

Barakātud Du‘ā

Blessings of Prayer

ḤADRAT MIRZA GHULAM AHMAD OF QADIAN

The Promised Messiah and Mahdi^{as}
Founder of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Jamā‘at

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برکات الدعاء

Blessings of Prayer

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About the Author

Born in 1835 in Qadian (India), Ḥaḍrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the Promised Messiah and Mahdi^{as}, remained dedicated to the study of the Holy Quran and to a life of prayer and devotion. Finding Islam the target of foul attacks from all directions, the fortunes of Muslims at a low ebb, faith yielding to doubt and religion only skin-deep, he undertook vindication and exposition of Islam. In his vast corpus of writings (including his epoch-making *Brāhīn-e-Ahmadiyya*), his lectures, discourses, religious debates etc., he argued that Islam was a living faith and the only faith by following which man could establish contact with his Creator and enter into communion with Him. The teachings contained in the Holy Quran and the Law promulgated by Islam were designed to raise man to moral, intellectual and spiritual perfection. He announced that God had appointed him the Messiah and Mahdi as mentioned in the prophecies of the Bible, the Holy Quran and *Aḥādīth*. In 1889 he began to accept initiation into his Community which is now established in two hundred and seven countries. His eighty plus books are written mostly in Urdu, but some are in Arabic and Persian.

After his demise in 1908, the Promised Messiah^{as} was succeeded by Ḥaḍrat Maulawī Nūr-ud-Dīn^{ra}, Khalīfatul Masīḥ I. On the death of Ḥaḍrat Maulawī Nūr-ud-Dīn^{ra} in 1914, Ḥaḍrat Mirza Bashīr-ud-Dīn Mahmood Ahmad^{ra}, who was also the Promised Messiah's^{as} Promised Son, was elected as Khalīfa. Ḥaḍrat Mirza Bashīr-ud-Dīn Mahmood Ahmad^{ra} remained in office for nearly fifty two years. He died in 1965 and was succeeded by his eldest son, Ḥaḍrat Hafiz Mirza Nasir Ahmad^{rh}, the Promised grandson of the Promised Messiah^{as}. After seventeen years of meritorious services he passed away in 1982. He was succeeded by his younger brother, Ḥaḍrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad^{rh} as Khalīfatul Masīḥ IV who, having led the Community to its present strength and global recognition, passed away on the 19th April, 2003. Ḥaḍrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad Khalīfatul Masīḥ V^{at} is the present head of the Community and enjoys the distinction of being the great-grandson of Ḥaḍrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as}.

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Foreword

Barakātud Du'ā, or *The Blessings of Prayer*, written by the Promised Messiah^{as} in 1893, is a refutation of Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan's view that there is no such thing as the acceptance of prayer, and that prayer is no more than a form of worship. The Promised Messiah^{as} rejects this view and proclaims that Allah hears and accepts the supplication of believers which are offered in humility and sincerity, and that the acceptance of prayer sets in motion its own chain of causes which culminates in the fulfilment of the objective prayed for.

In the second part of the book, which deals with Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan's other book *Uṣūlul Tafṣīr (On the Principles of Commentary of the Holy Quran)*, the Promised Messiah^{as} presents his criteria or guiding principles for the correct interpretation of the Holy Quran.

The initial translation of this book was done by the late Dr. Aziz Ahmad Chaudhry. It has now been thoroughly revised at Wakalat Tasnif. I am grateful to Sahibzada Mirza Anas Ahmad Sahib, Wakīlul Ishā'at, Taḥrīk-e-Jadīd, Rabwah and Maulana Muniruddin Shams Sahib, Additional Wakīlul Taṣnīf, London, for their valuable suggestions and their help in bringing out this book. I am also indebted to the following who assisted me in the various stages of this project:

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Tahir Mahmood Mubashar.

Chaudhry Muhammad Ali
Wakīlul Taṣnīf,
Taḥrīk-e-Jadīd Rabwah
December 24th 2006

Publishers' Note

Please also note that words in the text in normal brackets () and in between the long dashes—are the words of the Promised Messiah^{as} and if any explanatory words or phrases are added by the translator for the purpose of clarification, they are put in square brackets [].

The name of Muhammad^{sa}, the Holy Prophet of Islam, has been followed by the symbol ^{sa}, which is an abbreviation for the salutation *Ṣallallāhu 'Alaihi Wasallam* (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). The names of other Prophets and Messengers are followed by the symbol ^{as}, an abbreviation for *'Alaihissalām* (on whom be peace). The actual salutations have not generally been set out in full, but they should nevertheless, be understood as being repeated in full in each case. The symbol ^{ra} is used with the name of the companions of the Holy Prophet^{sa} and those of the Promised Messiah^{as}. It stands for *Raḍi Allāhu 'anhu/'anhā/'anhum* (May Allah be pleased with him/with her/with them). th stands for *Raḥimahullāhu Ta'ālā* (may Allah have mercy on him). ^{at} stands for *Ayyadahullāhu Ta'ālā* (May Allah, the Mighty help him).

In transliterating Arabic words we have followed the following system adopted by the Royal Asiatic Society.

ا at the beginning of a word, pronounced as *a*, *i*, *u* preceded by a very slight aspiration, like *h* in the English word 'honour'.

ث *th*, pronounced like *th* in the English word 'thing'.

- ح *ḥ*, a guttural aspirate, stronger than h.
 خ *kh*, pronounced like the Scotch ch in 'loch'.
 ذ *dh*, pronounced like the English th in 'that'.
 ص *s*, strongly articulated s.
 ض *ḍ*, similar to the English th in 'this'.
 ط *t̤*, strongly articulated palatal t.
 ظ *ẓ*, strongly articulated z.
 ع ʿ, a strong guttural, the pronunciation of which must be learnt by the ear.
 غ *gh*, a sound approached very nearly in the r 'grasseye' in French, and in the German r. It requires the muscles of the throat to be in the 'gargling' position whilst pronouncing it.
 ق *q*, a deep guttural k sound.
 ى ʾ, a sort of catch in the voice.

Short vowels are represented by:

- a* for —َ— (like *u* in 'bud');
i for —ِ— (like *i* in 'bid');
u for —ُ— (like *oo* in 'wood');

Long vowels by:

- ā* for —َـ or َـ (like *a* in 'father');
ī for ى —ِـ or —ِـ (like *ee* in 'deep');
ū for و —ُـ (like *oo* in 'root');

Other:

- ai* for ى —ِـ (like *i* in 'site')♦;

♦In Arabic words like شيخ (Shaikh) there is an element of diphthong which is missing when the word is pronounced in Urdu.

au for و —ُ— (resembling *ou* in 'sound').

Please note that in transliterated words the letter 'e' is to be pronounced as in 'prey' which rhymes with 'day'; however the pronunciation is flat without the element of English diphthong. If in Urdu and Persian words 'e' is lengthened a bit more it is transliterated as 'ei' to be pronounced as 'ei' in 'feign' without the element of diphthong thus 'عے' is transliterated as 'Kei'. For the nasal sound of 'n' we have used the symbol 'ñ'. Thus Urdu word 'میں' is transliterated as 'meiñ'.*

The consonants not included in the above list have the same phonetic value as in the principal languages of Europe.

We have not transliterated Arabic words which have become part of English language, e.g., Islam, Mahdi, Quran**, Hijra, Ramadan, Hadith, ulema, umma, sunna, kafir, pukka etc.

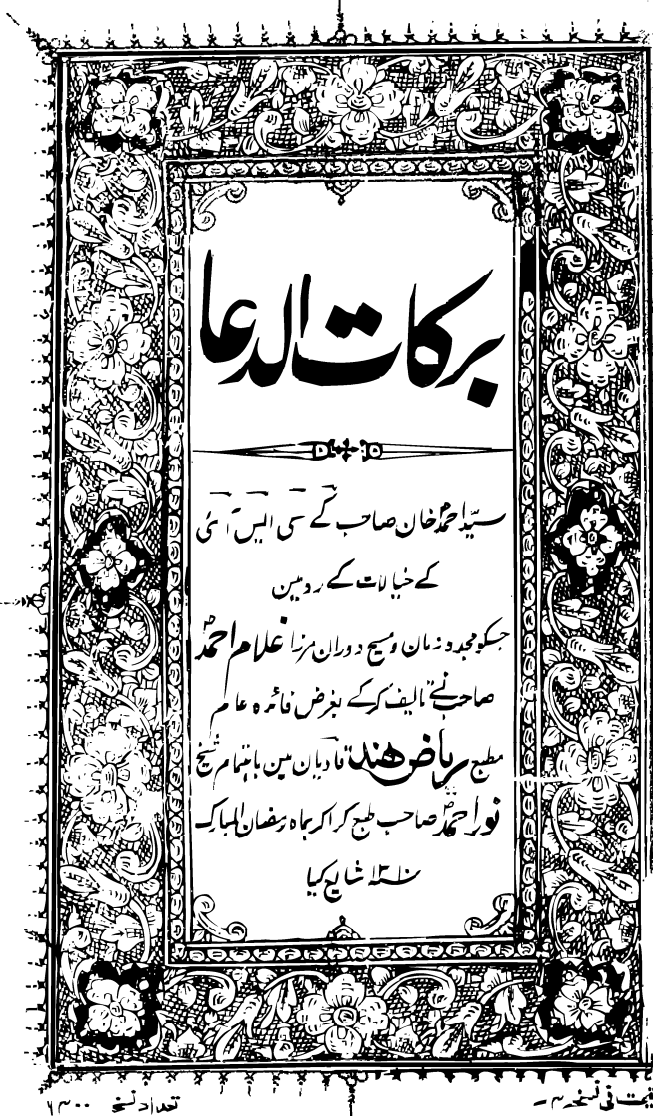
For quotes straight commas (straight quotes) are used to differentiate them from the curved commas used in the system of transliteration, ' for ع, ' for ء. Commas as punctuation marks are used according to the normal usage. Similarly for apostrophe normal usage is followed.

