUmar Dār. Instead of peeling and eating the apples, he took a few of them, had the juice extracted from them, and drank it, saying: "I will drink it because it is beneficial for the heart." There are many such instances found in his life.

'His Holiness ﷺ also used certain medications in specific quantities. He always kept aloe vera seeds, which he referred to as 'stomach cleansers', wrapped in a handkerchief, as well as musk, because he would occasionally experience sudden headaches.'[1]

The Matter of the Prohibition of Photography

Maulawī Sayyid Muḥamad ʿAbdul Wāḥid objected to the Promised Messiah ﷺ having his photograph taken, stating: 'In the Ḥadīth there is stern warning concerning the drawing of a picture of any living thing, but the photographs of your eminence that have been published suggest that you deem it lawful.'

In response, the Promised Messiah ﷺ wrote:

> I am vehemently opposed to anyone taking a photograph of me and keeping it with him like idolaters do, or publishing it.

1. *Sīrat Ḥaḍrat Masīh-e-Mauʿūd*, by Shaikh Yaʿqūb ʿAlī ʿIrfānī, p. 64

I have absolutely not given any such instruction that someone should do this. No one could be more opposed to idol-worship and image-worship than me. However, I have noticed that when the people of Europe want to read someone's book, they desire to see a picture of its author first. This is because knowledge of physiognomy is quite developed in Europe, and most of them can tell just from looking at a picture whether the claimant is truthful or a liar. Those people, on account of the distance of thousands of miles, cannot come to me nor can they look at my face. Therefore the sagacious of that land reflect upon my inner condition by looking at my picture. There are many who have written letters to me from Europe and America and in their letters they have written that they had looked at my picture carefully and on the basis of the art of face reading they were forced to admit that it was not the picture of a liar. One American woman, upon seeing my picture, said that it was the picture of Yasū' [Jesus]; that is, 'Īsā عليه السلام. It is for this purpose, and to this extent, that I have purposely remained silent about the initiation of this practice. إِنَّمَاالأَعْمَالُ بِالنِّيَّاتِ [And actions are judged by their intentions].

Also, I do not believe that prohibition of drawing of a portrait is absolute. It is evident from the Holy Qur'ān that the sect of *Jinn* used to draw portraits for Ḥaḍrat Sulaiman [Solomon]. The Israelites, for a long time, possessed portraits of Prophets, including that of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Also, Gabriel عليه السلام, showed the Holy Prophet ﷺ a portrait of Ḥaḍrat 'Ā'ishah رضي الله عنها on a silk cloth. And the images of animals become naturally imprinted on some stones under water. Moreover, the instrument that is now used for taking photographs had not been invented in the time of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. It is a very useful instrument by which some diseases can be diagnosed. Another instrument has been introduced by which the image of all the bones of a person is taken to help diagnose diseases such as

rheumatism and gout, and determine the nature of the illness. Similarly, many scientific benefits have been realised by means of photographs. Some Europeans have published the images of all the known living things, including many kinds of insects, and all variety of birds and animals, etc. in their books which has fostered knowledge. Is it then conceivable that God—who encourages the acquisition of knowledge—would prohibit the use of an instrument that helps to diagnose difficult diseases and which helps sagacious people to attain guidance?

All these are senseless notions that have become widespread. Why don't the *maulawīs* [religious clerics] of our country throw away from their pockets and homes all the coins, rupees, two *annas*, four *annas*, and eight *annas* that bear the image of the royal visage? Do not these coins bear pictures on them? It is a pity that, by uttering unreasonable things wantonly, they give the opponents an opportunity to laugh at Islām. Islām has forbidden frivolous pursuits and such pursuits as foster idolatry; and not the pursuits that foster human knowledge, help in diagnosing diseases, and draw sagacious people closer to guidance. Despite all this, however, I do not like it at all that people of my Jamā'at should, without an unavoidable desperate need, make it an occupation of publishing my photo routinely because this is how innovations slowly take root and culminate into idolatry.

I, therefore, admonish my Jamā'at here, too, to refrain from such deeds as far as is possible for them. I have seen cards of some people on the back of which I have noticed my picture in a corner. I am vehemently against such publication. I do not want anyone in my Jamā'at to be guilty of such an act. It is one thing to do something for a legitimate and useful cause, and quite another to be like the Hindus who hang the pictures of their elders on the walls everywhere. It has always been observed that such frivolous deeds end up in idolatry and grave

errors, like those which found their way among the Hindus and the Christians.

And I expect that anyone who views my admonitions with honour and deference and is my true follower will henceforth abstain from such acts; otherwise, he will be deemed to conduct himself against my instructions and interfere in the Sharīʿah with insolence.[1]

1. *Barāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya Part 5, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 21, pp. 365–367; Eng. Trans.: pp. 490–492

INNOVATIVE PRACTICES AND BAD CUSTOMS

Listening to Music

It was mentioned that some elders listen to music; is this permissible?

The Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

It is not good to think ill of the elders of religion like this. We should practice thinking well of others. It is proved from the Ḥadīth that the Holy Prophet ﷺ also used to listen to couplets.

It is written that during the time of Ḥaḍrat ʻUmar ؓ, a Companion used to read couplets inside the mosque.

Ḥaḍrat ʻUmar ؓ prohibited him. He replied: 'I used to recite poetry in the mosque in front of the Noble Prophet ﷺ, so who are you to stop me?' Hearing this, Ḥaḍrat *Amīrul-Mu'minīn* [Leader of the Believers] became utterly silent.

The Holy Qur'ān should also be recited in a beautiful melodious tone. Indeed, this is emphasized to such a degree that the person who does not recite the Holy Qur'ān melodiously is not one of us.

Moreover, this in itself has an effect. A good speech delivered in a good tone also has an effect. If the same speech is given in a slurred tone, it has no effect. The thing in which God has placed a power to influence, what is wrong if it is employed as an instrument to draw people towards Islām? The Psalms of

David were songs, regarding which it is said that when David used to pray to God, the mountains would weep with him, and the birds also sang the praises of God.[1]

Flutes

The Promised Messiah ﷺ was once asked: 'What is your directive concerning flutes?' He replied:

Some have interpreted the words لَهْوَ الْحَدِيثِ[2] [idle tales] of the Holy Qur'ān as meaning flutes.

However, I believe everyone should always keep the place and the setting in mind. A learned person who possesses the signs of piety—and there are a thousand proofs of his being a God-fearing person—do not call him evil just because of one thing that you fail to comprehend. A man can become a wretch in this way. It is mentioned concerning Bāyazīd Basṭāmī ﷺ that once many people gathered around him, causing him much disturbance. It was the month of Ramaḍān. He started eating in front of everyone.

Seeing this, all the people ran away, saying that he was a disbeliever. The people were unaware that he was on a journey and was not required to fast. The people ran away in disgust, and he came to obtain seclusion to be able to worship in peace.

These are mysteries, and an excellent example of them is present in the Holy Qur'ān, where Ḥaḍrat Khiḍr ﷺ wrecked a boat and killed a boy. No known existing Sharī'ah could allow him to do such a thing. One should derive benefit from this story.

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1. *Badr*, 17 November 1905, pp. 7–6; Eng Trans.: *Malfūẓāt*, vol. 8, p. 78
2. *Sūrah Luqmān*, 31:7

Khiḍrī mysteries have always been found in this Ummah. Our Noble Prophet ﷺ was a composite of all excellences, and these are also present by way of reflection in his Ummah. What Khiḍr did, the future masters of excellence will also do as necessary. Where Ḥaḍrat Khiḍr علیہ السلام killed a pure soul, what is a flute compared to this? So one should not be hasty. Haste destroys a man. One should look at the other signs that the friends of the Gracious God possess.

The case of these people is very delicate—exercise great caution in this. He who objects will face destruction. But, surprisingly, those who open their tongues are filthy people, and their hearts are unholy, yet they raise objections against the elders.[1]

The Black Spot for Protection Against the Evil Eye

The Promised Messiah علیہ السلام stated:

I also see that the presence of such a thing in the saintly people is Allāh's practice. When a mother sends her beautiful child outside in a fine dress, she also smears a blemish on the child's face to serve as protection against the evil eye. In the same way, God also places such a thing in the appearance of His pious servants so that evil people stay away from him, and only virtuous people gather around him. The fortunate man sees the face's natural beauty, and the attention of the wretched man remains fixed upon the blemish.

There is an incident that took place in Amritsar. A few clerics were participating in a feast, and the house owner had also invited me. When the host brought the tea, I took the cup with my left hand. Then everyone objected that I acted against

1. *Badr*, 17 November, p. 7; Eng Trans.: *Malfūẓāt*, vol. 8, pp. 79–80

the Sunnah [the practice of the Holy Prophet ﷺ]. I said it is indeed the Sunnah to take the cup with the right hand, but is it not the Sunnah that:

لَا تَقْفُ مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِ عِلْمٌ[1]

You should not speak about what you do not know. Was it not appropriate for you to think well of me and remain silent? Alternatively, if you could not do this, then before objecting, you could have asked me why I had acted in this way. Then I explained that I had a broken bone in my right arm that had been so since my childhood, and I could not lift my hand while holding a cup. They were all ashamed to hear this when I told them.[2]

Thinking Good About Sufi Practices

Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ narrates that Shaikh Karam Ilāhī of Patiala ؓ once informed him in writing: 'During my stay in Qadian, the Promised Messiah ؑ was present one evening in Masjid Mubārak at the time of the *'Ishā'* Prayer, and the Mosque was full of people. A Maulawī from Punjab stood up and addressed him, saying:

'What is your ruling regarding a practice found among some Sufi orders, such as the Naqshbandīs, where the phrase of **نفي وإثبات** [negation and affirmation] is drawn from the forehead to the limbs, and then the chest is struck while saying **إِلَّا اللّٰه** [except Allāh]?'

The Promised Messiah ؑ replied:

1. *Sūrah Banī Isrā'īl*, 17:37
2. *Badr*, 17 November, 1905, p. 7: Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt*, vol. 8, p. 80

We do not see any need for such methods.

The Maulawī responded, 'If these practices are contrary to the Sharī'ah, then many renowned saints and men of God, such as Aḥmad Sirhindī—who claimed to be the Reformer (*mujaddid*) of the 11th century—adopted this method and encouraged others to do the same.'

The Promised Messiah ﷺ replied:

> Indeed, there came a time upon Islām when enthusiasm for the remembrance of Allāh diminished in the hearts of Muslims due to abundant conquests, worldly wealth, and an increase in luxury and ease. During such a time of spiritual decline, those righteous individuals adopted actions they deemed beneficial, considering it a temporary necessity during a time of spiritual epidemic. Considering their good intentions, this matter is to be entrusted to Allāh.

He then said:

> Their example is like a caravan that loses its way and ends up in a barren desert, devoid of water. Some among them, parched from thirst, are close to death. Their companions then crush tree leaves with stones and extract water from them to pour into the mouths of the thirsty, so they might not perish from dehydration before water becomes available. Or, rocks are blasted in the mountains and a well is dug with great effort; similarly, one may dig a well in the desert, bearing heavy hardship, until water finally springs forth. But if there is a river flowing nearby, is there any need for such toilsome effort? We must thank Allāh the Almighty that in this era, He has caused a pure and clear spring to gush forth from the mountaintop. To undergo such hardship despite its presence is nothing but ignorance and ingratitude for the favour of Allāh.

Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ stated: 'The state of awe I felt upon hearing these words was that, although he did not approve of those practices which are not established from the noble example of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, he did not utter a single disrespectful word about those deceased saints. Rather, he interpreted their actions favourably in light of their sincere intentions, and entrusted their matter to Allāh, considering their practices as arising from a temporary need.'[1]

Advice for Women to Avoid Innovations

The Promised Messiah ؑ issued advice to women, stating:

> Anyone who receives this announcement must read its entire contents to the women in his family, explain it to them thoroughly, and advise them accordingly. If there is an educated woman among them, she must also do the same.

ANNOUNCEMENT FOR THE PURPOSE OF CONVEYANCE AND WARNING

> As it is established and clear from authentic *aḥādīth* that anyone who has authority over women and others in his household will be questioned as to whether he admonished them when they deviated from the path of righteousness and whether he guided them towards the straight path or not—I deemed it necessary, out of fear of accountability on the Day of Judgement, to warn women and others (who are our relatives, acquaintances, and those associated with us) against innovations and improper conduct through this announcement.

1. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 2, pp. 69–70

I observe that various customs and inappropriate traditions—which threaten the very foundation of faith—have become like necklaces adorning our households. These people cherish such harmful customs and behaviours, which oppose the Sharīʿah, with the same passion with which they ought to love righteousness and religious matters. I have advised them as much as I could, but they hardly listen; I have warned them repeatedly, but they hardly take heed.

And since none can know when death may strike—and since there is no punishment more fearsome than the punishment of God—I have resolved to publish this announcement solely as a means of offering sincere advice, regardless of whether it causes offence, displeasure, or pain. I do this to fulfil the duty of sincere counsel and to warn not only them but all my Muslim brothers and sisters. This way, the burden of responsibility may not remain solely on my shoulders, and no one may claim on the Day of Judgement: 'No one advised us or guided us to the straight path.'

Therefore, today I declare clearly and loudly: the straight path through which one enters Paradise is to shun all paths of *shirk* and blind adherence to cultural traditions, and to adhere solely to the path of Islām. One must not deviate even slightly—neither to the right nor to the left—from what Allāh Almighty has taught in the Qur'ān and what His Messenger ﷺ has guided us to. Rather, one must fully emulate it and never choose any path that is contrary to it.

Though the harmful customs that have crept into our homes are many, I shall now mention a few of the more widespread ones, so that the righteous, God-fearing women may abandon them.

(1) In the state of mourning, grieving and crying loudly, while beating one's chest, screaming over the dead body and shouting and uttering words expressive of a lack of patience are

all things that endanger one's faith. All these rituals have been taken from the Hindus. Ignorant Muslims forgot their religion and adopted Hindu practices. Upon the death of a loved one, there is this commandment for Muslims in the Holy Qur'ān that they should only say:

إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيهِ رَاجِعُونَ[1]

That is, we are God's possession and property. Therefore, He has the authority to take what belongs to Him whenever He wants, and if one has to cry, only tears are permissible and whoever does more than that is from Satan.

(2) Second, to go on mourning for one year continuously, and to cry, weep and lament, beating one's chest and wailing every time new women arrive or on certain special days, and for women to knock each other's heads and cry, and to utter nonsense from their mouths, and stop cooking specific foods for a year on the pretext that there is mourning in our home or our extended family; all these are unholy rituals and sinful things that should be avoided.

(3) A lot of unnecessary expenditures are also undertaken during the days of wailing and weeping. Deceitful women, sisters of Satan who come from far and wide to cry and weep, covering their faces deceptively, smashing their heads into each other like buffaloes whilst wailing loudly, are fed lavish meals. And if possible, to make a show of their grandeur and arrogance, they spend hundreds of rupees to cook expensive food and distribute it among their extended family and others. The aim is to receive praise from people that so and so made a fine

1. *Sūrah al-Baqarah*, 2:157

display of things upon dying and made a good name for himself. So, these are all evil ways that must be avoided.

(4) If a woman's husband dies, even if that woman is young, marrying another husband is considered to be so bad as if it is a great burdensome sin. And she remains a widow and childless all her life, thinking that she has done something highly meritorious and becoming of a chaste wife. However, for her to remain a widow is a severe sin. It is a highly meritorious act for women who become widows to marry and have another husband.

Such a woman is indeed very blessed and righteous who, being a widow and of older age, fearful of evil thoughts, marries someone and does not fear the curses of evil women. Women who hinder obedience to the commands of God and His Messenger are themselves accursed and disciples of the devil, through whom he does his work. A woman who loves the Messenger of Allah ﷺ should find an honest and righteous husband after becoming a widow and remember that being engaged in the service of her husband is a hundred times better than remaining engaged in the repetitive recitation of prayers as a widow.

(5) Another bad habit found among women is that they disobey men in every little thing, spend their wealth without their leave, and when angry, they launch a tirade of abuses against them. Such women are cursed in the sight of Allāh and the Messenger ﷺ.

Their Prayer, fasting, and any other action are not accepted. Allāh the Exalted clearly states that a woman cannot be virtuous unless she obeys her husband completely, respects him with heartfelt love, and does not wish him any ill behind his back. And the Messenger of God ﷺ, has said that women must be submissive to their husbands; otherwise, their actions will not be accepted, and he has also said that if it were permissible to

prostrate to anyone other than God, he would have ordered that women should prostrate to their husbands.[1]

If a woman says something bad about her husband or looks at him with contempt and does not stop even after hearing God's command, she is cursed. God and the Messenger ﷺ are angry with her. Women should not steal the property of their husbands and should protect themselves from non-*maḥrams* [those outside the prohibited category]. And it should be remembered that except for the husband and those men with whom *Nikāḥ* [marriage] is not allowed, *purdah* [the veil] must be observed from all other men. Satan is with them. Satan accompanies those women who do not observe *purdah* from non-*maḥrams*. It is also necessary for women not to allow wicked and ill-mannered women to come into their homes and employ them in their service, because it is a grave sin for an evil woman to be in the company of a virtuous woman.

(6) It is also a bad habit among women that when a woman's husband wants to marry someone else due to some expediency, that woman and her relatives become furious and abusive and raise a clamour and unjustly persecute the poor man. Such women and their relatives are also wicked and corrupt, because Allāh, the Lord of Glory, by His perfect wisdom, in which there are hundreds of reasons and precedents, has allowed men to have up to four wives at the time of their need or expediency. Thus, why should the person who marries according to the command of Allāh and the Messenger be called evil?

Such women and relatives with such habits who oppose God and His commandments are most wretched and siblings of Satan because they want to fight with their Noble Lord by turning their backs on God and His Messenger ﷺ. And if

1. *Sunan Tirmidhī, kitābur-riḍā', bābu mā jā'a fi ḥaqqiz-zawj 'alal-mar'ah*, Ḥadīth 1159 [Publisher]

there is such a wife in the home of any good-hearted Muslim, it would be proper for him to marry a second time to punish her.

(7) At the time of establishing kinship, some ignorant Muslims check whether the person with whom the marriage of their daughter is being considered has a first wife or not. Thus, if the first wife is present, they do not want to marry their daughter to such a person. So it should be remembered that such people are Muslims in name only, and in a way, they are the helpers of such women who are angry with their husbands' second marriages. So they should also fear God Almighty.

(8) It is also a bad custom among our people that they do not like to give a girl [in marriage] to someone not from their own people; they do not even want to take a bride from others. This is a reflection of complete arrogance and vanity, which is entirely against the rules of the Sharī'ah. All human beings are servants of God Almighty. In establishing kinship, one should see whether the person to be married is righteous and dignified and not involved in any affliction that may be the cause of mischief. And it should be remembered that in Islām, no consideration is given to the national origin of anyone; only piety and righteousness are taken into account. Allāh the Exalted says:

إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللهِ أَتْقَاكُمْ[1]

In other words, the most noble among you in the sight of God Almighty is the one who is most righteous.

(9) It is also a bad custom in our people that hundreds of rupees are wasted on marriages. So, it should be remembered that distributing food among relatives by way of boasting and aggrandisement, its giving and its eating—both are forbidden

1. *Sūrah al-Ḥujurāt*, 49:14

in the Sharī'ah. And spending money on fireworks and giving to panderers and musicians is absolutely forbidden. Money is wasted unjustly, and sin is earned. In place of this, the Noble Sharī'ah has simply prescribed that he who gets married should do *walīmah*—that is, serve food to a few friends after the marriage is consummated.

(10) The observance of the Sharī'ah is very lax in our homes. Some women come under the obligation of paying *Zakāt* and possess much jewellery, but they do not give *Zakāt*. Some women are very negligent in performing Prayers and Fasting. Some women participate in polytheistic rituals such as smallpox [goddess] worship. Some worship imaginary goddesses. Some give such donations stipulating that women should eat but men should not, or those who smoke *hookah* should not eat. Some women engage in the practice of making an offering at some saintly person's grave on Thursdays. But it should be remembered that all these are satanic ways. I admonish the people solely and purely for the sake of Allāh: come and fear God; otherwise, after death, you will suffer severe punishment with humiliation and disgrace, and you will suffer from the wrath of God, which has no end.[1]

Avoid Traditions During the Month of Muḥarram

A written question was submitted: Is it permissible to distribute food during the days of Muḥarram to convey reward to the souls of the *Imāmain* [The Two Imāms, Ḥasan and Ḥusain]?

The Promised Messiah ﷺ replied:

1. *Al-Ḥakam,* 10 July 1902 pp. 8–6

> It is generally accepted that the reward of food distributed for this purpose reaches the deceased; however, it must not be accompanied by traditions suggestive of *shirk*. It is not permissible to follow customs that the *Rāfiḍīs*[1] practice.[2]

Distribution of Food in the Name of the Deceased

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ relates: 'Mughlānī Nūr Jahān Ṣāḥibah, the wife of the brother of Mirzā Ghulāmullāh, wrote to me through *Lajna Ima'illah* in Qadian, stating that the Promised Messiah ؑ used to say:

> You must distribute food in the name of the deceased to those in need—and not to professional *maulawīs*...[3]

Discontent with the Method of Invocations and Spiritual Practices Among the Sufis of the Naqshbandī Order

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ relates that Shaikh Karam Ilāhī of Patiala ؓ informed him in writing: 'While we were staying with the Promised Messiah ؑ at a house in Ambala, we needed to consult him about a matter unrelated to religion, specifically, concerning medicine. The brethren appointed me for this task, so I entered his room after seeking permission. His Holiness ؑ was alone at the time. After I had received an answer regarding the matter, I took the

1. Lit. 'Those who reject'. A term used to describe a group within the Shi'ah sect who rejected the legitimacy of certain Companions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. [Publisher]
2. *Dhikr-e-Ḥabīb*, p. 253
3. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 2, p. 229

opportunity to mention a personal incident, and he graciously allowed me to do so.

'So I said: "I have previously pledged allegiance and belong to a family associated with the Naqshbandī order. I engage in invocations and *awrad* according to their method. One night, I was engaged in the *dhikr* of *nafī-o-ithbāt* [negation and affirmation], following their manner, whereby I would inscribe the word لا [no] upon the centre of my chest, raise it to my forehead, then pass the word إله [god] across from my left shoulder to other limbs, and finally strike the phrase إِلَّا اللّٰه [except Allāh] upon my heart.

'After persisting in this practice for a long time, I began to feel a sensation like an electric current, flowing from head to toe, affecting every particle of my body. The intensity increased to the extent that I feared I might faint and fall off the bed. As I was alone, I thought that if people were to find me collapsed the next morning, they might assume I had taken some intoxicant. So, I deliberately ceased the *dhikr*. Most of the night had passed, and I quickly fell asleep. When I awoke in the morning, my state had returned to normal. I repeated the same practice several times thereafter, but that condition never occurred again.'

'Upon hearing this, His Holiness عليه السلام said: "Do you wish for that same state to return?" I replied: "Yes, that is my desire." He asked: "Why do you wish for it?" I responded: "Because that state was accompanied by such pleasure and delight that I have never experienced in anything else."

The Promised Messiah عليه السلام stated:

> One should not worship God for the sake of pleasure, but in obedience to His command, considering worship as obligatory. If Allāh so wills, He can bestow a pleasure far greater than that. If one worships for the sake of pleasure, then it is merely a pursuit of the self, since pleasure is a condition of the soul. Worship should be performed in every state, whether or not pleasure is attained, for it lies in the will of God.

> The state you experienced is akin to the marvels and illusions encountered along the path by a traveller; it is fleeting. The clearest proof of its impermanence is that, although you performed the same *dhikr*, that state did not return.
>
> Let me tell you of an action that brings a pleasure which never fades: it is to follow the Sunnah and emulate the noble example of the Master of the Universe, peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, whose sole objective was to attain the pleasure of God Almighty. So, do not chase fleeting sensations.

Then he added:

> One must also offer Prayer with humility and devotion, and it is equally necessary to avoid all that is forbidden.[1]

Do Not Choose a Wrong Method to Prevent Innovations

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ relates: 'Dr. Mīr Muḥammad Ismā'īl informed me in writing: "Miāń Ilāhī Dīn, the philosopher, and later Maulawī Yār Muḥammad, during a certain period, used to remove the cloths draped over graves. Miāń Ilāhī Dīn even collected some money by selling these cloths. They believed that by doing so, they were eradicating innovations and *shirk*.

'When the Promised Messiah ؑ heard of this, he considered their action to be impermissible. Upon this, they both refrained from it and donated the money toward the propagation of Islām.'

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ further states: 'Islām does not only prohibit what is forbidden; it also forbids the adoption of impermissible methods even in matters that are otherwise permissible.'[2]

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1. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 2, pp. 67–68
2. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 1, p. 780

Benefit in Some Traditions

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ relates that Dr. Mīr Muḥammad Ismā'īl ؓ once said to him: 'In this country, there are certain customary practices observed on occasions such as birth, death, marriage, and so forth. The Promised Messiah ؑ did not reject all such traditions outright, as the Ahl-e-Ḥadīth tend to do. Rather, he would often identify some underlying benefit in them, except where a tradition involved elements of *shirk* or stood in contradiction to Islām. He used to say that such customs arose due to some benefit or need.

'For instance, the tradition of giving money to the family into which a boy or girl is marrying originally began as a form of mutual financial support. But now, it has become a social formality which leads only to discomfort and harm.'[1]

Fātiḥah Khwānī and Isqāṭ

It was submitted that it is customary to do *fātiḥah khwānī*[2] for the dead when a Muslim dies. Is it found in the Sharī'ah or not?

The Promised Messiah ؑ said:

> There is no mention of it in the Ḥadīth, the Holy Qur'ān, nor in the Sunnah.

It was submitted that if it is done with the understanding that it is just a prayer for *maghfirat* [forgiveness]?

1. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 1, p. 744
2. A practice observed by some Muslims involving the recitation of *Sūrah al-Fātiḥah* and other Quranic verses as a means of seeking Allāh's forgiveness for the deceased. This practice is typically performed collectively, especially following the death or on the anniversary of someone's passing. [Publisher]

The Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

> *Isqāṭ* [giving money for feeding the poor or other virtues to remove the deceased's burden of sin] is neither correct nor is it a prayer in such a fashion, for the door of innovations is opened thereby.[1]

Isqāṭ for the Deceased

The Promised Messiah ﷺ was asked 'The *maulawīs* stand near the deceased and perform *isqāṭ*. Is there any permissible method for this?' He replied:

> There is no evidence for this practice anywhere. The *maulawīs* have introduced many customs in matters of mourning and marriage. This is one of them.[2]

On another occasion, the Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

> They have adopted a method of *isqāṭ* in which they pass the Holy Qur'ān around in a circle.[3] This is, in reality, a form of disrespect to the Noble Qur'ān. A person cannot have a true relationship with God until all his attention is directed towards God alone.[4]

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1. *Badr*, 19 April 1906 , p. 3; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt*, vol. 8, pp. 364–365
2. *Al-Ḥakam*, 24 April 1903, p. 10
3. Those who practise this tradition sit in a circle, with each individual reciting a portion of the Qur'ān before passing it to the person seated next to him, and so forth. In this manner, the recitation of the Qur'ān is circulated among all those present in the gathering. [Publisher]
4. *Al-Badr*, 16 March 1904, p. 6

Reciting the Qur'ān for the Deceased

QUESTION—Some people recite the Qur'ān on the third day after a person's death with the intention of conveying its spiritual reward to the deceased. Does the deceased benefit from this or not?

ANSWER—There is no foundation in the Sharī'ah for reciting the Qur'ān in this manner. What truly benefits the deceased is charity, supplication, and seeking forgiveness on their behalf. As for the reward of such recitation, perhaps it reaches the *maulawīs* themselves. If they are counted among the deceased—and indeed, they are spiritually dead—then let us accept that.

I truly wonder how people place their hopes in such practices. We have received our religion from the Noble Prophet ﷺ, and there is no trace of such actions in his teachings. The noble Companions رضي الله عنهم also passed away—did anyone ever recite the Qur'ān for them in this manner? This innovation has emerged centuries later, like many others.[1]

Reciting the Fātiḥah and the Qur'ān for the Deceased on the Third Day

QUESTION—What is the ruling regarding those who gather to recite the *Fātiḥah* for the deceased?

ANSWER—This is not permissible; rather, it is an innovation. It is not established from the Holy Prophet ﷺ that he ever spread out a mat, sat upon it, and recited the *Fātiḥah* in this manner.[2]

1. *Al-Badr*, 16 March 1904, pp. 5–6
2. *Al-Badr*, 16 March 1904, p. 6

Reciting the Qur'ān and the Fātiḥah

On one occasion, a member of the Jamā'at asked the Promised Messiah ﷺ: 'Your Holiness, I had made a vow that when I obtain employment, I will set aside half an *anna* from every rupee, prepare food with it in the name of a certain Shaikh titled "*Pīrān-e-Pīr*" [Guide of the Guides], have the *Fātiḥah* recited over it, and then distribute it among the poor. What is your opinion on this?'

The Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

> Charity is permissible in all circumstances and in every manner. A person may give it to whomsoever he wishes. But I do not understand the purpose of reciting the *Fātiḥah*, nor do I see the need for it. I have observed a common custom in our country whereby portions of the Qur'ān are recited over food. This is *shirk* and is not established from the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. If you wish, you may feed the poor and needy.[1]

Wages for Leading Prayers and for Completing the Recitation of the Qur'ān

In response to a question, the Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

> To recite the sacred words of God Almighty—the Qur'ān—while mixing them with base motives is a grave breach of propriety. The *maulawīs* only do this in order to earn their daily bread. In this country, when they recite the Qur'ān over food or on similar occasions, they deliberately choose long portions in order to increase their remuneration.

1. *Al-Ḥakam*, 31 March 1903, p. 4

وَلَا تَشْتَرُوا بِآيَاتِي ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا[1]

> And barter not My Signs for a paltry price, and take protection in Me alone.

This is *kufr*. The style of Prayer commonly practised in the Punjab these days is also one that I strongly object to. The *maulawīs* lead the Prayer on behalf of particular individuals. Such an imām is not valid according to the Sharīʿah. There is no precedent for this in the lives of the Companions; never did any of them lead Prayers in exchange for wages. Today, if an imām is dismissed from a mosque, lawsuits are filed in the high courts.

Once, one of these imāms recited six or seven extra *takbīrs* during a Funeral Prayer. When people asked him about it, he replied: 'A person remembers such practices when performed daily. But here, barely one person dies in a year—how am I supposed to remember [how many *takbīrs* to recite]? By the time a funeral is held, I have already forgotten that people die!'

There was a cleric who stayed here, appointed by our respected Mirza Sahib[2] in a certain neighbourhood. One day he came crying and complaining: 'The people in the area where I am been assigned are short in stature, so when someone dies, the cloth I receive will be too small. It may not even suffice to make a full sheet.' Such is the wretched state of people in this age. The Sufis say that the heart hardens by consuming the wealth of the deceased.[3]

1. *Sūrah al-Baqarah*, 2:42
2. The Promised Messiah ﷺ was referring to his late father. [Publisher]
3. *Al-Badr*, 27 March, 1903, p. 73

Chehlum

A question was presented before the Promised Messiah ﷺ, whether the ritual of *Chehlum*[1] is permissible or not.

The Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

> This ritual is outside the Sunnah [practice of the Holy Prophet ﷺ].[2]

Setting Out on Devotional Visits for Protection from the Plague

There was once a discussion about those in Lahore who left the city and set out on *ziyārats* [devotional visits] in order to pray for protection from the plague.

The Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

> These people go out to offer Prayers and undertake devotional visits, yet they do not settle their account with God Almighty. It appears they have no real intention to bring about any righteous change within themselves. Otherwise, why does the same recklessness and defiance continue to be seen in their actions?
>
> If there were genuine transformation, the plague could not possibly persist. It is truly strange that when I advise them to reform their inner state, to seek forgiveness from God Almighty, and to reconcile with Him, they mock and ridicule my words. And now, they themselves admit that supplication is

1. *Chehlum* is the religious observance by some Muslims of the 40th day following a person's death. [Publisher]
2. *Badr*, 14 February 1907, p. 4; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt*, vol. 9, p. 126

the only remedy. Yet they also suggest that the plague has come upon them because I made a false claim.

I am both astonished and saddened by such words. Look at me—I remain safe and unharmed, despite their accusation that the plague was sent on account of my supposed falsehood. I am the one to whom the promise of divine protection was given. This is a most extraordinary thing. Even in worldly courts, it does not happen that a real criminal is set free and an innocent person is hanged in his place. Can it really be said that Allāh deals unjustly and tyrannically? That the very person for whose actions the plague was allegedly sent remains preserved and protected, and that this promise of protection is presented as a divine sign, while others continue to perish?

I say: let any fair-minded person reflect on this and speak with justice and equity—can it be that the one who fabricates against God is the very one preserved from harm, and is even given a promise of protection for all those in his household, while the sword is drawn instead against the necks of others?[1]

The Ruling on Saying: 'O Shaikh 'Abdul Qādir Jīlānī'

QUESTION—Is it permissible to say, 'O Shaikh 'Abdul Qādir Jīlānī, grant something for the sake of Allāh'?

ANSWER—No, it is absolutely not permissible, because it goes against *tauḥīd* [the oneness of God].

1. *Al-Ḥakam*, 10 June 1904, p. 3

QUESTION—Since addressing both the absent and present is a known form of expression, what harm is there in it?

ANSWER—There are people living in Batala. If you call out to them from here, will any of them respond? Likewise, if you were to call out to ʻAbdul Qādir Jīlānī while standing at his grave in Baghdad, would there be any reply? But God Almighty does answer, as He says:

ادْعُونِيْ أَسْتَجِبْ لَكُمْ[1]

Pray unto Me; I will answer your prayer.

Do any of the dwellers of the graves respond? Why then do people act in a way that is contrary to the unity of God?

QUESTION—Since these individuals are alive, how can we describe them as dead?

ANSWER—Life is a separate matter. It does not mean that the dead also hear our call. We do indeed affirm that such individuals are alive in the sight of Allāh, but we do not accept that they have the power to hear. It is Allāh alone who is present everywhere. We too are alive, yet cannot hear someone calling us from Amritsar or Lahore. There is no doubt that the *auliyā'ullāh* [friends of Allāh] and the martyrs are alive with Him, but we cannot describe them as hearing everything or being present in every place.

The One who responds to Prayers and possesses power is God alone. Certainly this matter lies at the heart of Islām. Whoever abandons this has abandoned Islām. And what a shame it is that they cry ʻO Shaikh ʻAbdul Qādir Jīlānī', yet do not say ʻO Muḥammad', or ʻO Abū

1. *Surah Al-Mu'minūn*, 40:61

Bakr', or 'O 'Umar'! Though their brothers who say 'O 'Alī' [i.e. the Shī'ah] do exist.

To single out one person without justification is *shirk*. When love for anything besides Allāh increases, a person becomes deaf and dumb, and this is against the essence of Islām. Islām came to establish the foundations of God's oneness. If one acts in opposition to *tauḥīd*, then what does it mean to be a Muslim?

It is strange that those whom people associate as partners with God attained their rank only through their firm adherence to *tauḥīd*. Had they themselves called upon others with 'O' as these people do, they would never have attained such a rank. The truth is that they obeyed God, and for this reason, they were elevated. Thus, the people mentioned fall into a kind of *shirk*, like the Shī'ah and the Christians.[1]

Celebrating the Birthday of the Holy Prophet ﷺ

Someone asked about celebrating the birthday of the Holy Prophet ﷺ.

The Promised Messiah ؑ said:

> Indeed, remembering the Holy Prophet ﷺ is highly commendable. It is established from the Ḥadīth that mercy descends upon the mention of prophets and saints, and God Himself has encouraged the remembrance of prophets. However, if such gatherings incorporate innovations that undermine *tauḥīd*, then they are impermissible. One must ascribe to God a rank befitting His greatness, and likewise, one must honour the Holy Prophet ﷺ with a rank appropriate to his status.
>
> In the gatherings held today in celebration of the Holy Prophet's birthday, one often hears words that indicate innovation, which contradict the will of God. If a gathering is free

1. *Al-Ḥakam*, 10 March 1904, p. 12

from such innovations, it becomes a means of *waʿẓ* [admonition]. Remembering the mission, birth, and demise of the Holy Prophet ﷺ is indeed a source of reward. However, it is not permissible for us to fabricate a new law or scripture for ourselves.

Some scholars go to the other extreme and declare that celebrating the Prophet's birth is *ḥarām*. I wonder: if this is forbidden, then who will you follow? The more a person is remembered, the more love and reverence for him naturally grows.

It is not permissible to stand when the Holy Prophet's birth is mentioned. How can these ignorant people claim that the spirit of the Holy Prophet ﷺ attends such gatherings? Often these events are filled with people of ill-conduct and vulgarity. How can the blessed spirit of the Holy Prophet ﷺ be present in such places? Where is it stated that his spirit even attends such gatherings?

وَلَا تَقْفُ مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِ عِلْمٌ[1]

And follow not that of which you have no knowledge.

Both sides must be considered. As long as a Wahhābī does not grasp the grandeur of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, he remains distant from God. Indeed, these people too have corrupted the faith. When a prophet or saint is mentioned, they object: 'What makes them superior to us?' They have derived no benefit from the miracles of the Prophets.

As for the second group, they have fallen into *shirk*. They even prostrate before graves and have thus ruined their faith. We do not say that the Prophets ought to be worshipped. Rather, we call for reflection and understanding. It is known that Allāh causes the rain to descend—a force over which we

1. *Sūrah al-Isrā'*, 17:37

have no control—and from it springs vegetation and greenery. The Prophets are like that blessed rain.

Consider also how pearls and corals both come from the sea, just as diamonds and stones both emerge from mountains, yet their value is not the same. Likewise, God has created people with differing ranks. The Prophets are the noblest of creation, saturated with divine love. What disbelief is greater than to regard them as mere ordinary men? On the contrary, God has promised that those who love them shall be counted among them. The Holy Prophet ﷺ once said, 'There is a place in Paradise where I shall be alone.' A Companion began to weep and said, 'O Messenger of Allāh, I love you—where shall I be?' The Holy Prophet ﷺ replied: 'You shall be with me.' True love bears fruit. A polytheist does not love with sincere affection.

As far as I have seen, the Wahhābīs are sharp and cunning but lack humility and meekness. In a sense, they are the Āryas of the Muslims. Just as the Āryas deny revelation, so do these people. One cannot reach God Almighty merely through stories, unless one gains direct certainty. And whoever believes in God Almighty with perfect faith will certainly be somewhat imbued with the hue of God.

As for the second group, their spirit is confined to the worship of graves and saints. They have abandoned the Noble Qur'ān. But God has made you an *ummat-e-wasaṭ* [an exalted nation]. The meaning of *wasaṭ* is to follow the path of moderation, which both of these groups have forsaken. And God says:

إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ اللَّهَ فَاتَّبِعُونِي[1]

If you love Allāh, then follow me.

1. *Sūrah Āl 'Imrān*, 3:32

Did the Holy Prophet ﷺ ever recite the Qur'ān over pieces of bread, for example? If he had even recited over one piece, we would have recited over a thousand. What he did do, however, was listen to the Qur'ān being recited in a melodious voice. He wept when the reciter reached the verse:

وَجِئْنَا بِكَ عَلَى هَؤُلَاءِ شَهِيدًا[1]

And We shall bring you as a witness against these.

He wept and said, 'Enough—I can bear no more.' Perhaps he was reflecting on what it means to bear witness. I too enjoy listening to the Qur'ān when it is recited melodiously by a *ḥāfiẓ*.

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has left for us a complete example in every domain, so we must emulate him. It is enough for a sincere believer to ask: did the Holy Prophet ﷺ do this? And if not, did he command it? Abraham ؑ was his forefather and certainly deserving of reverence, yet the Holy Prophet ﷺ never celebrated his birth in the manner people celebrate his birth today.[2]

The Leaders of Sufi Orders and Their Innovations

The Promised Messiah ؑ said:

It is worth reflecting: what truly qualifies one as a Muslim? A Muslim is one who declares that Islām is the truth, that our master Muḥammad ﷺ is the Prophet, and that the Holy Qur'ān is a divine book. This declaration means that such a

1. *Sūrah al-Nisā'*, 4:42

2. *Al-Badr*, 27 March 1903, pp. 73–74

person affirms they will not deviate from this belief, neither in creed, nor in worship, nor in action. Instead, their every word and deed should remain within these bounds.

Now consider with justice: what are the leaders of Sufi orders doing in this age, in light of this teaching? If they do not act according to the Book of Allāh, what answer will they give on the Day of Judgement when Allāh asks: 'Why did you not act according to My Book?' In this age, we witness practices such as circumambulating graves, gatherings of dancing girls, and various forms of *dhikr*, including one known as *Arrah*[1]. But I ask: did Allāh forget to include these matters in His Book? Did He not inform His Messenger ﷺ about them? Whoever recognises the greatness of the Messenger ﷺ must acknowledge that it is impermissible to depart from what the Holy Prophet ﷺ has taught.

Whatever is practised contrary to the Book of Allāh is an innovation, and every innovation leads to the Fire. The essence of Islām is that a person does not deviate from the prescribed law under any circumstances. No one has the right to fabricate a new Sharī'ah time and time again. Some *pīrs* wear bracelets, apply henna, constantly dress in red garments, and refer to themselves as 'eternally chaste women.' One should ask them: the Holy Prophet ﷺ was a man, so what has befallen you that, whilst being men, you imitate women?

We follow no principle but the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, no Book except the Qur'ān, and no path other than the Sunnah. What has emboldened them to invent these things for themselves? They recite poetry in place of the Holy Qur'ān; this reveals that their hearts have turned away from the

1. Literally means the '*dhikr* of the saw'. It is a practice in Sufism where one utters a recitation that is meant to purify the heart quickly. The raspy manner of recitation sounds like a saw is being used. [Publisher]

> Qur'ān. Allāh says that those who follow His Book will be led from darkness into light, and those who do not follow it shall be accompanied by Satan.[1]

Traditions of Musical Performance

Regret was expressed over the conduct and conditions of various spiritual leaders, who remain entangled in the innovation of *sarūd* [musical performance] and similar practices. In this regard, the Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

> There is within human nature a tendency toward enjoyment. People find pleasure in *sarūd*. However, they deceive themselves when they claim to derive true spiritual delight from such practices. In reality, the self simply seeks pleasure—whether that pleasure is found in the praise of God or the praise of Satan. When these people become absorbed and lost in this, then for them the praise of Satan or of God becomes all the same.[2]

The Mendicants and Ascetics of the Present Age

The Promised Messiah ﷺ stated:

> I am astonished that these days many people become ascetics, but they do not harbour any desire other than the worship of their own ego. They are completely divorced from the essence of faith. They are also being corrupted by their desire for the same material world that the public is running after. They

1. *Al-Badr*, 13 March 1903, p. 59
2. *Al-Badr*, 19 March 1908, pp. 5–6

include practices in their worship that do not have anything to do with worship and are matters of materialism; such as meditation, holding their breath, and incantations. A Hindu *kāfir* [disbeliever] and a Christian idolater can also join them in these disciplines and exercises, rather can advance further than them.

