

QUARTERLY

THE MESSAGE



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And hasten to forgiveness from your Lord and a Garden, as wide as the heavens and the earth; it is prepared for those who keep their duty:

Those who spend in ease as well as in adversity and those who restrain (their) anger and pardon men. And Allah loves the doers of good (to others).

And those who, when they commit an indecency or wrong their souls, remember Allah and ask forgiveness for their sins. And who forgives sins but Allah? And they persist not knowingly in what they do. (H.Q. 3:132-134)

Chapter 57 *AL-HADID* (IRON)

by Dr. Basharat Ahmad

(Translated by Imam Kalamazad Mohammed, BA, Dip. Ed.)

SECTION 1

This chapter, *Al-Hadid* (Iron), was revealed at Madinah. Although it is a Madinan revelation, it was placed just after a Makkan chapter, *A-Waqi'ah* (The Event), because in this chapter man has been divided into three groups on the Day of Resurrection as compensation for deeds:

1. Those who are drawn closest to Allah, Most High;
2. The companions of the right hand, comprising those whose good deeds outweigh their evil deeds; and
3. The companions of the left hand, meaning those whose evil actions far surpass their good ones. The first two groups will enter Paradise whilst the third is destined for the fire of Hell.

In order to belong to the first two groups, man has been commanded to glorify the name of his Lord, but as the

word *tasbih* (glorification) covers a wide significance in the Holy Qur'an, it was therefore necessary that further clarification be given to it. For this reason, this command is placed immediately after the chapter *Al-Hadid* (Iron), for here the explanation of the command "to glorify the name of the Lord" is given together with the necessary conditions attached to it, for without paying heed to these requirements, man's exaltation of his Lord would remain defective and imperfect and will not lead to noble consequences.

In the last chapter, *Al-Waqi'ah* (The Event), it has been explained that man can glorify the name of his Lord in two main ways: firstly, by means of words. In other words, to believe with the utmost sincerity of heart that Allah's attributes are free of all defects and imperfections and to make a verbal affirmation of this conviction; secondly, by practical means – that is, in order to fulfil the purpose of creation, man should

PASS ON THE MESSAGE

live exactly according to the will of his Creator so that his latent powers and capabilities might be nourished and be manifested with such dazzling clarity that his very conduct would serve as a standing testimony of his Maker, the One Who is free from defect or blemish. In keeping with this, not only man, but all other created objects of Allah, Most High, are included in this kind of glorification. Indeed, every creation of the Almighty is vested by Him with such talents and capacities to fulfil its object of creation and is guided along this path with such solicitude and care that it is impossible to imagine a better system. In fact, everything in the heaven and the earth glorifies the name of its Lord by the very nature of its existence. In other words, the splendour of its creation bespeaks the beauty and perfection of its Creator and this is mentioned right at the beginning of this chapter:

1. Whatever is in the heavens and the earth declares the glory of Allah, and He is the Mighty, the Wise.

Man is told that he alone is not charged with the glorification of his Lord but, in fact, everything in the heavens and the earth is constantly engaged in doing so. That is, so perfectly are they working towards achieving the purpose of their creation and so faithfully are they employing the Divine powers and capabilities reposed in them for this object, and so impeccably and meticulously are they treading the path laid down for them that it is beyond human intellect to conceive of any arrangement that is more excellent. In other words, by their very condition they are constantly glorifying their Creator and this is referred to in the Holy Qur'an in another verse:

"The seven heavens and the earth and those in them declare His glory. And there is not a single thing but glorifies Him with His praise but you do not understand their glorification ..." (17:44).

How beautifully is this expressed! We are told that everything in its own sphere is so perfectly created in order to attain the purpose of its creation that merely by witnessing it, it gives rise to a cogent proof that the Creator of all this is immaculately free of fault or blemish. There is one difficulty, though, and that is man's lack of knowledge and understanding of the true purpose of the creation of any object, or his faulty appreciation of its latent talents and abilities which leads him to raise objections. Otherwise, if man had perfect knowledge, or if he could fathom the capacities of each atom and the reason for its creation, then he would be able to hear the glorification of its Creator and his own heart would sing its own praises of the Almighty.

In the days when I was a medical student, doctors were unaware of the utility of the many glands in the human body. It was thought that if these glands were non-existent in the body, no harm would come thereby because no one could see what work they performed. In fact, it was not known in what way they benefited the human body. However, today, with the immense increase in medical knowledge, it has been discovered that it is these glands that hold the reins over the body of man: whether a person is fat or thin, tall or short, sharp-witted or dull, young or old, etc. he is totally dependent on these glands. In other words, as they could not comprehend the glorification of

these glands, they raised objections to them. Today, when knowledge of their praise and adulation is well-known, words extolling the Creator involuntarily escape from the lips of a serious-minded thinker. Thus, it is man's paucity of knowledge that causes him to raise objection to something the benefit of which he does not understand. So, how can the limited brain of man comprehend the creation of the vast universe as well as its perfection and purpose?

Thus, it is a self-evident fact that every single thing which exists in the heavens and the earth, each in its own sphere, continuously glorifies the name of its Lord by its very condition, and its beauty and uniqueness point to the fact that its Creator and Controller is Mighty and Wise. That is, He has absolute power and perfect knowledge and wisdom.

A sign of Allah's attribute of total power is that no atom can deviate even an inch from the laws under which it is bound. Even the largest celestial bodies as well as the tiniest earthly specks are all held in control by laws which they assiduously obey without the slightest veering away in performing their functions and fulfilling their objective of creation after which they will all cease to exist. So, consider, therefore, how powerful is the Maker of these laws from the grip of which nothing in the heavens and the earth can ever deviate in the least. Thus, this serves as an indisputable proof that there is a mighty Being Who has absolute power over everything in creation and nothing can escape His control.

2. His is the kingdom of the heavens and the earth. He gives life and causes death; and He is

Possessor of power over all things.

This verse tells us that there is no partnership in the sovereignty of that Being (Who has already been described in verse 1 as Mighty and Wise) and His dominion extends over everything in the heavens and the earth. The entire Kingdom and Dominion belongs to Him and everything is His handiwork which depends for its existence and sustenance on this very Being Who gives life and causes death.

Today, science, too, has discovered that every single atom in the universe is, every second, going through a process of construction and destruction or, life and death, and this extends also to man's body in which every instant cells are born and die. By means of eating and breathing, there exist in the bloodstream such elements that spark life in the living atoms of the human body to create new cells and dead cells are constantly being expelled from the system through exhalation, urination, excretion and perspiration. In short, the chain of life and death continuously pervades the whole universe. The power to create anew or to cause death does not lie within the power of anyone except the Almighty. Thus, in this weak and dependent world, everything in the universe as well as every human being is held fast by this sequence of life and death from which it is clearly discernible that true sovereignty belongs to this Being from Whose powerful laws and sagacious management nothing is excluded.

On the other hand, there are many kings, no matter how stringent their laws may be and who may desire to effect certain measures, yet they cannot find the power to do so. Contrary to this, Allah's

sovereignty is such that it possesses so great power and might that He can do whatever He wishes. His command may be delayed or instant or it may evolve into being by slow degrees in accordance with the system of cause and effect, yet its coming into being is inexorably certain. Thus, as a glorious sign of His perfect dominion, it is stated that He has in His power the ability to bring into existence whatever He so desires.

