

Message
from
Heaven

Hadhrat Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmud Ahmad
Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih II

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Foreword

Majlis Khuddamul Ahmadiyya has the unique honour of publishing this classic discourse delivered by Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih II رضى الله عنه, Second Successor to the Promised Messiah.

Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih II رضى الله عنه delivered the address during his visit to the United Kingdom in 1924. It was subsequently published in the Review of Religions in December 1924 and again in January 2003.

The address is a powerful heartfelt message to the West inviting them to embrace the truth of Islam and the Promised Messiah عليه السلام . With the world yearning for peace and stability it is hoped that nearly eighty years on this message will fall on ears yearning to hear a message of peace, harmony and unity.

I would like to thank Naseer Ahmad Dean for providing the original Review of Religions article, Majlis Khuddamul Ahmadiyya Isha'at team and all those involved for their efforts in delivering this message to you.

Mirza Fakhar Ahmad
Sadr Majlis Khuddamul Ahmadiyya (UK)
June 2004

An Introduction to "Message from Heaven"

Over a hundred years ago, an amazing event took place in an obscure and tiny hamlet, Qadian, in the province of the Punjab, India. It was an event that was destined to change the course of history.

There appeared a religious leader who claimed to be the Promised Reformer of the latter days and the fulfilment of various prophecies in all major religious scriptures regarding the advent of a global reformer. The followers of all great religions - Jews, Christians, Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists, Zoroastrians and the followers of Confucius - all anxiously awaited the advent of the Promised Reformer, as predicted in their Holy Scriptures. Each believed the Promised Reformer would fulfil the prophecies contained in their respective scriptures.

If the entire universe is the creation of one God, which it is, and therefore He alone must be the source of all religions, how could He send different messengers concurrently, inviting mankind into divergent paths and conflicting ideologies? This was the perplexing question addressed by Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad عليه السلام, the Holy Founder of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community. Under Divine guidance he made the revolutionary disclosure that there was to appear only one such reformer representing all the Promised Ones and humankind was ultimately to be brought under the fold of one universal religion.

Hadhrat Ahmad عليه السلام declared that he was the Promised Messiah. He further maintained that Islam was the final and complete code of life for all mankind, hence his claim that the awaited reformer had to appear in Islam as a subordinate prophet to Muhammad, the Holy Prophet of Islam صلى الله عليه وسلم.

Born in 1835, Hadhrat Ahmad عليه السلام established the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community in 1889. His mission, in which he acquitted himself with distinction and credit, was to revive Islam. He did not bring a new code of conduct or introduce any theological innovation. His teaching, deriving entirely from the Holy Quran and the pronouncements of the Holy Prophet of Islam صلى الله عليه وسلم, represent the essence of Islam shorn of all innovations that have through many centuries adulterated the doctrine of Islam.

Hadhrat Ahmad عليه السلام showed that by adhering to the true teachings of Islam, peace can be established among mankind and between man and his Creator. He urged his followers to foster a deep and sincere relationship with God, aiming to personify the true meaning of Islam - peace and submission to the Will of God.

Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad عليه السلام died in 1908 but his guidance on the teachings of Islam has lived on through his community. His followers have been subjected to extreme persecution but despite all attempts of hostile fanatics, be they individual or

governmental, whose purported objective was to extinguish the torch of Ahmadiyyat, the community has continued to prosper and now has branches in over 180 countries across the world.

The message of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community is that unless man learns to live at peace with himself and his fellow human beings, he cannot live at peace with God. In Islam, you shall find such peace of mind and tranquillity of heart that is the fruit of submitting to the Will of God.

It is for this reason that the second successor to the Promised Messiah عليه السلام, Hadhrt Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmud Ahmad رضي الله عنه, poured out his heart in a message to the western nations. The 'Message from Heaven' was first published in the Review of Religions in December 1924, but it was felt that the message should be published within its own right. In a time of political, economic and social instability, mankind is ever in need of glad tidings. It is hoped that seekers after truth need look no further, for the one who has been long awaited has already come.

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With the Grace and Mercy of God. He alone is the Helper.

'Wherefore I say unto you, all manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men, but blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of Man it shall be forgiven him, but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world neither in the world to come.'