The true ascetic is the one who completely separates himself from the corrupt objectives of the world and adopts a harsh life for himself; only then does he attain a state of divine cognizance and achieve the strengthening of his faith. Today, the children of *pīrs* and the successors of the saints either do not care about Prayer or observe it so quickly as if it is forced labour without stipend that has to be suffered, and spend their time in self-made rituals that have not been prescribed by God and His Messenger. They have devised a chant called *Arrah* that severely damages human lungs. Some people lose their minds in such laborious exercises, and some simply die. The ones who lose their minds are taken by the ignorant as saints.

The ways established by God Almighty to attain His pleasure are not insufficient. God Almighty is pleased with such actions in which man adopts modesty, virtue, and inclines towards his God with sincerity and selflessness, adopts تَبَتَّلَ إِلَى اللّٰهِ [solely devotes himself to Allāh], divorcing himself from the filth of the world. He ought to give preference to God Almighty over all other things and offer the Prayers with humility. Prayer renders man pure. Outside of the formal Prayer, during our everyday movements, like standing and sitting, one must keep his attention towards God. This is the true objective that God Almighty has described in the Holy Qur'ān regarding His servants—that they remember God Almighty standing and sitting, and contemplate His powers. Remembrance and contemplation both are a part of worship. Contemplation enhances the ability to be grateful. Man must ponder and reflect that God Almighty has created the heaven and earth, the air and the clouds, the sun

and the moon, the stars and the planets, all for the benefit of man. Contemplation increases God-realisation.

In short, God's servants are always engaged in His remembrance. Regarding this, someone has mentioned that moments of heedlessness render a person a *kāfir*. The people of today do not have patience. Even those who incline towards this are so hasty that they desire to achieve everything by uttering an incantation, and do not pay attention to the Holy Qur'ān, in which it is written that the path of guidance is shown to the ones who strive and make an effort. All relations with God Almighty depend upon striving. When man engages in supplication with complete attention, a tenderness arises in his heart, and he advances further and further toward the Divine threshold, and eventually shakes the hands of angels.

Our ascetics have adopted many innovations. Some have even memorised chants of the Hindus and consider them to be sacred too. My respected brother was fond of exercising. A wrestler visited him. Before leaving, he said to my brother in seclusion, 'I present to you a wondrous gift that is very valuable.' After saying so, he recited a chant to him and said, 'This chant is so effective that if it is recited once in the morning, then there is no need for Prayer or ablution all day.' Such people insult the word of God Almighty—that Holy Word that has given the promise:

هُدًى لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ[1]

It is a guidance for the righteous.

1. *Sūrah al-Baqarah*, 2:3

They abandon this themselves and deviate towards other paths. There can be progress in man's faith only when he follows the directives of God Almighty and establishes his trust in God.

Once the Noble Messenger ﷺ saw Bilal ؓ gathering dates. He asked Bilal ؓ why he was doing so. Bilal ؓ said that he was collecting them for the next day. The Messenger ﷺ asked him, 'Do you not believe in the God of *tawakkul* [trusting in Him]?' But he said this only to Bilal ؓ; he didn't say it to everyone. Everyone is advised and instructed according to what they can bear.[1]

The Best Spiritual Exercise

A person submitted: 'I visited ascetics previously and they had me do various strenuous exercises. Now I have taken your *Bai'at* [the Pledge of Allegiance]. What should I engage in?'

The Promised Messiah ؑ replied:

Recite the Holy Qur'ān anew and deeply ponder over its meanings. Offer Prayer wholeheartedly and act upon the directives of the Sharī'ah. This is indeed the duty of man. Then, after this, the actions of God begin. A person who seeks the pleasure of God Almighty with humility, God is pleased with him.[2]

The Pīrs of Today

The Promised Messiah ؑ said:

1. *Al-Badr*, 1 August 1907, p. 3; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt*, vol. 9, pp. 321–333
2. *Badr*, 1 August 1907, p. 3; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt*, vol. 9, pp. 331–333

> The *pīrs* [spiritual guides] of today often attract immoral women as their followers. Some are *pīrs* of Hindus. Such people remain firm in their wickedness and *kufr* [disbelief]. They can become followers of the *pīrs* just by making a donation. No matter what their practical condition, this is not considered an obstacle. If doing this were permitted, then the Holy Prophet ﷺ could have made even Abū Jahl his follower. He could have continued to worship his idols and the need for so much fighting and quarrel would not have arisen, but such things are absolutely sinful.[1]

A Lock or Wisp of Hair on the Crown of a Newborn Child

A question from the same person was presented, seeking an injunction about not completely shaving the head of a newborn child and leaving a lock or wisp of hair on the crown in the name of some revered person.

The Promised Messiah ؑ responded:

> It is unlawful. One should not do so.[2]

Distributing Food in the Cemetery in the Name of the Deceased

A person asked that those who accompany the dead person take baked bread or other items to the cemetery and, after burying the deceased, distribute it among the poor. What is the ruling regarding this?

The Promised Messiah ؑ said:

1. *Badr*, 1 August 1907, p. 3; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt*, vol. 9, p. 324
2. *Badr*, 14 March 1907, p. 5; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt*, vol. 9, p. 175

> All things are dependent on intention. If it is the intention that since the poor gather at this place and charity can reach [i.e. benefit] the deceased, so as the person is buried on the one hand and charity is given to the poor on the other, so that it will benefit him and he may be forgiven, this is a good thing. However, if this work is undertaken merely as a ritual, then it is not permissible because its reward is neither for the deceased nor for those who give it. There is no benefit in it at all.[1]

Making a Miniature Mausoleum during Muharram

A question from the same person was presented, asking if it was appropriate to join the people who make a miniature mausoleum and hold other gatherings during Muḥarram.

The Promised Messiah ﷺ responded:

> This is a sin.[2]

Distributing Sweet Drinks & Rice on 10th Muḥarram

Qāḍī Ẓuhūr-ud-Dīn Akmal raised a question and asked the directive of the Promised Messiah ﷺ regarding the distribution of sweet drinks and rice, etc., on the tenth of Muḥarram with the intention of gaining spiritual reward from God.

The Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

> To fix a day and a time for such activities is a custom and an innovation. Gradually, such customs lead to *shirk* [associating

1. *Badr*, 16 February, p. 2; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt,* vol. 8, p. 347
2. *Badr*, 14 March, 1907, p. 5; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt*, vol. 9, p. 176

partners with Allāh]. Therefore, one should avoid such practices because their outcome is not good. Though initially it might have been with the same intent, it has now taken the form of *shirk* and is in the name of other than Allāh, therefore, I declare it to be unlawful. False beliefs are not removed until such customs are eradicated.[1]

The Ruling on Dhikr-e-Arrah

Someone asked the question: Are those practices permissible that the Sufis have devised to increase focus, mainly, to sit in a particular manner, then the striking of the heart in a specific manner, reciting *Dhikr-e-Arrah*, and other similar compilations?

The Promised Messiah ﷺ responded:

These are not permitted; rather, all of them are innovations. **حَسْبُنَا كِتَابُ اللّٰه** For us, the pristine Book of Allāh the Exalted—the Holy Qur'ān—is sufficient. The Book of Almighty Allāh is sufficient as a guide in reaching Him. The practices that these people have now adopted were not at all introduced by the Holy Prophet ﷺ, nor his Companions ﷺ. These are only inventions of these people and should be avoided. We do, nevertheless, say:

كُوْنُوْا مَعَ الصَّادِقِيْنَ[2]

Be with the truthful

1. *Badr* Newspaper, 14 March, 1907, p. 5; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt*, vol. 9, p. 174
2. *Sūrah at-Tawbah*, 9:119

> Just as a great many sects have formed amongst the scholars during this age, so have many sects arisen among the ascetics, and all of them express their various interpretations as a new approach. The whole world is becoming like this, so the need for reform is everywhere. It is indeed for this reason that God Almighty has sent that *Mujaddid* [Reformer] in this age, who has been given the title *Masīḥ-e-Mau'ūd* [the Promised Messiah ﷺ], and who had been eagerly anticipated since antiquity. All the Prophets ﷺ had prophesied about him and the noble elders of yore held on to the yearning that they might chance upon his day.[1]

Prayer Beads Are a Later Innovation

One person mentioned that the opponents say that these people offer Prayers but do not keep *tasbīḥs*[2] with them.

The Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

> When did the Companions keep *tasbīḥs*? These people have made up such things later.

The Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

> A person is mentioned who used to hold a long *tasbīḥ* in his hand and was passing through a street. On the way, an old woman saw that he was counting how many times he was reciting the name of God with the *tasbīḥ*. She said, 'Does anyone

1. *Badr*, 15 November 1906, p. 5; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt,* vol. 9, pp. 11–12
2. *Tasbīḥ* literally means 'glorification' or the remembrance of Allāh's glory. In Arabic, prayer beads are termed *misbaḥah*, though in Urdu the word *tasbīḥ* is commonly used to refer to the beads themselves. [Publisher]

count how often he makes mention of a friend?' He threw away the *tasbīḥ* right there and then. The blessings of Allāh are innumerable; who can count them?[1]

The Use of Prayer Beads

Someone asked about prayer beads: what is your opinion on the use of prayer beads?

The Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

> The one who passes beads through his fingers is merely focused on counting. His aim is to complete a fixed number. Now you can judge for yourself: will his focus be on finishing the count, or on true spiritual attention? It is clear that the person who is concerned with completing a tally cannot sincerely repent.
>
> The Prophets ﷺ and the *kāmilīn* [perfected ones] who are immersed in the pleasure of divine love and lost in God's nearness, do not concern themselves with numbers, nor do they see any need for it. The *Ahl-e-Ḥaqq* [people of truth] are in constant remembrance of Allāh, and they consider the notion of counting to be absurd. Does anyone recall the name of their beloved by keeping count?
>
> If a person loves Allāh with true love, and is wholly turned towards Him, the thought of counting will never even arise in his heart. Rather, he will consider this *dhikr* [remembrance] to be nourishment for his soul. The more he engages in it, the more he will experience delight and spiritual sweetness, continuing to advance on his journey. But if the aim is to merely

1. *Badr*, 22 March 1906, p. 2; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt*, vol. 8, pp. 358–359

complete a number, then once it is done, he will consider it nothing more than a tax he has paid.[1]

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ relates: 'Miāṅ 'Abdullāh of Sanaur ؓ narrated to me: "Someone once brought a *tasbīḥ* as a gift for His Holiness ؑ. He handed it to me and said, "Take it and invoke blessings upon the Prophet on it." The *tasbīḥ* was very beautiful.'

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ further states: 'This humble one affirms that the Promised Messiah ؑ did not generally prefer the use of prayer beads.'[2]

The Blessings of Using Sūrah Fātiḥah for Ta'wīdh

Pīr Sirāj-ul-Ḥaqq Nu'mānī ؓ writes: 'The Promised Messiah ؑ never practiced *ta'wīdh*[3] like the contemporary dervishes and mystics. However, on four or five occasions, he did write a *ta'wīdh*. One such instance was when Khalīfah Nūr-ud-Deen from Jammu, who had no children, requested the Promised Messiah ؑ to pray for him to have children. The Promised Messiah ؑ responded: "We will pray for you." Khalīfah Nūr-ud-Deen then asked for a *ta'wīdh* to which the Promised Messiah ؑ replied: "I will write something for you". When Nūr-ud-Deen repeated his request, the Promised Messiah ؑ said: "Remind me, and I will write it for you." Out of respect, Khalīfah Nūr-ud-Deen did not remind him again but asked Ṣāḥibzādah Mirza Mahmud

1. *Al-Ḥakam*, 10 June 1904, p. 3
2. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 1, p. 166
3. The term *ta'wīdh* is derived from the Arabic root *'-w-dh*, which means to seek refuge or protection. *Ta'wīdh* refers to an amulet or talisman inscribed with Quranic verses, prayers, or other sacred text, often worn or carried by an individual as a means of seeking divine protection or blessings. [Publisher]

Ahmad ﷺ, who was then a young boy, to request the *ta'wīdh* from the Promised Messiah ﷺ.

'Whenever Mirza Mahmud Ahmad ﷺ approached the Promised Messiah ﷺ, he would say: "Write the *ta'wīdh* for Khalīfah." The Promised Messiah ﷺ initially declined but eventually accepted when Mirza Mahmud Ahmad ﷺ insisted, saying: "Father, please write the *ta'wīdh* for him." The Promised Messiah ﷺ then said: "I do not know how to write *ta'wīdh*, but since Mirza Mahmud Ahmad ﷺ is insisting, I will not refuse." He then wrote the entire *Sūrah Fātiḥah*, including the *basmalāh*, and handed the *ta'wīdh* to Mahmud Ahmad ﷺ, who then gave it to Khalīfah Nūr-ud-Deen. Shortly thereafter, Khalīfah Nūr-ud-Deen's wife conceived and gave birth to a son.

'A non-Aḥmadī from Hyderabad wrote a letter requesting a *ta'wīdh* written by the blessed hand of the Promised Messiah ﷺ. The Promised Messiah ﷺ said to me: "I do not know how to write *ta'wīdh*. Bring me a piece of paper, and I will write *Sūrah Fātiḥah* on it, as it contains all blessings." He wrote *Sūrah Fātiḥah* and handed it to me, saying: "Send it by mail."

'Another letter came from someone in Marwar, stating that spontaneous fires broke out in their house, terrifying sounds were heard, and the family frequently fell ill. He requested a handwritten *ta'wīdh* from the Promised Messiah to rid them of this problem, whether it was due to *jinn* or some other evil entity. The Promised Messiah ﷺ told me to write something myself as he did not believe in such evil entities. He instructed me to write: "Call the *Adhān* in the four corners of the house every evening." After I wrote this and showed it to the Promised Messiah ﷺ, he said: "Good, send the letter." Two or three weeks later, a letter arrived from that person stating that the fires had ceased, nightmares had stopped, and the entire family had been completely healed by the grace of Allāh. I then requested the Promised Messiah ﷺ to write a *ta'wīdh*. He replied that he would write it, and then one day he wrote *Sūrah Fātiḥah* and said: "Send it."

'Women from Qadian and neighbouring villages would come and request: "O respected Mirzā, please write a *ta'wīdh* for us." The Promised Messiah ﷺ would tell them: "Go to Ṣāḥibzādah Sahib; he will write it for you. Do you know who the Ṣāḥibzādah is? He is that tall *pīr* [spiritual guide]." The women would respond: "Yes, we know him."

'The people of Qadian and its surroundings knew me; some called me "*Pīr* Sahib" and others "the Great *Pīr*." The women would then come to me, saying: "Mirza Sahib sent us to you; please write a *ta'wīdh* for us." Following the example of the Promised Messiah ﷺ, I would write *Sūrah Fātiḥah* for them.'[1]

The Futility of Amulets and Written Charms

A person asked about the effectiveness of amulets and written charms.

The Promised Messiah ﷺ responded:

> That they produce any effect is merely an unsupported claim. Such forms of treatment fall under the category of mental impressions, for mental impressions can have a powerful effect upon a person. Through them, one person may be made to laugh, another to weep, and people may even be shown various things that do not in reality exist. Some ailments may also be treated in this way. However, amulets often prove ineffective, until the one prescribing them is compelled to admit: 'I can do no more.'[2]

1. *Tadhkiratul-Mahdī*, pp. 184–186
2. *Badr*, 21 August 1903, p. 242

Recitation of the Book Dalā'ilul-Khairāt

One day, someone asked: 'What is the ruling on reciting the book *Dalā'ilul-Khairāt*[1] as a devotional act?'

The Promised Messiah ﷺ replied:

> The time spent reciting the book *Dalā'ilul-Khairāt* would be more beneficial if it were spent in prayer and recitation of the Holy Qur'ān. These books prevent one from Prayer and reciting the Holy Qur'ān. The Qur'ān is the word and command of Allāh, while these devotions are innovations of people. People also perform devotional recitations of verses and chapters of the Qur'ān, which is an innovation done out of ignorance. The Qur'ān is not for mere recitation but for acting upon and for moral reformation. If the Holy Prophet ﷺ had placed prayer beads in the hands of the Companions ﷺ and had them sit in secluded rooms, the Faith would not have reached us. They had to strive with the sword. The Holy Prophet ﷺ repeatedly said:
>
> الْجَنَّةُ تَحْتَ ظِلَالِ السُّيُوفِ[2]
>
> Meaning, paradise lies under the shadows of swords. Our time is the era of *minhāj-e-nubuwwat* [the precepts of prophethood], and our path is also on *minhāj-e-nubuwwat*. People must now abandon seclusion, throw away the prayer beads, burn the coloured garments, and strive earnestly for *Jihād* and supporting the Faith with their wealth, lives, hands, and in every other

1. *Dalā'ilul-Khairāt* is a well-known devotional work compiled by Imām al-Jazūlī, consisting primarily of prayers invoking blessings upon the Holy Prophet ﷺ and arranged for regular recitation. [Publisher]

2. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Kitāb al-Jihād, ḥadīth no. 2818

possible way. In those times, *Jihād* was performed by the sword, whereas now it is by the tongue and the pen. *Jihād* was ongoing then, and it continues now, but its method has changed. A true believer is never satisfied with the shell but seeks the essence. It is disbelief to cling to mere words. Nothing is achieved by holding onto words alone; rather, the purpose is fulfilled by acting upon the Qur'ān and living according to its guidance.[1]

Bulleh Shāh's Poems

Ḥaḍrat Pīr Sirāj-ul-Ḥaqq Nuʿmānī ﷺ writes that during a discussion in the gathering of the Promised Messiah ﷺ concerning Reverend 'Imād-ud-Dīn's book *Tawzīn-ul-Aqwāl*, I submitted: ''Imād-ud-Dīn has written that no saint has appeared among the Muslims. He says that he has, however, heard of one person called Bulleh Shah, who lived in Kasur. From reading and listening to his poems, it appears that he does not regard Islām as anything of significance. He speaks of it in derogatory terms, praises wine and permissiveness, and repeatedly insults Islām in his poems."

The Promised Messiah ﷺ responded:

It is people such as these who have brought Islām into disrepute. In reality, they are a disgrace to Islām and a source of shame to faith. The existence of such people brings dishonour upon the righteous. Muslims ought to take a lesson from such people. Had such people not existed, no blemish would have been associated with Islām. Of course, Islām itself is so radiant that no stain or blemish can attach itself to it. However, instead of bringing benefit, such people have caused harm. Those whose hearts are afflicted with deviance and crookedness present such

1. *Tadhkiratul-Mahdī*, pp. 183–184

examples, and, leaving aside the pure and righteous, select such worthless individuals instead. Otherwise, through its pure effects, Islām has elevated thousands upon thousands, indeed tens of millions, of people to a rank that even the Messiah did not attain.[1]

The Custom of Bismillāh

A person submitted in writing that there is a custom among them, that at the time of the *Bismillāh* [the start of formal religious education] of a child, the *maulawī* teaching the child is given a silver or a gold plate or tablet, and a silver or a gold pen and ink pot. Although he is a poor person, he desires to send these items to the Promised Messiah ﷺ at the *Bismillāh* of his child.

The Promised Messiah ﷺ wrote in reply:

To give a silver or a gold plate, pen, and ink pot are all innovations. They should be avoided, and to so extravagantly spend money despite poverty and lack of property is a grave sin.[2]

Blowing One's Breath on Someone after Reciting Words of God

A friend asked to be told a verse of the Holy Qur'ān that he could recite and blow upon an ill patient to cure him.

The Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

1. *Tadhkiratul-Mahdī*, pp. 45–46
2. *Badr*, 5th September 1907, p. 3; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt* vol. 9, pp. 356–356

> There is undoubtedly healing in the Holy Qur'ān. It is the cure for spiritual and physical diseases, but reciting the Holy Qur'ān this way involves a trial for the people. Do not put the Holy Qur'ān to test. Pray to God Almighty for your sick person. This is enough for you.[1]

Unveiling the Circumstances of the Dead

The Promised Messiah ﷺ stated:

> All of these stories about people who claim to be able to uncover the circumstances of the dead from their graves are nothing but lies—they are nonsensical and absurd; in fact, they are tantamount to associating partners with God. I have heard of a man who wanders these parts and makes tall claims about being able to gain an insight into the circumstances of the dead from their graves. If his knowledge is true, he ought to come to me and I shall take him to such graves of whose dwellers I am well aware. But as I have said, these are all nonsensical things and to pursue them is nothing but a waste of time. A fortunate man ought not to waste his time in such preoccupations. He ought to adopt the way taught by Allāh, and follow the practice of Allāh's Messenger and his companions.[2]

Self-Invented Invocations and Incantations

The Promised Messiah ﷺ stated:

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1. *Badr*, 25th October 1906, p. 4; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt* vol. 8, p. 451
2. *Badr*, 19 March 1908, p. 5; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt*, vol. 2, p. 107

> Renowned Sufis and the successors of saints have deemed the height of their excellence to lie in long and enormous invocations, incantations, and practices which they have invented themselves. They have become engrossed in these practices and have lost the true essence of faith. Then, their greatest accomplishment, if anything, is that they will undertake forty-day retreats. They will take certain items along and appoint a person who will bring them milk or something else on a daily basis. These retreats are generally undertaken in dark, narrow, and filthy rooms, or in a cave, and those who practice these exercises lay there in these rooms. God knows how they are able to remain in such places. Then when these people come out of the room, they emerge in a terrible state. This is what is left of Islām. I cannot understand how these retreats of seclusion benefit Islām, the Muslims, or humanity at large, and how this improves a person's morals?[1]

The Promised Messiah ﷺ further stated:

> I know that it is the consequence of the actions of those who abandoned these pillars and invented innovations for themselves. Otherwise, the Qur'ān has already said:
>
> الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِيْنَكُمْ[2]
>
> Meaning, the religion has been completed, the blessing has been perfected, and it has been decreed that Islām is the religion approved by Allāh. Thus, abandoning the righteous deeds of God's Messenger and inventing new ways for themselves,

1. *Al-Ḥakam*, 9 July 1900, p. 4; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt*, vol. 2, p. 253
2. *Sūrah al-Mā'idah*, 5:4

> reciting other incantations and invocations instead of the Qur'ān, and creating other forms of remembrance instead of righteous deeds, are not for the pleasure of the soul but for the pleasure of the self. People have not distinguished between the pleasure of the self and the pleasure of the soul, but they have considered them to be the same, whereas they are different. If the pleasure of the soul and the self were the same, I would ask: the lowly derive more pleasure from the songs of an immoral woman. So will they be considered as those who are cognisant of Allāh or as perfect individuals due to this pleasure of the self? No. Those who invented ways that contradict the Sharī'ah and go against the example of the Messenger ﷺ have fallen into this error and are unable to distinguish between the pleasure of the self and the pleasure of the soul. Otherwise, they would not find the pleasure and tranquillity of the soul in these trivial and frivolous things. They do not possess the *nafs-e-muṭma'innah* [the soul which is at rest], so they seek pleasure in the poems of Bulleh Shāh, whereas the pleasure of the soul is attained through the Noble Qur'ān.[1]

The Promised Messiah ؑ also stated:

> They did not consider the consequences of their actions and abandoned the righteous deeds that came to them from the Holy Prophet ﷺ, replacing them with litanies and invocations they invented themselves, thinking that memorising some religious songs is sufficient. They sway in ecstasy when reciting the songs of Bulleh Shāh. Therefore, it is observed that wherever a Qur'ānic lesson is held, the number of attendees is small, but wherever there is such a gathering, people flock in large numbers. The lack of interest in good deeds and the abundance of

1. *Al-Ḥakam*, 31 July 1902, p. 8

interest in matters of the self and desires clearly indicate that they have not grasped the difference between the pleasure of the soul and the pleasure of the self.

It has been observed that they deliberately remove their turbans upon entering gatherings of dance and music, claiming that ecstasy overcomes them when they sit in such assemblies. Thus, innovations and fabricated matters of this kind have arisen. The truth is that, those who do not find pleasure in Prayer and are deprived of its taste do not understand the tranquillity and peace of the soul at all, nor do they know what true pleasure is. I am always amazed at how these people invent such innovations while being Muslims. If the happiness or pleasure of the soul lay in such practices, then it would have been expected that the Messenger of God ﷺ, who was the most knowledgeable and perfect person in the world, would have taught something of this kind or at least demonstrated it by his actions.

I ask these opponents who call themselves great scholars and have their own followers: Did the Messenger of God forget your invocations, incantations, and spiritual exercises like hanging upside down, if these were the true avenues by which to know the truth? I am astonished that, on one hand, they read in the Qur'ān: الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتْمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي[1] [This day I have perfected for you your religion and completed My favour upon you], and on the other hand, they want to undermine this completion, showing it as incomplete with their desires and innovations.

From one perspective, these unjust people falsely accuse me of claiming an independent prophethood separate from the law-bearing Prophet. Yet, they do not pay the slightest attention to their own actions as they themselves falsely claim prophethood by establishing a new law contrary to the Messenger and

1. *Sūrah al-Mā'idah*, 5:4

> the Qur'ān. Let anyone who holds justice and fear of Allāh in his heart tell me: Have I added anything to the teachings and practices of the Messenger of Allāh, or diminished them by giving instruction according to the Noble Qur'ān ... and believing in the Messenger of Allāh as our leader and judge? Did I invent the practice of *Dhikr-e-Arrah*, and am I the one who taught specific invocations, including controlling the breath and *nafī wa ithbāt*?[1] They are the ones who falsely claim prophethood and then accuse me.[2]

1. These are prevalent methods for specific remembrances (*adhkār*) in the Indian subcontinent. One method involves saying '*Allāh*' while exhaling and '*hū*' while inhaling, imagining the manifestation of God both outwardly and inwardly. The person is to engage in this form of remembrance frequently until the heart becomes pure and free from anything other than God, thereby becoming a vessel for divine light. Another method involves the practice of negation and affirmation. The individual inhales while silently saying '*illā Allāh*' and exhales while saying '*lā ilāh*,' with the mouth closed and the tongue completely still. The person continues this practice persistently until the breath naturally begins to repeat this remembrance without conscious effort. [Publisher]

2. *Al-Ḥakam*, 10 August 1902, p. 5

Visualisation of the Spiritual Mentor

QUESTION—Those who engage in the exercise known as the visualisation of the spiritual mentor (*taṣawwur-e-shaikh*[1]) say that they do not consider their mentor to be God.

ANSWER—I accept that they say this, but idol worship begins with visualisation. Even the present state of the idol worshipper came gradually. First, there would have been visualisation; then they thought that in order to keep the image alive, it would be better to make a picture, and this then grew, leading to the creation of idols carved of stone and metal, and these took the place of pictures. Ultimately, this continued to the extent that they were given even greater spiritual importance until they became known as gods themselves. Now all they do is place that stone in front of themselves and claim that these mantras make them worthy of worship, and that these stones become an incarnation of Parmeshwar. They have named the *mantra* '*avahan*.' On one occasion, I saw that I had a piece of paper in my hand. I handed it to someone so they may read it. He said that an *avahan* is written on the paper. I disliked this and so I said to him: 'Show it to me.' When I took the paper in my hand again and read it, the following was written on it:

أَرَدْتُ أَنْ أَسْتَخْلِفَ فَخَلَقْتُ آدَم

1. This is one of the Sufi methods to cultivate the qualities of the guide and ensure the follower adheres to them. The book *Al-Ism Al-A'ẓam* by Khwājah Shams-ud-Dīn 'Aẓīmī describes this concept as follows : 'At that moment, the seeker's vision perceives their Shaikh as closer than the jugular vein, and their gaze reaches the depths of their heart where the image of the Shaikh resides. The stream of the Shaikh's thoughts flows into their heart, and the knowledge of the Shaikh is transferred to their mind through this stream.' [Publisher]

> [I decided to appoint a vicegerent in this age and so, I created this Adam.]

The fact of the matter is that the vicegerent of God Almighty is draped in the mantle of divinity. This is why Allāh the Exalted states in respect of Adam عليه السلام:

نَفَخْتُ فِيهِ مِنْ رُّوْحِی[1]

And I have breathed into him of My spirit.

It is in the manner that I have just described that errors became established. The fundamental teaching was misunderstood, and then beliefs were corrupted until ultimately, polytheism and idolatry took its place. The purpose behind my photo being taken is, as I have mentioned earlier, so that the people of London may be informed and so that the truth may be propagated in this way.[2]

The Concept of the 'Moving Heart'

The Promised Messiah عليه السلام said:

> Therefore, the concept of the visualisation of the spiritual mentor (*taṣawwur-e-shaikh*) is a Hindu invention; it has been taken from the Hindus. The concept of the moving heart (*ijrā-e-qalb*) also comes from the Hindus. If this was the primary objective for which God Almighty had created human beings then what need would there be for Him to give such an extensive religious teaching. All that God would have needed to do in such a case

1. *Sūrah al-Hijr*, 15:30
2. *Al-Ḥakam*, 24 October 1901, p. 2; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt*, vol. 4, pp. 31–32

was to mention this concept of the moving heart and explain the techniques by which to practice it correctly. A certain individual told me from a reliable source that the heart of a Hindu was absorbed in the state of the 'moving heart,' invoking '*Rama*, *Rama*,' when a Muslim happened to pass by. Suddenly, the heart of the Muslim became absorbed in the same state as well and he too began invoking the name '*Rama*, *Rama*'. However, one should not be deceived because '*Rama*' is not the name of God. Even Dyanand has stated that this is not the name of God. This state of 'setting the heart in motion' is a game which is used to trick simple, ignorant people. If a person begins to repeat the words '*lota, lota*'[1] the heart can become absorbed in this too, but if a person is attached to Allāh, it is His name that the heart calls out. The Holy Qur'ān has not given such a teaching, in fact, it teaches something that is even better:

إِلَّا مَنْ أَتَى اللهَ بِقَلْبٍ سَلِيمٍ[2]

> But he alone will be saved who brings to Allāh a sound heart.

God desires that a person's entire being becomes the heart. Otherwise, if a person's entire being does not begin to move and profess the name of God, then such a *qalb* (heart) is no *qalb* at all, it is as lowly as a *kalb* (dog). What God desires is for you to become wholly absorbed in Him and to revere the limits and injunctions set by Him. The Holy Qur'ān teaches the concept of annihilation of perception (*fanā-e-naẓarī*). I have observed from experience that this concept of putting the

1. A *lota* is a small, round water vessel, usually with a spout, used in the Indian subcontinent. [Publisher]

2. *Sūrah ash-Shu'arā'*, 26:90

heart in 'motion' is based entirely on repetitive practice, and has nothing to do with piety and righteousness. A person from Montgomery district or perhaps from Multan used to meet me at the Chief Court and he was very experienced in this practice of setting the heart in motion. So, in my view, this is nothing to be given importance, and God Almighty also has not given this practice any significance or deemed it to be of any value. The desire of God Almighty and the underlying purpose in the teaching of the Holy Qur'ān is nothing more than:

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ زَكَّاهَا[1]

He indeed truly prospers who purifies the soul.

Until a cloth is washed completely it cannot be purified. Similarly, all of the various parts of the body must be cleansed; nothing can be achieved by simply purifying one part. It is also important to remember that when God beautifies a thing, it cannot be spoiled, but human forms of beautification lose their grace eventually. I openly proclaim on the basis of my experience that until a person brings about a change within themselves that is in accordance with the will of God Almighty and the practice of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, and until one begins to tread the path of piety, even if a sound does resonate from their heart, the poison that destroys a person's spirituality cannot be removed. There is only one way established by God Almighty by which a person can nurture and develop their spirituality and that is by following the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. The people who demonstrate these spectacles of the 'moving heart' have gravely dishonoured the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Has there been anyone greater in this world than the Messenger

1. *Sūrah Ash-Shams*, 91:10

of Allah ﷺ? Now would the Holy Prophet ﷺ sit in the cave of Hira and practice methods of putting his heart in motion or was he a man whose person was completely annihilated in God? Moreover, there is not a single example from the life of the Holy Prophet ﷺ in which he taught the companions to engage in exercises to put their hearts in motion. Furthermore, never did anyone with a 'moving heart' demonstrate this practice, nor did anyone ever narrate that they observed the Holy Prophet ﷺ in the aforementioned state. All such practices that are not mentioned in the Holy Qur'ān at even a single instance are but human inventions and notions that have never brought forth any results. What the Holy Qur'ān does teach is that one should love God, and for one to hold true to the words:

أَشَدُّ حُبًّا لِلَّهِ[1]

Stronger in their love for Allāh.

One is instructed to act on the teaching:

فَاتَّبِعُونِي يُحْبِبْكُمُ اللهُ[2]

Follow me: then will Allāh love you.

One is taught to become so completely annihilated in God that one becomes imbued in the hue that is characterised by the words:

1. *Sūrah al-Baqarah*, 2:166
2. *Sūrah Āl 'Imrān*, 3:32

تَبَتَّلْ إِلَيْهِ تَبْتِيلًا[1]

Devote thyself to Him with full devotion.

One is taught to give precedence to God Almighty over all else. These are the objectives that one must seek to achieve. The ignorant seek to measure God by the gauge of their own mind and thoughts. They seek, by their own devices, to develop a relationship with Him, but this is the very thing that they cannot do.

So my advice is that you ought to keep away from such notions. You ought to follow the way that was presented to the world by the Messenger of God Almighty ﷺ and what he demonstrated through his own practical example as a pathway by which one can attain success and prosperity in the hereafter; one should follow what he taught the companions. Then, from time to time various, chosen ones of God showed the same practice through their actions by continuing the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, and today, God has liked the same practice. Now if the true objective of God Almighty was for us to adopt the self-invented concept mentioned earlier, then even today when he has established a divine community to revive those truths and verities that are now lost, he would have taught this strange practice and this would have been the highest objective of my teachings as well. However, you can observe that God has not given any such teaching; in fact, He says that man should come to Him with a sound heart (*qalb-e-salīm*). He loves those who do good (*muḥsinūn*) and those who are righteous (*muttaqūn*). He is the Friend and Protector of such people. Is it written anywhere in the whole of the Qur'ān that God loves those whose hearts are set in motion? You must know for certain that these are merely baseless notions, they are games which have

1. *Sūrah al-Muzzammil*, 73:9

no relation whatsoever with the reformation of one's soul or with spiritual matters. In fact, such games only move a person further and further away from God and prove to be harmful to a person in terms of their actions. So adopt righteousness, honour the practice of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and demonstrate with unwavering dedication that you follow his path, for this is the true pride of the teaching of the Holy Qur'ān.

QUESTION—Then where did the Sufis go wrong?

ANSWER—Leave them to God. We do not know what they understood and how they reached their conclusions.

تِلْكَ أُمَّةٌ قَدْ خَلَتْ لَهَا مَاكَسَبَتْ[1]

Those are a people that have passed away; for them is what they earned.

Sometimes people are deceived and they believe that the initial stage is the ultimate objective they sought. Who knows, perhaps the Sufis ascribed to such beliefs but in the end they abandoned these ideas. It is also possible that others may have attributed these statements to them and mixed their own concepts with theirs. This is how the Torah and Gospel were altered as well. The Sufi saints and leaders of the past should be excluded in this context and should only be remembered with good words. What is necessary for an individual personally is that when God enables them to realise a mistake, they themselves abstain from it. God has stated that one should not associate partners with Him, and become wholly devoted to Him with

1. *Sūrah al-Baqarah*, 2:135

all of one's understanding and ability. What could be greater than the fact that:

مَنْ كَانَ لِلّٰهِ كَانَ اللّٰهُ لَهٗ

He who belongs to Allāh, Allāh becomes his.[1]

Holding the Breath

QUESTION—What is this practice of holding the breath (*ḥabs-e-damm*)?

ANSWER—This is also a practice taken from the Hindu yogis. There is no foundation for this in Islām.[2]

Innovative Practices Related to the Night of Barā'at in the Middle of Sha'bān

The Promised Messiah ﷺ said about the *niṣf-e-sha'bān* [also known as *Shab-e-Barāt* etc.]:

All these customs of *ḥalwā* [a dessert] etc. are innovations.[3]

1. *Al-Ḥakam*, 31 October 1901, p. 2; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt*, vol. 4, pp. 32–36
2. *Al-Ḥakam*, 31 October 1901, p. 2; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt*, vol. 4, p. 36
3. *Badr*, 26 September 1907, p. 7; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt*, vol. 9, p. 415

Sacrifices to Fulfil Desires

A question from the same person was presented, asking whether it is lawful to sacrifice an animal for the fulfilment of an objective, or for the fertility of land, or by way of *chath* [a *qurbānī* offered on the sixth night of the lunar month].

The Promised Messiah عليه السلام said:

It is not lawful.[1]

1. *Badr*, 14 March 1907, p. 5

MODERN DISCOVERIES

It is Permissible to Make Use of Apparent Means

The Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

> Medical treatment is not forbidden. The English, for instance, invented the train, and we too benefit from it. They invented the telegraph, and we also make use of it. Matchsticks come from Europe, and similarly, if a medicine is made by them and we use it, there is no harm in that.
>
> As for abstaining from the plague vaccine, God has declared it a trial, so that the sign [i.e., the divine promise of protection] is not undermined. If we take the vaccine and then claim that protection as a sign, how could that be? God has set us apart from others, and it appears that there is some hidden matter which will be made manifest in due time. Otherwise, we do regularly make use of things and medicines produced by them.
>
> What is truly strange is that, on the one hand, they say that a person does not contract the plague unless the plague germ comes into contact with their constitution, and on the other hand, they themselves introduce that very germ into the body. To compare the plague to smallpox is a flawed analogy. The smallpox virus enters the body through a mother's milk, whereas it is believed that the plague virus is not naturally present in many bodies. Therefore, the vaccine is administered

merely as a preventative measure, so that the virus does not enter in the first place.[1]

The Permissibility of Art That Serves the Objectives of the Shar'īah

A person had asked the Promised Messiah ﷺ: 'Is it permitted to take pictures according to the Sharī'ah?'

He replied:

This is a new invention. There is no mention of it in the earlier Scriptures. Some materials have the God-given quality that allows a picture to be taken. If this technique is harnessed for the service of the Sharī'ah, then it is permissible.[2]

Photography

Munshī Naẓīr Ḥusain posed a question to the Promised Messiah ﷺ: 'I am a photographer who takes photographs. In the depths of my heart, I feared that this work might be against the Sharī'ah. However, when I saw your photograph, this doubt was dispelled.'

The Promised Messiah ﷺ replied:

إِنَّمَا الْأَعْمَالُ بِالنِّيَّاتِ

Actions are judged by intentions.

1. *Badr*, 31 October 1902, p. 6
2. *Badr*, 24 December 1908, p. 5; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt*, vol. 10, p. 223

I permitted my photograph to be taken solely to include it with our letters sent to Europe, as part of conveying the message of Islām. The general taste of those people has developed to the point that when they mention something, they also present its image, and they can draw very accurate conclusions from it through physiognomy. As for the scholars who object to my photograph, why do they keep banknotes in their possession? Do they not have images printed on it?

Islām is a comprehensive religion that evaluates actions based on intentions. During the Battle of Badr, a man entered the battlefield with a swaggering gait, and the Holy Prophet ﷺ said that this manner of walking is very displeasing because God Almighty says:

لَا تَمْشِ فِي الْأَرْضِ مَرَحًا[1]

And walk not in the earth haughtily.

However, at this moment, God Almighty loves this gait because this man is about to sacrifice his life in the way of God, and his intention is very noble. Thus, if a person does not consider their intention, they face significant problems. Once, the Holy Prophet ﷺ said that those who let their garments hang low would enter Hell. Upon hearing this, Ḥaḍrat Abū Bakr ؓ began to weep, as his own garment would sometimes hang low. The Holy Prophet ﷺ reassured him that he was not among such people. Thus, intention plays a crucial role in every action, and one must carefully consider the context and occasion.

Munshī Naẓīr Ḥusain then asked: 'I myself am a photographer, and I take pictures. What is your opinion on this?'

1. *Sūrah Banī Isrā'īl*, 17:38

The Promised Messiah ﷺ replied:

If you are not supporting disbelief and idol worship, it is permissible. The science of physiognomy and facial features is highly advanced these days.[1]

A Picture Does Not Invalidate Prayer

Someone asked: 'Does a picture invalidate Prayer?'

The Promised Messiah ﷺ responded:

Imitating the disbelievers by making pictures is generally impermissible, but the picture itself is not inherently forbidden; rather, its prohibition is secondary. If the mere presence of a picture invalidated Prayer, I wonder: does keeping paper money or coins during Prayer not invalidate it as well? If you answer that carrying money is necessary, then my response would be: if someone relieves themselves out of necessity, does it not invalidate the Prayer? Must they not perform ablution again?

The truth is that when it comes to pictures, one ought to determine the underlying intention and see if the picture is meant to serve a religious purpose or not? If a picture is taken without a reasonable cause or without any religious benefit, it is pointless, and God Almighty says:

وَالَّذِيْنَ هُمْ عَنِ اللَّغْوِ مُعْرِضُونَ[2]

And who shun all that which is vain.

1. *Al-Ḥakam*, 24 May 1904, p. 3
2. *Sūrah al-Mu'minūn*, 23:4

Turning away from that which is vain is a characteristic of a believer, so one must avoid it. However, if a picture serves a religious purpose, it is not prohibited, for Allāh does not wish for knowledge to be lost.

For instance, on one occasion, I drew a picture of the Christian Trinity, in which I depicted a dove as the Holy Spirit and showed the Father and the Son as separate figures. My aim was to refute the concept of the Trinity and to demonstrate that the God presented by Islām is the true, living, eternal, and unchanging God, free from any incarnation. So, if a picture is meant to serve Islām, the Sharīʿah does not forbid it, for there is no objection to things that serve the faith.

