THE TRUE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE FINALITY OF PROPHETHOOD

(Khatam-i-Nabuwat ki Haqiqat)

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Adam

Traditions, historical as well as religious, of all nations of the world have agreed on this point that the human race took its rise and originated from one single man, and all the human beings wherever they are found on this earth, are the Children of that Adam who was a specific and distinctive link of this great system, and with whom ushered in and commenced a new era whose physical development had been accomplished to such a high degree that he was fit enough to receive and bear Divine revelation. It was through him that the Most High God laid the foundation of the edifice of Prophethood, and made him the recipient of His Word, as stated in a verse of Holy Quran:

Then Adam received revealed words from his Lord, and He turned to him mercifully. (2:37)

Law of Revelation

Side by side with it, the Most High God laid down another law for the human race that the Divine Word shall not come upon every one of them, but it shall, in time of need, be revealed to the chosen ones to give them light and guidance. So the most High God said in the Holy Quran:

O Children of Adam, if messengers come to you from among you relating to you My messages, then whoever guards against evil and acts aright - they shall have no fear, nor shall they grieve. (7:35)
Different Nations and Disputes

In the beginning, the principle of life as well as teaching for man's guidance was very simple and easy, for he had not yet been involved in the intricacies of social life. All the affairs of his life were very simple; all of them lived the same sort of life, and were happy and content over their natural simplicity. As time passed on, they went to and spread over the different parts of the world, and became different nations. Some people continued to follow in the footsteps of their father, Abraham, whereas some others, on account of the vicissitudes of time, fell away from and forsake their ancestral way, and followed their own desires. With the increase in their numbers, the needs of their social life also increased, giving rise to various kinds of differences which ultimately assumed the form of dissension and dispute, tyranny and oppression. Each group began to look down upon and hate the other group and trample under foot and violate each other's rights.

Institution of Messengership

It became necessary, when these conditions arose, that for the sake of human guidance, and the rehabilitation of truth and justice, enlightenment should come from Above. And this Heavenly Light did come in the form of Divine Word, and the system of preaching and ministration through the Messengers of God come to be inaugurated. The Holy Quran says:

So Allah raised prophets as bearers of good news and as warners, and He revealed with them the Book with truth, that it might judge between people concerning that in which they differed. (2:213)

In every nation the Most High God began to raise prophets who invited the people unto the path of righteousness and truth. They recalled the forgotten lesson to the minds of their people, did away with and abolished the rites and ceremonies of the days of ignorance, and taught them how to live in accordance with the will of God. They imparted unto the people a knowledge of the true laws, and urged upon them to abide by and observe these laws. The prophets communicated to their peoples, just in accordance with their understanding and need, the simplest ways and means to get into the Right Path. For the guidance of man, in that remote time, it was enough for him to know that

- God is One.
- He is the Creator of all things.
- All the human beings are His creation.
- There is life after death when man shall reap the fruit of his actions.

In that primitive stage, a few, simple moral laws were enough for the inducement of good deeds. But as the human race progressed, and the human brain evolved and developed, and the intricacies of social life increased, the law was also enhanced accordingly, until came the time of Prophet Noah (peace be on him); and the like of Adam he was. Said Allah:

And certainly We sent Noah to his people, so he said: O my people, serve Allah, you have no God other than Him. Will you not guard against evil? (23:23)

Again:

Then we sent our messengers one after another. (23:44)

Then came the time of Abraham; and the Most High God says in the Holy Quran:
And We sent Abraham, when he said to his people
Serve Allah and keep your duty to Him. It is better for you, if you did but know.
(29:16)

Continuing the institution of prophethood, the Most High God said:

And We granted him Isaac and Jacob, and
ordained prophethood and the Book among his seed (29:27)

And elsewhere:

And certainly We sent Noah and Abraham, and We
gave prophethood and the Book to their offspring. (57:26)

In fact, prophets had been raised from time to time for the reformation and guidance of the nations, and
the prophetic revelation (Wahi-e-Nabuvvat) continued, and the time of Moses (peace be on him) arrived. Says the Most High God in the Holy Quran:

And We indeed gave Moses the Book and We sent
messengers after him one after another. (2:87)

After Moses, for about fourteen centuries, prophets came to different countries and nations that each
nation might have separately its own share of teaching and guidance, and that the wrong doctrines and
beliefs might gradually be effaced and obliterated, yielding place to true teaching. This brings us to the
time of Jesus the Messiah, of whom the Most High God said in the Holy Quran:

And We sent after them in their footsteps Jesus son of
Mary .... and We gave him the Gospel (5:46) -
And Allah will teach him the Book and the Wisdom and
the Torah and the Gospel; and make him a messenger
to the Children of Israel. (3:47)

The Last Prophet

From the above-quoted verses, you must have clearly understood that even after such illustrious and eminent prophets as Noah and Abraham, the chain of prophets and apostles continued, and the prophets, as a matter of fact, did come. The Holy Quran has used the following words to express this
great truth:

Then We sent our messengers one after another. (23:44)
And We sent messengers after Moses one after another.
(2:87)

You may go through the whole of the Quran, and read it intensively, but after Jesus, you will not find even one single statement of this kind. Jesus, however, said to his people that there shall come only
one prophet after him, and the name of that Great Prophet shall be Ahmad (peace and the blessings of
God be upon him):

And when Jesus, son of Mary, said: O Children of Israel,
surely I am the messenger of Allah to you, verifying that
which is before me of the Torah and giving the good
news of a Messenger, who will come after me, his name
being Ahmad. (61:6)

The time came at last when human intellect and understanding had been developed by the teachings of
the prophets to such a degree that they could be given the last and most comprehensible guidance and
the edifice of prophethood be brought to perfection the basis whereof had been laid by Adam. About
six hundred years had passed over the death of Jesus the Messiah, when the Promised Prophet was born
in fulfilment of the prayer of Abraham and prophecy uttered by Jesus. This great and glorious Man, as
soon as the Call came to him, addressed the world saying:

O mankind, surely I am the Messenger of Allah to you
all. (7:158)
Termination of Prophethood

This prophethood which commenced with Adam, the Holy Quran brought to an end and closed with the advent of the Holy Prophet Muhammed, saying:

1. Muhammed is not the father of any of your men, but he is the Messenger of Allah and the Seal of the prophets. (33:40)

The Divine purpose for which prophets had been raised, reached its highest point of perfection and found its fulfilment in the holy person of the Holy Prophet Mohammad (peace and the blessings of God be upon him). And when the object was realized and fulfilled, there remained no need for any prophet to come after him. Said the Most High God in the Holy Quran:

    This day have I perfected for you your religion and completed My favour to you and chosen for you Islam as a religion. (5:3)

A prophet is needed in the world to enlighten and expound some new phase for the perfection of human kind. But when the Holy Quran has brought all the aspects and phases to the highest point of perfection, there is left no need whatsoever for a new prophet.

2. The Holy Quran has dealt with this doctrine of the finality of Prophethood in yet another way, viz, the Most High God made a covenant with all the prophets and their nations that when that Great Prophet would make his appearance on the stage, they would believe in him and aid him;

    Allah said: Do you affirm and accept My compact in this matter? They said: We do affirm. (3:80)

This covenant and the burden on their shoulders which had been coming down the ages ever since the creation of the world, the Holy Prophet took off and removed, just as the Holy Quran has stated:

    And Muhammed removes from them their burden. (7:157)

The burden of this covenant remained on the shoulders of all the nations. It was, however, taken off and removed from them who reposed faith in the Holy Prophet when he made his appearance. After him, the burden of believing in another prophet the Holy Quran has not placed upon us, which burden shall be taken off and removed by that prophet; and Holy Quran rather taught us the prayer:

    Our Lord, do not lay on us a burden as Thou didst lay on those before us. (2:286)

The Holy Quran, it can be easily seen, has adduced it as an argument on the finality and termination of Divine messengership.

3. There is yet another way in which the Holy Quran has disserted upon and ventilated this subject. It says:

    But how will it be when We bring from every people a witness and bring thee as a witness against these. (4:41)

By these are here meant the followers of the Holy Prophet. The witness against this Ummat, on the Day of Resurrection, shall, therefore, be none else but the Holy Prophet Muhammed. Elsewhere:

    That the Messenger may be a bearer of witness to you, and you may be bearers of witness to the people. (22:78)

The bearers of witness are the persons who carry knowledge to others, bearing testimony to its truth in their own persons. Every prophet is the bearer of witness and leader of his own nation; and the bearer of witness and leader of the Muslim nation is only the Holy Prophet Muhammed of Arabia, and none else. If it had been that another prophet would be raised in this Ummat, then most surely on the Day of Resurrection, there would have been some one else, and not the Holy Prophet, as the bearer of
witness and leader of this *Ummat*. It, therefore, proves conclusively that the Prophet of this *Ummat* is exclusively he who is *Khatam al-nabiyyin*, the Seal of the prophets, and none else.

There are, in the Holy Quran, many more verses dealing with this topic, but we leave them for fear of being rather too long.

**Khatam al-nabiyyin**

To advert to and review the verse:

Muhammad is not the father of any of your men, but he is the Messenger of Allah and the Seal of the prophets.

(33:40)

The term *laakin* has been used in the Arabic text. With regard to it, it is written in books on grammar:

The term *laakin* points to understanding and comprehension. Its significance is to remove such doubt or misunderstanding which might have been created by a previous statement. This term *laakin* comes in between such statements which being positive and negative are inconsistent with each other.

(commentary by Jami)

This verse occurs in the 5th Section of the Chapter entitled *The Allies*; and it is borne out by historical evidence that it was revealed in the 5th year of Hijrah to confute the charges of the opponents regarding the prophet's marriage with Hazrat Zainab and invalidate and abolish the practice of adopting children. In the earlier verses of this chapter, the Most High God had said that the Prophet's wives were as the mothers of the faithful, and the Prophet himself as their father. It was indeed a spiritual relationship. To overthrow the opponent's charge, He said:

Allah has not made those whom you assert (to be your sons) your sons. These are the words of your mouths. (33:4)

Then came the statement:

Muhammad is not the father of any of your men ... (33:40).

This statement, it is but natural, creates a doubt that in an earlier verse, the Holy Prophet, for being a prophet, had been called the father of the *Ummat*, but in this verse (33:40), his fatherhood had been denied; shall we then conclude that with the denial of the Holy Prophet's fatherhood, the denial of prophethood has also taken place, just as we read in Baidawi (Vol. 7, p.175):

With the denial of fatherhood, a doubt about the denial of prophethood is also created. This doubt was, therefore removed by using the term *laakin* i.e. but he is the Messenger of Allah; and the messenger of Allah is undoubtedly the spiritual father of the people.

Another question arises: Just as the system of spiritual fatherhood was in vogue in the past, will it be continued after the Holy Prophet also, and spiritual fathers will continue to be raised as heretofore? So this doubt was removed with the statement *Khatam al-nabiyyin* i.e. he is the last spiritual father. The Holy Prophet himself is reported to have said:

1. Formerly, when one prophet passed away, another prophet followed; but after me there is no prophet.

There is yet another tradition recorded in *Kanz al-Ummat* (Vol. 6, p.120), narrated by Hazrat Abu Zar Gaffari, that the Holy Prophet said:

2. Among all the prophets, Adam was the first and Muhammad the last (peace and the blessings of God be upon him).

3. Said the Holy Prophet: I am the last of the prophets,
and you are last-of-all Ummat. (Ibn.e.Majah)

4. Said the Holy Prophet: There shall be no prophet after me, and no Ummat after my Ummat. (Bahqiq)

5. The Holy Prophet said: Of a truth, apostleship and prophethood has come to a close. So there shall be neither any apostle nor prophet after me. (Tirmizi)

6. On the occasion of the Last Pilgrimage, the Holy Prophet, while delivering his sublime sermon, said: Ye people, no prophet shall come after me nor shall there be any Ummat after you. (Musnad of Imam Ahmad).