(St Matthew 12:31, 32)

In these words did a Holy Prophet of God عليه السلام , 1900 years ago, address those who refused to accept a Message from Heaven, and these words are as true and full of import today as they were when they were spoken. Apart from the legends which fancy has woven round the expression 'Holy Ghost', the expression refers to the angel who was the bearer of the Word of God to Jesus عليه السلام . By the words which I have quoted above, Jesus عليه السلام meant no more than this, that all manner of sin would be forgiven unto men, but that blasphemy against the Word of God would not be forgiven. A man who speaks against the son of man might be forgiven, but a man who speaks against the message which the son of man had brought would be punished both in this world and in the next.

These words contain a great and profound truth, a truth which is free from every suspicion of error. It is but reasonable to assume that if there really exists a God and He sends a message for the guidance of mankind, which contains truths from which the world might derive eternal benefits and is not full of empty useless things, then those who ignore such a message or refuse to accept it must suffer the consequences of their conduct. If we give directions to a man as to how to reach a certain place and he arrives at that place without any trouble or difficulty in defiance of our directions, there must be, something wrong with our directions. If they had been correct, a man who had acted in defiance of them could not, without repairing his mistake, have arrived at his destination. Similarly if the Word of God contains guidance for mankind, a contravention of it must result in pain, not because God is actuated by spite, but because the offender has chosen to tread on a path which leads to trouble and difficulties. The Word of God is not revealed in order to try mankind, but is meant to guide mankind along the only path which leads to the goal of human existence.

In short, a Message from Heaven is not a thing which might be ignored with impunity. It is a spiritual law, the contravention of which, like that of a physical law, is

attended with penalties and deprives a man of spiritual well-being. As no man may swallow a deadly poison and escape the consequences, so may the human soul not reject the Word of God and escape the consequences. He who acts in accordance with it lays not God under an obligation but promotes the welfare of his own soul, and he who contravenes it, does no harm to God but injures his own soul.

Having indicated the vital nature of a Message from Heaven, I desire to point out that as the object of man's existence is that he should develop within himself Divine attributes and should attain to the perfection of purity, it is necessary that he should be the constant recipient of such messages from God as serve to sustain his interest and to remind him of the object of his existence. It is inconceivable that God, Who is the source of all knowledge and wisdom, should create man for a definite purpose and should then leave him to act as he pleases, and thus stultify His own work. History also confirms this conclusion. There is not a single country or a single nation that has not at one time or another entertained a belief in revelation and that has not produced men who claimed to have been the recipients of revelation. We cannot say that all claimants were impostors or were the victims of nervous disorders, for they formed the centre of all morals and culture, and without them the world would have been but an empty waste. Concerning this the Holy Qur'an says:

وَأَنَّ مِنْ أُمَّةٍ إِلَّا خَلَا فِيهَا نَذِيرٌ ﴿٢٥﴾

There is no people to whom a Warner has not been sent
(Ch.35: V.25)

This is perfectly true and correct. Having endowed man with powers and faculties which can lead him to the highest pinnacle of progress, God would not leave him without guidance or instruction; and being the Lord of, and having equal love for, all mankind, He would not confine the revelation of His Word to one nation or to one age.

If we believe in a Merciful Creator, we must also believe that He sends His message to the world in every age; otherwise our belief would be a mere jumble of inconsistencies.

When we arrive at the conclusion that revelation ought to be vouchsafed whenever mankind is in need of it, we have already advanced a step towards the acceptance of God's message, and have opened one of the windows of our soul; but we must take another step forward and ask ourselves the question, are we also in need of a message from God? If the need for such a message is established, we become prepared to accept the message. A study of the laws of nature shows us that wherever there is a want the means of satisfaction of that want have also been provided If mankind is in

need of a Divine message, such a message must have been sent.

