AND FROM AMONG YOU THERE SHOULD BE A PARTY WHO INVITE TO GOOD AND ENJOIN THE RIGHT AND FORBID THE WRONG. AND THESE ARE THEY WHO ARE SUCCESSFUL.

The Holy Qur'an Ch. 3 verse 103

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OUR BELIEFS

Ashhadu-an la ilaha ill-Allahu wa la sharika lahu wa ashhadu-anna Muhammad-an abduhu wa rasulu-hu.

1. We believe Allah to be the Possessor of all the perfect attributes, free from all defects and imperfections, Unique in His Person, unrivalled in His Attributes and Works, and One without a partner.

2. We hold it essential to believe in angels, all of the Divine Books, and all the prophets and messengers of God.

3. We believe that the Holy Prophet Muhammad is the Khalat al-Nabiyyin. With his advent religion has been perfected, so he is the Last Prophet after whom no prophet shall come, neither a new one nor a former one.

4. We believe in the life after death, and in all matters relating to the grave, the day of judgement, and paradise and hell, that are proven from the Qur'an and Hadith.

5. From the depth of our hearts, we hold the Righteous Caliphs, the Holy Companions (ashab), the Purified Wives, and members of the Holy Household (ahl bayt), as beloved, worthy of respect, and honourable in the sight of God.

6. We hold the Imams Abu Hanifah, Shafi'i, Malik, and Ahmad Hanbal to be the leaders of jurisprudence (fiqh), and saints such as Shaukh 'Abdul Qadir Jilani, Khaawjah Naqshbandi; and Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi to be leaders of Tawwawof (the spiritual sciences). We believe all such elders of the religion to be worthy of esteem.

7. In accordance with the Holy Prophet's sayings about mujaddids and mubaddhats, we believe in the truth of the mujaddids of all the centuries, and in accordance with the same tradition, believe in Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian as the Mujaddid of the fourteenth century of Hijrah, not as a prophet.

8. We consider each such person to be a Muslim who professes to believe la ilaha ill-Allah, Muhammad-ur rausl Allah (there is no god but Allah, Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah) and calls himself a Muslim.

9. All the members of the Ahmadiyyah Anjuman Isbaa't Islam Lahore believe in acting according to God's Book the Holy Qur'an and the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, and if no specific direction is found there, they give precedence to the Hanafi school of jurisprudence.

The Ahmadiyyah Anjuman Isbaa't Islam Lahore has not only been proclaiming these beliefs but, for over eighty years, it has been engaged in the propagation of Islam and service to its cause. The whole world and in particular the Muslim religious scholars of the Indo-Pakistan sub-continent have borne witness to this fact.

SWORN DECLARATION OF HAZRAT
MIRZA GHULAM AHMAD OF QADIAN:

"I make it clear to the public that I swear by Almighty Allah that I am not a kafir. My belief is la ilaha ill-Allah Muhammad-ur rausl Allah, and regarding the Holy Prophet I believe that "he is the Messenger of Allah and Khatam al-Nabiyin" (the Qur'an, 33:40). I swear to this statement as many times as the Holy Qur'an, and as many times as there are the excellency of the Holy Prophet in God's eyes. No belief of mine is opposed to the directions of God or of the Holy Prophet, and he who thinks otherwise is mistaken. Whoever still considers me a kafir, and does not refrain from declaring me as such, should remember with certainty that God will question him after his death."

"In all matters my beliefs are the same as those of the other ahl sunnah. In this house of God, I admit most clearly that I believe in the finality of prophethood of the Khatam al-anbiya, the Holy Prophet. Whoever denies the finality of prophethood, I consider him to be a disbeliever and outside the pale of Islam."

SWORN DECLARATION OF HAZRAT
MAULANA MUHAMMAD ALI, FIRST HEAD
OF THE LAHORE AHMADIYYA
COMMUNITY:

"I, Muhammad Ali, head of the Lahore Ahmadiyyah Community, do swear by Almighty God that my belief is that Hazrat Mirza Sahib was a Mujaddid and the Messiah, but not a prophet, and that a person cannot become a kafir and excluded from the pale of Islam by denying him as such; this was also the belief of Hazrat Mirza Sahib himself. O God, if I have lied in swearing by Thy name, send upon me such exemplary punishment as could not come from human means, and by which the world would see how terrible and frightening is God's punishment for those who deceive His creatures by swearing falsely in His name."
NEED FOR THE AHMADIYYA MOVEMENT IN THE PRESENT AGE

By Maulana Hafiz Sher Muhammad

If the opponents of the Ahmadiyyah Movement were to face the atmosphere and the difficulties besetting the Muslims at the time when Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad appeared, or if they could see the issues which had caused earthquake-like shocks to run through the religious world of the time, and as a result of which the Ahmadiyyah Movement was born, these critics would not oppose the Movement or its Holy Founder. Therefore, before dealing with the objections and allegations of the opponents of Ahmadiyyat, it is appropriate to draw their attention to that environment, so that they may perhaps be enabled to understand the real issues.

A careful study of the history of the Indian subcontinent shows that the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries had a very special importance in the religious field. Intoxicated with their physical dominance, supremacy and power, the Christian nations of Britain and other European countries devised a plan to convert the natives of India to their faith. To achieve this end, on the one hand they sent teams of Christian missionaries to India to propagate their religion, and on the other hand, to make this preaching an exemplary model, they gave full freedom to the votaries of all the religions in that land to broadcast their own various faiths. The result was a volcanic eruption in the world of religion, leading to a great earthquake. Many schools of thought took birth in every religion. Following the example of the many Christian sects energetically propagating their faith, Hindu factions such as the Arya Samaj, Brahmo DSamaj, Dev Samaj, Jain Mut, Shakanuk Mat, Vedanat, and Sanatan Dharm also entered the field.

If one religion made the "existence of God" its topic of discussion, another was interested in "revelation from God and communion with Him," a third discussed "the Unity of God" while a fourth "polytheism." One faith believed that "matter is eternal," while another held that it was "created." If "Duality" was the basic principle of one religion, another was equally vigorous in advocating "Trinity." In short, there was no religious issue which was not brought under discussion in that period in that country. In a land where there was a wrestling bout taking place between various faiths, one trying to throw another to the ground, and where all the other religions had made Islam and the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, their special target for attack, what line of action should the Muslims have followed in this conflict? And despite the dangerous attacks of the opponents of Islam, the Muslims were not only involved in mutual wrangling and internal fighting, but were declaring each other Kafirs (heretics).

