

MY BOOK ABOUT

G O D

(THE CONCEPT OF GOD IN ISLAM)

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My Book About God

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PREFACE TO REVISED EDITION

‘My Book About God’ was first published in 1992. The present edition has been substantially revised. Particular attention has been given to make the text easy flowing as well as to its clear layout and design.

Moreover it includes some new material. For example some important extracts from the writings of the Promised Messiah, may peace be upon him, have been added.

The concept of God has been put forth in all its glory and wealth in the Holy Quran, the scripture of Islam, and explained truly and adequately by the Holy Prophet, may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him. At the present time a servant of the Holy Prophet of Islam, Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian, the Promised Messiah, revived it in the light of the Islamic teachings for our benefit.

Islam presents a living God, Who communicates with His servants as He did in the past. He is the one who is Eternal, All Powerful, All Knowing and the Creator of all things. He is the one, Who punishes the transgressors, but also forgives them where it is wise to forgive.

The author has tried to explain all these aspects in this booklet, creating an everyday situation where children ask questions to their elders.

The Children’s Book Committee is working under the guidance and instructions of Hadhrat Khalifat-ul-Masih IV.

May Allah bless its members for their dedication and hard work and reward them abundantly. We hope that the book will prove of tremendous value and benefit to children of all ages, new comers to Islam, and others who are interested in the subject.

We welcome suggestions and comments from our readers.

Munir-ud-din Shams
Additional Vakil-ul-Tasneef
London.

March 2003.

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MY BOOK ABOUT GOD

(THE CONCEPT OF GOD IN ISLAM)

It was a glorious summer morning. The sun was shining brightly. Salma and her school friends Mary and Barbara were playing in the garden at the back of Salma's house. Salma's mother Bushra was also enjoying the sunshine. She was sitting in a chair reading a magazine.

Suddenly Barbara saw a brightly coloured beautiful butterfly, which was hovering over the flowers. She called Salma and Mary and asked them to have a close look at it.

Mary looked at the butterfly and said, "It is indeed very beautiful."

Salma: "It has lovely colours. We should thank God, Who created such wonderful creatures. They are not only beautiful to look at but also serve some useful purpose."

Barbara: "Do you really believe that there is a God?"

Salma: “Yes, that’s why I offer my prayers regularly. I ask His forgiveness for all my faults and sins and seek His help in every matter.”

Mary followed the butterfly for a while. Then she came back and asked Salma, “Have you ever seen God?”

Salma: “No, I haven’t.”

Mary: “Then how do you know that God really exists?”

Before Salma could answer, Barbara commented: “Well! I have seen pictures in books where God is shown as an old man with a long white beard sitting on a cloud surrounded by angels. Different religions have different ideas about God. My friend Neeta is a Hindu and I have seen pictures where God is shown as an elephant or sometimes a human figure with many arms.”

Mary: “Our teacher told us that the ancient Egyptians used to worship a God that looked like a jackal. She also told us that some Egyptians worshipped cats.”

Then turning towards Salma, she said, “Now tell us, what does your God look like?”

Salma: “I don’t think He looks like anything we know of. The concept of God in Islam is completely different to what you have been saying.”

“Let us ask your mother”, suggested Mary and Barbara.

Salma: “That seems to be a good idea.”

The girls went to Salma’s mother and greeted her.

Bushra looked up and said, “Hello girls! Have you stopped playing already?”

“No mother, we want to ask you some questions about God,” said Salma.

Bushra: “Well, What do you want to know about God?”

Salma: “My friends are not sure about the existence of God. **Does God exist?** And if He exists what does He look like?”

Bushra: “Let us deal with the first part of the question first. Lots of people have wondered about the

existence of God. Some totally deny His existence. Others say that He was once alive but now He is dead.

According to Islam, God is the Creator of the whole universe and everything in it. He is Eternal and Everlasting. The Holy Quran has set forth many excellent proofs of the existence of God.

At one place it says, *“It is not for the sun to overtake the moon, nor can the night outstrip the day. All of them float smoothly in an orbit.”* (Ch 36:Verse41)

This verse points to the excellent design and order that pervade the entire universe. There is a perfect harmony in what He had created. There is absolutely no incongruity or discord in His creation.

For example if we look at the heavenly bodies we observe that each one of them is performing its allotted task regularly, punctually, and unerringly, without trespassing on another’s sphere of action.

Each one is gliding through space with precision. A slight disorder in the movement of any one of the heavenly bodies would bring about the ruin of the whole world. These bodies never collide, nor change their speed, nor alter their course in the slightest degree, nor has their circulation during such a long period worn them. If they are not under the supervision of a Super Being, how is it that such a grand organisation continues to carry on through numberless years entirely on its own?”

She continued, “We also know from history that the presence of perfect symmetry and the existence of perfect harmony in the laws of nature has convinced many scientists to believe in God. Even the great scientist Einstein had to declare that there is a Creator of this well organised universe, who created it with perfect wisdom.”

Mary: “Auntie! The argument, which the Quran presents, is very valid. The only conclusion, which can be drawn from such a well organised universe, is that there is a Creator, who created everything according to a plan.”

Bushra: “The Holy Quran gives another proof. It says, “*Our Lord is He Who gave unto everything its proper form and then guided it to its proper function.*” (Ch20: Verse51)

If we reflect upon the shapes and forms of all the creatures, which inhabit this universe, we are impressed with the Wisdom of God Almighty. All animals, including man, who live on land and in the sea and birds that soar in the skies, are created in the best form and God has bestowed upon them such properties that are best suited to their particular requirements and needs. If they make use of them properly they can attain their fullest development.”

Salma's mother paused for a while and then said, "You should also remember that God Almighty has been sending Prophets, from time to time, to guide mankind towards Him. These Prophets have shown thousands of heavenly signs proving the existence of God. Even in the present age, the true followers of the Holy Prophet of Islam have shown signs to the world, which prove conclusively that God does exist with all His Glory."

Mary: "We believe in Prophets and we know that they always speak the truth, so there must be a God Who speaks to them and tells them of future events, which come to pass exactly as they were told."

Bushra: "We also find that the belief in God is a universal phenomenon. History tells us that such a belief was common to all ages. Even among the Aborigines of Australia and the ancient Maya people of Mexico and Central America, there does exist some sort of belief in an Omnipotent and Ultimate Supreme Being, whom they regard as the Creator of the universe."

She said, "Even though the vision of God varies in detail from people to people, we find the belief in God is common in the people of all ages. This leads us to believe that belief in God is something innate in human beings. So it requires a more serious inquiry than just a superficial glance at the subject."

Explaining it further she said, “ Philosophers have been debating the issue from time immemorial. There are committed atheists who categorically deny the existence of God. There are agnostics who, though do not deny the existence of God, maintain that as far they are concerned there is no proof of God’s existence. In spite of their denial, the fact is that a large majority of people including great philosophers and teachers do maintain a firm belief in the existence of God.”

Barbara didn’t seem to be as convinced as the other girls. She said, “I sometimes wonder **why do people believe in the existence of God without any concrete evidence?**”

Bushra: “Most people have inherited such a belief from their ancestors without themselves ever questioning the idea. They somehow find peace in their belief and are deeply convinced that God exists without being able to support their belief with concrete evidence.”

“It is not possible to provide one single argument which would convince all human beings alike, as different people have different attitudes. Some

arguments can convince some people while other arguments are required to convince other people.

In fact, there are many misconceptions and misunderstandings about God. That is why people started worshipping many deities besides God.”