Publishers

* These transliterations are not included in the system of transliteration by Royal Asiatic Society. [Publishers]

** Concise Oxford Dictionary records Quran in three forms—Quran, Qur'an and Koran. [Publishers]

The Facsimile of the Title of the First Edition (1893)



برکات الدعا

سید احمد خان صاحب کے سی ایس آئی

کے خیالات کے رد میں

جسکو مجدد زمان و سچ دوران مرزا غلام احمد

صاحب نے ایف کر کے بغرض فائزہ عالم

مطبع ریاض ہند تادیان میں ماہنامہ شمع

نور احمد صاحب طبع کر کر ماہ رمضان المبارک

سنہ ۱۳۱۱ھ شایع کیا

(Translation of the Title Page)

BLESSINGS OF PRAYER

IN REFUTATION OF THE CONCEPTS OF
SAYYID AHMAD KHAN SAHIB, K.C.S.I.

written and published for the benefit of
the general public

by

MIRZA GHULAM AHMAD^{as}

**Messiah of the Age
and Reformer of the Time**

in 1310 A.H. during the holy month of Ramadan

Printed at: Riyāḍ Hind Press, Qadian,
under the supervision of Shaikh Nur Ahmad

An Example of Accepted Prayer

Anīs-e-Hind Of Meerath and an Objection to My Prophecy

I have received *Anīs-e-Hind* of 25th March, 1893, which contains some criticism of the prophecy I had published with regard to Lekhram of Peshawar.¹ I

¹ The words of the Prophecy are as follows:

'On 20th February, 1886, I published an announcement wherein I proposed to Indarman and to Lekhram of Peshawar that, if they so wished, I could publish some prophecy regarding their future destiny. Indarman avoided my proposal and died soon afterwards. Lekhram, on the other hand, accepted the proposal with great audacity and wrote to me a letter stating that I could go ahead and publish any prophecy regarding him. Thus, in answer to my supplications, I received the following revelation from God Almighty:

عَجَلٌ جَسَدٌ لَّهُ نُحُورٌ لَهُ نَصَبٌ وَعَذَابٌ

That is: *This is just a lifeless calf, from which a mournful bleating emanates. For him, on account of his blasphemy and foul language, grief and severe chastisement has been ordained.*

Today, Monday 20th February, 1893, when I prayed to be informed about the time of this impending punishment, it was revealed to me that within six years from today—20th February, 1893—this person would suffer dreadful chastisement on account of the foul and abusive language he has used against the Holy Prophet^{sa}. Therefore, I now publish this prophecy for the knowledge of Muslims, Christians, Āryas, and people of other faiths. If this person is not visited by some Divine punishment—which is miraculous in nature, and is distinct from everyday afflictions, and is far beyond ordinary suffering, and is accompanied by Divine awe—within these six years, then let it be known that I have not been commissioned by God, and these words are not from Him. And if I prove to be false in my prophecy I shall be ready to face any punishment.' (*Majmū'a Ishtihārāt*, vol. 1, pp. 304-305) [Publishers]

have learnt that some other newspapers have also found this word of truth disagreeable. In fact, it quite pleases me to see that this prophecy is gaining publicity and fame at the very hands of the opponents.

In response to this criticism, I consider it sufficient for the time being to say that God Almighty has done what He wished and as He wished. It is not of my doing. As regards the objection that such a prophecy shall fulfil no purpose and some doubts will still remain in this connection, I consider it to be premature.

I freely admit and reiterate that if, as the critics believe, this prophecy results in some ordinary fever or he² suffers a little pain or a bout of cholera, after which he fully recovers, it will not be considered a prophecy, rather it will amount to fraud and deception, for no one is free from such illness and we all fall sick at one time or the other. Thus, in such a situation, I will still deserve the punishment that I have stated. But if this prophecy manifests itself in such a way that the signs of Divine wrath are clearly and openly witnessed, then let it be known that it is from God Almighty. The fact is that the inherent greatness and awe of a prophecy does not require that

² Lekhram of Peshawar. [Publishers]

the time and day [of its fulfilment] should be fixed. Rather, it is enough to set a time limit within which the punishment will come. And when the prophecy actually reveals itself with appalling awe, it automatically draws hearts towards itself and all the conjecture and criticism that prematurely take root in the hearts are so vanquished that people who possess judicious and sound judgement retract their previous ideas and feel ashamed of them.

Besides, I too am subject to the laws of nature. If I published this prophecy as a hoax, on the basis of mere presumptions and with some common ailments in mind, then the person who is the focus of the prophecy can likewise make a prophecy concerning me, based on similar presumptions. I am quite willing that, instead of six years, which is the limit I have set for him, he is free to stretch it to ten years in my case. Lekhram at present would be no more than thirty years old. He is a well-built young man enjoying excellent health. I, on the other hand, am more than fifty years old, weak, chronically ill, and suffering from several ailments; nonetheless, the contest will make amply clear as to which is the word of a mortal being and which is the word of God Almighty.

The critics' contention that this is no longer the age for such prophecies, is a mere statement commonly uttered by people. I, however, believe that this is the age for the acceptance of the immutable and perfect truths and verities, and there has probably never been such an age. It is true that no fraud or deceit can remain hidden in this age, but this is all the more pleasing for the righteous, because only a person who knows how to differentiate between truth and falsehood can truly appreciate the truth and embrace it with joy and eagerness. There is such attraction in the truth that it draws people towards itself. Evidently, people of this age are accepting hundreds of new facts which their forefathers did not accept. If the people of the age are not thirsty for the truth, then what is the reason for the beginning of such a wonderful revolution? The present age, undoubtedly, is a friend, and not foe, of the truth. To say that this is the age of wise people and gone is the time of the simple-minded, amounts to the condemnation of the age, as if to say, that this is an evil time in which people refuse to accept the truth even after they have recognized it. But I can never accept this to be the case; because I find that the majority of those turning to me and benefiting from me are such as have had modern education, and some have even attained BA and MA

degrees. I see that these educated people are accepting the truth with great zeal and enthusiasm. There is a group of Eurasian Englishmen—educated and newly converted to Islam—residing in Madras who are members of my Jamā‘at and believe in all the verities.

I believe that I have now written all that caters for the understanding of a God-fearing person. Āryas, however, are at liberty to comment on this article as they wish. I am not bothered by whatever they might say, for I know that to praise or condemn the prophecy at this stage is of no consequence. If this prophecy is from God Almighty—and I know that it is from Him—then it will definitely manifest itself with awesome signs and will cause hearts to tremble. And if it is not from Him, then it will result in my humiliation. If, upon the fulfilment of this prophecy, I indulge in weak and futile interpretations, I will suffer even more disgrace. The Eternal and Holy Being, Who holds all power in His Hand, never bestows honour upon a liar.

It is wrong to imagine that I have anything personal against Lekhram, or against anyone else for that matter. But Lekhram is the enemy of the truth and he has insulted the perfect and holy one^{sa} who is the fountain of all truth. This is why God Almighty has desired to manifest throughout the world the dignity

and honour of the one He loves. وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَىٰ مَنِ اتَّبَعَ الْهُدَىٰ
[Peace be on those who follow the guidance.]

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ
نُحَمِّدُهُ وَنُصَلِّیْ عَلٰی رَسُوْلِهِ الْكَرِیْمِ³

A Review of Two Booklets

Ad-Du'ā-wal-Istijābah

& Tahrīr fī Uṣūlit Tafṣīr⁴

by Sayyid Ahmad Khan Sahib, K.C.S.I.

کے اس عقل خود برہستی خود کم بناز
غیر را ہرگز نمے باشد گندہ در کوئے حق
ہر کہ آید ز آسمان او را زان یار آورد
خود بخود فہمیدین قرآن گمان باطل است
کے ہر لو العجائب چوں تو بسیار آورد
ہر کہ از خود آورد او بخش دہوار آورد⁵

3 In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful. We praise Allah and invoke His blessings upon His noble Prophet^{sa}. [Publishers]

4 'Prayer and its Acceptance' and 'On the Principles of Commentary of the Holy Quran.' [Publishers]

5 Persian verses:

O prisoner of your own intellect!
Be not too proud of yourself;
This wonderful celestial sphere
Has brought forth many like you.
One who is alienated from God
Can never find access to His court;
The secrets of the Beloved are revealed
Only to him who comes from heaven.
It is foolish to think that you can fathom
The secrets of the Quran on your own;
Whoever invents meanings from himself
Invents only filth and carrion.

[Publishers]

In his booklet with the above heading, Sayyid Sahib has the following to say on the subject of the acceptance of prayer:

Prayer does not mean that whatever is prayed for will necessarily be granted, for if this be the meaning of acceptance of prayer, two difficulties would arise: First, thousands of prayers are offered with great humility and in extreme anguish, and yet the wish is not granted. This means that the prayer has not been accepted despite the fact that God has promised the acceptance of prayers.

The second difficulty is that whatever is going to happen has already been determined; likewise that which is not going to happen has also been determined, and nothing can ever happen contrary to this determination. If the acceptance of prayer was taken to mean that whatever one asks for is granted, then the Divine promise:

أَدْعُونِي أَسْتَجِبْ لَكُمْ^ط

will obviously not apply to the prayers which have been determined never to be granted. In view of this interpretation, the promise of the acceptance of prayer cannot be taken as a general promise, since only those

^ط 6 Pray unto Me; I will answer your *prayer*.—*Al-Mu'min*, 40:61 [Publishers]

requests will be granted which have already been decreed. And yet the promise of the acceptance of prayer is a general promise and admits of no exception. Moreover, as some verses of the Holy Quran indicate that things which have been decreed not to be granted are never granted, and at the same time it is evident from some other verses that no prayer is rejected and all are accepted—what is more, God Almighty has promised to accept all prayers, as indicated in the verse:

أَدْعُونِي أَجِبْكُمْ^{7ط}

There can be no other way of reconciling this contradiction and inconsistency between the verses, other than to interpret the acceptance of prayer as the acceptance of worship, i.e., to consider prayer as a kind of worship which God Almighty has promised to accept when it is offered earnestly and with humility and submission. Thus the reality of the acceptance of prayer is that it is only a form of worship and it is merely on this account that it deserves merit. Of course, if the granting of something has already been determined and, perchance, a prayer is also offered for it, it will be granted—not because of the prayer,

⁷ Ibid.

but only because it was predetermined. Nevertheless, a great benefit of prayer is that when one prays one's heart is overawed by the Majesty and Omnipotence of God, and this feeling overcomes all the apprehensions which had been the source of distress, and the supplicant begins to experience forbearance and fortitude. This is a natural consequence of worship and this is what the acceptance of prayer means. Towards the end of his booklet Sayyid Sahib writes that those who are unaware of the reality of prayer and the wisdom inherent in it might object: What is the use of prayer when we know that nothing can happen that has not been predetermined? i.e., as we know that something which has been determined shall, in all circumstances, be granted—whether one prays for it or not—and that whatever has not been predetermined will not be granted—no matter how many prayers one offers for it; thus prayer turns out to be a futile exercise. In answer to this, Sayyid Sahib says that it is man's nature to seek help when in distress, and it is due to this natural faculty that he prays without giving a thought to whether or not his prayer will be granted. He prays because it has been ingrained in his nature to seek everything from God.

It is obvious from the discourse I have summarised above that Sayyid Sahib does not believe prayer to be the means of attaining an objective, nor does he believe it to be helpful in achieving any purpose. He believes that a person who prays for the sole purpose of attaining an objective is grossly mistaken, because something which has been predetermined does not need any prayers; and crying and beseeching is of no avail when something has not been preordained. It is quite clear from this discourse that Sayyid Sahib believes prayer to be related only to worship, and that he considers it a folly to think of it as a means for achieving any worldly objective. Let it be clear that Sayyid Sahib is seriously mistaken in his understanding of the verses of the Holy Quran. God willing, I shall elaborate on this misconception later on.