Leaving aside other religions, if you just consider the issues raised by the Christian missionaries of the time, you will see that they were, on the one hand, raising objections against the truthfulness of the Holy Quran, the Prophethood of the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, the belief in the sinlessness of all prophets, the miracles of Islam, etc., and deriding slavery, polygamy, jihad with the sword, and the sentence of death for the apostate, on the other hand they were presenting the birth of Jesus, his life, his superiority over other prophets, and his latter-day descent, as miracles in order to make Muslims, indeed all the inhabitants of India, acknowledge the divinity of Jesus. Apart from Muslim research scholars, other Muslims already believed that, whereas the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, had died, Jesus was alive in his physical body having undergone no change whatever, and when in the last days Islam would be hemmed in by great difficulties and Muslims would be in the grip of calamities and tribulations, Jesus shall descend from heaven and, joining up with the Imam Mahdi, spread Islam by the sword and relieve the Muslims of their suffering.

Raising these issues, the Christian missionaries used to attack Islam. And the Muslims, instead of being able to reply, would hang their heads in shame. These were the Muslims' own acknowledged beliefs, so they could neither deny them nor answer the objection. The result was that millions of Muslims left Islam and embraced Christianity. This intellectual and religious weakness of the Muslims was their first weakness which the Christians exploited. Their second weakness was that the colonial government was also crushing the Muslims in the economic and political fields. Whatever little they had was lost after the 1857 uprising, when the Muslims had to bear all the repercussions. The colonial government had turned against them completely, and all the paths of progress had been
closed to them. There were plans being devised in England to convert leading Muslims - indeed, all the inhabitants of India - to Christianity. Hence:

1. The Prime Minister of England, Lord Palmerston, said: "I believe we are all united in our purpose. It is not only our duty, but our interest is related to it as well, that we should spread the preaching of Christianity as far as possible, and take it to every corner of India." (The Missions by Robert Clark, p.234).

2. Sir Donald McCleod, Lieutenant Governor of the Punjab, said: "I wish to express my conviction that if we want to defend our rule in India, we should try our hardest to make this country Christian." (The Missions, Punjab and Sind, p.47).

3. A report of the British legislature, the House of Commons, published in 1873, said: "The government commends the noble efforts of 600 missionaries with feelings of deep gratitude. Their unsoiled example and dedicated services are breathing a new spirit into the old lives of countless colonies of British subjects, and making them better men and preparing them to be better citizens of this great empire in which they live." (History of Protestant Missions by A.M. Shering, London).

Besides the above, there are many other similar writings but we rest content with these. From the sentiments of these patrons of Christianity it is obvious how, at that time, they were trying their utmost to spread Christianity. They could see no religion confronting them other than Islam, and therefore they directed all their attacks towards it. However, much falsehood and fault-finding was possible, and however many unjustified objections could be raised, they did it to the fullest extent. The dangerous campaign which the Western Christian missionaries undertook to efface Islam took many forms. On the one side, they exploited the doctrinal weaknesses of the Muslims. On a second front, they exceeded all limits in spreading offensive and hurtful remarks about Islam and its Holy Founder. As a third tactic, they opened their treasury to exploit the poverty of decent and honourable people, the refult being that not only the poor from amongst the Muslims, but families upon families of their nobility (including Sayyids) deserted Islam to seek shelter in Christianity. And due to the encouragement and support of the government, the church being a branch of it, Christian missionaries boldly roamed the land. Millions of books against Islam and the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, had been distributed, and missions had been established in every place. Seeing their own success and the helpless state of the Muslims, the Christians were greatly uplifted and were certain that Islam would now perish from the earth. A measure of this feeling can be had from a speech by the Lieutenant Governor of the Punjab, Charles Aitcheson. He said: "Some people who have not had the occasion to turn their attention to this matter will be surprised to learn that Christianity is spreading in this country at a rate four to five times faster than the rate of population increase, and the number of Indian Christians has reached around one million. Now the question is, what is the cause of this great thing that everywhere Christianity is spreading faster than at any time since its early history? You and I know the real cause, which is that the spirit of God is in action. As before, God is now again glorifying His Name, and He is extending our church to those people who desire salvation. The power of the ancient message of the Gospel still exists. Even now, as in the times of the prophets, the word of God possesses the power to bring about progress, and it is becoming triumphant." (The Muslims by R. Clark, published in London, p.234).

The famous missionary John Henry Burrows said in a lecture: "Now I come to the daily increasing progress of Christianity in Islamic countries. As a result of this progress, today if the splendour of the cross is casting its light in Lebanon, on the other side the mountain tops in Persia and the waters of the Bosphorus are glittering with its brilliance. This state of affairs is a forerunner of the coming revolution when the cities of Cairo, Damascus, and Tehran will be populated by servants of the Lord Jesus Christ, till, piercing the silence of the Arabian desert, the splendour of the cross reaches even there. At that time, the Lord Jesus, through his servants, shall enter the City of Mecca and the sacred Ka'ba, and at last this truth shall be proclaimed from there that 'eternal life is to know the one God and Jesus whom He sent.'" Burrows Lectures, p.42).

These extracts show that the missionaries were obsessed with the idea of propagating Christianity, and the only reason for this was that they not only had the great wealth of the Western nations and churches to support them, but had the protection of the law and the government as well. In 1676 Lord Chief Justice Sir Matthew Hill had ruled that "Christianity is part of the laws of England, and anyone raising his voice against it
(Christianity) will be punished severely." And the King of England was not only head of the Church of England, but above the title 'Defender of the Faith.' The grandeur of the sovereign can be judged from the saying that the sun never set on his empire.

Facing them are nations which have been subjugated by them, and over whom they have established dominance by force. From the point of view of creed, the beliefs on the basis of which the Christians argue that Jesus is Divine, are also held by Muslims. Just as Christians believe the birth of Jesus, his life, and his second coming to be miraculous, so do Muslims. For these twofold reasons, the Christian missionaries were not only able to propagate their beliefs but also to attack some mistaken views held by the Muslims and try to disprove the truth of Islam. Therefore they picked issues such as polygamy, Jihad with the sword, death penalty for apostasy, the spread of Islam and the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, by exploiting the Muslims' misconceptions on these points. These issues were given wide publicity by them. The opponents of the Ahmadiyya Movemethe questions as to what path should have been chosen by a person raising his pen to refute these objections, especially on issues relating to Jesus?

Muslim Responses to Christian Attacks

1. One response of the Muslims was that adopted by Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan and his co-thinkers. They accepted that Jesus had died, and rejected all the hadith speaking of his return. In fact, they declared all the eschatological hadith referring to the Messiah, the Mahdi, Dajjal, Gog and Magog, etc., to be unreliable and denied all the Hadith prophecies about the latter days. They believed the solution of all the problems and tribulations facing the Muslims to lie in acquiring Western knowledge and adopting Western civilization.

2. Another response was that proposed by Maulana Abdullah Chakralvi and his co-thinkers, namely, that all the traditions in Hadith were fabricated by hypocrites (God forbid!), and that Jesus had not ascended to heaven but was alive on earth, to come out in the last days. The Maulana also made basic changes in fundamental Muslim practices, such as prayer, fasting and zakat, altering them completely. He believed this to be the way of defending Islam against the Christian missionaries.