3. He is the First and the Last and the Manifest and the Hidden, and He is Knower of all things.

Al-Awwal – He is the First. That is, there is no one before Him. This is an attribute of Allah, Most High, and this is the meaning given to it in the *Hadith*.

Al-Akhir – He is the Last. That is, there is none after Him. This, too, is an attribute of Allah, Most High, and this also is the meaning attributed to it in the *Hadith*.

Az-Zahir – He is the Manifest and nothing supersedes Him in this regard. This is another attribute of Allah, Most High, and there is another significance attached to it in the *Hadith* meaning that no one is above Him.

Al-Batin – He is the Hidden. That is, no one is more hidden than He. This is another attribute of Allah, Most High, and the *Hadith* gives an additional meaning – that there is none beneath Him. In other words, He encompasses all things.

We can perceive Allah's attributes of Manifest (*Zahir*) and Hidden (*Batin*) in several ways. Firstly, there is none who is more visible than He. That is,

there is none above Him, meaning that He is more powerful than all and above everything else. Besides this, He is Manifest in the sense that His attributes or actions are so evident in the pages of nature that any fair-minded person can see Him in whatever object to which he may turn his attention. In other words, He is visible from His multitudinous signs. This is called self-evident knowledge.

Secondly, He, by His very nature is Hidden. He is also Hidden in the sense that for a person with deep insight, behind the veil of everything lies the glorious manifestation of Allah, Most High. This is called true or esoteric knowledge. Further, He is more Hidden than anything else in that for everything there is someone else who knows its reality, that is, He has full knowledge of everything yet no one can fathom, other than Himself, the secret of His reality. It is possible to discern the reality of all things but it is impossible to grasp the knowledge of Allah's true personality. And since He is the one behind the veil of everything and the Causer of all causes, then besides Him there can be no resort nor sanctuary to which petition may be addressed.

He is Manifest in this regard, too, that He encompasses and comprehends all things and He is Hidden in this way, too, that no one can encompass or comprehend Him.

We must bear in mind also that He is not confined to place and time because He exists before and after all creation. Place and time are used to show relationship between finite things but He is limitless and infinite. Further, He encompasses all things in His power, knowledge and control.

In addition to this, there is another point mentioned in the verse, “*Allah, Most High, has perfect knowledge of all things*”, and that is that the reach of His knowledge encompasses everything that exists and nothing is excluded from it. Further, this knowledge could never be complete and perfect unless Allah, Most High, was the Creator of all things, for unless one were the creator, he could not possess that degree of knowledge. In that case, he would be dependent and would have to seek knowledge of it from its Creator. If he had known the full reality of all things, then it must necessarily follow that the next attribute to be mentioned will be that of Creator and so we read in the next verse:

4. *He it is Who created the heavens and the earth in six periods (ayyam), and He is established on the Throne of Power. He knows that which goes down into the earth and that which comes out of it, and that which comes down from the heaven and that which goes up to it. And He is with you wherever you are. And Allah is Seer of what you do.*

Ayyam is the plural of *yaum*, which generally means a day which extends from the rising of the sun to its setting. However, it can also refer to any period of time regardless of its duration, that is, whether very short or very long (*Mufradat* of Imam Raghīb). Before the creation of the heavens and the earth, there was no sun nor earth from the mutual relation of which we get our day and night. From this, one can plainly see that in reference to the creation of the heavens and the earth the use of the

word *yaum* (day) can never signify our present day and night. Thus, when our existing instrument for computation was not yet in existence, then the word *yaum* (day) will mean time in the abstract, or time alone which is free from all limitations, for knowledge of any division of time is known only to Allah, Most High, and no one else. Science, too, has discovered that before the creation of our heaven and earth the entire universe had to pass through several stages which according to scientific terminology are called ages or periods with each period lasting for hundreds of millions of years. In fact, the true length of an age is not definitely known. It is to this “age” that the word *yaum* (day) is used in the Holy Qur’an. Scientists, in accordance with the extent of their knowledge, have divided the creation of the universe into different ages but Allah, Most High, in His perfect knowledge has divided it into six ages or periods. Whatever the ages may have been, only Allah, Most High, knows. It is possible, however, that these are the stages that have been verified by science, namely, of ether, nebula, electron, mineral, vegetation and animal life or others not known. All that the Almighty has told us here in brief is that He created the heavens and the earth in six periods or six stages. That is, their creation evolved gradually over several ages or periods. Only Allah, Most High, knows what those stages were and how long they lasted.

From reading scientific books we certainly gather this much that countless marvels of creation were manifested in the course of those stages – wonders, the nature of which is beyond the comprehension of man. Thus, it is incumbent on a wise person, conscious of his extreme lack of knowledge, to acknowledge these wonders.

Al-‘Arsh – This means the throne on which a king sits. According to Imam Raghīb, it refers also to honour, power, dominion and kingdom. He explains further:

“Allah’s ‘*Arsh* (Throne) is such that no human knows its reality and it cannot mean what the ordinary folk imagine it to be (that is, similar to the throne of a worldly king) for in that case Allah’s throne would have to be carried about although the Person of Allah is far removed from such a thing.”

One of His attributes is *Al-Qayyum* (the Self-subsisting) through Whom all things subsist. Thus, the expression: “*He established Himself on the Throne*”, cannot mean that Allah, Most High, placed Himself on any throne. We should not be deceived by the use of the word ‘*arsh* (throne) for we must remember that the same words that are used for Allah, Most High, are also employed in relation to man but the reality between the two uses is as far as the heaven is from the earth. For example, Allah, Most High, too, has hands, and He hears and sees, also. But to imagine that He has hands like a human being or He hears and sees as one will constitute a grave error.

Similarly, the sovereignty of a king is tied up with a throne but Allah’s dominion is free of such constraints. Even in this world when we say that the king is sitting on his throne we do not mean that he is perched there day and night without moving from it at any time. Instead, what is meant is that his power and authority have been established. This is the meaning, too, attached to the verse: “*He is established on the throne*”, that is, His power and

authority pervade everything. It can never signify that He is literally sitting on a throne. In the Holy Qur'an, it is a generally accepted fact that when some words are used in relation to Allah's attributes or actions whatever means or tools that are subsumed by them are never attributed to Allah, Most High. Instead, only the final point in the chain of actions is meant. For example, if we were to say that Allah, Most High, sees, although these words also apply to human beings, yet Allah, Most High, stands in no need of eyes and light which are the means by which man sees. Instead, what we will mean is only the result that is obtained at the end point of seeing. And the same applies to Allah's act of hearing. Similarly, when man has to construct something, he needs hands and material but when Allah builds or creates such means are not needed.

Similarly, in regard to man, the sentence: "*He established himself on the throne*", means the promulgation of man's power and dominion through the medium of sitting on the throne. However, in the case of Allah, Most High, this means is non-existent, and the import is only that He established and wielded His power and complete mastery over everything.

The Holy Qur'an itself makes it clear that this is the intended meaning as we read in 10:3, for example, when it states:

"He is established on the Throne of Power regulating the Affair..."