Contestation

The Holy Prophet (peace and the blessings of God be upon him) had said in unequivocal terms, expounding the significance of the verse *Khatam al-nabiyin*:

I am the last of the prophets, and there is no prophet after me.

But the advocates of the doctrine of the Continuity of Prophethood contend that in the statement *la nabiyya ba'di*, the *la* denotes the negation of perfectness and impeccability, and the verse, therefore, means:

There is, after me, no prophet of perfect excellence and superiority like myself.

There are, in books on syntax and correct style, chapters dealing with the *la* of the negation of species, but there is no such chapter as the *la* of the negation of perfectness which shows clearly that the *la* of the negation of species cannot be used so as to mean the *la* of the negation of perfectness. It is quite a different thing that in every language every word and phrase can be used in a metaphorical sense.

Imam Razi who was an indisputable authority on grammar of his age, writes in his well-known book, *Razi Shara Kafiyah*, on p.188, discussing the *la of the negation of species*:

Thou shalt say "La musalliyan fi al Jamei" when thou meanst to deny the existence of the man who offers his prayers in the mosque, meaning thereby that no such man is present who is or has been saying his prayers in the mosque. But there can be such a person who is present in the mosque, but who has said his prayers in some other mosque. But when thou sayest "La musalliya fi-al Jamei" it will mean that there is no worshipper in the mosque, no matter whether he has offered his prayer in that or in some other mosques.

If it had been *la nabiyyan badi*, it could have been possible, according to the grammatical rule enunciated above, that some prophets who had ministered somewhere else, may come later on, i.e. Jesus, son of Mary (peace be on him). But the clear-cut statement *la nabiyya ba'di* has decided irrevocably that neither such a prophet can come, who, having been born in this *Ummat*, may claim to be a prophet, nor any such prophet who had performed the functions of a prophet elsewhere; that is to say, the meaning of *la nabiyya ba'di* is that neither a new nor any prophet of old can come. Keeping this grammatical rule in view, there has been, during the last thirteen hundred years, only one man, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian (peace be on him) who has interpreted this tradition *la nabiyya badi* to mean:

The Holy Prophet (peace and the blessings of God be upon him), having said *la nabiyya badi* has closed the door against any new prophet as well as against the second visit of a former one. (Ayyam al-Sulh. p. 156)
Khatam al-nabiyyin

In the same way, Hazrat Mirza Sahib has discussed inexhaustibly the verse Khatam al-nabiyyin in his books. A few quotations are given below:

1. "Ma kana Muhammadun aha dim min rija lekum walakin rasullah wa Khatam al-nabiyyin."
   
i.e. Muhammed (peace and the blessings of God be upon him) is not the father of any of your men, but he is the Messenger of Allah and the Seal of the Prophets. This verse also shows clearly that after our Holy Prophet (peace and the blessings of God be upon him) there shall come no prophet in the world (Izala fi-il-Aham, p.614).

2. If the Most High God is as good as His word, and the promise held out in the verse Khatam al-nabiyyin which has been elucidated and defined in detail in the traditions, that after the death of the Holy Prophet, the angel Gabriel has been forbidden and stopped for ever from bringing the prophetic revelation (Wahy-i-Nubuwwat), if all these things be correct and true, then no man, after our Holy Prophet (peace and the blessings of God be upon him) can ever come in the capacity of an apostle (Izala fi-il-Aham, p. 577).

3. I wish to reiterate, with regard to Khatam-i-nubuwat (Finality of prophethood), that the more pronounced and palpable meanings of Khatam al-nabiyyin are that the affairs of prophethood started with Adam and came to a close with the Holy Prophet. The other meanings are that the circle of the perfect excellences of prophethood was completed and closed in the person of the Holy Prophet. It is quite true that Holy Quran has perfected imperfect things, and prophethood, therefore, came to a close, and the statement "alyauma akmalu lakum dinakum" was fulfilled in Islam. (Malfuuzat - 1, p.21)

4. I firmly believe that our Prophet (peace and blessings of God be upon him) is Khatam al Anbiya. After him no Prophet either new or old shall appear for this nation. (Nishan-i-Asmani. p.28)

5. The Holy Prophet had said repeatedly that no prophet shall come after him; and the hadith "la nabiyya ba’di" was so well-known and famous that no one ever doubted its authenticity; and the Holy Quran, too, every word of which is decisive and absolute, corroborates and confirms with its verse "wa laakin rasulullah wa khatam al-nabiyyin" that the prophethood, as a matter of fact, has come to a close and terminated with our Holy Prophet (peace and the blessings of God be upon him). (Kitab al-Bariyya, p.484, margin).

