

The Life & Character of

HAZRAT NAWAB

MUBARAKAH BEGUM^{RA}

Daughter of

Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{AS}

The Promised Messiah and Mahdi



By

MUNAVARA GHAURI

Lajna Ima'illah UK – Isha'at Department

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By Munavara Ghauri

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Salutations and Abbreviations

The name of Muhammad^{sa}, the Holy Prophet of Islam, has been followed by the symbol 'sa', which is an abbreviation for the salutation *Sallallahu 'Alaihi Wasallam* (May peace and blessings of Allah be upon him).

The names of other Prophets and messengers are followed by the symbol as, an abbreviation for *'Alaihissalam* (on whom be peace).

The actual salutations have not generally been set out in full, but they should nevertheless be understood as being repeated in full in each case. The symbol ^{ra} is used with the name of the companions of the

Holy Prophet^{sa} and those of the Promised Messiah^{as}. It stands for *Radi Allahu'anhu/'anha/'anhum* (may Allah be pleased with him/her/them). The abbreviation 'rh' stands for *Rahimahullahu Ta'ala* (may Allah grant him mercy).

Foreword

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

Dear Readers,

السلام علیکم ورحمۃ اللہ وبرکاتہ

Indeed, it is a great honour for Lajna Imaillah UK to publish a book on Hazrat Nawab Mubarakah Begum Sahibah^{ra}. I am ever so grateful to Munavara Ghauri Sahibah for writing this extensive book about her. May Allah bless her for her hard work. Aameen.

I had the blessed opportunity to be involved in the production of this book from its early days and remember many discussions between the writer and myself, when she took my advice, so in this way it feels like I have been part of this journey too. And such was the great and inspiring personality of Hazrat Nawab Mubarakah Begum Sahibah ('Barih Ummi' as we call her) that on no occasion were my eyes dry whilst working on the manuscript.

Like all the children of the Promised Messiah^{as}, Hazrat Nawab Mubarakah Begum Sahibah^{ra} was truly a sign of Allah the Almighty. She was a girl born with Allah's promises and prophecies in the household of a prophet. Indeed, she was a blessed lady. She was raised in a house which was full of prayers, respect, love, kindness, generosity and truthfulness. She wrote and spoke extensively about her childhood. Allah blessed her with a remarkable memory and she made use of this gift for the benefit of others. In these writings she has narrated to us how beautiful her home environment was. In this respect, her purpose was that members of the Jama'at learn from

this example and make their own homes a paradise. There are so many incidents, each more captivating than the other and I am sure our readers will find them very inspiring, InshaAllah.

She was a very prayerful and an extremely pious lady. You can get an idea of this by the fact that every time she heard a plane in the sky she would pray for the passengers on the plane and their safe journey. Her salat was often so long that she would remain immersed in that prayer until the time of the next salat. It used to be so intense that she would become physically weak. She would even regularly pray for those Jama'at members who never wrote to her for prayers.

The Promised Messiah^{as} used to ask her to pray and he was aware that she was blessed by Allah the Almighty with the gift of true dreams. For this reason, he would always ask her to narrate her dreams to him.

She was very fortunate to have received immense love from the Promised Messiah^{as}, Hazrat Amma Jaan^{ra} and her siblings, especially Hazrat Musleh Mauood^{ra}. There was great friendship between these two siblings. However, despite receiving all that love she spread more love to others. She was a figure of great affection, guidance and support for all her family, including her nieces and nephews. She was also extremely devoted to the members of the Jama'at. She did not treat them any differently from her family and gave them her time, valuable guidance and as mentioned before, her prayers. People used to write to her from all over the world and she used to reply to their letters and answer their queries. Her hours were devoted to Lajna members who used to visit her daily. She was never tired of doing this every single day. She had the great honour to be one of the first 14 members of Lajna Imaillah.

She served Lajna in various capacities wherever she lived. She was extremely intelligent and was granted the talent of poetry and prose by Allah the Almighty. She utilised this talent to instil the love of Allah the Almighty in others and the love of the Holy Prophet^{saw} through her poetry and speeches. She wrote and spoke about many matters of self-reformation.

She had the great honour of being the daughter of a prophet of God, yet she lived her life as a great servant of Khilafat. She showed absolute obedience to Hazrat Khalifatul Masih I^{ra} who also loved her dearly, Hazrat Musleh Mauood^{ra} who was her most beloved brother and similarly, to Hazrat Khalifatul Masih III^{rht}, who was her nephew and son-in-law. She showed by example how you pay the due right of obedience to Khilafat.

She was a source of comfort and guidance for family members and the Jama'at members in times of difficulty and trial. The way she addressed her family members at the time of the sad demise of Hazrat Khalifatul Masih II^{ra} knowing full well the discord the Jama'at faced after the sad demise of Hazrat Khalifa I^{ra}, shows her strength of character and also bears a powerful testimony to the life and sacrifice of the "Promised Son" and how he fulfilled his promise.

All in all, what we gather from her life is the fact that she paid her rights to Allah and her rights to other human beings in a most excellent manner. She was a great daughter, sister, wife, mother, stepmother, aunt, grandmother, sister-in-law and mother-in-law. In discharging her responsibilities, she has left a significant example for us to follow. She lived her to the full, enjoyed Allah's bounties on her, loved books and poetry and had a thirst for knowledge. She taught herself to read English.

She finished the Holy Quran at a very young age, as narrated by the Promised Messiah^{as} in his poetry. There is a great sense of gratitude and prayers in the Promised Messiahs's poetry for his children, as he knew they were Allah's sign and he bowed down in front of Allah the Almighty praying for them even more.

When the Promised Messiah^{as} passed away his children were all relatively young, with the eldest child, Hazrat Musleh Mauood^{ra} aged 19 to the youngest child, Hazrat nawab Amatul Hafeez Begum Sahiba^{ra} aged 3. After the demise of their father, Hazrat Amma Jaan^{ra} gathered her children and said to them not to look at an empty house and think that their father hadn't left them anything. She told her children that their father has left them a treasure of prayers in heaven that would reach them in life whenever they needed it. Just like his other children, we see this manifest in the life of Hazrat Nawab Mubarakah Begum Sahiba^{ra} as well. She was indeed, a "Khaatoon-e - Mubarakah" (a Blessed Lady).

May Allah continue to elevate her status in heaven and may Allah enable all of us to learn from her example and follow the righteous path. Aameen summa Aameen.

Wassalaam,

Fariha Khan

Serving as Sadr Lajna Imaillah, UK

Acknowledgements

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

In the Name of Allah, The Gracious, The Merciful.

I would first like to humbly thank Hazrat Khalifatul-Masih V (May Allah be his Helper) for suggesting that Lajna Ima'illah UK publish this book about Hazrat Nawab Mubarakah Begum^{ra}. It has been both a labour of love and a huge responsibility that I have felt over the past years. On the one hand, I have felt immense gratitude to Allah the Almighty for allowing me this great privilege and the strength to write about this noble daughter, a daughter of a Prophet sent to revive the message of Islam (Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as}). Yet, I have also felt a heavy responsibility to accurately convey this model of virtue and in a contemporary style to be enjoyed by our English-speaking Lajna members.

I cannot sufficiently thank those who have helped me in the production of this book, may Allah the Almighty reward them all. I must acknowledge the late Urdu Biographer - Professor Syeda Naseem Saeed, whose book published by Lajna Ima'illah Lahore was a primary source alongside Hazrat Nawab Mubarakah Begum's own writings. May Allah elevate her soul. I am also grateful to her daughter, Hamdah Manaah Sahibah, for giving me the precious copy of her mother's book. I would like to thank my husband, Dr. Saboor Ghauri, for his quiet but constant support, and my daughter, Nadia, for her IT skills.

I would like to sincerely thank National Lajna Sadr UK, Dr Fariha Khan, for her invaluable background knowledge as the great granddaughter of Hazrat Nawab Mubarakah Begum^{ra} and her assistance with the more challenging Urdu vocabulary. I would like to thank Shermeen Butt Sahibah for her proofing and both her and Amatul Hadi Ahmad Sahibah for their translation of the poetry. I must also thank Munir-ud-Din Shams Sahib (Addl. Vakil-ut-Tasnif) for his support and guidance, Late Mirza Anas Ahmad Sahib for his suggestions and Zahida Ahmed Sahibah and Fauzia Mirza Sahibah for supervising the initial layout. Farhad Ahmad Sahib made invaluable edits recently and Saliha Whittinger Sahibah also assisted with translation.

I would like to request prayers and express gratitude for my late nephew, Syed Taalay Ahmed Shaheed (1990-2021). He was my junior in years alone. He provided the paternal family tree of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{ra} (Appendix III), with his characteristic zeal and commitment to any work relating to the service of Islam, Ahmadiyyat. May Allah Almighty continue to elevate his soul and keep his children under His supreme care.

Finally, I would like to dedicate this book to all our Ahmadi daughters including my own, Nadia and Qanita, in this special year of the Lajna Imaillah Centenary. I hope and pray that the book proves beneficial to its readers, Insh'Allah. The example and advice of Hazrat Nawab Mubarakah Begum^{ra} are gems of wisdom that are worth keeping at the forefront of our minds. Hazrat Nawab

Mubarakah Begum's strong faith, quality of worship, wisdom and compassion, demonstrate that she is a timeless role model for all of us.

Munavara Ghauri
Salisbury, UK

Introduction

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the Name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

This book is about a unique lady. Her name was Sahibzadi Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} (1897-1977). She had the distinction of being the daughter of the Promised Messiah - Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as} of Qadian (1835-1908). He was the Messiah and the Mahdi who had been long awaited by all major religions and his advent had been foretold by the Holy Prophet^{sa} of Islam.¹ He had come to rejuvenate the true message of Islam and elucidate the true meanings of the Holy Qur'an. The birth of Sahibzadi Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} had indeed been divinely intimated to this blessed Prophet by Allah the Almighty when it was revealed many years prior to this daughter's birth, that his house would be filled with blessings and *"blessed women"*.²

Sahibzadi Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} had the privilege to spend the first 11 years and 24 days of her life with the Promised Messiah^{as}. Indeed, she was to sleep in

¹eg. The Hadith "Hearken! There is no Prophet and messenger between me and the forthcoming Jesus. And hearken! He is the Khalifa (successor) of my ummah." (Tabrani)

Also, "Anyone who will be alive from among you, will meet Isa son of Mary who is the Imam Mahdi, a Judge and a Justice." (Musnad Ahmad bin Hambal, Vol.2, p. 411)

²See <https://www.alislam.org/library/books/Tadhkirah> p.180 (ed.2009.)

the very same room with her mother and the Promised Messiah^{as} until the last day of his life was divinely decreed. She slept at arm's length from her parents and thus had the unique experience to observe and learn from every word, every expression, and every action of this appointed Prophet of God. Blessed with a sharp intelligence and a retentive memory, Sahibzadi Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum's knowledge and memories of this Prophet are almost encyclopaedic and thus a great blessing for those wishing to learn more about the Promised Messiah^{as}.

Living so close to a Prophet, made this daughter a partaker in the blessings which his presence provoked. These included a multitude of divine communications from a young age in the form of true dreams. Despite her youth, the young Mubaraka^{ra} became a recipient of great knowledge and wisdom through these dreams.

One of her earliest memories of a true dream was at around the age of six years. She saw the moon orbiting and it spoke to her and advised her to ***"Trust in Allah"***.³

Indeed, her father - the Promised Messiah^{as}, would often request his daughter to pray for a particular task of his and to offer two extra *Rakat* (the sequence of the formal prayers) at night⁴. Subsequently, the young Mubaraka^{ra} would frequently receive a divine response to the matter through a dream. Her dreams were not only informative for the Promised Messiah^{as}, but were to become a source of

³Seerato Swaanneh Sayyeda Nawab Mubaraka Begum Sahiba^{ra}, Lajna Ima'illah Lahore, 2001, Prof. S N Saeed, p58

⁴*Mubaraka kee Kahani, Mubaraka kee Zabani* – Amatul Shakoor Sahiba, Islam International Publications, 2008, p42.

invaluable guidance for the Jama'at as well; particularly after the passing of her blessed father in 1908. This was the reason why Sahibzadi Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} related these dreams in numerous addresses and writings to the Community over the years. The profound advice they relayed included the exhortation of the Promised Messiah^{as} to the Jama'at to say the prayer ***“Rabbana la tuzigh qulubana ba da idh hadaitana,”***⁵ In which the supplicant prays for his heart not to be perverted after receiving the blessing of guidance. This was expressed in a dream to the young Mubaraka^{ra} only 3 days after her father's passing. On another occasion when the young Mubaraka^{ra} was 12 or 13 years of age, she learnt of the true significance of girls and women within the Ahmadiyya Movement, when she saw in a dream that the Promised Messiah^{as} declared passionately to a companion:

“Until you put your daughters in the foundations, the building of Ahmadiyyat cannot stand erect.”⁶

Similar to her mother before her, Hazrat Nusrat Jahan Begum^{ra}, Sahibzadi Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} was to become a great role model amongst Ahmadi Muslim women as an example of a true believer. She was a lady constantly involved in the worship of her Creator and observance of His Quranic commandments. Her days were beneficially employed in prayer, care of relations and the

⁵The full prayer is *“Rabbana la tuzigh qulubana ba da idh hadaitana wa hab lana mil-ladunka rahmah, innaka antal wahhab”* i.e. “Our Lord. Let not our hearts become perverse after Thou hast guided us; and bestow on us mercy from Thyself; surely, Thou alone art the Bestower.” Holy Quran, Ch3:V9. By Maulawi Sher Ali.

⁶*Mubaraka kee Kahaani, Mubaraka kee Zabaani* – Amatul Shakoor Sahiba, Islam International Publications, 2008, p82.

needy, the moral training of ladies and propagation of the message of Islam. She was also a leader in terms of her financial sacrifices for the Community. Such good deeds were not always easy. Sahibzadi Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} married and then lived alongside a Shia Muslim community in Malerkotla, Punjab. Yet, she was to become greatly revered and loved by that very same community despite being an Ahmadi Muslim.

Her intelligence and appetite for knowledge meant that she was to excel in the Urdu language and became competent in Arabic, Persian and even English despite having no formal education. Her intellectual interests were something she shared with her siblings, especially Hazrat Khalifatul Masih II^{ra}. Her literary compositions - especially her poetry, were to garner high praise both from within and outside the Ahmadiyya Community. They showed the depth of her love for Allah the Almighty and His Prophet Muhammad^{sa}, in a rare combination of honesty, eloquence and humility.

As her years increased, so did the demands of her beloved Jama'at. She met with ladies and corresponded abundantly through letters, as well as undertaking various supervisory roles in Lajna Ima'illah. These were all commitments she happily performed. Her unwavering loyalty and obedience to the three Khulafa whose Khilafat spanned her lifetime was also exemplary. In all aspects of her life, Sahibzadi Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} illustrated how prayer and a reliance on Allah Almighty alone, is the secret to success, both in spiritual and worldly terms. She had learnt to ***“Trust in Allah.”***

Glad Tidings and the Birth of a Holy Individual

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} passed away on the night of May 22nd, 1977. Having been born on March 2nd, 1897, in the holy month of Ramadan, she had the blessing of living over 80 years in this world. She was born on one of the blessed nights of the last 10 days of Ramadan, that is, the 27th night. Indeed, of that night, Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra} was to say that the Promised Messiah^{as} would recollect:

“All night I prayed profusely. Rain showers began, so I thought that it was the special time of the acceptance of prayers of Lailat ul Qadr and so I prayed a lot.”⁷

The Promised Messiah^{as} understood that night to be an auspicious night; a night described by Allah the Almighty in the Holy Qur’an as a night that is **“better than a thousand months,”**⁸ marked out in the year as a special time for the manifestation of Allah the Almighty’s Mercy. The birth of Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} on this felicitous night appears to have marked the birth of a most blessed individual. The acceptance of the Promised

⁷Taqreer Zikre Habib – *Misbah*, Dec 1972, p.17

It literally means “Night of Destiny”. According to the Holy Qur’an and Ahadith, on one of the odd nights of the last 10 days of the holy month of Ramadan, it is particularly blessed and is even “better than a thousand months” in terms of the spiritual blessings that can be attained.

⁸Holy Quran, Ch97:V4. Maulawi Sher Ali.

Messiah's prayers on that night became evident in the blessed life of Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra}. Yet, news of his blessed daughter's auspicious life both in spiritual and material terms had already been conveyed to the Promised Messiah^{as}.

During the pregnancy of Hazrat Nusrat Jahan Begum Sahiba^{ra}, the blessed wife of the Promised Messiah^{as}, Allah the Almighty foretold the good news of a daughter but also that **تنشاء في الحلية** that ***"She will be brought up among ornaments."***⁹ The revelation was to be fulfilled in a variety of ways. The Promised Messiah^{as} was to interpret it himself as meaning that his daughter 'would not die young, nor would she face privation.'¹⁰ This ***"Mubaraka"*** was also to be adorned with the spiritual gems of piety and purity, as well as the worldly jewels of attractive features, intelligence and literary flair. Furthermore, her life was to be later embellished with a comfortable lifestyle and wealth as the wife of a ***"Nawab"***. Also, seven days after this daughter's birth on the day of her *Aqiqah* (Islamic celebration of the birth of a child), an opponent of the Promised Messiah^{as} was killed as he had prophesied, Pundit Lekh Ram. Thus, the Promised Messiah^{as} was to note in his book, *Haqiqatul Wahi*, that two divine signs were fulfilled at the same time.

As the time of delivery of this child had been miscalculated, the parents began to worry. They feared that perhaps some unexplained illness was leading to the delay in birth. Then

⁹Seerat-o-Swaaneh Sayyeda Nawab Mubaraka Begum Sahiba, Lajna Ima'illah Lahore, 2001, Prof. S N Saeed, p31. (*Al Hakam*, vol.5, No. 44, Nov 30, 1901, p3)

Also, <https://www.alislam.org/library/browse/book/Haqiqatul-Wahi/#page/276/mode/1up>.

¹⁰ *ibid*, (*Haqiqatul Wahi*, 2018 ed, Sign 37)

Allah the Almighty again reassured the Promised Messiah^{as}, **“The day of deliverance is coming soon”**¹¹, thus conveying that the birth was imminent.

Four years later in 1901, the good news concerning his daughter continued to manifest itself. Two titles relating to the future destiny of this daughter were revealed to the Promised Messiah^{as}. Firstly, that she would be **“Nawab Mubaraka Begum.”**¹² Thus, the young Mubarakara^{ra} was to be both a princess in the household of the Promised Messiah^{as} and the wife of a pious and influential Nawab, (who could be likened to a duke of the small province of Malerkotla). She would come to have both secular influences in this position, earning respect amongst her husband’s family and her local community, as well as spiritual influence as an exemplary Muslim. The Promised Messiah^{as} also experienced a dream in which it was conveyed to him that his daughter, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra}, would attain a high rank and a title of honour that was predetermined:

”ہو اک خواب میں مجھ پر یہ اظہر

In a dream, it has been conveyed to me

کہ اس کو بھی ملے گا بخت برتر

That she will attain to high rank

لقب عزت کا پاوے وہ مقرر

She will have a title of honour

¹¹Seerat-o-Swaaneh Sayyeda Nawab Mubaraka Begum Sahiba, Lajna Ima’illah Lahore, 2001, Prof. S N Saeed, p31. (orig. *Nazool Masih*, p202)

¹²<https://www.alislam.org/book/tadkirah/> (ed.2018, p560)

یہی روزِ ازل سے ہے مقدر

Which has been determined for her from the beginning.¹³

These verses were a part of a series of verses that the Promised Messiah^{as} was to share on the joyful occasion of the Ameen ceremonies of his three children, Hazrat Mirza Bashir Ahmad^{ra}, Hazrat Mirza Sharif Ahmad^{ra} and their younger sister, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra}.

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} would become a spiritual guide for the Ahmadiyya Jama'at and both an obedient servant and support for the three Khulafa (spiritual successors) who lived throughout her lifetime. Yet, despite such an elevated status, there was never a shred of pride or arrogance in her character. She was a unique blend of humility and dignity. Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} was also very intelligent and discerning by nature. She was extremely God-fearing and devoted to her Creator. She was steadfast and ever grateful to Allah the Almighty and had inherited her parents' abhorrence of jealousy and lying. Indeed, in her exemplary behaviour she was to fulfil a dream of her father, the Promised Messiah^{as}, in which he saw his daughter, declare to him in Punjabi:

“No one can say about me that she came and brought this affliction.”¹⁴

¹³Tadhkirah, 2018 Edition, p560.
(<https://www.alislam.org/book/tadhkirah/>)

¹⁴ibid, p.435

Her spiritual status gave her a magnetism that attracted ladies of the Community, making them desirous to meet her repeatedly. Her character was based upon an inherent love of Allah the Almighty, love for His Prophet Muhammad^{sa} and kindness to God Almighty's creation. These were her core qualities and values from which her other characteristics emerged. She was ever immersed in prayers, words of worship and the remembrance of Allah the Almighty. Standing and lying and even as she turned in her sleep, she remembered her Lord. Her love for her Creator was sincere and true. It was not for public appearances; it was something that flowed in her veins, something that she had inherited from her supremely devout parents. It was something that her relatives witnessed, even in the final days of her life. Her sister-in-law, Hazrat "Choti Appa,"¹⁵ who had the honour to care for her during her final illness, related that whenever Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} regained consciousness, her tongue would spontaneously utter words of remembrance of Allah the Almighty.

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} opened her house as she did her heart, welcoming any ladies who wished to see her. The men of the Jama'at would also request her prayers in writing. Even today, there is love and respect for her in the hearts of many. Those of us not fortunate enough to have met her, can by studying her life and seeking to emulate her good deeds, also earn this *mo'minah*¹⁶ merit in the eyes of

¹⁵i.e., Sayyeda Maryam Siddiqah Begum, the wife of Hazrat Musleh Ma'ud^{ra}.

¹⁶Quranic term for a female believer/one of faith.

our Creator. We should pray for her as she herself requested members of the Jama'at to:

“Pray that just as we, the five brothers and sisters, were raised under one shelter, in one lap we were raised and for quite a long time at the feet of angels near Hazrat Aqdas Ma’ud^{as} we rested - in the same manner, may our Lord through His mercy pardon us infinitely and reunite us again at the feet of our Master, in the company of our parents.”¹⁷

Every reader should offer this prayer for Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra}. This book attempts to provide a glimpse into the life of this blessed lady; a life that was filled with spiritual light, divine communications and compassion for humanity. It will help us understand how such a blessed personality who initially lived and breathed amongst “*angels*”, still led an ordinary, earthly life, amongst mankind. It is hoped that the reader can gain some insight of how to win the Pleasure of Allah the Almighty by following the exemplary conduct of Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} and by reading her invaluable guidance.

A Picture of Grace and Dignity

It has been related by many that Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} always presented herself in a graceful and smart manner. She was neat and tidy and conducted herself with grace and dignity. This sprung from her spirituality, wisdom and a deep

¹⁷Misbah magazine, May 1966, p.9.

appreciation of the favours of Allah the Almighty. Her niece, Sahibzadi Amatul Mateen Sahiba, recollected from the earliest of her childhood memories, that this gracious aunt of hers was always beautifully presented, well groomed and immaculately dressed.

Another niece, Sahibzadi Qudsia Begum Sahiba, related that Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} was greatly influenced by the wise guidance of her blessed mother, Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra}. She had guided that a wife should always look presentable in the company of her husband. Indeed, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} acted upon this profound wisdom until her final days. As Qudsia Sahiba reminisced, her aunt even maintained her neat and tidy appearance during her final illness. Sometimes, Qudsia Sahiba would have the night duty to care for her aunt in her final days. She recollected that her aunt would still wash her hands and face each morning and dressed well. This remained her routine. She would change her clothes and jewellery in the evenings, wearing more decorative earrings at that hour of the day. Thus, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} lived a life of moderation as is encouraged in Islam. Whilst not over-indulging in the luxuries of life, she was also not rigidly ascetic. In this manner, she appreciated the bounties of Allah the Almighty – **Ar-Razzaaq** (The Provider).



The Children of the Promised Messiah^{as} (R-L)

**Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad(ra), Hazrat Mirza Bashir Ahmad (ra),
Hazrat Mirza Sharif Ahmad (ra) Hazrat Nawab Mubarkah Begum (ra), Hazrat Mirza
Mubarak Ahmad (ra).**

Early Education Of Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra}

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} was blessed with a sharp intelligence, literary flair and an intellectual inclination, which was evident from her early years. The fact that she completed the Holy Qur'an at the tender age of four and a half years in November 1901 was an early indication of the exceptional intellect of this virtuous daughter of a blessed Prophet. Her early education began in the pioneering hands of a name familiar to many mothers, Pir Manzoor Muhammad Sahib^{ra}, the writer of the "*Yassarnal Qur'an*", found in so many Ahmadi Muslim homes today. In fact, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum's initial education began when Pir Manzoor Muhammad Sahib's wife happened to mention to Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra} that her husband had formulated a new technique for teaching Arabic to his daughter, Saliha Begum Sahiba.¹⁸ Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra}, a devout and lifetime lover of the Holy Qur'an then requested the wife of Pir Manzoor Muhammad Sahib^{ra} to ask her husband to also teach her daughter. At this stage, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} was not much beyond the tender age of three. She recalled visiting Pir Sahib's house and seeing Arabic letters painted on wooden blocks in the style of those found in English nursery schools. She also recollected that her teacher would instruct her to copy out the letters and with time the exercises Pir Sahib^{ra} created were then collected in the standardised "*Yassarnal Qur'an*". This has now benefited thousands of children learning to read the Holy Qur'an.

¹⁸Later she became Hazrat Ammaa Jaan's sister-in-law and so Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum's aunt by marriage.

In addition to her Arabic learning, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} also learnt Urdu, a couple of books in Persian and a few foundational books in English from Pir Sahib^{ra}. Additionally, she learnt some mathematics.

It appears that Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} was blessed with the literary flair of both her parents' families, as one day she herself requested her tutor to teach her how to compose poetry. She then quickly began creating her own couplets. The young Mubaraka^{ra} then progressed to recite the Holy Qur'an under the supervision of Maulvi Abdul Karim Sahib^{ra}. After his passing, which was a great loss felt by the Promised Messiah^{as} and his family, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} had the good fortune to be instructed in the Holy Qur'an and its translation by the holy personage - Hazrat Hakeem Maulvi Noor-ud-Deen^{ra}. He was notably remembered as an expert in the Holy Qur'an, its multiple meanings and insights, and as one who had stated that he had heard the Holy Qur'an recited from his mother's womb.¹⁹ He taught the young Mubaraka^{ra} with great care and attention, meticulously teaching her verbatim translation.

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum's insatiable appetite for learning meant that she began to read Ahadith books herself and if she struggled with a word, she had the unique blessing of the help of her exceptionally enlightened

¹⁹He was also elected as the first spiritual successor (khalifa) of the Promised Messiah^{as} after his demise in May 1908. He served the Jama'at in this spiritual role until his death on March 13th, 1914.

brothers: Hazrat Musleh Ma'ud^{ra}, Hazrat Mirza Bashir Ahmad^{ra} and Hazrat Mirza Sharif Ahmad^{ra}.

When Hazrat Pir Sahib's wife became unwell, the Promised Messiah^{as} directed his daughter not to make any more demands of Pir Sahib^{ra} to teach her. She then had the auspicious privilege of being taught Persian by her father, the Promised Messiah^{as}. The ever obedient Hazrat Hakeem Maulvi Noor-ud-Deen^{ra} then undertook this role in obedience to the request of the Promised Messiah^{as}, who had become increasingly busy with his own writings.²⁰ It is a great credit to Hazrat Hakeem Maulvi Noor-ud-Deen^{ra} that he happily undertook this role; although he admitted to Mubaraka Begum^{ra} that his heart only really enjoyed teaching the beauties of the Holy Qur'an.

Hazrat Hakeem Maulvi Noor-ud-Deen^{ra} continued tutoring Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} even after the passing of the Promised Messiah^{as}. This was despite his great responsibilities as his spiritual successor, the Khalifa of the Jama'at. Hazrat Hakeem Maulvi Noor-ud-Deen^{ra} would later comment that the inception of the ladies' "***Dars***" (explanatory lessons of the Holy Qur'an) had begun with his lessons to Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} and for this reason she would be rewarded by Allah the Almighty.²¹ Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} reflected that even after marriage whenever she visited Qadian, she would always attend the "***Dars***". Likewise, her mother Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra} was also a regular participant of the "***Dars***".