But before she could finish, Barbara interrupted, “I know! I have been told that in ancient times people thought that the sun was God because the sun gave them heat and light. Some even worshipped fire. There were others who worshipped animals, because they were afraid of them. Gradually they searched for a supernatural Being, which they called God and this is how they started worshipping Him.”

Bushra: “It’s true that some people worshipped the sun, the moon, the stars and even fire. We also find that even today there are many who worship various other deities besides God. But this is not how it all developed. The Holy Quran resolves this dilemma and explains how the beliefs of people became corrupted, giving birth to superstitions resulting in material images of God.

According to Islam it is not true to say that people worshipped objects like the sun or the moon first and then gradually they started to believe in one single God. In fact the opposite is true.”

She continued, “If we study the history of world religions and the psychological trends of man, we find no evidence whatsoever that idol worship and belief in many gods converged, through an evolutionary process, into the belief in one single God.

On the other hand we have irrevocable evidence that religions, which began with belief in One God, gradually deteriorated and with the passage of time many partners with God were devised. We can therefore say with certainty that monotheism, under the influence of human weakness, gradually gave way to beliefs in many gods.”

Salma’s mother paused for a while and then said, “If you are interested in the history of religions, you will find that the great religious founders claimed to be ordinary human beings and preached the worship of one God. But ironically they themselves were gradually raised to super-human level by their followers. People started worshipping saints and ordinary human beings were elevated so as to possess supernatural powers. Thus deities besides God were created. There is therefore absolutely no evidence from religious history that One God evolved out of many, while there is repeated evidence that many gods were created out of one.”

Expanding the subject Bushra said, “Islam has a very logical and deeply convincing approach to the belief

in one Supreme Being as the only God and the only Creator. In one chapter of the Holy Quran it is stated:

'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.' (Ch 112:Verse 2-5)

The concept of a single Creator perfectly tallies with the study of nature. The uniformity of the laws of nature always point to the singleness of God. This is the argument presented by the Holy Quran. Had there been two or more gods there would have been chaos in the world.”

Bushra continued, “Those who obey God’s commands and submit themselves to the Will of God do not need any concrete evidence to believe in the existence of God. God speaks to them and tells them not to be afraid of calamities or of enemies. He reassures them that He is with them and He will help them through His inspiration and revelation and through heavenly signs. The Holy Quran shows that the best means of the recognition of God is prayer, and that it is only through prayer, that the complete and perfect understanding of the existence of God and His perfect attributes can be obtained, and that it cannot be attained in any other way.”

Bushra: “Have you got any more questions to ask?”

Mary: “Yes, Auntie! I have a question. It has two parts.

- i) **Did God create the universe or did it happen by chance?**
- ii) **Is God Eternal?”**

Bushra: “Let me answer them in this way. If there is no Creator of this universe, which is well organised and well disciplined, then we have to believe that the entire universe is eternal with all its complexities, intricate laws and the most wonderful organisation. But we know very well that the universe is not eternal. Hence the assumption, that there is no Creator of this universe, has no legs to stand upon.

Another thing which we should consider seriously in this regard, is the fact that because we find evidence of perfect harmony and organisation in the universe and because a lot of wisdom has gone into its making, we come to the natural conclusion that there is a Creator, Who is also very Wise.

So the question simply breaks down to this: What is eternal, the universe or its Wise Creator? One of them has to be eternal because something cannot be born out of nothing.

In the light of what I have just said, we are convinced that it is the Wise Conscious Being, the Creator of the entire universe, who is Eternal.

To sum up, we can say that if there is any form of existence, it must fall into one of the two categories, eternal or created. If it is not eternal then we have to believe that there is an external Being Who created it.”

She continued, “As Muslims, we believe that God is Eternal, while all finite objects have been proved to have a beginning at one time or another. Scientific evidence clearly points to this fact.

For example, the discovery of the existence of the Black Hole and the study of physics regarding the age of particles, clearly indicate that no form of matter is eternal. Even protons, which were considered some decades ago to be everlasting and indestructible, have been discovered to have a time scale for their existence. This means that there has to be a time when they did not exist.

In the distant future there will be a time when they will cease to exist in their present form. The right conclusion would be that there is nothing that can make the universe eternal. I therefore reiterate that this phenomenon proves beyond any doubt that there is an outside Eternal Being who created the whole universe and controls it.”

Barbara: “Did God create the universe on His own or did He get help from anyone else?”

Bushra: “God is Self Subsisting, Self Sufficient and All Sustaining. Everything else is mortal and is dependent on Him all the time. He is Independent and does not need any help or support from anybody. He has no son or daughter. He does not need any. He is Allah, the One, with no equal or partner. He lives today as He lived in the past and will continue to live hereafter. He speaks to people as He spoke in the past. He listens to the supplications of the supplicants and responds accordingly to whomsoever He pleases just as He did in the past.

All His attributes are Ever Lasting. But you should remember that He sees without physical eyes and hears without physical ears and speaks without a physical tongue.”

Mary: “Auntie! Can you explain, how can God see without eyes, hear without ears and speak without a tongue?”

Bushra: “The tongue, the eyes and the ears are instruments created by God to help us. They are simply tools created to suit our limited capabilities.

God, the Creator, has unlimited capabilities and as such does not need any such instrument.

He is All Powerful. He does everything and can do everything except that which is inconsistent with His Dignity or is opposed to His Promise.”

Explaining it a bit further she said, “We should remember that God is not only fully aware of what is happening in the entire universe but is also aware of that which is going to happen in the future. He is All Knowing. We, as human beings, do not know what the future is going to be, unless He tells us.”

Barbara: “How can God know the future?”

Bushra: “God, being the Creator, knows each and every detail of His creation.

Let me give you an example. A car engineer, who designs and builds a car, knows perfectly well the limitations of the car. He knows how many kilometres it will run per litre of petrol. He can estimate the time its engine will last and also the limit of its speed. He also knows that it has to obey the laws of gravity and if it is driven at a high speed round a corner, it will topple over. However, God with His infinite knowledge, knows even the minutest details of human

capabilities, as well as other external factors of His creation, more than any human being knows of what he himself has produced.”

Barbara: “Thank you auntie. This point is clear to us now, however I wanted to know **what does God look like? Does He has a shape?**”

Bushra: “The nature of God is not very easy to understand, but I will try to make it clear to you.

You know that our knowledge is confined to the limited experiences of our lives. God, being the Creator, cannot be compared with His own creation. Our position is that of a person who looks at a piece of artwork and then tries to visualise the artist who created it. Just as it is impossible to comprehend the physical shape of the artist by looking at his work, similarly it is impossible for us to imagine the shape of God by looking at His creation.

In fact, the difference between God, the Creator, and His creation is much greater than that of the artwork and the artist.”

She continued, “God has no shape, therefore it is absolutely impossible for us to see Him with our eyes, but He exists. His presence can be seen, felt and experienced through His various attributes manifested through His creation.

If you want to know Him, He is closer to you than your jugular vein. God loves those who love Him. They feel His closeness as He accepts their prayers and helps them in their time of need. Ordinarily though, we do not feel His presence.

By nature of His person He is distant from us. No one can directly reach Him through the five senses.”

Salma’s mother said, “Imagine for a moment that God has a material shape. Imagine also that He is close to us and watches over us all the time. In such a situation life would become very boring, extremely burdensome and even miserable for some.”

Mary: “I would not like to be watched constantly by anyone.”

Bushra: “Yes indeed. One would like to have some moments to oneself at least. We love our privacy. So it is also a blessing in the sense that God is not visible to our physical eyes, though it can be argued that to live in the presence of one’s beloved cannot be called a burden. But then you have to be of a very high spiritual status. Prophets of God do not find it a burden.”