Here it pains me to point out that if Sayyid Sahib did not have enough understanding to comprehend the verses of the Holy Quran, was also the law of nature hidden from his eyes when he wrote on this subject? How could he have ignored the law of nature while he professes to follow it and regards it as the interpreter of Divine guidance and of the hidden mysteries of the Holy Quran? Was Sayyid Sahib not aware that though

there is nothing good or evil in the world which has not been preordained, nature has nevertheless appointed certain means for their occurrence, and no reasonable person will ever question the effectiveness of these means. For instance, if we were to take everything to have been predetermined, it would be as ineffectual to use or not to use medicine as it would be to pray or not to pray. But Sayyid Sahib would never say that medical science is utterly baseless, and that the True Physician has placed no effect in medicine? If Sayyid Sahib, in spite of his faith in the Divine Decree, also believes in the efficacy of medicine, then why is he creating mischief and why he is discriminating in the similar and parallel laws of God Almighty? Does he believe that God Almighty had the power to invest certain medicines such as Turbad, Scammony, Senna and Cottonseed with such powerful effects that one full dose of one of them immediately relieves diarrhoea; or, for instance, that God has endowed Arsenic, Beesh and other fatal poisons with such powerful effects that imbibing a pure extract of these is enough to dispatch a person from this world within minutes; and yet He treats as dead and ineffective the earnest and heartfelt supplications of His chosen ones as if they were

without any effect whatsoever! Is it possible that there should be disharmony in the Divine order, and that the Will which God has manifested in medicines for the benefit of His creatures should fail to manifest itself in the case of prayers? This is definitely not so.

The fact is that Sayyid Sahib is himself unaware of the true philosophy of prayer and has no personal experience of its profound effects. He is like a person who uses an old, discarded and expired medicine for a long time, and then, finding it ineffective, declares the medicine to be without any effect. It is a pity that though Sayyid Sahib has reached old age, the system of Divine order has eluded him and he has failed to understand how Destiny and Predetermination has been closely linked to causes, nor does he understand the deep, indispensable and interdependent relationship between cause and effect. This is why he fell into the error of thinking that things can take place without the coming into play the physical and spiritual causes appointed by nature. Of course, there is nothing that has not been Preordained, and all the things that man makes use of, such as fire, water, air, soil, corn, vegetables, animals and minerals, have been ordained for him; nevertheless, if some fool were to imagine that anything can be gained without all the means that

God has appointed for the purpose, and without proceeding in the way that has been determined by nature, and without the mediation of physical or spiritual means, such a person seeks only to falsify the wisdom of God Almighty. The only meaning I can give to Sayyid Sahib's words is that he does not regard prayer to be one of those effective causes whose existence he has proclaimed to the point of exaggeration. For instance, if the properties of fire are mentioned before Sayyid Sahib, he will never deny them and will never say that if burning has been preordained for someone he will burn even without the medium of fire. I am, therefore, surprised that despite being a Muslim he denies the effectiveness of prayer which at times lights up the darkness like fire and sometimes burns the hand of an impertinent foe. Does Sayyid Sahib only think of Predestination when it comes to prayer and forget it when fire and other elements are mentioned? Is it not the same Predetermination that affects both? Although Sayyid Sahib believes in Predetermination, he at the same time vehemently believes in the physical means, and his exaggeration in this regard has even earned him a bad name, why then does he forget the system of nature which he himself professes when it comes to prayer?

He considers a fly to have some effect, but he does not believe the same about prayer. The truth is that he is completely unacquainted with this realm. He has neither personal experience in this field, nor kept the company of those who have had such experiences.

Now, for the benefit of the general public, I will briefly set out the facts about the acceptance of prayer. Let it be clear that this subject is part of the larger subject of prayer, and it is a matter of principle that one who is not conversant with the fundamentals of a subject is bound to be mistaken and deceived in understanding its branches. This is why Sayyid Sahib has also been mistaken. Prayer, in essence, means a relationship of mutual attraction between a righteous person and his Lord. This means that God's grace first draws a person towards Himself, and then, through the magnetism of the person's sincerity, God draws closer to him. In the state of prayer this relationship reaches a point where it manifests wonderful qualities. When a man in grave difficulty falls down in prayer with perfect certainty, perfect hope, perfect fidelity, and perfect resolve; and when he becomes perfectly alert and advances far into the field of self-annihilation, tearing aside all veils of heedlessness, lo and behold, he finds before him the

Divine threshold, and he perceives that God has no associate. His soul then prostrates itself at the Divine threshold and the power of attraction that is invested in him draws the bounties of God Almighty towards him. It is then that the Glorious God attends to the fulfilment of the desired objective, and casts the effect of the prayer on all the preliminary means, which, in turn, produce the means that are essential for the achievement of the objective. For example, if the prayer is for rain and it is accepted, all the natural means which are necessary for causing rain are created as a result of the prayer. If the prayer is for famine, the All-Powerful One creates the opposite means. And this is why the eminent recipients of revelation and men of perfection have proven with their extraordinary experiences that the prayers of a perfect one are endowed with a power of creation. That is to say, under Divine command, prayer influences the lower and higher strata of the world and sways the elements, heavenly bodies, and hearts of men towards the desired objective. There is no shortage of such examples in Divine scriptures. In fact, some kinds of miracles are also the result of the acceptance of prayer. Prayer is the source of the thousands of miracles shown by Prophets as well as

the marvels that have been displayed by the saints to this day. And, more often than not, it is through prayers that the supernatural signs of Divine Omnipotence are manifested.

Have you any notion what was the strange event that occurred in the wasteland of Arabia when hundreds of thousands of the dead were revived within a few days, and those who had been misguided through generations exhibited Divine complexion, and those who were blind began to see, and those who had been dumb began to utter words of Divine wisdom, and the world underwent a revolution which no eye had seen before and no ear had heard of. Do you know how all this came about? It was the supplications during dark nights of one who had lost himself in God which caused a revolution in the world, and showed such wonders as could never have been expected from that Unlettered and Helpless one [the Holy Prophet^{sa}].

اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ وَبَارِكْ عَلَيْهِ وَارْحَمْهُ وَعَمِّمْهُ
وَ حُزْنِهِ لِهَذِهِ الْأُمَّةِ وَأَنْزِلْ عَلَيْهِ أَنْوَارَ رَحْمَتِكَ إِلَى الْأَبَدِ⁸

⁸ Send down Thy blessings and peace, O Allah, on him and his people according to the amount of pain and anguish he felt for his umma, and pour down upon him the light of Thy mercy forever. [Publishers]

I too have observed from personal experience that the effect of prayers far excels that of water and fire. In fact, nothing in the chain of natural causes is as gloriously potent as prayer.

If someone is in doubt because some prayers are not accepted and are apparently ineffectual, I would say that the same is also true of medicines. Have medicines closed the door of death, or is it impossible for them to fail in their purpose? And yet can anyone deny their effect? It is true that Predestination comprehends everything, but it has neither rendered the sciences useless nor has it shown the means to be unreliable. If you reflect deeply enough, you will see that the physical and spiritual means are not outside the sphere of Predestination. For instance, if a sick person's destiny is favourable, all the means for the proper remedy become available and his physical condition happens to be such that it is ready to derive full benefit from the remedy, and the medicine also finds its mark accurately. The same principle applies to prayer. All the means and conditions for the acceptance of a prayer only become available when God wills to accept it. God Almighty has bound both the physical and spiritual orders in the same chain of cause and effect. Thus, it is a gross mistake on the

part of Sayyid Sahib to accept the physical order and to deny the spiritual one.

I deem it necessary to add that if Sayyid Sahib does not repent of his erroneous assumptions and insists on being given proof of the acceptance of prayers, then let him know that I have been commissioned to dispel such misconceptions and I promise to inform him of the acceptance of some of my prayers beforehand, and I will even go so far as to publish them. But Sayyid Sahib too should affirm that he will give up his false ideas when it has been proved that I am true in my claim.

Sayyid Sahib asks, why is it that all prayers are not accepted when, according to him, God Almighty in the Holy Quran has promised the acceptance of all prayers? Sayyid Sahib is in fact grossly mistaken in this regard. The verse:

أَدْعُونِي أَسْتَجِبْ لَكُمْ^ط

cannot help his purpose, because here the prayer which man has been ordered to observe is not the ordinary supplication, rather it refers to worship which has been made obligatory on man. The imperative mood here signifies an obligation, while it

⁹ Pray unto Me; I will answer your *prayer*.—*Al-Mu'min*, 40:61 [Publishers]

is obvious that all prayers are not obligatory, since in some instances Allah has praised those who practice patience and forbearance and commit themselves entirely to Him. The main argument in this regard is that God does not only make this prayer obligatory but, pronouncing it as 'worship', warns of the punishment of hell in case of disobedience. It is obvious that such a warning does not accompany the other forms of prayer. Sometimes even Prophets^{as} have been admonished for praying. The following verse, for example, testifies to this:

إِنِّي أَعْظَمُكَ أَنْ تَكُونَ مِنَ الْجَاهِلِينَ¹⁰

It is obvious that if every prayer was worship, then why should Noah^{as} have been reprimanded with the words لَا تَسْأَلْنِي [Ask not of Me!]. There are times when saints and Prophets^{as} consider it disrespectful to pray for a certain thing. At such times, the sages have acted upon the dictates of their hearts; which means that when they were confronted with a trial they would pray if their heart's dictate was to pray, but if it called for endurance they would endure and refrain from prayer. Besides, God Almighty has never promised to accept all prayers, but has said clearly

10 I advise thee lest thou become *one* of the ignorant.—*Hūd*, 11:47
[Publishers]

that He will accept or reject prayers as He desires. The following verse clearly states this point:

بَلْ إِيَّاهُ تَدْعُونَ فَيَكْشِفُ مَا تَدْعُونَ إِلَيْهِ إِنْ شَاءَ¹¹

(Sūrah *Al-An'ām*, Part VII)

Even if we condescend to accept that in this context the word 'Pray' refers to prayer in general, we will have to affirm that the prayer referred to here is that which complies with all the necessary conditions; and we know that it is not in the power of man to meet all these conditions by himself unless he is helped by God. One should also remember that humility and anguish alone is not enough for prayer to be accepted, for it also requires righteousness, purity, truthfulness, perfect certainty, perfect love and perfect attention. Moreover, it is also essential that the object prayed for should not be opposed to the Divine scheme of things and should not be against the welfare of the supplicant, or the one on whose behalf he prays, both in this world and the hereafter. It often happens that although all other conditions have been fulfilled, the object prayed for happens to be against the Divine scheme of things with regard to the supplicant, and no good can come of granting such a prayer. For

¹¹ Nay, but on Him alone will you call; then will He remove that which you call on Him *to remove*, if He please.—*Al-An'ām*, 6:42 [Publishers]

example, if a dear child of a mother should cry and beg her to hand it a burning brand or a snake, or to feed it a poison which seems agreeable, the mother would never fulfil such a wish. Were she to do so, and even if the child were to escape with its life and were to lose one of its limbs, it would certainly grow up with a strong grievance against the foolish mother.

There are, in addition, many other conditions in the absence of which a prayer is not worth its name. So long as a prayer is not inspired by full spirituality and a close connection is not established between the supplicant and the person on whose behalf the supplication is made, there is little hope that such a prayer will be accepted. Unless there is a Divine will to accept the prayer all these conditions remain unfulfilled and the faculties remain devoid of complete attention.

Sayyid Sahib also accepts that the good fortune, the bounties, the delights and comforts of the hereafter, which constitute salvation, are the result of faith and sincere prayers. This being so, Sayyid Sahib is left with no alternative but to acknowledge that the prayers of a believer do have an effect and do become the means of dispelling calamities and of the achievement of objectives. If this were not so how would

prayer be of any help on the Day of Judgement? Think and reflect carefully, if prayer is indeed a vain thing and cannot be a means for the removal of any calamity in present life, then how will it become the means for doing the same on the Day of Resurrection? It is only too clear that if our prayers truly possess the quality of safeguarding us against calamities, then this quality should manifest itself in this world also, so that our faith and our hope may be strengthened and we may pray even more earnestly for our salvation in the hereafter. But if prayer amounts to nothing and that which has been predestined is bound to happen, then just as prayer is useless for the tribulations of this world—according to Sayyid Sahib—it should also be useless to pin any hopes on it in the hereafter.