²⁰The Promised Messiah^{as} was to write around 85 books during his lifetime.

²¹Seerat-o-Swaaneh Nawab Mubaraka Begum Sahiba, Lajna Ima'illah Lahore, 2001, Prof. S N Saeed, p35.

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum's sharp mind and aptitude for languages is apparent when we learn how her skills in Arabic developed. She was aware that the youngest of her brothers, Hazrat Mirza Sharif Ahmad^{ra}, had acquired great knowledge of the language. So, she requested him to teach her (girls did not attend school in India in that era). Within a short time, she began expanding her own knowledge by reading Arabic books copiously. The extent of her knowledge was duly tested when Hazrat Khalifatul Masih II^{ra} opened a school for girls and suggested that his younger sister attend the Arabic classes. However, the young Mubaraka^{ra} informed her surprised brother that she had already learnt Arabic from "*Chotey Bhai*" (Hazrat Mirza Sharif Ahmad^{ra}) and still occasionally took lessons. Hazrat Khalifatul Masih II^{ra} spontaneously challenged his sister to a test, and she readily agreed. He gave her two Arabic novels that were at hand to read. She immediately did so and also offered a translation alongside her reading. Consequently, Hazrat Khalifatul Masih II^{ra} warmly praised his brother, Hazrat Mirza Sharif Ahmad^{ra}, for being an excellent teacher to their sister.

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum's own intellectual pursuits and appetite for learning meant that she became a very competent reader in English. She herself encouraged one of the children's tutors to teach her English. She then learnt from a teacher - Muhammad Hussain Taj; a pious man and an expert in English who had gained experience whilst teaching Urdu to English speakers. Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} related that she quickly progressed in English. Her literary talents became evident, and she remembered that whenever Master Taj Sahib taught her a proverb in English, she would respond with an Urdu saying of a similar meaning. She would fill her exercise books with

her personal writings and poetry couplets. Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} admitted:

“My heart was only ever really into studying, any sort of needlework agitated me.”²²

This does not mean that Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} was not competent in sewing skills. On the contrary her mother, Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra}, had diligently taught her sewing. The intelligent Mubaraka^{ra} had also learnt to knit and cook from watching the daily household activities. She had acquired all essential life skills, yet her sharp mind naturally inclined her towards more intellectual pursuits. This intelligence meant that she was able to complete her first reading of the Holy Qur’an at the young age of four years. Consequently, she joined her older brothers in a celebration of this shared achievement in an “Ameen” function organised by the Promised Messiah^{as} in November 1901. In gratitude, the Promised Messiah^{as} hosted a dinner to which many disadvantaged members of society and orphans were invited. As mentioned previously, he also composed a beautiful poem for the occasion, expressing his gratitude to Allah the Almighty and heartfelt prayers for a pious progeny. Below are some of the verses in which he mentioned his beloved daughter and how Allah the Almighty had revealed that she would be blessed with ‘an excellent fortune’ and ‘a title of great respect’.

²²Seerat-o-Swaaneh Sayyeda Nawab Mubaraka Begum Sahiba, Lajna Ima’illah Lahore, 2001, Prof. S N Saeed, p37.

O God! O my dear God
What bestowals of Thine are these upon me!
That Thou hast shown such day again to me
That the second son has finished reading, too. Basheer
Ahmad whom Thou hast taught
Thou cured his sight gave him insights
Thou hast given this fruit to Shareef Ahmad, too
...
And with them has been given one daughter
She is a little less than five, with good fortune. She recites
fluently the Words of God
This is all God's grace and mercy.
This was shown unto me in a dream
That she, too, will find an excellent fortune.
She will undoubtedly receive a title of great respect; This
has been destined from the very beginning.
God has bestowed four sons and this daughter,
Thus, this is a bounty through and through.
...
Even then it is impossible to render thanks.
O Gracious! Pray remove Thou all evils from them.
O Merciful! Make them pious and with long lives.²³

²³<https://www.alislam.org/library/books/Durr-e-Sameen-English-Translation.pdf>, p49, poem 19. (Trans by Waheed Ahmad, 2008)

بشیر احمد شریف احمد اور مبارک کی آمین

خدا یا اے مرے پیارے خدا یا
 کہ تو نے پھر مجھے یہ دن دکھایا
 بشیر احمد جسے تو نے پڑھایا
 شریف احمد کو بھی یہ پھل کھلایا
 یہ چھوٹی عمر پر جب آزمایا
 برس میں ساتویں جب پیر آیا
 ترے احساں ہیں اے رب البرایا
 جب اپنے پاس اک لڑکا بلایا
 غموں کا ایک دن اور چار شادی
 اور ان کے ساتھ دی ہے ایک دختر
 کلام اللہ کو پڑھتی ہے فر فر
 ہو اک خواب میں یہ مجھ پہ اظہر
 لقب عزت کا پاوے وہ مقرر
 خدا نے چار لڑکے اور یہ دختر
 یہ کیا احساں تر ہے بندہ پرور
 یہ کیسے ہیں ترے مجھ پر عطایا
 کہ بیٹا دوسرا بھی پڑھ کے آیا
 شفا دی آنکھ کو مینا بنایا
 کہ اُس کو تو نے خود فرقاں سکھایا
 کلام حق کو ہے فر فر سنایا
 تو سر پر تاج قرآں کا سجایا
 مبارک کو بھی پھر تو نے جلایا
 تو دے کر چار جلدی سے ہنسایا
 فَسُبْحَانَ الَّذِي أَخْنَعُ مِنَ الْأَعْدَاءِ
 ہے کچھ کم پانچ کی وہ نیک اختر
 خدا کا فضل اور رحمت سراسر
 کہ اس کو بھی ملے گا بخت برتر
 یہی روزِ ازل سے ہے مقدر
 عطایا کی، پس یہ احساں ہے سراسر
 کروں کس منہ سے شکر اے میرے داور

Extract of the Poem written by the Promised Messiah^{as} on the Ameen Function of Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} and her brothers, Hazrat Mirza Bashir Ahmad^{ra} and Hazrat Mirza Sharif Ahmad^{ra} in 1901.

(from alislam.org - <https://alisl.am/u1203>)

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} recollected the special occasion in her own words:

“I remember my Ameen well. I wore clothes with gold braiding. On one side of me was ‘Manjhalei Bhai’ (Hazrat Mirza Bashir Ahmad^{ra}) and on the other side ‘Chotey Bhai’ (Hazrat Mirza Sharif Ahmad^{ra}) was seated.”²⁴

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} wrote that on the occasion a young boy named Mian Abdul Rahman came and sat cross legged opposite her. At the time, she was unaware that this young boy was destined to become one of her beloved stepsons.

²⁴Seerat-o-Swaanah Sayyeda Nawab Mubaraka Begum Sahiba, Lajna Ima'illah Lahore, 2001, Prof. S N Saeed, p.37.



The Promised Messiah^{as} (1835-1908)

A Pure Childhood with a Loving Father

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} was blessed with a pure, content and secure childhood amidst the kindest and most virtuous of parents. Of her father - Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as}, she related that he showed great kindness. This was to the extent that when her mother would occasionally reproach her daughter for fear of over-indulging her, her father would stop her and remark that their daughter was but their guest for a short time. It was indeed a beautiful way for the Promised Messiah^{as} (Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad) to remind his wife, Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra} of the wonderful but temporary blessing which children become within the homes of their parents.

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} was always treated kindly by her parents but especially so by her father - the Promised Messiah^{as}. As a young child, she was afraid of the dark - a common childhood fear. Indeed, her mother Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra}, had also disliked sleeping in complete darkness. Thus, after their marriage the Promised Messiah^{as} had kindly accommodated his wife's wish and stopped sleeping in complete darkness, as was his former practice. Fearing the dark, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} would often creep into her father's bed. When she was around five years of age, the Promised Messiah^{as} reassuringly explained to the young Mubaraka^{ra}:

“...When children begin to get older, then they do not come to a bed and squeeze in like this. I am

often awake, if you wish you can call me a 100 times. I will reply and then you will not be scared. You can call me from your own bed.”²⁵

Thereafter, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} stopped slipping into her parents’ beds. She herself recollected that whenever she called out during the night to him, the Promised Messiah^{as} would always respond and her childhood fears evaporated. Even so, her small bed always remained near her parents’ beds. This remained the case even until the death of her beloved father when she was 11 years old.

An interesting incident related by Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} portrays the consideration the Promised Messiah^{as} gave to his daughters and indeed to all female family members throughout his life. It was a regard that was witnessed by all his children, a special treatment of his wife and daughters, in consideration of their more delicate natures. She related that her brother Hazrat Mirza Sharif Ahmad^{ra} (who was two and a half years her senior), once wished to have his bed put beside the Promised Messiah’s^{as}. Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} did not agree to her bed being removed, despite her mother commenting that she always slept there. However, the Promised Messiah^{as} remarked, ***“She is a girl, it is more important to keep her heart happy.”²⁶***

This indeed illustrated the Promised Messiah’s strong opinions concerning the importance of considering and prioritising the emotions of girls and women. The incident

²⁵Seerat-o-Swaaneh Sayyeda Nawab Mubaraka Begum Sahiba, Lajna Ima’illah Lahore, 2001, Prof. S. N Saeed, p.67.

²⁶Seerat-o-Swaaneh Sayyeda Nawab Mubaraka Begum Sahiba, Lajna Ima’illah Lahore, 2001, Prof. S. N Saeed, p.68.

is interesting because routinely the Promised Messiah's consideration for Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra} - his wife - and her wishes were paramount. However, on this occasion, he felt it of greater importance to consider the feelings of his young daughter. In retrospect, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} was to feel regret at her own stubbornness. She recollected that in order to console Hazrat Mirza Sharif Ahmad^{ra}, her mother then slept in another room alongside him. This small incident left an indelible impression upon Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} of the Promised Messiah's^{ra} great consideration for her personal feelings, even as a young girl.

The Promised Messiah^{as} was also an incredibly generous father. Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} recollected:

“I would ask for money and whatever came out of his hand first (from his pocket) he would give me, which was often more than I had requested. The Promised Messiah^{as} would then say: ‘It is your good fortune that you ask for a little but a lot appears in my hand. Now take it, why should I put it back?’ Once I asked for two annas²⁷ and one rupee emerged and the Promised Messiah^{as} said: ‘You asked for 2 Annas and one Rupee emerged, that is your good fortune.’”²⁸

Two other incidents in Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum's childhood capture the great consideration and kindness the Promised Messiah^{as} displayed towards his daughter;

²⁷16 annas were equivalent to one Rupee.

²⁸Seerat-o-Swaaneh Sayyeda Nawab Mubaraka Begum Sahiba - Prof. S N Saeed, Lajna Ima'illah Lahore, 2001, p.69.

perhaps an unconventional kindness in a society and culture where respect for elders was highly stressed. During that era and indeed even in eastern cultures today, sons were often given preferential treatment over daughters. Yet, the Promised Messiah^{as} who profoundly loved the Holy Prophet^{sa} always strived to mirror his every teaching and action.

Two such teachings were:

“He who has a daughter and does not bury her alive nor who has a daughter and does not bury her alive nor humiliates her, nor gives a son preference over her, will be admitted to Paradise by Allah.”²⁹

“He who brings up two girls through their childhood, will appear on the Day of Judgement attached to me like two fingers of a hand.” (Muslim)³⁰

Hazrat Nawab Mubarak Begum^{ra} related that in her childhood there was no sliced bread in Qadian. Thus, their routine breakfast would consist of sweetmeats or “*parathas*” (pan-fried flatbreads) with milk. Even tea was a luxury. Occasionally, they would receive a loaf of sliced bread as a gift sent from Lahore. One morning, the Promised Messiah^{as} had gone for a short stroll with some Companions. The cook (who had the good fortune to cook for the Promised Messiah^{as} for 11 years and was fondly

²⁹*Wisdom of The Holy Prophet* - Muhammad Zafrulla Khan, 4th ed., 1995, p.13.

³⁰*Pathway to Paradise*, Lajna Ima'illah USA, 1996, p.32.

known as “*Asghari’s Mother*”) was busy preparing some food and Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra} was also in the kitchen. The cook handed a cup of milk and two slices of bread to Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} and told her to have her breakfast. The young Mubaraka^{ra} refused, declaring that she only liked fried bread. The cook told her firmly that she was busy working. Her mother - Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra} also explained that they were presently occupied with many other jobs, so she should eat the bread as it was. Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} walked off quietly into her mother’s room and sat on one of the wooden beds. She felt a certainty that once her father returned the matter would be resolved in her favour.

Soon the Promised Messiah^{as} returned. As he entered the room, he only had to glance at his daughter to assess the situation from her sorrowful posture. He then left the room. Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} knew that her kind father would have gone to enquire the reason for his daughter’s gloominess. Sure enough, the Promised Messiah^{as} inquired of the cause of his daughter’s low spirits. He subsequently returned carrying a tray in his own hands with two fried slices of bread just as his daughter preferred with a cup of milk. He then said to her, **“Here you go, now eat up.”** Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} greatly appreciated the spontaneous kindness of her father and promptly began to eat. As she recollected the incident, which was later printed in the *Misbah* magazine,³¹ she declared that the memory of her father’s kindness would bring tears to her eyes, years later. In remembrance of that kind act she would still on occasion

³¹November 1960 Edition, pp.42-3.

eat fried bread and would savour both the taste and her fond memories of a kind father.

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} related a similar incident to her granddaughter, Sahibzadi Amatul Shakoor Sahiba, which again illustrated her father's great love and affection for her and his habit of prioritising his daughter's wishes. One day, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} was feeling hungry and went to her mother in the kitchen. She repeatedly asked her to make her a *paratha* (fried flatbread) with cream and sugar. Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra} and another female helper were busy cooking the meal for the Promised Messiah^{as}, so she told the young Mubaraka^{ra} to be patient. She explained that once they had prepared her father's meal and the cooker was free, she would make her a *paratha*. The young Mubaraka^{ra} went into another room. Feeling upset, she covered her head and face with a blanket and lay down.

After a short time, the Promised Messiah^{as} entered and saw his daughter in this agitated state. He did not rebuke her, nor did he ridicule or ignore her childish behaviour. Instead, he enquired of his wife, Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra} the reason for his daughter's state. Learning of the cause, the Promised Messiah^{as} immediately asked his wife to make Mubaraka her *paratha* first, leaving aside the preparation of his own meal. Such was the exemplary behaviour of our beloved Promised Messiah^{as}. He did not consider his own wishes of greater gravity than those of a young girl. He again took the prepared food in a tray to his daughter, not forgetting to take the cream and sugar which she had requested. Presenting the tray to his daughter, he did not scold her but consolingly remarked:

“Get up Mubaraka and see what I have brought for you.”

She recalled that she immediately arose, conscious that such an honourable personage as her father had personally brought her food, despite his elevated status. She promptly began eating and reminisced that her wonderful father watched her fondly until she had finished the very last bite. As the Promised Messiah^{as} looked at his daughter eating happily, the joy he felt was apparent from his face.

Despite this great consideration and love for his children and especially his daughters, the Promised Messiah^{as} still maintained a fine balance regarding the moral upbringing of his children. It meant that his kindness and compassion for them was tempered by his extraordinary love for his Creator and the Holy Prophet^{sa}, the Messenger of Islam to mankind. Thus, he was ever conscious that his children should not violate Islamic teachings. The Promised Messiah^{as} was pragmatic in his approach to his children, not scolding them on every small mishap or petty mistake, yet always emphasising fundamental teachings. Thus, when the young Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad^{ra} took a handful of almonds from a bowl that had been offered to a guest by the Promised Messiah^{as}, he did not scold his son but wisely remarked:

“This boy is a very good boy, he won’t take a lot, just one or two, and he will put the rest back.”³²

The Promised Messiah^{as} would also relate moral stories to his children to gently teach them good moral values. Hazrat

³²Seerat Hazrat Masih Ma’ud - Amatul Hai Fazeelat, Raqem Press, 2008, p.30.

Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} recalled that her father would often relate stories of the Prophets such as the Holy Prophet^{sa} of Islam and Prophet Yusuf^{as} (Joseph). He would give his children guidance during their normal daily conversations, a valuable practice which his daughter Mubaraka^{ra} was to adopt with her own children.

On another occasion, the Promised Messiah^{as} pointed out to his children the source of their blessings when Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad^{ra} discussed an essay topic with his younger brother. His school assignment was to debate what was more important, wealth or knowledge. The Promised Messiah^{as} who was present, remarked that neither wealth nor knowledge is good - only the Blessing of Allah the Almighty is good.³³ Indeed, Allah's Grace is the basis for all blessings in life.

The Promised Messiah^{as} was also firm in establishing Islamic practices in his children and within the household. On one occasion, he conveyed the importance of the spirit of purdah ³⁴ to Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} and the girls of the household. This was due to an incident involving a playmate of the young Mubaraka, who lived in their household. Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} recollected that the particular girl was overall a good girl. She was a few years older than Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} recollected that the particular girl was overall a good girl. She was a few years older than Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra}.

³³Seerat-o-Swaaneh Sayyeda Nawab Mubaraka Begum Sahiba - Prof. S N Saeed, Lajna Ima'illah Lahore, 2001, p.48.

³⁴The practice of Muslim women covering their heads and bodies and keeping a social distance from males outside their immediate family according to Qur'anic teaching.

Some older girls told the Promised Messiah^{as} that this girl would stand in the window of *Baitul Fikr* for great lengths of time in public view. The Promised Messiah^{as} immediately called her and advised her for some time. He told her that her punishment for doing something which was disagreeable would be that she could no longer speak or play with Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra}, until she had truly repented. Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} recalled that the girl cried for four or five days. Indeed, both girls felt the hardship of the punishment but also learnt the gravity of not properly practising *pardah*. Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} remembered that she did not speak to the girl either in accordance with her father's instruction. After some time, the girl requested forgiveness from the Promised Messiah^{as}, and he summoned the young Mubaraka^{ra}. He informed her that the girl had now been forgiven and she could henceforth play with her. Thus, both girls learnt the grievousness of not observing *pardah* in the true spirit³⁵.

Once, the Promised Messiah^{as} reproached his son, Hazrat Mirza Bashir Ahmad^{ra}, for not expressing due reverence to an older relation. His son happened to mention a relative of the Promised Messiah^{as} - Mirza Nizaam Din as only "Nizaam Din". The man was a bitter opponent of the Promised Messiah^{as}, yet the Promised Messiah^{as} rebuked his son for his laxity explaining:

³⁵Seerat-o-Swaanah Sayyeda Nawab Mubaraka Begum Sahiba - Prof. S N Saeed, Lajna Ima'illah Lahore, 2001, p.73.

“Mian, ultimately, he is your uncle. You do not refer to someone’s name in this manner.”³⁶

Another incident illustrated how the Promised Messiah^{as} wished to teach children never to take the belongings of others, without permission. One day, the Promised Messiah^{as} and his son, Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad^{ra} were accompanied by some Companions on a walk. On the way, they discovered an acacia tree that had fallen to the ground. Some of the Companions picked up several twigs of the tree for the purpose of cleaning their teeth (product known as “miswaak”). One of the Companions offered the young Mirza Mahmud Sahib^{ra} a twig, which he took. He then instinctively offered the twig to his father, the Promised Messiah^{as}, who then smilingly questioned his son:

“Mian, first tell me, with whose permission have you acquired this miswaak?”³⁷

Upon hearing this question, all the Companions threw their twigs to the ground as well as the young Mirza Mahmud Sahib^{ra}. The valuable lesson from this incident that one learns is never to take something that does not belong to one without permission.

Of course, the greatest moral training that the Promised Messiah^{as} gave to his children was by his own personal example. It is a common proverb that ***“Actions speak louder than words”*** and this indeed was the case with the

³⁶Seerat Hazrat Masih Ma’ud - Amatul Hai Fazeelat, Islam International Publications, 2008 p.29.

³⁷Seerat Hazrat Masih Ma’ud – Amatul Hai Fazeelat, Islam International Publications, 2008, p.31.

Promised Messiah^{as}. His life was devoted to acquiring the Pleasure of Allah the Almighty and explaining the true teachings of Islam. He knew that Islamic worship has two compulsory components which must be observed: *Huququllah* - the rights of Allah - our Supreme Creator and *Huquq-ul-ibaad* - the rights of His Creation. This means that we have a duty to serve His Creation; be they parents, children, kin, neighbours or even animals.

Thus, the Promised Messiah^{as} neglected neither of these two fundamental duties. So, alongside his care and support as a father, he was always engaged in the worship of his Supreme Creator. Establishing a living relationship with Allah the Almighty was a fundamental principle that the Promised Messiah^{as} wished to instil in his children. He would thus advise Hazrat Nawab Mubarak Begum^{ra} that whenever her eyes opened or she turned as she slept at night, she should not miss the opportunity to pray. Indeed, prayers were continuously offered from the blessed lips of the Promised Messiah^{as} throughout the day. Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra} related that these prayers included:

سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَبِحَمْدِهِ سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ الْعَظِيمِ

SubhanAllahi wa bihamdihi subhanAllahhil Azeem

which means, "Exalted is Allah with all His Glory, Exalted is Allah, Who is Great."³⁸

³⁸ibid, p.38

It was a prayer that the Holy Prophet^{sa} also highly recommended as one that is light on the tongue but heavy in its impact, i.e. it invokes great rewards from Allah the Almighty upon its utterance. *Durood Sharif* (the invocation of blessings upon the Holy Prophet^{sa}) and *Istighfar* (seeking forgiveness from Allah the Almighty) were also abundantly recited throughout the day by the Promised Messiah^{as}.

Apart from the five obligatory Prayers prescribed in Islam, the Promised Messiah^{as} also observed voluntary prayers at a fixed time. For this, he would always establish a specific place within the home or indeed whilst on a journey. At home, this appointed place was a small, simple room within the adjoining mosque, which helped him focus on his Prayers. Indeed, it must have also influenced the young Mubaraka^{ra} who was keen to offer the *Tahajjud* (supererogatory nighttime Prayer) at the tender age of four, when it is unlikely that she even knew the full prescribed Arabic prayers by heart. In later life, her daughters have related that their mother would observe lengthy prayers. She regularly prayed from the time of *Maghrib*³⁹ Prayer until the time of *Isha*.⁴⁰

At other times, her prayers could be so lengthy and fervent, that she would emerge from them in a physically weakened state. Such was the profound impact of the Promised Messiah^{as} upon the young Mubaraka^{ra}.

³⁹The prescribed Islamic Prayer just after sunset.

⁴⁰The prescribed Islamic late evening Prayer.

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} had memories of an immensely kind, thoughtful and considerate father only. Indeed, Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra} sometimes worried that the Promised Messiah^{as} was exceedingly soft on his daughters. Thus, she feared that this kindness may have caused difficulties for the young Mubaraka^{ra} adjusting to her future life, especially when they had no knowledge of her future and the type of family she would marry into. Yet, the Promised Messiah^{as} would reassuringly say:

“Don’t worry, Allah grants to the grateful (individuals) things which are worthy of being grateful for.”⁴¹

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} recollected that her father also took an interest in little domestic matters despite his elevated rank and momentous mission as a Prophet and Reformer of the age. She reminisced that once her mother - Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra} had called a cloth merchant to the house in Lahore where they were staying, in order to buy some fabric for her daughter’s wedding wardrobe. The Promised Messiah^{as} approached the young Mubaraka^{ra} and said:

“Your mother is getting silky materials for you, I prefer Benarsi fabric. Whichever cloths you choose from these pieces of Benarsi fabric that have been put here, I shall personally get them for you.”⁴²

⁴¹Seerat-o-Swaanah Sayyeda Nawab Mubaraka Begum Sahiba, Lajna Ima’illah Lahore, 2001, Prof. S N Saeed, p.75.

⁴²ibid

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} was to regret feeling too shy to choose a fabric, which would have been blessed by being handled by the Promised Messiah^{as}. At the time, she remained modestly silent, conscious of the fact that her mother was preparing her wedding wardrobe. Later, she regretted overlooking the opportunity to gain a blessed gift.

Thus, the Promised Messiah^{as} showed an interest in all matters regarding his children. Despite his spiritual station, his great mission and “Jihad of the pen”, he still had the time to take an interest in the smallest of family matters. On one occasion, the young Mubaraka Begum^{ra} came to him and complained that her younger brother, Sahibzada Mirza Mubarak Ahmad^{ra}, was upset with her and could not be pleased in any way. Consequently, her thoughtful father wrote her a few verses to pacify her brother. When she recited them to him, they did indeed please the young Mubarak Ahmad^{ra} greatly:

مبارک کو میں نے ستایا نہیں

I have never teased Mubarak

کبھی میرے دل میں یہ آیا نہیں

Such a thing has never entered my mind

میں بھائی کو کیوں نگرستا سکتی ہوں

How can I tease my brother?

وہ کیا میری ناکاں کا جایا نہیں

Isn't he the son of my mother?

الہی خطا کر دے میری معاف

O God, pray forgive my error

کہ تجھ بن تو رب البرایا نہیں!

For there is no Lord-of-the-Worlds other than Thee.⁴³

The Promised Messiah^{as} was indeed an active father, who was very involved in the day-to-day matters of his children. He did not live an elusive, monastic lifestyle but was attentive to his children's needs. This was despite the inconvenience to his work that they sometimes caused as they noisily played or chatted outside his room. For example, it is related that when Hazrat Mirza Bashir Ahmad^{ra} was a young boy of about three years, he developed a love of sugar and would come and demand some from his blessed father whilst he was writing. Yet, the Promised Messiah^{as} would leave his work whenever his young son made such a demand and would fetch some sugar for him.⁴⁴

Similarly, the Promised Messiah^{as} would attend to his children whenever they were unwell, sometimes sitting with them for hours. This was the case when his eldest daughter, Sahibzadi Ismat, became ill (she sadly passed away in 1891, aged five). During the illness of his son, Sahibzada Mirza Mubarak Ahmad^{ra}, the Promised

⁴³<https://www.alislam.org/urdu/pdf/DurreSameenUrdu.pdf> and <https://www.alislam.org/library/books/Durr-e-Sameen-English-Translation.pdf>, p.76. (Poem No.36)

⁴⁴Seerat Hazrat Masih Ma'ud^{as} – Amatul Hai Fazeelat, Islam International Publications 2008, p.29.

Messiah^{as} would sit and distract his son from his discomfort by bringing baby birds to entertain him. It is true that this loving father and blessed Prophet^{as} did not limit his kindness to his own children but also cared for many children throughout Qadian by providing free medicine.

It is related that women of the village would come and loudly knock on his door as he wrote his manuscripts, seeking advice and medicine for their children's ailments. The Promised Messiah^{as} would patiently listen to their problems, which often became a lengthy process. Yet, he never uttered a word of irritation.⁴⁵

The Promised Messiah's consideration for his children is also proven by the startling fact that only a day before his passing, he thoughtfully arranged a small trip for them in Lahore. He requested the driver of a carriage to take his family on a short ride to the value of one rupee. This was one of many kind acts typical of him. It was unusually so, in a culture where women seldom ventured outdoors. Yet, as the daughter of a godly and loving father, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} was not deprived of such happy experiences throughout her childhood.

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum's attachment to her father, the Promised Messiah^{as}, was perhaps one reason why his passing from this world was to be divinely communicated to her. In a dream, she saw that she was sitting and a person remarked to her, "***The greatest man***

⁴⁵Seerat Hazrat Masih Ma'ud – Amatul Hai Fazeelat, Islam International Publications, 2008, p.27.

in the world will depart within 2 or 4 months.” She then saw the Promised Messiah^{as} appear in front of her and she related to him what the person had just said. Reflecting aloud on the meaning of the man’s words, she said to the Promised Messiah^{as}:

“Maybe a king will die? Pir Jee said that the greatest kingdom is of the English monarchy.”⁴⁶

The Promised Messiah^{as} looked at his daughter and queried her:

“Is he such a great man? That is not the meaning of this.”

