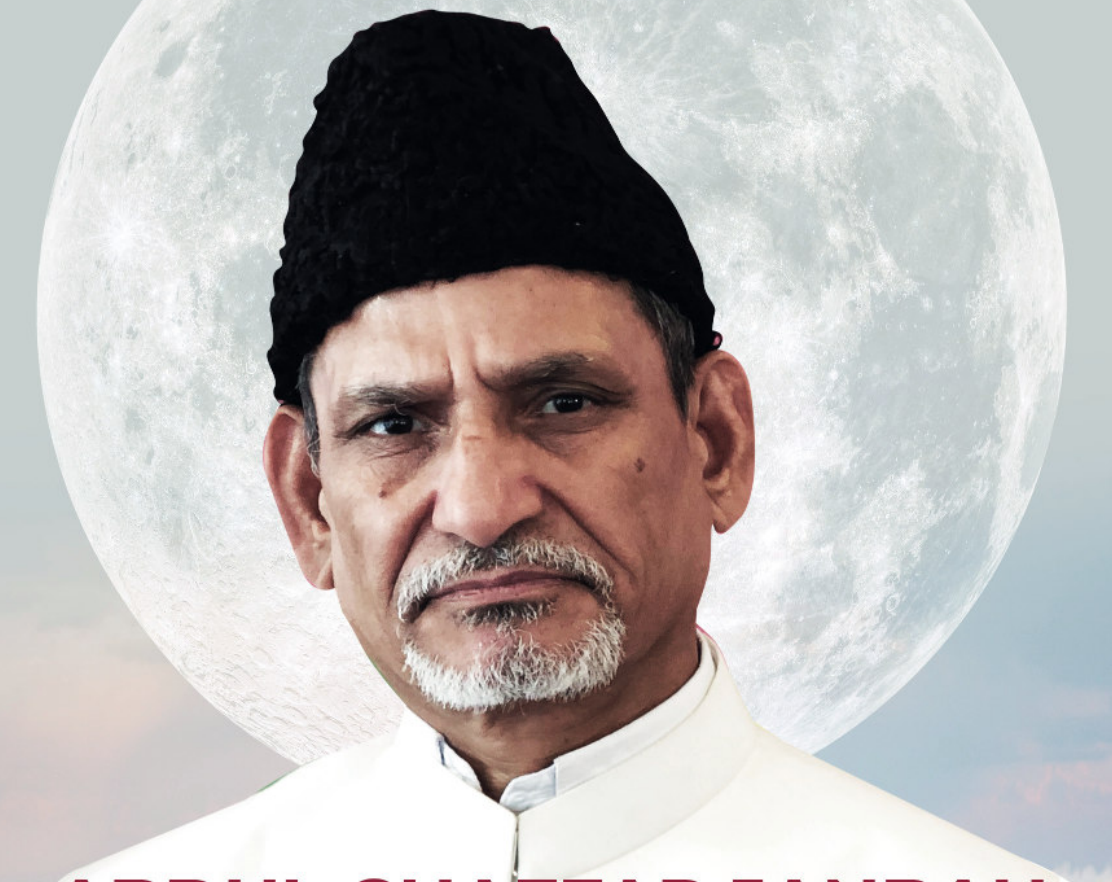


هُوَ الَّذِي أَرْسَلَ رَسُولَهُ بِالْهُدَىٰ وَدِينِ الْحَقِّ لِيُظْهِرَهُ عَلَى الدِّينِ كُلِّهِ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ الْمُشْرِكُونَ

“He, it is, Who has sent His Messenger with the guidance, and the Religion of truth, that He may cause it to prevail over all religions, even if those who associate partners with God, hate it.” [Surah As-Saff 61:10]



ABDUL GHAFAR JANBAH

Promised Zakhi Ghulam & Masih Isa Ibne Maryan

“And then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. But as these things start to occur, raise your selves up and lift your heads up, because you’re deliverance is getting near.” (Luke 21: 27-28)

**VIRTUE IS
GOD**

THE SUPREME ULTIMATE UNIVERSAL TRUTH

عَنِ ابْنِ اَهْرَيْرَازٍ رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللهِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:
وَالَّذِي نَفْسِي بِيَدِهِ لَيُوشِكُنَّ اَنْ يَنْزِلَ فِيكُمْ ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ حَكِيماً
عَدْلًا فِيْكَسِرُ الصَّلِيْبَ وَيَقْتُلُ الْخَنَازِيْرَ وَيَضَعُ الْحَرْبَ وَيُفِيْضُ السَّالَ حَتَّى
لَا يَقْبَلَهُ اَحَدٌ حَتَّى تَكُوْنَ السَّجْدَةُ الْوَاحِدَةُ خَيْرًا مِنْ الدُّنْيَا وَمَا فِيْهَا ثُمَّ
يَقُوْلُ اَبُوْ هُرَيْرَةَ وَاَقْرَؤْا اِنْ شِئْتُمْ وَاِنْ مِّنْ اَهْلٍ اَلِكْتَبِ اِلَّا لَيُؤْمِنَنَّ بِه
قَبْلَ مَوْتِهِ وَيَوْمَ الْقِيَمَةِ يَكُوْنُ عَلَيْهِمْ شَهِيْدًا. (النساء: 159) حديقۃ الصالحين 776

صحيح البخاري كتاب احاديث الانبياء باب نزول عيسى ابن مريم عليهما السلام

Narrated Abu Huraira:

Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said, "By Him in Whose Hands is my soul, surely (Jesus) the Son of Mary will soon descend amongst you and will judge mankind justly (as a Just Ruler); He will break the Cross (What the breaking of the cross means is that in this age the God of heaven and earth will disclose a hidden reality, whereby the whole structure of the cross will collapse at one stroke), and kill the swine the (slaughter of swine does not refer to the slaughter of people or of pigs, but it pertains to ill-mannered, contemptible habits such as lying persistently, which is tantamount to swallowing filth. Just as a dead pig can not consume filth); and He will end the fighting, (to return the swords back into their scabbards). Wealth will become so abundant that no one will accept it, and a single prostration (in prayer) will be better than this world and everything in it." Abu Huraira added "If you wish, you can recite (this verse of the Holy Book): -- 'And there is none Of the people of the Scriptures but must believe in him (i.e Jesus as an Apostle of Allah and a human being) before his death. And on the Day of Judgment He will be a witness against them." (4:159)

Narrated by al-Bukhaari (49) Chapter: The advent (descent) of 'Isa (Jesus), son of Maryam (Mary) alayhis-salam.



Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmadas

[1835-1908]

Founder of Jama'at-e-Ahmadiyya

The Promised Imam Mahdi & Masih

"O all ye who dwell upon the earth, and O all human souls that are in the east or in the west, I announce to you emphatically that the true reality in the earth is Islam alone, and the True God is the God Who is described in the Qur'an, and the Prophet who has everlasting spiritual life and who is seated on the throne of glory and holiness, is Muhammad, the chosen one(sa). The proof of his spiritual life and holy majesty is that by following him and loving him we become recipients of the Holy Spirit and are favoured with the bounty of converse with God and witness heavenly signs."

[Tiryauqul Quloob, Now printed in Ruhani Khazain (London, 1984), Vol. 15, p.7]

“وَلَا يُحِيطُونَ بِشَيْءٍ مِّنْ عِلْمِهِ إِلَّا بِمَا شَاءَ...”

“And they encompass nothing of His
Knowledge except what He pleases.”

(Surah Al-Baqarah 2:256)

Virtue is God

Divine Theory

Or

Supreme Ultimate Universal Theory

Or

Mother of Theories

Or

The Seal of Theories

Or

The Reality of the Prophecy of Musleh Maoud

revealed on 20th February 1886

چلہ ہوشیار پور میں نازل ہونیوالی ۲۰ فروری ۱۸۸۶ء کی الہامی

پیشگوئی موعودؑ کی غلام مسیح الزماں یا مصلح موعودؑ کی حقیقت

عَنْ أَنَسٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ مَنْ أَدْرَكَ مِنْكُمْ عَيْسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ فَلْيَقْرَأْهُ مِنِّي السَّلَامُ - (دُرِّ مَنْشُور صفحہ ۲۴۵ ج ۲ حلیقۃ الصالحین، صفحہ ۳۹۹)

Narrated Hadhrat Anas ^{ra}:

Hadhrat Anas ^{ra} states that the Holy Prophet ^{saw} related that whoever has the good fortune of meeting Isa Ibne Maryam should convey my greetings to him on my behalf. [Durre - Mansoor, page. 445/2j] [Hadiqat al-Salihin, P.399]

عَنْ جَعْفَرٍ عَنْ أَبِيهِ عَنْ جَدِّهِ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ ﷺ أَبَشِّرُوا بِأَبَشِرُوا... كَيْفَ تَهْلِكُ أُمَّةٌ أَنَا أَوَّلُهَا وَالْآخِرَةُ وَسُطُهَا وَالْمَسِيحُ أَخْرُهَا وَلَكِنْ بَيْنَ ذَلِكَ فَيْجُ أَعُوْجُ لَيْسُوا مِنِّي وَالْآخِرَةُ مِنْهُمْ - رَوَاهُ زَيْدٌ - (مشکوٰۃ شریف جلد ۳ صفحہ ۲۹۳)

Narrated Hazrat Ja'afar ^{ra}:

Hazrat Ja'afar ^{ra} narrates, through his father, and he, via his grandfather (Hazrat Imam Hussain ^{ra}), that Holy Prophet ^{saw} said: Be happy! Be happy! That Ummah will never perish which has me in the beginning, Mehdi in between and Messiah at the end. But there is a crooked Jama' at in between them; that has no link with me and I have no link with them. (Mishkat Sharif, vol. 3, pp. 293)

اس مسیح کو بھی یاد رکھو جو اس عاجز کی ذریت میں سے ہے جس کا نام ابن مریم بھی رکھا گیا ہے کیونکہ اس عاجز کو براہین میں مریم کے نام سے بھی پکارا ہے۔ روحانی خزائن جلد 3 صفحہ نمبر 318

Also remember this Messiah, (son of Mary) who is from my followers, who is also named Ibne Maryam (son of Mary) because this humble person is also called by the name of Maryam (Mary) in the Braheen. (Rohani Khazain, vol. 3, pp. 318)

زدر گاہِ خدا مردے بصد اعزاز مے آید
مبارک بادت اے مریم کہ عیسیٰ باز مے آید

A man comes from the presence of God with a hundred honours
Felicitations to you, O Mary, that Jesus has come back again

Tadhkirah p.1104 [Letter of Pir Sirajul-Haqq Nu'mani -ra, p .6; al-Bushra, p. 57]

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حیاتِ جاوداں کی مُنتہا ہے
خُدا نیکی ہے اور نیکی خُدا ہے
کہا سُقراط نے ہے علم نیکی
کھُلا اِس دور میں "نیکی خدا ہے"
میری عقل و فہم سے ماوراء ہے
وہ لامحدود نُقطہ نُور کا ہے
ہے لازم دوستوں فِکرو تدبیر
اِسی سے علم کا رَوزن کھُلا ہے

Life is the conclusion of Eternity
God is Virtue and Virtue is God
Socrates stated, "Virtue is Knowledge"
Unfolded in this Era "Virtue is God"
It is beyond my comprehension
It is an infinite point of light
It is essential to think, friends
This is the source of knowledge

Arshi Malik



Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as} [1835–1908]

Founder of Jama'at-e-Ahmadiyya

The Promised Imam Mahdi & Masih^{as}

هُوَ الَّذِي أَرْسَلَ رَسُولَهُ بِالْهُدَىٰ وَدِينِ الْحَقِّ لِيُظْهِرَهُ عَلَى الدِّينِ كُلِّهِ (الصف: ١٠)

This verse contains the prophecy about Hadhrat Masih in respect of the secular and governmental affairs and the promise which has been made about the complete supremacy of the faith of Islam. That supremacy would be manifested through the Messiah. And when Hadhrat Masih [Messiah], may peace be upon him, would come for the second time into this world, then the religion of Islam would spread over the entire expanse of the world at his hands.¹

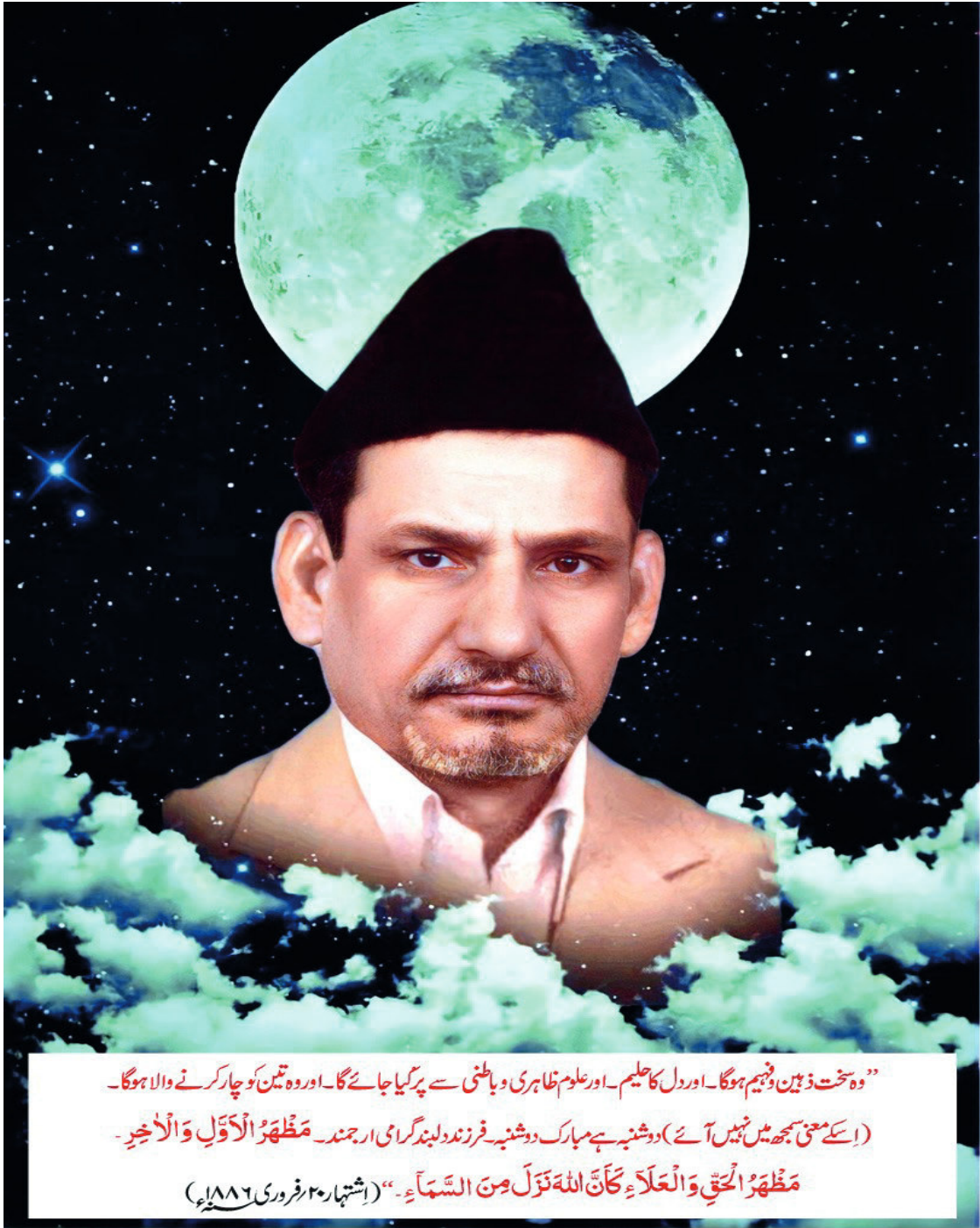
¹ Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as}, Roohani Khazain, (Urdu), Vol 1, pp. 593. Barahin-e-Ahmadiyya – part IV First English translation published in the UK, (Islam International Publications Ltd., Tilford, Surrey GU 10 2AQ UK, 2016), p. 374.



*To
Almighty God
who made me aware
of “**The Essence of Virtue**”*

“My followers will excel so much in knowledge and insight that they will confound all others with the light of their truth and their reasoning and their signs. Every people shall drink of this fountain and this community will spread with great force and will flourish till it encompasses the whole earth. There will be many obstructions and many trials but God will remove all of them and will fulfil His promise ... Then, O ye who hear, remember all this and make secure these prophecies in your boxes, for this is the Word of God which shall one day be fulfilled.”

[Tajalliyyat-e-Ilahiyyah, pp21-22, first edition, Ruhani Khaza'in, Vol. 20, p. 409]



Abdul Ghaffar Janbah

“He will be extremely intelligent and perceptive and will be meek of heart and will be filled with manifest and latent knowledge. He will convert 3 into 4 (of this the meaning is not clear). [Persian] It is Monday a blessed Monday. Son, delight of the heart high ranking noble; [Arabic] a manifestation of the First and the Last, a Manifestation of the Truth and the Supreme; as if Allah has descended from heaven.”

[Revealed Prophecy of Mohammadi Maryam Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as}]

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Introduction

Virtue is God is a philosophical treatise of Abdul Ghaffar Janbah. This book contains three topics: The Essence of Virtue, Virtue is Knowledge and Virtue is God. The layout is such that it leads to the undeniable conclusion that – Virtue is God. The author has established that Muslims and their philosophers have studied the Holy Qur'an in the light of Greek philosophy, although it is a complete and perfect guidance for all of Mankind and contains within it every aspect of welfare. It is necessary to study the classic philosophies in the light of the Holy Qur'an and reveal the hidden gems of wisdom and philosophy contained within its pages.

The author discusses different kinds of philosophies, different schools of thought and their concerns. Moreover, he addresses the most subtle and difficult question, 'What is Virtue?'. In this regard he provides opinions of ancient and non-Muslim philosophers. He discusses them in his own style and proves that Virtue is an 'all-comprehending light', infinite and is Allah.

What the author discusses and how he proves that 'Virtue is God' is unparalleled. This treatise is primarily for the enlightened and may be an arduous journey for those disinclined towards metaphysics or the subtle sciences, yet remain an adherent of Virtue and a practising Muslim.

The enlightened may protest that their propositions and convictions about Virtue are silent. However, this treatise is directed to win the favours of Allah and will leave a lasting impression on the reader and invariably direct their prayers in favour of the author.

Nazir Haqq
Daily Newspaper 'Pakistan'
Sunday Magazine-Zindagi
22nd–28th August 2004

Preface

It is absolutely true and regretful that Muslim scholars have studied the Holy Qur'an in the light of Greek philosophy. Although the Holy Qur'an is the complete guidance from Allah for the whole of Mankind, it would be more appropriate to study the classic Greco-Roman philosophies in the light of the Holy Qur'an in order to acquire pearls of knowledge and wisdom from it. Professor Naeem Ahmad writes:

“Although Muslim contribution in Chemistry, Medicine, Geography and Mathematics gave new directions of thought and research, in Philosophy it did not establish any new tradition. Muslim philosophical thought is noticed in three disciplines/studies:

- A) Theology
- B) Sufism
- C) Rationalism

A) **Theology** – The beginning of Philosophic thought in Muslims is traced in (the realm of) Divinity and Theology. In this regard there are two schools of thought viz. ‘Mutazilah’ and ‘Ashairah’. Mutazilah regard Revelation and Reason as two sources of Knowledge and try to reconcile them both. If there is contradiction in Revelation and Rationalism, Mutazilah prefer to interpret it in the light of Reason. This school of thought considers the Universe as a Creation. Existence is only an attribute which may or may not exist. Matter assuming different shape and annihilation is the process of creation (coming into being and dying). God is the Eternal Being and human qualities such as Mercy, Sympathy, Rationalism etc. cannot be attributed to Him. God is all-knowing and his knowledge emanates from his own-self. He, like man, does not acquire knowledge from instincts or environs as these factors would limit His absolute powers. Mutazilah maintain that God cannot desire evil, nor can he create it. But this is against Reason and Rationalism. To them (Mutazilah school of thought) Man is free in his actions. Justice

is an absolute principle in the Universe, a principle which God himself follows. Thus, they are believing in the mechanical system of reward and punishment wherein there is no scope of intercession and freedom from sins. Renowned personalities among this school of thought are Wasil bin Atta, Nizam, Hafiz and Ikhwan-us-Safa.

Theologian's second school of thought is 'Ashairah' whose founder is Al-Ashari. This school was founded in Iraq. Its followers are called 'Ashairah'. Their main doctrines are as follows:

- a) They regard revelation and inspiration as the only source of knowledge. They use Reason in its support and existence.
- b) They performed a thorough study of Greek philosophy in order to find its rejection from its source.
- c) They do not regard Divine Attributes of God a part of His Being as they had to disbelieve in the attributes as God's being. In such a state God does not remain simple and indivisible.
- d) They regard the Holy Qur'an as the word of God which is an attribute of God. The Holy Qur'an, to them, is uncreated and like other attributes of God is initial and eternal.
- e) They believe that God is invisible, to the eyes.
- f) They define human limits in an alternative way and solve the question of Destiny in a new perspective.
- g) They are of the view that the universe is the combination of innumerable atoms incapable of convertibility or changes. God creates new atoms as the old ones are annihilated.

Some renowned Ashari philosophers are:

- i) Al-Ashari (d.930–36)
- ii) Abu Bakr Baqlani (d.1190)
- iii) Imam-ul-Harmain (d.1110)
- iv) Shehrastani (d.1190)
- v) Al-Razi (d.1222)
- vi) Al-Ghazali (d.1111)

Al-Ghazali is a sort of bridge between theologians and mystics. His thinking is important on account of various aspects, but here it cannot be treated due to shortage of space.

B) **Sufism** – (Mysticism) has no definite place of its origin. This is a universal trend founded in various religions and nations. The history of Muslim philosophy is incomplete without a mention of mysticism. As regards to their purpose and end goal there is no difference between philosophy and mysticism. Both principles commune with Absolute Reality, but in practice they are different. Philosophy moves forward with the clutches of reason, whilst mysticism takes refuge in the inner-self and love of God. Muslim mystics may be divided into two classes.

- a) Wahdatul Wajud (Unity of Existence) – Hold the premise that the Universe is God in Being.
- b) Wahdatul Shahud (Unity of Appearance) – say that God is in the Universe and beyond it too.

However, all mystics agree that the Absolute Reality is unchangeable, indivisible and beyond understanding. When this Absolute Reality reflects itself on the attributal plane, i.e. appears within the dimensions of Space and Time, it becomes the Universe. Mystics agree that the Way to God (Jada-I-Triqat) has various aspects to it – piety, dependence on Allah, Remembrance, complete obedience of mentor and communion with God.

Eminent mystics prominent in history include:

- i) Hadhrat Ali (d.660)
- ii) Maroof Karkhi (d.821)
- iii) Rabia Basri (d.717–801)
- iv) Bayazid Bastami (d.874)
- v) Mansoor Hallaj (d.921)
- vi) Abdul Qadir Jeelani (d.1166)
- vii) Ibn-ul-Arabi (d.1240)
- viii) Ali Hajwery (d.1072)
- ix) Moeen-ud-Din Chishti (d.1234)

- x) Nizam-uddin Aulya (d.1324)
- xi) Ahmad Sarhandi (d.1664)

Although Islamic philosophy has been under the influence of Buddhism, Christianity and Iranian philosophy, its primary persuasion is that of Greek philosophy, particularly Neoplatonism.

C) Rationalism – The Third group of the Muslim thinkers is that of Rationalists. They may be rightly called Philosophers; they believe that both revelation and Reason are the fountainhead of knowledge. For this reason, their characteristics have been to reconcile religion and philosophy. They thoroughly study Greek philosophy and knowledge. They were not only philosophers but also scientists. They also had working knowledge of Chemistry, Mathematics, Astronomy, and other sciences. They were more well-versed in these sciences than philosophy itself. They were very proficient in these subjects. Some of these Muslim philosophers are mentioned below:

- i) Al-Kandi (d. 873)
- ii) Farabi (d 950)
- iii) Ibn-i-Maskoya (d. 1030)
- iv) Avicenna (d. 1037)
- v) Ibn-i-Haitham (d. 1039)
- vi) Ibn-i-Baja (d. 1138)
- vii) Ibn-i-Tufail (d. 1185)
- viii) Ibn-i-Rushd (d. 1198)

Al-Kandi, Farabi and Ibn-i-Sina (Avicenna) reconciled Muslim beliefs with the thoughts of Plato and Aristotle. Although Farabi is greatly influenced by Aristotle's philosophy, Avicenna is inclined to Neoplatonism. These philosophers dredged Greek philosophy from the obsolete Greek culture and revived it. By their pre-occupation they precipitated the spread of Greek philosophy in the West, there are however traces of new thoughts in their philosophy. But this philosophy is an attempt to reconcile Greek philosophy with Islamic thought. They regarded Plato, Aristotle and Plotinus as authorities, thereby making Muslim philosophy apologetic.

This perspective of Muslim philosophy perseveres and encroaches into the Modern Age. Religious beliefs are made to accord with scientific theories. This innovation maligns reason as the greatest defect in this viewpoint is that religion ought not to be made subservient to scientific theories permanently (which are ever-changing) as this makes religious beliefs ever-changing with the constant modifications to scientific theories.

No thinker has tried to propound such philosophical thought which has purely Islamic texture. Chinese and Hindu philosophies are indigenous ones. Though they compare them with other philosophies but do not found their own philosophies on them. Muslim thinkers ought to have brought to light the Qur'anic metaphysics, morality, politics, logic and the theory of knowledge without the influence of any other philosophy.”²

The concept of Virtue (arete) is very important in the domain of knowledge. Although this term has been interpreted differently, yet we do not find upon removing all doubts, satisfaction in the heart and mind. My thesis is composed of four chapters. The first chapter deals with ‘the essence of Virtue’. Logically the subject of Virtue has been explained under different topics. With respect to Socrates, a Columbian born and well-informed American scholar, Professor Luis E. Navia in his book *Socrates, The Man and His Philosophy* writes:

“About whom, in a sense, we know a great deal, but about whom, in another sense, we know hardly anything at all.”³

Socratic Theory of Knowledge (Virtue is Knowledge) is discussed in the second chapter. A well-known Pakistani poet Saifuddin Saif says:

سیف انداز بیاں رنگ بدل دیتا ہے
ورنہ دنیا میں کوئی بات نئی بات نہیں

It's the style of expression that changes the nature of the subject otherwise there is nothing new in the world.

2 History of Greek Philosophy (Urdu) by Naeem Ahmad (Zameema p.20-23) 1981 Markazi Kutab Khana Lahore.

3 Luis E. Navia, Socrates, The Man and His Philosophy (University Press of America, 1985), P. 1.

I have done the same and thus the Socratic Concept of Knowledge has been explained and treated in a different and novel way. Turning away from the traditional viewpoint, it has been altogether regenerated. Divine Prophets and Messengers have extraordinary characteristics and eccentricities. The Holy Qur'an acknowledges and fully describes these characteristics about the various Prophets it mentions. In the light of these characteristics, I have fully proven that Socrates was not only a dry thinker but also a Prophet and a Messenger for the people of Athens. Sources of knowledge and degrees of human understanding have been mentioned in the third chapter. Moreover, this chapter, 'Concept of Sciences', discusses the Nature and Scope of different sciences while under the heading 'Divine Covenant', the object of human life has been explained. In the last chapter, Supreme Ultimate Universal concept 'Virtue is God' has been verified with Divine script. It should be kept in mind that the truth is simple, naive and incontrovertible. It does not need the glamour of words for its expression, for beauty and reality need no ornaments. In order to comprehend it, righteousness is needed and not just a mere scholarly mind. This essay is addressed to thinkers, and to interested members of the general reading public. So as Professor Naeem Ahmad has said, no Muslim thinker has ever tried to propound such philosophic thought which has pure Islamic texture. After reading this treatise, it is the responsibility of the reader to decide how far the question of Professor Naeem Ahmad has been answered.

اندازِ بیاں گرچہ بہت شوخ نہیں ہے
شاید کہ اُتر جائے ترے دل میں مری بات

Although the style of expression is not very flamboyant; Perhaps my words will make an impression on your heart.

یا وسعتِ افلاک میں تکبیر مسلسل!
یا خاک کے آغوش میں تسبیح و مناجات!

Or continuous Takbir in the vastness of the heavens; Or rosary and prayers amongst ashes.

وہ مذہبِ مردانِ خود آگاہ و خدا مست!
یہ مذہبِ ملا و جمادات و نباتات!

*So, worship God's intoxicated humans; Therefore worship the priest, dead stone and mindless lumps.*⁴

I am thankful to my wife Shagufta Ghaffar Janbah and children (Professor Dr Zishan Ahmad Ghaffar Janbah, CA Ahmad Sher Ghaffar Janbah, Dr Kashif Ahmad Ghaffar Janbah) and my nephew Mohammad Latif Janbah, and moreover to those friends who assisted me in any way during the writing and publishing of this treatise. I am also thankful to the members of Jamaat Ahmadiyya Islah Pasand – JAIP (The Ahmadiyya Reform Movement) – as a whole and especially Zahoor Ahmed, Mansoor Ahmed, Shoaib Arshad, Dr Mansoor Arshad, Tariq Chohan, Syed Aqeel Zakria and Mubashir Ahmad Shahid. I pray for their success and welfare in this world and in the next world.

Abdul Ghaffar Janbah

Promised Zaki Ghulam and

Promised Mohammadi Masih Isa Ibn Maryam

Promised Mujaddid 15th century (Hijri)

Kiel, Germany, February 2023

4 Kulliyat e Iqbal, Iqbal academy Pakistan Lahore, (Urdu), (National Book Foundation Islam Abad, 1990) p. 403, Bal-e-Jibril, (Urdu), (A stanza) p. 79.

CHAPTER ONE

THE ESSENCE OF VIRTUE

*How convenient the people would have been
had they known that their success lies in Virtue.
[Hadhrat Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him)]*

1. What is ‘Virtue’ (arete)?

Let it be known first that what the term ‘*arete*’ has been understood up until now. It is an ancient Greek term meaning **Excellence** or **Virtue**. The ‘*arete*’ of something is the highest quality state it can reach. Using ‘*arete*’ as a principle for living life means that you are focused on the quality of everything you do and experience. Moreover, it is said that no English word or phrase captures the exact meaning of ‘*arete*’. The nearest equivalents are ‘excellence’ and ‘virtue’. But there is something more to ‘*arete*’ which cannot be expressed in words. There is something of the Divine in it. Perhaps the only true way to understand ‘*arete*’ is to consider a few examples of excellence and to contemplate what it is they share. What does it mean when we say of an action, an artistic work, or some flawless athletic manoeuvre that it is excellent? To behold what is excellent in whatever form, brings us the same joy. We perform an action with excellence and declare ‘perfect!’. In the moment of excellence, something transcends the mundane and touches the Ideal.

In some contexts, ‘*arete*’ is unequivocally affiliated with human knowledge, where the aphorisms ‘Virtue is Knowledge’ and ‘*Arete* is Knowledge’ are synonymous. The inimitable human potential is knowledge, and all other human abilities are derived from this fundamental proficiency. If ‘*arete*’ is knowledge and study, the highest human knowledge is knowledge about knowledge itself. From this perspective, the theoretical study of human knowledge, which Aristotle called “contemplation”, is the highest human ability and happiness. The origin of the word is the same as *aristos*, the word which shows unparalleled mastery and superiority, and *aristos* was invariably used in the plural to denote the ‘aristocracy’. To say that ‘*arete*’ has a common definition of excellence or fulfilment may be an overstatement simply because it is very difficult to determine ‘*arete*’, not to mention the fitting ways to endeavour attaining it.

Besides Plato and Xenophon, Socrates also had other disciples, e.g. Antisthenes, Aristippus and Euclid. These three disciples established their

own schools of thought. But they all agreed upon this point that ‘virtue’ is the sole objective of life. Moreover, Antisthenes believed that virtue can be taught and the ‘One’. Aristippus also agreed that virtue is, at least formally, the sole objective of life. Euclid believed that if virtue is knowledge, then it can only be the knowledge of Being. So far as Socratic concept ‘Virtue is Knowledge’ is concerned then Aristotle confirms it in his book *Magna Moralia* 1183b and 1198a, but he also states that this is an erroneous statement. Though the fact is that the Socratic statement is absolutely right and Aristotle was by himself wrong conceiving it erroneous.

Remember that the utmost and meaningful term virtue (*arete*) is not new in philosophy and religion but as antiquated as they are themselves. Every Divine Messenger had been taught about the essence of ‘virtue’. He gave the lesson and laid great emphasis on it, informing that virtue is the sole purpose of our lives and our Success lies in achieving it. But how can we attain it? Its accomplishment lies in its recognition and understanding. So far as traditional thought is concerned, it is replete with the descriptions of virtue but we do not have any satisfactory explanations about its meaning. A true and virtuous figure, Socrates was a far cry from the whole series of thinkers in history. Although very simple, Socratic philosophy is very important and fertile. In his well-known paradox, he has taught that ‘virtue is Knowledge’. But in his treatise, he has not defined virtue, rather identified it with Knowledge. By doing so, no doubt, Socrates had made those with wisdom aware of its true meaning. Meno, a wealthy and handsome young man (who resided in Thessaly) asks Socrates whether virtue can be taught? And so ‘Meno’, the dialogue of Plato starts with the same question. Meno questions Socrates:

“Can you tell me, Socrates – is virtue something that can be taught? Or does it come by practice? Or is it neither teaching nor practice that gives it to a man but natural aptitude or something else?”⁵

5 Plato: Protagoras and Meno, translated by W.K.C. Guthrie, 1956, 70a.

Replying to Meno's question, Socrates says:

“You must think I am singularly fortunate, to know whether virtue can be taught or how it is acquired. That fact is that far from knowing whether it can be taught, I have no idea what virtue itself is. That is my own case. I share the poverty of my fellow countrymen in this respect, and confess to my shame that I have no knowledge about virtue at all. And how can I know a property of something when I don't even know what it is?”⁶

It is quite obvious from the reply of Socrates that he had no knowledge of virtue at all. After reviewing 'Meno' it comes to mind that he thinks that virtue is at least knowledge. Now the question is that if he thinks about virtue that it is knowledge; even then he did not define it. What is virtue? This question, *prima facie* might not be a difficult one to answer, however, upon careful observation and closer scrutiny, we find it a most arduous one. When we become aware of the difficulties and obstacles in the way of an honest and definitive answer, we become perplexed about the study of philosophy for this is merely the attempt to answer such ultimate and intricate questions, not carelessly and dogmatically as we do in daily life, but critically after studying all that makes such questions perplexing.

Before replying to the question, let me express how the term 'Virtue' has been understood up until now. It has been conceived entirely as an ethical term and therefore used in the sense of 'virtuous action' which is quite comprehensive yet illogical. From this exposition one should not hold the opinion that I deny its ethical sense, but what I mean is that it is not merely an absolute ethical term. Perhaps one concludes that as the term has been used in this sense since time immemorial, why should it be disputed? But it is not so. Socratic doctrine is that 'Virtue is Knowledge.' In this principle, Socrates did not use it in the sense of virtuous action. Many thinkers and historians of thought have taken it as an entirely ethical term, yet in doing so remain dissatisfied. They have taken it as a conundrum and sought to discover its true meaning and scrutinised the

6 Ibid., 71 ab.

context in which Socrates had used it. Walter Terence Stace (1886–1967), a British philosopher and former professor of the Philosophy Department at Princeton University, states about the Socratic term ‘virtue’:

“But as, for Socrates, the sole condition of virtue is knowledge, and as knowledge is just what can be imparted by teaching, it followed that virtue must be teachable. The only difficulty is to find the teacher, to find someone who knows the concept of virtue. What the concept of virtue is that is, thought Socrates, the precious piece of knowledge, which no philosopher has ever discovered and which, if it were only discovered, could at once be imparted by teaching, where upon men would at once become virtuous.”⁷

It must be noted that the status of Socrates is the acme for wisdom for every school of thought. His doctrine teaches us that both virtue and knowledge are one and the same. Yet even with this, he did not leave us in the dark. He determined the right direction for philosophy, the proper way to reach the truth. One matter is quite evident that the term ‘Virtue’ has certainly been used in one sense or another, either for virtuous action or by some other meaning.

The question whether it has been used for mere virtuous action or for some other meaning can be resolved under careful analysis of the maxim. The Socratic doctrine negates its use for virtuous action by itself. How can we understand this? The problem is simple and credulous but needs appropriate attention. Virtuous action simply belongs to human activity. If by human virtuous action Socrates meant knowledge, then why aren’t all other creative actions knowledge? We see that when we take the term ‘virtue’ in the sense of virtuous action, then this whole doctrine becomes meaningless. Moreover, Socrates was not unaware of the difference between ‘Virtue’ and ‘virtuous action’.

⁷ W. T. Stace, *A Critical History of Greek Philosophy* (Macmillan and Co., Limited St. Martin’s Street, London, 1920), p. 149.

“Socrates believed that a man cannot act rightly, unless he first knows what is right, unless, in fact, he knows the concept of right.”⁸

In the above quote, it has been stated that Socrates had not taken the term ‘Virtue’ in the sense of virtuous action, moreover he was interested in knowing the concept of ‘virtue’. Socrates was considered the smartest man of his era, and at the least it would not be expected of him to have used the term ‘Virtue’ in the sense of ‘virtuous action’. He was not your average person rather the wisest man of his time. Just as Plato finishes his dialogue ‘Phaedo’ with such words:

“Such was the end of our comrade, Echecrates, a man who, we would say, was of all those we have known the best, and also the wisest and the most upright.”⁹

Both Plato and Xenophon wrote an apology concerning the death of Socrates. Xenophon finishes his apology with such words. He says:

“As for myself, knowing as I do the man’s wisdom and nobility of character, it is impossible for me to forget him or to remember without praising him. And if anyone who seeks virtue has met with any more beneficial companion than Socrates, I consider him worthy of being called the most blessed of all.”¹⁰

The enlightened and dignified character Socrates cannot be expected to have used the term ‘virtue’ in the sense of ‘virtuous action’. To confine the term within mere ethical spheres is unequivocally unjust and uninviting. Truly, ‘virtue’ is some philosophical truth and there was need of becoming aware of its meaning. Socrates himself was silent about the nature of the term. His only guidance is latent in his identification of ‘Virtue’ with ‘Knowledge’. In order to grasp its real meaning, let us first isolate our minds from its traditional ethical sphere and consider it philosophically.

8 Ibid., p. 147.

9 Plato: Complete Works Edited by John M. Cooper, 1997, (Phaedo 118a).

10 Socrates’ defence to the Jury by Xenophon, 34.

Suppose there is a man (A) who has the ability to speak. Will such a man cease to speak? Rationally, he will not cease to do so; whenever he wishes to speak, he will do so. Further, when such a man speaks, we call his speaking, his speaking action. By contrast, if there is another man (B) who is mute by birth, then in this case his muteness is his action. Let us take another example, I am writing and this is my writing action. You are reading and this is your reading action.

Furthermore, take my thinking; what I have to write is again my thinking action. Similarly, what you have to read is again your thinking action. In this regard we can justifiably conclude that every type of creation found in the universe, even the universe itself, is in a dynamic or active state. It is another matter of consideration that some actions of creation we are aware of whilst others we are not. With this rational conclusion, another question poses itself, are all actions objective or can there possibly be some 'objectless' action?

It is acknowledged that all actions are always objective. Every action has an object. The term 'object' has been taken in the sense of that which makes an action possible. It is noted that every action is always concerned with some object. It is also evoked that an object is often related with the accusative, but it is also possible that an object does not relate with any accusative. Without object, some action is not only meaningless but also impossible. For example, I am writing. Can my writing action be possible without any object? No, rather it indicates that certainly writing action has its specific object and this is its 'objective writing'. It can be the letter, the book or something else. If 'objective writing' does not exist then one's writing action also can't exist. Practically, it is only 'objective writing' that makes one's writing action possible. Likewise, your reading action also has its specific object, i.e. some 'objective reading'. Since reading action becomes possible only because of some 'objective reading', therefore, without it, one's reading action becomes impossible and meaningless.

For the explanation of our hypothesis, let us take some other examples. Suppose there is a man who says that he is 'looking'. For his 'looking' action, conscience automatically infers about the existence of some

‘objective look’. This ‘objective look’ may be the garden, the moon, etc. It will be meaningless and impossible, if someone claims that he is looking but without some ‘objective look’. All this is due to the fact that action and object are counterparts and always remain together. We cannot deny their union, the presence of one justifies the presence of the other.

Suppose there is another man who is drinking. As an action is impossible without its object, therefore his drinking action also requires some ‘objective drink’, which may be water, milk or some other ‘objective drink’. So, one’s drinking action informs us about the existence of some ‘objective drink’. Again, take the example of breathing. Breathing as an action also depends upon some ‘objective breath’, i.e. air. The presence of breathing action justifies the presence of some ‘objective breath’, or air. Sleeping action also requires some ‘objective sleep’, i.e. sleep. We see those objects like book, garden, water can be seen but air is not visible, but is only felt. So far as sleep is concerned neither it can be seen nor is it felt. Socrates presents in his defence this kind of reasoning before a jury in his apology. Plato states:

*“Does any man, Meletus, believe in human activities who does not believe in humans? Make him answer, and not again and again create a disturbance. Does any man who does not believe in horses believe in horsemen’s activities? Or in flute-playing activities but not in flute-players? No, my good sir, no man could. If you are not willing to answer, I will tell you and these men. Does any man believe in spiritual activities who does not believe in spirits? – No one. Thank you for answering, if reluctantly, when these gentlemen made you. Now you say that I believe in spiritual things according to what you say, and to this you have sworn in your disposition. But if I believe in spiritual things I must quite inevitably believe in spirits. Is this not so? It is indeed. I shall assume that you agree, as you do not answer. Do we not believe spirits to be either gods or the children of gods? Yes, or no? – of course.”*¹¹

¹¹ Plato, *op. cit.*, (Apology 27 bcd).

In the light of these examples, we see that all actions exist only because of their objects and pertains to its respective object. The existence of one logically proves the existence of the other. Many examples of actions have been given until now. Apparently, it seems quite strange but one should keep in mind that in fact many truths have been hidden in these actions. No doubt, Socratic method of reasoning was also similar to this.

“His method of forming concepts was by induction. He would take common examples of actions which are universally admitted to be prudent, and would attempt to find the quality which they all have in common, and by virtue of which they are all classed together, and so form the concept of prudence. Then he would bring up fresh examples, and see whether they agreed with the concept so formed. If not, the concept might have to be corrected in the light of the new examples.”¹²

After knowing that the existence of all actions depends upon the existence of their objects, let us move towards another question. Why are actions performed? The simple answer is that we perform actions because of our needs. For example, we breathe because of our need and this need also justifies the existence of some object. In case of breathing our need of breathing is directly related with ‘objective breath’ or air. Without the existence of ‘objective breath’ the existence of our need of breathing also cannot exist. Just as action is a logical proof of its object. Likewise, need too is a logical proof of it. If need and action both exist, then certainly their object, too will exist. From this discussion we can draw certain conclusions.

- 1) Firstly, that the existence of need and action both justify the existence of their object. If there does exist some need and its concerning action then no doubt their object will also exist.
- 2) Secondly, that need and its concerning action are ‘post-created’ while their object pre-exists.
- 3) Thirdly, both need and its concerning action emerge because of their object and depend upon it; while their object is independent and does not depend upon its predicates.

¹² W. T. Stace, op. cit., p. 146.

Now let us move onward and give thought and care to the term ‘virtue’. In ethical sphere, it is described as ‘virtuous action’. To obey the parents; to speak the truth and to help the poor are but a few examples. All these are in fact actions like other actions of looking, breathing and sleeping etc. In the ethical sense, virtue is called ‘virtuous action’, the question is why do we call it ‘virtuous action’? As has already been stated, every action has its object which makes it possible or we can say, which is the reason of that action. In case of ‘virtuous action’ how possibly can it be without any object? Definitely, it has also its object which makes virtuous actions possible and for the sake of it, such actions are performed. The existence of virtuous action has been admitted everlastingly. So, in the case of ‘virtuous action’, the same inferences can be drawn as have been drawn in case of other material and immaterial actions:

- I) That the existence of ‘virtuous action’ and its desire both provide good reason for the existence of their object. If there does exist some ‘virtuous action’ and its desire then definitely their object also does exist.
- II) That ‘virtuous action’ and its desire are both ‘post-created’, while their object certainly pre-exists.
- III) That both ‘virtuous action’ and its desire emerge because of their object and depend upon it, while their object is independent and does not depend upon its predicates.

Now the question is, what is this object, the desire of which we feel in ourselves and because of which we perform such virtuous actions? Is the answer to this question not already present in the words ‘virtuous action’? We call it ‘virtuous action’, not merely action. Why do we add the word ‘virtuous’ for the description of such actions? Certainly, there is some reason for this. No doubt, the word virtuous is added because it refers to the object of such actions and it is ‘objective virtue’ or in short ‘Virtue’ that which Socrates identifies with knowledge. On account and for this ‘objective virtue’, all virtuous actions are performed. Virtuous action is a simple material action which is performed virtuously for its ‘object’.

We see that sometimes action is named after its object. The word ‘drink’

is a good example. This word represents both meanings. On the one hand, it refers to the 'object' (some objective drink) while on the other hand, it refers to 'drinking action'. We see that the word (drink) is used in both senses and this gives quite different meanings according to its use. In the case of 'virtue' the same word gives different meanings according to its practice.

In the Socratic paradox, this term has not been used in the sense of 'virtuous action'. Because when we use it in the ethical sense, the whole doctrine becomes meaningless. Certainly, this term has been used in some objective sense. Socrates did not answer this question as to for what meaning this term has been used or what it means. He is absolutely silent about the definition of 'virtue'. As Professor W. T. Stace writes in this context:

*“So that, in spite of the fact that his whole principle lay in the method of definitions, Socrates, in fact, left his followers without any definition of the supreme concept of his philosophy, virtue. It was upon this point, therefore, that the followers of Socrates disagreed. They all agreed that virtue is the sole end of life, but they developed different ideas as to what sort of life is in fact virtuous.”*¹³

From this quotation, two things are immediately apparent. Firstly, that Socrates himself did not define 'virtue' and his followers interpreted it differently. Secondly, that they all agreed upon the fact that the term has been used in such a sense which is the sole object of human life.

Before proceeding further, I would like to say something about the term 'definition'. What is a definition? When we define an object, we describe its attributes whose presence is essential for that object. Such attributes are called connotation. Therefore, definition means to express the connotation of something, in the absence of which the thing cannot be termed what it is. For example, in the definition of human beings, it is sufficient to say that a human being is a rational animal. To be an animal and rational

¹³ W. T. Stace, op. cit., p. 158.

are essential qualities for human beings. If an object is neither an animal nor rational, then we cannot call it human. 'Human' connotation is based on these two attributes. So, the definition of an object refers to the attributes of that object which are necessary and sufficient for it; according to Aristotle, definition is the beginning and end of knowledge. Definition is the starting point of knowledge, in the sense that in order to acquire knowledge of an object, we need to have a clear concept of that object. For example, when a teacher wants to teach a lesson about triangles to his students, he first defines what is a triangle. If he does not do so, then his students will not understand what their teacher is teaching them. Definition is the end of knowledge, in the sense that the goal of knowledge is to acquire knowledge of the complete definitions of things. Therefore, some definitions are primary, and some are final. The last and complete definition is the goal of knowledge and thus definition is the end of knowledge in that sense.

We now address the question what is 'Virtue' (arete) viz Knowledge that is the sole purpose of our life. Allow me to reveal that Socrates had used this term in the sense of 'The Best' and justly it is the '**SUPREME ULTIMATE UNIVERSAL TRUTH**'. Now the question arises whether the Supreme Ultimate Universal Truth is the Knowledge? Undoubtedly, Knowledge is the Supreme Ultimate Universal Truth. Certainly, this definition makes us aware of the Supreme Truth which occupies the whole universe and is the sole purpose of human life. So far as the nature of Virtue is concerned: then it is neither a material or immaterial object. This being a philosophical Truth, is above physical and metaphysical truths. It is everywhere yet our eyes cannot see it. It has created everything, yet by Itself is above creation. We can equate it with nothing because nothing can be like it. It is the beauty, the love and illuminates everywhere. How beautifully Virtue has been depicted by a poet. He says:

حُسن بھی آپ ہیں، عشق بھی آپ ہیں
جس طرف دیکھئے، آپ ہی آپ ہیں

***"You are the embodiment of beauty, you are the embodiment of love;
Whichever direction you look, there is only you."***

wherever we gaze, we find thee. A well-known revelation of the Promised Messiah and Mahdi Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as} makes us aware of it intimately.

جدھر دیکھتا ہوں اُدھر تو ہی تُو ہے

“Wherever I look, I only see you.”¹⁴

Let us ponder on the words that constitute the definition or supreme concept of ‘Virtue’ (arete). The last word in the statement is ‘Truth’. The ‘Truth’ is a fact or belief accepted as veracious as opposed to false or illusion. It signifies a reality which exists by itself. The third word ‘Universal’ means ‘what pertains to the whole universe’. Neither is it the universe nor anything found in the universe, even then nothing can be excluded from its omnipresence and omnipotence. The second word ‘Ultimate’ simply refers to that which is final, last or the most significant. It is that which is far away from human sight and at the same time proximal to human sight. Lastly the first word ‘Supreme’ refers to what is of the highest status and power. It is that which creates, nourishes and causes to die while itself is above creation, nourishment, death and decay. How beautifully ‘Virtue’ has been described in the following verses:

کس قدر ظاہر ہے نور اُس مبداء الانوار کا
بن رہا ہے سارا عالم آئینہ ابصار کا

“How manifest is the light of that ‘Source of lights.’ The whole universe is turning in to mirrors for the eyes.

چاند کو کل دیکھ کر میں سخت بے کل ہو گیا
کیونکہ کچھ کچھ تھا نشان اُس میں جمالِ یار کا

Yesternight, beholding the moon I became restive. I saw therein a glimpse of my Dear One’s splendour.

14 Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as}, Dur-e-Thameen (Urdu), Revealed hemistich 8, p. 163.

ہے عجب جلوہ تری قدرت کا پیارے ہر طرف
جس طرف دیکھیں وہی رہ ہے ترے دیدار کا

How curious is the manifestation of thy omnipotence. Wherever we turn our gaze, that path leads to Thy view.

چشمہ خورشید میں موجیں تری مشہود ہیں
ہر ستارے میں تماشہ ہے تری چکار کا

Thy grandeur is witnessed in the light of the Sun. Thy dazzle is manifest in every star.

آنکھ کے اندھوں کو حائل ہو گئے سو سو حجاب
ورنہ تھا قبلہ ترا رخ کافر و دیندار کا

Many a veil thwarts the blind of eye – otherwise the believer and the infidel were all turned to Thee.”¹⁵

I would like to conclude this topic with the depiction of ‘Virtue’ by the greatest and most influential physicist of all time, an individual who is synonymous with the term ‘genius’ – Albert Einstein. He states:

”وہ انتہائی حسین و ممتاز جذبہ، جس کا ہم تجربہ کر سکتے ہیں۔ حقیقت میں صوفیائے کرام ہی کا وجدانی تجربہ ہے کیونکہ یہی حقیقی سائنس کا سرچشمہ ہے۔ جس شخص کو یہ جذبہ غیر مانوس اور آجنبی محسوس ہوتا ہے، جو شخص اس وجدانی کیفیت پر حیرت و عقیدت کا اظہار کئے بغیر کائنات کے خالق کی عظمت سے مرعوب ہو کر پہروں سر مستی اور بے خودی کی لذت سے لطف آندوز نہیں ہوتا وہ حقیقت میں مردہ اور بے حس انسان ہے۔ یہ معلوم کرنا کہ جس شے کی گہرائی تک ہماری عقل و ادراک کی رسائی کا کوئی امکان نہیں، وہ شے حقیقت میں موجود ہے، اور ہمارے شعور و قیاس سے ماوراء اپنی حکمت و دانش کو کائنات کے ذرے ذرے سے ظاہر کرتی ہے۔ وہ جگمگاتا ہوا حُسن جسے ہماری سفلی صلاحیتیں صحیح طور پر محسوس بھی نہیں کر سکتیں۔۔۔ اس حقیقت کا صحیح ادراک اور اپنی کوتاہی کا عرفان، اپنی بے مائیگی کا یہی جلتا ہوا احساس حقیقی مذہب کا مرکز ہے۔“

15 Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as}, Dur-e-Thameen, (Urdu), p. 10.

“My religion is to humbly and affectionately supplicate to such a Vast and Enormous, Lofty and Sublime, All-knowing and All-Seeing Soul that manifests Itself in the veil of slight details that we can but little understand through our imperfect conscience – the Sublime, the Supreme wise power that is beyond reason and sight unfolds Itself in each and every atom of the Universe and this deep mystic faith of His presence sets up my conception about the person of God.”¹⁶

¹⁶ Mohammad Saeed, The Evolution of Science (Urdu) (Qomi Kutab Khana Railway Road Lahore 1958), p. 447-448.

2. Faces of Virtue

Let us take the example of a human body, it has several distinguishable components, but is primarily identified by the face and not by other parts of his body. The face of a person is the direct vehicle of his identification. Four words ‘Supreme Ultimate Universal Truth’ have provided us with a supreme concept of ‘Virtue’. This definition informs us about such a Being, which has encompassed the whole universe. Each and every particle is not only dependent on It for its existence but also is under Its rule and decree. For further realisation, let us consider Its faces.

The word ‘face’ is defined as that aspect or way by which we can recognise something. In the context of ‘Virtue’, i.e. Supreme Ultimate Universal Truth, what can be the faces of It? Upon contemplation, we ascertain that certainly there are four faces of It, namely the First, the Last, the Manifest and the Latent. Every face explains and defines It in its own way. These are like sources which take us to one and the same single objective Entity. They reveal to us what is hidden from our physical eyes. These faces strengthen and sharpen our minds and eventually we have no doubt in Its existence. Let us consider them separately but in brief.

THE FIRST: The foremost face of ‘Virtue’ is the First. The term ‘First’ means that which precedes or foreshadows everything, the earliest, the best and the foremost. Is this not ‘Virtue’ which comes before all others, the first, the best and the foremost? Justifiably it is. Although our finite observations cannot discern It, yet even then, there is no place where the ‘First’, i.e. the ‘Supreme Ultimate Universal Truth’, is not present.

THE LAST: The Second face of ‘Virtue’ is the Last. The term ‘Last’ gives the sense of what comes at the end or after all else. Simply it means that is final or ultimate. Is the ‘Last’ not ‘Virtue’ which is final or ultimate? Secondly that the term Last can be applied only to what is Real and not to what is unreal. In the world of creation, what is first cannot be the last. First and last things or events are always different. In the case of ‘Virtue’,

the First and the Last allude to one and the same ‘Supreme Truth’.

THE MANIFEST: The Third face of ‘Virtue’ is the ‘Manifest’. The term ‘manifest’ refers to what is clear, obvious and evident. Undoubtedly it is Virtue that is clear, obvious and evident. Obviously, it seems that the things before our eyes are the Manifest but this notion is turned away when we become aware of the realities of things. On account of my narrative, one who is unaware of the realities of things out of lack of understanding, will brand me (heaven forbid) a confused or unhinged man. However, it is the excellence and supremacy of ‘Supreme Truth’ which being the Manifest is beyond our perception.

THE LATENT: The Fourth face of ‘Virtue’ is the Latent. It refers to what is not clear, obvious or evident. Virtue is the Latent because It has concealed Itself under the veil of phenomena or creation. The third face (i.e. the Manifest) explains that Virtue is evident while the fourth face describes that it is inconspicuous and this is not inconsistency. The third and fourth faces point to one and the same Being or Supreme Truth and at any moment, it is both the Manifest and the Latent, which was fittingly illustrated by the Promised Mahdi and Messiah Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as} in the following verses:

کیا کروں تعریف حُسنِ یار کی اور کیا لکھوں
اک ادا سے ہو گیا میں سیلِ نفسِ دُوں سے پار

“In what words can I praise the charm of my Beloved? His single gesture made me cross the flood of sordid self.

اس قدر عرفاں بڑھا میرا کہ کافر ہو گیا
آنکھ میں اُس کی کہ ہے وہ دُور تر از صحنِ یار

My insight extended to a level to make me disbeliever; In his eyes who is remote from the courtyard of the Beloved.

اِس رُخِ روشن سے میری آنکھ بھی روشن ہوئی
ہو گئے اَسرار اُس دِلبر کے مجھ پر آشکار

My eye too became enlightened by that glowing Face; the mysteries of that Beloved were unveiled to me.”¹⁷

Moreover, the First, the Last, the Manifest and the Latent are only different faces of the same Reality whom Socrates called ‘Virtue’ and identifies It with ‘Knowledge’. These take us to one and the same ‘Supreme Truth’ and logically prove Its existence. Let us move onward and observe Its relation with things.

¹⁷ Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as}, Dur-e-Thameen, (Urdu), p. 132.

3. 'Virtue' and Phenomenon

The problem of 'Virtue' and 'Phenomenon' has already been considered under various terms like Being and not-being; Being and nothingness, etc. It has remained a striking and unresolved enigma in the domain of philosophy. Though the enlightened have attempted to solve this philosophic mystery in their own way, those who believed in pure reason and regarded it as a sole guidance did not tend towards this point of reason. Human intellectual abilities are incapable of reaching the truth and to know the nature of reality. In order to comprehend the above-mentioned terms and their correlation with each other, let us begin with some questions. I propose that by answering these questions, the objective will be achieved.