She continued, “God is also distant from those who never remember Him and consider themselves to be born by chance and not created by God. Such people lead an empty life with a void all around them. They can neither visualise nor feel the presence of God through inner experiences.”

Salma’s mother added, “We should also remember that it is naïve for us to try to understand the nature of God’s figure in the dimensions we know.

Scientists have proved that there are many dimensions which we cannot comprehend and God being Limitless cannot be limited within any space or dimension.”

She said, “It is a fact that every religion of the world describes God as Limitless and Infinite. Such a Being, therefore, has to be shapeless. I hope you understand now.”

Mary: “Auntie! There is a general saying; ‘Seeing is believing’. If we see a thing we believe in it. **If we cannot see God how can we believe in His existence?**”

Bushra: “This maxim ‘Seeing is believing’ is not always true. Sometimes our perception is wrong. For example in a hot desert we see water nearby but it turns out to be a mirage. Moreover, there are numerous things, which we believe exist, even though we do not see them with our eyes. Even within the sphere we occupy, things like TV signals, radio waves, and many other kinds of radiations exist and can be used to our advantage, but they cannot be seen with our eyes nor can they be heard with our ears or felt with our hands.

Similarly, no one can deny the existence of pain, sorrow, happiness, hope and so on, yet these are not visible to us.”

She added, “According to major religions of the world, God is present everywhere. He is limitless, but our faculties are limited. We, therefore, cannot understand the nature of that which is unlimited.”

Mary: “If we cannot understand the nature of God, how can we believe in Him with full conviction?”

Bushra: “There are many things which we do not understand, yet we believe in them. For example the

majority of us do not understand the nature of radiation, which carry radio and TV signals, yet we believe in its existence.

Again, most of us do not understand the complexities of modern day technology such as computers, yet we all believe that they exist and work for us.

The important thing to remember is that there should not be any contradiction in our beliefs.

We are surrounded by mysteries, revealed through the study of nature, which we have to believe though we do not understand them. On the other hand we can never believe in contradictions.”

She paused for a while and then said, “We should remember that the image of God in His attributes as propounded by the Holy Quran, has no contradiction, nor is there any contradiction in His creation i.e. the entire universe.

If we, therefore, fail to understand the nature of God, it does not logically imply that we must reject His existence.”

Mary: “Thank you auntie, now I am beginning to understand the real concept of God. I hope that you do not mind us asking such questions.”

Bushra: “Not at all, it is my pleasure to tell you as much as possible about our Beloved God, Who

created all things, big and small, and provided for the existence of everything He has created.”

Salma: “Mum! It is nearly teatime. Shall I make a cup of tea for you?”

Bushra: “Yes, that would be lovely. Let us all enjoy a cup of tea and then we will continue our discussion.”

Salma went to the kitchen and after a while brought tea and biscuits, which they all enjoyed.

As they sipped tea Barbara addressed Salma’s mother and said, “ Auntie, if God has created us, He must have created us for a purpose. **So what is the purpose of man’s life?**”

Bushra: “God tells us in the Holy Quran that the true purpose of man’s life is to worship Him alone.

It is obvious that man is not in a position to appoint the purpose of his own life, for he did not come into this world of his own accord, nor will he depart from here of his own will.

Man is a creature and the One who created him, and has bestowed upon him better and higher faculties than those of other animals, has also appointed a purpose for his life.”

She said, “People generally do not understand the concept of worship; it is to visualise the attributes of God Almighty. The more you become familiar with them, the more lovable God appears to you.

A person acquires greater wisdom and evolves to a higher spiritual state through the worship of God Almighty. He becomes a better person and acquires a clear vision of life.”

She continued, “However, we should keep in mind that God is in no need of our worship or devotion. It is for our own good that we are required to worship Him.

The purpose of our creation is therefore, to do what He wants us to do. If we act upon His commandments, He rewards us abundantly, because to act upon good advice is only for the benefit of the one who accepts the advice. It has to be remembered also that God always directs us to perform those actions that are good and beneficial. Every good has some innate rewards and benefits.

Therefore those who obey God, do not obey to satisfy God’s ego, but they obey Him for their own ultimate good.”

Mary: “Does God punish us if we do not act upon His Commandments and commit a sin or a crime?”

Bushra: “God is very kind to His creation. He loves us and we should love Him too. The Holy Quran tells us that He is Most Forgiving, Ever Merciful, but when people exceed the limits in mischief, wrongdoings, arrogance or persecution of the innocent people, then God’s wrath is roused against such people and they are sometimes punished in this world, in addition to their chastisement in the Hereafter.”

Mary: “If someone commits an offence against us, what should be our response? Should we punish that person or should we forgive him?”

Bushra: “The point to remember is that the ultimate purpose of punishment is reformation and not vengeance.”

Addressing Salma she said, “Please bring the Holy Quran so that I can recite a verse of the Holy Quran which deals with the subject of revenge and punishment.”

Salma went inside and brought a copy of the Holy Quran.

Salma’s mother told the children, “This is the Holy Book, the actual word of God revealed to the Holy

Prophet Muhammad, may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him. In chapter 42 Al-Shoora, verse 41, Allah says, “ *The recompense of an injury is an injury the like thereof; but whoso forgives and his act brings about reformation, his reward is with Allah.*”

She said, “According to the teachings of the Holy Quran, therefore, if a person commits a crime against you, then you have every right to take revenge as long as you remain within the limits of justice and fair play and your revenge does not exceed, in severity, the wrong done to you.

Moreover, your actions should also correspond with the prescribed law. You are not allowed to take the law into your own hands.”

She continued, “Allah also states that there is a better course open for you. You have the choice to forgive the wrongdoer provided that your forgiveness results in reformation and does not encourage him to do more crime.

If you are kind to a thief, he will surely continue to steal from other people or may even kill for money.

So by being kind to him, you in fact become unkind to society. You are also unkind to him by encouraging him to commit further crimes and making him a hardened criminal. It is evident, therefore, that the exercise of mercy and kindness requires prudence and wisdom.”

Let me tell you a story, which my mother told me when I was a child.

‘Once a habitual thief, who had turned into a murderer, was brought to trial and condemned to death. As was the custom in those days, he was granted his last wish. He said that he wanted to have a word in his mother’s ear. So when his mother went near him, instead of saying something in her ear, he bit her ear very hard, almost severing her ear. People rebuked him for yet another heinous crime.

People asked him the reason for his action. He said that his mother was to blame for his bad actions as she never tried to correct his behaviour or punished him for his misconduct when he was a child. She shut her eyes to his earlier crimes and thus practically encouraged him to commit further crimes.

The people, who were present there, were amazed to hear his answer.’

She continued, “Had the mother of that boy acted wisely and had not shown imbalanced kindness and love to her child excessively, and had she chastised him on his earlier crimes, he might not have turned into a criminal.

Her action towards her son, therefore, cannot be called an act of kindness or love; rather it was an act of cruelty in disguise.”

“It becomes evident from this story that mothers, who show excessive kindness or love to their children while knowing that their children were involved in some anti-social behaviour, do more harm to their children than good.”

Mary: “I totally agree.”

Bushra: “Unfortunately some people have an erroneous notion of their religious teachings and they present God as One Who is Love and thus always treats sinners with forgiveness. As such, they think that they present a better and more attractive image of God. This is not true. God, Who exercises love without balance and discipline, would be more like a sentimental mother who inadvertently encourages her child to become corrupt and cruel by being excessively kind to the child. It is not just kindness; it is the wisdom of God which keeps His attributes in balance and creates a perfect image of beauty.”