Here, "*regulating the Affair*", is the explanation of: "*He is established on the Throne of Power*".

Again, in 7:54, after saying: "*He created*

the heavens and the earth in six periods, and He is established on the Throne of Power," the verse says towards the end: "*His is the creation and the command.*"

In other words, to create is His work as well as to establish His commands. From this, it is evident that in saying: "*He created the heavens and the earth in six periods,*" Allah's attribute of Creator is highlighted whilst in saying: "*He is established on the Throne of Power,*" the promulgation of Divine command is intended and this turn of phrase is entirely appropriate, for creation is one facet of His work whilst the establishment of His authority is another aspect of it. Thus, this power becomes perfect by these two manifestations, that is, by creation and by wielding of command.

For instance, for anything in creation there are two aspects to it. Firstly, creating it and secondly, making it fulfil the function for which it was created. Let us take the case of the sun. First, there was the creation of it. Before bringing it into existence only Allah, Most High, knows how many means He brought together in order to create it. After creation was complete, Allah, Most High, set it to work in accordance with the purpose of its creation.

Not only for the sun but for everything else there are two stages in Allah's work: first, there is creation and then there is the act of putting it to work under His command and power to fulfil the designated object of its existence.

So, firstly, there is *khalq* (creation) and after that comes the wielding of command (*amr*) or as the Holy Qur'an states: "*Istawa 'alal 'arsh,*" which means to set everything in proper order.

In this, there is an indication that Allah's dominion and the exercise of His power are in proper order. That is, they are perfect and that nothing can remain outside of His authority nor can anything deviate from it in the slightest manner.

At this juncture, this point ought to be clarified and that is that dreams and visions belong to the category of the realm of similitude. In them, all things are necessarily seen in a form of likeness. Thus, if Allah, Most High, is seen in a dream or vision, then it is in the form of a likeness so that if He is seen as having eyes and ears like a man, it does not mean that He, too, has physical eyes and ears. In the same way, if He is beheld as sitting on a royal throne, then this would signify that total sovereignty belongs to Him and not that He has a physical body which is seated on a wooden throne.

After this, mention is made of Allah's knowledge, for kingship without knowledge is imperfect. If a king does not have any knowledge of his subjects, what is the point of His sovereignty? Thus, together with the supreme management of His power and dominion, Allah, Most High, also mentions His perfect knowledge. In the verse prior to this, in stating that He has knowledge of all things (*bi kulli shai'in 'aleem*), He emphasised His perfect and complete knowledge which resulted in the creation of the heavens and the earth for total knowledge presupposes the ability to create.

Now, in this verse, together with the perfect power behind the wielding of His authority, Allah, Most High, saw it fit to emphasise that His knowledge over the movements and deeds of His creation is also perfect and comprehensive. So the verse: "*He has*

knowledge of everything,” refers to His awareness of the nature and essence of all creation, whilst here, He makes mention of His perfect knowledge of its actions and movements.

The verse states that the Divine Being is fully aware of what enters the earth and what comes out of it, as well as what comes down from heaven and what goes up to it. This statement includes the movements and actions of everything in creation except man who is mentioned separately because he is given power to act within a certain limit so that he may choose to act according to Divinely-ordained laws or not. Thus, because of the special power of discretion granted to him, it was therefore necessary for him to be mentioned separately for the sake of special emphasis. The logic behind this is that his future life is based on his deeds (in this world). Thus, it is important for him to display prudence in this matter. Thus, the verse warns: *“He is with you wherever you are and Allah is Seer of what you do.”*

In other words, man is told that he has been given the gift of choice so that he can choose to obey Allah’s commands or to disobey, but before contravening the laws of the All-powerful Lord of the Throne, he should bear in mind that wherever he may be, his Lord is with him and whatever he does is witnessed by the All-seeing One. So powerful a lesson of faith is taught by this that if anyone should possess a degree of sincere faith in his heart, he could never violate the laws of the Almighty. Will anyone steal in the presence of the judge or commit fornication for him to see? Certainly not! This is why the *Hadith* says that at the time a thief is engaged in stealing, or at the time of fornication, there is no faith in the transgressor.

5. *His is the kingdom of the heavens and the earth; and to Allah are (all) affairs returned.*

Allah, Most High, after reminding man that He is Seer of all his deeds, also states that to Him belongs the kingdom of the heavens and the earth so that if man is disobedient to Him there is no place of refuge for him either in the heavens or the earth. On the other hand, if he is obedient, he will taste fully of the bounties of the earth and abundantly of the blessings of heaven. If a nation should comply with the commands of the Lord of the two worlds, then for its people is a share of both worlds, that is, they will enjoy earthly gifts as well as a heavenly heritage or, in other words, the inheritance of spiritual blessings will be given to them as we can plainly see in the example of the noble companions of the Holy Prophet (*sas*). They observed their duty to Allah, Most High, to the best of their ability, so He, in return, fulfilled His promise to them to such an extent that there is no parallel to it in world history as He blessed them with two kingdoms: a material and a spiritual one. In other words, they became recipients of an earthly and heavenly kingdom. On an individual basis also, if a person is perfectly subservient to the Almighty, he, too, will receive, by way of reflection, a share of Divine power in both worlds.

Ilal-Lahi turja ‘ul umur means that every affair is returned to Allah, Most High. This is mentioned because in this life the veil of means is so powerful that man fails to see the hand of Allah, Most High, or His power. Instead, he becomes a worshipper of means and in seeking the pleasure of other things besides his Lord, he throws the pleasure of the Almighty behind his

back. For this reason, man is advised that he should not fall into this error for in this world power may belong to man or seemingly to others besides Allah, Most High. However, true dominion belongs truly to the Lord of all creation. Ostensibly, in this world, man exercises authority and achieves power and might but there is no need to fear him for the rein is in the hand of the Lord of the Kingdom and unless heaven does not give permission nothing can take place on earth. So it is that the Master of the Kingdom Who must be feared and in comparison with fear for Him, fear for anything besides Him ought to pale into insignificance, and in the face of His pleasure no human being should be given precedence or undue consideration. He gives the kingdom to whom He pleases and takes it away from whom He pleases. He also makes the night to pass into the day and makest the day to pass into the night, as the next verse says:

6. *He causes the night to pass into the day, and causes the day to pass into the night. And He is Knower of what is in the hearts.*

‘Alimum bi dhatis-sudur means that He is Knower of the secrets of the heart. This is a figurative expression. The store of secrets, hidden and confidential mysteries of man’s heart are felt in his breast and it is on the basis of this feeling that this figurative turn of phrase has come about. We are told that it is Allah, Most High, Who turns day into night and night into day. So, the believers are consoled with the promise that however poor and helpless they may be at that point in time, yet if they allow the rule of Allah, Most High, to hold sway over them and make obedience to His laws in their way of

life, then the night of weakness and powerlessness that has shrouded them will be transformed into the day of Allah's success and victory. On the other hand, the unbelievers' bright daylight which was based on their power and predominance will be changed into night. That is, they will taste defeat and disgrace. Accordingly, the noble companions (may Allah be pleased with them) acknowledged the sovereignty of Allah so wholeheartedly and His laws, which had come down to them through the Holy Qur'an, and they obeyed with such sincerity and rigid devotion that in the end, their night was turned into day and the unbelievers' day was transformed into night.