I do not wish to elaborate upon this subject, because all fair-minded readers who study my exposition carefully will understand that I have given sufficient evidence to prove how completely Sayyid Sahib is mistaken in his belief. If Sayyid Sahib still does not abandon his obstinacy, I will give him an alternative which will take the matter to its conclusion. If he is a true seeker after truth, he will surely not back away.

Sayyid Sahib's other book, *Tahrīr fī Uṣūlit Tafsīr*¹² stands in complete contrast to the first. It would seem that Sayyid Sahib had written these books in a delirium. In his book which deals with the acceptance of prayers, Sayyid Sahib gives precedence to *Taqdīr* [Predestination] and considers natural means to be useless, and it is on this ground that he goes on to deny that prayers are ever accepted, whereas the fact is that prayer is one of the natural means about which more than one hundred thousand Prophets and tens of millions of saints have given their testimonies.¹³ What else did the Prophets possess, but prayer!

In this second book, Sayyid Sahib does not seem to consider Predetermination to be of any importance for

¹² *On the Principles of Commentary of the Holy Quran*. [Publishers]

¹³ For the benefit of the reader, I wish to reproduce the text and translation of what *Qutub-e-Rabbānī* and *Ghauth-e-Subhānī** Sayyid Abdul Qadir Jilani^{ra} has written in his book *Futūḥul Ghaib*, regarding the effect of the prayers and attention of the perfect men of God, based upon his own personal experiences. The meaning of the following excerpt is that the only testimony recognized in any field is that of a person who is well experienced in that particular field. Thus, only the person who enjoys a relationship of true sincerity and love with God can truly understand the philosophy of the acceptance of prayer. Therefore, to enquire about this holy philosophy from Sayyid Ahmad Khan Sahib is like seeking the remedy of a human illness from a veterinary surgeon. If Sayyid Sahib were to expound the relationship between a worldly government and its subjects,
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* *Qutub-e-Rabbānī* and *Ghauth-e-Subhānī* are titles signifying the spiritual status of Sayyid Abdul Qadir Jilani^{ra}. [Publishers]

he describes everything as having a permanent existence, as though all things have slipped away from the Hand of God and He now exercises no control over their transformation or alteration, as if His divinity is confined to a narrow sphere and the manifestation of His power is something that belongs to the past, and the state in which we find things is not due to His Determination—for the concept of Determination requires the control of the Lord of Destiny—but is an innate quality of the things

he would no doubt be qualified to do so; but Godly affairs are known only to godly persons. The excerpt is as follows:

فَأَجْعَلْ أَنْتَ أَجْمَلَتَكَ وَاجْزَأَتَكَ أَصْنَامًا مَعَ سَائِرِ الْخَلْقِ وَلَا
تُطِيعْ شَيْئًا مِنْ ذَلِكَ وَلَا تَتَّبِعْهُ جُمْلَةً فَتَكُونَ كَبِيرِنَا أَحْمَرَ فَلَا
تَكَادُ تَرَى فَجِيبِيذَ تَكُونُ وَارِثَ كُلِّ نَبِيٍّ وَرَسُولٍ وَبِكَ تُحْتَمَمُ
الْوَلَايَةُ وَتَنْكَشِفُ الْكُرُوبُ وَبِكَ تَسْقَى الْغُيُوثُ وَبِكَ تَنْبُتُ
الرُّزُوعُ وَبِكَ تُدْفَعُ الْبَلَايَا وَالْمِحْنُ عَنِ الْخَاصِّ وَالْعَامِّ وَ
أَهْلِ الشُّعُورِ وَتَقْلِبُكَ يَدُ الْقَدْرَةِ وَيَدْعُوكَ لِبِسَانِ الْأَزَلِ وَتَنْزِلُ
مَنْزَلًا مِنْ سَلَفٍ مِنْ أَوْلَى الْعِلْمِ وَيُرَدُّ عَلَيْكَ التَّكْوِينُ وَحَرْقُ
الْعِبَادَاتِ وَتَوْمُنُ عَلَى الْأَسْرَارِ وَالْعُلُومِ اللَّدْنِيَّةِ وَغَرَابِهَا

That is to say, if you desire to become an accepted one of God, then believe with utmost certainty and understand that your hands, your feet, your tongue, your eyes, and your whole being, and all its organs, are like idols in your way, and all other creation is similarly an idol barring your path. Your children, your wife, the worldly objectives you wish to achieve, worldly riches, worldly honour and prestige, every worldly hope and fear, your reliance or trust in anyone or anything, your fear of being harmed by anyone, all these are idols in your way. So do not become subservient to any of these idols, and do not lose your way in pursuit of them. That is, have recourse to them within the bounds of the shariah and the way of the

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themselves which cannot be changed or transformed. Obviously, characteristics over which God Almighty has no control cannot be called His Destiny. On the other hand, if He does have control over them, there will always be the possibility of alteration. Thus in the second booklet Sayyid Sahib has done away with the governance of the True Lord of Destiny over all things to the extent that in respect of their inherent qualities he considers them to be no longer under the will of the Lord of Destiny. It is like Section 5 of the Act regarding the tenants, in which the British have

righteous. If you succeed in this you will become [precious as] the red brimstone and your status will be raised beyond people's imagination, and God shall make you heir to His Prophets and Messengers^{as}, which means that all their knowledge, wisdom and blessings, which had disappeared into obscurity and oblivion, will be granted afresh to you, and you will reach the highest level of sainthood, and none after you shall be able to rise higher. Your prayers, your fortified resolve, and your blessings will relieve people of their anguish; the famine-stricken will be granted rain and crops will grow; the affliction and anguish of every low and high, and even the troubles of kings shall be alleviated through your attention and prayers; the Hand of Providence shall be with you, whichever direction it takes you will be guided in the same way; the Eternal Voice will beckon you to itself, which means that whatever flows from your tongue will be from God and it will be blessed; and you will be made a successor to all the righteous servants of Allah who were granted knowledge before you; a kind of power of creation will be bestowed on you, i.e., your attention and your prayer will exercise control in the world; if you then wish to turn the existing into non-existing, and vice versa, it will come to pass; extraordinary and miraculous things will take place at your hand; Divine secrets shall be revealed to you and you shall be given understanding of subtle and profound matters of Divine knowledge, of which you are considered to be worthy and deserving. [Author]

upheld the rights of hereditary tenants to such a degree that the landlord will no longer have any authority over them. Sayyid Sahib considers all things, for instance fire, to be hereditary tenants of the same category. Sayyid Sahib's law is, in fact, even more severe than that of the British, because in Section 5 there is a clause which allows for the expulsion of a hereditary tenant if he does not pay his dues for the period of one year, even if it amounts to two *annas*; but Sayyid Sahib has usurped the rights of the Owner in every respect. One can hardly conceive of greater injustice!

Sayyid Sahib has demanded from a rival of his the criteria for evaluating the standard of a commentary of the Holy Quran. Therefore, I, who consider it my foremost duty to show the way to one who has gone astray, deem it proper to serve him in this aspect as well. It, therefore, needs to be understood that:

The first and foremost criterion for an accurate commentary of the Holy Quran is the testimony of the Quran itself. One should bear well in mind that the Holy Quran is not like other books that are dependent upon extraneous sources for the proof or disclosure of their verities. The Holy Quran is like a perfectly balanced structure, the whole dynamics of which are

disturbed by the displacement of a single block. The Holy Quran possesses no verity that is not supported by at least ten or twenty testimonies contained within itself. So, when we interpret a verse of the Holy Quran in a certain way, we should try to find out whether or not there are other testimonies present in the Holy Quran which support this interpretation. If there are no other testimonies, and the interpretation is found to be clearly opposed to some other verses, then we should conclude that this interpretation is false, for there is no possibility of contradiction in the Holy Quran. The touchstone of a true interpretation is that it should be supported by a host of clear and supporting testimonies of the Holy Quran itself.

The second criterion is the interpretation of the Holy Prophet^{sa}. There can be no doubt that our beloved and revered Prophet^{sa} was the one who best understood the Holy Quran. Thus, if an interpretation made by the Holy Prophet^{sa} is available, then a Muslim is duty-bound to accept it without any hesitation or reservation, otherwise he will appear to be feeble of faith and under the spell of philosophy.

The third criterion is the interpretation of the Companions of the Holy Prophet^{sa}. There is no doubt that the Companions^{ra} were the first to inherit the light

of the Holy Prophet^{sa} and were the foremost inheritors of his knowledge. Allah blessed them abundantly and helped them in their understanding, for they practiced what they preached.

The fourth criterion is to meditate upon the meanings of the Holy Quran with the purity of one's own self, because purity of the self has a certain affinity with the Holy Quran, as Allah says:

لَا يَمْسُهَا إِلَّا الْمُطَهَّرُونَ¹⁵

which means that the verities of the Holy Quran are disclosed only to a person of pure heart, for the two have an affinity with one another. Such a person recognizes these verities, and smells them, and his heart cries out that this indeed is the true way. The light of his heart is an excellent criterion for evaluating the truth. Unless a person is endowed with this quality and treads on the narrow path which the Prophets^{as} have tread, it is only prudent that he should refrain from impertinently and arrogantly assuming the role of a commentator of the Holy Quran. Otherwise his commentary will be based upon his own inference, and this is something which the Holy Prophet^{sa} has forbidden. He has said:

¹⁵ *Al-Wāqi'ah*, 56:80 [Publishers]

مَنْ فَسَّرَ الْقُرْآنَ بِرَأْيِهِ فَاصَابَ فَقَدْ أَخْطَأَ¹⁶

That is, he who interprets the Holy Quran based on his own inference, does an erroneous interpretation even though he thinks he has done well.

The fifth criterion is the Arabic lexicon. Since, the Holy Quran itself has provided sufficient means for its understanding, recourse to Arabic lexicon seems unnecessary. But there is no doubt that it helps in enhancing our understanding, and sometimes, when we consult the lexicon, our attention is drawn to some hidden subtleties of the Holy Quran and we discover some mystery.

The sixth criterion for understanding the spiritual order is the understanding of the physical order, for there is complete harmony between the two.

The Seventh Criterion is the revelation granted to saints and the visions of the *Muḥaddathīn*.¹⁷ This

¹⁶ Tirmidhī, *Abwābu Tafṣīril-Quran*, *Bābu mā jā'a filladhī Yufaṣṣirul Qur'āna bi-Ra'yihī*. [Publishers]

¹⁷ In his book, Sayyid Sahib does not consider revelation to be a criterion for recognizing the truth, and he has no intention of doing so. The apparent reason for this is that he does not view revelation with due reverence, regardless of whether the revelation has been granted to a Prophet^{as} or a saint. Instead, he considers revelation to be merely an innate quality. Therefore I find it appropriate at this point to comment on his beliefs.