Sisters and brothers, consider for a moment, what is the object of Divine messages and of revelation? Is it not that men should attain to perfect certainty of belief concerning their Creator and should, through perfect love for Him and perfect realisation of Him, be enabled to purify their souls and be equipped with faculties by means of which they may both here and hereafter, attain to union with God, which is the ultimate goal of human existence? Then, do we find these things in the world today? Do the men and women of today really believe in God, and do they cherish for Him such love as is due to Him, and do they so mould their lives in everything as to make them conformable to His commands? Have they acquired such spiritual powers and faculties as indicate their union with God? I trust everyone of you must have read the Bible, or at least, some portions of it. Then do you find such men living today as those of whom you read in the Bible, and does God manifest His signs today on their behalf as He did of old? If this is not so, and on the contrary, the world is empty of faith and disbelief is on the increase, and the love of God has been replaced by the love of riches, goods and worldly honours, and feelings of charity and sympathy have given place to schemes for robbing and despoiling. Instead of witnessing Divine signs, men scarcely believe in the existence of God and the whole time and energy of men is devoted to the gratification of their desires. The commandments of religion are being ignored as mere formalities. The rules of fashion relating to collars, coats, neckties, hats, frocks and gowns, and the regulations of what is described as good taste in manners and behaviour are enforced with a rigour which indicates that these matters are the sole concerns of life. Divine commandments are being designated as mere formalities and shells, not because formalities and shells are regarded as useless but because man desires to abolish the law of God and to substitute in its place rules made by himself. This is not so much a rejection of the law as an usurpation of the functions of the Law-giver. Then, things being as I have described them, do you not feel the need of a fresh message from God which should remind mankind that their Lord is a Living and Mighty Lord, and that He is not asleep in a corner of Paradise like an overwrought workman.

Having demonstrated the need of a Divine message in the present age, I desire to inform you that God has not forsaken His creatures, nor has He forgotten their needs. He has sent His message for the guidance of mankind through a Chosen One, as He had previously sent His messages through Noah عليه السلام , Abraham عليه السلام , Moses عليه السلام , David عليه السلام , Jesus عليه السلام , Krishna عليه السلام , Rama Chandra عليه السلام , Buddha عليه السلام , Confucius عليه السلام , Zoroaster عليه السلام and Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم . The name of the prophet who has brought the message of God to mankind in the present age is Ahmad عليه السلام , and those who accept his message and follow his teachings inherit the Grace of God, in the same manner as did those who accepted and followed the previous prophets. I am a follower of this Prophet and am also his second successor, and out of the love for our fellow-beings with which this Prophet has filled our hearts, I

have come to deliver his message to you, and in doing so, I shall adopt the words used by the Promised Messiah ﷺ himself. He says,

'Hearken ye who have ears to hear: What is it that Allah requires of you? Only this that you should become His alone and set up no equal with Him, neither on this earth nor in heaven. Our God is the One Who is alive today as much as He ever was; likewise He speaks today as He did in the past; He hears as He used to hear. To think that He only listens but does not speak in this age is a vain belief. Indeed, He both hears and speaks. All His attributes were never suspended, nor will they ever be. He is the same Unique Being Who has no associate; He has neither son nor wife...'(1)

'Remember, I say unto you truly, that the man shall perish who has a leaven of worldliness in his faith, and verily hell is very near unto the one whose thoughts are not all for God, but some for God and some for the world. If there is one atom's weight of worldliness in your faith, all your worship is vain, for then you follow Satan and not God. Be not flattered with the hope that God will help you in such a case, for you are then worms of the earth and like worms of the earth you too will speedily perish. God will not be with you, but will be pleased to bring about your ruin. But if you truly submit yourselves to death, then will you live in God and God will be pleased with you and the house wherein you dwell shall be blessed. If your life and your death and every movement that you make, and the forbearance you exercise and the punishment you mete out are solely for the sake of God, and try not God in every difficulty and trouble, but move forward towards Him at every step, then will you indeed be the favourite of God.'

Again he says,

'Realise that your Lord is One, and do not associate any partners with Him, either in heaven or on earth. You are not forbidden to employ such means for the achievement of your projects as God has furnished you with, but he who forsakes God and puts his trust in material things, sets up other gods beside Him in Whom should be our whole trust. Think not that the age of Divine revelation has passed and that the Holy Ghost does not now descend upon men as it did in ages past. The perfect law has been revealed to mankind in the Holy Qur'an, but the doors of revelation are ever open, for revelation is the soul of faith. The faith that is not founded on revelation is not a living but a lifeless thing. Verily I say unto you that every other door may be closed but the door of revelation can never be closed. Open then the windows of your soul, that the light of revelation may enter therein. When you shut the windows through which the light of revelation may enter, you shut out the bright sun itself. O foolish one, arise and open the windows of thy soul, and the light will enter therein of itself. God has not shut upon you the doors of worldly blessings in this age, but has opened them wider for you than in ages past; then how can you imagine that the doors of spiritual blessings of which you are in greater need today than men were in the past, have been shut upon you? They have been thrown open more widely and more generously than of yore.'