6. The Holy Quran has, in the verses "alyauma akmalu lakum deenakum" and "wa laakin rasulullah wa Khatam al-nabiyyin," evidently brought prophethood to a close and terminated it in the person of the Holy Prophet (peace and the blessings of God be upon him). (Tofsi-i-Golarviyyah, p.83)

7. If it were argued that this age, too, is no less in wickedness and vice, then why was it that no prophet has been raised for their good and guidance? the reply is that that age had become completely demided of Divine Unity (tawheed) and righteousness, whereas there are, in this age, 40 crores (400 million) people who profess faith in La ilaha ill-Allah. i.e. there is no god but Allah. (Noor al-Quran, p.8, margin)

Inspired Reformers

It is thus abundantly clear in the light of the Holy Quran, the Holy Prophet’s traditions, and the few brief quotations from the writings of the Promised Messiah that the institution of prophethood came to an end with the Holy Prophet; for the guidance which was to be given to human kind by the Most High God, had reached its highest point of perfection and completion, and the line of prophets was, therefore, completed and sealed. But the great Law of Nature holds true and endures that when the soil of human hearts, after a long time, becomes dry and hard, and indifference towards God and unconcern with religion crops up and leads astray, and viciousness and wrong-doing spreads far and wide, the raising of the Inspired Reformers for its regeneration is as essential and necessary even today as it was in the past. So a promise was held out to the Holy Prophet that, for the revival and rejuvenation of religion, and for the reinvigoration of Law, such spiritual Guides shall be raised, from time to time, from among his Ummat, who shall, according to the needs of the time, avouch and advocate the cause of True Religion. In the Holy Quran they have been called Khulfa (Caliphs):

Allah has promised to those of you who believe and do
good that He will surely make them Khalifah in the earth
as He made those before them Khalifah, and that He
will surely establish for them their religion which He has
chosen for them, and that He will surely give them security
in exchange after their fear. (24:55)

Just as it has become crystal clear from this verse that after the Holy Prophet, only his caliphs and
successors can come, in the same way the term "as" (Kama in the original Arabic text) contains an
argument that no Israelite prophet can be raised in this Ummat; for in accordance with the term Kama it
may be that likes of the prophets of Israel may happily come, but the coming of the self-same prophets
for the reclamation and guidance of the Muslim nation is interdicted and forbidden.

Terminology

According to the Holy Quran, even after the Holy Prophet, the descending of angels,
communication of good news (al-bushra), prophecy (walayat), and offices of spiritual leadership
(imamah) have continued and remained in the Muslim nation. In the same way, there are found in the
Holy Prophet’s traditions such terms as:

Muhaddasiyyat, mujaddadiyyat, khilafat,
imamah, masil-i-Ahliya, rajaee-i-faras,
meedi, masih, mubashsharat.

All these terms stand for and signify partial prophethood. And history bears it out that there have been
in every age mujaddads, muhaddases, khuffa, auliya and imams and it is such an apparent fact which
no one will perhaps be able to deny or doubt. It is of course true that the terms:

Zilli ummati, baroozi, ghair, shari’ and majazi-nabi

are not to be found in the Holy Quran nor in the Holy Prophet’s traditions; these have been invented by
Muslim sages and saints. But it should be remembered that what the Holy Quran and the Prophet’s
traditions call Khilafat, immat, walayat, and muhaddasiyyat, the very same thing these sages and saints
call zilli, baroozi ummati and majazi-nabi. It should further more be understood that Zilli nabuwat
and baroozi nabuwat are not any kinds of prophethood, but these are synonymous terms with
Khilafat, immat, and walayat which the sages and saints of the ummat have invented and devised.

For such people who have not seen the books compiled by these sages and saints and eminent
religious personalities, these terms may serve as stumbling stones, and therewith the ignorant masses
can be led astray; but for those who have studied these books and read their expositions, these very
terms serve to enhance and increase their faith; for it was already foretold in the prophecies that when
the Messiah would come the insipid and jejune ulama, not being able to understand his fine and subtle
statements, would hold him up to execration and denounce him, as stated by Hazrat Mujaddad Alif Sani

The ulama of the time will pit against and oppose Mehdi
(peace be on him), and without trying to understand and
know the sublime knowledge and truths expounded by him,
will condemn and brand him as against the Holy Quran
and the Prophet’s practice.

Clarification

In order to be able to understand and appreciate these terms, a few quotations from the writings
of the sages and saints are given below:

73, p.24:

Walayat is a general, popular prophethood, whereas
nabuwat tashri is the special, proper prophethood.

2. Sheikh Abdul Haque Muhaddas of Delhi writes in his commentary on Fatuh al-Ghaib:
Walayat is the zill (Shadow) of prophethood.

3. Hazrat Shah Ismael Shaheed writes on p.54 of his book Mansab-i-Immat:

*Imamat is the Zill of apostleship.*

4. It is written in the magazine Anwar al-Sufiah (December 1907) on page 16, under the sub-head *Walayat*:

What more proof can there be of the true teaching of the Holy Prophet and the benefit derived from its blessings than that the Most High God illuminates and enlightens the man who obeys the Holy Prophet most devotedly and follows in his footsteps to the perfect degree, with the light of Zilli nabuwwat, and confers on him the office of preaching unto the people and imparting religious instruction unto them, and then ordains him for the revival and refreshing of the religion of Muhammad (peace and the blessings of God be upon him). Such holy men had been, are and shall be in 'every age, and of them the Holy Prophet has said: The Ulema of my Ummat shall be the likes of the prophets of Israel.'


The Sheikh has said that the excellences of Nabuwwat and mubashshrat (good news) and walayat (prophecy) is Prophethood without Law.


In the opinion of the Sheikh 'ghair tashri' nabuwwat (prophethood without law) is not prophethood. But these are the ingredients of Khatam-i-nabuwwat which are called walayat in the terminology of the Sufis.

7. Maulvi Muhammad Hanif Nadvi writes:

The Sufis, of course, think that walayat has not come to a stand but continues ceaselessly. They look upon and interpret an aspect of walayat as prophethood. Literally it may be taken to mean that one usage of prophethood, in their opinion, is that it is a sort of walayat, and not a sort of rasalat (apostleship). So, when they say that the blessings of prophethood continue, they mean that walayat continues and keeps going .... It should, therefore, be abundantly clear that with the Sufis, prophethood has an application of its own in which the auliya of the Ummat are admitted and included. (Mirzaiyat Naye Zaviyon se, p.72)


The real significance of barooz is that the barooz should become an exact image of his spiritual master to such a perfect degree that he may declare: I am he.