3. A third point of view was that held by the Sufis, namely, that Jesus had died like other prophets, and the prophecies about his second coming as found in the Hadith were not meant in a literal sense, but that all those descriptions about the latter days were metaphorical. The coming of Jesus referred to a zill or burooz of his (someone in his spiritual likeness). But instead of facing the Christian missionaries, they thought it safe to withdraw from the world and live as recluses and monks.

4. Lastly, there was the majority of the Muslims, divided into various sects such as Ahl-i Sunna, Shia, and Ahl-i Hadith, whose solution to the problems raised by the Christian missionaries was to declare each other as Kafir (heretic). Their belief about Jesus was that: "Jesus was born without a father, being at the time of birth free of the 'touch of the devil' (unlike any other human child, as they believed). He immediately started to talk at birth, and after growing up, he healed the sick, cured the blind and raised the dead. He knew matters of the unseen and could create birds. When the Jews attempted to crucify him, God lifted him up, physically with his body, alive to heaven. For two thousand years he has been living in the skies without eating or drinking. He has no need of the necessities of life, nor has the passage of time affected him or caused any change in his body. When he shall descend, his age will be the same as it was when he was taken up. He will still be a prophet and receive revelation. He shall come for the reformation of the whole world, so that even the followers of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, will stand in need of his reform."

As against this belief of theirs about Jesus, they believe about the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, that: "He was born like an ordinary human being, he did not talk at birth, nor heal any sick person when older, nor create a single bird. When the disbelievers of Mecca sought to kill him, he had to seek refuge in a cave. He died like other mortals, and his tomb is to be found in Medina."

When Christian missionaries used to put these acknowledged beliefs of the Muslims before them and challenge them to compare Jesus and the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, and see who was superior, and to say whether one should believe in a living being or a dead one, the Muslims had to bow their heads in shame before the Christians. The result was that hundreds of thousands of Muslims became Christians. Islam at that time faced three challenges:
1. From atheism, materialism that God did not exist, or was now dead. Had He been alive He would be giving proof of His existence through revelation to someone, showing that He interacts with our lives.

2. From Christianity, that all prophets had died but Jesus was alive, and salvation could only be obtained through belief in him who was eternally alive.

3. The third challenge, from a sect of Hinduism, was that all Scriptures except the Vedas were false, and salvation could only be obtained through these Hindu scriptures.

These were the issues and the challenges confronting the Muslims, and the atmosphere was one of combat between various faiths. At such a critical time, instead of uniting to find a solution to these problems, or replying to the charges against Islam, Muslims were completely fragmented as a result of declaring each other as Kafir (heretic). They did not, or perhaps could not, refute the objections of the opponents. It was at such a difficult time that, in accordance with the well-known hadith of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad appeared as the Mujaddid (Reformer) sent by God. Now please tell us whether a mujaddid should turn his attention to the issues of the time or not. The Mujaddid of the fourteenth century hijrah raised his pen to deal with the issues brought to the fore by the Christian and Arya Samaj criticism of Islam, and he not only smashed all the objections against Islam and the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, so as to silence the opponents, but brought about the intellectual triumph of Islam over all other religions. All the Press of that time bore witness to this, and by way of specimens we reproduce below some comments from prominent Muslim journals and leading figures of those days, from which everyone can judge the work which Hazrat Mirza did and why he founded the Ahmadiyya Jama’at.

Tributes

1. Mirza Hairat of Delhi, editor of the Curzon Gazette, wrote in his obituary of Hazrat Mirza: "The services of the deceased which he rendered to Islam in confrontation with the Christians and the Arya Samajists deserve the highest praise. He completely changed the flow of the debate, and laid the foundations of a new literature in India.

We admit, not because of being Muslims but being seekers after truth, that the top-most Arya Samaj leader or Christian missionary could not dare open his mouth to confront the late Mirza Sahib. The incomparable books which he wrote in refutation of the Arya Samaj and Christian creeds, and the shattering replies he gave to the opponents of Islam, we have not seen any rational refutation of these except that the Aryas have been hurling abuse at the Founder and the teachings of Islam in an uncouth manner, without being able to give a sensible reply. Although the deceased was a Punjabi, yet his pen was so powerful that today in the whole of the Punjab, even in the whole of India, there is no author of such power... and it is true that, on reading some of his writings, one goes into a state of ecstasy." (Curzon Gazette, Delhi, India, June 1, 1908).

2. Maulvi Bashir-ud-Din, editor of Sadiqul Akhbar, Rewari (U.P., India) wrote as follows in his obituary: "As Mirza Sahib, with his forceful speeches and magnificent writings, shattered the foul criticism of the opponents of Islam, silencing them for ever and proving that truth is after all the truth, and as he left no stone unturned in the service of Islam by championing its cause to the full, justice requires that one should condole the sudden and untimely death of such a resolute defender of Islam, helper of the Muslims, and an eminent and irreplaceable scholar." (Sadiqul Akhbar, May 1908)

3. Shamsul Ulama Maulana Sayyid Mumtaz Ali, editor of the Magazine Tehzib-e-Niswan, Lahore, wrote: "The late Mirza Sahib was a very saintly and exalted personage. And he had such spiritual power born of virtue that it could enslave the hardest of hearts. He was a very knowledgeable scholar, a reformer of great determination, and an exemplar of the purest life. Although we do not believe him to be the Promised Messiah, his guidance and teaching was indeed messianic for the spiritually dead."

4. Maulvi Sayyid Waeed-ud-Din, editor of Aligarh Institute Gazette, wrote: "The deceased was an acknowledged author and founder of the Ahmadiyya Sect. He has left 80 writings, twenty of which are in Arabic. Undoubtedly, the deceased was a great fighter for Islam." (Aligarh Institute Gazette, June, 1908)

5. The editor of the Lahore Municipal Gazette wrote: "The Mirza Sahib was specially renowned for
his knowledge and scholarship. His writings were also eloquent. In any case, we are grieved by his death for the reason that he was a Muslim. We believe that a scholar has been taken from the world." (Municipal Gazette, Lahore, 1980)

6. Maulvi Irfad Ali of Nagpur, who joined Islam again after repenting from his conversion to Christianity, wrote in reply to a Christian missionary as follows: "The Christian missionary Saifdar Ali has challenged me to a debate with him on the truth of Islam and Christianity.... But I can ask him that if he is so confident of his arguments and the truth of Christianity, where was he when Maulvi Ghulam Ahmad Qadiani stood in the field of debate like a brave lion and challenged him. This challenge had such an effect on you people that no Christian missionary dare confront him (Mirza Sahib)." (Magazine Dastkari, Amritsar, June 18, 1899)