The phrase: "*Knower of what is in the hearts*", has another interpretation, and that is, that intentions play an important role in the commission of deeds. If there is no purity in one's intentions nor any determination to work for Allah's sake, but instead there is a mixture of ostentation and greed for worldly gain in one's mind, then deeds can never bring successful results. Instead, those deeds would come to naught. This is why the Holy Prophet (*sas*) is reported to have said: "Deeds are judged by intentions."

Thus, the real meaning of the expression: "*Knower of what is in the hearts*", is that in our affairs we should be cautious of that Omniscient Being Who is fully cognisant of the secrets of our hearts. It is possible for even the most intelligent or pious of men to be deceived (by show) but not Allah, Most High. So, unless He is pleased with us and our intentions are sincere, our actions can never bear good fruit as the Holy Qur'an states in another verse:

"*They will swear to you that*

you may be pleased with them. But if you are pleased with them, yet surely Allah is not pleased with the transgressing people" (9:96).

This is a reference to the hypocrites who were trying to ingratiate themselves with the Muslims by pretending to be pleased with them, but their hearts and intentions were not sincere. This is why Allah, Most High, branded them as transgressors and publicly announced His displeasure with them. Thus, however righteous an action may appear to be on the surface, yet if the doer's intention is not pure, that action can bring no good results. For, in that case, a person gives charity but he is not doing so to seek Allah's pleasure but to gain a good reputation. It is possible that he may get some recognition from people for it, but in Allah's eyes, his act of generosity carries no weight. The success of the noble companions came about because their intentions were extremely noble and pious and their deeds were done with solely the pleasure of Allah, Most High, in mind. This is why their Lord, Who knew the secret of their hearts, gave them victory in this life and the next and made them recipients of two kingdoms – one material and the other spiritual.

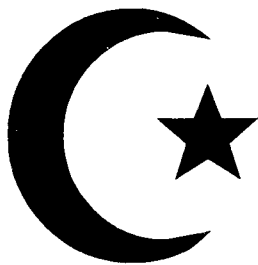
Take the example of Abu Bakr (*ra*) and 'Umar (*ra*). Although they were masters of Arabia, Iran, Rome, Syria and Egypt, yet such was the model of simplicity and selflessness of life they left that every wise person has to bow his head in admiration and reverence to them when he reads the account of their single-minded devotion to Allah, Most High. Even when Abu Bakr (*ra*) was *Khalifa*, he still carried on his trading business. People pointed out to him that the running of the government was so

time-consuming and demanding an affair that it left little time for him to do his trading. They suggested that he should take an allowance from the Treasury and forgo his trading. Accordingly, he agreed and gave up his business and took a very small sum as his daily allowance and on this small stipend he led a very straitened life. After living like this for some time, he happened to see, one day, his wife wearing a beautiful new head-covering. He asked her how she got it. She replied that from the small daily allowance she used to save two coins until she gathered enough to buy her head-covering. He forthwith took it and deposited it in the Treasury and asked the keepers to deduct two coins from his daily allowance for he could live on two coins less. Such was his devotion for the sake of Allah, Most High, that he considered it forbidden (*haram*) to spend too much of this world's wealth on himself or family, and whatever he took just allowed him to live a life of extreme simplicity and stringency. And just imagine! He was the king of the Empire of Islam!

The second *Khalifa*, 'Umar (*ra*), was also of the same nature. He was the king of Arabia, Iran, Rome, Syria and Egypt, yet he wore clothes with as many as fifteen patches. When the kingdoms of Iran, Egypt and Syria were subjugated in battle by the Muslim warriors, the Roman Kaiser sent his ambassador to pay respect to *Khalifa* 'Umar (*ra*). Now, this ambassador had seen many a fine regal court and so he thought that the court of the majestic Muslim king would be replete with extraordinary pomp and splendour. However, when he arrived in Madinah, he could see no palace or royal mansion, so he inquired as to the whereabouts of the *Khalifa*. He was told that 'Umar was sitting on a mat in the mosque not too long ago

but, as was his wont, he must have gone out towards the jungle to await the arrival of the Muslim courier. The ambassador sought him there, too, but learned that he had just left that location. At last, someone pointed out a man sleeping under an acacia tree and informed him that that was the *Khalifa* of the Muslims. When the ambassador approached closer, he saw a person with seventy patches on his clothes fast asleep very unceremoniously with the bare ground as his bed.

He was struck with consternation. His heart was overcome with such awe that he began to tremble. It was a fear inspired by truth that caused him to shiver and not the dread for a man lying on the ground in tattered clothes, for this kind of awe is not engendered by human beings but instead it is stimulated by Allah, Most High, in the hearts of people for His righteous ones. This was the case with the Holy Prophet's companions. In spite of enjoying power and an abundance of wealth, they never allowed these considerations to tarnish the garment of their perseverance and deep trust and reliance on their Lord. For example, Lady A'isha (*ra*) distributed among the poor and needy almost every penny of the pension she received.



THE UNIQUE DISTINCTION OF ISLAM

Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad

(Translated by Kalamazad Mohammed, BA, Dip. Ed., Editor, *The Message*)

Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, *Imam* of the Age, reminds us that as man is created weak (“*Allah desires to make light your burdens and man is created weak*” – Holy Qur’an, 4:28), he is in constant need of Divine assistance and the way to gain this is by making continuous *du’a* (supplication) to the Almighty for without doing so man will deprive himself of a powerful means of attaining moral, intellectual and spiritual elevation. The Holy Qur’an itself warns us: “*Say: My Lord would not care for you were it not for your prayer (du’a)*” (25:77).

He continues by saying that supplications and hard, purposeful striving will bring rewards that no other religion can give to us and thus he strongly affirms that the chief characteristic of Islam is *du’a*. He writes (in *Malfuzat*, Vol. 7, pp. 193-198):

One should know for a fact that this weapon and this grace have been granted to Islam alone and that all other religions are bereft of this special bounty. Why should the Arya Samaj people make *du’a* when it is their belief that man cannot escape the endless cycle of reincarnation and so forgiveness for any sin is a futile affair? Therefore, what need or necessity is there for them to make *du’a* and what benefits would they derive from it? From this, it is abundantly evident that according to the Arya Samaj religion *du’a* is a fruitless exercise.

Similarly, why should the Christians make *du’a* when they are sure that their sins would not be forgiven twice for their Messiah cannot be put on the Cross again (allegedly to die for their sins)?

Thus, these singular blessings are reserved for Islam alone and that is why this *Ummah* (community of the Holy Prophet [*sas*]) is so mercifully blessed. However, if we ourselves should deprive ourselves of this grace and close this door with our own hands, then who can we blame? When there is an ever-present life-giving spring from which we can satisfy our thirst whenever we desire then to spurn this opportunity to quench our thirst is tantamount to courting death and destruction from lack of water. The wise thing to do is to put one's lips to this fountain and drink to satiation. This is my advice which I consider to be the pith and kernel of all Qur'anic counsels. The Holy Qur'an is divided into thirty parts which all abound with excellent admonitions and advice. However, not everyone knows from all of these exhortations which is the single most important counsel that can guide him on all the spiritual pathways disclosed by the Holy Qur'an and which unlawful things he can avoid, provided he adheres strictly to that special advice and acts steadfastly according to it. However, I say to you that the key and power to everything good and pure is *du’a*. Take hold of *du’a*, therefore, with all your strength.

