

## ‘The Need for the Imam’

### Background

The Promised Messiah<sup>as</sup> wrote this book in one and a half day following a meeting with a friend who made a theological mistake, when in September 1898, Babu Ilahi Bakhsh of Lahore, came to Qadian to see the Promised Messiah<sup>as</sup>. During his meeting with the Promised Messiah<sup>as</sup>, he related a number of dreams and revelations. The Promised Messiah<sup>as</sup> immediately sensed the fact that he had become a victim of serious misunderstanding. He did not know the real position and the status of the Promised Messiah. Perhaps he thought too highly of his own dreams. It was natural that the Promised Messiah<sup>as</sup> became anxious about him and took the opportunity of explaining the exalted position of an Imam like himself. So within a short time, he wrote a booklet entitled *Daruratullmam*. The Book According to the Holy Quran, the Promised Messiah<sup>as</sup> wrote that all true believers can become the recipients of Divine revelations. There had been actually millions of such men among the followers of the Holy Prophet<sup>sa</sup>. But most of their revelations were only of a personal nature and they could not be relied upon. In contrast to this, the Imam occupies a supreme position and stands out prominently among the believers. The Promised Messiah<sup>as</sup> described six distinctive features of the Imam of the Age which are as follows:

1. He is a man of strong and high character.
2. He is a born leader.
3. His knowledge of truth is vast.
4. His will and purpose are inflexible.
5. He is most earnest in turning to God in all circumstances.
6. His visions and revelations are extraordinary in quantity as well as in quality. God speaks to him face to face and not in riddles.

The Promised Messiah<sup>as</sup> further enumerated distinctive features of a true revelation, which are as follows:

1. It descends upon the heart and flows with Divine love.
2. It brings joy and conviction.
3. There is glory in Divine revelation and it descends with a voice which is full of majesty and power.

4. It contains true prophecies.
5. It has a purifying and ennobling effect.
6. It imparts a new life.
7. It is not a solitary voice and God speaks to him.
8. Recipient of true revelation is never a coward.
9. A recipient of true revelation can never be a coward.
10. It is accompanied with honour.

After describing these distinctive characteristics of a Divine revelation, the Promised Messiah<sup>as</sup> raised the pertinent question as to who was the Imam of this age, so that everybody could render him spiritual allegiance. So he proclaimed on the basis of reasons, signs and prophecies, without fear of contradiction: **“I am the Imam of the Age”**.

(Taken from: An Introduction to the Hidden Treasures of Islam)