She said, “God always looks at our actions in a comprehensive way. We humans cannot comprehend the implications of our sins or crimes. Only God is in a right position to judge our actions and punish or forgive if He so desires, in the most equitable way, as He alone is aware of the intentions and circumstances which have led a person to commit a crime or sin.”

She added, “We must never forget that God is All Powerful. He can forgive us if He so desires.

Whenever it is wise to forgive, He forgives, but you cannot expect mercy from Allah if that mercy brings misery to others. He therefore forgives those who repent sincerely. We should therefore make it a habit to ask forgiveness from God.”

Salma: “I always pray to God Almighty and ask for His mercy and forgiveness.”

Bushra: “We should all pray to Allah for forgiveness and ask His help in everything we do.

Remember when I say ALLAH I mean the same Creator, to whom you refer to as God in English. He is the only Lord, call Him Allah or by any other name. He listens to everyone who prays to Him.”

Mary: “How can we know what God wants us to do? How can we lead our lives to please Him?”

Bushra: “God wants us to lead our lives as He deems best for us. If we love God, we would like to follow His commandments willingly because therein lies our own good. We would be very careful not to do anything so as to risk losing His favour. We will

always try to win His pleasure. He is so kind to us that He has sent Messengers to act as models for us.

Abraham, peace be upon him, was a model for us. Moses, peace be upon him, was a model for us. Jesus, peace be upon him, too, was a model for us and so were all Prophets of God, who came into this world from time to time. Unfortunately, the lifestyles of previous Prophets have not been fully preserved. Their teachings, too, have altered with the passage of time.

The good news is that the Holy Book of Islam, by design of Allah, escaped this fate. The Holy Quran is exactly the same as was presented to the world by the Holy Founder of Islam. The Muslims believe it to be the word of God. The non-Muslims believe it to be the word of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, yet there is no dispute that it is exactly the same as when it was revealed.”

She said, “As such, all those who believe in this eternal Truth, can act upon its teachings with full confidence because it has not been altered or interpolated.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad, may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, who is the last Law bearing Prophet, is therefore the most perfect model for us, for all times to come. His lifestyle is a guide

for us because he acted upon whatever is contained in the Quran.

It can be concluded therefore that though we cannot see Almighty God with our physical eyes, we can lead our lives by following the Prophet's example."

Salma's mother looked at the clock and then said, "Girls! Let me tell you another attribute of our Most Merciful God. He is the Provider and has provided mankind with different kinds of delicious food. You must be starving by now. Let us go to the dining room and have some food."

She then placed the Holy Book on the top shelf and they all went to the dining room to have their midday meal.

There was a knock at the door. It was John who had come looking for his sister Barbara. He looked at his sister and said, "There you are! I looked everywhere for you. Mother was worried. She didn't know where you were."

Bushra: "Barbara, you should have told your mum. Go and ring her.

Children should always tell their parents as to where they are going and for how long.

You don't realise how much your parents love you and how worried they become when they do not know where you are."

Barbara went to the telephone to ring her mother.

"What were you discussing today? Has auntie told you another story, which I missed?" asked John as he was invited to join them at the dining table.

Salma: "We were talking about the concept of God."

John: "There are many things which I do not understand about God. I wish I could have joined in the discussion too."

Bushra: "While we are eating, I will try to explain to you anything which you don't understand about God."

John: "God loves us and cares for us. **Why are then innocent people including children killed in natural disasters?**

When there is famine, floods, earthquakes or cyclones, many are killed. Why?"

Bushra: "God has created life, death and everything in between according to a set plan. This plan of things

applies to a much wider canvas and if you concentrate on a small point on the canvas ignoring the whole plan of things, you are likely to be confused.

You have to look at the whole scheme in order to appreciate the beauty of the plan and the wisdom of the Creator.”

She said, “ Just as a gardener sometimes uproots vegetation from his garden in order to create a beautiful spot, God also plans and designs things and He is the best Designer of all.”

She continued, “You should also remember that the life which we live in this world, is not an end in itself. The body dies but the soul lives on in a different form. Life to come is eternal and has a much larger span. The present life is like a speck or a dot as compared to the life Hereafter. In a way, therefore, those people, who have their lives shortened, pass through this transitory phase, not into nothingness but into eternal life.”

John: “Auntie! Please, you haven’t answered my question yet.”

Bushra: “What I was telling you was relevant to your question, even though it doesn’t seem to you as such at the present moment.

OK, I will try to give the answer to your question from a different angle. You know that life contains both happiness as well as misery. Both exist simultaneously.

Every child in this scientific age knows that a positive pole cannot exist on its own. There is always a negative pole on the other end. Similarly, the existence of happiness without misery, or vice versa, is unthinkable. They support and compliment each other. We can appreciate happiness only if there is misery around.

Evolution of life cannot take place if there was only happiness. In fact, misery is essential for the progress of life. If you remove the role of misery from the overall scheme, life would become stale and stagnant. It has to be present to push the wheel of progress as we can achieve happiness only by overcoming misery. All scientific achievements were possible due to misery and all creative thoughts were born out of misery.

For example, whenever misery befalls man in the form of a disease, scientists put their heads together and find a cure.

Thus, by successfully overcoming the disease, we progress to a happier state of life. Lack of suffering is called happiness and we know that most of the

scientific discoveries have been brought about in order to eradicate human suffering.”

“Don’t you agree?” asked Bushra.

John: “Yes, I am beginning to understand now.”

Bushra: “Some people, not knowing the plan of things, object to accidents which happen in the world. Accidents are essential in our pursuit of perfection. As we progress through evolution, we become comparatively more perfect. Accidents can therefore, only be avoided if we reach perfection.”

John: “Can you give me an example, auntie?”

Bushra: “Yes, of course. Think of a situation when all the drivers in a town are perfect and the pedestrians, cyclists and others who use the roads, are perfectly wise.

Suppose also that the car machinery is designed perfectly, and the roads as well as other conditions, are perfect too.

In these circumstances accidents would be very rare.

If, on the other hand, there are imperfections, accidents are bound to happen.

These imperfections, not only lead to more caution on the part of the drivers and other people, but also to the making of better models of cars and machines.”

She said, “That is what I told you earlier. It is misery, which ultimately results in happiness and a better life. This is the scheme of things. Therefore, some people must fall victims to accidents and this has nothing to do with their innocence or wickedness, as accidents are blind and do not discriminate between good and bad people. This is not a punishment to those people. It is a part of the scheme of things and therefore should not be objected to.”

John: “Yes, I know that good or bad, young or old, all can be victims without any distinction.”

Explaining the point further Bushra said, “We also know that sometimes people are injured in sports, but no one objects to such incidents as they know that the injuries are a part and parcel of games. Unfortunately, some people fail to appreciate this in everyday life and raise objections to such events.”

John: “This means that the natural calamities, like many other forms of suffering, have a vital role in our lives.”

Bushra: “Yes, indeed. The global natural phenomena like earthquakes, the sprouting of lava from the volcanic mountains, great climatic changes, and cycles of ice age alternating with warmer climates, are profoundly related to evolution of a wide variety of

possibilities, which were essential for the creation and maintenance of life.

Such phenomenon results in many apparent innocent casualties. However, we find that throughout the history of the evolution on earth, this is the price, which has to be paid for the evolution and progress of life on earth. One should also remember that in all schemes of development, an element of sacrifice and wastage is much smaller than their gain and profit. Therefore, instead of looking at the issue in its entirety and reading their message on a wider plane, if you narrow your observations to a tiny spot and illogically localise the results of such universal phenomenon, you will always be misled in your conclusions.”