I aver with total confidence and it is also through my own experience that I affirm that Allah, Most High, would smooth all our difficulties but there is one drawback – people are unaware of the essence and reality of *du'a*.

Du'a is not just the mumbling of a few words, for this amounts to nothing whatsoever. The true meaning of *du'a* is to beseech Allah, Most High, sincerely for His assistance. This petition becomes perfect and efficacious only when man surrenders his all to Allah, Most High, with total anguish of heart, perturbation and heart-burning and makes supplication so fervently that his soul melts like water and flows at the threshold of Divine Unity. For example, look at how a person who is embroiled in a misfortune importunes people for help in moving terms and see what a wonderful change and transformation his appeal undergoes – the tone of his voice becomes full of anguish which attracts the mercy of people.

Similarly, when a person makes *du'a* to Allah, Most High, the tone of his voice changes also and is filled with tenderness and pain that causes the fountain of Divinity to gush forth with mercy. When *du'a* is being made the modulation of one's voice should be such that every limb of the body is affected and meekness and humility issue from the tongue. The heart must also be filled with softness and agony and the limbs must surrender with total submission to the Creator.

Over and above all this, one must have consummate faith in Allah's mercy and

generosity and entertain complete hope of acceptance of one's entreaty. If one should fall at the Divine threshold in such a state he will never be disappointed and in this condition he should beseech the Almighty over and over in the following manner:

“Dear Master, I am nothing but a weak, helpless sinner. Without Thy support and mercy I can never amount to anything. Please have pity on me and cleanse me of my sins for without Thy kindness and grace there is no one else who can purify me.”

When a person makes this kind of petition repeatedly and continuously and seeks Allah's assistance with patience and perseverance then at some unforeseen time a light will descend from Allah, Most High, and peace will suffuse the heart of the supplicant and thus the darkness which formerly covered his heart will be dispelled. Allah, Most High, will then endow him with a power that creates a revulsion in his heart for sins from which he will be saved. At this point he will realise that his heart which had become seized and imprisoned in low passions and carnal desires as if hundreds of thousands of chains had fettered him and were drawing him helplessly towards a life of sinfulness – at this stage he will find that these chains have been miraculously cut in a flash and he has been liberated. His former love for sin will be replaced by hatred for it and instead of fear and hatred for Allah, Most High, love for Him and a magnetic attraction in his

heart for his Lord will be born as the Holy Qur'an delineates in 49:7-8: “...but Allah has endeared the faith to you and has made it seemly in your hearts, and He has made hateful to you disbelief and transgression and disobedience. Such are those who are rightly guided —A grace from Allah and a favour.”

This is a powerful truth which Islam possesses and its veracity cannot be contradicted for it is a living reality in every age. I truly affirm and proffer my personal experience as proof that if man should truly understand this matter and become cognisant of the secret power of *du'a* he would win for himself extreme good luck and prosperity. In this regard, he should realise that all his desires would be fulfilled otherwise the immeasurable pain, grief and anxiety of this world are such that they would surely bring about his destruction.

The person whose sole concern is this world's life progresses a little and then comes up short for disappointment and futility dog him and finally lead him to perdition. On the other hand, the one whose gaze is centred on the Almighty and who employs all his faculties and powers in trying to achieve this goal and whose movements and periods of rest are all for the sake of his Lord will find that Allah, Most High, makes the world also subservient to him although there is a great difference in his case as compared with the case of the one who seeks only the pleasures of this world's life. This one becomes obsessed with this world's life whilst on the other hand the God-seeking person for whom the

world has been made a slave finds no pleasure in the luxuries and comforts of this life. Instead, he develops a kind of distaste for it and he will feel as if for the first time and witness for himself that this is indeed love for his Creator and total surrender to Him. His former love, joy and ecstasy are not derived from this world but instead they descend from another source.

When man becomes a true lover of Allah, Most High, and all his comforts and pleasures are acquired from pleasing his Lord, then without a shadow of doubt this worldly life becomes his also. However, the origin of his peace and tranquillity spring from another source. He obtains no pleasure nor comfort from the pleasures of this world. It is the same way that the prophets and saints had to walk along the paths of this life but they derived no ecstasy from this earthly existence. This was because their soul was differently oriented. This is a universal law of nature: when man covets the joys of this world, he never gets them; however, when he surrenders himself totally to Allah, Most High, and forsakes the world, and there is no yearning or desire for such in his heart, then, paradoxically, the world becomes his own but now no desire for it remains in his soul. This is a fixed principle of life which we would do well never to forget – success with Allah brings in its wake success in this worldly life too! Over and over in the Holy Qur'an Allah, Most High, has maintained that if a person chooses the paths of righteousness He will remove all his difficulties for him (*“And whoever keeps his duty to Allah, He makes his*

affair easy for him. That is the command of Allah, which He has revealed to you. And whoever keeps his duty to Allah, He will remove from him his evils and give him a big reward” – 65:4-5) and that He will bestow on him sustenance from whence he perceives not (*“And whoever keeps his duty to Allah, He ordains a way out for him, and gives him sustenance from whence he imagines not. And whoever trusts in Allah, He is sufficient for him”* – 65:2-3). How magnificent are these boons and favours which can obliterate all straitness and difficulties from man and Allah, Himself, becomes the Surety for his sustenance! However, as the Almighty Himself says, this blessing can be achieved only through *taqwa* (piety) and no where does He say that this favour can be obtained through deceit and trickery in this life.

One of the signs of Allah's true devotees is that they have a great disgust for being creatures of the earth. Consequently, whoever desires to win the pleasure of his Lord and to acquire the peace and repose of this world and the Hereafter should deliberately and consciously choose this path of *taqwa* (righteousness). On the contrary, if he should abandon this path for other ways then try as he might he will gain nothing whatsoever. There are many people who will spurn this advice and laugh at it. However, they should bear in mind that ultimately a time will come when they will realise the truth of these matters and they will manifest great regret on having wasted their lives in trifles. But by then it will be too late for regret for

the opportunity will have slipped from their hands and the spectre of death will have come to them.