7. Allama Sir Muhammad Iqbal, great Muslim philosopher and poet of the Indian subcontinent (d. 1938), wrote during the lifetime of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad: "Amongst the Indian Muslims of today, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian is the greatest religious thinker." (Magazine Indian Antiquary, September, 1900)

8. When the famous Muslim journalist Mr Muhammad Ashlam Khan Baloch, editor Moeen-ul-Muslimeen of Amritsar, visited Qadian in 1913 during the time of Hazrat Maulana Nur-ud-Din (Head of the Ahmadiyya Movement after the Founder's death), he recorded his impressions as follows: "The great catastrophes befalling the world of Islam compelled me to go to Qadian to see whether the Ahmadi Jamaat, which for so long has been claiming that it shall conquer the world for Islam by means of a literary and missionary struggle, is actually capable of doing so.... What I saw in Ahmadi Qadian was pure and sincere service of the One God, and wherever one's sight turned there was the Quran. In short, I found the Ahmadi Jamaat of Qadian in a practical sense to be true to a very great extent in its claim that it can spread Islam in the world in a peaceful way by means of preaching and propagation, and that it is a Jamaat which in today's world is a true follower of the Quran, purely for the sake of God, and a lover of Islam. If all the Muslims of the world, especially of India, help them practically in the propagation of Islam in Europe, then certainly the European continent would light up with the rays of the sun of Islam, and this blood-thirsty Christianity, which to satisfy the appetites of its materialist disciples is bent upon destroying Muslim countries and effacing Islam from the world, would face manifest defeat by this means." (Badr, March 13, 1913)

9. Editor of newspaper General wa Guhar Asafi of Calcutta commented on a speech written by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad on the teachings of Islam, and presented in a multi-religious congress held in Lahore in December, 1896, as follows: "If the paper by Hazrat Mirza Sahib had not been there, the Muslims would have faced degradation and shame at the hands of the other religions. But the powerful hand of God saved holy Islam from defeat, and through that paper granted it such a triumph that, let alone its adherents, even the opponents cried out spontaneously, 'This paper is the best of all, this paper is the best of all.'" (Asafi, January 24, 1897)

10. The famous Indian Muslim scholar and author Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, who later held important posts in the post-independent republic of India, writing in the renowned Muslim paper Wakesel of Amritsar as its acting editor, contributed the following tribute at the death of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad: "The man, that very great man, whose pen was a magic wand and whose tongue spell-binding; that man whose brain was a complex of wonders, whose eye could revive the dying and whose call aroused those in the graves, whose fingers held the wires of revolution and whose fists were electrical batteries; that man who for thirty years was an earthquake and typhoon for the religious world, who, like the trumpet of Doomsday awakened those lost in the slumber of this life, he has left the world empty-handed....

"The demise of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Sahib of Qadian is not such an event that a lesson should not be learnt from it, nor should it be consigned to the passage of time to efface. Such people who produce a religious or intellectual evolution are not born often. These sons of history, in whom it rightly takes pride, appear but rarely on the world scene, and when they do they bring about a revolution for all to see....

"His special characteristic, that he acted against the enemies of Islam as a victorious general, compels us to express openly our feeling that the grand movement which for so long defeated and trod over our
opponents should be continued in the future also.

"Mirza Sahib appeared in the front line of devotees who, for the cause of Islam, accepted the dedication to sacrifice their time from the cradle, through the springs and autumns, to their graves in fulfilling the pledge of loyalty to this beautiful beloved Islam.... The literature produced by Mirza Sahib in his confrontation with the Christians and the Aryas has received the seal of general approval, and for this distinction he needs no introduction. We have to acknowledge the value and greatness of this literature from the bottom of our hearts, now that it has done its work. This is because that time cannot be forgotten nor effaced from the mind when Islam was besieged by attacks on all sides, and the Muslims were lying flat, sobbing in the aftermath of their shortcomings, doing nothing for Islam or not being able to do anything for it....

"That defence (of Islam by Hazrat Mirza) not only shattered to bits the initial influence of Christianity, which it really had due to the support of the government, and saved thousands, nay millions, of Muslims from this dangerous attack which would have succeeded, but the talisman of Christianity itself was blown away like smoke.... By changing the form of defence, he made the vanquished to be triumphant....

"So, this service rendered by Mirza Sahib will place the coming generations under a debt of gratitude, in that he fulfilled his duty of the defence of Islam by joining the front rank of those engaged in the jihad by the pen, and he left behind him such literature as a memorial which will last as long as Muslims have blood flowing in their veins and the service of Islam remains their national characteristic. Besides this, Mirza Sahib performed a very special service for Islam by crushing the poisonous fangs of the Arya Samaj....

"India today is an exhibition house of religions, and the number of great and small faiths found here, along with their mutual struggles which announce their existence, cannot be matched anywhere else in the world. Mirza Sahib's claim was that he was the arbiter and judge for them all, but there is no doubt that he possessed a special talent to make Islam pre-eminent among all these religions." (Wakeel, Amritsar, May, 1908)

The permanent editor of Wakeel, Maulana Abdullah Imadi, added his own tribute in a later issue, as follows: "In about 1877, when he was 35 or 36 years old, we find him charged with unusual religious fervour. He is leading the life of a true and pious Muslim. His heart is unimpressed by worldly attractions. He is as happy in solitude as if he were in congenial company, and when in company he is enjoying the bliss of solitude. We find him restless, and it appears as if he is in search of a lost thing, no trace of which can be found in the mortal world. Islam has so overwhelmed him that he holds debates with the Aryas, and writes voluminous books in support of Islam. His debates in Hoshiarpur in 1886 were so delightful that the feeling of enjoyment has still not been forgotten....

"The state of ecstasy created by reading his invaluable books, which were written to counter other religions and uphold Islam, still has not faded. His Barahini Ahmadiyya over-awed the non-Muslims and raised the spirits of the Muslims. He presented to the world a captivating picture of the religion (of Islam), cleansed of the blots and dust that had collected upon it as a result of the superstition and instinctive weaknesses of the ignorant. In short, this book raised a loud echo in the world, at least within India, which is still reverberating in our ears. Though some Muslim religious leaders may now pass an adverse verdict on Barahini Ahmadiyya, the best time to evaluate it was 1880 when it was published. At that time, Muslims unanimously decided in favour of Hazrat Mirza Sahib.

"As to his character, there is not the slightest trace of a blot on it. He lived a pious life, a life of a righteous God-fearing person. The first fifty years of his life, in terms of high morals, approved habits, and services to the religion, raised him to an enviable position of great honour among the Muslims of India."