What is the essence of Virtue and Phenomenon? Are these interconnected or not? If they are complementary then what sort of relationship is this? It has heretofore been described about the nature of 'Virtue'. In a nutshell, it is a philosophical objective entity, i.e. 'Supreme Ultimate Universal Truth'. From this definition, it is quite clear that 'Virtue' is Omnipresent, Omnipotent and Omniscient. It always remains constant through a series of changes or varying connections. It is the Ultimate, Universal Cause and is Supreme because It is without cause and therefore is above all. If some cause in turn has a cause, then this does not deserve to be designated Supreme. It is only 'Virtue' which is the Cause of causes, yet itself being causeless. This simply means that everything depends upon It for their existence while it is the Independent; as for Its Being, it does not depend upon anything or anyone else. Its supremacy and existence are everywhere and only It governs the whole universe. It causes everything to perish, yet by Itself is Immortal and justly described as Permanent and Everlasting. It is Self-Existent, Self-Sufficient, constant and stable by itself and therefore is Self-Evident. Although Virtue is the most radiant truth, our senses cannot determine It. The reason is that as human senses are finite, they cannot observe the Infinite. The four faces of Virtue have hitherto been

described. Do these not help us considerably in Its understanding? Every face guides and informs us about Its existence in a novel approach.

(i) Nature of Phenomenon

Next, we take 'phenomenon'. It is a specific expression or manifestation, having some particular form with particular qualities. For example, the table and the pen, both are physical phenomena. The words 'table' and 'pen' refer to some particular forms of matter having some particular qualities, whom we assign the appellations, table and pen. The table and the pen are not direct first manifestations. These are in turn a compound of innumerable different sorts of phenomena and so is the case with all other visible phenomena. The instances of metaphysical phenomena are those of force and ether. These phenomena emerge, undergo different sorts of changes and finally decay and finish. Moreover, particular form and particular qualities of any phenomenon are interdependent.

For example, wood is a phenomenon. It consists of a particular form and its particular qualities. We say wood is heavy, brown, hard, etc. Now the heaviness, the brownness, the hardness, etc. are qualities. These qualities cannot exist independent of the form. But it is equally true that the form cannot exist independent of its qualities. If one was to consider peeling away all its qualities, and then consider what the form is aside from its qualities, you will find that your mind is oblivious to it. In taking away the qualities you have taken away the form itself. The form can only be thought through its qualities. It only exists through its qualities. The form, therefore, just as much depends on the qualities for its existence as the qualities depend upon the form. Hence neither of them can be regarded as independent. What is the source of these phenomena? Where do these particular forms come in to being? Is It not 'Virtue' which manifests and shapes all these phenomena? These phenomena depend upon Virtue for their existence and conservation while Virtue is the Independent. Whenever Virtue aspires, phenomenon may cease to exist while Itself is not bound by the limits of mortality. For the sake of illustration, let us consider an example. Although this example consists of finite vis-a-vis

finite while the relation of 'Virtue' and 'phenomenon' is that of Infinite vis-a-vis finite. However, this will assist and improve one's insight to appreciate and comprehend what I propose to explain.

What is ice? We know that ice is a solid form, opaque or white in colour. Water is also a common colourless liquid with various interchangeable forms that we consume daily. Steam is another substance in a gaseous state which emerges when water vapour escapes from the surface of boiling water. Another substance is produced when these water vapours are slightly condensed and this is what we call clouds. Mist and fog too are formed in the same way. Ice, water, steam, clouds, mist and fog all are different sorts of phenomena, each having its own particular form and particular qualities. There is a specific name by which we express each phenomenon, e.g. the word ice for ice-based phenomenon and the word water for water-based phenomenon and so on.

After analysing them, we find that all these different sorts of phenomena (ice, water, steam, clouds, mist and fog) are different forms of hydrogen and oxygen. Hydrogen and oxygen are common elements found in all these different phenomena. We see that what we define as water is really an expression of hydrogen and oxygen. These elements chemically combine in a certain ratio as H_2O and adopt a particular form of a phenomenon, to which we give the particular name of water. When the molecules of H_2O freeze to a certain degree, then these adopt a particular form of another phenomenon that we call ice. Again, when water is boiled, then these molecules begin to rise above in the form of water vapour. In this state H_2O adopts another particular form called steam. When these molecules are frozen, then to a certain degree, these adopt the form and qualities of another phenomenon, called clouds. The same happens in the case of mist and fog. From this, it is obvious that the words, water, ice, steam, clouds, mist and fog are applied only to express particular forms of H and O. These particular forms are the effect of the elements hydrogen and oxygen. From this example or analysis, we can draw a few certain conclusions.

- 1) These particular forms (water, ice, steam, clouds, mist and fog) cannot be named of hydrogen and oxygen.
- 2) These particular forms (water, ice, steam, clouds, mist and fog) exist because hydrogen (H) and oxygen (O) exist. Had H and O not existed, then these particular forms too could not have existed?
- 3) The existence of all these phenomena (i.e. water, ice, steam, clouds, mist and fog) depend upon H and O while the existence of H and O do not depend upon these particular forms.
- 4) Moreover, these particular forms are absolutely proved as illusion as compared to H and O, while H and O are permanent as compared to these particular forms.

Nonetheless, as has been mentioned at the outset of this example, it does not provide us fully and precisely the relationship between ‘Virtue’ and ‘phenomenon’. With regard to Virtue, then neither It resembles any phenomenon nor is It a Being which exists in Its own mysterious world far away from the world of phenomena. In the aforesaid example, hydrogen and oxygen and their expressions (water, ice, steam, clouds, mist and fog) are different sorts of phenomena.

Hydrogen and oxygen are not Universal but these are found in every particular form of their expression. In case of Virtue, the matter is quite the reverse. Although ‘Virtue’ is Universal, we cannot say that It is in this or that phenomenon. Why? According to the realities of phenomena, these are unreal, illusion or nothingness. How can what be real exist in unreal, illusion or nothingness? How can what is Immortal be in mortal forms? When it is said that ‘Virtue’ is not in this or that phenomenon, then this does not affect Its universality, omnipresence and omnipotence. No doubt, Virtue has manifested and still manifests all sorts of phenomena. During the process of manifestation, It retains Its Being Independent and Unmixed. At the first sight, it seems somewhat strange and impossible that a Being which manifests, remains Independent and Unmixed. But when our mind reaches the level of the utmost thought, then it seems neither strange nor impossible. About phenomenon it is further stated that it is akin to a mirage. After observing a mirage in the desert, we can

experience its deception but the intangibility of phenomena is inept. Its reason is that since human beings are bound to the chains of forms and living, they cannot be released from these chains. So, it is impossible for unaided reason to become aware of the realities of phenomenon.

Someone will have found a clue of the argument of First Cause in this concept of 'Virtue'. If there is so, then it is correct. No doubt, Virtue is not only the First Cause but also self-caused and self-sufficient. Nevertheless, two objections have been made upon this argument. Let us see whether these objections are valid or invalid. Firstly, it is said, why should any cause be the first? Why should we stop anywhere in the chain of causes?

This objection is false because it is beyond doubt that our universe is bound together in a system of cause and effect. Nothing is beyond the pale of this system. A cause may either be thus a primary or the consequence of another cause, and that in its turn may be the effect of yet another cause, and so on. Now it is impossible that in this finite world, the system of cause and effect should be infinite. So, there is no need for us to stop anywhere in the chain of causes because this process automatically ends up at some point. Is the point, where causality terminates, not the First Cause?

Secondly, it is said that if there can be anything without a cause, it may just as well be the world as causeless. In such words, it has been asserted that both the world (manifestation) and the First Cause (The One which manifests) are one and the same. Such reasoning is illogical because human reason and human daily experience reject this notion. For example, in the world of phenomena, we see that H and O are causes, while water, ice, steam, clouds, mist and fog are their effects. Can these causes and effects be one and the same? If these are, then we would never use different names for their description. According to the definition of phenomenon, all these are different ranks of causes and effects which are generally dependent, illusionary, transitory and mortal. Considering these cannot be termed as one and the same, how can we say that the First Cause (which is Independent, Permanent and Immortal) and the dependent world are one and the same? Under the profound influence of

sensory and non-sensory phenomena, the First Cause has been conceived as some sort of mechanical cause. Such conception of the First Cause is absolutely wrong because the faces of Virtue refute it. A mechanical cause nevertheless, cannot be the first, the last, the manifest and the latent, while Virtue being the First Cause, is simultaneously the Last, the Manifest and the Latent.

(ii) Law of Conservation of Matter and Energy

Phenomena, whether, physical or metaphysical are transitory and mortal is a foregone conclusion. Considering matter is phenomenon, thus it too is regarded mortal. But according to the scientific law of conservation, matter has been considered immortal. What is true about matter? Is it mortal or otherwise? Let's first observe, what does mortality mean? When something does not maintain its existence (form and qualities), then how would we describe it? Certainly, it has perished. For example, when a table is broken into pieces, then it loses its existence as a table and does not remain a table. Later on, when pieces of wood are burned away, they too lose their existence. In this process, does the table or pieces of wood not perish? During chemical reactions, such conversion often takes place. Hereupon, one may argue that such conversion is a mere change of form and during such processes, matter remains immortal. According to Einstein's formula $E=mc^2$, matter is converted into energy and light. Can energy and light be named as matter? According to this equation, does mortality of matter not take place? Energy, light, ether, etc., all are metaphysical phenomena and like physical phenomena, these are also mortal. The process of mortality ends at 'Virtue' which is Immortal. So, there is not any validity in the conservation of matter or energy because immortality entirely belongs to 'Virtue' which is not only Self-existed but also Stable by itself.

“In the times of Newton, there has been conceived 7 forces in the universe. These were reduced to the number of 6 in 1680. In 1830, these were considered as 5 in number. In 1878, this number became 4.”¹⁸

There are four fundamental forces of nature and these are:

- I) *Gravitational force.*
- II) *Weak nuclear force.*
- III) *Electromagnetic force.*
- IV) *Strong nuclear force.*

(I) Sir Isaac Newton (1642–1727) was an English mathematician, astronomer, philosopher and physicist. Although of relatively small frame, he had a large intellect, as demonstrated by his discovery of gravity, light, motion, mathematics, and numerous other observations. While contemplating the forces of nature, he observed an apple falling from a tree, as a consequence of which, he discovered the force of gravity around 1665–1666. Gravitational force is described in physics as *the force of attraction between all masses in the universe*; notably the attraction of the mass of the Earth for bodies near its surface.

(II) The second force is known as the weak nuclear force that governs all matter in the universe. While the other forces hold things together, the weak force plays a greater role in things falling apart, or decaying. The weak force, or weak interaction, is stronger than gravity, but it is only effective at very short distances. It acts on the subatomic level and plays a crucial role in powering stars and creating elements. It is also responsible for much of the natural radiation present in the universe, according to the Thomas Jefferson National Accelerator Facility (Jefferson Lab).

Italian physicist Enrico Fermi devised a theory in 1933 to explain beta decay, which is the process by which a neutron in an atomic nucleus splits into a proton and expels an electron, often called a beta particle

18 Monthly Tashheez-ul-Azhan Edited by Naseer Ahmad Anjum September 2000, p. 77.

(β -particle) in this context. “He defined a new type of force, the so-called weak interaction, responsible for decay, and whose fundamental process was transforming a neutron into a proton, an electron and a neutrino,” which was later determined to be an anti-neutrino, as described by Giulio Maltese, an Italian physics historian, in the three-part series entitled ‘Particles of Man’, an article he published in October 2013 in the journal *Lettera Matematica*.

According to Maltese, Fermi originally thought that this involved what amounted to a zero-distance or adhesive force whereby the two particles would literally have to be touching for the force to work. It has since been demonstrated by HyperPhysics, a website produced by Georgia State University, that the weak force is actually an attractive force that works at an extremely short range of about 0.1 per cent of the diameter of a proton.

(III) The third fundamental force is the electromagnetic force. It is *a type of physical interaction that occurs between electrically charged particles*. It acts between charged particles and is the combination of all magnetic and electrical forces. The electromagnetic force can be attractive or repulsive. However, until electromagnetism was discovered, scientists thought that electricity and magnetism were unrelated. A Danish scientist named Hans Christian Oersted changed all that. He made the important discovery in 1820 that an electric current creates a magnetic field. Oersted’s discovery of an unexpected connection between electricity and magnetism led to Michael Faraday’s discovery of electromagnetic induction in 1831 and to James Clerk Maxwell’s famous equations in 1865. The result was nothing short of an electromagnetic revolution that changed the world we live in.

(IV) The fourth fundamental force is the strong nuclear force. In 1935, the first theory for this new force was developed by the Japanese physicist Hideki Yukawa (Yukawa, 1935), who suggested that the nucleons would exchange particles between each other and this mechanism would create the force. As its name implies, the strong force is the strongest force of the four. It is responsible for binding together the fundamental particles of matter to form larger particles. As soon as Rutherford demonstrated that the mass of an atom was predominantly concentrated in a tiny nucleus

with an assemblage of positively charged protons in close proximity, it was obvious that there must be some attractive force between nucleons that is much stronger than the repulsive Coulomb force, albeit *short range*, otherwise all matter would just collapse into one immense nucleus. Yukawa reasoned that the short range was due to the larger mass of the particle being exchanged to mediate the strong force. Based on the sizes of nuclei he guessed the mass of this ‘meson’ (the *pion*) and got it right to within about 10%!

The most important issue is whether the four fundamental forces are actually manifestations of a single great force of the universe. If so, then there is already evidence that they can. Professor Dr Abdus Salam from Imperial College London, with Sheldon Glashow and Steven Weinberg from Harvard University, won the Nobel Prize in Physics in 1979 for unifying the electromagnetic force with the weak force to form the concept of the electroweak force. Space Science writer Mr Jeremy Rehm writes in his essay:

*“Physicists working to find a so-called grand unified theory aim to unite the electroweak force with the strong force to define an electronuclear force, which models have predicted but researchers have not yet observed. The final piece of the puzzle would then require unifying gravity with the electronuclear force to develop the so-called theory of everything, a theoretical framework that could explain the entire universe. Physicists, however, have found it pretty difficult to merge the microscopic world with the macroscopic one. At large and especially astronomical scales, gravity dominates and is best described by Einstein’s theory of general relativity. But at molecular, atomic or subatomic scales, quantum mechanics best describes the natural world. And so far, no one has come up with a good way to merge those two worlds. Many physicists aim to unite the fundamental forces under a single, unified theory – a theoretical framework that could explain the entire universe.”*¹⁹

¹⁹ The Four Fundamental Forces of Nature published by Jeremy Rehm 1st October 2019.

Suppose in the near future, physicists prove that these four fundamental forces are actually manifestations of a single great force of the universe. Then, in such a state, can we say that this single great force is the First Cause, the Originator or the Creator of the Universe? Not by any means, this single great force will be a manifestation of ‘Virtue’, i.e. ‘Supreme Ultimate Universal Truth’.

(iii) Nature of the Soul

In the same context, some questions can be raised about the nature of the soul. For example, what is the soul and where does it come from? What sort of concern does it have with a physical body? Keep in mind that the soul is a metaphysical phenomenon, it always remains within the physical body, for which it is the soul. We can perceive the physical body but its soul being metaphysical truth is beyond human perception. Moreover, the soul is not extrinsic to the body, it is created along with the universe. Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^(as) writes in his book *The Philosophy of the teachings of Islam*: **The relationship of the soul with its physical body is similar to the relationship of fire with the flint in which it is latently found.** As physical phenomena are manifestations of ‘Virtue’, likewise metaphysical phenomena are also Its manifestations. Commonly, it has been conceived that the soul is solely appertained to human beings. Such thinking is flawed. Truly the soul not only pertains to human beings but animals, plants and growthless phenomena also possess souls. Among the ranks of souls, the growthless soul is the most rudimentary. When plants and animals die, their botanical and zoological souls depart and are replaced with growthless souls. The human soul is of the highest order and most developed. Along with the modifications of human actions, the human soul also transforms. For example, when a man acts virtuously, his soul becomes virtuous, and when he acts viciously, his soul becomes vicious. In short, human actions change the human soul according to their nature. At the time of death, the human soul (virtuous or vicious) leaves the physical body and passes to the next world. After this separation, only a growthless phenomenon with growthless soul is left over. So far as the soul and death are concerned, Socrates remarks on this connection. He says:

1) *“And they would be telling the truth, Simmias, except for their being aware. They are not aware of the way true philosophers are nearly dead, nor of the way they deserve to be, nor of the sort of death they deserve. But never mind them, he said, let us talk among ourselves. Do we believe that there is such a thing as death?”*

Certainly, said Simmias.

*Is it anything else than the separation of the soul from the body? Do we believe that death is this, namely, that the body comes to be separated by itself apart from the soul, and the soul comes to be separated by itself apart from the body? Is death anything else than that?”*²⁰

Moving onwards, he remarks:

2) *“In fact, Simmias, he said, those who practise philosophy in the right way are in training for dying and they fear death least of all men. Consider it from this point of view: if they are altogether estranged from the body and desire to have their soul by itself, would it not be quite absurd for them to be afraid and resentful when this happens? If they did not gladly set out for a place, where, on arrival, they may hope to attain that for which they had yearned during their lifetime, that is, wisdom, and where they would be rid of the presence of that from which they are estranged? Many men, at the death of their lovers, wives or sons, were willing to go to the underworld, driven by the hope of seeing there those for whose company they longed, and being with them. Will then a true lover of wisdom, who has a similar hope and knows that he will never find it to any extent except in Hades, be resentful of dying and not gladly undertake the journey thither? One must surely think so, my friend, if he is a true philosopher, for he is firmly convinced that he will not find pure knowledge anywhere except there. And if this is so, then, as I said just now, would it not be highly unreasonable for such a man to fear death?”*

20 Plato: Complete Works Edited by John M. Cooper, 1997, (Phaedo 64bc).

It certainly would, by Zeus, he said.

Then you have sufficient indication, he said, that any man whom you see resenting death was not a lover of wisdom but a lover of the body and also a lover of wealth or of honours, either or both.”²¹

(iv) Kinds of Phenomenon

Let us move onward and consider some other features of phenomenon. Although phenomena are expressions of ‘Virtue’, nevertheless we find that all these are not exactly alike. For example, ether, mountain, oak, lion and man are all phenomena but not of the same category. Every phenomenon belongs to its own particular classification. On the whole, there are two major classes, physical and metaphysical phenomena. Ether, force and all other metaphysical creation belong to metaphysical class while physical phenomena are further subdivided into four sub-classes or categories.

- 1) Growthless phenomena
- 2) Growthable phenomena
- 3) Irrational phenomena
- 4) Rational phenomena

After profound observation and exhaustive contemplation, we find that our universe has been arranged under a single coordinated system. All phenomena are found in a proper order and there isn’t any randomness among them. Growthless phenomena comprise all those things which do not grow. Mountains, sand, water and air are common examples of post-elementary growthless phenomena. All such things are alive and whomever exclaims them as dead objects is unaware of their life. The universe mostly comprises of this sort of phenomena. The second category is that of growthable or botanical phenomena. These can only grow and bereft of other higher features, e.g. plants. These are also living

21 Plato: *op. cit.*, (*Phaedo* 67c-68bc).

beings and both the process of sensitivity and nutrition are found in them. The third category is that of irrational phenomena. The term 'irrational' explains that these are without reason or mind, e.g. animals. These not only grow but also possess other distinct features (powers of hearing, sight, smell, taste and touch). The fourth and the most developed form of physical phenomena is that of rational phenomena, e.g. human beings. One distinctive feature which differentiates them from other physical phenomena is that they have been endowed with the power of 'reason'.

(v) States of Physical Phenomenon

Every physical phenomenon is found in some kind of state. Until now it has been conceived that there are three states, nevertheless this statement is flawed. The states of physical phenomena are four:

- I) Solid
- II) Soliq
- III) Liquid
- IV) Gas

Solid is the first state of physical phenomena. In this state, phenomenon maintains both its shape and volume. Stone, iron and wood are its common examples. The second state is soliq. In this state, phenomenon maintains its volume and to some extent its shape. Actually, it is a deformed state of solid. Since it does not strictly comply with the definition of solid therefore it is a separate and independent state. Sand and all powders are instances of this state. The third state is liquid. In this state, phenomenon maintains its volume but not its shape. Oil, milk and water, etc. are common examples of this state. Gas is the fourth state of physical phenomena. Oxygen, hydrogen and the like are instances of this state. In this state, phenomenon does neither maintain its volume nor its shape. Often there is a large distance among the molecules or atoms of gaseous phenomena and these move freely wherever they find vacuum. Due to their independent and irregular motion, the volume and shape of gaseous phenomena always keep on changing.

Before closing this topic, let us observe some questions which are common to religion and philosophy.

- 1) What is the character and general structure of the universe in which we live?
- 2) Is there a permanent element in the constitution of this universe?
- 3) How are we related to it?
- 4) What place do we occupy in it?
- 5) What is the kind of conduct that befits the place we occupy?

In this topic, the answers to these questions can be found, except the last one. Briefly, as it has been stated, “The Universe is a manifestation of ‘Virtue’, i.e. ‘Supreme Ultimate Universal Truth’. It does not exist by itself and therefore is unreal and transitory. The One which has given sign of this universe is the Real and the Permanent. There is no decay and death for It. The human mind finds Its shining face in disguise of phenomena. Human beings are related to It because of being Its manifestation. They are the most developed and the best of all, found in the universe and this is because they have been enriched with the wealth of reason.”

4. Time, Space and ‘Virtue’

Time and space have always attracted the attention of the human mind and this seems to be partly due to the fact that without their understanding and mention, our comprehension and explanation of the universe remains incomplete. Scientifically, time is described as a parameter measuring duration with reference to a periodic process such as the rotation of the Earth or the vibration of electromagnetic radiation emitted from certain atoms. This sort of temporal description neither discloses the real nature of time, nor does it answer any other relevant questions. Certainly, there is a need for a philosophic look for its proper understanding.

Let us once again turn to the faces of Virtue, the First, the Last, the Manifest and the Latent. The First literally means, the earliest, and the foremost but with this definition, the word does not end and being perplexing proceeds further. When it is considered profoundly, this discloses its latent meaning and beyond doubt, this is ‘the action’ or ‘the motion’ and briefly every sort of change. So, the First is exactly and in its entirety ‘the action’.

Likewise, the second face of Virtue, the Last meaning the truth coming at the end or after all others. Definitely, it is the Final or Ultimate. Upon attentive and scrupulous contemplation, this term also discloses its hidden meaning, i.e. ‘the purpose’ or ‘the object’. Both, ‘the Action’ and ‘the Object’ cannot be separated and above all these refer to one and the same ‘Supreme Truth’. These faces after merging into one another give rise to the concept of one temporal aspect of ‘Virtue’ termed as ‘Virtuous Time’ or simply ‘Time’.

In the universe, when temporal aspects of phenomena are observed and analysed, we find that all these come into being because of their objective actions. All sorts of motion, changes found in material and immaterial phenomena are expressions or shadows of ‘Supreme Truth’. The reality is that Phenomenal Times are nothing but a reflection of one temporal aspect of ‘Virtue’. Let’s take one example. Our Planet Earth rotates and revolves.

Both rotation and revolving are its actions. As no action is possible without some object, therefore, earthly rotation and revolving are also objective. The objects of earthly rotation and revolving are 'rotation' and 'revolving' respectively. So earthly objective rotation and revolving are two different temporal aspects of the Earth. As the First and the Last are two faces of the same 'Supreme Truth', in the same manner phenomenal action and object are also two faces of the same phenomenon.

The third face of Virtue, the Manifest, refers to what is distinct and evident. Though our eyes cannot perceive It, Its radiance is everywhere or we can say nothing is out of Its grasp and confines. The fourth face, the Latent, refers to what is hidden and cannot be perceived. When human senses cannot observe the Manifest, then certainly It is the Latent. Like the First and the Last, these faces also give rise to the concept of another aspect of 'Virtue'. This is called 'Virtuous Space' or simply 'Space'. Generally, space is defined as the unlimited three-dimensional expanse in which material objects are located. This expansion is nothing but a metaphysical display of 'Virtuous Space' or 'Space', and therefore is a phenomenal space. As the Manifest and the Latent are two faces of the same 'Supreme Truth', likewise, body and soul are also two faces of the same 'phenomenon'. For example, Earth is a phenomenal space. It is a composition of body and soul. All sorts of physical and metaphysical phenomena are expressions of the spatial aspect of 'Virtue'. Here we should keep in mind the following main points.

Firstly: that as both 'Space' and 'Time' are two aspects of 'Virtue', therefore these themselves are one and the same 'Supreme Truth'.

Secondly: that one should not consider anybody and its soul and moreover its objective actions as 'Space' and 'Time' because these are in fact, phenomenal space and time.

Thirdly: that as 'Space' and 'Time' are only two aspects of one and the same 'Supreme Truth', thus, phenomenal space and phenomenal time also refer to only two aspects of one and the same phenomenon.

Our universe is composed of two major categories of phenomena, metaphysical and physical. So along with this, phenomenal space and time splits into two categories namely:

- I) Metaphysical Space and Time
- II) Physical Space and Time

As far as metaphysical space and time is concerned, all metaphysical creation and its objective actions are its common examples. In case of physical space and time, these further divide into four subcategories:

- I) Growthless space and time
- II) Growthable space and time
- III) Irrational space and time
- IV) Rational space and time

For the sake of analysis, let's take the example of water again. Water is a growthless phenomenon and has both spatial and temporal aspects. We know that hydrogen and oxygen are two different elementary growthless spaces. When every H atomic space chemically and proportionally combines with O atomic space, then by this union there results some molecular space. When such countless molecular spaces are combined, these result in water, which is essentially a compound space (a composition of numerous elementary and molecular spaces). In the same way, the temporal aspect of water is also a compound time (a composition of numerous elementary and molecular times). We find that actions are always either virtuous or vicious. In the case of virtuous actions, the object is 'Virtue' while in the case of vicious actions, the object is 'vice'. Since every phenomenal space is a manifestation of 'Virtue', therefore, it has been desired to act virtuously and so all should act likewise. When we say that temporal aspect of water is compound, then this means that water acts virtuously or simply that it is carrying out its end.

Like water, temporal aspects of all other growthless, growthable and irrational phenomena are compound. All this is due to the fact that since their spaces are compound, likewise their times are also compound. When

the temporal aspect of all lower phenomena is compound because these always act virtuously, then the higher and the most developed phenomena (rational phenomena) also have been created to act virtuously or simply to make their times virtuous or compound. Here we find the answer of one previous question, ‘What is the kind of conduct that befits the place we occupy?’ Rational times can be compound only when rational phenomena act virtuously; otherwise, their times become mixed or vicious. But we see that all rational phenomena do not act virtuously and some make their times mixed or vicious. Here another question arises, ‘Why does it so happen? Why does the temporal aspect of rational phenomena become mixed?’ The reply of this question is a separate subject and therefore will be treated in the third chapter.

5. Properties of ‘Virtue’

Until now, the concept of ‘Virtue’ has become much clearer. It has been clearly explained that It is not like physical or metaphysical things because all these are mere phenomena. It also has infinite attributes as ‘Virtue’ is above human understanding, likewise Its attributes are also beyond human mental capacity to comprehend. Let’s mention a few of them in brief.

‘Virtue’ is nothing other than the Infinite. Although it is obvious, our finite senses cannot perceive It. All things which we observe here and there are termed as phenomena. These are priori truths and short-lived while the Infinite being ‘Supreme Ultimate Universal Truth’ lies beyond the sensory and non-sensory worlds and expresses them.

‘Virtue’ is the Immutable and Immovable. Immutable means unchangeable. ‘Supreme Truth’ produces all sorts of phenomenal spaces and times but remains Itself unchanged. Motion belongs to the world of phenomena while ‘Virtue’ is the Unmoved Mover. It is also the Immortal and the Eternal. Things come into being and perish. From where do all these come and go? Emergence and decay of phenomena is a mere exhibition of mortal forms. Ultimately these return and will return to ‘Virtue’. The whole Universe, being phenomenon will cease to exist and after its cessation, our conscience makes us aware that ‘Supreme Truth’ remains unaffected and overcomes every sort of decay. It is without beginning and without end and will last forever.

‘Virtue’ is also the Perfect and Formless. Only that which remains immortal can be Perfect, while phenomena, being changeable and mortal, cannot be referred to as Perfect. In the same way, form is a character of phenomenon and nothing can exist without it. On the other hand, the Bestower of Forms is Formless. The question of reality has been replied inconsistently. Some have termed it ‘mind’ while others have designated it as ‘matter’. In fact, reality has nothing to do with mind or matter. It being ‘Supreme Truth’ cannot be confined to the world of senses or ideas.

Things are deemed as Beauty which is wholly inappropriate. Verily, Beauty is the 'Supreme Truth', which beautifies everything. 'Virtue' is also the One. There is nothing else which can be equal to It. Had there been Its peer then certainly, the peer's creation would have existed but neither Its peer nor the peer's creation have ever been found? But we find only the creation of 'Supreme Truth' which is the One and Peerless. One can rightly ask about the nature of Knowledge. So far as Knowledge is concerned, then many have denied Its existence. The answer to this question has been well documented by Socrates. He has informed mankind that 'Virtue is Knowledge'. Although phenomena is a mere delusion, nevertheless in reality under the guise of them, we find the radiant face of Knowledge.

In the same way, Omnipresence, Omnipotence and Omniscience also belong only to 'Virtue'. None of the phenomena, whether physical or metaphysical, can be Omnipresent, Omnipotent and Omniscient because all of these are mortal and dependent for their existence. 'Virtue' is the Creator and creation cannot be equated and identified with It. Moreover, it is the source of all life. Plants absorb their nourishment from the earth, animals eat grass and meat and human beings get their nourishment from plants and animals. Since all nourishment is provided by 'Virtue', therefore, It is the sole nourisher of all the worlds. It is also the Gracious, the Merciful and the Lord of the Day of the Judgement. Before proceeding to the next chapter, it is stated that in the light of reasoning, the essence of 'Virtue' has become quite clear. There remains no doubt in Its existence, Omnipresence, Omnipotence and Omniscience. In case of thought, Professor Stace writes:

“The movement of thought exhibits three stages. The first stage is positive belief, not founded upon reason; it is merely conventional belief. At the second stage thought becomes destructive and sceptical. It denies what was affirmed in the previous stage. The third stage is the restoration of positive belief now founded upon the concept, upon reason, and not merely upon custom.”²²

22 W. T. Stace, A Critical History of Greek Philosophy (Macmillan and Co., Limited St. Martin's Street, London, 1920), p. 151.

The concept of 'Virtue' also passes through three stages of thought. Five centuries before Jesus Christ in the time of Socrates, the concept of 'Virtue' was merely a conventional belief. Socrates did call it knowledge but could not explain how it is knowledge. After Socrates, at the second stage the concept of 'Virtue' was relegated to that of morality. For example, some experts take this term 'Virtue' in the sense of virtuous action and they say that instead of being knowledge, it depends upon knowledge. Some writers considered this doctrine as the moral foundation of his (Socrates) political philosophy. Truly, when thought creates scepticism and uncertainty in the realm of knowledge, faith or belief, these ills of thought cannot be removed by suppressing it but by further thought. Now I say that Socratic concept of 'Virtue' or 'arete' is the 'Supreme Ultimate Universal Truth' and truly It is 'Knowledge'. This is the third stage of the concept of 'Virtue', the restoration of positive belief, now founded upon the concept, upon reason and revelation. Finally, let's come to Meno's question:

“Can you tell me, Socrates – is virtue something that can be taught? Or does it come by practice? Or is it neither teaching nor practice that gives it to a man but natural aptitude or something else?”

Replying to the question of Meno, I will say that 'Virtue' is not some category of knowledge like social sciences and natural sciences. It is Divine Knowledge, Divine Wisdom and whoever is privy to it, no doubt, receives it through Divine dispensation. It is a gift dispensed by Providence. Nobody can teach it, however when it is revealed to an individual, Divine Knowledge or Divine Wisdom can be taught. Plato also concluded his dialogue 'Meno' with somewhat the same answer given by Socrates. He says:

“Socrates: If all we have said in this discussion, and the questions we have asked, have been right, virtue will be acquired neither by nature nor by teaching. Whoever has it gets it by divine dispensation without taking thought, unless he be the kind of statesman who can create another like himself. Should there be such a man, he would be among the living practically what Homer said Tiresias was among the dead,

when he described him as the only one in the underworld who kept his wits – ‘the others are mere fluttering shades’. Where virtue is concerned such a man would be just like that, a solid reality among shadows.

Meno: That is finely put, Socrates.

Socrates: On our present reasoning then, whoever has virtue gets it by divine dispensation. But we shall not understand the truth of the matter until, before asking how men get virtue, we try to discover what virtue is in and by itself.”²³

The Socratic answer to the question of Meno is absolutely correct and this humble is a living example of the Socratic answer in this world. It is God Almighty who made me aware of the essence of ‘Virtue’ that Socrates in his supreme concept of philosophy identifies It with knowledge. And it is the same concept of ‘Virtue’ about whom Professor Stace had said that *“which no philosopher has ever discovered and which, if it were only discovered, could at once be imparted by teaching, where upon men would at once become virtuous.”* How did God Almighty make me aware of ‘the essence of Virtue’? The complete story of this incident has been described in the epilogue. Now in the next chapter we will discuss the Socratic Theory of Knowledge.

23 Plato: Protagoras and Meno, translated by W.K.C. Guthrie, 1956, 99e-100ab.

CHAPTER TWO

VIRTUE IS KNOWLEDGE

“Socrates was the first man to bring philosophy down from the heavens and set her firmly in cities on earth, bringing her into the homes of the people, and making them consider their lives and their standards of behaviour.” [Cicero, Fragments V4 ,10]

SOCRATES AS A PROPHET OF EUROPE

1) *“Gentlemen of the jury, if, at Potidaea, Amphipolis and Delium, I had, at the risk of death, like anyone else, remained at my post where those you had elected to command and had ordered me, and then, **when the god ordered me**, as I thought and believed, to live the life of a philosopher, to examine myself and others, I have abandoned my post for fear of death or anything else. That would have been a dreadful thing.”(Apo-28e)*

2) *“Gentlemen of the jury, I am grateful and I am your friend, **but I will obey the god rather than you, and as long as I draw breath and am able, I shall not cease to practice philosophy**, to exhort you and in my usual way to point out to any one of you whom I am happen to meet.”(Apo-29d)*

3) *“Be sure that this is what the god orders me to do, and I think there is no greater blessing for the city than my service to the god. For I go round doing nothing but persuading both young and old among you not to care for your body or your wealth in preference to or as strongly as for the best possible state of your soul, as I say to you: Wealth does not bring about excellence, but excellence brings about wealth and all other public and private blessings for men.”(Apo-30ab)*



Socrates (470 BC–400 BC)

*“Indeed, gentlemen of the jury, I am far from making a defence now on my own behalf, as might be thought, but on yours, to prevent you from wrongdoing by mistreating the god’s gift to you by condemning me; **for if you kill me, you will not easily find another like me.**” (Apo-30e)*

1. The Era of the Sophists

To understand Socrates impartially and exhaustively, it is necessary first to know about the Sophists and their era. It is not possible to understand the conduct, activities and teaching of the Sophists without some knowledge of the religious, political and social conditions of their time. After lengthy struggles between the masses and the nobles, democracy had triumphed almost everywhere in and around Athens, the cultural centre of Greece. The decay of religion went hand in hand with the rise of democracy. Belief in the gods was discredited almost everywhere. This was primarily due to the moral ineptitude of the Greek religion itself and moreover the collapse of religion due to the advances in science and philosophy. No educated individual believed in divination, auguries and miracles any longer. A wave of rationalism and scepticism passed over the Greeks. This era became one of negative, critical and destructive sentiment. Democracy had undermined the old aristocratic institutions of the State and science had done the same with religious orthodoxy. With the downfall of these two cornerstones of society, all else went too. Tradition, Custom, Authority, Morality was denounced and abandoned. What was regarded with respect, awe and pious veneration by their forefathers, the modern Greeks were now looked upon as fit subjects for jest and mockery. The teaching of the Sophists was merely a translation into theoretical propositions of these practical tendencies of the period. The Sophists were the children of their time and the interpreters of their age. Their philosophical teachings were simply the crystallization of the impulse which governed the life of the people into abstract principles and maxims.

Who and what are the Sophists? The Greek words *sophos*, *sophia* are usually translated 'wise' and 'wisdom'. These were in common use from the earliest times, and standing as they do for an intellectual or spiritual quality, however were not a school of philosophers. Primarily, the word *sophos* connotes expertise in a particular craft. If the Origin of

the World, the interpretation of the origin and creation of nature was a setback for the first period of Greek philosophy. The second period of Greek philosophy dealt with the problem of the position of man in the universe. If the teachings of the earlier philosophers were exclusively cosmological then that of the Sophists was humanistic. It is often pointed out that the Sophists were not a particular philosophical school, rather a profession. They were itinerant teachers, who made a living out of the new hunger for guidance in practical affairs which arose at that time from the increasing opportunities of participation in practical politics, the growing impatience with the natural philosophers, and an escalation in scepticism about the validity of traditional religious doctrine and their crudely anthropomorphic images of the gods.

Sophists were a professional class rather than a school, and nourished among themselves the usual professional rivalries. They were professional teachers and educators. The rise of the Sophists was due to the growing demand for popular education, which was partly a genuine demand for light and knowledge, but was mostly a desire for such spurious learning as would lead to worldly, and especially political, success. The triumph of democracy created opportunities that political careers were now open to the populace who had hitherto been wholly excluded from it. Any man could rise to the highest positions in the State if he was talented with shrewdness and eloquence, whence to sway the passions of the masses, and sufficiently equipped in the way of pedagogy. Hence the demand arose for such an education as would enable the ordinary man to carve out a political career for himself. It was this demand which the Sophists undertook to satisfy. They wandered about Greece from place to place, as freelance lecturers, they took on pupils and entered into disputations. For these services they exacted substantial fees. It is also said that the Sophists have been described as teachers of virtue (*arete*) and the description is correct, provided that the word virtue is understood in its Greek sense, which did not restrict it to morality alone. For the Greeks the word virtue meant the capacity of a person to perform his functions successfully in the state. For example, the virtue of a mechanic is to understand machinery and the virtue of a doctor is to cure the sick. The word sophists had not hitherto carried any derogatory implication. It was in fact the word applied

to the seven sages of tradition. It was the unpopularity of the 5th-century Sophists which gave it the ignominy that it has borne ever since.

The four most outstanding and the best-known Sophists who emerged in Athens during the 5th century BC were Protagoras, Gorgias, Prodicus and Thrasyarchus. They were part of a group who had come to Athens as itinerant teachers and considered Sophists 'intellectuals'. Not only had the Sophists lived in different countries with their different customs, but they had also gathered considerable information based upon their observation and experience of a multitude of cultural facts.

Their encyclopedic information of different customs and cultures made them sceptical about the possibility of attaining any absolute truth and knowledge by which a society might establish itself. They became popular lecturers and were the chief source of new political and social education. Socrates had also studied under the Sophists, but as a consequence of poverty could only afford their 'shorter course'. This practice of charging fees prompted Plato to disparage them as "shopkeepers with spiritual wares". The most significant Sophists in history are:

1) **Protagoras:** The earliest known Sophist who had come to Athens was Protagoras. He was born at Abdera, about 490 BC. In many ways he was the most influential. He wandered far and wide around Greece, and for some time settled at Athens. He wrote a book on the subject of the gods. In his book entitled *On the Gods*, he dismissed any discussion on the subject of theology, saying that "*About the gods, I cannot be sure whether they exist or not, or what they are like to see; for many things stand in the way of the knowledge of them, both the capacity of the subject and the shortness of human life.*" (D.L. 9. 51)

He stated knowledge is limited to our various perceptions and these perceptions will differ with each person. He is best known for his famous statement, "*Man is the measure of all things; of those that are that they are; of those that are not that they are not.*" At Athens he was charged with impiety and atheism. His book was publicly burnt, and he had to flee from Athens. He fled to Sicily, but drowned on the way about the year 420 BC.

2) **Gorgias:** He was born in 483 BC in Leontinoi, Sicily. He died at Larissa in Thessaly circa 375 BC at the age of 108. He came to Athens from Sicily as ambassador in 427 BC. Like Protagoras, he reached the conclusion that knowledge is impossible. If there is no objective truth, there cannot be any knowledge of it. So far as knowledge is concerned the viewpoint of Gorgias is also the same. He wrote a book with a title *On nature, or the Non-existent*. In his book he tried to prove three propositions, (1) That nothing exists; (2) That if anything exists, it is not comprehensible; (3) That even if it is comprehensible, knowledge of it cannot be communicated. By this mode of reasoning, he was convinced that there could be no reliable knowledge and certainly there could be no truth. That is why he abandoned philosophy and turned to rhetoric and tried to perfect it as the art of persuasion.

3) **Prodicus:** Prodicus of Ceos (circa 465–395 BC) was a native of Ioulis on the island of Ceos in the Cyclades, the birthplace of the poet Simonides. Prodicus was a part of the first generation of Sophists. He came to Athens as an ambassador from Ceos. He was well-known as a speaker and a teacher. He was a Sophist in the full sense of a professional educator. His name is coupled with that of Protagoras as teaching the art of success in politics and private life. Plato says that he often came to Athens on official missions from Ceos, and like Gorgias took the opportunity to earn some money by declaiming his compositions in public and giving instructions to the young men. In Platonic dialogues Socrates appears as the friend of Prodicus. Socrates also calls himself his pupil and elsewhere in the dialogue speaks of him as a man of “*inspired wisdom*”, which he thinks may be “*ancient and god-given*”. In the book *Meno* he also speaks of himself as having been trained by Prodicus as Meno by Gorgias. There is no doubt that Socrates had close personal relations with him. He attended his lectures on the importance of using words precisely. From the dialogues of Plato, it also appears that the essence of Prodicus’s teaching was linguistic. He also had a theory of the origin of religion. Like other fellow Sophists, Prodicus also interpreted religion through the framework of naturalism. He regarded the gods as personifications of the sun, moon, rivers and fountains and that is why he was sometimes charged with atheism.

4) **Thrasymachus:** He (circa 459–400 BC) was a citizen of Chalcedon on the Bosphorus, a Colony of Megara. He was a Sophist best known as a character in Plato's *Republic* who asserted that injustice is to be preferred to the life of justice. His career appears to have been spent as a Sophist at Athens. He was primarily known as a teacher of rhetoric and a speech writer. In rhetoric, he was something of an innovator, and most of the extant references to him are concerned with his style. He was a profound Sophist who charged for his instruction. He travelled to foreign cities, and though specialising in rhetoric was prepared to answer ethical questions also. His teaching on justice seems to have been well-known. He did not conceive injustice as a flaw of character but he considered the unjust person as positively superior in character and intelligence. He said, justice is pursued by simpletons and leads to weakness. He regarded justice as being the interest of the stronger and believed that "might is right". In ethics, his ideas have often been as the first fundamental critique of moral values. We see that here is the reduction of morality to power, an unavoidable logical outcome of the progressive radicalism of the Sophists which led their nihilistic attitude toward truth and morality. It was Socrates whose chief concern was to unravel the logical inconsistencies of the Sophists and to build some new notion of truth and establish firm foundation for moral judgements. Referring to Sophists and Socrates, Eduard Zeller wrote:

"Just as we Germans could hardly have had a Kant without the Age of Enlightenment, so the Greeks would hardly have Socrates and a Socratic philosophy without the Sophists."²⁴

Some modern professors of history of Greek philosophy, i.e. Eugen J. Weber, exclaims Socrates a notorious Sophist although it is a thoroughly incorrect depiction. Concerning the Sophists, Henry Sidgwick in 1872 summarises the opinion of the Sophists like this. He says:

"They were a set of charlatans who appeared in Greece in the fifth century, and earned an ample livelihood by imposing on public credulity:

²⁴ Zeller, E. *Die philosophie der Griechen*, 2. Teil, 1. Abteilung, *Sokrates und die Sokratiker: Plato und die alte Akademie*. 5. Auflage, Leipzig, 1922 (repr. 1963), quoted in: W.K.C. Guthrie, *A history of Greek philosophy* (Cambridge University Press 1969), Vol 3, p 48.

professing to teach virtue, they really taught the art of fallacious discourse, and meanwhile propagated immoral practical doctrines. Gravitating to Athens as the Prytaneion of Greece, they were there met and overthrown by Socrates, who exposed the hollowness of their rhetoric, turned their quibbles inside out, and triumphantly defended sound ethical principles against their pernicious sophistries.”²⁵

Socrates, opposing the Sophists, states before the jury:

“It does not seem like human nature for me to have neglected all my own affairs and to have tolerated this subject now for so many years while I was always concerned with you, approaching each one of you like a father or an elder brother to persuade you to care for virtue. Now if I profited from this by charging a fee for my advice, there would be some sense to it, but you can see for yourselves that, for all their shameless accusations, my accusers have not been able in their impudence to bring forward a witness to say that I have received a fee or ever asked for one. I, on the other hand, have a convincing witness that I speak the truth, my poverty.”²⁶

Xenophon informing us about the routine works of Socrates, says:

“Socrates stayed seldom at home. In the morning he went to the places appointed for walking and public exercises. He never failed to be at the hall, or courts of justice, at the usual hour of assembling there, and the rest of the day he was at the places where the greatest companies generally met. There it was that he discoursed for the most part, and whoever would hear him easily might; and yet no man ever observed the least impiety either in actions or his words.”²⁷

25 Sidgwick, H. ‘The Sophists’, *Journal of Philology*, 1872, 288-307, and 1873, 66-80, quoted in: *A history of Greek philosophy* Vol 3, p. 11&12.

26 Plato: *Complete Works* Edited by John M. Cooper, 1997, (*Apology* 31bc).

27 Xenophon, *The memorable Thoughts of Socrates* Translated by Edward Bysshe (Cassell & Company, Limited: 1880), p. 12.

2. Socrates: Life and Character in General

(a) Socrates was undoubtedly an Athenian citizen of moderate means, son of Sophroniscus and midwife Phaenarete, both highly respected citizens. He was born in 470 or 469 BC in Athens. His father was a stonemason or sculptor, and references in Plato would naturally trace their lineage back to Daedalus. The justification for the mythical genealogy is that it was regular Greek practice for a craft to be handed on from father to son. Accordingly, it was said that Socrates himself was brought up in the sculptors' craft, which he may have practised in his early years. Very little is known of his education. In later years, some statues used to be shown at the Acropolis in Athens, which were said to be the work of Socrates. He spent his entire life in Athens, never departing from it, save for short periods on three occasions, when he served in military expeditions in the Athenian army. The physical appearance of Socrates was unsightly. He was short, thick-set, and repulsive. As he grew older, he became bald. His nose was broad, flat and turned up. He walked with a peculiar gait, and had a trick of rolling his eyes. His clothes were ragged and pitiable. Socrates gave no thought for external appearances and regularly went barefooted, the one ancient coat he possessed was a standing joke, and his critics called him 'unwashed'. Even his friends had to admit that to see Socrates newly bathed and wearing shoes was unusual. He kept all his appetites, desires and passions for sex as well as for food under strict control.

He was married to Xanthippe and had three sons. Diogenes Laertius (ii, 26) gives their names as Lamprocles, Sophroniscus and Menexenus. The eldest, Lamprocles, was a youth at the time of the execution of Socrates and the youngest child is said to be young enough to be held in his mother's arms at the time of his father's execution (Phaedo 60a). In the Apology (34 d), Socrates speaks of his family and children:

"My good sir, I too have a household and, in Homer's phrase, I am not born 'from oak or rock' but from men, so that I have a family,

indeed three sons, gentlemen of the jury, of whom one is an adolescent while two are children. Nevertheless, I will not beg you to acquit me by bringing them here."²⁸

Later on, in the *Apology* (41e), Socrates asks the jurors to punish his sons if they love wealth and act against virtue. He says:

*"When my sons grow up, avenge yourselves by causing them the same kind of grief that I caused you, if you think they are for money or anything else more than they care for virtue, or if they think they are somebody when they are nobody."*²⁹

Xanthippe's name suggests aristocratic connections, and she has become a byword for shrewishness, by all accounts deservedly. In the *Phaedo* (60a and 116b), there are two references to Xanthippe, the wife of Socrates, but nothing can be inferred from Plato about her character. The first reference in the *Phaedo* is given as follows:

*"After a short time, he (Jailer) came and told us to go in. We found Socrates recently released from his chains, and Xanthippe – you know her – sitting by him, holding their baby. When she saw us, she cried out and said the sort of thing that women usually say. Socrates looked at Crito. 'Crito,' he said, 'let someone take her home.' And some of Crito's people led her away lamenting and beating her breast."*³⁰

The most impressive description of Socrates comes from Alcibiades in the *symposium* (215a-222b), in which from the voice of one of the most influential and indeed most dissolute among the Athenians, we are given the most memorable eulogy and the most graphic description of Socrates on record. In Plato's *Symposium*, Alcibiades, after comparing him to Marsyas the Satyr, who challenged Apollo with playing the flute, and commenting on the extraordinary resemblance of Socrates in appearance to Marsyas, goes on to say:

28 Plato: Complete Works Edited by John M. Cooper, 1997, (*Apology* 34d).

29 *Ibid.*, (*Apology* 41e).

30 *Ibid.*, (*Phaedo* 60a).

“But you don’t play the flute, you say? No, indeed; the performance you give is far more remarkable. Marsyas needed an instrument in order to charm men by the power which proceeded out of his mouth – But you, Socrates, are so far superior to Marsyas that you produce the same effect by mere words without any instrument. At any rate, whereas most of us pay little or no attention to the words of any other speaker, however accomplished, a speech by you, or even a very indifferent report of what you have said, stirs us to the depths and casts a spell over us, women and men and boys alike. I myself, gentlemen, were it not that you would think me absolutely drunk, would have stated on oath the effect which his words have had on me – Whenever I listen to him, my heart beats faster than if I were in a religious frenzy, and tears run down my face, and I observe that numbers of other people have had the same experience. Nothing of this kind ever used to happen to me when I listened to Pericles and other good speakers; I recognized that they spoke well, but my soul was not thrown into confusion and dismay by the thought that my life was no better than a slave’s.”³¹

Alcibiades goes on to describe in detail the character and habits of his venerable friend, and the words that flow from his lips reveal to us a veritable paradigm of human excellence and virtue with which he does not fail to contrast his own shortcomings. Socrates embodies in his person all the divine attributes that humble human beings worship and admire in the Olympians. Alcibiades concludes his eulogy with these words:

“You could say many other marvellous things in praise of Socrates. Perhaps he shares some of his specific accomplishments with others. But, as a whole, he is unique; he is like no one else in the past and no one in the present – this is by far the most amazing thing about him. For we might be able to form an idea of what Achilles was like by comparing him to Brasidas or some other great warrior, or we might compare Pericles with Nestor or Antenor or one of the other great orators. There is parallel for everyone – everyone else, that is. But this man here is so

31 Symposium 215 b ff. Hamilton, W. The Symposium by Plato, a new translation. Harmondsworth (Penguin Books), 1951 (and later reprints). quoted in: W.K.C. Guthrie, A history of Greek philosophy (Cambridge University Press 1969), Vol 3, p. 398 &399.

bizarre, his ways and his ideas are so unusual, that, search as you might, you will never find anyone else, alive or dead, who's even remotely like him. The best you can do is not to compare him to anything human, but to liken him, as I do, to Silenus and the satyrs, and the same goes for his ideas and arguments. – But if you see them when they open up like the statues, if you go behind their surface, you will realize that no other arguments make any sense. They are of great – no, of the greatest – importance for anyone who wants to become a truly good man.”³²

The same words Meno says to Socrates during his conversation in the following passage:

“Meno: Socrates, before I even met you, I used to hear that you are always in a state of perplexity and that you bring others to the same state, and now I think you are bewitching and beguiling me, simply putting me under a spell, so that I am quite perplexed. Indeed, if a joke is in order, you seem, in appearance and in every other way, to be like the broad torpedo fish, for it too makes anyone who comes close and touches it feel numb, and you now seem to have had that kind of effect on me, for both my mind and my tongue are numb, and I have no answer to give you. – I think you are wise not to sail away from Athens to go and stay elsewhere, for if you were to behave like this as a stranger in another city, you would be driven away for practising sorcery.”³³

32 Plato: Complete Works Edited by John M. Cooper, 1997, (Symposium, 221c ff-222b).

33 Ibid., (Meno 80a ff).

Socrates' Prison, Athens



*The cave in Athens said to be where Socrates was held prisoner and died
(by Mark Cartwright)*

Socrates' Prison



*The cave in Athens said to be where Socrates was held prisoner and died
(by Jay Costa Owen)*

(b) Death Charges and Its Causes

Remember that Socrates lived in an age of Sophists. In such an age, Socrates, a man of just thinking emerges in contrast to Sophists. Here we are talking about one Athenian Socrates, but human history teaches us that whenever sophistry emerges then hand in hand with the rise of it, a Socrates also emerges. In fact, Socrates is like a spiritual doctor who cures ill-minded people as a physician cures physical malady. He roots out the reign of falsehood and maintains the kingdom of truth. Though he faces manifold troubles, he always remains a conqueror in the battle of truth and reason. Socrates attacked Sophists and destroyed their false ideas. In such a dark age, he lit the candle of knowledge and informed people, what Knowledge is and how It can be known and taught? What a great man he was and how excellent his teachings!

Socrates, a genius with a beautiful heart was born in Athens circa 470 BC. He led a perfectly simple life in poverty his vesture was basic. He cared not for external appearances as it was insignificant in his view. He never bartered knowledge for wealth and gave his wisdom free to all who sought it. He believed that he was guided by an ethereal voice, which he called his 'daimonion'. He stated that none can induce him to disobey its injunctions. In 400/399 BC, when Socrates was 70 years old, he was brought to trial on three charges:

- 1) for denying the national gods,
- 2) for setting up new gods of his own,
- 3) for corrupting the youth.

All these charges were unfounded, baseless and mere false claims. The truth is that the old philosopher was a noble person of his age. He was virtuous and indeed a friend of God. He hated vice and led a quiet virtuous life, pure and undefiled. That is why his philosophy is a virtuous philosophy. The vicious are ever liked and respected but eventually truth roots them out. In contrast to this, the virtuous are always hated, teased, abused, exiled and even poisoned but in the end they triumph. Exactly the same occurred with this respected man of Athens. If he had not been

poisoned and killed, then certainly, the history of philosophy would have been in some other form. And with this, perhaps the history of mankind would also have been different altogether. Perhaps this was inevitable and so it came to pass. In *Apology*, Socrates not only mentions those baseless and false charges but also describes the reasons behind the charges levelled against him. He says:

“The young men who follow me around of their own free will, those who have most leisure, the sons of the very rich, take pleasure in hearing people questioned; they themselves often imitate me and try to question others. I think they find an abundance of men who believe they have some knowledge but know little or nothing. The result is that those whom they question are angry, not with themselves but with me. They say: ‘That man Socrates is a pestilential fellow who corrupts the young.’ If one asks them what he does and what he teaches to corrupt them, they are silent, as they do not know, but, so as not to appear at a loss, they mention those accusations that are available against all philosophers, about ‘things in the sky and things below the earth, “about” not believing in the gods’ and ‘making the worse the stronger argument’”; they would not want to tell the truth, I am sure, that they have been proved to lay claim to knowledge when they know nothing. These people are ambitious, violent and numerous; they are continually and convincingly talking about me; they have been filling your ears for a long time with vehement slanders against me. From them Meletus attacked me, and Anytus and Lycon, Meletus being vexed on behalf of the poets, Anytus on behalf of the craftsmen and the politicians, Lycon on behalf of the orators, so that, as I started out by saying, I should be surprised if I could rid you of so much slander in so short time. That, men of Athens, is the truth for you. I have hidden or disguised nothing. I know well enough that this very conduct makes me unpopular, and this is proof that what I say is true, that such is the slander against me, and that such are its causes. If you look into this either now or later, this is what you will find. Let this suffice as a defence against the charges of any earlier accusers. After this I shall try to defend myself against Meletus, that good and patriotic man, as he says he is, and my later accusers. As these are a different lot of accusers, let us again takes up

their sworn deposition. It goes something like this: Socrates is guilty of corrupting the young and of not believing in the gods in whom the city believes, but in other new spiritual things. Such is their charge.”³⁴

(c) Glad Tidings for Divine Personages

According to the Holy Qur'an, revealed to the Holy Prophet Muhammad^(saw), before the incumbent death of virtuous and holy people they are granted glad tidings of safety, peace and Paradise. So as God the Exalted says in Sura Ya Sin:

إِنَّ أَصْحَابَ الْجَنَّةِ الْيَوْمَ فِي شُغْلٍ فَكِهِونَ. هُمْ وَأَزْوَاجُهُمْ فِي ظِلِّ عَلَى الْأَرَائِكِ مُتَّكِونَ. لَهُمْ فِيهَا فَاكِهَةٌ
وَلَهُمْ مَا يَدْعُونَ. سَلَامٌ قَوْلًا مِنْ رَبِّ رَحِيمٍ. يسين- ٥٩, ٥٨, ٥٧, ٥٦

“Verily the inmates of Heaven will, on that day, be happy in their occupation. They and their wives will be in pleasant shades, reclining on raised couches. They will have fruits therein, and they will have whatever they call for. ‘Peace on you’ – a word of greeting from the Merciful Lord.”
(Surah Ya Sin 36’:56-59)

Likewise in Sura Al-Fajr, God the Exalted says to His virtuous men at the time of their death:

يَا أَيَّتُهَا النَّفْسُ الْمُطْمَئِنَّةُ. ارْجِعِي إِلَىٰ رَبِّكِ رَاضِيَةً مَّرْضِيَّةً. فَادْخُلِي فِي عِبَادِي. وَأَدْخُلِي جَنَّتِي. الفجر- ٣١, ٣٠, ٢٩, ٢٨

“And thou, O soul at peace! Return to thy Lord well pleased with Him and He well pleased with thee. So, enter thou among My chosen Servants, and enter thou, My Garden.” (Surah Al-Fajr 89’:28-31)

The same happened with Socrates before his death. He sees a dream, in which a beautiful and comely woman gives him glad tidings. Such as Socrates says to his friend Crito before his death. Plato documents this story in his famous dialogue *Crito* in the following words:

34 Ibid., (Apology, 23c ff. 24ab).

“Socrates: That is so. Why have you come so early?”