It is narrated that Moses ﷺ possessed pictures of all the Prophets. When the companions visited the Caesar of Rome, they saw a picture of the Holy Prophet ﷺ with him. It should be understood that a picture is not inherently prohibited; rather, its prohibition is secondary. However, for those who make or keep pictures without purpose, this is what is forbidden. The Sharīʿah forbids it in one aspect and permits it in another lawful manner. Take fasting as an example: it is permissible during Ramaḍān, but if someone fasts on the day of *ʿĪd*, it is *ḥarām* [forbidden].

گر حفظِ مراتب نہ کنی زِندیقی

If you are not considerate of rank, you shall lose your faith.

There are two types of prohibition: inherent (*bin-nafs*) and relative (*bin-nisbat*). For example, pork is absolutely forbidden, whether it comes from the wild or any other place, whether it is white or black, small or large; it is forbidden in all its forms—this is an inherent prohibition. A relative prohibition, however,

is exemplified by someone who earns money through lawful means and effort; such wealth is permissible. But if the same money is obtained through theft or gambling, it becomes forbidden. As stated in the first *ḥadīth* of *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī*:

إِنَّمَا الْأَعْمَالُ بِالنِّيَّاتِ

Actions are judged by intentions.

If there is a murderer and his picture is taken for the purpose that through it he may be identified and arrested, then this will not only be permissible, rather it will become obligatory to make use of it. Similarly, if a person sends the picture of one who insults Islām, then if it is said to him that he has done something *ḥarām*, this statement is the work of a mischief-maker.

Know that Islām is not an idol; it is a living religion. I say with great regret that the ignorant contemporary scholars have provided the opponents with grounds to object to Islām. The image of everything is reflected in the eye, and there are even stones that reflect the image of birds when they fly by. One of the names of Allāh is *Muṣawwir* [The Fashioner]. The Qur'ān states:

يُصَوِّرُكُمْ فِي الْأَرْحَامِ[1]

He it is Who fashions you in the wombs.

Why, then, object without thought? The principle I have stated is that the prohibition of images is not absolute; it applies in some cases and not in others. Therefore, it is always necessary to consider the intention when it comes to secondary

1. *Sūrah Āl 'Imrān*, 3:7

prohibitions. If the intention is legitimate as per the Sharīʿah, the picture is not *ḥarām*; otherwise, it is *ḥarām*.[1]

The Promised Messiah's Disapproval of Printing His Picture on a Postcard

Muftī Muḥammad Ṣādiq ؓ presented a written request to the Promised Messiah ؑ on behalf of someone who sought permission to print his photograph on a postcard. In response, the Promised Messiah ؑ said:

I dislike it.

The narrator heard these words with his own ears. However, Ḥaḍrat Maulawī Noor-ud-Deen and Ḥakīm Faḍl Dīn ؓ mentioned that the Promised Messiah ؑ had said prior to this:

This innovation is gradually escalating, and I dislike it.[2]

On another occasion, it was mentioned that someone had printed the photograph of the Promised Messiah ؑ on postcards, so people could purchase these cards and use them as letters.

The Promised Messiah ؑ said:

In my view, this is not correct. This is the first step in spreading innovation. I permitted the taking of a photograph so that the people of Europe and America, who are very far from us and possess knowledge of physiognomy and benefit therefrom, may be able to derive a spiritual benefit from it. Because

1. *Al-Ḥakam*, 28 February 1902, p. 6
2. *Al-Badr*, 8 November 1904, p. 9

the type of prohibition that applies to images is not universally applicable; on the contrary, sometimes, if the *mujtahid*[1] sees that a benefit exists without any loss, then he can use it as needed. Permission was granted because of this particular need of Europe. Accordingly, some letters came from Europe and America in which it was written that by looking at the photograph, it appears as if this is precisely that very Messiah. Similarly, an image can sometimes prove very helpful in diagnosing a disease. In the Sharī'ah, every matter that comes under مَايَنْفَعُ النَّاسَ[2] [that which benefits men] is permitted to remain for much longer. However, these cards upon which the photograph is made should not be purchased. Pictures are the root of idolatry. When a person believes in someone, he tends to pay some reverence to the picture as well. Avoid such things and stay away from them, lest disaster befall our Community at its very inception. I have recorded this prohibition in a book that is under print. I am extremely angry with those people in the Jamā'at who do such things; God is angry with them. Nevertheless, should anyone's soul be profited through any means, then that method is exempt.

(A card with a photograph was shown). Upon seeing it, the Promised Messiah عليه السلام said:

This is absolutely forbidden.

A person brought a bundle of such cards and showed them, saying that as he bought these commercially for sale. What should he do now?

1. *Mujtahid* is a term used in Islamic jurisprudence to refer to a scholar who is qualified to interpret and derive legal rulings from the Islamic sources, including the Holy Qur'ān and Sunnah. [Publisher]

2. *Sūrah ar-Ra'd*, 13:18

The Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

> Burn them and destroy them. There is disdain for religion and disdain for the Sharīʿah in this. Moreover, do not keep them at home. There is nothing to be gained from this; instead, it ultimately gives rise to idolatry. It would have been better had there been a propagational message in lieu of the photograph.[1]

The Reason for Having a Photograph Taken

Then it was said that the people take objection with the photo of the Promised Messiah ﷺ and assert that this photograph has been taken to reinforce the concept known as the visualisation of the spiritual mentor (*taṣawwur-e-shaikh*).

His Holiness ﷺ said:

> This is an attack on the intentions of others. I have explained many times the purpose behind my photograph being taken. The fact of the matter is that it was my intention to propagate the faith to European lands, and especially London. However, since these people do not turn their attention to an invitation or message, until they are aware of the circumstances of the individual in question—and for this purpose they have progressed remarkably in the science of physiognomy—they develop an opinion about the righteousness and spiritual influence of a person by looking at their portrait and studying their features and characteristics. Similarly, this gives them an opportunity to establish a view in many other respects as well. Therefore, this was the actual objective and intention. But these people, who, for no reason seek to oppose me in everything, have spread

1. *Al-Ḥakam* 10 October 1905, p. 3; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt*, vol. 8, pp. 3–4

terrible propaganda and deceived the world. I proclaim that the reason aforementioned was the sole objective in having my picture taken. If these people consider photos in themselves to be objectionable, then they should have no coins in their possession. In fact, it would be better for them to pluck out their eyes too, because they too reflect various images.

These foolish people do not even realise that intentions are of chief importance in one's actions. They read the words:

الأَعْمَالُ بِالنِّيَّاتِ

Yet they do not understand it. After all, if someone were to offer their Prayer for the purpose of ostentation, would anyone deem this to be a good deed? Everyone knows that such a Prayer would be of no benefit; in fact, this would be a curse. So would this mean that Prayer is an evil deed? Of course not; the incorrect use of Prayer resulted in an evil outcome. In the same manner, the objective in mind with my photo was to support the cause of inviting people to Islām, keeping in view the disposition of the Europeans. To equate this with the concept known as the visualisation of the spiritual mentor and to turn this into something else is a calumny. Those who are Muslims ought not to have become angry at this; all that God and His Messenger have stated is true. If the words of certain Sufi leaders are not in accordance with God and His Messenger, then as the Persian saying goes: 'throw what is faulty back in the face of he who brought it.' If someone were to ask, there is nothing that would support the concept known as the visualisation of the spiritual mentor. The truth is, however, that love for the righteous and those who are annihilated in Allāh is an excellent thing, but one must be mindful of rank and station.

گر حفظِ مراتب نہ کنی زِندیقی

If you are not considerate of rank, you shall lose your faith.

Therefore, one ought to consider God to hold the position that behoves Him, one ought to give the Messenger ﷺ his due regard, and one ought to make the word of God one's code of conduct. Other than this, there is nothing else mentioned in the Holy Qur'ān except for the words:

كُوْنُوْا مَعَ الصَّادِقِينَ[1]

Be with the truthful.

As such, keeping in the company of the righteous and those who are wholly absorbed in God is necessary, but nowhere has it been stated that one should consider such people to be everything. In addition to this, the Holy Qur'ān instructs:

قُلْ إِنْ كُنتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ اللَّهَ فَاتَّبِعُونِي يُحْبِبْكُمُ اللَّهُ[2]

Say, 'If you love Allāh, follow me: then will Allāh love you.'

However, this does not state 'consider me to be God.' In fact, this verse states that if one desires to become the beloved of God there is only one path and that is to follow the Noble Messenger, peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him. Although the Holy Qur'ān instructs a person to follow, it does not contain any

1. *at-Taubah*, 9:119
2. *Sūrah Āl Imran*, 3:32

instruction to engage in the practice known as the visualisation of the spiritual mentor.[1]

The Permissibility and Necessity of Photography

The Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

> In this age, the need for photographs in response to others is considerable. Nowadays, images are used to create an impression in every sphere, whether in war or in public assemblies. Even a photograph of Pigott was published. In our time, warfare is considered incomplete without photographs.
>
> God Almighty has commanded that you must equip yourselves with the same weapons your enemy uses. From this, the permissibility of photography is established—just as the permissibility of using rifles and cannons in war was derived, even though killing by fire is forbidden. Therefore, wherever there is true necessity, or revelation affirms its validity, to declare photography unlawful would be sheer folly.
>
> Gabriel ﷺ himself once showed the Holy Prophet ﷺ an image of ʿĀ'ishah ﷺ.

Maulawī Muḥammad Aḥsan ﷺ said: 'Perhaps a similar necessity arose during the time of Solomon ﷺ.' The Promised Messiah ﷺ replied that this appears to be the case.

He then stated:

1. *Al-Ḥakam*, dated 24–28 October, 1901, pp. 1–2; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt*, vol. 4, pp. 29–30

> There is absolute prohibition, and there is non-absolute prohibition. Non-absolute prohibition is lifted when there exists a valid reason for its removal.[1]

The Permissibility of Photography for Necessity

An Aḥmadī asked the Promised Messiah ﷺ: 'The villagers are harassing us as to why photographs of you are taken. How should we respond to them?'

The Promised Messiah ﷺ replied:

> As long as a person always carries money in his pocket for material needs, which bears images, why should it not be permissible to take a photograph for religious purposes? These people fall under the category of:
>
> لِمَ تَقُولُونَ مَا لا تَفْعَلُونَ[2]
>
> Why do you say what you do not do?
>
> They do something themselves, yet criticise others for the same. If, in their view, photographs are forbidden, then they ought to throw all of their money away before objecting to us. Those scholars who object so strongly are not capable of giving up even a penny.[3]

1. *Al-Badr*, 28 November–5 December 1902, p. 35
2. *Sūrah Aṣ-Ṣaff*, 61:3
3. *Al-Badr* 25 September 1903, p. 381

Recording of the Poems of the Promised Messiah ؑ

A person inquired if it was permissible to record the poetry of the Promised Messiah ؑ in the phonograph and play it for people to hear.

The Promised Messiah ؑ said:

> Actions are judged by the motives underlying them. It is permissible to use the recorded poems for the purpose of *tablīgh* [propagation of the Message] because, many a time, poetry makes the hearts of people soft and tender.[1]

The Permissibility of Using the Inventions of Disbelievers

A question from a person was presented, that if the railway is the donkey of the *Dajjāl* [Antichrist], then why should we ride it?

The Promised Messiah ؑ said:

> It is not forbidden to derive benefit from the crafts and inventions of the disbelievers. The Holy Prophet ﷺ said that to mate a mare with a donkey is *dajl* [deception]; thus, the one who causes such mating is a *dajjāl* [one who deceives]. Yet, he himself would regularly ride a mule. Moreover, a non-Muslim king once sent him a mule as a gift, and he continued to ride it.[2]

Train Travel is for Our Benefit

The Promised Messiah ؑ said regarding the train:

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1. *Badr*, 24 May 1908, p. 8; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt*, vol. 10, p. 561
2. *Badr*, 28 March 1907, p. 4; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt*, vol. 9, p. 206

God Almighty has benefited our Community in this era because travelling has become very easy. Otherwise, one would endure great hardship to reach one place from another. For example, if someone wanted to travel to the city of Madras, where Sayyid ʿAbd-ur-Raḥmān resides, they would begin their journey in the summer and arrive in the winter. God Almighty has spoken about this present time in the verse:

وَإِذَا النُّفُوسُ زُوِّجَتْ[1]

Meaning that people from one region will reach people from another region.[2]

1. *Sūrah at-Takwīr*, 81:8

2. *Badr*, 6 February 1903, p. 21

SOCIAL CONDUCT AND INTERPERSONAL RELATIONS

From National Unity to Global Unity

The Promised Messiah عليه السلام says:

> Just as there is unity in the Being of God Almighty, He desires this same unity among humanity, who were created for eternal worship. The division among nations that arose due to their growing populations was, in fact, a preparation for the creation of complete unity. God intended to first create the parts of unity within different nations and then bring everyone into the circle of perfect unity. Therefore, He made the nations into different peoples and created unity within each people. The wisdom behind this was to facilitate recognition between nations so that there would be no difficulty in their mutual relations. Once the smaller parts of the nations became acquainted with each other, God decided to unite all nations into one. It is like a gardener who plants a garden, divides its trees into different sections, and then builds a fence around the entire garden, bringing all the trees into a single circle. The Qur'ān points to this, stating:

إِنَّ هَذِهِ أُمَّتُكُمْ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً وَأَنَا رَبُّكُمْ فَاعْبُدُونِ[1]

This means, O prophets from various parts of the world, the Muslims who have gathered from different nations in this world are one nation, who believe in all of you, and I am your Lord, so worship Me together. This gradual unity can be compared to God Almighty's command that people gather in their local mosque five times a day, and then once a week on the seventh day in the larger central mosque of the city, a mosque that accommodates everyone. Then, they are commanded to gather annually from the whole city and surrounding villages at a larger site, such as the *ʿĪd* Prayer ground. Finally, they are instructed to gather once in their lifetime from all over the world at one location, in the holy city of Makkah. Just as God gradually perfected the gathering of the Ummah through *Ḥajj*—starting with smaller gatherings and then giving the entire world the opportunity to unite in one place—this is also His practice with revealed scriptures.

God intended through this that the circle of His oneness reaches perfection, by first creating unity in smaller parts of different lands, and then ultimately uniting everyone in one place, just like the gathering during *Ḥajj*. This is as promised in the Qur'ān:

وَنُفِخَ فِي الصُّورِ فَجَمَعْنَاهُمْ جَمْعًا[2]

Meaning that in the latter days, God will gather the righteous through His call to one religion, as they were at the beginning, to establish a connection between the first and the last.

1. *Sūrah al-Anbiyā'*, 21:93
2. *Sūrah al-Kahf*, 18:100

In brief, people were initially like one nation, but when they spread across the earth, God divided them into different nations for ease of recognition among them. He assigned each nation a specific religion suited to them, as He says:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَى وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوا[1]

O mankind, We have created you from a male and a female; and We have made you into tribes and subtribes that you may recognise one another.

God Almighty further states:

لِكُلٍّ جَعَلْنَا مِنْكُمْ شِرْعَةً وَمِنْهَاجًا وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللهُ لَجَعَلَكُمْ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً وَلَكِنْ لِيَبْلُوَكُمْ فِي مَا آتَاكُمْ فَاسْتَبِقُوا الْخَيْرَاتِ[2]

Meaning, for each of you We prescribed a clear spiritual Law and a manifest way to manifest the intrinsic qualities of different natures through different teachings. So, O Muslims, strive toward good deeds, for you are a group that gathers within it all nations and all types of nature. Thus, based on the aforementioned reasons, God divided humanity into many nations.

In the earliest times, people were connected through kinship, and kinship-based unity existed among them. Then, as multiple nations formed, scriptures were sent to create unity within each nation. During that time, only national unity was possible in each region, but global unity was not. Then came a third era in which the means for unity between nations were

1. *Sūrah al-Ḥujurāt*, 49:14
2. *Sūrah al-Mā'idah*, 5:49

provided, i.e., the tools for global unity became available. Every era that humanity passed through required a scripture suited to that era. Thus, when God wanted to establish national unity, He sent a separate messenger to each nation, prioritising national unity over global unity.

It was God's wisdom that national unity be established in each land first. When the stage of national unity concluded, the phase of unity among all nations began, and that era was the time of the advent of our Prophet ﷺ. It should be noted that the greatness of a messenger or a scripture is measured by the magnitude of the reform they undertake and the challenges they face in carrying out the reform. It is clear that a scripture revealed in earlier times could not be complete in any way, because the problems that emerged later could not have been imagined in the earlier eras. Likewise, the problems faced by the prophets and messengers during the time of national unity could not compare to the challenges faced by that Prophet ﷺ who was commanded to unite all nations under one global unity.[1]

Interacting with Opponents

Someone asked: 'The opponents who insult us and you with severe insults and use harsh and obscene words—should we greet them with peace or not?'

The Promised Messiah ؑ replied:

A believer is very protective of their honour. Is it in line with this sense of honour that such people hurl insults and abuses at you, and yet you greet them with peace? However, buying and

1. *Chashma-e-Ma'rifat, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 23, pp. 144–147

> selling with them is permissible, and there is no harm in that, as one pays the price and takes the goods, and no one owes anyone any favour in such transactions.[1]

Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ II ؓ once stated: 'My practice is that I greet everyone, except when I encounter someone wicked like Lekhram, whom the Promised Messiah ؑ did not greet, in which case I may hesitate. Most people, although they are in opposition to us, are simply misguided, and hence still deserve the prayer that is included in the greeting "*assalāmuʿalaikum*" [peace be upon you].'[2]

Dealing with the Uncivilised

A friend from Africa asked the Promised Messiah ؑ in writing, that the natives there—men and women—live completely naked, and the trade of daily consumable items takes place with them, so is it sinful to interact with them?

The Promised Messiah ؑ said:

> You did not ask them to be naked. They do so themselves. Why is it a sin for you? They are just like some *faqīrs* [mendicants] and the insane that roam around naked in our country. However, an effort should be made for them to develop the habit of clothing themselves.

This question was also raised concerning such people: 'There are also poor people in Africa who are available for inexpensive employment. Is it permitted to have them cooking food whereas they do not have an understanding of *ḥalāl* and *ḥarām* [lawful and unlawful]?

1. *Al-Ḥakam*, 10 April 1903, p. 14
2. *Al-Fazl*, dated 21 August 1960, p. 4

The Promised Messiah ﷺ responded:

Considering the conditions of that country, it is permissible for them to be employed, and they should be thoroughly briefed regarding your food, etc.

This question was also raised whether it is permissible to marry such women.

The Promised Messiah ﷺ responded:

In that country and in those areas, with the condition of necessity, marrying such women is permissible, but after marriage, an effort should be made to have them clothed and adopt Islamic practices.[1]

Girls Singing on the Occasion of a Wedding

A question was asked: 'What is the ruling on girls singing at the house of the bride or the groom?'

The Promised Messiah ﷺ replied:

The ruling is the same as previously mentioned. If the songs are not vulgar or inappropriate, then there is no harm in them. When the Holy Prophet ﷺ arrived in Madīnah, he was welcomed by girls singing songs of praise for him.[2]

1. *Badr*, 26 September 1907, p. 6: Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt* vol. 9, pp. 407–408
2. *Aṣḥāb-e-Aḥmad*, v. 2, p. 552, New Edition

Expressing Joy on Special Occasions

Nawāb Muḥammad ʿAlī Khān said: ʿIn December 1901, I wrote to the Promised Messiah ﷺ: "The ceremony held on the occasion of the *Āmīn* of Bashīr, Sharīf Aḥmad, and Mubārakah bore a unique distinction, as these children were born as a result of prophecies. Thus, no matter how much joy is expressed on such an occasion, it cannot be considered an exaggeration. However, since Your Holiness is a *burūz* [spiritual manifestation] of the Holy Prophet ﷺ for us, this practice of yours will become a Sunnah for us. Therefore, I wish to request that you speak on this subject during your walk."

Regarding this, during a walk, the Promised Messiah ﷺ said something along the following lines:

الأَعْمَالُ بِالنِّيَّاتِ

Deeds are judged by intentions.

This is a universally accepted principle and a most authentic *ḥadīth*. If someone provides food with the intention of showing off or seeking superiority over others, or out of greed for compensation, then that food and similar actions are prohibited. However, if someone spends with the intention of thanking Allāh and seeking His pleasure without any ostentation or desire for return, there is no harm in it. In fact, the birth of a child should be widely announced, and using a *daff* [frame drum] to announce weddings is essential. It is also permissible to use English musical instruments for this purpose. Similarly, there is no harm if women sing, as long as their songs do not contain anything against the teachings of Sharīʿah. The most important thing in all this is the intention.

Some people give women excessive freedom, which is inappropriate, whilst others treat them like animals and slaves,

which is also wrong. Women should be given freedom within the limits of the Sharī'ah. Whenever they act against the Sharī'ah, they should be stopped.'[1]

Good Treatment of a Hindu Guest

A Hindu gentleman, whom the Promised Messiah ﷺ received as a guest, stated: 'People used to scare me, saying that Mirza Sahib does not talk to anyone and behaves very rudely with Hindus. However, I have found all these statements to be untrue and I have seen you to be of the highest standard in manners and hospitality.'

The Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

People spread false news. God Almighty has taught us broad morals. Instead, I am sorry that I cannot fully demonstrate my good manners to you because it is not permissible for you to eat our food according to your national custom. We arrange the food for such Hindu guests with a Hindu, but we cannot control the preparation of this food ourselves. It is not part of our principles to behave discourteously with someone because of religious differences, and misbehaviour is also inappropriate, because, at most, in our opinion, a person of a different faith is like a person who is ill and lacks spiritual health. Therefore, the sick person deserves even greater mercy and should be treated with great kindness and gentleness.

If the ill person is treated with an ill temper, his illness will worsen. If someone is involved in any error or deviation, he should be made to understand with love.

1. *Aṣḥāb-e-Aḥmad*, v. 2, p. 551, New Edition, *Biography of Nawāb Muḥammad 'Alī Khān*

> Our main principles are two: keeping a pure relationship with God and treating His servants with compassion and good morals.[1]

Sympathy Towards Hindus

A question of a person was presented to the Promised Messiah ﷺ that: 'Due to having old ties, a Hindu from our town joins in our moments of sorrow and joy, and if someone dies, he participates in the funeral as well. Is it permissible for us to participate similarly with him as well?'

The Promised Messiah ﷺ replied:

> It is permissible to express sympathy and support for Hindus in worldly affairs after maintaining a detachment and disinterest from the Hindu customs and rituals which oppose the Islamic Sharī'ah.[2]

The Food of the People of the Book

A discussion was taking place regarding the astonishing inventions of America and Europe. In this connection, mention was also made of matters relating to social life and mutual cooperation. It was noted that milk, broth and other such items, which arrive from Europe sealed in tins, are extremely refined and clean. One particular merit of these products is that they are not touched by human hands at all; even the milk itself is extracted by means of machines.

The Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

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1. *Badr* 6 July 1906, p. 8; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt* vol. 9, pp. 406–407
2. *Badr*, 6 June 1907, p. 8; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt*, vol. 9, p. 289

> Since the Christians of today do not care about the boundaries of their religion, its lawful and unlawful aspects, and they frequently consume pork, nor do they mention the name of Allāh when slaughtering their animals—instead, as we have heard, they cut the throat of the animal in one swift motion—a doubt may naturally arise that biscuits, milk and similar products manufactured in their factories may contain an admixture of pork fat or even derivatives of swine. Therefore, I consider the consumption of biscuits, milk, and soups of this kind, imported from Europe, to be entirely contrary to *taqwā* and impermissible. When the rearing and consumption of swine is so commonly practised among these people in Europe, how can we be assured that other edible items which they prepare and export do not, in one form or another, contain some portion thereof?

Abū Sa'īd, the Arab, a rice merchant of Rangoon, narrated the following incident to the Promised Messiah علیہ السلام: 'In Rangoon there was a factory owned by the British for the manufacture of biscuits and bread. A Muslim trader purchased it for approximately 150,000 rupees. When he examined the books of accounts, he discovered that lard had also been regularly purchased for use in the factory. Upon enquiry, the factory staff informed him that they used this fat in the preparation of biscuits and similar products, for without it such items would not be palatable. They further stated that in Europe as well, this fat is added to these goods.'

This incident can inform the readers about the extent of piety and discernment the Promised Messiah علیہ السلام exercised in such matters. However, since some among us used to travel frequently and some brethren still resided in African countries and other remote regions, where they might need such products as milk, biscuits, and similar items, this issue was raised with the Promised Messiah علیہ السلام again in light of their circumstances.

The topic of Hindu food was also mentioned, and it was said that their utensils are often very dirty, with dogs frequently licking their pots.

The Promised Messiah عليه السلام responded:

> In my view, the lawful food of the Christians is only that which is beyond any doubt, as it is not forbidden according to the Holy Qur'ān. Otherwise, it would imply that one avoids certain foods at home, considering them impermissible, but consumes them from the hands of Christians outside the home. This is not limited to Christians alone; if there is a Muslim whose situation raises doubts, it is also not permissible to eat his food. For example, if a Muslim is mentally unstable and cannot distinguish between lawful and unlawful, how can one trust his food or what he has prepared? Therefore, I do not allow the consumption of biscuits imported from Europe in my household; instead, we purchase those made by an Indian company.
>
> Our situation with Hindus is one of necessity compared to Christians, as Hindus have become widely integrated with us, and their shops are spread everywhere. However, if Muslim-owned shops are available and supply everything, one should not buy food from Hindu stores.

He added:

> Moreover, I believe that *Ahl-e-Kitāb* [People of the Book] primarily refers to the Jews, as a large number of them lived in Arabia at the time, and they are repeatedly addressed in the Holy Qur'ān. The Torah was the only book at that time that clearly explained the issues of lawful and unlawful. The Jews continue to follow it on this matter as they did in those days. As for the Gospel, it is not really a book of law at all.

Abū Sa'īd said that the definite article '*al-*' in [the Arabic term] *Ahl al-Kitāb* also signifies this specific designation, which clarifies the issue further.[1]

Eating Meat Slaughtered by Followers of the Wujūdī Sect

A person asked: 'In our town, there are many followers of the Wujūdī [2] sect, and they are the main producers of slaughtered animals. Is it permissible to consume their meat or not?'

The Promised Messiah ﷺ replied:

> Constantly spying and investigating is not right. In general, you should avoid associating with polytheists and wrongdoers. Excessive investigation leads to numerous problems. Any animal slaughtered in the name of Allāh, in accordance with Islamic teachings, is lawful, regardless of who performed the slaughter.[3]

Fulfilling a Dream

A friend wrote to Promised Messiah ﷺ that his wife saw a dream in which a person said to her: 'There is heavy burden upon your son. Give *ṣadaqah* on his behalf. Also do the following: Soak chickpeas, put them in an earthen pot, and tie it in the shirt the boy had been wearing, and

1. *Badr*, 16 July 1904, p. 3
2. One who believes in the doctrine of *Waḥdat-ul-Wujūd* (lit. Oneness of Being), a belief attributed to Ibn 'Arabī, which suggests that God and His creation are one and the same thing. [Publisher]
3. *Badr*, 16 July 1904, p. 4

at bedtime, put it under the bed towards the head and light a lamp. In the morning have it placed in an open public place by someone unrelated.' He asked the Promised Messiah ﷺ if it was permissible to fulfil the dream literally.

In response the Promised Messiah ﷺ wrote:

> It is permissible to do accordingly and fulfil the dream.[1]

A Doctor Should be Compassionate and Cautious

A question was asked: the effect of the plague passes from one person to another, so in this condition what is the directive for a physician?

The Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

> A physician or doctor ought to carry out treatment and show compassion, but exercise caution for his safety. It is not necessary for him to get very close to the patient or to go inside the house. He should diagnose the condition and provide advice. Similarly, it is necessary for the attendants also that they exercise caution, as well as show compassion for the sick.[2]

A Believer who Dies from the Plague is a Martyr

A question arose: 'What is the directive for the *ghusl* [bathing] of someone who has died from the plague?'

The Promised Messiah ﷺ responded:

1. *Badr* 4 April 1907, p. 6; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt* vol. 9, pp. 220–221
2. *Badr* 4 April 1907, p. 6: Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt* vol. 9, p. 219

If a believer dies from the plague, he is a martyr. There is no need for the *ghusl* of a martyr.[1]

Instruction for the Aḥmadīs in Plague-Afflicted Areas

In the morning the Promised Messiah ﷺ went for a walk outside with his followers. On the way, the Promised Messiah ﷺ addressed this humble one [Muftī Muḥammad Ṣādiq, Editor of *Badr*] and directed:

Publish in the newspaper and inform everyone that these days are the days of God Almighty's wrath. Allāh the Exalted has informed me many times through *waḥy* [revelation]:

غَضِبْتُ غَضَبًا شَدِيدًا

I have been moved to sever anger.

The plague continues to spread rapidly these days and is raging in all four directions. I pray to God Almighty fervently for my Jamā'at that He keep it safe, but it is proven from the Holy Qur'ān that when God's wrath descends, then even the virtuous are affected with the evil, and then their resurrection will be according to their deeds.

Behold! The storm of Prophet Noah ﷺ struck everyone. It is obvious that every man, woman, and child was not fully aware of the claim of Noah and its proofs. The victories in wars that were achieved were all a Sign of the truthfulness of Islām, but in each one of them Muslims also were killed along with the disbelievers. The *kāfir* went to Hell and the Muslim was recognised as a *shahīd* [martyr].

1. *Badr* 4 April 1907, p. 6; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt* vol. 9, p. 220

Similarly, the plague is a Sign for my truthfulness, and it is possible that some members of my Jamāʿat may also be martyred in it. I am engaged in supplication before God Almighty that He keep a distinction between them and others. However, the members of the Jamāʿat ought to remember that nothing can be achieved just by placing [your] hand on [my] hand until my teaching is not acted upon. First of all, discharge the rights of Allāh. Keep yourself pure from all passions. After this, discharge the rights of people and carry out good works. Sincerely believe in God Almighty and continue praying to Him fervently, and there should not be a day that you have not supplicated, weeping before God.

Following this, take precaution of external measures: vacate the building where rats begin to die, leave the neighbourhood where there is plague, and move to an open field pitching a camp. One who becomes afflicted with the plague by Divine decree, show him and his relatives the utmost compassion, and help him in every way, and use every means in his treatment, but keep in mind that compassion does not mean that you become affected by his poisonous breath or clothing; rather keep yourself protected from such effects. Keep the patient in a spacious house. God forbid, if he dies from this disease, he is a martyr. There is no need to bathe (*ghusl*) the corpse nor to clothe it with a new shroud. Keep the deceased in his clothes and, if possible, lay a white sheet over him. Since the noxious effect increases in the corpse of the deceased, all of the people should not gather together around him. According to the need, two or three people may carry the deceased's bed and the others can join his *Janāzah* [Funeral Prayer] from afar; for example, a hundred yards away.

The *Janāzah* is a supplication, and for this, it is not necessary for a person to stand right up close to the corpse. A place where the graveyard is at a distance, such as in Lahore, if it

can be arranged, take the deceased in a vehicle or a cart. There should be no crying and wailing over the deceased, for it is a sin to object to an act of God. Do not be afraid that on doing so people will malign you. They do not speak kindly of you as it is. All these matters comply with the Sharīʿah. Eventually you will observe that the people who ridicule you, will themselves follow you in these matters.

It is stressed again strongly that a house that is confined and dark, and air and light cannot enter it adequately, leave it without delay as such a house itself is dangerous even if no rat has died within it. As much as possible, stay on the rooftops of the houses. Avoid the lower floors and keep your clothes clean, and have the drains cleaned regularly. Above everything else, cleanse your hearts as well, and be at complete peace with God.[1]

Feast on the Fulfilment of a Sign

Khān Sahib ʿAbdul Ḥamīd wrote a letter to the Promised Messiah ﷺ from Kapurthala seeking permission to hold a feast for the members at the occasion of the joyous fulfilment of the glorious Sign of Dowie.

The Promised Messiah ﷺ granted permission and said:

It is permissible to hold such a feast to proclaim the favour [of God].[2]

1. *Badr* dated 4 April 1907, pp. 6–5
2. *Badr* 28 March 1907, p. 4; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt* vol. 9, p. 205

Assemblies for Poetry Recital

The Promised Messiah ﷺ was asked about the establishment of a poetry reading society proposed by some Aḥmadīs possessing poetic dispositions.

The Promised Messiah ﷺ responded:

> It is a waste of time that such societies be set up and people remain wholly immersed in composing couplets. Of course, it is permissible for someone to write a poem on some joyous occasion and incidentally read it in a gathering or have it published in a newspaper. I have written a number of poems in my books, but despite having lived a lifetime, I have never participated in any poetry recital to this day. I absolutely detest someone seeking fame through poetry. Certainly, there is no harm in composing a poem that can be beneficial to humanity if it is written on the basis of genuine inspiration, not on the basis of mere words, and out of spiritual passion, not lustful desires. Nevertheless, to make this a profession is a detestable deed.[1]

Keeping a Bull for Breeding Purposes

A person raised a question; whether it was permissible if, merely for Allāh's sake, someone lets a bull roam freely just for breeding.

The Promised Messiah ﷺ replied:

أَصْلُ الأَشْيَاءِ إِبَاحَةٌ

1. *Badr*, 27 June, 1907, p. 7; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt*, vol. 9, pp. 292–293

> The default or natural state of things is one of permissibility. Only those things which God Almighty has declared *ḥarām* [unlawful] are *ḥarām*; everything else is *ḥalāl* [lawful]. A great many situations are dependent upon intention. In my opinion, this is permissible; nay, rather, an act of virtue.

It was submitted that this is mentioned in the Glorious Qur'ān.

The Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

> I kept this in view while responding. They donate in the names of idols. Here it is specifically in the name of God Almighty. Breeding is a necessary thing. In the Glorious Qur'ān, God Almighty has mentioned cattle, etc. amongst His favours. Therefore, this favour should be appreciated, and breeding is a form of appreciation as well. Hence, if that were not the case, then quadrupeds would become weak and the functioning of the world would not be able to run well. Therefore, in my opinion, there is no harm in this thing. Every deed is dependent upon intention. When carried out in the name of anyone other than Allāh, it is *ḥarām* [unlawful], but the very same deed is *ḥalāl* [lawful] if it is done for the sake of Allāh.[1]

The Role of an Aḥmadī at a Place of Disorder

A letter by some Aḥmadīs reached the Promised Messiah ﷺ from an area beyond the frontier region that [said], 'It is not peaceful here. People attack one another. There is no one in authority. Some *mullāhs* wish to murder us. Do you permit us that we should also try and kill them?'

The Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

1. *Badr*, 1 August, 1907, p. 12; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt*, vol. 9, pp. 292–293

Do not do so. Protect yourself in every way but do not attack anyone yourselves. Bear difficulties and be patient until God Almighty makes some better arrangement for you. God is with the individual who adopts righteousness and shows patience.[1]

Imitating the Disbelievers

A person once asked: 'Is it permissible to wear a lower garment like the Hindus do?'

The Promised Messiah ﷺ replied:

Imitating the disbelievers is not permissible under any circumstance. For example, Hindus place a mark on their foreheads. If someone adopts such a mark—or grows a tuft of hair in imitation of them, even though everyone naturally has hair on their heads—this too is impermissible. A Muslim ought to be protective of their conduct and appearance.

The Holy Prophet ﷺ himself would also wear a lower garment, and it is also established that he purchased *sarāwīl*, which we refer to as *pājāmah* or *tambī*. A person may wear whichever of these he wishes. Furthermore, it was the blessed practice of the Holy Prophet ﷺ to wear a cap, a shirt, a lower garment, and a turban. One may wear any of these without hesitation. However, if a new need arises, one should adopt clothing that does not resemble the attire of the disbelievers and is closer to Islamic dress.

When a person accepts faith, what is there left to fear? Does anything remain in his heart as a longing? Does he still cling to the customs and traditions of the disbelievers? He should fear only Allāh and take the Holy Prophet ﷺ as his model. No sin,

1. *Badr*, 26 September 1907, p. 6; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt* vol. 9, pp. 406–407

however small, should be taken lightly, for it is the small sins that accumulate into great ones. Persisting in minor sins is itself a major sin.

God has not placed in my nature any inclination for their clothing or shoes. Once or twice I was sent English shoes, but I found them very difficult to wear. I would wear the right shoe on the left foot, and the left shoe on the right, until I had to mark them with black ink to tell them apart. Even then, the plan did not succeed, and I realised that it was simply against my nature to wear such shoes.[1]

Eating with a Knife and Fork is Permissible

The Promised Messiah ﷺ said regarding eating with a knife and fork:

The Islamic Sharīʿah has not prohibited cutting food with a knife, but it has forbidden strict adherence to certain practices out of formality, so that one does not become like the people who are accustomed to it. Otherwise, it is established that the Holy Prophet ﷺ ate meat by cutting it with a knife, and he did so to make things easier for the Ummah. Therefore, eating in this manner is permissible when there is a genuine need, but adhering to it rigidly or demeaning other ways of eating is prohibited, because this can lead a person to gradually imitate others to the point where they even neglect cleanliness, as those people do. The meaning of the *ḥadīth*[2] مَنْ تَشَبَّهَ بِقَوْمٍ فَهُوَ مِنْهُمْ [Whoever imitates a people is one of them] is that one should not rigidly follow the practices of others. Otherwise, it is not forbidden to engage in such practices occasionally when there

1. *Al-Ḥakam*, 17 April 1903, p. 8

2. *Sunan at-Tirmidhī, bāb fi lubs ash-shuhrah*, ḥadīth 3512. [Publisher]

is a genuine need. For example, sometimes I am very busy, so, while writing, I ask for the food to be placed on the table, and I eat there. Other times, I eat sitting on the floor, or on the bed. In such matters, simplicity should always be observed.

The essence of imitation, as mentioned in this *ḥadīth*, is to rigidly follow a single mode of conduct. Otherwise, the simplicity of our religion is something that other nations admire and envy, wishing it were found in their own traditions. The British have themselves praised this simplicity and have adopted many principles from the Arabs. But now, they are so entrenched in their own customs that they are unable to free themselves from them.[1]

April Fool's Day is a Bad Custom

The Promised Messiah ﷺ says:

The Qur'ān curses the liar, and states that liars are companions of Satan, and they have no faith, and satans descend upon the liars. The Qur'ān did not only say, 'Do not lie,' but also said that you should abandon the company of liars, cease taking them as friends, fear Allāh, and be with the truthful. It also states that your speech should be upright, without any trace of falsehood, even in jest. Now tell me, where can these teachings be found in the Bible? If such teachings existed, the bad habit of April Fool's Day would not still exist among Christians today. Look at how bad the habit of April Fool's Day is, where lying is considered to be a sign of civility. This is the civilisation of Christianity, and this is the teaching of the Bible. It seems that Christians are especially fond of lying, as their practical condition testifies.

1. *Al-Ḥakam*, 6 February 1903, p. 13

> For example, the Qur'ān remains the same in the hands of all Muslims, but we hear that the number of Gospels exceeds 60. Woe to you, O priests! This is a practice of lying. Perhaps you have heard a sacred person among you say that lying in speech is not only permissible but is itself a virtue.[1]

An Example of Religious Honour

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ narrates that 'Miāṅ Khair-ud-Dīn of Sikhwan ؓ informed him in writing: 'During the days when the debate with the Christian 'Abdullāh Ātham began, the weather was hot and we would need water. However we carried our own water with us. We would not drink from the well of the Christians because they were a people who insulted the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. Thus, His Holiness ؑ did not like to drink water from their well.'[2]

Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ narrates that Munshī Ẓafar Aḥmad of Kapurthala ؓ informed him in writing: 'During the debate with Ātham, the lectures of both sides were written down, and the scribes of both parties would compare the drafts. Sometimes their scribes would come, and sometimes I would go to them. On one occasion, I went to Ātham's house to compare the drafts. As soon as I sat down, Ātham asked me: "Where do you live?" I said: "In the town of Badhana, Muzaffarabad District." He said: "I had a friend in that town, Munshī 'Abdul-Wāḥid, the Judge." I said: "He was my uncle." Then Ātham mentioned another place and said that he worked there as a deputy commissioner, and Munshī 'Abdul-Wāḥid was a judge or held an administrative position there, and their relationship was very close. Munshī also considered himself a recipient of revelation. Ātham then

1. *Maktūbāt Aḥmad*, vol. 1, p. 199
2. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 2, p. 198

said to me: "You are like my nephew," and he brought out the women of his household and said to them: "This young man is like my nephew, so he must be entertained." Immediately, sweets and other foods were brought out, but I said: "I cannot eat them, because once the Promised Messiah ﷺ did not accept an invitation from some Christians, saying: 'How can we accept their invitation when they insult our Master and Lord?' Therefore, I cannot even drink tea.' But Ātham kept insisting, saying: "We are not hosting you as an Aḥmadī, but because you are like my nephew." I returned from there without comparing the drafts and mentioned the incident to His Holiness ﷺ, who said:

> You have done well. From now on there is no need for you to go there to compare the texts. If they wish to do this, they should come themselves.'[1]

Disapproval of Embracing and Eating with Opposing Christians

The Promised Messiah ﷺ was asked: 'Is it permissible to eat with Christians and embrace them or not?' He replied:

> I do not see it as permissible at all, for it is contrary to religious honour to embrace them while they insult our Holy Prophet ﷺ. The Qur'ān has even prohibited sitting in gatherings where Allāh and His Messenger ﷺ are mocked. Moreover, these people eat pork, so how can it be permissible to eat with them? For example, if someone insults one's mother or sister, would it be permissible for that person to sit with and embrace them? If not in such a case, how then can we permit embracing

1. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 2, pp. 48–49

and eating with the enemies of God and His Messenger ﷺ, who insult them?[1]

Reading and Writing Novels

A question was presented before the Promised Messiah ؑ to his view on writing and reading novels.

The Promised Messiah ؑ replied:

The directive about the novels is the same as the one the Holy and Noble Prophet ﷺ has stated about poetry that:

حَسَنُهُ حَسَنٌ وَقَبِيحُهُ قَبِيحٌ[2]

The good of them is good and the detestable is detestable.