Hazrat Nawab Mubarak Begum^{ra} related that she then woke up but her heart remained affected. She had perceived the true implication of the dream but as she did not want to think of anything unpleasant occurring, she tried to efface its meaning from her heart.⁴⁷

In another dream, Hazrat Nawab Mubarak Begum^{ra} was to gain a clearer indication of the imminent passing of her father. However, she was also blessed with an understanding of the auspicious and elevated destiny in the Hereafter, which awaited him. In the dream, she saw herself approaching the Promised Messiah’s circular-shaped room in ` (known as the “*gol kamra*”). Many people

⁴⁶At the time Edward VII was in power and was also the Emperor of India.

⁴⁷*Tehriraat-e-Mubarak*, Lajna Ima’illah Pakistan, Zia-ul-Islam Press, p.273.

had congregated there as if for a special gathering. One of the Companions of her father, Maulvi Abdul Karim Sahib^{ra}, came to the door of the room and said to the young Mubaraka^{ra}:

“...Tell your father Rasul-e-Karim (i.e. the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{sa}) has arrived and all the respected Companions are awaiting and are calling him.”⁴⁸

She then went upstairs to her father and saw him sitting on his bed, writing with great speed. His face seemed to be suffused with a special light and manifested a unique passion. She related to him the message of Maulvi Abdul Karim Sahib^{ra} and he responded, ***“Go and say I’ll be there as soon as I finish this article.”⁴⁹*** The young Mubaraka^{ra} later recalled that this exact scene seemed to be recreated on the last evening of the life of the Promised Messiah^{as}, when she saw him writing with the same illuminated face, the same fervour and with great speed.

Thus, although the sad news of the passing of a loving father was conveyed to Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra}, so too was the felicitous news that a Prophet and Messiah would soon be received in the most blessed company conceivable – that of the Holy Prophet of Islam^{sa}.

⁴⁸ *ibid*, p.273 (taken from Lajna Ijtema Markaz Speech, 1970)

⁴⁹ *ibid*

A Father's Upbringing

A Prophet's Upbringing

The daughter of both a Prophet who had come for the reformation of the world and as an exemplary Ahmadi role model, meant that Hazrat Nawab Mubarak Begum's upbringing was truly unique, most blessed and at the centre of a spiritual renaissance. Hers was a childhood which brought her great enlightenment but also an inner contentment and peace, something which people often aspire to grasp their entire lives and never achieve. It was a childhood she wished to recreate in the afterlife as she appealed to people to pray:

"...Also pray that just as we five sisters and brothers grew up under one roof, in one lap and for quite a while even in one room under the protection of angels, near Hazrat Aqdas - Hazrat Masih Ma'ud^{as}, so in a similar manner, may Allah bless us with immeasurable forgiveness in His Merciful lap and at our master's feet may he gather us together once again, close to our parents. Now, those times float before my eyes when every moment was showered with more and more light.

"50

⁵⁰Seerat-o-Swaanah Sayyeda Nawab Mubarak Begum Sahiba - Prof. S N Saeed, Lajna Ima'illah Lahore, 2001, p.41.

She related that their hearts were filled with the serenity and contentment of Allah's Grace in a unique environment whereby:

"... Day and night fresh revelations and glad tidings would ring in our ears and such joys would become our spiritual sustenance. It was not possible for the passage of time to erase the memory from the hearts of those who witnessed those days."⁵¹

Her recollections suggest that Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} had a happy upbringing in the company of "Angels". She had the unique experience to witness her father – the Promised Messiah^{as} - experiencing revelations. She has stated that it was hard to express the condition of her father at such times despite her vivid memories. A special glow would emanate from the face of the Promised Messiah^{as}; his forehead would become redder and would glisten with beads of perspiration, his body would tremble and his lips would move as if directed by a Divine power.

In this spiritual but happy environment, there was no sibling rivalry as children commonly experience, but a unity that arose from the spiritual heights of their parents' belief in their Creator – Allah the Almighty. Indeed, it is astonishing to learn of the degree of kindness, respect and patience the Promised Messiah^{as} displayed towards his children. His wife Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra} was also a lady of

⁵¹Seerat-o-Swaaneh Sayyeda Nawab Mubaraka Begum Sahiba - Prof. S N Saeed, Lajna Ima'illah Lahore, 2001, p.41.

great virtue, faith and kindness. In fact, the couple whose marriage had been divinely orchestrated were complementary in their gentle dispositions. Yet, Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra} would occasionally admonish her daughter, and as has been previously mentioned, the comment of the Promised Messiah^{as} on such occasions would be, ***“What will her memories of us be? Daughters are only [their parents’] guests for a short time.”***

To consider daughters as *“guests”* is to consider them as temporary companions in one’s home and as individuals to be honoured and cared for to the best of one’s ability. Such was the exemplary and extraordinary attitude of the Promised Messiah^{as} towards his daughters.

Yet, the Promised Messiah^{as} was also attentive to the cultivation of faith and moral values in his children. Firstly, to instil a belief in the existence of Allah the Almighty, the Promised Messiah^{as} would request his children to pray for small jobs of his. He would often guide the young Mubaraka^{ra} to offer two Rakats of voluntary Prayer (*Nafl*) for this purpose. This was to teach her and her siblings the effectiveness and mandatory nature of Prayer.

Both the Promised Messiah^{as} and Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra} publicly praised their children in a positive manner and thus deterred them from committing sins. For example, the Promised Messiah^{as} and his pious wife both tried to inculcate repulsion for lying and falsehood in their children. Indeed, falsehood becomes a means of *shirk* (associating partners with God/idolatry) when one

prioritises the opinions of others before the thought of pleasing Allah the Almighty. Thus, these wise parents would publicly declare, ***“Our children do not ever lie.”*** Hazrat Nawab Mubarak Begum^{ra} related that consequently she and her siblings would never commit such vices out of a sense of shame and a desire not to diminish the high expectations of their parents.

The Promised Messiah^{as} also taught his children the fundamental importance of compassionate behaviour towards all the creatures of Allah the Almighty. On one occasion, he happened to notice that his son, Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad^{ra}, was attempting to catch sparrows in the house by closing all the doors and windows of a room. He commented:

“Mian, do not catch the sparrows living near the house. One who does not have mercy does not have faith.”⁵²

The Promised Messiah’s own compassion was constant and universal. Everyone; young and old, rich and poor, Muslim and non-Muslim, would enjoy the reception of a kind, considerate and generous host in the figure of the Promised Messiah^{as}. Hazrat Nawab Mubarak Begum^{ra} thus witnessed the compassion of her father:

⁵²Seerat Hazrat Masih Ma’ud - Amatul Hai Fazeelat, Islam International Publications, 2008, p30.

“By serving others the Promised Messiah^{as} gained happiness. An old lady attendant, Mai Taabi, used to live with us. She constantly suffered from headaches. He (i.e., the Promised Messiah^{as}) used to take care of her a lot. He used to give her medicines and an almond drink to take. I would also often prepare the drink and give it to Mai Taabi. Consequently, she would utter many prayers for me and I was aware that the Promised Messiah^{as} would also be happy by such a deed of mine.”⁵³

Indeed, the profound influence parents can have upon their children is also stated by Hazrat Khalifatul Masih IV^{rh} in his book *“Sawanneh Fazle Umar”*. He has written:

“Children often acquire an understanding of the inclinations of their parents’ hearts despite being young of age, and they know well which values they (parents) themselves give precedence to. These general impressions of their parents on the hearts of children equally influence the habits and behaviour they develop.”⁵⁴

⁵³ibid, p.36.

⁵⁴Swaaneh Fazl-e-Umar – Hazrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad^{rh}, Vol.1, p.80. Seerat-o-Swaaneh Sayyeda Nawab Mubarak Begum Sahiba, Prof. S N Saeed, Lajna Ima’illah Lahore, 2001, p49.)

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} said of her own father, the Promised Messiah^{as}, that despite his soft and gentle demeanour, he never missed an opportunity for the moral training of his children.

On the other hand, the Promised Messiah^{as} would overlook the minor mischief of children in their playful games. He did not criticise every minor failing of children. However, his speech had a profound and ***“miraculous effect”*** on everyone. Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} recollected that when he did stop his children from doing something it was ***“with incredible softness.”*** She related:

“Whatever he prohibited me from doing, I never remember even in a state of forgetfulness ever doing that thing again.”⁵⁵

She continued that nowadays parents can reproach their children even 100,000 times or more and still have no effect.

The Promised Messiah^{as} taught his children that their prayers were most effective and acceptable to Allah the Almighty. Despite their young age, he would ask them to relate any dream that they saw to him. He taught them the wonderful lesson that they too could be the blessed recipients of Allah the Almighty’s Communication. Indeed, as parents we should reflect on the respect and dignity the Promised Messiah^{as} gave his children from such a young

⁵⁵Seerat-o-Swaaneh Sayyeda Nawab Mubaraka Begum Sahiba - Prof. S N Saeed, Lajna Ima’illah Lahore, 2001, p50.

age. We learn from Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra}, that the Promised Messiah^{as} would listen to the retelling of her dreams as if he were listening to a respected elder. He would also at times make notes of her dreams, which she began experiencing at the young age of six.

This life of worship, revelations and the remembrance of Allah the Almighty in which the blessed parents of Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} were ever immersed, had a profound impact on the young Mubaraka^{ra}. It is recorded that from as young as the age of four, Mubaraka Begum^{ra} would request the wife of a Companion of the Promised Messiah^{as}, Hazrat Maulvi Abdul Karim Sahib^{ra}, to wake her up for Tahajjud Prayers.⁵⁶ It is interesting to learn that the Promised Messiah^{as} was not extreme in establishing Islamic practices within his children. It is documented that the young, sleepy-eyed Mubaraka^{ra} would often fail to rise, despite the persistent efforts of the aunty she had requested to wake her. Seeing her struggle, her father, Huzur Aqdas^{as}, considerately told the attendant not to awake the young Mubaraka^{ra} and instead he advised his daughter to recite *tasbeeh* and *tahmeed*⁵⁷ whilst lying in her bed.⁵⁸

Similarly, as Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} grew up, the Promised Messiah^{as} did not impose certain Islamic practices that were practised incorrectly to the extreme in

⁵⁶Voluntarily Prayers observed some time at night before the mandatory dawn Prayer (Fajr).

⁵⁷The phrases "SubhanAllah" meaning "Perfect art Thou O Allah" and "Alhamdollilah" meaning "All praise belongs to Allah".

⁵⁸Seerat-o-Swaaneh Sayyeda Nawab Mubaraka Begum Sahiba - Prof. S N Saeed, Lajna Ima'illah Lahore, 2001, p145.

those times, upon his daughter. Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} related that she fasted one day at the age of around 9 ½ years. Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra} had organised a large dinner on this special day for her daughter. However, when she attempted another fast a few days later and told her father, he immediately gave her something to eat to break her fast. He kindly explained:

“You are weak, don’t keep fasts right now.”

He also made her friend Saliha Sahiba,⁵⁹ break her fast. She was of a similar age to Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} and was with her at the time.

The Promised Messiah^{as} maintained a fine balance between kindness towards his children and the reinforcement of Islamic values. Thus, he would play with his children and sometimes even kindly tease them. One Companion, who was surprised by the tolerant and patient attitude of the Promised Messiah^{as} as a parent despite his spiritual status, was Hazrat Pir Iftikhar Ahmed Sahib^{ra} of Ludhiana. He has related that once whilst the Promised Messiah^{as} was visiting Ludhiana, they were sitting together in a drawing room, conversing with some respectable Companions. Meanwhile, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} who was approximately four years old at the time entered the room. She came in and started climbing onto her father, sometimes on his back, compelling him to bend forward and sometimes on his side. The Promised Messiah^{as} would bend accordingly to allow his playful

⁵⁹Saliha Sahiba, the daughter of Pir Manzoor Muhammad Sahib^{ra} who was to later marry Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum’s younger maternal uncle, Hazrat Sayyed Mir Muhammad Ishaq^{ra}.

daughter to satisfy her whims. Pir Iftikhar Ahmed Sahib^{ra} related his reaction to the scene:

“I looked in surprise at the paternal sweetness and tranquillity of Huzoor. [The little girl] continued doing so for a long time until she herself returned to the ladies’ quarters of her own accord.”⁶⁰

This kindness however was not derived from an indulgent love of his children, but ultimately stemmed from the Promised Messiah’s love of his Creator and thus his Creator’s Creation. It was recognition that there are two aspects of proper worship according to Islam: firstly, satisfying the rights of our Creator (**“Huququllah”**) and secondly, responsibly fulfilling the rights of His Creation (**“Haququl-ibad”**). The exemplary prayers the Promised Messiah^{as} did for his children illustrate that the primary concern for his progeny was that they too should submit to the Will of Allah the Almighty and His commands. The Promised Messiah^{as} himself said concerning children:

“People greatly wish for children and have children, but it is not then seen that there is an endeavour or concern for their moral training, to make them good and of a righteous character and obedient to Allah the Almighty. Nor do they pray

⁶⁰Seerat-o-Swaaneh Sayyeda Nawab Mubarak Begum Sahiba - Prof. S N Saeed, Lajna Ima’illah Lahore, 2001, p55. Taken from “Ya inaamaat-e-Khudawand-e-Karim”, Iftikhar ul Haq, p.374.

for them and neither do they bear in mind the points of moral training. My own condition is such, that there is no Salat of mine in which I do not pray for my friends and children and wife.”⁶¹

Indeed, the Promised Messiah^{as} was always mindful of his children’s moral training. During day-to-day domestic matters, he would constantly remind his children of the existence and significance of Allah the Almighty in their lives.

Allah the Almighty blessed Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} with a particularly good memory, which would prove invaluable as a vehicle for conveying the teachings and practices of the Promised Messiah^{as}. Indeed, it was an extraordinary memory from which we benefit today.

This memory was enhanced by the fact that Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} had such a profound and deep love for the Promised Messiah^{as}, that the smallest of his mannerisms and the briefest of his comments became ingrained in her memory. It was with great respect and love that she related such matters. It was as if she had become a trustee of invaluable knowledge of the Promised Messiah^{as} for his Jama’at. This is her eternal distinction and a reason why we should remember Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} in our prayers.

⁶¹ibid. Original from Malfoozat Vol.2, p272.

At the Lajna Ima'illah⁶² Jalsa Salana programmes and Ijtemas, she would regularly present speeches entitled “*Zikre-Habib*”,⁶³ which would transport the fortunate listeners back into the time of the Promised Messiah^{as}. The fluctuations of her voice and her spiritual terminology had a similarity to that of her elder brother, Hazrat Khalifatul Masih II^{ra}. Her enthusiasm and passion for the subject was evident from the fact that for as long as was physically possible, she would speak herself. Even when she became unwell, she would not miss this opportunity and would instead request her sister-in-law “*Hazrat Choti Appa*” to read for her. Her love of the subject was apparent from the fact that she would sit on the stage and listen, enthralled by the subject of her own speeches.

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} was to explain her purpose on one occasion when she presented her “*Zikre-Habib*” speeches:

“I have always had some hesitation concerning what I could write and what could I say (regarding the topic). However, only a short while ago I remembered the dream of a Sayyed girl whom I had brought up and I resolved that now, even at this age, whatever and however much, I will speak (on the subject) at the available opportunities. Maybe this will be accepted in the Court of Allah the

⁶²This literally means “A Community of the female Servants of Allah” and is an auxiliary association of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Association consisting of women over the age of 15, established in 1922.

⁶³Which means “Remembrance of a Beloved”.

Almighty. It was in Malerkotla, 1934 or 35, that this girl woke up in the morning and related a dream to me that she had seen Hazrat Masih Ma'ud^{as} in 'Barri Bait'" (Aqsa Mosque, Qadian).

The girl continued to relate her dream to Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra}:

"I saw that he (the Promised Messiah^{as}) was standing there and said to both the siblings (i.e. Hazrat Khalifatul Masih II^{as} and Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra}) to clean the mosque."⁶⁴

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} explained that a mosque in a dream can symbolise the *Jama'at* (Community), so she thought that the dream was a directive by Allah the Almighty to every man and woman of the *Jama'at* to work in unity for its spiritual progress. Thus, remembering this dream she was determined that she would no longer hesitate and would take up the pen for this important purpose.

One of her most striking descriptions of the Promised Messiah^{as} is a real insight into both his character and his profound influence upon the young Mubaraka^{ra}. It shows how the blessed and magnetic personality of the Promised

⁶⁴*Tehriraat-e-Mubaraka*, Lajna Ima'illah Pakistan, Zia-ul-Islam Press, p163.

Messiah^{as} moulded her and her siblings in their formative years. Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} wrote:

“Now, what shall I write (and what shall I leave out)? We did not just love him in the capacity of an extremely kind father, rather (loved him even more so) due to the fact that from a very young age, from as long as I can remember, we believed [in him]. We had faith that he was a Prophet sent by Allah the Almighty and a special individual, a special lover of his Lord and the Holy Prophet^{sa}. Never did I see his eyes not filling with tears whenever he mentioned the Holy Prophet^{sa}. He would continue talking and carried on wiping his tears with his fingers. In the same way, his true love for the Holy Being of Allah the Almighty was always visible.

Once, I saw him praying and crying. He was repeatedly calling for his Lord, His Beloved, with great pain. The words ‘My Beloved Allah, my Beloved Allah’, would roll off his tongue. I saw this myself. I thought and saw that there was a profound effect upon my brothers and Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra} from the influence of his constant company. ‘Personally, I have always had a great love for Allah the Almighty imbued in me from a very young age and an acute yearning to see the Holy Prophet^{sa}, because of his influence. ...’⁶⁵

⁶⁵Al Fazl Newspaper, Jan 3rd, 1974 Edition.

Hazrat Nawab Muhammad Ali Khan Sahib^{ra} (1870-1945)

No book about Hazrat Nawab Mubarak Begum^{ra} would be complete without a considered mention of the esteemed Hazrat Nawab Muhammad Ali Khan Sahib^{ra}; the man who was to become her husband, with whom she spent over 35 years of her life and who was the father of her progeny. What is even more remarkable about this man is that not only he but two of his children from his first wife were to be honoured with marriages with two of the children of the Promised Messiah^{as}. Firstly, his daughter, Hazrat Bu Zainab Sahiba^{ra}, was to marry Hazrat Mirza Sharif Ahmad^{ra}, and then his son, Hazrat Nawab Muhammad Abdullah Khan Sahib^{ra}, was to marry the younger sister of Hazrat Nawab Mubarak Begum^{ra}, Hazrat Amatul Hafiz Begum^{ra}.

Hazrat Nawab Muhammad Ali Khan Sahib^{ra} was indeed an outstanding individual. He gave up a princely lifestyle in a palatial home in the state of Malerkotla⁶⁶ where his father, Nawab Ghulam Muhammad Khan Sahib governed, to live in the small, undeveloped town of Qadian. There, he built a simple two roomed home of unbaked bricks, which he

⁶⁶Now a city and municipal council in the Sangrur district of the Indian state of Punjab. It is the only place in the Indian Punjab currently to have a Muslim majority. It is 50 km from Ludhiana and 35 km from Sangrur.

shared with his second wife⁶⁷ and three sons. This extraordinary act he did with the greatest of joy and gratitude to his Creator, Allah the Almighty. Why? For the reason that his basic dwelling would be adjacent to the home of the man whom he had accepted to be the Mahdi and Messiah of the age, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as}.

The greatest tribute to Hazrat Nawab Muhammad Ali Khan Sahib^{ra} was given by the Promised Messiah^{as} himself when he said:

“I feel envy thinking of the good fortune of the man who has such a righteous son; despite providing him with all the ways and means for being carefree and indulgent, even so, in the greater part of his youth he is so abstinent.”⁶⁸

Indeed, the honourable rank of this man in the sight of his Creator was proven by the fact that the Promised Messiah^{as} actually experienced a vision in 1903, in which he was to receive a revelation about Hazrat Nawab Muhammad Ali Khan Sahib^{ra}. In it, Allah the Almighty referred to him as ***“Hujjatullah”*** meaning *“The proof of Allah.”* The Promised Messiah^{as} was to explain that this venerable title was a consequence of the fact that Hazrat Nawab Sahib^{ra} was a unique individual who rejected his family and Shia Muslim society, in his search for Allah the Almighty and the acceptance of His Prophet’s message. The Promised Messiah^{as} was to say to him:

⁶⁷Bu Amatul Hameed Sahiba^{ra}

⁶⁸Ashaab-e-Ahmad, Vol 2, p.611.

“Because you have separated yourself from your brethren, your people and your society and have come here, Allah the Almighty has thus named you ‘Hujjatullah’, i.e., you are a proof for them. On the Day of Judgement, it will be said to them that such a person came from amongst you and understood this truth and accepted it. Why did you not do so? He was from among you and was a person like you.

Because Allah the Almighty has made your name ‘Proof of Allah’, you also need to fulfil this proof to those people by writing and speaking and every other means. In reality, this whole nation is in such a state that it is in need of mercy...they have no connection with God or Heaven. When God extracts someone from such a nation and reforms him, then He names him as a proof for those people.”⁶⁹

⁶⁹ibid, p.424, 425.



Hazrat Nawab Muhammad Ali Khan Sahib^{ra}
(1870-1945)

Hazrat Nawab Muhammad Ali Khan Sahib's distinct character was evident from a young age. At school, first in Ambala and then Lahore, he was well respected by his teachers. Hazrat Nawab Sahib^{ra} was a good, conscientious student and enjoyed playing tennis. He remained aloof from his peers and never involved himself in "playground politics". He earned the respect of his contemporaries by never being abusive nor was he one to backbite. However, he did have a strong sense of fairness and equality. Whenever he felt a student was being mistreated (particularly Muslims), he would intervene on his behalf. This strong sense of fairness meant that he even spoke up before the Governor of the School. The fact that the school staff listened to him illustrated their high regard for him.

This strong sense of justice was something Hazrat Nawab Sahib^{ra} had developed from a very young age. His elder sister, Bu Fatima Begum Sahiba, who had great affection for this unique younger brother, has related that even as a young boy, Hazrat Nawab Sahib^{ra} would say that when he grew up he would hang men such as cruel employers and rogues. This early claim was to be indicative of the compassion with which he would safeguard vulnerable groups of society in later life. Indeed his wife, Hazrat Nawab Mubarak Begum^{ra}, was to describe him as a man with ***"Avast amount of good manners,"*** and ***"A master of a faith of the highest order."***

Hazrat Nawab Muhammad Ali Khan Sahib^{ra} was also distinct in his repulsion for the idolatrous rituals that were inherent in the surrounding Hindu and Shia Muslim communities. This abhorrence increased with age. It was illustrated in his reaction when on the death of his baby

daughter from his first wife, his sister sent some fruit and asked for it to be put in the lap of her sister-in-law, as a good omen of her future fertility. Hazrat Nawab Muhammad Ali Khan Sahib^{ra} was extremely angered by his sister's suggestion and said:

“Take this fruit away. The [baby] girl was here temporarily. Even if 7 adult sons who are all worthy die before me, I will not let idolatry occur on any account.”⁷⁰

Hazrat Nawab Muhammad Ali Khan Sahib^{ra} was naturally inquisitive. He had an appetite for religious knowledge and searched to establish a real connection with his Creator. His rejection of the customary practices and rituals of his family and community provoked their anger and opposition. Nonetheless, some would quietly admit that Hazrat Nawab Sahib^{ra} had wisely freed himself from the rituals that the rest of society was embroiled in. Those people who relinquished such customs were labelled as having joined “*Hazrat Nawab Sahib’s ways*”. People of the community who wished to invite him to their gatherings knew that they could only do so if they abandoned their customary rituals. Nawab Ahmad Ali Khan Sahib, his nephew, was one such person who organised the weddings of 2 or 3 of his children in a very simple manner, so that his uncle would attend.

⁷⁰ibid, pp23-33

First Contact with the Promised Messiah^{as} and Conversion

Hazrat Nawab Muhammad Ali Khan Sahib^{ra} was to be introduced to Ahmadiyyat through his tutor, Maulvi Abdullah Sahib Fakhri^{ra}, who took the oath of allegiance (*Bai'at*) in May 1889. Near the end of that year, Hazrat Nawab Sahib^{ra} was sufficiently impressed by what he had heard, to ask his tutor to write to the Promised Messiah^{as} requesting prayers on his behalf. The Promised Messiah^{as} responded that without a proper connection it was not possible to pray for him most effectively. He suggested that Hazrat Nawab Sahib^{ra} take the oath of allegiance. Hazrat Nawab Sahib^{ra} humbly explained the obstacle of his Shia family, who were of the Ithna Asheri sect.⁷¹

The Promised Messiah^{as} subsequently responded that a man's sect was not important when committed to the message of Allah the Almighty's Prophet. If he had faith in Allah the Almighty, if he accepted the Holy Prophet^{sa} and the Holy Qur'an as a complete book, divinely protected from all interpolations and one that could not be hidden, then there was no obstacle for him to swear allegiance. If he acknowledged the Shariah as a final law and that the paths of Imams and Khulafa were open until the Day of Judgement, then taking the oath of allegiance was possible. He also explained to Hazrat Nawab Sahib^{ra} the reason for respecting the Khulafa and the companions of the Prophet of Islam^{sa}. He advised Hazrat Nawab Sahib^{ra} to pray

⁷¹The most populous Shia sect today. They believe that Hazrat Ali^{ra} was the first true Imam after the Holy Prophet^{sa}.

sincerely, without any antagonism in his heart and encouraged him to visit him in Qadian. This indeed he did. In November 1890, leaving the comforts of his prosperous life, he subsequently embraced the spiritual joys of accepting Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as} as the Mahdi and Messiah of the age. This was at the relatively young age of 20, when most men his age would have been more preoccupied by worldly amusements. He was to be registered as *bai'at* number 210 in the Promised Messiah's^{as} personal register of members of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam. Initially, Hazrat Nawab Muhammad Ali Khan Sahib^{ra} asked if he could conceal his *bai'at*. The Promised Messiah^{as} responded that he should only do so if it was extremely necessary. He said that otherwise concealment encourages a weakness of faith and by declaring his faith a whole group of people could benefit.

In December 1891, the Promised Messiah^{as} responded to a letter in which Hazrat Nawab Sahib^{ra} had requested prayers. The Promised Messiah^{as} related having an auspicious dream concerning Hazrat Nawab Sahib^{ra}. He had seen in it that Hazrat Nawab Sahib's^{ra} neck was elevated, as if some good fortune and an increase in respect had made him elongate it with happiness. The Promised Messiah^{as} interpreted the dream to mean that at some point in his life, Allah the Almighty had appointed good fortune, success and heightened respect for Hazrat Nawab Sahib^{ra}. The Promised Messiah^{as} thought this may refer to his business affairs for which he had specifically requested prayers in the letter. It could also have been an early indication of the elevated status he was to achieve as the son-in-law of this blessed Messiah^{as} 17 years later.

By 1893, Hazrat Nawab Muhammad Ali Khan Sahib^{ra} publicly declared his faith in the Promised Messiah^{as}. He stopped all Shia practices and praying behind Shia Muslims. His attachment to the Promised Messiah^{as} from these early days is evident, when one learns that he left behind one of his employees in Qadian, Mirza Khuda Bakhsh Sahib^{ra}. Hazrat Nawab Sahib^{ra} instructed him to regularly request prayers from the Promised Messiah^{as} for both of them. On Hazrat Nawab Sahib's request, the Promised Messiah^{as} also sent Hazrat Hakeem Maulvi Noor-ud-Deen^{ra} to Malerkotla to instruct him in the Holy Qur'an and its commentary. He went in 1896 and stayed there for several months. Hazrat Nawab Sahib^{ra} enjoyed entertaining pious and learned elders at his home and hearing religious books read aloud. Hafiz Roshan Ali Sahib^{ra} was another such elder who lived with him for many years.

Move to Qadian

In due course, the Promised Messiah^{as} was to be greatly impressed by the level of Hazrat Nawab Sahib's faith, sincerity and obedience. He then encouraged Hazrat Nawab Sahib^{ra} to move to Qadian and build a house there. In November 1901, Hazrat Nawab Sahib^{ra} made this permanent move with his second wife Bu Amatul Hameed Begum Sahiba^{ra} and his three sons from his first marriage.⁷² As previously mentioned, Hazrat Nawab

⁷²His first wife, Mehr-ul-Nisa Begum, died in 1898 after childbirth. The baby son also died. Hazrat Nawab Sahib^{ra} was blessed with 1 daughter and 3 sons from this first marriage. As a result of the encouragement

Sahib^{ra} first built a basic, temporary abode, consisting of 2 rooms.