Let it be clear that it is gravely erroneous, mischievous and misleading of Sayyid Sahib to contend that Divine revelation is no more than a natural ability. Human nature is obviously endowed with different abilities and the
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criterion comprehends all the other criteria because he who is granted the revelation of *Muhaddathiyyat* possesses all the qualities of the Prophet^{as} he follows

nature and essence of one ability testifies to the nature and essence of other abilities. Some people, for instance, have a natural ability for arithmetic, while others are more suited to medicine, or logic or philosophy. But these innate abilities cannot by themselves make someone an accountant or an engineer or a physician or a logician. Rather he stands in need of a teacher. And when the wise teacher observes in him the aptitude for a certain branch of knowledge, he encourages him to study it. The following couplet is relevant to this point:

ہر کسے را بہر کارے ساختند میل طبعش اندراں انداختند^a

After having been educated in this way, the talent latent in him like a seed bursts forth and he begins to understand the subtleties of that particular branch of knowledge. And it will not be wrong to give the name of 'revelation' or 'inspiration' to all the novel and original ideas that God inspires in his heart. All useful knowledge which benefits mankind is disclosed to man by God Himself. This is exactly what God Almighty points out in the verse:

فَأَلْهَمَهَا فُجُورَهَا وَتَقْوَاهَا^b

This means that all the good and evil that inspires the human heart is revealed by God. A good person, because of his natural goodness, is qualified to receive good and pure inspirations; whereas an evil one, because of his evil nature, deserves that only evil thoughts and suggestions should cross his mind. It is in keeping with these natural abilities that many people have left behind good or evil writings, and holy or unholy sayings. But the question is: Is this also the nature of the revelation received by Prophets? Do they also continue to benefit from such inspirations merely on the basis of a natural ability? If so, then there is no more to say, for if we were to regard the revelation of Prophets merely as a natural ability, it would be impossible to distinguish between Prophets and other people.

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^a *Every man is made for a special purpose;*

To which his nature is strongly inclined. [Publishers]

^b *Al-Shams, 91:9 [Publishers]*

and is granted all that which was granted to him, with the exception of Prophethood and new commandments, and the true teaching is certainly made manifest to him. That is not all; as a bounty and reward he is given all that which was given to the

Perhaps, at this point, Sayyid Sahib may assert that he does believe in verbal revelation, i.e., he believes the Holy Quran to have been revealed in the form of words. But I am only too aware of Sayyid Sahib's tactics. The fact is that he does not believe in verbal revelation the way we understand it. It is obvious that there can be no inspiration without words, and the mind cannot conceive of an idea without the association of words. Here we also need to understand the distinction between the Holy Quran and Hadith. The words of Hadith cannot be considered as having originated from the same fountain as the Holy Quran, though they too originate from God in keeping with the general concept of inspiration and revelation. This is testified by the verse:

وَمَا يَنْطِقُ عَنِ الْهَوَىٰ ۗ ۝ إِن هُوَ إِلَّا وَحْيٌ يُوحَىٰ ۗ ۝^a

Let me stress that inspiration, of whatever kind, is always accompanied by words. For example, when a poet who is in need of a line to complete his verse receives some inspiration from God, it will always be in the form of words. It is therefore settled that all philosophers, mystics and poets receive inspiration from God Almighty, and that this inspiration is always accompanied by words, and that good and evil people are granted good and evil qualities respectively, in consonance with which they now and again receive some inspiration. For instance, the same sort of revelation was received by the person who invented the railway; and the person who invented the telegraph was also the recipient of revelation in the same sense. Having ascertained all this, Sayyid Sahib will now be confronted with the above mentioned objection. If he says that, in the matter of inspiration, Prophets, philosophers and even believers and non-believers are all equal, but the distinction of a Prophet's revelation is that it is always true, then Sayyid Sahib will have to profess that there is no intrinsic difference between the revelation of Prophethood and the inspiration of the

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^a Nor does He speak out of *his own* desire. It is nothing but *pure* revelation that has been revealed by God.—*Al-Najm*, 53:4-5 [Publishers]

Prophet whom he follows. Thus, his discourse is not mere conjecture, but he says what he has seen and speaks what he has heard. And this way is open for this umma, for it is not possible that there should be no true inheritor [of blessings of Prophethood], nor is

disbelievers, apart from the fact that the revelation of Prophets is ever flawless, while the inspiration of philosophers, such as Aristotle, Plato, etc., was not so. This would, however, be a baseless claim and would, in fact, amount to sheer audacity; for we would have to believe that a good many portions of the exhortations and moral teachings of the philosophers—which happen to be free from error and are in consonance with the Holy Quran—are also the word of God, equal in status to the Holy Quran, and have been revealed in the form of words. The rest which contain errors should be entered into the category of 'error of interpretation', just as the Prophets also, at times, commit errors of interpretation. According to this principle, therefore, such philosophers and even disbelievers should be regarded as Prophets. This concept is such that it might well end up destroying Sayyid Sahib's faith and he might even at one time declare the inspiration of geniuses, such as Newton, to be superior to the revelation of the Holy Quran. Alas! had Sayyid Sahib adopted the Holy Quran itself as the criterion for understanding its verities, he would not have fallen in this pit of ruin. Nowhere does the Holy Quran liken its revelation to a fountain that gushes forth from the earth, rather it always likens it to the rain that falls from heaven. Sayyid Sahib would surely have saved himself from stumbling if, before writing his book, he had enquired from a person with first-hand experience of revelation about its nature and mode of descent. Because of this error, Sayyid Sahib has led astray a large number of Muslims and has brought them to the brink of heresy and atheism by undermining the sanctity of the revelation of Prophethood, and by confining it to a natural ability which is also shared by the faithless and the infidels.

I will now, merely for the sake of God, present my own testimony before Sayyid Sahib, hoping that God Almighty will have mercy on him.

My dear Sayyid Sahib! I swear in the name of God that revelation from heaven falls upon the heart just as the rays of the sun fall upon a wall. It is my daily experience that whenever the time comes for me to receive Divine
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it possible that one who is the creature of the world and is after worldly glory, honour and prestige, should inherit the Prophetic knowledge, because God Almighty has promised that it shall be given only to the pure. A person who claims to inherit the know-

converse, I all at once experience a trance-like state and become a wholly different entity. Although, at this stage, I remain in full possession of my senses and am fully conscious, yet I feel as if a most Powerful Being has taken my whole being in His grip and all the veins of my existence are in His hand, and whatever is mine is no longer mine but belongs to Him. At this point God Almighty brings before my mind those of my thoughts upon which He intends to focus the rays of His words. These thoughts then appear before my mind, one after the other, in a wonderful way; and it so happens that when a thought passes through my mind—for instance, whether a certain person will recover from his illness or not—a piece of Divine revelation at once falls upon it like a ray, and this often shakes up my whole body. Once this matter has been settled, another thought suddenly presents itself before me. No sooner does this happen, than another piece of Divine revelation falls upon my mind. It is much like an archer shooting whenever a quarry shows itself. At that moment I realize that while the chain of thoughts is generated by my own natural ability, the words that fall upon it descend from heaven.

Although it is true that poets and other such people also receive inspiration after thought and reflection, it is a gross insolence to relate it to Divine revelation, because inspiration is a result of one's own deep reflection and is experienced while one is fully conscious and is in full control of his faculties; while Divine revelation is received only when the whole being of the recipient is under the control of God Almighty, and his own senses or reflections have no part to play in the revelation. At that instant one feels that his tongue is not his own and some Mighty Power is controlling it. From what I have stated, one can understand clearly the difference between the natural phenomena and what descends from heaven. Finally, I pray that God Almighty may wash away this cursed naturalism from the hearts of Muslims, so that no stain of it may be left. The eye which can see the blessings of Islam will not open unless

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ledge of a Prophet, in spite of his foul and corrupt condition, in fact makes mockery of the holy teaching. On the other hand,* it is also gross ignorance to

this dark smoke has been cleared.

از دست تو فتنه هر طرفت خاست	؛	اے نیچر شوخ ایں چه ایذا است
دیگر نگزید جانب راست	؛	آنکس کہ وہ کجبت پسندید !
از راست مصیبتی کہ بر ما است	؛	لیکن چون ز غور دنگر بسنم
زان روز، هجوم ایں بلا است	؛	متروک شد است درس فرقان
دین گم شد و نور عقل پاک است	؛	نیچر نہ باصل خویش بد بود
رو تافتہ ز ان طرف کہ دریا است	؛	بر قطرہ نگون شدند یک بار
کس قصد بعید از خود است	؛	بر جنت و حشر و نشر نهند
گوئید خلافت عقل دانا است	؛	چون ذکر زشتیگان بماید
ہشدار کہ پائے تو نہ بر جا است	؛	لے سید مہر گدوہ ایں قوم !
رو تو بہ کن ایں نہ رہ تقوا است	؛	پیرانہ سرا ایں چه در سراستاد
گوئی کہ خدا خیال بیجا است	؛	ترسم کہ بدیں قیاس یک روز
در گاہ خدا ز نور سودا است	؛	لے خواجہ بود کہ فسر انسان
بنشین کہ نہ جائے شور و غوغا است	؛	آخر ز قیاس با چہ خیزد
السرار خدا نہ خوان یغما است *	؛	لے بندہ بصیرت از خدا خواہ

[Author]

* Translation of Persian verses:

O ye, mischievous nature worshiper! look what turmoil you have created;
Your hands have brought disorder all around.

No one who ever fancied your twisted way,
Ever returned to the right path.

But when I reflect deeply, I realize:

The turmoil is of our own making;

It is from the day we abandoned the Holy Quran,

That all these adversities have overwhelmed us.

The study of nature was not an evil itself,

Contd...

deny the existence of such inheritors and to contend that the profundities of Prophethood are mere tales of the past which do not and cannot exist today, and that we do not have any example of them before us.

This is not so, for in such a case Islam could not be called a living religion. It would be dead like other religions, and belief in Prophethood would only be a tale referable to times gone by. But this is not what God Almighty intended. He knew that in order to prove that Islam is an ever-living religion, and to establish forever the reality of Prophethood, which should silence the deniers of revelation for all times to

It was the loss of faith that took away the light of wisdom.

All at once people fell for the drop,

And turned their backs to the flowing river.

They ridicule [the concept] of paradise and resurrection,

Calling it an absurd and illogical myth;

Upon the mention of angels,

They deem it contrary to intellect of the wise.

O Sayyid! the leader of such people!

Be warned, for you are off the right path.

Whatever has gone into your mind in your old age!

Do repent; the path you tread is not the right path.

I fear lest due to such thoughts,

You might one day reject the existence of God Himself!

Desist sire! for to delve in matters Divine

Is sheer madness.

Nothing comes of conjecture,

Do back away, for these are not matters to trifle with.

O dear sir, beseech Allah the Almighty to grant you spiritual sight!

Secrets of the Divine realm are not a bounty that can be acquired by force.

[Publishers]

come, it was necessary that revelation should continue forever through *Muhaddathiyyat*. This is what God has done. *Muhaddathīn* are people who are honoured with Divine revelation and, in their inner power, bear a strong resemblance to inner power of Prophets. These special qualities serve as the lasting signs of Prophethood, so that the profound question of revelation should not at one time lose its credence and become a mere myth. It is wrong to believe that Prophets^{as} passed away from the world leaving behind no one to inherit their blessings, and that to talk about them is no more than telling old tales.