The spiritual power of perfect Men sometimes operates on the austere people in this way that it becomes the author
of all their actions. To this stage the Sufis have given some
the name barooz .... And some people cherish the belief
that the spirit of Jesus will reappear and reflect (barooz)
through Mehdi, and that the term nazool, according to the
hadith "la Mehdi illa Isa", denotes this very barooz.

10. Writes Qari Muhamed Tayyab of Deoband in ulema-e-Hind ka Shandar Mazi Jadeed
pp.308, 312:

Prophethood is the real substance and revival is its
shadow (zill) .... since mujaddadiyyat is the real
shadow of prophethood.

In fact, the Ulema, both ancient and moderns, are agreed on this point that wala\yat and imamat is, as
a matter of course, the shadow, the Zill of prophethood, and not a kind of prophethood; and the Imam
of this age, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement, the Promised
Messiah (peace be on him), too, has said the very same thing. He writes:

(i) Walayat is perfectly the shadow (Zill) of prophethood. (Hujjat al-Allah, p.14)

(ii) The holy and heavenly-minded people are agreed on this point that walayat is the shadow
of prophethood. (Lajjat al-Noor, p.38)

(iii) The prophet is like the real substance, and the wali is like the shadow. (Karamat al-
Sadqueen, p.85)

(iv) It is generally the habit of the Ulema of Islam that they give to the barooz the name
"foot-mark". For instance, they say: This man is in the foot-steps of Moses and that in
the foot-prints of Abraham. (Lajjat al-Noor, p.1, Margin)

(v) All the Ummat agree with one consent that a non-prophet becomes a deputy or locum
 tenens of a prophet in the form of barooz; and this is exactly the significance of the
hadith: "The Ulema of my Ummat are the likes of the prophets of Israel". (Ayyam al-
Sulh, p.164)

(vi) The fact of being a barooz denotes the negation, of his own existence. (Ek Ghalti ka
Izalah)

(vii) So this thing that he has been called Ummati (a disciple) as well as nabi (a prophet)
indicates that he will be endowed with the two dignities of discipleship and prophethood,
just as it is essentially necessary to have them in a Muhaddas. But the Lord of
prophethood has but one dignity within him, the dignity of prophethood. In short,
Muhaddasiyyat is doubly-dyed with both these colours (Izalah-i-Atham, p.532).

(viii) Sometimes, in Divine revelations, such words are used in a metaphorical sense, in
respect of certain auliya of His, and they are not applicable to plain matter of fact and
reality. This is the whole dispute which the wrong-headed, ignorant scoffers have pulled
into a different direction. The name nabi Allah which has been conferred, in Sahih
Muslim etc., on the Promised Messiah by the sacred lips of the Holy Prophet, is in
accordance with this metaphorical significance which is, in the books of the venerable
Sufis, an accredited and familiar usage of Divine Communion; otherwise what sense can
there be in the coming of a prophet after the Last of the Prophet (Khatam al-Anbiya).
(Anjam-e-Atham, p.28, Margin)

This is the significance of the finality of Prophethood as is evident and clear from the Holy Quran, the
Holy Prophet's traditions and the writings of the Promised Messiah Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad; and
the technique of Zill and barooz the respected Sufis have invented to be used to communicate and
convey the idea of Walayat and not the sense of prophethood. And this was the faith and belief of the
Promised Messiah also.

Our Beliefs

We, all the Ahmades, who have been carrying on the work of the propagation of Islam under
the guidance of the Ahmadiyyah Anjuman Isha'at-i-Islam, Lahore, believe:
1. Allah is the One True God, and there is no partner nor any associate with him.

2. After the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace and the blessings of God be upon him), there can come for this *Ummat-i-Muhammadiyya*, neither any of the foregoing prophets and apostles nor a new one. Prophethood of every kind has come to a close in the holy person of the Holy Prophet.

3. *In accordance with the hadith: "The Ulema of my Ummat are the likes of the prophets of Israel", great religious personalities, auliya and mujaddads (Inspired Reformers) have, from time to time, appeared in this Ummat, and shall continue to appear in future also, who were Majazi, Zilli and Baroozi-Nabis i.e. Muhaddases, and had been blessed with Divine Communion; and*

4. From among them was also Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian, the Promised Messiah and Mehdi (peace be upon him).

5. The Holy Prophet Muhammad, (peace and the blessings of God be upon him) can be *Khatam al-Anbiya* in the true sense only when it is believed with all your heart and without any reluctance that no prophet neither old nor new, can come after him.

6. A man professing faith in the holy *kalimah* cannot be dubbed as a kafir and thrown out of the house of Islam for not believing in Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the Promised Messiah and Mehdi. But to deny and denounce him is of course blameworthy and censurable, for the reason that with his claim is bound up the future success and advancement of Islam in the field of propagation.

7. The Promised Messiah has been raised for the rectification and reform of an immense evil and wickedness of this age.

8. It is, therefore, imperatively necessary for the Muslims all over the world to join hands and co-operate with this Great Mujaddad in the achievement of his sublime object, the spread of Islam, and get thereby a share of the blessings which the Most High God has promised upon him:

   *Allah said:*

   *I will make those who follow thee above those who disbelieve to the day of Resurrection.*

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A Book Review
by Mahmud Shaukat

**MUHAMMAD**

BY KAREN ARMSTRONG - 1992

(Published by Harper San Francisco - Division of Harper Collins)

Many biographies of the Holy Prophet have been written by the Western, Non-Muslim writers from time to time. But the approach of the present author is different from most of the other biographies, and is in many ways unique. Earlier biographies written by the western writers carried a definite bias, pre-conceived notions and age old prejudices. There was no objectivity in their handling of the subject and they never cared to refer to the original sources. The Holy Prophet was still considered 'Muhammad the Enemy'.