(Wakeel, Amritsar, May 30, 1908)

11. Maulvi Muhammad Hussain Batalvi, a leader of the Ahl-i Hadith sect, wrote:

i) "This book (Barahini Ahmadiyya) by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad) in the circumstances of the present times, is such that the like of it has not appeared before in the history of Islam.... Its author has served Islam so steadfastly, by money, by self-sacrifice, by his written and spoken word, and by personal experience, that very few examples of it can be found among past Muslims." (Ishaat al-Summa, vol. vii, No. 7).
ii) "If anyone considers our words to be an Asian exaggeration, let him show us at least one such book which so vigorously fights all the opponents of Islam, especially the Arya and Brahmo Samaj, and let him name two or three persons who have supported Islam, not only with their wealth, lives, pen and tongue, but also by personal spiritual experience, and who have boldly thrown the challenge to all the opponents of Islam and the deniers of Divine revelation that whoever doubts the truth of God speaking to man, he may come and observe it for himself, thus giving other religions a taste of this experience." (Ibid., vol. vii, No. 6).

iii) "According to the experience and observation of friends and foes alike, the author of Baraheen Ahmadiyya lives by the Shariat of Islam, is God-fearing, and truthful by habit." (Ibid., vol. vii, No.6, p.284).

iv) "The excellence of this book, and the benefit accruing to Islam from it, will not remain hidden to those who read it with a fair mind or to the readers of this review. Therefore, in accordance with the Divine command, 'Is not the reward for good but good,' all the followers of Islam (be they Ahl-i Hadith Hanafi, Shia or Sunni) are obliged to support this book and its printing. The author of Baraheen Ahmadiyya has saved the honour of the Muslims. He has challenged the opponents of Islam throughout the world that anyone who doubts the truth of Islam should come to him and see for himself its truth by logical arguments drawn from the Quran and by miracles of the Prophethood of Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, (by which he means the revelations and signs granted to the author of Baraheen)." (Ibid., vol. vii, No.6, p.348)

12. At the time of publication of Baraheen Ahmadiyya in the early 1880's Maulana Muhammad Shareef, editor Akhbar Munsoor Muhammadi, Bangalore, commented as follows: "The hypocrites and the enemies are directing all their attacks against Islam. Atheism is attacking here, irreligion has a hold there, and somewhere else the Brahmo Samaj is wanting to prove its superiority over Islam through philosophical discourses. As for our Christian friends, all their energies are being spent on uprooting Islam, and they are confident that as long as the sun of Islam keeps on casting its bright rays on the world, all the exertions of Christianity will remain futile and the trinity unsuccessful. In short, all religions and their followers want somehow or other to burn out the lamp of Islam....

"It was our long-cherished wish that someone among the Muslim Ulama, whom God had granted strength to serve and aid the cause of the faith, should write a book meeting the needs of the present age which should contain rational arguments and factual evidence to prove that the Holy Quran is the word of God and the Holy Prophet Muhammad's prophethood is true. Thank God that this wish has been fulfilled. This is the very book the preparation of which had been desired for so long: Baraheen Ahmadiyya, the full title of which is 'The Ahmadiyya Arguments on the truth of the Book of God, the Holy Quran, and the Prophethood of Muhammad.' In it the author, may God increase his worth, has proved the truth of the Quran and the prophethood of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, with three hundred logical arguments. The book is written by that greatest of the Ulama, the illustrious general, pride of the followers of Islam in India, the accepted one of God, Maulvi Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the great chief of Qadian, District Gurdaspur, Punjab. Glory be to God! What a marvellous book, every word of which proved the True Faith and shows the truth of the Quran and the Prophethood. With what grandeur have the strong arguments been conveyed to the opponents." (Manshoor Muhammadi, Bangalore, 25 Rajab, 1300 A.H. p.214)

13. The Shamsul-Ulama Maulana Sayyid Mir Hasan, teacher of Dr. Sir Muhammad Iqbal, said of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad: "Sadly, we did not appreciate him. I just cannot express his spiritual accomplishments. His life was not that of ordinary men, nay, he was one of those persons who are chosen servants of God and who appear but rarely." (Al-Hakam, April 7, 1934)

14. The saint Hazrat Sayyid Ashhad-ud-Din, Jhanday waly, of Hyderabad, Sind, Pakistan, a contemporary of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, wrote a letter to him as follows: "I saw the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, in a vision. I entreated him, O messenger of God, is this man who claims to be the Promised Messiah a liar and imposter, or truthful? The Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, replied, 'He is truthful and has come from God. So I then under-
stood that you are right. After this, we shall not have any doubts concerning you." (Reproduced in Zameema Anjam Atham, p 40).

15. Another contemporary recognized Muslim saint, Hazrat Khwaja Ghulam Farid of Chacharhan said at the time: "Mirza Gulam Ahmad Sahib of Qadian is right and truthful in his affairs. Day and night he is engrossed in the service of God Almighty. He strives with his heart and soul for the progress of Islam and raising aloft the cause of the Faith. I cannot see anything wrong at all in him. If he has claimed to be the Mahdi and Messiah, that too is permissible." (Isharat-e Faridi, vol. iii, p. 179)

16. Maulavi Siraj-ud-Din, father of the famous Maulavi Zafar Ali Khan, editor of the well-known Muslim daily Zamindar of Lahore, wrote the following in his obituary of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad: "I can say from personal experience that, even in his youth, Mirza Sahib was a very virtuous and righteous person. He was free from pretence or fabrication in religious matters. Personally, we did not have the honour of believing in his claims or revelations, but we consider him to be a perfect Muslim." (Zamindar, June 8, 1908)

17. Khwaja Hasan Nizami of Delhi wrote: "Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Sahib was a very great venerable scholar of his time. We have to acknowledge his scholarship and accomplishments." (Newspaper Muniadi, Delhi, India, April 27, 1930)

18. Allama Niyaz Fatehpuri wrote:

i) "Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Sahib came to the defence of Islam at a time when even the greatest scholar of the Faith could not dare to confront the opponents." (Monthly Nigar, November, 1955)

ii) "Whoever studies his life and character sincerely and truthfully will have to concede that he was a lover of the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, in the true sense of the word, and had within him a sincere urge for the cause of Islam." (Nigar, Lucknow, India, July, 1960)

Conclusion

There are many other similar expressions of opinion by leading Muslim personalities, but we rest with the above for the moment. The opinions quoted above are of Muslim journalists, scholars and religious leaders whose scholarship is universally recognized in the Islamic world till this day, who shone like stars on the firmament of knowledge in their time, and from whom the whole wide world obtained the light of knowledge. They include the contemporaries of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad who had observed him from close at hand. Despite differing with him in certain matters of belief, but remembering the Divine command, 'Fear not the censure of any censurer' and bearing in mind the pleasure of God, they showed great sincerity, honesty and broadmindedness in making fair comment on his scholarship, virtue, righteousness and service of Islam. They gave true testimony which is preserved in the pages of history to this day.