I still affirm and advise you to be solicitous in seeking the pleasure of Allah for if He is kind to you then the whole world will respond to you in the same manner. However, if He is angry at you then no one can be of any service to you. When His anger descends on a person no mercy will be there for him on earth no matter how many tricks or stratagems he may employ to win the approbation of people. He may count as many beads as he wants, chant the name of God as much as he likes and put on green robes (as a sign of spirituality) yet the world will look upon him with contempt. If he manages to deceive people for a few days, his veneer of religiosity will be ultimately exposed and his insincerity and cunning will become manifest to all. However, whoever comes from Allah, Most High, will never be overcome no matter how ferociously the world opposes him and no matter what insidious subterfuges they use. They may curse and abuse him but a time will certainly come when those same detractors will submit to him and be compelled to acknowledge his truthfulness. I say with all sincerity that if someone belongs to Allah, Most High, the world will flock to him. Of course, it is true that those chosen ones who come from Allah, Most High, are initially received with enmity by the people who visit them with all kinds of persecution and place every conceivable manner of obstacle in their way. No prophet or messenger ever came to earth and failed to suffer pain and adversity nor failed

to be branded as a trickster, a charlatan and a self-seeking opportunist. However, notwithstanding the multitudes who wished to shoot all kinds of arrows at them, to stone them and to abuse them, they paid not the slightest heed to them and no impediment could stand in their way. They persisted in their mission to preach the word of the Almighty to the people and they strained every nerve and sinew in propagating the message they brought from their Creator. The slings and arrows of persecution and torment from their enemies slowed them down not a bit but instead opposition made them more keen and enthusiastic to the point that there came a time when Allah, Most High, made those difficulties easy for them and the opponents came to their senses and those very people fell at their feet and gave public testimony to their veracity and rectitude: the heart of man lies in the hand of the Almighty Who can cause it to change whenever He wills.

Know for a fact that all prophets met with difficulties in the dissemination of their message. The Holy Prophet (*sas*) himself was the most pre-eminent and the greatest of all the prophets of God to such an extent that the chain of prophethood came to an end with him, that is, the excellences of prophethood reached a natural culmination in him. Nevertheless, despite the grandeur and magnificence of his status everyone is aware of the difficulties and impediments he faced in propagating his message and to what limit the unbelievers tormented and persecuted him. Even his own people and his

paternal uncle and other leaders of the society also took a most prominent role in their opposition to him. The period of his torment and persecution lasted so long that for thirteen years he suffered all kinds of torture from his people. In this condition, no one could have predicted his eventual success for opposition waxed warm in every quarter and even his relatives were thirsting for his blood. As a matter of fact, when his own family and ancestral relations refused to accept him it became more difficult for others to believe in him.

In short, the period of the Holy Prophet's trials and tribulations seemed interminable.

Note from Translator on why the righteous are bound to face trials and hardships and opposition

Maulana Muhammad Ali in his book *Muhammad, The Prophet*, chapter 4, answers this question thus:

“Do men think that they will be left alone on saying, We believe, and will not be tried” (29:2).

Whenever the Divine will inspires a band of righteous people to work as torch-bearers of Truth to a corrupt humanity, there never fails to appear at the same time a band of those who pitch themselves in deadly opposition to them, and inflict upon them all kinds of trouble and torture. And in

truth the storm of opposition is absolutely indispensable. The persecutions to which they [righteous people of God] are subjected serve as a crucial test of the sincerity of their motives. They unhesitatingly put up with humiliations, endure hardships and cruelties, but never for a moment give up the truth for which they stand. In fact, they live if they can, for the Truth; and die, if they must, for the Truth. Besides, afflictions constitute the only training ground for fostering virtues of steadfastness and perseverance, without which man cannot attain to moral perfection. Unless one is hemmed in on all sides by overwhelming obstacles and visited with hardships and privations, one cannot cultivate these qualities. Adversities that befall such people are in fact blessings in disguise, which conduce to their moral advancement. Over and above these, there is a third object. The Almighty God wants to bring home to mankind that a plant tended by the Divine hand, however slender it may look survives the most furious blasts of hostile winds. Consequently, in accordance with this Divine law, the Holy Prophet and his companions had to suffer untold troubles at the hands of the opponents.”

Dr Muhammad Ahmad Hami, M.Sc., Ph.D. (UK)

A biographical note



Muhammad Ahmad Hami was born in Qila Soba Singh, District Sialkot on 19 February, 1930. He received his primary and high school education at the Taleemul Islam High School, Qadian, District Gurdaspur and passed his Matriculation Examination in 1946. That same year he entered the Punjab Agriculture College (now Agriculture University, Faisalabad), Lyallpur, a prestigious institution for the study of Agriculture in Pakistan, and obtained his B.Sc. (Agriculture) in 1950. After completing two years of post-graduate studies at the same institution, he obtained his M.Sc. (Agri.) degree in 1952, specialising in Agricultural Biochemistry.

From 1953 onwards, Dr Hami dedicated his life to the service of Islam and the Ahmadiyya Movement and reported to the Sadr Anjuman Ahmadiyya in Rabwah, District Jhang. He was appointed a research scholar at the Fazli Umar Scientific Research Institute, where he worked until 1957. During this period he was occasionally seconded to teach Biology to intermediate-level students at the Taleemul Islam College, Rabwah.

His grandfather, Hakim Chiragh Ali, and his father, Hakim Mohammad Feroz-ud-Din, both accepted Ahmadiyyat in 1905 through a letter sent to Hazrat Mirza

Ghulam Ahmad, Promised Messiah and Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam. Both of them migrated to Qadian in 1919 and built a house in Mohallah Darul Rahmat. His father worked as Inspector, Baitul Maal with the Sadr Anjuman Ahmadiyya Qadian. He died in 1954. Both his grandfather and his father were pious, humble and extremely dedicated Ahmadis who served the Movement till the end of their lives. May Allah rest their noble souls in peace in Paradise.

When the Research Institute was closed down in 1957, Dr Hami joined various industrial units related to edible oils, fats and soap industries in Pakistan, and also worked as manager of the Baby Food Industrial units of Glaxo Laboratories and Cow & Gate Limited from 1957 to 1963. Later on, he went to Chittagong (now Bangladesh) and worked as production manager, supervising edible and fats production. In 1974 he established his own soap and detergent manufacturing factory at Sargodha in Pakistan. Unfortunately, soon after its establishment it was attacked, looted and set on fire during the anti-Ahmadiyya riots in 1974. The mob also attempted to set his residential home on fire but, by the grace of Allah and the timely help of family members, most of his possessions were saved.

Towards the end of 1974, due to family circumstances and on the advice of some of his friends, he moved to the UK, where in 1975 he joined Reading University to do further studies on the subject of nutritional science. After completing one year of extensive studies he was able to obtain his M.Sc. degree with distinction in Nutritional Science in 1976 and was awarded the Gold Medal. He pursued his Ph.D. from the same university and was appointed Assistant Lecturer and worked at that institution for two and a half years. In 1978 he was offered a job as a lecturer at the Al-Fatah University, Tripoli, Libya and he worked there for two and a half years. After this,

he returned to the UK, bought a house and settled in Wembley in 1992.

From his college days in Lyallpur, Dr Hami was keen to read Urdu and English literature – religious as well as poetry. He was keen to study translations and commentaries of the Holy Qur'an and other Islamic literature. The English and Urdu translations of the Qur'an by Maulana Muhammad Ali fascinated him greatly and he read almost all Maulana Muhammad Ali's Urdu and English publications.

He was very critical of the Qadian views about the claims and interpretation of the finality of prophethood and he became much closer to the views of the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement. He was a regular subscriber to the weekly publications, *Paigham-i Sulh* and *Light*.

His interest in having deeper knowledge of the Qur'an and *Hadith* prompted him to learn the Arabic language on his own and he obtained a fair amount of command over the language in translating Arabic references from the Qur'an and the *Hadith*. He can speak and write both English and Urdu fluently.

