



“ ALLAH IS THE LIGHT ”

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[Based on Hazrat Mirza Sahib's Writings]

The Holy Quran tells us that Allah is the light of the heavens and the earth and that He guides to His light whom He pleases. We are also warned that if Allah does not give us light, there is no other source of light for us and darkness will be our fate.

Four questions come to mind. To whom was this light given, why was it bestowed, can we ordinary human beings share in this light and where is that light to be found?

Firstly, the Holy Quran tells us that the Holy Prophet (pbuh) was the greatest recipient of this light for he was siraj munir (a light-giving sun – 33:46). Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Sahib, the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement, explains that just as there is a physical sun for the bodies of human beings, so, too, there is a spiritual sun for the souls of mankind and that sun was no other than the Holy Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), the respndence of whose light Mirza Sahib extols in the following words:

"That light of high degree that was bestowed on the perfect man was not in the angels, was not in the stars, was not in the moon, was not in the sun, was not in the oceans and the rivers, was not in rubies or emeralds, or sapphires, or pearls; in short, it was not in any earthly or heavenly object. It was only in the perfect man whose highest and loftiest and most perfect example was our lord and master, the Chief of the Prophets, the Chief of all living ones, Muhammad, the chosen one, peace be on him. That light was bestowed on this man and, according to their ranks, upon all those who bore the same colour to some degree...this dignity was found in its highest and most perfect form in our lord and master and our guide, the immaculate Prophet, the righteous one, testified to by the righteous, Muhammad, the chosen one, peace be on him" (Ayena-e-Kamalat-e-Islam, pp. 160-161).

Secondly, why was that light conferred on the Holy Prophet with such dazzling splendour? The Holy Quran says: Surely Allah commands you to make over amanat (trusts) to those worthy of them... (4:58).

What is the meaning of amanat (trusts)? On one level, Maulana Muhammad Ali explains the word in this way: "This section deals with the granting of kingdom to the Muslims, who are here required to entrust the affairs of State to people who are worth of this responsibility. The words that follow, requiring judges to be just, corroborate this significance, the whole verse stating the reciprocal duties of the governed and the governors. Explaining the word amanat, I'Ab said that it means duties. The Prophet (pbuh) himself explained the word amanat as meaning Government or affairs of State. 'The Prophet (pbuh) said, When the amanat (trust) is wasted, wait for the sa'ah, i.e. the hour or the doom. It was said, How will the trust be wasted, O Messenger of Allah? He said, When Government is entrusted to those unworthy of it, then wait of the doom' (B. 81:35)" (The Holy Quran, Note 592).

On another level, Mirza Sahib gives the following meaning:

"The meaning of amanat is that perfect man gives back to Allah, Most High, everything which Allah had bestowed on him as gifts, all his capabilities, his intelligence and knowledge, his heart and soul, his desires, his love, his fears, his honour and dignity and all his physical and spiritual powers until he fulfils the verse:

Surely Allah commands you to make over amanat (trusts) to those worthy of them; that is, he annihilates himself in Allah and bequeaths his life to His service and this glory is found to the highest, most perfect and most complete degree in no other person than our Holy Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) as Allah Himself says in the Holy Quran: Say: My prayer and my sacrifice and my life and my death are surely for Allah, the Lord of the worlds. No associate has He. And this I am commanded and I am the first of those who submit (6:163 - 164)". (Ayena-e-Kamalat-e-Islam).

An explanation of these verses is given by Mirza Sahib in the same book. As regards prayer, he writes:

"First, God must be believed to be the One Who is to be worshipped, sought and loved. In serving Him, loving him, fearing Him and hoping from Him, no one must be taken as being His partner. Celebration, glorification and service of God, all the forms and commands in relation to serving Him, the commandments and prohibitions, and matters relating to the destiny ordained by Him, must all be accepted with one's heart and soul. All these orders, limits, laws, and circumstances ordained for us, must be borne with complete devotion, in the most humble and lowly manner. And one must learn thoroughly all the pure truths and knowledge which are the means of realising His vast powers, the medium of discovering the elevated glory of His dominion and kingship, and a powerful guide for recognising His favours and blessings" (The Meaning of Islam, p. 4).

Concerning sacrifice, he says that every personal desire must be given up in preference to the will of Allah and every gift of Allah, concrete and abstract, must be used for the glory, praise and service of the Almighty. "That is, the person claiming to be a follower of Islam must prove that his hands, feet, heart and mind, his sense, reason, anger, mercy, gentleness and knowledge, all his spiritual and physical powers, his honour and property, his rest and comfort, and all that he has, from the hair of his head to the nails of his toes, both outwardly and inwardly, so much so that his intentions, the fears in his heart, and the feelings in his soul – all these have become as obedient to God as a person's limbs are in his own control" (The Meaning of Islam, p. 3).

In respect to our living and dying for Allah, it must be our conscious resolve that every cell that is born in our bodies must live for the sake of Allah and His creation and when it dies it must do so in complete fulfilment of this resolution. Or as Mirza Sahib writes:

"The other aspect of devoting one's life for God is that it must be dedicated to the service, sympathy and help of his creatures, the bearing of their burdens, and the true sharing of their grief. One must bear hardship to provide relief to others, and for their comfort tolerate difficulty for oneself" (The Meaning of Islam, p. 4). Further:

"Service to the creation of Allah is like this. As regards all the needs of His creation, and all the various ways in which Divine providence has made some people dependent on others, one must do good with all the real, selfless and true sympathy that one can show, solely for the sake of Allah, and help every needy person with one's God-given ability, exerting oneself to bring about reform and improvement in their life of this world and the next" (The Meaning of Islam, p. 5).