Crito: I bring bad news, Socrates, not for you, apparently, but for me and all your friends the news is bad and hard to bear. Indeed, I would count it among the hardest.

Socrates: What is it? Or has the ship arrived from Delos, at the arrival of which I must die?

Crito: It has not arrived yet, but it will, I believe, arrive today, according to a message brought by some men from Sunium, where they left it. This makes it obvious that it will come today, and that your life must end tomorrow.

Socrates: May it be for the best. If it so please the gods, so be it. However, I do not think it will arrive today.

Crito: What indication have you of this?

Socrates: I will tell you. I must die the day after the ship arrives.

Crito: That is what those in authority say.

Socrates: Then I do not think it will arrive on this coming day, but on the next. I take to witness of this a dream I had a little earlier during this night. It looks as if it was the right time for you not to wake me.

Crito: What was your dream?

Socrates: I thought that a beautiful and comely woman dressed in white approached me. She called me and said: “Socrates, may you arrive at fertile Phthia on the third day.”

Crito: A strange dream, Socrates.

Socrates: But it seems clear enough to me, Crito.

Crito: Too clear it seems, my dear Socrates, but listen to me even now and be saved. If you die, it will not be a single misfortune for me. Not only will I be deprived of a friend, the like of whom I shall never find again, but many people who do not know you or me very well will think that I could have saved you if I were willing to spend money, but that I did not care to do so. Surely there can be no worse reputation than to be thought to value money more highly than one's friends, for the majority will not believe that you yourself not willing to leave prison while we were eager for you to do so.

Socrates: My good Crito, why should we care so much for what the majority think? The most reasonable people, to whom one should pay more attention, will believe that things were done as they were done.

Crito: You see, Socrates, that one must also pay attention to the opinion of the majority. Your present situation makes clear that the majority can inflict not the least but pretty well the greatest evils if one is slandered among them.

Socrates: Would that the majority could inflict the greatest evils, for they would then be capable of the greatest good, and that would be fine, but now they cannot do either. They cannot make a man either wise or foolish, but they inflict things haphazardly.”³⁵

I have quoted the dream of Socrates with a full reference to the context. The dream of Socrates was a clear indication of the fact that he was a holy person and a friend of God. Before his death, he was certainly given glad tidings of safety, peace and Paradise. Remember that Socrates was a man of elevated character, yet the Athenian jury caused a great injury to mankind by poisoning him. They had not poisoned Socrates but mankind itself. Is our age not an age of hypocrites and Sophists? It is stated that currently hypocrisy and sophistry is in full bloom. Hypocrites

35 *Ibid.*, (Crito, 43c–44d).

and Sophists are votaries of material desires. What a strange resemblance there lies between the modern and the ancient hypocrites and Sophists! Before moving onwards, let's pay tribute to this Greek luminary. O, Socrates you spoke nothing but the plain truth, yet the Athenian jury could not understand thy philosophic tone. After leading a virtuous life, you confronted your martyrdom valiantly.

(d) Last Hours Before Drinking Poison

Here is Plato's account of the death of this exceptional holy personage of his era which I quote from the *Phaedo*. Though it cannot be considered historical, we may well believe that the primary incidents as well as the depiction it gives us of the demeanour and moral behaviour of the philosopher in his last moments, are in fact accurate representations. Plato says:

“After saying this he got up and went to another room to take his bath, and Crito followed him and he told us to wait for him. So, we stayed, talking among ourselves, questioning what had been said, and then again talking of the great misfortune that had befallen us. We all felt as if we had lost a father and would be orphaned for the rest of our lives. When he had washed, his children were brought to him – two of his sons were small and one was older – and the women of his household came to him. He spoke to them before Crito and gave them what instructions he wanted. Then he sent the women and children away, and he himself joined us. It was now close to sunset, for he had stayed inside for some time. He came and sat down after his bath and conversed for a short while, when the officer of the Eleven came and stood by him and said: ‘I shall not reproach you as I do the others, Socrates. They are angry with me and curse me when, obeying the orders of my superiors, I tell them to drink the poison. During the time you have been here I have come to know you in other ways as the noblest, the gentlest and the best man who has ever come here. So now too I know that you will not make trouble for me; you know who is responsible and you will direct your anger against them. You know what message I bring. Fare you well, and try to endure what you must as easily as possible.’ The officer was weeping as he turned away and went out. Socrates looked up at him and said: ‘Fare you well also; we shall do as you bid us.’ And turning to us he said: ‘How pleasant the man is! During the whole time I have been here he has come in and conversed with me from time to time, a most agreeable man. And how genuinely he now weeps for me. Come, Crito, let's obey him. Let someone bring the poison if it is ready; if not, let the man prepare it.’

‘But Socrates,’ said Crito, ‘I think the sun still shines upon the hills and has not yet set. I know that others drink the poison quite a long time after they have received the order, eating and drinking quite a bit, and some of them enjoy intimacy with their loved ones. Do not hurry; there is still some time.’

‘It is natural, Crito, for them to do so,’ said Socrates, ‘for they think they derive some benefit from doing this, but it is not fitting for me. I do not expect any benefit from drinking the poison a little later, except to become ridiculous in my own eyes for clinging to life, and be sparing of it when there is none left. So do as I ask and do not refuse me.’

‘Hear this,’ Crito nodded to the slave who was standing near him; the slave went out and after a time came back with the man who was to administer the poison, carrying it made ready in a cup. When Socrates saw him, he said: ‘Well, my good man, you are an expert in this; what must one do?’ – ‘Just drink it and walk around until your legs feel heavy, and then lie down and it will act of itself.’ And he offered the cup to Socrates, who took it cheerfully. Echecrates, without a tremor or any change of feature or colour, but looking at the man from under his eyebrows as was his wont, asked: ‘What do you say about pouring a libation from this drink? Is it allowed?’ – ‘We only mix as much as we believe will suffice,’ said the man.

‘I understand,’ Socrates said, ‘but one is allowed, indeed one must, utter a prayer to the gods that the journey from here to yonder may be fortunate. This is my prayer and may it be so.’

And while he was saying this, he was holding the cup, and then drained it calmly and easily. Most of us had been able to hold back our tears reasonably well up till then, but when we saw him drinking it and after he drank it, we could hold them back no longer; my own tears came in floods against my will. So I covered my face. I was weeping for myself, not for him – for my misfortune in being deprived of such a comrade. Even before me, Crito was unable to restrain his tears and got up. Apollodorus had not ceased from weeping before, and at this moment

his noisy tears and anger made everybody present break down, except Socrates. 'What is this,' he said, 'you strange fellows. It is mainly for this reason that I sent the women away, to avoid such unseemliness, for I am told one should die in good omened silence. So, keep quiet and control yourselves.'

*His words made us ashamed, and we checked our tears. He walked around, and when he said his legs were heavy, he lay on his back as he had been told to do, and the man who had given him the poison touched his body, and after a while tested his feet and legs, pressed hard upon his foot and asked him if he felt this, Socrates said no. Then he pressed his calves, and made his way up his body and showed us that it was cold and stiff. He felt it himself and said that when the cold reached his heart he would be gone. As his belly was getting cold Socrates uncovered his head – he had covered it – and said – these were his last words – 'Crito, we owe a cock to Asclepius; make this offering to him and do not forget.' – 'It shall be done,' said Crito, 'tell us if there is anything else.' But here was no answer. Shortly afterwards Socrates made a movement; the man uncovered him and his eyes were fixed. Seeing this Crito closed his mouth and his eyes. Such was the end of our comrade, Echecrates, a man who, we would say, was of all those we have known the best, and also the wisest and the most upright.'*³⁶

36 *Ibid.*, (Phaedo, 116a–118a).

3. Socrates as a Philosopher

Many Athenians and a number of historians of philosophy have mistaken Socrates for a Sophist but between the Sophists and Socrates there was a fundamental difference. We can say that Socrates was one of the Sophists' keenest critics. Sophists split hairs to show that good arguments could be put forward on either side of any issue. They were sceptics who doubted that there could be any certain knowledge. They also concluded that since all knowledge is comparative and respective therefore moral ideas and ideals are also relative. On the other hand, Socrates had a different motivation for his permanent argumentation. He was committed in the pursuit of truth and regarded it his mission to seek out the foundation for stable and certain knowledge. He was also trying to discover the base for the good life. Unlike the Sophists, then, Socrates engaged in argumentation, in 'dialectic' to achieve creative concepts of truth and goodness. In the history of philosophy, Socrates has a unique place without parallel. On the one hand, he is revered as inaugurating the first great era of philosophy, and therefore, in a sense, philosophy itself. On the other hand, any account must begin with the admission that there is, and always will be, a 'Socratic problem'. The reason is that he left behind no writing, and there is hardly a single sentence ascribed to him that we can be sure was his own rather than a literary creation of one of his disciples or admirers. All that we know about him and his philosophy comes from the writings of men of the most varied character, from philosophers to comic poets, some of whom were passionately devoted to him while others thought his influence pernicious. Usually, we become aware of Socrates from the writings of Xenophon and Plato. But the Socrates of Xenophon and that of Plato are two different personalities. This difference between the views about Socrates shows us that the real and historical Socrates was some other personality. As Bertrand Russell writes:

“Socrates is a very difficult subject for the historian. There are many men concerning whom it is certain that very little is known, and other men concerning whom it is certain that a great deal is known; but in the

case of Socrates the uncertainty is as to whether we know very little or a great deal. He was undoubtedly an Athenian citizen of moderate means, who spent his time in disputation, and taught philosophy to the young, but not for money, like the Sophists. He was certainly tried, condemned to death, and executed in 399 BC, at about the age of seventy. He was unquestionably a well-known figure in Athens, since Aristophanes caricatured him in The Clouds. But beyond this point we become involved in controversy. Two of his pupils, Xenophon and Plato, wrote voluminously about him, but they said very different things.”³⁷

It is quite sure that after his death, Socrates was wrapped with cloaks of exaggerations. So, he and his real philosophy were concealed in the guise of expansion and decline and therefore he and his philosophy have been made a paradox for the future generations. Some eminent scholars say that Xenophon’s Socrates is a Socrates without irony and without paradox. Take these two away from Plato’s Socrates, and therefore nothing is left. That is why Professor Gregory Vlastos (1907–1991) writes:

“We find a man who is all paradox. Other philosophers have talked about paradox. Socrates did not. The paradox in Socrates is Socrates.”³⁸

After Socrates, many philosophical and moral theories have been ascribed to him but we can rightly say that each and every theory ascribed to him was not his theory and teaching. There has been much misunderstanding about his teaching on account of such variations. It is evident that there are two aspects of Socratic philosophy, the Theory of Concepts and the Ethical Theory. Professor Stace informs us:

37 Bertrand Russell, History of Western Philosophy (MPG Books Ltd, Bodmin, Cornwall 2005), p. 89.

38 Gregory Vlastos, The philosophy of Socrates: a collection of critical essays, (University of Notre Dame Press edition published 1980), p. 4.

*“There are two sides of the Socratic teaching. In the first place, there is the doctrine of knowledge, that all knowledge is through concepts. This is the scientific side of philosophy of Socrates. Secondly, there is his ethical teaching.”*³⁹

He goes on to write:

*“Now, of the two aspects of Socratic philosophy, the Theory of Concepts and the Ethical Theory, it is easy for us, looking back upon history, to see which it was that influenced the history of thought most, and which, therefore, was the most important.”*⁴⁰

From the above two references of Professor Stace, it is quite clear that Socrates certainly presented two doctrines of knowledge but not in the meaning or sense in which these have been used after him. Usually, we are informed that the teaching of Socrates was ethical in character and with this fact did Socrates bear any resemblance to the Sophists. For this reason, Aristotle writes:

*“Socrates turned his attention to the study of ethical virtues, and was the first to look into the possibility of defining ethical concepts ... And since he was endeavouring to approach this issue in a logical way, it was appropriate for him to inquire into the essence of things, for the essence is always the starting point of logical reasoning.”*⁴¹

Moreover, we should keep in mind that the ethical teaching of Socrates was founded upon his theory of knowledge which being quite simple is extremely important. Protagoras says that man is the measure of all things, therefore in this way Sophists founded knowledge upon perception and so all objective standards of truth had been severely extirpated. In contrast to this Sophist approach, Socrates founded knowledge upon reason, and in

39 W. T. Stace, A Critical History of Greek Philosophy (Macmillan and Co., Limited St. Martin's Street, London, 1920), p. 149-150.

40 Ibid., p. 156.

41 Aristotle: Metaphysics 1078b quoted in: Luis E. Navia, “Socrates The Man and His Philosophy” (University Press of America, 1985), p. 216.

this way to restore to truth its objectivity. It is remembered that possibly, there can be two doctrines of knowledge. Firstly, that how can we know or seek knowledge? Whilst the other can be about the nature of Knowledge? Socrates has correctly used his doctrines in such methods which are absolutely correct and true but it is regretfully described that later on, both these doctrines have been misunderstood and misinterpreted. Briefly speaking, the Theory of Concepts or Scientific Theory may be summarised by saying that *“All knowledge is knowledge through Concepts”*⁴²

Now the question is what is a concept through which we can gain knowledge or we can say that knowledge advances? So far as concept is concerned, then, keep in mind that when we are directly aware of the presence of any particular thing, a horse, a man, a tree, etc., such awareness is called perception. Upon closing our eyes, we frame a mental picture of such a thing, such awareness is called an image or representation. Such mental images, like perceptions are always ideas of specific individual things. But besides these ideas of individual things whether through sense-perception or imagination, we also have general ideas, that is to say, not ideas of any particular thing, but ideas of whole classes of things. If I say, ‘Socrates is mortal’, I am talking or thinking of an individual Socrates. But if I say, ‘man is mortal’, then I am thinking not of any particular man, but of the class of men in general. Such an idea is called a general idea or a general concept. All class-names, such as horse, animal, man, tree, etc., which stand, not for one thing, but for a multitude of things, represent concepts. We form these general ideas or concepts by including in them all the qualities which the whole class of things has in common, and excluding from them all the qualities in which they differ, that is to say, the qualities which some of the things possess, but others do not.

Let us take an example. We cannot include the quality of brownness in our general idea of camels, because, though some camels are brown, others are not. But we can include the quality of hump, because all camels agree in having humps. So, a concept is made by bringing

42 W. T. Stace, *A Critical History of Greek Philosophy* (Macmillan and Co., Limited St. Martin's Street, London, 1920), p. 143.

together the ideas in which all the members of a class of things agree with one another, and neglecting the ideas in which they differ. Now it is the reason or mind by which we form concepts or in other words reason is the faculty of concepts. Let it be also remembered that there are two types of argumentations or reasoning. Either it is Inductive or Deductive. Inductive reasoning or induction consists in the formulation of general laws from particular facts. A general law is always a statement made, not about any particular thing, but about a whole class of things, that is, about a concept. Concepts are formed inductively by comparing numerous examples of a class. Other type of reasoning is deductive. It is always the opposite process of applying general laws to particular facts. For example, if we argue that Socrates must be mortal because all men are so, here we see, whether Socrates is a man, that is to say, whether the concept of man is properly applied to the particular thing called Socrates. In this way, inductive argumentation is concerned with the formulation of concepts while deductive argumentation with the application of them. The Sophists place all knowledge in sense-perception. Now since reason is a common or universal element in man, it follows that Socrates in opposition of Sophists placing knowledge in concepts, was thus restoring the belief in an objective truth, valid for all men, and binding upon all men, and was destroying the Sophistic teaching that the truth is whatever each individual chooses to think it is.

Now let us give thought and care to the definition. If we wish to define the word man, we must include in our definition only the qualities or a quality which all men have in common. We cannot, for example define man as a white-skinned animal, because all men are not white-skinned. Similarly, we cannot include 'Urdu-speaking' in our definition, because, though some men speak the Urdu language, others do not. But we might include such a quality as 'reason', because 'reason' is a quality common to all human beings. Thus, a definition is formed in the same way as a concept, namely, by including the common qualities of a class of things and excluding the qualities in which the members of the class differ. In this way, we find that in fact, a definition is merely the expression of a concept in words. Now, by the process of forming definitions, we obtain objective standards of truth. If, for example, we form the definition of a

square, then we can compare any geometrical shape with it, and decide whether it is a square or not. In this way, it is no longer an open choice for anyone to declare that whatever he chooses to call a square is a square. Likewise, if we form a definition of the word man, we can then compare anything with that definition, and decide whether it is a man or not.

Remember that this Socratic theory of concepts is not a theory of knowledge because it does not deal with the nature of knowledge. Definitely it is a theory of definitions which deals with the question of how can we know or acquire or achieve knowledge? Moreover, Socrates did not call his concept as some ‘independent external metaphysical reality’. To term the concept as an ‘independent external metaphysical reality’ was a serious mistake. And after Socrates, this blunder was committed by his famous disciple Plato. With regard to this mistake, Plato’s distinguished acolyte, Aristotle, writes in his book, *Metaphysics*:

“But Socrates did not make the universals or the definitions exist apart; his successors, however, gave them separate existence, and this was the kind of thing they called Ideas.”⁴³

We should keep in mind that the concept had been for Socrates merely a rule of thought. For Socrates, definitions were like guide-rails which keep thought upon the right path. Now the question is that what was for Socrates merely pattern of thought, his pupil Plato converted it into a metaphysical reality. His theory of Ideas is the *Theory of Objectivity of Concepts*. According to him, the concept is not merely an idea in the mind, but something which has a reality of its own, outside and independent of the mind and this was the core of Plato’s philosophy. Aristotle has confirmed his master’s reasoning in his *Metaphysics*. He says:

“Socrates was responsible for the genesis of the theory of Ideal Forms on account of his search for universal definitions; but he was correct in not conceiving of universals as existing in separation from particulars.”⁴⁴

43 The Complete Works of Aristotle Edited and Revised by Jonathan Barnes, (Princeton University Press 1995), Vol 2, p. 1705, ([Metaphysics 1078b 30](#)).

44 Aristotle: [Metaphysics 1086b](#): quoted in: Luis E. Navia, “Socrates, The Man and His Philosophy” (University Press of America, 1985), p. 216.

Now we turn towards what have been usually conceived as Socratic ethical teaching, i.e.: *'Virtue is Knowledge'*. Be mindful that it is not some sort of moral or ethical teaching, rather it is a theory of knowledge because the nature of knowledge has been described in it. Before documenting this famous dictum of Socrates, it is better to mention some unjust and invalid objections on this statement presented by some eminent philosophers and scholars of philosophy. The most famous and authentic philosopher who is recalled as the foremost teacher, Aristotle, though confirms the validity of this statement but at the same time, he objects the truthfulness of it. So as, he writes in his famous book *Magna Moralia* the following words. He says:

- 1) ***“Socrates’s statement that virtue is knowledge is erroneous, as is his idea that brave and just actions are meaningless unless they are done with knowledge and are the result of some rationally conceived goal.”***⁴⁵

We see that Aristotle attests the Socratic dictum ‘Virtue is Knowledge’ but at the same time taking the word ‘virtue’ in the sense of ‘virtuous action’, he objects on the credibility of this dictum. Remember that when we use the word ‘virtue’ in the sense of ‘virtuous action’ then the whole Socratic statement becomes meaningless and useless. That is why, and because of this error, Aristotle calls it an incorrect statement. Although the fact is that in Socratic statement both words ‘virtue’ and ‘knowledge’ have been used in their objective senses, i.e. ‘objective virtue’ and ‘objective knowledge’. In the same book, in another place Aristotle says the following words about the above-mentioned dictum. He says:

- 2) ***“Socrates (who came after Pythagoras) spoke better and further about the nature of the ethical virtues, but he was not successful in clarifying the issue, as he made the mistake of equating virtue and knowledge.”***⁴⁶

45 *Ibid.*, pp. 219-220., (*Magna Moralia* 1198a:).

46 *Ibid.*, pp.218-219., (*Magna Moralia* 1182a:).

Again, we see that Aristotle mentions in his words ethical virtues and from this, it is quite obvious that he was taking the word ‘virtue’ in the sense of ‘virtuous action’. As I have said already, when we use the word ‘virtue’ in the sense of ‘virtuous action’ then, the whole dictum of Socrates becomes meaningless. In the Socratic statement or dictum, the words ‘virtue’ and ‘knowledge’ have been used in the senses, of ‘objective virtue’ and ‘objective knowledge’. And no doubt that the objective virtue is ever objective knowledge and, in this way, Socratic doctrine ***‘virtue is knowledge’*** is proved absolutely correct.

So far as the meaning of arete is concerned, then British famous historian of philosophy W. K. C. Guthrie objects to the meaning of ‘arete’ as ‘virtue’. He emphasises that Greek word arete does not give the meaning of English word virtue but it meant primarily efficiency at a particular task. Whereas, he writes in the following words:

“Socrates is probably best known for the famous dictum which is usually translated ‘Virtue is knowledge’, and to find out what this means makes as good an approach as any to the centre of his teaching ... We know now that the word ‘virtue’ attaches false associations to the Greek arete, which meant primarily efficiency at a particular task ... By equating arete with knowledge, therefore, Socrates’s statement takes on the aspect of a deliberate challenge, which we can only recapture by thinking ourselves back to the times in which he lived.”⁴⁷

Against Guthrie, ‘arete’ is correctly translated by some other eminent scholars as ‘virtue’ with all its connotations. No doubt the exercise of discovering the purpose of one’s life is what *arete* stands for. There are some other competent scholars who have researched the true and full meaning of *arete*. One of them is Gregory Vlastos who strongly rejects to treat it as efficiency at a particular task. Giving reasons, for the original Greek word, in its various possible connotations, he rightly emphasises that, in Socratic usage the word ‘arete’ must be equated with ‘virtue’ in every form of goodness that they may refer to. In this context he says:

47 W. K. C. Guthrie, The Greek Philosophers From Thales to Aristotle (Fletcher & Son Ltd. Norwich 1972), p.71-72.

“On ‘virtue’ for arete I need not linger at all, for whatever may be the general usage of this word, Socrates’ own use of it to designate precisely what we understand by moral virtue must have been apparent throughout this book. Any lingering doubt on this point in my readers’ mind may be resolved by referring them to the fact that whenever he brings the general concept under scrutiny – as when he debates the teachability of arete in the Protagoras and the Meno – he assumes without argument that its sole constituents or ‘parts’ are five qualities which are, incontestably, the Greek terms of moral commendation par excellence: andreia (‘manliness’, ‘courage’), sophrosyne (‘temperance’, ‘moderation’), dikaiosyne (‘justice’, ‘righteousness’), hosiotes (‘piety’, ‘holiness’), sophia (‘wisdom’).”⁴⁸

In this way, we see that Gregory Vlastos is very rational in his stance that it is important to search the intended central meaning which Socrates himself portrays and highlights of *arete*. Aristotle also confirms the meaning of ‘*arete*’ as ‘virtue’. Talking about Socrates, he says, in his dialogue, *Magna Moralia*:

“Socrates was in error in insisting on identifying virtue with knowledge, and even though he believed that nothing exists in vain, he eventually succeeded in reducing the virtues to something useless.”⁴⁹

Socratic statement ‘*virtue is knowledge*’ is not only the most important concept of knowledge but also a sort of paradox. Apparently, it seems contradictory but in fact it is a true concept. Human finite minds cannot discover the true and hidden meanings of such philosophic riddles, that is why it has remained a striking and unsolved enigma in the domain of philosophy. Keeping in mind that the knowledge unfolds itself with the passage of time. When it has to unfold, how it has to unfold and where it has to unfold, only ‘objective Knowledge’ knows it. Without Divine assistance, we are unable to know the reality of such difficult questions

48 Gregory Vlastos, *Socrates, Ironist and Moral Philosopher*, (Cornell University Press. 1991), p. 200.

49 Aristotle: *Magna Moralia* 1183b; quoted in: Luis E. Navia, “Socrates, The Man and His Philosophy” (University Press of America, 1985), p. 219.

about the nature of Knowledge. Socrates was neither a Sophist nor a so-called philosopher but a Divine Messenger and a true reformer who was commissioned to cure the ills of the people of Athens. When rationalists could not grasp the truth of such paradoxes, then they think that perhaps the paradox has come to us in some distorted form. Although Aristotle has confirmed the words of Socratic dictum, even then some experts of philosophy try to reform the wording of this paradox. As though, in the same context, Professor Stace writes:

“If virtue is the sole end of life, what precisely is virtue? Socrates had given no clear answer to this question. The only definition he had given was that virtue is knowledge, but upon examination it turns out that this is not a definition at all. Virtue is knowledge, but knowledge of what? It is not knowledge of astronomy, of mathematics, or of physics. It is ethical knowledge, that is to say, knowledge of virtue. To define virtue as the knowledge of virtue is to think in a circle, and gets us no further in the enquiry of what virtue is? But Socrates as a matter of fact, did not think in a circle. He did not mean that virtue is knowledge, although his doctrine is often, somewhat misleadingly, stated in that form. What he meant was – quite a different thing – that virtue depends upon knowledge. It is the first condition of virtue. The principle, accurately stated, is, not that virtue is the knowledge of virtue, which is thinking in a circle, but that virtue depends upon the knowledge of virtue, which is quite straight thinking. Only if you know what virtue is can you be virtuous. Hence, we have not here any definition of virtue, or any attempt to define it. We are still left with the question, ‘what is virtue?’, unanswered.”⁵⁰

As though I have described that in Socratic paradox, the words ‘virtue’ and ‘knowledge’ have been used in objective senses, i.e. ‘objective Virtue’ is ‘objective Knowledge’. Here I want to mention a well-known revealed couplet of the English mystic poet John Keats. ‘Ode on a Grecian Urn’ was written by John Keats in 1819. The last two lines of this ode are the most discussed in all of Keats’s poetry. In this couplet he says:

⁵⁰ W. T. Stace, *A Critical History of Greek Philosophy* (Macmillan and Co., Limited St. Martin’s Street, London, 1920), p. 157.

***“Beauty is truth, truth beauty, – that is all
Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know.”⁵¹***

In this couplet, Keats does not imply that beauty depends upon truth, rather he means that beauty and truth both are one and the same. Further he says that to know the reality of beauty and truth are the purpose of human life. But we see that Keats does not mention the reality whom he called beauty and truth. In other words, we can say that in this couplet Keats has not defined beauty and truth. But we can easily understand that he has mentioned the ‘objective Beauty’ and ‘objective Truth’. Similar to John Keats’s revealed couplet, we can also say the same thing about the Socratic statement, ‘*Virtue is Knowledge*’.

***“Virtue is Knowledge, Knowledge Virtue, – that is all
Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know.”***

So far as Virtue is the sole end of life is concerned, then Aristotle has confirmed this fact, in his *Eudemian Ethics*. He says:

“According to Socrates the elder, the goal should always be the knowledge of virtue; his concern was the clarification of justice, courage, and the other virtues, and in this he was correct; he thought that virtue and knowledge were the same, so that virtue and the knowledge of virtue were attained at the same time.”⁵²

Now let’s turn towards the nature of Knowledge. Different men have described the nature of Knowledge quite differently. Like Sophists, some of them have even denied the existence of ‘the Knowledge’. They claim that if there does exist any Knowledge, then certainly human reason could discover It. This sort of thinking is a mistake because the Knowledge is always above human finite reason. If a blind person claims that there does not exist any sun because he cannot see it; can such a claim of the blind person be valid and sufficient for the denial of the existence of the sun?

51 John Keats (1795-1821), ‘*Ode on a Grecian Urn*’ (1820) st. 5.

52 Aristotle: *Eudemian Ethics* 1216b; quoted in: Luis E. Navia, “Socrates, The Man and His Philosophy” (University Press of America, 1985), p. 220.

The state of human reason, in relation, to ‘the Knowledge’ is exactly the same as the state of a blind person in relation to the sun. Someone should not opine that since human reason is unable to seek the Knowledge, therefore, it is unattainable. The Knowledge is attainable, not through reason but when someone feels a true thirst for ‘the Knowledge’, and adopts the virtuous path, then ‘the Knowledge’ improves one’s mind and unfolds Itself in his heart. In this context the Promised Mahdi and Masih-e-Maoud Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as} guides human beings in the following words. He says:

“Dear ones, no one can fight God’s designs. Be sure that the source of perfect knowledge is Divine Revelation which is bestowed on the holy Prophets of God. Therefore God, who is the ocean of Grace, did not design that divine revelation should be sealed up for the future and the world should thus be destroyed. The doors of His revelation and converse are always open. If you seek them along their proper ways, you will find them easily.”⁵³

In the first place, let’s deal with the question: does any Knowledge exist? To find the answer to this question, let’s first see the reasoning or argumentation of Socrates. After that, we will try to find the answer to our question, in the light of Socratic reasoning. In apology, Socrates asks from his accuser Meletus:

“Does any man, Meletus, believe in human affairs who does not believe in human beings? Make him answer, and not again and again create disturbance. Does any man who does not believe in horses believe in horsemen’s activities? Or in flute-playing activities but not in flute-players? No, my good sir, no man could. If you are not willing to answer, I will tell you and these men. Answer the next question, however. Does any man believe in spiritual activities who does not believe in spirits? – No one.

53 Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmadas, Roohani Khazain, (Urdu), Vol 10, pp. 443. The Philosophy of the Teachings of Islam, translated into English by Sir Ch M Zafrullah Khan (Islam International Publications Ltd., Tilford, Surrey GU 10 2AQ UK, 2017), pp. 199.

Thank you for answering, if reluctantly, when these gentlemen made you. Now you say that I believe in spiritual things and teach about them, whether new or old, but at any rate spiritual things according to what you say, and to this you have sworn in your deposition. But if I believe in spiritual things I must quite inevitably believe in spirits. Is that not so? It is indeed. I shall assume that you agree, as you do not answer. Do we not believe spirits to be either gods or the children of gods? Yes, or No? – Of course.

Then since I do believe in spirits, as you admit, if spirits are gods, this is what I mean when I say you speak riddles and in jest, as you state that I do not believe in gods and then again that I do, since I do believe in spirits. If on the other hand the spirits are children of the gods, bastard children of the gods by nymphs or some other mothers, as they are said to be, what man would believe children of the gods to exist, but not gods? That would be just as absurd as to believe the young of horses and asses, namely mules, to exist, but not to believe in the existence of horses and asses. You must have made this deposition, Meletus, either to test us or because you were at a loss to find any true wrongdoing of which to accuse me. There is no way in which you could persuade anyone of even small intelligence that it is possible for one and the same man to believe in spiritual but not also divine things, and then again for that same man to believe neither in spirits nor in gods nor in heroes. I do not think, men of Athens, that it requires a prolonged defence to prove that I am not guilty of the charges in Meletus' deposition, but this is sufficient.”⁵⁴

Now let us return to the question: does any ‘Knowledge’ exist? In the first chapter, I have discussed in detail that every action is possible with some sort of object. No action is possible without its object as they are always complementary. I have also described that we perform actions because of our needs. For example, we all require nourishment because of our need and this need also justifies the existence of some objective nourishing. In case of nourishing our need of nourishing is directly related

54 Plato: Complete Works Edited by John M. Cooper, 1997, ([Apology](#) 27c-28a).

with the ‘objective nourishing’, i.e. nourishment. Without the existence of ‘objective nourishing’ the existence of our need of nourishing also cannot exist. Just as an action is a logical proof of its object, likewise need, too, is a logical proof of it. If need and action both exist, then certainly their object too will exist. Like other actions, knowing is also an action. If all other actions cannot be possible without their objects, then how is it possible for knowing to exist without its object? Can we deny the existence of all students in the world? Can we deny the existence of all seekers of knowledge in this world? If we wish so, even then, we cannot do so. Moreover, it has been pointed out that our nourishing is not possible without its need. According to Socrates, if we believe in human affairs, then we also have to believe in human beings. In case of our knowing, how is it possible that all students and seekers of knowledge are engaged in knowing but without its need and without the existence of ‘objective knowledge’? Justly, we all have employed ourselves in knowing because ‘the knowledge’ exists and we feel its thirst in ourselves. From this discussion, once again we can draw certain logical conclusions about the existence of ‘the Knowledge’.

- 1) Firstly, that our knowing and our need for knowing both justify the existence of their object (i.e. objective Knowledge or shortly the Knowledge). If our knowing and our need for knowing do exist, then no doubt their object (the Knowledge) will also exist.
- 2) Secondly, that our knowing and our need for knowing both are post-created while their object (i.e. the Knowledge) pre-exists.
- 3) Thirdly, that, since our knowing and our need for knowing both are emerged because of ‘the Knowledge’, therefore, these depend upon It, while ‘the Knowledge’ is Independent. It does not depend upon Its predicates (i.e. the knowers and their needs).

Alas! We believe in physical and metaphysical sciences but we deny the existence of ‘the Knowledge’ which has encompassed the whole universe and is the sole source of all sorts of sciences. This proof is sufficient for those who deny the existence of ‘the Knowledge’. With the proof of the existence of ‘the Knowledge’, there comes out another question, ‘What is It?’ Socrates has rightly and thoroughly provided the answer to this

question in his well-known concept or dictum, '*Virtue is Knowledge*'. Here someone will ask about 'the essence of Virtue'. It has already been discussed in the first chapter. Can we cast doubt over 'the Supreme, Ultimate, Universal Truth', being that It is Knowledge? No, never, not at all. After Socrates, all subsequent adepts and pseudo-philosophers have taken the term 'Knowledge' in a verbal sense of 'Knowing' while Socrates had used It in the sense of 'objective Knowledge'. Such understanding and interpretation of the terms 'Virtue' and 'Knowledge' left the students in darkness and the advancement of thought was stopped.

یہ دُعا ہی کا تھا معجزہ کہ عصا، ساحروں کے مقابل بنا آڑ دہا
آج بھی دیکھنا 'مردِ حق' کی دُعا سحر کی ناگنوں کو نگل جائے گی

It was a miracle of prayer that a staff becomes a serpent before magicians. Today look, the prayer of a true man will swallow all sorts of serpentiform magic.⁵⁵

Someone can object that if 'the Knowledge' is 'the Supreme, Ultimate, Universal Truth', then why did Socrates leave his followers without Its description and explanation? Possibly, there can be two reasons for it. In the first place, Socrates, as is well-known had never committed his philosophy to writing. His method of teaching was purely conversational. It is possible that verbally he told his followers about the nature of 'the Knowledge', but they could not comprehend him. Secondly, that 'the Knowledge' unfolds Itself with the passage of time. When It has to unfold, how It has to unfold and where It has to unfold, only 'the Knowledge' knows it. Without Divine assistance, we are unable to grasp the truth. Socrates was neither a speculator nor a sophist but a true philosopher and above all a Divine Messenger who had a contact with the Heavens. He had claimed that both '*Virtue*' and '*Knowledge*' are one and the same. It has been described that It is '*the Supreme, Ultimate, Universal Truth*'. Can we doubt the existence of 'the Knowledge'? Are we not in search of It? Don't we know It through concepts?

55 Mirza Tahir Ahmad (Kalam-e-Tahir, Urdu), Ahmadiyya Jamaat Germany, Aug 1998, p. 20.

4. Socrates as a Prophet and Messenger for Athens

In the times of Socrates^{as}, there are two groups of educators or scholars in Athens, i.e. natural philosophers and the Sophists. But we see that Socrates^{as} can not be included in either group of these educators of that time. So far as natural philosophers are concerned then, Socrates^{as} says in front of the jury:

*“I do not speak in contempt of such knowledge, if someone is wise in these things – lest Meletus bring more cases against me – but, gentlemen, I have no part in it, and on this point, I call upon the majority of you as witnesses. I think it right that all those of you who have heard me conversing, and many of you have, should tell each other if any one of you has ever heard me discussing such subjects to any extent at all.”*⁵⁶

After enduring Greek Philosophy and specifically studying Socrates^{as}, one question emerges in the mind of the reader, whether Socrates^{as} was a Sophist, philosopher or appertained to that holy and pious group of people, the Prophets and Messengers. This question is not only important from a religious point of view but also to settle once and for all the true personality of Socrates^{as}. No doubt, Socrates^{as} had led his whole life among the Sophists but even then, he was not one of them. Stating that Socrates^{as} was totally opposed to them is no exaggeration. He was a man of the noblest character and of the simplest of lifestyles. Contrary to the Sophists, he accepted no fees from his audience and thus accumulated no wealth. Poor, caring nothing for worldly grandeur, wholly independent of the ordinary needs and desires of men, he devoted himself exclusively to acquire of that which, in his eyes, alone had value, virtue and knowledge. He was enriched with the utmost strengths of physical tolerance, moral strength and temperament. It is said that it was Sophists who had introduced into Greek philosophy the problems of man and his duties. And to these problems, Socrates^{as} also turns his exclusive attention. We

56 Plato: Complete Works Edited by John M. Cooper, 1997, (Apology 19c-d).

can say that it was the only similarity between Sophists and Socrates^{as} that both addressed the problem of man and his duties. But contrary to the Sophists the position of Socrates^{as} is that of a restorer of faith. His excellence lies in the fact that he observed that the only way to combat the ruinous results of the Sophistic teaching was to refute the fundamental assumption from which all that teaching flowed, the assumption that knowledge is perception. Opposing such teachings, Socrates^{as} taught that knowledge is virtue and it is achieved through concepts.

Secondly, he was not the soi-disant philosopher who thinks about the origins of the world, or the nature of the ultimate reality, of which he had heard so much in the ideologies of the antecedent savants. He openly deprecated such speculations and taught that all such knowledge comparatively was worthless as against ethical knowledge of man and his duties. He was the first true and genuine philosopher to divert philosophy from matters which nature herself has wrapped in obscurity, with which all philosophers before him had been concerned, and apply it to ordinary life, directing its inquiries to virtues and vices, and in general to good and evil. So as, Guthrie writes in this context:

“For the Greeks themselves the name of Socrates formed a watershed in the history of their philosophy. The reason they give for this is that he turned men’s eyes from the speculations about the nature of the physical world which had been characteristic of the Presocratic period, and concentrated attention on the problems of human life. In the most general terms, his message was that to investigate the origin and ultimate matter of the universe, the composition and motions of the heavenly bodies, the shape of the earth or the causes of natural growth and decay was of far less importance than to understand what it meant to be a human being and for what purpose one was in the world.”⁵⁷

His conduct also provides a robust argument that Socrates^{as} was not only a genuine philosopher but also a Prophet and a Reformer for the people of Athens. That is why addressing to the members of jury he says:

57 W. K. C. Guthrie, A history of Greek philosophy Vol 3, p 417.

“You too must be of good hope as regards death, gentlemen of the jury, and keep this one truth in mind, that a good man cannot be harmed either in life or in death, and that his affairs are not neglected by the gods. What has happened to me now has not happened of itself, but it is clear to me that it was better for me to die now and to escape from trouble. That is why my divine sign did not oppose me at any point. So, I am certainly not angry with those who convicted me, or with my accusers. Of course, that was not their purpose when they accused and convicted me, but they thought they were hurting me, and for this deserve blame. This much I ask from them: when my sons grow up, avenge yourselves by causing them the same kind of grief that I caused you, if you think they care for money or anything else more than they care for virtue, or if they think they are somebody when they are nobody. Reproach them as I reproach you, that they do not care for the right things and think they are worthy when they are not worthy of anything. If you do this, I shall have been justly treated by you, and my sons also. Now the hour to part has come. I go to die; you go to live. Which of us goes to the better lot is known to no one, except the god.”⁵⁸

What was the condition and thoughts of Socrates^{as} before his death, is beautifully depicted by a well-known Pakistani poet. So far as Munir Niazi says in his verses:

کُج اُنچ وی راہواں آکھیاں سن --- کُج گل وچ غماں دا طوق وی سی
کُج شہر دے لوک وی ظالم سن --- کُج سانوں مرن دا شوق وی سی

Sometime the paths were tortuous, sometimes the burden of grief was hanging on the neck.

Sometimes the people of the town were cruel ... sometime I had a death wish.

It should be remembered, that Socrates^{as} occupies a unique position in the history of Greek philosophy. Though Socrates^{as} has been treated as a

58 Plato: Complete Works Edited by John M. Cooper, 1997, (Apology 41c ff.).

thinker in Western philosophy he was not only a philosopher rather also a great Prophet or Messenger for the people of Athens. We should remember that God Almighty has not only sent His Prophets in the generation of Abraham^{as} or to the Children of Israel (Bani Israil) but He had appointed His Prophets in each and every nation for the guidance of His people. In the Holy Qur'an, God Almighty says to His Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) that He has sent many Messengers before him^{saw}.

وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا رُسُلًا مِّن قَبْلِكَ مِنْهُمْ مَّن قَضَّصْنَا عَلَيْكَ وَمِنْهُمْ مَّن لَّمْ نَقْصُصْ عَلَيْكَ... البومن-٩،

- 1) *“And We did send Messengers before thee; of them are some whom We have mentioned to thee, and of them there are some whom We have not mentioned to thee ...”* (Surah Al Mu'min 40':79)

إِنَّمَا أَنْتَ مُنذِرٌ وَلِكُلِّ قَوْمٍ هَادٍ... الرعد-٨

- 2) *“Thou art, surely, a Warner. And there is a Guide for every people.”* (Surah Ar-Ra'd 13':8)

وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا مِن قَبْلِكَ فِي شَيْعِ الْأَوَّلِينَ... الحجر-١١

- 3) *“And We sent Messengers before thee among parties of ancient peoples.”* (Surah Al-Hijr 15':11)

وَلَقَدْ بَعَثْنَا فِي كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ رَسُولًا أَنِ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَاجْتَنِبُوا الطَّاغُوتَ... النحل-٣٤

- 4) *“And We did raise among every people a Messenger, preaching: ‘Worship Allah and shun the Evil One.’”* (Surah An-Nahl 16':37)

From these aforesaid verses of the Holy Qur'an, it is well-described and proven that God the Exalted has sent his Prophets in each and every nation of the world for the purpose of guiding the people. In case of revelation and rationality, Socrates^{as} was the only one in whom these two sources of knowledge were perfectly combined. There must have been other Prophets before and after him that is why he is known to have said that he is not the

only one from God who has been the recipient of revelation; there have been many other great men before who had been sent and they did the same to serve the cause of goodness. We believe that before Socrates^{as} the philosophical babble of the Sophists were the acts of earthly and sensual men. It is the revelation and rationality which lifts human thoughts to the sublime and the beautiful loftiness. It is the reason that some biographers describe him to bring high-flown ethereal philosophical concepts from the heavens down to the Earth. A well-known Italian statesman and writer Marcus Tullius Cicero says in his letters:

“Socrates was the first man to bring philosophy down from the heavens and set her firmly in cities on earth, bringing her into the homes of the people, and making them consider their lives and their standards of behaviour.”⁵⁹

Socrates^{as}, in his defence, had delivered a well-grounded and comprehensive speech before the verdict of the jury. Plato’s dialogue *Apology* is conceived as the text of that historical speech. The original name of this dialogue was *The Reply of Socrates* but was later renamed in the English translation as *Apology* and truly it has deeply impressed the people in the history of mankind.

From the writings of Plato and Xenophon, it is obvious that Socrates^{as} was neither the soi-disant philosopher nor a Sophist but he was a reformer and preacher for his nation. In the history of mankind, we know that many false claimants of prophethood have existed. In such a situation the question arises, is there some solid and sound proof for the Prophethood of Socrates^{as}. According to the Holy Qur’an there are some special properties of true Prophets. And now we will investigate whether these special properties of Prophethood can be found in the personality of Socrates^{as}. According to the Holy Qur’an the following distinctive features and special characteristics are typical for divinely appointed Prophets.

59 Cicero, Fragments V4 ,10.

Special Properties and Features of Prophets

There are some special properties and features of Prophets which will be explored in the light of the Holy Qur'an. Furthermore, we will examine the personality of Socrates in the light of the criteria of Prophets.

1) Prophets have always been commissioned by God.

- I) Let it to be remembered that Prophets and Messengers have been always commissioned by God. No man can be a Prophet or Messenger of his own volition. It is God the Exalted who always appoints them. God the Exalted says in Surah Yusuf:

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ إِلَّا رِجَالًا نُوْحِي إِلَيْهِمْ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْقُرَىٰ... يوسف- ١١٠

“And We sent not before thee as Messengers any but men, whom We inspired, from among the people of the towns ...” (Surah Yusuf 12':110)

- II) God the Exalted says in Surah Al-Qasas:

وَلَكِنَّا كُنَّا مُرْسِلِينَ... القصص- ٣٦

“----But it is We Who sent Messengers.” (Surah Al-Qasas 28':46)

- III) In Surah Al-An'am God the Exalted says:

وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا إِلَىٰ أُمَمٍ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ فَأَخَذْنَاهُمْ بِالْبَأْسَاءِ وَالضَّرَآءِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَضَرَّعُونَ... انعام- ٣٣

“And indeed, We sent Messengers to peoples before thee; then We afflicted them with poverty and adversity that they might humbles themselves.” (Surah Al-An'am 6':43)

- IV) In Surah Hud God the Exalted says:

وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا نُوحًا إِلَىٰ قَوْمِهِ إِنِّي لَكُمْ نَذِيرٌ مُّبِينٌ... هود- ٢٦

“And We sent Noah to his people, and he said, ‘Truly, I am a plain Warner to you.’” (Surah Hud 11’:26)

So far as Socrates^{as} is concerned, he too was appointed and commissioned by God the Exalted. Whereas, he says before the jury:

- I) *“Gentlemen of the jury: wherever a man has taken a position that he believes to be best, or has been placed by his commander, there he must I think remain and face danger, without a thought for death or anything else, rather than disgrace. It would have been a dreadful way to behave, gentlemen of the jury, if, at Potidaea, Amphipolis and Delium, I had, at the risk of death, like anyone else, remained at any post where those you had elected to command had ordered me, and then, when the god ordered me, as I thought and believed, to live the life of a philosopher, to examine myself and others, I had abandoned my post for fear of death or anything else. That would have been a dreadful thing.”*⁶⁰
- II) *“Indeed, men of Athens, I am far from making a defence now on my own behalf, as might be thought, but on yours, to prevent you from wrongdoing by mistreating the god’s gift to you by condemning me; for if you kill me, you will not easily find another like me. I was attached to this city by the god.”*⁶¹

2) Prophets have always received revelation from the Exalted God.

- I) No doubt God the Exalted reveals to His multitude of chosen people but His Prophets and Messengers abundantly receive revelation. God the Exalted says in Surah Al-Anbiya’:

60 Plato: Complete Works Edited by John M. Cooper, 1997, (Apology 28de, 29a).

61 Ibid., (Apology 30e).

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ مِنْ رَسُولٍ إِلَّا نُوحِيَ إِلَيْهِ... الانبياء- ٢١

“And We sent no Messenger before thee but We revealed to him ...”
(Surah Al-Anbiya 21’:26)

II) God the Exalted says in Sura Yunus:

أَكَاْنِ لِلنَّاسِ عَجَبًا أَنْ أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَى رَجُلٍ مِنْهُمْ... يونس- ٣

“Is it a matter of wonder for men that We have inspired a man from among them,” (Surah Yunus 10’:3)

III) God the Exalted says in Surah Al-Nisa:

إِنَّا أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ كَمَا أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَى نُوحٍ وَالنَّبِيِّينَ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ... النساء- ١٦٣

“Surely, we have sent revelation to thee, as We sent revelation to Noah and the Prophets after him; –” (Surah An-Nisa 4’:164)

So far as revelation is concerned, Socrates^{as} also received revelation from God the Exalted. Whereas, he says before the jury:

*“Why then do some people enjoy spending considerable time in my company? You have heard why, men of Athens; I have told you the whole truth. They enjoy hearing those being questioned who think they are wise, but are not. And this is not unpleasant. To do this has, as I say, been enjoined upon me by the god, by means of oracles and dreams, and in every other way that a divine manifestation has ever ordered a man to do anything.”*⁶²

3) The Prophets advise people to take care of their souls and prepare for the Hereafter. They call people towards God and purify them.

62 Ibid., (Apology 33 c).

According to Socrates^{as}, the human body consists not only of skin and flesh but also of a spirit with eternal existence which is known as a soul. The Holy Qur'an also informs us that the human body is a compound of skin and flesh in which a soul was breathed into. God the Exalted, describes in Surah Sad the creation of the Prophet Adam^{as} and informs us:

إِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ إِنِّي خَلَقْتُ بَشَرًا مِّنْ طِينٍ. فَإِذَا سَوَّيْتُهُ وَنَفَخْتُ فِيهِ مِن رُّوحِي فَقَعُوا لَهُ سَاجِدِينَ... ص ٤٣، ٤٢

“When thy Lord said to the angels, ‘I am about to create man from clay, And so when I have fashioned him in perfection, and have breathed into him of My Spirit, fall ye down in submission to him.’” (Surah Sad 38’:72,73)

A soul is a manifestation of Allah’s Majesty belonging not to earth but to heaven. The Soul is the single cause of human existence. Our body needs food to exist but noxious or unsuitable food can destroy our body. Likewise, a soul prospers with good and virtuous deeds and may extinguish because of malicious conducts. The spiritual being is more precious than the body of flesh. Since human beings are surely in need of physical sustenance and the human souls of spiritual food. All spiritual religions acknowledge the presence of a spiritual being.

In Deuteronomy 8:3 Allah the Exalted Says

“He afflicted thee with want, and gave thee manna for thy food, which neither thou nor thy fathers knew: to shew that not in bread alone doth man live, but in every word that proceedeth from the mouth of God.

For the sake of trial, when Jesus Christ^{as} was questioned, then replying to the question he repeated the same statement of Deuteronomy.

Whereas in Matthew (Ch. 4 verse 3,4) he says:

“And the tempter coming said to him: If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. Who answered and said:

It is written, Not in bread alone doth man live, but in every word that proceedeth from the mouth of God.”

As it is necessary for a human being to protect his physical body likewise it is more important to protect his soul. It is called purifying the soul and Allah the Exalted has emphasised the importance of purifying the soul so that a human being can achieve success and salvation in the hereafter. Whereas He says in sura Al-Shamas:

فَالْهَمَّهَا فُجُورَهَا وَتَقْوَاهَا قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ زَكَّاهَا وَقَدْ خَابَ مَنْ دَسَّاهَا... الشمس ٩، ١٠، ١١

“And He revealed to it what is wrong for it and what is right for it. He indeed truly prospers who purifies it (soul), And he who corrupts it is ruined.” (Surah Al-Shamas 91’:9,10,11)

In the same way God the Exalted says in sura Al-Ala:

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ تَزَكَّى... الأعلى ١٥

“Verily, he truly prospers who purifies himself i.e his soul.” (Surah Al-A’la 87’:15)

That is why the single purpose of invitation of all the Prophets has been to reform the soul of the people and same is the purpose of the advent of the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw}. According to the Holy Qur’an, God the Exalted says in Surah Al-Baqarah and Surah Al-Jumu’ah:

رَبَّنَا وَابْعَثْ فِيهِمْ رَسُولًا مِنْهُمْ يَتْلُو عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِكَ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ... البقرة ١٢٩-١٣٠

“And, our Lord, raise up among them a Messenger from among themselves, who may recite to them Thy Signs and teach them the Book and Wisdom and may purify them; surely, Thou art the Mighty, the Wise.” (Surah Al-Baqarah 2’:130)

كَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا فِيكُمْ رَسُولًا مِنْكُمْ يَتْلُو عَلَيْكُمْ آيَاتِنَا وَيُزَكِّيكُمْ وَيُعَلِّمُكُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَيُعَلِّمُكُم مَّا لَمْ تَكُونُوا تَعْلَمُونَ - البقرة ١٥٢

“Even as We have sent to you a Messenger from among yourselves who recites Our Signs to you, and purifies you, and teaches you the Book and Wisdom, and teaches you that which you knew not.” (Surah Al-Baqarah 2’:152)

According to the prayer of Prophet Abraham^{as} when God the Exalted commissioned that Prophet^{saw} in Mecca He says:

هُوَ الَّذِي بَعَثَ فِي الْأُمِّيِّينَ رَسُولًا مِنْهُمْ يَتْلُو عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِهِ وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَإِنْ كَانُوا مِنْ قَبْلُ لَفِي ضَلَالٍ مُبِينٍ - الجمعة ٣

“He it is Who has raised among the Unlettered people a Messenger from among themselves who recites unto them His signs, and purifies them, and teaches them the Book and Wisdom, although they had been, before, in manifest misguidance.” (Surah Al-Jumu’ah 62’:3)

Divine Prophets invite people towards their Creator, the Master of the Day of Judgement. So as, God the Exalted says in Sura Yusuf about the Prophet Muhammad^{saw}:

قُلْ هَذِهِ سَبِيلِي أَدْعُو إِلَى اللَّهِ عَلَى بَصِيرَةٍ أَنَا وَمَنِ اتَّبَعَنِي وَسُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَمَا أَنَا مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ - يوسف ١٠٩

“Say, ‘This is my way: I call unto Allah on sure knowledge, I and those who follow me. And Holy is Allah; and I am not of those who associate gods with God.’” (Surah Yusuf 12’:109)

Even though the mention of the body and soul existed in ancient Greek philosophy and religion before the time of Socrates^{as}, the emphasis made by Socrates on caring of the soul is unique. When we study the literature of Plato, Xenophon and other scholars we observe that the main aspect of the message of Socrates was to inspire people to reform their souls. That is why Socrates used to discuss the concepts of good and evil with the people in the streets of Athens. According to Socrates, all the paths to the

soul go through knowledge. The first step towards purifying the soul is that one should try to identify one's own self and to recognise the strengths and traits they possess. What are our obligations as human beings? What is virtuous and what is evil? What is good and what is wickedness? All these questions can only be answered through knowledge. After knowing the solutions to these questions, it can be possible for human beings to become virtuous and avoid sin. Socratic teachings were the same for the people of Athens. As he says before the jury:

- I) *“Men of Athens, I am grateful and I am your friend, but I will obey the god rather than you, and as long as I draw breath and am able, I shall not cease to practice philosophy, to exhort you and in my usual way to point out to any one of you whom happen to meet. Good Sir, you are an Athenian, a citizen of the greatest city with the greatest reputation for both wisdom and power; are you not ashamed of your eagerness to possess as much wealth, reputation and honours as possible, while you do not care for nor give thought to wisdom or truth, or the best possible state of your soul?” Then, if one of you disputes this and says he does care, I shall not let him go at once or leave him, but I shall question him, examine him and test him, and if I do not think he has attained the goodness that he says he has, I shall reproach him because he attaches little importance to the most important things and greater importance to inferior things. I shall treat in this way anyone I happen to meet, young and old, citizen and stranger, and more so the citizens because you are more kindred to me. Be sure that this is what the god orders me to do, and I think there is no greater blessing for the city than my service to the god. For I go around doing nothing but persuading both young and old among you not to care for your body or your wealth in preference to or as strongly as for the best possible state of your soul, as I say to you: “Wealth does not bring about excellence, but excellence brings about wealth and all other public and private blessings for men.”⁶³*

63 Ibid., (Apology 29 dff-30 b).

- II) *“Though it seems a ridiculous thing to say – as upon a great and noble horse which was somewhat sluggish because of its size and needed to be stirred upon by a kind of gadfly. It is to fulfil some such function that I believe the god has placed me in the city. I never cease to rouse each and every one of you, to persuade and reproach you all day long and everywhere I find myself in your company.”*⁶⁴

In the religion of Islam, some mystics believe that in order to purify the soul, knowledge, research, pursuit and enquiry is prohibited. But according to the Holy Qur'an, this is the practice of non-believers as a man is gifted by Allah the Exalted with five senses and strengths to deliberate so that he can acquire knowledge about the hidden secrets of the universe. As God the Exalted says in Surah Al-e-Imran:

إِنَّ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَاخْتِلَافِ اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ لَآيَاتٍ لِّأُولِي الْأَلْبَابِ. الَّذِينَ يَذْكُرُونَ اللَّهَ قِيَامًا وَقُعُودًا وَعَلَى جُنُوبِهِمْ وَيَتَفَكَّرُونَ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ رَبَّنَا مَا خَلَقْتَ هَذَا بَاطِلًا سُبْحَانَكَ فَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ (إل عمران- ١٩١، ١٩٢)

“In the creation of the heavens and the earth and in the alternation of the night and the day there are indeed Signs for men of understanding. Those who remember Allah while standing, sitting, and lying on their sides, and ponder over the creation of the heavens and the earth: Our Lord, Thou hast not created this in vain; nay, Holy art Thou; save us, then, from the punishment of the Fire.” (Surah Al-e-Imran 3':191-192)

In the Holy Qur'an those people, who use their capacities to unveil the secrets of the universe and praise the Lord, are called men of understanding and men of eyes having a high status. The Holy Prophet^{saw} appreciated knowledge and scholars and said, that the best person amongst you is the one who is gifted with knowledge by God the Exalted, he acts in accordance with that knowledge and teaches others. Same was said by Socrates^{as} that the best characteristics of a person is his knowledge and his intelligence. These facts reveal that Socrates was a great preacher

64 Ibid., (Apology 30 e-31 d).

of purifying the soul, great Messenger from God the Exalted and his teachings were in accordance with the teachings of the Holy Qur'an. Before drinking the poison, Socrates talks with his friends about the states and care of souls. He urges that the most important work and responsibility of human beings is to protect and purify their souls. He says:

- I) *“It is right to think then, gentlemen, that if the soul is immortal, it requires our care not only for the time we call our life, but for the sake of all time, and that one is in terrible danger if one does not give it that care. If death were escape from everything, it would be a great boon to the wicked to get rid of the body and of their wickedness together with their soul. But now that the soul appears to be immortal, there is no escape from evil or salvation for it except by becoming as good and wise as possible, for the soul goes to the underworld possessing nothing but its education and upbringing, which are said to bring the greatest benefit or harm to the dead right at the beginning of the journey yonder.*

We are told that when each person dies, the guardian spirit who was allotted to him in life proceeds to lead him to a certain place, whence those who have been gathered together there must, after being judged, proceed to the underworld with the guide who has been appointed to lead them thither from here. Having there undergone what they must and stayed there the appointed time, they are led back here by another guide after long periods of time. The journey is as Aeschylus' Telephus describes it. He says that only one single path leads to Hades, but I think it is neither one nor simple, for then there would be no need of guides; one could not make any mistake if there were but one path. As it is, it is likely to have many forks and crossroads; and I base this judgement on the sacred rites and customs here.