Dr Hami has been writing a series of articles, rejoinders, columns and letters to the editors of daily and weekly newspapers in Pakistan and the UK. While writing in Pakistan he often used a pen name. His writings regarding the Ahmadiyya Movement were published in the weeklies *Paigham-i Sulh* (Lahore) and *Al-Fazal* (UK). Later, when his studies of science, philosophy and sociology increased, he started contributing thought-provoking articles to *Saqafat*, *Hamdard*, *Pakistan Times* and the *Civil & Military Gazette* of Pakistan. His articles on nutritional science and biochemistry, which total about 100, were published in foreign research journals from 1952 to 1985.

Dr Hami has special interest in history, especially of the life of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (*sas*) and the Prophet's companions. He can narrate minute details of events and individuals and their

OSMAN HOSEIN

Eulogy delivered by Kamala (Kamie) Mohammed-Carter on 31st July, 2007

way of life that bring to the listener a live picture of early Islamic history, the circumstances in which a particular event took place or the character of a companion who took part in it.

He is equally adept at writing poetry and short stories. Some of these were published in the well-known literary journals of Pakistan such as the weekly *Qindeel*, the monthly *Maah-i Nau*, *Nairang-i Khayaal* and *Takhleeq*, and various other literary digests of Pakistan. While settled in England his regular columns "Shazraat" in *Al-Fazal* and "Food Advice" (*Ghizaai Mashwarey*) in the daily *Jang* were read with great interest.

While at Lyallpur and later when working as Chief Chemist at the Punjab Vegetable Ghee and General Mills, Lahore, which was owned by the late Sh. Mian Muhammad, who later became President of the Lahore Anjuman, he became close to the Lahore Anjuman and attended annual *jalsas* and other functions of the Anjuman. This led to him having closer relations with Dr. Saeed Ahmad Khan, Mian Fazl-i Ahmad and other prominent members of the Lahore Anjuman.

In 2000 he came to know about the Lahore Ahmadiyya centre at 15 Stanley Avenue in Wembley, which was quite near to his residence at Sudbury Hill, and he became a regular member of the Lahore Anjuman by taking formal initiation. For most the last five years Dr Hami has virtually been the *Imam* at the Wembley centre, delivering Friday sermons, *dars-i-Qur'an* and *-Hadith*. The Centre recently started a computer system called *Virtual Mosque*, through which Friday sermons and other lectures and deliberations are relayed live.

Dr. Muhammad Hami's sermons and talks are full of knowledge and deeper insight into the Holy Qur'an and the life of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (*sas*) and in this respect members are always keen to listen to him.



Assalam-wa-alaikum to our brothers and sisters in Islam, good evening everyone.

My paternal grandfather, Osman Hosein or Papa as he is fondly called, died on Friday 27th July, 2007 at the age of 97 plus years. This death, my dear brothers and sisters, is not only about the passing away of our beloved Papa, grandfather and great-grandfather but sadly the end of a significant generation in our family.

Papa was born in October 1909 in Arena, Freeport to his mother Miriam and father Mohammed Hosein. His grandfather was Dookie Meah, a Muslim who made the initial voyage from India to the shores of the West Indies. He was the second of eleven children and is survived by his only sibling, our dear Shirlin Pupoo.

Papa attended the Freeport Mission Road Government School where the Presbyterian school is today and where his children and many of his grandchildren, nieces and nephews attended.

He was the father of 12 children – nine boys and three girls. Papa survived the death of his wife, Sakina Hosein, or Mama as she was also fondly called, three sons – Rahaman, my father, Uncle Wahab, another son who died whilst in hospital, and a daughter who died at the age of 8 from malaria.

Papa lived not only a pious and virtuous life dedicated to Islam but one that was steeped in a rich history. Indeed, his life was not simply a history of a person but of us, his children, 30 grandchildren and 24 great-grandchildren, and the journeys we have all made influenced his life. It tells us about where we have come from and the journeys we have yet to make. It connects us to happenings and experiences of the past that define who we are today.

Most of Papa's childhood and teenage years he spent working in the cocoa estates which his father owned. It was in this phase of his life that he gained the knowledge of the cocoa plantations and coal-making that would provide his family with a livelihood. During World War I his parents stopped him from going to school to help in the family garden. He remembers this as a time of hardship in his life since the naval blockades which prevented food from reaching the West Indies demanded that families be self-sufficient.

Papa recalled that much of his knowledge of the great olden days was passed on to him by his great-grandmother. In his childhood, his family, who were strong and dedicated to the Islamic way of life, attended the Calcutta mosque, a carrat-covered shed where his exposure to and experience with Islam began to grow.

In 1933, Papa, through an arrangement between his father, the neighbour and a family in Silver Mills, San Juan, was married under Islamic rites to Sakina Hosein, Mama. Also in 1933, Papa's mother died. As a result, he and Mama were left to support and care for Papa's other brothers and sisters. On reflection of Papa's life we also see the contribution of a great mother and caregiver, Mama, became so important to the development of the Hosein or Hoseinee family as we sit here today. Counting

their blessings, Papa and Mama raised their children with the strictest sense of discipline and imbued within them a love and duty toward the life of Muslims.

Papa felt that his life and that of his family would not have been successful without the enormous support and contribution from Mama. Although she was considered to be a housewife, she touched the lives of all she came into contact with. He felt that he had honestly tried to give his children the very best of what he had to give and that allowing them the opportunity to access an education was one of the greatest gifts he could give, given the limited resources at that time.

After working for his father cutting and carting cane, in 1942 Papa began working as a watchman at the Works and Hydraulics Division of the Ministry of Works in Chaguanas. He also operated the gates to the train line of the Princess Margaret Highway.

In 1960, Imam Sacroola Meah of the Freeport Mosque asked Papa to carry on as an apprentice based on his diligent practice and knowledge of the Koran. Iman Sacroola Meah referred people of the *Jamaat* to Papa for information concerning the Koran and codes of living. From Freeport, the *Jamaat* continued to Fireburn. At this time, the concentration on Urdu was giving way to an English-speaking/understanding congregation. Papa was thought to be ideal as an *Imam* since he possessed this English-speaking ability so as to bring the message of Islam to the then younger generation of followers. In addition, Papa, together with Mulvi Ameer Ali, built the St. Joseph Mosque and founded the Trinidad Muslim League.

Papa served 23 years as *Imam* of the Fireburn Mosque, between 1965-1991. He therefore played a vital role in the transition of the Urdu-based Islamic movement to the present day one. In fact, I was one of the many privileged ones to be guided and led in prayers by

Papa both at the mosque and at home. As an *Imam*, Papa, as I recall, was not about ruling his flock as is so prevalent today, but about sharing his knowledge and guiding us with his abundant wisdom.