His son Abdul Rahman Sahib^{ra}, reminisced that his parents' room was so tiny that it could barely accommodate their *charpai* (basic bed with a hardwood frame and hand-strung woven base). The three brothers slept in the other room. As it was only a temporary construction, there was a fear of it collapsing during heavy rains. On such days, the boys were told to sleep on the floor. When one reflects how the family had relinquished the luxurious lifestyle of a palatial home with a large household staff in Malerkotla, one can only marvel at the great sacrifices they all made. It was a clear proof of Hazrat Nawab Sahib's strong and unwavering faith in the claim of the Promised Messiah^{as}.

The dwelling of Hazrat Nawab Sahib^{ra} was attached to the *Darul-Masih* the house of the Promised Messiah^{as}. Hence, there was constant communication between the two families. Hazrat Nawab Muhammad Ali Khan Sahib^{ra} was to recollect the great hospitality and consideration that the Promised Messiah^{as} and his family were to extend to his own family whilst his house was being built. The Promised Messiah^{as} would send them food daily for nearly 6 months

from the Promised Messiah^{as} (who was concerned for the welfare of Hazrat Nawab Sahib^{ra} and his 4 children) Hazrat Nawab Sahib^{ra} then married Bu Amatul Hameed Sahiba^{ra}, the younger sister of his first wife. There were no offspring from this second marriage. Bu Amatul Hameed Sahiba^{ra} was an obedient and pious lady concerning whom the Promised Messiah^{as} saw a felicitous dream. He told Hazrat Nawab Sahib^{ra} that he would consider this wife of his like his own daughter. Bu Amatul Hameed Sahiba^{ra} also died prematurely due to illness. (See *Ashaab-e-Ahmad*, Vol 2, p.214 for further details.)

and only stopped upon the insistence of Hazrat Nawab Sahib^{ra}. Thereafter, the Promised Messiah^{as} continued to show great kindness, still sending special dishes or fresh fruit from his home.

Of that time, Hazrat Nawab Mubarak Begum^{ra} recollected:

“Nawab Sahib^{ra} used to say that the pleasure and spiritual joy in which those days passed, he had not seen before or since.”⁷³

Writing to his beloved sister, Bu Fatima Begum Sahiba, Hazrat Nawab Muhammad Ali Khan Sahib^{ra} was to explain the rare, spiritual attraction of Qadian for him:

“Here are the means for spiritual purification, the opportunities to pray. People are completely unaware of the effective methods of prayer and having prayers offered on one’s behalf. In order to pray one needs patience and perseverance, one should supplicate just like beggars plead people... a person should pray until his dying breath and he should not tire of praying...without a connection with the Prophets, less prayers can be offered...for prayer it is necessary to create a connection, because prayer is not in one’s control. It needs time

⁷³Seerat-o-Swaaneh Sayyeda Nawab Mubarak Begum Sahiba - Prof. S N Saeed, Lajna Ima’illah Lahore, 2001, p94 (original from Ashaab-e-Ahmad, Vol 2, pps 645-646)

and the urge. Indeed, by living close (i.e., to the Promised Messiah^{as}) this encouragement continues. Often, it is a practice of Hazrat Aqdas^{as} that if a person is not routinely present (at the mosque), then he investigates why such a person has not come. If he is not present because of illness, prayer is urged for him. If by some other means he learns of a person being unwell, then he becomes much more anxious than an anxious, loving mother would be...If someone is far, he may forget his name. However, there is more opportunity (for him) to pray for those who are always present. So, there is such great benefit (to be derived) from the spiritual purification of this place as cannot be attained elsewhere.”⁷⁴

Later Hazrat Nawab Muhammad Ali Khan Sahib^{ra} knocked down his two-room dwelling and built a more substantial building. During the time of Hazrat Khalifatul Masih I^{ra}, he was to build a large house on the outskirts of Qadian with extensive gardens and named it “*Dar-ul-Salam*” (i.e. “House of Peace”).

Hazrat Nawab Sahib^{ra} would continue to miss that special kindness and affection of the Promised Messiah^{as} as his wife, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} reminisced:

“Hazrat Nawab Sahib^{ra} acutely missed the love, benevolence, kindness and affection of Hazrat

⁷⁴Seerat-o-Swaaneh Sayyeda Nawab Mubaraka Begum Sahiba - Prof. S N Saeed, Lajna Ima'illah Lahore, 2001, p92 (original from *Ashaab-e-Ahmad*, Vol 2, p.125)

***Masih Ma'ud^{as}. He missed him most painfully up until his death.*"⁷⁵**

Indeed, it seems likely that Hazrat Nawab Sahib^{ra} has now been reunited with his spiritual master and mentor - Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as} in the Hereafter, as this Messiah of God would himself say and poignantly pray:

***"I have that love for you as one does for a beloved son and I pray that even after this world, Allah the Almighty may show us the happiness of meeting in Dar-ul-Salam."*⁷⁶**

That love for a spiritual son was to materialise into a physical bond when Hazrat Nawab Sahib^{ra} became inextricably linked to the Promised Messiah^{as} through the bond of marriage with his daughter, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra}⁷⁷. Allah the Almighty was to reward his deep faith and loyalty to the Promised Messiah^{as} by making him the father of his grandchildren and a blessed progeny that continues to flourish to this day.

⁷⁵ibid

⁷⁶This literally means "House of Peace" See Ashaab-e-Ahmad , Vol 2 p.677.

⁷⁷The religious ceremony of the marriage (*nikah*) occurred during the lifetime of the Promised Messiah^{as} in February 1908. The actual wedding in March 1909 occurred after the demise of the Promised Messiah^{as} in May 1908.

The Marriage of Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} and Hazrat Nawab Muhammad Ali Khan Sahib^{ra}

After the sad demise of Hazrat Nawab Muhammad Ali Khan Sahib second wife, the Promised Messiah^{as} attempted to arrange several matrimonial matches for his beloved friend and follower, yet nothing seemed to materialise. It was as if by divine decree another destiny had been ordained for Hazrat Nawab Muhammad Ali Khan Sahib^{ra}, for obstacles seemed to emerge with every match he considered. Sometimes the lady's family objected and sometimes Hazrat Nawab Muhammad Ali Khan Sahib^{ra} himself felt some reservation concerning a match. It was initially Hazrat Maulvi Noor-ud-Deen^{ra} (later Hazrat Khalifatul Masih I^{ra}) who had the idea of a match with Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra}. Hazrat Nawab Muhammad Ali Khan Sahib^{ra} - a pupil of Hazrat Hakeem Maulvi Noor-ud-Deen^{ra} once approached him to write a letter of proposal on his behalf to someone. He agreed reluctantly, hinting that his heart wished for something else.⁷⁸

At this point Hazrat Nawab Muhammad Ali Khan Sahib^{ra} immediately understood the meaning of his respected tutor (i.e., that he wished him to propose to Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra}) He then requested Hazrat Maulvi Noor-ud-Deen^{ra} to defer the letter-writing and went away

⁷⁸Seerat-o-Swaaneh Sayyeda Nawab Mubaraka Begum Sahiba - Prof. S N Saeed, Lajna Ima'illah Lahore, 2001, p.102.

contemplating the new suggestion. He began praying but was aware of how his respected tutor had not wished to speak disrespectfully by an outright mention of the match. He too felt he could not openly mention the proposal. He thus asked the widow of Hazrat Maulvi Abdul Karim Sahib^{ra}, who was a regular visitor to his household as a friend of his daughter – Hazrat Bu Zainab Sahiba, as well as that of the Promised Messiah^{as}, to inquire if there was any possibility of such a match. He strictly instructed her not to mention his name, nor to explicitly express a proposal but to only ask in principle. The widow of Hazrat Maulvi Abdul Karim Sahib^{ra} was however on familiar terms with the Promised Messiah^{as} and his household. So she asked him forthrightly, mentioning Hazrat Nawab Muhammad Ali Khan Sahib's name.

The Promised Messiah^{as} responded that his daughter was too young at present and they had thought to marry her at around twenty years of age. He thus questioned whether Hazrat Nawab Muhammad Ali Khan Sahib^{ra} could wait that long. Now that the match was a possibility, Hazrat Nawab Muhammad Ali Khan Sahib^{ra} could think of no other and he had an ardent desire to establish family relations with the Promised Messiah^{as}. He then approached Hazrat Maulvi Noor-ud-Deen Sahib^{ra} explaining that he had understood his initial hint and informed him of what had subsequently occurred. He asked him to write on his behalf, expressing that he would happily wait for as many years as the Promised Messiah^{as} requested.

Thereafter, the Promised Messiah^{as} responded to the proposal explaining how at that moment these two issues

were troubling him. Firstly, the age of his daughter, that Mubarakara should at least be fifteen years of age before the marriage. Secondly, the Promised Messiah^{as} was worried by a revelation that he had repeatedly experienced which he had kept from his family members. He believed that it would affect both families and one of his family members would suffer some misfortune. The date of the 27th of a month would also bear some significance. He had also printed something in the paper one month previously concerning a “*hidden matter*”, which would be later disclosed. Furthermore, he had seen a goat slaughtered in a dream, amongst other things. This he inferred to be symbolic of some kind of death. Consequently, he wrote that he was praying at present. Hazrat Nawab Sahib^{ra} replied that whatever the Promised Messiah^{as} advised would be correct and acceptable and that it was quite possible for him to wait.⁷⁹

Gradually, the date of the marriage was brought forward as Hazrat Maulvi Noor-ud-Deen Sahib^{ra} also wished for the same. One day, Pir Manzoor Muhammad Sahib^{ra} came with a letter which stated that the marriage was agreeable to the family of the Promised Messiah^{as} and that the *Nikah* (marriage ceremony) may now take place and that the actual departure of the bride [from her parental home] could take place after one year.⁸⁰ Thus, according to

⁷⁹Ashaab-e-Ahmad , Vol.2, pp.227-230. (Cited in Seerat-o-Swaaneh Sayyeda Nawab Mubarak Begum Sahiba, Prof. S N Saeed, Lajna Ima'illah Lahore, 2001, p.103.) Further details in Tarikh-e-Ahmadiyyat, Vol.2, pp.515-517 (2000 Ed.)

⁸⁰Seerat-o-Swaaneh Sayyeda Nawab Mubarak Begum Sahiba, Prof. S N Saeed, Lajna Ima'illah Lahore, p.107.

the suggestion of the Promised Messiah^{as} the *Nikah* took place on the following Monday, on February 17th, 1908, in Aqsa Mosque. As suggested by the Promised Messiah^{as}, the *Haq Mehr* was agreed at a sum of 56,000 rupees and the ceremony was conducted by Hazrat Hakeem Maulvi Noor-ud-Deen Sahib^{ra}. The papers were submitted to a registrar in Batala a few days later. On this historic occasion, Hazrat Maulvi Noor-ud-Deen Sahib^{ra} delivered a sermon which captured the significance and enormity of the occasion. Here, a few extracts of that historic sermon are presented:

“I have much happiness on this occasion and joy from many angles. Nawab Muhammad Ali Khan Sahib is my friend. Do not think that he is a special friend for the reason that he is a special ‘Sahib’ or a ‘Nawab Sahib’ or a ‘Raees’. I have not for even a fleeting second befriended him for his wealth, as he well knows. The love I have for him is for the sake of Allah. His love has never had a pretentious or hidden motivation. This relation of his is with Hazrat Imam^{as}. This happiness and honour is his good fortune and the reason for his happiness. There was a righteous man of his (family) - Sheikh Sadr Jahan, whom a worldly king married to his daughter, considering him a pious man. However, this (marriage) is the result of Allah the Almighty’s blessing, and the wonderful point is this, that today, the spiritual king has given his daughter to Muhammad Ali Khan Sahib... Is there anyone more fortunate than this pious inheritor? It is my knowledge, my religion and my faith, which

***informs me that he is more fortunate than Hazrat Sadr Jahan.*"⁸¹**

Hazrat Maulvi Noor-ud-Deen^{ra} continued the sermon by highlighting the importance and beauties of the Arabic language. He then enlightened those present of the importance and benefits of the *Nikah* ceremony. The proceedings ended with a silent prayer led by the Promised Messiah^{as}.

Regarding her wedding, Hazrat Nawab Mubarak Begum^{ra} related that it was a sad fact that in the same year of her *Nikah*, the blessed personage of her father, the Promised Messiah^{as} passed away (May 1908). Her wedding then took place in the following March of 1909 in a very simple fashion and with the prayers of Hazrat Khalifatul Masih I^{ra}. He led her to the door of her new husband's home and her mother, Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra}, took her inside without any ostentation or fanfare. The event was so low-key that Hazrat Nawab Muhammad Ali Khan Sahib^{ra} happened to be absent at the time, having gone to offer his afternoon Prayers at the mosque. In his own diary of March 14th, 1909, Hazrat Nawab Muhammad Ali Khan Sahib^{ra} recorded the event:

⁸¹Seerat-o-Swaaneh Sayyeda Nawab Mubarak Begum Sahiba, Prof. S N Saeed, Lajna Ima'illah Lahore, p106. (Sheikh Sadruddin-i-Jahan was a holy man of the Sherwani tribe of Afghanistan area. Local tradition says the Afghan King Behlol Lodhi (1451-1517) desired to rule Delhi and on his way to conquer it he was caught in a sanddrift. During it, he saw a hut which belonged to Hazrat Sheikh Sadruddin. He went to it and requested prayers from the holy man for a victory and a son. After his victory, the king married his daughter, Taj Murassa, to Hazrat Sheikh Sadruddin-i-Jahan and gave him the area of Malerkotla as a *jagir* (feudal land grant) in the fourteen fiftes. His descendants branched into two groups; one group ruled the province and were given the title of 'Nawwab' during the Mughal Empire.)

“Today, Mubaraka Begum Sahiba, the elder daughter of Hazrat Aqdas Masih Ma’ud^{as}...whose Nikah with myself took place on 17th February 1908...took leave [of her parental home] and came to my house and illuminated my home. This departure took place at 3 pm. I have found in her both a beauty in appearance and in character. She also has a special aptitude for knowledge. All praise to Allah the Exalted. This is a unique blessing of God that an unworthy person such as myself as come to be associated with Prophethood of such exalted heights. That is Allah’s Grace; He bestows it on whom He pleases; and Allah is the Master of immense grace.”⁸²

A Groundbreaking Wedding

There were certain unIslamic customs that had become ingrained within society at the time of Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum’s wedding which Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra} wished to relinquish despite any social pressures. It is a credit to the young Mubaraka^{ra} that despite her young age, she was not petulant about the nature of her wedding and simply complied with the wishes of her elder family members. The people of Malerkotla were accustomed to sending the groom’s procession to a bride’s home with great fanfare and ceremony. At the bride’s home, they would eat a lavish meal and would return with the bride,

⁸²Seerat-o-Swaaneh Sayyeda Nawab Mubaraka Begum Sahiba - Prof. S N Saeed, Lajna Ima’illah Lahore, 2001, p.110.

but would then omit the obligatory *walima* meal⁸³ on behalf of the groom. Hazrat Nawab Muhammad Ali Khan Sahib^{ra} decided not to take a *barat* procession to Hazrat Ammaa Jaan's house, so that she would not have to organise a feast. Instead, he arranged that she should bring the bride to his house directly and he could then provide the obligatory feast hosted by the groom (*walima*) according to Islamic teaching.

The people of Delhi from whom Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra} originated, customarily hosted ostentatious wedding ceremonies. They considered it an acknowledgement of the bride's status and dignity and that a great procession should accompany the groom. Thus, they considered it a disgrace if the groom did not arrive with a formal procession. Yet, Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra} did not consider it a kind of dishonour and simply took her beloved daughter to the home of Hazrat Nawab Muhammad Ali Khan Sahib^{ra}. There, the pair waited for some time as the groom returned from his Prayers in the mosque. Once he arrived, the emotional Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra} addressed this pious man and said: ***"I am giving my orphaned daughter into your care."***⁸⁴ Then overcome by emotion, she bid a speedy ***"Assalammo Alaikum"*** and departed.

Indeed, she proved that she was one of the righteous servants of Allah the Almighty, who cared more for her

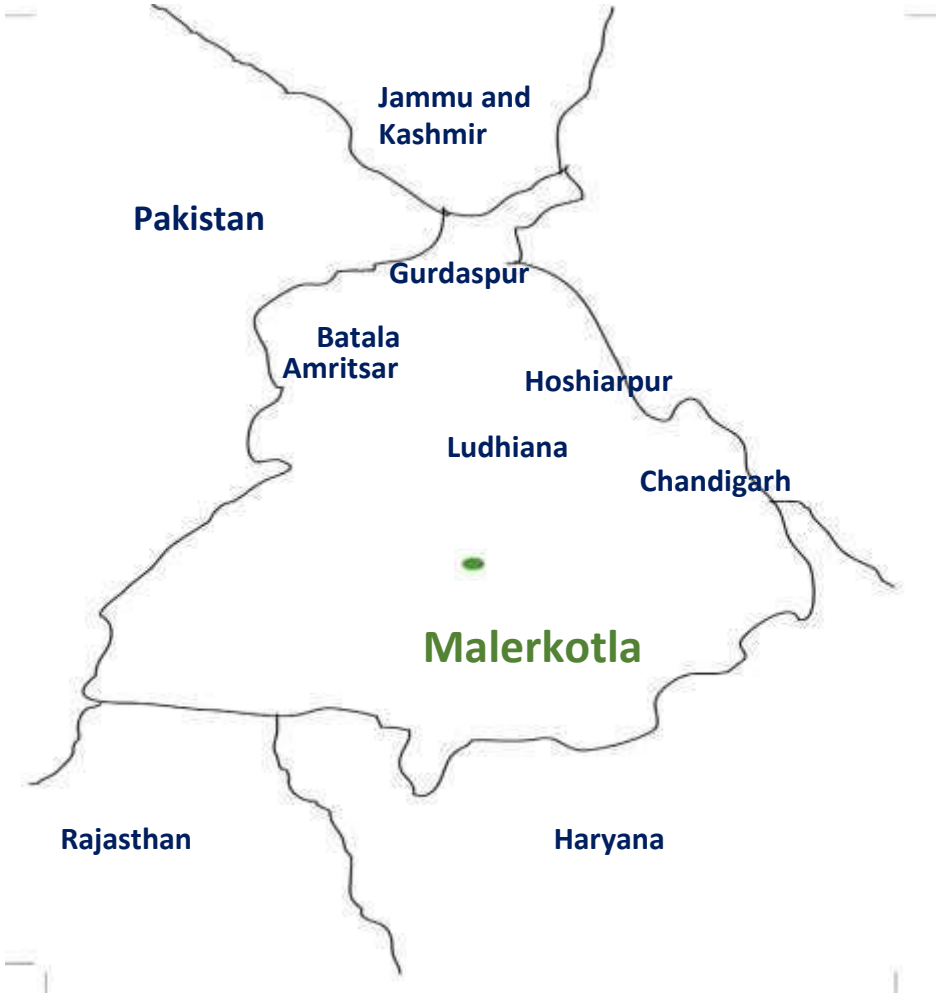
⁸³The obligatory wedding dinner according to Islamic teaching whereby the marriage is publicly announced.

⁸⁴Seerat-o-Swaaneh Sayyeda Nawab Mubarak Begum Sahiba, Prof. S N Saeed, Lajna Ima'illah Lahore, 2001, p.111.

Creator's Pleasure than that of society. Hazrat Nawab Muhammad Ali Khan Sahib^{ra} was to later send his daughter, Bu Zainab Sahiba^{ra}, as a bride to the home of Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra} - her new mother-in-law, in a similarly simple fashion. She was escorted there by his wife, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum Sahiba^{ra}.

According to the diary of Hazrat Nawab Muhammad Ali Khan Sahib^{ra}, his *walima* with Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} took place on March 15th 1909, three days after the wedding. The wedding group then left for Lahore. Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} was accompanied by a lady, "*Bismillah*", daughter of Quadratullah Khan Sahib and her two daughters. In this simple, unpretentious manner, a happy and blessed union began which was to last over 35 years.

Map showing location of Malerkotla



Hazrat Nawab Muhammad Ali Khan Sahib's Opinion of his Wife, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra}

Hazrat Nawab Muhammad Ali Khan Sahib^{ra} was a regular diary writer and so we are fortunate to be able to discover his innermost thoughts from those diaries, which Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} later generously donated to the Jama'at. The blessed couple wedded in March 1909. Hazrat Nawab Muhammad Ali Khan Sahib^{ra} hosted a big *walima* dinner, inviting his Ahmadi brothers of Qadian. Regarding the match, Hazrat Nawab Muhammad Ali Khan Sahib^{ra} himself confesses in his diary that his intentions were twofold. Firstly, to gain Allah the Almighty's Pleasure and secondly, to strengthen his bond with "**Hazrat Aqdas**" i.e. the Promised Messiah^{as}.

However, he felt that Allah the Almighty had bestowed upon him many blessings because of the union. He revered his wife not only as the daughter of the Promised Messiah^{as}, but also because she came from an honourable lineage of both "Moghuls" and "Sayyeds". Her maternal grandfather - Mir Nasir Nawab Sahib's lineage, could be traced back to the pious Khwaja Mir Dard. In fact, Hazrat Nawab Muhammad Ali Khan Sahib^{ra} said that Nawab Mubaraka Begum's maternal and paternal lineage was as distinct in its radiance as the sun and the moon. He also fully appreciated that he could not be blessed with a more

honourable household amongst Ahmadi Muslims, nor could any household in the entire world be more honourable in the sight of God than that of the Promised Messiah^{as}. Hazrat Nawab Sahib^{ra} was to become an admirer of his wife's wisdom, great understanding, love and loyalty. In his diary he wrote of Mubaraka Begum^{ra}:

"...On account of appearance and also spirituality, she is most elevated. And, in terms of character, indeed, whose father's daughter is she? She has an appealing manner and a uniquely endearing nature. She is a loving wife, thus there is no reason for her not to be my beloved. May Allah the Almighty develop the best of relations between us and create a deep love between us and bless us long term with righteousness, love, respect, honour, health, happiness and prosperity. May He keep us united in the service of the faith. Ameen."⁸⁵

In his diary of 18th March 1909, Hazrat Nawab Muhammad Ali Khan Sahib^{ra} recorded the newly wedded couple's departure from Lahore. His high regard for his new wife was apparent from the pleasure he expressed due to his children's welcoming and gracious reception of their new mother.⁸⁶ He related that upon arrival at Lahore station at 9 pm, he was surprised to hear the voice of his son Abdul Rahman Sahib, and to learn that his children had cycled to receive them there:

⁸⁵Seerat-o-Swaanah Sayyeda Nawab Mubaraka Begum Sahiba - Prof. S N Saeed, Lajna Ima'illah Lahore, 2001, p.113.

⁸⁶Hazrat Nawab Muhammad Ali Khan Sahib^{ra} had 1 daughter and 3 sons from his first marriage with Bu Mehr-ul-Nisa Begum.

“...I was really happy by the fact that they gave a exuberant and warm reception to their new mother, and then when we reached the house, I was even more overjoyed because Zainab received Mubaraka Begum Sahiba very beautifully and with open arms. Zainab and the children had really decorated the house from which you could deduce their happiness and love. This is also a blessing of Allah the Almighty that the children behaved with her as with a real mother.”⁸⁷

From Hazrat Nawab Muhammad Ali Khan Sahib’s diary entries regarding his wife, we capture a personal and candid depiction of Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra}. Despite the 27-year age gap between the couple, their mutual respect and love was always apparent. Hazrat Nawab Muhammad Ali Khan Sahib^{ra} was perpetually impressed by his wife’s piety, wisdom and intelligence, and hugely respected the fact that she was the daughter of an exalted Prophet of God. He was aware that it was Allah the Almighty’s special favour, blessing and mercy upon him, which had allowed him to become part of such a spiritually elevated family. He would sincerely pray:

“O God, O my dear Lord, now you have made me the son-in-law of your Messenger and have connected

⁸⁷ibid, p.114.

me to his darling child, so also fill me with light (spiritual) so that I can be worthy of this.”⁸⁸

As previously mentioned, Hazrat Nawab Sahib^{ra} was to say of his beloved wife that she was most distinguished in both physical and spiritual aspects and was blessed with a uniquely attractive nature. She was a loving and affectionate wife as well as being an extremely pious individual. Indeed, she was the daughter of a lineage of honourable wives. If we consider the character of her grandmother, Sayyeda Begum, we realise that Hazrat Nawab Mubarak Begum^{ra} resembled both her grandmother and her mother. Of her grandmother, her maternal grandfather - Hazrat Mir Nasir Nawab Sahib^{ra} was to say,

“...This blessed wife that I have married has given me great comfort and has been ever faithful to me. She has always given me righteous advice...Such wives are seldom found in this world...Because of my wife’s pious conduct, I am already in a heavenly paradise in this world.”⁸⁹

Hazrat Nawab Muhammad Ali Khan Sahib’s respect for his wife is evident from the numerous times he requested his wife to bless things. On one occasion, he asked her to write a couplet on his New Year’s Calendar. She agreed and wrote:

⁸⁸Seerat-o-Swaaneh Sayyeda Nawab Mubarak Begum Sahiba, Prof. S N Saeed, Lajna Ima’illah Lahore, 2001, p.125.

⁸⁹Seerat-o-Swaaneh Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra}, Prof. S N Saeed, Lajna Ima’illah Lahore, 2005, p.68.

فضل خدا کا سایہ ہم پر رہے ہمیشہ
ہر دن چڑھے مبارک ہر شب بخیر گزرے

**May the shelter of Allah's Blessing remain on us
always**

**Make every day begin auspiciously and may every
night pass safely.**

Thereafter, Hazrat Nawab Sahib^{ra} would write this couplet on the front page of every new calendar, illustrating the deference he had both for his wife's prayers and her poetry. He would often request her to write some poetry and she would agree, composing in both Persian and Urdu. The poetry would usually express an intensely spiritual love for our Creator and His Creation rather than the transient human love which most poetry concerns.

The following description by Mahmuda Begum Sahiba of her mother's relationship with her father is a real tribute to the pure, honest and humble nature of Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra}. She wrote:

"Had she been any other wife, she would surely have become proud and begun to fall short in maintaining her husband's rights, love and respect... thoughts of her own greatness may have

developed, but Ami Jaan, despite the fact that she was a very young age (hardly 12 years old), did not exploit Abba Mian. She was always very respectful; she greatly loved and revered him. She always remained mindful of the things he did not like. She always acted accordingly, both in front of him and in his absence. She would always say to us, 'Your Father does not like this, so be mindful of it.' She would worry during his illness. She would pray a great deal for his life. Every instruction and wish of his, she would act upon with complete conviction of heart. She married at a young age. She would say, 'I have learnt a lot of things from Mian - He did not find fault with anything but would explain matters with great softness, in a very nice manner.'"⁹⁰

It is also a great tribute to her father - Hazrat Nawab Muhammad Ali Khan Sahib^{ra}, who was not overbearing but always respectful, loving and patient with his young wife. He overlooked small shortcomings and was never domineering. This could have been the case considering the age difference and the fact that at the time of their marriage, her venerable father was no longer alive.

His extensive respect for his wife has been described by his daughter, Mahmuda Begum Sahiba:

"He respected and appreciated Umi Jaan so much and he loved her so much, that I don't have the words (to express it). He honoured from the tiniest

⁹⁰ibid, p.126

to the greatest of her wishes; he would fulfil her every wish. I have never seen such an example of beautiful conduct in my life. In all my life I have never seen such an exemplary husband, and this was only because of the Promised Messiah^{as}... ”⁹¹

Mahmuda Begum Sahiba then wrote that when it was decided that Hazrat Nawab Sahib's son (Nawab Abdullah Khan Sahib) would marry Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum's younger sister (Hazrat Amatul Hafiz Begum Sahiba^{ra}), the advice he gave to his son reflected the profound respect he felt for his wife and her family. He said:

“Look, never claim to be equal to her. The respect and honour I give to your mother (i.e. Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra}) is not because she is my wife but because she is the daughter of Hazrat Masih Ma’ud^{as}. ”⁹²

She confirmed that her brother was to demonstrate the same respect for his wife, Hazrat Amatul Hafiz Begum Sahiba^{ra}, the younger daughter of the Promised Messiah^{as}, as his father had shown to Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} throughout their happy and blessed marriage.