Actions are dependent upon intention. The tales that are written in the *Masnawī* of Rumi are all parables and not actual incidents. Similarly, Jesus ؑ would often have recourse to parables. These are also a genre of novels. The novels that are written with a good intention with fine language, and the result promotes good morals are in every way beneficial. There is no sin in writing or reading them as required in appropriate instances.[3]

1. *Al-Ḥakam*, 17 August 1902, p. 10
2. *Sunan ad-Dār Quṭnī*, vol. 2, part 4, p. 90, *Kitābul-Wakālah, Khabarul-Wāḥidī Yūjibul-ʿAmal,* Ḥadīth *4261,* Dārul-Kutubil-ʿIlmiyyah, Beirut, 2003 [Publisher]
3. *Badr*, dated 5 September 1907, p. 3; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt*, vol. 9, pp. 357–358

Giving Sacrificial Meat to a Non-Muslim

The Promised Messiah ﷺ was asked about giving sacrificial meat to a non-Muslim, and he replied:

> It is permissible to give the meat of the sacrifice to a non-Muslim as well.[1]

The Permissibility of Christian Food

In response to a question by Bābū Muḥammad Afḍal regarding the food of the *Ahl-e-Kitāb* [the People of the Book], the Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

> We also eat the food of Hindus due to coexistence and civility, and similarly, eating the food of Christians is also permissible. However, care should be taken that the utensils are clean and that nothing impure is involved.[2]

Food Cooked by Hindus

A person asked: 'Is it permissible to eat food cooked by Hindus?'

The Promised Messiah ﷺ replied:

> The Sharī'ah permits it, and it does not impose such strict restrictions. Rather, it emphasises:

1. *Dhikr-e-Ḥabīb*, p. 83
2. *Al-Ḥakam*, 17 June 1901, p. 4

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ زَكَّاهَا[1]

Indeed, successful is the one who purifies it [the soul].

The Holy Prophet ﷺ would eat items prepared by the hands of Armenians. The truth is, it is difficult to manage without such allowances.[2]

Accepting the Invitation and Offering of a Hindu Lady

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ narrates: 'The Deputy Commissioner was on a tour regarding a legal matter, and a hearing was scheduled to take place in the town of Dhariwal during the month of Ramaḍān. It was decided that we would stay somewhere close to Dhariwal to avoid any issues in attending at the scheduled time. This place was about eight miles from Qadian. Initially, we attempted to stay in the village of Leel, but unfortunately, the local Muslims refused. Then it was suggested to stay in the village of Khunda, where the village leader, Rānī Ishar Kaur [the widowed daughter-in-law of Sardār Jaimal Singh], was very pleased with the arrival of the Promised Messiah ؑ. She sent her entourage to welcome him and ordered her grand palace to be cleaned, offering it to the Promised Messiah ؑ as a place to stay. She sent him a message expressing her great happiness at his arrival, saying that she felt as though Sardār Jaimal Singh had come.

That same evening, the village leader hosted a grand feast to which the Promised Messiah ؑ and his companions were invited, and he expressed great happiness.'[3]

1. *Sūrah ash-Shams*, 91:10
2. *Al-Ḥakam*, 10 June 1904, p. 3
3. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 2, pp. 266–267

Regarding this incident, *Al-Ḥakam* newspaper reported: 'After some time, Rānī Ishar Kaur sent her servants with a tray of sugar candy (*misri*) and a tray of almonds as an offering to the Promised Messiah ﷺ. She also sent word with her servants that she was honoured by the arrival of the Promised Messiah ﷺ and that his stay was no different for her than the coming of the late Sardār Jaimal Singh himself. His Holiness responded, with immense simplicity and in the God-given tone that is characteristic of such holy people, by saying:

> Very well, as you have invited us, I accept your offering as well.[1]

Attendance at a Banquet Hosted by a Hindu Merchant

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ﷺ narrates: 'Munshī Ẓafar Aḥmad of Kapurthala informed me in writing that the Promised Messiah ﷺ stayed in the city of Jalandhar for about a month, shortly after the first *Bai'at*. A Hindu, who was a prominent merchant from Jalandhar, came to His Holiness ﷺ and said: "I wish to host you and all your companions." The Promised Messiah ﷺ immediately accepted his invitation.

'The host arranged a banquet in the village of Baba Khel and prepared very luxurious dishes. His Holiness ﷺ walked on foot from the city of Jalandhar. The host personally laid the table before His Holiness ﷺ and took a water jug in his hand to pour water over our hands to wash them. One of us said to him: "Please do not trouble yourself in this way." The host replied: "I see my salvation in God's acceptance of this simple service of mine." He continued to serve with the utmost sincerity and love.

'After the meal, he asked the Promised Messiah ﷺ: "Will God accept this act of mine and grant me salvation?"

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1. *Al-Ḥakam*, 31 January 1889, p. 7; Eng. Trans: *Malfūẓāt*, vol. 2, p. 13

His Holiness ﷺ responded:

Indeed, God is Grateful and Powerful. You should believe in the One God, who has no partner, and forsake idols. Continue to pray to God for your guidance in your own language.

'The man said: "I will certainly do that, and I also request your prayers for me." After that, we returned to Jalandhar, and this wealthy individual would come every two or three days and sit before the Promised Messiah ﷺ with great respect.'[1]

Trade and Interaction with Hindus

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ﷺ narrates: 'Dr. Mīr Muḥammad Ismā'īl ﷺ told me that the Promised Messiah ﷺ used to eat food prepared by Hindus and would accept their gifts, such as sweets and similar items, and he would eat them. He would also order food and drinks from a Hindu sweet shop in the market. These items were not paid for in cash at the time; rather, the details of the goods, such as their names, weights, prices, and purchase dates, were written down on a piece of paper. The shopkeeper would send the account details after a month, and the Promised Messiah ﷺ would review it and pay the full amount.'

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ﷺ further states: 'The Promised Messiah ﷺ considered eating food prepared by Hindus to be permissible, and he did not hesitate in consuming it. Nowadays people avoid such food not due to religious reasons, but economic ones.'[2]

1. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 2, pp. 50–51
2. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 1, p. 794

Presenting False Witnesses in Legal Cases

A court official once asked: 'What is the ruling on presenting false witnesses in a case that is truthful and based on honesty?'

The Promised Messiah ﷺ replied:

> Firstly, you should only pursue a case that is entirely truthful. You should investigate whether the case is true or false, for the truth will then prevail of its own accord. Secondly, you should have no involvement whatsoever with the witnesses. It is the client's responsibility to produce the witnesses. It is highly improper for one to instruct the client to find a few witnesses, coach them on what to say, and then remain silent oneself. The client should present the testimony himself, whatever its nature may be.[1]

Recitation of Poems and Verses

A question was asked regarding the recitation of poetry and verses, to which the Promised Messiah ﷺ replied:

> Poems are also recited in our gatherings. The Holy Prophet ﷺ also listened to some verses from a man known for his beautiful voice. After listening, the Holy Prophet ﷺ said to him, 'May Allāh have mercy on you.' It was well-known that when the Holy Prophet ﷺ said this to someone, that person would soon attain martyrdom. This Companion was also martyred shortly after entering the battlefield. After the passing of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, one of the Companions recited poetry in the mosque. Ḥaḍrat 'Umar ؓ prohibited him, to which the

1. *Al-Ḥakam*, 24 April 1903, p. 10

companion angrily replied, 'How can you stop me? I recited poetry here, in this very place, in the presence of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, and he did not prevent me.' Ḥaḍrat 'Umar ؓ remained silent after that.[1]

Composing Poetry

It was mentioned that someone objected to His Holiness ؑ composing poetry.

In response, the Promised Messiah ؑ said:

The Holy Prophet ﷺ also recited poetry on occasion, and there is no difference between reciting and composing it. Furthermore, all of the Companions of the Holy Prophet ﷺ were poets. The poems of Ḥaḍrat 'Ā'ishah, Imām Ḥasan, and Imām Ḥusain ؓ are well-known. Ḥaḍrat Ḥassān bin Thābit ؓ composed a poem at the passing of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Similarly, Ḥaḍrat 'Abd al-Qādir Jīlānī ؒ also composed poetry. You will not be able to prove that any of the companions of the Holy Prophet ﷺ did not compose poetry, whether a little or a lot. The Holy Prophet ﷺ did not prevent any of them from doing so. In fact, many verses of the Qur'ān resemble poetic verses.

Someone mentioned that poets are criticised at the end of *Sūrah ash-Shu'arā'*.

The Promised Messiah ؑ replied:

Read those verses and you will find that God has condemned the poetry of the immoral and corrupt, while He has made an

1. *Al-Badr*, 27 March 1903, p. 74

exception for believing poets. The entire Psalms is poetry, and the Torah [i.e. the Old Testament] also contains the poems of Jeremiah, Solomon, and Moses. Thus, it is clear that composing poetry is not a sin. However, the poem must be free from immorality and corruption. I also receive revelations, some of which are structured in rhyme, while others are in the form of poetry.[1]

Fireworks

The Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

Fireworks also contain a portion of phosphorus, which purifies polluted air. For example, there is a type of firework shaped like a pomegranate which quickly purifies the atmosphere during the current outbreak of the plague. Therefore, if fireworks are used with the pure intention of purifying the air, without any harm or danger, then I consider them permissible. However, this must be done with the right intention, as actions are judged by intentions. It is mentioned in a *ḥadīth* that a companion built a house and requested the Holy Prophet ﷺ to bless it by visiting. The Holy Prophet ﷺ entered the house and noticed a window. He asked the owner of the house: 'What is the purpose of this window?' The man replied: 'So that a pleasant breeze may enter.' The Prophet ﷺ said: 'If you had intended to hear the sound of the *Adhān* [Call to Prayer] through it, the air would still enter, and you would have also earned the reward of your good intention.[2]

1. *Al-Badr*, 27 March 1903, p. 74
2. *Al-Ḥakam*, 24 April 1903, p. 10

Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ﷺ narrates that Dr. Mīr Muḥammad Ismā'īl ﷺ told him: 'During the time of the Promised Messiah ﷺ, the children in the house would bring some fireworks shaped like pomegranates on the occasion of *Shab-e-Barāt*[1], and they would set them off for play and amusement. His Holiness ﷺ would also watch this when he was present at home. Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ II ﷺ used to say that His Holiness ﷺ said that setting off fireworks in the house is beneficial for eliminating plague contaminants and for purifying the air.'

Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ﷺ further states: 'When we were young, we would sometimes bring these harmless fireworks and set them off in the house. His Holiness ﷺ would watch us playing and did not prevent us; rather, we would ask him for money to purchase such items, and he would give it to us.'[2]

Fireworks and Musical Instruments

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ﷺ narrates that Munshī Muḥammad Ismā'īl of Sialkot ﷺ informed him: 'On the occasion of the marriage of Mirzā Ḥākim Baig, his in-laws asked if they could use

1. It is the night of the 15th of *Sha'bān*, which is known among some Muslims in the Indian Subcontinent as *Shab-e-Barāt,* or *Lailatul-Barā'ah* in Arabic. Some of them observe this night by performing voluntary Prayers, reciting the Holy Qur'ān, and supplicating to attain the forgiveness of Allāh mentioned in various narrations. Others—especially in the Indian subcontinent—celebrate it hoping that Allāh the Exalted will forgive them on this night, so they set off firecrackers and fireworks throughout the night. It has been mentioned in some narrations n the authority of Abū Mūsā al-Ash'arī, from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, who said: 'Indeed, Allāh looks upon [or observes] on the night of mid-*Sha'bān* and forgives all of His creation, except for a polytheist or one who harbours enmity.' (Narrated by Ibn Mājah: *mā jā'a fī lailat al-niṣf min sha'bān*). [Publisher]

2. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 1, p. 341

fireworks and musical instruments. Ḥākim Baig wrote to the Promised Messiah ﷺ saying that his in-laws were requesting this; what does His Holiness instruct?

The Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

> Such practices are generally not permissible, but a believer sometimes benefits from things that are otherwise impermissible. For example, if there is an epidemic spreading in a city, and someone sets off fireworks with the consideration that it will purify the air, then he will receive spiritual reward for that. Similarly, concerning music, if one considers that because the wedding procession will be traveling a long distance, it would be beneficial for people to know that so-and-so's marriage has been contracted with so-and-so's daughter. Therefore, if music is used with this intention—as a means of announcement—then the issue of impermissibility no longer arises.'[1]

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ﷺ narrates that Miāṅ Khair-ud-Dīn of Sikhwan ﷺ wrote to him, saying: 'I once asked the Promised Messiah ﷺ: "What is the ruling of the Sharī'ah on using musical instruments, setting off fireworks, and similar activities on the occasion of marriage, as most people do?"

The Promised Messiah ﷺ replied:

> Setting off fireworks is not permissible because this action is harmful, but using musical instruments to announce the marriage is permissible.'[2]

1. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 2, p. 321
2. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 2, p. 268

The Sikhs and Hindus Requesting the Adhān

The newspaper *Al-Badr* wrote: 'It has been observed these days, during the severe outbreak of the plague, that in many Hindu and Sikh villages, people are adopting the practice of having the *Adhān* called in every house as a means of remedy. Someone asked His Holiness عليه السلام about this matter, and he said:

> The *Adhān* is solely the mention of Allāh's name. I recall the saying of 'Alī رضي الله عنه, the essence of which is: I do not wish to be the embodiment of Allāh's saying:
>
> أَرَأَيْتَ الَّذِى يَنْهَى * عَبْدًا إِذَا صَلَّى[1]
>
> Have you seen the one who forbids a servant when he prays?
>
> Therefore, in my opinion, there is great power in the *Adhān*, and there is no harm in calling it. (Indeed, it is mentioned in a *ḥadīth* that Satan flees upon hearing it).[2]

Using Gold, Silver or Silk

The Promised Messiah عليه السلام was asked whether the use of silver buttons and similar items is permissible. In his response, he stated:

1. *Sūrah al-'Alaq*, 96:10–11
2. *Al-Badr*, May 1903, p. 116

There is no harm in using it in measures up to the weight of three to four *māshas*[1], but using any more than that is prohibited. It has been permitted for women to use gold and silver as adornment, and their use for medical treatment is also not forbidden. For instance, if someone is afflicted with an illness and a physician advises him to eat from a vessel made of silver or gold, then he is allowed to use it as a remedy until he recovers.

A man suffering from a severe infestation of lice once came to the Holy Prophet ﷺ, so he instructed him to wear a silk shirt, as it was beneficial for eliminating lice. (Likewise, silk clothing is beneficial for someone suffering from skin irritation.)[2]

The Ruling on Property Built with Bribe Money

Someone asked: 'If a person repents but owns property—for example, a building that was previously constructed with bribe money—what is its ruling?'

The Promised Messiah ؑ replied:

The Sharī'ah commands that when a person repents, it is incumbent upon him to return the rights to their rightful owners. It is necessary to distinguish between bribery and a gift. Bribery is what is taken or given to usurp someone's right. However, if someone is given something after he has completed his work

1. A *māsha* is a traditional South Asian unit of mass. It is primarily used in India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh for measuring gold, silver, and medicines. 1 *māsha* = 0.972 grams, so three to four *māshas* would be approximately 2.92 to 3.89 grams. [Publisher]

2. *Al-Badr*, 1 May 1903, p. 116

with full effort and has not usurped anyone's right in the process, then it is the wage for his effort.[1]

Prohibition of Going to a Plague-Affected Area

Someone asked: 'My family and children are in a place where the plague is severe. I am worried and wish to travel there.'

The Promised Messiah ﷺ replied:

Do not go.

وَلَا تُلْقُوا بِأَيْدِيكُمْ إِلَى التَّهْلُكَةِ[2]

And do not throw yourselves with your own hands into destruction.

Rather, rise in the last part of the night and pray for them; this is better than going there. Traveling to such a place is a sin.[3]

The Ruling on Food and Money Distributed with the Intention of Receiving More in Return

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ﷺ narrates that Miāṅ Khair-ud-Dīn of Sikhwan ﷺ wrote to him: 'These words date back to 7 December 1899, when the Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

1. *Al-Badr*, 27 March 1903, p. 76
2. *Sūrah al-Baqarah*, 2:196
3. *Al-Ḥakam*, 24 April 1902, p. 8

> I have told my family members not to accept such food [with the intention of receiving more in return].[1]

'He continued:

> One day, a Sikh woman came to our house with some items, but my family refused to accept them, as was their custom. The woman said: "I do not desire anything; in fact, you have done me a great favour." I recognised the woman. The truth of the matter was that her son was afflicted with a disease called *Umm as-Ṣibyān* [a type of infantile epilepsy] and was on the verge of death. She brought him to me, and after I treated him, he recovered. I told my family to accept them because she brought them as a token of thanks.'[2]

Distribution of Sweets upon the Birth of Children

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ﷺ narrates that Murād Khātun Sahiba, the wife of the late Dr. Khalīfah Rashīd-ud-Dīn, informed him in writing through *Lajna Ima'illah* in Qadian: 'Doctor Sahib purchased two rams for the '*Aqīqah*[3] of [our son] Ṣalāḥ-ud-Dīn. I said: "Perhaps we can also bring some sweets because I had vowed to distribute sweets if a boy is born." Doctor Sahib said: "The '*Aqīqah* is

1. This is a reference to a common tradition in the Indian subcontinent, where people distribute food and money on various occasions, with the intention that they will receive back on another occasion more than they gave. In Urdu, this tradition is known as *bhājī*. [Publisher]
2. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 2, pp. 231–232
3. A tradition of the Holy Prophet ﷺ observed by Muslims on the birth of a baby, in which the newborn's head is shaved, charity is given to the poor, and animal sacrifice is made. The *Aqīqah* is performed on the seventh day after the child's birth. [Publisher]

Sunnah, but distributing sweets might be an innovation. Let us ask the Promised Messiah ﷺ."

'The Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

> Distributing sweets on a happy occasion is permissible.

Murād Khātun Sahiba continues: 'We had already slaughtered two rams before; then we bought a third ram. On the following day, we also purchased meat from the market to complete the distribution. At that time, the price of one kilogram of sweets was four rupees, and we bought sweets worth 18 rupees. We distributed them to all the houses, offices, the guest house, and other places.'[1]

Distribution of Sweets Upon Bai'at

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ narrates: 'Shaikh Karam Ilāhī of Patyala wrote to me in a letter, saying: "Before I performed *Bai'at*, I listened to a speech by the Promised Messiah ﷺ in Ludhiana. After the speech concluded, the *Maghrib* Prayer was offered, and His Holiness ﷺ himself led it. In the first *rak'ah*, after *Sūrah al-Fātiḥah*, he recited *Sūrah al-Ikhlāṣ* and *Sūrah al-Kāfirūn*, and in the second *rak'ah*, after *Sūrah al-Fātiḥah*, he recited *Sūrah al-Ikhlāṣ* and *Sūrah an-Nās*. After the Prayer, His Holiness ﷺ took *Bai'at* from us, and I was the second person to pledge allegiance that day.

"When the first person left the room after *Bai'at*, His Holiness ﷺ called me, and I entered the room. He closed the door and accepted my *Bai'at*. After the *Bai'at*, I said: 'When I previously performed *Bai'at* in the Naqshbandī Sufi order, I distributed sweets. If you permit me, I would like to bring sweets and distribute them.' He said:

1. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 2, p. 223

This is not necessary, but if you wish to do so, I will not stop you.

The Promised Messiah ﷺ continued:

Practices such as these, which people observe today as traditions, can, upon reflection and careful study of the Prophetic Sunnah, be traced back to their original sources. Take the case of distributing sweets for example; it is established from the Ḥadīth that the Holy Prophet ﷺ once said that if some people gather in a house and the host does not have enough to offer hospitality to all of them, he should give each of them one date. From there began the practice of *tabarruk*, that is, distributing sweets in gatherings with the intention of attaining blessings. So if someone does this with that intention, he will earn the reward of acting upon the Sunnah as well as the reward of hospitality.

But on the contrary, the condition of those who distribute such foods these days has become one of affectation, that so-and-so distributed simple items in his gathering, but we will distribute various kinds of sweets. Conversely, the attitude of those who receive these items is such that they have no intention whatsoever of benefiting from the preaching and advice for which the gatherings are held. Instead, their discussions focus on the fact that, in a particular gathering, sumptuous food or exquisite sweets will be distributed. They decide to attend that gathering but loiter outside during the proceedings. Then, when it comes time for the distribution, they try to be the first to receive the sweets. In fact, they even attempt to move to different rows so they can receive the sweets more than once.[1]

1. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 2, pp. 84–85

Distribution of Sweets in Gratitude to Allāh Upon the Birth of a Son

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ narrates: 'Nawāb Muḥammad 'Alī Khān informed me in writing, saying: "A son was born in the house of Mirzā Khudā Bakhsh, so he sent sweets to me. However, I returned them to him and said: 'I will accept the food of the '*Aqīqah* [the sacrificial feast], but I will not accept sweets in this manner.' Then, after a short while, the Promised Messiah ؑ came carrying the same plate and said:

> What you said is correct, but these sweets are not for the birth of the son; rather, they are in gratitude that the life of the mother was saved.

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ continues: 'So I accepted the plate with full respect.'[1]

Avoidance of a Musical Gathering

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ narrates that Munshī Ẓafar Aḥmad of Kapurthala ؓ informed him in writing, saying: 'This incident dates back to the period before the first *Bai'at*, when I was in Qadian. There was a celebration in the village of Faizullah Chak for a wedding or circumcision ceremony, and the Promised Messiah ؑ was invited along with some of his companions. Due to the host's insistence, His Holiness ؑ accepted the invitation. About ten or twelve of us accompanied the Promised Messiah ؑ to the village.

'As we approached the village, the sounds of music and singing from the celebration reached our ears. Upon hearing these sounds, the

1. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 2, p. 52

Promised Messiah ﷺ immediately turned back. When the villagers learned of this, they came to him and pleaded earnestly, insisting that he attend, but he did not accept and continued to return.

'On our way back, we passed through another village the name of which I do not recall now. A respected Sikh woman lived there, and she invited the Promised Messiah ﷺ with great insistence. His Holiness ﷺ said that Qadian was close by, but she remained firm in her request. Eventually, he accepted her invitation, and we all partook in a meal at her home. After a brief rest, His Holiness ﷺ returned to Qadian.'[1]

Displeasure with Shaving the Head

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ narrates that Miāṅ Imāmuddīn of Sikhwan informed me in writing, saying: 'One day, during the Promised Messiah's journey to Gurdaspur for a case filed by a man named Karam Dīn, he was resting under a tree near the court. Khwājah Kamāl-ud-Dīn, who had completely shaved his head, was walking under the tree. When the Promised Messiah ﷺ saw his shaved head, he was displeased with it. To discourage him from doing so in the future, he said that this is a sign of the hypocrites—or he said a sign of the Jews; I do not recall exactly which of the two words he used—but he certainly said either "hypocrites" or "Jews".'

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ added: 'As far as I remember, His Holiness ﷺ used to say that shaving the head is a sign of the Kharijites[2], and he disapproved of it.'[3]

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1. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 2, p. 49
2. Lit. 'The separatists.' A rebellious sect which emerged after the assassination of Ḥaḍrat 'Uthmān ؓ. They were responsible for the assassination of Ḥaḍrat 'Alī ؓ. [Publisher]
3. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 1, pp. 629–630

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ narrates: 'Dr. Mīr Muḥammad Ismā'īl told me that the Promised Messiah ؑ greatly disliked shaving the hair of the head. He used to say that it is a sign of the Kharijites. His Holiness ؑ would say:

> My head has not been shaved since the '*Aqīqah*.

'Because of this, the hair on his head was thin and extremely soft like silk, and his hair reached up to the middle of his neck. As for his beard, it was thick and dense compared to the hair on his head.'

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ further states: 'No one should misunderstand Dr. Mīr Muḥammad Ismā'īl's statement that "his hair reached up to the middle of his neck" to mean that he grew his hair as some people do nowadays as a matter of fashion. Rather, the truth is that because his hair was soft and thin [not thick], it did not appear long in the way that people usually grow it.'[1]

Ḥaḍrat Pīr Sirāj-ul-Ḥaqq Nu'mānī ؓ writes: 'The Holy Prophet ﷺ said:

سِيمَاهُمْ التَّحْلِيقُ وَالتَّسْبِيدُ

That is, one of the signs of the hypocrites is that they shave the hair of their heads and also their beards. The Promised Messiah ؑ cited this *ḥadīth* from *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī* during a discussion in Qadian about hair. He repeatedly said that shaving the hair of the head and the beard is a sign of the hypocrites. Then he added:

> I have never shaved my head; rather, the hair on my head is from after the '*Aqīqah*.

1. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 1, p. 383

'His hair was thin and very soft, reaching to his shoulders, as mentioned in the *ḥadīth* regarding the signs of the Promised Messiah علیہ السلام.'[1]

The Manner in Which the Promised Messiah علیہ السلام Shook Hands

Dr. Mīr Muḥammad Ismā'īl told me: 'I never saw the Promised Messiah علیہ السلام embrace anyone. Rather, he would generally shake hands with people in the commonly prevalent manner.[2] He did not shake hands in the way of the *Ahl-e-Ḥadīth*.'[3]

Simplicity in Dress

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad رضی اللہ عنہ relates: 'The Promised Messiah علیہ السلام usually wore a white turban made of fine cotton fabric, generally about 10 metres in length. Beneath the turban, he would wear a soft Turkish-style cap. At times, he would remove the turban while at home and keep only the cap on his head. During the summer, he typically wore a fine cotton shirt, over which he would put on a warm waistcoat or coat. His trousers were also made of warm material. He always wore socks; in winter, he would wear two pairs, one over the other. His shoes were of the traditional local style.

'My mother told me that since the Promised Messiah علیہ السلام began experiencing bouts of illness, he started wearing warm clothes both in summer and winter. Though at times he would feel hot and

1. *Tadhkiratul-Mahdī*, p. 32
2. The Promised Messiah علیہ السلام shook hands in the customary manner of his time, often with both hands, unlike the *Ahl-e-Ḥadīth* who preferred a single-handed handshake. [Publisher]
3. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 1, p. 718

uncomfortable, once he adopted this style of dress, he continued with it until the end of his life.

'After Shaikh Raḥmatullāh of Gujarat—who later joined the Lahore Aḥmadiyya Movement—entered the fold of Aḥmadiyyat, he would consistently bring clothes for His Holiness عليه السلام. The Promised Messiah عليه السلام would wear whatever garments were gifted to him, regardless of their type. On one occasion, someone gifted him a pair of shoes known as *gurgabi*, and he wore them. However, he was unable to easily distinguish between the left and right shoes, and so, he often wore them the wrong way around, which caused him some discomfort. When this happened, he would remark with some dissatisfaction: "These are no good at all."

'My mother said that she tried to mark the shoes to help differentiate them. Even so, he would at times fail to tell them apart and would wear them incorrectly. Eventually, he stopped using them altogether. My mother also told me that His Holiness عليه السلام once expressed his dislike for cuffs similar to those on English shirts.'

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad رضي الله عنه further states: 'Shaikh Raḥmatullāh would bring him warm shirts stitched in the English style, which the Promised Messiah عليه السلام did wear. However, he did not like the English-style cuffs. This was because, firstly, he felt uneasy fastening the buttons of the cuffs, and secondly, the need to open and close the buttons was difficult for him. At times, he would say: "Why do these hang down like ears?"'

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad رضي الله عنه further states: 'The Promised Messiah's practice in clothing was to wear whatever was given to him, regardless of its design. However, generally speaking, he did not like the English style of dress. Firstly, because he considered it contrary to his principle of simplicity, and secondly, because he found it uncomfortable, especially garments that restricted movement. At home, only shirts and turbans made of fine cotton cloth were prepared for him; the rest of his garments would usually arrive as gifts. In this regard, Shaikh Raḥmatullāh was especially devoted in his service.'

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ further states: 'The Promised Messiah ؑ also wore a belt around his lower back. He was particular about wearing a coat when stepping outside, and was in the habit of carrying a cane. My mother said: "Each year, I would prepare shirts for His Holiness ؑ from about half a bolt of fabric. But in the year of his passing, I made shirts from a full bolt. When I presented them, he said to me: 'What will I do with so many shirts?' But I had already had them made. Some of those shirts, which he never wore, are still with me."'[1]

Clothing and the Green Turban

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ narrates: 'Chaudhry Ghulām Muḥammad, B.A., told me: "When I visited Qadian in 1905, I observed that His Holiness ؑ was wearing a green turban. I was perplexed as to the connection between the Promised Messiah ؑ and such a coloured turban? Later, I read in the *Muqaddimah* of Ibn Khaldūn[2] that whenever the Holy Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ wore green clothing, revelation would descend upon him more frequently.'[3]

Some of the Blessed Habits of the Promised Messiah ؑ

Describing the features of the Promised Messiah ؑ, Ḥaḍrat Dr. Mīr Muḥammad Ismā'īl ؓ, states: 'His hair was fine, straight, shiny, and

1. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 1, pp. 60–61
2. In Volume 1 of Ibn Khaldūn's *Kitāb al-'Ibar*, which includes the *Muqaddimah*, it is mentioned that the Holy Prophet ﷺ preferred to wear white and green garments during revelation, since white and green are associated with angels and goodness. [Publisher]
3. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 1, p. 99

always dyed with henna. His hair was not thick, but rather thin and soft, and it was long, reaching down to his neck. He did not shave his head nor did he cut his hair very short; rather, his hair was somewhat long. He would use fragrant oil for his hair—often jasmine oil—or henna, among other things. He never left his hair dry without oil.

'His beard was thick, and its hair was strong, shiny, and soft, with a reddish tint due to being dyed with henna. He would grow his beard long, but would trim any unruly or out-of-place hairs. So his beard was always well-kept and straight. He also regularly applied oil to his beard. Once, he shaved part of his beard where a small boil had appeared, and some of the companions have preserved this hair as a blessing. His beard covered all three sides of his face and was remarkably beautiful. It was neither too thin, appearing only on the chin, nor too thick, reaching up to the eyes.'[1]

Ḥaḍrat Dr. Mīr Muḥammad Ismā'īl ؓ, describing the food, drink, clothing, and some of the blessed habits of the Promised Messiah ؑ, says: 'The Promised Messiah ؑ would eat *roti* [bread], whether it was baked on an iron plate or in a traditional *tandoor* oven. He also ate British bread, biscuits, and similar items with tea. In fact, he considered it permissible to eat British biscuits as well, saying:

> We do not know whether animal fat is used in their production. As long as the producers state that they have used butter to make them, why should we be suspicious and doubt, assuming that they contain animal fats?

'In the last seven or eight years of his life, he consistently ate bread made from corn flour, as he suffered from dysentery, which had weakened his digestive strength. Additionally, he would sometimes eat bread made from regular flour, or from flour mixed with butter, milk, and sugar. In

1. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 1, p. 413

short, he would eat all types of bread that were served to him, and he would not refuse any kind.'[1]

The Promised Messiah's Use of Indigo and Henna

Ḥaḍrat Dr. Mīr Muḥammad Ismā'īl ؓ narrates: 'In the early days, the Promised Messiah ؑ used both *wasmah* [a dark plant-based dye commonly used for the hair and beard] and henna. Later, however, due to frequent bouts of dizziness, he continued to apply only henna to his head and blessed beard until the end of his life, and discontinued the use of *wasmah*. He did, however, use English *wasmah* for a few days, but later discontinued that as well. In his final days, Mīr Ḥamīd Shāh of Sialkot prepared *wasmah* for him, which he used. This caused his blessed beard to acquire a black colour. However, for many years prior, he had only used henna, which he would usually have applied by a barber on Fridays, though at times on other days as well.'[2]

Once, during a discussion about henna and *wasmah*, the Promised Messiah ؑ said:

> Most of the eminent scholars have inclined to the view that *wasmah* should not be applied on its own. Either henna should be applied, or *wasmah* and henna should be mixed together.[3]

1. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 1, p. 423
2. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 1, p. 413
3. *Al-Badr*, 8 May 1903, p. 1

MISCELLANEOUS

The Comprehensive Nature of the Holy Qur'ān

The Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

> Everything can be found in the Holy Qur'ān. If a person is wise, it is sufficient for him. The Europeans make agreements with nations and phrase the terms in such a way that they can draw inferences and conclusions when facing new needs and events that arise later. Similarly, the Holy Qur'ān contains subjects and provisions for future needs.[1]

All Laws Are Found in the Holy Qur'ān

The Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

> Allāh did not send the Holy Prophet ﷺ as a prophet only to that land, but He also made him its ruler and completed the Holy Qur'ān as a law containing instructions on all civil, criminal, and financial matters. As a king, the Holy Prophet ﷺ was the ruler over all [religious] communities, and people of all faiths brought their cases to him for judgment. It is established from the Holy Qur'ān that once a Jew and a Muslim brought

1. From the notebook of Maulawī Sher 'Alī as quoted in *Malfūẓāt*, vol. 1, p. 533

a case before him. After investigating the matter, the Holy Prophet ﷺ ruled in favour of the Jew against the Muslim.[1]

The Holy Qur'ān and Science

The Promised Messiah عليه السلام said:

God Almighty has not left religious matters in these times merely as stories and tales; rather, He has made religion a science. Therefore, this present era is one of the unveiling of truths, where everything is revealed in a scientific manner. I have been sent to explain all the beliefs and stories of the Holy Qur'ān in a scientific way.[2]

Is Reading a Translation of the Holy Qur'ān Sufficient?

The Promised Messiah عليه السلام said:

I never issue a verdict that simply reading a translation of the Qur'ān is sufficient, as doing so negates the miraculous nature of the Qur'ān. Those who say this wish for the Qur'ān to disappear from the world. Not only that, but I also assert that the prayers taught by the Messenger of Allah ﷺ should be recited exclusively in Arabic. However, for other personal needs, one may supplicate in their own language, after reciting the prescribed prayers.

1. *Chashma-e-Ma'rifat, Rūhānī Khazā'in*, vol. 23, pp. 242–243
2. *Al-Ḥakam*, 10 April 1902, p. 6

Someone said: 'According to the Ḥanafīs, reading the translation is sufficient.'

The Promised Messiah ﷺ replied:

> If this was the view of *Imām-e-A'ẓam* [Imām Abū Ḥanīfah], then he was mistaken.[1]

The Necessity of Learning the Translation of Prayer and the Qur'ān

Maulānā Muḥammad Aḥsan stated: 'It is proven from the verse: لَا تَقْرَبُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَأَنْتُمْ سُكَارَى حَتَّى تَعْلَمُوا مَا تَقُولُونَ[2] [Approach not Prayer when you are not in full possession of your senses, until you know what you say] that a person must know what they are saying in their Prayer.'

The Promised Messiah ﷺ responded:

> What is the significance of the Prayer of those who never experience the pleasure of تَعْلَمُوْا [knowing what they say] throughout their entire life?[3]

Disapproval of Forced and Affected Recitation of the Qur'ān

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ narrates that Miāṅ Khair-ud-Dīn of Sikhwan ؓ wrote to him, saying: 'During the days of the legal cases filed by Karam Dīn, His Holiness ﷺ stayed in Gurdaspur for several days to attend the court daily. A house was rented south

1. *Al-Badr*, 1 May 1903, p. 115
2. *Sūrah an-Nisā'*, 4:44
3. *Al-Badr*, 1 May 1903, p. 114

of the pond in front of the district office building, and the Promised Messiah ﷺ resided on the upper floor of the house. There was a person on the ground floor reciting the Qur'ān in an exaggerated and affected tone. Upon hearing this, His Holiness ﷺ said:

> He is merely trying to enhance his voice artificially.

'In other words, His Holiness ﷺ did not approve of reciting the Holy Qur'ān in a forced and affected style.'[1]

Reciting Quranic Verses and Blowing on the Sick

One of the companions asked the Promised Messiah ﷺ: 'Please tell me a Quranic verse with which I can perform *ruqyah*[2] on a sick person, so they may be healed.'

The Promised Messiah ﷺ replied:

> There is no doubt that the Holy Qur'ān contains healing for both spiritual and physical ailments. However, reciting it in this manner can become a trial for people, so do not put the Holy Qur'ān to such a test. Instead, you should pray to Allāh for your sick person, and that will be sufficient for you.[3]

1. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 2, p. 251
2. *Ruqyah* refers to the recitation of Quranic verses or prophetic supplications for spiritual healing and protection. In Urdu, this practice is commonly described using terms such as دم کرنا and پھونکنا. In this translation, the Arabic term *ruqyah* has been adopted throughout, as it is widely understood across the Muslim world. [Publisher]
3. *Dhikr-e-Ḥabīb*, p. 146

Reciting the Qur'ān for the Deceased is Not Established

The Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

> One ought to pay charity on behalf of the deceased and pray for their forgiveness. However, reciting the Holy Qur'ān with the intention of conveying its reward to the deceased is not established [from Islamic teachings].[1]

Disapproval of Seeking Omens from the Holy Qur'ān

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ﷺ narrates: 'Maulawī Muḥammad Ismā'īl ﷺ told me that Maulawī Muḥammad 'Abdullāh of Sanaur ﷺ used to say that the Promised Messiah ﷺ forbade seeking omens[2] from the Qur'ān.'[3]

Muftī Muḥammad Ṣādiq also narrates: 'The Promised Messiah ﷺ generally discouraged the practice of seeking omens from the Qur'ān, and he would say:

> It is better for a person to perform *Istikhārah* [prayer for guidance] regarding any matter they face.[4]

1. *Dhikr-e-Ḥabīb*, p. 199
2. This refers to the practice of performing *Istikhārah* by randomly opening the Qur'ān to see what the verses say. This method is widely practiced among the Shī'ah Community. [Publisher]
3. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 1, p. 429
4. *Dhikr-e-Ḥabīb*, p. 199

Breaking Ablution While Reciting the Qur'ān

A person asked: 'If someone breaks their ablution while reciting the Qur'ān, is it necessary to renew it?'

The Promised Messiah ﷺ replied:

> If a person performs ablution before beginning the recitation of the Qur'ān, and then their ablution is invalidated during the recitation, performing *tayammum* is sufficient.[1]

Prohibition of Reciting the Qur'ān During Menstruation

Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ says: 'I was informed by Umm Nāṣir, the first wife of Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ II ؓ and daughter of the late Dr. Khalīfa Rashīd-ud-Dīn, through *Lajnah Imā'illāh* in Qadian, in writing: "I, along with Sarwar Sulṭān Begum Sahiba wife of Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad, and the wife of Maulawī Muḥammad 'Alī, and the wife of Pīr Manẓūr Muḥammad, were studying the translation of the Qur'ān under the First Khalīfah ؓ. At that time, he was living in the house where Umm Wasīm Aḥmad, may Allāh grant her peace, now resides. The wife of Pīr Manẓūr Muḥammad was menstruating when we passed by the Promised Messiah ﷺ and Ḥaḍrat Ammāń Jān. Both of us were holding the Qur'ān. Ḥaḍrat Ammāń Jān asked: 'Is it permissible for her to touch the Qur'ān in this condition?'

The Promised Messiah ﷺ replied:

> Since Allāh has exempted her from reading the Qur'ān during these days, how could I say otherwise? Tell her not to recite the Qur'ān during these days.[2]

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1. *Dhikr-e-Ḥabīb*, p. 199
2. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 2, p. 243

Reverence for the Pages of the Holy Qur'ān

A person once submitted the following question: 'Is it permissible to burn worn pages of the Holy Qur'ān in order to protect them from disrespect?'

The Promised Messiah ﷺ responded:

> This is permissible. Haḍrat 'Uthmān ﷺ burned certain pages [of the Holy Qur'ān]. It depends upon one's intention.[1]

Proclaiming the Blessings of God on the Occasion of the Āmīn Ceremony

The Promised Messiah ﷺ hosted a special reception for his friends on the occasion of the *Āmīn* ceremony held for his children. He also composed a poem on this occasion, and explained:

> I see that Allāh the Exalted has bestowed upon me favours and bounties beyond all count, and I am obliged to speak of them. Whenever I perform any task, my aim and intention are to manifest the grandeur of Allāh the Exalted. Such is also the case on the occasion of the *Āmīn* ceremony. Since these children are in the position of being a sign from Allāh the Exalted, and each one of them is a living example of the fulfilment of divine prophecies, I consider it my obligation to honour and appreciate them. For they serve as proof of the prophethood of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, the truth of the Holy Qur'ān, and indeed the very existence of Allāh the Exalted.
>
> Now that the children have completed their first full recitation of the Holy Qur'ān, I have been asked to compose a

1. *Badr*, 8 August 1907

few verses in gratitude for the grace and kindness of Allāh the Exalted. As I have said before, I am always thinking about reformation, and so I found this ceremony to be greatly blessed, and I resolved to convey the message in this manner.[1]

Honouring the Qiblah

A question was posed: 'Is it permissible for a person to sleep with their feet pointed towards the *Ka'bah*?'

The Promised Messiah ﷺ replied:

This is not permissible, as it goes against the honour and reverence of the *Ka'bah*.

The questioner said: 'This has not been explicitly prohibited in the Ḥadīth.'

The Promised Messiah ﷺ responded:

This is not a valid argument. If someone were to place their feet on the Holy Qur'ān, and claim that it is not explicitly forbidden in the Ḥadīth, would that make it permissible? Certainly not. Allāh says:

وَمَنْ يُعَظِّمْ شَعَآئِرَ اللّٰهِ فَإِنَّهَا مِنْ تَقْوَى الْقُلُوبِ[2]

And whoso honours the symbols of Allāh, it is indeed from the righteousness of the hearts.

1. *Al-Ḥakam*, 10 April, p. 1903, p. 2
2. *Sūrah al-Ḥajj*, 22:33

The Practice of Reciting Sūrah al-Fātiḥah for Healing

Ḥaḍrat Pīr Sirāj-ul-Ḥaqq Nuʿmānī ؓ writes: ʻOnce, I travelled on foot from Sarsawa to Qadian and presented myself before the Promised Messiah ؑ. Ḥaḍrat Maulānā Noor-ud-Deen ؓ, the *Khalīfah* of the Promised Messiah ؑ, was also present, sitting after the *Fajr* Prayer alongside the Promised Messiah ؑ. Ḥaḍrat Maulānā Noor-ud-Deen ؓ addressed me and stated: "Respected Pīr, we have seen many spiritual guides perform *ʻamaliyāt* [spiritual practices] and write *taʻwīdh* [amulets]. Do you also recall any practice that you are certain has an effect?" I replied: "Yes, I do recall one." He said: "Show it to us." I replied: "I will show it to you at the appropriate time." The Promised Messiah ؑ said: "Indeed, the respected Ṣāḥibzādah should remember some of these practices, as they have continued in his family for generations."

ʻAfter approximately two hours, a person arrived who was suffering from *dhāt al-janb* [pleurisy or pain in the ribs], so I said: "I will apply the effect of my practice on him." Ḥaḍrat Noor-ud-Deen ؓ said: "Yes, do so," and the Promised Messiah ؑ also encouraged me, saying: "Do it."

ʻI blew on him after reciting the *wird* [invocation], and God Almighty restored him to health. Once he had fully recovered, Ḥaḍrat Maulānā Noor-ud-Deen ؓ asked: "Is this mesmerism?" At that time, I had never even heard the term *mesmerism*, nor did I know what it was. The Promised Messiah ؑ then asked me: "What did you recite?"