The well-ordered and wise soul follows the guide and is not without familiarity with its surroundings, but the soul that is passionately attached to the body, as I said before, hovers around it and the visible world for a long time, struggling and suffering much until it is led away

by force and with difficulty by its appointed spirit. When the impure soul which has performed some impure deed joins the others after being involved in unjust killings, or committed other crimes which are akin to these and are actions of souls of this kind, everybody shuns it and turns away, unwilling to be its fellow traveller or its guide; such a soul wanders alone completely at a loss until a certain time arrives and it is forcibly led to its proper dwelling place. On the other hand, the soul that has led a pure and a moderate life finds fellow travellers and gods to guide it, and each of them dwells in a place suited to it.”⁶⁵

Those people who protect their souls from pollution in this life, Socrates^{as} gave them glad tidings of the afterlife. He says:

- II) *“Those who are deemed to have lived an extremely pious life are freed and released from the regions of the earth as from a prison; they make their way up to a pure dwelling place and live on the surface of the earth. Those who have purified themselves sufficiently by philosophy live in the future altogether without a body; they make their way to even more beautiful dwelling places which it is hard to describe clearly, nor do we now have the time to do so. Because of the things we have enunciated, Simmias, one must make every effort to share in virtue and wisdom in one’s life, for the reward is beautiful and the hope is great.”⁶⁶*

4) Prophets have elevated and robust character.

All Prophets and Messengers appointed by God the Exalted have high and sound characters. Before their commission they are treated as respectable men of their nation by virtue of their outstanding character. As far as this quality is concerned, God the Exalted says to the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw}, you spoke to your people before your claim, you have

65 Plato: Complete Works Edited by John M. Cooper, 1997, (Phaedo, 107cde-108abc).

66 Ibid., (Phaedo, 114 c).

passed your whole life among them. And you are aware of my character. And even you also know that I never spoke a lie. As God Almighty says in Sura Yunus:

فَقَدْ لَبِثْتُ فِيكُمْ عُمُرًا مِّن قَبْلِهِ أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ... يونس-١٤

“I have indeed lived among you a whole lifetime before this. Will you not then understand?” (Surah Yunus 10’:17)

Likewise, God the Exalted says in Sura Al-Qalam about the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw}:

وَإِنَّكَ لَعَلَىٰ خُلُقٍ عَظِيمٍ - القلم- ٥

“And thou dost surely possess high moral excellences.” (Surah Al-Qalam 68’:5)

The most impressive description of Socrates’^{as} habits and high character comes from Alcibiades in the symposium (215a-222b), in which from the lips of one of the most influential and indeed most dissolute among the Athenians, we are given the most memorable eulogy and the most graphic description of Socrates on record. The man, says Alcibiades, as a bundle of eccentricities that can be best described in terms of an analogy: inner man resembles God just like the statues of the Sileni sold at the statuary’s outlets, within which there are hidden figures of God. Alcibiades goes on to describe in detail that Socrates embodies in his person all the divine attributes that humble human beings worship and admire in the Olympians. He concludes his eulogy with these words:

“You could say many other marvelous things in praise of Socrates. Perhaps he shares some of his specific accomplishments with others. But, as a whole, he is unique; he is like no one else in the past and no one in the present – this is by far the most amazing thing about him. For we might be able to form an idea of what Achilles was like by comparing him to Brasidas or some other great warrior, or we might compare Pericles with Nestor or Antenor or one of the other great orators. There

is parallel for everyone – everyone else, that is. But this man here is so bizarre, his ways and his ideas are so unusual, that, search as you might, you will never find anyone else, alive or dead who is even remotely like him. The best you can do is not to compare him to anything human, but to liken him, as do, to Silenus and the satyrs, and the same goes for his ideas and arguments.”⁶⁷

5) The Prophets preach with love, wisdom, goodly exhortation and charming smiles.

Since the prophets are unique people of their nations therefore their way of talking is also unique. Their conversation is always argumentative, well-grounded, full of wisdom, loving and goodly exhortation. Whereas God the Exalted informs the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw} in Sura An-Nahl:

أَدْعُ إِلَى سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ بِالْحُكْمَةِ وَالنُّعْظَةِ الْحَسَنَةِ وَجِدِلْهُمْ بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ... النحل- ١٢٦

“Call unto the way of thy Lord with wisdom and goodly exhortation, and argue with them in a way that is best.” (Surah An-Nahl 16’:126)

Alcibiades mentions the same Socratic affectionate, loving behaviour and charming and bewitching style of preaching in Symposium. He says:

“If I were to describe for you what an extraordinary effect his words have always had on me (I can feel it this moment even as I am speaking), you might actually suspect that I am drunk! Still, I swear to you, the moment he starts to speak. I am beside myself: my heart starts leaping in my chest, the tears come streaming down my face, even the frenzied Corybantes seem sane compared to me – and, let me tell you I am not alone. I have heard Pericles and many other great orators, and I have admired their speeches. But nothing like this ever happened to me: they never upset me so deeply that my very own soul started protesting that

67 Plato: Complete Works Edited by John M. Cooper, 1997, (Symposium, 221cd).

my life – my life! – was no better than the most miserable slaves. And yet that is exactly how this Marsyas here at my side makes me feel all the time: he makes it seem that my life is not worth living! You cannot say that is not true, Socrates.”⁶⁸

6) The Prophets are great philosophers, devotees and mystics of their times.

All Prophets and Messengers are in a sense philosophers and mystics of their times. God the Exalted granted them knowledge and judgement.

I) God the Exalted says about his Prophet Yusuf^{as} in Sura Yusuf:

وَلَمَّا بَلَغَ أَشُدَّهُ آتَيْنَاهُ حُكْمًا وَعِلْمًا وَكَذَلِكَ نَجْزِي الْمُحْسِنِينَ ... يوسف - ٢٣

“And when he attained his age of full strength, We granted him judgement and knowledge.” (Surah Yusuf 12’:23)

II) Likewise in Sura Al-Qasas God the Exalted says about his Prophet Moses^{as} that he was granted wisdom and knowledge. God Almighty says:

وَلَمَّا بَلَغَ أَشُدَّهُ وَأَسْتَوَى آتَيْنَاهُ حُكْمًا وَعِلْمًا وَكَذَلِكَ نَجْزِي الْمُحْسِنِينَ ... القصص - ١٥

“And when he reached his age of full strength and attained maturity, We gave him wisdom and knowledge; and thus, do We reward those who do good.” (Surah Al-Qasas 28’:15)

So far as Socrates^{as} is concerned he was granted wisdom and knowledge. That is why he passed his whole life as a philosopher in the streets of Athens. Besides advising the people to take care of their souls and the hereafter, he always remained busy in asking philosophic questions about virtue, vice and beauty. When people told him about good and virtuous

⁶⁸ Ibid., (Symposium, 215e).

actions then he in response said that I am not asking you about virtuous actions but about the concept of ‘virtue’, vice and beauty. Whereas, addressing the gentlemen of jury he says:

*“When the god ordered me, as I thought and believed, to live the life of a philosopher, to examine myself and others, I had abandoned my post for fear of death or anything else. That would have been a dreadful thing.”*⁶⁹

7) The Prophets have always been sneered at, mocked and ridiculed. Moreover, every Messenger was dubbed a liar and sorcerer.

In the light of the Holy Qur’an, we come to know that every Prophet and Messenger was sneered at, mocked and ridiculed. Not only have they been laughed at but the townsfolk also called them liars and sorcerers.

I) God the Exalted says in Surah Ya Sin:

(I) *يَحْزَنُهُ عَلَى الْعِبَادِ مَا يَأْتِيهِمْ مِنْ رَسُولٍ إِلَّا كَانُوا بِهِ يَسْتَهْزِءُونَ... يُسِينَ-٣١*

“Alas for My servants! There comes not a Messenger to them but they mock at him.” (Surah Ya Sin 36’:31)

God the Exalted informs the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw} that before him all His appointed Prophets were laughed at and mocked. God Almighty says in Surah Al-Anbiya:

(II) *وَلَقَدْ أَسْتَهْزِئُوا بِرُسُلِكَ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ فَخَاقَ بِالَّذِينَ سَخِرُوا مِنْهُمْ مَا كَانُوا بِهِ يَسْتَهْزِءُونَ... أَلْأَنْبِيَاء-٣٢*

“And Messengers have indeed been mocked at before thee, but whereat they mocked encompassed those of them who scoffed.” (Al-Anbiya 21’:42)

69 Ibid., (Apology 28e-29a).

Furthermore, God Almighty says in Surah Sad:

(III) **وَعَجِبُوا أَنْ جَاءَهُمْ مُنْذِرٌ مِنْهُمْ وَقَالَ الْكَافِرُونَ هَذَا سِحْرٌ كَذَّابٌ... ص-ه**

“And they wonder that a warner has come to them from among themselves; and the disbelievers say, ‘This is a magician, a great liar.’”
(Surah Sad’ 38’:5)

Likewise in the same context God Almighty says in Surah Adh-Dhariyat:

(IV) **كَذَلِكَ مَا أَتَى الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ مِنْ رَسُولٍ إِلَّا قَالُوا سَاحِرٌ أَوْ مُجُنُونٌ... الذاريات-هـ**

“Even so there came no Messenger to those before them, but they said, ‘A sorcerer, or a madman.’” (Surah Adh-Dhariyat’ 51’:53)

So far as this attribute of Prophets is concerned, Socrates^{as} was also proclaimed a madman and a sorcerer. The pernicious inhabitants of Athens mocked, joked and ridiculed him. In the same context Socrates presents his case before the members of the jury as follows:

- I) ***“I have a divine sign from the god which Meletus has ridiculed in his deposition. This began when I was child. It is a voice, and whenever it speaks it turns me away from something I am about to do, but it never encourages me to do anything. This is what has prevented me from taking part in public affairs, and I think it was quite right to prevent me.”***⁷⁰
- II) ***“On the other hand, you know that what I said earlier is true, that I am very unpopular with many people. This will be my undoing, if I am undone, not Meletus or Anytus but the slanders and envy of many people. This has destroyed many other good men and will, I think, continue to do so. There is no danger that it will stop at me.”***⁷¹

⁷⁰ Ibid., (Apology 31d).

⁷¹ Ibid., (Apology 28ab).

Meno repeats the same words to Socrates^{as} as mentioned in the Platonic dialogue Meno. He says:

III) *“Meno: Socrates, before I even met you, I used to hear that you are always in a state of perplexity and that you bring others to the same state, and now I think you are bewitching and beguiling me, simply putting me under a spell, so that I am quite perplexed. Indeed, if a joke in order, you seem, in appearance and in other way, to be like the broad torpedo fish, for it too makes anyone who comes close and touches it feel numb, and you now seem to have had that kind of effect on me, for both my mind and my tongue are numb, and I have no answer to give you. Yet I have made many speeches about virtue before large audiences on a thousand occasions, very good speeches as I thought, but now I cannot even say what it is. I think you are wise not to sail away from Athens to go and stay elsewhere, for if you were to behave like this as a stranger in another city, you would be driven away for practising sorcery.”*⁷²

8) The Prophets have always been tortured and they are not afraid of people and death penalties.

In the history of mankind nearly, all Prophets have been tortured and they were subjected to harsh treatments by harmful opponents of their times. In this context God Almighty says in the following verses:

(I) **وَهَمَّتْ كُلُّ أُمَّةٍ بِرَسُولِهِمْ لِيَأْخُذُوهُ وَجَدَلُوا بِالْبَاطِلِ لِيُدْحِضُوا بِهِ الْحَقَّ...الْمُؤْمِنِينَ.**

“And every nation strove to seize their Messenger and disputed by means of false arguments that they might rebut the truth thereby ...” (Surah Al-Mu'mim 40:6)

72 *Ibid.*, (Meno., 80ab).

(II) فَمَا كَانَ جَوَابَ قَوْمِهِ إِلَّا أَنْ قَالُوا اقْتُلُوهُ أَوْ حَرِّقُوهُ فَأَنجَلَهُ اللَّهُ مِنَ النَّارِ... العنكبوت- ٢٥

“And the only answer of his people was that they said, ‘Slay him or burn him (Abraham^{as}).’ But Allah delivered him from the fire ...” (Surah Al-Ankabut 29’:25)

The Prophet Noah^{as} says to his nation:

(III) إِن أَنَا إِلَّا نَذِيرٌ مُّبِينٌ. قَالُوا لَئِنْ لَمْ تَنْتَهِ يَنُوحُ لَتَكُونَ مِنَ الْمَرْجُومِينَ... الشعراء- ١١٦، ١١٤

“I am only a plain Warner. They said, ‘If thou desist not, O Noah, thou shalt surely be one of those who are stoned.’” (Surah Ash-Shu’ara’ 26’:116,117)

So far as torture and death penalties are concerned, then Socrates^{as} also faced such punishments. So as the Jury of Athens declares a verdict against him as follows:

“What I say is true, gentlemen, but it is not easy to convince you. At the same time, I am not accustomed to think that I deserve any penalty. If I had money, I would assess the penalty at the amount I could pay, for that would not hurt me, but I have none, unless you are willing to set the penalty at the amount I can pay, and perhaps I could pay you one mina of silver. So that is my assessment.

Plato here, gentlemen of the jury, and Crito and Critoboulus and Apollodorus bid me put the penalty at thirty minae, and they will stand surety for the money. Well then, that is my assessment, and they will be sufficient guarantee of payment.

[The jury now votes again and sentences Socrates to death]

(Lastly Socrates says) – Now the hour to part has come. I go to die; you go to live. Which of us goes to the better lot is known to no one, except the god.”⁷³

73 Ibid., (Apology 38b-42).

9) The Prophets do not charge for their preaching and services. And they pass their lives in poverty and pauperism.

Let it to be stated here that Prophets and Messengers do not charge for their teaching and services. And because of such sacrifices, nearly they all pass their lives in poverty and pauperism. In Surah Ash-Shu'ara' with reference to this, Prophet Hadhrat Noah^{as} says to his people:

(I) وَمَا أَسْأَلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ أَجْرٍ إِنْ أَجْرِيَ إِلَّا عَلَى رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ... الشعراء. ١١٠

“And I ask of you no reward for it. My reward is only with the Lord of the Worlds.” (Surah Ash Shu'ara' 26':110)

(II) يَقَوْمِ لَا أَسْأَلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ أَجْرًا إِنْ أَجْرِيَ إِلَّا عَلَى الَّذِي فَطَرَنِي أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ... هود. ٥٢

“O my people, I do not ask of you any reward therefore. My reward is not due except from Him Who created me. Will you not then understand?” (Surah Hud 11':52)

So far as, the reward for preaching is concerned, God the Exalted says to the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw}, that you say to your people, that for your preaching and other services, you do not ask and demand from them any reward. God the Exalted says in Surah Yusuf:

(III) وَمَا تَسْأَلُهُمْ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ أَجْرٍ إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا ذِكْرٌ لِلْعَالَمِينَ... يوسف. ١٠٥

“And thou dost not ask of them any reward for it. On the contrary, it is but a source of honour for all mankind.” (Surah Yusuf 12':105)

So far as the teaching and preaching is concerned, Socrates^{as} did not take any fee or reward from his listeners. About his preaching and other theological services, Socrates says to the gentlemen of the jury:

- i) *“And if you have heared from anyone that I undertake to teach people and charge a fee for it, that is not true either.”*⁷⁴

74 Ibid., (Apology 19e).

- ii) *“That I am the kind of person to be a gift of a god to the city you might realize from the fact that it does not seem like human nature for me to have neglected all my own affairs and to have tolerated this neglect now for so many years while I was always concerned with you, approaching each of you like a father or an elder brother to persuade you to care for Virtue. Now if I profited from this by charging a fee for my advice, there would be some sense to it, but you can see for yourselves that, for all their shameless accusations, my accusers have not been able in their impudence to bring forward a witness to say that I have ever received a fee or ever asked for one. I, on the other hand, have a convincing witness that I speak the truth, my poverty.”*⁷⁵
- iii) *“Because of this occupation, I do not have the leisure to engage in public affairs to any extent, nor indeed to look after my own, but I live in great poverty because of my service of the god.”*⁷⁶

10) The Prophets have uncompromising behaviour about their claims and their preaching.

Prophets and Messengers are always strict and steadfast in their claims and in their truthfulness. They do not compromise with their opponents on their claims and their truthfulness. In this connection, they reject each and every offer of the non-believers. They are uncompromising in their claims, their teachings and ministering with opponents. They do not accept any condition of the opponents. They are ever ready even to sacrifice their lives for their claims and truthfulness. As in Surah Yunus, the Prophet Noah^{as} says to his people:

75 *Ibid.*, (Apology 31bc).

76 *Ibid.*, (Apology 23b).

وَأْتْلُ عَلَيْهِمْ نَبَأَ نُوحٍ إِذْ قَالَ لِقَوْمِهِ يَقُومُوا إِنَّ كَانَ كِبَرُ عَلَيْكُمْ مَقَامِي وَتَذَكِّرِي بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ فَعَلَى اللَّهِ تَوَكَّلْتُ فَأَجْمِعُوا أَمْرَكُمْ وَشُرَكَاءَكُمْ ثُمَّ لَا يَكُنْ أَمْرُكُمْ عَلَيْكُمْ غُمَّةً ثُمَّ اقْضُوا إِلَيَّ وَلَا تُنْظِرُونِ... يونس- ٤٢

“And recite unto them the story of Noah, when he said to his people, ‘O my people, if my station with God and my reminding you of your duty through the Signs of Allah offend you – and in Allah do I put my trust – muster then all your designs, you and your “partners”; then let not your course of action remain obscure to you in any respect; then carry out your designs against me and give me no respite.’” (Surah Yunus 10’:72)

In the same way in Surah Hud, the Prophet Hud^{as} says to his people:

مِنْ دُونِهِ فَكَيْدُونِي جَمِيعًا ثُمَّ لَا تُنْظِرُونِ. إِنِّي تَوَكَّلْتُ عَلَى اللَّهِ رَبِّي وَرَبِّكُمْ ط... هود- ٥٦، ٥٧

“Beside Him. So, devise plans against me, all of you, and give me no respite. ‘I have indeed put my trust in Allah, my Lord and your Lord ...’” (Surah Hud 11’:56-57)

Likewise, in Surah Al-Araf, the chiefs of the nation of the Prophet Shu’aib^{as} say to him:

قَالَ الْمَلَأُ الَّذِينَ اسْتَكْبَرُوا مِنْ قَوْمِهِ لَنُخْرِجَنَّكَ يَشْعَبُ وَالَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا مَعَكَ مِنْ قَرْيَتِنَا أَوْ لَتَعُوذُنَّ فِي مِلَّتِنَا قَالَ أُولَئِكَ هُمْ كَرِهِينَ. قَدْ أَفْتَرَيْنَا عَلَى اللَّهِ كَذِبًا إِنْ عُدْنَا فِي مِلَّتِكُمْ بَعْدَ إِذْ نَجَّيْنَا اللَّهُ مِنْهَا وَمَا يَكُونُ لَنَا أَنْ نَعُودَ فِيهَا إِلَّا أَنْ يَشَاءَ اللَّهُ رَبُّنَا ط..... الاعراف- ٨٩، ٩٠

“The chief men of his people who were arrogant said, ‘Assuredly, we will drive thee out, O Shu’aib and the believers that are with thee, from our town, or you shall have to return to our religion.’ He said: ‘Even though we be unwilling? – We have indeed been forging a lie against Allah, we now return to your religion after Allah has saved us therefrom. And it behoves us not to return thereto except that Allah, our Lord, should so will ...’” (Surah Al-A’raf 7’:89-90)

Now I wish to convey two examples of uncompromising behaviour of the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw} concerning his claim to Prophethood from God the Exalted.

1) The first example is that when the Message of Islam reached the people of Mecca and the well-meaning and reflective among them were inspired by it, the elders of Mecca took a critical view of what was happening. In the leadership of the tribal chieftain Utbah ibn Rabi'ah they sent a deputation to the Prophet's uncle, Abu Talib, and addressed him as follows:

“You are one of our chiefs and for your sake we have so far spared your nephew, Muhammad^{saw}. The time has come, however, when we should put an end to this national crisis, this conflict, in our midst.

Enquire from Him, what it is he wants of us? If he wishes to earn honour, then we are ready to accept him as our leader. If he wishes to earn money, then everyone among us is ready to hand over a part of their wealth to him. If he wishes to marry, then he can name any girl of Makkah, and we will happily her off to him. In return we demand nothing at all from him, and won't stop him from doing anything.

“We ask and demand that he should desist from saying anything against our idols. Let him proclaim that God is One, but let him not say anything against our idols. If he agrees to this, our conflict and controversy with him will be over. We urge you to persuade him. But if you are unable to do so, then one of two things must happen. Either you will give up your nephew, or we, your people will give you up.”

Abu Talib was confronted with a hard choice. To give up his nephew was hard. Equally hard was to be disowned by his people. Arabs had little in the way of money, their prestige lay in their leadership. They lived for their people and their people for them. Abu Talib was very upset. He sent for the Prophet^{saw} and explained to him the demands made by the elders of Mecca. And he said: “If you do not agree,” with tears in his eyes, “then either I have to give you up or my people will give me up.” The Prophet^{taw}

was in evident sympathy with his uncle. Tears came to his eyes and he said:

“I ask you not to give up your people. I ask you not to stand by me. Instead, you may give me up and stand by your people. But the One and Only God is my witness when I say that even if they were to place the sun on my right hand and the moon on my left hand, I would not desist from preaching the truth of One God. I must go on doing so until I die. You can choose your own pleasure.”

This is a very clear example of Prophet Muhammadsaw^{saw} of his uncompromising behaviour concerning his Claim of Prophethood.

2) Another example of uncompromising behaviour of the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw} concerning his beliefs is “*The proposal of compromise by the Quraish*”. In these days, the Quraish were greatly distressed and everyone was contemplating how to combat the religion brought by the Holy Prophet^{saw}. In this tension, one day among the chieftains of the Quraish, *Walid ibn al-Mughira*, *‘As bin Wail*, *Umaiyyah bin Khalaf*, etc., after consulting with one another, approached the Holy Prophet^{saw} and exclaimed, “O Muhammad^{saw} this discord is beginning to grow excessively and our national unity is falling apart. Can there be no design for a mutual compromise?” The Holy Prophet^{saw} inquired, “How so?” They responded:

“We can make our worship mutual. In other words, along with your God, you^{saw} worship our idols as well. And in the mutual worship of our idols, we shall include your God as well. In this way, through a compromise, the party who is upon virtue and truth shall also benefit the other as an additional advantage.”

The Holy Prophet^{saw} smiled and said, “Think closely, how is this possible? How can I worship your idols with my belief in God and how can you worship my God whilst remaining idolaters? Both these things are at such odds and contradictory to one another that they can never be brought

together at one place.” Therefore, during those days, the following verses of the Holy Qur’an were revealed:

قُلْ يَا أَيُّهَا الْكَافِرُونَ لَا أَعْبُدُ مَا تَعْبُدُونَ وَلَا أَنْتُمْ عِبُدُونَ مَا أَعْبُدُ وَلَا أَنَا عَابِدٌ مَّا عَبَدْتُمْ وَلَا أَنْتُمْ عِبُدُونَ
مَا أَعْبُدُ لَكُمْ دِينُكُمْ وَلِيَ دِينٌ... الكافرون - ٢٠٤

Say, ‘O ye disbelievers! ‘I worship not that which you worship; ‘Nor worship you what I worship. ‘And I am not going to worship that which you worship; ‘Nor will you worship what I worship. ‘For you your religion, and for me my religion.’ (Surah Al-Kafirun 109’:2-7)

By this response, we see that the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw} did not accept the proposal of compromise by the Quraish and stood by his claim and the Unity of the One God.

So far as preaching and practising philosophy was concerned, Socrates^{as} like other prophets also had an uncompromising behaviour before the Jury and his people. He says in this regard:

- i) ***“If you said to me in this regard: “Socrates, we do not believe Anytus now; we acquit you, but only on condition that you spend no more time on this investigation and do not practice philosophy, and if you are caught doing so you will die;” if, as I say, you were to acquit me on those terms, I would say to you: “Men of Athens, I am grateful and I am your friend, but I will obey the god rather than you, and as long as I draw the breath and am able, I shall not cease to practice philosophy, to exhort you and in my usual way to point out to any one of you whom I happen to meet.””***⁷⁷

From the reply of Socrates, it is quite apparent, that he was not ready to compromise with the Jury’s verdict and the demand of his people. Furthermore, he says to the members of the Jury:

⁷⁷ Ibid., (Apology 29cd).

- ii) ***“On this point I would say to you, men of Athens: “Whether you believe Anytus or not, whether you acquit me or not, do so on the understanding that this is my course of action, even if I am to face death many times.”⁷⁸***

If Socrates would be a self-styled philosopher and thinker, then no doubt, he would compromise with his opponents and save his life. But he was not a soi-disant thinker. He was a Divine Prophet and a Divine Reformer for his nation. That is why he could not compromise with his nation and with his opponents and maintained steadfastness in his beliefs.

The ten criteria illustrated above can be applied to him and confirm that Socrates^{as} was not only a genuine Philosopher, a Devotee but also a Prophet and Messenger for his nation, the people of Athens, Greece.

78 Ibid., (Apology 30bc).

5. Similarities between Abraham and Socrates

There are many similarities between Abraham^{as} and Socrates^{as}, of these, I will present two clear examples below:

1) Both Abraham^{as} and Socrates^{as} fathers were sculptors and both their societies were polytheists.

According to biblical tradition, the Prophet Abraham^{as} (c2000 BC) was born in or near the city of Ur in Mesopotamia, most likely in southern Chaldea. According to the Holy Qur'an, Abraham's father Azar is believed to have been a disbelieving man due to his refusal to listen to the constant advice of his son. Hadhrat Abraham, after receiving his first revelation from God Almighty invited his father to the way of Islam. Hadhrat Abraham^{as} explained to him the faults of idolatry and why he was wrong to worship objects which he could neither hear nor see. Hadhrat Abraham said to his father: "Do you take idols as deities? Indeed, I see you and your people to be in manifest error." God Almighty says in Surah Al-An'am:

وَإِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ لِأَبِيهِ أَزَرَ أَتَتَّخِذُ أَصْنَامًا إِلَٰهًا إِنِّي أَرُكَ وَقَوْمَكَ فِي ضَلٰلٍ مُّبِينٍ. (الانعام. ٥٠)

"And remember the time when Abraham said to his father, Azar: 'Dost thou take idols for gods? Surely, I see thee and thy people in manifest error.'" (Surah Al-An'am 6':75)

Likewise, God Almighty has described the same thing in Sura Al-Anbiya.

إِذْ قَالَ لِأَبِيهِ وَقَوْمِهِ مَا هَذِهِ التَّمَاثِيلُ الَّتِي أَنْتُمْ لَهَا عِقْفُون. قَالُوا وَجَدْنَا آبَاءَنَا لَهَا عِبَادِينَ. قَالَ لَقَدْ كُنْتُمْ أَنْتُمْ وَآبَاؤُكُمْ فِي ضَلٰلٍ مُّبِينٍ. (الانبياء. ٥٥، ٥٣، ٥٢)

“When he (Abraham^{as}) said to his father and his people, ‘What are these images to which you are so devoted?’ They replied, ‘We found our fathers worshipping them.’ He said, ‘Indeed, you yourselves as well as your fathers have been in manifest error.’” (Surah Al-Anbiya 21’-53-55)

Abraham informed his father that he had indeed received Divine knowledge from God, which his father did not possess, and informed him that belief in God would grant him immense rewards in this life and the hereafter, Abraham^{as} concluded his preaching by warning Azar of the grave punishment he would face if he did not mend his ways. When Abraham offered his father the guidance and advice of God, he rejected it, and threatened to stone him to death. Abraham^{as} prayed for his father to be forgiven by God, and although he continued to seek forgiveness, it was only because of a promise that he had made earlier to him. When it became clear that Azar’s unrelenting hatred towards monotheism would never be fought, Abraham dissociated himself from him. According to his promise, Abraham^{as} sought forgiveness for his father in verse 114 of Sura At-Taubah:

وَمَا كَانَ اسْتِغْفَارُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ لِأَبِيهِ إِلَّا عَنْ مَّوْعِدَةٍ وَعَدَهَا إِيَّاهُ فَلَمَّا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُ أَنَّهُ عَدُوٌّ لِلَّهِ تَبَرَّأَ مِنْهُ إِنَّ إِبْرَاهِيمَ لَأَوَّاهٌ حَلِيمٌ - (التوبة- ١١٣)

“And Abraham’s asking forgiveness for his father was only because of a promise he had made to him, but when it became clear to him that he was an enemy to Allah, he dissociated himself from him. Surely, Abraham was most tender-hearted, forbearing.” (Surah Al-Taubah 9’:114)

The Holy Qur’an states that the people of Abraham (Hadhrat Ibrahim^{as}) were polytheists. When the Prophet Abraham was a young boy, he decided finally to teach his community a lesson. He said to himself that he had a plan for their idols, whilst they would be gone away. The Holy Qur’an goes on to say that Abraham subsequently destroyed all the idols, except the largest one, which he kept intact. When the worshippers returned, they began questioning one another over the carnage, until one remembered that a youth, named Abraham, was critical of the idols. When Abraham^{as} arrived, the people immediately questioned him, enquiring whether he had

anything to do with the damaged idols. Abraham then, tauntingly asked the people as to why they do not ask the intact idol, which they believed, could indeed hear and speak. The people of Abraham were then confounded with shame, and admitted that the idols were incapable of anything.

After this incident, the people of Abraham, whilst admitting the errors of their way, are said to have ignored Abraham's warning and irrespectively retaliated by throwing him into a fire and exclaiming "*protect your gods*". Although the nature of fire is one of intense heat, God Almighty commanded the flame to be cool and tranquil for Abraham^{as}. Abraham, as a result, remained unscathed both physically and spiritually, having survived the fire of persecution. The people continued to taunt and persecute him, but to no avail, as the Holy Qur'an says that it was they "*that lost most*". This means that Abraham^{as} came out unscathed and outlasted the people. All these incidents have been described in the following verses of the Holy Qur'an:

إِذْ قَالَ لِأَبِيهِ يَأْبُتُ لِمَ تَعْبُدُ مَا لَا يَسْمَعُ وَلَا يُبْصِرُ وَلَا يُغْنِي عَنْكَ شَيْئًا. يَأْبُتُ إِنِّي قَدْ جَاءَنِي مِنَ الْعِلْمِ مَا لَمْ يَأْتِكَ فَاتَّبِعْنِي أَهْدِكَ صِرَاطًا سَوِيًّا. يَأْبُتُ لَا تَعْبُدِ الشَّيْطَانَ إِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ كَانَ لِلرَّحْمَنِ عَصِيًّا. يَأْبُتُ إِنِّي أَخَافُ أَنْ يَمْسَكَ عَذَابٌ مِنَ الرَّحْمَنِ فَتَكُونَ لِلشَّيْطَانِ وَلِيًّا. قَالَ أَرَأَيْتَ أَنْتَ عَنْ إِلَهِي يَزِيدُ هَيْمًا لِي لَمْ تَنْتَهِ لَأَرْجُئِكَ وَأَهْجُرْني مَلِيًّا. قَالَ سَلِّمْ عَلَيْكَ سَأَسْتَغْفِرُ لَكَ رَبِّي إِنَّهُ كَانَ بِي حَفِيًّا. وَأَعْتَزِلُكُمْ وَمَا تَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ وَأَدْعُوا رَبِّي عَشْيًى أَلَا أَكُونُ بِدَعَاءِ رَبِّي شَفِيًّا. (مريم - ٣٣ تا ٣٩)

"When he said to his father, 'O my father, why dost thou worship that which hears not, nor sees, nor can avail thee aught? O my father, there has indeed come to me knowledge such as has not come to thee; so, follow me, I will guide thee to an even path. O my father, serve not Satan; surely, Satan is a rebel against the Gracious God. O my father, indeed, I fear lest a punishment from the Gracious God seize thee, and thou become a comrade of Satan.' He replied, 'Dost thou turn away from my gods, O Abraham? If thou desist not, I shall surely cut off all relations with thee. Now leave me alone for a while.' Abraham said, 'Peace be on thee.' I will ask forgiveness of my Lord for thee. He is indeed glorious to me. 'And I shall keep away from you and from that which you call upon beside Allah; I will pray unto my Lord; I shall not be disappointed.'" (Surah Maryam 19':43- 49)

The incident to throw Abraham^{as} into the fire has been described in Sura Al-Anbiya. Whereas God Almighty says:

وَتَاللَّهِ لَا كَيْدَ لَكُمْ بَعْدَ أَنْ تُولَّيْتُمْ مَدْيَنَ. فَجَعَلَهُمْ جَذْدًا إِلَّا كَبِيرًا لَهُمْ لَعَلَّهُمْ إِلَيْهِ يَرْجِعُونَ. قَالُوا مَنْ فَعَلَ هَذَا بِآلِهَتِنَا إِنَّهُ لَمِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ. قَالُوا سَمِعْنَا فَتًى يَذْكُرُهُمْ يُقَالُ لَهُ إِبْرَاهِيمُ. قَالُوا فَاتَّبُوا بَرِّهٖ عَلَىٰ أَغْيَنِ النَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَشْهَدُونَ. قَالُوا أَنْتَ فَعَلْتَ هَذَا بِآلِهَتِنَا يَا إِبْرَاهِيمُ. قَالَ بَلْ فَعَلَهُ كَبِيرُهُمْ هَذَا. فَاسْأَلُوهُمْ إِنْ كَانُوا يَنْظِقُونَ. فَرَجَعُوا إِلَىٰ أَنفُسِهِمْ فَقَالُوا إِنَّكُمْ أَنْتُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ. ثُمَّ نَكِسُوا عَلَىٰ رُءُوسِهِمْ لَقَدْ عَلِمْتَ مَا هَؤُلَاءِ يَنْظِقُونَ. قَالَ أَتَعْبُدُونَ مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ مَا لَا يَنْفَعُكُمْ شَيْئًا وَلَا يَضُرُّكُمْ. أَفِ لَكُمْ وَلِمَا تَعْبُدُونَ مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ. قَالُوا احْرَقُوهُ وَانصُرُوا آلِهَتَكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ فَعِلِينَ. قُلْنَا يَبْنَؤُا كُونِي بَرْدًا وَسَلَامًا عَلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ. وَأَرَادُوا بِهِ كَيْدًا فَجَعَلْنَاهُمُ الْأَخْسَرِينَ. (الأنبياء ٥٨ تا ٦١)

“‘And, by Allah, I will certainly plan against your idols after you have gone away and turned your backs.’ So, he broke them to pieces, all except the chief of them, that they might return to it for enquiry. They said, ‘Who has done this to our gods? Surely, he must be a wrongdoer.’ They said, ‘We heared a young man speak ill of them; he is called Abraham.’ They said, ‘Then bring him before the eyes of the people’ that they may bear witness.’ Then they said to Abraham, ‘Is it thou who hast done this to our gods, O Abraham?’ He replied, ‘Aye, somebody has surely done this. Here is their chief. But ask them if they can speak.’ Then they turned towards one another and said, ‘You yourselves are surely in the wrong.’ And their heads were made to hang low for shame and they said, ‘Certainly thou knowest well that these do not speak.’ He said, ‘Do you then worship instead of Allah that which cannot profit you at all, nor harm you? Fie on you and on that which you worship instead of Allah! Will you not then understand?’ They said, ‘Burn him and help your gods, if at all you mean to do anything.’ We said, ‘O fire, be thou cold and a means of safety for Abraham!’ And they had sought to do evil to him, but We made them the worst losers.” (Surah Al-Anbiya 21’:58-71)

Dr Mohammad Iqbal in his poetry, says about this incident:

بے خطر کود پڑا آتش نمرود میں عشق
عقل ہے محو تماشائے لبِ بامِ ابھی

***“Love jumped into the volcano’s (Nimrod) fire, without hesitation
Whilst the intellect was still watching the spectacle deep in thought.”⁷⁹***

So far as Socrates^{as} is concerned, like Abraham^{as}, he was also the son of a stonemason and sculptor. His father’s name was Sophroniscus and mother Phaenarete, a midwife by profession. Since he was not from an aristocratic family, he probably received a basic Greek education and learned his father’s craft at a young age. William Guthrie says about him:

- 1) ***“Socrates was a native Athenian, son of Sophroniscus and Phaenarete, of the deme Alopeke. He was born in 470 or 469 BC, for the records of his trial and execution put them in the spring of 399, and Plato gives his age as seventy at the time. His father is said to have been a stonemason or sculptor, and references in Plato to Daedalus as his ancestor (Euthyphro 11b, Alc. 1 121a) do something to confirm this. As doctors traced their descent to Asclepius as eponymous ancestor (so Eryximachus in Plato, Symp. 186e), sculptors would naturally trace their line back to Daedalus. The justification for the mythical genealogy is that it was regular Greek practice for a craft to be handed on from father to son. Accordingly, it was said that Socrates himself was brought up in the sculptor’s craft, which he may have practiced in his earlier years (Zeller, Ph. D. Gr. 52, nm ... 1 and 2), before he ‘deserted it for paideia’ as Lucian later put it (Somn. 12).”⁸⁰***

Likewise, Professor Stace also mentions the same things about Socrates. He says:

79 Kulliyat e Iqbal, Iqbal academy Pakistan Lahore, (Urdu), (National Book Foundation Islam Abad, 1990) p. 310 Bang-e-Dra, Poem p. 294.

80 W.K.C. Guthrie, A history of Greek philosophy Vol III (Cambridge University Press 1969), pp. 378-379.

- 2) *“Socrates was born about 470 BC in Athens. His father was a sculptor, his mother a midwife. Very little is known of his early years and education, except that he took up his father’s occupation as a sculptor. In later years some statues used to be shown at the Acropolis in Athens, which were said to be the work of Socrates. But comparatively early in life he deserted his profession in order to devote himself to what he considered his mission in life, Philosophy.”*⁸¹

2) Both used logic and arguments for the reformation of their societies.

- 1) When night outspread over him, Abraham^{as} firstly saw a star and said, ‘Is this my Lord.’ But when it set, he said, ‘I love not the setters.’ Later on, when he saw the moon rising, he said, ‘Is this my Lord.’ But when it set, he said, ‘If my Lord does not guide me, I shall surely be of the people gone astray.’ Again, when he saw the sun rising, he said, ‘This is my Lord; this is greater!’ Later on, when it also set, he said, ‘O my people surely, I am quit of that you associate with God. I have turned my face to Him who originated the heavens and the earth, a man of pure faith.’ So as God the Exalted describes this story in Sura Al-An’am:

وَكَذَلِكَ نُرَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ مَلِكُوتِ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضِ وَلَيَكُوْنُ مِنَ الْمُؤَقِنِيْنَ. فَلَمَّا جَنَّ عَلَيْهِ اللَّيْلُ رَآٰ كَوْكَبًا قَالَ هَٰذَا رَبِّيْ فَلَمَّا أَفَلَ قَالَ لَا أُحِبُّ اِلٰهَ الْفٰلِغِيْنَ. فَلَمَّا رَآٰ الْقَمَرَ بَازِغًا قَالَ هَٰذَا رَبِّيْ فَلَمَّا أَفَلَ قَالَ لَيْسَ لِّمِ يَهْدِيْنِيْ رَبِّيْ لَا كُوْنَتْ مِنَ الْقَوْمِ الضَّالِّيْنَ. فَلَمَّا رَآٰ الشَّمْسَ بَازِغَةً قَالَ هَٰذَا رَبِّيْ هَٰذَا أَكْبَرُ فَلَمَّا أَفَلَتْ قَالَ يٰقَوْمِ اِنِّيْ بَرِيْءٌ مِّمَّا تُشْرِكُوْنَ. اِنِّيْ وَجْهْتُ وَجْهِيَ لِلَّذِيْ فَطَرَ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضَ حَنِيفًا وَمَا اَنَا مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِيْنَ. (الانعام- ٨٠ تا ٨٦)

“And thus, did We show Abraham the kingdom of the heavens and the earth that he might be rightly guided and that he might be of those who have certainly of faith. And when the night darkened upon him, he saw a

81 W. T. Stace, *A Critical History of Greek Philosophy* (Macmillan and Co., Limited St. Martin’s Street, London, 1920), p. 127.

star. He said: 'This is my Lord!' But when it set, he said: 'I like not those that set.' And when he saw the moon rise with spreading light, he said: 'This is my Lord.' But when it set, he said, 'If my Lord guide me not, I shall surely be of the people who go astray.' And when he saw the sun rise with spreading light, he said: 'This is my Lord, this is the greatest.' But when it set, he said, 'O my people, surely, I am clear of that which you associate with God. I have turned my face toward Him Who created the heavens and the earth, being ever inclined to God, and I am not of those who associate gods with God.'"

(Surah Al-An'am 6':76-80)

In this way Abraham^{as} told his people that these celestial bodies are not our Creator and therefore not our God but these celestial bodies have been created by our Creator, who is the Supreme God. These celestial bodies guide us towards Him. Further God the Exalted says that We gave this argument to Abraham for his people to give them a lesson:

وَتِلْكَ حُجَّتُنَا آتَيْنَاهَا إِبْرَاهِيمَ عَلَىٰ قَوْمِهِ نَرْفَعُ دَرَجَاتٍ مَّن نَّشَاءُ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ حَكِيمٌ عَلِيمٌ - (الانعام - ٨٣)

"And that is Our argument which We gave to Abraham against his people. We exalt in degrees of rank whom so We please. Thy Lord is indeed Wise, All-Knowing. " (Surah Al-An'am 6':84)

- 2) Abraham^{as} had established a definite reasoning against idolators. Nothing was left for him except to reason against the people who proclaimed themselves gods. When the king, Nimrud, heard of Abraham's safe exit from the fire, he became very angry. He feared that the status of godhead he had proclaimed for himself was now challenged by an ordinary human being. He summoned Abraham to the palace and held a dialogue with him, which God the Almighty narrated in Sura Al-Baqarah:

أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِي حَاجَّ إِبْرَاهِيمَ فِي رَبِّهِ أَنْ آتَاهُ اللَّهُ الْمُلْكَ إِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ رَبِّيَ الَّذِي يُنْحِي وَ يُمِيتُ قَالَ أَنَا أُحْيِي وَأُمِيتُ قَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْتِي بِالشَّمْسِ مِنَ الْمَشْرِقِ فَأْتِ بِهَا مِنَ الْمَغْرِبِ فَبُهِتَ الَّذِي كَفَرَ وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِينَ. (البقرة: ٢٥٩)

“Hast thou not heard of him who disputed with Abraham about his Lord, because Allah had given him kingdom? When Abraham said, ‘My Lord is He Who gives life and causes death,’ he said, ‘I also give life and cause death.’ Abraham said, ‘Well, Allah brings the sun from the East; bring it thou from the West.’ Thereupon the infidel was dumb-founded. And Allah guides not the unjust people.” (Surah Al-Baqarah 2’:259)

So far as Socrates^{as} is concerned, one of the allegations imposed upon him was that, “He is guilty of not believing in the gods in whom the city believes, but other new divinities.” Now we will see how Socrates not only logically refuted this charge but also compelled his complainant to admit that Socrates believes in the gods in whom the city believes. For example, asking from Meletus, Socrates says:

“Nonetheless tell us, Meletus, how you say that I corrupt the young; or is it obvious from your deposition that it is by teaching them not to believe in the gods in whom the city believe but in other new divinities? Is this not what you say I teach and so corrupt them? – That is most certainly what I do say.

Then by those very gods about whom we are talking, Meletus, make this clearer to me and to the jury: I can not be sure whether you mean that I teach the belief that there are some gods – and therefore I myself believe that there are gods and am not altogether an atheist, nor am I guilty of that – not, however, the gods in whom the city believes, but others, and that this is the charge against me, that they are others. Or whether you mean that I do not believe an gods at all, and that this is what I teach to others. – This is what I mean, that you do not believe in gods at all.

You are a strange fellow, Meletus. Why do you say this? Do I not believe, as other men do, that the sun and the moon are gods? – No, by Zeus,

jurymen, for he says that the sun is stone, and the moon earth.”⁸²

But in Plato’s dialogue ‘Theaetetus’ (149a) Socrates^{as} compares his own function in life to the art of midwifery. As the midwife helps women in bringing their unborn children to birth, so Socrates practises on men, and the children which he assists into the world are offspring not of the body but of the mind. Like Greek midwives too, he is incapable of childbearing himself. That is, he has no ideas of his own, and can be of service only by assisting others to bring their brain-children to the light. This light-hearted simile he introduces by saying, “Have not you heard that I am the son of a fine upstanding midwife called Phaenarete? Well, I also practise my mother’s art.”

Almost every spiritual leader and founder of religion has experienced a profound transformative event, a momentous spiritual experience which has divided his life into two parts, a relatively mundane and uneventful life before and a dynamic illustrious life after that event. It is the profound characteristic of such events that the whole life of a divine personage revolves around that one moment. One can clearly observe this template examining the lives of the prophets, Abraham^{as}, Moses^{as}, Jesus^{as} and Muhammad^{saw}. The history of these personalities clearly illustrates a pivotal life changing spiritual experience that changed the direction of their lives.

So far as Socrates^{as} is concerned, a similar incident took place with him. In carrying on his daily work, Socrates certainly regarded himself as engaged upon a mission in some way spiritually imposed upon him by his God. Of the origin of this mission, we have an account in the *Apology* of Plato. Socrates^{as} says:

“You know Chairephon. He was my friend from youth, and the friend of most of you, as he shared your exile and your return. You surely know the kind of man he was, how impulsive in any course of action. He went to Delphi at one time and ventured to ask the oracle – as I say,

82 Plato: Complete Works Edited by John M. Cooper, 1997, (*Apology* 26c^{ff}.).

gentlemen, do not create a disturbance – he asked if any man was wiser than I, and the Pythian replied that no one was wiser. Chairephon is dead, but his brother will testify to you about this. Consider that I tell you this because I would inform you about the origin of the slander. When I heard of this reply I asked myself: ‘Whatever does the god mean? What is his riddle? I am very conscious that I am not wise at all; what then does he mean by saying that I am the wisest? For surely, he does not lie; it is not legitimate for him to do so.’ For a long time, I was at a loss as to his meaning; then I very reluctantly turned to some such investigation as this: I went to one of those reputed wise, thinking that there, if anywhere, I could refute the oracle and say to it: ‘This man is wiser than I, but you said I was.’ Then, when I examined this man – there is no need for me to tell you his name, he was one of our public men – my experience was something like this: I thought that he appeared wise to many people and especially to himself, but that he was not. As a result, he came to dislike me, and so did many of the bystanders. So, I withdrew and thought to myself: ‘I am wiser than this man; it is likely that neither of us knows anything worthwhile, but he thinks he knows something when he does not, whereas when I do not know, neither do I think I know; So, I am likely to be wiser than he to this small extent, that I do not think I know what I do not know.’ After this I approached another man, one of those thought to be wiser than he, and I thought the same thing, and so I came to be disliked both by him and by many others.

After that I proceeded systematically. I realized, to my sorrow and alarm, that I was getting unpopular, but I thought that I must attach the greatest importance to the god’s oracle, so I must go to all those who had any reputation for knowledge to examine its meaning. And by the dog, gentlemen of the jury – for I must tell you the truth – I experienced something like this: in my investigation in the service of the god I found that those who had the highest reputation were nearly the most deficient, while those who were thought to be inferior were more knowledgeable. I must give you an account of my journeyings as if they were labours I had undertaken to prove the oracle irrefutable. After the

politicians, I went to the poets, writers of tragedies and dithyrambs and the others, intending in their case to catch myself being more ignorant than they. So, I took up those poems with which they seemed to have taken most trouble and asked them what they mean, in order that I might at the same time learn something from them. I am ashamed to tell you the truth, gentlemen, but I must. Almost all the bystanders might have explained the poems better than their authors could. I soon realized that poets do not compose their poems with knowledge, but by some inborn talent and by inspiration, like seers and prophets who also say many fine things without any understanding of what they say. The poets seemed to me to have had a similar experience. At the same time, I saw that, because of their poetry, they thought themselves very wise men in other respects, which they were not. So there again I withdrew, thinking that I had the same knowledge over them as I had over the politicians.

Finally, I went to the craftsmen, for I was conscious of knowing practically nothing, and I knew that I would find that they had knowledge of many fine things. In this I was not mistaken; they knew things I did not know, and to that extent they were wiser than I. But, gentlemen of the jury, the good craftsmen seemed to me to have the same fault as the poets: each of them, because of his success at his craft, thought himself very wise in other most important pursuits, and this error of theirs overshadowed the wisdom they had, so that I asked myself, on behalf of the oracle, whether I should prefer to be as I am, with neither their wisdom nor their ignorance, or to have both. The answer I gave myself and the oracle was that it was to my advantage to be as I am.

As a result of this investigation, gentlemen of the jury, I acquired much unpopularity, of a kind that is hard to deal with and is a heavy burden; many slanders came from these people and a reputation for wisdom, for in each case the bystanders thought that I myself possessed the wisdom that I proved that my interlocutor did not have. What is probable, gentlemen, is that in fact the god is wise and that his oracular response meant that human wisdom is worth little or nothing, and that when

*he says this man, Socrates, he is using my name as an example, as if he said: 'This man among you, mortals, is wisest who, like Socrates, understands that his wisdom is worthless.' So even now I continue this investigation as the god bade me – and I go around seeking out anyone, citizen or stranger, whom I think wise. Then if I do not think he is, I come to the assistance of the god and show him that he is not wise. Because of this occupation, I do not have the leisure to engage in public affairs to any extent, nor indeed to look after my own, but I live in great poverty because of my service to the god.'*⁸³

We see that both the prophet Abraham^{as} and Socrates^{as} take light and guidance from celestial bodies and also use logic and arguments for the reformation of their societies.

83 Plato: Complete Works Edited by John M. Cooper, 1997, (Apology 21a ff., 22a ff., 23a ff.).

6. Similarities between Socrates and Jesus Christ

The time of Socratic prophethood and reformation approximately lies between 439–399 BC and that of Jesus Christ approximately three years before the incident of crucifixion. There are many similarities found between Socrates^{as} and Jesus Christ^{as} and there lies also two substantial differences between them. Similarities are as follows:

i) Both were Divine Messengers of their ages.

Socrates^{as} occupies a unique position in the history of Greek philosophy. Although Socrates was regarded as a philosopher in Western philosophy, he was in fact also a remarkable Prophet and Messenger for the people of Athens. God Almighty had appointed his prophets in every nation for the guidance of His people. As the Holy Qur'an states:

وَلِكُلِّ أُمَّةٍ رَسُولٌ فَإِذَا جَاءَ رَسُولُهُمْ قُضِيَ بَيْنَهُمْ بِالْقِسْطِ وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ... يونس: ٤٨

“And for every people there is a Messenger. So, when their Messenger comes, it is judged between them with equity, and they are not wronged.”
(Surah Yunus 10:48)

As Socrates was a Prophet of God sent to the people of Athens, Jesus Christ (Isa Ibne Maryam)^{as} was also an illustrious Prophet and the Promised Al-Masih, sent to guide the Bani Isra'il (Children of Israel). According to the New Testament and the Holy Qur'an he is believed to be neither married nor had any children. He is thought as a significant figure, being mentioned in the Holy Qur'an in 93 verses with various titles attached such as the *“Son of Mary”* and other related terms, thus mentioned directly and indirectly over 187 times. He is therefore, the most cited personage in the Holy Qur'an. In Islam, Jesus is believed to have been the precursor to the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw} attributing the name of Ahmad to someone who would follow him. Islam rejects the divinity

of Jesus and teaches that he was not God incarnate, nor the Son of God, and according to the Holy Qur'an, the crucifixion death, and resurrection is not believed to have occurred. Jesus was a Prophet and a mortal man, like other Prophets, but endured crucifixion and remained on the cross for a few hours until darkness fell. Jesus was taken down from the cross alive but unconscious. He was treated and recovered from his wounds. He met his trusted disciples on the Mount of Olives, and left Judea towards the sea of Galilee on his way to Damascus. After his dramatic escape from crucifixion, he travelled to the eastern lands in search of the ten lost tribes of Israel. It is said that ultimately, he died a natural death in Kashmir India, as opposed to having been physically raised up alive to Heaven.

“In the life time of Hadhrat Isa^{as}, his apostles and other disciples were not quite sure about his claims. The reason is that the personality of Hadhrat Isa^{as} was not in accordance with the concept of ‘Christ’ which was prevalent in Jewish society. In this connection, the attitude of Hadhrat Isa^{as} by himself was equivocal and doubtful. He was not clear about his claim of ‘Christ’ and he always adopted symbolical ways.”⁸⁴

When the Jews asked him, whether you are the Promised “Christ”, he replies stating, it is you that have enunciated me as a “Christ”. For example, in Matthew the High Priest says to Jesus Christ:

- 1) “So the high priest said to him: ‘By the living God, I put you under oath to tell us whether you are the Christ the Son of God!’. Jesus said to him: ‘You yourself said (it). Yet I say to you men, from henceforth you will see the Son of man sitting at the right hand of power and coming on the clouds of heaven.’” (Matthew 26:63-64)
- 2) “At this they all said: ‘Are you, therefore, the Son of God?’ He said to them: ‘You yourselves are saying that I am.’ They said why do we need further witness? For we ourselves have heard (it) out of his own mouth.” (Luke 22:70-71).

84 Dunya Ke Bare Mazahib (Urdu) by Emad Ul Hassan Azad Farooqi (Maktaba Tamir e Insaniyat Urdu Bazar Lahore), p. 297.

- 3) But in the Holy Qur'an God the Exalted very clearly states that Isa Son of Maryam^{as} was Prophet and Messenger to Bani Isra'il. God the Exalted says:

وَإِذْ قَالَ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ يَبْنِي إِسْرَءِيلَ إِنِّي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ إِلَيْكُمْ مُصَدِّقًا لِمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيَّ مِنَ التَّوْرَةِ وَمُبَشِّرًا بِرَسُولٍ يَأْتِي مِنْ بَعْدِي اسْمُهُ أَحْمَدُ فَلَمَّا جَاءَهُمْ بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ قَالُوا هَذَا سِحْرٌ مُبِينٌ..الصفـ،

“And remember when Jesus, son of Mary, said, ‘O Children of Israel, surely, I am Allah’s Messenger unto you, fulfilling that which is before me of the Torah, and giving glad tidings of a Messenger who will come after me. His name will be Ahmad.’ And when he came to them with clear proofs, they said, ‘This is Manifest Sorcery.’” (Surah As-Saff 61’:7)

In the Holy Qur'an in another place, God the Exalted says about Isa^{as} Son of Maryam as follows:

وَرَسُولًا إِلَى بَنِي إِسْرَءِيلَ..ال عمران...٥٠

“And will make him a Messenger to the children of Israel.” (Surah Aal-e-‘Imran 3’:50)

ii) Both had the same method of preaching.