⁹¹Seerat-o-Swaanah Sayyeda Nawab Mubaraka Begum Sahiba, Prof. S N Saeed, Lajna Ima'illah Lahore, 2001, p.127.

⁹²ibid

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum's Opinion of her Husband - Hazrat Nawab Muhammad Ali Khan Sahib^{ra}

It was in the company of Hazrat Nawab Muhammad Ali Khan Sahib^{ra} that Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} spent the longest period of her life. In an article describing two great Companions of the Promised Messiah^{as}, she has given a detailed description of the noble character of her husband - Hazrat Nawab Sahib^{ra}. She firstly mentioned witnessing the strength and high degree of faith of her husband, ***“His belief and faith in the Promised Messiah^{as} were of the highest order,”*** and despite having a reserved nature whereby he rarely showed his emotions, his love of the Promised Messiah^{as} was always clearly apparent in his personality. She wrote that her husband would miss the Promised Messiah^{as}, ***“Just as a son would miss the absence of a most beloved father.”***

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum's opinion of her beloved husband, Hazrat Nawab Muhammad Ali Khan Sahib^{ra}, was poignantly illustrated in her words upon his passing. She said:

“He was a very content individual and the possessor of extensive good manners. He would never talk ill of anyone, nor did he listen to such talk. He sincerely shared other people's joys from

the bottom of his heart. He had a rich, content, serene heart, patience and dignity of the highest order, a breadth of good manners; these were the specialities of his character, and these qualities were magnificently manifest in him. During my whole life which I spent with him, I never saw any fault in him; instead I saw these fine qualities shining brighter and brighter. However, his greatest quality was his faith, the gems of which I kept seeing throughout the years, of what Allah showed me. I can say and Allah is my witness, that he had faith of the highest standard. This was also a special favour of Allah the Almighty upon him, as otherwise a man cannot create this condition by himself.⁹³

Indeed, such a tribute to one's life companion, the one person with whom Hazrat Nawab Mubarak Begum^{ra} spent the longest period of time, is truly astonishing. Having lived so closely with Hazrat Nawab Sahib^{ra}, her testimony of his character would indeed be accurate. It is perhaps the greatest tribute she could have given her husband as she described him as a man of faith; with such quality and devotion to the Promised Messiah^{as}, that it could have only been supported by a Divine Power.

Describing her wedding she continued:

“Hazrat Walida Sahiba (i.e. Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra}) herself accompanied me to the house of Hazrat

⁹³Seerat-o-Swaaneh Sayyeda Nawab Mubarak Begum Sahiba, Prof. S N Saeed, Lajna Ima'illah Lahore, 2001, p.129.

Nawab Sahib^{ra} and left me there under his care. May Allah's thousands of blessings, day by day, minute by minute, descend upon his soul. He honoured and cherished our (marriage) bond in a manner that I have not seen elsewhere, until he departed, leaving my hand in the hand of God Almighty.⁹⁴

This sincere prayer for her mother highlights the extensive happiness and blessings the marriage brought to Hazrat Nawab Mubarak Begum^{ra}. Continuing to describe her husband she recalled:

"...He cared for me in such a manner that he competely fulfilled his duty. Throughout my life, I saw love and love, kindness and more kindness. My every weakness and failing he overlooked, to the extent that he never even let me feel embarrassed over anything. He bestowed me with favour upon favour and when the time came for me to care for him I regret that it came to an end so rapidly... He has gone before me and has met our Master; that day has come for which I prayed that it would not for 35 years... May Allah unite us in His Presence; after such a meeting, may we never be separated – Insha'Allah – may it be so; but alas these days are not easy to pass.⁹⁵

⁹⁴ibid, p.130, taken originally from Ashaab-e-Ahmad Vol. 2, pp623-624.

⁹⁵ibid

This heartfelt description of her beloved husband captures their close relationship and his kind treatment, consideration and respect for Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum's status. Evidently, his passing left a large vacuum in the heart of his pious wife. Hazrat Nawab Muhammad Ali Khan Sahib^{ra} would say to her that he had enjoyed the good fortune to experience the love of the Promised Messiah^{as} not only spiritually, but also as that of a father.

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} further mentioned her husband's great conviction in the institution of Khilafat and how he was affected during the khilafat of Hazrat Khalifatul Masih I^{ra}, when opposition arose. At that time, Hazrat Musleh Ma'ud^{ra} was visiting them in Shimla and Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} remembered the hours spent in discussion between her husband and her brother. Hazrat Nawab Sahib^{ra} was affected by the controversy and came to feel repulsion for the "**Anjuman**" which had challenged the position of the khalifa.

On a personal level, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} mentioned Hazrat Nawab Sahib's qualities of fortitude, magnanimity, and incredible humility, despite the fact that he had seen the influence and authority of his father who had been granted considerable estates by the Government. Even so, his dealings with the poor and household attendants were always sympathetic. He listened to their domestic matters with great interest, giving beneficial advice and donations. He was especially kind to the

children of their domestic helpers and would pray for them.

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} witnessed that her husband had a revulsion for the customs and ostentatious rituals that had developed in his hometown of Malerkotla. He considered them an evil. She wrote:

“... And he would not attend any wedding of his family until they promised to absolutely stop such customs on the occasion...because Hazrat Nawab Sahib^{ra} was considered one of the pious elders of Malerkotla and he oversaw local land disputes. He was very much respected and they would accept what he said.”⁹⁶

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} has related that two of his children were married in Malerkotla in such a simple fashion, that they were simpler than weddings that took place even in Rabwah.⁹⁷ She related that there was only one custom Hazrat Nawab Sahib^{ra} had a liking for. It was when the needy were helped in funding their weddings by a financial collection made by more prosperous families.

Hazrat Nawab Muhammad Ali Khan Sahib^{ra} did not like excessive spending at weddings. Hence, at his children's weddings he did not serve a meal to the local people, and only to those who had travelled from afar. He did not send

⁹⁶*Tehrirat-e-Mubaraka* - Lajna Ima'illah Pakistan, Zia-ul-Islam Press, p.90.

⁹⁷ibid

invitation cards to those friends and family he regularly met to avoid the unnecessary expense. This was out of consideration for those families that were financially struggling, but may have felt pressure to conform to the standards set by more affluent families.

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} also highlighted that she had greatly benefited from the wisdom her husband had imparted upon her. This he would convey in a gentle manner during conversation. She wrote:

“I was very young when I got married. Despite this (situation), by the Grace of Allah, my personality was not childlike because of the influence of Hazrat Masih Ma’ud^{as}. However, he (i.e. Hazrat Nawab Muhammad Ali Khan Sahib^{ra}) considered it his duty throughout the years to explain things to me as we talked, and I greatly benefited from it. May Allah exalt his status higher and higher. Ameen.”⁹⁸

Hazrat Nawab Muhammad Ali Khan Sahib’s immense loyalty and obedience to the Promised Messiah^{as} is demonstrated by one incident that Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} recollected. On one occasion, she was about to mention something that the Promised Messiah^{as} had forbidden her to say, at which point her husband interrupted her and sternly told her never to utter it even

⁹⁸*Tehrirat-e-Mubaraka* – Lajna Ima’illah Pakistan, Zia-ul-Islam Press, p.91.

to him.⁹⁹ This illustrated Hazrat Nawab Muhammad Ali Khan Sahib's profound obedience to the Promised Messiah^{as}.

This love for the Promised Messiah^{as} was reflected by the fact that Hazrat Nawab Muhammad Ali Khan Sahib^{ra} married his beloved daughter, Bu Zainab Sahiba, to the younger son of the Promised Messiah^{as}, Hazrat Mirza Sharif Ahmad^{ra}, despite his brother's bitter opposition. A Companion of the Promised Messiah^{as} - Mufti Muhammad Sadiq Sahib^{ra}, related that when the proposal was sent, Hazrat Nawab Sahib's brother was against the match, fearing social condemnation. He came to Qadian to dissuade his brother, who replied:

“Since I have accepted a person as the Messiah and Mahdi, consider what my position is today and how can I now refuse his marriage proposal?”¹⁰⁰

His brother departed enraged. Hazrat Nawab Mubarak Begum^{ra} herself related her husband's incredible desire for this match and his regard for her family and her brother Hazrat Mirza Sharif Ahmad^{ra}. Irrespective of the anger and grief of his brothers, who felt he was casting off his daughter, Hazrat Nawab Muhammad Ali Khan Sahib^{ra} told them in very definitive terms his feelings regarding it:

⁹⁹ ibid

¹⁰⁰ibid, p.95

“What I have perceived cannot be seen by you but listen to this, even if Sharif Ahmad^{ra} begged in the streets with a broken piece of pottery in his hand and on the other side a king was desirous of this marriage, even then, I would give my daughter to Sharif Ahmad.”¹⁰¹

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} related that she was very much affected by these words and her heart then realised the depths of her husband’s faith. Indeed, such emotional words can only make us marvel at the extent of this pious man’s faith and helps us understand why Allah the Almighty was to bestow the great distinction upon him of having three of the five adult children of the Promised Messiah^{as} united by close bonds of matrimony with his own family.

Indeed, Hazrat Nawab Muhammad Ali Sahib’s faith was a complete faith, whereby he observed **“Huququl-ibaad”** i.e. the rights of the creation of Allah as well as **“Huququllah”** i.e. the rights of Allah, as his wife Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} witnessed. She related that it was her husband’s habit to care for the poorer members of society. He supported many people in their education and employment. He also greatly assisted people on the occasions of their weddings, both in Malerkotla and Qadian. Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} related that she never saw her husband hesitate in regard to charity and he

¹⁰¹ibid, p.96

would give beyond what one would expect and possibly whatever he could afford at the time.

His kindness extended beyond people to animals as well. Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} related that Hazrat Nawab Sahib^{ra} would feed animals daily, ensuring that bread was broken up into little pieces for the birds in the garden and into larger pieces for the animals. He would sprinkle mixes of fruit for the bees which other birds also grew accustomed to and enjoyed. Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} recalled witnessing the pleasant scene when birds would come and feed familiarly from the palms of her husband in the garden¹⁰².

Indeed, Hazrat Nawab Muhammad Ali Khan Sahib^{ra} was an honourable son-in-law of the Promised Messiah^{as} and shared two of his qualities. Firstly, he had a fervent desire to spread the message of Ahmadiyyat. He did not ever waste an opportunity to convey the teachings of the Promised Messiah^{as}.

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} related that whenever a guest visited their home, rich or poor, Hazrat Nawab Sahib^{ra} would preach to hthe. When she inquired what they had discussed, her husband would simply reply; ***“That subject that we have, what else?”*** i.e. he meant Ahmadiyyat. Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} has also recollected one time when the son of a relation of Hazrat Nawab Sahib^{ra} visited. He had studied in Qadian and had

¹⁰²Ashaab-e-Ahmad, Vol.2, p.692

accepted Ahmadiyyat. However, when he went away for employment, he had relinquished his beliefs. Hazrat Nawab Sahib^{ra} had been greatly saddened by this fact. Consequently, when this relation visited, Hazrat Nawab Sahib^{ra} had an intense and lengthy discussion with him. It lasted so long that after the *Isha*¹⁰³ Prayer their conversation was only stopped by the call for the *Fajr*¹⁰⁴ Prayer, about an hour before sunrise!

Even in his final illness, he did not neglect this duty. Hazrat Nawab Mubarak Begum^{ra} wrote:

“Throughout his lifetime at every opportunity, he preached to his relatives as much as he could. Even in his final illness, for the last time he wrote letters to all his relatives and wrote: ‘This is the last time I fulfil the responsibility of conveying the message because now only a few days of my life remain.’”¹⁰⁵

Hazrat Nawab Muhammad Ali Khan Sahib^{ra} had a patient, humble and unassuming disposition; qualities that were also perfectly demonstrated by his father-in-law, the Promised Messiah^{as}. His wife writes that he avoided relating dreams in later life and also writing them down. He remarked that he found some people became somewhat arrogant after experiencing a few dreams or revelations and he did not wish to become so. This pure nature was reflected in his physical body also. Hazrat Nawab Mubarak Begum^{ra} relates that her husband was very

¹⁰³The prescribed Islamic late evening Prayer.

¹⁰⁴The prescribed Islamic Prayer before sunrise.

¹⁰⁵Ashaab-e-Ahmad, Vol 2, p.742.

meticulous about remaining clean. He mostly remained in a state of ablution and had an intense dislike of dirt.

The greatest tribute to the nature of Hazrat Nawab Muhammad Ali Khan Sahib^{ra} is of course the fact that the Promised Messiah^{as} granted him the high status of being his son-in-law and thus also a part of the exalted progeny of the Prophet and Mahdi of the Latter Age. The Promised Messiah^{as} described a man with such a “*righteous son*” to be most fortunate.¹⁰⁶ He continued that Nawab Sahib^{ra} was not inclined towards anything indulgent and licentious in his youth, despite having the worldly means to do so.

The Promised Messiah^{as} gave Hazrat Nawab Muhammad Ali Khan Sahib^{ra} the ultimate tribute by declaring in a letter to him:

“I have such love for you as one has for a beloved son and I pray that even after this earthly life, may Allah the Almighty grant us the joy of meeting again in Dar us Salaam.” (i.e. the Hereafter)¹⁰⁷

Indeed, such a high opinion was both an honour and tribute to the outstanding and virtuous character of Hazrat Nawab Muhammad Ali Sahib^{ra}; a character that made him worthy of being the spiritual son of a Prophet and then a

¹⁰⁶Seerat-o-Swaaneh Sayeddah Nawab Mubarak Begum Sahiba, Prof S N Saeed, Lajna Ima'illah Lahore, P82.

¹⁰⁷*Tehrirat-e-Mubarak* – Lajna Ima'illah Pakistan, Zia-ul-Islam Press, p.106.

physical son also (by his relationship as a son-in-law). It additionally gave him the rare and blessed distinction of being the father and grandfather of a Prophet's progeny.

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum's high opinion and genuine love for her husband is apparent from the dedicated care she gave him during his final illness. Her daughter, Mahmuda Begum Sahiba, related that her mother cared for her father with great devotion, sometimes taking him to Lahore and sometimes Shimla. Whilst he was unwell in Qadian, she did not leave his side. She related that her father was reserved in nature and did not like to be dependent on others.

When severely ill he would become restless, but Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} remained composed and steadfast in her husband's company, providing both support and strength. Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum's deep love and devotion for her husband is evident when we learn that despite never being asked to do anything by him throughout their married life, during his final illness she did not rest for even a minute as she cared for him. She only stopped if a family member insisted that she should take some respite, otherwise she stayed by his bedside despite her own health problems. Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} developed an abscess where her skin rubbed against the headboard of Hazrat Nawab Sahib's bed. She ignored it and did not mention it to anyone. Only after her husband's demise, did she reveal the discomfort she had suffered. This personal neglect meant that the abscess grew quite large and the pain alongside the grief of her

beloved husband's demise combined to make her bedridden for two months.

Abbas Ahmad Khan Sahib, a nephew of Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} has written of his aunt's devoted care of her husband:

“Our Khala, (maternal aunt) Hazrat Sayyeda Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra}, looked after and cared for her husband –our grandfather - Hazrat Nawab Muhammad Ali Khan Sahib^{ra} during his long illness of many years in such an exemplary way, that onlookers and the wider family of Malerkotla, seeing this pure example, were visibly affected by it.”¹⁰⁸

He continued that his aunt was widowed at the young age of 48, after which she lived for over 30 years and had to endure the trial of leaving her home during the Partition of India. Yet, she always remained patient and submissive to the Will of Allah the Almighty.

After the death of her beloved husband and despite the terrible loss, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} conducted herself with the same exemplary fortitude and steadfastness that her devout mother - Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra} had displayed at the time of the passing of the

¹⁰⁸Seerat-o-Swaanah Sayyeda Nawab Mubaraka Begum Sahiba - Prof. S N Saeed, Lajna Ima'illah Lahore, 2001, p.133.

Promised Messiah^{as}. It was a time when she had told her lady companions to control their crying as indeed she was able to do so, despite losing her husband. During that time, she comforted her children including the 11-year-old Mubaraka^{ra}, emphasising that although their blessed father had left them, he had bequeathed them an invaluable treasure chest full of prayers. This would release its contents intermittently but assuredly in their future lives.

At this difficult time of the death of her son-in-law, Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra} was the loving, caring mother who drew Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} into her loving lap. Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum's daughter, Mahmuda Begum Sahiba has related of her mother's conduct during one of the hardest trials of her life:

“After the passing of my father, Umi Jaan spent her time showing great fortitude and patience; never did a word of anguish leave her lips. It is natural that after having such a devoted and respectful husband, she must have felt very anxious inside. It was always Umi Jaan's directions that were followed. It was indeed Allah's blessing that Umi Jaan never had to see any financially hardships. Her brothers also looked after her very well . Immediately after her Iddat¹⁰⁹, they took her to Shimla and would take her every year thereafter,

¹⁰⁹A period of waiting for a widow of 4 months and 10 days after her husband's passing. During this time, she avoids social interaction outside the home.

everyone was kind. All the brothers and especially Hazrat Khalifatul Masih II^{ra} took a lot of care of Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra} and Umi Jaan.”¹¹⁰

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum’s Dreams of Hazrat Nawab Muhammad Ali Khan Sahib^{ra}

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} related that she always wished to see her beloved husband in her dreams and regrettably only saw him a few times. Yet those two or three dreams she experienced, appeared to convey the exalted and blessed status of Hazrat Nawab Muhammad Ali Khan Sahib^{ra} in the Hereafter. In one dream she related, she appeared to have been flying behind her husband on a “*charpai*” (a wooden daybed). In the dream her husband remarked, “*I have not even been shown the window of Hell.*” She related that he was wearing a high-collared waistcoat of bright, white velvet and he further said, “***Whoever wears one of these, such is the treatment that he receives.***”¹¹¹

In another dream, she saw Hazrat Nawab Muhammad Ali Khan Sahib^{ra} approaching her and she was aware that he had passed away. In the dream she told her youngest daughter, Asifa Begum Sahiba, that her father had come. He

¹¹⁰Seerat-o-Swaanah Sayyeda Nawab Mubaraka Begum Sahiba - Prof. S N Saeed, Lajna Ima’illah Lahore, 2001, p.133.

¹¹¹*Tehrirat-e-Mubaraka* – Lajna Ima’illah Pakistan, Zia-ul-Islam Press, p.108.

embraced his daughter affectionately and asked her if she had any problems or needs. He whispered in her ear: ***“I have brought good felicitations for you.”*** Then he also enquired of his wife – Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra}, whether she had any problems or needs. She replied that she had none except that she wished to meet her husband, Hazrat Nawab Sahib^{ra}. At that point she felt as though the body of Hazrat Nawab Muhammad Ali Khan Sahib^{ra} was made of crystal, upon which light was shimmering. It then appeared as though he began to rise from the spot where he was standing. Mubaraka Begum^{ra} saw a door arise alongside him. Hazrat Nawab Muhammad Ali Khan Sahib^{ra} consoled his wife that they would indeed ultimately meet and then gave her the profound reassurance:

“Fear Allah the Almighty as much as you wish here (on earth). There, there is nothing.”¹¹²

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} was perplexed and worried by these words in the dream, in case they suggested Allah’s rejection of her husband until he comforted her:

“...The treatment I have seen meted out for me is only mercy upon mercy, forgiveness upon forgiveness...”

It was as if he had awoken in a wonderful, new world to receive forgiveness and mercy. Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} recalled feeling elated after hearing these words of her dearly departed husband. Surely, the dream was a

¹¹²ibid

divine blessing to ease the acute pain of the loss of a beloved husband of over 35 years.

The Nature of Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum's Worship and the Acceptance of her Prayers

Born as the daughter of the Promised Messiah^{as} - the 'Mahdi of the age', and of Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra} was to have a profound impact on Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra}. We have previously learnt how the intelligent and precocious young Mubaraka^{ra} began learning the Holy Qur'an at the tender age of three, playing with wooden blocks of the Arabic alphabet through a new experimental technique of Pir Manzoor Muhammad Sahib^{ra}. Likewise, the young Mubaraka^{ra} who at this stage still slept within the comfort and security of her parents' beds also witnessed the dedication and devotion of her parents to the worship of Allah the Almighty. It was an occupation in which her father, the Promised Messiah^{as}, would be engaged for the best part of his nights. It was a practice he had loved from an early age, when even as a young child he would say to his playmate cousin; **"Pray that God makes me always an adherent to Salat."**¹¹³

Consequently, the good-natured Mubaraka^{ra} was to be profoundly influenced by the conduct of her devout parents. Likewise, she too requested to be woken for the Tahajjud Prayers¹¹⁴ by a neighbouring aunty nicknamed *"Maulwiyaani Jee"* (wife of Hazrat Maulvi Abdul Karim Sahib^{ra}).

¹¹³Seerat Hazrat Masih Ma'ud^{ra} -Amatul Hai Fazeelat, Islam International Publications, 2008, p.11.

¹¹⁴a voluntary pre-dawn prayer

Naturally, the young Mubarakara did not always wake at *Maulwiyaani Jee's* prompting. Sometimes, her father would see this and would kindly suggest to his daughter to instead remain lying and to recite "***Tasbeeh and Tahmeed***"¹¹⁵ in bed.

The young Mubarakara was influenced by the devotion and passion for prayer which she witnessed daily. Indeed, she was the girl who had watched the fervency of her mother's own prayers and had commented that they affected all those around her. The saying of the Holy Prophet^{sa} "***Al Jannatu tahta aqdamil ummahati***"¹¹⁶ i.e. "***Paradise lies under the feet of mothers***" was proven by the fact that this blessed lady was to become another example of a true "***saliha***", namely, a righteous servant of Allah the Almighty, by following her mother's example. Hazrat Nawab Mubarak Begum^{ra} witnessed the constant worship of her devout parents and just as Salat was the sustenance of their souls, so too was it to become hers. Indeed, it was her father, the Promised Messiah^{as}, who was to teach:

"What is Salat? It is a supplication addressed to the Lord of Honour without which a person cannot be truly alive, nor can they procure any means of security and happiness."¹¹⁷

¹¹⁵i.e. phrases for the glorification and praise of God.

¹¹⁶Sunan Nisai

¹¹⁷The Essence of Islam, Vol.II, Trans. Chaudhry Muhammad Zafrullah Khan, Islam International Publications Ltd., Surrey, 2004 p.297.

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} understood the fundamental importance of prayer in a believer's life. The significance she gave to her supplications was witnessed by all her family; the pleasure she gained from worship was evident from the immense time and energy she devoted to her Prayers. It was a characteristic similar to that of her father the Promised Messiah^{as}, which he attained during his supplications. He would advise:

“Do not perform the Salat as a mere ceremony but observe it with the burning and the melting of the heart and supplicate continuously in the Salat. It is the key to the resolving of all difficulties.”¹¹⁸

Her sister-in-law, Hazrat “Hazrat Choti Appa”¹¹⁹, wrote of the quality of Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum's Prayers:

“She offered very impassioned and heart-melting, lengthy Prayers to the degree that when she could no longer sit and offer her Prayers due to physical weakness, she would then spend hours busy in the worship of Allah whilst lying down. She felt the pain of the whole Jama'at in her heart - the progress of Islam and Ahmadiyyat, the welfare of the Jama'at, the missionaries and workers, their wives and children, her relatives and all those who would write to her; she would abundantly pray for

¹¹⁸ ibid, p.310

¹¹⁹Hazrat Sayyeda Maryam Siddiqua Begum, one of the wives of Hazrat Musleh Ma'ud^{ra}

them. Even when those requesting prayers would have had their purposes fulfilled and forgot to send news, she would still continue praying for them with the same fervour. She also encouraged others who wrote to her to do so. Whilst she had the health and strength, she would respond to letters with her own hand with great love.”¹²⁰

The intensity of these prayers was also witnessed by her niece, Amatul Basit Sahiba. She wrote that when her aunt left the room after completing her prayers, her condition would be such that:

“...She would be so weakened that her legs would stagger and she would fall on her bed exhausted. After drinking some water or some other fluid, she would then have the strength to speak. Often, she told us, ‘I have allocated my prostrations (during prayer)’, and one prostration was dedicated to that part of the Jama’at who had never even written to her to request prayers. However her love and kindness would not let her forget them. Allah only knows how many prayers she did for those who did write to her. It was amazing to see how regular she was in the responding to her letters.

Her daughter-in-law, Tayyaba Siddiqua Sahiba, wrote of the quality of Hazrat Nawab Mubarak Begum’s prayers:

¹²⁰Seerat-o-Swaanah Sayyeda Nawab Mubarak Begum Sahiba - Prof. S N Saeed, Lajna Ima’illah Lahore, 2001, p.145.

“Ever since I got married, I always saw her offering very long Salat and prayers. During more anxious times such as just before our departure from Qadian, apart from her Salat she would spend all day uttering prayers as she walked to and fro.

In Dar-us-Salam, her bedroom was on one side and on the other side was mine with a long verandah at the front. On this verandah, she would walk up and down reciting verbal prayers... Just as she increased in age, the quality of her prayers also increased. She would lock the door from the inside and I would worry a lot in case she became unwell. I always used to say to her to leave the door open [assuring her] that no one would intrude. Regarding prayers she once said of her youngest daughter Asifa that she has (due to the Partition)¹²¹ received a lot less in her wedding collection than her other sisters did; so I have permanently dedicated two prostrations in Prayer for her.”¹²²

She would also encourage her children and others to offer their prayers with passion and fervency. Tayyaba Siddiqua Sahiba continues relating:

“Once we all went to Hazrat Ammaa Jaan’s house after the final prayer of Ramadan – naturally,

¹²¹The Partition of India and the creation of Pakistan in 1947.

¹²²ibid, p.147

everyone had been affected by the prayers - the girls were all quiet. She (i.e. Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra}) began to ask, 'Who has cried a lot today?' I was already feeling a bit tearful, so I and another girl began to cry. Although I would only probably have been in the seventh grade, I still very much liked the way she asked about prayers."¹²³

Similarly, Sahibzadi Fozia Shamim Sahiba has noted that the combination of having pious and loving parents as well as her own inherent virtue and spirituality, made her aunt extremely keen when it came to supplications. Watching her aunt as a child, she recalls seeing her engaged in worship for hours. In the afternoon, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} would offer her *Zuhr*¹²⁴ Prayer alone in a separate room before lunch. She would spend a great amount of time on it. Fozia Shamim Sahiba has recollected the weakened state of her aunt after her intense prayers. She relates that the impression of the elder, holy relatives in the household such as Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} was so profound that the young girls would be influenced. They too would routinely seek out separate rooms in a quiet corner of the house to offer their supplications and *"At the time of Maghrib Prayer an extremely pure atmosphere was created."*¹²⁵

¹²³ibid, p.147

¹²⁴The prescribed prayer in Islam which is observed just after the sun has crossed the zenith point. (Just after midday)

¹²⁵Seerat-o-Swaanah Sayyeda Nawab Mubaraka Begum Sahiba - Prof. S N Saeed, Lajna Ima'illah Lahore, 2001, p.148.

Amatul Shakoor Sahiba has related:

“From my childhood, one thing that I saw was that Barri Umi would observe her Prayers with great care. She would say her Prayers alone in her room where the light was dimmed. She disliked noise during her Prayers; therefore care was taken to maintain silence. I remember in Qadian one of the girls of Barri Umi’s household would always sit outside her room, taking care that no one made a noise near her room and that no one went in during her Prayers. Whatever the disturbance would be whether a gathering of a wedding etc., Barri Umi would punctually observe her prayers in the same meticulous manner. Sometimes I would go in the morning and she would be sitting already dressed reading the Holy Qur’an.”¹²⁶

Her niece Tahira Siddiqua Sahiba fondly recollected that she and many others of her family would write to her aunt whenever they had any worries, confident that their aunt’s worship was of the highest quality and her prayers were often answered. She reminisced that she once wrote requesting prayers and her aunt affectionately replied. She reassured her that she prayed for her niece alongside her other relatives, but also took her name individually in every prayer that she offered. Hence, she explained that she prayed for her niece twice in every Salat. After her death, her niece greatly missed the aunt who had

¹²⁶ibid

sympathised with her regarding each and every difficulty she suffered.

