My Faith

By Muhammad Zafarullah Khan

I bear witness that there is no one worthy of worship save Allah alone, Who has no associate; and I bear witness that Muhammad is His servant and messenger.

I have firm and sincere faith in the Existence of God Almighty and in all His attributes. Allah, the Exalted, is free from every defect, weakness, lack, imperfection, shortcoming, sloth and forgetfulness. He possesses all excellent attributes to the highest degree better than which cannot be conceived. Indeed it is not possible for human intellect to fully comprehend all Divine attributes.

I believe in God's angels and His books and all His Messengers. I believe that Allah, the Exalted, determines the measure of good and evil and has everything under His control, so much so that not a leaf could stir without His command.

I believe that the universe is the creation of Allah and is under His complete control. He regulates the whole of it. He has bound the Universe by law and has placed it at the service of man. Through the study of that law, man can derive progressively increasing benefit from every part of creation.

God's knowledge comprehends the whole creation in all its details. Nothing is outside His knowledge. Time is also God's creation. He Himself is outside Time.

In His wisdom, God has endowed man with choice between good and evil and exercising this choice beneficently, man can, by Allah's grace, attain to the highest degree of nearness to God Almighty.

Allah, the Exalted, has created man and the universe with a purpose. The purpose of man's creation is that he should, within the limits of his capacities, make himself a manifestation of Divine attributes. For the achievement of this purpose, God Almighty has endowed man with suitable faculties and capacities and has placed the universe at his service, having bound it by law, and has furnished him with adequate guidance through His Prophets and Messengers.

The law and guidance sent through the Prophets who preceded the Prophet of Islam, peace be on him, were limited to the needs and requirements of the people to whom they were sent and were also limited in respect of the time during which they were to be in operation. They comprehended basic fundamental truths, for instance, the Existence of God, His Unity, revelation, Prophethood, the prevalence of truth over falsehood and the possibility for every human being to establish communion with God and to attain nearness to Him etc. In addition, there were a large number of teachings and commandments, which were of a local or temporary character. When in God's knowledge, the time approached when mankind was about to become one people, He, out of His grace and mercy, raised the Holy Prophet, peace be upon him, and revealed through him the teaching and the guidance which was meant for the whole of mankind and for all time and made the Holy Prophet an exemplar for all mankind.

The Holy Quran comprehends all those verities which were comprised in previous scriptures. No verse in the Holy Quran has been abrogated. The guidance contained in the Quran is comprehensive and it does not lack or omit anything that was needed, nor is there anything in it which is redundant.

I have firm faith in the verse:

"This day have I perfected your religion for your benefit and have completed My favour unto you. I have chosen for you Islam as your faith." (5: 4)

The Holy Quran and the example of the Holy Prophet, peace be on him, furnish all the guidance which any section of mankind can stand in need of at any time. Nevertheless it is a historical fact that it happened in the case of the previous Prophets and their teachings that they were neglected by their followers. The same happened in the case of the Holy Quran and the teachings of the Holy Prophet, peace be upon him, as had been foretold, that the Muslims progressively neglected the guidance contained in the Holy Quran as set forth by the Holy Prophet and became heedless of
its spirit till in the words of the Holy Quran it became a case of the Messenger saying: "Lord, my people did indeed discard the Quran utterly". (25:31) At that stage, in accord with the prophecies of the Holy Prophet, peace be upon him, Allah, the Exalted, raised the Promised Messiah and Mahdi, of His grace and mercy, for the revival of Islam and for making it supreme over all religions.

I believe firmly that from the beginning of creation the Holy Prophet, peace upon him, was and continues to be Khataman-Nabiyeen, as set forth in the verse:

'Muhammad is not the father of any of your men, but he is the Messenger of Allah and the Seal of the Prophets, Allah has full knowledge of all things'. (33:41)

The Promised Messiah, peace be upon him, has fully expounded the philosophy of the Khatme Nabuwait in many of his writings and speeches; for instance he has said:

"He is the best of Messengers and the best of creation, all prophethood has come an end with him; and again:

"Every excellence found its culmination in his holy being; doubtless every Prophet thereby came to an end".

This means that on the one side all the excellence of humanity and of prophethood found their culmination in the most perfect degree in the blessed person of the Holy Prophet, peace be upon him, and, on the other hand by his advent every prophethood and every Prophet came to an end.

With the advent of the Holy Prophet, peace be upon him, the Prophethoods of all previous Prophets, Zoroaster, Confucius, Buddha, Krishna, Moses, Jesus etc. came to an end and it became obligatory on the whole of mankind to believe in the Prophethood of The Holy Prophet and to act in conformity with the law revealed to him and with the teachings and guidance set forth and illustrated by him. Henceforth the Prophethood of the Holy Prophet, peace be upon him, and his law and guidance alone were current. The law revealed to him and the teachings and guidance inculcated by him can neither be added to nor can be subtracted from. However much the pattern of human life might evolve, the Holy Quran and the example of the Holy Prophet, peace he upon him, will continue to furnish all the guidance that may be needed from time to time.

It was, however, necessary that when the intellect of people should fall short of finding the needed guidance from the Holy Quran or from the example of the Holy Prophet, peace upon him, such guidance should be made available through a spiritual system of Reformers. According to the Holy Quran a time was to come when Divine wisdom and in conformity with the prophecies of the Holy Prophet, peace be upon him, there was to appear among the Muslims a Reformer who would be so completely devoted to and lost in the Holy Prophet that his advent would be a reflection of the Holy Prophet himself. This was indicated in the Quran in the verse:

"And among others from among them who have not yet joined them". (62:4)

In the prophecies of the Holy Prophet, peace be upon him, that Reformer has been named the Messiah and the Mahdi, and he was bound to be a reflection of the Prophethood of the Holy Prophet, for the latter, when naming him, had repeatedly called him Messiah, the Prophet of Allah. The advent of such a Prophet among the Muslims would not amount to a breach of the Seal of Prophethood, but would be a manifestation of the continuation of the grace of the Prophethood of the Holy Prophet.