'The Lord who has revealed His Word to me, and has shown mighty signs in my support and has sent me as the Promised Messiah in this age, is the Lord of all the universe. There is no god besides Him, either in heaven or on earth. Blessed are they that believe in Him, for they shall be made happy; and woe is unto them that reject Him, for they shall be forsaken and their days shall end in grief. I have been vouchsafed the revelation of the Lord, which is brighter than the sun. I have seen Him and realised Him; He is the Lord of the Universe and there is no god beside Him. How wondrous is the Lord that I have seen, what a Mighty Helper have I found in Him!'

'Hearken unto me, O men, for hereby do I discharge the duty of delivering my message to you. Sin is a poison, avoid it; rebellion against the Lord is eternal death, beware of it! Pray to God, that you may be strengthened. Do not imagine that by uttering a few words from your mouth you realise the object of your existence; God desires to bring about a thorough transformation in your lives. Be kind and merciful to the creatures of God. Let not your tongue speak evil against them, or your hands do injury to them. Do not oppress them, and be ever kind and good to them. Speak not words of pride and vanity to anyone, even unto your subordinates or servants; and abuse not anyone though you may be abused. Walk upon the earth in meekness and humility, and comfort your fellow-beings that you may be accepted of God. There are many that wear the mask of humility, and are soft of speech, but their hearts are those of serpents. You cannot be accepted of God until your tongue conforms to your heart. If you are placed in a high station, glory not in your greatness and do not look down upon the lowly, but be kind to them. If you are learned, glory not in your learning, and do not despise the ignorant out of vanity, but give them a word of kind advice. If you are rich, glory not in your wealth, and do not behave proudly or with arrogance towards the poor, but serve and assist them. Shun the paths that lead to destruction; fear God and lead righteous lives. Worship not any creature, but severing all earthly bonds, be wholly devoted to God. Let not your joy be of this world; serve God alone, and devote your whole life to His service. Shun all evil and impurity for the sake of the Lord, for the Lord is Holy. Let each morning bear witness that you have passed the night in the fear of God, and let each evening bear witness that you have spent the day in righteousness. You are men like unto me, and the Lord who is my God is also your God. Neglect not your faculties that work for purity; and if you incline wholly to God, rest assured, for I have been commanded by God to convey to you the assurance, that you will be the chosen ones of God.'

This is the message that the prophet of this age has brought us, and a consideration of this message shows, firstly, that God calls us to a realisation of His perfect Unity not in the sense that we should merely say 'the Lord is One' for there are many who say this, but in the sense that every thought and every deed of ours should be governed by the sense of His Unity and that our sole and perfect trust should rest in Him. We may employ material means for the achievement of our objects, but we must believe

that the result of all action rests in the Hands of God. We should love no thing or person with a love stronger than that which we bear for God, neither our homes, properties, goods, relations, desires or enjoyments, nor should our hatred of a thing overcome our love for God, so as to make us insensible to the commands of God. In short, every act of ours should be for the sake of God, and we should have no goal and no object, save Him. This is the Unity that God desires us to realise, and this is the Unity that alone can benefit the world, for it rescues us not merely from images of stone, but also from the idols of desire and hate and thus establishes perfect peace in the world.

Secondly, this message tells us that the only means for the salvation of mankind is the law revealed in the Holy Qur'an. It contains full directions relating to every matter that affects the moral or spiritual well-being of man, and the world should, therefore, turn to the Holy Qur'an for the solution of all its difficulties.