Although the interval between these two Prophets is about four hundred years, there is a great similitude in the way of their teaching and ministering. For example, Xenophon was an Athenian-born citizen of Greece. He was a soldier and a type of mercenary. Once in battle, he fell from his horse and was severely injured. Socrates^{as} took him on his shoulders and carried him away to a place of safety. Xenophon thus became a follower of Socrates in his youth. Diogenes Laërtius (wrote many centuries later) reports how Xenophon met Socrates and became his pupil. He states:

“The story goes that Socrates met him in a narrow passage, and that he stretched out his stick to bar the way, while he inquired where every

*kind of food was sold. Upon receiving a reply, he put another question, 'And where do men become good and honorable?' Xenophon was fairly puzzled; 'Then follow me,' said Socrates, 'and learn.' From that time onward he was a pupil of Socrates. (D. L. ii, 48)"*⁸⁵

Also bear in mind that Jesus Christ^{as} (Messiah, Son of Mary) also had the same way of ministering and teaching. This anecdote is somehow reminiscent of that in Matthew in which Jesus encounters Peter and Andrew, James and John and invites them to follow him:

"As Jesus was walking beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon called Peter and his brother Andrew. They were casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen. 'Come, follow me,' Jesus said, "'and I will send you out to fish for people.' At once they left their nets and followed him. Going on from there, he saw two brothers, James, the son of Zebedee and his brother John. They were in a boat with their father Zebedee, preparing their nets. Jesus called them, and immediately they left the boat and their father and followed him." (Matthew 4:18-22)

This is a point of interest in the similarity between these two anecdotes, in so far as Xenophon's relationship with Socrates^{as} has reminded some scholars of the relationship between the apostles and Jesus^{as}.

iii) Both left no written remarks.

In the history of philosophy, Socrates^{as} has a unique place without parallel. On the one hand, he is revered as inaugurating the first great era of philosophy, and therefore, in a sense, philosophy itself. On the other hand, any account must begin with the admission that there is, and always will be, a 'Socratic problem'. The reason is that he left behind no writing, and there is hardly a single sentence ascribed to him that we can be sure was his own rather than a literary creation of one of his disciples or admirers.

⁸⁵ Luis E. Navia, Socrates The Man and His Philosophy (University Press of America, 1985), p. 97.

All that we know about him and his philosophy comes from the writings of men of the most varied character, from philosophers to comic poets, some of whom were passionately devoted to him while others thought his influence pernicious.

Jesus Christ^{as} also had not written his message. Like Socrates^{as} he also verbally preaches. Gospel originally means the Christian message. The word **gospel** is derived from the term god-spell, **meaning** ‘good story’, ‘good news’ or ‘good telling’. The four canonical gospels were probably written between AD 66 and 110. All four (Matthew, Mark, Luke and John) were anonymous (the modern names were added in the 2nd century), almost certainly none were by eyewitnesses, and all are the end-products of long oral and written transmission. Mark was the first to be written, using a variety of sources; the authors of Matthew and Luke, acting independently, used Mark for their narrative of Jesus’s(as) career, supplementing it with the collection of sayings and additional material unique to each. Since the late 18th century, the first three have been called the Synoptic **Gospels**. The contradictions and discrepancies between the first three and John make it impossible to accept both traditions as equally reliable. Modern scholars are cautious of relying on the gospels uncritically, but nevertheless they do provide a good idea of the public career of Jesus, and critical study can attempt to distinguish the original ideas of Jesus from those of the later authors.

Many non-canonical gospels were also written, all later than the four canonical gospels, and like them advocating the particular theological views of their various authors. Important examples include the Gospel of Thomas, the Gospel of Peter, the Gospel of Judas, the Gospel of Mary, infancy gospels such as the Gospel of James (the first to introduce the perpetual virginity of Mary), and gospel harmonies such as the Diatessaron. Besides, the gospel of Barnabas (14th–16th century) contradicts the ministry of Jesus in canonical New Testament and strongly denies Pauline doctrine, but has clear parallels with Islam, mentioning Muhammad^{saw} as Messenger of God. Jesus^{as} identifies himself as a Prophet, not the Son of God.

iv) Both were sentenced to death.

Between Socrates^{as} and Jesus Christ^{as} among many other similitudes there is one of that both holy persons have been sentenced to death. Whereas in Apology Socrates says:

*“It is not difficult to avoid death, gentlemen of the jury, it is much more difficult to avoid wickedness, for it runs faster than death. Slow and elderly as I am, I have been caught by the slower pursuer, whereas my accusers, being clever and sharp, have been caught by the quicker, wickedness. I leave you now, condemned to death by you, but they are condemned by truth to wickedness and injustice. So, I maintain my assessment, and they maintain theirs. This perhaps had to happen, and I think it is as it should be.”*⁸⁶

The same punishment was chosen for Jesus Christ^{as}. Whereas in Matthew 27:11-26, it is written as follows:

“Jesus now stood before the governor; and the governor put the question to him: ‘Are you the king of the Jews?’ Jesus replied: ‘You yourself say [it].’ But, while he was being accused by the chief priests and older men, he made no answer. Then Pilate said to him: ‘Do you not hear how many things they are testifying against you?’ Yet he did not answer him, no, not a word, so that the governor wondered very much. Now from festival to festival it was the custom of the governor to release a prisoner to the crowd, the one they wanted. Just at that time they were holding a notorious prisoner called Bar ab’bas. Hence when they were gathered together Pilate said to them: ‘Which one do you want me to release to you, Bar’ ab’bas or Jesus the so-called Christ?’ For he was aware that out of envy they had handed him over. Moreover, while he was sitting on the judgement seat, his wife sent out to him, saying: ‘Have nothing to do with that righteous man, for I suffered a lot today in a dream because of

86 Plato: Complete Works Edited by John M. Cooper, 1997, (Apology 39b).

him.’ But the chief priests and the older men persuaded the crowds to ask for Bar ab’bas, but to have Jesus destroyed. Now in responding the governor said to them: ‘Which of the two do you want me to release to you?’ They said: ‘Bar ab’bas.’ Pilate said to them: ‘What, then, shall do with Jesus the so-called Christ?’ They all said: ‘Let him be impaled!’ He said: ‘Why, what bad thing did he do?’ Still, they kept crying out all the more: ‘Let him be impaled!’

Seeing that it did not good but, rather, an uproar was arising, Pilate took water and washed his hands before the crowd, saying: ‘I am innocent of the blood of this [man]. You yourselves must see to it.’ At that all the people said in answer: “‘His blood come upon us and upon our children.’ Then he released Bar ab’bas to them, but he had Jesus whipped and handed him over to be impaled.” (Matthew 27:11-26)

So, Socrates^{as} and Jesus Christ^{as}, being innocent and faultless both were cruelly sentenced to death.

v) So far as destiny is concerned, then both Holy Persons were content with the Divine pleasure.

In Apology, Socrates^{as} says:

“Very well then, men of Athens. I must surely defend myself and attempt to uproot from your minds in so short a time the slander that has resided there so long. I wish this may happen, if it is in any way better for you and me, and that my defence may be successful, but I think this is very difficult and I am fully aware of how difficult it is. Even so, let the matter proceed as the God may wish, but I must obey the law and make my defence.”⁸⁷

Jesus Christ^{as} also says the same words in his most challenging moment:

87 *Ibid.*, (Apology 19a).

“Then he said to them: ‘My soul is deeply grieved, even to death. Stay here and keep on the watch with me.’ And going a little way forward, he fell upon his face, praying and saying: ‘My father, if it is possible, let this cup pass away from me. Yet, not as I will, but as you will.’” (Matthew 26:38-39)

vi) Both were distinctive personalities of philosophy and religion.

There are two distinctive features ascribed to only two personalities in the domain of philosophy and religion and these are Socrates and Jesus Christ. Socrates^{as} marked an era of philosophy and that’s why the time before and after him is divided in the pre-Socratic Greek philosophy and post-Socratic Greek philosophy era. Besides Socrates there is no other Greek philosopher who divided the philosophy into two eras. In the domain of religion, the same phenomenon can be applied to Jesus Christ^{as}. For example, in religion, when we discuss any religious event that happened before and after Jesus Christ, we add the abbreviations BC or AD. Besides Jesus Christ, in the history of religion there is no other prophet where the timeline is divided into an era before and after him.

vii) Socrates^{as} called Athens the greatest city while Jesus Christ^{as} called Jerusalem the greatest city.

In his discussions, whenever Socrates mentioned his city Athens, he always said about Athens that it is the greatest city in the world. For example, whilst addressing the Jury, Socrates said to them:

“Good Sir, you are an Athenian, a citizen of the greatest city with the greatest reputation for both wisdom and power; are you not ashamed of your eagerness to possess as much wealth, reputation and honours as possible, while you do not care for nor give thought to wisdom or truth, or the best possible state of your soul?”⁸⁸

88 Ibid., (Apology 29e).

Likewise, when Jesus Christ mentioned Jerusalem, he also said about Jerusalem that it is the greatest and most respected city. He said for example:

“However, I say to you: Do not swear at all, neither by heaven, because it is God’s throne; nor by earth, because it is the footstool of his feet; nor by Jerusalem, because it is the city of the great King.” (Matthew 5:34-35)

7. Differences between Socrates^{as} and Jesus Christ^{as}

There are two significant differences between Socrates and Jesus Christ.

- i) Socrates marries and has three children whereas the marriage of Jesus Christ has not been proven from the Holy Bible and the Holy Qur'an.
- ii) One significant difference lies between them, in connection to their companions. Socratic companions remain steadfast and remained attached with him till his last breath. Whereas the disciples of Jesus Christ do not remain steadfast and most of them denied him at the time of crucifixion.

CHAPTER THREE

**SOURCES OF THE KNOWLEDGE,
CONCEPT OF SCIENCES AND
THE DIVINE COVENANT**

1. Sources of the Knowledge and Degrees of Human Understanding

a) Degrees of Human Understanding

If there does exist any Knowledge, then no doubt the sources of its understanding also exists. First and foremost, it is fitting to explain the term knowledge. The term is used in two senses; subjective and objective meanings. Subjectively, it purports some sort of personal understanding. It may change from one state to another. Objectively, It is the Object of one's understanding. Objective Knowledge ever remains one and the same. There is no change in it and is therefore unchangeable.

Firstly, let us deal with subjective knowledge. There are three types of human understanding or subjective knowledge.

- 1) Ilmul-Yaqeen – (Knowledge by way of certainty of inference).
- 2) Ainul-Yaqeen – (Knowledge by way of certainty of sight).
- 3) Haqqul-Yaqeen – (Knowledge by way of certainty of experience).

For the sake of explanation of these degrees, let's consider a few examples from the world of phenomena. When we perceive smoke from a distance, our mind conceives that since smoke and fire are inseparable and therefore where there is smoke, there must be also fire. About the existence of fire, our [or this type of] knowledge and reasoning would be Ilmul-Yaqeen. This is the first degree of human understanding. Here, an object is known not directly but through something, by which it can be inferred, as by observing smoke, we infer the existence of fire. Our eyes do not see the fire but the smoke and on account of it, we believe in the existence of fire. Furthermore, on approaching nearer, when we see the flames of the fire, then our knowledge increases to the second degree, i.e. Ainul-Yaqeen. Here there is no inference but direct knowledge through sight. Finally, when we enter into the fire, then our knowledge about the existence of fire

reaches to the third and the highest degree of understanding, i.e. Haqqul-Yaqeen. Here, not only direct sight is concerned but also experience. In this example, we see that fire remains one and the same. What changes, is our understanding or certainty about it.

After hearing a lion's voice or using the sense of smell, one's deductive belief in the existence of a lion or bloom respectively are also similar examples. After a nearer approach, when we see the lion or bloom, then our knowledge increases and converts into the second degree, i.e. Ainul-Yaqeen. Further, when we touch the lion or bloom with our hands, then our knowledge about the existence of the lion or bloom reaches to the highest degree of understanding, i.e. Haqqul-Yaqeen. In the Holy Qur'an, God the Exalted mentions these three degrees of human understanding. For example, after addressing to the dwellers of hell, God Almighty says:

أَلْهَكُمُ التَّكَاثُرُ. حَتَّى زُرْتُمُ الْمَقَابِرَ. كَلَّا سَوْفَ تَعْلَمُونَ. ثُمَّ كَلَّا سَوْفَ تَعْلَمُونَ. كَلَّا لَوْ تَعْلَمُونَ عِلْمَ
الْيَقِينِ. لَتَرَوُنَّ الْجَحِيمَ. ثُمَّ لَتَرَوْهَا عَبْثًا يُبْقِينَ. ثُمَّ لَتُسْأَلُنَّ يَوْمَئِذٍ عَنِ النَّعِيمِ... التكاثر - ٩٢

“Mutual rivalry in seeking worldly increase diverts you from God. Till you reach the graves. Nay! you will soon come to know. Nay again! you will soon come to know. Nay! if you only knew with certain knowledge, you will surely see Hell in this very life. Aye, you will surely see it with the eye of certainty. Then, on that day you shall be called to account about the worldly favours.” (Surah Al-Takathur 102':2-9)

Paradise, Hell and Angels all are metaphysical creations which cannot be seen in this physical world. In the above-mentioned Qur'anic verse, Allah the Exalted says, “Oh my servants! How can you with certainty know about spiritual creations?” The question arises then how it is possible? The answer is that in this world, we cannot acquire firm knowledge of spiritual creations directly because we cannot see these things with our physical eyes but we can see them indirectly. For example, when we see smoke, we acquire knowledge by certainty of reason about the existence of fire. Likewise, when we ponder over the universe and over human life and its objectives, we acquire knowledge by certainty of reason regarding Paradise, Hell, Angels, etc. However, after death in **Barzakh**, we will

observe spiritual creations with our own eyes as we see in this physical world and we will then acquire knowledge by certainty of reason as well as knowledge by certainty of sight. On the Day of Judgement, we will acquire knowledge by certainty of experience about all the spiritual things. Whereas God Almighty says:

فَأَمَّا إِنْ كَانَ مِنَ الْمُقَرَّبِينَ فَرَوْحٌ وَرَيْحَانٌ وَجَنَّتْ نَعِيمٌ. وَأَمَّا إِنْ كَانَ مِنْ أَصْحَابِ الْيَمِينِ فَسَلَمٌ لَكَ مِنْ أَصْحَابِ الْيَمِينِ. وَأَمَّا إِنْ كَانَ مِنَ الْمُكَذِّبِينَ الضَّالِّينَ فَنُزْلٌ لِّمَنْ حَمِيمٌ. وَتَضْلِيلَةٌ بَهِيمٌ. إِنَّ هَذَا لَهُوَ حَقُّ الْيَقِينِ. فَسَبِّحْ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ الْعَظِيمِ... الواقعة ٨٩-٩٤

“Now if he be of those who have attained nearness to God, then for him is comfort and fragrance of happiness and a Garden of Bliss; And if he be of those who are on the right hand, then ‘Peace be on thee, who is from those on the right hand.’ But if he be of those who reject the truth and are in error, then for him will be an entertainment of boiling water, and burning in Hell. Verily, this is the certain truth. So, glorify the name of thy Lord, the Great.” (Surah Al-Waqi’ah 56’:89-97)

So far as Objective Knowledge or Virtue (arete) is concerned, then its knowledge or understanding also has the same three degrees, i.e. Ilmul-Yaqeen, Ainul-Yaqeen and Haqqul-Yaqeen. On every stage, our knowledge changes and becomes quite different, although Virtue, i.e. Supreme Ultimate Universal Truth, remains unchanged. Human beings are the best of creation because they have been enriched with a valuable wealth of reason. The face of Knowledge is latent and has been concealed under several screens of phenomena. The purpose of human life is to know and recognise It. Yet it is only possible to know and recognise it through concepts or theories. And therefore we can say without doubt that human excellence depends on his power of theorisation. In this connection, the Promised Messiah, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as} says:

“One must know that Almighty God has created the human being, not like other animals, with the nature having limited awareness of a few apparent and common facts, but has awarded the quality to improve the wisdom up to unlimited graph with his mind and observation. For this reason, he has been granted lightened night-pearl of wisdom which

other animals have not. It is openly evident that all unusual miracles of God could have been crystal clear in which observations and thoughts are not requirements than the human being whose greatness depends upon the completion of this ideology, to which direction he could have acted and how could he reach at the top without the thoughts and observations. Since humanity is related to the power of theorization, the Absolute Wise has set in darkness to most of the facts and figures. So, unless the human being utilizes the best of his enthusiasm does not become aware of the secrets. This indicates the intention of the Absolute Wise of keeping the way open leading to the high levels enabling him to touch the top target for which he is created.”⁸⁹

b) Sources of the Knowledge

In the following lines these three types of human understanding (Ilmul-Yaqeen, Ainul-Yaqeen and Haqqul-Yaqeen) will be somewhat discussed a little bit in detail.

1) Ilmul-Yaqeen. (Knowledge by way of certainty of inference.)

There are three sources of first type of human understanding.

- I) Senses
- II) Reason
- III) Conscience.

For example, it is documented that Socrates^{as} was a Greek philosopher who had been poisoned. Although we did not live in the time of Socrates, nor did we see him, yet we are certain that such a person existed. The question is how do we come to believe in the existence of Socrates? How did we arrive at that certainty? The answer is, through the uninterrupted narrative of discussing him. Thus, there is no doubt that the sense of

⁸⁹ Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as}, Rohani Khazain, Vol 1, (Urdu), p. 464-467.

hearing carries our knowledge to the stage of Ilmul-Yaqeen. After seeing smoke, we believe in the existence of fire, then our sense of sight operates and provides us with some raw data. From this raw data, our reason infers the existence of fire. Other senses also work likewise. Truly, without reason our senses are fruitless, similarly without senses, our reasons are worthless. In the process of knowing, these both help each other and take us to the degree of Ilmul-Yaqeen. Besides senses and reason, conscience is another source of Ilmul-Yaqeen. As the most High God says:

فَلْتَمُوجْهَكَ لِلدِّينِ حَنِيفًا فِطْرَتَ اللَّهِ الَّتِي فَطَرَ النَّاسَ عَلَيْهَا لَا تَبْدِيلَ لِخَلْقِ اللَّهِ ذَلِكَ الدِّينُ الْقَيِّمُ وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ
النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ.. الروم- ٣١

“So set thy face to the service of religion as one devoted to God. And follow the nature made by Allah – the nature in which He has created mankind. There is no altering the creation of Allah. That is the right religion. But most men know not.” (Surah Ar-Rum 30’:31)

So far as Virtue (arete) or Objective Knowledge is concerned, then how can we obtain Its Ilmul-Yaqeen? After mindful observation of the Universe, we find it orderly. Nothing comes into being at random. We see that there is nothing created in vain and each and every thing has been created with a grand design. Since human beings have been designed in accordance with the properties of Knowledge, thence they feel a yearning for It. When we are knowing, then what are we doing? We are studying this universe of which we are also a part. Several categories of sciences have developed as a result of our contemplation. In this world we perceive countless students and their knowing action. These students are engaged in knowing, for they feel the thirst for it. Here once again a question arises that when a thirst for knowing and knowing action exists then why does their Object not exists, i.e. Objective Knowledge?

Here again, we are guided by senses, reason and conscience and these take us to the degree of Ilmul-Yaqeen. We are aware of the fact that none action is possible without its object. These both are twin. If there does exist some action then no doubt its object also does exist. Here one question arises.

When both, the thirst for knowledge and knowing action do exist, then why not does their Object exist? From this sensorial observation, reason draws the following conclusions about the existence of the Knowledge.

Firstly, that the existence of knowing action and its thirst both provide good reason for the existence of their Object. If there does exist knowing action and its thirst, then definitely, the Objective Knowledge also does exist.

Secondly, that knowing action and its thirst are both post-created, while the Objective Knowledge pre-exists.

Thirdly, that knowing action and its thirst both emerge because of the Objective Knowledge and depends upon it; while the Objective Knowledge is independent and does not depend upon its predicates. We attest that our different faculties (senses, reason, conscience) mutually work together and have taken us to the level of inference. This sort of human understanding is termed as Ilmul-Yaqeen.

This sort of Ilmul-Yaqeen about the existence of the Objective Knowledge only informs us that the Objective Knowledge exists but what is this Objective Knowledge, i.e. what is its essence? At this stage we cannot know it and its simple reason is that our senses, reason and conscience cannot provide us Ainul-Yaqeen about the existence of the Objective Knowledge. As the Most High God says:

وَلَا يُحِيطُونَ بِشَيْءٍ مِّنْ عِلْمِهِ إِلَّا بِمَا شَاءَ...البقرة ٢٥٦

“Who is he that will intercede with Him except by His permission?”

(Surah Al-Baqarah 2’:256)

Likewise in another place He says:

يَعْلَمُ مَا بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَمَا خَلْفَهُمْ وَلَا يُحِيطُونَ بِشَيْءٍ مِّنْ عِلْمِهِ ۚ طه ١١١

“He knows all that is before them and all that is behind them, but they cannot compass it with their knowledge.” (Surah TaHa 20’:111)

2) Ainul-Yaqeen. (Knowledge by way of certainty of sight.)

This is a degree of understanding, where there is no intermediary between us and that of which we have gained knowledge. For example, instead of seeing smoke, direct sight of fire, instead of hearing human voice, direct sight of man, instead of smelling, direct sight of bloom; all such knowledge is, as it were, Ainul-Yaqeen.

In these examples, we see that Ainul-Yaqeen of things can be sought with the help of our senses and reason. So far as the Objective Knowledge is concerned, how do we gain Its Ainul-Yaqeen? With regard to Objective Knowledge, human understanding arrives at the degree of Ainul-Yaqeen, when it is directly revealed. His heart, his eyes, his ears and his tongue all directly receive revelation. In this connection an eminent eastern poet, Dr Mohammad Allama Iqbal, says in his book Bal-e-Jibril:

ترے سینے میں دم ہے، دل نہیں ہے۔۔۔ ترا دم گرمی محفل نہیں ہے
گزر جا عقل سے آگے کہ یہ نور۔۔۔ چراغ راہ ہے، منزل نہیں ہے

“There is Breath in thy bosom, but no heart. Your Breath Does not give warmth to the party.

Overtake the mind’s reasoning ... because this light ... is merely a lamp in the path, not the destination.”⁹⁰

Previously, it has been stated that we feel thirst for knowledge. Reason and senses do not perfectly quench this thirst. The question is that if Objective

90 Kulliyat e Iqbal, Iqbal academy Pakistan Lahore, (Urdu), (National Book Foundation Islam Abad, 1990) p. 409, Bal-e-Jibril, (Urdu), p. 85.

Knowledge has not provided us with the means of perfect understanding in advance, then why has It created this thirst in ourselves? No doubt, we have been provided with the source of Ainul-Yaqeen and this is a direct revelation from the Knowledge. After His revelation, we come to know that there exists such Objective knowledge which has encompassed the whole universe with Its knowledge. Not only that It is everywhere but It is also Omnipotent. It accounts for everything and all have to submit before It. Now the question arises that what It is, which has encompassed the whole universe with Its knowledge. The answer is that It is the Supreme Ultimate Universal Truth which has not only encompassed each and every thing with Its knowledge but also numbered these all. The Holy Qur'an enlightens us about such a Being in the following verses:

رَبَّنَا وَسِعْتَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ رَّحْمَةً وَعِلْمًا... البوم. ٨

“Our Lord, Thou dost comprehend all things in Thy mercy and knowledge.” (Surah Al-Mu'min 40':8)

اللَّهُ الَّذِي خَلَقَ سَبْعَ سَمَوَاتٍ وَمِنَ الْأَرْضِ مِثْلَهُنَّ يَتَنَزَّلُ الْأَمْرُ بَيْنَهُنَّ لِتَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ قَدْ أَحَاطَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عِلْمًا... الطلاق. ١٣

“Allah is He Who created seven heavens, and of the earth the like thereof. The divine command comes down in their midst, that you may know that Allah has power over all things, and that Allah encompasses all things in His knowledge.” (Surah At-Talaq 65':13)

وَلِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ مُّحِيطًا... النساء. ١٢٤

“And to Allah belongs all that is in the heavens and all that is in the earth; and Allah encompasses all things.” (Surah An-Nisa 4':127)

يَسْتَخْفُونَ مِنَ النَّاسِ وَلَا يَسْتَخْفُونَ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَهُوَ مَعَهُمْ إِذْ يُبَيِّتُونَ مَا لَا يَرْضَى مِنَ الْقَوْلِ
وَكَانَ اللَّهُ بِمَا يَعْمَلُونَ مُّحِيطًا... النساء. ١٠٩

“They seek to hide from men, but they cannot hide from Allah; and He is with them when they spend the night plotting about matters of which He

does not approve. And Allah encompasses what they do.” (Surah An-Nisa 4’:109)

إِنَّمَا إِلَهُكُمُ اللَّهُ الَّذِي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ وَسِعَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ عِلْمًا... طه- ٩٩

“Your God is only Allah, beside Whom there is no God. He embraces all things in His knowledge.” (Surah TaHa 20’:99)

وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ وَنَعْلَمُ مَا تُوَسْوِسُ بِهِ نَفْسُهُ وَنَحْنُ أَقْرَبُ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ حَبْلِ الْوَرِيدِ... ق- ١٤

“And assuredly, We have created man and We know what his mind whispers to him and We are nearer to him than even his jugular vein.” (Surah Qaf 50’:17)

إِنَّ كُلَّ مَنْ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ إِلَّا آتِيَ الرَّحْمَنِ عَبْدًا. لَقَدْ أَحْصَاهُمْ وَعَدَّهُمْ عَدًّا... مريم- ٩٥، ٩٣

“There is none in the heavens and the earth but he shall come to the Gracious God as bondman. Verily, He comprehends them by His knowledge and has numbered them all fully.” (Surah Maryam 19’:94-95)

Being Subject, the Objective knowledge is Wise and All-Knowing.

As The Holy Qur’an says:

إِنَّ رَبَّكَ حَكِيمٌ عَلِيمٌ... انعام- ٨٣

“Thy Lord is indeed Wise, All-knowing.” (Surah Al-An’am 6’:84)

And since that Wise and All-Knowing Entity is the prime object for our endeavour to acquire knowledge, It is the Final and Objective Knowledge and Wisdom. This Final and Objective All-Knowing and All-Wise entity is foremost beyond or behind and therefore Transcendent. It reaches our eyes but our eyes cannot reach It. As The Holy Qur’an says:

لَا تُدْرِكُهُ الْأَبْصَارُ وَهُوَ يُدْرِكُ الْأَبْصَارَ وَهُوَ اللَّطِيفُ الْخَبِيرُ - الانعام - ١٠٣

“Eyes cannot reach Him but He reaches the eyes. And He is the Incomprehensible, the All-Aware.” (Surah Al-An’am 6’:104)

A famous poet, Faiz Ahmad Faiz, has pointed out ‘Objective Knowledge’ in his poetry in the following verse. He says:

کئی بار اُسکی خاطر ڈرے ڈرے کا جگر چیرا
مگر یہ چشم حیراں جس کی حیرانی نہیں جاتی

Many a time I had left no particle unturned, for his sake. But my sight is amazed at the amazement that doesn’t go away.

It has rightly been stated about reasoning:

یہ تو خود اندھی ہے گر نیرِ الہام نہ ہو

It is itself blind if there is no Light of revelations.

So far as revelation is concerned, an individual to whom nothing has been revealed may question, ‘What is this revelation? What is its need? Why do we believe in its existence?’

In the way that abstract reason is unable to get Ilmul-Yaqeen likewise, it cannot attain Ainul-Yaqeen without the light of revelation. For the sake of inference, primary resources such as the senses help with reason, in the same way, reason is in need of revelation to proceed further. So far as the belief in its existence is concerned, then as neither of us have seen Socrates^{as} personally nor lived in his time, even so, we are quite certain about his existence. We believe that Plato and Xenophon have not fabricated a lie about the existence of Socrates. The question is that if we believe in the claims of Plato and Xenophon about the actual existence of Socrates, then why should we not believe the claims of a whole host of virtuous people about the existence of revelation? If the statements of Plato and Xenophon about the existence of Socrates are true, then the

claims of a multitude of virtuous people of their personal experience of revelation is much more trustworthy. Whether someone has received revelation personally or not, the existence of revelation is beyond doubt. Revelation is which illumines and guides reason and it is a mere source of Ainul-Yaqeen.

It is said that the impressions of the senses are different for each individual but reason is universal. However, this is not correct. If it is so, then why is it that the rational judgements of Plato and Aristotle differ? Logically what was true for Plato, was not so for Aristotle. Why do their minds contradict each other? The truth is that if reason is universal, then revelation is more universal. Revelation is ever rational and its information is always one and the same. It is implausible that different people would be revealed differently about the same event. It may happen so that sometimes human reasoning is unable to properly understand revelation and commit some sort of error through misunderstanding regarding the content of revelation. Such indiscretions will be the fault of reason. With regards to the content of revelation, such rational fault is removed and reformed in the light of newer emerging revelations. True revelation by itself is above any sort of mistake. So far as the question, ‘What is revelation?’ is concerned the Promised Messiah Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as} very beautifully answered this question. He says:

“It should be kept well in mind that revelation does not mean that an idea should arise in the mind of a person who sets himself to ponder over a thing as, for instance, a poet having thought out half a verse seeks the other half in his mind and his mind suggests the other half. This is not revelation but is the result of reflection, in accordance with the law of nature. When a person reflects upon something good or bad, a corresponding idea arises in his mind ... What then is revelation? It is the living and powerful converse of the Holy and Mighty God with a chosen servant of His, or with one whom He designs to make His elect. When this converse starts in an adequate and satisfactory manner, being altogether free from the darkness of false concepts, and is not composed merely of a few inadequate and meaningless words, and is full of delight and wisdom and grandeur, then it surely is the word of

God with which He designs to comfort His servant and to manifest Himself to Him.”⁹¹

3) Haqqul-Yaqeen. (Knowledge by way of certainty of experience.)

- I) All hardships, calamities and sufferings experienced by the virtuous at the hands of their opponents, or imposed upon them by Divine decree, are the fundamentals of Haqqul-Yaqeen. Allah the Exalted says in the Holy Qur’an:

وَلَنَبْلُوَنَّكُمْ بِشَيْءٍ مِّنَ الْخَوْفِ وَالْجُوعِ وَنَقْصٍ مِّنَ الْأَمْوَالِ وَالْأَنْفُسِ وَالثَّمَرَاتِ وَبَشِّرِ الصَّابِرِينَ الَّذِينَ إِذَا أَصَابَتْهُمُ مُصِيبَةٌ قَالُوا إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ أُولَٰئِكَ عَلَيْهِمْ صَلَوَاتٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ وَرَحْمَةٌ وَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُهْتَدُونَ.. البقرة ١٥٦، ١٥٧، ١٥٨

“And We will try you with something of fear and hunger, and loss of wealth and lives and fruits; but give glad tidings to the patient, Who, when a misfortune overtakes them, say, ‘Surely, to Allah we belong and to Him shall we return.’ It is these on whom are blessings from their Lord and mercy, and it is these who are rightly guided.” (Surah Al-Baqarah 2’:156-158)

Likewise, in another verse, Allah the Exalted says in the Holy Qur’an:

لَنَبْلُوَنَّ فِي أَمْوَالِكُمْ وَأَنْفُسِكُمْ وَلَتَسْمَعَنَّ مِنَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ وَمِنَ الَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوا أَذًى كَثِيرًا وَإِنْ تَصْبِرُوا وَتَتَّقُوا فَإِنَّ ذَلِكَ مِنْ عَزْمِ الْأُمُورِ... آل عمران ١٨٤

“You shall surely be tried in your possessions and in your persons and you shall surely hear many hurtful things from those who were given the Book before you and from those who set up equals to God. But if you show fortitude and act righteously, that indeed is a matter of strong determination.” (Surah Aal-e- ‘Imran 3’:187)

91 Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as}, *Roohani Khazain*, (Urdu), Vol 10, pp. 437-439. *The Philosophy of the Teachings of Islam*, translated into English by Sir Ch M Zafrullah Khan (Islam International Publications Ltd., Tilford, Surrey GU 10 2AQ UK, 2017), pp. 191-193.

As the Promised Messiah, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as} has said in his essay:

“The third source of knowledge is certainty through experience, that is to say, all the hardships and calamities and sufferings that are experienced by the Prophets and the righteous at the hands of their opponents, or that are imposed upon them by Divine Decree. Through these hardships and sufferings all the commandments of the law and its directions that were comprehended by the human mind intellectually, appear in practical shape and become experience, and by being developed by practical exercise arrive at their climax, and the person concerned himself becomes a perfect code of Divine Guidance. All the moral qualities like forbearance, retribution, endurance, mercy, etc. which hitherto pervaded the mind and heart theoretically, become part of the personality through practical experience and make their impress upon the total personality of sufferer.”⁹²

Furthermore, he states:

“As wealth is multiplied by commerce, in the same way knowledge arrives at its spiritual climax through practical experience. Thus, practical experience is the principal means of perfecting knowledge and bestows a light upon knowledge. The ultimate certainty of knowledge is achieved through experience of every part of it. That is what happened in Islam. God Almighty provided the Muslims with the opportunity to illustrate whatever they were taught in the Qur’an in their practice and thus to become filled with its light. That is why God Almighty divided the life of the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, into two phases; one phase of hardship and calamities and sufferings, and the other of victory; so that during the phase of sufferings those high moral qualities might be demonstrated which come into play at such times, and during the phase of victory and authority those high moral qualities might be illustrated which cannot be displayed in the absence of authority. Thus, both these types of qualities were perfectly illustrated in the life of the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon

92 *Ibid.*, p. 201.

him, by his passing through both these phases and conditions. During the period of trials in Mecca, which extended over thirteen years, the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, demonstrated in practice all the high qualities which a perfectly righteous person should exhibit at such a time, such as trust in God, perfect serenity under sufferings, steady and eager carrying out of duties and fearless courage. Observing his steadfastness many of the disbelievers believed in him and thus testified that it is only the one who has complete trust in God who can display such steadfastness and endurance of suffering.

During the second phase, that is to say the phase of victory, authority and prosperity, he demonstrated such high qualities as forbearance, forgiveness, benevolence and courage, so that a large number of the disbelievers believed in him through witnessing his exercise of those high qualities. He forgave those who had persecuted him, granted security to those who had expelled him from Mecca, bestowed great wealth upon those among them who were in need and having obtained authority over his bitter enemies, forgave them all. Witnessing his high morals many of them testified that such qualities could only be demonstrated by one who comes from God and is truly righteous.”⁹³

- II) As narrated earlier we can acquire Objective Knowledge and Wisdom only through Revelation and therefore it is the source of Ainul-Yaqeen. Recipients of revelation, besides knowledge, are given news about forthcoming events. With the passage of time when these events take place word by word at their appointed times, then human understanding arrives at the level of Haqqul-Yaqeen. That which was theoretical, now comes into practice. Here we acquire realisation of the reality of Knowledge and becomes a manifestation of It.

93 Ibid., p. 204-206.

2. Concept of Sciences

Before beginning the discourse on sciences, we must be mindful of the relationship of science with philosophy. For this, let's start with the questions, 'What is philosophy? And what is its subject matter?' So far as the definition of philosophy is concerned, it has always remained a disputed subject. Many philosophers have framed its various definitions, some have even claimed that philosophy is futile. I define philosophy as a knowledge of 'the' Knowledge; a wisdom of 'the' Wisdom. One may object that they do not believe in the Knowledge, the Wisdom, and therefore do not accept this definition of philosophy. Of course, this definition becomes meaningless if and when the non-existence of the Knowledge, the Wisdom is proved. To be sceptical of the Knowledge does not mean It does not exist. Mere verbal disbelief is insufficient to prove Its non-existence. A disbeliever has to present some logical proof for the non-existence of the Knowledge, otherwise, there is no way but to admit this definition.

As far as the subject matter of philosophy is concerned, then it does not deal with any particular section of the universe but with the universe, the Knowledge, and with the Wisdom as a whole. If we study plants then we will acquire only botanical knowledge. But on the other hand, when we consider the Knowledge, then we have to analyse all sorts of phenomena and by doing so, eventually we reach the Knowledge. Rightly one cannot comprehend the Knowledge unless, he thinks beyond the realm of physical and metaphysical worlds. According to Socratic teaching, '*All knowledge is through concepts*'. Our knowledge improves when we move from one concept to a higher concept and from there to the highest concept. In view of this, it is concluded that the object of philosophy is the Supreme Ultimate Universal Concept and no doubt the same has been admitted by erudite scholars.

"All sciences tend to generalise, to reduce multitudes of particular facts to single general laws. Philosophy carries this process to its highest

limit. It generalises to the utmost. It seeks to view the entire universe in light of the fewest possible general principles, in the light, if possible, of a single ultimate principle."⁹⁴

In a nutshell, science is defined as knowledge of the phenomena (expressions of the Knowledge). Whilst studying the sensory world, ultimately, we chance upon the non-sensory world. Where physical science ends, metaphysical science starts and ultimately, we enter the realm of philosophy. We cannot term metaphysics as philosophy, though such has been wrongly conceived. Like the physical world, the metaphysical world is also a creation of the Knowledge and entirely depends upon It. It is the Knowledge, the Wisdom alone which is the Independent, the Immortal while all the various faculties of sciences are dependent, mortal and short-lived. To illustrate, let's take the instance of a tree.

Suppose we begin from the apex of any shoot. We observe that every shoot ends at the stem and the stem eventually ends at the root. This is the case with science, metaphysics and philosophy. If scientists observe the shoots only, then metaphysicians do not stop at the shoot. They go further to the stem. The philosopher however goes still further in search of ultimate cause, until he reaches the root.

*"All the sciences take quite for granted certain principles and facts which are, for them, ultimate. To investigate these is the portion of the philosopher, and philosophy thus takes up the thread of knowledge where the sciences drop it. It begins where they end. It investigates what they take as a matter of course."*⁹⁵

So far as the goals of sciences are concerned, they are the same as that of philosophy. Scientists and metaphysicians are engaged in discovering the same supreme truth. For example, botanists observe plants and during their research, move from one concept to another. Zoologists, similarly,

94 W. T. Stace, A Critical History of Greek Philosophy (Macmillan and Co., Limited St. Martin's Street, London, 1920), p. 3.

95 *Ibid.*, p. 3.

during the study of animals, advance from one concept to another. In this manner, we see that all scientists tend to generalise. In fact, they are all engaged in approaching the same supreme ultimate universal concept. Indicating to the same fact, Professor Stace says:

*“Thus, the explanation of the many isolated facts consists in their reduction to the one law, and the explanation of the many laws consists in their reduction to the one more general law. As knowledge advances, the phenomena of the universe come to be explained by fewer and fewer, and wider and wider, general principles. Obviously, the ultimate goal would be the explanation of all things by one principle. I do not mean to say that scientific men have this end consciously in view. But the point is that the monistic tendency is there. What is meant by the explanation is the reduction of all things to one principle.”*⁹⁶

Leaving discussion about the nature of philosophy and science, let's move towards the concept of sciences. It deals with the nature and scope of various sciences. As the Knowledge is both Space and Time, It has both Spatial and Temporal aspects. Just like the Knowledge, its manifestation, its expression too has both spatial and temporal aspects. The Knowledge has manifested the whole universe. The universe in turn is a composition of metaphysical and physical phenomena. The science that deals with metaphysical phenomena is called metaphysical science while that which deals with physical phenomena is termed as physical science. Metaphysical science in turn diverges into metaphysical spatial and temporal sciences. Metaphysical spatial science deals with the spaces of metaphysical phenomena while metaphysical temporal science deals with their times. Physical phenomena are further split into four sub-categories, accordingly physical science is also divided into four sub-categories; namely Growthless, Growthable, Irrational and Rational sciences. In the following lines, let's observe each of them in brief.

96 Ibid., p. 65.

I) **Growthless Science**

This sub-category of physical science deals with that portion of physical phenomena which do not grow, e.g. mountains, sand, water, air, etc. The majority of physical phenomena comprises this sort of phenomena. As, it has already been stated every phenomenon can be studied in view of its spatial and temporal aspects; therefore this sub-category of physical science is further subdivided into growthless spatial and growthless temporal sciences. Growthless spatial science deals with the spatial truths while growthless temporal science deals with the temporal truths of growthless phenomena.

II) **Growthable Science**

As is obvious from the term ‘growthable’, this sub-category deals with that class of physical phenomena which grow, e.g. plants. Growthable or botanical science is further subdivided into growthable spatial and growthable temporal sciences. Growthable spatial science deals with the spatial truths while growthable temporal science deals with the temporal truths of botanical phenomena.

III) **Irrational Science**

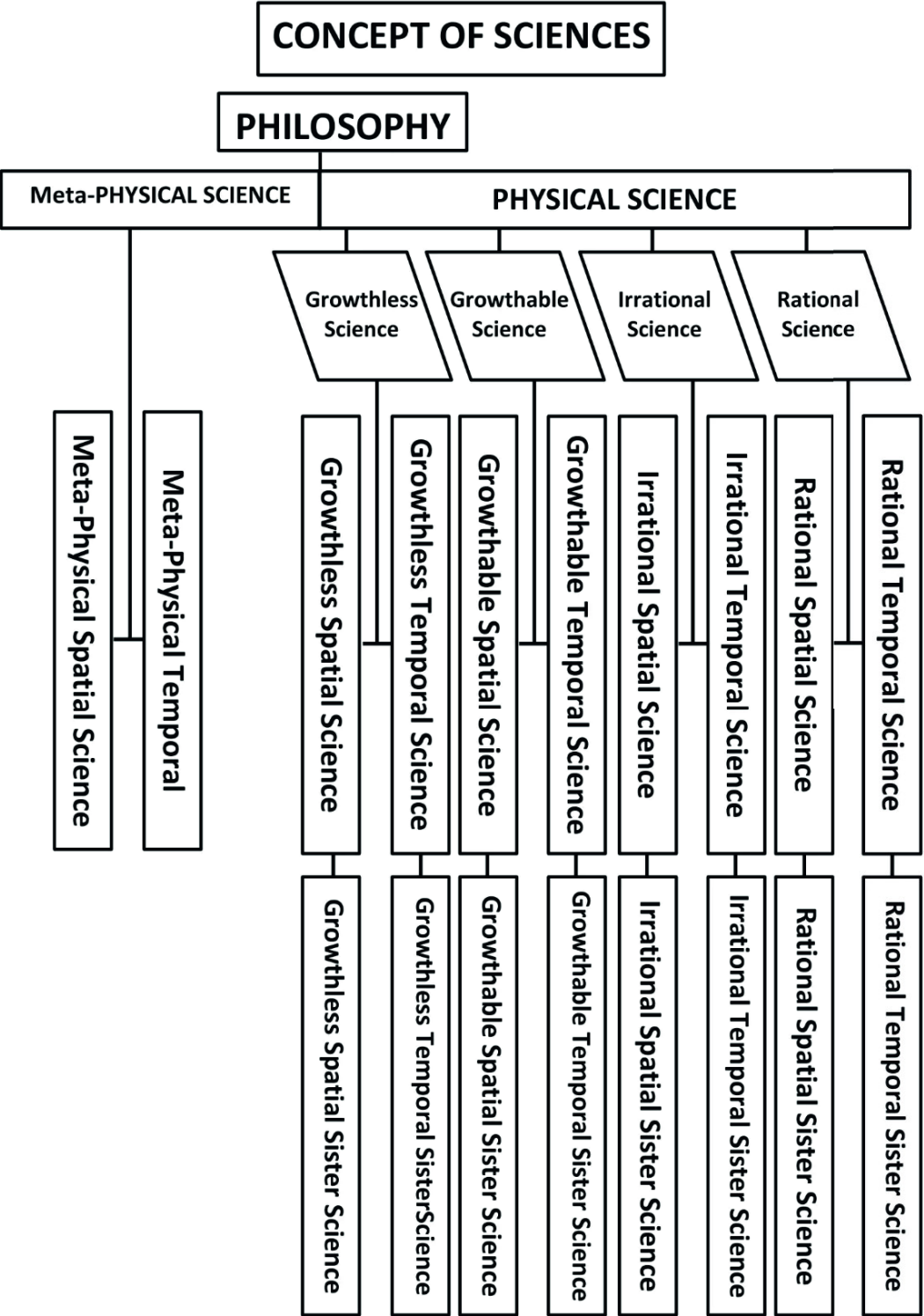
Irrational, in this context, refers to lacking the power to reason, i.e. animals. Irrational or zoological science is a developed form of botanical science as the latter is a developed form of growthless science. Irrational science further splits into irrational spatial and irrational temporal sciences. Irrational spatial science deals with the spatial truths of animals while irrational temporal science deals with their temporal truths.

IV) **Rational Science**

Rational, in this context, refers to having reason. Rational science deals with human beings. It is further subdivided into rational spatial and rational temporal sciences. Rational spatial science deals with the spatial truths of human beings while rational temporal science deals with their

temporal truths. Under the domain of growthless, growthable, irrational and rational spatial and temporal sciences, many other interrelated sciences appear and these respectively deal with their spatial and temporal truths. These are termed sister sciences of the sub-categories, e.g. in case of rational spatial science, morphology, physiology, embryology and taxonomy are all sister sciences. Likewise, under the domain of rational temporal science, moral and social sciences are sister sciences.

One might ask as to what are these moral and social sciences or precisely what are these temporal truths of human beings? It is replied that all moral and social sciences are studied in the light of 'Divine Covenant'. I will discuss the topic of 'Divine Covenant' in the following section.



3. The Divine Covenant

While writing the Revealed or Supreme Ultimate Universal Theory, I have presented the concept of sciences in the sphere of knowledge and wisdom. According to my theory, moral and social sciences can be studied within the domain of rational or human temporal science. Here again one question arises, what are these moral and social sciences and what is meant by the human temporal truths? Let it be recalled that by human temporal truths it stipulates how we have to perform our actions and duties. With reference to this, let it be known that all moral and social sciences are to be studied in the light of the Divine Covenant, but what is this Divine Covenant?

Before I elucidate the Covenant, I must reiterate here about social contract, which is an interesting aspect of social and political philosophy. It is said that in the ancient times, human beings (*Homo sapiens*) dwelled in the 'State of Nature'. There was no concept of government at all. Each individual would secure and preserve himself upon the basis of individual wisdom and strength, survival of the fittest if you will. He would remain in solidarity with his fellow men for his existence in order to guard against the predation and ferocity of wild animals and natural calamities therefore in a perpetual state of war. Thus, at a later stage, human beings framed a social contract with mutual understanding to ensure their safety and existence. Each individual deprived themselves of some of their personal freedom for the sake of the collective welfare. With the help of these contracts, over a long period of time human beings eventually determined and formed the governments and the rights of their citizens. The initial features of such a social contract can be traced in the acclaimed writings of Plato's *Crito* and *Republic*. Subsequently, in the latter phase of social renaissance in European and Western histories, the concept of social contract, proved to be vastly influential in the moral and political sectors.

The time frame of 1642 to 1648 was an epoch of political machinations and civil wars in Britain between two parties. One group was in favour

of the monarchy and the other favouring a political democratic system. The group supporting monarchy (Royalists or Cavaliers) believed in absolute and limitless powers whereas the other group (Parliamentarians or Roundheads) projected civil rights in a democratic system. Robert Filmer (1588–1653) presented this concept in his book *Patriarcha or the Natural Powers of the King* and portrayed that the powers and reign of the king are of Divinity in nature therefore he is aristocratic and dictatorial in his jurisdictions and authorities. According to Robert Filmer, the social and political rights of the subjects/citizens are under the sway of divinity in monarchical rule of the king. On the contrary, the other group under the leadership of Oliver Cromwell desired for increasing the authority of Parliament. During the tumultuous era of the English Civil War, an English philosopher, Thomas Hobbes (1588–1679), while answering the solution to the English Civil War, expanded Plato's concepts and features of social contract theory in his book entitled *Leviathan*. He depicted in his book that in the ancient times there used to be no governments at all and the rule of 'Might is Right' prevailed as the people who were mighty and strong, controlled and suppressed the weak at all times.

According to Thomas Hobbes theory, people formed a democratic state for their security and welfare and thus willingly handed over their rights and freedom to it. Thomas Hobbes wanted to execute and ensure a reconciliation between the two groups, viz. monarchy and democratic form of government. On one hand he challenged the Divine Right to rule of monarchy and on the other hand he opposed the democratic concepts as well. He projected that there should never be a division of powers between the monarchy and democratic government. He was in the middle of revolution and modesty, meaning he favoured both equally.

(Just to sidetrack, I wish to illustrate a ruse that is exploited by the self-proclaimed Quasi-Khalifas of the Ahmadiyya Community. One fundamental feature that the adherents of the Ahmadiyya Community must not lose sight of is that God the Almighty had always commissioned, or in other words appointed his Messengers for the moral guidance and reformation of Mankind. He never delegates these features to anyone but His Appointed Prophets. Historically, monarchs and kings had exercised

the ‘Divine Right to Rule’ to implement their authority and hegemony and exercise absolute and indisputable reign. In the same manner the Qadiani self-proclaimed Quasi-Khalifas (Bala-e-Qadian – The Calamity of Qadian) are using the same subterfuge of Divine Right to Rule to oppress contemporary Ahmadis into bondage and subjugation. They claim that they are accorded authority by God to be Khalifas, but the truth is that neither they nor the Monarchs of Britain were ever appointed by God. This is nothing but a web of heresy, chicanery and deception to impose their influence and command over the Ahmadiyya Community and to bolster their right to rule exploit the garb of religion in the name of God, the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw} and the Promised Messiah Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as}.)

John Locke, an English philosopher and physician (1632–1704), further moved the social contract of Thomas Hobbes, in his book *Two Treatises of Government* as well as essays and letters. In one of his treatises, he strongly opposed the concepts of Robert Filmer about the absolute monarchy of the kings, saturated in divinity and in his other treatise he presented the constructive and positive arguments in favour of civil governments formed by democracy. The basic contradictory elements in both of the theories of John Locke and Thomas Hobbes for the social contract reflect the conceptual disagreements of human nature and moral connotations.

According to John Locke, individuals pandered in this social contract and civil government whilst forsaking the natural way of living just to safeguard their properties and interests. The concepts and theories of civil rights of people presented by John Locke in his social contract for the formation of revolutionary government against the kingship/monarchy had inspired and thus were adopted by Thomas Jefferson and other founding fathers of the United States of America.

The greatest stimulant and the third pro-ponder of the French Revolution were Jean-Jacques Rousseau, born in Geneva, Switzerland in 1712. His mother died nine days after his birth. After his father moved away following a legal quarrel with a wealthy landowner, Jean-Jacques studied for only

two or three grades at school and later on he had to quit his education due to extreme poverty and destitution. It should be kept in mind that occasionally theories are the projections of the mindsets of philosophers or theologians and are outcomes of the circumstances in which they live. This was the same scenario of the concepts of Rousseau. He presented two different theories of the concepts of the social contract. In his book *A Discourse Upon the Origin and Foundation of the Inequality Among Mankind* published in 1754, he addressed human nature, while keeping passions and emotions ahead, instead of facts of history, imaginations or wisdom. He stated:

“Oh people, look, this is the true evolution of your history as it should have been recorded according to nature but not like the conjectural history written in the books by historians, but nature doesn’t tell any lies, so I have followed the path of nature.”

According to Rousseau, primitive or prehistoric society was very simple and credulous, humans possessed an instinctive drive towards self-preservation. They would spend their lives without any lust, hatred, animosity, disputes, bias or prejudice. They would quench their thirst with the water of springs, and stifle their appetite with the leaves of the trees. They slept under the shades of the trees, to fulfil their slumber. They would stay free of any despair or dismay. There were no slaves or masters. But this reign of peace, tranquility, equality and respite became subjugated and compartmentalised when human beings introduced endeavours for self-possession. He writes:

“The first real founder or member of the civil society is the one who grabbed a piece of land and erected a boundary wall around it and claimed it to be his personal property. Had there been any individual to break that boundary wall that the very first man had erected and further warned the people about the fraudulence of that individual and had kept them aware of these notions and made them stay away from such falsified stuff, as the land was supposed to be nobody’s property rather the

fruit of earth belonged to all. The entire mankind would have been saved from innumerable destruction, wars, crimes, mishaps and massacres.”

The most famous and important book of Rousseau is *The Social Contract* published in 1762. This book was renowned as the bible of the French Revolution. *The Social Contract* commences with this famous opening sentence:

“Man was born free, and he is everywhere in chains.”

(A noteworthy analogy occurred after the death of The Founder of the Ahmadiyya Community Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as}. His Community was usurped by the self-proclaimed promised reformer, his son Mirza Basheer-ud-Din Mahmood Ahmad in 1914 and since then the community has become a cult under severe restrictions and subjugation.)

From the opening sentence of *The Social Contract*, it appears that Rousseau was to be a protagonist of individual freedom and liberty, but after reading the book it becomes apparent that his focus and interests were for the equality of mankind. According to Rousseau, there is no harm done if human liberty is sacrificed just to restore equality in society. He was in favour of democracy, but such democracy that was prevalent in ancient governments in the cities of Greece. He calls the capitalist democracy a type of socialism of the privileged, i.e. Aristocracy. Rousseau's name appears at the apex in the events leading to the French Revolution. He is also revered as the prophet of the French Philosophic/Theological Revolution. The French Revolution of 1789 was a period of radical changes that ended in 1799. This was no ordinary series of events but a monumental international masterpiece of human history that left an indelible mark far and beyond all the nations of Europe. Austria, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Italy, Belgium and Germany, etc. witnessed the revolution of people who stood for procuring freedom and democracy. The French Revolution razed to the ground the three pillars of Dictatorship, Capitalism and Papalism of the Middle Ages. The three slogans of Liberty, Equality and Brotherhood were engraved upon the flag of the French Revolution.

With reference to the Social Contract, John Rawls, an American moral and political philosopher, presented a theory in 1972 called, 'A Theory of Justice'. As did David Gauthier in his 1986 book, *Morals by Agreement* as he attempted to revive the political and moral philosophies of Thomas Hobbes.

The listener needs to understand the clear and vivid concept that in the reigns and regimes of human history, several astute and perceptive individuals have presented theories about the Social Contract and they left profound indelible imprints in the political, economic and social history, particularly of Europe and the United States of America. But despite these facts, the value of these philosophies is not more than a hypothesis. While keeping in mind the imaginative concept of the social contract, one question arises in our minds, 'What is the logic and justification of having this Social Contract?' If the disciplined and civilised human lives are being observed and researched upon or for some other tertiary reasons, that forced the populace, under some compulsion to form the society, then one may think that it was done under the auspices of the social contract. So, 'How can this interpretation of the social contract be considered reasonable?' It is beyond doubt that human beings were not born just to have this developed social fabric to spend their lives accordingly, but for the fulfilment of the purpose of their lives and creation. Now the question is, 'What is the sole purpose of the creation of human beings?'

A clear and illustrated fact must be kept in mind that naturally, humans prefer a collective social structure of life compared to a lifetime of isolation. Is it not a fact that animal species too have a social structure or pecking order amongst the various individuals? Can we present a logic that animals had been doing so under some kind of auspices of any social contract that they had formulated in the primary stage of their creation? Whereas we all know that such a tendency of animals for living together and in groups is due to their instinctiveness and not by any social contract. Then how can we present the logic that human society gained discipline and development in the early or primary stages of their formation under the parameters of a social contract.

Secondly, after profound observation of the universe, we come to know that every animal species is created to fulfil a specific purpose and undoubtedly, even the lower species have been fulfilling and displaying their properties and purposes. The most developed genus and species, viz. Is it fair to say human beings were created without any material or sacred purpose? It is a misconception to keep such notions for human beings as they happen to have been granted the lofty status as the ‘Best of all Creation’ in the world and thus attain the superior motives of their lives. Before moving forward, let us initially see what sublime purpose God Almighty has assigned human beings. So far as the object of our existence is concerned the Promised Messiah, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as} addresses in his book *The Philosophy of the Teachings of Islam*. He states:

“Different people, being short-sighted and lacking high resolve, appoint different purposes for their lives. And limit themselves to worldly goals and ambitions. But the purpose that God Almighty has appointed for man in His Holy Words is as follows:

وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ-الذاريات: ٥٤

That is, I have created Jinn and men so that they may know Me and worship Me. Thus, the true purpose of man’s life is the worship of God, His understanding and complete devotion to Him. It is obvious that man is not in a position to appoint the purpose of his own life, for he does not come into the world of his own accord, nor will he depart therefrom of his own will. He is a creature and the One Who created him and invested him with better and higher faculties than those of all other animals, has also appointed a purpose for his life. Whether anyone penetrates to it or not, the purpose of man’s creation without a doubt is the worship and the understanding of God and complete devotion to Him.”⁹⁷

97 Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as}, *Ruhani Khaza’in, Islami Usool Ki Philosophy* (Urdu), Vol 10, p. 414. *The Philosophy of the teachings of Islam*, translated into English by Sir Ch M Zafrullah Khan (Islam International Publications Ltd., Tilford, Surrey GU 10 2AQ UK, 2017), pp. 158-159.

This should also be conspicuous that the righteous or iniquitous human being can only be assessed or judged by one's deeds. As mentioned by the celebrated author Doctor Muhammad Allama Iqbal in his poetry,

عمل سے زندگی بنتی ہے جنت بھی جہنم بھی
یہ خاکی اپنی فطرت میں نہ نوری ہے نہ ناری ہے

“It’s our actions that make life paradise or hell. Our original being, by its nature, is neither of light nor of fire.”⁹⁸

Furthermore, the philosophy of human actions cannot be understood, so long as the purpose and aim of human creation are not kept in mind. But the founders of social contract have categorically ignored and neglected these aspects. Different theories and concepts that have been presented about the social contract, are beyond reality. It must be clear to the readers that the Holy Qur'an projects and acquaints us with the Divine Covenant instead of social contract.