In the eyes of his children and those of the Arena and Islamic community, Papa was a strict disciplinarian. He insisted that his children and those of his grandchildren, who were fortunate to be living in Arena, have an Islamic education. In fact he would give them lessons every night. I am indeed grateful and fortunate to have been part of those classes. Incidentally, when I was about 10 years old, my mom asked me to deliver a message to our now dearly departed Mama at about seven in the evening. Without thinking, I ran down the road, about five houses down, to do my mother's bidding and also hoping to get piece of Mama's delicious sada roti and butter. Papa was sitting in the kitchen with Mama. He took one look at me and said, "Kamie, follow me to the living room!" in a soft but very stern voice. Of course, Mama smelt the rat by then and said "Leave the child alone." Nevertheless, I respectfully obeyed and Papa proceeded to open the Holy Koran and read the entire chapter on how a Muslim should attire herself. Apparently, the length of the pants I was wearing was not in conformity with the teachings of Islam. At the end of the chapter I was literally trembling. Honestly, I felt as though I had committed a crime and I ran all the way home crying. You can also ask Shameen, one of his nieces; she also suffered a similar fate. I can still see her face, streaming with tears and red with embarrassment as she ran up the stairs to her home. Thereafter we all ensured that generally, and in particular whenever Papa was around, we were appropriately attired, not because we were afraid of him but because of the tremendous respect we all had for him.

Papa lived by the saying, "Early to bed, early to rise." Sometimes in the early morning and evening he could be found

humming verses and *surahs* from the Koran. He also had an outstanding habit of eating just what was given to him, never asking for more, and he never ate between meals. Jamalar, his granddaughter-in-law who, along with Kenny, was instrumental in taking care of Papa's needs later on in his life, always said that no matter what she gave Papa to eat he would never complain about what he was given nor ask for more. In his social life he missed *Jumma* very rarely, and he operated on a strict work ethic of sun-up to sun-down.

Some of his dislikes were that he hated alcohol, never liked to see anyone sleeping after 5:30 a.m. (ask Tantie Shari and Uncle Gaffar, they will tell you). In fact, Uncle Gaffar, one of his sons, told us Papa would visit their rooms every morning to ensure they were up by 5.30, if not, the crook stick would do the talking. Uncle Gaffar said one day he placed pillows in a line on the bed, covered them with a sheet and they ran outside and peeked through the window awaiting Papa's anticipated arrival. Papa demanded that they wake up immediately and getting no response the crook stick was at the pillows. You can well imagine the laughter from outside the window. Papa was not amused.

Papa disliked idling and disliked hearing his children sing songs that were not religious. All those who knew Papa were acutely aware of his strict code of ethics. Again, I fondly recall many years ago some of us – the grandchildren, nieces and nephews – were preparing to attend a dance and we walked past Papa's house (no taxis in Arena then). He hailed out to us asking where we were going. Kazim, one of Papa's nephews, blurted out that we were attending a prayers. Papa said, "Very nice Bata, I'm so happy to hear that." (Very, very naughty Kazim!)

Up to his last days Papa possessed a remarkable memory. Uncle Aleem, who was also very instrumental in caring for

Papa, recounted only two nights ago to me that he took Papa up the hill from here and asked him if he recalled what was planted on those hills some 40 years ago and Papa promptly and accurately replied “cashew trees.”

We all have experienced the kindness and wisdom of Papa, Mr. Osman Hosein, in some form or the other. He had endured many difficult and trying times in his life, times which many of us may not even know existed and may not have the strength to cope with. Papa and Mama were wonderful examples of human beings. We could all learn very valuable lessons from their lives. You would notice I keep mentioning Mama often, but it’s difficult to imagine one without the other. They complimented each other so well.

I have learnt a lot about humility from Papa. He was indeed one of the most humble persons to walk this planet. I also learnt from Papa that it is truly a blessing to have peace of mind. He was fazed by so little but yet he was a very compassionate man. I could see him interact with people of all walks of life and know that he was a truly spiritual man in the way he treated everyone as his equal, as a brother or sister.

All of Papa and Mama’s children live honest and good lives. As a parent, I do realise what an accomplishment that must be in a world that is influenced by so many negatives.

We love our dearly departed Papa and Mama. They have truly stood the test of time and have proven to the world that Allah is Merciful and Beneficent and will bless those who help themselves.

Assalam-wa-alaikum.

EDITOR’S NOTE: Imam Osman Hosein was one of the first persons in Trinidad to belong to the Ahmadiyya Movement Lahore, and remained steadfastly faithful to its principles until the end.

Te-re faz-lon sejaan bus-taan sa-raa hai

*Te-rey faz-lon sejaan bus-taan sa-raa hai,
Te-re noo-ron se dil sham-suzzu-haa hai.
A-gar and-hon ko in-kaa-ro a-baa hai,
Woh kyaa jaa-nen keh is see-nah men kyaa hai.*

*Tu-jhay sab zo-ro qud-rat hai khu-daa-yaa
Tu-jhay paa-yaa har ik mat-lab ko paa-yaa
Har ik ‘aa-shiq ney hai ik but ba-naa-yaa,
Ha-maa-ray dil men yeh dil-bar sa-maa-yaa.*

*Wo-hee aa-raa-me jaan aur dilko bhaa-yaa
Wo-hee jisko ka-hen Rab-bul ba-raa-yaa.
Ho-waa zaa-hir woh mujhpar bil-a-yaa-dee,
Fa-sub-haa-nal la-zee akh-zal a- ‘aa-dee.*

*Mu-jhay us yaar se pay-wand-e jaan hai
Wo-hee jan-nat wo-hee daa-rul a-maan hai.
Ba-yaan Us-kaa ka-roon taa-qat ka-haan hai
Mo-hab-bat kaa to ik dar-yaa ra-waan hai.*

*Yeh kyaa ih-saan Te-re hain me-re Haa-dee,
Fa-sub-haa-nal la-zee akh-zal a- ‘aa-dee.*

It is through Thy favours that my life is like a flourishing orchard,
And through Thy light my heart shines like the mid-day sun.
If (spiritually) blind people refuse and deny the truth,
They are unaware of what is in this heart of mine.

To Thee belongs all might and power, dear Lord,
When I found Thee all my desires were fulfilled.
Every lover builds an idol in his heart,
But Thou art the Beloved that lives in my heart.

Thou art the One Who gives peace to my life and happiness to my heart,
The One Who is called the Lord of the worlds.
Through His favours He revealed Himself to me,
So glory be to Thee, Who routed my enemies.

My life is inseparably bound to that Friend,
He is my Paradise; He is my abode of peace.
I do not have the ability to describe that Beloved,
He is like a flowing river of love.

What a multitude of favours Thou hast bestowed on me, O my Guide,
So glory be to Thee Who routed my enemies.

LIST OF BOOKS AND TRANSLATIONS PUBLISHED

By the grace of Allah the Trust has stepped into the sixth year of its existence. During the past five years, in spite of its limited resources, it has been able to publish more than 23 books and booklets. We would like to thank our Trust members, friends and relatives who have generously contributed towards the publications and the quarterly, *The Message*. A list of the books published by the Ahmadiyya Muslim Literary Trust, Trinidad and Tobago as at January 2007 is as follows:.

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Anwaar-ul-Quran [English translation and commentary of Parts 27 and 30 of the Holy Qur'an rendered by Imam Kalamazad Mohammed]:

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Chapter 52: *At-Tur* (The Mountain)

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Chapter 55: *Ar-Rahman*
(The Beneficent)

Chapter 56: *Al-Waqiah* (The Event)

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