All the teachings of the Promised Messiah, peace be upon him, all the guidance set forth by him, all his effort and in the whole of his teaching there is not the slightest indication of departure from complete obedience to the Holy Prophet, peace be upon him, or of any addition to it. He announced clearly:

We are Muslims by Allah's grace and Mustafa (Muhammad) is our leader and preceptor. A single step away from that Bright Book (the Holy Quran) is according to us, heresy, loss and ruin.

He emphasized continuously and repeatedly that whatever God Almighty had bestowed upon him was in consequence of his perfect obedience and complete devotion to the Holy Prophet. For instance:

"My heart and soul are enchanted with the beauty of Muhammad and my body is like the dust of the path trodden by the progeny of Muhammad.

I have perceived with the eye of my heart and have heard with the ear of my intelligence that every part of the universe proclaims the beauty of Muhammad.

This fire of mine is borrowed from the fire of the sun of Muhammad and this water of mine is a portion of the flowing waters of Muhammad.

This running fountain to which I call people is but a drop from the ocean of excellences of Muhammad".

I can affirm with fullest confidence, and I call Allah, the Exalted to witness, that the love and devotion which one so humble, useless, sinful and heedless person as myself entertains for the Holy Prophet, peace
be on him, has been bestowed upon me by Allah the Exalted, out of His extreme graciousness, is solely and surely on account of my being a follower of the Promised Messiah, peace be on him. It is not possible for me to imagine that the one through whom millions like me have won through to the honour of being the servants of the Holy Prophet, peace be on him, was himself not wholly and completely devoted to him and that he was at all guilty of in any way minimizing or reducing the high station occupied by the Holy Prophet, peace be on him. He has set forth in his writings, in poetry and prose, such details and expositions of the high dignity of the Holy Prophet, peace be on him, and has expressed such devoted love and admiration for him as is not even approached by any other lover of the Holy Prophet. I shall content myself with citing only one instance. He has said:

"Who but the Gracious God Himself realizes the true worth of the Holy Prophet, Ahmad, who was so lost in his devoted love of Allah that he thereby became unique (ahad).

Let him who will charge me with error and going astray, but I am bound to affirm that I know of no other Mighty Throne except the heart of Ahmad.

That my life should be wholly consumed in the love and service of the faith of Muhammad is my desire, my prayer, and the firm determination of my heart".

This is a very brief summary of my faith and belief. The Parliament of Pakistan has affirmed that holding this belief, I am not, in the view of a majority of the members of that Parliament, a Muslim for the purposes or the Constitution and the law. My only retort, in the words of the Promised Messiah, is:

Next after my love of God, I am inspired by the love of Muhammad. If, this amounts to disbelief, then by Allah, I am a disbeliever in the highest degree.

Before the adoption of this resolution by the Parliament of Pakistan and thereafter, some of those who claim to be Muslims and profess devotion and obedience to the Holy Prophet, peace be upon him, have maltreated the members of the Ahmadiyya Movement in a manner which is not permitted by Islam and which the Holy Prophet, peace be upon him did not consider permissible even, in the case of his bitter enemies. It is not necessary for me to set out any details for the details are not only known in Pakistan but also in the greater part of the outside world. It would be enough to state that this persecution has not yet come to an end and Government is being continuously urged to adopt all sorts of measures against the members or the Movement. I wish, however, to make it clear that under article 20(a) of the Constitution of Pakistan, I have the right to profess, practice, and propagate my religion. The Parliament of Pakistan might call my religion by whatever name it pleases, but I have the right to freely profess, practise, and propagate my religion as I believe in it. For instance, it is part of my faith that there is no one worthy of worship save Allah alone and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah. I believe firmly that the Holy Quran is the word of Allah. To study and to recite the Holy Quran, to propagate its teachings, to urge conformity and obedience to its commandments and to put them into practice in my own life is part of my faith and in the exercise of that faith no one has the right to obstruct me.

I deem it a grace and mercy of Allah the Exalted that ever since I have come to years of discretion I have never entertained any sentiments of enmity, hatred or contempt against any human being. The same is my attitude today and I hope and pray that so long as God Almighty grants me respite, He will, of His grace maintain me in this attitude. Should our lives, our properties and our honor be again put in jeopardy, I trust that in the face of such trials, the Ahmadiyya Community will continue to furnish proof of its steadfastness and will not let itself be overcome by any situation with which it might be confronted as the Promised Messiah has observed:

To such degree have we banished fear from our heart that death has no terror for us; for indeed we had suffered death from the moment that we had cast out everything beside Allah from our hearts. We have offered up our hearts and souls as a sacrifice in the cause of our Beloved, should He demand our lives repeatedly we would go on offering them repeatedly and cheerfully.

Life, property, honour, children relations, friends are all divine bounties committed to us as a trust, and a believer is a trustee in respect of all of them. Whenever Allah, the Exalted, demands back any or all of them, it behoves not a believer to seek to hold them back or to hesitate in surrendering them. He warned us in advance:

We will surely try you with somewhat of fear and hunger and loss or wealth and lives and fruits; then give glad tidings to the steadfast, who, when a misfortune overtakes them, do not lose heart, but 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. (2:156-158)