On the contrary, their successors have appeared in every century, according to the need of the time. In this century God Almighty has sent this humble one for the reformation of this age, so that the errors which could not be removed except by special Divine help may be removed from the minds of the Muslims, and the proof of a True and Living God may be given to the disbelievers, and the superiority and truth of Islam may be proven with fresh signs. This is exactly what is happening. True knowledge of the Holy Quran is being revealed, and subtle and profound meanings of the Divine Word are being disclosed; heavenly signs and miracles are being shown, and

God Almighty is manifesting afresh the beauty, the light and the blessings of Islam. One who has eyes should see and one who has true zeal should seek. One who has an iota of love for God and the Holy Prophet^{sa} should rise up and test [my claim], and should join God's chosen Jamā'at whose foundation God has laid with His own Holy Hand.

To say that the avenue of *Waḥī-e-Walāyat*¹⁸ has been blocked and signs cannot be shown and prayers cannot be accepted is the path of ruin and not the path of safety. Do not reject Divine bounty. Wake up and test it and scrutinize it! If you find that I am a person of ordinary understanding and intellect and what I say is of little consequence, then do not accept me. But if you witness the wonder of Divine power and see the shine of the same Hand, which manifested itself in those who had Divine support and received Divine revelation, then do accept me. Let it be understood that it is the great favour of God Almighty upon His servants that He does not wish Islam to be a dead faith but wants to keep open forever the ways of certainty, true knowledge and overcoming the adversary with superior arguments. Can there be a

¹⁸ The revelation granted to saints. [Publishers]

better way to silencing a person who denies the existence of Prophetic revelation and considers it to be a mere conjecture, than to show him an example of it? Do tell me, is it a good news or evil tiding that Islam was the recipient of Divine blessings only for a few years and was then forsaken by God! Are these the signs of a true religion?

These, in short, are the criteria for the correct interpretation of the Holy Quran. There is no doubt that at most places Sayyid Sahib's commentary falls quite short of these seven criteria. Right now it is not my aim to confront him on this point. Sayyid Sahib takes great pride in the law of nature but has completely disregarded it in his commentary. For instance, how opposed to the laws of nature is Sayyid Sahib's belief that Prophetic revelation is no more than a special natural ability and that angels have no intermediary role to play between this ability and God Almighty. It is our everyday experience that we are dependent on heavenly means for the development of our physical faculties. God Almighty has made the Sun, the Moon, the Stars, and the elements subservient to us for the maintenance of our bodily functions and the achievement of our desired goals. Thus the beneficence of God, Who is the Cause of all

causes, reaches us through many means and never ever without them. For instance, God Almighty alone sends light to our eyes for He is the Cause of all causes, but He does so by means of the Sun. In the observable order of the world, we do not find a single instance whereby God Almighty grants us something merely by stretching out His blessed Hand, rather everything is given to us through the means. Again, we observe that our physical faculties have not been created in a perfect condition, which means that the eyes, for instance, do not by themselves possess any light, and do not possess the ability—like the ability to receive revelation that you have proposed—which should make them independent of the intermediary of the Sun. How, then, can your vague concepts, which are against this natural order, stand up to the truth? Moreover, the testimony of personal experiences, which is the most outstanding testimony of all, strongly rejects this concept of yours. I have continued to be honoured with Divine revelation for the last eleven years, and I know full well that revelation does indeed descend from heaven. Revelation, if one could compare it to anything in the world, might perhaps be compared to the telegraph which automatically transmits every variation.

My own experience at the time of the descent of revelation—which comes to me in the form of *Waḥī-e-Walāyat*—is that I become aware of an external and very powerful hold over myself. At times this influence is so strong and its light so takes hold of me, and so forcefully do I find myself drawn towards it, that I am powerless to resist. Under this influence, I hear clear and manifest revelation. Sometimes I even see the angels¹⁹ and perceive the power and awe of the truth. Very often the revelation comprehends matters of the unseen. The external hold is so powerful that it gives evidence of the existence of God. To deny this would be the carnage of a self-evident truth.

It would be better for Sayyid Sahib to accept this truth prior to his death, and to abstain from blaspheming heavenly revelation. It is odd that he looks into the physical order but does not correlate it to the spiritual one. He does not understand that when God has fashioned our physical order in such a way that physical light comes down to us from heaven, and the True Benefactor sends down His bounties upon our physical faculties through heavenly means, and it is

¹⁹ I do not only see the angels, but at times even their intermediary role in the revelation is revealed to me. [Author]

never His way to grant any beneficence without the intermediary of the means, why then would He cut us off from the channel of intermediaries when it comes to the spiritual order?

Have we been cut off from this chain in our physical order, or are we in fact bound in the chain of cause and effect which originates with the Cause of all causes and reaches down to us. To deliberate further upon this subject, one should read my books *Tauḍīḥ-e-Marām* and *Ā'ina-e-Kamālāt-e-Islam*. The latter, in particular, contains such a comprehensive discourse about the need for angels, that you will not find anything like it in any other book. As to how much knowledge Sayyid Sahib truly possesses about Divine matters, it is enough to know that he has declared the whole creation to be free from the control of the True Lord of Destiny. He does not even seem to realize that the Divinity of God Almighty demands that He should have all power and authority. It is God's unlimited and unrestricted exercise of authority over His creation at all times that constitutes Divine omnipotence. If He is indeed the Creator, then, as He is unlimited in Himself, He must also have left enough room in His creation for

the unlimited exercise of His control, so that at no point should His powers become dormant.²⁰

²⁰ An objection might be raised that belief in the limitless wisdom of God Almighty which has the power to bring about unlimited change would result in loss of faith in the properties of things. For example, if we believe that God Almighty possesses the power to change the physical form of water into that of air, or to convert the physical form of air into that of fire, or to change the tangible appearance of fire—by means known only to Him—into the apparent form of water, or to change clay into gold or gold into clay in some stratum of the earth by exercising His subtle control over things, all this would result in chaos and all skill and knowledge would become useless. The answer to this objection is that such an idea is totally misconceived, for we see that God Almighty keeps subjecting the elements to innumerable changes through the exercise of His hidden wisdom. Just look how the earth goes through all sorts of changes and turns into countless forms. It is the earth that brings forth arsenic and its antidotes as well, and it is the same earth that brings forth gold, silver and all kinds of jewels. Similarly, the vapour that rises from earth creates all kinds of things in the sky. The same vapour that causes snowfall and hailstorm also causes lightening and thunderbolts; even ash has at times been known to fall from the sky. Do these phenomena render knowledge useless, or do they cause chaos and disorder? If you say that God Almighty has already endowed the elements with the inherent property to undergo such changes, our reply will be that we never said that the elements under question have not been invested with this inherent property. In fact, the true faith is that God Almighty, Who is One in His being, has created all things as though they are one, so that they may serve as evidence of the Oneness of the True Creator. Thus, God Almighty, in view of His Oneness and the demand of His unlimited authority, has endowed the elements with the ability to undergo transformations. With the exception of the souls—which, because of their fortune or misfortune, are destined to abide in heaven or hell according to the following verse:

خُلِدِينَ فِيهَا أَبَدًا^أ

and for whom the Divine design has forever determined an unchangeable nature—nothing else from among the creations is free from change. If you
Contd...

^a Wherein they will abide for a long, long period.—*Al-Jinn*, 72:24 [Publishers]

If, God forbid, the assertion of Ārya Hindus that Parmeshwar [God] is neither the creator of the particles of the universe nor of the souls, was correct, then such a weak Parmeshwar would govern poorly

observe carefully, each and every object is undergoing change all the time, so much so that scientific research has shown the human body to undergo complete change in three years and the previous body to dissipate through decay. Neither water nor fire is free from two kinds of transformation: The first results from the removal or addition of some particles, and the second is whereby the removed particles take on a new existence in consonance with their potential.

In short, to keep this mortal world riding the wheel of change is the way of God Almighty. Close observation reveals that all these things are like one in their original nature, because of having originated from the same One Originator. It is true that man cannot become the perfect alchemist, and how could it be when the Supreme Sage has not empowered anyone to comprehend the unlimited secrets of His wisdom. If you ask, where are the changes in heavenly bodies, then let me say that the heavenly bodies too possess the element of transformation and assimilation, though we may be unaware of it; and it is because of this inherent element of change that they are destined to suffer decline one day. Moreover, when we observe the process of transformation in thousands of things, it becomes obvious that nothing is free from change. You will have to deny the existence of change on earth before you talk of the heavens.

تو کار زمیں را نکو ساختی کہ با آسماں نیز پرداختی^a

Thus, the objection that all knowledge will become useless and chaos will result if we believe in the possibility of change, is extremely erroneous because we experience all sorts of changes and transformations everyday, and the Oneness of God demands that He should be the source of all these changes, and the Godhood of the Almighty cannot remain functional unless He has control over each and every particle. When we say that the Glorious God has the power to make water work like fire or make fire work like water, we do not mean that He acts arbitrarily without the use of His

Contd...

^a *Have you set everything right upon the earth*

That you now wish to interfere with the heavens? [Publishers]

for a while and then cease to function, and He would be disgracefully exposed. But our All-Powerful and Omnipotent God is not such. He is the Creator of all the particles of the universe, the souls and all the

infinite wisdom, because no Divine act is, or should be, without some underlying wisdom. What we do mean is that when He wishes to make water work like fire or vice versa, He brings His eternal wisdom into service, which controls each and every particle of the universe, though we may or may not be aware of it. And there can be no doubt that any action based upon wisdom does not render knowledge useless, rather it becomes the means of the advancement of knowledge. Just see how water is artificially turned into ice and is used to produce electricity; but does this ever lead to chaos, or does it render knowledge to be useless?

Another subtle point that needs to be born in mind is that, at times, when men of God show miracles, for instance, water is not able to drown them and fire is not able to harm them, the secret behind such manifestations is that at times when the friends of God focus their attention towards a particular thing, the All-Wise God—Whose infinite secrets man can never comprehend—shows a sign of His power, and their attention begins to exercise control in the universe. The convergence of the means which, for instance, cause the heat of the fire to cease casting its effect—whether these means are related to heavenly bodies, to some hidden properties of the fire itself, or to some subtle property of the body that is put in the fire, or whether it is a combination of all these—all such means come into operation through such attention and such prayer. It is thus that an extraordinary miracle is shown. But this does not cause us to lose faith in the reality of things, nor does it render knowledge useless, for it is itself a branch among the branches of Divine knowledge. It has its own dimension, just as, for instance, the burning quality of fire has its own. Let us understand it this way: these are spiritual elements that manifest themselves by subjugating the fire, and they are peculiar to their own time and place. Human intellect falls short of understanding the secret that the perfect man is the locus for the manifestation of the spirit of God Almighty. And when the time comes for the perfect man to display this manifestation, everything begins to fear him as it fears God. You may now throw him before a beast or into a fire, he will suffer no harm; for at such moments the spirit of God Almighty is upon him and everything is under obligation to fear Him. This Contd...

creations. If one would enquire about His powers, then let him know that He has the power to do everything with the exception of that which is contrary to His perfect attributes and His true promises. To contend that though He may be All-Powerful He may not wish to exercise His power is completely absurd, for ²¹ *كُلَّ يَوْمٍ هُوَ فِي شَأْنٍ* is also one of His attributes.

is the ultimate secret of Divine knowledge, which cannot be understood without keeping company with the perfect ones. Being a very profound and rare phenomenon, every intellect is not aware of this philosophy. But, remember, everything listens to the voice of God Almighty. He has control over everything and He holds all the strings in His Hand. His wisdom knows no limit and it penetrates to the root of every particle. Nothing possesses properties that are in excess of His powers. All the qualities that things may possess are within the scope of His power. He who does not believe in this is among those about whom it has been said:

وَمَا قَدَرُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ قَدْرِهِ^a

Since the perfect man is a perfect manifestation of the whole world, it is therefore drawn towards him from time to time. He is like a spider of the spiritual world and the whole world is his web. This is the secret behind miracles.