Thirdly, this message tells us that the fact that a perfect law has already been revealed does not signify the cessation of further messages from God. The Word of God is not confined only to the injunctions of the law; it is very often revealed for the purpose of calling men to God. God does not merely reveal the ordinances of the law; He says that whenever men fall away from Him He calls them to Himself. For God to speak to His servants is a sign of love and He never shuts the gates of His love. If the object of human existence is that man should win the pleasure of God and should attain to union with Him, it is inconceivable that the door through which union can be attained should be shut. It is no answer to say that man would attain to union with God after death. If there had been only one religion and only one school of thought in the world, this answer might perhaps have served, but there are hundreds, nay thousands of creeds in the world which claim that their followers would attain to union with God after death. If the certainty of union with God is to be attained only after death, what means are left to a man to demonstrate the truth in this, and what shall it profit a man to discover the truth after death, for there are no means of returning from the beyond, and knowledge gained there cannot help a man to improve the life he had spent in this world? It is, therefore, necessary that there should be certain means available in this life for ascertaining the pleasure of God, and that these means can be furnished only by revelation and the manifestation of God's attributes. The Promised Messiah ﷺ claimed that he had attained to these things as the previous prophets had attained to them, and that he had been sent by God to demonstrate to mankind that perfect faith, without which man cannot escape sin, and to foster in the hearts of men that perfect love, without which no true sacrifice is possible.

Fourthly, this message tells us that a prophet is only a man like other men, and should not be regarded as a supernatural being. God has endowed all men with similar faculties and has thrown open the door of advancement to all mankind. Whoever strives in the path of God may attain to the highest pinnacle of progress and the doors of

Divine realisation will be opened to him. No man should, therefore, despise his latent faculties, and everyone should use these faculties to strive after spiritual advancement and try to attain to perfect union with God by putting himself in direct relationship with Him.

Fifthly, we are told that the object of religion is not to divorce us from the world, and that a renunciation of the world is not a condition precedent of union with God. The function of religion is to teach us how to establish a perfect relationship with God while living in the world. We cannot find God by giving up our properties, goods and relationships; we can find Him only by holding fast to Him in all conditions and circumstances of life, whether of joy or of sorrow, of prosperity or of poverty. We should remember Him in times of prosperity as well as of adversity, and should never despair of His Mercy, and should foster His love, and should always seek His help through prayer. A brave man runs not away from battle, for true courage is displayed by firmness on the field of battle.

Sixthly, we learn that virtue does not mean the doing of good deeds, nor does evil signify the doing of bad ones; by virtue and evil are meant the good and evil conditions of the mind, and good or bad deeds are only the signs of virtue or of evil. It is our duty not merely to suppress the signs of evil, but to suppress evil inclinations and to foster virtuous ones, for the purity of the mind is real purity, and the purity of the limbs only follows from it.

Seventhly, we are told that no amount of advancement in learning or in intellect, can enable us to dispense with the necessity of conforming our conduct to the laws of God. The law of God is not a penalty from which we might escape at a certain stage; like physical laws, it is based on the principle of cause and effect, and we cannot make any spiritual progress without conforming our conduct to it. A sin is not a sin because God has forbidden it; on the contrary God forbids a sin because it is a poison for the soul. The law, therefore, does not make a man sinful, but helps him to avoid sin. A man who is forewarned of danger is prepared to meet it; the warning does not render him more likely to succumb to it. The Promised Messiah عليه السلام says that sin is like a poison, that is to say, as a man is prohibited from taking poison because it is harmful, so is a man prohibited from committing sins because they are injurious. A poison does not become fatal because the doctor prohibits its use, nor does sin become fatal because God prohibits it.

Eighthly, we are told that we should not only establish a perfect relationship with God, but should also perfect our relations with our fellow beings. We should avoid all that leads to disorder and disturbance, and the blessings that are vouchsafed to us we should employ in the service of mankind rather than towards the attainment of mastery and dominion over our fellow beings.

This is the message that the Promised Messiah ﷺ brought from God, and a very slight consideration would indicate the momentous nature of this message. This message is the message of hope; it is the message of peace and it is the message of wisdom. If the world were to pay heed to this message it would discover in it the solution to all its social and spiritual problems. It is not a message from man; it is a message from God. The Promised Messiah ﷺ does not claim to have discovered these things in his own mind. He says that he has merely conveyed to us that which God had commanded him to convey. What message can, therefore, claim greater importance than the Message of God?