She said, “Such phenomena, in their wider sphere always provide evidence of a Benign and Wise God, Whose management of the universe has always been generated by the principle that the interest of the individual will be sacrificed for the society and not vice versa.

As such, earthquakes and eruption of volcanic mountains are found to be much more beneficial to us than they are harmful. They play a vital role, with far reaching consequences in the scheme of things over individualisation and sentimentalism. The question of right and wrong, therefore, does not arise. I hope that you understand the point.”

John: “Thanks auntie! The whole topic has become clear to me now. Can I ask another question?”

“Yes, you can,” said Salma’s mother, “but it is getting late now. Your parents may be wondering as to what you are doing?”

Moreover, I have to do some shopping and then cook supper for the family. Salma’s dad will probably be home soon.

Let us postpone the rest of the discussion till tomorrow.

They all agreed and Mary, Barbara and John left for their homes.

Next day Mary, Barbara and John came to Salma’s house again. The weather had changed overnight. It was raining heavily.

They found Salma’s mother in the drawing room, so the children joined her in the drawing room.

John exclaimed, “What a miserable day? I don’t like rain at all. I like sunny days.”

Mary: “John! You should not forget that as sun is important for us, so is rain and air.”

Barbara: “We know that all energy come from the sun. If there is no sun, no living thing can survive on earth, but air and water are equally important. If there is no water or no air, everything on earth would perish.”

Salma’s mother was listening to their talk. She said, “You are absolutely right. Air, water and solar energy are all essential for our existence on earth. We should therefore be thankful to God Almighty for providing these things free to us.”

She then addressed John and said, “You wanted to ask a question last night. What was your question?”

John: “I had a discussion a while ago with some of the girls in my class at school. They objected to addressing God as ‘He’. Can you explain to us, **why do we address God as ‘He’ and not ‘She’?**”

Salma’s mother smiled and said, “God is neither He nor She. These are human terms. The concept of human gender is limited to life on this earth only. Moreover, it does not apply to other forms of life. For example, an angel cannot be called ‘he’ or ‘she’.

The fact is that certain weaknesses are attributed to women in our society. They are regarded as the weaker sex. That is why, even in the most modern societies, there are campaigns for women’s liberation, implying that men are still treating women unfairly.

The very existence of these movements proves the point that women are regarded as weaker than men.

In light of this explanation and because of the distorted usage of the word 'she' by human beings, it is not proper to use the word 'she' for God, as it implies some sort of weakness, however erroneously." Salma's mother said, "Let me explain here that the word 'he' is not indicative of masculinity. It is just a reference to persons and no more.

Hence, the only pronoun left for us to use for God is 'He'. If you or your friends do not like it, you have to invent another word. I hope you understand the point."

John: "Yes, auntie! We understand now. You have made it clear to us. Thank you very much."

Mary: "Auntie! **Does God help us against our enemy if we pray to Him?**"

Bushra: "Our God is an extremely faithful God, Who works wonders for those who remain faithful to Him. He delivers them from every danger and gives them victory over their enemies.

Numerous examples can be given from history where Prophets of God received Divine help in their times of danger. Though every effort was made on the part of the opponents to stop the Divine message, God stood by His Messengers and they emerged victorious in the end.

The Holy Quran states: *“Allah has decreed; ‘Most surely, I will prevail, I and My Messengers.’ Verily, Allah is Powerful, Mighty.”* (Ch: 58:Verse22)

Let me give you an example of Moses, peace be upon him. During his time Pharaoh, the king who ruled over Egypt was a cruel and unjust ruler. He used to inflict grievous torments on Israelites by imposing upon them hard labour. He had also issued orders that their sons be killed and their daughters be spared.

Moses was very distressed. He asked for Divine help. God commanded Moses to take the Israelites out of Egypt into Canaan to save them from Pharaoh’s tyranny.

Accordingly the Israelites left secretly by night. When Pharaoh learnt of their escape, he pursued them with his mighty forces. With the help of God Almighty Moses along with his followers crossed the Red sea safely while Pharaoh and his forces were drowned in the sea.

Mary: “That was a great sign of the truth of Moses.”

Bushra: “Indeed that was a great sign. God always helps His Prophets.

Another example, which I can relate, is from the life of Jesus, peace be upon him. The Jews did not believe in the truth of Jesus. They arrested him and put him on the cross in order to kill him. They considered him to be a false Prophet. Jesus cried for help to his Lord, “Eli, Eli Lima Sabaqtani,” which means, ‘My God! My God! Why hast Thou forsaken me?’

God accepted his prayer. It is stated in the Bible that darkness fell over the whole land. There was an earthquake too.

As Sabbath was approaching, the body of Jesus was taken down from the cross. He was alive though he was unconscious. The body was placed in an empty tomb.

According to Ahmadi Muslims, his wounds were soon healed and he left the country secretly and went to far off lands in search of the lost tribes of Israel. It is said that he finally settled in Kashmir valley and lived a long and successful life.”

Barbara: “If he lived in Kashmir in his old age, he must have died there. Where is his grave?”

Bushra: “His grave can be visited even today in the Khanyaar district of Srinagar city.”

Mary: “Auntie! The story of Jesus’ survival from the cross, which you told us, was from the Muslim point of view. What do the Jews and the Christians believe?”

Bushra: “Thank you for asking that question. The Jews believed that he was a false Prophet and he died an accursed death on the cross. According to the Bible, “He, that is hanged is accursed of God” (*Deuteronomy CH 21:Verse23*)

The Christians believe that Jesus suffered death upon the cross to atone for the sins of mankind, and thus became the only true source of human salvation.”

Salma: “This means that there is a great controversy about the crucifixion incident among these religions.”

Bushra: “Yes. Indeed.

Another example of Divine help can be given from the life of the Holy Prophet of Islam, may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him.

When the whole of Makkah turned against the Holy Prophet, the leading men of Quraish tribe gathered and decided that he should be put to death by a joint venture. They planned that a young man from each clan should be selected and the whole group should pounce upon the Holy Prophet and kill him. In this

manner the responsibility of their action would be on all clans.

God revealed their plan to the Holy Prophet and directed him to migrate to Madinah the same night.

As night fell the Quraish besieged the house of the Holy Prophet but he slipped out of the house without being noticed. He passed through the streets of Makkah and soon he was out of the city. There he met Abu Bakr, may Allah be pleased with him, who was to accompany him. Both climbed up to the cave of Thaur, a cave high up in the mountain three miles to the south of Makkah and took refuge there.

In the morning when the people of Makkah came to know that Muhammad had escaped, they sent several parties in search of him. The Quraish had announced a reward of one hundred camels for any one who would bring back Muhammad dead or alive. Trackers were hired for the purpose. They led the people to the mouth of the cave.

The chief tracker announced that the footmarks of the fugitives did not appear to go any further so there is a possibility that they may be hiding in the cave but the others ridiculed him saying, "How can someone take refuge in this cave which seems to be infested with poisonous insects and reptiles?"

Abu Bakr could hear them talking to each other outside the cave. He was much perturbed and

whispered to the Holy Prophet, “Messenger of Allah, Quraish have arrived so close that I can see their feet outside the cave.”

The Holy Prophet reassured him saying, “Do not worry. Allah is with us.”

The party returned to Makkah frustrated. After a few days journey the Holy Prophet and Hadhrat Abu Bakr reached Madinah where Muslims were waiting to receive them warmly.

John: “Are we allowed praying to God Almighty for worldly things?”

Bushra: Allah says in the Holy Quran, “*Pray unto Me; I will answer your prayers.*” (Ch40: Verse61)
The verse shows that God accepts our prayers.