ʻI replied: "Your Holiness, may blessings be upon you and upon Muḥammad, I recited *'al-Ḥamd Sharīf'* [*Sūrah al-Fātiḥah*]."'[1]

1. *Tadhkiratul-Mahdī*, p. 186

Ta'wīdh and Ruqyah

A person asked: 'Is it permissible to tie a *ta'wīdh* [amulet] on the upper arm or any other place and perform *ruqyah* [reciting prayers or Quranic verses for protection or healing] after recitation?' The Promised Messiah ﷺ turned to Maulānā Hakeem Noor-ud-Deen ؓ and asked: 'Can any evidence for this practice be found in the Ḥadīth or not?' He replied: 'It has been recorded that when Khālid ibn al-Walīd went out for battle, he would tie some strands of the Holy Prophet's hair to the front of his cap. On one occasion, the Holy Prophet ﷺ shaved his head in the morning and gave half of his hair to one particular person and distributed the other half among the rest of his Companions. At times, they would wash the blessed cloak of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and give the water to the sick to drink, and they would be healed. Similarly, a woman once collected his blessed sweat.'

Upon hearing this, The Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

> There is no doubt that there is definitely some benefit in such practices. From this, the reality of *ta'wīdh* and similar practices can be inferred. There is no difference whether a person ties a strand of hair or attaches a *ta'wīdh*. It has been revealed to me, 'Kings will seek blessings from your garments.' This also shows that such practices must hold some significance, which is why people will seek blessings through them. However, the basis of such matters lies in love and sincerity.[1]

Vows with the Intention of Gratitude are Permissible

Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ II ؓ states: 'It is evident from the Ḥadīth that the Holy Prophet ﷺ did not favour making vows (*nadhr*).

1. *Al-Badr*, 17 July 1903, p. 1

However, if someone makes a vow, it becomes obligatory for them to fulfil it. The Noble Prophet ﷺ discouraged vows because they are a form of bargaining, and bargaining with Allāh is not desirable. Instead, one should focus on giving charity, performing good deeds, and praying sincerely without resorting to vows.

'However, if a person gives charity, performs good deeds, and prays, and then makes a vow as an expression of gratitude to Allāh, there is no harm in doing so. I derive this understanding from the practice of the Promised Messiah عليه السلام. When people would come to him requesting prayers, he would sometimes say to them:

> I will pray for you, but you should decide in your heart an amount to be spent in the service of religion once your wish is fulfilled.

'This shows that if a person makes a vow to express gratitude to God for the fulfilment of their desire, there is no harm in it, provided they also engage in supplications, acts of charity, and good deeds alongside it.'[1]

Paying Donations with the Intention of a Vow

The Promised Messiah عليه السلام wrote in a letter to Ḥaḍrat Nawāb Muḥammad 'Alī Khān رضي الله عنه:

> I received your gracious letter and reflected on its contents. I realised that it is indeed a trial from God Almighty, an intense trial. I was contemplating devoting myself fully to prayers for you, keeping in mind the self-sufficiency of God. During this time, the story of Niẓām-ud-Dīn the carpenter came to mind, and it occurred to me that it is not beyond the grace and mercy

1. *Tafsīr-e-Kabīr*, vol. 2, p. 620

of God for you and your brothers to act in a similar way to how Niẓām-ud-Dīn acted. If you do so, God may treat you as He treated Niẓām-ud-Dīn.

The story is as follows: There is a carpenter in Sialkot named Niẓām-ud-Dīn, from whom I received a letter a few days ago, though regrettably, it was torn. In his letter, he wrote: 'I have been arrested in a criminal case, and I see no way out. In this state of anxiety, I vowed that if I were delivered from this case, I would immediately send 50 rupees to you.' Coincidentally, when his letter arrived, I was in need of funds. I prayed to God, saying: 'O my Merciful and Generous Lord! If You deliver him from this case, it will reflect Your grace in three ways: first, this distressed man will be saved from his affliction; second, my current financial need will be met to some extent; and third, a sign from You will manifest.' A few days after this prayer, I received another letter from Niẓām-ud-Dīn, informing me of his release. The following day, 50 rupees arrived.

This inspired me to think about various religious needs currently pressing upon me. The guest house remains incomplete and unfit for accommodating visitors. Mirzā Khudā Bakhsh has purchased a piece of land for 400 rupees, and if the same amount is paid, the land can be acquired to expand our facilities. Additionally, at least 2,000 rupees are needed to construct a building on that land. I am also constantly contemplating the completion of the minaret, which requires thousands of rupees. God will complete it as He wills. These expenses are indeed necessary for ensuring the complete comfort of guests, as per the divine revelation وَسِّعْ مَكَانَكَ [Enlarge your abode.]

It occurred to me that if you—along with your brothers—accept one trial as a means of relief from another trial, by vowing in your hearts to donate a certain amount promptly for these religious needs if you are delivered from this affliction through divine help, then I will pray for you just as I prayed

for Niẓām-ud-Dīn. God Almighty is Most Appreciative, and it is not unlikely that He may resolve your problem upon seeing your sincerity. I do not promise that this prayer will certainly be accepted, for God is self-sufficient. However, considering the prior favours of my Gracious Lord, I am absolutely certain that He will at least inform me of future developments. Moreover, since He has promised to show 50 or 60 additional signs, it would not be surprising if this sign also manifests during this trying time. Before your problem is resolved, I demand nothing, not even a single penny. However, if the prayer is accepted and your desire is fulfilled, then you must fulfil the vow you have made without any delay. You should also make this promise to God after performing two units of voluntary Prayer, and inform me immediately after making the promise.

I recall that when I prayed for Niẓām-ud-Dīn, I saw in a vision a bird flying into my hand and surrendering itself to me. I interpreted this as heavenly provision, just like the sustenance that descended upon the Children of Israel from the heavens. God inspired this matter in my heart, and my heart believes it to be good. وَاللّٰهُ أَعْلَمُ [And Allāh knows best.][1]

Breaking an Oath May Be Part of Good Morals

The Promised Messiah ﷺ stated:

Just as God Almighty has made it an integral part of His own noble attributes to avert prophecies of warning on the basis of repentance, seeking forgiveness, prayer, and charity, so did He teach the same morals to man as is evidenced by the Holy Qur'ān and the Ḥadīth. When—out of sheer

1. *Maktūbāt-e-Aḥmad*, vol. 2, pp. 299–300

maliciousness—the hypocrites had perpetrated a calumny against Haḍrat ʻĀ'ishah ﵂, some unwary Companions also had joined in this narrative. One of those Companions used to get his meal, twice a day, from the home of Haḍrat Abū Bakr ﵁. Due to this lapse, Haḍrat Abū Bakr ﵁ pledged that he would never again feed him as a punishment for this misdeed, whereupon the verse was revealed:

وَلْيَعْفُوا وَلْيَصْفَحُوا أَلَا تُحِبُّونَ أَنْ يَغْفِرَ اللهُ لَكُمْ وَاللهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ[1]

> [Let them forgive and forbear. Do you not desire that Allāh should forgive you? And Allāh is Most Forgiving, Merciful.]

At that Haḍrat Abū Bakr ﵁ broke his pledge and restored his meals as usual. It is for this reason that it is part of Islamic morality, that should one pledge something by way of punishment, the breaking of that pledge is a component of good morals. For instance, if someone swears that, with regard to his servant, he shall strike him 50 times with a shoe, to forgive him on account of his repentance and earnest supplication is the Islamic custom, so that **تخلق بأخلاق الله** [morality mirrors the attributes of Allāh]. Nevertheless, it is not permissible to break a promise; one will be held accountable for the breach of promise, but not for breaking a pledge of chastisement.[2]

1. *Sūrat an-Nūr*, 24:23

2. *Barāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya* Part 5, *Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 1, p. 181; Eng. Trans.: pp. 256–257

Reciting an Invocation on the Basis of a Dream

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ narrates: 'Pīr Sirāj-ul-Ḥaqq Nu'mānī ؓ once told me that when the time for the prophecy concerning Ātham was nearing its conclusion, the wife of Maulawī Noor-ud-Deen ؓ had a dream. In it, someone said to her: "One thousand grains of *māsh* [a type of lentil] should be collected, *Sūrah al-Fīl* should be recited over them one thousand times, and the grains should then be cast into a well. The person should then return without looking back."

'The First Khalīfah ؓ narrated this dream to the Promised Messiah ؑ in the presence of Maulawī 'Abdul-Karīm ؓ, during the late afternoon. The Promised Messiah ؑ said that the dream should be fulfilled outwardly. It was his consistent practice that if he or one of his companions experienced a dream, he would make an effort to enact it outwardly, provided it did not contradict the teachings of the Sharī'ah. This case was no exception.

'Maulawī 'Abdul-Karīm ؓ suggested to the Promised Messiah ؑ that Miāṅ 'Abdullāh of Sanaur ؓ and I undertake this task. The Promised Messiah ؑ approved the suggestion and instructed the two of us to recite *Sūrah al-Fīl* one thousand times over the grains of *māsh*. We began this recitation after the *'Ishā'* Prayer and completed it by 2:00 a.m.'

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ further states: 'This humble one affirms that this incident was also narrated by Miāṅ 'Abdullāh of Sanaur ؓ in the first volume of *Sīratul-Mahdī*. Upon hearing his account, I initially wondered why the Promised Messiah ؑ undertook such an action, as it was not his general habit to perform such practices. However, after hearing Pīr Sahib's narration, the matter became clear to me. The Promised Messiah ؑ carried out this act as an outward enactment of the dream. It was his practice to strive to outwardly fulfil dreams, provided that doing so did not contravene any injunctions of the Islamic Sharī'ah.

'The interpretation of this dream is that, just as God Almighty protected the *Ka'bah* from the attack of the People of the Elephant (who were Christians) and destroyed them through means of His own making, He would similarly thwart the Christians' attack on Islām related to the prophecy concerning Ātham. While the Christians might temporarily gain the opportunity to create an uproar against Islām, God would ultimately prepare the means for their defeat. The believers were thus reminded to place their trust solely in God and seek His assistance, recalling how the people of Makkah, despite their weakness, were protected by God when Abraha attacked with his army.

'It should also be noted that there are minor discrepancies between the accounts of Pīr Sahib and Miāṅ 'Abdullāh. For example, Miāṅ 'Abdullāh mentioned that the grains were chickpeas rather than *māsh*. Regardless of the type of grain, the interpretation in the science of dream interpretation associates lentils or chickpeas with worry and distress. This hinted at the temporary sorrow and grief related to the prophecy concerning Ātham, but ultimately, through the blessings of *Sūrah al-Fīl*, this grief would be cast into a dark well and come to an end. And Allāh knows best.[1]

Five Endeavours of Islām

The Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

> God Almighty has established five endeavours in the religion of Islām: (1) Prayer, (2) Fasting, (3) *Zakāt* and alms, (4) *Ḥajj*, and (5) restraining and repelling the enemies of Islām through the sword or the pen. These five endeavours are proven from the Holy Qur'ān. Muslims should strive in them and abide by them. These [obligatory] fasts are only for a month in a year.

1. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 1, pp. 289–290

> Some people of Allāh often fast as a supererogatory act and strive in them. However, keeping fasts forever is forbidden, that is, it should not be so that a person is continuously fasting. Rather one should keep supererogatory fasts sometimes and not at others.[1]

Denouncement of Extreme Ascetic Practices

Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ narrates: 'A person once asked for some invocations and supplications to recite. In response, the Promised Messiah ؑ said:

> You should adhere to the Sunnah. Performing Prayers with all their prerequisites is the best invocation. Moreover, sending blessings upon the Holy Prophet ﷺ and *istighfār* [seeking forgiveness] wherever you may be is sufficient. Similarly, reciting the Holy Qur'ān with an understanding of its translation, as much as your free time allows, is also recommended. We do not follow the path of extreme ascetic practices, such as hanging oneself upside down or standing in water during cold weather, contrary to the Sunnah.

'The questioner, however, insisted: "I have been accustomed to such ascetic practices since I reached adulthood. Therefore, if you command me to undertake any such endeavour, I will act accordingly."

'Hearing this, the Promised Messiah ؑ stood up, entered his house, and returned with a bundle of manuscripts of *Barāhīn-e-Aḥmadīyya*, which had been published up to that time. He handed it to the questioner and said:

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1. *Badr* 24 October 1907, p. 3; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt*, vol. 9, p. 463

Take this, read it yourself, and convey it to others. God Almighty has made this the form of *mujāhadah* [striving] in this era.'[1]

Is It Permissible to Pray for Transferring One's Lifespan to Another

Miāń Muḥammad Dīn, the Kebab Seller, Lahore (residing in Dheri Battan Village, Jammu State) sent a letter to the Promised Messiah ﷺ in which the following was written: 'Your Holiness! Over the last few days I have begun to pray in the court of the Exalted Maker, merely for Divine pleasure, that ten years of my life be given to His Holiness the Promised Messiah ﷺ as my life is not as important for the propagation of Islām. Is it permissible to offer such a prayer?'

The Promised Messiah ﷺ wrote in response:

There is no harm in such a prayer, rather it is a source of reward.[2]

1. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 2, p. 279
2. *Badr,* 6 June 1907, p. 8; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt*, vol. 9, pp. 287–288

The Effect of Mesmerism or ʻAmal-uṭ-Ṭirb

Ḥaḍrat Pīr Sirāj-ul-Ḥaqq Nuʻmānī ﷺ narrates: ʻA cleric (from the town of Patna, Azimabad) once asked the Promised Messiah ﷺ in Masjid Mubārak: "What is the mesmerism that has become widely known these days? Does it truly have any effect, or is it merely a child's plaything and an illusion with no real outcomes?"

The Promised Messiah ﷺ responded:

> Maulawī Sahib, mesmerism is something very beneficial and produces effective results. It is well-known that Allāh has not created anything in vain or without purpose:
>
> رَبَّنَا مَا خَلَقْتَ هَذَا بَاطِلًا[1]
>
> Our Lord, You have not created this in vain.
>
> Mesmerism is indeed very useful and possesses a unique effect. Islām has adopted it, utilised it, and benefited from it in ways no other religion or sect has. While Islām acquired the essence and purpose of this knowledge, others were left with its superficial shell. It is said that the term 'mesmerism' originates from the name of an individual, Mesmer, a European who popularised and made it widely known. Thus, the term 'mesmerism' came to be associated with his name. However, its actual name

1. *Sūrah Āl ʻImrān*, 3:192

is '*Ilm-uṭ-Ṭirb* [the science of soil], as the word *ṭirb*[1] relates to the soil from which humans were created:

خَلَقَهُ مِنْ تُرَابٍ ثُمَّ قَالَ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ[2]

He created him from dust, then said to him, 'Be,' and he was.

My son, Sulṭān Aḥmad, once brought a table from somewhere, and upon placing one's hand on it, it would begin to shake. Allāh revealed to me, by way of inspiration, that this is '*Amaluṭ-Ṭirb*.'

In Jesus, there was a considerable amount of this power of *ṭirb*. I have received a revelation stating:

هَذَا هُوَ التُّرَابُ الَّذِي لَا يَعْلَمُهَا الْخَلْقُ[1]

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1. Note by Ḥaḍrat Maulānā Jalāl-ud-Dīn Shams ﷺ in *Tadhkirah*: 'According to lexicons *tirb* means: of the same age or similar, but the word may also be related to *turāb*, meaning 'clay'. The Promised Messiah ؑ says: "The word '*turāb*' is derived from *tirb* and *tarbush-shai* according to Arabs means 'that thing which is created with it'. Tha'lab has said: *tirb* to something is that which resembles it. Therefore, the clay has been called '*turāb*' because it shares certain qualities of time or characteristics with heavens. In the beginning, the earth was created together with the heavens and both resemble each other as forms of the creation of God." (*Anjām-e-Ātham*, pp. 262–263, *Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 11, pp. 262–263) According to this, the revelation indicates that this knowledge is earthly and not heavenly. Only those who have a small share of spirituality employ it. The Promised Messiah ؑ also says: "The history of the saints and the seekers after truth and their biographies show that those of high degree among them avoided having any recourse to such practices, but some people were led into them out of a desire to impress others with their saintliness or with another motive."' (*Izāla-e-Auhām*, p. 308(c) footnote, *Rūḥāni Khazā'in*, vol. 3, p. 287 footnote). *Tadhkirah* (Eng. Trans.), pp. 236–237. [Publisher]

2. *Sūrah Āl 'Imrān*, 3:60

1. *Izāla-e-Auhām*, p. 312 footnote, *Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 3, p. 259

> This is the *'turāb'* of which people of the present time have no knowledge.

This knowledge existed among ascetics in ancient times, but they considered it a hidden secret, sharing it only with a select few. They possessed the ability to cause people to faint, and this phenomenon was regarded as a miraculous feat. However, today people flee from the term mesmerism. Among ascetics and Sufis, this is referred to as *tawajjuh* [concentration] and *taṣawwur* [visualisation]. If someone dislikes the term 'mesmerism,' they may refer to it instead as *tawajjuh* and *taṣawwur*. Islām adopted this practice in the form of handshaking and embracing. While such customs exist among other communities as well, they often serve no purpose and are practiced merely as a form of entertainment. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ emphasised proper alignment in congregational Prayer, instructing worshippers to stand shoulder to shoulder and foot to foot, leaving no gaps between them. He explained that Satan enters through these gaps. This demonstrates that the physical and spiritual focus of one person can flow into another. Just as there are physical differences in strength among individuals in a congregation, there are also differences in spiritual and inner qualities. When people stand closely together like a wall, their collective physical proximity enables the spiritual influences and blessings of one to flow into another.

When the first row becomes filled with its spiritual power and attraction, its effect reaches the second row, and then both rows' influence extends to the third row, and so on. To understand this, consider the example of machines that produce electricity which have been invented in this age. If someone holds such a machine or device in their hand, their hand will become numb, and they will not be able to release it. Similarly, if another person holds the first person's hand, the electric

> current will pass to them as well. This can continue to the extent that if 10, 20, 50, or even 100 people hold hands, the electric current will flow through all of them equally. However, if there is a break in this chain, the electrical effect will cease, and the magnetic power will no longer function. This separation will prevent the current from moving forward, disrupting its continuity. Likewise, if there is any discontinuity in the alignment and straightness of the rows during Prayer, the spiritual power or inner effect that flows among the worshippers will be disrupted. In the terminology of the Sharī'ah, this disruption is referred to as *Satan*.[1]

It is Necessary to Prevent Contagious Diseases

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ states: 'Lady Barakāt Bībī, the wife of Allāh Yār, the contractor, informed me in writing through *Lajna Ima'illāh* in Qadian, saying: "I would often take my nephew, who was around six or eight years old, to the house of the Promised Messiah ؑ. One day, while I was offering Prayer, the child began coughing.

The Promised Messiah ؑ said:

> He has whooping cough; do not bring him here until he recovers.

"I submitted: 'Your Holiness, kindly pray that he may recover.' Subsequently, the child recovered very quickly."'[2]

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1. *Tadhkirat-ul-Mahdī*, pp. 276–278
2. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 2, p. 267

Means of Preventing Contagious Diseases

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ states: 'Lady Barakāt Bībī, the wife of contractor Allāh Yār, informed me in writing through *Lajna Imā'illāh* in Qadian, saying: "My sister and I once came from the village of Mukerian during a time when the plague was spreading. There was a guard stationed at the house of the Promised Messiah ؑ. His Holiness ؑ asked: 'Did no one stop you?'

"I replied: 'No.' He then asked: 'Is the plague not spreading in the area you came from?'

"I replied, 'No.' He said: 'No place will remain free from the plague; it will spread everywhere.'"[1]

Leave Areas Struck by the Plague

On 1 March 1907, a friend mentioned that the plague had spread in his village.

The Promised Messiah ؑ responded:

> Leave the village immediately and pitch your camp in open air. Do not take it to be the idea of the British to abandon plague inflicted areas and thus absolve oneself of the duty of observing this practise. This is not the case. To leave plague-stricken places is the verdict of the Sharī'ah. Save yourselves from the polluted air. Do not put yourself in peril knowingly. Wake up in the nights and pray fervently, and have your sins forgiven by God Almighty for He is the Omnipotent God and everything is under His control. If the decree of God arrives despite these precautions, then exercise patience.[2]

1. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, p. 264
2. *Badr*, 16 May 1907, p. 6; Eng. Trans.: *Malfūẓāt*, vol. 9, p. 162

Prostration During an Earthquake

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ﵁ writes: 'Lady Umm Nāṣir, the first wife of Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ II ﵁ and daughter of the late Dr. Khalīfa Rashīd-ud-Dīn, informed me in writing, through *Lajna Ima'illah*, Qadian:

"When a severe earthquake struck one morning, a loud noise suddenly erupted, followed by tremors. At the time, we were in the house, in a room above the well, which has since collapsed. The maids knocked on the door from outside, urging those within to come out. Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ II ﵁ tried to open the door, but due to the tremors, he could not manage it immediately. He kept trying until he succeeded with great difficulty. It was also cold, and I attempted to pick up a shawl to observe *purdah*, but my husband took my hand and pulled me outside at once. The courtyard door was shut and required effort to open. We found that the Promised Messiah ﵇ and all others had fallen into prostration. As I was unable to pray at the time, I remained standing, until my husband took my hand and made me prostrate as well."'[1]

Birth Control

The Promised Messiah ﵇ states:

The Holy Qur'ān contains the verse:

نِسَآؤُكُمْ حَرْثٌ لَّكُمْ فَأْتُوا حَرْثَكُمْ أَنَّىٰ شِئْتُمْ[2]

1. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 2, p. 255
2. *Sūrat al-Baqarah*, 2:224

> Your women are your tilth for yielding your offspring. Thus, approach your tilth in whatever manner you please.

Bear this similitude of a tilth in mind; in other words, do not copulate with them in a manner that prevents the conception of a child. In early Islām, some men would restrain themselves from ejaculating and would ejaculate after withdrawing themselves. This verse has forbidden them from doing so and has thus regarded women as a tilth—land which yields every type of produce. Thus, in this verse God has unequivocally stated that because a woman is likened to a tilth that yields offspring as its produce, it is impermissible to prevent this tilth from bearing children. Indeed, if the woman is ill and it is certain that pregnancy will risk her death and if there are any other preventative factors, then these would be considered as exemptions. Otherwise, according to Islamic law, it is unlawful to practice birth control.[1]

The Matter of Bondwomen

In response to an objection by the Hindus that the Muslims would take female prisoners in battles and cohabit with them, the Promised Messiah ﷺ wrote:

> As to the matter of disbelievers' women and girls becoming bondwomen through warfare, and thus cohabiting with them, anyone aware of the actual reality will not find this objectionable in the least.

1. *Chashma-e-Ma'rifat*, *Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 23, p. 292

The fact is that, in that early era, many vile and evil-natured individuals became enemies of Islām without just cause and inflicted various forms of suffering on the Muslims. If they murdered a Muslim, they would often mutilate the corpse by severing the hands, feet, and nose, and they would even mercilessly kill children. If the wife of a poor, oppressed person fell into their hands, they would make her a bondwoman and include her among their women [as a bondwoman]. There was no form of injustice that they refrained from committing. For a long time, the Muslims were commanded by God Almighty to endure these atrocities with patience, but eventually, when the tyranny exceeded all limits, God granted them permission to fight these wicked people, though not to exceed the level of their atrocities.

(Footnote: It should be known that the essence of marriage lies in securing the consent of the woman, her guardian, and the man as well. However, when a woman loses her rights to freedom and is no longer free—having been part of the oppressive combatants who unjustly wronged Muslim men and women—if such a woman is captured and made a bondwoman as a consequence of her relatives' crimes, all her rights to freedom are forfeited. She then becomes the bondwoman of a victorious ruler, and her consent is no longer required for inclusion in the household. The act of capturing her after the defeat of her combative relatives is considered her implicit consent. This ruling is also found in the Torah. However, the Qur'ān states: فَكُّ رَقَبَةٍ "The freeing of a slave", emphasising that the emancipation of a bondwoman or slave is a highly virtuous act. Muslims are encouraged to free such individuals, promising them immense rewards from Allāh for doing so. While it is within the rights of a Muslim ruler to make such oppressors slaves and bondwomen following victory, God Almighty still prefers kindness in return for wrongdoing. It is a matter of great happiness that

those labelled as disbelievers in contrast to Muslims in the present era have abandoned such unjust and oppressive practices. Therefore, Muslims, too, are prohibited from making their captives slaves or bondwomen, as God commands in the Qur'ān to retaliate against the warring party only to the extent of their transgression. Now, as such practices no longer exist, and disbelievers no longer enslave Muslim men or women during wars, instead treating captives as prisoners of the state, it is likewise impermissible—and indeed prohibited—for Muslims to make captives into slaves or bondwomen.)[1]

Testimony in Cases of Adultery

Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ﵁ states: 'Dr. Mīr Muḥammad Ismā'īl ﵁ narrated to me that the Promised Messiah ﵇ used to say:

> The testimony of a witness regarding adultery is not accepted according to the Sharī'ah unless the witness testifies that they observed the act explicitly, as clear as a stick being inserted into a *kohl* container."

Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ﵁ further states 'This humble one affirms that these words of His Holiness ﵇ are a translation of a Ḥadīth, the wording of which is:

كَالْمِيْلِ فِي الْمِكْحَلَةِ[2]

1. *Chashma-e-Ma'rifat*, *Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 23, pp. 252–255
2. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 1, p. 804

The Use of Henna is Sunnah

Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ narrates: 'I was informed of an incident by Sayyidah Murād Khātūn, the wife of the late Dr. Khalīfa Rashīd-ud-Dīn, through a written account submitted through *Lajna Ima'illāh* in Qadian. She stated: "Once, we travelled from the city of Agra on a three-day leave and were accommodated by the Promised Messiah ؑ on the upper floor of his residence. It was my habit to visit and greet him every day after the *'Aṣr* Prayer. On one such occasion, I found him seated with Ummul-Mu'minīn (Mother of the Believers) on a bed in the courtyard of the house of Umm Nāṣir. After offering my greetings, I sat on a small bed placed in front of them.

"At the time, most of my attire was white. Seeing this, the Promised Messiah ؑ asked Ummul-Mu'minīn: 'Does she always wear white clothing.' Ummul-Mu'minīn then asked me: 'Do you not like colourful attire?' I replied: 'Yes, I do like it, but dyeing fabrics stains the hands.' Hearing this, the Promised Messiah ؑ looked at my hands and asked: 'Do you not use henna?' I replied: 'No.' He inquired further: 'Why not?' I repeated: 'Your Holiness, it stains the hands.' At this, he said: 'The use of henna is a Sunnah. Women should not leave their hands plain and white.' In the meantime, Mīr Nāṣir Nawāb, who had travelled to Lahore to purchase some household items, returned with some fabric and a significant amount of henna, among other things. The Promised Messiah ؑ asked Ummul-Mu'minīn: 'Is there any henna in the house?' She responded: 'Yes.' He then said: 'Give Murād Khātūn some henna and this piece of fabric, and tell her to get used to applying henna.' The fabric was made of silk and had a greenish hue. From that day onwards, I began to use henna and wear colourful clothing."'[1]

1. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 2, pp. 235–236

The Limits of Obedience to Parents in Matters Contrary to the Sharīʿah

Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ﷺ states: ʻShaikh Karam Ilāhī of Patiala informed me in writing, narrating: "After the Promised Messiah ﷺ held debates with Maulawī Nadhīr Ḥusain and Maulawī Muḥammad Bashīr of Bhopal in Delhi, he stayed for a day or two in Patiala on his way back at the request of the local members of the Jamāʿat. Maulawī Noor-ud-Deen and Maulawī ʻAbdul-Karīm ﷺ were also in his company. During that time, the matter of my marriage was under discussion. My late father, who was concerned about preserving his social standing and reputation, was being influenced by his friends and advisors to arrange a wedding that adhered to traditions contrary to the Sharīʿah, even taking on debt despite his strained financial condition. I had expressed my disapproval of these customs and declared my dissociation from them, but this had no effect on him. From my workplace in Rajpura, I wrote an article of three or four pages, outlining how these customs contradicted the Sharīʿah, ethics, and civility. I sent this article to a weekly publication in Delhi, where it was published. I requested several copies, which I sent to my father and other relatives. Later, I travelled to Patiala and met my father there.

"My father praised the article and, while agreeing with its contents, said: 'You may act upon the article's guidance when the matter is in your hands. However, this is the only marriage I am going to arrange, so I will conduct it in this manner regardless. I will do as I please, whether you like it or not.' I had no response to this, except to remain silent. I then presented my predicament to a *maulawī* from the Ahl-e-Ḥadīth, who had a good relationship with my family and was always kind to me. However, knowing my father's temperament, he avoided advising my father and instead strongly advised me, saying: 'If your father insists on adhering to traditions against the Sharīʿah, you should refuse the marriage.' I knew my father's disposition, and that I was his only son. I feared that such a step would greatly distress him and permanently

sever our familial ties. Consequently, I became very worried and deeply conflicted during this time.

"While the Promised Messiah ﷺ was in Patiala, Maulawī Noor-ud-Deen and Maulawī 'Abdul-Karīm ﷺ would visit our home after the '*Ishā*' Prayer and stay overnight, returning to the Promised Messiah ﷺ after *Fajr*. One day, I seized the opportunity to share my problem with Maulawī Noor-ud-Deen ﷺ. He listened attentively and said: 'Since the Promised Messiah ﷺ is here, you should present this matter to him.' I replied: 'I may not get the opportunity due to the number of people and his many responsibilities.' He said: 'I will try to create the opportunity for you.'"

Shaikh Karam Ilāhī continues: 'Due to the end of my leave, I returned to my post the following day. A day or two later, the Promised Messiah ﷺ arrived in Rajpura by train in the morning, en route back to Qadian. After the meal and other engagements, when he was about to board the train, Maulawī Noor-ud-Deen ﷺ called me over and narrated my situation to the Promised Messiah ﷺ. After listening to the entire account, he asked me: "Does your father know that you deeply abhor traditions contrary to the Sharī'ah?" I replied: "In addition to verbally expressing this to him, I published a detailed article against these traditions and customs under my name, and I ensured he received a copy. However, despite agreeing with the article, he insists on acting contrary to it and following his own opinion." The Promised Messiah ﷺ then said: "If you refuse the marriage, as advised by the *maulawī* from Ahl-e-Ḥadīth, what would be the outcome?' I replied: 'It would permanently sever our familial ties."

He then asked: "Will the *Nikāḥ* announcement be conducted according to Islamic Sharī'ah?" I responded affirmatively.

The Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

> Consider the customs and traditions that accord with Islamic Sharī'ah as your contribution, and leave those that conflict with it to your father. Do not confront him about them, even if you

> deeply dislike them. This way, this matter will pass without discord or dispute.

The Promised Messiah ﷺ then turned to Maulawī Noor-ud-Deen ؓ and said:

> I believe that a son does not have the right to prevent his father from an action contrary to the Sharī'ah beyond expressing that it is against the Sharī'ah and showing his disapproval. He does not have the right to stop him with force or coercion because God Almighty has commanded us to lower our wings of humility for our parents and not to even say *'uff'* to them.

Shaikh Karam Ilāhī continues: 'In the meantime, the train arrived. I shook hands with the Promised Messiah ﷺ and, afterward, with Maulawī Noor-ud-Deen ؓ. He said: "The verdict of the Promised Messiah ﷺ has resolved your issue. That is why I advised you to present this matter to him. The truth is, we *maulawīs* cannot perceive the depth of matters as he does." Thus, this phase passed without conflict.'[1]

Being Inquisitive About Others Is Not the Trait of a Believer

A person's letter was presented to the Promised Messiah ﷺ. In the letter, the writer mentioned someone who does not observe Prayer or keep the fast, and asked whether such an individual should be considered a disbeliever. The writer also inquired whether such a person could still be regarded as an Aḥmadī.

The Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

1. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 2, pp. 88–90

> This individual should be advised to focus on improving themselves and mending their own ways. Everyone has their own personal relationship with God Almighty. Who has appointed you as a supervisor to evaluate the deeds of others and pass judgements about their faith or disbelief? It does not behove a believer to be unnecessarily inquisitive about the actions of others.[1]

Circumcision at an Advanced Age is Not Necessary

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ narrates that Ḥaḍrat Dr. Mīr Muḥammad Ismā'īl ؓ told him: 'A man named Bhajhatar Singh from the state of Jammu came to Qadian and accepted Islām. He was given the name Shaikh 'Abdul 'Azīz. People insisted that he undergo circumcision, but since he was advanced in age, he hesitated and feared the associated pain. This matter was brought to the attention of the Promised Messiah ؑ, who said:

> Covering one's private parts is obligatory for those advanced in age, but circumcision is merely a Sunnah. Therefore, it is not necessary for him to undergo circumcision.'[2]

Some Attributes of the Promised Messiah ؑ

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ narrates that Ḥaḍrat Dr. Mīr Muḥammad Ismā'īl ؓ told him: 'The Promised Messiah ؑ did not perform *Ḥajj*, observe *I'tikāf* [spiritual retreat], or pay *Zakāt* [alms]. He did not keep prayer beads with him, and in my presence,

1. *Al-Badr*, 23 April 1908, p. 6
2. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 1, p. 756

he disapproved of eating *ḍabb*.[1] He never consumed wealth given as *Ṣadaqah* [voluntary charity] or *Zakāt*, but he did accept gifts and vows. Unlike contemporary spiritual guides, he did not keep a prayer mat or ceremonial robe, nor did he recite commonly practiced litanies like *Panj Sūrah, Du'ā'-e-Ganj-ul-'Arsh, Durūd-e-Tāj, Ḥizbul-Baḥr, or Du'ā-e-Suryānī*,[2] among others.'

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ further states: 'This humble one affirms that there were specific reasons why he did not perform *Ḥajj*. One reason was that he did not have sufficient funds for this purpose, as the management of properties and similar assets in the early days was under the control of our grandfather, and later, our father's elder brother took over their administration. Furthermore, certain conditions arose that compelled him to engage in [spiritual and literary] *Jihād*, and secondly, the journey to *Ḥajj* was not safe for him. Despite this, he always yearned to perform *Ḥajj*, and after his demise, our respected mother sent someone to perform *Ḥajj* on his behalf.

'As for *I'tikāf*, it is possible that he observed it before being divinely appointed, but after his commission as the Promised Messiah ؑ, his time was occupied with his *Jihād* of the pen and other responsibilities, which took precedence over *I'tikāf*. Regarding *Zakāt*, he did not pay it because he did not possess wealth reaching the *Niṣāb* [minimum taxable amount]. However, our mother paid *Zakāt* on her jewellery. The Promised Messiah ؑ did not favour keeping prayer beads and did not believe in traditional litanies.'[3]

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1. Commonly referred to as the spiny-tailed lizard or Uromastyx in English. It is a type of desert-dwelling lizard found in arid regions, particularly in the Middle East, North Africa, and parts of Asia. There are differing opinions regarding its permissibility for consumption. [Publisher]

2. These are titles of well-known devotional recitations and supplications found in later Muslim practice, including selected Quranic chapters recited together, formulae of blessings upon the Holy Prophet ﷺ, and other litanies and prayers transmitted in devotional literature. [Publisher]

3. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 1, pp. 623–624

The Promised Messiah ﷺ Did Not Permit the Use of Ṣadaqah for His Children

Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ narrates that Ḥaḍrat Dr. Mīr Muḥammad Ismā'īl ؓ told him: 'The Promised Messiah ﷺ deemed it impermissible to use *Ṣadaqah* for himself, his household, and his children.'[1]

Supplicating for the Holy Prophet ﷺ

Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ narrates: 'Khwājah 'Abd-ur-Raḥmān, a resident of Kashmir wrote to me, saying: "Once, my father told me that in the early days of his acceptance of Aḥmadiyyat, some people from the town of Shopian in the Kashmir region asked him to inquire from the Promised Messiah ﷺ about the permissibility of reciting the supplication:

صَلَّى اللّٰهُ عَلَيكَ يَا رَسُولَ اللّٰهِ وَسَلَّمَكَ اللّٰهُ يَا رَسُولَ اللّٰهِ

> May Allāh send blessings upon you, O Messenger of Allāh, and grant you peace, O Messenger of Allāh.

"My father sent a letter to the Promised Messiah ﷺ regarding this matter, and he replied that it is permissible to recite it."'

Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ further states: 'The apparent purpose behind this enquiry seems to have been the following: since the Holy Prophet ﷺ has passed away, is it permissible, even in such a state, to address him in the manner of one who is living, and to invoke blessings upon him directly? If this narration is authentic, then the ruling of the Promised Messiah ﷺ is that it is indeed permissible to do so. The

1. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 1, p. 619

reason appears to be that his spirituality is living, and he is also alive through his Ummah. Therefore, it is permissible to supplicate for him in the form of direct address. Indeed, the Promised Messiah ﷺ himself, in one of his poetic verses, directly addressed the Holy Prophet ﷺ, seeking his assistance and support. He stated:

اے سیّد الوریٰ! مدد دے وقتِ نصرت است

That is to say: O Messenger of Allah ﷺ, your Ummah is facing a moment of hardship; come to its aid, for the circumstances demand it.'[1]

Changing the Name of a New Convert is Not Necessary

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ writes that Mīr Shāfī Aḥmad of Delhi informed him in writing: 'One of the prominent Aḥmadīs recently met Sir Bertol Chandra Chatterjee, a Bengali. He conveyed to him the message of Aḥmadīyyat, which had such a profound effect on him that he accompanied the Aḥmadī to Qadian and accepted Islām. When someone suggested to the Promised Messiah ﷺ that his name should be changed, the Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

> His original name is good as it is. Add "Aḥmad" to it; there is no need for any further change.

'Later, people took him to a barber and had his hair cut in accordance with local styles rather than Bengali custom. Upon seeing him, the Promised Messiah ﷺ inquired:

1. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 1, pp. 553–554

> Why did you cut your hair? Your hair was good before; in fact, it has now been ruined.

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ further states: 'This humble one affirms that it seems that someone requested for his hair to be cut, leaving it close to being shaved, which was disliked by the Promised Messiah ؑ. He would remark that shaving one's head entirely was a practice associated with the Kharijites. I would like to add that changing the name of someone who embraces Islām is not necessary unless the name indicates *shirk* [associating partners with Allāh], in which case it must be changed.'[1]

The Promised Messiah's Giving of Items as a Blessing

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ writes that Ḥaḍrat Dr. Mīr Muḥammad Ismā'īl ؓ narrated to him: 'During the final days of the Promised Messiah ؑ life, many brethren would sew a new shirt and present it to him as a gift, requesting that he give them his used shirt as a source of blessing. On one such occasion, someone sent a new shirt through me with a request for the Promised Messiah's used one. Upon searching the house, it became clear that there was no unwashed shirt available that the Promised Messiah ؑ had worn. The Promised Messiah ؑ instructed that the person be given a shirt that had already been washed by the laundry man. I said: "This is a washed shirt, while the person has specifically requested an unwashed one." The Promised Messiah ؑ smiled and said:

> Which blessing gets washed away by the laundry man? Give him this washed shirt.

1. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 1, pp. 435–436

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ further states: 'Perhaps the person already knew that washing does not remove blessings, but, owing to the natural affection that a lover holds, he desired an unwashed garment of his beloved. Therefore, out of regard for this natural sentiment, the Promised Messiah ؑ first ensured that a search was conducted for an unwashed shirt. When none was found, the washed shirt was offered as a substitute.'[1]

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ further narrates that Qādhī 'Amīr Husain said to him: 'I was reading about the Companions of the Holy Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ and how they preserved strands of his hair as blessings. This inspired me to request some hair of the Promised Messiah ؑ, so I asked him. Thus, after having his hair trimmed, he sent me some strands of his hair as a gift.'

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ further states: 'I too am blessed to have in my possession some strands of his hair.'[2]

Seeking Blessings from Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah 'Abdul-Laṭīf

Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ writes that Ḥaḍrat Dr. Mīr Muḥammad Ismā'īl ؓ narrated to him: 'After the martyrdom of Maulawī 'Abdul-Laṭīf, one of his disciples came to Qadian to meet the Promised Messiah ؑ. He brought with him some strands of the martyr's hair. The Promised Messiah ؑ placed these strands in a small bottle, added some musk to it, sealed it tightly, tied it with a string, and hung it in his *Bait-ud-Du'ā'*. He did this in such a manner as if he considered these strands to be blessed. Perhaps he hung them in the Prayer room as a reminder to pray for him.'

1. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 1, pp. 343–344
2. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 1, p. 21

Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ affirmed: 'This bottle remained hanging in the Prayer room for many years; however, it has not been seen there for some time now.'[1]

Keeping a Beard is a Tradition of the Prophets

Once, a guest Muḥammad Sa'īd, the Arab, inquired about the beard.

The Promised Messiah ؑ responded:

> This matter relates to one's outlook. Some Englishmen, who shave both their beards and moustaches, consider it a mark of beauty. However, I find such a practice so unpleasant that if someone with this appearance were before me, I would even lose my appetite for eating. The tradition of growing the beard, as adopted by the Prophets and the righteous, is highly commendable. However, if it grows excessively long, it may be trimmed to the length of a fist. God has made it a distinguishing feature between men and women.[2]

Permissibility of Trimming the Beard

Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ writes: 'Dr. Mīr Muḥammad Ismā'īl ؓ narrated to me that the Promised Messiah ؑ would trim the excess length of his beard with scissors. This humble one affirms that the Holy Prophet ﷺ instructed that Muslims should grow their beards and trim their moustaches. The reason for this is that the beard is a source of masculine adornment and dignity, whereas growing the moustache produces vanity and arrogance. However, this does

1. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 1, p. 339
2. *Al-Badr*, 6 February 1903, p. 21

not mean that the Sharī'ah has prescribed any specific length for the beard. The Sharī'ah does not interfere in such minor matters; rather, it leaves them to personal discretion and preference. The intention is merely that the beard should not be shaved off, but rather should be kept. However, keeping the beard excessively long has also not been favoured. Thus, the Promised Messiah ﷺ would say that it is appropriate to trim the beard that has grown beyond the measure of one fist and two fingers.