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The present writer has been very fair and honest in her approach. She has tried to draw her conclusions about important and disputed issues from the Holy Quran, Hadith and the early Muslim biographers, and has been very objective in her presentation.

The author was doing a television program about Sufism, the mysticism of Islam, that she got impressed by the Sufi appreciation of the other religions, a quality the author says was not present in Christianity. This changed her ideas and she got interested in Islam, and finally when she was doing a study of the Crusades and the current conflict in the Middle East that she was led to the life of the Holy Prophet and the Quran. She writes "In all the great religions, seers and prophets have conceived strikingly similar visions of the transcendent and ultimate reality.... The monotheistic faiths however, call this transcendent 'God' I believe that Muhammad had such an experience and made a distinctive and valuable contribution to the spiritual experience of humanity. If we are to do justice to our Muslim neighbours we must appreciate this essential fact and that is why I have written this book."

The author has divided this book into ten chapters. She has presented and developed the subject very nicely, giving her own priorities and arrangement of the subject matter.

In her first chapter of the book, 'Muhammad the Enemy' she has traced the writings of a number of great western writers, philosophers and religious leaders, starting from early times when the west came in contact with Islam, till to date. The Christians met Muslims in Crusades in the near east, in Spain, and later on when the Turks invaded Europe, a belligerent image of Islam was carried all through ages. In the present times Western Imperialism and Colonialism arose, with the armies and the administrators went the Christian Missionaries. She writes "Christian missionaries' efforts supported the Colonialists, attempting to undermine traditional Muslim culture in the conquered countries".

In the second chapter 'Muhammad the man of Allah', she writes about the Revelations, the Quran and the Holy Prophet. About the Quran she writes, "The Arabs found the Quran quite astonishing, it was unlike any other literature they had encountered before. Some as we shall see were converted immediately, believing that divine inspiration alone could account for this extraordinary language. Muslims still find Quran profoundly moving."

She writes that like Torah which Jews revere as the 'Word of God' and they do not pass their eyes over the pages but they say the words aloud savouring the language that God himself used when He revealed himself to Moses, as if they were blown by the breath of God's spirit. Muslims encounter the same blessing in the words of God in the Quran. It cannot be the same with the Christian scriptures, because she says "... there is nothing holy about the New Testament Greek."

About the Holy Prophet she writes "If we could view Muhammad as we do any other historical figure we would surely consider him one of the greatest geniuses the world has known .... but to appreciate his genius to the full, we must examine the society into which he was born and the forces with which he contended."

The title of sixth chapter is 'The Satanic Verse'. The episode of the appearance of the book by this name has greatly maligned the name of Islam and the Prophet in the recent years. The author of the biography has discussed the sources of these unreliable reports and stories. These were narrated by Ibn S'ad and Tabri, the sole authority for these baseless reports. How could such an incessant preacher against idolatry whose every incident of life condemns it as a bare falsehood should lapse into it. The author writes,"Western enemies of Islam, however have seized upon it to illustrate Muhammad's manifested insincerity.....". Muslims believe the story to be apocryphal. They point out that there is no clear reference to it in the Quran, and that it is not mentioned in by Ibn-Ishaq the earliest and most reliable account of Muhammad's life, nor in the great collections of traditions (hadith) which were compiled in the ninth century by Bukhari and Muslim.

Muslims do not reject tradition simply because they could be interpreted critically but because they are insufficiently attested, and again "Tabri does not necessarily endorse all the traditions he records ....".

The eighth Chapter is called 'Holy War'. It deals with the mostly misunderstood and maligned subject of Jihad. The author explains that the word Jihad signifies a physical, moral, spiritual and intellectual effort. She explains "... for an armed conflict the Arabic words are Harb (war), Sira'a (combat) or Qital (killing) etc. which could easily have been used if war had been Muslims' principal way of engaging in this effort and that the Jihad is not one of the five pillars of Islam. It is not the central prop of Islam, but it was and remains a duty for the Muslims to commit themselves to a struggle on all fronts - moral, spiritual, and political - to create a just and decent society, where the poor and
vulnerable are not exploited in the way that God had intended man to live. Fighting and warfare might sometimes be necessary, but it was only a minor part of the whole Jihad or Struggle."

The author had tried to remove a great misunderstanding against Islam and has tried to portray the correct significance of Jihad in Islam. The author writes, "Instead of being a pacifist religion that turns the other cheek, therefore, Islam fights the tyranny and injustice 'and in Islam' .... the only war is a war of self defence. If the enemy proposes a truce toward peace, Muslims are commanded by the Quran to end the hostility immediately."

The position of women in the society and the polygamy are also dealt in this chapter. Polygamy, she says "... was not designed to improve the sex life of the boys - it was a piece of social legislation. The problem of orphans had exercised Muhammad since the beginning of his career and it had been exacerbated by the deaths at Uhud. The men who had died had left not only widows but daughters, sisters and other relatives who needed protection". She writes "In seventh century Arabia, when a man could have as many wives as he chose, to prescribe four was a limitation, not a license to new oppression. Further the Quran immediately follows the verses giving Muslims the right to take four wives with a qualification, which has been taken very seriously. Unless a man is confident that he can be scrupulously fair to all his wives he must remain monogamous".

About the rights and the position of women in Islam, she writes ........ "What Muhammad achieved for women was extraordinary. The very idea that a woman be a witness, or could inherit anything at all in her own right was astonishing. We must recall that in Christian Europe, women had to wait until the nineteenth century before they had anything similar, even then the law remained heavily weighted towards men."