At another place Allah says in the Holy Quran, “*When My servants ask you about Me, say; I am near. I answer the prayer of the supplicant when he prays to Me. So they should hearken to Me, that they may follow the right path.*” (Ch2: Verse187)

We should therefore make it a habit to ask Him for all our needs, however small these needs might be. I will

tell you a Saying of the Holy Prophet of Islam. He is reported to have said, “Everyone among you should pray to Allah and beg Him for all you stand in need of, even for the shoelace that has snapped.”

Salma: “Can I also ask a question?”

Bushra: “Why not? You are most welcome.”

Salma: “Is it true to say that Allah is seated on ‘Arsh’ or a Throne, which the angels are supporting?”

Bushra: “Where did you hear that from?”

Salma: “Our Religious teacher told us so.”

Bushra: The Holy Quran tells us that Allah is Self-Subsisting and All Sustaining which means that Allah supports everything while He, Himself, requires no support. Therefore it is not true to say that the angels are supporting the Throne on which Allah is sitting.

Perhaps your teacher was referring to the verses of the Holy Quran, which if translated literally mean what you have just described. But we cannot take those verses literally. I will explain to you.

The word ‘Arsh’ is used in the Holy Quran as a metaphor. God has no physical body; therefore He

does not need a throne made of bricks, stones or some other material, to sit. God is limitless. He is on earth as He is in heaven. Therefore to think that He is confined to a limited space is totally wrong.

Arsh means the Greatness, Majesty and Supremacy of God. It is the name of the Divine rank which is beyond of beyond from all His creation and being above all and higher than all and farthest of all. It is a station, which is higher than the whole universe and is a manifestation of His attributes of Transcendence and Holiness.

Salma: “Please mum! Can you explain this point a bit further?”

Bushra: “God has two kinds of attributes, the attributes of Resemblance and the attributes of Transcendence.

Attributes of Resemblance of God are similar to the attributes manifested by human beings, because God has created man in His own image and breathed into him His own qualities. He, thus, created a resemblance unto Himself.

On the other hand when His attributes of Transcendence and Holiness are manifested, He is above everything. That is to say, despite all relationships, He remains apart and does not mix with His creation.

The attributes of Transcendence are God's exclusive attributes. They are not found in any other being. They are eternal and unchangeable. No other being has the slightest resemblance to God in that respect. God Almighty withdraws to the station where His attributes of Transcendence cover all His other attributes and makes Him beyond of beyond and hidden of hidden. This station is called the Arsh. I hope you understand the meaning of Arsh."

"Let me now explain to you the meaning of the verses which say that the angels are supporting the Arsh."

"The principal attributes of Allah are four in number, which are given in the chapter Al-Fatiha of the Holy Quran. They are:

1. Lord of all the worlds.
2. The Gracious- who provides for all the needs of man even before his birth and without any effort on his part.
3. The Merciful- who causes man's labours to produce the best possible results.
4. Master of the Day of Judgement- to whom all will have to render an account of their actions.

These are the basic Divine attributes that are essential to Allah's Being, and on them rest the very existence of the universe.

These Divine attributes are manifested through angels. The bearing of Arsh by angels therefore means that

the true reality of God's attributes is disclosed and manifested through the angels.

When the Holy Quran says that four angels are holding His Throne, it means that four angels manifest these four attributes of Allah to the world.

I hope everything is clear now.”

Salma: “Thanks mum! Can I ask another question?”

Bushra: “Go ahead.”

Salma: “**How can we communicate with God?**”

Bushra: “The most obvious method of communication with God is through regular prayers. You should remember that you cannot cultivate a personal relationship with God unless you speak to Him and address Him with all sincerity and deep feelings. It is sincerity and your true feelings that are acceptable to God and not merely the words, which convey them. The best advice for children, in this matter, is that they should be informal about it.

They should talk to Him and behave towards God in the same manner as they address their beloved ones or their intimate friends.”

“Did I tell you the story of the Prophet Moses, peace be upon him, and the shepherd?” said Salma's mother.

“No,” said Salma.

“Please tell us,” the children said with one voice.

Bushra: “Once Moses, peace be upon him, was going on a journey. He saw a shepherd sitting by the roadside, picking lice from his clothes and killing them one by one. His clothes seemed to be infested with lice. As he was busy doing so, he was muttering something. Moses, peace be upon him, became inquisitive. He went near the shepherd in order to find out what he was saying. He found that the man was saying, “O my Lord! If ever you come to me, I will pick all the lice from your clothes, take out thorns from your feet and offer you milk from my sheep to drink.”

When Moses heard this, he could not contain his anger. He shouted out, “Who on earth are you to speak to God in such a way? Do you think God is like you, full of lice and filth?

God is the Provider of everything. He is the Lord of the universe and Creator of all things. He is Self Sufficient. He does not stand in need of help from anyone, especially from such a lowly person as you are.”

But before he could continue, he heard an awe inspiring rebuke from God Almighty, expressing His deep displeasure at what he had done. God told him that He was deeply enjoying the simple innocent expressions of pure love from His servant when Moses interrupted.

Moses, peace be upon him, was overwhelmed by this rebuke from God. He fell to his knees beseeching forgiveness from Allah for being rude to one of His humble servants.”

Bushra added, “The moral of the story is that you should treat God with extreme love, in your innocent way. If you do that, you will experience that God, in turn, will treat you with love as well. You should always be sincere and true to God as it is the truth that matters.

God communicates with His servants through dreams, visions and sometimes through verbal messages.

Sometimes He sends angels to convey His message, but it should be remembered that we cannot see angels with our eyes.”

John: “How can we be sure that the message is from God and is not our wishful thinking or an illusion?”

Bushra: “It is the contents of the message and the richness of the experience, which convinces the person, with whom God is communicating, that the message is from God and not his wishful thinking or an illusion.

Sometimes God informs the person of a future event which comes to pass exactly as the message was conveyed to him. Moreover, there are many other ways of judging the authenticity of God's communion with man, but I think this explanation is enough for today. Don't you think so?"

The children all agreed. They enjoyed the talk. They were now fully convinced that there is a Creator of this universe, who is the Best Designer of things. Everything that happens in this world is in the knowledge of God and under His command.

They also learnt that in order to get close to God they had to obey His commandments and cultivate a personal relationship with Him.

They thanked Salma's mother for answering their questions. The rain had stopped so they went into the garden to play.

They sat down at the edge of the pond and marvelled at the beautiful colours of the goldfish and their swift movements in water.

Mary: "Another beautiful creature, which God has created. There must be a purpose of creating such tiny beautiful fish."

Barbara: "We will ask auntie the purpose of goldfish some other time."

John: "Auntie is very knowledgeable. She sincerely believes that God is alive and real and that He loves

us and cares for us if we obey His commands. I wonder what is the source of her knowledge.

“We will ask her next time,” they all decided.

Next Sunday afternoon when the children had finished their homework with the help from Salma’s mother, they asked her the question, which was bothering them.

Salma’s mother: “Every type of knowledge is contained in the Holy Quran, the best explanation of which is given by the Founder of Islam, Muhammad, may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him. In the present age, the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian, India, who was appointed by God Almighty to be the Reformer of the present age, revived this knowledge for our benefit.”

She said: “Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad was very distressed to find that people were drifting away from their Creator. He tried to bring people closer to God Almighty. Many opposed him but some followed him. His followers are known as Ahmadi Muslims and they are growing in number very fast throughout the world.”

John: “Are you an Ahmadi Muslim?”

Bushra: “Yes. I am one of his followers and all that I have learned is from the Holy Quran, the Sayings of the Holy Prophet of Islam and the writings of the Founder of Ahmadiyya Muslim Community.”