'The reason for this is most likely that an excessively long beard is also contrary to adornment, and keeping it clean also requires some time. Conversely, trimming the beard so short that it appears shaved undermines the respect owed to the instruction of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and is unbecoming of a sincere Muslim.'[1]

Appearance of the Beard

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ writes: 'Munshī Ẓafar Aḥmad of Kapurthala informed me in writing that a man named Muḥammad Sa'īd, the Arab, used to shave his beard. However, after spending some time in Qadian, and upon encouragement from others, he allowed his beard to grow. Once, in my presence, he said to the Promised Messiah ﷺ: "O my Master, do you find my beard suitable?" The Promised Messiah ﷺ replied: "It is good, but how was it before?" It appeared as though the Promised Messiah ﷺ was unaware that Muḥammad Sa'īd had previously been clean-shaven.'[2]

1. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 1, pp. 339–340
2. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 2, p. 82

Using Ill-Gotten Wealth for the Service of Islām

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ﵀ writes: ‘Miāṅ ‘Abdullāh of Sanaur ﵀ narrated to me that a person from Ambala once sought a *fatwā* from the Promised Messiah ﵇, saying: “One of my sisters was a prostitute and had amassed a large amount of wealth through her profession. She has since passed away, and I inherited this wealth. Afterward, by the grace of Allāh, I repented and reformed myself. What should I do with this money?”

The Promised Messiah ﵇ responded:

> I believe that such money can be utilised in this era for the service of Islām.

He then explained this with an example:

> If someone is attacked by a rabid dog, and does not have a stick or stone to defend themselves with, but finds some coins lying in filth nearby, would they not use those coins to ward off the dog and save their life? Would they abstain from doing so simply because the coins are lying in filth? Certainly not! Similarly, considering the condition of Islām in this era, such wealth can be used for the service of Islām.

Miāṅ ‘Abdullāh of Sanaur ﵀ further added: ‘The coins of that time were not like the smooth English coins used today; they were thick, uneven, and referred to as “Mansoori” coins.’

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ﵀ writes: ‘On this same principle, the Promised Messiah ﵇ also permitted the use of interest-based money for the service of Islām in this era, subject to certain conditions. However, it must be noted that this *fatwā* was temporary

and conditional upon specific circumstances. Any transgression beyond this would constitute wrongdoing and opposition to God.'[1]

A Prayer to Overcome Fear of a Ruler

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ writes: 'Miāṅ'Abdullāh of Sanaur ؓ narrated: "At 10 o'clock on a Friday morning during the month of *Dhul-Ḥijjah*, 1303 AH, the Promised Messiah ؑ said to me:

> If anyone fears a certain person and is overwhelmed by their awe, they should recite *Sūrah Yāsīn* three times after the *Fajr* Prayer, then dryly write the words '*Yā 'Azīz*' on their forehead with their finger. After this, when they approach that person, the awe of that individual will no longer dominate them, God-willing. Instead, the other person will feel awe-stricken.

"The Promised Messiah ؑ also generally advised me to recite *Sūrah Yāsīn* after the *Fajr* Prayer three times daily."'

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ writes: 'This humble one affirms that Miāṅ 'Abdullāh preserved this counsel of the Promised Messiah ؑ in his notebook, which is why the exact date and time is also recorded. In my opinion, the wisdom behind writing the words "*Yā 'Azīz*" is that when one firmly instils in their heart the concept of Allāh's power, might, dominance, and supremacy, the fear of others inevitably leaves the heart. Moreover, because he is a believer, through contemplation of these attributes he acquires a spiritual strength that causes others to be overawed by him. Writing [these words] with the finger serves, according to the principles of psychology, to strengthen

1. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 1, pp. 243–244

this concept in the mind. Otherwise, such prescribed prayers are not charms or incantations. And Allāh knows best.'[1]

Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ states that Ḥāfiẓ Nūr Muḥammad ؓ, residing in the village of Faizullah Chak, informed him in writing: 'I heard Ḥāfiẓ Ḥāmid 'Alī narrate that His Holiness ؑ said:

> If someone has to appear in court for any case or has to present themselves before an authority for some other reason, they should recite *Sūrah Al-Fātiḥah* seven times before doing so. Then, with their finger, they should inscribe "*Yā 'Azīz*" [O Almighty] on their forehead seven times. Allāh the Exalted will grant them success and prosperity.'

Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ further states: 'This humble one submits that this practice is perhaps meant to cultivate a state in which one becomes free from dependence on all besides Allāh and places one's trust wholly in Him.'[2]

Eating in a Particular Manner Is Not Contrary to the Sharī'ah

Ḥaḍrat Ṣāḥibzādah Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ narrates that Miāṅ 'Abdullāh of Sanaur ؓ said: 'After taking the first *Bai'at* at the start of 1889, the Promised Messiah ؑ travelled to Aligarh. I, Mīr 'Abbas Alī, and Shaikh Ḥāmid Alī were in his company. The Promised Messiah ؑ stayed at the house of Sayyid Tafaḍḍul Ḥusain, who was a superintendent at the District Commissioner's office. The District Commissioner, who had a good relationship with Sayyid Tafaḍḍul Ḥusain, hosted a

1. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 1, pp. 127–128
2. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, pp. 441–442

banquet in honour of His Holiness ﷺ and invited the city's dignitaries as well. The Promised Messiah ﷺ attended the banquet, and, as was his custom, seated us three to his right and left. The District Commissioner had arranged small tables with food placed on them, and the guests were seated around these tables. Small bouquets of flowers in glass vases were also placed on the tables.

'When the meal began, Mīr 'Abbās 'Alī did not partake and remained seated in silence. The Promised Messiah ﷺ asked him: "Why are you not eating?"

'Mīr 'Abbās 'Alī replied: "This is the style of the *necharīs*[1]." The Promised Messiah ﷺ said: "That is not the case. There is no harm in it, and this manner of eating does not contradict the Sharī'ah." Mīr 'Abbās 'Alī replied: "My heart is not inclined to eat it." The Promised Messiah ﷺ said: "Is it not sufficient for you that I am eating it?" Mīr 'Abbās 'Alī responded: "You may eat, but I cannot." In short, Mīr Abbas Alī did not eat that food.'

Miāń 'Abdullāh further states: 'When Mīr 'Abbās 'Alī later apostatised, I remembered this incident and realised that from that moment onward, he had already begun to distance himself from His Holiness ﷺ.'[2]

Performing Bai'at to Another Spiritual Guide After Already Being a Disciple of One

A person asked: 'If someone has already performed *Bai'at* at the hand of one spiritual guide, is it permissible for them to perform *Bai'at* with another?'

1. A term used in nineteenth-century Indian Muslim discourse for those who interpreted religion in accordance with the laws of nature, particularly associated with the Aligarh modernist movement. [Publisher]

2. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 1, pp 71–72

The Promised Messiah ﷺ replied:

> If the first *Baiʿat* was not performed at the hand of a righteous person, it is worthy of being annulled automatically. However, if it was performed at the hand of a righteous person, then the second *Baiʿat* will become *nūrun ʿalā nūr* [light upon light]. When a second lamp is lit beside another, the light only increases. Sayyid ʿAbdul Qādir Jīlānī performed *Baiʿat* [at the hands of different spiritual guides] on various occasions.[1]

The Divine Command to the Promised Messiah ﷺ to Accept Baiʿat

The Promised Messiah ﷺ was asked: 'Do you accept *Baiʿat* generally like the Sufis and other spiritual guides, or has Allāh the Exalted commanded you to accept *Baiʿat*?'

The Promised Messiah ﷺ replied:

> I accept *Baiʿat* by the command of Allāh, as I have written a revelation in the announcement:
>
> إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يُبَايِعُونَكَ إِنَّمَا يُبَايِعُونَ اللهَ[2]
>
> Verily, those who swear allegiance to you indeed swear allegiance to Allāh.[3]

1. *Dhikr-e-Ḥabīb*, pp. 232–233
2. *Sūrah al-Fatḥ*, 48:11
3. *Al-Ḥakam* 24 May 1901, p. 8

The Method of Bai'at

Ḥaḍrat Muftī Muḥammad Ṣādiq ؓ narrates how he first performed *Bai'at*, writing: 'On the second or third day [of my stay in Qadian], I told Ḥāfiẓ Ḥāmid 'Alī that I wanted to perform *Bai'at*. The Promised Messiah ؑ took me to a separate house. This house was located on the land where the country house of Nawāb Muḥammad 'Alī Khān now stands. It once housed the central library in its lower section, while Dr. Ḥashmatullāh used to live in its upper portion. (As of August 1935, it is being used as a guest house.)

'At that time, there was a cattle shed belonging to the Promised Messiah ؑ on that land, where cows, oxen, and other animals were kept. A doorway led to the shed through a street. In front of the inner door of the house was the entrance to the cattle shed, and that corridor was situated where the large library office room stands today. The Promised Messiah ؑ took me into that room and closed the door from the inside. In those days, *Bai'at* was taken individually. There was a *charpoy* in the room. The Promised Messiah ؑ asked me to sit on it. I complied, and he also sat on it. He then took my right hand in his hand and accepted my *Bai'at*, asking me to abide by the ten conditions of *Bai'at*. I did not repeat each condition individually, but simply said, "ten conditions of *Bai'at*."'

While mentioning the *Bai'at* of Ḥaḍrat Mirza Ayyūb Baig, Ḥaḍrat Muftī Muḥammad Ṣādiq ؓ writes that the Promised Messiah ؑ made him repeat each condition of *Bai'at* individually. Thus, he writes: 'Around 1892, Mirzā Ayyūb Baig took *Bai'at* at the hands of the Promised Messiah ؑ in Lahore. He used to narrate: "When I entered a separate room to take *Bai'at*, the Promised Messiah ؑ instructed me to say: 'I will abide by the ten conditions of *Bai'at*.'

"I responded that I did not know what those ten conditions were. The Promised Messiah ﷺ then made me repeat each of the conditions one by one."[1]

Communicating with the Dead or Spirits

Ḥaḍrat Muftī Muḥammad Ṣādiq ﷺ writes: 'In 1905, when the Promised Messiah ﷺ travelled to Delhi with his family and some of his companions, I accompanied him, as I was the editor of *Badr*. His Holiness ﷺ stayed at the house of Sayyid Alif Khān in the Chitli Qabar neighbourhood. One day, the Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

> There is not much to expect from the living in Delhi. Let us instead meet the dead here, for many pious individuals and saints of Allāh are buried here.

Ḥaḍrat Muftī Muḥammad Ṣādiq ﷺ continues: 'Acting on this, we visited the graves of Khwājah Mīr Dard, Niẓām-ud-Din Auliyā', Quṭb Sahib, and other righteous individuals. At each grave, the Promised Messiah ﷺ would stand, raise his hands in Prayer, and supplicate briefly. Those accompanying him would also join in the Prayers.

'While standing at the grave of Niẓām-ud-Din Auliyā', the Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

> There is undoubtedly a connection between souls and their graves; and the *Ahl-e-Kashf* [people granted spiritual unveiling], with concentration, can even converse with the deceased.[2]

1. *Dhikr-e-Ḥabīb*, pp. 6–7
2. *Dhikr-e-Ḥabīb*, pp. 137–138

The Promised Messiah ﷺ Performing Intense Spiritual Exercises Under Divine Command

The Promised Messiah ﷺ wrote:

> I have never engaged in arduous spiritual practices, or, like some contemporary Sufis, subjected myself to severe *mujahādāt* [spiritual disciplines], nor have I undertaken any retreat in seclusion. Nor have I performed any ascetic rituals that contradict the Sunnah or are inconsistent with the teachings of the Holy Qur'ān. Rather, I have always remained averse to such *faqīrs* [mendicants] and innovation-practising people who are involved in various forms of innovation.
>
> However, during the lifetime of my revered father, when the time of his demise was very near, it so happened that I saw in a dream an elderly, righteous man of pure countenance. He mentioned that 'observing a certain number of fasts in anticipation of heavenly lights is a tradition of the family of prophethood', thereby indicating that I should also fulfil this tradition of the *Ahl-e-Bait* of the Messenger ﷺ. Thus, I deemed it appropriate to observe fasts for some time, but at the same time I thought it better to carry this out in secrecy.
>
> I therefore adopted the practice of having my food sent from the house to the men's sitting room. I would then secretly give that food to certain orphan children whom I had already identified and instructed to come at the appointed time. In this way, I would spend the entire day fasting, and no one except God Almighty knew of these fasts.
>
> After two or three weeks, I realised that, with such fasts, whereby I would eat bread to my fill at one time, I was not experiencing any difficulty. I therefore thought it better to reduce my food somewhat. From that day onward, I continued to lessen my food intake, until I would suffice with only one

> piece of bread throughout the entire day and night. I gradually reduced my food even further, until perhaps my nourishment after 24 hours consisted of only a few *tolas* [a traditional South Asian unit of weight, roughly 11.7 grams each] of bread. I continued in this manner for probably eight or nine months. Despite such a meagre diet, which even a two- or three-month-old infant could not endure, God Almighty protected me from every calamity and affliction.[1]

Do not Undertake Rigorous Spiritual Exercise on Your Own Initiative

The Promised Messiah ﷺ, under the special permission of God Almighty, once observed continuous fasts for eight or nine months. With regard to these fasts, he stated

> Another benefit I derived from these *mujāhadāt* [spiritual disciplines] was that I found my inner self able to endure hunger with the greatest patience at times of need. I often reflected that if a stout man, who besides being corpulent was also a wrestler, were compelled to endure hunger alongside me, he would die before I felt any real restlessness for food. From this, I also came to realise that a person can, to some extent, develop the capacity to endure hunger. I am convinced that until one's body becomes accustomed to such hardship, a person given to comfort and ease cannot become worthy of the higher spiritual stations.
>
> However, I do not advise everyone to do this, nor did I undertake it of my own accord. I have seen many ignorant dervishes who adopted severe spiritual exercises, and ultimately,

1. *Kitābul-Barīyyah*, *Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 13, pp. 196–198, footnote

due to dryness of the brain, became insane and spent the rest of their lives in madness, or else became afflicted with other illnesses such as consumption and tuberculosis. Human mental faculties are not all of the same kind. Thus, those whose natural faculties are weak cannot bear any form of physical discipline, and very quickly fall prey to a dangerous illness.

It is therefore better that a person should not, on the suggestion of their own self, subject themselves to severe *mujāhadah* [spiritual discipline], but should instead adopt *dīn al-ʻajā'iz*.[1] Yes, if there is a revelation from God Almighty, and it is not contrary to the luminous Sharīʻah of Islām, then it is necessary to act upon it. However, the end result of the spiritual exercises taught by most ignorant *faqīrs* [mendicants] of the present day is not good.[2]

Blowing on the Chest as a Form of Ruqyah

Ḥaḍrat Muftī Muḥammad Ṣādiq ؓ narrates an incident in which the Promised Messiah ؑ recited something and blew on someone's chest [i.e. performed *ruqyah*]. He writes: 'Once, I travelled from Lahore to Qadian, accompanied by some other brethren from Lahore. The late Sufi Aḥmad Dīn requested me to ask the Promised Messiah ؑ to recite something and blow on his chest. As the Promised Messiah ؑ was passing through the alley on his way into the house, I approached him and presented Sufi Aḥmad Dīn's request. The Promised Messiah ؑ recited something, blew on his chest, and then proceeded into the house.[3]

1. Lit. 'the faith of elderly women', referring to remaining firm in practising the fundamental principles of religion without any deep insight. [Publisher]
2. *Kitābul-Barīyyah*, *Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 13, pp. 199–200, footnote
3. *Dhikr-e-Ḥabīb*, pp. 175–176

Contrivance is Permissible if Taught by God

A question was asked about the verse:

خُذْ بِيَدِكَ ضِغْثًا فَاضْرِبْ بِهِ وَلَا تَحْنَثْ[1]

> Take in your hand a handful of dry twigs and strike therewith and break not your oath.

If it is interpreted in the manner generally presented by commentators, it could open a door for contrivances within the Sharīʿah.

The Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

> Since the wife of Ḥaḍrat Ayyūb [Job] was very pious and always ready to serve, and he himself was righteous and patient, Allāh the Almighty provided a respite and imparted a strategy that would fulfil the oath without causing any harm. If Allāh the Almighty enables someone to understand such a tactic, it is lawful in the Sharīʿah, as it comes through the same source by which the Sharīʿah itself has been revealed. Therefore, there is no harm in it.[2]

Listening to Songs on the Radio

A question was presented to Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ II ﷺ regarding a verdict issued by Maulawī Muḥammad Sarwar Shāh ﷺ and the late Maulawī Muḥammad Ismāʿīl ﷺ, who ruled that listening to songs sung by a woman over the radio is impermissible according to Islamic law.

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1. *Sūrah Ṣād*, 38:45
2. *Badr* 28 February 1907, p. 6; Eng. Trans: *Malfūẓāt*, vol. 9, p. 160

Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul-Masīḥ II ؓ responded: 'I do not hold the view that listening to a woman sing in person is the same as listening to her by means of the radio or gramophone. On one occasion, the Promised Messiah ؑ listened, in my presence, to a *ghazal*[1] being played on the gramophone of the late Mirza Afḍal Baig Sahib, and he did not declare it to be prohibited. However, bearing in mind that such things may have an adverse effect and lead to a waste of time, they may be discouraged. Nevertheless, I am not prepared, on the basis of this argument, to issue a verdict declaring it unlawful.'[2]

Seeking Tawassul Through the Living is Permissible

A question was submitted: 'Is it permissible, after supplicating, to say: "O my Lord, accept my prayer through the blessings of the Promised Messiah ؑ"?

The Promised Messiah ؑ replied:

> The permissibility of seeking *tawassul*[3] through the living is established from the Sharī'ah. On the face of it, there is nothing in this that constitutes *shirk* [associating partners with God]. In fact, this is also mentioned in a *ḥadīth*.[4]

1. An Urdu or Persian lyric poem, often sung or recited. [Publisher]
2. *Farmūdāt Muṣleḥ Mau'ūd Darbarah Fiqhī Masā'il*, p. 387
3. Seeking nearness to Allāh or the acceptance of prayer through a divinely accepted means. [Publisher]
4. *Al-Badr* 28 November—5 December 1902, p. 37

The Interpreter's Opinion Does Not Alter the Vision's Outcome

Someone asked a question regarding the common belief that the first interpretation given by *mua'bbir* [interpreter of dreams] is the most accurate. Based on this, it is said that one should not narrate their dream to just anyone.

The Promised Messiah عليه السلام said:

> A glad tiding revealed in a dream cannot turn into a warning, nor can a warning become a glad tiding as a result of the interpreter's explanation. Thus, it is incorrect to assert that if an interpreter explains a dream of glad tidings as a warning, it will necessarily become a warning, and vice versa. However, it is true that if someone sees a warning in a dream, giving alms and praying can avert its potential harm.[1]

Taking Omens from Names

A question was asked about taking an omen from someone's name by way of *tafa'ul*[2]. The Promised Messiah عليه السلام said:

> This often proves to be correct. The Holy Prophet ﷺ also took good omens. Once, I was travelling to Gurdaspur for a court case in which a man was due to be punished. I was wondering whether he would receive punishment or not, when a boy was placing a rope around the neck of a goat. He made a loop in the rope, placed it around the goat's neck and called out loudly:

1. *Al-Badr*, May 1903, p. 117
2. *Tafā'ul* refers to taking a good omen from a word, event, or occurrence, while placing one's trust in Allāh. [Publisher]

'It is trapped! It is trapped!' From this, I inferred that the man would certainly be punished, and so it happened.

Similarly, on one occasion, we were going for a walk, and I had the matter of Pigott in mind, thinking: 'This is a great confrontation. Let us see what the outcome will be.' On the way, a non-Ahmadi said '*As-salāmu 'alaikum*.' From this, I inferred that we would be victorious.[1]

Taking an Omen from a Book

Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ narrates that Ḥaḍrat Dr. Mīr Muḥammad Ismā'īl ؓ stated: 'Once, the Promised Messiah ؑ said:

I once took an omen from a collection of poems by Ḥāfiẓ[2] for an important matter, though I do not recall now for which purpose I sought the omen.

Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Bashīr Aḥmad ؓ further states: 'Taking an omen is a form of drawing lots, and when accompanied by supplication, it takes on the form of *Istikhārah* [seeking guidance from Allāh]. However, I have heard that the Promised Messiah ؑ did not approve of taking omens from the Holy Qur'ān.'[3]

1. *Al-Badr*, 1 May 1903, p. 117
2. Renowned Persian lyric poet Khwājah Shams-ud-Dīn Muḥammad Ḥāfiẓ of Shiraz (d. 1390). [Publisher]
3. *Sīratul-Mahdī*, vol. 1, p. 791

Taking a Bad Omen from a Name

A girl was named *Jannat* [Paradise]. Someone said that this name is inappropriate because, at times, someone might call out, 'Is Jannat at home?' And if she is not present, it might seem as though only 'Hell' is in the house. Similarly, if someone is named *Barakat* [Blessing], and it is said that Barakat is not in the house, it could imply that only misfortune resides there.

The Promised Messiah ﷺ responded:

> This is not the case. There is no harm in giving such a name. If someone says that Barakat is not inside, it simply means that the person named Barakat is not inside, not that there is no blessing. Similarly, if someone says that Jannat is not there, it does not mean that Paradise is absent and Hell is present. Rather, it means that the person whose name is Jannat is not there.

Someone pointed out that such naming practices are discouraged in certain *aḥādīth*.

The Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

> I do not consider such *aḥādīth* to be authentic. Such *aḥādīth* bring unnecessary objections against Islām, as even the names taught by God—such as 'Abdullāh [Servant of Allāh], 'Abdur-Raḥīm [Servant of the Merciful], and 'Abdur-Raḥmān [Servant of the Gracious]—could be subjected to similar criticism. For instance, if someone says that 'Abdur-Raḥmān is not inside, it does not imply that 'Abdush-Shaiṭān [the Servant of Satan] is inside. Rather, a name is given as a good omen, with the hope that the person will embody the qualities associated with it.[1]

1. *Al-Ḥakam*, 31 March 1907, pp. 10–11

Writing Ta'wīdh and Performing Incantations

A man presented some of his needs in writing. After reading them, the Promised Messiah ﷺ replied: 'I will pray.' The man, somewhat perplexed, asked: 'You have not responded to my request.' The Promised Messiah ﷺ said: 'I have told you that I will pray.' The man then asked: 'Does your Holiness not provide a *ta'wīdh* [amulet]?'

The Promised Messiah ﷺ replied:

> My task is not to write *ta'wīdh* or perform incantations. My role is solely to pray to Allāh.[1]

Prostration as a Sign of Reverence is Prohibited

Ḥaḍrat Muftī Muḥammad Ṣādiq ﷺ writes: 'An impoverished and devout Aḥmadī man of tall stature used to travel on foot from his village in Kashmir to Qadian with great sincerity. His name might have been 'Akal Jo.' On one occasion, he was in Qadian. When the Promised Messiah ﷺ went out for a walk, this Kashmiri man was standing at a crossroad. Upon seeing the Promised Messiah ﷺ, he, overwhelmed with love and emotion, placed his head on the feet of the Promised Messiah ﷺ while weeping.

The Promised Messiah ﷺ leaned down, lifted him up, and said:

> This is not permissible. One should not prostrate to any human.[2]

1. *Al-Ḥakam*, 6 April 1908, p. 1
2. *Dhikr-e-Ḥabīb*, pp. 206–207

It is Not Permissible for Everyone to Investigate

A person submitted: 'I sell sugar at a shop in a village. Sometimes, boys or the servants and employees of the landlords bring cotton or wheat or something similar and barter it for merchandise, as is the general practice in villages; but some boys or servants bring these things without the knowledge of the owner. Is it permissible to give the merchandise in this situation or not?'

The Promised Messiah ﷺ replied:

> When it is certain that an item is stolen property then to take it is impermissible, but to put oneself into undue suspicion is an undesirable act. To investigate such matters, and for no reason prove someone as a thief, is not the prerogative of the shopkeeper. If the shopkeeper will engage himself in such investigations, then when will he tend to his shop? It is not permissible for everyone to investigate. It is understood from the Holy Qur'ān that Allāh the Exalted directed the Israelites to slaughter a cow. It was better to just get hold of a cow and slaughter it as that would have fulfilled the injunction. Without need, they began asking other questions like what the cow should be like, and what should the colour be, and by asking such questions, they put themselves into further difficulty. Asking too many questions and to engage into excessive probing is not good.[1]

The Permissibility of Tauriyah and its Reality

Addressing Padre Fateh Masih, the Promised Messiah ﷺ wrote:

1. *Badr* 8 August 1907, p. 5; *Malfūẓāt*, vol. 9 pp. 332–333

You then go on to write that the Holy Prophet ﷺ has sanctioned lying in three circumstances. However, you have erred due to your own ignorance. The fact is that no *ḥadīth* sanctions telling a lie at all. On the contrary, the *ḥadīth* has the words, إِنْ قُتِلْتَ وَأُحْرِقْتَ[1]; meaning, 'You should not abandon truth even if you are killed or burned.'

Now, when the Qur'ān says that you should not abandon justice and truth even if you lose your lives for it, and the *ḥadīth* says that you should speak the truth, even if you are burned and killed, then, even if we assume that some *ḥadīth* does exist that is at odds with the Qur'ān and *ṣaḥīḥ aḥādīth* [authentic sayings of the Holy Prophet ﷺ], it will not be worthy of attention, for we accept only that *ḥadīth* which is not in contravention with the *ṣaḥīḥ aḥādīth* and the Noble Qur'ān.

It is true that some *aḥādīth* contain a semblance of justification for *tauriyah*, but the same has been termed as falsehood in order to create an aversion to it. Now, if an ignorant and extremely foolish person finds a word with dual meaning in some *ḥadīth*, he might take it to mean actual falsehood, for he is unaware of the categorical verdict that in Islām actual falsehood is considered an abomination, unlawful, and akin to idolatry [associating partners with God]. But *tauriyah* is not actual falsehood, though it bears a semblance of falsehood. Justification for it can be inferred from [some] *ḥadīth* for common people in desperate circumstances. Even then it is written that those people are indeed superior who abstain even from *tauriyah*.

In Islamic terminology, *tauriyah* means that, in order to conceal a fact lest it lead to mischief, or in order to keep a secret for some other exigency, a statement is made in such a way and in such a fashion that while the astute would understand what

1. *Musnad Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal*, Ḥadīth 22075

is meant, the obtuse would not and his mind would turn away from the real message of the speaker. And, upon close scrutiny, it should be evident that what the speaker had said is sheer truth and not a lie. Also, it should not have even an iota of falsehood mixed, nor the [speaker's] heart should have even slightly inclined towards falsehood. For instance some *aḥādīth* justify *tauriyah* to bring about reconciliation between two Muslims; or to save one's wife from some hardship, domestic discord, or dispute; or to keep one's aims hidden from the enemy in a battle or to distract the enemy. Notwithstanding this, it is clear from many other *aḥādīth* that *tauriyah* is incompatible with the righteousness of the higher order, and that unmitigated truthfulness is still preferable even if one were to be killed or burned on account of it...A sublime example of the teaching of our lord and master, the Honourable Holy Prophet ﷺ, is established here and it is that the same *tauriyah*—of which your Yasū' availed himself throughout his entire life as if mother's milk—had been admonished by the Holy Prophet ﷺ to avoid as far as possible, so that the purport of a statement should not resemble a lie even in its outward form. But what can I say and what can I write about your Yasū' who could not uphold such assiduity in truthfulness?

A person who lays claim to Divinity should have come into the world like a roaring lion, instead of adopting *tauriyah* during his entire life and making all his statements in a manner akin to lies, thereby proving that he is not among the perfect personages who announce themselves in the face of their enemies showing no concern for death. They trust God fully and never exhibit cowardice at any stage. I am verily reduced to tears when I imagine how I would respond if someone were to object to the timid state and use of *tauriyah*—which is a form of falsehood—of such a weak-hearted Yasū'.

When I envision *Sayyidul-Mursalīn* [the Chief of the Messengers] while being all by himself during the Battle of Uḥud, and proclaiming, in the face of drawn swords, that I am Muḥammad, I am the Prophet of God, I am the son of ʻAbdul Muṭṭalib, and on the other hand I envision your Yasūʻ while trembling, admonishing his disciples not to tell anyone that he is Jesus the Christ—which ran contrary to reality even though this statement would not have led anyone to kill him—I am drowned in an ocean of bewilderment and ask: 'O my God! Even this person is called a Prophet when such is his standard of courage in the path of God?'

In short, Fateḥ Masīḥ has exposed his own ignorance quite well. Rather, he even struck a blow on his Yasūʻ by presenting some of those *aḥādīth* that mention the justification for *tauriyah*. Even if *tauriyah* has been erroneously referred to as falsehood in some *ḥadīth*, it would be the height of ignorance for someone to consider that it means actual falsehood when the Holy Qur'ān and all authentic *aḥādīth* unanimously declare actual falsehood to be strongly prohibited and foul, and *aḥādīth* of higher quality are describing the issue of *tauriyah* explicitly.

Then, even if we suppose that in some *ḥadīth* the word *kidhb* [falsehood] has come in place of *tauriyah*, how can this—God forbid—mean actual falsehood? Rather, it would be an indication of the meticulous righteousness of its proponent that he considered *tauriyah* to be akin to falsehood and used the word 'falsehood' as the alternative. It is necessary for us to follow the Qur'ān and the authentic *aḥādīth*. If something is in conflict with it, we will not accept the meaning which is contrary [to the Qur'ān and authentic *aḥādīth*]. When taking *aḥādīth* into consideration, it is essential not to trust the *aḥādīth* that are contrary to and incompatible with the *aḥādīth* whose authenticity has been established to a high degree. And not to trust those *aḥādīth* either that are blatantly discordant, incongruous,

and inconsistent with the clear, explicit, and decisive dictate of the Holy Qur'ān. It would be an act of hypocrisy and mischief to raise an objection—on the basis of inference from some absurd account, or some questionable and unauthentic *ḥadīth* or some dubious impression—concerning an issue which the Holy Qur'ān and authentic *aḥādīth* have consensus upon, and which has been described explicitly in religious tomes.

The truth is that it is these kind of mischiefs that have ruined the Christians. They do not have the ability to study the *ḥadīth* themselves. The most they can do is to read some translation of the *Mishkāt* and then raise an issue which they can find fault with in their flawed understanding. The fact is that the books of *ḥadīth* have all kinds of material—accurate and inaccurate. One who uses the *ḥadīth* as a criterion faces the need to scrutinize them. And this is a very delicate matter to find the authentic *aḥādīth* from among all sorts of *aḥādīth*, and then try to ascertain its true meaning and then to search for its correct context.[1]

The Importance of Religious Freedom

A *maulawī* from the frontier region of Afghanistan once visited the Promised Messiah ﷺ. After shaking hands, the Promised Messiah ﷺ asked him about the details of his journey and the hardships he had faced along the way. The conversation then turned to the lack of liberty and freedom under the Afghan government.

The Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

1. *Nūrul-Qur'ān*, *Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 9, pp. 404–408; Eng. Trans.: *The Light of The Holy Qur'ān*—Number Two, pp. 100–107

What is being written in the newspapers these days, that people of every religion enjoy complete freedom under the Afghan government, is an utter falsehood, devoid of any truth. If people of every religion in Afghanistan enjoyed the same liberty and freedom as they do in India, the noble Maulawī Muḥammad ʻAbdul-Laṭīf would not have been so mercilessly put to death under that government on account of religious differences.[1]

1. *Al-Ḥakam*, 24 February 1907, p. 14

THE REALITY OF JIHĀD

The Promised Messiah ﷺ decisively clarified the true concept of *Jihād*, thus fulfilling a great prophecy foretold by the Holy Prophet: يَضَعُ الْحَرْبَ [He will put an end to war] and يَضَعُ الْجِزْيَةَ [He will abolish *Jizyah*]. This subject is discussed extensively in his books and recorded sayings. For this very purpose, he authored a book titled *The British Government and Jihād*, in which he expounded upon various aspects of the Islamic teachings of *Jihād*.

The Promised Messiah ﷺ stated:

> The philosophy and true nature of *Jihād* is a matter both complex and subtle. Grave errors have been made both in our age and in the middle age [of Islām] because people failed to understand this subject. It is with great embarrassment that I am forced to admit that these dangerous mistakes have exposed the holy religion of Islām, which is a mirror of the laws of nature and a manifestation of God's glory, to the criticism of its opponents.

A Study of the Word Juhd

> It should be understood that the word '*Jihād*' is derived from the [Arabic] root '*juhd*', which means 'to strive' and is therefore used figuratively for religious wars. It seems that the word '*yudh*',

which is commonly used by Hindus to mean war, is in reality a corruption of the word *Jihād*. Since Arabic is the mother of all languages, out of which all other languages emerged, the word '*yudh*' which in Sanskrit means war is actually the same as '*juhd*' or '*Jihād*'. Over time the letter '*jīm*' was replaced by the letter '*y*' and after further alteration the word was spoken with phonetic emphasis.

The Causes of Opposition to the Prophets

Why did Islām come to need *Jihād* and what is *Jihād* ? I would now like to address this question. It needs to be understood that Islām was forced to confront great difficulties from its very inception, and all nations stood opposed to it. When a Prophet or Messenger comes from God, his followers are perceived to be a promising, truthful, righteous and progressive group that is likely to advance quickly. Pre-existing communities and religious sects inevitably begin to develop a certain kind of anger and jealousy towards them. Religious experts and leaders are particularly vocal about expressing such feelings because the arrival of a man of God leads to a change in their incomes and prestige. Their students and disciples begin to emerge from their trap because they find all excellent qualities of faith, morality and knowledge in the person who is from God. Those possessing sense and discrimination therefore begin to understand that these scholars do not deserve the respect that they had been previously accorded on the basis of educational accomplishment, piety and abstinence. Exalted titles such as *Najm-ul-Ummah* [Star of the Nation], *Shams-ul-Ummah* [Sun of the Nation], *Shaikh-ul-Mashā'ikh* [Leader of the Honourable] and so forth no longer befit them. Sensible people who do not wish to lose their faith therefore turn away from these scholars.

Religious scholars and patriarchs have always been jealous of God's Prophets and Messengers because of the foregoing losses. The members of this faction are in fact deficient; they possess very little of Divine light and their flaws are totally exposed during a Prophet or Messenger's time. Their egos give rise to a hostility towards God's Prophets and the righteous, and they selfishly devise plans to injure them. Such people sometimes even know in their hearts that they have fallen under God's wrath by unjustly persecuting his pure-hearted man. Their instinctive actions against the righteous indicate the guilty state of their hearts, and the fire of their jealousy—moving like a fast locomotive—pushes them towards the abyss of hatred.

These reasons incited the hostility of pagan, Jewish and Christian scholars and prevented them from accepting the truth in the time of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. They therefore sought to eliminate Islām from the face of the earth. Since there were so few Muslims during Islām's early period, their opponents treated them with bitter hostility out of the natural arrogance that inspires the minds of those who consider themselves to be superior to the followers of a new faith in terms of wealth, property, numbers, esteem and rank. They did not want this heavenly plant [of Islām] to take root upon the earth, but rather were fighting with all their might to destroy these righteous people. They feared that the firm establishment of this religion would in turn sow the seeds of destruction for their faith and nation.

The Oppression and Tyranny of the Disbelievers

Because of this fear, which was deeply impressed on their hearts, they committed acts of extreme viciousness and cruelty, and brutally murdered many Muslims.

Their ways remained unchanged for a lengthy thirteen year period. Many of God's faithful—the very honour of humanity—were cruelly cut to pieces by the swords of these barbarians. Orphans, the weak and helpless women were slaughtered in the streets and alleys. Even so, God commanded that there be no retaliation against evil. These righteous, chosen people adhered to this instruction precisely. While the streets ran red with their blood, they did not utter a sound. They were slaughtered like animals but did not protest. God's holy and exalted Prophet (upon whom the heavens and earth shower their blessings) was stoned on many occasions, so much so that he was stained with blood. Nevertheless, that upright mountain of truth tolerated all this mistreatment with an open heart and love. This attitude of steadfastness and humility provoked Islām's enemies to intensify their persecution, and they looked upon this holy community as a hunter looks upon his prey.

Divine Permission for Retaliation

Then God, Who does not wish that cruelty and oppression should exceed their bounds on the earth, turned towards His oppressed servants, and His wrath was inflamed against the wicked. He informed His helpless, suffering people through the Holy Qur'ān: I am watching everything that is happening to you and henceforth give you permission to retaliate. I am God the Almighty, and I will not allow your oppressors to escape without punishment. This is the commandment that in other words came to be known as *Jihād*. The original wording, which is still preserved in the Qur'ān, is as follows:

أُذِنَ لِلَّذِينَ يُقَاتَلُونَ بِأَنَّهُمْ ظُلِمُوا وَإِنَّ اللهَ عَلَى نَصْرِهِمْ لَقَدِيرٌ * الَّذِينَ أُخْرِجُوا مِنْ دِيَارِهِمْ بِغَيْرِ حَقٍّ[1]

That is: Allāh has heard the cry of those oppressed people who are killed and unjustly turned out of their land and has permitted them to retaliate. Allāh is All-Powerful, and able to help the oppressed.

This commandment was specific to the period and time. It was not forever. It applied during the time when those entering the fold of Islām were being slaughtered like sheep and lambs. After the time of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and his Successors, people unfortunately made very grave mistakes in understanding the philosophy of *Jihād*, which is rooted in the preceding verse. The unjust slaughter of God's creatures was deemed to be a mark of religious virtue.

It is a remarkable coincidence that Christians erred with respect to the rights of God, while Muslims erred with respect to the rights of human beings. That is, the Christian faith raised a humble man to Godhood, thereby compromising the obligations due to the All-Powerful, All-Sustaining Being Who has no equal in heaven or earth. But Muslims violated human rights by unjustly raising the sword and calling it *Jihād*. In short, Christians adopted one path of violating rights, and Muslims adopted the other. Unfortunately for this era, both of these groups consider their own transgressions to be desirable. Each therefore emphasizes its own doctrine, certain that this alone is the straight path and best way to Paradise. Although violation of God's rights is the greatest of sins, it is not my intention here to discuss this dangerous offense of which the Christian people are guilty, but rather to make Muslims aware

1. *Sūrah al-Ḥajj*, 22:40–41

of the transgressions that they are committing against their fellow human beings.

The Contemporary Understanding of Jihad is Incorrect

It should be remembered that today's Islamic scholars (who are called *maulawīs*) completely misunderstand *Jihād* and misrepresent it to the general public. The public's violent instincts are inflamed as a result and they are stripped of all noble human virtues. This is in fact what has happened. I know for certain that *maulawīs* who persist in propagating these blood-spattered doctrines are in fact responsible for murders committed by ignorant, egotistical people who know nothing of why Islām was forced to fight battles in its early history. When these *maulawīs* meet present day rulers, they bow down as if ready to prostrate; but among their own kind they insist repeatedly that this country is '*dār-ul-ḥarb*' [the zone of war]. They consider *Jihād* to be obligatory in their hearts, and few of them think otherwise. They adhere so strongly to their doctrine of *Jihād*—which is completely misguided and entirely contradicts the teachings of the Holy Qur'ān and *ḥadīth*—that they label as '*dajjāl*' [Antichrist] and advocate the murder of anyone who objects. A *fatwā* [edict] of this kind was pronounced against me some time ago. Some of this country's *maulawīs* labelled me a *dajjāl* and a *kāfir* [infidel] and—without fear of the British Government's laws—published a *fatwā* stating that I should be killed, and that it would be a blessed deed to loot my belongings or abduct the women of my house. What was the reasoning for this? Only that I incurred their displeasure because I am the Promised Messiah ﷺ and preach against their concept of *Jihād*, rejecting notions of the bloodthirsty Messiah and Mahdī whose advent would, they had hoped, allow them to engage

in loot and plunder. They should remember that their understanding of *Jihād* is not at all correct, and that human sympathy is its first casualty.

Why Has Jihad Now Been Declared Unlawful?

Their belief, that *Jihād* should be lawful today because it was permitted in early Islām, is totally incorrect, and we offer two rejoinders. The first is that their reasoning is baseless. Under no circumstance did our Holy Prophet ﷺ raise the sword against anyone unless they had first raised the sword, mercilessly killing innocent and pious men, women and children with such brutality that reading about these events even today brings tears to our eyes. Second, even if we assume that *Jihād* as conceived of by these *maulawīs* was obligatory in early Islām, the commandment is no longer applicable because it is written that violent *Jihād* and religious fighting will come to an end with the appearance of the Promised Messiah عليه السلام, who will not raise the sword or any other earthly weapon. Prayer shall be his only instrument, and firm determination his only weapon. He will establish peace and gather together the goat and the lion. His age will be one of peace, gentleness and human sympathy. Alas! Why do these people not reflect that thirteen hundred years have passed since the Holy Prophet ﷺ said, '*yaḍa-'ul-ḥarb*' in honour of the Promised Messiah عليه السلام. These words mean that the Promised Messiah عليه السلام will end warfare when he comes.

The same point is also indicated in the verse of the Holy Qur'ān:

حَتَّى تَضَعَ الْحَرْبُ أَوْزَارَهَا[1]

That is to say, fight until the advent of the Promised Messiah عليه السلام. This is the meaning of:

تَضَعُ الْحَرْبُ أَوْزَارَهَا

Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī is considered the most authentic book after the Holy Qur'ān and it is available. Read it carefully. O Muslim scholars and *maulawīs*! Listen to me. I tell you truly that this is not the time for *Jihād*. Do not disobey God's Holy Prophet ﷺ. The awaited Messiah has arrived and orders you to abstain from religious wars involving armed combat, killing and bloodshed. Not refraining even now from spilling blood and giving such sermons is therefore not the way of Islām. The person who accepts me will not merely stop preaching in this way. Rather, he will recognise the evil of this path and come to know that it invites God's anger.

At this point I must, with great regret, say that although ignorant *maulawīs* have instructed the ordinary public in plunder and killing by calling these actions *Jihād*, Christian clerics have also done something similar. They have, in Urdu, Pashto and other languages, produced thousands of publications, journals and flyers alleging that Islām was spread by the sword. This literature, which has been distributed by them in India, Punjab and the Frontier Region, wrongly claims that Islām is synonymous with violence. The people's penchant for violence has increased as a result of the combined testimony of the *maulawīs* and Christian clerics. The dangerous lies of the Christian clerics create unrest and rebellion and, in my view, it is essential that

1. '...Until the war lays down its burdens...' (*Sūrah Muḥammad*, 47:5)

our government prohibit them. Muslims will never abandon Islām due to these senseless fabrications. By repeatedly calling their attention to the doctrine of *Jihād*, these sermons will instead cause Muslims to rise from their slumber.