Sisters and brothers, a man who really believes in God can never find satisfaction in tales and fables. What satisfaction can we derive from reading in our respective scriptures how God used to speak to His servants? If He showed signs in ages past, but shows no signs now, how can we love Him? For does it not follow that He loved those who have gone before us, but feels no concern for our welfare? And will this thought engender love or dislike towards Him? Can anyone be encouraged to make an attempt to establish a relationship with a Being who shuts His door in our face? Nor can we admit that while man is making rapid intellectual advances, God's attributes are falling into decay; for although we cannot say that the attributes of God are developing, we cannot on the other hand admit that they are getting worn out. His perfection consists in not being subject to change, for change, whether for the better or for the worse, implies an imperfection, and He is free from all imperfections.

Human nature itself bears witness that it stands in need of guidance from above. The fact that thousands of spiritualistic societies have been formed indicates that men are not satisfied with the love of this world. Is it conceivable, however, that while the souls of our ancestors are anxious to lead us along the path of advancement, the Being who is the Creator of all souls and Who has created us with the object that we should attain nearness to Him, is indifferent to our welfare and indicates no way of our meeting Him? If there is any being who is anxious for our welfare, if there is one who desires to meet us, it is God. No doubt a man who desires to be at one with God must fulfil certain conditions. To prepare himself for meeting Him a man must develop in himself an extraordinary purity, and man must knock before the door is opened to him, but the possibility of the door being opened must be ever present. The Promised Messiah ﷺ gives us the Divine message that this possibility is present, 'If you so will', says God, 'and follow my guidance, you shall hear my Word as those who have gone before you heard it; and I shall manifest my powers for you as I did for them.' I shall leave you to imagine. What a clarion of hope is sounded by this message, and what a prospect it opens of man being led back in peace to His Maker. But I must add that by delivering this message, the Promised Messiah ﷺ has made peace between man and God, and has proved that the men of this age do not stand towards God in the position of stepsons and that He loves them more than men love their own children.

The claim put forward by the Promised Messiah ﷺ is not a commonplace one; his very claim is a proof of his truth. For a man to say that he has come from God is easy but to say that he can lead every man to God is most difficult. The former is a claim the truth or falsehood of which depends upon arguments, and arguments can be twisted in many directions, but the latter is a claim, the proof of which depends upon the personal experience of each man, and it is impossible for an impostor to adduce such proof. Not only did the Promised Messiah ﷺ make such a claim but thousands of men who followed his teachings have seen the signs of God and have heard His Word. Thus they have set their seal to the truth of his claim. Can a false man put forward the claim that by following his teachings men can attain to union with God as did the righteous men of old? Will not the claim of such a man be proved false within a few days and bring disgrace and humiliation on him?

Men and women of England, I have brought you glad tidings, aye joyful tidings, namely, the message of God that He has not forsaken you, that the gates of His mercy have been opened to you and it is now for you to enter therein. Follow His revealed Law and you can in this very life experience His mighty powers. All other religions seek to win your approval on credit, but the Promised Messiah ﷺ offers you a ready return. He promises you union with God not after death but in this very life. That which you used to read in the Bible with wonder and surprise, has today become possible through him. It is for you to try it.

The life of the Promised Messiah ﷺ is an ideal, and the Holy Qur'an is a perfect guide for you. Is it not enough for you that 34 years ago (2) a man cried from the wilderness *'Hearken unto him who calls you to the Lord; listen to the call of the crier. The gates of God's mercy have been thrown open; He has addressed Himself to the welfare of His creatures, He desires to collect all mankind at one hand through me, and to lead them out of doubt and darkness to the waters of certainty.'* The dwellers of cities laughed at him and those that lived in the country were furious, governments looked down upon him and the people mocked him, but in spite of every kind of opposition, his voice rose ever higher and still higher, till the soft notes of a flute swelled into a trumpet-call and those that slept began to awake in confusion and bewilderment. A man here and a man there advanced towards the voice, till the lonely crier was no longer alone. There were two and then lo there were four Their numbers increased, and today he has nearly a million followers in fifty different countries of the globe. (3)

This was not, however, achieved without troubles and hardships. People did not travel towards him along rose strewn paths. Many who accepted him were driven out of their homes; husbands were forsaken by their wives and wives were put away by their husbands; parents were driven out by their children and children were driven out by their parents; tyrants and despots arrested those who were inclined towards him

and threatened them with death in case they believed in him, but these were not daunted and in death they found a joy that no earthly thing could yield. They stood before their oppressors with smiling faces and heads erect, while merciless murderers showered stones at them. Each stone that fell on them, was to them but a flower and each brickbat that struck them they took to be a flower, and as a happy bridegroom leads his bride home in radiant joy, so did they cherish their love for the Promised Messiah ﷺ and arrived before their Maker happy in the possession of their treasure and in the realisation that they had made a profitable bargain.

