

Introduction

There are pages, sentences, sayings, phrases, words, and letters, all true, which radiate the light of the Qur'an. *The Essence of the Holy Qur'an*, by Ayatullah Pooya, is one of them! The Qur'anic simile of "light" furnishes a source to secure peace and felicity in this world and the hereafter and stimulates the heart and mind to achieve it.

"Allah is the Light of the heavens and the earth. The similitude of His Light is a niche wherein is a lamp. The lamp is in a glass. The glass is, as it were, a shining star. (This lamp is) kindled from a blessed tree, an olive neither of the east nor the west, whose oil would almost glow forth (of itself) though no fire, touches it. Light upon Light, Allah guides unto His Light whom He will. And Allah speaks of humankind in allegories, for Allah is Knower of all things. (This lamp is found) in houses which Allah has allowed to be exalted and His name shall be remembered therein. Therein do offer praise to Him at morn and evening." (24:35 – 36)

This "eternal Light" has been transmitted through His messengers from Adam to the Last Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him and his household,

"so there may not remain any argument for people against Allah." (4:65)

The inseparable chain of Light passed from the Holy Prophet to Ali, the first Imam (the divine leader), and his 11 descendants as Imams, and their mother Fatima, the daughter of the Prophet, of whom he declared, "*al-Fatimatu-bidh'tu mini*" (Fatima is a piece of my flesh and blood, i.e., personality). They are all infallibles (*Ma'soom*) as conferred by the Qur'an (33:33), and a permanent proof of *Tawheed Nabuwat*, and the continuity of *Imamate* until the Day of Resurrection.

It exists as the inner reality of the Prophet (*Haqiqat-e Muhammadia*), and all the signs of Allah exist in it. The Qur'an warns the believers, ***"even if they desire, they could not extinguish the Light."*** Allah ***"will perfect it."*** (41:8). This is the overall view of Islam.

The portrait of the late Agha Pooya (may Allah bless him) appears among ***"those (who possessing minds) remember Allah standing and sitting and reclining on their sides and think (seriously) on***

the creation of the heavens and the earth, saying, 'Oh our Lord, You have not created all this in vain! Glory be to You. Save us then from the (hell) fire.'" (3: 191). It is an inimitable description of a person who remember Allah with all sincerity and humbleness.

Agha Pooya was born in Yazd (Iran) in the year 1317 A.H. (1899 A.D.) and his chapter of ephemeral life closed in Karachi on Jamadi al-Thani 17, 1393 (July 17, 1973).

This venerable religious scholar during his studies of Islamic sciences under the patronage of his father, the saintly scholar Agha Mirza Muhammad Hassan of Yazd, and the special guidance of the eminent religious authority Agha Mirza Muhammad Hussain al-Naini, was able to develop his talents and comprehend the Qur'anic verses.

The political upheavals, with intervals, in Iran and Iraq, led the author to migrate to India in 1925. He settled down in Madras and Bangalore, and had the opportunity to study modern thought directly in English and evaluated the conflicting intellectual trends of the east and the west.

His illuminating metaphysical notes of exoteric and esoteric nature on the verses of the Qur'an, a guide to the seeker of truth, have been incorporated by Mir Ahmad Ali in His English translation of the Holy Book.

His scholarly exposition of the universal Islam left indelible marks on people of every caste and creed, from Christian missionaries to Hindus, Zoroastrians, Muslims of all schools, on theists and atheists alike.

As editor I have made a sincere effort to bring out the book which is consistent with the intention of its esteemed author. Mr. Hussain Taylor, who reviewed this volume, earns respect for his linguistic observations and sound approach to Islamic ideology.

The profound interest taken by Agha Murtadha Pooya and Agha Ali Pooya, sons of the late Agha Pooya, manifests a mark of nobility which they have inherited from their parents.

Thanks are due to all those friends who participated in the publication of the work.

Syed Muhammad Murtadha

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