John: “Auntie! Salma told me that he was a Prophet of God to whom God used to speak and sometimes He told him about the incidents which happened later exactly as he was told.”

Bushra: “Yes. He was a Prophet of God. He was the Promised Messiah and Mahdi the world was waiting for. He came as a subordinate Prophet to the Holy Prophet of Islam. He believed Islam to be the final and complete code of life for the whole of mankind. In some of his writings he declared that God exists and that he communicated with him. I will read out to you some of his writings.”

(1)

“A philosopher contemplating the heavens and the earth and reflecting on the perfect orderliness of the universe merely states that there ought to be a Creator. **But I lead to a higher stage and affirm on the basis of my personal experience that God exists.**”

(Malfoozat vol, III p.16)

(2)

“The God Who has manifested Himself to all the Prophets, and appeared to Moses on Mount Sinai and appeared to Jesus on Mount Seir and shone forth to Hadhrat Muhammad, the Chosen one, peace be upon him, on Mount Paran, the same **Mighty and Holy God has manifested Himself to me. He has talked to me** and said that He is the High Being, to establish Whose worship all the Prophets were sent.”

(Zameemah Risalah Jihad p.7, Roohani Khazaain Vol: 17)

(3)

“**Our Ever Living and All Sustaining God talks to me like one person talks to another.** I ask Him something and supplicate Him and He answers in words full of Power.”

(Naseem-e-D´awat p.88, Roohani Khazaain Vol: 19)

(4)

“Our God is our paradise. Our highest delights are in our God, for we have seen Him and have found every beauty in Him.

This wealth is worth procuring though one may have to lay down one’s life to procure it.

This ruby is worth purchasing though one may have to lose one’s self to acquire it.

O, Ye! Who are bereft, run to this fountain and it will satiate your thirst. It is the fountain of life that will save you.

What shall I do, and how shall I impress the hearts with this good news, and by beating what drum shall I make the announcement that this is your God, so that people might hear? What remedy shall I apply to their ears so that they should listen?

If you belong to Allah, rest assured that Allah will belong to you.”

(Kashti-e- Nuh pp.21-22 Roohani Khazaain Vol: 19.)

(5)

“**Our God is One**, Who is alive today as He was alive in the past, and He speaks today as He used to speak in the past and He hears today as he used to hear in the past.”

(Al Wasiyyat p. 11. Roohani Khazaain Vol: 20.)

(6)

“**Our God possesses many wonders**, but they are visible only to those who become His, out of sincerity and loyalty. He does not disclose His wonders to those who do not believe in His Power and who are not sincere and loyal to Him.”

(Kashti-e- Nuh p.21, Roohani Khazaain Vol: 19.)

(7)

“When I observe these great bodies and reflect upon their greatness and wonders and realise that all this was created by God’s design and His Will, my soul cries out involuntarily; **Our Mighty Lord how Great are Thy Powers. How wonderful and beyond the limit of reason are Thy Works.** Foolish is the one who denies Thy Powers and stupid is he, who asks: From what material did He make all this?”

(Naseem-e-D’awat p.65 footnote, Roohani Khazaain Vol:19.)

(8)

“**Our Holy Prophet, peace be upon him, convinced the atheists and pagans of Arabia of the existence of God Almighty** by showing them thousands of heavenly signs.”

(Haqiqat-ul-Wahy p.121, Roohani Khazaain Vol: 22.)

(9)

“**God will never cease to operate.** He is always the Creator, the Providence, the All Sustaining, the Gracious, the Compassionate and always will be.”

(Malfoozat vol: IV p. 347)

(10)

“God responds to the call of everyone who calls on Him, that is to say, He accepts prayer.”

(Islami Usul Ki Filasfi p.62, Roohani Khazaain Vol: 10)

(11)

“Nothing is outside God’s knowledge or outside His control, or outside His creation. We call thousands of blessings and peace and mercy on the Holy Prophet Muhammad, the Chosen one, through whom we have found the Living God, Who gives us proof of His existence through His Word.

He demonstrates to us through extraordinary signs His shining countenance, which possesses eternal and perfect power.”

(Naseem-e-D´awat p.3, Roohani Khazaain Vol: 19.)

(12)

“God’s Grace comprehends all peoples, all countries and all ages, lest any people should complain that God bestowed His bounties upon others, but not upon them.”

(Paigham-e-Sulh p.4, Roohani Khazaain Vol: 23.)

(13)

“God is the light of the heavens and the earth. Every light that is visible on the heights or in the valleys, whether in souls or in bodies, whether personal or impersonal, whether apparent or hidden, whether in the mind or outside it, is a bounty of His Grace.”

(Braheen-e-Ahmadiyya pp.191-192. footnote, Roohani Khazaain Vol: 1)

(14)

“God Almighty, Who is Perfect and Eternal and Self Sufficient and Non-dependent, had carried on all His great works through eternity by His Ownself. He alone created the universe without the aid of a father or son and bestowed upon souls and bodies all the powers that they needed and is Himself the Guardian and Support and Controller of the universe.”

(Braheen-e-Ahmadiyya pp. 413-419 footnote 11 Roohani Khazaain Vol: 1)

(15)

**“All Praise be unto Him, Who is Everlasting. None is His equal, nor is anyone like unto Him.
He remains forever, the rest is transient;
To love others than Him is a mere fantasy.
He alone is my heart’s desire, I know none other,**

My heart exclaims; Holy is He, Who keeps me in
sight,
He provides for all, His grace is manifest,
In Him alone lies our comfort;
He alone is dear to us.”
Without Him we cannot live, all else is false.
Blessed be this day, Holy is He, Who keeps me in
sight.”
(Roohani Khazaain vol 12, Mahmood ki Aameen p.319)

(16)

“Prayer is the means, which bestows certainty with
regard to the existence of God Almighty and removes
all doubts and suspicions.”
(Ayyam-us-Sulh p.10.)

(17)

“How vastly God, Who is the ultimate source of all
light,
has manifested the Divine light,
The whole universe is turning into,
a reflected mirror;
for the eyes to perceive Him.

O, my Beloved!
How wonderfully is Thy
Power of creation manifested everywhere;
Whichever way I look, I find,

every road leading to Thy Presence.

In the fountain of the sun,
the tides of Thy Power are witnessed;
Every star
is twinkling with Thy Glory.

No one can comprehend
the ultimate design of Thy creation;
Who can disentangle
the web of this baffling riddle?

It is Thy charm, which is
the essence of every beauty;
Every flower that blossoms forth
borrows its colour
from the splendour of Thy attributes.

The mellow intoxicating eyes of all
who are endowed with beauty;
remind of Thee every moment.
To Thy direction is turned
the pointing finger
of every curly lock.

With what mysterious qualities,
Thou hast endowed every particle.
Who can read through the voluminous
accounts of these mysteries?"
(Surma Chashm-e-Arya P.4, Roohaani Khazaen Vol:2)

John: “Auntie! From these writings it is clear that the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community had great love for God Almighty. God must have loved him too. I would like to know more about him. May be you can tell us some other time.”

As evening was approaching fast, Salma’s mother said to the children, “It is becoming late. You must be tired by now. Let us call it a day.”

The children all agreed and went to their homes praising God Almighty in their hearts.

GLOSSARY

A

AGNOSTICS: Those who believe that it is not possible to say definitely whether or not there is a God.

ATHIEST: A person who believes that there is no God.

ATTRIBUTE: Quality, or feature that something or someone has.

B

He **BEGETS** not: He has no child.