Now that the Promised Messiah عليه السلام has come, it is the duty of every Muslim to refrain from such *Jihād*. There could have been some justification for misunderstanding this issue if I had not come. But I have arrived and you have witnessed the day that was promised. Therefore, those who now raise the sword on religion's behalf have no excuse before God Almighty. Those who possess sight, read the *aḥādīth* and ponder over the Holy Qur'ān and should understand well that the kind of *Jihād* practiced by many of today's barbaric people is not Islamic *Jihād*. Rather, these misguided activities that have spread amongst the Muslims are instigated by *nafs-e-'ammārah* [self that incites to evil] or by a crude desire for Paradise.'

Examples of the Truthfulness and Patience of the Companions

I have just mentioned that during his entire life our Prophet ﷺ was never the first to raise the sword. Indeed, he suffered for a long time at the hands of the disbelievers and displayed a degree of patience that is not possible for every person. His Companions رضي الله عنهم held fast to the same lofty principle, doing as they were commanded, withstanding atrocities and demonstrating patience. They were trampled underfoot but did not utter a sound. Their children were cut to pieces before their very eyes. They were tortured with fire and water but, like innocent children, did not retaliate against this evil. Can anyone show that the people of any of the Prophets—despite possessing the ability to retaliate—heard God's command and exercised similar restraint? Who can demonstrate that there has

ever been another group like this? For these were a people who possessed bravery, unity in numbers, strength, ability to fight and all masculine qualities, and yet repeatedly restrained themselves for thirteen years in the face of a merciless and bloodthirsty enemy. The patience shown by our Lord and Master and his Companions was not due to their powerlessness. In fact, the hands and arms of the devoted Companions who exercised restraint at this time of patience were no different after the permission for *Jihād* was granted. On occasion only one thousand young Muslims defeated one hundred thousand enemy soldiers. Events transpired in this way so that people would know that the patience demonstrated in Makkah was not due to any weakness or frailty; Muslims laid down their weapons upon hearing God's command and were prepared to be slaughtered like goats and lambs. This type of patience is certainly beyond human capacity. Even if one studies the history of the whole world and all the Prophets, one cannot find such an abundance of virtues in any other community or in the followers of any other Prophet. If we listen to stories about patience from the past, then immediately it crosses one's mind that the conditions of the time indicate that the reason for this patience was in fact cowardice or lack of power to retaliate. But the Holy Prophet ﷺ and his Companions رضي الله عنهم demonstrated very real bravery over a period of thirteen years. Despite being brave warriors of stout heart, and despite being persecuted, bloodied with spears and seeing their children killed, they did not retaliate against evil. Such patience over thirteen years in the face of dangerous tribulations is unmatched. Those who doubt this should step forward and provide us with an example of similar patience from among the righteous people of the past.

It may also be noted that despite the extent of the injustice done to his Companions رضي الله عنهم, our Holy Prophet ﷺ did not of his own accord suggest any plan of escape. Instead, he repeatedly

urged them to be patient despite much suffering. Anyone begging permission to retaliate was stopped and told: 'I have been commanded to be patient.' Until the commandment to retaliate descended from Heaven, the Holy Prophet ﷺ always preached forbearance and tolerance. Search for an example of comparable fortitude from the earliest to the most recent of times. If possible, try to find an example of such behaviour from among the followers of Moses عليه السلام or the disciples of Jesus عليه السلام and show it to us.

The Current Concept of Jihad is Based on Personal Interests

To summarise, Islām excels all other faiths in the demonstration it provides of patience, noble conduct and the rejection of evil. It would be foolish, unfortunate and wrong for Muslims to abandon this example. May God bring these ignorant *maulawīs* back to the right path. They have misled the populace into believing that the keys to Paradise lie in beliefs that are oppressive, cruel and completely immoral. Can it be a good deed to shoot a complete stranger, intending to kill him while he is absorbed in thought? Is this religiousness? If these are acts of any virtue then animals are more virtuous than human beings.

Glory be to God! How truly inspired by the spirit of the Prophets and the righteous were those who behaved like humble, weak babies when commanded in Makkah not to resist evil even if they were cut to pieces, acting as if their hands and arms possessed no strength. Some of them were killed in the following manner: two camels were made to stand close to each other, while each of the victim's legs were tied to the camels. Then, the camels were made to run in opposite directions. The victims were immediately torn apart just as a carrot or radish is split open.

Unfortunately, the Muslims—and the *maulawīs* in particular—ignore all these events and think of the whole world as their prey. Many *maulawīs* are just like a hunter who moves stealthily towards a deer he is stalking in the forest, shooting his gun at precisely the right moment. They know nothing about compassion for humanity. According to them, it is an act of Islamic virtue to fire a pistol or gun at an innocent person. Where are those who will act like the Companions of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and remain patient while suffering torture? Has God commanded us to capture complete strangers and cut them to pieces or to shoot them without reason or proof of an offence? Can a religion be from God if it teaches that you can enter Paradise by killing His blameless and innocent creatures—to whom you have not even delivered the message? Is it not shameful that a complete stranger should be unjustly killed while occupied in his daily affairs, thus widowing his wife, making his children orphans, and turning his house into a funeral parlour? Which *ḥadīth* or verse of the Holy Qur'ān authorizes such behaviour? Is there any *maulawī* who can respond? Foolish people hear the word *Jihād*, and make it an excuse for the fulfilment of their own selfish desires. Or perhaps it is sheer madness that inclines them towards bloodshed.

I have just mentioned that Islām employed the sword during the time of our Holy Prophet ﷺ, with God's permission, only after the disbeliever's swords had already sent many Muslims to their graves. Then God's honour willed that those who kill by the sword should also perish by the sword. God is very Noble, Ever Merciful and Forbearing. He shows great patience, but in the end He protects the honour of the righteous. Muslims are not being killed today by anyone because of their faith. What authority do they have to justify the killing of innocents, I wonder?

Why do their *maulawīs* not stop them from these awful actions which bring Islām into disrepute? One cannot enumerate the comforts which the Muslims have under this British Government. Many who lived under Sikh rule are still with us today. They should come forward and tell others about the circumstances of Islām and the Muslims at that time. The *Adhān* [Call for Prayer], which is a mandatory tenet of Islām, was considered a crime. No one who called the *Adhān* could survive the hatchets and spears of the Sikhs. Did God err in freeing the Muslims from the Sikhs' transgressions and in delivering them to the sanctuary of British rule? As soon as this government took power, the Muslims of Punjab were, for all practical purposes, granted their faith anew. Since a good deed demands a good deed in return, we should not renounce the blessing that God has granted us in place of Sikh rule as an answer to our many tears and prayers.'

At this time, I specifically instruct my Jamā'at [Community], which accepts me as the Promised Messiah, that they should always stay away from these foul habits. God has sent me as the Promised Messiah and has clothed me with the garment of the Messiah, son of Mary. I therefore admonish you: Refrain from evil and be truly compassionate towards mankind. Cleanse your hearts of malice and spite, for you will become like angels through this habit. It is a filthy and unholy religion that is devoid of sympathy for humanity, and polluted is the path riddled with the thorns of a rancour based on selfish desires. O those who are with me, do not become like such people. Think about what it is we seek to attain through religion. Is it to constantly oppress others? No, religion exists so that we may obtain the life that lies in God. Such a life has not been, and will never be, attained unless Divine attributes come to abide in you. Be compassionate towards all for the sake of God so that you may be shown mercy in the heavens. Come, and I will teach

you a way that will cause your light to prevail over all other lights. Abandon all lowly spite and jealousy, be compassionate for mankind, and lose yourselves in God. Being with God, achieve the highest levels of purification. This is the path on which miracles are bestowed, prayers are accepted, and angels descend to one's aid. But it is not a single day's work. Advance and continue advancing. Learn from the example of the washerman, who continues to boil clothes in hot water until the heat causes dirt and filth to separate from them. Then, rising in the morning, he soaks the load in water, and beats the clothes on stone sills. The dirt that had settled in the clothes is thus slowly removed. This process of heating clothes and beating them continues until they are as clean as they were when new. This is the only strategy for cleansing the human soul. Your entire salvation depends on this cleanliness alone. This is precisely what Allāh the Most High has said in the Holy Qur'ān:

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ زَكّٰهَا[1]

This means: the soul that has been cleansed of diverse types of dirt and filth has attained success.

Jihad by the Sword is No Longer Applicable Today

I have come to you with an order: *Jihād* with the sword has ended from this time forward, but the *Jihād* of purifying your souls must continue. I do not say this of my own accord. This is indeed the will of God. Recall the hadith from *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī* which honours the Promised Messiah ﷺ by saying

1. *Sūrah ash-Shams*, 91:10

yaḍa-'ul-ḥarb. That is to say, when the Messiah comes he will put an end to religious wars. Accordingly, I command those who have joined my ranks to refrain from all such thoughts, to purify their hearts, to foster sympathy, and to be compassionate towards the suffering. They should spread peace on earth, because that will cause their faith to spread in return. They should not entertain doubts about how this will transpire. Just as God Almighty has—without the usual means of intervention—used the resources of the earth to create modern inventions, and satisfied our physical needs by making trains that outrun horses, He will in the same way—unaided by human hands—use His angels to fulfil spiritual needs. Great heavenly signs will be seen and numerous flashes of light will open many eyes. Ultimately, people will recognise that they erred gravely in elevating ordinary people and objects to divine status. Be patient and keep watching, for God guards His *Tauḥīd* [Unity] with more jealousy than you do. Keep praying lest you be counted among the disobedient.

O ye who yearn and thirst for truth, listen! These are the days that have been promised since the beginning. God will not permit much delay in these affairs. Just as you can see that the lamp placed on top of a minaret spreads its light far and wide, and just as lightning in one part of the sky also illuminates all other parts, so too will it be in these days. God has Himself provided the means for fulfilling His prophecy that the message of the Messiah will spread in the world like lightning and will encompass all four corners of the earth like the light from a tower. The railways, telegraph, steamships, excellent postal services, easy modes of travel, tourism and other such means have been established to fulfil the prophecy that the message of the Messiah will illuminate every corner like lightning. The true nature of the tower of the Messiah that is mentioned in the *aḥādīth* is that the Messiah's invitation and message will spread

on this earth very quickly just as light or sound from a tower reaches far. Therefore, trains, postal services, steamboats, and ease of preaching and travelling are all special signs of the time of the Messiah that have been mentioned by many Prophets. The Holy Qur'ān also says:

وَإِذَا الْعِشَارُ عُطِّلَتْ[1]

This means that the age of open invitation, which is the time of the Promised Messiah[2] will occur 'when camels would be rendered useless.' Some new modes of travel would be invented and therefore camels would no longer be needed. It is also stated in the hadith that:

يُتْرَكُ القِلاصُ فَلَا يُسْعَى عَلَيهَا

In other words, camels will be rendered useless in that age. This sign has not been appointed for the time of any other Messenger. So be grateful that preparations are being made in heaven for spreading Divine light. Blessings are also stirring up in the earth. You are witnessing an ease in travel and movement that was not known to your parents and grandparents. It is as if this is a new world. Fruits are available out of season, trips that once took six months can now be completed in days, news is

1. *Sūrah at-Takwīr*, 81:5

2. I have written repeatedly that the Promised Messiah has come with the nature and disposition of the Prophet of the Israelites, but is not the same person. Since the Torah declares our Holy Prophet ﷺ to be like Moses علیہ السلام, it was necessary that there be a Messiah at the end among the followers of Muḥammad ﷺ just as there was one among the followers of Moses علیہ السلام. [Footnote by the Promised Messiah علیہ السلام]

instantly transmitted thousands of miles, and there are devices and machines to assist with every task. If you wish, you can travel by train with the same comfort that you would have in an orchard at your home. Has the earth not undergone a revolution? Just as there is an astounding upheaval on earth, God also wills that an astounding upheaval take place in the heavens. Both of these are signs of the days of the Messiah. The revelation below, mentioned twenty years ago in my book *Barāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya*, alludes to these signs:

إِنَّ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ كَانَتَا رَتْقًا فَفَتَقْنَاهُمَا[1]

This means that the heavens and the earth were tied up like a bundle and their elements were hidden. God has untied both of these bundles in the days of the Messiah and has revealed their secrets.[2]

Rulers Must Advise Their Subjects Through Scholars

As I have detailed extensively in this booklet, the tradition prevalent among Muslims of attacking the people of other religions, which they call *Jihād*, is not the *Jihād* of Divine religious Law (Sharī'ah). Rather, it is a grievous sin and a violation of the clear instructions of God and His Prophet ﷺ. It may not be easy for

1. See *Barāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya*, *Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 1, p. 611

2. Is it not a fact that the secrets of the earth have been revealed in this age and thousands of new facts and discoveries relating to the properties of things and new inventions are being made? Why should the secrets of the heavens then remain closed? Regarding the secrets of the heavens, previous Prophets had foretold that: Even children and women would receive revelation from God in the time of the Promised Messiah. [Footnote by the Promised Messiah عليه السلام]

certain Muslims to abandon this custom since it is well established among some tribes. In fact, because they imagine themselves to be *ghāzis*[1], they may even become the mortal enemies of one who counsels them against this practice and seek to kill him. One solution, that I can think of, to this problem is that His Majesty, the *Amīr* of Kabul[2], whose influence over Afghan tribes probably exceeds that of all previous *Amīrs*, should gather the great scholars of religion and convene a discussion on the true nature of *Jihād*. These religious scholars can then educate the public about its errors. In fact, the religious scholars of this country should compile a few pamphlets in Pashto and make them available to the general public. I believe that this type of activity will have a tremendous influence on people. The passions instilled by the ignorant *maulawīs* will gradually subside. The *Amīr's* citizens will surely suffer if he fails to pay heed to this essential reform. The government that ignores such *fatāwā* from these mullahs ultimately creates problems for itself because these days the *maulawīs* readily label people as disbelievers over minor religious differences, applying to them all other *fatāwā* that they apply to disbelievers. In light of this, even the *Amīr* himself cannot remain safe from these *fatāwā*. It is quite possible that the *maulawīs* may cast the *Amīr* out of the pale of Islām by taking offence over some trivial issue, and then subject him to the same *fatāwā* of *Jihād* that they have applied to others. A group that has the power to declare a person to

1. The author is referring to a common belief amongst Muslims that steadfast participants in religious wars attain Paradise, regardless of whether they are killed in action or survive. In the former case, they are *shahīd* (martyr) and in the latter, they are referred to as *ghāzi*. [Publisher]

2. The Amīr of the Afghans at that time was ʻAbd-ur-Raḥmān (1881–1901). He ascended to the throne after the second Afghan war (1878–80) and was recognised as the *Amīr* of Kabul on the condition that he would not have political relations with any foreign power other than the British. [Publisher]

be a believer or disbeliever is dangerous, and the *Amīr* should not be complacent with respect to them. They are the source of the rebellions confronted by every government. They have power over the common people and create havoc by turning them in whatever direction they please. It is therefore no sin to free people from their influence through gentle education about the true nature of *Jihād*. Islām certainly does not teach Muslims to behave like thieves and bandits, or to use *Jihād* as an excuse to satisfy their basest inner desires.

Since the general public know that Islām does not allow *Jihād* to be waged without the sovereign's permission, it is possible that some people who are ignorant of the facts will blame the *Amīr* for such events. The *Amīr* must therefore do his best to prevent the issuing of these erroneous *fatāwā*. The *Amīr* will exonerate himself magnificently in this way. God will also reward him well because, after the observance of duties owed to God, there is no act of goodness greater than delivering the oppressed from the swords of their oppressors. The *Amīr* has been given an opportunity by God to make this great reform a part of his legacy because it is mostly Afghans who commit these acts and wield the sword with the intent of becoming *ghāzis*, and a sizable majority of them live in his country. These barbaric practices defame Islām and he should do his best to cleanse the Afghan nation of them.

This is the time of the Promised Messiah. God will certainly create a way for the world, which is currently filled with persecution, injustice and bloodshed, to be filled with justice, peace and reconciliation. Blessed are the sovereigns and kings who play a part in achieving this objective.'

A Petition to the Benevolent Government

At the end of this discourse, I wish to submit a proposal to our benevolent government. I know that this is a wise and astute government. Nevertheless, it is incumbent upon us to present any suggestions that may prove useful for the government and the public. I believe with absolute conviction that the barbaric practices of the Frontier Afghans, which result in the almost daily killing of innocent persons, have two causes:

1) First, those *maulawīs* for whom it is an article of faith that killing people of other religions—especially Christians—is an act of great virtue and that such murder opens doors of heavenly reward that cannot be achieved through obligatory *ṣalāt* [Prayers], *ḥajj* [Pilgrimage], *zakāt* [obligatory charity], or any other good deed. I am well aware of the fact that these *maulawīs* secretly preach this to the people. When ordinary people hear such sermons day and night, their hearts—which differ little from those of animals—become deeply affected. They become like beasts of prey, with no shred of mercy remaining within them and commit horrendous acts that make one shudder. Although Afghanistan and the Frontier Region are full of many *maulawīs* who regularly preach in this way, it is my opinion that Punjab and India are not entirely free of such *maulawīs* either. Our noble government should reconsider if it has come to believe that this country's *maulawīs* are innocent and do not think along these lines. I am of the opinion that the majority of the ignorant and short-tempered mullahs of the mosques are not free of these evil thoughts. I would have considered them blameless if their opinions were in accordance with God's Holy Book because, in a way, one is indeed helpless in matters of faith. However, I speak nothing but the truth when I say that they ignore the benevolence of this government and are its clandestine enemies in the same way that they are culprits

and offenders in front of God. I have explained in detail that the Word of God in no way commands us to spill the blood of innocent people. Those who are of this opinion have turned their backs on Islām.

2) In my opinion, the second cause of this criminal bloodshed, which is carried out in the hopes of becoming a *ghāzī*, is the preaching of Christian priests who have widely publicised the claim that *Jihād* is compulsory in Islām. They claim that killing people of other faiths is a matter of great Islamic virtue. I believe that the people of the Frontier Region were not even aware of this doctrine until the Christian priests embedded it in their minds. My view is supported by the fact that there were no incidents of this type before Christian priests began the distribution of journals, newspapers and books in the Frontier Region. In fact, ordinary Muslims and the people of the Frontier Region were very pleased when the British replaced the previous Sikh Government. In 1849, Reverend Pfander published his book *Mīzān-ul-Ḥaqq*[1] in India, the Punjab and the Frontier Region. In it, he used offensive language to attack Islām and its Prophet ﷺ and publicised the claim that killing people of other faiths is not merely permitted but is in fact considered to be worthy of great Divine reward in Islām. This drew the attention of the barbaric people of the Frontier Region (who have no knowledge of their religion), and they came to believe that Islām advocates the killing of non-Muslims.

After careful consideration, I have concluded that most of the incidents in the Frontier Region, and the violent hostility that has been created among its people, are due to the priests'

1. *Mīzān-ul-Ḥaqq* was written by the Reverend Karl Gottlieb Pfander. This was his first book on Islām and Christianity. The book is a defence of the integrity of the Bible, as well as an attack on the Holy Qur'ān and the truthfulness of the Holy Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ. [Publisher]

books, which use excessively harsh language and repeatedly draw attention towards the subject of *Jihād*. Ultimately, after the great publicity received by *Mīzān-ul-Ḥaqq* and its subsequent poisonous effect, our government was forced to issue Act Number XXIII of 1867 in order to check the spread of the militant ideas of the Frontier's residents. This law was applicable to six tribes in the Frontier Region, and it was hoped that violent incidents would thereby come to an end. Unfortunately, however, the subsequent violent and bitter writings of Reverend 'Imād-ud-Dīn[1] of Amritsar and some other foul-mouthed priests greatly damaged goodwill and reconciliation within the country. The books of other ministers, which we need not mention in detail, have also sown seeds of hatred within peoples' hearts, and they have thus proven to be a great obstacle for our noble government's attempts at reconciliation. Our government did act commendably in permitting Muslims to respond to these books, although the Muslims also showed some harshness in their replies. These sharp responses did, nevertheless, serve as a striking testimony to the open-minded nature of the government. The disturbances that could have resulted from these derogatory writings were avoided because of the well intentioned and fair manner adopted by the government.

We acknowledge with great regret that Islām's *maulawīs* have focused on an improper definition of *Jihād* and have taught the Frontier Region's tribes to unjustly harm this friendly government by spilling the blood of its honourable officers. Nevertheless, we are also disappointed with the '*mullāhs*' of Europe—namely the Christian priests—for they have inflamed the passions of the ignorant masses with their harsh and unjust publications. By bringing up the issue of *Jihād* a thousand

1. Reverend 'Imād-ud-Dīn, a former Muslim, was one of the many priests who published extensively against Islām during this period. [Publisher]

times, they have led ignorant Muslims to believe that this is an easy path to Paradise. If these priests were free from ill-will, they should have realised the truth themselves and remained silent after comparing the *Jihād* of the Prophet Moses and the Prophet Joshua to the *Jihād* of our Holy Prophet ﷺ. Even if we assume that the *maulawīs* are largely responsible for instigating the public to *Jihād*, our sense of fairness compels us to point out that the literature of the priests, which offers almost daily insults to Muslims, also play a part. It is regrettable that some ignorant people sit to one side after carrying out a mischievous act, leaving the British Government to deal with ensuing difficulties. In my opinion, an easy way to deal with these problems is to adopt the example of the present Ottoman government.

For an experimental period of a few years, every group should be strictly forbidden from using vicious language against other religions, be it explicit or implicit, in their writings or in their sermons. They should, however, be permitted to recount the virtues of their own faith. This will prevent the cultivation of new plants of hatred, and as ancient tales fade away people will be inclined towards mutual love and reconciliation. When the barbaric people of the Frontier Region see love and friendship grow among nations, then they too will be impressed, and in turn will show as much sympathy towards Christians as one Muslim does to another.

A second suggestion is that, if the *maulawīs* of Punjab and India truly oppose this notion of *Jihād*, they should publish journals about it, translate them into the Pashto language, and disseminate them among the tribes of the Frontier Region, for these would certainly prove very effective. However, all this

must be done with an honest heart and enthusiasm, not with hypocrisy. Peace be on him who follows the guidance.

Published by:
The humble one,
Mirza Ghulam Ahmad
The Promised Messiah
Seeking Allāh's security and peace
From Qadian
May 22, 1900[1]

1. *Government Angreizī aur Jihād*, *Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 17, pp. 3–22; Eng. Trans.: *The British Government and Jihād*, pp. 3–41

The Decree of the Promised Messiah Concerning the Suspension of Jihād

اب چھوڑ دو جہاد کا اے دوستو خیال دیں کیلئے حرام ہے اب جنگ اور قتال

Give up the thought of Jihād now, my friends
For war and fighting for religion are now forbidden.

اب آگیا مسیح جو دیں کا امام ہے دیں کی تمام جنگوں کا اب اختتام ہے

The Messiah has come, the leader of the faith[1]*,*
And with his advent, all religious wars have ended

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1. (A profound inspiration and vision) On Saturday, June 2, 1900, at 2:00 p.m., during a light trance, I was shown a pure white page. On its last line, the word '*Iqbāl*' [meaning honour and glory] was written. I perceive that the placement of this word in the last line signifies a good end—that my end will be blessed and honourable. Immediately after this, I received the following revelation:

قادر کے کاروبار نمودار ہو گئے۔ کافر جو کہتے تھے وہ گرفتار ہو گئے

The workings of the Almighty have been revealed; Those who called me a disbeliever have been seized.

This revelation means, as I was made to understand [by Allāh the Exalted], that great signs will soon appear. All those who declare me a disbeliever will be accused of various charges and will be seized with such intensity that they will have no escape. This is a prophecy, and let everyone who reads it remember it well.

Then, on June 3, 1900, at 11:30 a.m., the following revelation was sent down upon me:

کافر جو کہتے تھے وہ نگونسار ہو گئے۔ جتنے تھے سب کے سب ہی گرفتار ہو گئے

Those who used to declare me a disbeliever have been humiliated and have all fallen into captivity.

That is, Allāh's conclusive argument will be established against all those who declare me a disbeliever, leaving them with no excuses. This is a prophecy, meaning it will happen soon, and a clear and decisive sign will manifest to settle the matter. [Footnote by the Promised Messiah ﷺ]

اب آسماں سے نورِ خدا کا نزول ہے اب جنگ اور جہاد کا فتویٰ فضول ہے
The divine light now descends from the heavens,
And the fatwā for war and Jihād is futile and absurd.

دشمن ہے وہ خدا کا جو کرتا اب جہاد منکر نبی کا ہے جو یہ رکھتا ہے اعتقاد
Whoever engages in Jihād now is an enemy of God,
And whoever holds such a belief denies the Prophet.

کیوں چھوڑتے ہو لوگو نبیؐ کی حدیث کو جو چھوڑتا ہے چھوڑ دو تم اس خبیث کو
O people, why do you abandon the sayings of the Prophet ﷺ?
Abandon the vile one who abandons them.

کیوں بھولتے ہو تم **یَضَعُ الحَرب** کی خبر کیا یہ نہیں بخاری میں دیکھو تو کھول کر
Why do you forget the prophecy of 'He will put an end to wars'?
Is it not recorded in Bukhārī? Open it and see.

فرما چکا ہے سیدِ کونین مصطفٰےؐ عیسیٰ مسیح جنگوں کا کردے گا التوا
The Master of both worlds, the Chosen One, said,
Jesus the Messiah will abolish wars.

جب آئے گا تو صلح کو وہ ساتھ لائے گا جنگوں کے سِلسلے کو وہ یکسر مٹائے گا
When he comes, he will bring peace with him,
And he will put an absolute end to wars.

پیویں گے ایک گھاٹ پہ شیر اور گوسپند کھیلیں گے بچے سانپوں سے بے خوف و بے گزند
The lion and the lamb will drink from the same stream,
And children will play with snakes, free from fear or harm.

یعنی وہ وقت امن کا ہوگا نہ جنگ کا بُھولیں گے لوگ مشغلہ تیر و تفنگ کا
That time will be an era of peace, not war,
And people will abandon the ways of the sword and spear.

یہ حکم سُن کے بھی جو لڑائی کو جائے گا وہ کافروں سے سخت ہزیمت اُٹھائے گا
Whoever fights after hearing this command
Will face severe humiliation at the hands of the enemies.

اِک معجزہ کے طور سے یہ پیشگوئی ہے کافی ہے سوچنے کو اگر اہل کوئی ہے
This prophecy is a miraculous sign,
Sufficient for anyone capable of reflection.

القصہ یہ مسیح کے آنے کا ہے نشاں کردے گا ختم آکے وہ دیں کی لڑائیاں
In short, this is a sign of the Messiah's advent—
He will end all religious wars upon his arrival.

ظاہر ہیں خود نشاں کہ زماں وہ زماں نہیں اب قوم میں ہماری وہ تاب و تواں نہیں
The signs are manifest, and the time is no longer the same,
Our nation no longer possesses the strength or capability.

اب تم میں خود وہ قوت و طاقت نہیں رہی وہ سلطنت وہ رعب وہ شوکت نہیں رہی
Your power, grandeur, and awe are no more,
Neither the sovereignty nor the prominence remain.

وہ نام وہ نمود وہ دولت نہیں رہی وہ عزمِ مقبلا نہ وہ ہمت نہیں رہی
No longer do you possess fame, wealth,
or determination, Gone is the resolve and courage for progress.

وہ علم وہ صلاح وہ عفت نہیں رہی وہ نور اور وہ چاند سی طلعت نہیں رہی
The knowledge, righteousness, and chastity are absent,
And the light, the radiance, are no longer present.

وہ درد وہ گداز وہ رقت نہیں رہی خلقِ خدا پہ شفقت و رحمت نہیں رہی
Compassion and tenderness, mercy for God's creation—
These too are no longer part of your hearts.

دل میں تمہارے یار کی اُلفت نہیں رہی حالت تمہاری جاذب نصرت نہیں رہی
Your love for the Beloved has faded from within,
And your state no longer attracts divine support.

حمق آگیا ہے سر میں وہ فطنت نہیں رہی کسل آگیا ہے دل میں جلادت نہیں رہی
Foolishness has overtaken you, wisdom is gone,
Laziness has entered your hearts, and resilience is lost.

وہ علم و معرفت وہ فراست نہیں رہی وہ فکر وہ قیاس وہ حکمت نہیں رہی
No longer do you possess insight, knowledge, or foresight,
Nor the thought, analysis, or wisdom of the past.

دُنیاو دیں میں کچھ بھی لیاقت نہیں رہی اب تم کو غیر قوموں پہ سبقت نہیں رہی
Your merit in both worldly and religious matters has vanished,
And you no longer lead other nations.

وہ اُنس و شوق ووجد وہ طاعت نہیں رہی ظلمت کی کچھ بھی حدّو نہایت نہیں رہی
Gone is the devotion, longing, and reverence,
The darkness knows no limit or end.

ہر وقت جھوٹ۔ سچ کی تو عادت نہیں رہی نورِ خدا کی کچھ بھی علامت نہیں رہی
You have become accustomed to lies and estranged from truth,
The signs of God's light are nowhere to be found.

سو سو ہے گند دل میں طہارت نہیں رہی نیکی کے کام کرنے کی رغبت نہیں رہی
Your hearts are full of filth and impurities,
And the desire for righteousness is lost.

خوانِ تہی پڑا ہے وہ نعمت نہیں رہی دیں بھی ہے ایک قشر حقیقت نہیں رہی
Your table is empty; you no longer partake in blessings,
Faith has become a shell, its essence lost.

مولیٰ سے اپنے کچھ بھی محبت نہیں رہی دل مر گئے ہیں نیکی کی قدرت نہیں رہی
You no longer love your Lord,
Your hearts are dead, unable to do good.

سب پر یہ اِک بلا ہے کہ وحدت نہیں رہی اِک پُھوٹ پڑ رہی ہے مودّت نہیں رہی
Another calamity has struck—you have lost unity.
Discord and division have spread, and affection is gone.

تم مر گئے تمہاری وہ عظمت نہیں رہی صورت بگڑ گئی ہے وہ صورت نہیں رہی
You are dead; your greatness is no more,
Your image is distorted, no longer what it was.

اب تم میں کیوں وہ سیف کی طاقت نہیں رہی بھید اس میں ہے یہی کہ وہ حاجت نہیں رہی
Why is the strength of the sword no longer in you?
Because it is no longer needed.

اب کوئی تم پہ جبر نہیں غیر قوم سے کرتی نہیں ہے منع صلوٰۃ اور صوم سے
No foreign nation forces oppression upon you,
No one prevents you from praying or fasting.

ہاں آپ تم نے چھوڑ دیا دیں کی راہ کو عادت میں اپنی کر لیا فسق و گناہ کو
But you yourselves have abandoned the way of faith,
And adopted sin and vice as your habits.

اب زندگی تمہاری تو سب فاسقانہ ہے مومن نہیں ہو تم کہ قدم کا فرانہ ہے
Your lives are now steeped in immorality,
You are no longer believers but act like disbelievers.

اے قوم !تم پہ یار کی اب وہ نظر نہیں روتے رہو دعاؤں میں بھی وہ اثر نہیں
O nation, the Beloved no longer looks upon you,
Even your supplications have lost their effect.

کیونکر ہو وہ نظر کہ تمہارے وہ دل نہیں شیطاں کے ہیں خدا کے پیارے وہ دل نہیں
How can He look upon you, when your hearts are no longer what they were?
They are dear to Satan, not to the Most Merciful.

تقویٰ کے جامے جتنے تھے سب چاک ہو گئے جتنے خیال دل میں تھے ناپاک ہو گئے
The garments of piety have been torn apart,
And every thought in your hearts is impure.

کچھ کچھ جو نیک مرد تھے وہ خاک ہو گئے فاقی جو تھے وہ ظالم و سفّاک ہو گئے
The righteous ones among you have returned to dust,
While others have become tyrants and oppressors.

اب تم تو خود ہی موردِ خشمِ خدا ہوئے اُس یار سے بشامتِ عصیاں جُدا ہوئے
You have drawn God's wrath upon yourselves,
Separated from the Beloved as punishment for your sins.

اب غیروں سے لڑائی کے معنے ہی کیا ہوئے تم خود ہی غیرین کے محلِّ سزا ہوئے
What meaning is left in fighting others?
When you yourselves have become deserving of punishment.

سچ سچ کہو کہ تم میں امانت ہے اب کہاں وہ صدق اور وہ دین و دیانت ہے اب کہاں
Speak the truth—where is your honesty?
Where is the faith, integrity, and righteousness of the past?

پھر جبکہ تم میں خود ہی وہ ایماں نہیں رہا وہ نور مومنانہ وہ عرفاں نہیں رہا
When faith and insight no longer remain among you,
When the light of true believers has departed.

پھر اپنے کفر کی خبر اے قوم لیجئے آیت **علیکم انفسکم** یاد کیجئے
Reflect upon your disbelief, O nation,
And remember the verse: 'be heedful of your own selves.'

ایسا گماں کہ مہدیٔ خونی بھی آئے گا اور کافروں کے قتل سے دیں کو بڑھائے گا

اے غافلو! یہ باتیں سراسر دروغ ہیں بہتاں ہیں بے ثبوت ہیں اور بے فروغ ہیں
The idea of a bloody Mahdī who will spread religion by killing disbelievers—
O heedless ones, this is utter falsehood, baseless and futile.

یارو جو مرد آنے کو تھا وہ تو آچکا یہ راز تم کو شمس و قمر بھی بتا چکا
O beloved friends, the man destined to descend has already come;
The sun and moon have revealed this secret to you.

اب سال ستر بھی صدی سے گذر گئے تم میں سے ہائے سوچنے والے کِدھر گئے
Seventeen years have passed since the century turned;
Alas, where are the reflective minds among you?

تھوڑے نہیں نشاں جو دکھائے گئے تمھیں کیا پاک راز تھے جو بتائے گئے تمھیں
There were no shortage of signs shown to you,
And many divine truths were unveiled for your understanding.

پر تم نے اُن سے کچھ بھی اُٹھایا نہ فائدہ مُنہ پھیر کر ہٹا دیا تم نے یہ مائدہ
Yet you took no benefit from them,
And turned away from this heavenly feast.

بخلوں سے یارو باز بھی آؤ گے یا نہیں خو اپنی پاک صاف بناؤ گے یا نہیں
O friends, will you not abandon your miserliness?
Will you not purify yourselves?

باطل سے میل دل کی ہٹاؤ گے یا نہیں حق کی طرف رجوع بھی لاؤ گے یا نہیں
Will you not remove falsehood from your hearts,
And return to the truth?

اب عذر کیا ہے کچھ بھی بتاؤگے یا نہیں مخفی جو دل میں ہے وہ سُناؤ گے یا نہیں
What excuse do you have now? Will you reveal it?
Will you share what lies hidden in your hearts?

آخر خدا کے پاس بھی جاؤ گے یا نہیں اُس وقت اُس کو مُنہ بھی دکھاؤ گے یا نہیں
Will you eventually return to God or not?
Will you face Him on that day or not?

تم میں سے جس کو دین و دیانت سے ہے پیار اب اُس کا فرض ہے کہ وہ دل کر کے اُستوار
Whoever among you loves faith and integrity,
It is now their duty to strengthen their hearts.

لوگوں کو یہ بتائے کہ وقتِ مسیح ہے اب جنگ اور جہاد حرام اور قبیح ہے
They must inform the world that this is the era of the Messiah,
That war and Jihād are now forbidden and vile.

ہم اپنا فرض دوستو اب کر چکے ادا اب بھی اگر نہ سمجھو تو سمجھائیگا خُدا
Friends, we have fulfilled our duty.
If you still fail to understand, then God Himself will make it clear to you.[1]

1. *Tuḥfa-e-Golarhvīyyah*, *Rūhānī Khazā'in*, vol. 17, pp. 77–80

THE ANNUAL GATHERING IS BASED ON PURELY RELIGIOUS OBJECTIVES

A Response to the Objection Claiming That the Annual Gathering is an Innovation

The Promised Messiah ﷺ stated:

> One of the major Signs of the nearness of the Day of Judgment related to a *ḥadīth* that Imām Bukhārī recorded in his *Saḥīḥ* [*al-Bukhārī*] from ʻAbdullāh bin ʻAmr bin al-ʻĀṣ, and it is as follows:
>
> يُقْبَضُ الْعِلْمُ بِقَبْضِ الْعُلَمَاءِ حَتَّى إِذَا لَمْ يَبْقَ عَالِمٌ اتَّخَذَ النَّاسُ رُؤُوسًا جُهَّالًا فَسُئِلُوا فَأَفْتَوْا بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ فَضَلُّوا وَأَضَلُّوا[1]
>
> Meaning that: ʻKnowledge will be lost through the death of scholars until the point when no scholar is found. The people will take the ignorant as their leaders and rulers and will go to them for inquiries about religious issues, upon which those people, on account of their ignorance and lack of proficiency, will draw conclusions that are opposed to the way of truth and

1. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, *Kitābul-ʻIlm*, *Bāb Kaifa Yuqbaḍul-ʻIlm*, Ḥadīth 100 [Publisher]

upstanding *fatwās*. So they themselves will go astray and will lead others astray.'

In another *ḥadīth* it is stated: 'Those who will issue *fatwās* in this age'—namely the *maulawīs*, *muḥaddith* [scholars of Ḥadīth], and jurists—'will be the worst of all creation on the face of the earth.'[1] In another *ḥadīth*, it is said: 'They will recite the Qur'ān, but the Qur'ān will not go down their larynx';[2] that is, they will not act upon it.

There are many other *aḥādīth* about the *maulawīs* of this age, but I will provide, by way of a sample, proof of the *ḥadīth* about the erroneous fatwas that I have cited above. This is so that everyone should realize that if there is any benefit from these *maulawīs*, it is only that their degenerate behaviour is a reminder of the Day of Judgment and it is understood from this that it is near. Thus, we become eyewitnesses to the perfectly complete fulfilment of a prophecy of *Ḥaḍrat Khātamul-Anbiyā'* [the Seal of the Prophets], may peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him.

Background of the Annual Gathering

To elaborate, it was decided last year, after consultation with most friends, that the members of our Community should meet my humble self at least once a year with the intent of learning the essentials of the Faith and for consultations about propagating the Faith and the unshakeable Sharī'ah. At the time of this consultation, it was also considered most expedient to appoint

1. *Mishkātul-Masābīḥ*, vol. 1, *Kitābul-'Ilm*, p. 68, Ḥadīth 276, published by Sharikat Dar Arqam ibn Abi Arqam, Beirut, Lebanon [Publisher]

2. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhāri*, *Kitāb Istītābatul-Murtaddīn*, *Bāb Man Taraka Qitālul-Khawārij*..., Ḥadīth 6934 [Publisher]

December 27 as the most appropriate and preferable date for coming to Qadian for this purpose, because these are holidays and provide greater convenience and freedom to those serving employment. Moreover, because of the winter season, these days are convenient for travel. The friends and sincere members agreed happily with this advice and considered it appropriate. Therefore, based on this, my humble self sent an announcement to all members on 7 December 1892, and it was published in Riyāḍ-e-Hind Press Qadian. The gist of the announcement was that from among its objectives, the major purpose of this *Jalsa* [Annual Convention] is that all participants should get an opportunity to derive religious benefit from the face-to-face meeting, and so that their religious knowledge and cognizance may be fostered.

A Strange Inquiry to an Imam of a Mosque in Lahore

It has now been heard that, in order to prove this activity to be an innovation, and indeed a sin, an older person has been bold enough to present a query to a *maulawī* by the name of Raḥīm Bakhsh—an imām in the Chiniyanwali mosque in Lahore. The import of the query was: What is the verdict about making a long journey for going to this conference on a specific date? And if a guest house is constructed specifically for accommodating the guests for such a conference, what is the verdict about anyone who makes a financial contribution towards its construction? This last item was added to the query because the petitioner might have heard that my brother Maulawi Hakeem Noor-ud-Deen, whom I love for the sake of Allāh, has constructed a house in Qadian for this gathering of Muslims at a personal cost of about 700 rupees or more, and brother

Hakeem Faḍl Dīn of Bhera has assisted in its construction by contributing 300–400 rupees.

In response to this query, Miyāń Raḥīm Bakhsh has written a lengthy response quoting an irrelevant *ḥadīth* with reference to شَدِّ رِحال [*shadd-e-riḥāl*—setting out for a journey]. In brief, he says that going to such a gathering is an innovation; indeed, it is a sin. He adds that proposing such conferences is something novel which finds no support from the Holy Book or Sunnah [Practice of the Holy Prophet ﷺ]. Anyone who introduces such a matter in Islām stands condemned.

The Excellence of Travelling for the Purpose of Religious Learning

Now, let those people who possess honest dispositions declare faithfully whether the existence of such *maulawīs* and jurists in Islām is a Sign of the Day of Judgment or not. O naive man! Are you unaware that travelling for the sake of religious knowledge is not only permissible, but has been made obligatory by the Holy Qur'ān and the Holy Law-giver, peace be upon him? Anyone who intentionally abandons it is guilty of a major sin, and deliberately insisting upon its denial under some situations amounts to *kufr* [disbelief]. Are you not aware that it has been commanded with great emphasis that:

طَلَبُ الْعِلْمِ فَرِيضَةٌ عَلَى كُلِّ مُسْلِمٍ وَمُسْلِمَة

Moreover, it has been commanded:

اطْلُبُوْا الْعِلْمَ وَلَوْ كَانَ فِي الصِّينِ

Meaning: 'Seeking knowledge is an obligation upon every Muslim man and woman', and 'Seek knowledge even if you have to travel to China for it.'

Now think about it. Considering that my humble self has announced in absolutely plain and clear words that the proposed journey for every sincere member would be solely with the intent of acquiring knowledge, how far removed from honesty, integrity, justice, *taqwā* [righteousness] and purity is it to give a *fatwā* that anyone who introduces such a matter in Islām stands condemned?

As for gathering all brethren together on a specific date is concerned, it is just a matter of making arrangements. It is not at all an objectionable innovation in Islām to do things by appropriate arrangements. إِنَّمَا الْأَعْمَالُ بِالنِّيَّاتِ[1] [Verily, deeds are (judged) by intentions]. Abandon the evil of ill thinking and reflect on what innovation there is in coming together on a specific date. Why is it unlawful to benefit from the convenience available for all friends to gather on a specific date, considering that on 27 December every sincere friend can come over conveniently to meet me, and in this context, their mutual meetings are also facilitated? Why is it unlawful to benefit from this convenience?

It is strange that the *maulawī* labelled me as condemned but did not recall the *aḥādīth* in which the Messenger of Allāh, may peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, has encouraged travelling for the sake of acquiring knowledge, and in which he has declared that travelling for the sake of meeting a Muslim brother is a means of earning the pleasure of the Lord of Honour and Glory, and in which it is written that travelling

1. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhāri*, *Kitāb Bad'ul-Waḥy*, *Bab Kaifa Kāna Bad'ul-Waḥy ilā Rasūlillāh* ﷺ, Ḥadīth 1 [Publisher]

to meet the righteous is a means of attaining forgiveness and redemption of sins.