The last chapter is 'The death of the Prophet'. The memorable words of Hazrat Abu Bakr at that critical time of the Prophet's death ring out the true meaning and understanding of the spirit of Islam "O men, if any one worships Muhammad, Muhammad is dead but if any one worships God, God is alive and immortal."

Then she writes about his achievements "Instead of wandering in unworldly fashion around the hills of Galilee preaching and healing, like the Jesus of the Gospels, Muhammad had had to engage in a grim political effort to reform his society." "Muhammad" she says "is seen therefore symbolically as the perfect man, the human archetype and the image of a perfect receptive to God....importance of the belief in Muhammad's illiteracy because it displayed his total openness to "Divine word". Then she says "Just as Christianity has developed the practice of the imitation of Christ, Muslims seek to imitate Muhammad in their daily lives in order to approximate as closely as possible to his perfection and so to come as close as they can to God Himself. As one might expect this process of imitation has been more practical and concerted than the imitation of Christ."

The book ends with the words Muhammad "..... Who had genius of a profound order and founded a religion and cultural tradition that was not based on the sword - despite the Western myth - and whose name 'Islam' signifies peace and reconciliation."

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THE HOLY PROPHET
(Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon Him)

AS THE MERCY FOR THE PEOPLES

By Hazrat Khwaja Kamal-Ud-Din

The Holy Prophet Muhammad is the best exemplar and I may say, the only Prophet who himself worked out all the principles he taught to others. There is not a single ordinance or injunction
in the Holy Quran that he did not act upon. When we read homilies and sermons elsewhere we find idealistic and impractical theories of morality and ethics, but we fail to find them practised by their own teachers. The Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon Him) is the only noble exception to this rule. Whatever he taught to others he practised himself.

It should not be forgotten that a potentiality is no proof of actuality. Even negative virtues, especially in teachers of morality, are no virtues at all. They cost them nothing, neither are they of any assistance to those who need practical illustrations of moral lessons. We may read to others homilies of forgiveness and sermons of meekness, but lip-teaching in itself furnishes no proof that we possess the morals we teach to others. Words converted into actions alone can show that we possess moral virtues. Moreover, how can we teach others what we have not experienced ourselves? A man must face the hardest trials of life of Prophet Jesus and the Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace and blessings of Allah be upon Him) before he attempts to teach others a lesson of patience. Prophet Jesus, however, could not find the proper occasions necessary to mould various other moralities into practical shape like the Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace and blessings of Allah be upon Him).

In fact, one who has not experienced changes in life cannot be, in every respect, a perfect model for others' imitation. Every moral quality requires certain given conditions for its display; and unless they present themselves in a person as enabling him thus to practise a certain morality he cannot be credited with them. Adversity and prosperity in life are both necessary to the revelation of different moralities.

From orphan to king, the Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon Him) passed through many different stages of life. Events of diverse nature arose in the course of his career which demanded the manifestation of various characters. At every step he was weighed, but was never found wanting. We need a perfect model suitable to our needs in our several walks of life and the life of the Holy Prophet in itself eloquently promises such a model. A king, a statesman, a warrior, a general, a law-giver, a judge, a conqueror, a persecuted fugitive, a tradesman, a friend, a son, a father, a husband, a neighbour - all these states are mirrored in most beautiful colours in his life. It is not through his sermons and teachings that we have to make our estimate of his character or teaching, but through his actions and deeds. In this respect the Holy Prophet Muhammad (Allah's peace be upon Him) is the only solitary noble example in history. How can any other personality be taken as an ideal and a universal model for the human race if his own life has not been of a universal character? Jesus is no example to others in various walks of life, leave apart his being ideal and he is not decidedly so in its higher avenues.

For example, forgiveness requires given conditions for its exhibition, in the absence of which no one can fairly claim to have fulfilled it. In the first place let us suppose that a person is persecuted ruthlessly by his enemies; and in the second, that his enemies fall and the change of circumstances places them at his mercy; and in the third that he possesses the power to give them the punishment they rightly deserve. Mercy, like forgiveness, can be shown only by him who finds others at his mercy. The mere preaching of mercy is no proof, or even any indication, that the person so preaching really possesses that quality, unless he is in a position to show mercy. Moreover, a persecutor and a tormentor would regard forgiveness as an insult to himself if it came from his helpless victim. Prophet Jesus on the cross prayed for forgiveness for his tormentors. It shows the beauty of his heart. He, however, was situated in circumstances which were very far from constituting the necessary condition for the display of the quality of mercy. He could neither vanquish his enemy nor were they at his feet craving mercy. In sacred history there is only one noble example which has the three conditions precedent for the manifestation of forgiveness, and that example was the Holy Prophet Muhammad (Allah's blessings be upon Him). Consider his triumphal entry into Mecca. Arabia lay prostrate at his feet, and Mecca, the stronghold of opposition, was at his mercy. He could have cut off the heads of everyone there, those implacable enemies of his who gave him no quarter, who forced him to leave his native land and seek shelter among strangers; who held him up to senseless ridicule and cruel scorn. The Holy Prophet Muhammad would have been quite justified if he had punished them. Many of the Hebrew prophets did punish their enemies and did so severely. Ramchandra and Krishna, the prophets and gods of the Hindus, were relentless to their conquered foes. But the moral attribute of forgiveness, which had never till then received its full revelation in the history of religion, would have remained in abeyance perhaps for ever, but for the Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace and blessings of Allah be upon Him).