It is not easy to travel along such paths, but so sweet was the voice of the Promised Messiah ﷺ that those whose ears were open were left no power to resist its call. It cleansed the hearts of men of all doubt and misgivings and filled them with belief and faith. Indeed, how could doubt linger in the hearts of those who had themselves heard the sweet voice of God by following the teachings of the Promised Messiah ﷺ ? Heaven and earth may change, but the hearts that have enjoyed this sweet ecstasy can never change.

Sisters and brothers, I speak not of things that I have heard from others. I have, by following the teachings of the Promised Messiah ﷺ , myself heard the sweet voice of God, and have been made happy by His loving words, as the disciples of Jesus ﷺ heard them, eye and more. I have witnessed the mighty signs of God. He has manifested His Glory for my sake, and helped me in places where no man's help could avail, and saved me from the attacks of my enemies at a time when no man could save me. He informed me beforehand of events which no man could foreshadow and it then came to pass as He had told me. My eyes have, therefore, seen the truth of the Promised Messiah ﷺ , and my heart has realised it; and I doubt not that everyone who accepts him and opens his heart to his love, shall experience what I have experienced and more, everyone according to the measure of his love. You men and women that listen eagerly to the message of your children and parents, husbands and wives and your friends, will you ignore the Message of God. While claiming to be believers in God, will you turn away from His Word? Will you forget that which occurred in the times of the previous prophets and will you not profit by it? Let not your fancies deceive you saying: 'Behold this man who calls himself the Messenger of God. Behold him, a dweller of the uncultured East, who had no power behind him and who was the subject of a foreign government. How was he raised to this dignity? And why did God select him?' Remember that the doings of God are marvellous and His ways are strange. He is ever wont to select the stone that the builders reject and to make it the cornerstone and to endow it with such power that whatsoever falls on it is broken into pieces, and on whatsoever it falls, it grinds to powder. Was there ever a prophet concerning whom men did not say similar things and was there ever one who was not held lowly and yet did not succeed? Harken, therefore, to what he says, and attend to the message which he has brought; consider the various forms of succour that God gave him, and press forward to accept him, for in this lies all blessings.

Let not your habits and customs stand in your way, for habits are discarded and customs change; then will you not give up your habits and customs for the sake of God? People say that the ordinances of Islam are stringent and hard to follow. But do they imagine that the union with God may be attained by mere words of mouth? What they should consider is, are the teachings of Islam opposed to reason? Do they promote disorder? Do they not lead to true purity of life? If the answers to these questions are satisfactory, will they shut the gates of God's mercy on themselves and will they reject the blessing of union with Him, merely because some of the ordinances of Islam are contrary to their old habits? Can any blessing be acquired without a sacrifice? You cannot at once please God and fulfil your own desires. All religions are agreed that one can find God only after death; and this is true, in the sense that one can find God only after one has submitted all one's desires to death for the sake of God.

Be not afraid that men will laugh at you and will look upon you as a mad man, for no one has ever accepted the Truth in the beginning, without men having called him mad. Were not the followers of Moses ﷺ and those who believed in Jesus ﷺ regarded as mad men? And did not those very 'mad men' become the teachers of mankind? I call God to witness, in Whose Hands is my life and concerning Whom all scriptures are agreed that he who utters a falsehood in His name shall perish, that He has shown me in a vision that I stood on the coast of England and that the spiritual conquest of England was to be achieved at my hands. Therefore, if not today then tomorrow, England shall answer the call of the Promised Messiah ﷺ and shall advance towards Islam. But blessed is he who takes the first step towards it. For him who is the first to advance towards the Truth is a double reward, for not only does he believe himself but he induces others to believe also, and those who come after him cannot claim equality with him. The truth spreads slowly at first, but overcomes everything in the end. God assured the Promised Messiah ﷺ that as within three hundred years after Jesus ﷺ as Christianity had gained the upper hand, so within three hundred years after his death, his movement would prevail against all other religions. But that victory of the Ahmadiyya Movement would be greater than the victory of Christianity, for Christianity had after three centuries become the official creed of Rome alone, whereas Ahmadiyyat would within three centuries conquer the hearts of the entire world. These matters relate, no doubt, to the future, but the world has already witnessed the fulfilment of thousands of prophecies of the Promised Messiah ﷺ, and the past therefore, bears witness to the future.