The expression *awwalul Muslimin* (the first of the Muslims) has been variously interpreted, but Mirza Sahib gives this explanation as if coming from the mouth of the Holy Prophet (pbuh) himself:

"From the beginning of the world to the end of it there will never be another person as perfect as I am – no one would lose himself in Allah to the extent that I have nor would anyone return his trust to Allah as I have done."

Remember that besides peace and submission to the will of Allah, Islam also means paying the price in advance for a thing, and our Holy Prophet (pbuh) had indeed fulfilled the trusts in advance in return for the wasila for which he has asked us all to pray that Allah may grant it to him as is reported in the hadith: "Ask Allah to grant me the wasila." When asked what the wasila was, he replied: "The highest grade in Paradise which only one man will attain and I hope I may be he" (Robson's Mishkat, p. 1236).

The third question is, how can we ordinary mortals be blessed with some of this light of Allah? The Holy Quran informs us in 33:21: Certainly you have in the Messenger of Allah an excellent exemplar for him who hopes in Allah and the Latter day, and remembers Allah much, and in 68:4, in reference to the Holy Prophet (pbuh), Allah says: And surely thou hast the most sublime morals.

Our Holy Prophet (pbuh) himself is reported to have said: "Allah has sent me to perfect good qualities of character and to complete good deeds" (Robson's Mishkat, pp. 1236-37).

For those who desire to share in Allah's light, the Holy Quran discloses the only possible way in this verse: Say, If you love Allah, follow me (the Holy Prophet). Allah will love you and grant you maghfirah (protection) from your sins. And Allah is Forgiving, Merciful (3:30).

Maghfirah means not only forgiveness of past sins, but also protection from committing sins because of human weakness and very significantly, suppression of a defective state – that is, more and more perfection or more and more light or as the Holy Quran says, light upon light (24:25).

The following two ahadith [sayings of the Holy Prophet (pbuh)] also inform us that without loving the Holy Prophet (pbuh) and following his way, there is no hope of receiving Allah's Divine Light. The Holy Prophet (pbuh) said:

"None among you is a true believer unless I become dearer to him than his father, his children and the whole of mankind" (Bukhari).

"I leave with you two things; as long as you hold fast to them both, you will never be misguided: the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Messenger" (Muwatta).

If there is any doubt in our minds, the Holy Quran removes it in the following promise (which is made in the clearest of words): O you who believe, turn to Allah with sincere repentance. It may be your Lord will remove from you your evil and cause you to enter Gardens wherein flow rivers, on the day on which Allah will not abase the Prophet and those who believe with him. Their light will gleam before them and on their right hands – they will say: Our Lord, make perfect for us our light, and grant us protection; surely Thou art Possessor of power over all things (66:8).

In extolling the excellence of following the Holy Prophet (pbuh) with love and fidelity, Mirza Sahib writes in the following excerpts:

"By walking under his shadow for ten days one obtains that light which before him could not be obtained in a thousand years....We have found every light by following the immaculate Prophet (pbuh) and whoever follows him will also find it and he will become so accepted of God that nothing will be impossible for him. The Living God Who is hidden from people, will be his God and all false gods will be trodden under his feet. He will be blessed everywhere and Divine Power will be with him. Peace be on him who follows the guidance" (Siraj Munir, p. 82).

"It is my personal experience that to obey the Holy Prophet, peace be on him, with a sincere heart and to love him, ultimately make a person beloved of God. God creates in his heart a burning for His Own love and such a one, withdrawing his heart from everything else, leans towards God and his affection and desire remain only for God Almighty. Thereupon a special manifestation of Divine love falls upon him and bestowing upon him the full colour of love and devotion pulls him towards itself with great force. He then overcomes his passions

and from every direction extraordinary works of God Almighty appear as signs in his support and to help him" (Haqiqatul Wahi, p. 65).

Finally, we may ask: Where can that light be found in this earthly existence? Again, the Holy Quran answers in clear and explicit words:

(It is) in houses which Allah has permitted to be exalted and His name to be remembered therein. Therein do glorify Him, in the mornings and the evenings, men who neither merchandise nor selling diverts from the remembrance of Allah and the keeping up of prayer and the paying of the poor-rate – they fear a day in which the hearts and the eyes will turn about (24:36-37).

In other words, according to Mirza Sahib, the prerequisite for that light of Allah is purity of heart. Sincerity of heart must come first; after that everything is open to us, and this is borne out by that statement of Allah to our Holy Prophet (pbuh): "The heavens and the earth, vast as they are, cannot contain Me, but the heart of a believer can."

In Kishti Nuh (The Ark of Noah) Mirza Sahib writes:

"Everybody claims that he is a follower of the true religion, but the religion of that man alone is true who obtains light in this very life itself. And everybody says that he will get salvation, but only he is justified in making this claim who is given light in this earthly life itself."

He later prays that our hearts should be changed so that we become like stars on this earth filling the planet with the light and life which we get from Allah, Most High.

This is the light for which our Holy Prophet (pbuh) prayed and which he taught every believer to pray for in the following words:

"O Allah, pour light into my heart, pour it into my eyes, and into my ears. Pour it to my right and pour it to my left. Pour it in front of me, and behind me and give me light. Pour light into my nerves, and into my flesh, and into my blood, and into my hair, and into my skin, and into my tongue, and into my soul and increase my light, and transform me into light; and surround me with light. O Allah, bless me with light" (Bases of Islamic Culture, p. 53)