As against these, we have certain newspaper columnists, authors and politicians of the present day who have no requisite knowledge of the Holy Quran and Hadith, no familiarity with Islamic literature, and who have not read any of Hazrat Mirza's books nor do they know anything about the Ahmadiyya Movement. They are not aware of those times or the conditions prevailing then, when according to Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Hazrat Mirza carried out a magnificent defence of Islam by conducting a jihad with the pen from the front-line, and not only defeated the opponents of Islam but went further to establish a Jama'at whose objectives are to make Islam predominate in the world, show the beauty of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, propagate and prove the truth of the Holy Quran, and reform the condition of the Muslims themselves. Thus was this grand Movement born. The opponents of Ahmadiyyat, having read only the adverse propaganda literature produced against the Ahmadiyya Movement, level all sorts of false accusations against the Imam of the Age, the Reformer of the fourteenth century Hijrah, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, may God have mercy on him. For the sake of their material, political, and financial ends, they are fanning the flames of hostility and ripping the unity of Muslims to shreds.

English translation by Dr. Sahid Aziz, U.K.
ISLAM
IMAM VEHBI ISMAIL

Of the great religions of the world Islam is a religion that is not aimed or directed toward opposing any particular section of mankind, or any particular race, nation or community. Islam is the universal religion. We read in the Holy Qur'an: "We have sent thee as a mercy for all the nations."

Islam made its appearance at a very critical time - at a time when the whole world had sunk to the lowest depths of decadence. To this the Holy Qur'an alludes in the following words: "Corruption has appeared in the land and the sea." About this period, Mr J.H. Denison says in his book "Emotions as the Basis of Civilization":

"In the fifth and sixth centuries, the civilized world stood on the verge of chaos. The old emotional cultures that had made civilization possible, since they have given to men a sense of unity and of reverence for their rulers, had broken down, and nothing had been found adequate to take their place.

It seemed then the great civilization which had taken four thousand years to construct was on the verge of disintegration, and that mankind was likely to return to that condition of barbarism where every tribe and sect was against the next, and that law and order were unknown... Civilization, like a gigantic tree whose foliage over-reached the world... was rotted to the core. Was there any emotional culture that could be brought in to gather mankind once more and to save civilization?"

This learned man continued to write in the same book: "The debt of our science to that of the Arabs does not consist in startling discoveries or revolutionary theories, science owes a great deal more to Arab Culture; it owes its existence. The ancient world was unscientific... what we call science arose in Europe as a result of a new spirit of investigation, of the methods of experiment, observation, measurement, of the development of mathematics in a form unknown to the Greeks. That spirit and those methods were introduced into the European world by the Arabs."

The well-known scholar John William Draper, after numbering the contributions of the Muslims to world civilization, especially in astronomy, in his book, "A History of the Intellectual Development of Europe," Vol. II, concludes: "The Arab has left his intellectual impact on Europe, as before long, Christendom will have to confess, he has indelibly written it on the heavens as anyone may see who reads the names of the stars on a common celestial globe."

The then President of the United States, Mr Eisenhower, in his speech on the 28th of June, 1957, on the historic day of the opening of the Islamic Center in Washington, D.C., among other things said: "Civilization owes to the Islamic world some of its most important tools and achievements. From the fundamental discoveries in medicine to the highest planes of astronomy, the Muslim genius has added much to the culture of all people. That genius has been a well-spring of science, commerce and the arts, and provided for all of us many lessons in courage and hospitality."

At this time, the Divine Providence sent a new messenger, the universal Prophet, Muhammad, peace be upon him, to save mankind from the verge of destruction. He brought about such a startling change of things that a new world appeared to have been created by God. The world was transformed into a paradise, or to use the words of the author of the book "Ins and Outs of Mesopotamia":

"... A man arose who, by his personality and by his claim to direct Divine guidance, actually brought about the impossible, namely, the union of all warring factions."

As Mr Hirschfield writes in his book, "The New Researches," "Never has a people been led more rapidly to civilization, such as it was, than were the Arabs through Islam."

What were those teachings that Islam brought to the world and led the Arabs so rapidly to civilization?

Some of the most important teachings of Islam are taught clearly in this verse of the Holy Qur'an: "It is not righteousness that you turn your faces towards the east and the west, but righteous is the one who believes in One God and the next world and the Angels and the Books and the
Prophets, and gives out of love for God to the near of kin and the orphans, the needy and the wayfarer and those who ask and to set slaves free, and keeps up prayer and pays the poor-rate; and the performers of their promise when they make a promise, and the patient in distress and affliction and in the time of conflict. These are they who are truthful; and these are who keep their duty."

Thus for the first time in the history of the world the Book of Islam declared in unmistakable terms that the main purpose for which all natural objects, from the mightiest stars to the most insignificant atoms, were created was to minister to man's needs. Everything in the universe being intended for his use, man is commanded to investigate their intrinsic properties. The initiation of the conquest of nature and the utilization of its forces for the good of humanity is, indeed, one of the greatest blessings ever conferred upon mankind.

When the Muslims acted according to the injunctions of the Holy Qur'an and the teachings of their Prophet they were masters of the world in all fields of knowledge.

Most of the unprejudiced writers acknowledge that if it were not for the Muslims the world would not have reached the civilization that we enjoy today.

Robert Briffauld in his book "The Making of Mankind" writes: "It is highly probable that but for the Arabs, modern European civilization would never have arisen at all, it is absolutely certain that but for them it would not have assumed that character which has enabled it to transcend all previous phases of evolution. For although there is not a single aspect of European growth in which the decisive influence of Islamic Culture is not traceable, nowhere is it so clear and momentous as in the genesis of that power which constitutes the paramount distinctive force of the Modern World and the supreme force of victory - natural science and scientific spirit."

If we were to study this verse comprehensively, we would need a series of speeches in which to comment upon it. However, I will try to summarize the fundamental teachings of Islam as expressed in this verse.

UNITY OF GOD

The first and most important principle is to believe in the Unity of God without any compromise. We read in the Holy Qur'an this chapter: "Say: He, God, is one. God is He on whom all depend. He begets not, nor is He begotten, and none is like Him."

The Rev. C.F. Andrews, a foremost missionary, observes in his contribution, "The Function of Islam":

"One of the greatest blessings which Islam has brought to East and West alike has been the emphasis which, at the critical period in human history, it placed upon the Divine Unity. For during those Dark Ages both in east and west, from 600 to 1000 A.D., this doctrine was in danger of being overlaid and obscured in Hinduism and Christianity, owing to the immense accretions of subsidiary worship of countless demi-gods and heroes. Islam has been both in Europe and India, in their darkened hour of aberration from the sovereign truth of God's Unity, an invaluable corrective and deterrent. Indeed, without the final emphasis of this truth, which Islam gave from its central position - facing both India and Europe - it is doubtful whether this idea of God as One could have obtained that established place in human thought which is uncontested in the intellectual world today."