بر کاروبار هستی اثری ست عارفان را

ز جہاں چہ دید آں کس کہ ندید این جہاں را^b

[Author]

^a And they failed to respect Allah as He should be respected.

—*Al-An'ām*, 6:92 [Publishers]

^b Those who possess true knowledge, influence the scheme of things;

What has he seen of the world who has no experience of their world!
[Publishers]

²¹ Every day He *reveals Himself* in a different state.—*Al-Rahmān*, 55:30
[Publishers]

Now, whereas it is not against His perfect attributes nor against His true promises to take away the cooling property of water or to strip the fire of its burning property, why then should someone unreasonably assert that He has forever been barred from exercising His control over the properties of these elements? Is there anything to prove this? And where is the need for this uncalled for compulsion which tarnishes the very image of Godhood?

It would seem that in this booklet Sayyid Sahib has realized the feebleness of his hypothesis. That is why, in order to defend his unsubstantiated assertion, he has taken recourse to yet another feeble argument. He says that God Almighty has hinted in the Holy Quran at the heat of fire, and the cooling effect of water, and the fact that the Sun moves from East to West—all which are meant to express the present state of these things—but Sayyid Sahib sees them as promises which admit of no change. If this indeed is the way to deduce arguments, then Sayyid Sahib is going to find himself in great deal of trouble, for he will have to declare that all the statements of the Holy Quran constitute promises. For example, God Almighty gave the following glad tidings to Ḥaḍrat Zachariah^{as}:

إِنَّا نُبَشِّرُكَ بِغُلَامٍ (مريم ع) ²²

In accordance with Sayyid Sahib's principle, Ḥaḍrat Yahya should always have remained a boy, because God Almighty has called him a boy and this [according to Sayyid Sahib] constitutes a promise. There can be countless other examples, but it will only be a waste of time to indulge in them. If, according to Sayyid Sahib, the mention of the current state of affairs becomes a mandatory promise for all times to come, then people should beware of him, for he might any time start accusing people on the same basis—taking every statement as an eternal promise. I believe it would be better if Sayyid Sahib would think of his last days and stay in my company for a few months. Having been appointed by God and being the bearer of glad tidings, I promise that I will concentrate [in supplication] so that Sayyid Sahib may be satisfied. I do hope that God Almighty will manifest such a sign that Sayyid Sahib's proposed law of nature will be brought to naught in no time. Many such things have already happened which Sayyid Sahib considers to be against the law of nature. But it would be futile to mention them now since Sayyid Sahib will regard them as mere tales. Nor does Sayyid Sahib believe in such prophecies as

²² We give thee glad tidings of a son.—*Maryam*, 19:8 [Publishers]

are granted to men of God. In his view these prophecies are as much against the laws of nature as it is for the fire to forsake its property of burning. Sayyid Sahib likewise believes that the innate efficacy of prayer—by means of which the objective prayed for is attained—is also opposed to the law of nature.

If Sayyid Sahib is unable to come and stay with me, then he should—by undertaking to accept the truth in respect of these two matters—permit me to publish whatever is revealed to me by God Almighty in answer to my supplications regarding him. This will be a great service to the public at large. If Sayyid Sahib's assertions are true, I will never achieve my objective, otherwise people of understanding will rid themselves of the evil beliefs of Sayyid Sahib and will recognize their Glorious God and turn to Him with love. They will not despair of His mercy when praying to Him, and will derive comfort when raising their hands for prayer. This, after all, is the very blessing of the presence of God, that He should hear our prayers and should Himself inform us of His existence; not that we should contrive in a thousand ways to establish in our hearts an imaginary god, like an idol, whose voice we cannot hear, and the manifestation of whose supreme power we cannot see. You should know for a certainty that the Omnipotent God, Who has power over everything, does exist.

وَمَا عَلَتْ أَيْدِيهِ بَلْ يَدَاهُ مَبْسُوطَتَانِ يُبْهِقُ كَيْفَ
يَشَاءُ وَيَفْعَلُ مَا يُرِيدُ وَهُوَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ
قَدِيرٌ۔ وَأَجِرْ دَعْوَانَا اِنَّ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ²³

رُوئے دلبر از طلبکاران نمی دارد حجاب
لیکن آن رُوئے حسین از غافلان مانند نہاں
دامن پاکش ز سخوت ہاتمی آید بدست
بس خطر ناک است راہ کو چہ یار قدیم
تا کلاش فہم و عقل نامزایاں کم رسد
مشکل قرآن نہ از ابناء دنیا حل شود
ایکہ آگاہی نہادندت ز الوارِ دروں
از سر و عظم و نصیحت این سخن ہاگفتہ ایم
از دعا کن چارہ آزار انکار و عسا
ایکہ گوئی گرد دعا ہا را اثر بودے کجاست

می درخشد در خورد می تا بد اندر ماہتاب
عاشقی باید کہ بردارند از بہش نقاب
بیج راہی نیست غیر از عجز و در دو اضطراب
جان سلامت بائدت از خوردوی ہا سہر تاب
ہر کہ از خود گم شود او یایداں راہ صواب
ذوق آن می داند آن مستی کہ نشد آن شراب
در حق ما ہر چہ گوئی نیستی جلائے عقاب
تا مگر زیں مہر بھی بہ گرد آں زخمی خراب
بجمل علاج می زمی وقت شمار و التہاب
سوئی من بشتاب بہنائیم ترا جوں آفتاب

ہاں مکن انکار زیں اسرار قدرت ہائمی حق
قصہ کو تر کن بہیں از ما دعائے مستجاب*

(See pages 1-6)

* Translation of Persian verses:

The face of the Beloved
Is not hidden from the seekers;
For it shines in the sun
And is reflected in the moon.
But that lovely Countenance is indeed hidden
From the eyes of the unaware;
It is only for a sincere lover
That the veil is lifted.

Contd...

²³ And Allah's hands are not tied by anything. On the contrary His hands are absolutely free. He spends as He pleases, and acts as He deems fit; And He has the power to do all that He wills. And in conclusion our call is: All praise belongs to Allah, the Lord of all the world. [Publishers]

Arrogance can lead no one
To His threshold;
There is no way to reach Him
But through the door of humility, pain and anguish.
Dangerous is the path
That leads to the Eternal Beloved;
Give up your ego
If you value your life.
The understanding and wisdom of the unworthy
Cannot fathom His words;
Only he finds the right path
Who loses his self to find it.
The secrets of the Holy Quran
Cannot be understood by the sons of the world;
Only he can appreciate the true taste of a wine
Who partakes of it.
O ye who have not been granted enlightenment,
I do not mind what you say about me;
I only say all this out of sympathy and as honest advice,
So that this ointment may heal the deep wounds.
Try to remedy with prayer
The loss you have incurred by rejecting prayer;
If you can't get intoxicated,
Still more wine is the remedy.
You who say: Show me
If there is any power in prayer;
Run towards me, I will show you its power
As clear as the shining sun.
Beware! do not deny the wonders of Divine omnipotence;
Come now, let me show you how prayers are accepted!
[Publishers]

Another Prophecy with regard to Lekhram of Peshawar

Today, on the morning of 2nd April, 1893, which is 14th of the month of Ramadan 1310 Hijrah, in a state of slight drowsiness, I saw myself sitting in a large house with some friends, when a robust and frightful man, who seemed to be in a terrible rage, appeared before me. I looked up and saw that he was a man of an unfamiliar creation and disposition. He seemed not a man but one of the terrible and awe-inspiring angels, and his terror seized the hearts. As I looked at him, he asked, 'Where is Lekhram?' He also named another person and asked of his whereabouts. It was then that I realized that this man had been appointed for the chastisement of both Lekhram and the other person whose name I do not recollect. But what I do remember is that he was from among those regarding whom I have already published an announcement. This happened on Sunday at four o'clock in the morning. فَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ عَلَىٰ ذَٰلِكَ [Allah be praised for it].

Read this carefully as it contains Good News for you.

A Plea to Chiefs, Noblemen and Officers of the Government

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
نُحَمِّدُهُ وَنُصَلِّي عَلَى رَسُولِهِ الْكَرِيمِ²⁴

O elders of Islam, may God Almighty inspire your hearts with greater good intentions than the rest of the people, and may He, in this time of crisis, make you true servants of His beloved faith. It is only for the sake of Allah that I hereby inform you of the important fact that at the turn of this fourteenth century God Almighty has **appointed me** from Himself for the revival and support of the true faith of Islam, so that in this tumultuous age I should proclaim the excellences of the Holy Quran and the greatness of the Holy Prophet^{sa}, and—with the help of the light, blessings, miracles and Divine knowledge that have been bestowed upon me—I should respond to all the enemies who are attacking Islam. This mission has been ongoing for the last ten years, but all the means that are needed for the propagation of

²⁴ In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful. We praise Allah and invoke His blessings upon His noble Prophet^{sa}. [Publishers]

Islam require substantial financial support. I, therefore, deem it necessary to convey this message to you. Listen, O men of eminence, listen! the difficulty we are faced with in the path of Allah and His Messenger^{sa} is that great financial resources are needed for the propagation of our publications among millions of people. The situation obtaining now is, firstly, that no funds are available for the accomplishment of all these monumental tasks. Even if a book does get published with the support and determination of some zealous servants of the faith,²⁵ no more than a few copies get sold due to the prevailing apathy and indifference. Most copies of the books remain stored away in boxes for years or have to be distributed free. All this is badly hurting the cause of the propagation of the faith. Though God Almighty is multiplying this Jamā'at day by day, there is, so far, none amongst us who is affluent enough to take upon himself a substantial part of the service of Islam. Since I have been commissioned by

²⁵ The first and foremost among these zealous servants of the faith is Ḥaḍrat Maulawī Hakim Nūruddīn Sahib of Bhera, who has practically given everything he had in this cause. Falling in line are my dear friends Hakim Faḍluddīn Sahib and Nawab Muhammad Ali Khan Sahib of Malirkotla, followed by all the dedicated friends who are devoted to this cause. [Author]

God Almighty for the revival of the faith, and He has given me the glad tidings that He shall bring prominent men and even kings into my Jamā'at, and He has said to me, 'I shall bestow upon you blessing after blessing, until kings shall seek blessings from thy garments'; it, therefore, occurred to me today that I should invite those who own wealth and resources to join me in the furtherance of my cause.