Nor has He **BEGOTTEN:** He has no father.

BENIGN: Gracious, Kind.

BEREFT: Deprived of.

BESTOW: Give as a gift.

BOUNTY: Gift or reward.

C

CALAMITY: Disaster.

CHASTISE: Reprimand severely.

COUNTENANCE: Face.

E

ERADICATE: Destroy completely.

ERRONEOUS: Wrong. Incorrect.

ETERNAL: Lasting forever.

EVOLUTION: The process by which different kinds of living organisms developed.

F

FANTASY: imagination.

H

HEREAFTER: Life after death.

I

IMMEMORIAL: Ancient.

INADVERTENTLY: Without thinking.

Unintentionally.

INCONCEIVABLE: Unbelievable. Unthinkable.

INCONGRUITY: Not in harmony.

INNATE: Natural

INQUISITIVE: Curious.

INTERPOLATED: Something added to the text.

IRREVOCABLE: Unalterable, which cannot be changed.

J

JUGULAR VEIN: One of the veins carrying blood from the head.

M

MANIFESTED: is shown clearly.

METAPHOR: Symbolic of something.

MIRAGE: Optical illusion. One sees sheet of water in a desert when there was no water to be found.

MONOTHEISM: The belief that there is only one God.

O

OMNIPOTENT: All-powerful.

P

PAGANS: People holding religious beliefs other than those of the main world religions.

PROPOUNDED: Put forward.

PROVIDENCE: God.

S

SELF-SUBSISTENT: Without support from external agencies.

SUPPLICANT: A person who prays to God.

SUPPLICATION: Prayers. Humble request.

T

TRANSCENDENCE: Above the range of normal physical human experience.

TRANSIENT: Of short duration.

TRANSITORY: Temporary.

U

UNERRINGLY: Always correct.

V

VENGEANCE: Revenge. Killing, hurting or harming someone in return for something harmful that they have done.

BOOKS FOR CHILDREN AND BEGINNERS

AN ELEMENTARY STUDY OF ISLAM

By: Hadhrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad.

The book is a brief introduction to the Five Fundamental Articles of the Islamic faith i.e. Unity of God, Angels, Prophets, Holy Books, and Life after Death. Moreover the readers are made aware of the similarities between Islam and other religions. The book explains that Islam, being a universal religion, unites people of all nations under its banner. The book is specifically written for students and beginners who want to have an elementary knowledge about Islam.

ABC FOR MUSLIM CHILDREN

By: Rashid Ahmad Chaudhry

This well illustrated book explains various religious words and terms, which a Muslim ought to know. It is an ideal book for beginners and young children.

AHMAD AND SARAH

By: Rashid Ahmad Chaudhry.

The aim of this publication is to introduce a few Islamic terms and phrases used by Muslims in their daily lives. An explanation of these terms is given at the end in Glossary. The booklet is suitable for children of 5 to 7 years.

AHMAD AND SARAH GO TO MOSQUE

By: Rashid Ahmad Chaudhry

The book is specifically written for children and beginners who wish to know about the manner and significance of Islamic Prayer, Wudhu, Adhaan and the etiquette of a mosque. It is written in a story form so as to arouse curiosity in children and to maintain their interest. The style, the language and the illustrations are all geared towards this goal.

BILAL

By: Children's Book Committee

The booklet contains the life story of Hadhrat Bilal, the first Muedhin in Islam, may Allah be pleased with him. He was a slave who was subjected to persecution for accepting Islam. He bore all atrocities with patience and remained steadfast and ultimately rose to a position of honour amongst Muslims. The book also describes his love for the Holy Prophet and his devotion to Islam

HADHRAT SAYYEDAH KHADIJAH

By: Rashid Ahmad Chaudhry

This is the life history of Hadhrat Sayyedah Khadijah, the Pure, the Great, Mother of the Faithful, the first wife of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, who lived with him for about twenty five years, may Allah be pleased with her. It tells the reader the high moral values she had, even before Islam, the qualities, which made her not only suitable wife for the Holy Prophet, may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, but also made her a most Capable Advisor and a great solace to him at the time when the whole of Makkah turned against him and the opponents tried to wipe off Islam from the face of the earth.

It also gives an account of the sacrifices made by this woman of remarkable character, an ideal of womanhood in Islam, in the cause of Allah.

HADHRAT UMAR FAROOQ

By: Rashid Ahmad Chaudhry

The book contains a life history of Hadhrat Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, the system of his government, the reforms carried out in different fields and the battles Muslims had to fight during his Khilafat. It also describes his role in the battles, which the Holy Prophet had to fight in defence of Islam, the treaties he made with Makkans and others, his love for Allah, the Holy Quran, the Holy Prophet, may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, Hadhrat Abu Bakr and the Muslim Community as a whole.

MUSLIM FESTIVALS AND CEREMONIES

By: Rashid Ahmad Chaudhry

The book contains historical background of celebrations and the philosophy underlying the religious festivals in vogue in the Muslim world today. Moreover the rites performed at the birth, marriage and death of a Muslim are described. It is a useful source for school students and teachers.

MY BOOK ABOUT GOD

By: Rashid Ahmad Chaudhry

The concept of God in Islam is explained in a simple manner in this booklet. Why should we believe in God and how can one be certain about His existence? What does He look like? How can we please Him? Why do we address Him as He and not She? Why are innocent people killed in natural disasters? The booklet answers these and many more questions, set in an everyday home environment where children ask questions freely to their elders. In the Revised edition (published in 2003), some extracts from the writings of the Promised Messiah have been added.

QA'EDAH YASSAR-NAL QURAN

By: Pir Manzoor Muhammad.

The Primer is essential for learning the Arabic text of the Holy Quran with correct pronunciation in easy, gradual steps. It contains instructions for students as well as teachers, in English language.

SELECTED SAYINGS OF THE HOLY PROPHET

Compiled by Syed Mahmood Ahmad Nasir

A short collection of 50 Sayings of the Holy Prophet, may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, selected specially for children. The book contains the original Arabic text with translation and a few coloured illustrations.

STORIES FROM EARLY ISLAM

By: Rashid Ahmad Chaudhry

It is a collection of true stories about the Holy Prophet, may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, and his Companions, may Allah be pleased with them. The book gives an insight to the lives led by early Muslims and shows how a firm belief in God Almighty helped them overcome their enemies. There are questions at the end of each chapter to test the reader.

THE HOLY PROPHET'S KINDNESS TO CHILDREN

By: Rashid Ahmad Chaudhry

The booklet contains teachings of Islam and Sayings of the Holy Prophet regarding kindness to children. It is written in simple language and is set in a classroom situation.

THE TRUE STORY OF JESUS

By: Rashid Ahmad Chaudhry

The book contains the account of the life of Jesus, may peace be upon him. The topics mentioned are 'Birth of Jesus and his early life', 'Jesus as a Prophet', 'Teachings of Jesus', 'Jesus on the cross and his escape to Kashmir', and 'Tomb of Jesus'. The main sources used in the book are the Bible and the Quran. There are questions at the end of each chapter to test the reader.

THE WORDS OF WISDOM AND PURIFICATION

By: Rashid Ahmad Chaudhry

The book contains the Quranic verses and their translation about the Islamic beliefs in Allah, Angels, Revealed Books, Prophets, Taqdeer (predestination) and Life Hereafter. It tells the reader how God planned the whole universe and created human beings and everything else that is needed for their sustenance. It explains how we should glorify Allah including the prayers mentioned in the Quran. This well illustrated book also tells us about the actions that Allah likes and the actions He does not like. The book is an excellent source of Quranic knowledge essential to every Muslim.