In fact, all those who had the blessed opportunity to live close to Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra}, be they family or companions, testify to the fact that her Prayers were very long and filled with deep anguish and fervency. The concentration and involvement with which she offered her Prayers, made her lose all track of time. It was an experience which involved all the senses: mental, physical and emotional; an experience which immersed her so completely that she would emerge physically weakened. Her great-niece, Amatul Rauf Sahiba, daughter of the late Sahibzada Mirza Waseem Ahmad Sahib, has also recollected her good fortune of receiving the prayers of her great-aunt. She relates that her mother once told her that when she was around two or three years old, she fell by the fireplace and became unconscious. She severely burnt her arm to the extent that some of her bone became visible. Her mother then wrote to all the pious elders of the family requesting prayers. She recollected that Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} wrote most regularly to her inquiring of her niece's health and offering advice to apply a particular ointment to avoid scarring. Her mother recollects that she did so whenever Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} wrote and no doubt her prayers and advice resulted in the scarring being minimal.

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum's concern and prayers for others was by no means limited to the immediate members of her family or to Ahmadis alone. For the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, she was like a gracious mother, soft and kind-hearted, who personally felt the worries and fears of others. One reason her prayers were so profuse

and universal, was because she followed the *Sunnah*¹²⁷ of the Holy Prophet^{sa} who taught:

“Love one another and pray for each other secretly. If a person prays secretly then an angel says, ‘May the same be for you also.’”¹²⁸

Indeed, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} did so, and her prayers ranged from covering individuals to the entire Ahmadiyya Community. They even extended to mankind at large. On one occasion a student who had failed his exams twice requested her prayers, despite having no hope for his third attempt. Yet, he was blessed with the good news of success soon after having requested Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum’s prayers. Similarly, once three members of an Ahmadi family were falsely accused of murder. It was a very tense period for the family and every other day they would write to Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} requesting her prayers. She responded in a letter reassuring them:

“I pray again and again for them in every prayer, for their honourable acquittal and release.”¹²⁹

Within a month or two of this response, the family happily informed Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} that with the help of her blessed prayers and by the Grace of Allah, they had all been honourably exonerated.

¹²⁷The practice of the Holy Prophet^{sa}

¹²⁸Malfuzat, Vol.I, P336. (Taken from Seerat-o-Swaaneh Sayyeda Nawab Mubaraka Begum Sahiba, Lajna Ima’illah Lahore, 2001, Prof. S N Saeed, p.151.)

¹²⁹ibid

Hazrat Nawab Mubarak Begum^{ra} was to acknowledge herself:

“Even as I turn over at night, I also pray at such times.”¹³⁰

Outside the Community, Hazrat Nawab Mubarak Begum^{ra} would sincerely pray for others who genuinely requested her prayers. On one occasion a non-Ahmadi wrote to her:

“I have got your address from an Ahmadi friend of mine. I am not Ahmadi. I am writing a letter to you requesting prayers because I see the miracle of your prayers. My friend often writes letters requesting prayers from you and then enjoys the fruits of your prayers. Please also pray for me. I have some difficulties regarding my service (Employment).”¹³¹

Surely enough after some time, Hazrat Nawab Mubarak Begum^{ra} received another letter from him stating with conviction:

“As a result of your prayers, Allah the Almighty has eased my difficulty. Alhamdolillah.”¹³²

¹³⁰ibid

¹³¹ibid

¹³²Seerat-o-Swaaneh Sayyeda Nawab Mubarak Begum Sahiba, Lajna Ima'illah Lahore, 2001, Prof. S N Saeed, p.151.

Indeed, the prayers of this pious lady were copious and very extensive in the people they included. Professor Naseem Saeed has written that once whilst she was visiting this righteous lady, they happened to hear a plane fly above them. Consequently, Hazrat Nawab Mubarak Begum^{ra} remarked:

“I pray even for these planes that fly by; O Allah, that plane and its travellers, may they all remain safe. Those who are going for a righteous purpose, grant them success in their objectives.”¹³³

Such was the universal compassion of this great lady for the entire creation of Allah the Almighty. By virtue of her kind, maternal nature, she was instinctively concerned for the moral and physical welfare of people globally and indeed proved to be a worthy daughter of the Imam Mahdi, Masih’ullah.

Hazrat Nawab Mubarak Begum’s compassion and concern for mankind and the Jama’at in particular, was reflected in the meticulous attention she paid to her letters. Hazrat Nawab Mubarak Begum’s correspondence requesting prayers often exceeded over a hundred letters per week, as members of the Jama’at sought the prayers of a lady of exemplary piety. To these letters she would respond with offering reassurances to the despondent, encouraging them to continue praying and affirming that she too was praying [for them]. Sometimes, she would additionally guide members to seek the prayers of the

¹³³ibid

Khalifa-e-waqt.¹³⁴ She would greatly feel the worry and heartache of others. The letters she received varied from personal and financial problems to social and political worries. Whatever the issue, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} did not differentiate amongst people; her sympathy and prayers encompassed all.

Razia Ghauri Sahiba, a member of Lajna Ima'illah living in East Africa and later in Rabwah, wrote that when she visited Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} after having travelled from East Africa, the latter enquired after her husband - Muhammad Akram Ghauri Sahib. Whenever she requested prayers from Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra}, for him, she would respond:

“I have written the names of Ghauri Sahib and your brother Nadeem Sahib in my list of people to pray for, and at the time of prayer these names come to my tongue spontaneously.”¹³⁵

The importance she gave to letters requesting prayers is illustrated by Razia Ghauri Sahiba's recollection of meeting Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} in her home on another occasion. She related that once she visited Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} who was in her room on an upper floor of her house and had a large pile of letters in front of her. As Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} saw her, she received her warmly, asking if she had just come from East Africa and if her journey had been agreeable. Razia Ghauri Sahiba

¹³⁴ibid, p.153

¹³⁵ibid, p.153

recollected that Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} was suffering with a bad cold and feeling slightly unwell. Hazrat Begum Sahiba^{ra} explained how despite the fact she was finding it difficult; she was still responding to several important letters. She said:

“...Because of my illness it is difficult to write letters, but the authors have the conviction that they will undoubtedly receive a reply. There are 11 letters with air letter enclosed for a reply.’ Saying this, she began writing the replies and then said: ‘Still, you consider yourself to be sitting in my company (whilst I write).”¹³⁶

Indeed, her desire to pray for others remained a lifelong wish and practice. When her health obstructed her from responding to requests for prayers, she apologised publicly in the “*Misbah*” magazine in 1966. However, she still urged people to send her letters, for she valued the opportunity to pray. She wrote:

“...It is requested that the responses to letters are not awaited and that I may be pardoned, but please do write. The opportunity to pray is still being given by Allah the Almighty with His special Favour and Grace. Lying, sitting and no matter in what condition, I do not wish to be deprived of serving people (by praying for them) Alhamdulillah; please pray.”¹³⁷

¹³⁶Seerat-o-Swaanah Sayyeda Nawab Mubaraka Begum Sahiba, Lajna Ima’illah Lahore, 2001, Prof. S N Saeed, p.154.

¹³⁷*Misbah*, May 1966, p.6.

Indeed, her daughter-in-law - Tayyaba Siddiqua Sahiba, witnessed the extensive prayers of her mother-in-law. She related:

“An infinite number of letters requesting prayers would come from every country and every city. After coming to Rabwah, a girl, Bushra came daily to write the responses to (her) letters. One could infer from the conversation between the two that every writer requesting prayers would be remembered in her prayers daily.”¹³⁸

Bushra Tayyaba Yusuf Sahiba was a lady who had the privilege of serving Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} for 11 years, helping her to respond to her correspondence. She was thus an accurate witness to the quality of these individualised prayers; prayers that were universal, detailed, fervent, and sincere. She related that Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} would insist upon responding to letters for prayers though it was hard for her when she was unwell. In fact, on one occasion, after being ill for several days, she requested Bushra Tayyaba Sahiba to convey to the Jama’at after her life that despite the great pain she had sometimes suffered, she had still responded to their letters. One day after feeling weak for several days¹³⁹ she instructed Bushra Tayyaba Sahiba to convey to the Jama’at:

¹³⁸Seerat-o-Swaanah Sayyeda Nawab Mubaraka Begum Sahiba, Lajna Ima’illah Lahore, 2001, Prof. S N Saeed, p.155.

¹³⁹ibid, p.157

“You remain witness that I pray for everyone with complete sincerity, great sympathy and heartfelt pain. I pray taking the names of each person I know and those who write to me.”

Indeed, she would very affectionately keep the letters of those people who wrote regularly requesting prayers, under her pillow or who would request prayers repeatedly and visited often. Bushra Tayyaba Sahiba reminisced that whenever she fetched these letters Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} would say: ***“I pray for them, taking the name of each one of them.”*** Remembering her commitment to the Jama’at especially during her severe illness, would bring tears to Bushra Tayyaba Sahiba’s eyes. She described Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} as being:

“Like a kind and gracious mother who helped all the Jama’at with the protective shade of her prayers. She prioritised the pain and afflictions of others over her own pain and afflictions.”¹⁴⁰

Indeed, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} was ever involved in prayer and worship. She perceived how a human being could never completely thank Allah the Almighty for His Bountiful Blessings. Like her father before her, she realised that learning the very method of prayer is

¹⁴⁰Seerat-o-Swaaneh Sayyeda Nawab Mubaraka Begum Sahiba, Prof. S N Saeed, Lajna Ima’illah Lahore, 2001, p.157.

indeed one of the greatest Blessings of Allah the Almighty, as indeed is the opportunity to pray. Her belief in the benefits of prayer is best expressed in her own words which she conveyed in a message to *Khuddamul- Ahmadiyya*¹⁴¹ in 1963:

“Prayer is a great wealth and a great blessing. Just as it increases our love for our Master and Creator, similarly it increases our love and kindness for His Creation. It is a tried and tested cure for cleansing one’s heart; so make use of it. When you pray for your brothers, you will feel that a love and desire for the fulfilment of all their wishes will develop in your heart and some personal development will occur in you. A special love and affection for all will be created in your heart and thoughts of harshness will be effaced. May Allah the Almighty be with you all.”¹⁴²

¹⁴¹Auxiliary organisation of the male members of the Ahmadiyya Community between the ages of 15 and 40 years.

¹⁴²Message for Khuddam Al Ahmadiyya at National Ijtema, Sept 1963. Taken from *Tehriraat-e-Mubarak*, Lajna Ima’illah Pakistan, Zia-ul-Islam Press, p.121.

Love of the Holy Prophet^{sa}

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} had great love and devotion for the holy personage appointed by Allah the Almighty to convey the perfect message of Islam i.e. the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{sa}. Indeed, she was also the daughter of that true and ardent devotee to the Holy Prophet^{sa} – Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as}, whose eyes would fill with tears at the very mention of the Holy Prophet^{sa} and of whom his son, Hazrat Mirza Sultan Ahmad^{ra} was to say:

“One thing I especially saw of my respected father was that he could not tolerate even the smallest slight against the Holy Prophet^{sa}. If someone uttered even a minor affront against the majesty of the Holy Prophet^{sa}, my father’s face would turn red, and his eyes would change appearance with indignation, and he would rise immediately and leave such a gathering. Respected father had a great love for the Holy Prophet^{sa}. Such a love I have not seen in any individual.”¹⁴³

As the daughter of such a personage, indeed of a Prophet sent for the renaissance of Islam, it is unsurprising that Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} also felt great devotion for the Holy Prophet. This love was evident daily, when she

¹⁴³Seerat Tayyaba – Hazrat Mirza Bashir Ahmad^{ra}, p.124. (Cited from Seerat Hazrat Masih Mauo’od, Amatul Hai Fazeelat, Islam International publications, 2008, p54.)

would offer *Durood Sharif* (invocations on the Holy Prophet^{sa}) prolifically alongside the glorification and praise of God. She would also advise others to do so. Her niece, Tahira Siddiqua Sahiba, said of this quality of her aunt:

“Khala Jaan (i.e. Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra}) was a picture of love for Allah the Almighty and the Holy Prophet^{sa}. Once, when the Holy Prophet^{sa} was being mentioned, she said that in his final illness the Holy Prophet^{sa} had experienced high fever and that in those times there were neither fans nor air conditioning. Hence, in that intense heat how much he (i.e. the Holy Prophet^{sa}), must have suffered. Saying this, her eyes filled with tears.”¹⁴⁴

Once, addressing the Lajna of Karachi on a day to celebrate the noble character of the Holy Prophet^{sa}, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} advised the ladies to offer *Durood*¹⁴⁵ abundantly explaining:

“A very good prescription to cleanse the heart is to invoke Durood abundantly upon the Holy Prophet^{sa}.”¹⁴⁶

¹⁴⁴Seerat-o-Swaanah Sayyeda Nawab Mubaraka Begum Sahiba^{ra}, Lajna Ima'illah Lahore, 2001, Prof. S N Saeed, p.161.

¹⁴⁵Invocation to God to bless and prosper the Holy Prophet^{sa} and his progeny

¹⁴⁶ibid

She also said that by doing so the favours of our patron (i.e. the Holy Prophet^{sa}) become apparent to us and then a righteous reformation occurs within ourselves. Thus, the prayers of this beloved benefactor of ours reach us in the form of mercy from Allah the Almighty. This love and faith in the Holy Prophet^{sa} overflowed in her multitude of poetic compositions about him. In her poetry, she would reflect upon his fine qualities, his favours to mankind and his perfect example. Below are extracts from one such composition:

شان تیری گمان سے بڑھ کر

Your majesty is beyond imagination

حسن و احسان میں نظیرِ عدیم

You are incomparable in your beauty and favours

تیرا تہ ہے فہم سے بالا

Your status is beyond our understanding

سرنگوں ہو رہی ہے عقلِ سلیم

In the process my wisdom surrenders

Then stating the favours of the Holy Prophet^{sa} she writes:

آدمی میں نہ آدمیت تھی

In man there was no humanity

اس کو انساں بنا دیا تُو نے

You have made him human,

لے کے آبِ حیات تو آیا

You came with the elixir of life

مر رہے تھے، جلا دیا تُو نے

They were dying and you gave life

متہائے کمالِ انسانی...

...You are the excellent apex of man

پاک اسمائے انبیاء کر دی

You purified the holy reputations of the Prophets

ہمہ بودند زیرِ صد بہتان

Those who were under hundreds of false allegations

اے سراج منیر تو آیا

O brilliant sun you came

ساری دنیا میں نور پھیلا یا

And spread light throughout the world.¹⁴⁷

She also wrote a lengthy three-part poem on the Holy Prophet^{sa} as ***“The Chief of the Prophets”***, contemplating one of his many spiritual attributes in each part.¹⁴⁸

One of the great favours of the Holy Prophet^{sa} bestowed upon mankind was explained by Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra}. She said that if one became his true and sincere follower - a Muslim in the true sense of the word, then one would never suffer from hopelessness and depression. She also expressed:

“The delightful fruition of the pure teaching of our beloved Prophet Muhammad^{sa} and one great favour of the multitude of his favours is this, that one who has true faith in him never dies ensnared by regret, grief or hopelessness.”¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁷Durre Aden, India, 2002, (Fazl Umar Printing Press), pp16-19.

¹⁴⁸ibid, pp21-28.

¹⁴⁹Seerat-o-Swaanah Sayyeda Nawab Mubaraka Begum Sahiba - Prof. S N Saeed, Lajna Ima'illah Lahore, 2001, p.163.

She further explained that this is because a Muslim's purpose in life is of a spiritual nature and his faith is of a very high level. She also elucidated that the beauty of the Holy Prophet's teaching was that it did not enslave man to this world and it taught one to give due rights, both to the Creator (*Haququllah*) and to His creation (*Huququlibaad*). It taught man to live in this world but also to be detached from it. It is through the Holy Prophet's perfect example that man learns how to find God. The Holy Prophet^{sa} most notably also introduced the rights of women and lifted their status to be on a par with that of men. Some brief extracts of Hazrat Nawab Mubarak Begum's poetry on this subject are presented here to give a taste of the highly emotive and passionate style of her compositions and of her deep appreciation of the Holy Prophet^{sa}:

رکھ پیش نظر وہ وقت بہن، جب زندہ گاڑی جاتی تھی

**Reflect on the times, O sister! When you used to be
buried alive**

گھر کی دیواریں روتی تھیں، جب دنیا میں تو آتی تھی

**The walls of the house would weep, when you came
into this world**

جب باپ کی جھوٹی غیرت کا، خوں جوش میں آنے لگتا تھا

**When the false pride of a father would make his blood
boil**

جس طرح جنا ہے سانپ کوئی، یوں ماں تیری گھبراتی تھی

As the mother agonised as if she had borne a serpent!

عورت ہونا تھی سخت خطا، تھے تجھ پر سارے جبر روا

**Your gender being your greatest mistake sanctioned
all brutality upon you**

یہ جرم نہ بخشا جاتا تھا، تا مرگ سزائیں پاتی تھی

**Never forgiven of the crime of being a woman, till
death were you penalised**

گویا تو کنکر پتھر تھی، احساس نہ تھا جزبات نہ تھے

**They thought you had no feeling or emotions, you
were considered like an insignificant pebble**

توہین وہ اپنی یاد تو کر! ترکہ میں بانٹی جانی تھی

**Remember how you were insulted, when you were
disposed off in inheritance**

وہ رحمت عالم آتا ہے، تیرا حامی ہو جاتا ہے

**That “mercy for the world” came (i.e., the Holy
Prophet^{sa}) and championed cause**

تو بھی انساں کہلاتی ہے، سب حق تیرے دلواتا ہے

**You are recognised as human now; he established all
your rights,**

ان ظلموں سے چھڑواتا ہے

Freed you from all oppression

بھیج درود اس محسن پر تو دن میں سو سو بار

**Send several hundreds of salutaions on this
benefactor every day**

پاک محمد مصطفیٰ، سب نبیوں کا سردار

**Muhammad, the holy, the chosen one, chief among all
Prophets¹⁵⁰**

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} also penned a poem in Persian regarding the glory of the Holy Prophet^{sa} on behalf of the Promised Messiah^{as} - her father, again illustrating her devotion and admiration of this blessed Prophet^{sa} divinely appointed as a mercy for mankind. As was previously mentioned, this love of the Holy Prophet of Islam^{sa} was partly a consequence of her own father's devotion to this Prophet^{sa} of God. Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} has described the Promised Messiah^{as} as:

***"A special lover of his Lord and the Holy Prophet^{sa}.
I never saw that he mentioned the Holy Prophet^{sa}
and his eyes did not fill with tears...in my own heart
from a very young age, I had a...throbbing in my***

¹⁵⁰Durre Aden – India, 2002, pg24

heart to see the Holy Prophet^{sa} because of his [her father's] influence.”¹⁵¹

Thus, this profound influence naturally permeated her poetry, the overriding themes of which were twofold: the love of Allah the Almighty and the love of His Prophet - Muhammad^{sa}. These themes can be studied in greater detail in her collection of poetry titled ***“Durre Aden”***.

This special love for the Holy Prophet^{sa} was indeed inherited from her father, the Promised Messiah^{as}. Her father exalted this Prophet^{sa} above all Prophets and believed the ultimate cause of his own existence to be the defence of this **“perfect exemplar”** and the divine teachings that he had introduced through the Holy Qur’an. The Promised Messiah^{as} was to describe this unique Prophet^{sa} as:

“...The only Prophet^{sa} who sowed the seed of the Unity of God in such a way that even now it has not gone to waste. He is the only Prophet^{sa} who came at a time when the whole world had gone astray, but who, before he passed away, spread the doctrine of the Unity of God in the world like a sea stretching far and wide.

He is the only Prophet^{sa} for whom God has shown His sense of honour in every age and worked thousands of miracles to uphold his truth. At

¹⁵¹*Al Fazl* magazine, Jan 3rd, 1974.

present, the Holy Prophet^{sa} has been greatly slandered. So, the sense of honour of God stirred itself more than it had stirred at any time before and He sent me as the Promised Messiah to be a witness to the truth of his Prophethood to the entire world.”¹⁵²

It must have been truly heartwarming for Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} to be blessed with the knowledge that her parents were with this remarkable Prophet of Islam^{sa} in the Hereafter. This occurred when she dreamt shortly before her father’s demise that the Holy Prophet^{sa} and his Companions had come to receive him at their home in Qadian. Also, as has been previously mentioned, soon after the passing of her mother - Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra}, she dreamt that her younger brother, Hazrat Mirza Mubarak Ahmad^{ra}¹⁵³, informed her of how their mother was residing “*In the same room*” as the Holy Prophet^{sa}. Indeed, such dreams were an indication of the immeasurable love both Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum’s parents and she herself felt for the Holy Prophet of Islam^{sa}.

¹⁵²*Haqiqat al-Wahi*, p. 618. (Taken from *Ahmadi Muslims Historical Outline*, Noor-ud-Deen Muneer, Lahore Art Press, 1983, p.40)

¹⁵³This younger brother had passed away in 1907, aged 8.

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum's Moral Upbringing of her Children

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} was to be blessed with five children; two sons (Nawab Muhammad Ahmad Khan Sahib and Nawab Masood Ahmad Khan Sahib) and three daughters (Mansoorah Begum Sahiba, Mahmuda Begum Sahiba and Asifa Masoodah Begum Sahiba).¹⁵⁴ Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum's upbringing of her children was deeply influenced by her own childhood which she had spent in the unique and distinguished company of her father - the Promised Messiah^{as}, and her mother - Hazrat Nusrat Jahan Begum^{ra}. Her childhood had been a beautiful combination of love and affection. However, this love was not unconditional but a love tempered by the constant awareness that the love of one's Lord and Master, supercedes all human bonds. An awareness that there is no human relationship, however close, that can ever and should ever compete with the love and gratitude we feel and express for our benevolent Creator - Allah Almighty.

She had loving and kind parents. She had a father who would respond to her every beck and call at night, who nursed her with cough syrups and allayed her bedtime

¹⁵⁴Nawab Muhammad Ahmad Khan Sahib married Amatul Hai Begum, daughter of Hazrat Mirza Bashir Ahmad^{ra}. Nawab Masood Ahmad Khan Sahib married Tayyaba Begum, daughter of Hazrat Dr. Mir Muhammad Ismail^{ra}. Mansoorah Begum Sahiba married Hazrat Mirza Nasir Ahmadth - [later Hazrat Khalifatul Masih III]. Mahmuda Begum Sahiba married Dr. Mirza Munawar Ahmad, son of Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad^{ra} (Hazrat Khalifatul Masih II), Asifa Masoodah Begum Sahiba married Mirza Mubashar Ahmad Sahib, son of Hazrat Mirza Bashir Ahmad^{ra}.

fears. She had a mother who due to her kindness, would purchase a particular fabric which her daughter had expressed a liking for in a passing conversation. Yet, despite all this, the young Mubaraka^{ra} was aware from a young age that her parents' worship was paramount to them. She was similarly aware that she had to fulfil her personal obligations to her Creator as a Muslim. Thus, the neglect of an Islamic injunction was a boundary she knew she could not cross however much her parents loved her. The father who had on occasion personally brought her *parathas*¹⁵⁵ for breakfast served on a tray, the father who considered his daughter to be a “*guest*” in his home, was still the father who would not tolerate any negligence in this area. This was something the young Mubaraka^{ra} knew instinctively and she was never lax in these matters.

It was the importance of this worship, our duty to our Creator, that she and her husband - Hazrat Nawab Muhammad Ali Khan Sahib^{ra} were at pains to inculcate in their own children. Thus, whilst displaying great affection for her children, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} showed a firm resolve to instil Islamic values within them. Her middle daughter, Mahmuda Begum Sahiba, related from her earliest memories the wonderful comfort and security she felt whenever she was unwell as she curled up in her mother's bed:

“From the time I can consciously remember that figure of my mother I felt as a shield for me. In my

¹⁵⁵fried flatbreads

childhood, whenever I had the smallest of ailments such as earache, I clearly remember despite sleeping in a separate room that I could not find comfort in my own bed not until Umi Jaan would gently, gently, pat me. Then, I would find comfort. At those times, I can still remember the pleasure and joy I received. Sometimes, I wished that I was ill every day, so that I could spend the nights close to Umi Jaan.”¹⁵⁶

Mahmuda Begum Sahiba has further explained that although in their household it was customary for the children to sleep separately after the age of 2 or 3 years, this did not mean that Hazrat Nawab Mubarak Begum^{ra} was neglectful of her children. On the contrary, she recollected that her mother would call her children to her before bed and she would share some religious knowledge or moral teachings with them. Their father, “*Abba Mian*”, also played a large part in this and she recollected her mother always embracing them affectionately before sending them to bed.

In the mornings, Hazrat Nawab Mubarak Begum^{ra} would call over her children to her bedroom. She made a point of greeting them with the Islamic greeting “*Assalamo Alaikum*” and insisted that they responded likewise. She would then reiterate the religious teachings she had discussed the previous night with them so as to firmly consolidate them in their minds. Often, she would then talk of the Holy Prophet^{sa} and other prophets and related

¹⁵⁶Seerat-o-Swaanah Sayyeda Nawab Mubarak Begum Sahiba, Prof. S N Saeed, Lajna Ima’illah Lahore, 2001, p.237.

incidents from the time of the Promised Messiah^{as}, according to their level of understanding. Mahmuda Begum Sahiba recollected that it was also her mother's routine to casually advise her children throughout the day on the Islamic teachings of daily conduct. If they repeatedly committed a mistake, she would gently admonish them. On the other hand, her mother did show firmness in establishing regularity in her children's observance of the daily prayers.

She related that when Salat¹⁵⁷ became obligatory upon them (i.e. from age 10 onwards) her mother would regularly remind them to observe their prayers and recite the Holy Qur'an each morning. She reminisced that there was an authority in her mother's directions that made her observe her Salat. Moreover, the thought of the shame of being punished for negligence of prayer was enough to prevent her from being lazy in this regard.

The importance Hazrat Nawab Mubarak Begum^{ra} gave to the observance of prayer is further illustrated by the fact that her youngest daughter, Asifa Begum Sahiba, remembered being slapped only once during her childhood and that was for missing her Salat. She also recollected that her mother had such an authority in her voice that they rarely disobeyed her. However, this was one rare occasion when she thus caused her mother to reprimand her. On that occasion, Hazrat Nawab Mubarak Begum^{ra} had asked her daughter if she had offered her Asr

¹⁵⁷ The obligatory physical worship prescribed five times a day for a Muslim.

Prayer.¹⁵⁸ Asifa Begum Sahiba replied in the negative and so Hazrat Nawab Mubarak Begum^{ra} told her to offer it. Asifa Sahiba returned after a short time and her mother again enquired if her daughter had offered her Prayer. Again, the young Asifa Begum Sahiba said “no” and was consequently again directed to go and offer it. When on her third appearance Asifa Sahiba again responded negatively to the same question, her mother, Hazrat Nawab Mubarak Begum^{ra}, lightly slapped her.

Asifa Sahiba was understandably startled because it was the only time her mother physically punished her. The incident teaches the profound importance of the observance of Salat and conveying this to our children. Since her mother only reprimanded Asifa Begum Sahiba once in this manner, it communicated to her the gravity of the sin of negligence in prayer. Indeed, this was taught to us by our beloved Holy Prophet^{sa} 1400 years ago when he said: ***“Tark-uduua’i ma’si-yatun” i.e. “It is a sin to abandon Praying.”***¹⁵⁹

The incident illustrates how sometimes parents must employ different approaches with their children, as each child is unique in temperament. The position of a child in a family can also influence the developing personality of that child. It is possible that Asifa Begum Sahiba as the youngest of five children was slightly more indulged than her siblings and thus more challenging. She herself admitted that this was the case:

¹⁵⁸The mid-afternoon Prayer prescribed in Islam.

¹⁵⁹Basics of Religious Education, 4th ed., Sheikh Abdul Hadi, Islam International Publications Ltd, 2002, p.101.