The second principle that is taught in this verse is a basic principle to nearly all religions and is a necessity for the betterment of the human society.

Human law is not enough to keep men from wrongdoing. Many of us could stay away from the punishment of our misdeeds if they were not discovered by anyone; but the believer in the life to come knows that the day of judgment will come, at which time he must answer for all his deeds in this world, no matter how secretly they were done. It is this belief that keeps him away from mischief.

Believing in angels as obedient servants of God is also recognized by most of the religions.

UNIVERSALITY OF DIVINE LIGHT

Belief in all the Holy Books revealed by God and in all the prophets of God is a unique
feature of Islam. Respecting the revelations that came before the Holy Qur'an and their Prophets paves the way to harmony with other religions. This is an Islamic concept aiming at the brotherhood of mankind under the fatherhood of One God. About this principle we read in the Holy Qur'an: "Say: We believe in One God and (in) that which has been revealed to Abraham, and Ishmael and Isaac and Jacob and the tribes, in that which was given to Moses and Jesus, and in that which was given to the Prophets from their Lord; we do not make any distinction between any of them and to Him do we submit." (2:136)

Maulana Muhammad Ali commenting on this verse in his translation of the Holy Qur'an writes the following:

"This shows the cosmopolitan nature of a Muslim's belief. Not only is belief in the great prophets of Israel an article of faith in Islam but the words 'that which was given to the prophets from their Lord' make the Muslim conception of belief in prophets as wide as the world. And it should be noted that this broad conception was promulgated at the time when the Jews and the Christians were exerting themselves to the utmost against the new faith.

"Our Prophet, peace be upon him, says: 'I am the most friendly among men with Jesus, son of Mary, in this world and the hereafter. Prophets are brothers ... by different mothers but their religion is the same'."

Charity in Islam is of great importance, and to help others is a duty upon every Muslim. The Holy Prophet says: "God helps those who help their brothers." In this verse we are told that charity and help should be given from the heart out of love of God. The love of God is here, as in many other places in the Holy Qur'an, stated to be the true incentive to all deeds of righteousness. Charity should begin at home, by helping first the nearest of kin, then the orphans, the needy, etc.

**PRAYER AND WORK**

Prayer is, as most of you know, obligatory five times a day. Man consists of body and soul. As the body is in need of food for its nourishment, so is the soul in need of prayer, for it helps man to be closer to God, and elevates him to higher stages of spiritual progress.

Islam, by making prayer obligatory five times a day, enables its followers to feel the presence of God at every step of their daily life; hence, it makes one more honest in his dealings and he will perform his duties more accurately as he is sure that God is witnessing his deeds.

In congregational prayer, we see the most perfect form of brotherhood. Islam makes no distinction between the poor and the rich, the high and the low, for all stand side by side.

In the Holy Qur'an we read: "Successful indeed are the believers who are humble in their prayer." (23:1-2). And in another verse we recite: "Surely, prayer keeps one away from indecency and evil" (29:45).

A positivist, follower of Comte, Dr. J.H. Bridges, in an address delivered in 1879 on the subject of "Prayer and Work" published in a book "Discourses on Positive Religion," observes: "The faith of the Mussulman is concentrated in a single word, Islam; devotion, resignation of our own will to the supreme decree. That word was not limited by Muhammad to his own followers; it was used ungrudgingly of his Judaic and Christian predecessors. There is no fitter word for the religion of the human race. If there is any word in the Western language which can translate it fully it is the word religion itself, and that word needs interpretation for ears untrained in Latin speech. The word Islam unfolds itself for us, as for the followers of Muhammad, into two great and inseparable aspects of life, 'Prayer and Work.' 'Pray and give alms,' said Muhammad, almsgiving in his wide interpretation of it, conceived with admirable wisdom relatively to the simple wants of his time, covering the whole field of doing good to men. Pray and work, said the medieval saint: pray as though nothing were to be done by work; work as though nothing were to be gained by prayer."

And he continues to say: "Islam, then, in the English tongue, devotion -- the devotion of our life to the highest: the bringing of our own wills into accord with the Supreme Will, this is the word that sums up the lives of pious men in every age and country. They have framed for themselves an
ideal, a model, a pattern of what their life would be. They have done their utmost to make the ideal a reality. In words, they have prayed and they have worked."

The verse of the Holy Qur'an continues, "and performers of their promise when they make a promise." The performance of promises on the part of individuals as well as of nations is one of the first essentials of the welfare of humanity, and hence the stress laid upon it by the Holy Qur'an. Faithlessness to treaties and pledges on the part of nations has wrought the greatest havoc on humanity.

**FASTING**

Fasting is obligatory for one month of every year. We read in the Holy Qur'an: "O you who believe! fasting is prescribed for you, as it was prescribed for those before you, so that you may guard against evil. It is for a certain number of days. But whoever among you is sick or on a journey, (he shall fast) a (like) number of other days. And those who find it extremely hard may effect redemption by feeding a poor man. So whoever does good spontaneously, it is better for you if you know. The month of Ramadan is that in which the Qur'an was revealed, a guidance to man and clear proofs of the guidance and the criterion. So whoever of you is present in the month, he shall fast therein ..." (2:183-185).

Fasting helps us control our senses; makes us masters of our desires; it trains us to change our customs, it makes us feel the pangs of hunger so we will gladly help our brothers who are less fortunate than we.

**PILGRIMAGE**

Pilgrimage to Mecca is a duty upon every Muslim, providing health and wealth permit, once in one's lifetime. We read in the Holy Qur'an: "And accomplish the pilgrimage and the visit for Allah" (2:196).

In pilgrimage the spirit of equality and fraternity reaches its climax. It is the highest manifestation of Islamic brotherhood and democracy. Nature dictates that brothers should have one common meeting ground for exchange of love and affection. Haj pilgrimage fulfills this object in the most excellent way as it is a universal assemblage of the brethren-in-faith in the central place of monotheism represented by the Holy Ka'ba. Not only is there uniformity of religion among the Muslims but there is also unity of dress, of living and unity of feelings in Ihram. The demonstration of equality furnished on this occasion is so complete that it is well-nigh impossible to distinguish a servant from a master. The whole of humanity assumes one aspect and one attitude and thus the noblest sight of equality and brotherhood is witnessed in pilgrimage and the field of Arafat.

From what I have explained, the principles of belief are five: 1 - Belief in God and His Unity, 2 - Belief in Angels, 3 - Belief in All Holy Scriptures, 4 - Belief in all Prophets, and 5 - Belief in the life hereafter. The religious duties of a Muslim are four: 1 - Prayer five times a day, 2 - Almsgiving, 3 - Fasting during the month of Ramadan, and 4 - Pilgrimage to Mecca.