"The personal element never entered into his actions at all. He rejected every token of personal homage, and declined all regal authority; and when at last, his haughty enemies appeared, humbled, before him, he asked what treatment they could expect at his hand." The Quraish, though cruel and callous themselves, knew full well the compassionate nature of the Holy Prophet (Peace be upon Him).
They cried out: "Thou art a noble brother and a noble cousin." Whereunto the Holy Prophet responded: "There shall be no reproach against you this day; go; ye are free." Among them was Hinda, the daughter of the Arab Chief Utba, the principal instrument of the cruel persecution to which the Holy Prophet and his friends had been subjected for full thirteen years. Her enmity for the Holy Prophet was no less than that of her father. She went so far as to chew the very liver of Hazrat Hamza, the uncle of the Holy Prophet, when the former fell in the battle with the Meccans. Now, being afraid to face the Holy Prophet, she came before him with a veil on her face to avoid identification. The Holy Prophet recognized her at once, but did not even hint at the painful incident. What could be a better proof of forgiving and forgetting the Holy Prophet cultivated in his Companions by his precept and example than the fact that this same lady afterwards, became the mother of the first ruling Muslim Dynasty! I refer to the Ommayads. Another arch enemy of the Holy Prophet was Abu Sufyan, who took a leading part in all the expeditions against him. He it was who spoke evil of the Holy Prophet Muhammad in the court of Heraclius. Wherefore he did not dare to come before the Holy Prophet Muhammad without someone to intercede for him. Abbas came with him, but the Holy Prophet needed no intercession. Abu Sufyan was not only granted an unconditional pardon, but it was also proclaimed that whosoever would take refuge in the house of Abu Sufyan should consider himself safe. Habbar-bin-Al-Aswad, another enemy of the Holy Prophet, who in a way, was responsible for the death of Zainab, the Holy Prophet Muhammad’s daughter, thought of fleeing to Persia for his life after the conquest of Mecca; but instead, he came to the Holy Prophet and addressed him thus:

"O Prophet of God, I wanted to flee away to Persia, but thy mercy and thy gentle and compassionate nature have kept me back; whatsoever thou hast heard of me is true. I know what I have done. I come to thee now to confess my wrongs." He received his pardon.

THE HOLY PROPHET
(Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon Him)

The Divinely-Ordained Champion of the Poor

By Hazrat Maulana Sadr-ud-Din

Humanitarianism is the essence of the teachings of Islam. According to the Holy Prophet’s exhortations, he who has learnt to abide by Islam, must necessarily learn to be a lover of humanity. If a Mussalman is devoid of the milk of human kindness, his prayers, fasts and pilgrimage are of no avail. The Holy Quran says:

Those who say prayers without paying any attention to the needs of the destitute, fail to achieve the ends of prayers. They may appear to be saying prayers. But in the spiritual sense they are not worshipping Allah. Fie on these worshippers!

When the Holy Prophet (Peace and blessings of Allah be upon Him) assumed the reins of Government, he exhorted the True Believers to spare no pains in bringing relief to the needy. It was the effect of those ennobling exhortations that the True Believers vied with one another in helping the poor and in salvaging them from their distress.

The Holy Prophet (Peace and blessings of Allah be upon Him) imparted a divine dimension to his commands by telling the people that it was Allah’s will that the wealth should be so utilized as to lay a healing balm on the lacerated hearts of the suffering humanity. Thus the Holy Prophet in his divine wisdom left no room for the rich to take pride in their philanthropy or to lord it over the recipients of their sympathy. The rich were commanded to feel and believe that they were discharging their obligation to Allah by sympathising with the poverty-stricken folk. All wealth belonged to Allah and the wealthy people were mere trustees and they just fulfilled their trust by spending their riches in the way of Allah.
With a view to creating a strong incentive for sympathy with the down-trodden sections of society, the Holy Prophet (Peace and blessings of Allah be upon Him) observed:

"My duty is to distribute wealth and as such I am an Ordained Treasurer. It is Allah Who vouchsafes treasures for the benefit of mankind."

The Holy Prophet (Peace and blessings of Allah be upon Him) attended to the physical needs of the poor. He also spoke inspiring words to elevate the moral level of his followers. He also laid down rules to quicken economic amelioration. He declared:

"He who died and left some property, his heirs would inherit it." To this command he added:

"If a man dies and leaves no property but small children or leaves some debt, the responsibility for bringing up the children or paying the debt devolves upon me." Can any modern Social Welfare State rise to the height of humanitarianism which is reflected in the Holy Prophet's directive? This directive has an immense socio-religious significance as it ensures the elimination of poverty. Not only that; it also creates an urge in the minds of the rich to devote their resources to the service of mankind. When the Holy Prophet (Peace and blessings of Allah be upon Him) undertakes to bear the burden of the poor, his votaries must naturally take a cue from this gesture and loosen their purse-strings to rescue their poor brethren from the clutches of poverty. It is a case of unique nation-building. All Isms minus religion pale into insignificance before the Holy Prophet's plan for social security and moral uplift.

The sponsors and promoters of secular schemes for social uplift can never claim to possess such piety and magnanimity as characterised the Holy Prophet's socio-economic reforms. Lest the beneficiaries of these reforms should feel any inferiority complex, the Holy Prophet (Peace and blessings of Allah be upon Him) proclaimed in unambiguous terms that all he did for the poor, was done under Allah's command. He initiated an epoch-making social change by impressing upon his people that he was more solicitous than they were about their needs. This luminous aspect of the Divine Social Revolution is enshrined in the Quranic verse:

"The Prophet is closer to faithful than their own selves." (33:6)

This is a divine evidence of the fact that the Holy Prophet (Peace and blessings of Allah be upon Him) loved his people more than they could love themselves. Thus the True Believers' dedication to the person of the Holy Prophet was more than rewarded by a boundless responsive love for them.

This verse enshrines guidelines for the sincere leaders of the Muslim Nation. If they desire to be the object of love for their people and aspire for their unfailing loyalty, they should follow the Holy Prophet's example of loving their people more than the people could love themselves as is indicated in the verse quoted above. If this type of mutual relationship is established between the leader and his nation, all problems will vanish like mist in the sun.