- 1) What are the properties of this Divine Covenant?
- 2) Is it for real or just an innovative imagination of the human mind?
- 3) Is it unique to human beings or other creatures as well?
- 4) How can we fulfil this covenant?
- 5) What benefits can we acquire, after acting accordingly or abiding by such a contract?

Earlier, it has been stated that Virtue is the sole Creator. When It is the Creator then no doubt It is the sole object of all Its phenomena (creation). This object can be sought only by acting virtuously. All kinds of metaphysical and a vast majority of physical phenomena are fulfilling the purposes of their creation. We cannot detect any infraction in their conduct and this justifies that they are acting fittingly. Nevertheless, as we look

98 Kulliyat e Iqbal, Iqbal academy Pakistan Lahore, (Urdu), (National Book Foundation Islamabad, 1990) Bang-e-Dra, Poem, Tulu e Islam, p.305.

towards human beings, we become aware of the fact that vice or disobedience emerges in their actions. Both Virtue and vice act with maximum impact here. Let it be remembered that human action can never remain neutral, in that it is always either virtuous or vicious. Since Virtue has created all human beings, therefore, they have been destined to obey It, instead of objective vice, i.e. the disobedient (Iblis). So as the Creator says in the Holy Qur'an:

وَاذْكُرْنَا لِلْمَلٰٓئِكَةِ اِسْجُدُوْا اِلٰلٰهَ فَسَجَدُوْا اِلَّا اِبْلٰیْسَ طَاۤیُّ وَاَسْتَكْبَرَ وَكَانَ مِنَ الْكٰفِرِيْنَ. (البقره. ۳۵)

“And remember the time when We said to the angels: ‘Submit to Adam,’ and they all submitted. But Iblis did not. He refused and was too proud; and he was of the disbelievers.” (Surah Al-Baqarah 2’:35)

Mankind has been conditionally expected to have ‘Virtue’ as their object and therefore act virtuously. This is what is termed as the Divine Covenant. Covenantal actions simply mean such actions which have to be performed under a Covenant. These covenantal actions uniquely apply to human beings.

The reason behind this is that mankind has been created with *Nafs*. And this *Nafs* is the characteristic of the human self that incites one towards vices. On the subject of *Nafs*, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad_(as) mentions that there are three types of *Nafs*. And he further comments on these three types of *Nafs* in detail in the following lines:

“Be it known that the holy Word of God Almighty, the Holy Qur’an, has indicated three separate sources of these three states. In other words, it has pointed out three springs out of which these respective states flow.

First Source: Nafsi Ammarah, the Self That Incites one to Evil

The first spring which is the source of all natural states is designated by the Holy Qur’an as the Nafsi Ammarah, which means the self that incites to evil, as it says:

إِنَّ النَّفْسَ الْأَمَّارَةَ بِالسُّوءِ... (يوسف- ٥٣)

This means that it is characteristic of the human self that it incites man to evil and is opposed to his attainment of perfection and to his moral state, and urges him towards undesirable and evil ways. Thus, the propensity towards evil and intemperance is a human state which predominates over the mind of a person before he enters upon the moral state. This is man's natural state, so long as he is not guided by reason and understanding but follows his natural bent in eating, drinking, sleeping, waking, anger and provocation, like the animals. When a person is guided by reason and understanding and brings his natural state under control and regulates it in a proper manner, then these three states, as described, cease to remain natural states, but are called moral states, as shall also be discussed later.

Second Source: Nafsi Lawwamah, the Reproving Self

The source of the moral state of man is designated by the Holy Qur'an Nafsi Lawwamah, as is said:

وَلَا أُقْسِمُ بِالنَّفْسِ اللَّوَّامَةِ... (القيامة- ٣)

That is, I call to witness the reproving self; that is to say, I call to witness the self that reproves itself for every vice and intemperance. This reproving self is the second source of human state from which the moral state is generated. At this stage man ceases to resemble the animals. Calling it to witness is for the purpose of doing it honour, as if by advancing from the state of the self that is prone to evil and arriving at the state of the reproving self, it has become worthy of honour in divine estimation. It is so called as it reproves man on vice and is not reconciled to man's submitting to his natural desires and leading an unbridled existence like the animals. It desires that man should be in a good state and should practise good morals, and no kind of intemperance should be manifested in any aspect of human life, and natural emotions and desires should be regulated by reason.

As it reproves every vicious movement, it is called the reproving itself. Though it reproves itself in respect of vices, yet it is not fully effective in practising virtue and occasionally it is dominated by natural emotions, when it stumbles and falls. It is like a weak child who does not wish to stumble and fall but does so out of weakness, and is then remorseful over his infirmity. In short, this is the moral state of human self when it seeks to comprehend within itself high moral qualities and is disgusted with disobedience, but cannot achieve complete success.

The Third Source: Nafsi Mutma'innah, the Soul at Rest

The third source which should be described as the beginning of the spiritual state of man is called by the Holy Qur'an Nafsi Mutma'innah, that is to say, the soul at rest, as is said:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّفْسُ الْمُطْمَئِنَّةُ - ارْجِعِي إِلَىٰ رَبِّكِ رَاضِيَةً مَّرْضِيَّةً - فَأَدْخُلِي فِي عِبَادِي - وَأَدْخُلِي جَنَّتِي - . (الفجر- ٢٨ تا ٣١)

That is, O soul at rest that has found comfort in God return to thy Lord, thou well pleased with Him and He well pleased with you. Now join My chosen servants and enter My garden.

This is the stage when the soul of a person being delivered from all weaknesses is filled with spiritual powers and establishes a relationship with God Almighty without Whose support it cannot exist. As water flowing down from a height, on account of its volume and the absence of any obstruction, rushes with great force, in the same way the soul at rest flows towards God. That is indicated by the divine direction to the soul that has found comfort in God to return to its Lord. It undergoes a great transformation in this very life and is bestowed a paradise while still in this world. As this verse indicates in its direction to such a soul to return to its Lord, it is nourished by its Lord and its love of God becomes its nurture, and it drinks at this fountain of life and is thus delivered from death. This is indicated another place in the Holy Qur'an where Allah, the Exalted, has said:

وَقَدْ خَابَ مَنْ دَسَّلَهَا - كَذَّبَتْ تَمُودُ بِطَغْوَاهَا - (الشمس: ١٠، ١١)

That is, he who purifies his soul of earthly passions shall be saved and shall not suffer ruin, but he who is overcome by his earthly passions should despair of life.”⁹⁹

Besides humans, all other physical phenomena are free from such a Divine Covenant and the reason being that these are created without *Nafs* and thus not placed under the influence of virtue and vice. These species always act virtuously because they all fulfil the purpose of their existence.

Again, the question may arise, as to why only human beings have been bound by such a Divine Covenant; whereas all other physical phenomena are free from such a responsibility? Let it be known, by bestowing human beings with reason, they have been elevated to the status of the best and highly developed form of physical phenomena. Due to the capacity to reason, man has the sense of virtuous and vicious. He is born with this sense, and acts under the influence of this Virtue and vice.

Though animals also possess the senses of sight, smell, sound, taste, touch and the power of locomotion, they have been deprived of reason and are therefore unaware of the sense of virtuous and vicious. Animals apply their bodily organs for what they have been created. For example, they eat and drink whatever they find. Whether you place a cup of sweet milk or poisonous milk before a cat, she will drink it. She does not know that poisonous milk will cause her to die. Likewise, all other growthless and growthable phenomena do what they have been created to do. In contrast to lower phenomena, all rational beings, having reason, are fully capable to act either virtuously or viciously. They may act, as they like. Having the precious gift of reason, human covenantal action is neither surprising nor a burden. Our conscience admits it and finds it a good judgement of our actions.

⁹⁹ Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as}, *Roohani Khazain*, (Urdu), Vol 10, pp. 316-319. *The Philosophy of the teachings of Islam*, translated into English by Sir Ch M Zaffrullah Khan (Islam International Publications Ltd., Tilford, Surrey GU 10 2AQ UK, 2017), pp. 3-8.

Let us take an example of any individual. We know that speaking the truth is a human compound virtuous action. How is it so? In this action, many human anatomical aspects are applied and all these acts virtuously. For example, mouth, teeth, tongue, etc. all these parts act for what they have been created. In all this process, every human anatomical action is its elementary virtuous action because of its object which is 'Virtue'. All these elementary actions after uniting adopt the form of human compound virtue. We see that in speaking the truth, one's action has become a compound Virtuous action, only when he has entirely acted virtuously, or when the sole object of his whole action is 'Virtue'. So, whenever one speaks the truth, then actually he passes through a compound virtuous action.

Let us observe the diametric opposite, i.e. vicious action. Suppose man A eats apples but upon enquiry he states that he has drunk water. In this case would it be fair to assume that he has told a lie? No doubt such an action is termed a 'vicious action'. The question is, 'Why such speaking action has become a "vicious action"?'. This question can be answered suitably after analysing the whole action. In this human action, again many human body organs, i.e. mouth, teeth, tongue, etc., have been involved. All these organs act virtuously because they act for what they have been created. Despite the fact, we cannot call the whole action as a virtuous action.

This action has become vicious as it is besmirched by 'vice'. What is this vice? It is simply disobedience of the 'Virtue' or obedience of the *Disobedient* or *Satan* or '*Iblis*'. This vice after mixing with elementary virtuous actions destroys them and the whole human action adopts the form of a vicious action. Besides this, let's observe how disobedience infiltrated this action. The man A disobeys because though in fact he has eaten apples, he says that he has drunk water. He disobeys because he does not state what he should state. He should state what has happened and not what has not happened. So, the vice after mixing with elementary virtues makes the entire action 'vicious'. Therefore, this is a violation of the Divine Covenant. According to the Divine Covenant, man has been asked to act virtuously. He should make his action, compound virtuous

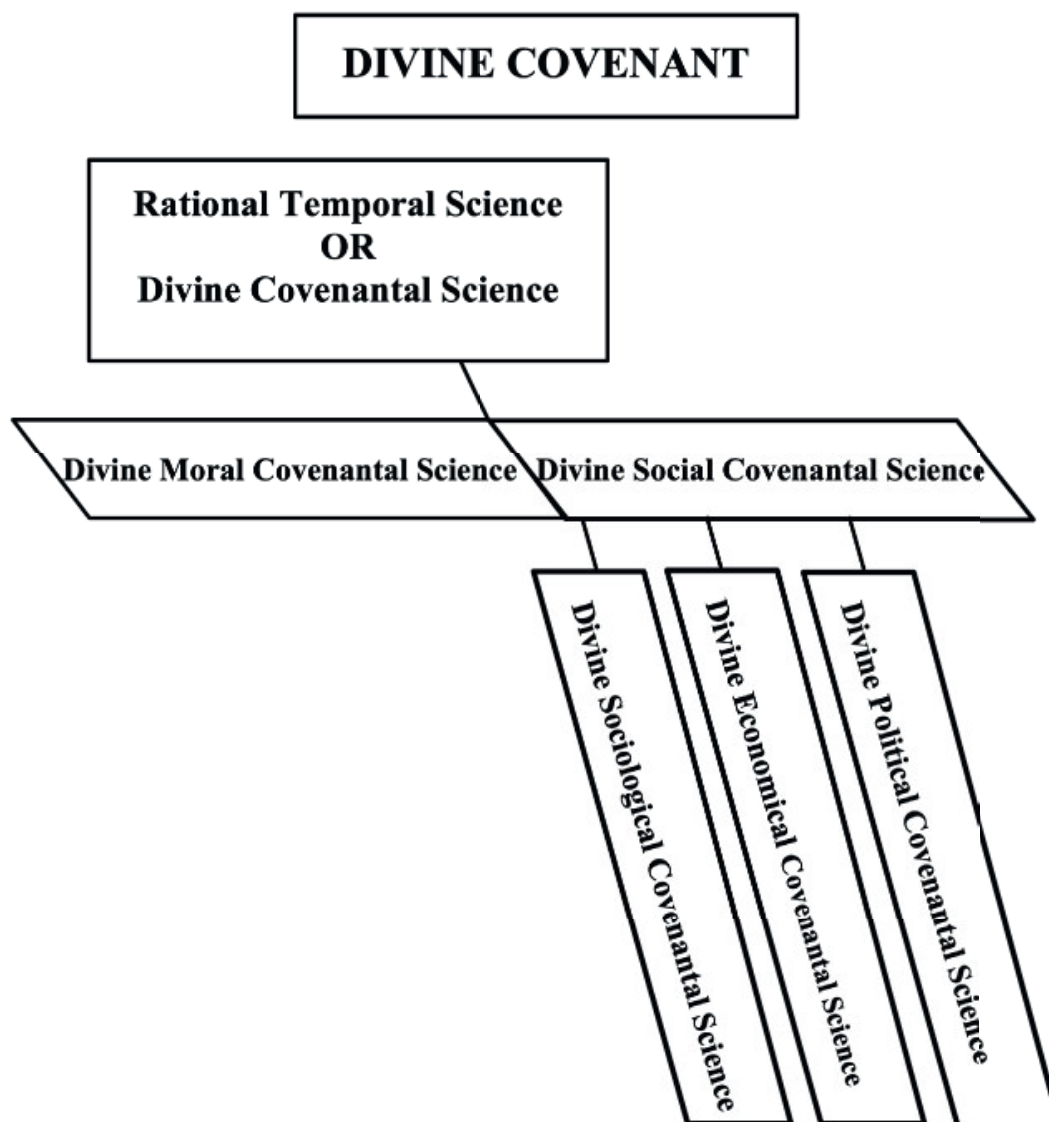
action and this is only possible when the object of human action is 'Virtue'. From these examples, the following conclusions can be drawn.

(I) During human actions, elementary virtuous actions always combine with one another and when the object of the whole action is Virtue, then the entire action becomes a compound virtuous action. It is this that we have been created for and expected to do.

(II) During actions, human beings are absolutely free to act either virtuously or viciously; despite the fact that they have been bestowed with reason and given the sense of discriminating between virtuous and vicious.

(III) Vice always mixes with elementary virtuous actions and destroys them, because it converts the entire action into vicious action.

(IV) Virtue and vice become active only during human actions, where these make human action either virtuous or vicious.



We are aware of the fact that the universe has not been created aimlessly. Behind its creation, there lies a specific purpose. This purpose reaches the highest point with the creation of human beings. As a consequence of the faculty of reasoning, their actions are inordinately developed, therefore the purpose of their creation is also comparatively elevated. And that is why, they have been placed before a Covenant.

Human covenantal action is a sort of test and we are aware of the fact that in a test one always deals with it as an individual accountable for their input and actions. The whole rational temporal science can be studied only in the light of this covenant. We should remember the following points about it:

- 1) Virtue has made this covenant with Its quintessential creation – human beings. Virtue and its human creation are its participants but not of equal rank. Their relation is that of the Creator and His creation, the Independent and the dependent.
- 2) Virtue is not only a party but also a judge and will decide as to who has obeyed and who violated the Covenant. Moreover, It is our Lord and therefore can inflict upon us or remit us.
- 3) All human beings are totally free either to obey or violate the covenant.
- 4) By birth, all human beings are virtuous.

And finally, ‘What is a virtuous action and what it is not’ is a disputed issue. If one man thinks that speaking the truth is a virtuous action then the other will say that telling a lie is a virtuous action. Still others may claim that the action that we assume virtuous is virtuous for us while the action that you assume virtuous is virtuous for you. In such a state how can one decide as to what is virtuous and what is vicious action? It is replied that ‘Virtue’ has created and asked Its human beings to act virtuously then how possibly can It leave them upon their whim. No doubt, It has reminded them about Its orders in Its words again and again. With this, all such confusion about virtuous and vicious action is removed. Which action is virtuous and what is not virtuous is a religious question. And to answer this question first we have to look at the brief history of religions.

Wherever in the world that has been inhabited by people, they have adopted their own way of living and that is being adopted by them in an extreme method. As per dictionary definition, the explanation of the word religion is the same and identical. The purpose and meaning of religion is the devotion and commitment to a personal set or institutionalised principles to be followed for leading one’s life. This meaning is the explanatory reality for this phenomenon. Another word of Urdu and Arabic origin ‘DEEN’ is employed extensively and is the common alternative word for religion. Thus, it is quoted in the Holy Qur’an, Surah Al-e-Imran.

إِنَّ الدِّينَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ الْإِسْلَامُ وَمَا اخْتَلَفَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ إِلَّا مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَهُمُ الْعِلْمُ بَغْيًا بَيْنَهُمْ وَمَنْ يَكْفُرْ بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ سَرِيعُ الْحِسَابِ (ال عمران-٢٠)

“Surely, the true religion with Allah is Islam (complete submission). And those who were given the Book did not disagree but after knowledge had come to them, out of mutual envy. And whoso denies the Signs of Allah, then surely, Allah is quick at reckoning.” (Surah Aal-e-Imran 3’:20)

At this juncture we must keep in mind that there is one delicate and subtle difference in the Deen and religion. The Deen is the name of those norms and principles that stood common in all the prophets from Adam^{as} to the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw}. Whereas ‘religion’ is the name of the changes in these principles and rules. This phenomenon reveals that the ‘DEEN’ remained the same but religions keep on changing. In the wake of religion, we come across such people who possess no personal faith or religion, and we identify them with terms such as ‘Agnostics’ or ‘Atheists’.

Religions of the world can be divided in two categories, ‘revealed religions’ and ‘non-revealed religions’. The revealed religions are referred to as those religions that are established through the revealed books of God and His Prophets; and the non-revealed religions are those whose followers do not consider themselves under the obligations of any set of teachings and concepts devised by God Almighty. Amongst the revealed religions are the monotheistic religions of the highest order, namely Judaism, Christianity and Islam, whereas the non-revealed religions include the other religions of the world.

This fact must be kept in mind that since the creation of the world the bona fide religion of human beings was the belief in Oneness of God. Pantheism sets in only when there is significant expansion in the population and the teachings of the prophets become obscure. Consequently, even today a slight spectrum of revealed teachings can be seen in the non-revealed religions based upon pantheism, like Hinduism, Jainism and Buddhism. Sikhism is a non-revealed monotheistic religion based upon dharmic teachings.

Judaism is the first of the category of revealed religions. The Torah is the revealed book of Judaism. In the current Holy Bible the combination of the first five books of the Old Testament, the ‘Pentateuch’ is called the Torah. (1) Genesis (2) Exodus (3) Leviticus (4) Numbers (5) Deuteronomy.

According to the Holy Qur’an, some amongst the Jews have amended the Torah as per their desires. This is the reason, although it contains virtually the same events and commandments as that of the Holy Qur’an yet monumental and significant differences exist in the faith and beliefs. Upon questioning the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw} about the Torah, he responded not to categorise this book true or false but instead we must declare that we have pledged for faith upon God and His Revealed Books. The followers of Judaism have carried out significant omissions and alterations in the Torah as the Holy Qur’an explains and Allah reiterates in Surah An-Nisa.

مِنَ الَّذِينَ هَادُوا يُخَرِّفُونَ الْكَلِمَ عَنْ مَوَاضِعِهِ...النساء-٢٤

“There are some among the Jews who pervert words from their proper places ...” (Surah An-Nisa 4’:47)

Although there have been varying points of views of different Islamic scholars about the kinds of changes and amendments by the Jews in the Torah, a few opine that Jews have changed the wordings, while others are of the view that the real changes and contradictions were exercised by them along with slight changes in meanings while giving the explanation of the verses.

The same has occurred with the Gospels (The New Testament). Here too there have been many alterations and contradictions that have surfaced over the centuries. It is explained in the Holy Qur’an and the traditions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw} that the Torah and the Gospel have both been annulled and all the (Muhasans) portfolios of these books have entered Islam. As stated by God about the Holy Qur’an in Surah Al-Anbiya:

هَذَا ذِكْرٌ مَنْ مَعِيَ وَذِكْرٌ مَنْ قَبْلِي بَلْ أَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ الْحَقَّ فَهُمْ مُعْرِضُونَ... (الأنبياء- ٢٥)

“This (the Qur’an) is the Reminder of those with me, and the Reminder of those before me. Nay, most of them know not the truth, and so they turn away.” (Surah Al-Anbiya 21’:25)

In the same fashion God reiterates in Surah Shura of the Holy Qur’an:

شَرَعَ لَكُمْ مِنَ الدِّينِ مَا وَصَّى بِهِ نُوحًا وَالَّذِي أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ وَمَا وَصَّيْنَا بِهِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَمُوسَى وَعِيسَى أَنْ أَقِيمُوا الدِّينَ وَلَا تَتَفَرَّقُوا فِيهِ ط كَبُرَ عَلَى الْمُشْرِكِينَ مَا تَدْعُو هُمْ إِلَيْهِ ط اللَّهُ يَجْتَبِي إِلَيْهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَيَهْدِي إِلَيْهِ مَنْ يُنِيبُ. (الشورى- ١٣)

“He has prescribed for you the religion which He enjoined on Noah, and which We have revealed to thee, and which We enjoined on Abraham and Moses and Jesus, saying, ‘Remain steadfast in obedience, and be not divided therein. Hard upon the idolators is that to which thou callest them. Allah chooses for Himself whom He pleases, and guides to Himself him who turns to Him.’” (Surah Ash-Shura 42’:14)

Consequently, now no one can be called a Muslim who believes in Judaism or Christianity rather every Jew and Christian who wants to be on the path of righteousness must believe in the teachings of Muhammad^{saw}. Whereas Islam has made it compulsory upon its followers to consider the Torah and the Gospel, etc. to be the revealed books of God. The basic faiths of Islam are ‘Oneness of God’, ‘Prophethood’ and ‘the live after death’. Allah happens to be one and the only one and there is nobody to share with Him in terms of personality or qualities. Muhammad^{saw} is His Messenger and Prophet and after the prophethood of Muhammad^{saw} being promulgated, all other religions have been annulled. He is the last Prophet with commandments from God and the religion that he brought in this world is the religion (Islam) from God. No other religion than this, including Judaism or Christianity, is worth acting upon or assuring salvation. The revealed books before the Holy Qur’an were sent to different nations and those were all very temporary in nature. The Holy Qur’an is the last and complete book that is revealed to the human beings from God. All the other books were sent to their respective nations before the Holy Prophet

Muhammad^{saw} and were short-lived, but now Muhammad^{saw} is being sent to the entire human race with a complete book and code of spending life. Whereas God Almighty says in Sura Saba:

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ إِلَّا كَافَّةً لِّلنَّاسِ بَشِيرًا وَنَذِيرًا وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ.. سبأ- ٢٩

“And We have not sent thee but as a bearer of glad tidings and a Warner; for all mankind, but most men know not.” (Surah Saba 34’:29)

There are in this world, many ethnicities of human beings with various distinguishing features such as colour, creed and race, but the sole purpose of the creation of Mankind in this universe is to worship the Creator, God. And this world was created as a testing ground for Mankind. The series of Prophets sent to the world had a motive to place human beings on the path of righteousness and for their worldly welfare and salvation on the Day of Judgement.

Now the question arises, Is the Prophethood and Sharia of the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw} eternal and will it last till the Day of Judgement compared to the Prophethoods and Sharia of the preceding Prophets? In reply to this question, I state unequivocally that this is true. I will now present the reasons and arguments in support of why the Prophethood and the Sharia of the Prophet Muhammad^{saw} is eternal and will last till the day of Judgement. In The Holy Qur’an Surah Al-Ahzab, God the Almighty says:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَمَلَائِكَتَهُ يُصَلُّونَ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا صَلُّوا عَلَيْهِ وَسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يُؤْذُونَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ لَعَنَهُمُ اللَّهُ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ وَأَعَدَّ لَهُمْ عَذَابًا مُّهِينًا (الاحزاب- ٥٨، ٥٩)

“Allah and His angels send blessings on the Prophet. O ye who believe! you also should invoke blessings on him and salute him with the salutation of peace. Verily, those who malign Allah and His Messenger – Allah has cursed them in this world and in the Hereafter; and has prepared for them an abasing punishment.” (Surah Al-Ahzab 33’:57-58)

Regarding this verse, The Promised Reformer of the 14th century of Islam, (Hijri) Hakam-o-Adal (the Truthful and Just) Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as} stated

in his lecture during the annual gathering (Jalsa Salana), 1897:

“Our Lord and Master, Holy Prophet Muhammad’s^{saw} sincerity and loyalty was such that he stood against all sorts of rebellious movements. He faced numerous hardships and sufferings but was not fazed by it. In fact, it was that sincerity and loyalty for which Allah the Almighty bestowed his blessings. It is for this reason Allah the Almighty said:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَمَلَائِكَتَهُ يُصَلُّونَ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا صَلُّوا عَلَيْهِ وَسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا.

Allah and all His angels send blessings on the Prophet. O people who believe! you should send blessings and peace on the Prophet.

It is obvious from this verse that Holy Prophet’s deeds were such that in order to praise him or to describe his attributes, God had not used any specific word. There could have been use of such words. But He had not done so purposely, because the praises of his virtuous deeds were beyond description with mere words. God had not revealed any such verse in the honour of any other Prophet. His soul was instilled with such sincerity and loyalty and in the eyes of God his actions were so cherished that God had commanded forever, as a gesture of appreciation people present and to come should send blessings and peace on him.”¹⁰⁰

Similarly, in his renowned book Chashma-e-Ma’rifat part 2, p 288-289, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as} says about Surah Al-Ahzab verse 57:

“There have been millions of pure-natured people in the world and there will be more in future, but we have found the best of all of them and the highest man of God, whose name is Muhammad [peace and blessings of Allah be on him].

إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَمَلَائِكَتَهُ يُصَلُّونَ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا صَلُّوا عَلَيْهِ وَسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا.

We shall leave aside any mention of the holy ones from among those

100 Report Jalsa Salana (Ahmadiyya) 1897, page 50, 51.

people whose circumstances have not been described in detail in the Holy Qur'an. We shall express our view only with regard to the Prophets who are mentioned in the Qur'an like Moses, David, Jesus and other Prophets [peace be on them]. We affirm it on oath, calling God to witness, that if the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allah be on him] had not come into the world, and the Holy Qur'an had not been revealed, and we had not seen with our own eyes the blessings that we have witnessed, the truth of all past Prophets would have remained doubtful in our eyes. No reality can be gathered from mere stories, for it is quite possible that they may not be true and it is also possible that the miracles that are attributed to these Prophets might be exaggerations, for no sign of them is visible today. We cannot even ascertain for certain from the Books revealed in the past that God truly exists, or that He speaks to man. But through the advent of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allah be on him] all these stories became real. We now realize not merely as a statement, but as a matter of experience, what converse with the Divine means and how God's signs are manifested and how prayers are answered. All this we have discovered by following the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allah be on him] and what other people relate as stories we have witnessed it all. We have attached ourselves to a Prophet who manifests God to us. A poet has put it beautifully: Muhammad of Arabia, King of both the worlds; Whose threshold is safeguarded by the Holy Spirit. I cannot call him God, but I do say; To recognize him is to recognize God."¹⁰¹

Similarly, in one of his lectures that was published in the Ahmadiyya newspaper Al-Hakam, Vol 5, number 2, 17th January 1901, p 3, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as} says:

“If one understands the events that occurred in the life of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allah be on him] and has complete knowledge of what the state of the world was at that time, and what he had done after his advent, then they would be overwhelmed, and their heart would cry out in frenzy:

¹⁰¹ Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as}, Roohani Khazain, (Urdu), Vol 23, pp. 301-302. With reference to The Essence of Islam Vol 1 pp. 200-202.

اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ

‘O Allah! send peace and blessings on Muhammad^{saw}.’ I speak the absolute truth; it is not imaginary nor an assumed fact what he saw had achieved rather the Holy Qur’an and the history of the world is absolutely testament to this fact. Otherwise, what was that special reason for which God has specifically said?

إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَمَلَائِكَتَهُ يُصَلُّونَ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا صَلُّوا عَلَيْهِ وَسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا.

‘Allah and His angels send blessings on the Prophet. O people who believe! you should send blessings and peace on him’ This call had not come in favour of any other Prophet. There was one man who attained full prosperity and is worthy of praise indeed. His name is Muhammad^{saw}.’¹⁰²

I shall raise here two questions in relation to this subject matter and God willing, propose to answer them myself.

The first question is that like the previous Prophethoods, was the Prophethood of Prophet Muhammad^{saw}, (God Forbid), for a limited period?

The simple answer to this question is, absolutely not. Contrary to the previous Prophethoods, the Prophethood of the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw} is eternal and will continue till the Day of Judgement. This is not just a wild claim, as there are convincing arguments to support my claim. Here are some rational arguments to support that the Prophethood of Muhammad^{saw} is eternal.

1) The first argument to support this is that prior to the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw}, God the Almighty did not instruct anyone to invoke blessings on any previous Prophet by stating that Allah and His Angels

102 Urdu News Paper, Al-Hakam, volume 5, number 2, dated 17th January 1901, p. 3.

send blessings on this Prophet and O Believers, you should also invoke blessings and peace on the Prophet. This is what Allah says in Surah Al-Ahzab:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَمَلَائِكَتَهُ يُصَلُّونَ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا صَلُّوا عَلَيْهِ وَسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا.

Allah and His Angels send blessings on the Prophet. “O ye who believe! you should also invoke blessings on him and salute him with the salutation of peace.” (Surah Al-Ahzab 21’:57)

I maintain that God the Almighty did not use any such words for any previous prophet in His Divine books be it the Vedas, Torah or Gospel. I challenge those opponents who berate the Prophet Muhammad^{saw} and the Holy Qur’an to present a single example from the previous Divine Books where God the Almighty has used such words as He has used for the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw} in Surah Al-Ahzab for any preceding Prophets. I assure you that this is a futile exercise as God the Almighty has not used such words for any previous Prophet other than Prophet Muhammad^{saw}. This is my first reason and argument to support that Prophet Muhammad^{saw} is a living and eternal Prophet, and his Prophethood and Sharia is permanent and eternal and will continue till the Day of Judgement.

2) The second argument to support that the Prophethood of Prophet Muhammad^{saw} is eternal and will last till the Day of Judgement is that no previous Prophet was appointed for the whole of Mankind. On the contrary, Prophet Muhammad^{saw} in the succession of Prophets, is such an exalted Prophet that he was appointed for the guidance of the whole of mankind. This is what Allah says in Surah Al-A’raf:

قُلْ يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنِّي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ إِلَيْكُمْ جَمِيعًا ...

“Say, ‘O Mankind! Truly I am a Messenger to you all from Allah ...”

(Surah Al-A’raf 7’:159)

Once again, I ask those who berate the honour of the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw} and the Holy Qur'an to give me an example from the Vedas, the Psalms, the Torah or the Gospel where God Almighty may have mentioned that he has sent any Prophet other than the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw} for the whole of Mankind.

3) The third argument to support that the Prophethood of Prophet Muhammad^{saw} is eternal and will last till the Day of Judgement is that God the Almighty did not say regarding any other Prophet before Prophet Muhammad^{saw} that he is the 'Khatam' (seal) of all the Prophets. This is what Allah says in Surah Al-Ahzab:

مَا كَانَ مُحَمَّدٌ أَبَا أَحَدٍ مِنْ رِجَالِكُمْ وَلَكِنْ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ وَخَاتَمَ النَّبِيِّينَ ۚ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمًا. (الاحزاب- ٣١)

“Muhammad is not the father of any of your men, but he is the Messenger of Allah and the Seal of the Prophets; and Allah has full knowledge of all things.” (Surah Al-Ahzab33’:41)

I have explained the definition and the meaning of Khatam-un-Nabiyeen in my previous articles and lectures and will only say here that Allah has made the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw} the Seal of all the Prophets. After him, no man will be given the reward of Prophethood unless he is a follower of Prophet Muhammad^{saw} and his Sharia.

I again challenge the opponents to present one example from the previous Holy Books whereupon Allah had entitled any other previous Prophet Khatam-un-Nabiyeen: The Seal of all the Prophets. I assure you that you will not find any such example because Allah has not entitled any previous Prophet other than the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw} Khatam-un-Nabiyeen, as He^{saw} is the only Prophet granted an eternal Prophethood and Sharia.

4) The fourth argument to support that the Prophethood of the Holy Prophet Muhammad^(saw) is eternal and will continue till the Day of Judgement is that God Almighty did not stipulate the condition to any previous Prophet that to get the reward of Prophethood, besides

worshipping God the Almighty one must follow Prophet Muhammad(saw). This is what Allah says in Surah An-Nisa:

وَمَنْ يُطِيعِ اللَّهَ وَالرَّسُولَ فَأُولَٰئِكَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِم مِّنَ النَّبِيِّينَ وَالصِّدِّيقِينَ وَالشُّهَدَاءِ وَالصَّالِحِينَ وَ
حَسُنَ أُولَٰئِكَ رَفِيقًا. ذَٰلِكَ الْفَضْلُ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَكَفَىٰ بِاللَّهِ عِلِيمًا. (النساء-٤٠، ٤١)

“And whoso obeys Allah and this Messenger of His, shall be among those on whom Allah has bestowed His blessings namely: the Prophets, the Truthful, the Martyrs, and the Righteous. And excellent companions are these. This grace is from Allah, and sufficient is Allah, the All-Knowing.”
(Surah An-Nisa 4’:70-71)

I implore my opponents to provide me with one example from any previous Divine Books where God the Almighty has placed this condition with any other previous Prophets be it Prophet Moses^{as}, Prophet Abraham^{as} or Prophet Jesus^{as} that in the future to get the reward of Prophethood you must obey Me and any of the aforementioned Prophets. You will not find such a statement or verse in any Divine Book as it was only indentured for the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw} that obedience to him^{saw} is a condition to achieve the reward of Prophethood.

5) The fifth argument to support that the Prophethood of Prophet Muhammad^{saw} is eternal and will continue till the day of Judgement is that Allah the Almighty did not give this title ‘Mercy for the whole of mankind’ to any Prophet preceding the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw}. This is what He said in Surah Al-Anbiya:

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ إِلَّا رَحْمَةً لِّلْعَالَمِينَ. (الانبياء-١٠٨)

“And We have sent thee not but as a mercy for all peoples.” (Surah Anbiya 21’:108)

I ask those adversaries who assert that the Prophethood and Sharia of the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw} is rescinded, give me one example where Allah has stated about any preceding Prophet in the erstwhile Divine Books that they are a blessing or Mercy for the whole of mankind.

It is true that as a Messenger, All Prophets and Messengers are equal, as Allah says in Surah Al-Baqarah:

لَا نُفَرِّقُ بَيْنَ أَحَدٍ مِنْ رُسُلِهِ... (البقرة ٢٨٦)

“We make no distinction between any of His Messengers.” (Surah Al-Baqarah 2’:286)

But Allah also says in the Holy Qur’an that He has exalted some of them above the others, as He says in Surah Al-Baqarah:

تِلْكَ الرُّسُلُ فَضَّلْنَا بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ مِنْهُمْ مَنْ كَلَّمَ اللَّهُ وَرَفَعَ بَعْضَهُمْ دَرَجَاتٍ وَآتَيْنَا عِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ الْبَيِّنَاتِ وَأَيَّدْنَاهُ بِرُوحِ الْقُدُسِ.... (البقرة ٢٥٣)

“These Messengers have We exalted, some of them above others: among them there are those to whom Allah spoke; and some of them He exalted by degrees of rank. And We gave Jesus, son of Mary, clear proofs and strengthened him with the Spirit of Holiness ...” (Surah Al Baqarah 2’:254)

We can now present the second question, like the erstwhile Divine Books, can the Holy Qur’an also be abolished?

Respected readers, in my response to the second question I shall say: absolutely not. Unlike the previous Divine Books, the Holy Qur’an has been sent down as an eternal Book for the guidance of Mankind till the Day of Judgement. I wish to present some rational arguments to support my statement. These are not mere whimsical claims. I will prove these with clear arguments.

1) Respected readers, the first argument in defence of the statement that ‘unlike the previous Divine Books the Holy Qur’an is the perfect and immutable Sharia,’ is that God Almighty did not state regarding any previous Divine Books that We have sent down this Exhortation and We are its guardians. This is what God the Almighty says in Surah Al-Hijr:

إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا الذِّكْرَ وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَحَافِظُونَ.

“Verily, We Ourselves have sent down this Exhortation, and most surely, We will be its Guardian.” (Surah Hijr 15’:10)

God says that it is Him who has revealed this Holy Qur’an to the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw} and it is Him who has taken the responsibility of guarding it. God the Almighty has not promised to provide that kind of protection for any of the other Divine Books before the Holy Qur’an such as the Vedas, the Psalms, the Torah or the Gospel. God Almighty has never mentioned in any of these Divine Books that He is the one who has revealed it to the respective Prophet, and He will protect it. I challenge my adversaries, who claim that the Holy Qur’an too has been annulled, to give me one verse where God Almighty promised to protect any of the other Divine Books for eternity as He promised to protect the Holy Qur’an. However, they are uttering diatribe and will not be able to give any such example. This is my first argument to support that the Holy Qur’an is the perfect and immutable Sharia till the Day of Judgement. There is no question about this Book ever being annulled.

2) Respected readers, the second argument to support the statement that unlike the previous Divine Books, the Holy Qur’an is the perfect and immutable Sharia is that God Almighty did not say about any other Divine Books before the Holy Qur’an that it is a perfect book; there is no doubt in it, and it is guidance for the righteous as God Almighty states in Surah Al-Baqarah:

ذَٰلِكَ الْكِتَابُ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ هُدًى لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ.

“This is a perfect Book; there is no doubt in it; it is a guidance for the righteous.” (Surah Al Baqarah 2’:3)

Now again I say to my adversaries who claim that the Holy Qur’an has been abrogated to show me where God Almighty used such words as in the above verse for any of the previous Divine Books before revelation of the Holy Qur’an. If God has used such words for the previous Divine

Books and then despite that they were cancelled, then I would be inclined to agree that despite these words the Holy Qur'an can also be cancelled. So, present to me a valid argument to prove that like other Divine Books, the Holy Qur'an too can be cancelled otherwise what you say is outright erroneous.

3) The third argument to support the statement that unlike the previous Divine Books, the Holy Qur'an is the perfect and immutable Sharia that God Almighty did not say about any other Divine Book, that falsehood cannot approach it from any perspective. But for the Holy Qur'an, Allah says in Surah Ha Mim As-Sajdah:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِاللَّهِ كُرْهًا جَاءَهُمْ وَإِنَّهٗ لَكِتَابٌ عَزِيزٌ ۚ لَا يَأْتِيهِ الْبَاطِلُ مِنْ بَيْنِ يَدَيْهِ وَلَا مِنْ خَلْفِهِ تَنْزِيلٌ مِّنْ حَكِيمٍ حَمِيدٍ (حم السجده ٣٣-٣٤)

“Those who disbelieve in the Reminder when it comes to them are the losers. And, truly, it is a mighty Book. Falsehood cannot approach it either from before or from behind it. It is a revelation from the Wise, the Praiseworthy.”
(Surah Ha Mim As-Sajdah 41':42-43)

Now again I challenge my detractors, who claim that the Holy Qur'an has been abrogated, to show me where God Almighty has said such words for any of the antiquated Divine Books. If God has used such vocabulary for the archaic Divine Books before the Holy Qur'an and then despite that it is rendered abrogated, then one can start considering that despite these verses being revealed in the Holy Qur'an it can also be abrogated. But it is impossible to find a single example from any of the archaic Divine Books where God has used such vocabulary that He used for the Holy Qur'an. Simply, these words do not exist in the archaic Divine Books before the Holy Qur'an.

4) The fourth argument to support the statement that unlike the previous Divine Books, the Holy Qur'an is the perfect and immutable Sharia is as Allah the Almighty reveals in Surah Aal-e-Imran that the true religion with Allah is Islam.

إِنَّ الدِّينَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ الْإِسْلَامُ... (ال عمران ٣٠)

“Surely, the true religion with Allah is Islam (complete submission).”

(Surah Aal-e-Imran 3’:20)

I ask my detractors to show me from any archaic Divine Books such as the Vedas, the Psalms, the Torah or the Gospel where God has revealed such verses about Hinduism, Judaism or Christianity as He has about Islam in the Holy Qur’an. You will not be able to present me with such proofs, as God has not promised this about any other religion other than Islam.

5) The fifth argument is that God Almighty never stated about any religion before Islam that apart from that religion, meaning apart from Hinduism or Judaism or Christianity, He will not accept any other religion. However, after the advent of Islam as the global religion for all of Mankind Allah explicitly states in Surah Aal-e-Imran verse 86, that He will not accept any other religion other than Islam.

وَمَنْ يَبْتَغِ غَيْرَ الْإِسْلَامِ دِينًا فَلَنْ يُقْبَلَ مِنْهُ وَهُوَ فِي الْآخِرَةِ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ. (ال عمران ٨٦)

“And whoso seeks a religion other than Islam, it shall not be accepted from him, and in the life to come he shall be among the losers.” (Surah Aal-e-Imran 3’:86)

This means that on the Day of Judgement, God will only accept Islam and will not accept any other religion such as Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism or Christianity. He will reject these religions and will only accept the religion revealed to the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw}. This is His Promise. Present to me from any archaic Divine Books prior to the Holy Qur’an where God has stated that apart from this religion, he will not accept any other religion. Such a statement does not exist. This is the fifth reason to acknowledge that the Holy Qur’an is the perfect and immutable Sharia and Islam being a perfect and immutable religion.

Respected readers, I have proven to you with clear arguments that unlike the antiquated Divine Books and religions such as Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism or Christianity, the Holy Qur'an and Islam are the perfect and the immutable Sharia. Islam is the only religion about which God has explicitly stated that he will not accept any other religion after the advent of Islam. This illustrates the excellence of the Holy Qur'an and Islam and exceptionality of the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw} and the permanence of his Prophethood.

I hope my eminent audience have understood the rationale as to why Islam contrary to Hinduism, Judaism and Christianity, is the complete and perfect religion. Islam is the pinnacle of the evolution of all the previous religions and the Holy Qur'an is the complete and irrevocable Sharia. God Almighty says in the Holy Qur'an that He will not accept any other religion other than Islam as it is the religion of our time to unite Mankind. He has not mentioned any such proclamation about any of the previous religions in any of the antiquated revealed Holy Books. This is the grandeur of the Holy Qur'an. This is the grandeur of Islam. This is the grandeur of the Prophethood of the Holy Prophet^{saw} enduring till the Day of Judgement.

Mirza Ghulam Ahmad the Promised Mahdi and Masih^{as} expounds in his book Chasma-e-Masihi with respect to the grandeur of the Prophethood of the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw}:

“The fact, O naive and blind people, is that our Holy Prophet^{saw}, and our lord and master, (countless blessings be upon him), surpassed all Prophets in his spiritual influence. The influence of all past Prophets came to an end at a certain point and their people and their religions have no trace of life left in them, but the spiritual influence of the Holy Prophet^{saw} will endure to the Last Day. For this reason, this umma does not require that a Messiah should come into it from outside; for, under the Holy Prophet's^{saw} benign influence, even an ordinary man can become a Messiah ...”¹⁰³

103 Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as}, Roohani Khazain, Chashma-e-Masihi, (Urdu), Vol 20, p. 389. With reference to Fountain of Christianity, (Islam International Publications Ltd., Tilford, Surrey GU 10 2AQ UK, 2007), page 69.

Esteemed readers, I am a living example of what Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as} has said in this quotation. Similarly, the Promised Messiah, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as} states in his book *Chashma-e-Ma'rifat*, *Ruhani Kha'zain*, Vol 23, p 340 about the Prophethood of the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw} and the Qur'anic Sharia:

“I believe sincerely in His Messenger and know that all Prophethood ended with him and that all law (sharia) is comprised in his law. Yet one type of Prophethood has not ended, that is to say, the Prophethood which is granted in consequence of complete Obedience to the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and which is illumined by his lamp. This Prophethood has not ended inasmuch as it is a reflection of his Prophethood and is given through him and is his manifestation and receives grace from him.”¹⁰⁴

Mirza Ghulam Ahmad(as) further writes in his book *Chashma-e-Ma'rifat*, *Ruhani Kha'zain* Vol 23, p 380. He says:

“The Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allah be on him] has been bestowed this special honour that he is Khatam-ul-Anbiya'; one, because he achieved the climax of all the excellences of Prophethood; and, secondly, because there will be no Prophet after him who would bring a new law nor any Prophet who is not his follower. Everyone who is honoured with converse with the Divine, achieves it through his grace and through his mediation and is known as his follower and not as a direct Prophet.”¹⁰⁵

Furthermore, after the advent of the Holy Prophet^{saw}, there cannot be any new prophethood, but a fortunate follower can be granted the status of an Umati Prophet. After the revelation of the Holy Qur'an there cannot be any new Sharia until the Day of Judgement. There cannot be any such Prophet who challenges or revokes the prophethood of the Holy Prophet

104 Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as}, *Roohani Khazain*, *Chashma-e-Mar'rifat*, (Urdu), Vol 23, p. 340. With reference to *The Essence of Islam* Vol 3, (Islam International Publications Ltd., Tilford, Surrey GU 10 2AQ UK, 2005), pp 137-138.

105 Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as}, *Roohani Khazain*, *Chashma-e-Mar'rifat*, (Urdu), Vol 23, p. 380. With reference of *The Essence of Islam* – Vol 1, p 280-281.

Muhammad^{saw} or the Holy Qur'an. Unlike others, I am not uttering fabrications. I am conferring sound reasoning that unlike other Prophets, the Holy Prophet's^{saw} Sharia is immutable, eternal, and irrevocable. Society is obligated to accept it and there is no other way around it. The Truthful and Just, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as} further says in his book, *Malfuzat*:

***“Anyone who claims to be a Prophet by turning away from the Holy Qur'an and separate from the Holy Prophet^{saw}, we consider such a claimant as one who deserves death and call him accursed. Anyone who claims to be such a Prophet that revokes the Prophethood of the Holy Prophet^{saw}, we consider such a claimant accursed and the one who deserves death. The blessings of Allah the Most High that are bestowed upon us, are indeed due to the influence of the Holy Prophet^{saw}. We speak the truth that, apart from the Holy Prophet^{saw} there is nothing, not even ashes. The honour and status of the Holy Prophet^{saw} is infused in my heart and my whole being. They are yet completely ignorant of that status. Anyone who does endless worship, recitation of the prayers, worships hard and such hard work makes him a mere skeleton, would not get any spiritual blessings without following and being obedient to the Holy Prophet^{saw}. In fact, it is impossible.”*¹⁰⁶**

The Imam Mahdi and Masih Maud, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as} says in his Khutba Ilhamia:

***“The Holy Qur'an is so glorious that none other can excel it in its glory. It is Hakam, the one whose judgement is ultimate; it is Muhaimin, a compendium of all guidance. Therein is found every argument which one may require. It is this Book which has scattered in defeat the very core of the enemy's might. A Book which covers everything in depth and contains the news of what was and what is to be. Falsehood can attack it not from the front nor from the rear. It is the very light of God Almighty.”*¹⁰⁷**

106 Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as}, *Malfuzat new edition*, (Urdu), Vol 5, pp. 610-611.

107 Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as}, *Roohani Khazain*, *Khutba Ilhamiya*, (Arabic), Vol 16, p. 103. English, Selections from the writings of the Promised Messiah, p. 31.

Likewise, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as} says about the glory of Holy Qur'an in his famous book *Izala-e-Auham*:

“Let it be known that the most outstanding miracle of the Holy Qur'an is that boundless sea of deep wisdom those solid facts, those avenues of Qur'anic knowledge so rich in philosophy which we can manifestly present to all nations and peoples of every language: be they Indians, Persians, Europeans or Americans, whichever country they belong to. The Qur'anic miracle is capable of rendering them defenceless, speechless and totally disarmed. The meanings of the Holy Qur'an are unfolded as demand is created according to the changing times and stand guard like well-armed soldiers against the insinuations and aspersions cast in every age. Had the Qur'an been limited in extent regarding that which it comprises of solid facts and subtle realities it could not have been deemed as that perfect miracle.”¹⁰⁸

Up till now, whatever I have said about the Prophethood of the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw} and his Sharia (the Holy Qur'an) are not just fictions, rather I have presented arguments, proofs and reasoning that the Prophethood of the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw} and his Sharia, contrary to the Sharia of the previous Prophets, which were for a certain period, is eternal. I have explained all these with arguments and proofs. I hope you will ponder over it and guard yourselves against such a fraudulent claimant who is claiming that he is the heart of Haq Ta'ala. Yet, even he does not know what is Haq Ta'ala. What is that? Truth? These individuals are misguiding people. It is my duty to explain and guide people towards the right path. On the Day of Judgement everyone is responsible for his actions. May God Almighty show His mercy upon Mankind, Ameen. Now I want to mention briefly this Divine covenant in the light of the Divine words revealed in the Holy Qur'an.

¹⁰⁸ Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as}, *Roohani Khazain*, *Izala e Auham* (Urdu), Vol 3 p, 255-256. English, Selections from the writings of the Promised Messiah, p. 32.

Creation of Adam^{as} and his wife Eve and both sent down to Earth with a Covenant.

So as in previous pages I have described the reasons as to why Islam contrary to Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, and Christianity, is complete, pure from amendments and an irrevocable revealed Book of God Almighty. According to the Holy Qur'an God Almighty said to the angels:

"I am about to place vicegerent on the earth. Then He created Adam^{as} and his wife Eve. After the creation of Adam and his wife, God said to the angels: 'Submit to Adam and they all submitted but Iblis did not. He refused to submit to Adam and was too proud; and he was one of the disbelievers. God Almighty said to Iblis, 'When I commanded you to submit to Adam, then why you did not submit to him?' Iblis replied, 'I am better than Adam. You have created me out of fire while Adam has been created of clay.' So as God Almighty says in chapter Al-A'raf:

قَالَ مَا مَنَعَكَ أَلَّا تَسْجُدَ إِذْ أَمَرْتُكَ قَالَ أَنَا خَيْرٌ مِّنْهُ خَلَقْتَنِي مِن نَّارٍ وَخَلَقْتَهُ مِن طِينٍ قَالَ فَاهْبِطْ مِنْهَا فَمَا يَكُونُ لَكَ أَنْ تَتَكَبَّرَ فِيهَا فَاخْرُجْ إِنَّكَ مِنَ الصَّاغِرِينَ.. (الاعراف- ١٢، ١٣)

"God said, 'What prevented thee from submitting when I commanded thee?' He said, 'I am better than he. Thou hast created me of fire while him hast Thou created of clay.' God said, 'Then go down hence; it is not for thee to be arrogant here. Get out; thou art certainly of those who are abased.'" (Surah Al-Araf 7':13-14)

After the creation of Adam and his wife, God Almighty said to Adam dwell you and your wife in the paradise and eat there from what you will but do not approach this tree, so that you may be among the wrongdoers. Such as God Almighty reveals in Surah Al-Baqarah and Surah Al-A'raf:

وَقُلْنَا يَا آدَمُ اسْكُنْ أَنْتَ وَزَوْجُكَ الْجَنَّةَ وَكُلَا مِنْهَا رَغَدًا حَيْثُ شِئْتُمَا وَلَا تَقْرَبَا هَذِهِ الشَّجَرَةَ فَتَكُونَا مِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ. (البقرة- ٥، ٣٦)

"And We said: 'O Adam, dwell thou and thy wife in the garden, and eat therefrom plentifully wherever you will, but approach not this tree, lest

you be of the wrongdoers. ’’ (Surah Al-Baqarah 2’:36)

وَيَا آدَمُ اسْكُنْ أَنْتَ وَزَوْجُكَ الْجَنَّةَ فَكُلَا مِنْ حَيْثُ شِئْتُمَا وَلَا تَقْرَبَا هَذِهِ الشَّجَرَةَ فَتَكُونَا مِنَ
الظَّالِمِينَ. (الاعراف: ٢٠)

“And O Adam, dwell thou and thy wife in the garden and eat therefrom wherever you will, but approach not this tree lest you be among the wrongdoers. ’’ (Surah Al-A’raf 7’:20)

So, keep in mind that it was initially a covenant of God with Adam^{as}. And God has mentioned the same covenant in Surah TaHa. He says:

وَلَقَدْ عَهِدْنَا إِلَى آدَمَ مِنْ قَبْلُ فَنَسِيَ وَلَمْ نَجِدْ لَهُ عَزْمًا. (طه: ١١٦)

“And verily, We had made a covenant with Adam beforehand, but he forgot, and We found in him no determination to disobey. ’’ (Surah TaHa 20’:116)

But in paradise Iblis whispered evil suggestions to Adam^{as} and said to him that do I lead you to the tree of eternity and to a kingdom that never ends? Such as God says in chapter Al-A’raf and TaHa:

فَوَسْوَسَ لَهُمَا الشَّيْطَانُ لِيُبْدِيَ لَهُمَا مَا وُورِيَ عَنْهُمَا مِنْ سَوْءٍ بِهِمَا وَقَالَ مَا نَهَاكُمَا رَبُّكُمَا عَنْ هَذِهِ الشَّجَرَةِ إِلَّا
أَنْ تَكُونَا مَلَكَتَيْنِ أَوْ تَكُونَا مِنَ الْخَالِدِينَ. وَقَاسَمَهُمَا إِنِّي لَكُمَا لِنَاصِحٍ. (الاعراف: ١٣، ١٤)

“But Satan whispered evil suggestions to them so that he might make known to them what was hidden from them of their shame, and said, ‘Your Lord has only forbidden you this tree, lest you should become angels or such beings as live forever.’ And he swore to them, saying, ‘Surely, I am a sincere counsellor unto you. ’’ (Surah Al A’raf 7’:21-22)

فَوَسْوَسَ إِلَيْهِ الشَّيْطَانُ قَالَ يَا آدَمُ هَلْ أَدُلُّكَ عَلَى شَجَرَةِ الْخُلْدِ وَمُلْكٍ لَّا يَبْئَلُ. (طه: ١٢١)

“But Satan whispered evil suggestions to him; he said, ‘O Adam, shall I lead the tree of eternity and to a kingdom that never decays?’” (Surah TaHa 20’:121)

After the murmurings of Iblis, Adam^{as} and his wife tasted of the forbidden fruit the result of which, their shame became manifest to them. God Almighty reveals in chapter Al-A'raf and TaHa:

فَدَلَّ لَهُمَا بِغُرُورٍ فَلَمَّا ذَاقَا الشَّجَرَةَ بَدَتْ لَهُمَا سَوْءُهُمَا وَطَفِقَا يَخْصِفَانِ عَلَيْهِمَا مِنْ وَرَقِ الْجَنَّةِ وَنَادَاهُمَا رَبُّهُمَا
أَلَمْ أَنْهَكُمَا عَنْ تِلْكَ الشَّجَرَةِ وَأَقُلْتُ لَكُمَا إِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ لَكُفَّاءٌ لَكُمَا وَعَدُوكُمَا مُبِينًا. (الاعراف- ٢٣)

“So, he caused them to fall into disobedience by deceit. And when they tasted of the tree, their shame became manifest to them and they began to stick the leaves of the garden together over themselves. And their Lord called them, saying, ‘Did I not forbid you that tree and tell you: verily, Satan is to you an open foe?’” (Surah Al-A’raf 7’:23)

فَأَكَلَا مِنْهَا فَبَدَتْ لَهُمَا سَوْءُهُمَا وَطَفِقَا يَخْصِفَانِ عَلَيْهِمَا مِنْ وَرَقِ الْجَنَّةِ وَعَصَىٰ آدَمُ رَبَّهُ فَغَوَىٰ. (طه- ١٢٢)

“Then they both ate thereof, so that their shame became manifest to them, and they began to stick the leaves of the garden together over themselves. And Adam observed not the commandment of his Lord, so his life became miserable.” (Surah TaHa 20’:122)

When Adam and his wife unwittingly disobeyed the covenant by taking the fruit of the tree, God the Almighty said to Adam, “Had I not prohibited you not to approach the tree?” Then Adam and his wife remorsefully humble themselves to God the Almighty and acknowledge that they had committed an oversight and if God the Almighty did not pardon them and pity them, then they shall surely be the losers. As God the Almighty revealed in Surah Al-Baqarah, Surah Al-A’raf and Surah TaHa:

فَتَلَقَّىٰ آدَمُ مِنْ رَبِّهِ كَلِمَاتٍ فَتَابَ عَلَيْهِ إِنَّهُ هُوَ التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيمُ. (البقرة- ٣٨)

“Then Adam learnt from his Lord certain words of prayer. So he turned towards him with mercy. Surely, He is Oft-Returning with compassion, and is Merciful.” (Surah Al-Baqarah 2’:38)

قَالَ اهْبِطُوا بَعْضُكُمْ لِبَعْضٍ عَدُوٌّ وَلَكُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ مُسْتَقَرٌّ وَمَتَاعٌ إِلَىٰ حِينٍ. (الاعراف- ٢٥)

“He said, ‘Go forth, some of you being enemies of others. And for you there is an abode on the earth and a provision for a time.’” (Surah Al A’raf 7’:25)

ثُمَّ أَجْتَبَهُ رَبُّهُ فَتَابَ عَلَيْهِ وَهَدَىٰ. (طه- ١٢٣)

“Then his Lord chose him for His grace, and turned to him with mercy and guided him.” (Surah TaHa 20’:123)

After the acknowledgement, God the Almighty forgave Adam and his wife and sent them to the Earth with the same covenant which was made with Adam and his wife before sending them to the Garden. But the nature of the covenant was somewhat different to the original covenant as it had conditions. God the Almighty states in Surah Al-Baqarah and Surah TaHa about this covenant. He says:

قُلْنَا اهْبِطُوا مِنْهَا جَمِيعًا فَإِمَّا يَأْتِيَنَّكُمْ مِنِّي هُدًى فَمَنْ تَبِعَ هُدَايَ فَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ. وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَكَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا أُولَٰئِكَ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ. (البقرة- ٣٩، ٤٠)

“We said: ‘Go forth, all of you, from here. And if there comes to you guidance from Me, then whoso shall follow My guidance, on them shall come no fear; nor shall they grieve.’ But they who will disbelieve and treat Our Signs as lies, these shall be the inmates of the fire; therein shall they abide.” (Surah Al Baqarah 2’:39-40)

قَالَ اهْبِطَا مِنْهَا بَعْضُكُمْ لِبَعْضٍ عَدُوٌّ فَإِمَّا يَأْتِيَنَّكُمْ مِنِّي هُدًى فَمَنِ اتَّبَعَ هُدَايَ فَلَا يَضِلُّ وَلَا يَشْقَىٰ. وَمَنْ أَعْرَضَ عَن ذِكْرِي فَإِنَّ لَهُ مَعِيشَةً ضَنْكًا وَنَحْشُرُهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَمَةِ أَعْمًى. (طه- ١٢٥، ١٢٣)

“He said, ‘Go forth, both of you, from here, some of you being enemies of others. And if there comes to you guidance from Me, then whoso will follow My guidance, he will not go astray, nor will he come to grief. But whosoever will turn away from My Reminder, his will be a strait life, and on the Day of Resurrection We shall raise him up blind.’” (Surah TaHa 20:124-125)

As the Holy Qur'an informs about the exclusion from the Garden, our esteemed ancestor Prophet Adam(as) and his wife were sent to the Earth. He and his wife were sent with a Covenant which I have termed, the Divine Covenant. God informed them that whenever My guidance comes to you, those who will follow My guidance will be successful. They will not go astray and nor will any grief come to them. But those who refuse and defy My guidance they will be cast into the fire. They will be bound in hell for an eternity. God Almighty says:

فَإِمَّا يَأْتِيَنَّكُمْ مِنِّي هُدًى. (البقرة ٣٩)

And if there comes to you guidance from Me ... (Surah Al Baqarah 2':39)

Now the question arises, how does this guidance come from God to Mankind? Replying to this question, God the Almighty says that My guidance will come to you with my Messengers. And those who will follow My guidance, they will have no fear. And those who refuse will be cast into hell. So as God the Almighty says in Surah Al-A'raf:

يَا بَنِي آدَمَ إِمَّا يَأْتِيَنَّكُمْ رُسُلٌ مِّنكُمْ يَقُضُّونَ عَلَيْكُمْ آيَاتِي فَمَنِ اتَّقَى وَأَصْلَحَ فَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ.
وَالَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا وَاسْتَكْبَرُوا عَنْهَا أُولَٰئِكَ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ. اعراف ٣٦، ٣٧

“O Children of Adam! If Messengers come to you from among yourselves, rehearsing my Signs unto you, then whoso shall fear God and do good deeds, on them shall come no fear nor shall they grieve. But those who reject Our Signs and turn away from them with disdain, these shall be the inmates of the Fire; they shall abide therein.” (Surah Al-A'raf 7':36-37)

God Almighty also knows that majority of His subjects will not submit to His Covenant. In this context, He says in Surah Al-A'raf:

وَمَا وَجَدْنَا لِأَكْثَرِهِمْ مِّنْ عَهْدٍ وَإِن وَجَدْنَا أَكْثَرَهُمْ لَفَاسِقِينَ. (اعراف ١٠٣)

“And we found not in most of them any observance of covenant and surely We found most of them to be evil-doers.” (Surah Al-A'raf 7':103)

In another verse of Surah TaHa God the Almighty reveals:

ثُمَّ اجْتَبَاهُ رَبُّهُ فَتَابَ عَلَيْهِ وَهَدَىٰ. قَالَ اهْبِطَا مِنْهَا بَعْضُكُمْ لِبَعْضٍ عَدُوٌّ فَأَيُّ بَيْنِكُمْ هَدَىٰ
فَمَنِ اتَّبَعَ هُدَايَ فَلَا يَضِلُّ وَلَا يَشْغَىٰ. وَمَنْ أَعْرَضَ عَن ذِكْرِي فَإِنَّ لَهُ مَعِيشَةً ضَنْكًا وَنَحْشُرُهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ
أَعْمَىٰ. (طه-١٢٣ تا ١٢٥)

“Then his Lord chose him for His grace, and turned to him with mercy and guided him. He said, ‘Go forth, both of you, from here, some of you being enemies of others. And if there comes to you guidance from Me, then whoso will follow My guidance, he will not go astray, nor will he come to grief. But whosoever will turn away from My Reminder, his will be a strait life, and on the Day of Resurrection We shall raise him up blind.’” (Surah TaHa 20’:123-125)

We know from the above quoted verses that after exclusion from the Garden, Adam^{as} and his wife were descended on the earth with a Divine Covenant. Moreover, God the Almighty has revealed to us that in the race of Adam^{as} some will be enemies of others, this means there will be altercations and discord. With this, God the Almighty has informed His subjects that those who follow my guidance, there will be no fear nor will they come to grief. What is this guidance which God the Almighty has promised to His people? The term ‘Guidance’ refers to those orders and teachings of God the Almighty which Prophets and Messengers bring to the people in different times. We find in the Holy Qur’an that at every moment, God the Almighty sent his Prophets to each and every nation. Acting according to (the fulfilment of) the guidance which God the Almighty sent to His people through His Prophets and Messengers is actually carrying out the Divine covenant. Fifteen centuries ago, when human beings were consciously able to obey a complete code of life, God the Almighty revealed a complete code (sharia or law) to our beloved Holy Prophet Muhammed^{saw} and appointed him for the guidance of human beings as a whole. So, in this way, the guidance which was promised to Adam^{as} by God the Almighty was revealed to us completely in the shape of the Holy Qur’an. It is a pledge that humans can undertake successfully. As I have mentioned earlier that with the sublime gift of reason, this Divine Covenant is neither surprising nor a burden but an immense test of our deeds. God the Exalted states:

وَهُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ فِي سِتَّةِ أَيَّامٍ وَكَانَ عَرْشُهُ عَلَى الْمَاءِ لِيَبْلُوَكُمْ أَيُّكُمْ أَحْسَنُ عَمَلًا...