“I was very much defeated by sleep. In the morning, she (i.e. her mother) would wake me for prayers and sometimes when I was lazy, she would walk around reciting the couplet that she had written for me:

کچھ تو خوف خدا کرو بے بی

کچھ تو بے بی خدا کا خوف کر

**Do somewhat fear Allah, Baby
Do somewhat, Baby, fear Allah.’¹⁶⁰**

After offering her Salat her mother would say:

“Your sisters offered Tahajjud at this age, yet you are lazy in getting up for Fajr Prayer¹⁶¹, even though I offer my prayers before I wake you. This is the age to ask Allah for anything; later on [in life] you will have other responsibilities. Once you have children, you won’t have as much energy.”¹⁶²

She recollected that she was about 15 or 16 years of age at the time when her mother said this.

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} clearly spent time on the moral training of her children and instilling good etiquette

¹⁶⁰“Baby” was the nickname of Asifa Begum Sahiba as the youngest child of Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra}

¹⁶¹The prescribed morning Muslim Prayer before sunrise.

¹⁶²Seerat-o-Swaaneh Sayyeda Nawab Mubaraka Begum Sahiba, Prof. S N Saeed, Lajna Ima’illah Lahore, p.241.

within them. Her daughter, Mahmuda Begum Sahiba, recalled that she and her siblings knew that they had to greet their mother with the Islamic greeting "**Assalamo Alaikum**" each morning. They were also greatly aware of the importance of honesty and the sinfulness of lying. Just as Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra} had emphasised it with her own children. She had also advised mothers to develop "*repulsion*" for lying within their children and so too did Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} emphasise the abhorrence of this sin.

Indeed, it is a vice that the Holy Prophet^{sa} loathed. When he taught "**Truthfulness saves, falsehood destroys**,"¹⁶³ he meant that falsehood can become the root cause for a plethora of other vices.

To stress the importance of practising good morals and behaviour, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} would repeatedly say to her children:

"You are not a reflection of my honour; you are a reflection of the honour of Hazrat Masih Ma'udas."¹⁶⁴

She always guided her children to never lie. She would say: "***I have every faith that you do not lie, yet it still happens that a person can make a mistake - so always stay clear of it.***"¹⁶⁵

¹⁶³Basics of Religious Education, 4thed, Sheikh Abdul Hadi, Islam International Publications Ltd, 2002, p.127.

¹⁶⁴Seerat-o-Swaanah Sayyeda Nawab Mubaraka Begum Sahiba, Prof. S N Saeed, Lajna Ima'illah Lahore, p.239.

¹⁶⁵ibid

In this regard, her attitude mirrored that of her pious mother, Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra}, who also expressed great trust and confidence in her children. Her praise and trust meant that her children, as Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} has herself recollected, felt too ashamed to commit the prohibited vices. Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} was to adopt this successful strategy of her parents which undoubtedly was also supported by their sincere and constant prayers for their children.

Mahmuda Begum Sahiba related that her mother like her grandmother Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra} also felt revulsion for gossip. Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} kept a vigilant eye on her children. She allowed them the freedom and leisure to play with other children of the household (of other families and household attendants); to jump, run, play with toys, etc. but the golden rule she stipulated was that all games must be played without closing doors. In this subtle way, she was able to keep a watchful eye on her children and deterred them from doing anything inappropriate. Mahmuda Begum Sahiba related that when they were young, this rule perplexed them. As they grew older and more mature, they increasingly appreciated the wisdom of it. Some of the girls they played with had learnt distasteful habits, which could have badly influenced their developing minds. Their mother had instructed them that should any girl behave inappropriately she should be informed. Mahmuda Begum Sahiba related that the threat

of having their behaviour exposed was enough to deter the other girls from any unsavoury behaviour. She also elaborated that her mother tried to nurture these other children as she did her own.

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} was additionally attentive to her children by reading the letters they wrote up to an age of maturity (about 16 or 17 years). She explained her reasoning to her daughter Mahmuda Begum Sahiba:

“At a young age you do not realise it. However, sometimes a child may write inappropriate thing.”¹⁶⁶

Mahmuda Begum Sahiba commented that they did not feel that their mother was distrustful of them; just that she was very conscientious about her parental duties. She relates that they never reacted badly to this supervision and once they had matured their mother showed full trust in them. Indeed, their moral training was a careful balance of parental control and trust. It meant that Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum's children were always conscious of their boundaries but also had the freedom to play with their friends and were not completely inhibited.

¹⁶⁶Seerat-o-Swaanah Sayyeda Nawab Mubaraka Begum Sahiba, Lajna Ima'illah Lahore, 2001 – Prof. S N Saeed, p.238.

Their reading too was supervised; they were given a choice of books and magazines to read but had to seek permission before reading any new material. Mahmuda Begum Sahiba related that she kept reading the same childish books although she had grown quite old. When her mother inquired why she did so, her innocent daughter replied that she had been awaiting her mother's permission to read something else. Hazrat Nawab Mubarak Begum^{ra} was amused and replied that all the books and magazines they subscribed to at home were perfectly fine and that she could freely read them. If her mother thought any of them were inappropriate, she would tell her. Thus, Hazrat Nawab Mubarak Begum^{ra} wished to give her children a degree of freedom and the opportunity to inquire and learn under her wise supervision.

Mahmuda Begum Sahiba related that her mother would offer advice as she informally talked to her children throughout the day. She recollected her mother relating that she often heard the Promised Messiah^{as} say that the honour of a woman is like a pearl. If it loses its lustre once, it never returns.¹⁶⁷

She would reiterate this when the children heard some gossip or news from outside or read something in a newspaper. Mahmuda Begum Sahiba recalled her mother giving this advice to other ladies as well. Their father would echo this advice. Their mother would say to them repeatedly that their conduct had a greater gravity and

¹⁶⁷ibid, p.239

significance than that of other children, because they were a reflection of the Promised Messiah's dignity as his grandchildren. Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} tried to instil an appreciation and a respect within her children for the distinct and blessed lineage from which they came. She was ever conscious that her children would always be considered a reflection of the Promised Messiah's^{as} values.

Her youngest daughter, Asifa Begum Sahiba, further alluded to the advice her mother gave them for the purpose of keeping their hearts and minds pure. She related that her mother taught them never to eavesdrop; be it their parents, brothers, sisters or anyone else. She instructed them never to read anyone else's letters without their permission. Asifa Begum Sahiba related her mother's own rigid adherence to this rule in that she never read her husband's diary (Hazrat Nawab Muhammad Ali Khan Sahib^{ra}) during his lifetime. After his passing, she read it but still felt it was not her personal property and thus entrusted it to the Jama'at. She also guided her daughter that should anyone ever instruct her not to say something to her elders then she must tell her mother; and if there was something that she herself desired to hide, she must tell her. Indeed, many potential problems could be avoided if more mothers were to give such wise advice to their daughters. Sadly, teenagers today are suffering many intolerable experiences even tragedies, because the lifeline of communication between parents and children is not maintained.

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} also very prudently advised her children not to make any other "confidantes"

of their secrets, thus encouraging them to share their thoughts with their parents only. She advised her daughter - Mahmuda Begum Sahiba, that girls especially tend to share all their thoughts - good and bad - with their girlfriends. This can lead to embarrassment later. She advised never to give any form of writing to anyone and never to sign a piece of paper without her permission. Mahmuda Begum Sahiba stated that their mother would discuss issues with her daughters that some mothers may avoid in a discreet and tactful manner. She did not neglect discussing any aspects of life that she felt were important for her daughters to know.

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum's youngest daughter, Asifa Begum Sahiba, recollected having a discussion with her mother when she physically matured and began menstruation. Her personal memory of this sensitive time was that her mother talked to her in great detail on the topics of maintaining personal hygiene, modesty and female health. Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} gave detailed advice to her daughters about being more careful during those days of the month. During such days, she advised her girls to keep warm, to wear socks (in the first two or three days to even wear them in bed), to avoid getting their feet wet, to avoid both washing in cold water and drinking very cold water. Then according to Shariah, she also advised her daughters on the subject. Asifa Begum Sahiba clearly appreciated her mother's guidance in these delicate matters as she related:

“Nowadays, neither mothers nor daughters bother. That is why so many girls often become affected by illnesses.”¹⁶⁸

On the subject of money, just as Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra} had given her children some pocket money, so too did Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra}. This was to teach them a degree of responsibility and to also develop the habit of giving Chanda.¹⁶⁹ Asifa Begum Sahiba related that she remembered initially receiving 10 Rupees per month, which then increased to 20 rupees. She also encouraged her daughter to do *Wassiyat*¹⁷⁰ at the age of 14.

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} like her mother before her, excelled in the management of her home. Indeed her mother, Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra}, had taught that a woman’s “beauty” is based upon her piety and good household management.¹⁷¹ When Professor Naseem Saeed enquired of Asifa Begum Sahiba about where she had learnt her domestic skills, she replied that her mother had been one of the finest cooks. She related learning recipes from her

¹⁶⁸Seerat-o-Swaaneh Sayyeda Nawab Mubaraka Begum Sahiba, Lajna Ima’illah Lahore, 2001, Prof. S N Saeed, p.240.

¹⁶⁹These are financial contributions within the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community. They fall into two categories: obligatory and voluntary contributions.

¹⁷⁰A lifetime commitment to the Jama’at through good deeds and financial sacrifice, whereby the participant pledges to give at least one tenth of their income/property to the Jama’at. It was initiated by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as} - the Promised Messiah^{as} and founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam in 1905.

¹⁷¹*Hazrat Amman Jan*^{ra} - An Inspiration For Us All, M Ghauri, 2011, p.189.

mother who had even mastered sweetmeats. She recollected that her mother did not need to sew after her marriage as their father would order their clothes from English companies. However, she was still very competent in this skill. On one occasion, she unstitched her son's "topi" (hat) to see how it was made and then recreated a very good replica. She related that their mother ensured that all three of her daughters learnt the important skill of sewing. She recollected that her mother once went to stay with her uncle (Mir Muhammad Isma'il Sahib^{ra}) and upon her return she told Asifa Begum ***"I have observed his daughters sew very well; and they behave with proper decorum. From now on you also sew your own clothes."*** Subsequently, her mother would bring her fabric and would say that if she desired to wear it, she would have to sew it. She recollected that she then never wore anything sewn by a tailor until she married.

Asifa Begum Sahiba stated another crucial aspect of her upbringing; her parents would often relate the incidents of their elders to their children. Their purpose was to inculcate the same moral values and wisdom within their children. She reminisced:

"Often, at the dinner table Umi Jaan and Abba Mian would relate lots of old incidents and things about our pious elders. Whenever relatives came, they would relate even more of such things."

As we listened to these old incidents about our elders again and again, it seemed as if we had personally witnessed the incidents and that we had met them. Indeed, it was as if they all lived with

us, as if they had presently gone away but would soon return. I had never seen my paternal aunt – ‘Bu Fatima Sahiba, yet after hearing about her I felt that I had met her. They would tell us lots and lots of things about the Promised Messiah^{as}. All the time they would relate something or other, which we memorised. Indeed, it felt just like we had seen and heard Huzoor^{as} ourselves.”¹⁷²

This was the insightful parenting of Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} and Hazrat Nawab Muhammad Ali Khan Sahib^{ra}, whereby they related all the good deeds, words and habits of the pious elders of their family. In this manner, their children were not deprived of the examples of these pious role models, especially of our most beloved Promised Messiah^{as} - their grandfather. As parents, we too should make a conscious effort to introduce our children to the lives of the positive role models within our families. We too should relate the enlightening incidents of the Promised Messiah^{as} and his family to them.

Finally, it appears that the fundamental principle for the good upbringing of her children which Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} adopted like her forefathers was prayer. She indeed was the maternal granddaughter of Hazrat Mir Nasir Nawab Sahib^{ra}, who was once asked by Hazrat Khalifatul Masih I^{ra} how he had managed to procure such a distinguished son-in-law (i.e. the Promised Messiah^{as}). He responded that he had never missed a single

¹⁷²Seerat-o-Swaanah Sayyeda Nawab Mubaraka Begum Sahiba, Lajna Ima'illah Lahore, 2001 – Prof. S N Saeed, p.245.

Salat since his daughter's birth, in which he had not prayed that she received that life companion whom Allah the Almighty considered best.¹⁷³

Hazrat Nawab Mubarak Begum's prayers for her children are evident from the fact that upon the imminent marriage of her youngest child, Asifa Begum Sahiba, she published a request for prayers to the whole Jama'at in the "Al Fazl" newspaper. She was worried for the successful marriage of Asifa Sahiba, who born after an 8-year gap, had been the most indulged. She was to write:

"It is the wedding of the youngest of my children, Asifa Begum, in whose moral training there has been some shortfall because of a lot of love and attention. I request the Jama'at members to pray for her successful marriage."¹⁷⁴

Asifa Begum Sahiba was to jokingly complain to her mother that upon her older sister's marriage she had composed a poem full of prayers but upon her marriage, her mother ridiculed her! Her mother affectionately replied:

"I have allocated a special sajdah (a prostration during the prescribed Prayer) just for you which is separate from all my other children."

¹⁷³Seerat-o-Swaaneh Hazrat Ammaa Jaan, Prof. S N Saeed, Lajna Ima'illah Lahore, 2005, p.48.

¹⁷⁴ibid p.243

Such was the significance she assigned to prayers in shaping the good destinies of her children. It is also of great value to learn from the abundant speeches and articles Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} personally wrote. Once, when addressing ladies, she wrote that women should not become complacent when they become mothers by assuming that Paradise lies under their feet (in accordance with the saying of the Holy Prophet^{sa}). Rather, they must understand that:

“...They need to make true preparations for heaven for their children by their moral training.”¹⁷⁵

In an article in *“Tasheezul Azhan”¹⁷⁶*, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum’s valuable address to children offering them words of wisdom reflective of her own parenting style was published. The two fundamental points of advice she gave to children were firstly, to pray for every aspect of their lives, and secondly, to ensure that they kept good company at all times. Extracts of this address are given below:

“Dear Children, Assalamo Alaikum wa Rahmatullah wa Barakatahu.

¹⁷⁵*Tehriraat-e-Mubaraka* - Lajna Ima'illah Pakistan, Zia-ul-Islam Press, p.115.

¹⁷⁶*ibid*, p69 (A scholarly magazine begun by Hazrat Khalifatul Masih II^{ra}, the Second Spiritual Head of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, during his youth in 1906.)

Lend me an ear! There are two things I wish to say to you; I will not take much of your time. You may very well be young, but praying is not just the right of adults. Of this blessing all have the right to take advantage, so why shouldn't you? From now on develop the habit of praying. Ask for every good and for blessings - both spiritual and worldly, from your beloved Allah; ask for a righteous destiny and pray that may Allah the Almighty safeguard you from every pain and trouble. Pray and say, (O Allah) do not let me become ensnared in the trap of Satan - may I remain truthful and righteous, always remaining with the truthful and staying connected with Khilafat. May Allah Almighty hold my hand and guide me.

When I was a little girl, Hazrat Masih Ma'ud^{as} often asked me to pray then or in the future for a certain job of his. Just reflect! At what (lofty) level was such an appointed individual of great glory and where (by comparison) was I? Even so, he would ask me for prayers. He would do this so that it became ingrained in the minds of us children that we too had to pray. It was so that we developed the habit of praying and that we children recognised that the door of Allah's Mercy is open; that if you ask, you will receive. This was his teaching regarding prayer.

In the same way, Hazrat Khalifatul Masih I^{ra} (May Allah the Almighty's thousands of blessings be upon his soul) would say with great love, 'Do you pray for me? Do indeed also pray for me.' In short, this was all with the purpose of instilling the

importance of prayer within our hearts. Likewise, Hazrat Khalifatul Masih I^{ra} would say to me repeatedly with special emphasis:

'Look, there should be not be any kind of embarrassment before Allah the Almighty. You are indeed young but continue to pray to Allah that Allah the Almighty gives you a blessed and pious match.'

Then, he would often say to me and the other girls who studied with me, 'From now on, quietly pray that Allah grants you righteous matches. Indeed, do not be shy. Do not be embarrassed from God on any account. It is from Him that you are to ask everything. Both boys and girls should absolutely offer this prayer.'"¹⁷⁷

Hazrat Nawab Mubarak Begum^{ra} continued to explain that children should pray in this manner to garner treasures of blessings for their future lives; **not so that they begin thinking about marriage prematurely.**

The second point she wished to express to children was about the importance of keeping good company and not keeping secrets from parents. She explained that Satan was not some obvious demonic goblin or ghost, which if seen one would run away from with sudden fright. She explained that Satan is a much subtler entity that can be present even in the form of other children, who can be

¹⁷⁷ibid, p.70

sweet in appearance but in reality are poisonous in their influence. She continued:

“...Protect yourselves from bad company; leave bad friends. Grasp this fundamental point now: anything which you cannot mention in front of your parents and elders is a sin and is toxic. Something about which you feel hesitation or embarrassment in telling is not right. When someone (Satan can appear as a girl, boy or even as an apparently reasonable, mature man) teaches or tells you something which you cannot say in front of your elders, run away from it. Be sure to mention every good or bad thing that you hear to your parents, but do not go about telling everyone. What will then happen is that you will escape Satan’s clutches and your heart will be strengthened...and then your parents can themselves continue to be quiet and wise supervisors over you. Hence, you will have great support.”¹⁷⁸

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} then concluded her brief but pertinent advice to children by addressing them:

“Become pious example for others. Some children learn rude words from uncivilised people in the streets and because of the filth of these words it

¹⁷⁸ibid, p.71

consequently creates filth in their hearts, which spreads badness. Never let such words reach your lips. Become good children and help your peers to become good.¹⁷⁹

On another occasion, addressing the ladies at the Annual Convention of 1963, she emphasised the importance of instilling faith and the seeds of spirituality in the hearts of their children and persevering as far as possible in this fundamental task.

She therefore urged that it was time to take on the great obligation of the moral training of children, so that they were not drawn to materialism. She expressed that it would be a great tragedy if this were to happen to Ahmadi children and the progeny of the companions of the Promised Messiah^{as}. Consequently, she urged ladies:

“This is the time for you to make more and more efforts to plant in the hearts of your children the seeds of religion, faith and spirituality. With special attention, get them to study profusely the books of Hazrat Masih Ma’ud^{as}, Malfuzat and the books of elders of the Community, accounts of the Companions etc. Recognise your own worth and also teach them their worth. Make them upholders of the honour of Ahmadiyyat; then why should they be influenced by others? They are to impress the

¹⁷⁹*Tehriraat-e-Mubaraka* – Lajna Ima’illah Pakistan, Zia ul Islam Press, p.71.

world with their righteous examples; why then should they follow others?"¹⁸⁰

She continued to express that weaknesses in faith were now arising in the younger generations due to a lack of religious education and of an understanding of the important role of Ahmadi Muslims within society. She said it was a cause for concern that some ladies and girls albeit a minority, were abandoning *pardah*:

"They are seen walking around in transparent dupattas (scarves). Is this the teaching of Islam and Ahmadiyyat that mothers are imparting and teaching their daughters, which fathers (too) are tolerating? It is astonishing that in these matters men's declarations of being 'guardians' disappear. Islam has not forbidden any work at a time of need and what work is there that cannot be done in a Chador¹⁸¹ or Burqa? It is simply the weakness of one's nafs (self-ego)."¹⁸²

She then convincingly elucidated that such negligence was a sin and wholly unnecessary, because the practice of *pardah* does not in any way inhibit women from leading rich, fulfilled lives and from performing their jobs. She continued to point out that if we let our daughters indulge

¹⁸⁰ibid, p.138

¹⁸¹Shawl covering the head and upper body.

¹⁸²*Tehriraat-e-Mubarak* - Lajna Ima'illah Pakistan, Zia-ul-Islam Press, p.138.

in such freedoms which are against Shariah, they will become deficient in religious training, with the inevitable outcome being that they will be lost. She continued that regrettably there had been two or three such cases where Ahmadi girls had gone against the clear directions of the Promised Messiah^{as} and married outside the Ahmadiyya Community, despite being from righteous families. She further expounded that if such girls had strong roots of faith embedded in their hearts and religious knowledge, such instances would not have occurred. Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} then reminded ladies that Huzoor^{as} had given very strong sermons regarding this subject and had reiterated this concern.

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} then conveyed a profound principle that we should all realise:

“For the sake of God, stand firm and take care of your daughters. They are not just yours, in one sense they are Hazrat Masih Ma’ud’s who have been entrusted to you - train them righteously. It should be ingrained in their hearts that they are not like ordinary women. Although they are part of the world, they have to set their example detached from the world. They are the foundations of Ahmadi families. Their faiths should be firm, so that they produce that generation which will wave the flag of Islam throughout the world and be ones to live for their Noble and Merciful Lord and to die for Him. To be servants of the faith, true lovers of Muhammad^{sa}, the Messenger of Allah, fervent followers of Hazrat Masih Ma’ud^{as}; may such be

raised from the laps of future mothers. May God Almighty make it so. Ameen¹⁸³

Two years later in 1965, whilst addressing the ladies at an Annual Convention, Hazrat Nawab Mubarak Begum^{ra} was to again spotlight the importance of the good upbringing of children and fostering a pious home environment with an emphasis upon prayer. She said:

“...My sisters, understand your responsibilities. Reflect how much importance you have been given from a religious perspective. Strive to become competent enough to accomplish the obligation Allah the Almighty has put upon your shoulders. You are the mothers of the future generations - you are the foundations of Ahmadiyyat. You can imagine for yourselves - what would become of a building if, God forbid, its foundation was hollow? Thus, you must create a religious environment within your homes. Give your children a righteous upbringing and create spirituality within them.”¹⁸⁴

She continued that mothers should pray to Allah the Almighty for His Help, persevering with every strength and effort, so that their children are filled with the

¹⁸³ibid, p.139.

¹⁸⁴*Tehriraat-e-Mubarak* – Lajna Ima’illah Pakistan, Zia-ul-Islam Press, p.187.

conviction of “*Tauheed*”¹⁸⁵, are devoted to Islam and Ahmadiyyat and remain true and pious servants of the Faith. Hence, she said:

“...if you leave behind a pious progeny, you may present yourself exultant before your Master. Otherwise in a contrary situation, God forbid, I say with a fearful heart that on the Day of Judgement misled children would reproach you for destroying them...”¹⁸⁶

She prayed that Allah the Almighty may enable Lajna members to stay upon the path of righteousness, to remain firm in piety and to become true reflections of Ahmadiyyat. She further prayed that they may never become of that unfortunate group of people of whom the Promised Messiah^{as} had said:

“Some in the Jama’at appear like dried, withered branches to me. My Helper God will cut them off from me and throw them into firewood.”¹⁸⁷

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} went on to suggest ways for Lajna to avert such a terrible destiny. She advised that they must above all remain busy in the remembrance of Allah the Almighty, remember His favours, pray and beg for His love and create love for Him within their hearts. She

¹⁸⁵ Belief in the unity of God.

¹⁸⁶ *Tehriraat-e-Mubaraka* – Lajna Ima’illah Pakistan, Zia-ul-Islam Press, p.187.

¹⁸⁷ *Tehriraat-e-Mubaraka* – Lajna Ima’illah Pakistan, Zia-ul-Islam Press, p.188.

repeatedly stressed the importance of praying and increasing their efforts in this aspect of their faith. She advised:

“Non-Ahmadis acknowledge this and often have been heard to express that ‘Ahmadis offer a lot of prayers.’ This is true by the Grace of Allah; but we should give even more emphasis to prayers. Hazrat Masih Ma’ud^{as} presented the miracles of prayers before you and in his teachings he has very much stressed and advised it. Time and again, repeatedly and abundantly, he drew the attention of the Jama’at to profiting from this blessing of Allah the Almighty. So, our very subsistence should be prayer and our support should also be prayer...Durood is the chief prayer amongst all our prayers.”¹⁸⁸

She explained that if they send blessings on the beloved Prophet of Islam^{sa}, then it is impossible that peace will not descend upon them from Allah the Almighty. She advised that they should begin any prayer by first reciting ***Sura Fatiha***¹⁸⁹, and should recite ***Durood Sharif*** abundantly.

¹⁸⁸“Durood” short for “Durood Sharif” is a prayer in which salutations and blessings are invoked upon the Holy Prophet^{sa}. It is a mandatory prayer in the 5 daily prayers of a Muslim. Its regular utterance is also part of The Third Condition of Bai’at. (Oath of Initiation into the Ahmadiyya Muslim Movement in Islam). *Tehriraat-e-Mubarak* - Lajna Ima’illah Pakistan, Zia-ul-Islam Press, p189.

¹⁸⁹The opening chapter of the Holy Qur’an, which is a mandatory part of the prescribed Islamic daily Prayers.

In this address she also reminded Lajna to pray for their beloved Khalifa (then Hazrat Khalifatul Masih III^{rh}) - that Allah's special blessings and succour remain with him (this was his first Annual Convention after being appointed Khalifa). She also guided them to pray for the progress of the Jama'at, their own spiritual progress and for the missionaries of the Jama'at. Moreover, she reminded Lajna to pray for themselves, their children and their future generations, for worldly and spiritual progress, as well as spiritual and physical good.¹⁹⁰

It is interesting to note the advice Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} gave to older children and adolescents when she addressed the Khuddam¹⁹¹ of Rabwah in December 1965 through a written message. It was a sad year for the Jama'at because of the demise of Hazrat Khalifatul Masih II^{ra}. On the event to remember the pure life and character of this great and pioneering man of God, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} lamented the loss of a beloved older brother and khalifa. She related an interesting fact to the Khuddam that from a young age, Hazrat Khalifatul Masih II^{ra} had kept a Holy Qur'an on one side of his table and books of Ahadith and other religious books on the other. He had also kept a copy of the Bible. This indicates the importance of studying comparative religions in order to gain a better understanding of other faiths and to subsequently be more effective in preaching.

¹⁹⁰*Tehriraat-e-Mubaraka* - Lajna Ima'illah Pakistan, Zia-ul-Islam Press, pp186-189 (Extract from Al Fazlnewspaper 1965, December 26.)

¹⁹¹Auxiliary organisation of the male members of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, between the ages of 15 and 40.

She reminded the Khuddam that especially during this critical period, it was important to remain close and connected to the new khalifa and to always be appreciative of the great blessing of the institution of Khilafat:

“Remain Khuddam of Ahmadiyyat, Khuddam (servants) of Ahmad^{sa} and devotees of the religion of Ahmad^{sa}. Stay connected to khilafat. Even in this grief we should be sincerely grateful - both in practice and through our words - and we should always remain so for the happiness that Allah the Almighty has bestowed upon us through His Mercy.”¹⁹²

She reiterated what a wonderful blessing the institution of Khilafat is, whereby we always remain under the shelter and protection of the guidance of our beloved Khalifa. Consequently, this protects us from many potential trials and tribulations. Indeed, this is as important a lesson today as it was then in 1965.

The profound influence Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} had upon her children was expressed by her youngest daughter Asifa Begum Sahiba, who felt her mother’s influence throughout her life:

¹⁹²*Tehriraat-e-Mubaraka* – Lajna Ima’illah Pakistan, Zia-ul-Islam Press, p.194.

“Perhaps because I was orphaned (lost her father) at the age of 15, my mother tolerated a lot of my petulant demands. However, she never fell short in her moral training in any serious matter. She thought that she was not doing a good job fulfilling her obligations of my moral training, however I feel even today, that my mother is holding my hand and guiding me forward. It is as if my pillow has become a collection of my mother’s sayings. There was no aspect of life that she neglected. Things that mothers often hesitate telling their daughters, my mother explained to me with modest discretion. In my experience anything that I unfortunately did not follow ended up being a disadvantage to me and the ones I followed, became valuable treasures in my life.”¹⁹³

It is poignant now to read how valuable and effective Asifa Begum Sahiba considered the moral values cultivated in her by her mother. She then requested prayers for her own children to act upon this *“inheritance”* or legacy of her mother’s and that they benefit in particular from the greatest *inheritance* that she had bequeathed to them - a treasure of prayers.

