

Continuity of Prophethood Part 2

(The non-Law-bearing independent Prophethood)

The other type of Prophethood is the Non-Law-bearing Prophethood, which is known as ‘an-Nabuwwa(h) (a)l-ghair (a)t-Tashri`iyya’. This kind of Prophethood has to be divided into two distinct types:

- The non-Law-bearing Prophethood, which is independent of any other Prophethood and
- The non-Law-bearing Prophethood, which is bestowed through allegiance to a Law-bearing prophet

The non-Law-bearing prophethood, which is independent of any other Prophethood is a direct Divine gift, such as the Prophethood of the line of prophets who followed after Mūsā as, whose Prophethood was not derived from allegiance to Mūsā as. An obvious example is prophet `Isā, the son of Maryam (as) and others who came in fulfilment of Mosaic Law and were obedient to Mūsā (as) and his Law, but received the bounty of Prophethood independently. This has been mentioned in Sūratul-Mā`ida(h) verse 45:

إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَا التَّوْرَةَ فِيهَا هُدًى وَنُورٌ يَحْكُمُ بِهَا النَّبِيُّونَ الَّذِينَ أَسْلَمُوا
لِلَّذِينَ هَادُوا وَالرَّبَّانِيُّونَ وَالْأَحْبَارُ بِمَا اسْتُحْفِظُوا مِنْ كِتَابِ اللَّهِ
وَكَانُوا عَلَيْهِ شُهَدَاءَ فَلَا تَخْشَوُا النَّاسَ وَاخْشَوْنِ وَلَا تَشْتَرُوا بِآيَاتِي
ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا وَمَنْ لَمْ يَحْكَمْ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْكَافِرُونَ

[5:45] Surely, We sent down the Torah wherein was guidance and light. By it did the Prophets, who were obedient *to Us*, judge for the Jews, as did the godly people and those learned *in the Law*; for they were required to preserve the Book of Allah, and *because* they were guardians over it. Therefore fear not men but fear Me; and barter not My Signs for a paltry price. And whoso judges not by that which Allah has sent down, these it is who are the disbelievers.

In other words the spiritual example and influence of prophet Mūsā (as) could result in raising persons to a status no higher than that of a Muhaddath which is synonymous to the rank of “Siddiqīn”, the Truthful ones, a spiritual rank lower than that of a prophet as indicated by Sūratul-Hadīd verse 20:

وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِ أُولَئِكَ هُمُ الصَّادِقُونَ وَالشُّهَدَاءُ عِنْدَ

رَبِّهِمْ لَهُمْ أَجْرُهُمْ وَنُورُهُمْ وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَكَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا أُولَئِكَ

أَصْحَابُ الْجَحِيمِ ﴿20﴾

[57:20] And those who believe in Allah and His Messengers *and* they are the Truthful and the Witnesses in the sight of their Lord, they will have their reward and their light. But *as for* those who disbelieve and reject Our Signs, these are the inmates of Hell.

It must be borne in mind, that this type of prophethood has been terminated with the appearance of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (saw) as Khatamun Nabiyeen, the Seal of the Prophets. This means that, after the Holy Prophet Muhammad

(saw), the door of prophecies has been closed until the Day of Judgement and that it is no longer possible for a follower of any religion to assume the title of 'Prophet'; all the doors leading to Prophethood have been closed except the door of complete devotion and obedience to the Holy Prophet Muhammad (saw). The Promised Messiah (as) stated the following:

It has been revealed to me that the door of independent Prophethood is firmly closed after the Seal of the Prophets (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him.) Now there can arise no independent Prophet, neither old nor new. Our misguided opponents do not consider this door completely closed. According to them there is a window open for the return of the Israelite Prophet, the Messiah.

[Siraj-e-Munir, Ruhani Khaza'in, vol. 12, pp. 5-6]

In the above-mentioned quotation the Promised Messiah (as) explains the fact, that although the mainstream Muslims claim that the Holy Prophet Muhammad (saw) is the last of all the prophets and his Khatmun-nabuwwa(h) (his finality) is absolute, they too despite this fact await the descent of Prophet 'Isā, the son of Maryam (as), an old prophet of God who appeared approximately 600 years before our beloved Prophet Muhammad (saw). Will his advent not violate the finality of Prophet Muhammad (saw)? Will it not break his Seal of prophethood? The opponents of the 'Ahmadiyya Muslim Jamā'at believe that Prophet 'Isā, the son of Maryam (as) will outlive the Holy Prophet Muhammad (saw) as he was approximately 600 years of age when our prophet Muhammad (saw) was born. At the age of 63 years, during the "alleged lifetime" of Prophet 'Isā, (as), the Holy Prophet Muhammad (saw) passed away. Since then, for more than 1400 years, Hadhrat 'Isā (as) is still alive.

Is it not obvious according to these scholars, that prophet ‘Isā (as) is in reality the last of the prophets and not the Holy Prophet Muhammad (saw)? Is it not clear that, if Hadhrat ‘Isā (as) reappears and becomes a servant of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (saw), he would still be a prophet after him? According to the Ahmadiyya adversaries ‘Khatmun-nabuwwa(h) means that new prophets cannot be commissioned, while old prophets can be brought back. What manner of an All-Wise God would He be who would call the Holy Prophet Muhammad (saw) the last of the prophets in absolute sense, despite His knowledge that a prophet would be needed after him? What manner of an All-Wise God would He be to fulfil the new need by borrowing an old prophet instead of fulfilling the same need by raising a new prophet from within the people of Islam?

A very important point is that the Holy Qur’an makes it absolutely clear that Hadhrat ‘Isā (as) died a natural death and was merely sent as a prophet to the children of Israel, the identity of which will never be changed. He was and will always remain a prophet to the House of Israel and will therefore never come back as mentioned in Sūrat ‘Ali-‘Imrān verse 50:

رَسُولًا إِلَىٰ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ ﴿٥٠﴾

[3:50] “... a Messenger to the children of Israel ...

There is not the least doubt that the Promised Messiah as believed sincerely and whole-heartedly that the Holy Prophet Muhammad (saw) was the Seal of the Prophets in its most exalted connotation. One cannot fully grasp the intense devotion and enlightened perception of the Holy Founder of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama‘at about the status of the *Khaatamul Anbiyaa’ wal Asfiya* (Seal of the Prophets and the Elect of God), unless one reads his writings. An excerpt from his writings in this context is reproduced below. He states:

"The accusation levelled against me and my followers that we do not believe the Messenger of Allah (sa)to be *Khaatamun Nabiyyeen*, is a colossal calumny against us. The force, certainty, perception and insight with which we believe the Holy Prophet (saw) to be *Khaatamun Nabiyyeen* is such that the other people's belief in this regard is not even the millionth part, in strength, as compared to ours. But then they do not have the requisite capability for it either. They do not have any genuine understanding of the truth and essence of the *Khaatamul Anbiyaa*'s fact of being the Seal of Prophets (*Khatme Nubuwwat*). They have simply been handed down this verbal expression from their forefathers, but they are oblivious of its real meaning, and do not know what "*Khatme Nubuwwat*" is, and what the *implication* of affirming one's belief in it is ? But we believe the Holy Prophet (saw)to be *Khaatamul Anbiyaa*' (the Ultimate Prophet) with perfect insight (let Allah the Exalted be the best witness over it). And God has manifested the truth of *Khatme Nubuwwat* to us in such a manner that we particularly savour the elixir of its perception which has been given to us to drink. None can imagine it except those who have been given to drink from this fountain."

[Malfoozaat, vol. I, pp. 227-228, new edition]