**EMPHASIS ON KNOWLEDGE**

Islam has put great stress on learning. Our Prophet, peace be upon him, said, "Acquire knowledge from the cradle to the grave."

The first revelation that came down to our Prophet was: "Read in the name of Thy Lord, who creates. Creates man from a clot. Read and Thy Lord is Most Generous. Taught man what he knew not."

Muhammad has said: "To acquire knowledge is a duty upon every Muslim male and female."

Our Prophet himself tried his best to educate his companions. The captives of the Battle of Badr were freed after each one of them taught ten Muslims to read and write.

Islam did not stop here, but it was reserved for its book, the Holy Qur'an, to open man's eyes to the wonders of nature by bringing her elements from the high pedestal of divinity on which they had been placed by man, to the position of the servants to mankind. We read in the Holy Qur'an: "And He has made subservient for you the night and the day and the sun and the moon. And the stars are made subservient by His command. Surely there are signs in this for a people who understand" (16:12).
It should be borne in mind that the truth which underlies all the principles of Islam is that indicated by the word Islam itself, and the aim of all its commandments is that a man should attain to the stage of perfection signified by Islam. Hence, the Holy Qur'an emphatically teaches that Almighty God should be made the sole object of one's desires and love. It shows now His beauty and goodness and calls attention then to His countless gifts and favours, for beauty and favours are the two incentives to love. According to the Holy Qur'an, Almighty God is one and without any partner in His excellences, and He is eternally free from every defect. In Him are found all the perfect attributes and by him are displayed all the mighty powers. From Him the whole creation comes into existence and to Him all the affairs return. He is the fountain-source of all blessings and the Judge of retribution. Being remote, He is very near, and being near, He is still far off. He is above all but still it cannot be said that beneath Him there is anything else, and he is the most hidden of all things, but it cannot be said that anything is more manifest than He. He is Himself living and everything has its life from Him. He is His own support and everything finds support from Him. He bears everything and there is nothing that bears Him. Nothing has come into existence independently of Him and nothing can exist without Him. He comprehends all, but the manner in which He does so, cannot be described. He is the light of everything that is in earth and heavens, and every light has shone forth from His hand and is a shadow of His person. He is the Lord of all the worlds and there is no soul which has not been brought forth by Him and has come into existence by itself. Nor is there any faculty of a soul which has not been brought into existence by Him. His manifold blessings are of two kinds. Firstly, such as are not given as a reward for any previous deed of a doer and which exist from the beginning, as earth, heavens, sun, moon and stars, fire, water, air and all other things which have been created for our comfort. Everything that was necessary to sustain us, was created for us by Almighty God long before we came into existence or any deed was done by us. Who can say that the sun was created because of any meritorious deed done by him, or that the earth was brought into existence because he had done a highly virtuous deed? In short, these blessings of God were created by His mercy displayed long before the existence of man, and they are not the result of any deed done by him. The other kind of Divine blessings is the outcome of His mercy displayed on the good deeds of men, and this does not stand in need of explanation.

The Holy Qur'an further teaches us that the person of God is free from every fault and defect and that He wishes that human beings should also, by following His injunctions, become free from every defect and be purified of every impurity. Thus He says:

"Whoever remains blind in this world, and does not see God, shall remain blind after death and his darkness will not be dispelled." (xvii, 72)

For, the truth is that the eyes to see God are granted in this world, and anyone who leaves this world without getting the eyes to see God, shall not see God in the next life. In this verse Almighty God has given us clearly to understand to what height of spiritual advancement He wants man to reach, and what stage of perfection a man can attain to by following His commandments. How Almighty God can be seen in this very world is then stated in the Holy Qur'an. Thus it says:

"Who wishes that he should see in this world the God Who is the true Lord and the Creator, should do the deeds of virtue which are free from every sort of corruption and in worshipping his Lord he should not be guilty of any shirk." (xviii. 110)

The first portion of this verse requires a man to do "deeds of virtue" which are free from impurity and every contamination, by which are meant deeds which are neither done that they may be seen of others nor do they generate vanity in the heart of a man that he is the doer of such great and excellent deeds, nor are they incomplete or defective, nor do they savour of aught but sincere personal love entertained towards God and are saturated with true faithfulness and perseverance.
The second portion of the verse requires a man to abstain from *shirk* i.e. setting up with God such false deities as the sun, the moon, the stars of heaven, the physical forces of nature, the elements or anything else that is upon earth or the heavens, or setting too high a value upon the physical means and placing so much reliance on them as to consider them actually effective without any reservation like God himself or giving an importance to one's own resources and efforts, for this, too, is a sort of *shirk*. On the other hand, when a man has done everything that lies in his power and exercised his abilities to his best, he should still be conscious of his utter weakness and ignorance, and ascribe everything to the mighty power and deep knowledge of God and not to his own power or learning. Our soul should constantly be in a state of perfect submission and prostration at the Divine threshold, and thus draw His favours and blessings. Unless we make our condition like the helpless cripple who, lying in a desert parched with thirst, suddenly sees a spring of sweet and clear water and, halting and limping, takes himself to it and applies his burning lips to cool water, not parting them until he is satiated - I say, unless we fully realize our own utter weakness and inability and the mighty power and beneficent grace of God which we constantly draw upon, we are not free from *shirk* and do not deserve to be called Unitarians.

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**MUHAMMAD THE GREATEST MAN OF HISTORY**

"If greatness of purpose, smallness of means, and astounding results are the three criteria of human genius, who could dare to compare any great man in modern history with Muhammad? ... Philosopher, orator, apostle, legislator, warrior, conqueror of ideas, restorer of rational dogmas, of a cult without images; the founder of twenty terrestrial empires and of one spiritual empire, that is Muhammad. As regards all standards by which human greatness may be measured, we may well ask: Is there any man greater than he?"

- Alphonse de Lamartine in Histoire de la Turquie

**QUR'AN, THE GREATEST SPIRITUAL FORCE**

"It is the one miracle claimed by Muhammad - his standing miracle, he called it - and a miracle it is."

- Bosworth Smith

"Never has a people been led more rapidly to civilization, such as it was, than were the Arabs through Islam.... And to it was also indirectly due the marvelous development of all branches of science in the Moslem world."

- New Researches by H. Hirschfeld

"Here, therefore, its merits as a literary production should, perhaps, not be measured by some preconceived maxims of subjective and aesthetic taste, but by the effects which it produced in Muhammad's contemporaries and fellow-countrymen. If it spoke so powerfully and convincingly to the hearts of his hearers as to weld hitherto centrifugal and antagonistic elements into one compact and well organized body, animated by ideas far beyond those which had until now ruled the Arabian mind, then its eloquence was perfect, simply because it created a civilized nation out of savage tribes, and shot a fresh woof into the old warp of history."

- Dr. Steingass, Hughes' Dictionary of Islam