Travelling for Various Purposes

It should be borne in mind that it is utter ignorance to interpret the [1]شَدِّ رِحال [*shadd-e-riḥāl*—setting out for a journey] *ḥadīth* as meaning that travelling anywhere except to the Ka'bah [in Makkah] or the Prophet's Mosque [in Madīnah], or Baitul-Maqdis [in Jerusalem] is prohibited. It is obvious that all Muslims have to travel for different purposes—sometimes the journey is indeed for the acquisition of knowledge, and sometimes it is to meet a relative, a brother or sister, or wife; or, for example, it may be a journey of the women for meeting their parents or of the parents to meet their daughters, or of men for their marriage, or to search for a livelihood, or delivering a message, or for meeting righteous people. For example, Ḥaḍrat 'Umar, may Allāh be pleased with him, travelled to meet Ḥaḍrat Uwais Qarnī. And sometimes the journey is also for *Jihād*, whether it be a *Jihād* with the sword or for a religious debate [i.e. *Jihād* with the pen]; and sometimes the journey is with the intent of engaging in a *mubāhalah* [prayer duel], as is proven from the life of the Holy Prophet, may peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him. And sometimes, the journey is undertaken to meet one's religious guide, as has always been the case of the great *Auliyā'* [i.e. Saints], amongst whom include Ḥaḍrat Shaikh 'Abdul Qādir, may Allāh be pleased with him; Ḥaḍrat Ba Yazīd Bisṭāmī; Ḥaḍrat Mu'īnud-Dīn Chishti; and Ḥaḍrat Mujaddid Alf Thānī—all of whom have been travelling

1. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhāri*, *Kitābus-Ṣaum*, *Babus-Ṣaum Yaumin-Naḥr*, Ḥadīth 1995 [Publisher]

with such objectives, and their handwritten travelogues are available to this day.

Sometimes, the travel is undertaken to obtain a *fatwā* as well. This permission, indeed it being an obligation under certain circumstances, is proven from authentic *aḥādīth*.

Encouragement in the Qur'ān and Ḥadīth for Various Types of Travel

The journeys undertaken by Imam Bukhārī to seek the knowledge of Ḥadīth are well-known. Perhaps Miyāń Raḥīm Bakhsh is not aware of these. Sometimes travel is undertaken to see the wonders of the world, as is indicated by the verse:

قُلْ سِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ[1]

Sometimes a journey is carried out to stay in the company of the righteous, as is enjoined by the noble verse:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللهَ وَكُونُوا مَعَ الصَّادِقِينَ[2]

Sometimes travel is undertaken to visit the sick or attend a funeral. Sometimes, a sick person, or someone caring for him, travels for seeking treatment. Travel is also undertaken sometimes to attend a court hearing or for commerce etc. All these forms of travel are permissible according to the Noble Qur'ān

1. Say, 'go about in the earth' (*Sūrah al-An'ām*, 6:12). [Publisher]
2. 'O ye who believe! fear Allāh and be with the truthful' (*Sūrah at-Taubah*, 9:119). [Publisher]

and the Ḥadīth of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Indeed, there is great emphasis and encouragement in authentic *aḥādīth* for travelling to meet the righteous, to meet brethren, and to seek knowledge. If I were to write all these *aḥādīth* here, it would form a book in itself.

Those who issue such *fatwās* and who have them issued do not realize that they themselves are often faced with the need to undertake such travel. Therefore, if it is forbidden to travel anywhere except to the three Mosques [in Makkah, Madīnah, and Jerusalem], then these people should give up all their relationships and relatives and sit idle and never undertake a journey to meet them, sympathize with them, or express their commiserations or care for their welfare. I do not think that anyone besides those totally blinded by prejudice and ignorance would hesitate to confirm the permissibility of all such travel. Open page 16 of *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* and see how much has been said by way of glad tidings for travelling to seek knowledge. It is said there that:

مَنْ سَلَكَ طَرِيْقًا يَطْلُبُ بِهِ عِلْمًا سَهَّلَ اللهُ لَهُ طَرِيْقَ الْجَنَّةِ[1]

Meaning that the person who travels to seek knowledge and treads a certain path, Allāh will make the path to Paradise easy for him.

O unjust *maulawī*, now exercise some fairness. You condemned a brother who subscribes to the *Kalimah* like you, faces the *Qiblah*, and believes in Allāh and His Messenger. You declared him to be totally deprived of the mercy of God Almighty and the intercession of the Messenger of Allāh, may

1. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, *Kitābul-ʿIlm*, *Bābul-ʿIlm Qablal-Qaul wal-ʿAmal* [Publisher]

peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him. You also paid no attention to this authentic *ḥadīth* in *Bukhārī*, which says:

أَسْعَدُ النَّاسِ يَوْمَ القِيَامَةِ مَنْ قَالَ لَا إله إِلَّا اللهُ خَالِصًا مِنْ قَلْبِهِ أَوْ نَفْسِهِ[1]

['The worthiest of my intercession on the Day of Judgment will be the one who says, "There is no one worthy of worship except Allāh" with purity of heart or mind']. The reason given in your *fatwā* for declaring me as condemned is that an announcement has been issued, and people have been invited to attend the *Jalsa*.

O ye who are deprived of any fear of God! Just open your eyes and read what the subject is from the announcement dated 7 December 1892. Have I invited the members of my Jama'at for seeking knowledge, for resolving difficulties faced by the Faith, for showing goodwill for Islām, and promoting brotherly meetings, or does it mention some different kind of festival with singing and music?

O *maulawīs* of this age who bring disgrace upon Islām! Why do you not fear Allāh, glorified be His eminence? Are you not going to die one day, or are you totally exempt from being called to account? You hear the word of truth and commandments of Allāh and His Messenger, but do not think of reverting from your stubbornness. Instead, like chronic litigants, you try to find some way of making up a response and publicizing it so that the people do not think that their *maulawī* had no answer. How long will you persist in such audacity, dishonesty, jealousy, and malice? When writing your *fatwā*, you failed to recall the *aḥādīth* in which travelling for seeking knowledge of the Faith, removing misunderstandings, and meeting brethren in Faith and dear ones has been declared to be a source of great

1. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, *Kitābul-'Ilm*, *Bābul-Ḥirṣ 'alal-Ḥadīth*, Ḥadīth 99 [Publisher]

blessings and immense reward. As a matter of fact, it has been a well-established tradition among the pious predecessors to travel to meet the righteous.

It is narrated in a *ḥadīth* that when a person will be liable for great punishment for his evil deeds on the Day of Judgment, Allāh, glorified be His eminence, will ask him if he had ever gone to visit a certain righteous person. He will respond that he never did so intentionally, but by chance, he came across him during a journey. God Almighty will then say: 'Go and enter Paradise. I forgive you solely for that meeting.' Now, O short-sighted *maulawī*! Reflect a little: What does this *ḥadīth* encourage?

Response to the Objection to Setting a Specific Date for the Gathering

If someone is troubled by the misconception as to why a specific date has been fixed for this religious *Jalsa* and how is such a practice proven from the actions of the Messenger of Allāh, may peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, or the Companions, may Allāh be pleased with them, the answer is: Open *Bukhārī* and *Muslim* and see that the Bedouins used to visit the Holy Prophet, may peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, to enquire about [religious] issues when they had free time. And some would present themselves in groups before the Messenger of Allāh, may peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, during very specific months when they would have the time. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* has recorded a hadith from Abū Jamrah that:

قَالَ إِنَّ وَفْدَ عَبْدِ القَيْسِ أَتَوْا النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ، قَالُوا: إِنَّا نَأْتِيكَ مِنْ شُقَّةٍ بَعِيدَةٍ، وَلَا نَسْتَطِيعُ أَنْ نَأْتِيَكَ إِلَّا فِي شَهْرٍ حَرَامٍ.[1]

Meaning that some representatives of the tribe 'Abdul Qais presented themselves to the Holy Prophet, may peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, and said: 'We travel a long distance to come here, and we cannot come except during the sacred months.' The Holy Prophet, may peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, did not disapprove of their statement. It can be inferred from this *ḥadīth* that the people who want to meet their spiritual leader to seek knowledge or serve a religious need can fix a date that suits them in terms of freedom from their activities when they can come without any inconvenience and harm. That indeed is the case for setting 27 December as the date, because the employed people can conveniently come on those days due to the holidays.

God Almighty says in the Holy Qur'ān that nothing inconvenient has been placed in this religion. This indicates that there is no harm in adopting the easier course in something that is legitimate and can be carried out with some convenience. To label such activities as innovations is the work of the blind who are deprived of the knowledge of both religion and the world. Imam Bukhārī has devoted a special chapter in his *Ṣāḥīḥ* about fixing a specific date for a gathering of seekers of religious knowledge. It is entitled **مَنْ جَعَلَ لِأَهْلِ العِلْمِ أَيَّامًا مَعْلُومَةً**; that is, fixing specific dates for the benefit of seekers of religious knowledge as was the practice of some of the Companions. To prove this point, Imam Bukhārī narrates from Abū Wā'il in his *Ṣāḥīḥ*:

1. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, *Kitābul-'Ilm*, *Bāb Taḥrīḍun-Nabī ﷺ Wafd 'Abdul-Qais...*, Ḥadīth 87 [Publisher]

كَانَ عَبْدُ اللَّهِ يُذَكِّرُ النَّاسَ فِي كُلِّ خَمِيسٍ[1]

Meaning that ʻAbdullāh had fixed Thursday as the day for delivering his admonitions, and people used to gather for learning on that day.

It may also be borne in mind that Allāh, glorified be His eminence, has commanded us in the Holy Qur'ān to make use of planning and effective management. He has enjoined us to adopt what we consider to be the best plan and arrangement for serving the Faith and overpowering enemies, as He, hallowed be His name, says:

وَأَعِدُّوْا لَهُمْ مَاسْتَطَعْتُمْ مِنْ قُوَّةٍ[2]

Meaning that, make all the necessary preparations you can to counter the enemy and use all your power to propagate the message of Islām. See how vehemently this verse enjoins that all possible strategies that can prove successful to serve Islām be adopted, and that all the faculties of your mind and limbs, and all the power of your wealth together with the best of planning and most appropriate tactics be employed so that you may be victorious.

The ignorant and blind *maulawīs* who are the enemies of the Faith now label this striving and planning as 'innovation'. These people of our times who are not even cognizant of the

1. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, *Kitabul-ʻIlm, Bāb Man Jaʻala li-Ahlil-ʻIlm Ayyāman Maʻlūmah*, Ḥadīth 70 [Publisher]

2. *Sūrah al-Anfāl*, 8:61 [Publisher]

Holy Qur'ān are called 'scholars'. إِنَّا لِلّٰهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ [Surely, to Allāh we belong and to Him shall we return].[1]

Strategic Planning for the Propagation of Islām is Not an Innovation

Those who reflect upon the above-cited verse can understand that in line with the *ḥadīth* of the Holy Prophet ﷺ: [2] إِنَّمَا الأَعْمَالُ بِالنِّيَّاتِ [Verily, deeds are (judged) by their intentions], no appropriate arrangement for serving Islām can be labelled as innovation or waywardness. As with the changing times new difficulties are arising for Islām, and new ways are being adopted to attack us, we have to make new plans to counter them. Therefore, if we think of a plan to counter and dispel the attacks prevailing at these times, it would be good planning and would have nothing to do with innovations.

It is also possible that because of the changing times, we may come across difficulties that were not faced by our Lord and Master the Holy Prophet, may peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him. For example, we cannot adopt the modes of fighting that were adopted by him, because the mode of fighting has been completely transformed. The older types of weapons are of no use, and new weapons have been invented. If using and handling these weapons is now deemed an innovation, and if—by listening to *maulawīs* such as Miyāń Raḥīm Bakhsh—we declare it to be sinful and a form of misguidance simply because neither the Holy Prophet ﷺ, nor his Companions, nor those

1. A phrase from the Holy Qur'ān which is recited by Muslims when one is afflicted with a misfortune. [Publisher]

2. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, *Kitāb Bad'ul-Waḥy, Bab Kaifa Kāna Bad'ul-Waḥy ila Rasūlillāh*, Ḥadīth 1 [Publisher]

who came after them adopted these methods of warfare, then what would be the consequence? The only outcome would be that we would suffer humiliating defeat. Even the crumbling kingdoms that still remain in our possession would be lost, and the enemy would prevail over us. No other result could possibly follow. Thus, in this verse of the Holy Qur'ān:

وَأَعِدُّوْا لَهُمْ مَاسْتَطَعْتُمْ مِنْ قُوَّةٍ[1]

Allāh, glorified be His eminence, provides us sufficient guidance in all matters of fighting—whether they relate to physical or intellectual warfare, and whether the fight is with the sword or the pen. And we are granted general permission to adopt the strategy best known to us and that appears most effective against the enemy. It is therefore obvious that to label such appropriate arrangements as innovation and sin, and to consider the helpers of the Faith who occupy themselves day and night to spread the message of Islām—about whom the Holy Prophet, may peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, says: حُبُّ الْأَنْصَارِ مِنَ الْإِيمَانِ[Love for the *Anṣār* is a sign of faith]—to be worthy of condemnation is not something that any virtuous person would do. On the contrary, it is actually the conduct of those whose spirituality has been disfigured. If you say that the *ḥadīth*: حُبُّ الْأَنْصَارِ مِنَ الْإِيمَانِ وَبُغْضُ الْأَنْصَارِ مِنَ النِّفَاقِ—meaning that the love for the *Anṣār* is a sign of faith and envy against them is a sign of hypocrisy—is applicable only to the *Anṣār* who lived in Madīnah but not to the helpers of the Faith in general, then it would justify being envious of all helpers of the Faith who appeared thereafter. This is certainly not the case. Rather, this *ḥadīth*, which was uttered with reference to one specific group

1. *Sūrah al-Anfāl*, 8:61 [Publisher]

of people, has a general applicability as well. In the Holy Qur'ān several verses were revealed with reference to specific groups of people, but are considered to be of general application. In short, these people who are called *maulawīs* are enemies of the helpers of the Faith and are following in the footsteps of the Jews.

This statement of mine does not apply to the righteous *'ulamā'* [scholars]. It has been written only about the deceitful *maulawīs*. Every Muslim should pray that God Almighty may soon liberate Islām from the presence of these deceitful *maulawīs,* because Islām is now going through a very precarious period and these foolish friends want Islām to be mocked and laughed at. They make such statements that are deemed clearly contrary to truthfulness by the light of faith in everyone's hearts.

May Allāh the Exalted have mercy on Imām Bukhārī, who has devoted one chapter in his book to this issue as well. He writes in this chapter:

قَالَ عَلِيٌّ رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ حَدِّثُوْا النَّأسَ بِمَا يَعْرِفُونَ أَتُحِبُّونَ أَنْ يُّكَذَّبَ اللهُ وَرَسُولُهُ[1]

['Alī, may Allāh be pleased with him, said: 'Speak to the people according to their level of understanding. Would you like them to falsify Allāh and His Messenger?'] In explaining this *ḥadīth*, Imam Bukhārī says in the footnote:

أَي تُكَلِّمُوا النَّاسَ عَلَى قَدَرِ عُقُولِهِمْ

1. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, *Kitābul-'Ilm*, *Bāb Khuṣṣa' bil-'Ilm Qaum dūna Qaum Karāhiyata an Lā Yafhamū* [Publisher]

Meaning that: 'Convey to people those topics of the sayings of Allāh and His Messenger ﷺ that they understand and that appear intelligible to them. Otherwise, they may unwittingly give the lie to Allāh and His Messenger.'

Now, obviously, any opponent who hears that the *maulawīs* have issued a *fatwā* stating that it is forbidden to travel in any other direction outside of three mosques and one or two other destinations, would laugh at Islām and would find an opportunity to find fault with the teachings of the Holy Law-giver, peace be upon him. The opponent would be completely unaware that this was simply the mischief or stupidity of a *maulawī* that was based upon some narrow-mindedness. He would directly attack our Lord and Master, may peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him.

Likewise, many such mischievous writings of the *maulawīs* have given ample help to the Christians. For example, when the *maulawīs* openly declared that our Prophet, may peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, is—God forbid—dead, but Ḥaḍrat 'Isā [Jesus] is alive till the Day of Judgment, these people mounted vigorous attacks upon *Ahl-e-Islām* [the Muslims]. They misled thousands of simple-minded people with these very statements. These unworthy people did not understand that, in fact, all Prophets are alive—not a single one of them is dead. During the night of *Mi'rāj* [Spiritual Ascension], the Holy Prophet, may peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, did not see the dead body of any of them. They were all alive.

Take note that in the Noble Qur'ān, Allāh, glorified be His eminence, informs His Noble Prophet ﷺ about the life of Moses, peace be upon him, and says:

فَلَا تَكُنْ فِي مِرْيَةٍ مِّنْ لِّقَائِهِ[1]

Furthermore, the Holy Prophet, may peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, has himself spoken about his becoming alive after death, being raised to Heaven and meeting the Most Exalted Companion. Then what is so unique in the life of the Messiah [Jesus] that is not found in others? During the night of *Mi'rāj*, the Holy Prophet, may peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, encountered all Prophets equally alive and saw Hadrat 'Isā [Jesus] sitting alongside Ḥaḍrat Yaḥyā [John].

May Almighty Allāh shower His mercy upon Maulawī 'Abdul-Ḥaqq, the *muḥaddith* of Dehli, who records the statement of another *muḥaddith* of his time, that it is verily his belief that if anyone, being a Muslim, considers the life of any other Prophet to be more potent than the life of the Holy Prophet, may peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, then that individual falls outside of the pale of Islām, or perhaps he had written that that individual is close to becoming a *kāfir* [disbeliever]. Nevertheless, these *maulawīs* do not desist from such mischievous acts and depart from the Faith merely to publicize their enmity towards my humble self. It would be better if God Almighty wiped them all off the face of the earth in order to protect the religion of Islām from their deliberate distortions.

It is an opportune moment to exercise a little justice, in that hundreds of people travel to Delhi seeking the knowledge or audience of Nadhīr Ḥusain, the wanting teacher, but that journey is considered permissible [by those very *maulawīs*]. Moreover, in spite of his elderly age, Nadhīr Ḥusain himself

1. Be not therefore in doubt as to the meeting with Him (*Sūrah as-Sajdah*, 32:24). [Publisher]

undertook a two-hundred *kos*[1] journey, arriving in Batala to feast at the *walīmah* [wedding reception] of [Maulawī Muhammad Ḥusain] Batālawī, and that journey is deemed absolutely legitimate. Similarly, the Shaikh of Batala runs off to Shimla year after year to meet the British, seeking worldly fame, and that journey is not considered forbidden and *ḥarām* [unlawful]. In the very same fashion, some *maulawīs* travel here and there to the east and the west in the name of giving sermons to earn their living, and those journeys are not considered objectionable, and no one issues *fatwās* of them being innovators or evil-doers, or being worthy of condemnation. However, when my humble self, being appointed under Divine guidance and command to call unto truth, invites the members of my Community to seek knowledge, then that journey is declared *ḥarām*, and I am called an apostate on account of that act. Is this the way of *taqwā* [righteousness] and God-fearing virtue?

Every Era Requires Administrative Measures

It is a pity that these simpletons do not even realize that planning and management cannot be inserted under the heading of *bidʿah* [innovations in the Faith]. Every time and age calls for new arrangements. If new types of challenges arise, then what can we do other than form new plans? So, would these plans be categorized as innovations? When the original Sunnah is safeguarded, and for its [continued] safeguarding we are compelled to make various plans, would such plans be called innovation? God forbid—not at all.

1. A *kos* is a measure of distance, the length of which is approximately two English miles. [Publisher]

An innovation is something which, in its essence, hinders or opposes the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, or for which there is a warning or limitation attributable to the Holy Prophet ﷺ. If you want to label any new arrangement or plan as innovation, then keep counting the innovations in Islām—there is no limit to them. Knowledge of grammatical conjugation and syntax would be counted as innovation, as would be the art of composition. Moreover, documenting the *aḥādīth* and classifying and arranging them into chapters would all become innovations. Similarly, riding a train, wearing clothes manufactured in factories, posting letters, seeking information by telegram, and fighting with guns and cannons would all be included as innovations. Indeed, fighting with guns and cannons would not only be considered an innovation, but also a major sin because there is a *ṣaḥīḥ* [authentic] *ḥadīth* stating that killing someone through the torment of fire is strictly prohibited.[1]

Who could be a better follower of the Sunnah than the Companions? Notwithstanding, they also did not understand the Sunnah to mean what Miyāń Raḥīm Bakhsh has understood. They performed such activities under new plans and arrangements which had not been enjoined by the Holy Prophet, may peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him, nor were they revealed in the Holy Qur'ān.

The Practices Introduced by Ḥaḍrat 'Umar رضي الله عنه

Look at the novel initiatives carried out by Ḥaḍrat 'Umar, may Allāh be pleased with him, which would fill a volume. He established the Hijri calendar in Islām. He appointed policemen for

1. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, *Kitābul-Jihād was-Siyar*, *Bāb La Yuʿadhdhab bi-ʿadhābillāh*, Ḥadīth 3016 [Publisher]

protecting the cities and established a regular office for the treasury. He established rules for vacation and holidays for the army, and ordained the regulation for their fighting engagements. He issued guidelines for the settlement of monetary disputes. He formulated and promulgated many regulations of his own for the protection of citizens. During the reign of his *Khilāfat*, he took upon himself the personal responsibility of sometimes going about at night in a covert manner to assess the true circumstances of the public. However, my humble self has not undertaken any such new initiative. I simply proposed this *Jalsa* [Convention] for seeking knowledge, mutual consultation, support for Islām, and meeting with the brethren.

As for the construction of a house, if it is *ḥarām* [unlawful] to build a house for the hospitality and comfort of every guest and traveller, you should present a *ḥadīth* or verse to support that view. What sin did brother Hakeem Noor-ud-Deen commit by constructing a house solely for the sake of Allāh for the members of this Jamaʿat? What kind of sincerity is it to go on criticizing an individual who is serving the cause of the Faith with all his ability and hard-earned money?

Gentlemen! You will find out after your death. Just wait a little, for the time is coming when you will be questioned about all of these verbal abuses. You constantly recite the *ḥadīth* that 'He who dies without recognizing the Imam of his time, dies a death of ignorance',[1] but you have no regard for the fact that someone was raised exactly at the appointed time—namely, the head of the fourteenth century—and not only the fourteenth century, but he also appeared during the very time of misguidance and the dominance of Christianity and philosophy. He proclaimed to be the Imam of the Age, but you denied him and

1. *Musnad Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal*, Juzw 10, p. 209, *Musnad Muʿāwiyah ibn Abī Sufyān*, Ḥadīth 16819, published by Dārul-Ḥadīth, Cairo, 2012 [Publisher]

labelled him a *kāfir* and *dajjāl*, without the slightest fear for your evil end, preferring to die in ignorance.

Allāh the Exalted had instructed you to recite the following prayer in your five daily Prayers:

اهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ[1]

Meaning that: O our God! Inform us of the path of those of Your servants who have earned Your blessings. Who are they? The Prophets, the Truthful, the Martyrs, and the Righteous. The essential meaning of this prayer is that whichever of these four groups whose season you chance upon, come under the shelter of their company and attain grace from them. But the present-day *maulawīs* have done a splendid job acting upon this verse—Bravo! Bravo!—who can I compare them with? They are akin to a blind man who openly boasts and brags about curing the sight of others, but is completely oblivious to his own inability to see.

In the end, I also affirm that if Maulawī Raḥīm Bakhsh still does not retract his *fatwā*, I call him in the name of Allāh, blessed be His eminence, that if he is a seeker of truth, he should come and visit me in Qadian to settle this matter. I will pay the total expenses of his journey and will prove to him by showing him the books and citing the Qur'ān and Ḥadīth that this *fatwā* of his is totally false and a satanic misguidance.

1. *Sūrah al-Fātiḥah*, 1:6–7 [Publisher]

والسلام على من اتبع الهدى [And peace be upon those who follow the guidance].

Humbly, **Ghulam Ahmad** of Qadian, District Gurdaspur
(17 December 1892)
Published by Riyāḍ-e-Hind[1]

1. *Ā'īna Kamālāt-e-Islām*, *Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 5, pp. 605–612

GLOSSARY

Aḥād Those *aḥādīth* narrated by one or a few individuals in one or more generations of the chain of transmission, rather than by a large number of people. These narrations do not reach the level of *mutawātir aḥādīth*, which are narrated by numerous individuals in each generation.

Al-Taḥiyyāt Refers to the portion of the Prayer recited during the sitting position (*qa'dah*) following the prostrations. It begins with the words *al-taḥiyyātu lillāhi* and includes praise of God, salutations upon the Holy Prophet ﷺ and supplications for blessings.

Annual Convention (Jalsa Sālāna) A conference held annually and attended by Aḥmadī and non-Aḥmadī-Muslims and other people throughout the world in large numbers. The annual conference was initiated by the Promised Messiah عليه السلام in 1891. It is known by its original Urdu name, *Jalsa Salāna*.

Adhān Also known as the 'Call to Prayer' in Islam, is an Islamic ritual in which a designated person, called the *mu'adhdhin*, announces the time for obligatory daily Prayers. This call includes specific phrases that invite Muslims to come to the mosque for congregational Prayer.

Al-Ḥakam The first official organ of the Aḥmadiyya Muslim Community established on 8 October 1897. The first editor of *Al-Ḥakam* was Ḥaḍrat Sheikh Ya'qūb Alī Irfānī رضي الله عنه. This weekly newspaper was published from Qadian, District Gurdaspur.

Aqīqah A tradition of the Holy Prophet ﷺ observed by Muslims on the birth of a baby, in which the newborn's head is shaved, charity is given to the poor, and animal sacrifice is made. The *Aqīqah* is performed on the seventh day after the child's birth.

'Aṣr The third of the five daily prayers, which is offered in the late afternoon.

Āmīn A term which literally means, 'so let it be' and is used at the end of a supplication to pray that God may accept it. It is similar in meaning to 'amen'.

Bukhārī Also referred to as *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī*. It is the most authentic book of Ḥadīth tradition among the *ṣiḥāḥ sittah* i.e. the six authentic books of Ḥadīth.

Baitud-Du'ā' Literally meaning 'the House of Prayer', this was a small, modest room adjacent to Masjid Mubārak in Qadian, where the Promised Messiah ﷺ, would often retire to engage in intense, heartfelt supplication.

Dhikr-e-arra Literally, the 'invocation of the saw'. A Sufi invocation, commonly found among the Yasavi order and others. The sound that comes from the throat of those performing this chant aloud resemble the grinding of a saw and is symbolic for the Sufis 'sawing their desires.'

Dajjāl A term in Arabic that literally means, 'the great deceiver'. In Islamic terminology *'Dajjāl'* refers to those satanic forces that would be unleashed in the Latter Days to oppose the Promised Messiah and Imām Mahdī.

Durūd Sharīf Also *Ṣalāt 'alan-Nabīyy*. Invocation of blessings upon the Holy Prophet of Islam, Muhammad ﷺ

Dār-ul-Ḥarb Literally, 'Territory of War' and refers to such territories where no treaty of peace with the Muslims exists. Various schools of thought and jurists believe that an Islamic territory taken by non-Muslims becomes a *Dār-ul-Ḥarb* when Islamic law is replaced.

Dābbatul-Arḍ Literally meaning 'Beast of the Earth', the term derives from the Arabic root *dabba*, meaning 'to crawl or creep slowly'. It broadly refers to animals or insects that move in such a manner, whether on legs, bellies, or otherwise, and includes beasts like horses or mules. It also carries a figurative meaning, denoting a grossly materialistic or worldly person, someone whose efforts are consumed by physical gain and who is heedless of spiritual truths.

'Id/Eid Literally, 'Happiness that is often renewed.' *'Īdul-Fiṭr* marks the end of the month of Ramaḍān. *'Īdul-Aḍḥā* is celebrated to commemorate the willingness of Ḥadrat Ibrāhīm ﷺ to sacrifice his son for God.

Fajr the first of the five daily prayers, which is offered at dawn before sunrise.

Faij-e-a'waj Literally, 'a crooked group' refers to a dark period destined to descend upon the Muslims after the first three golden centuries of Islam. According to the prophecies of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, this would be an era in which the Muslims would lose their spirituality and be misguided.

Fātiḥah Khānī is a practice observed by some Muslims involving the recitation of *Sūrah al-Fātiḥah* and other Quranic verses as a means of seeking Allah's forgiveness for the deceased. This practice is typically performed collectively, especially following the death or on the anniversary of someone's passing.

Futūḥāt Refers to *Al-Futūḥāt-ul-Makkīyyah*, a well-known book in the field of Islamic mysticism by Abū Abdullāh Muḥammad ibn Alī ibn Muḥammad ibn ʻArabī.

Ḥalālah A practice among certain Muslims in which a female divorcee marries another man, consummates the marriage, and then gets a divorce, so that it becomes permissible for her to remarry a previous husband. Such pre-planned marriages of convenience are forbidden in Islam and the Holy Prophet ﷺ has sent curse on those who engage in this unlawful practice.

Ḥabs-e-damm Literally, 'holding breath,' is a meditative practice which combines rhythmic inhaling and exhaling, and the restricting of one's breath along with the recitation of verbal formulae to induce a state of heart and mind that entrances the spiritual seeker.

Ḥāfiẓ A person who has committed to memory the entire text of the Holy Qur'ān. Plural form is *ḥuffāẓ*.

Hadīth The recorded sayings, actions, tacit approvals, and descriptions of the Holy Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ. The singular form is *ḥadīth* and the plural is *aḥādīth*. When referring to the entire body of such reports, the term is capitalised and written as Ḥadīth.

Ḥaḍrat A term of respect used to show honour and reverence for a person of established righteousness and piety. The literal meaning is: His/Her Holiness, Worship, Eminence, etc. It is also used for God in the superlative sense.

Ḥakam Arbiter, Judge. A title given to the Imām Mahdī by the Holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.

Holy Qur'ān The final and perfect Scripture revealed by Allah for the guidance of mankind for all times to come. It was revealed word by word to the Holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ over a period of twenty-three years.

Ijtihād The use of independent reasoning in Islamic jurisprudence.

Ijrā-e-qalb Literally, 'the movement of the heart,' is a Sufi belief suggesting that one's heart begins to beat in a certain manner or speed through constant, concentrated repetition of Allah's name. It is said that once the heart begins to 'move' in this rhythmic way, the spiritual seeker begins to perceive their heart call out the name of God. The Holy Qur'ān and Ḥadīth do not speak of such things, and this is nothing but a latter innovation in the Faith.

'Ishā' The last of the five daily prayers, which is offered in the evening, shortly after nightfall.

Ishrāq Is an optional Prayer consisting of two phases: two *rak'āt* are offered when the sun has risen for a while but not enough to have heated up the environment. Once the latter has occurred, this is the second phase,

in which one may offer four or eight *rak'āts*. The first phase is known as *salāt-ul-ishrāq* and the second *ṣalāt-uḍ-ḍuḥā*. It has been named *ṣalāt-ul-awwābīn* as well. In some *aḥādīth*, however, the Prayer offered between *Maghrib* and *Ishā'* consisting of six *rak'āts* is called *ṣalāt-ul-awwābīn*.

Jizyah A tax paid in lieu of military service by non-Muslims living in a Muslim State.

Jamā'at Community. Although the word *Jamā'at* may refer to any community, in this book *Jamā'at* generally refers to the Worldwide Aḥmadīyya Muslim *Jamā'at*.

Kadhdhāb A great liar. A title of Musailimah, who claimed falsely to be a Prophet in Arabia in the 7th century CE.

Khabar wāḥid A *khabar wāḥid* (solitary report) refers to a *ḥadīth* transmitted by a single narrator at one or more stages of its chain of transmission. While not reaching the level of *mutawātir* (mass-transmitted reports), *khabar wāḥid* narrations are accepted in matters of jurisprudence and practice when the narrator is trustworthy and the report is consistent with Islamic principles.

Khānqāh A *khānqāh* is a spiritual retreat or lodge traditionally associated with Ṣūfī orders

Kufr Disbelief. Describes any belief or act that is so contrary to Islamic teachings that it can cause its doer to fall outside the pale of Islam. Often used by Muslims in the context of opining on the beliefs or actions of their co-religionists.

Khalīfah Caliph is derived from the Arabic word '*khalīfah*', which herein means 'successor'. *Khulāfā*' is the plural of *Khalīfah*.

Khilāfat The institution of successorship in Islam.

Khuṭbah Thāniyah Refers to the second and concluding part of the Friday sermon, typically shorter in length and focused on prayers and supplications

Lajna Imā'illāh literally, 'Maidservants of Allah'; the women's auxiliary organisation of the Aḥmadiyya Muslim Community.

Mujaddid Lit. 'Reformer'. Holy personages within Islām who appeared at the head of every century.

Mujtahid One who practices *ijtihād* (independent reasoning)

Maghrib The fourth of the five daily prayers and offered right after sunset.

Maḥram A man or woman with whom marriage is not permissible. A non-*maḥram*, therefore, refers to a man or woman who one can marry and between whom the Sharī'ah instructs segregation in light of the Islamic injunction of veiling.

Madhab (pl. *Madhāhib*) Refers to a school of thought within Islamic jurisprudence that outlines principles and

methods for deriving rulings from the Qur'ān and Sunnah. The four major Sunni *madhāhib* are Ḥanafī, Mālikī, Shāfi'ī, and Ḥanbalī, each named after its founding jurist.

Muqallid A term which refers to someone who follows the teaching of another. In general it refers to someone who follows one of the four main Sunni schools of Islamic jurisprudence, namely: Ḥanafī, Shāfi'ī, Mālikī and Ḥanbalī.

Muwaḥḥid Literally meaning a believer in the Unity of God. Every Muslim, by virtue of subscribing to the *Kalima-e-Tauḥīd*, is a *muwaḥḥid*. However, the term *muwaḥḥid* has been adopted by some Muslims who consider the Qur'ān and Ḥadīth to be sufficient sources of guidance and do not follow any Imam.

Tawātur A standard of Ḥadīth narration in which a *ḥadīth* is clear in its meaning and transmitted by such a large number of narrators that it is impossible to accept it as forgery. Such a *ḥadīth* is known as *mutawātir*.

Mahr The obligatory gift or dower that a husband must give to his wife as part of the Islamic marriage contract.

Madīnah The ancient Arabian city to which the Holy Prophet ﷺ emigrated from Makkah. Home to al-Masjid an-Nabawī and the tomb of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, the second holiest site in Islam.

Mahdī Literally 'the guided one' and usually used in reference to the Imam Mahdī—a title meaning 'Guided Leader', given to the Reformer of the Latter Days prophesied by the Holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.

Maulawī (Also spelled Maulvi) an honorific title used in South Asia for a learned scholar of Islam, often one who has received formal training in religious sciences such as the Qur'ān, Ḥadīth, and jurisprudence.

Mathnawī An extensive poem written in Persian by Maulānā Jalāl-ud-Dīn Rūmī, it is one of the most influential works of Sufism and is often referred to as 'the Qur'ān in Persian.'

Mi'rāj Literally, 'the ascension' was a spiritual experience of the Holy Prophet ﷺ in which he travelled into the heavens, met various Prophets and ultimately Allah Himself.

Makkah The ancient Arabian city of the Holy Prophet Muhammad's birth, settled by Prophet Ibrāhīm, and home to the *Ka'bah*, the holiest site in Islam.

Muṣleḥ Ma'ūd Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul Masīḥ II, Mirzā Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad رضي الله عنه (1889–1965), was the second Successor of the Promised Messiah عليه السلام. He is also called *Muṣleḥ-e-Ma'ūd* (Promised Son) because he was born in accordance with the prophecy made by the Promised Messiah عليه السلام in 1886 concerning the birth of a righteous son who would be

endowed with unique abilities and attributes.

Muṣṭafā The Chosen One, a title of honour used for the Holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.

Nawāb An honorific title ratified and bestowed by Mughal emperors to semi-autonomous Muslim rulers of princely states in South Asia. The female equivalent is 'Begum' or 'Nawāb Begum'.

Nikāḥ the announcement of marriage in Islam.

Nafī-o-Ithbāt A meditative practice among the Sufis, in which they recite, as a formula, the Muslim creed *lā ilāha illallāhu muḥammadur-rasūlullāh*, and direct the energy of these words throughout their body, whilst holding their breath. First they recite *lā ilāha* (there is no God) and this constitutes a negation (*nafī*) of all that is besides God. Then they recite *illallāh*, (except for Allah) which is an affirmation (*asbāt*) of the One True God.

Nafs A term in Arabic that literally means 'self'.

Niyog The Arya Samāj practice allowing a married woman to indulge in conjugal relations with other men in order to have children.

Pīr(s) Literally, 'old' (in Persian). Generally refers to a spiritual leader at whose hands students have taken an oath of allegiance. Title is commonly used for leaders of Sufi orders.

Prayer and Prayers Three Islamic terms, all sometimes translated as 'prayer', should be distinguished. The first term is *du'ā* prayers or supplications made to God Almighty. *Du'ā* can be made at any time and in any language. It does not require any formal prescribed posture. *Du'ā* is translated in the text as 'prayer' or 'supplications'. Secondly, *ṣalāt* refers to the five daily Prayer services prescribed for all Muslims. Unlike *du'ā*, *ṣalāt* has fixed timings and modes of performance. Thirdly, We have retained the term *ṣalāt* in the translation or have used the term 'prescribed Prayer', or 'Prayer'.

Qiyās The process of analogical reasoning which critically analyses the teachings of the Qur'ān and Ḥadīth, involving applying a known injunction to a new situation and creating a new injunction.

Qiblah The direction in which a Muslim should face when observing the formal Islamic Prayer. The *qiblah* of the Muslims is the Holy *Ka'bah* in Mecca.

Qunūt To stand in supplication, with both hands to one's side, during the formal Prayer after completing the bowing position *(ruku')* and before falling into prostration (*sajdah*). During the *Qunūt* one may recite Quranic prayers and other prayers as well. One may offer the *Qunūt* in times of calamity or for a special purpose.

Rak'at a single unit in the formal Islamic Prayer, consisting of the standing and bowing positions, as well as two prostrations.

Ramaḍān The ninth month of the lunar calendar, in which fasting is prescribed for all adult, able-bodied Muslims, except those traveling, ill, pregnant, or nursing.

Ṣadaqah Charity offered willingly with the intention of pleasing God. It encompasses voluntary acts of generosity, love, compassion, or faith directed towards others. *Ṣadaqah* is not limited to physical or monetary contributions alone. Even simple gestures like a smile or extending a helping hand are considered acts of *ṣadaqah*.

Sahib A title of respect similar to diverse English terms like Mister, Honourable, and Revered.

Sunnah The actions, deeds or customs practiced by the Holy Prophet ﷺ, which were followed by his Companions رضي الله عنهم and thus transferred from generation to generation. In the context of the formal Prayer, *sunnah* refers to those *rak'āt* that the Holy Prophet ﷺ offered but are not prescribed as obligatory and are dropped while travelling. *Sunnah rak'āt* are offered regularly by practicing Muslims.

Taslīm Refers to the concluding salutation in Islamic Prayer, said as *al-salāmu 'alaykum wa raḥmatullāh* while turning the head to each side. It marks the formal end of the Prayer.

Tasbīḥ Literally means 'glorification' or the remembrance of Allah's glory. In Arabic, prayer beads are termed *misbaḥah*, though in Urdu the word *tasbīḥ* is commonly used to refer to the beads themselves.

Taqwā Righteousness. Fear of God.

Taṣawwur-e-Shaikh A Sufi practice in which one contemplates about their spiritual master and visualises their image in order to achieve inner purity and develop a deeper perception of Allah's presence. Proponents of this false practice suggest that it is easier to visualise a person one has seen with the physical eyes. Moreover, they say that since a disciple loves their spiritual master for the sake of God, visualising their image increases them in nearness to God. However, the Prophet of Islam ﷺ never taught such polytheistic practices, nor did his Companions ever adopt such practices themselves.

Takbīr-e-Taḥrīmah The Arabic expression *Allāhu Akbar* (God is the Greatest), proclaimed loudly by the Imām while he raises his two hands to his earlobes at the very beginning of a congregational Prayer service.

Taḥiyyatul-Masjid Lit. 'Greeting the Mosque.' A Sunnah of the Holy Prophet ﷺ whereby one offers two *rak'āt* of voluntary Prayer upon entering the mosque.

Taqlīd The practice of adhering to the legal rulings of a qualified scholar or established school of thought without

independently consulting the primary sources of Islamic law. A person who engages in *taqlīd* is called a *muqallid*.

Tashahhud Lit. 'Bearing witness.' Refers to the portion of the *ṣalāt* where the worshipper is sat on the ground and bears witness that there is none worthy of worship except Allah, and that Muḥammad ﷺ is the Messenger of Allah.

Tauḥīd The Oneness of God—the fundamental Islamic belief that there is no one worthy of worship except Allah.

Tirmidhī A book which contains collections of *aḥadīth*.

Tābi'īn The generation of pious Muslims after the generations of the Companions.

Tayammum Lit. 'Aiming for something.' A ritual purification method in Islām performed when water is unavailable or its use is medically harmful. It involves striking the hands on clean earth or sand and then wiping the face and hands. This act serves as a substitute for ablution (*wudū'*) or bathing (*ghusl*) before Prayer or other religious observances.

Walīmah Reception given by the husband after the marriage has been consummated.

Walī Literally, 'friend'. In the terminology of Islamic mysticism, it refers to a very pious person or a friend of Allah. The singular form is *walī* [friend] or *waliyyullāh* [friend of Allah], the plural form is *auliyā'ullāh* which is sometimes abbreviated to *auliyā'*.

Wujūdī One who believes in the doctrine of *Waḥdat-ul-Wujūd* (lit. Oneness of Being), a belief attributed to Ibn 'Arabī, which suggests that God and His creation are one and the same thing.

Ẓuhr The second of the five daily prayers, which is offered in the afternoon after the sun begins to decline from its zenith

Zakāt The fourth pillar in Islam known as obligatory alms-giving, which constitutes the social support system in Islam for the distribution of wealth. The poor and needy are provided for by the contributions of the rich and affluent. Literally means, 'increase' or 'purification.'