“And He it is Who created the heavens and the earth in six periods, and His throne rests on water; that He might prove you to show which of you is best in conduct.” (Surah Hud 11’:8)

In the same way, God the Exalted One says in Surah Al-Kahf:

إِنَّا جَعَلْنَا مَا عَلَى الْأَرْضِ زِينَةً لَهَا لِيَبْلُوَهُمْ أَيُّهُمْ أَحْسَنُ عَمَلًا...

“Verily, We have made all that is on the earth as an ornament for it, that We may try them as to which of them is best in conduct.” (Surah Al-Kahf 18’:8)

In Surah Al-Mulk, God the Exalted says:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ الْمَوْتَ وَالْحَيَاةَ لِيَبْلُوَكُمْ أَيُّكُمْ أَحْسَنُ عَمَلًا وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْغَفُورُ.

“Who has created death and life that He might try you—which of you is best in deeds; and He is the Mighty, the Most Forgiving.” (Surah Al-Mulk 67’:3)

Now it becomes apparent that the deeds of those people who follow Divine guidance will be righteous and are the beloved of the Creator while those who disobey shall be chastised. In conclusion I categorically state that the Holy Qur’an is a complete Divine Book, a perfect code for life. In this book God reveals to Mankind that they should conduct such practices decreed by God and abhor those deeds forbidden by God. If we lead our lives according to the instructions and the guidance of God, then we are leading our lives in accordance with the Divine Covenant. If we lead our lives contrary to divine guidance of God, then it befits a violation of the Divine Covenant and the particular will remain bereft of divine guidance leading to evil. In conclusion it becomes apparent that there is not any reality, validity or logical justification in the concepts of social contract makers. It is only said that it was a mere mental exercise of some intelligent people of the world. Actual and true reality is linked with and found in the Divine Covenant.

“The Holy Qur’an is a rare pearl. Its outside is light and its inside is light and its above is light and its below is light and there is light in every word of it. It is a spiritual garden whose clustered fruits are within easy reach and through which streams flow. Every fruit of good fortune is found in it and every torch is lit from it.”¹⁰⁹

CHAPTER FOUR

VIRTUE IS GOD

Divine Theory

Or

Supreme Ultimate Universal Theory

Or

Mother of Theories

Or

The Seal of Theories

¹⁰⁹ Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, Roohani Khazain, Ayena Kamalat e Islam, (Arabic), Vol 5, p. 545.

1. What is God?

It is entirely just and has been generally agreed upon that in religion, philosophy and science, monistic tendency is traceable. Monistic tendency simply means to reduce all things to one principle; we have to explain the entire universe in the light of a single supreme principle. So far as physical and metaphysical sciences are concerned; these are confined only to physical and metaphysical truths. As for the supreme principle, it can only be a philosophic truth and so it is only the business of philosophy to accomplish with this end. Broadly speaking, one will find two major schools of thought in philosophy, e.g. materialism and idealism. Materialists believe that ultimate reality is some material truth while idealists conceive it as an ideal or mental truth. As a matter of fact, It is neither matter nor mind. It is a Virtue or Good, a philosophic Truth which is above matter and idea.

Instead of refuting one and all, philosophy, religion and science reinforce one another. In the world of philosophy and science, that which is termed Reality, Beauty and Knowledge, according to my faith, in the religious sense is God the Almighty. All these names point to one and the same Supreme Truth. Science and traditional philosophy are grounded on reason and observation, while religion is based on faith and revelation. The object of the lives of human beings is to know and recognise God the Exalted. If we do not come to know and recognise our Creator in this world, then in the hereafter we would not recognise and see Him. Therefore, we should search for our Creator and discover Him in this world and establish a relationship with Him. So, as Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as} the Promised Mahdi and Messiah, informs us in his book *Arba'in*:

“The real reason for the effulgence of my sympathy is the fact that I have discovered a mine of gold and Jewels and it is a good fortune that I have found in this mine, a priceless diamond full of lustre. The price of that diamond is so great that if I were to distribute it amongst all my brethren of mankind each one of them would become richer than

the one who possesses in the world today notwithstanding the greatest quantity of gold and silver.

What is that diamond? The True God. To get to Him is to recognize Him, to have a true faith in Him, to seek Him it would be the height of injustice that after possessing so much wealth I should keep mankind deprived of it, that I should enjoy it while they should starve. It is absolutely impossible for me to do so. My soul is sore vexed when I see their poverty and starvation and my heart sinks when I find them in darkness. I want to fill them with heavenly wealth, and I wish them to get as many jewels of truth as humanly possible.”¹¹⁰

In another place of the Holy Qur'an, Isa Ibne Maryam^{as} (Jesus Christ) informs the people of his nation (Children of Israel – Bani Isra'il) that they should believe in God the Almighty who is One and worship Him alone, for it is the right path. So as God the Almighty says:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ رَبِّي وَرَبُّكُمْ فَأَعْبُدُواهُ هَذَا صِرَاطٌ مُسْتَقِيمٌ - آل عمران - ٥٢

“Surely, Allah is my Lord and your Lord; so, worship Him: this is the right path.” (Surah Aal-e-'Imran 3':52)

In this verse of the Holy Qur'an, God Almighty has clearly proclaimed that He is the Lord of everyone and everything. The sole purpose of the creation of human beings is to recognise and worship their Creator. The question is, 'How can we recognise Him?' It is possible only when we act according to the aspirations of God the Almighty. When somebody lives and dies according to the aspirations of his Lord, then 'the Creator' unfolds Himself to him. Such a fortunate individual then observes the face of his Lord. It has been inferred that as every sort of action has its object, likewise virtuous action also has its object and It being Virtue is God the Almighty. As God reveals in Surah Aal-e-'Imran):

110 Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as}, Roohani Khazain, Arba'in, (Urdu), Vol 17, pp. 344-345.

لَنْ تَنَالُوا الْبِرَّ حَتَّى تُنْفِقُوا مِمَّا تُحِبُّونَ وَمَا تُنْفِقُوا مِنْ شَيْءٍ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ بِهِ عَلِيمٌ -ال عمران- ٩٣

“Never shall you attain to Righteousness (Virtue) unless you spend out of that which you love (virtuous action) and whatever you spend, Allah surely knows it well.” (Surah Aal-e-’Imran 3’:93)

In this verse, God the Almighty has revealed every letter and word fittingly and meaningfully. We see that in the former part of the verse, God the Almighty has proclaimed that you cannot attain ‘Righteousness’ (Virtue) but immediately after that He has informed us how it can be achieved, that your attainment of ‘Virtue’ is akin to your virtuous action. Let’s take another verse:

وَلَتَكُنْ مِنْكُمْ أُمَّةٌ يَدْعُونَ إِلَى الْخَيْرِ وَيَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْبَاقُونَ -ال عمران- ١٠٥

“And let there be among you a body of men who should invite to ‘Goodness’ and enjoin equity (virtuous action) and forbid evil. And it is they who shall prosper.” (Surah Aal-e-’Imran 3’:105)

In this verse, once again we find the use of the term ‘Virtue’ in two different senses. Firstly, for Goodness, i.e. ‘Objective Virtue’ who is God the Almighty and secondly for ‘virtuous action’. The Arabic word ‘Khair’ means the same as Virtue, Good, Goodness, Right, and Righteousness in English. Let’s take another verse:

إِنَّا كُنَّا مِنْ قَبْلُ نَدْعُوهُ إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْبَرُّ الرَّحِيمُ -ال طور- ٢٩

“We used to pray to Him before. Surely, He is the Beneficent i.e. Virtuous, the Merciful.” (Surah At-Tur 52’:29)

In this verse, God the Almighty has revealed that He is the Virtuous. He is the Originator of all creation. He being ‘Subject’ is truly the Virtuous; while He is the ‘Virtue’ as a consequence of being the sole object of all creation. In another verse, God the Almighty reveals:

وَاللَّهُ خَيْرٌ وَأَبْقَىٰ طه١٤٠

“And Allah is the Best and the Most-Abiding.” (Surah TaHa 20:74)

Allah says that He is the Best. And Virtue and the Best are one and the same. After this, we move towards the definition of ‘Virtue’. It has been stated that Virtue which is the sole object of our lives is the:

‘Supreme Ultimate Universal Truth.’

Let it be known that the most outstanding and complete knowledge of the existence of God the Exalted has been cited in the Holy Qur’an. The Divine knowledge transpires by Itself with the course of time. The Holy Qur’an is a treasure trove of Divine knowledge and we uncover every aspect of Its excellence and finesse. The Holy Qur’an is filled with every possible aspect of truth and It is a miracle the like of which never was and never will be. The epoch of its blessings and bounties is everlasting. Speaking of the splendor and immensity of the Holy Qur’an, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian^{as} says:

“Of all the revealed Books which we find today, it is only the Holy Qur’an whose claim to having been revealed from God is established on the strength of irrefutable arguments. The principle it has enunciated regarding salvation corresponds exactly with the dictates of truth and human nature. The doctrines it propounds are so perfect and well-founded that they are entirely supported by powerful and irrefutable evidence. Its injunctions are based on nothing but the truth. Its teachings are completely free from adulteration or idolatry, innovation and creature worship. It is a book in which there is exceeding eagerness to manifest the Oneness and Greatness of God and to emphasize the perfection of the attributes of the One and only God. It is a Book which has this outstanding quality that it is filled entirely and purely with the teachings of the Unity of God and does not permit any manner of blemish or defect, or shortcoming or any other aspersion to be cast against the Holy Creator. It does not desire to impose any doctrine perforce. On the contrary, it precedes everything that it expounds with

such arguments and logic as establish its truth. It proves its objectives and purport with weighty arguments and strong evidence. Having presented clear arguments to explain every principle it enunciates, it leads man to firm belief and absolute understanding of realities. It removes with the help of lucid enunciation, all the defects, impurities and irregularities which infest human beliefs, practices, words and deeds. It also teaches all etiquettes which are essential to cultivate human values in man. It meets the challenge of every corruption with no less a force than that displayed by the corruption itself prevalent in the world today. Its teachings are straight, powerful and well balanced as if they were a reflective mirror of nature itself and a true copy of the law of nature. It is like an enlightening sun for the inner eye perceptive faculty of the heart.”¹¹¹

Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian^{as} in an illustrious treatise of his, *Kishti-e-Nuh*, remarks about the greatness and truthfulness of the Holy Qur'an. He says:

“Further, the Holy Qur'an forbids the worship of anything besides God – whether man, beast, moon, sun, star, material provisions or one's own ego. So, beware and do not take a single step contrary to the teaching of God and the guidance of the Holy Qur'an. I tell you truly that anyone who disregards even a small injunction of the seven hundred commandments of the Holy Qur'an, shuts upon himself the door of salvation. The ways of true and perfect salvation have been opened by the Holy Qur'an and all else is its reflection. Therefore, study the Holy Qur'an with deep contemplation and hold it very dear. Love it more than anything else. God has said to me:

الْحَيْرُ كُلُّهُ فِي الْقُرْآنِ

All good is contained in the Qur'an.

111 Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as}, *Roohani Khazain*, *Braheen e Ahmadiyya*, (Urdu), Vol 1, pp. 81-82.

This is the truth. Pity those who favour anything besides it. The fountainhead of all your prosperity and salvation lies in the Holy Qur'an. There is no religious need of yours which is not fulfilled by it. On the Day of Judgement, the Holy Qur'an will confirm or deny your faith. There is no other book beneath heaven besides the Holy Qur'an, which can directly guide you. God has been most beneficent towards you in that He has bestowed upon you a book like the Holy Qur'an. I tell you truly that if the book which has been recited to you was recited to the Christians, they would not have perished. If this favour and guidance which has been bestowed upon you had been granted to the Jews in place of the Torah, some of their sects would not have denied the Day of Judgement. Therefore, appreciate this favour that has been bestowed upon you. It is a most precious favour; it is a great wealth. If the Holy Qur'an had not been revealed, the whole world would have been nothing more than a filthy half-formed lump of flesh. The Holy Qur'an is a book, in contrast with which, all other guidance amounts to nothing.”¹¹²

Now, Let's observe the definition 'Supreme Ultimate Universal Truth' in the light of Divine words. This definition is composed of four words. About the existence of God the Almighty, though, these four words are not present in a combined form anywhere yet individually they are present everywhere in the Holy Qur'an. Let's take the fourth word the 'Truth'. God the Almighty reveals in Surah An-Nur:

(١) ...يَوْمَئِذٍ يُوفِّيهِمُ اللَّهُ دِينَهُمُ الْحَقَّ وَيَعْلَمُونَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الْحَقُّ الْمُبِينُ.

“On that day will Allah pay them their just due, and they will know that Allah alone is the Manifest Truth.” (Surah An-Nur 24':26)

(٢) ...ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الْحَقُّ وَأَنَّ مَا يَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِهِ الْبَطْلُ ... لقمان ٣١

“That is because it is Allah alone Who is 'the Truth' and whatever they call upon besides Him is falsehood ...” (Surah Luqman 31':31)

112 Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as}, Roohani Khazain, Kishte Noah, (Urdu), Vol 19, pp. 26-27.

(٣) .. هُنَالِكَ الْوَلِيَّةُ لِلَّهِ الْحَقِّ هُوَ خَيْرٌ تَوَابًا وَخَيْرٌ عُقْبًا - الكهف - ٣٥

“In such a case protection comes only from Allah, the Truth. He is the Best in respect of reward and the Best in respect of consequence.” (Surah Al-Kahf 18’:45)

(٣) .. ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الْحَقُّ وَأَنَّهُ يُحْيِي الْمَوْتَى وَأَنَّهُ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ - الحج - ٤

“That is because Allah is the Truth, and that it is He Who brings the dead to life, and that He has power over all things.” (Surah Al-Hajj 22’:7)

In the aforesaid verses, it has been told that Allah, alone being the Truth, exists, while all sorts of creation, being falsehood does not exist. Let’s take the third word the ‘Universal’. It means that which pertains to the whole universe. God the Almighty is the Universal and except for Him, nothing deserves to be called the ‘Universal’. He says:

اللَّهُ نُورُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ... - النور - ٣٦

“Allah is the Light of the heavens and the earth ...” (Sura An-Nur 24’:36)

Let’s take the second word the ‘Ultimate’. God the Almighty is the ‘Ultimate’. As He says:

وَأَنَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ الْمُنتَهَىٰ - النجم - ٣٣

“And that to thy Lord do all things ultimately go.” (Sura An-Najm 53’:43)

God the Almighty is the ‘Ultimate’. The ‘Ultimate’ means that which is final, last or the most significant. All things in the universe and the universe itself are a manifestation of the ‘Ultimate’. Everything comes into existence by the impression of the ‘Ultimate’, yet He being without cause is the Independent and exists by Itself. From the above verse, it is obvious that the whole system of causality ends with God the Almighty. In this context, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian^{as} says:

“If we observe carefully, we find that the entire universe is bound together in a system of cause and effect. This system is at the root of all knowledge. No part of creation is outside this system. Some things are the roots of others and some are the branches. A cause may be primary or may be the effect of another cause, and that in its turn may be the effect of still another cause, and so on. Now, it is not possible that in this finite world this pattern of cause and effect should have no limit and should be infinite. We are compelled to acknowledge that it must terminate with some ultimate cause. The ultimate cause is God.”¹¹³

Finally, let's take the first word of the definition the 'Supreme'. It means that which is the highest and the most excellent of all. God the Almighty is the 'Supreme' as He being without cause is the cause of all. Moreover, He is the Immortal while the creation is mortal and therefore only He is the 'Supreme' in the sense of the term. In the Holy Qur'an, God the Almighty reveals:

(١)۔۔ سَبِّحْ اسْمَ رَبِّكَ الْأَعْلَىٰ۔۔ اَلْاَعْلَىٰ ۲

“Glorify the name of thy Lord, the Supreme.” (Surah Al-A'la 87':2)

(٢)۔۔ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الْعَلِيُّ الْكَبِيرُ۔۔ لَقْبَان ۳۱

“And because it is Allah alone Who is the Supreme, the Incomparably Great.” (Surah Luqman 31':31)

(٣)۔۔ وَهُوَ الْعَلِيُّ الْكَبِيرُ۔۔ سَبَّأ ۲۴

“And He is the Supreme, the Great.” (Surah Saba 34':24)

(٤)۔۔ إِلَّا ابْتِغَاءَ وَجْهِ رَبِّهِ الْأَعْلَىٰ۔۔ اللَّيْلِ ۲۱

“Except that he gives his wealth to seek the pleasure of his Lord, the Supreme.” (Surah Al-Lail 92':21)

¹¹³ Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as}, Roohani Khazain, (Urdu), Vol 10, p. 369. The Philosophy of the teachings of Islam, translated into English by Sir Ch M Zaffrullah Khan (Islam International Publications Ltd., Tilford, Surrey GU 10 2AQ UK, 2017), p. 88.

(٥) ..وَهُوَ الْعَلِيُّ الْعَظِيمُ-البقرة-٢٥٦

“*And He is the Supreme, the Great.*” (Surah Al-Baqarah 2’:256)

(٦) ..إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلِيًّا كَبِيرًا-النساء-٣٥

“*Surely, Allah is the Supreme, the Great.*” (Surah An-Nisa 4’:35)

In the aforesaid words, Allah has well replied to the question, ‘What is God the Almighty?’ He has revealed that He is the ‘**Supreme Ultimate Universal Truth**’; the sole object of human existence is to believe in Him, recognise Him, adopt his attributes and worship Him. As God the Almighty reveals:

صِبْغَةَ اللَّهِ وَمَنْ أَحْسَنُ مِنَ اللَّهِ صِبْغَةً وَنَحْنُ لَهُ عَابِدُونَ-البقرة-١٣٩

“*We shall adopt the colour of Allah; and who is better than Allah in colour (i.e. attributes) and Him alone do we worship.*”(Surah Al Baqarah 2’:139)

Before concluding this subject, I say that a true philosophy, which is the knowledge of God the Almighty, is not possible with reason. So those who believe in reason, can never quite attain bona fide knowledge of God the Almighty. True philosophy is only and exclusively established in the revealed words of God the Almighty. Seeking Divine help, we must try to acquire the knowledge expected by God the Almighty. The Ummat-e-Muhammadi (the community of believers) is extremely fortunate in that it has been blessed with the Holy Qur’an, the comprehensive guide for success and the victory of Islam. If we do not contemplate the Holy Qur’an in our lives, then it will be our personal misfortune. The Promised Mahdi and Masih, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian^{as} says in his booklet *Kashti-e-Nuh* (Noah’s Ark):

“Similarly, do not follow the philosophers of this world and do not be overawed by them, for they only pursue follies. True philosophy is that which God has taught you in His words. Those who are in love with secular philosophy are in ruin and truly successful are those who have

sought true knowledge and philosophy in the Book of God. Why do you follow the paths of foolishness? Will you teach God that which He does not know? Do you hasten to follow the blind so that they should guide you? O foolish one! How will he, who is himself blind, guide you? True philosophy is, in reality, acquired through the Holy Spirit as has been promised. Through it you will be carried to the acquisition of pure knowledge, to which others have no access. Ultimately, you will obtain such knowledge by sincerely seeking it. Then will you come to know that this is the very knowledge which revitalises and revives the heart and guides you to the pinnacle of certainty. How is it possible to receive pure nourishment from he who feeds upon carrion? How can he who is blind help you see? All pure wisdom descends from heaven. What then do you seek from the people of this world? Those whose souls ascend to heaven are the true heirs of wisdom. He who is not satisfied himself cannot bestow satisfaction upon you, but first purity of heart is required; sincerity and purity are needed, after which, everything will be bestowed upon you. Do not think that God's revelation is a thing of the past and that the Holy Spirit can no longer descend as it did in previous times. I tell you truthfully that all doors may close – but the one from which the Holy Spirit descends, never shuts. Open the doors of your hearts so that the Holy Spirit may enter it. By closing the window from which the ray of light enters, you distance yourself from this sun of your own accord. Unenlightened ones! Come forth and open this window so that the sun might itself enter you. God has not closed the paths of His worldly blessings in this age. Rather, He has increased them. Do you then think that the paths of the blessings of heaven, which you sorely need at this time, have been closed by Him? Most certainly not! Rather, this door is wide open.”¹¹⁴

114 Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as}, Roohani Khazain, Kashti e Nooh, (Urdu), Vol 19, pp. 24-25.

2. Divine Faces

The sources by which someone can easily and completely become aware of the existence of God the Almighty and gain His knowledge are termed as Divine faces. After considering them, all confusion and vagueness vanishes and reasonable minds will not feel any doubt about His existence. Certainly, He has four faces, the First, the Last, the Manifest and the Latent, and with the help of these, we can understand Him and gain His knowledge. About His faces, He has told us in the following words. He says:

هُوَ الْأَوَّلُ وَالْآخِرُ وَالظَّاهِرُ وَالْبَاطِنُ وَهُوَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ - الحديد - ٢

“He is the First and the Last, and the Manifest, and the Hidden and He knows all things full well.” (Surah Al-Hadid 57:4)

These faces guide us to the existence of God and therefore are sources of Divine knowledge. After considering them, although human physical eyes cannot see Him, the human mind confirms His presence. To know and to worship Him is the sole purpose of human existence. Every man feels a yearning in his heart for God the Almighty and is searching for Him either consciously, subconsciously or unconsciously. The excellent explanation of this verse can be found in the prayer of the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw}. Imam Ahmad recorded that Abu Hurairah^{ra} said that the Messenger of Allah^{saw} would recite this supplication while going to bed.

اَللّٰهُمَّ رَبَّ السَّمٰوٰتِ السَّبْعِ وَرَبَّ الْعَرْشِ الْعَظِيْمِ رَبَّنَا وَرَبَّ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ مُّنْزِلَ التَّوْرَةِ وَالْاِنْجِيْلِ وَالْفُرْقَانِ فَالِقِ الْحَبِّ وَالنَّوَى لَا اِلَهَ اِلَّا اَنْتَ اَعُوْذُ بِكَ مِنْ شَرِّ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ اَنْتَ اَخْذُ بِنَاصِيَتِهِ اَنْتَ الْاَوَّلُ فَلَيْسَ قَبْلَكَ شَيْءٌ وَاَنْتَ الْاٰخِرُ فَلَيْسَ بَعْدَكَ شَيْءٌ وَاَنْتَ الظَّاهِرُ فَلَيْسَ فَوْقَكَ شَيْءٌ وَاَنْتَ الْبَاطِنُ فَلَيْسَ دُوْنَكَ شَيْءٌ اِقْضِ عَنِ الدَّيْنِ وَاَغْنِنَا مِنَ الْفَقْرِ -

“O Allah, Lord of the seven heavens and Lord of the Magnificent Throne! Our Lord, and the Lord of everything, Revealer of the Torah, the Injeel and the Furqan, the Splitter of the grain of corn and the date

*stone! I seek refuge with You from the evil of everything whose forehead You have control over. O Allah! You are Al-Awwal, nothing is before You; Al-Akhir, nothing is after You; Az-Azahir, nothing is above You; and Al-Batin, nothing is below You. Remove the burden of debt from us and free us from poverty.”*¹¹⁵

115 Hafiz Ibn Kathir, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, Vol 5, p. 267.

3. God and Creation

God the Almighty being the Supreme Ultimate Universal Truth is a philosophic Being Who pervades the entire universe. He is the Immortal, Permanent and Everlasting Truth. He has created all and continues creating but Himself being Independent is above creation. It is unwarranted to seek Him in the skies because He being the self-evident Truth, is everywhere and is it not so that the heavens and the earth are promulgating Him? He is infinitely away from us and yet unremittingly near us. We can uncover and discern Him, not with reason but through His pleasure. Divine pleasure can be sought only after obeying His commandments and embracing His attributes.

Let us now proceed to the nature of creation. Creation is that which has a specific form and possesses formal qualities while God is free from any sort of form and has infinite virtuous attributes. Both God and His creation have a definite relationship and this is that of the independent vis-a-vis dependent. He is the source of all varieties of existence. Unlike God, His creation is finite, temporary and short-lived. It persists in the anticipation of Divine pleasure.

In the cosmos, we observe that everything is in need of its Maker and overseer. If there is no Creator then the object will not exist: likewise, if it has no overseer, then it will not function faithfully. But we see that the universe and all that is found in it, exists and operates perfectly according to its reverent course. If prosaic objects cannot exist and function faithfully without the presence of their Creator and overseer, then how could an immense universe be in existence and functioning perfectly without a Creator and overseer? Certainly, there is a Being, a Supreme Truth who created everything and is the overseer of it. Not only has He created their shapes but also made them beautiful. God says:

خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ بِالْحَقِّ وَصَوَّرَكُمْ فَأَحْسَنَ صُورَكُمْ وَإِلَيْهِ الْمَصِيرُ. التغابن- ٣

“He created the heavens and the earth with the truth, and He shaped you and made your shapes beautiful, and to Him is the ultimate return.”
(Surah at-Taghabun 64’:4)

لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَهُوَ الْعَلِيُّ الْعَظِيمُ. الشورى- ٥

“To Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth and He is the Supreme, the Great.” (Surah Ash-Shura 42’:5)

ذَلِكُمُ اللَّهُ رَبُّكُمْ خَلِقُ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الْهَؤُلَاءِ يَتُوفَّكُونَ. المؤمن- ٦٣

“Such is Allah, your Lord, the Creator of all things. There is no God but He. How then are you turned away?” (Surah Al-Mu’min 40’:63)

اللَّهُ خَلِقُ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَهُوَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَكِيلٌ الزمر- ٦٣

“Allah is the Creator of all things, and He is Guardian over all things.”
(Surah az-Zumar39’:63)

With our physical eyes, we see different things and do not doubt their existence, though these are mere delusions. The question is that if we believe in temporary and mortal beings, why do we deny the existence of God the ‘Supreme Ultimate Universal Truth’? He is the only Permanent and Immortal and above all, the Supreme Creator of all mortal beings or expressions? He reveals:

أَفِي اللَّهِ شَكٌّ فَاطِرِ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ. إبراهيم- ١١

“Are you in doubt concerning Allah, Maker of the heavens and the earth?” (Surah Ibrahim 14’:11)

We observe that everything has been given the most appropriate and suitable creation. Who is the Maker of such suitable forms? It is the majesty and excellence of ‘Supreme Truth’ that He has given the best

and the most suitable form to everything. Alas! You believe in forms and deny the Giver of forms. Moreover, every sort of creation functions well according to its form. Is all this automatic? He says:

رَبُّنَا الَّذِي أَعْطَى كُلَّ شَيْءٍ خَلْقَهُ ثُمَّ هَدَىٰ طه. ٥١

“Our Lord is He Who gave unto everything its proper form and then guided it to its proper function.” (Surah TaHa 20’:51)

All things verify His existence. They are like a mirror in which we observe His radiant face. His light is found in all places which are reflections of Him. It is from Him that all light originates. He is the Light of all lights and the Life of all lives and none except Him is the true and living God. Blessed is he who believes in Him. God the Almighty reveals:

اللَّهُ نُورُ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضِ ط مِثْلُ نُورِهِ كَمِثْلِ شَوْكَةٍ فِيْهَا مِصْبَاحٌ ط الْمِصْبَاحُ فِيْ زُجَاجَةٍ ط الزُّجَاجَةُ كَأَنَّهَا كَوْكَبٌ دُرِّيٌّ يُوقَدُ مِنْ شَجَرَةٍ مُّبٰرَكَةٍ زَيْتُوْنَةٍ لَا شَرْقِيَّةٍ وَلَا غَرْبِيَّةٍ يَكَادُ زَيْتُهَا يُضِيْءُ وَلَوْ لَمْ تَمْسَسْهُ نَارٌ ط نُورٌ عَلَىٰ نُورٍ ط يَهْدِي اللَّهُ لِنُورِهِ مَن يَّشَآءُ ط وَيَضْرِبُ اللَّهُ الْاَمْثَالَ لِلنَّاسِ ط وَاللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيْمٌ. النور ٣٦

“Allah is the Light of the heavens and the earth. The similitude of His light is as a lustrous niche, wherein is a lamp. The lamp is in a glass. The glass is as it were a glittering star. It is lit from a blessed tree – an olive – neither of the east and neither of the west, whose oil would well-nigh glow forth even though fire touched it not. Light upon Light! Allah guides to His light whomsoever He will. And Allah sets forth parables to men, And Allah knows all things full well.” (Surah An-Nur 24’:36)

So far as the Light of God Almighty is concerned, the Promised Messiah and Mahdi, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian^{as} says in his book *Braheen-e-Ahmadiyya* with beauty and eloquence:

“God is the light of the heavens and the earth. Every light that is seen, be it high or low, whether it belongs to souls or pertains to bodies, or be it substantive or attributive, whether hidden or evident, be it subjective or objective, it is a mere bounty of His Grace. This is a sign which indicates that the bounties of Allah encompass everything. He is the source of all

Grace and is the ultimate cause of every light, the Fountained of all mercies. His Being is the support of the universe and is the refuge of all, high and low. He it is Who brought everything out of the darkness of nothingness and bestowed upon everything the mantle of being. No being other than He exists by itself or is eternal. All other beings are recipients of His grace. Earth and heaven, man and beast, stones and trees, souls and bodies, all are sustained by His Grace.¹¹⁶

Moreover, God the Almighty explains His ‘Being’ in Surah Al-Namal in this way. He reveals:

قِيلَ لَهَا ادْخُلِي الصَّرْحَ فَلَمَّا رَأَتْهُ حَسِبَتْهُ لُجَّةً وَكَشَفَتْ عَنْ سَاقَيْهَا قَالَ إِنَّهُ صَرْحٌ مُمَرَّدٌ مِنْ قَوَارِيرَ ط قَالَتْ رَبِّ
إِنِّي ظَلَمْتُ نَفْسِي وَأَسْلَمْتُ مَعَ سُلَيْمَانَ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ النمل. ٣٥

“It was said to her, ‘Enter the palace’. And when she saw it, she thought it to be a great expanse of water, and she uncovered her shanks. Solomon said, ‘It is a palace paved smooth with slabs of glass.’ She said, ‘My Lord, I indeed wronged my soul, and I submit myself with Solomon to Allah, the Lord of the worlds.’” (Surah Al-Naml 27’:45)

Although, the true beloved is Allah, we are compelled to love His Creation as we see Him in his creation. The sun, the moon, the day and the night all are delusions and these are His spatial and temporal signs. God the Almighty reveals:

وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ اللَّيْلُ وَالنَّهَارُ وَالشَّمْسُ وَالْقَمَرُ ... حم السجدة ٣٨

“And among His Signs are the night and the day and the sun and the moon ...” (Surah Ha Mim as-Sajdah 41’:38)

We observe that new objects (forms) emerge in lieu of the old ones. Similarly, if we suppose that if the Earth after turning into particles, reduced to nothingness and likewise if all the other heavenly bodies are

116 Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, Roohani Khazain, Braheen Ahmadiyya footnote, (Urdu), Vol 1, pp. 191-192.

brought to insignificance and the whole universe is made non-existent. Furthermore, reason and the conscience require and admit that some ‘Supreme Truth’ remains which can never cease nor ever be subject to any change or decay. Such a ‘Being’ is God the Almighty, who being the Original Cause brought everything into existence. All material and immaterial creation is mortal while Immortality solely and absolutely belongs to the Creator. As He reveals:

كُلُّ مَنْ عَلَيْهَا فَانٍ وَيَبْقَى وَجْهُ رَبِّكَ ذُو الْجَلَالِ وَالْإِكْرَامِ - الرحمن - ٢٨، ٢٩

“All that is on it (Earth) will pass away. And there will remain only the Person of thy Lord, Master of Glory and Honour.” (Surah ar-Rahman 55:27’-28)

وَلَا تَدْعُ مَعَ اللَّهِ إِلَهًا آخَرَ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ كُلُّ شَيْءٍ هَالِكٌ إِلَّا وَجْهَهُ... القصص - ٨٩

“And call not on any other God besides Allah, there is no God but He. Everything will perish except Himself.” (Al-Qasas 28’:89)

All creation is His reflection and this is not like Him, Almighty God says:

فَلَا تَضْرِبُوا لِلَّهِ الْأَمْثَالَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ - النحل - ٥٠

“So, coin not similitudes for Allah. Surely, Allah knows and you know not.” (Surah An-Nahl 16’:75)

Everything on Earth and heaven recognises and proclaims the Holiness of God the Almighty. They all prostrate at the threshold of God the Almighty in extreme humility and are occupied with His obedience. In this context Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian^{as} says:

“Every particle of earth and heaven glorifies and proclaims the Holiness of Allah said; everything in them is engaged in His glorification and praise. The mountains remember Him, the rivers remember Him, the trees remember Him and many righteous ones are occupied with His remembrance Whoever fails to remember Him in his heart and by his

tongue and does not humble himself before God is compelled to humble himself by being put through diverse types of torment by Divine decree. Whatever is recorded of the angels in the Book of God that they are completely obedient to Him, the same is said of every leaf and every particle in the earth. Everything is obedient to Him, not a leaf can fall without His command, no medicine can heal without His command, nor can any food prove agreeable without it. Everything prostrates itself at the threshold of God in extreme humility and worshipfulness and is occupied with His obedience. Every particle of the earth and mountains, every drop of the rivers and oceans, every leaf of trees and plants and all particles of men and beasts recognise God, obey Him and are occupied with His glorification and praise. That why God Almighty has said:

يُسَبِّحُ لِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ... الْجَمْعَةُ ٢

That is to say: Everything in the earth glorifies Allah and proclaims His Holiness as does everything in heaven.”¹¹⁷

God the Almighty is infinitely near us because of His Omnipresence. He, being very near, is also far away from us. Due to this nearness, where we are and what we do is open for Him. He is a subtle entity and because of His subtlety, He is latent for us. He says:

وَهُوَ مَعَكُمْ أَيْنَ مَا كُنْتُمْ ط وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ. الحديد ٥

“And He is with you wheresoever you may be. And Allah sees all that you do.” (Surah Al-Hadid 57’:5)

وَهُوَ عَلِيمٌ بِذَاتِ الصُّدُورِ. الحديد ٤

“And He knows full well all that is in the breasts.” (Surah Al-Hadid 57’:7)

All things come from the ‘Supreme Truth’ and finally will return to Him. He says:

117 Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, Roohani Khazain, Kashti e Nooh, (Urdu), Vol 19, pp. 32-33.

لَا تُدْرِكُهُ الْأَبْصَارُ وَهُوَ يُدْرِكُ الْأَبْصَارَ وَهُوَ اللَّطِيفُ الْخَبِيرُ. - الانعام - ١٠٣

“Eyes can’t reach Him but He reaches the eyes. And He is the Incomprehensible, the All-Aware.” (Surah Al-An’am 6’:104)

وَإِلَى اللَّهِ الْمَصِيرُ. - فاطر - ١٩

“And to Allah shall be the return.” (Surah Fatir 35’:19)

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ ط إِلَيْهِ الْمَصِيرُ. - المؤمن - ٢

“There is no God but He. Towards Him is the final return.” (Surah Al-Mu’min 40’:4)

وَإِنَّا إِلَىٰ رَبِّنَا لَمُنْقَلِبُونَ. - الزخرف - ١٥

“And to our Lord surely shall we return.” (Surah Az-Zukhruf 43’:15)

So far as the nature of the soul is concerned; it is a metaphysical creation and it comes into being according to the Divine will. As God the Almighty reveals:

وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الرُّوحِ ط قُلِ الرُّوحُ مِنْ أَمْرِ رَبِّي وَمَا أُوتِيتُمْ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا. - بني اسرائيل - ٨٦

“And they ask thee concerning the soul. Say, ‘The soul is by the command of my Lord; and of the knowledge thereof you have been given but a little.’” (Surah Bani Isra’il 17’:86)

About the reality of the soul then, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian^{as} writes:

“After this digression I revert to my earlier discussion. It is absolutely true that the soul is a fine light developed inside the body and which is nurtured in the womb. To begin with it is hidden and imperceptible and later it is made manifest. From the very beginning its essence is present in the sperm. It is related to the sperm in a mysterious manner

by the design and command and will of God. It is a bright and illumined quality of the sperm. It cannot be said that it is a part of the sperm as matter is part of matter, nor can it be said that it comes from outside or falls upon the earth and gets mixed with the matter of the sperm. It is latent in the sperm as fire is latent in the flint. The Book of God does not mean that the soul descends from heaven as a separate entity or falls upon the earth from the atmosphere and then by chance gets mixed with the sperm and enters the womb with it. There is no basis for such a notion. The law of nature rejects it. We observe daily that thousands of insects infect impure and stale foods and are generated in unwashed wounds. Dirty linen secretes hundreds of lice and all sorts of worms are generated inside a person's stomach. It cannot be said that all these come from outside or can be observed as descending from heaven. The truth is that the soul is developed in the body and this also proves that it is created and is not self-existent.”¹¹⁸

118 Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as}, Roohani Khazain, Islami Usool Ki Philosophy (Urdu), Vol 10, pp. 322-323. The Philosophy of the teachings of Islam, translated into English by Sir Ch M Zaffrullah Khan (Islam International Publications Ltd., Tilford, Surrey GU 10 2AQ UK, 2017), pp. 13-14. _

4. Time, Space and God

Since God the Almighty has created all manner of creation and their relevant actions, He is therefore, both Space and Time. He is Space, not in the sense of any metaphysical or physical space but that who has created all metaphysical and physical spaces, i.e. creations. Likewise, He is Time, not in the sense of some metaphysical or physical time but that Who has created all metaphysical and physical times, i.e. objective actions. As God the Almighty reveals:

إِنَّ رَبَّكُمُ اللَّهُ الَّذِي خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ فِي سِتَّةِ أَيَّامٍ ثُمَّ اسْتَوَىٰ عَلَى الْعَرْشِ يُغْشِي اللَّيْلَ النَّهَارَ يَطْلُبُهُ حَثِيثًا وَالشَّمْسُ وَالْقَمَرُ وَالنُّجُومُ مُسَخَّرَاتٌ بِأَمْرِهِ ۗ أَلَا لَهُ الْخَلْقُ وَالْأَمْرُ ۗ تَبَارَكَ اللَّهُ رَبُّ الْعَالَمِينَ
الاعراف. ٥٥

“Surely, Your Lord is Allah Who created the heavens and the earth in six periods; then He settled Himself on the Throne. He makes the night cover the day, which pursues it swiftly. And He created the sun and the moon and the stars, all made subservient by His command. Verily, His is the creation and the command. Blessed is Allah, the Lord of the worlds.” (Surah Al A’raf 7’:55)

In the Holy Qur’an, in another place God the Almighty reveals:

وَاللَّهُ خَلَقَكُمْ وَمَا تَعْمَلُونَ. الصافات. ٩٤

“Whereas Allah has created you and your action.” (Surah As-Saffat 37’:97)

Many cultures only surmise in a secular existence and refuse to believe in the afterlife. Although the afterlife to come after our demise in this world is not only real but an indisputable reality. Moreover, if they only knew that it is time that extinguishes life but in fact, they have no knowledge of the nature of time. In Surah Al-Jathiyah God the Almighty reveals:

وَقَالُوا مَا هِيَ إِلَّا حَيَاتُنَا الدُّنْيَا نَمُوتُ وَنَحْيَا وَمَا يُهْلِكُنَا إِلَّا الدَّهْرُ
وَمَا لَهُمْ بِذَلِكَ مِنْ عِلْمٍ إِنْ هُمْ إِلَّا يَظُنُّونَ - الجاثية ٢٥

“And they say, ‘there is nothing but this our present life; we die and we live here; and nothing but Time destroys us.’ But they have no knowledge of that; they do but conjecture.” (Surah Al-Jathiyah 45’:25)

The Holy Prophet Mohammad^{saw} also says in a narration:

وَعَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ ﷺ قَالَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى يُؤْذِيَنِي بَنُ آدَمَ يَسُبُّ الدَّهْرَ وَأَنَا الدَّهْرُ بِيَدِي الْأَمْرُ
أَقْلِبُ اللَّيْلَ وَالنَّهَارَ - (مُتَّفَقٌ عَلَيْهِ)

Narrated Abu Huraira^{ra}: Allah’s Messenger ﷺ said, “Allah said, ‘The son of Adam annoys Me for he abuses Ad-Dahr (the Time) though I am Ad-Dahr (the Time), in My Hands are all things, and I cause the revolution of day and night.’” 119 (1)

119 Sahih Al-Bukhari Vol 6, surat Al-Jathiyah, (English).

(1) (H. 4826) Ad-Dahr : ‘I am Ad-Dahr’ means ‘I am the Creator of time, and I manage the affairs of all creation including time.’ One should not attribute anything, whether cheerful or disastrous, to time, for everything is in the Hands of Allah, and only He is the Disposer of everything.

5. Divine Properties

God the Almighty, that we observe in the Holy Qur'an, is the same as that of 'Virtue', i.e. 'Supreme, Ultimate, Universal, Truth'. Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian(as) further describes Him in his booklet 'Kishti-e-Nuh'. He says:

*"To follow me, it is necessary for them to believe that they have an Omnipotent, Self-Sustaining God, who is the creator of all things, and whose attributes are eternal, everlasting and unchangeable. He has no father and no son. He is above suffering, being crucified and killed. He is such that despite being far, He is near; and despite being near, He is far. Despite being One, His manifestations are diverse. For a person who brings about a change in himself, He becomes a new God for him and deals with him by means of a new manifestation. Thus, such a person experiences a change in God according to the change in himself. Yet no change takes place in God, for He is eternally unchangeable and possesses complete perfection, but when a person undergoes a transformation and begins to move towards virtue, God manifests Himself to such a person in a new way. At the time of every improved condition that manifests itself in a person, the manifestation of God Almighty's power also reveals itself to a greater extent. He manifests His might in an extraordinary way only when an extraordinary change takes place in a person. This is the root of all extraordinary happenings and miracles. The God so described is the fundamental bedrock of my community. Believe in Him and give precedence to Him over your own souls and comforts and over all your relationships; show sincerity and loyalty in His cause by exhibiting courage in your practice. Worldly people do not prefer Him over their means, and their kith and kin, but you ought to, so that you may be counted in heaven as belonging to His community."*¹²⁰

120 Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as} Kahsti-Nooh (Urdu), Vol 19, pp.10-11. Noah's Ark, translated into English, (Islam International Publications Ltd., Tilford, Surrey GU 10 2AQ UK, 2018), pp. 18-19.

Now we move toward his attributes. God Almighty has infinite attributive names and He has mentioned them in His words in the Holy Qur'an. Some of them are described here. He says:

(١). قُلِ ادْعُوا اللَّهَ أَوْ ادْعُوا الرَّحْمَنَ أَيًّا مَا تَدْعُوا فَلَهُ الْأَسْمَاءُ الْحُسْنَىٰ... بنى اسرائيل-١١

1) “Say, ‘Call upon Allah or call upon Rahman; (the Gracious) by Whichever name you call Him, His are the most beautiful names’ ...” (Surah Bani Isra’il 17’:111)

(٢). اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ لَهُ الْأَسْمَاءُ الْحُسْنَىٰ... طه-٩

2) “Allah – there is no God but He. His are the most beautiful names.” (Surah TaHa 20’:9)

(٣). هُوَ اللَّهُ الْخَلِيقُ الْبَارِئُ الْبَصُورُ لَهُ الْأَسْمَاءُ الْحُسْنَىٰ... الحشر-٢٥

3) “He is Allah, the Creator, the Maker, the Fashioner. His are the most beautiful names ...” (Surah Al Hashr 59’:25)

He is the Infinite. Infinite means what is infinitely away from and near us. He is the Incomprehensible because finite beings are incapable of seeing and understanding Him. He says:

(١). لَا تُدْرِكُهُ الْأَبْصَارُ وَهُوَ يُدْرِكُ الْأَبْصَارَ وَهُوَ اللَّطِيفُ الْخَبِيرُ... الانعام-١٠٣

1) “Eyes cannot reach Him but He reaches the eyes. And He is the Incomprehensible, the All-Aware.” (Surah Al-An’am 6’:104)

(٢). إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَطِيفٌ خَبِيرٌ... الحج-١٢

2) “Allah is indeed the All-Subtle, the All-Aware.” (Surah Al-Hajj 22’:64)

He is the Eternal because He is above beginning and end and Immutable because there is no change in Him. He says:

(١). وَاللَّهُ خَيْرٌ وَأَبْقَىٰ - طه - ٤٢

1) “And Allah is the Best and the Most Abiding.” (Surah TaHa 20’:74)

(٢). كُلُّ شَيْءٍ هَالِكٌ إِلَّا وَجْهَهُ ط لَهُ الْحُكْمُ وَإِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ - القصص - ٨٩

2) “Everything will perish except Himself. His is the judgement, and to Him will you be brought back.” (Surah al Qasas 28’:89)

(٣). كُلُّ مَنْ عَلَيْهَا فَانٍ وَيَبْقَىٰ وَجْهُ رَبِّكَ ذُو الْجَلَالِ وَالْإِكْرَامِ - الرحمن - ٢٨، ٢٩

3) “All that is on it (earth) will pass away. And there will remain only the Person of thy Lord, Master of Glory and Honour.” (Surah Rahman 55’:27-28)

He is the One without any equal. He is the Perfect. He is not in need of any son for His assistance because all such weaknesses are related with creation. He reveals:

(١). قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ. اللَّهُ الصَّمَدُ. لَمْ يَلِدْ وَلَمْ يُولَدْ. وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ كُفُوًا أَحَدٌ - الاخلاص - ٢، ٣، ٤، ٥

1) “Say, ‘He is Allah, the One; Allah, the Independent and Besought of all. He begets not, nor is He begotten; And there is none like unto Him.’” (Surah Al-Ikhlās 112’:2-5)

(٢). إِنَّ إِلَٰهَكُمْ لَوَاحِدٌ ط رَبُّ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا وَرَبُّ الْمَشَارِقِ - الصفات - ٦، ٥

2) “Surely your God is one, Lord of the heavens and the earth and all that is between them and the Lord of the sun’s risings.” (Surah As-Saffat 37’:5-6)

He is the Reality while all other except Him is falsehood. As He reveals:

(١). ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الْحَقُّ وَأَنَّ مَا يَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِهِ هُوَ الْبَطْلُ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الْعَلِيُّ الْكَبِيرُ - الحج - ٣

1) “That is because it is Allah Who is the Truth, and that which they

call on beside Him is falsehood, and because Allah is the Supreme, the Great.” (Surah Al-Hajj 22’:63)

He Is the Creator because He has created and continues creating but Himself is above creation. He proclaims:

(١) - ذَلِكُمُ اللَّهُ رَبُّكُمْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ خَالِقُ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ فَاعْبُدُوهُ وَهُوَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَكِيلٌ - الانعام - ١٠٣

1) *“Such is Allah, your Lord. There is no God but He, the Creator of all things, so worship Him. And He is Guardian over everything.”* (Surah Al-An’am 6’:103)

(٢) - أَفَمَنْ يَخْلُقُ كَمَنْ لَا يَخْلُقُ أَفَلَا تَذَكَّرُونَ - النحل - ١٨

2) *“Is He, then, Who creates like one who creates not? Will you not then take heed?”* (Surah An Nahl 16’:18)

(٣) - إِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ الْخَلَّاقُ الْعَلِيمُ - الحجر - ٨٤

3) *“Verily, it is thy Lord Who is the Great Creator, the All-Knowing.”* (Surah Al-Hijr 15’:87)

God Almighty is the All-Knowing and the All-Wise. Since He is Objective Knowledge, therefore, He is also the Knowledge and the Wisdom. As He reveals:

(١) - إِنَّ رَبَّكَ حَكِيمٌ عَلِيمٌ - الانعام - ٨٣

1) *“Thy Lord is indeed Wise, All-Knowing.”* (Surah Al-An’am 6’:84)

(٢) - وَسِعَ رَبِّي كُلَّ شَيْءٍ عِلْمًا أَفَلَا تَتَذَكَّرُونَ - الانعام - ٨١

2) *“My Lord comprehends all things in His knowledge. Will you not then be admonished?”* (Surah Al-An’am 6’:81)

(٣). وَسِعَ رَبُّنَا كُلَّ شَيْءٍ عِلْمًا ط. الاعراف. ٩٠.

3) “*Our Lord comprehends all things in His knowledge.*” (Surah Al-A’raf 7’:90)

(٣). وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ قَدْ أَحَاطَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عِلْمًا ط. الطلاق. ١٣.

4) “*And that Allah encompasses all things in His knowledge.*” (Surah At-Talaq 65’:13)

He is the Omnipresent because He is everywhere. He is Omnipotent because He has power to do all things. He says:

(١). وَهُوَ مَعَكُمْ أَيْنَ مَا كُنْتُمْ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ ط. الحديد. ٥.

1) “*And He is with you wheresoever you may be. And Allah sees all that you do.*” (Surah Al-Hadid 57’:5)

(٢). عِلْمُ الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ وَهُوَ الْحَكِيمُ الْخَبِيرُ ط. الانعام. ٢٠.

2) “*He is the knower of the unseen and the seen. And He is the Wise, the All-Aware.*” (Surah Al-An’am 6’:74)

(٣). إِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ الْقَوِيُّ الْعَزِيزُ ط. هود. ٦٤.

3) “*Surely, thy Lord is the Powerful, the Mighty.*” (Surah Hud 11’:67)

(٣). وَأَنَّهُ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ط. الحج. ٤.

4) “*And that He has power over all things.*” (Surah Al-Hajj 22’:7)

He is the Light and Formless. He cannot be resembled with things, i.e. physical or metaphysical. He says:

(١). اللَّهُ نُورٌ السَّيِّئَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ط. النور. ٣٦.

1) “Allah is the Light of the heavens and the earth ...” (Surah An-Nur 24’:36)

(٢) لَيْسَ كَمِثْلِهِ شَيْءٌ الشورى- ١٢

2) “There is nothing whatever like unto Him ...” (Surah Ash-Shura 42’:12)

God the Almighty is the Lord of all physical and metaphysical worlds, the Gracious, the Merciful, and the Master of the Day of Judgement. As He proclaims in the Holy Qur’an:

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ الرَّحْمَنُ الرَّحِيمُ مَلِكُ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ الْفَاتِحَةُ- ٢، ٣، ٤

“All praise belongs to Allah, Lord of all the worlds, the Gracious, the Merciful, the Master of the Day of Judgement.” (Surah Al-Fatiha 1’:2-4)

Finally, I close this subject with the beautiful words of the Promised Messiah and the Mahdi, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian^{as}. He says in his book entitled Kashti-e-Nuh:

“How unfortunate is the man, who even now, is unaware that there is a God who has power over all things! Our Paradise lies in our God. Our highest delight is in our God for we have seen Him and found every beauty in Him. This wealth is worth procuring though one might have to lay down one’s life to procure it. This ruby is worth purchasing though one may have to lose oneself to acquire it. O ye, who are deprived! Hasten to this fountain as it will satiate you. It is this fountain of life that will save you. What am I to do? How shall I impress the hearts with this good news? What sort of a drum am I to beat in the streets in order to make the announcement that this is your God, so that people might hear? What remedy shall I apply to the ears of the people so that they should listen?”¹²¹

121 Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as}, Roohani Khazain, Kashti e Nooh, (Urdu), Vol 19, pp. 21-22. Noahs-Ark, (Islam International Publications Ltd. Islamabad, Sheephatch Lane Tilford, Surrey, GU10 2AQ UK, 2018), p. 36-37.