Is it not marvellous that 34 years ago, at a time when the Promised Messiah ﷺ was alone in the world, he published a prophecy in one of his books that his teachings would soon be published in England and that many people would accept them? Today you see a number of his followers proclaiming his truth throughout England, and several persons in this country have already joined his movement. Then marvel not at the doings of God, for all things are easy for Him. You seekers after Truth, and

ye that truly yearn after God, I assure you on the basis of my experience that there is no means of attaining to union with God except through following the Promised Messiah ﷺ . Today, all doors are closed except his door, and all lamps have gone out except his lamp. Enter then, by the door which God has opened, and seek light from the lamp which God has lit; see His Glory with your own eyes and realise His nearness in your own hearts.

But remember, that it profits not to place one's feet in two boats. Faith cannot avail without sacrifice. A man who is not prepared to sacrifice his comforts, enjoyments, time and habits can never hope to achieve success, he who is prepared to sacrifice all these can never perish. The Promised Messiah ﷺ says,

'You can never win the pleasure of God until you forsake your own pleasures and enjoyments, your rank, your wealth and your very life, and are prepared to encounter every difficulty in His path which brings before your eyes the scene of death. But if you encounter and overcome all difficulties, you will be taken into the bosom of God like little children, and He will make you heirs to the blessings which were vouchsafed to the righteous men who have gone before you.'

Behold! God has, in accordance with the prophecy of Isaiah, raised the righteous man from the East, and has conveyed His will to you through him. May I hope that you will accept him in all sincerity of heart and will be his first standard-bearers in the West? If so, I assure you out of the knowledge that God has vouchsafed to me that nations shall be blessed through you, and future generations shall bless you, and you shall attain to immortality in God!

Endnotes:

1. Cited on p15 of 'The Will'. Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, 'The Will', first published in Urdu in 1905, English rendering in 1997, Islam International Publications Ltd.
2. This message was written 34 years after Hadhrat Ahmad(as) announced his claim.
3. In just 34 years the number of followers rose to nearly a million in 50 different countries. In 2003, the figure stands at approximately 200 million in over 180 countries of the world.

Glossary:

SAW ﺻﻠﯩﺌﯩﻠﻠﻪﻫﯩﻮﻭﺳﻠﻢ
Holy Prophet

AS ﻋﻠﻴﻪﺳﻼﻡ (alaihis-salaam)
Prophet of God

RA ﺭﺍﺩﻯﺍﻟﻠﻪﻫﯩﻤﻪﻥ (radiy-allahu anhu)
Companion of a Prophet

Khalifa
Spiritual Head of the Community

Majlis Khuddamul Ahmadiyya
Youth Organisaition established by Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih II

Message from Heaven



Hadhrat Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmud Ahmad, the son of the Promised Messiah, was born on 12 January 1889. On 14 March 1914 he was elected the second successor at the age of 25.

He was blessed with the qualities of great leadership and wise judgement.

He organised different departments and activities and under his leadership the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community progressed rapidly worldwide.

He passed away on 8 November 1965 at the age of 76, having led the community for 51 years.

His 'Message from Heaven' was first published in December 1924 in the Review of Religions.

It was his firm belief that the Kingdom of God would once again be re-established on earth and that God's love would once again be man's most prized treasure.

It is this spiritual revolution that would bring about peace in the world.

In a time where the world at large is diagnosed with political, economic and social contentions, this message at hand administers the remedy.

However, it is up to us to acknowledge that there is a problem.

A problem so serious that it requires a Message from Heaven.