Since the task of helping the faith is a momentous one, and man is susceptible to doubts and misgivings, and one cannot have the resolve for giving such substantial assistance unless he has recognized the truth, I, therefore, announce it publicly to all rich and affluent gentlemen that if they have any hesitation in offering assistance without prior verification, let them write to me about some of their plans, ventures and difficulties so that I may pray for them. But, at the same time, they must also inform me how much financial assistance they will be willing to offer me in the cause of Islam once their desired objective has been fulfilled, and whether they have made a firm resolve in their hearts that they will offer this assistance without fail. When I receive such a letter

from anyone,²⁶ I will pray for him, and I am certain that, unless it is a matter of *Taqdīr-e-Mubram* [irrevocable destiny], God will hear my supplications and will inform me of it through revelation. Do not despair if your aims are hard to achieve, for God has power to do everything, provided His eternal Will is not opposed to it. In the event that many people send such requests, I shall only respond to those whose success in their endeavours will be foretold to me by God Almighty. These will also serve as signs for the disbelievers and such signs may become so numerous as to flow like a river.

Finally, I urge and admonish every Muslim to wake up for the sake of Islam. Islam is facing severe tribulations. Come to its assistance for it is in adversity. This is the purpose for which I have come. God Almighty has granted me the knowledge of the Holy Quran and disclosed to me the verities and subtle points of His Book, and He has granted me miracles. Come to me so that you too may partake of this bounty. I swear by Him in Whose hand lies my

²⁶ The letter should be sent with great care through registered post and should be duly stamped. The secret should not be disclosed beforehand. On my part also the matter will remain a close secret. It will be better indeed if, instead of a letter, the affluent person should send a trusted representative. [Author]

life that I have been sent by God Almighty. Was it not necessary that at the turn of such a century, which is replete with great trials and tribulations, and whose evils are self-evident, a Reformer should have appeared with a manifest claim? You shall soon recognize me through my work. The ignorance of religious scholars has always been a hindrance to everyone who has come from God. And it was only through their accomplishments that men of God were finally recognized. A bitter tree cannot bring sweet fruit, and God does not grant other people the blessings which He bestows upon His chosen ones.

O ye people, Islam has become very weak, the enemy has laid siege from all sides, and the objections against it have risen to more than three thousand. At such a juncture, you need to prove your faith by showing sympathy for Islam, you will then be counted amongst the men of God. ²⁷ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَىٰ مَنِ اتَّبَعَ الْهُدَىٰ

²⁷ Peace be on those who follow the guidance. [Publishers]

ہر کسے در کار خود با دین احمد کار نیست
 حیث بر چہے کہ انکوں نیز ہم ہر شیہا نیست
 بخود از خوابید یا خود بخت دیں پیدا نیست
 آنچہ می بینم بلا ما حاجت انہما نیست
 دیدنش از دور کار مردم دیندار نیست
 محرم این درد ما جز عالم اسرار نیست
 زہر می نوشیم لیکن زہرہ گفتار نیست
 لے درین ایں بیگسی رایح کس غمخوار نیست
 لے عجب ایں مردمان را ہر آن دلدار نیست
 کایں ہمہ خود و سخاوت در رہ دادار نیست
 لطف کن ما را نظر بر اندک بس یا نیست
 آنکہ مثل او بزیر گنجد و دوار نیست
 جزو علم با مداد و گریہ اسی او نیست
 آنکہ او را فکر دین احدی مختار نیست

بیگے شد دین احمد ایچ خویش یا نیست
 ہر طرف سبیل ضلالت صد ہزاراں تن ر بود
 اے خداوندان نعمت این چنین غفلت چراست
 اے مسلماناں خدا را یک نظر بر حال دیں
 آتش افتاد است در غرض بخیزید لے یلاں
 ہر زمان از بہر دیں درخول دل من می تپد
 آنچہ بر ما می رود از غم کہ داند جز خدا
 ہر کسے غمخواری اہل و اقارب می کند
 خون دیں بینم رواں چوں کشتیگان کہ بلا
 حیرت آید چو بینم بدل مثال در کار نفس
 لے کہ داری مقدرت ہم عرم تا بیادتیں
 ہیں کہ چوں در خاک می غلطد ز جو ناکساں
 اندرین وقت مصیبت چارہ ما بیگساں
 اے خدا ہرگز ممکن شاد آں دل تاریک را

اے برادر ہنچ روز آیام عشرت لا بود
 دامن عیش و بہار گلشن و گلزار نیست*

The Writer:

**Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian,
District Gurdaspur, Punjab.**

* Translation of Persian verses:

The Faith of Ahmad^{sa} has been forsaken,
 None has its interest at heart;
 Everyone is engrossed in his own affairs,
 None cares for the Faith of Ahmad^{sa}.
 Thousands have been drowned
 By the flood of misguidance;
 Woe to him,
 Who is not alerted even now.
 O masters of wealth!

Contd...

Why such indifference?
Are you totally given to slumber,
Or has the fortune of the Faith gone to sleep?
O ye Muslims! for God's sake,
Take a look at the plight of the Faith;
The calamities that I see
Hardly need to be mentioned.
O valiant ones, rise!
The garment of the Faith has caught Fire;
It does not behove the faithful
To stand and watch from afar.
Day and night, and every moment,
My heart is in agony at the plight of the Faith;
None knows of my anguish but He—
The Knower of all hidden things.
Only He can understand
The grief that I suffer;
I drink of this poisonous cup
But have no power to speak.
Everyone takes care
Of his near and loved ones,
Alas! is there no one
To stand up for the helpless Faith!
I see the blood of the Faith flow
Like [the blood] of the martyrs of Karbala;
And I am amazed at these people,
Who have no love for the beloved [Faith]!
When I see them spending freely
On their own pleasures;
I wonder why such generosity is not shown
In the cause of the Faith.
O ye, who are able and resolved
To help the Faith!
I urge you to be generous;
No matter if your contributions are great or small.
Look! how the Faith,
Which has no peer under the canopy of heaven,
Is rolling in dust
Due to the injustices of ignoble people.
At the time of this adversity and tribulation,
There is only one remedy available to us helpless ones:
To supplicate in the morning

Contd...

And shed tears of anguish before dawn.
O God! grant not joy
To the heart full of darkness,
Which has no sympathy
For the Faith of Ahmad^{sa}.
O my brother,
Few are the days of rejoicing and merrymaking;
These blissful gardens and enchanted orchards
Will not last forever.

[Publishers]

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَآلِ مُحَمَّدٍ أَفْضَلِ الرُّسُلِ وَخَاتَمِ النَّبِيِّينَ²⁸

Announcement²⁹

Being inspired and commanded by God, I have undertaken the compilation of a book named *Barāhīn-e-Ahmadiyya*, with the object of reforming and reviving the religion, and have offered a reward of rupees 10,000 to anyone who would prove the arguments brought forward therein to be false. My object in this book is to show that the only true and the only revealed religion, by means of which one might know God to be free from blemish, and obtain a strong conviction as to the perfection of His attributes, is the religion of Islam, in which the blessings of truth shine forth like the sun, and the impress of veracity is as vividly bright as daylight. All other

²⁸ In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

O Allah, send down Your blessings upon Muhammad and upon the progeny of Muhammad, who is the most exalted of Messengers and the Seal of Prophets. [Publishers]

²⁹ The English translation of this Announcement was part of the first edition of the book published in 1893. It is being reproduced here with minor corrections. [Publishers]

religions are so palpably and manifestly false that neither their principles can stand the test of reasoning nor can their followers experience the least spiritual edification. On the contrary, these religions so obscure the mind and divest it of the power of discernment that the signs of future misery among their followers become apparent even in this world.

That Islam is the only true religion has been shown in this book in two ways. (1) By means of three hundred very strong and sound arguments based on mental reasoning (their cogency and sublimity being inferred from the fact that a reward of rupees 10,000 has been offered by me to anyone refuting them, and from my further readiness to have this offer registered for the satisfaction of anyone who might be willing to come forth.) (2) By means of the Divine signs which are essential for the complete and satisfactory proof of a true religion. With a view to establishing that Islam is the only true religion in the world, I have adduced under this latter head three kinds of evidence: (i) Miracles performed by the Holy Prophet^{sa} during his lifetime, either by deed or word, which were witnessed by people of other persuasions are inserted in this book in a chronological order (based on the best kind of evidence). (ii) The signs which are inseparably

apparent in the Holy Quran itself, and are perpetual and everlasting, the nature of which has been fully expounded for facility of comprehension. (iii) The signs which, by way of inheritance, devolve on any believer in the Book of God and any follower of the true Prophet^{sa}. As an illustration of this, I have recorded in this book many instances of how I myself have been blessed by God Almighty with true revelations, supernatural deeds, miracles, news of the unseen, knowledge of future events and acceptance of prayers, and all of this has been seen and witnessed by many of my opponents (Āryas and others). It has also been revealed to me that I am the Reformer of the age and that, as regards spiritual excellence, my virtues bear very close similarity and strict analogy to those of Jesus son of Mary^{as}. I also, by virtue of being the follower of the Best of mankind and the Greatest of Prophets, the Holy Prophet^{sa}, have been favoured with a higher rank than that assigned to many of the saints and holy personages preceding me. To follow in my footsteps will be a source of blessing and the means of salvation, whereas any antagonism towards me will result in estrangement from God. All this will become evident by reading the book *Brāhīn-e-Ahmadiyya*, which will consist of nearly 4800 pages, of which

about 592 pages have already been published. I am ever ready to satisfy any seeker of truth.

وَذَلِكَ فَضْلُ اللَّهِ يُؤْتِيهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَلَا فُخْرَ
وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَيَّ مَنْ اتَّبَعَ الْهُدَى³⁰

If, after the publication of this notice, anyone does not take the trouble of becoming earnest enquirer after the truth and does not come forward with an unbiased mind to seek it, then let this serve as my final word to him, and he shall be answerable to God.

I now conclude this announcement with the prayer: O Gracious God, guide the pliable hearts of all the nations so that they may have faith on Thy chosen Prophet^{sa} and on Thy Holy Quran and that they may follow the commandments contained therein, so that they may thus be blessed with peace and true happiness which are given to the true Muslims in both the worlds, and may they obtain absolution and eternal life, which is not only procurable in the next world but is also enjoyed by the truthful and honest people in this very world. This particularly applies to the English people who have as yet not availed themselves of the Sun of truth and whose cultured,

³⁰ All this is by the grace of God. He gives it to whomsoever He likes. And this is no boast. Peace be to all the followers of righteousness. [Publishers]

civilized and benevolent Government has obliged us, through its kind and friendly treatment, to wish them well, so that just as their fair faces shine in this world, so should they shine with Divine light in the next.

فَنَسْتَلُ اللَّهَ تَعَالَى خَيْرَهُمْ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ اللَّهُمَّ اهْدِهِمْ وَ
 أَيِّدُهُمْ بِرُوحِ مَنْكَ وَاجْعَلْ لَهُمْ حَظًّا كَثِيرًا فِي دِينِكَ وَاجْذِبْهُمْ
 بِحَوْلِكَ وَقُوَّتِكَ لِيُؤْمِنُوا بِكِتَابِكَ وَرَسُولِكَ وَيَدْخُلُوا فِي دِينِ
 اللَّهِ أَفْوَاجًا- آمِينَ ثُمَّ آمِينَ وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ-³¹

(Signed)

Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian,
 District Gurdaspur, Punjab.

³¹ We beseech God for their well being in this world and the next. O God, guide them and help them with Thy grace and instil in their hearts the love for Thy religion, and attract them with Thy power, so that they may believe in Thy Book and Thy Prophet^{sa}, and may embrace Thy religion in large numbers. Amen! Amen! Praise be to God the Supporter of creation!

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