Epilogue

A commonly posed question to me by seekers of the truth is to understand briefly about my life before my claim. I will attempt to keep it short and poignant.

1) A brief sketch of my life before my claim

This humble one is Abdul Ghaffar Janbah. I was born into a sub-caste of the Jatt clan Janbah. I was born at our family farm Chah Wakil Wala, on 24th February 1954 in the village of Dawar, 5km west of Rabwah, Pakistan. I am an Ahmadi Muslim by birth. My father, Choudhry Sher Mohammad Janbah, was a simple farmer by profession, owning 25 acres of land. My mother's name was Ghulam Fatima; I am the youngest of five brothers and sisters. My mother and both of my elder sisters had no formal education. However, they were conversant in reciting the Holy Qur'an in Arabic. My father and mother were very simple folk and devout Muslims. They had a deep love of Ahmadiyyat and Islam in themselves. Bear this in mind that Allah, the Exalted made me the *Sign of His Mercy* even before my birth. And I was born as the Zaki Ghulam (the pure, pious and spiritual son) of the *Muhammadi Maryam* (Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Qadiani^{as}) in my parents' home.

2) He will be sheltered under the shadow of God

I was just six months old when my noble and respectable father, Choudhry Sher Mohammad Janbah, passed away (انا لله وانا اليه راجعون); leaving behind his youngest son under the custody and supervision of Allah the Exalted.

The account of how my father handed over this humble one to the protection and supervision of Allah the Exalted, was narrated to me numerous times by my beloved mother, before my claim in December 1983. My father had two younger sisters. When he was on deathbed, both of his sisters came to our house to meet their only and lonely brother. One day, both my aunts were sitting close to him and my younger paternal aunt took me in her arms and then asked her dying brother: Your other children are a bit mature, but Abdul Ghaffar is just six months old. Who will be his custodian after you will be gone? Without uttering a single word, my father pointed his forefinger towards the sky. In this way, my father conveyed his message to his sisters that Allah the Exalted would be the custodian of this child.

3) My Father worshipped God in solitude

My grandfather, Choudhry Mahtab Janbah, had two younger brothers. One was married and the youngest was unmarried but both were without any offspring. My father was the only male child of the three brothers and this fact granted him a special status in the family. Despite this, he was a very humble, pious and ascetic type person. He had little interest in the material issues and never indulged himself in worldly affairs. He was a content person and loved contentment. He prioritised always spiritual matters over worldly affairs. He was a devoted Ahmadi Muslim and was very sensitive and extremely careful about issues concerning rights of mankind and rights of the Creator. Here, I want to speak about the nobility and austerity of my father as told by my late mother and brothers on several occasions. My father had leased half of his land to other farmers and they used to channel water in the land during night. Our land was surrounded by desert and overgrown bushes. My father used to worship Almighty Allah in solitude in the wilderness of the desert around our land. These farmers used to hear the cries of my father during worship at night and relayed the account to their wives enquiring whether there was any marital discord between my mother and father. Upon inquiry my mother explained them that there was no such problem, rather that her husband was a God-fearing person who enjoyed nothing better than worshipping his Lord in solitude.

4) Beginning of my education

My brothers were in class six and seven of school when our father passed away. His sudden and untimely demise severely affected the financial situation of my family. My brothers were interested in continuing their studies, but the prevailing circumstances prevented them from doing so. They sacrificed their education and contended to cultivate the land to fulfil the basic needs of the family and they would not let me do the same as they sacrificed their tutelage so I may continue. In this critical situation however, I was deprived the opportunity to learn the Holy Qur'an and it would be fair to say that in my early years I was illiterate from a religious point of view. The reason behind this was that my mother and siblings were struggling for their own survival. They had no opportunity to offer me tutelage of any sort. However, at the age of six or seven, I was admitted to Government Primary School of Dawar which was about 2km away from our home. In the beginning, I was afraid of going to school, but my family guided and helped me with their love and attention to continue my education. I did, however, acquire a skill in farming as a pastime but not as a profession. After my primary education, I got admission in the Government Middle School in Ahmad Nagar, a town which was 4km walking distance from my hometown. Naseer Ahmad Qamar, the editor of the weekly Ahmadiyya Newspaper Al Fazl London and private secretary to Mirza Tahir Ahmad, the Fourth Successor of Jamaat Ahmadiyya, was my classmate.

In the beginning of 1969, I concluded the Middle School examination in the First Division. I ranked second position in the school, so in this way, I fulfilled my family's and my brothers' wishes. I still recall a long corridor in the school having many arched entrances. On every entrance, there were poetic couplets written in blue ink calligraphy. One of them, which I never forgot was:

پھلا پھولا رہے یا رب چمن میری اُمیدوں کا
جگر کا خون دیدے کریہ بوٹے میں نے پالے ہیں

“O Lord, May the garden of my hopes continue to blossom; I have raised these plants with my own sweat and blood.”¹²²

In March 1969, I joined the ninth class of Talim-ul-Islam High School in Rabwah. I chose science subjects in high school. Here, I passed the matriculation final exam (Known as matric in Pakistan) in the first division and I got third position in the school. Munir Ahmad Javaid, who was the private secretary of Fourth and Fifth Head of Jama’at Ahmadiyya, was my class fellow in the tenth class of high school.

After matric, I joined the Talim-ul-Islam College in Rabwah but could not carry on my education there as I joined my brothers to help them in farming. However, I had the good fortune to continue my education privately and passed the FA as well as BA degree with exceptional grades. From an early age my brothers encouraged me to seek knowledge. I was always silent as reticent as observed by all my classmates. This was not intentional rather it was my nature. I have always been a good student, it would be fair to say as a student I was intelligent, but not extraordinarily intelligent or a genius. Now, I know that no individual is extraordinarily intelligent or genius by birth, rather by the Grace of God alone. As God the Exalted reveals in Surah Al-Jumu’ah:

ذَٰلِكَ فَضْلُ اللَّهِ يُؤْتِيهِ مَن يَّشَاءُ ۖ وَاللَّهُ ذُو الْفَضْلِ الْعَظِيمِ .

“That is Allah’s grace; He bestows it on Whom He pleases; and Allah is the Master of immense grace.” (Surah Al Jumu’ah 62’:5)

Now, the question arises, how does God make someone extraordinarily intelligent? Let’s take the example of Sir Isaac Newton (1642–1727). In fact, He was a student of average intelligence. A contemporary author

122 Kulliyat e Iqbal, Iqbal academy Pakistan Lahore, (Urdu), (National Book Foundation Islam Abad, 1990) p. 127 Bang-e-Dra, Poem, 111.

William Stukeley writes in his book, *Memoirs of Sir Isaac Newton's life*, a statement given by Sir Isaac Newton which goes like this:

(A conversation with Newton in Kensington on 15 April 1726)

*“We went into the garden, and drank tea under the shade of some apple trees, only he, and myself. amidst other discourse, he told me, he was just in the same situation, as when formerly, the notion of gravitation came into his mind. ‘Why should that apple always descend perpendicularly to the ground,’ thought he to himself: occasioned by the fall of an apple, as he sat in a contemplative mood: ‘why should it not go sideways, or upwards? but constantly to the earth’s centre? assuredly, the reason is, that the earth draws it. there must be a drawing power in matter. And the sum of the drawing power in the matter of the earth must be in the earth’s centre, not in any side of the earth. therefore dos this apple falls perpendicularly, or toward the centre. if matter thus draws matter; it must be in proportion of its quantity. therefore the apple draws the earth, as well as the earth draws the apple.’”*¹²³

Similarly, **Michael White** describes this incidence in his book as follow. He says:

*“Newton himself often told that story that he was inspired to formulate his theory of gravitation by watching the fall of an apple from a tree.”*¹²⁴

We all know that there is nothing unusual in an apple falling to the ground. Millions of people had observed this phenomenon before Newton, but none paid extraordinary attention to this usual incident. But when Newton observed this fall, the question was revealed to him, why the apple fell on the ground? Why did the apple not fall upwards? None can deny the significance and the importance of a question. The Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw} said that **a question is half knowledge and the key to**

123 “Revised Memoir of Newton (Normalized Version)”. The Newton Project. Retrieved 13 March 2017.

124 White, Michael, *Isaac Newton: The Last Sorcerer*, (Basic Books; First US Edition. 31 Dec. 1997), p. 86.

knowledge. From my personal experience I can say that this revelation and question, both proved to be a blessing for Newton. **If Newton had not received this revelation and if the question had not been raised in his mind, then how could the law of gravitation have been discovered?**

The question that arises about the falling apple and the received revelation made Newton an extraordinarily intelligent person. We can imagine Newton's peers would have sneered at him when he presented the idea that:

“The earth attracts the objects towards its centre.”

It may have been plausible that some took the liberty of saying to Newton.

“Have you gone mad?” “When any object falls to the ground, how can it be related to the attraction of the Earth?”

“Objects always fall downwards, they cannot fly upwards.

It is a matter of common sense, nothing new in it.”

Certainly, it was not an ordinary incident, and rather it led to formulate a unique detection in the field of science. The Italian mathematician Joseph Louis-Lagrange stated that Newton was the greatest genius who ever lived, and once added that Newton was also *“the most fortunate, for we cannot find more than once a system of the world to establish.”*¹²⁵

An English poet, Alexander Pope, wrote the famous epitaph,

*Nature and Nature's laws lay hid in night.
God said, let Newton be! and all was light.*

But this was not allowed to be inscribed in the monument. The epitaph in the monument can be translated as follows:

¹²⁵ Fred L. Wilson, *History of Science: Newton* citing: Delambre, M. “Notice sur la vie et les ouvrages de M. le comte J.L. Lagrange”, *Oeuvres de Lagrange* I. Paris, 1867, p. xx.

*“Here is buried Isaac Newton, Knight, who by a strength of mind almost divine, and mathematical principles peculiarly his own, explored the course and figures of the planets, the paths of comets, the tides of the sea, the dissimilarities in rays of light, and, what no other scholar has previously imagined, the properties of the colours thus produced. Diligent, sagacious and faithful, in his expositions of nature, antiquity and the holy Scriptures, he vindicated by his philosophy the majesty of God mighty and good, and expressed the simplicity of the Gospel in his manners. Mortals rejoice that there has existed such and so great an ornament of the human race! He was born on 25th December 1642, and died on 20th March 1726.”*¹²⁶

So far as the personality, simplicity and candidness of Newton is concerned, then, in a later memoir, Newton wrote, *“I do not know what I may appear to the world, but to myself I seem to have been only like a boy playing on the sea-shore, and diverting myself in now and then finding a smoother pebble or a prettier shell than ordinary, whilst the great ocean of truth lay all undiscovered before me.”*¹²⁷

5) A strange incident occurred in my life

I was a bachelor student in 1978 and had a strong desire to get higher education. I wanted to do a PhD thesis on the comparative study of the Islamic system with capitalism and communism. The purpose of this was to prove the superiority of the Islamic system. I knew nothing why I had such thoughts in my mind. Perhaps I was being prepared for something big. At that time, I was having some blessed dreams, one after the other. I want to relate one of these dreams to you, but before that I wish to relate to an incident which had a profound connection to that dream. At the end of 1977 or just in the beginning of 1978, I came back with my mother from Dawar to my residence in Darus Sadar Gharbi Rabwah in the evening.

126 Westminster Abbey. “Sir Isaac Newton Scientist, Mathematician and Astronomer”. westminster-abbey.org. Retrieved 19 January 2022.

127 *Memoirs of the Life, Writings, and Discoveries of Sir Isaac Newton* (1855) by Sir David Brewster (Volume II. Ch. 27)-

Shortly before Isha (night prayer), I had some poetic verses running in my heart and mind.

Within a few minutes, I wrote a complete poem. Bear in mind that although I love and read good poetry but by myself, I had never tried to compose any poetry. The next day, I realised that these words were in fact a benediction, a potent prayer and I should recite it during my prayers (صلوة) I wrote them down and introduced them into my daily prayers. I revealed these poetic verses to my mother and shared them with some friends recommending them to add them to their daily prayers. Bear in mind that when these couplets came into my mind, I was unaware of the fact that those words were revealed to me by God. This poem is as follow:

6) A magnificent prayer

اے میرے اللہ اب تو میری پکار سن لے
بخشش کامیں ہوں طالب، میرے غفار سن لے

1) O, my Allah listen to my call. I desire of thy forgiveness; hear me, The Most Forgiving.

میں گنہ گار بندہ ، در پہ ہوں تیرے آیا
شرمندگی کے آنسو، اپنے ہوں ساتھ لایا

2) I am a sinner and come to Thy door. I carry with myself nothing but tears of shame.

گلیوں میں رو رہا ہوں ، آنسو بہا رہا ہوں
در در کی ٹھوکریں، اے مالک میں کھا رہا ہوں

3) Weeping tearfully in the streets, O, my Lord, I am being pummelled from door to door?

تو پاک مجھ کو کر دے، اور نیک بھی بنا دے
اسلام کی محبت، دل میں میرے بٹھا دے

4) Ye make me pure and virtuous; the love of Islam set in my heart.

ہر آن رکھوں دیں کو، دنیا پہ میں مقدم
اسلام کی فتح کا، ہو فکر مجھ کو ہر دم

5) At every moment, I choose faith over this world. I am concerned for the Victory of Islam.

اسلام کی صداقت، دنیا میں، میں پھیلاؤں
شمع ہدایت، ہر گھرمیں، میں جلاؤں

6) I convey the Truth of Islam to the world. I lighten the candle of guidance in every home.

اسلام پر جیوں میں، اسلام پر، مروں میں
ہر قطرہ اپنے خوں کا، اس کی نذر کروں میں

7) I live for Islam and die for Islam. I sacrifice every drop of my blood for the cause of my faith.

برائی سے بچوں، اور زیاں پہ ہو صداقت
تیرے چمن کا گل ہوں، گل کی تو کر حفاظت

8) I refrain from vice and speak the truth. A bloom of Thy garden, Ye protect the bloom.

7) A magnificent dream

A few months after the revealed poem, I had a dream. There is a stream between Rabwah and Lalian, which has since dried up. Whenever the River Chenab had a high-level flood, this stream used to overflow. In my childhood, whenever I went to Lalian city for shopping along with my

mother, I crossed this stream many times. I saw in the dream that both sides of the stream were grassy and I was on the north-west side of the stream. Suddenly I found myself standing before the Promised Mahdi and Messiah Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as}. He addresses me and says, “Ghaffar; Offer your namaz (prayers) regularly and join me in my prayer.” After this, Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as} raised his hands and prayed. According to Hadhur’s advice, I also raised my hands towards the sky and joined him in his prayer. Along with Hadhur, I began to recite the aforesaid revealed poem. Shortly after that I woke up.

8) Admission to the University of Punjab

In the beginning of 1981, I wanted to enrol into the University of Punjab in Lahore but due to poverty, it was not possible. However, I had inherited seven acres of land which I decided to mortgage to raise funds for my study. I admitted myself to the Department of Political Science to study for my master’s degree. There were five different topics to study during the first year. Two of these papers were about Political Philosophy. The first one was Muslim Political Philosophy, the other Western Political Philosophy. We studied Socrates, Plato, Aristotle and many other Western thinkers under the topic of Western Political Philosophy. Whilst studying Socrates, we reflected on his famous discourse: *Virtue Is Knowledge*. In literary analyses such as *Sages of Ages*, his treatise was explained only as a moral concept, i.e. if a person has the knowledge of good deeds, and then he follows up with good deeds, the good deeds depend upon knowledge, or Virtue depends upon knowledge. But my mind never accepted this explanation of Socratic concept. A question was raised in my mind that this exposition required deeper contemplation. I kept this customary and prevalent explanation in my mind just for the sake of examination, but I made a firm decision to reflect further and deeper to understand its source.

By September 1983, I was to take my final exam of my MA and was convinced I would get a prominent position. To move on with my education, I acquired prospectuses and applied to many universities in other countries. Most universities expected a ten-thousand-dollar advance

including an annual fee and expenditures. I was at a crossroad as I had no choice but to sell my house in Rabwah, which was co-habited by my brothers. Although I was concerned about my education, destiny had prepared me for something else. As they say in a Persian idiom “*mind thinks something and the Sky thinks something else.*”

9) Request for financial help

I had listened to several sermons of the Third Successor of Jamaat Ahmadiyya (Mirza Nasir Ahmad) in which he stated that any Intelligent Ahmadi who struggled to continue education due to financial constraints would be supported by the Jamaat. I also recalled a promise by his younger brother Mirza Tahir Ahmad the Fourth Successor of the Jamaat, which he made to me many years earlier, the details of which are mentioned in the foreword of my book; *Ghulam e Masih uz Zamman*. I wrote a letter to him in October 1983 to remind him of his promise. I asked him for a scholarship and grant and if that was not possible then grant me an interest-free loan and I would repay it as soon as possible. But his reply was very strange and disappointing, neither rejecting nor accepting my request. It was merely a political reply. He wrote, “*If the Head of the Education Department of the Jamaat sanctioned the Scholarship, I will not interfere in it.*” Instead of keeping his word, he evaded it and referred me to the Head of the Department of Education. Later on, when I visited the Head of Department of Education and showed him Mirza Tahir Ahmad’s letter, he denied to help me directly. This response of Mirza Tahir Ahmad made me sad and disappointed. I was sorrowful and despondent. I was overwhelmed with worries and disappointments. My heart was broken. His promise which I held in my mind for many years as an idol, was shattered and broken into pieces.

دو گھڑی صبر سے کام لو ساتھیو! آفتِ ظلمت و جور ٹل جائے گی
آہِ مومن سے ٹکرا کے طوفان کا، رخِ پلٹ جائیگا، رُت بدل جائیگی

“Be Patient my friends! This time of hardship will soon be over. Sigh of

a believer will turn away the storm of suffering and Adversity.”¹²⁸

Sometimes incidents such as this can change fate and an apparent heartbreak, disappointment, failure and suffering ends up into positive betterment and blessing beyond imagination. When someone passes through such a trial, the feeling of grief and sorrow can affect the whole being and lead to self-imprecation. But in hindsight these trials, difficulties, disappointments and tribulations are an impetus for success and progress.

If Mirza Tahir Ahmad hadn't broken my spirit, my heart, the best I could have achieved was higher education in a foreign university at the most. Today in hindsight I can reflect and conclude that the rejection of my request for financial assistance turned out to be a Divine Blessing.

The unsuccessfulness, hopelessness and failure that mortified me was in fact a hidden success and blessing in disguise from God the Almighty. Consequently, I have learnt, we should not be disheartened because of financial hardship, misfortune or failure as there may be a hidden success behind it. A Sufi poet Baba Bulleh Shah (Syed Abdullah Shah Qadri) relates in Punjabi:

مسجد ڈھا دے، مندر ڈھا دے، ڈھا دے جو کچھ ڈھیندا
اک بندے دا دل ناں ڈھاویں رب! دلاں وچ رہیندا

Demolish any Mosque, any Temple or anything else. But never break anybody's Heart, as God dwells there.

10) A blessed prostration

I travelled back to Lahore from Rabwah in November 1983 depressed after being turned down by these worldly people and a so-called Khalifa

¹²⁸ Kalam e Tahir, Mard e Haq Ki Dua, National Shoba Ishaat Ahmadiyya Muslim Jamaat Germany, August 1998, p. 20

who couldn't keep a promise. It was in this moment that my Beloved Lord consoled me and wrapped me with His mercy to comfort my soul and strengthen my resolve with His assured help. The truth is that Allah had already embraced me with the veil of His Mercy the day I was born, but this fact had been concealed from me. The following events assured me that there is an Eternal and Almighty Lord of the Universe that has the power to do all that He wills. Nothing is beyond his scope. In my state of hopelessness and restlessness, He revealed His Mercy and Eternal love for me. There is a famous Persian proverb which states:

رحمت حق بهانه می جوید

“Divine Mercy seeks an excuse and pretext.”

In my case, how did this Divine Mercy and pretext take place? This whole incident happened in this way. In those days, there was A Talent Club of Ahmadiyya Students in Lahore and I was also a member of this club. The rules were, in every month, one member student would choose a topic according to his academic discipline and then deliver a lecture on the respective subject in the light of the Holy Qur'an. After my return to Lahore from Rabwah, the Club organiser requested me to deliver a lecture in November 1983. I accepted the challenge. I was pondering over the Socratic treatise, '*Virtue is Knowledge*'. I had decided that it would be a walk in the park for me to deliver a lecture on the same subject. The topic Virtue is Knowledge seemed to be quite straightforward and easy on the face of it, but upon reflection, it became an arduous undertaking. The concept of Socrates was considered as an ethical theory, although it was a '*Theory of Knowledge*' in its true reality; Resembling knowledge with virtue, Socrates guided us to understand the essence of it. The issue was how to solve this problem because if we cannot understand the Essence of Virtue, then we cannot understand the nature of Knowledge as well, because according to Socrates, Virtue and Knowledge are one and the same thing. The question in my mind was, '*What is Virtue?*' I put all my mental capabilities for almost three weeks to find the solution of this issue but all in vain. I felt ashamed that even being a MA student and I dare to say one of the best students, even then, I couldn't know what knowledge was. In mid-December 1983, I returned to my room after Friday prayers

(Jum'ah) again pondering over the Essence of Virtue. I was quite tired at that moment both mentally and physically, and began to think that the understanding of 'the Essence of Virtue' was beyond my capacity. However, a thought came into my mind instantly that why shouldn't I ask this question from Allah, the All-Knowing and All-Aware. A strong desire to pray stimulated in my heart. On my bed, I turned my face towards Qibla (The Holy Ka'ba in Makkah) and fell to prostration.

There are some prayers for the enhancement of Knowledge revealed to the Holy Prophet^(saw) and the Promised Mahdi and Messiah Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^(as). I had learnt them by heart and used to recite them during my daily prayers. In the state of prostration on that day, I started reciting them. These prayers are as follows:

رَبِّ زِدْنِي عِلْمًا.

- 1) *O my Lord! Enhance my knowledge. (Sura TaHa v.115) (Tadhkirah p.310)*

رَبِّ عَلِّمْنِي مَا هُوَ خَيْرٌ عِنْدَكَ

- 2) *Lord, teach me that which is good in Thy estimation. (Tadhkirah p.558)*

رَبِّ أَرِنِي أَنْوَارَكَ الْكُلِّيَّةَ.

- 3) *Lord, show me Thy All-comprehending lights. (Tadhkirah p.534)*

رَبِّ أَرِنِي حَقَائِقَ الْأَشْيَاءِ.

- 4) *Lord, show me the reality of things. (Tadhkirah p.613)*

اے ازلِ ابدی خدا! مجھے زندگی کا شربت پلا۔

- 5) *O Eternal and Everlasting God give me to drink of the sweet water of life. (Tadhkirah p.600)*

I continued reciting these prayers for ten minutes at which point I felt Allah had accepted my request. During the state of prostration an immense and deep knowledge overwhelmed me and I felt Allah had answered my question of ‘The Essence of Virtue’. Not only that, a radical change had overcome me and I became filled with joy. My weary state disappeared forever as I sensed the Old Abdul Ghaffar dissolved away during the Prostration and a new Abdul Ghaffar came into being. I cannot begin to comprehend what happened to me during that blessed Prostration. But know this, in the Holy Qur’an Allah states:

إِنَّمَا أَمْرُهُ إِذَا أَرَادَ شَيْئًا أَنْ يَقُولَ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ. يسين- ٨٣

“Verily, His Command, When He Intends a thing, is only that He says concerning it, ‘Be!’ and it comes into being.” (Surah Ya Sin 36’:83).

I imagined that I too went through this transformative state during that blessed prostration. Shortly after this, next day, Allah revealed to me, ***“Virtue is God.”***

جو ہمارا تھا وہ اب دلبر کا سارا ہو گیا
آج ہم دلبر کے اور دلبر ہمارا ہو گیا
شکر اللہ! مل گیا ہم کو وہ لعل بے بدل
کیا ہوا گر قوم کا دل سنگ خارا ہو گیا

What was ours, Is now wholly of the Beloved. All that was of mine became of my Beloved. As of today, we belong to the Beloved; And the Beloved belongs to us.

God be thanked, I have found, that matchless gem; It matters not, if the heart of the people has turned to stone.?¹²⁹

In the above-mentioned revelation, I was informed that the Virtue, the God and the arete, which were defined as KNOWLEDGE, by Socrates, is in fact the Creator of the Universe, Our Lord Allah, God.

129 Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as}, Roohani Khazain, Izala-e-Auham, (Urdu), Vol 3, p. 458.

And He is the Supreme Ultimate Universal Truth.

After this revelation, a new phenomenon commenced. Hidden information developed in my heart and mind effortlessly without pondering or reflection. I felt that the deep, subtle and elusive mysteries of religion and philosophy were being unveiled to me. Based on this revealed information, I wrote the Divine Theory '***Virtue is God***'.

It was revealed to me that this Divine Theory is not only the Supreme Ultimate Universal Theory, but also the Mother of Theories, and the Seal of Theories.

By disclosing the reality of Socrates' treatise, i.e. Virtue is Knowledge, and by revealing to me the Supreme Ultimate Universal Theory, i.e. Virtue is God; The Lord God made me the ***Supreme Head of the Kingdom of Knowledge and Wisdom***, just as He made Newton the Father of Modern Science by revealing the reality of gravitation through an ordinary incident of a falling apple.

In the life of every spiritual leader and founder, there occurs at least one incident of central importance that divides his life into two separate distinguishable phases, i.e. life before and after that specific profound spiritual experience. There is also a unique specialty regarding such a spiritual experience that will have influenced their whole lives. Be it, Prophet Noah^{as}, Prophet Abraham^{as}, Buddha^{as}, Prophet Moses^{as} Prophet Jesus^{as}, Prophet Muhammad^{saw} or Prophet Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as}. The life history of all these illustrious personalities as well as other religious reformers points towards such a pivotal spiritual experience that changed the course of their lives. In some statements, these experiences are called Intuition, Spiritual Awareness, Observation or Revelation. If we ponder with another point of view, this is a unique experience for the remedy of the loneliness of the human soul. Usually, this feeling of loneliness and helplessness reaches its pinnacle when a person undergoes extreme crisis, or when one passes through such a severe shock which disturbs every fibre of his being. In such a state of helplessness and loneliness, this spiritual experience, like a flashlight, reveals that the human soul is

always attached to and dependent on a pure, unblemished and Permanent Reality. This awareness, that man is not lonely and helpless in this vast and boundless universe, rather, one has the ‘company’ of a Supreme Being who has the remedy against all the sufferings of a person and is the soul and kernel of this spiritual experience.

By the blessings of God the Almighty, I too have experienced such a profound spiritual experience. After this, I came to know that as a result of acceptance of the prayers of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as} for forty days in solitude at Hoshiarpur (*Chila Hoshiarpur*), God gave him the Glad Tidings of ‘**His Sign of Mercy**’, i.e. ‘**Zaki Ghulam**’. He disclosed to me that I am the embodiment of the Divine Prophecy of Musleh Maoud of the announcement of 20th February 1886 and provided me a scientific, central and revealed proof of it. In the announcement of 20th February 1886, the Promised Messiah, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian^{as} says:

“God the Merciful, the Noble, the Magnificent and High, Who has power to do all that He wills (glory be to Him and exalted be His name) addressed me in a revelation and said:

I confer upon you a Sign of My Mercy according to what you begged of me. So, I have heard your entreaties and have honoured your prayers with My acceptance through My mercy and made your journey (i.e. the journey to Hoshiarpur and Ludhiana) a source of blessings for you. Therefore, a Sign of power, mercy, nearness is bestowed on you, a Sign of grace and beneficence is awarded to you and you are granted the key of success and victory. Peace on you, O victorious one. Thus did God speak so that those who desire life may be rescued from the grip of death and those who are buried in the graves may come out of them and so that the superiority of Islam and the dignity of God’s word may become manifest unto the people and so that truth may arrive with all its blessings and falsehood may flee, with all its ills and so that people may understand that I am the Lord of Power, I do whatever I will, and so that they may believe that I am with you, and so that those who do

not believe in God and deny and reject His religion and His Book and His Holy Messenger Muhammad, the Chosen One^{saw} may be confronted with a clear Sign and the way of the guilty ones may become manifest.

Rejoice, therefore, that a handsome and pure boy will be bestowed on you. You will receive a pure and virtuous youth (boy). That boy will be of your seed and will be of your progeny. A handsome and pure boy is coming as your guest. His name is Emmanuel and also Bashir. He has been invested with a spirit of holiness, and he is free from all impurity. He is the light of Allah. Blessed is he who comes from heaven.

He will be accompanied by grace which shall arrive with him. He will be characterised with grandeur, greatness and wealth. He will come into the world and will heal many of their disorders through his Messianic qualities and through the blessings of the spirit of Holiness. He is the Word of Allah for Allah's mercy and honour have equipped him with the Word of Majesty. He will be extremely intelligent and perceptive and will be meek of heart and will be filled with Manifest and Latent knowledge. He will convert three into four (of this the meaning is not clear). [Persian] It is Monday a blessed Monday. Son, Delight of the heart, high ranking, noble. [Arabic] A manifestation of the First and the Last, a manifestation of the Truth and the Supreme; as if Allah has descended from heaven. His advent will be greatly blessed and will be a source of manifestation of Divine Majesty. Behold a light comes, anointed by God with the perfume of His pleasure. We shall pour Our spirit into him and he will be sheltered under the shadow of God. He will grow rapidly in stature and will be the means of procuring the release of those held in bondage. His fame will spread to the ends of the earth and peoples will be blessed through him. He will then be raised to his spiritual station in heaven. [Arabic] This is a matter decreed.”¹³⁰

Issues and disputes arise when some people or nations start thinking that they are the only heirs of the Lord's Mercy and Bounty. In fact, such

130 Announcement of 20th February 1886, Majmu 'a-e-Ishtiharat (Urdu), vol. 1, pp. 100-102. Tadhkirah, translated into English by Sir Ch M Zaffrullah Khan, Third English translation [revised] Published in UK in 2018, (Reprinted in Qadian, India in 2019), pp. 174-179.

thinking is totally wrong, as this matter is only in the hands of our Lord. He grants this to whom He wills. The Holy Qur'an narrates this issue in such words:

ذَٰلِكَ فَضْلُ اللَّهِ يُؤْتِيهِ مَن يَّشَاءُ ۖ وَاللَّهُ ذُو الْفَضْلِ الْعَظِيمِ - الحديد: ٢٢

“That is Allah’s Grace; He bestows it upon whomsoever He pleases, and Allah is the Lord of Immense grace.” (Surah Al Jumu’ah 62’:5)

It is possible that the flatterers and close companions of the pseudo-Khalifa may declare my claim as senseless matter. If they can declare a person world renowned, which is hardly known outside the circle of Jamaat; if they can proclaim that all the nations of the world were blessed by a pseudo Promised Reformer (Mirza Bashir ud Din Mahmood Ahmad) and if they can declare a person, elected by his own employees, as God-Appointed Khalifa, then they can say or do anything. What accomplished personalities are they! What cunning and dishonest people are they!

My response to all such persons is to come forward and falsify my Divine Theory by arguments, reasoning and by logic. If they do not dare to accept my challenge and are not ready to discuss with me, even then, I inform them that my Lord, my God the Almighty shall disclose the truthfulness of my claim with the passage of time or when the time is right.

After transcribing the Divine Theory, it was revealed to me that this theory is deeply and specifically linked with the Divine Prophecy of 20th Feb 1886, whereupon different signs and attributes of the ‘Divine Mercy’ or ‘Zaki Ghulam’ are mentioned. Therefore, I have given another name to this Divine Theory, i.e.

“The Reality of the Divine Prophecy of 20th Feb 1886.”

What I have written since mid-December 1983 and in future, is and shall continue to be the fruits of that blessed prostration in ‘Darul Hamd’ [literally meaning Residence of Divine Praise] situated in New Muslim Town Lahore. The same happened to Prophet Moses^{as} whilst observing

the Burning Bush on Mount Tur, Prophet Muhammad^{saw} in the Cave Hira, Prophet Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as} during one night in Gurdaspur. As these chosen personalities were appointed for some specific missions, in the same way, I have been appointed to reform the Jama'at Ahmadiyya as well as for the Victory and Dominance of Islam. Allah the Almighty promised three times in the Holy Qur'an with His Prophet Mohammad^{saw} about this victory and Dominance of Islam, as He says:

هُوَ الَّذِي أَرْسَلَ رَسُولَهُ بِالْهُدَىٰ وَدِينِ الْحَقِّ لِيُظْهِرَهُ عَلَى الدِّينِ كُلِّهِ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ الْمُشْرِكُونَ. الصَّف. ١٠

“He it is Who has sent His Messenger with the guidance and the Religion of truth, that He may cause it to prevail over all religions, even if those who associate partners with God, hate it.” (Sura As-Saff 61’:10).

This is the first and lasting promise of Allah and Allah the Almighty shall fulfil it. The question is how it will be fulfilled? By cannons, swords and atomic bombs? No, absolutely not. The military force and weapons of opponents are so advanced which the Muslim world cannot even perceive. In a world where Muslims are branded as terrorists and no one is willing to listen to them. Now is the time, to fight with the pen and the knowledge. This is not the age of bloody wars but a war of ideologies. Our time or age is an age of theoretical wars or more precisely wars of knowledge. I have firm faith that this war will not be fought on land, sea or air, rather in educational institutes. By the blessings of Allah, Islam shall dominate over all other schools of thoughts and religions. As for the explanation of the movements of the celestial bodies of the Universe, God blessed Sir Isaac Newton with the Keys to Gravitation. So is the case of the Promised Son of Muhammadi Mary Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as}. To whom, God vouchsafed the Supreme Ultimate Universal Theory, i.e. **Virtue is God**, for the complete Dominance and Victory of Islam. The whole world [God willing] will submit to this Theory. This Supreme Ultimate Universal Theory will also gather the whole Muslim World together, by the blessing of Allah (If God the Most High wills). Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian^{as} pointed out this matter as follows:

*“There will be a new earth and a new heaven. **The days are approaching when the sun of truth will rise from the West and Europe will recognise the True GOD.** Thereafter the door of repentance will be closed, for those who wish to enter will have entered eagerly, and only those will remain outside whose hearts are by nature, sealed, and who are in love, not with light but darkness. The time is near when all religions will perish except Islam. All weapons will be broken except the heavenly weapon of Islam for it will neither be broken nor will it be blunted till it has broken all Antichrist tendencies to bits. The time is near that the true Unity of God, which is perceived within their nature even by those who dwell in the desert or are completely unaware of any teaching, will spread through all regions. On that day there will remain no artificial atonement nor an artificial god. A single stroke of God will frustrate all the plans of disbelief, not by any sword, nor by any gun, but by bestowing light on eager souls and by illumining the pure hearts. Then will there be an understanding of all that which I say.”¹³¹*

¹³¹ Al-Ishtiharu Mustaiqinan bi-Wahyillahil-Qahhar, (Urdu) announcement dated January 14, 1897, Majmu ‘a-e-Ishtiharat, vol. 2, pp. 304-305., Tadhkirah, translated into English by Sir Ch M Zaffrullah Khan (Third edition [revised] published in UK in 2018, Reprinted in Qadian, India in 2019), p. 379.

How ‘Virtue is God’ is the Mother of Theories

Our universe is too great and vast. It is everything we can touch, feel, sense, measure or detect. It includes living and semi-living things, planets, stars, galaxies, dust, clouds, light and even time. It contains billions of galaxies, each containing millions or billions of stars. It is a scientific fact that at every instance it is continually expanding. In spite of this, it is finite because it is a phenomenon, i.e. an expression of the ‘*VIRTUE*’.

It is also said that the space between the stars and galaxies is empty but I say, no space is empty in this universe because the Supreme Ultimate Universal Truth is everywhere. Our universe is mainly composed of two types of phenomena, physical and metaphysical. Although up till now we do not know, even then, it is possible that in our universe there would be another type of phenomenon which would be neither physical nor metaphysical. When we say that our universe is composed of physical and metaphysical phenomena, it means that our universe is composed of physical and metaphysical truths. Since we cannot see metaphysical phenomena with our eyes, it is too difficult to determine or to become aware of their realities. Albeit we can see physical phenomenon, alas, their truths are hidden before us. And we cannot unequivocally know about their realities. When we discover any physical or metaphysical truth, it becomes an academic law. For example, It was the theoretical chemist Henry Cavendish (1731–1810), who first discovered the composition of water, when he experimented with hydrogen and oxygen. In 1811 the Italian physician Amedeo Avogadro (1776–1856) finally found chemical formula (H_2O) for water. After discovering H_2O , it became a natural law in our world that water, is always composed of hydrogen and oxygen. And its formula is always H_2O . It is always composed of two atoms of hydrogen and one atom of oxygen. The formula of H_2O is a physical truth and therefore it is a physical theory about the reality of water.

Let's take an example of a metaphysical theory. In particle physics, the electroweak force is the unified description of two of the four known fundamental forces of nature: electromagnetic force and the weak nuclear force. Although these two forces appear very different at everyday low energies, the theory models them as two different aspects of the same force. Sheldon Glashow, Abdus Salam and Steven Weinberg were awarded the 1979 Nobel Prize in Physics for their contributions to the unification of the weak nuclear force and electromagnetic force between elementary particles, known as the Weinberg–Salam theory.

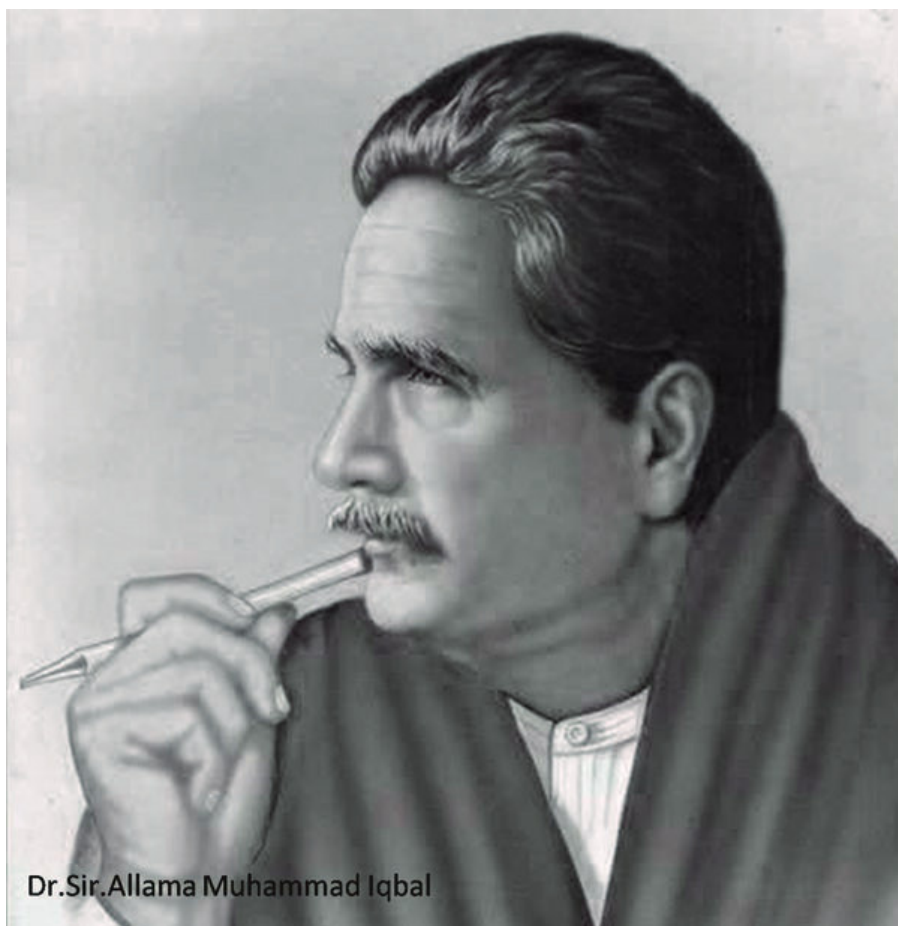
Discovering the properties of water (H₂O) is a physical theory and the discovery of the electroweak force is a metaphysical theory. Any physical theory will be about some specific part of the physical world. In the same way, any metaphysical theory will be about some specific part of the metaphysical world. Physical and metaphysical theories can neither be the Supreme Ultimate Universal Theory nor a Mother of Theories, because these deal with specific portions of the physical and metaphysical worlds. According to Professor Stace,

“Philosophy seeks to view the entire universe in light of the fewest possible general principles, in the light, if possible, of a single ultimate principle.”

Virtue is God, is a Divine theory because the essence and the existence of God have been described in this concept. God the Exalted One told me that the Divine Theory is also a Supreme, Ultimate, Universal, Theory and the Mother of Theories. Now the question arises that how this concept (Virtue is God) can be a Supreme Ultimate Universal Theory and a Mother of Theories? Just to clarify here that all those theories which deal with material things are known as physical theories. That is to say that physical theories deal with physical or material truths. Likewise, metaphysical theories deal with metaphysical or immaterial truths of the universe. Keep in mind that a Supreme Ultimate Universal Theory can only be that which deals with the Truth that is simultaneously Universal Ultimate and Supreme. Non-physical or metaphysical theory can deal with the Truth which is at the same time Universal, Ultimate and Supreme. And it is only

God, the Creator and the Originator of the universe Who is the Supreme Ultimate Universal Truth. Therefore, non-physical and metaphysical theory can be described as the Mother of Theories. It is only the Supreme Ultimate Universal Theory which can be a Mother of Theories. Its reason is that it does not deal with any specific portion of the universe but with the universe as a whole. Such a theory which pertains to the universe as a whole and all things come under its rule or grasp will be termed as not only a Supreme Ultimate Universal Theory but also a Mother of Theories. '*Virtue is God*' is not only a 'supreme ultimate universal theory' but also a 'mother of theories' and the 'seal of theories'. The reason is that each and every physical and metaphysical theory come out of it and theoretically it is also impossible to transcend it. In this world, till the Day of Judgement, nobody will emerge who can challenge this Divine Theory '**VIRTUE IS GOD**'. If there is anyone, then, he should come forward. Let it be known that there is no God of this universe except '**Virtue**'. He is the Knowledge and He is the Supreme, Ultimate, Universal Truth.

Mohammad Iqbal's 'نغمۂ توحید' i.e. melody of Unity of God'.



Dr Mohammad Iqbal (9th November 1877–21st April 1938)

Dr Mohammad Iqbal was a visionary poet and the originator of the Ideology of Pakistan. He had the vision to see beyond superficial and read between events as they happened. His poetry played a vital role to awaken the Muslim Ummah and gave the message of reconstruction and creative thinking. He tells the youth that an intensive and endless struggle has to be waged to achieve the object of life. He spurs them to seek risk and adventure so that their mettle will be tested and galvanised. He urges them to aspire for bigger and unseen possibilities. By telling them that they have more skies ahead of them, he demands the youth to break new

ground, become trailblazers and see beyond the obvious to tread where no one has ever done before. Undoubtedly, Iqbal is one of the great poets of the 20th century and he will remain the greatest among the poets of his era and the later. Iqbal had said that poetic verses are often revealed to him. So as Abdul Majeed Salik writes in the biography of Iqbal:

“In days gone by there was an instance worthy of note during an annual convention of the Forman Christian College in Lahore in which Allama (Iqbal) was invited. The Principal of the College, Doctor Lucas requested Allama Iqbal to remain for a while after the conclusion and tea as he needed to ask him a question. After completion of the ceremony Dr Lucas approached Allama Iqbal and posed the question:

‘Do you think the meaning of the Holy Qur’an was revealed to your Prophet^{saw} which He^{saw} then expressed in his own words, or were those words revealed too?’

Allama Iqbal gave a clear answer that ‘in my opinion the text of the Holy Qur’an was revealed to the Holy Prophet^{saw} in the Arabic language, not only the meaning, but the words too were revealed.’ Upon this admission Dr Lucas was very surprised and stated:

‘I do not understand. How can such a great philosopher like you have such faith (in revelation)?’

Allama Iqbal stated, ‘Doctor Sahib! I do not need any argument in this matter, I have my personal experience. I am not a prophet just a poet. When I get the urge to recite a poem, the poetry begins to descend on me and I copy them exactly. Sometimes it happened that I wanted to make some changes in these poems. But my modifications looked patchy compared to the original poem so kept the poem as it is. In a situation where a whole poem can be revealed to a poet, so the point in this is can the whole text of the Holy Qur’an be revealed to the Holy Prophet^{saw} word by word?’

*After this Dr Lucas was lost for words.*¹³²

Dr Mohammad Iqbal has written many lengthy poems. In such a lengthy poem named as ‘**Shama aur Shair**’, he has mentioned a “**melody of Unity of God** i.e. (نغمہ توحید)”. God the Exalted informed me that “Virtue is God” is an actual expression of Iqbal’s “**melody of Unity of God**. i.e. (Naghma-e-Tawhid)”. So in the third part of this lengthy poem, first Iqbal says:

تھا جنہیں ذوقِ تماشا وہ تو رخصت ہو گئے
لے کے اب تو وعدہ دیدارِ عام آیا تو کیا

When Those who were fond of watching spectacle ‘had left. Now your promise of public sighting makes no difference.

آنجن سے وہ پرانے شعلہ آشام اُٹھ گئے
ساقیا! محفل میں تو آتشِ بجام آیا تو کیا

When the ardent lovers of wine have long left the party; O’ butler! Your offerings of fine wine will make no difference.

آہ! جب گلشن کی جمیعت پریشاں ہو چکی
پھول کو بادِ بہاری کا پیام آیا تو کیا

Ah! When the garden was in disarray; To the flower, the news of the arrival of spring will make no difference.

آخرِ شب دید کے قابل تھی بسمل کی تڑپ
صبح دم کوئی اگر بالائے بام آیا تو کیا

The anguish of the wounded was noteworthy at the end of the night; The arrival of the beloved at dawn will make no difference.

132 Abdul Majeed Salik, *Zikr e Iqbal* (Urdu) pp. 244-245.

بُجھ گیا وہ شعلہ جو مقصودِ ہر پروانہ تھا
اب کوئی سودائی سوزِ تمام آیا تو کیا

That flame which was the desire of every moth has extinguished; Now even if a pursuer of love comes, it will make no difference.

پھول بے پرواہ ہیں تو گرمِ نوا ہو یا نہ ہو
کارواں بے حس ہے آوازِ درا ہو یا نہ ہو

The flowers are indifferent, your excitement will make no difference; The congregation is senseless, your calling out will make no difference.

In the last and eleventh part of the poem, Iqbal says:

آسماں ہو گا سحر کے نور سے آئینہ پوش
اور ظلمتِ رات کی سیماب پا ہو جائے گی

The sky will be illuminated like a mirror with the morning light; And the darkness of the night will slip away.

اس قدر ہوگی ترنم آفریں بادِ بہار
نکھتِ خوابیدہ غنچے کی نوا ہو جائے گی

The spring breeze will be so refreshing, it will inspire melodies; The flower bed's subtle fragrance will turn intoxicating.

آملیں گے سینہ چاکاں چمن سے سینہ چاک
بزمِ گل کی ہم نفس بادِ صبا ہو جائے گی

The wounded will meet with their fellow sufferers; The gentle breeze will become soulmates with the bed of roses.

شبِ نیم افشانی مری پیدا کرے گی سوز و ساز
اس چمن کی ہر کلی درد آشنا ہو جائے گی

The soft spray of morning dew will inspire passionate music; Every

flower bud in this garden will become familiar with the pain.

دیکھ لوگے سٹوٹِ رفتارِ دریا کا آل
موجِ مضطر ہی اسے زنجیر پا ہو جائے گی

You will witness the might of the fast-flowing river; The restless tide will prove to be its own shackles.

پھر دلوں کو یاد آجائے گا پیغامِ سجود
پھر جبیں خاکِ حرم آشنا ہو جائے گی

Then the hearts shall recall the mission of prostration; Then the foreheads will be acquainted with the sacred dust.

نالہٗ صیاد سے ہوں گے نوا ساماں طیور
خونِ گلچیں سے کلی رنگیں قبا ہو جائے گی

The hunter's barrel will give reason for the birds to make noise; The flower buds will be enrobed in the blood of the flower picker.

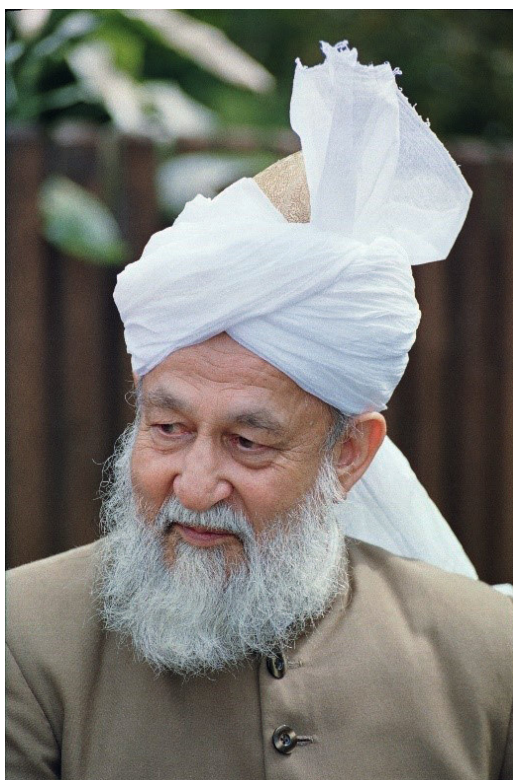
آنکھ جو کچھ دیکھتی ہے لب پہ آسکتا نہیں
موجِ حیرت ہوں کہ دنیا کیا سے کیا ہو جائیگی

Whatever the eyes witness cannot be articulated by words; I am drowned in amazement as to what will become of the world.

شبِ گریزاں ہوگی آخر جلوۂ خورشید سے
یہ چمن معمور ہوگا نغمہٗ توحید سے

The night will eventually disappear with the brightness of the sun; This garden will become established with the Melody of Unity of God.

Mirza Tahir Ahmad's advice for Ahmadis to pray for the blessed one in Jamaat Ahmadiyya.



Mirza Tahir Ahmad (18th December 1928–19th April 2003)

Mirza Tahir Ahmad stated in his Friday sermon dated 22nd November 1996 on the death of Dr Abdus Salam Sahib.

“This is the discourse that provides the cure for the wounds of deprivation of humankind in a manner that every sorrow is cured, but only if man turns his attention to it. Thereupon at the time I prayed for Doctor Sahib this morning, this discourse came to my mind and gave another direction to my prayer. I said that the honours of this world if not today inevitably will be annihilated tomorrow, nothing remains of it. But the honour in Your approval which is mentioned in the Face of thy Lord is enduring. So, I prayed to Allah the Exalted the Merciful, for

him with these words from the Holy Qur'an,

أَرْجِعْ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ رَاضِيَةً مَّرْضِيَّةً

*Return to thy Lord well pleased with Him and He well pleased with thee.
(Surah Al-Fajr 89':29)*

Oh, Soul at rest! Return to thy Lord in such a manner that He is well pleased with thee. So be content with thy Lord and He be content with thee. Any human being whom Allah is not content with, cannot acquire eternity. No human being who is not content with Allah cannot acquire eternity. With this subject, my focus changed direction. Instead of saying that today there is a departure from us which has created a vacuum in the future, and the Jamaat will feel this vacuum in the future. I said, why don't I mention that subject about eternity which is the eternal discourse. So with a virtuous ending, my attention turned towards what is a good beginning, and I came to the conclusion that in fact people are so overwhelmed by the good end, that they do not even consider about the beginning, even though there are many pure and good endings. The foundations of which are sometimes laid before the birth of man. Accordingly, Dr Abdus Salam is one of those beings. As Chaudhry Mohammad Zafrullah Khan Sahib used to constantly remind the world of the efforts he had made, that it was nothing but the prayers of my mother. His devotion to Tawheed (Oneness of Allah) and his faithfulness, his unwavering and steadfast belief in the Oneness of Allah were fruitful and manifested in the form of a blessing for him by the Grace of Allah the Almighty.

I am just a fruit of the prayers of my holy, elderly mother and this discourse led them (him) to talk, so that they could speak openly. I was very unassuming, they used to say that the whole story is the same, what am I, what is my existence, I am the fruits of prayers. And in the same way Doctor Sahib was also the fruits of Prayers ... A body has passed away, but it can be said with reference to it, Oh my Lord grant Ahmadiyyat further Nobel laureates.

وَيَبْقَى وَجْهُ رَبِّكَ ذُو الْجَلَالِ وَالْإِكْرَامِ

And there will remain only the Person of thy Lord, Master of Glory and Honour (Surah Ar Rehman 55:28)

How many Nobel laureates are there and how many will Ahmadiyyat compete with, thousands are and thousands more will come. After begging, If we acquire another four what difference will it make. But the one who is rewarded at the court of Allah, even if he is illiterate, can be so awarded that the top scholars of the world and the most honourable ones would feel proud to lift the shoes of the achiever, and would feel proud to kiss the dust of his feet. So why should we pray for minor achievements, why not pray for major achievements like the prayers of the father of Doctor Abdus Salam for his son and whom God accepted in the same way that made him a manifestation of His pleasure ... Therefore prostration has been likened to Rafaat. (Rifaat the word is in Arabic with the subjunctive of rai) but in Urdu some people also say Rafaat (with the force of rai) so I sometimes say Rafaat but the real word is Rifaat. The exaltations that are bestowed upon a person have a deep connection with humility. Therefore the supplication رَبِّيَ الْأَعْلَى Rabi al Ala (My Lord, the Most High) has been taught in prostration. Remember the Lord Almighty, you will earn the benefit from it and the one that goes down in prostration earns the blessings from it, these two subjects are inseparable. The Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw} did this more than anyone and he^{saw} achieved the greatest of blessings and victory had been bestowed upon him^{saw}. Therefore with the passing of a great man, those concepts should be discussed that make people great and is an equal message for all. In this matter if I say that Allah grant us a hundred Nobel laureates what will be the end result, will they surpass the grandeur of the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw}, who didn't even have the opportunity to sit in any school. From all knowledgeable human beings and living souls, consciousness and beings The Holy Prophet Muhammad^{saw} exceeded everyone. Then why not pray for those exaltations in which we all become equal participants. Big or small a person of the developing nation, a resident of the western countries, all of them have a common value that the source of real knowledge,

the source of real honours, whose knowledge and honours will remain is the Being of Allah. Bow down, lean towards Him. Each of you will then acquire exaltations that you cannot even begin to imagine. May Allah the Almighty elevate the ranks of the late Doctor Sahib and grant him a lofty station and May Allah the Almighty pass on the fruits of the prayers and their essence onto his children and descendants. Ameen.”¹³³

یہ دُعا ہی کا تھا معجزہ کہ عصا ساحروں کے مقابل بنا آڑہا
آج بھی دیکھنا ”مردِ حق“ کی دُعا، سحر کی ناگنوں کو نکل جائے گی

It was a miracle of prayer that a staff becomes a dragon before magicians. Today look, the prayer of a ‘true man’ will swallow all sorts of serpent magic, i.e. all sorts of the so-called philosophies and the philosophers.

133 Mirza Tahir Ahmad, Friday sermon dated 22nd November 1996.

يُؤْتِي الْحِكْمَةَ مَنْ يَشَاءُ ۚ وَمَنْ يُؤْتَ الْحِكْمَةَ فَقَدْ أُوتِيَ
خَيْرًا كَثِيرًا ۚ وَمَا يَذَّكَّرُ إِلَّا أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ . (البقرة: ٢٤٠)

He grants wisdom to whom He pleases, and whoever is granted wisdom has indeed been granted abundant good; and none would be reminded except those endowed with understanding. (Surah Al-Baqarah 2:270)

ہزاروں سال نرگس اپنی بے نوری پہ روتی ہے
بڑی مشکل سے ہوتا ہے چمن میں دیدہ ور پیدا

Hazaron Saal Nargis Apni Benoori Pe Roti Hai;
Bari Mushkil Se Hota Hai Chaman Mein Didahwar Paida.

*“For a thousand years the narcissus has been Lamenting its blindness;
with great difficulty a true visionary is born in the garden.”¹³⁴*

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The Sun of truth is rising from the West

“There will be a new earth and a new heaven. The days are approaching when the sun of truth will rise from the West and Europe will recognise the True God ... The time is near when all religions will perish except Islam. All weapons will be broken except the heavenly weapon of Islam for it will neither be broken nor will it be blunted till it has broken all Antichrist tendencies to bits. The time is near that the true Unity of God, which is perceived within their nature ... will spread through all regions. On that day there will remain no artificial atonement nor an artificial god. A single stroke of God will frustrate all the plans of disbelief, not by any sword, nor by any gun, but bestowing light on eager souls and by illumining the pure hearts. Then will there be an understanding of all that which I say.”

[Announcement dated January 14, 1897, Majmu'a-e-Ishtiharat, vol. 2, pp. 304-305]

“But as, for Socrates, the sole condition of virtue is knowledge, and as knowledge is just what can be imparted by teaching, it followed that virtue must be teachable. The only difficulty is to find the teacher, to find someone who knows the concept of virtue. What the concept of virtue is that is, thought Socrates, the precious piece of knowledge, which no philosopher has ever discovered and which, if it were only discovered, could at once be imparted by teaching, where upon men would at once become virtuous.”

[W. T. Stace, A Critical History of Greek Philosophy
(Macmillan and Co., Limited St. Martin's Street,
London, 1920), p. 149.]