Hazrat Nawab Mubarak Begum’s moral training of her children also extended to her grandchildren. Her granddaughter Amatul Shakoor Sahiba, recollects the lovely manner whereby her grandmother, *“Barri Umi”*, gave advice. Her grandmother was never severe in her

¹⁹³Seerat-o-Swaanah Sayyeda Nawab Mubarak Begum Sahiba, Lajna Ima’illah Lahore, 2001, Prof. S N Saeed, p.246.

guidance or admonitions. She would often refer to the example of the Promised Messiah^{as} or her mother, Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra}. She remembers one piece of advice her grandmother gave her relating to the budgeting of household expenses:

“Do not make a budget. In other words, do not always be counting the money you have to spend. Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra} used to say that money is not blessed by being counted, that God is able to grant beyond measure, so why do you limit that by making a budget?”¹⁹⁴

Of the Promised Messiah’s advice to her, her grandmother once told her that the Promised Messiah^{as} had prohibited her as a child from relaying “*bad news*” (out of a sense of love and affection for his daughter). Once, Amatul Shakoor Sahiba conveyed the news of someone’s death to her grandmother, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra}. After expressing sorrow, her grandmother told her not to convey such news to her. She said this was based on the advice the Promised Messiah^{as} had given her. She related:

“On one occasion in my childhood, I was playing outside. Somebody came to the porch and said to me that a certain Sahib had passed away and that I could tell Huzoor (i.e. the Promised Messiah^{as}). I went and gave the news, upon which Hazrat Sahib

¹⁹⁴Seerat-o-Swaanah Sayyeda Nawab Mubaraka Begum Sahiba, Lajna Ima’illah Lahore, 2001, Prof. S N Saeed, p.248.

(i.e. the Promised Messiah^{as}) said, ‘Mubaraka, do not give me such news. Allah the Almighty created you to relate good news.’”¹⁹⁵

(Indeed, to do so would have been contrary to her revealed name which literally meant “happy” or “blessed”). Amatul Shakoor Sahiba related that this advice of her grandmother had a profound impact on her and thereafter she was reluctant to be the primary source of any bad news.

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} was to leave a positive and long-lasting impression on her children and their progeny. She was acutely conscious that her children were inevitably both a reflection of the Promised Messiah^{as} and the vital building blocks for the future of Ahmadiyyat. For this reason, the moral training of her children and grandchildren remained a life-long endeavour.

¹⁹⁵ibid

Concern for the Moral Upbringing of all Ahmadi Children

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} was not only concerned for the upbringing of her own children, but also for the children of the entire Ahmadiyya Community. Expressing her own principles regarding the rearing of children, she said:

“Where did my moral training originate from? As far as I was able to and had the strength for, I maintained the ways I saw of Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra}. Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra} would say:

‘There is a great need to spend a lot of attention on the moral upbringing of the eldest child. If they stay on the right path, then there is less need to make effort in the future. The younger ones themselves begin to follow in the footsteps of the elder one.’¹⁹⁶

She continued to explain that both her parents had expressed a trust and confidence in their children. Since her mother would declare: **“My children do not lie”** with such conviction that Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} and her siblings felt this declaration was engraved upon their

¹⁹⁶Seerat-o-Swaaneh Sayyeda Nawab Mubaraka Begum Sahiba, Lajna Ima'illah Lahore, 2001, Prof. S N Saeed, p.344.

hearts. Consequently, this made it impossible for them to even think about lying.

The Promised Messiah's expression of confidence in his children meant that they were too embarrassed to do anything against his liking or to keep anything hidden from him. However, he did not patronise children as his daughter Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} recollected. Their father listened to them carefully as though he was listening to a trustworthy adult.

The Promised Messiah^{as} would guide his children to do good deeds. He would oversee their actions with a quiet but undeniable authority; without constant scoldings and fault-finding over small matters. By expressing confidence in them, he developed a feeling of personal responsibility within his children and an aversion towards bad conduct. If any of them required some admonishment, the Promised Messiah^{as} would quietly take the child aside and explain to them the error of their ways. Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra} would also advise not to constantly reproach children. However, she did teach that if a child is told to do something, then one must ensure that the child complies with the instruction, in order to instil the habit of obedience in him.

Because of her concern for the good upbringing of Ahmadi children in accordance with Islamic teachings, whenever ladies came to meet Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} with their children, she would offer some guidance. She would stress to mothers the importance of being good examples to their children and to especially concentrate on

the eldest child's upbringing. She would advise to show love and affection to children while also teaching them respect for their elders and kindness towards their juniors. She instructed to teach children to revile lying, swearing and mocking.

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} would exhort mothers to ensure that their children keep good company. Aware of the psychology of children, she understood that they enjoyed her individual attention. So, whenever children came with their mothers to meet her, she would take time to inquire of their names and their school year. She would also treat them with sweetmeats, affectionately patting them on the head and sometimes relating funny anecdotes from her own childhood. Professor Naseem Saeed, the writer of Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum's biography in Urdu, has related that she regularly visited Hazrat Begum Sahiba^{ra}. When she went for the first time with her four sons, who were all close in age, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} looked at them and asked pertinently, "***Children, you don't fight between yourselves, do you? It is not good to fight.***"¹⁹⁷ She then told them that the Promised Messiah^{as} would always advise children never to swear, tell a lie or be naughty. When she commented that children do have little squabbles amongst themselves, Professor Naseem Saeed's boys were amazed. Later they inquired from their mother: "*Ammi, had Begum Sahiba found out that we sometimes quarrel?*" This incident illustrates Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum's keen understanding of children and her friendly approach to them. Maintaining a fine balance

¹⁹⁷ibid, p.349.

between affection and guidance, she left a lasting impression on the children who visited her.

She would sincerely pray for children to be devoted to Allah the Almighty, to be lovers of khilafat, righteous and motivated by *Taqwa*.¹⁹⁸ Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} was to warn Ahmadi mothers of their great responsibilities and the profound repercussions that their actions today could have on the Jama'at tomorrow. She said:

“Remember, now is the time for reflection and strength. Compose yourselves and realise that your great duty is to take care of your children. If at this time they come under the control of the Dajjal and altogether submit, and your children only appreciate worldly people in their hearts and minds, then only Allah the Almighty can protect them. The service of Allah the Almighty will not end, but how lamentable would it be that you, your children and the progeny of the companions will remain deprived of this service. The reason for it will be purely your unworthiness and neglect. New people will come forward for the service of the Faith and they shall be favoured with the rewards of Allah the Almighty...”¹⁹⁹

This message shows how markedly Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} felt the need for the religious education and moral training of the future generation. She could not

¹⁹⁸i.e. the fear of losing the love of Allah the Almighty.

¹⁹⁹Tareekh Lajna, Vol.2, p.234, 1963 (Concluding address to ladies at the Annual Convention.)

stress enough how this was “*the great duty*” of mothers now, for which they had to be mentally prepared. She also emphasised the importance of familiarising children with the literature of the Promised Messiah^{as} and the conduct of pious elders, for the purpose of sowing the seeds of Ahmadiyyat within their hearts. Indeed, this is a timeless message which mothers need to heed as much today as they did in 1963. It is also reminiscent of the great importance Hazrat Musleh Ma’ud^{ra} (Hazrat Khalifatul Masih II^{ra}) conferred upon mothers. He said their role was more significant than that of even national leaders and kings, regarding the upbringing of children.²⁰⁰ It explains why Hazrat Nawab Mubarak Begum^{ra} had an ongoing concern for Ahmadi children.

The origins of this concern perhaps stemmed from a dream she was to experience at the young age of around 16 years. She saw that the Promised Messiah^{as} was sitting on a chair in the courtyard. She was also present alongside her first daughter, Mansoor Begum, then a toddler. A person came to the Promised Messiah^{as} and asked: “***Huzoor! What is the commandment concerning girls?***” The Promised Messiah^{as} responded fervently:

“Until you give your daughters in the foundations, the building of Ahmadiyyat cannot stand erect.”²⁰¹

²⁰⁰“Al Izhar-le-Zawatil-Khimar”, compiled by Hazrat Sayyeda Maryam Siddiq Begum, from *Al Nusrat* magazine, Khilafat Centenary Edition.

²⁰¹*Tehriraat-e-Mubarak* – Lajna Ima’illah

Pakistan, Zia-ul-slam Press, p.55.

Thus, the young Mubarakara received a clear message as to how Ahmadi girls would determine the future success of the Jama'at. It is truly inspiring to think that a young girl was honoured with such profound truths from a Prophet even after his worldly life had ended. Reflecting on this dream much later on in life, Hazrat Nawab Mubarak Begumra related to the Jama'at at an Annual Convention of 1973, what she felt was the fundamental message of the dream:

“The interpretation that came to my mind at the time I saw the dream was that firstly, it is necessary to give girls religious education as well as moral training, so that they can focus on the religious training and education of future generations. Thus, a succession of blessed progeny will continue. Secondly, boys should also procure Ahmadi wives so that their progeny is not corrupted. A mother has a profound impact; a child is first influenced in its mother’s lap...the current times and the external society is very damaging. The first duty of you all is to fortify the foundations of the building of Ahmadiyyat so effectively that the building remains strong until the Day of Judgement...

It is also the duty of fathers to become a righteous example for their sons. Protect them from bad company and from roaming around. After a certain age, it is fathers who can look after boys better.”²⁰²

²⁰²*Tehriraat-e-Mubarak* - Lajna Ima'illah Pakistan, Zia-ul-Islam Press, p.309.

Such words reinforce the fact that the benefits of our children's moral training today are not limited to them alone. They will manifest in the generations of tomorrow as well.

Concern for the Moral Condition of the Jama'at

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} had a sincere and maternal concern not only for children but also for the adult members of the Jama'at. She worried for their spiritual progress and so shared her personal dreams with them intermittently throughout her life, whenever she felt that it would benefit the Jama'at. On one occasion she related:

"I saw a dream quite a while ago. It may not have a link with the current subject under discussion as such; however, because that dream was a message of Hazrat Masih Ma'ud^{as}, I would like to mention it. I saw as though I had come after meeting Hazrat Aqdas and I felt I must convey what he said. I saw that a lady was standing in front of me. I went to her, addressed her and told her that Hazrat Masih Ma'ud^{as} had said:

'If an individual has some personal weakness and he commits a mistake, but he has faith, sincerity and love, then Allah will not leave his pearl to remain in the dirt.'

Saying this, I see that in front of where the lady is standing, very close to her is some earth. I bend down and see a gleaming pearl in the earth and I pick it up. It is a pristinely clean, brightly shining,

authentic pearl. There is not a trace of dirt on my hand. I put the pearl on the palm of my hand and extend it towards her and say 'like this', i.e. despite mistakes and weaknesses, if there is faith, sincerity and love, then Allah's pearl cannot remain in filth. I then felt pleased that I was able to convey this insight to her."²⁰³

On another occasion, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} saw a dream which she related at the Annual Ijtema of October 1962. Through referring to it, she wished to convey to the Jama'at that until spirituality overtakes our characters, we cannot attain the Pleasure of Allah the Almighty.

She recounted that she had seen a dream in which she saw a general merchant's store. The shop was shut because of a holiday. However, there was a back door to the shop leading to the merchant's house which was open. From there he beckoned Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} to come inside. A relative who was with her in the dream informed her that the shop owner was an Ahmadi. He told her that the shop owner had accepted Ahmadiyyat but had not yet taken the Covenant of Allegiance (*Bai'at*). The relative then showed the shop owner two of his fingers intertwined. He explained to him that spirituality and human nature are like two such adjoining fingers - one influences the other. Whichever becomes stronger, it increasingly influences the other and eventually conquers

²⁰³*Tehriraat-e-Mubaraka* - Lajna Ima'illah Pakistan, Zia-ul-Islam Press, p.300.

it. He continued to explain that every individual is born with a body and a pure soul. Human nature is such that it is constantly desirous to fulfil the demands of the human body; it is from this desire that *Iblis* may enter (into a person). If the soul is strong and the human nature is not allowed to conquer it, then spirituality increases, and it further controls one's primitive human nature. This makes a person civilised and directs him towards the right path.

Throughout her life, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} would grasp every opportunity to offer good and sincere advice to the Jama'at; be it the Annual Convention, Annual Ijtemas, the opening of schools, prize-giving ceremonies or other occasions. She also wrote prolifically and often had her messages and articles printed in the "*Al Fazl*" newspaper - a newspaper initiated in 1913 by Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad^{ra} (later Hazrat Khalifatul Masih II). Shortly after the death of her beloved brother Hazrat Mirza Sharif Ahmad^{ra} in 1963, she thanked the Jama'at for their abundance of letters and telegrams of condolence. Yet, she also stressed the importance of remaining steadfast during the difficult trials of life which inevitably come to us all:

"However, whenever a mo'min²⁰⁴ experiences any kind of shock or calamity, physical or financial, for him the commandment from our Gracious and Noble Lord is that he should say, 'Inna lillahi wa inna ilaihi raji'oon.'²⁰⁵ This means that upon the

²⁰⁴ i.e. 'a believer'.

²⁰⁵ i.e. "To Allah we belong and to Him shall we return."

demise of anyone one should say this, display patience and truly understand that, 'To Allah we belong and to Him we shall return.'

We should realise that people do not perish (one should have the following mindset), and we should run in the direction of Allah the Almighty having the mindset that this misfortune, this loss, is perhaps the result of our sins and neglect or perhaps this was what our Master – the Knower of the Unseen, deemed expedient. Whilst enduring every condition, every pain, whilst experiencing every calamity, we will never be demoralised, we shall always return to Him (i.e. Allah the Almighty). We shall stand firm in His sphere even more resolutely...You have reclaimed one of Your blessings, may You bestow an even greater blessing upon us. After all, where can we go if we leave You? Please forgive our sins, hear our pleas. Under no circumstances, can we ever be one of those to be disappointed by Your Mercy and Your Noble Supervision..."²⁰⁶

She continued to explain that our relationship with Allah the Almighty is like that of a mother and child. A child still cries for his mother even if she is harsh or reproachful at times. In the same manner, we should always beckon Allah the Almighty, never become depressed and pray to Him with greater zeal and humility.

²⁰⁶*Tehriraat-e-Mubarak* - Lajna Ima'illah Pakistan, Zia-ul-Islam Press, p.128 (originally from Al Fazl newspaper, 23 Oct. 1963).

In 1972, to mark the 50th anniversary of the *Lajna Ima'illah*, the Auxiliary organisation of the Ahmadiyya Movement, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} addressed the Lajna at a special event. She reminded them of the original purpose of the creation of *Lajna Ima'illah*²⁰⁷:

“As far as I can remember, Hazrat Musleh Ma’ud^{ra}, the second Khalifa - established the foundation of Lajna Ima’illah in 1922. He had a yearning; a wish that Ahmadi ladies also acquire religious knowledge and that on the path of righteous deeds their steps remain firm. That they themselves become righteous examples of Ahmadiyyat – the true Islam – and morally train their children, so that men and women all become true servants of the faith and prove to be examples of great virtue in every deed.”²⁰⁸

It is a message as important today as it was in 1922. The purpose of *Lajna Ima'illah* at its inception is something that all members of this organisation should remember and make a motivating factor in their lives.

²⁰⁷This literally means “The Community of the female Servants of Allah” and consists of Ahmadi Muslim women over the age of 15 years.

²⁰⁸*Tehriraat-e-Mubaraka* – Lajna Ima'illah Pakistan, Zia-ul-Islam Press, p.296. (Originally published Badr Newspaper, Dec 21, 1972.)

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum's

Advice to Girls

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} had great wisdom and the foresight to realise that girls are impressionable from a very young age and thus susceptible to influences both positive and negative. Her niece Fozia Shameem Sahiba, relates of Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra}, whom she affectionately called "*Barri Umi*" that her moral training and guidance of her daughters began from an early age.

She had concern for both their physical and mental wellbeing. Consequently, she taught them homemade remedies for maintaining good skin and hair. In winter, she personally made a rose glycerine mixture to prevent cracked skin on hands and feet, which she encouraged girls to apply. She also recommended applying honey to eyes to enhance their gleam, castor oil to eyelashes to thicken them and cucumber juice to revitalise faded skin. She also suggested the water of Isphagula husk as an effective skin refresher which removes heat spots and lightens tanned skin. These were just some of a multitude of health and beauty tips Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} shared with the girls of her family and household. In fact, she gained such a reputation for her wealth of tips that families from outside the Ahmadiyya Community would also seek her advice on such matters. This was often at the time when women in their families were preparing for their weddings.

On a more fundamental level, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} was also aware of the importance of teaching modesty from a young age within her daughters. If we consider how our present beloved khalifa has taught us:

“Purdah²⁰⁹ is an Islamic commandment as well as the dignity of an Ahmadi woman...The sanctity of the Ahmadi woman is upheld through this and it is essential to maintain it.”²¹⁰

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum’s thinking concurred with this. From as early as the age of 10 or 11 years, she made her daughters conscious of their demeanour and clothing. She would stop them from sitting with their legs spread ungraciously or from lying down in front of adults. She would discourage them from listening to the conversation of adults, aware that children can then be exposed to inappropriate thoughts or language. Fozia Shameem Sahiba recollects that even if boys of the family came and gathered, the girls were instructed to leave the room.

Another niece Tahira Siddiqua Sahiba recollected that her aunt was very close to them. There were some matters they felt they could not ask their mother, yet they could ask their aunt for any advice without reservation. She would always respond affectionately. Her daughter-in-law, Tayyaba

²⁰⁹The Islamic practise by Muslim women of covering their heads and bodies with a loose outer covering in the presence of unrelated men or outside their homes, according to Qur’anic teaching (e.g. Ch24:V32).

²¹⁰“*Observance of Purdah*” - English rendering of address by Hazrat Khalifatul Masih^Vaba at Annual Ijtema of Lajna Ima’illah UK, Nov12th, 2006. Ahmadiyya Bulletin, p.9.

Siddiqua Sahiba, has reminisced that she would stress the importance of “*purdah*” to all ladies and girls:

“Once after the time of the Partition, something was being discussed concerning purdah. So, she began to say (i.e. Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra}) that in the Holy Qur’an all the commandments for men and women have been given together, but the commandment of purdah (i.e. physical covering-up) is the only one for women. Although, there is only one extra commandment ordained by Allah the Almighty for women, yet still they do not follow this commandment properly.”²¹¹

Her niece, Sahibzadi Amatul Naseer Sahiba, has written that her aunt would guide them during their informal conversations. She recollected that on one occasion she gave her detailed advice about the evils of telling lies. She told her that one who speaks the truth is never embarrassed in the presence of others. Her aunt gave her further valuable advice. She guided her never to read other people’s letters. She also advised her against being inquisitive about matters others wished to keep private. She explained to her niece that if she was ever entrusted with a secret then she must maintain that trust. Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} also guided mothers to stop their children rummaging in their purses or bags, as they may contain valuable items such as important papers, jewellery or money etc. which should not be disturbed.

²¹¹Seerat-o-Swaanah Sayyeda Nawab Mubaraka Begum Sahiba - Prof. S N Saeed, Lajna Ima’illah Lahore, 2001, p.251.

Her niece Tahira Siddiqua Sahiba also related that her aunt had great farsightedness. On one occasion Tahira Siddiqua Sahiba felt aggrieved by a relative and her aunt knew of this. A few days later, when she was visiting from Jhelum, she greeted all her relatives and also embraced the relative to whom she bore some ill-feeling. Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} witnessed the scene and later said to her niece:

“I was very pleased to see that you put aside your resentment and embraced that person. It increased the love I have for you in my heart.”²¹²

Her niece, Amatul Mateen Sahiba, has related that her father, Hazrat Khalifatul Masih II^{ra}, did not like his daughters following the modern trends blindly. He would say:

“You may happily adopt the fashion that the Shariah permits; however you must abstain from whatever is not permitted by the Shariah.”²¹³

Thus, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} paid great attention to this instruction of Hazrat Khalifatul Masih II^{ra} also. Amatul Mateen Sahiba also related that once whilst in Quetta her finger nails grew excessively, perhaps due to unavailability of a pair of scissors or just laziness. Her aunt

²¹²ibid

²¹³Seerat-o-Swaaneh Sayyeda Nawab Mubaraka Begum Sahiba, Prof. S N Saeed, Lajna Ima'illah Lahore, 2001, p.301.

saw her nails and said: ***“I will tell your father”***. Amatul Mateen Sahiba became concerned and clipped her nails immediately.

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} provided guidance for the girls of her family whilst they considered marriage proposals. Another one of her nieces, Qudsia Begum Sahiba, recollected that from her earliest memories, their elders like Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} did indeed encourage them to pray for their future destinies. They promoted prayers for future husbands who were righteous and blessed and that they were granted pious children. Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} had been given similar advice to pray for her own blessed match from a young age, by Hazrat Khalifatul Masih I^{ra}. Our present beloved Khalifa, Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad^{aba}, was to highlight this point at the UK Lajna and Nasirat Ijtema in 2009:

“...Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum Sahiba^{ra}, who was the eldest daughter of the Promised Messiah^{as}, has also related an admonishment of Hazrat Khalifatul Masih I^{ra}, who would counsel her and other young girls with this advice as well. I believe that this advice and putting it into practice is more important today than it was before. Twelve and thirteen year old girls, who are entering into their youth, should certainly pray in this manner. Hazrat Khalifatul Masih I^{ra} often said to her,

‘Look, there is no shame in front of Allah the Exalted. Indeed, you are young, but you should keep on praying to God that He gives you a pious and blessed match.’

The advice of Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum Sahiba^{ra} is especially significant and appropriate for the current day environment. After giving this advice, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum Sahiba^{ra} said, 'These prayers are so that children may gather a treasure for their future life.'

You should pray in this age of self-awareness; pray, so that you gather a treasure of prayers and Allah the Exalted may grant you out of this treasure at the right time."^{214b}

Once girls began to receive marriage proposals, there would be an increased emphasis upon prayer, but no coercion was inflicted upon the girl. Even if her parents preferred another match, ultimately the girl's preference took precedence. Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} and other elders of her family would assuredly highlight the positive and negative points of a potential match, yet the final decision was left to the girl.

Another piece of advice Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} gave to her daughters was not to become overly impressed in the romance novels they read. Indeed, she would check their reading material at home, suggesting novels and magazines of good taste. She explained that at a young age, girls can begin to imagine themselves in fantasy situations and then may crave such romances in real life.

Equally, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} advised her daughters and nieces during their pregnancies. Amatul

Mateen Sahiba related that her aunt was both affectionate and concerned for their welfare. During her early pregnancy, she advised her not to pick up heavy objects. On one occasion when she did so, her aunt was annoyed with her and told her to be particularly careful in her first pregnancy. She also advised her not to prevent the conception of a second child after her first, as sometimes doing so led to women having difficulty conceiving a second time. She stressed this point to her niece who had been an only child herself.²¹⁴

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} would offer sincere and helpful advice to women and girls on all aspects of life. Her daughters' and nieces' accounts prove that her insight was not confined to the fields of faith and spirituality, but also encompassed the practical aspects of life. Indeed, Islam is a religion that covers all angles of life from the spiritual and religious, to the social and economic. As a true authority on this faith, this wisdom was reflected in the unique character of Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra}.

^{214b}Responsibilities of Ahmadi Muslim Women, Lajna Ima'illah UK, 2013, pgs26-27

²¹⁴Amatul Mateen Sahiba was subsequently blessed with a total of five children.

Hazrat Nawab Mubarak Begum's Loyalty to the Institution of Khilafat

Hazrat Nawab Mubarak Begum^{ra} had deep respect and loyalty for the institution of khilafat, the spiritual succession to prophets in Islam including the spiritual leaders of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community. Hazrat Sahibzadi Nasira Begum Sahiba (the late mother of Hazrat Khalifatul Masih V^{aba}, the sister of Hazrat Khalifatul Masih III^{rh} and the daughter of Hazrat Musleh Ma'ud^{ra}) has related of her aunt in this regard,

“Phuphi Jaan (paternal aunt) had a great deal of respect for khilafat within her heart. On account of the status of khilafat, she had precisely the same respect for Hazrat Khalifatul Masih I^{ra} as she had for Hazrat Musleh Ma'ud^{ra}. The same devotion was expressed by her when Bhaijan (Hazrat Khalifatul Masih III^{rh}) was entrusted with the status of Khilafat.”²¹⁵

Apart from her respect for the first khalifa, she also had a great love and faith in him. Her daughter, Mahmuda Begum Sahiba related how her mother's deep feelings for the khalifa were evident from the manner and affectionate way

²¹⁵Seerat-o-Swaanah Sayyeda Nawab Mubarak Begum Sahiba, Prof S N Saeed, Lajna Ima'illah Lahore, 2001, p.194.

in which she spoke of Hazrat Khalifatul Masih I^{ra} and incidents from his era. It was apparent that a deep devotion and faith for him emanated from every part of her body. When she reminisced of Hazrat Khalifatul Masih I's loving and overflowing respect for all the children of the Promised Messiah^{as} and also her husband, their own hearts would fill with love for this magnificent personage. She recollected that from childhood her mother would tell them a multitude of incidents from her time with the Promised Messiah^{as} and Hazrat Khalifatul Masih I^{ra}.

It is interesting to note that Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} related that the Promised Messiah^{as} forbade any type of backbiting or gossip. However, when it concerned the possibility of Hazrat Hakeem Maulvi Noor-ud-Deen^{ra} experiencing any problem or ill-treatment from anyone, the young Mubaraka^{ra} was directed by her father - the Promised Messiah^{as} - to inform him. This was because as a young child she would go in and out of her tutor's house frequently; thus was on informal terms with Hazrat Maulvi Sahib^{ra} (later Hazrat Khalifatul Masih I^{ra}). Clearly, the Promised Messiah^{as} would not tolerate any form of discomfort being suffered by Hazrat Maulvi Sahib^{ra}

This love and concern also developed in the hearts of his children. From a young age Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} was taught to show care and consideration for this devout follower, neighbour, friend and tutor - Hazrat Hakeem Maulvi Noor-ud-Deen^{ra}. In fact, she recollected that when Hazrat Maulvi Sahib^{ra} remarried, the Promised Messiah^{as} would send the young Mubaraka^{ra} to check each morning how Hazrat Maulvi Sahib^{ra} was. Indeed, the Promised Messiah^{as} would daily inquire of his daughter: *"Was Maulvi Sahib provided with a good breakfast or not?"*

Hazrat Maulvi Sahib and his wife's attachment to the whole family is apparent as Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} and her siblings referred to Hazrat Maulvi Sahib's wife respectfully but intimately as "Amma Jee", literally meaning "Dear Mother". She recollected that both Maulvi Sahib^{ra} and his wife, Sughra Begum Sahiba^{ra}, were also aware of the fact that the Promised Messiah^{as} was always concerned for Maulvi Sahib's welfare and would enquire daily of it. Maulvi Sahib^{ra} would on a daily basis reassure the Promised Messiah^{as} of his wellbeing. He would sometimes even jokingly moan (to the Promised Messiah^{as}) as one would with a close friend.

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} praised Hazrat Maulvi Sahib's wife, Sughra Begum Sahiba^{ra} in this context. She recollected that Amma Jee never became irritable with the young Mubaraka^{ra} for making her daily enquiries about Hazrat Maulvi Sahib^{ra} on behalf of her father. She fondly recollected how there was a lot of affection and banter between her mother - Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra} and Sughra Begum Sahiba^{ra} – her neighbour and friend.

The closeness of Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum's family and that of Maulvi Sahib, their intertwined lives and history is captured in Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum's description of her childhood,

"I spent my childhood playing in his lap (i.e. Hazrat Khalifatul Masih I^{ra}) and I started learning to read from him in my childhood. There were daily 'comings and goings' (between the families); it was

as if we were one household... Without any exaggeration almost every day he would affectionately say (i.e. Maulvi Sahib, later Hazrat Khalifatul Masih I^{ra}) ‘...You are dearer to me than my children and even more than Abdul Hai who was born during the later period of my life.’ (i.e. the children of the Promised Messiah^{as})²¹⁶

She recollected that he would often fervently say, **‘These children are not dearer to me than Mahmud’** (i.e. Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad^{ra}). This was not an impulsive comment as Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} recalled that she had often heard such comments over the years. She initially had the impression that the love Maulvi Sahib^{ra} bore for them, and especially for Mirza Bashir-ud-Din, stemmed from the incredible love he bore for their father - the Promised Messiah^{as}. However it could be that Hazrat Maulvi Sahib^{ra} had also recognised the elevated status of Hazrat Musleh Ma’ud^{ra} with his spiritual insight.

An incident from the young Mubaraka’s childhood astonishingly illustrates the profound depth of respect Hazrat Khalifatul Masih I^{ra} had for the Promised Messiah^{as}, the one whom he treated as his master. She recollected that when she would visit Maulvi Sahib^{ra} each morning for her lessons, she would take some almonds or walnuts in her pocket for his young son, Mian Abdul Salam. She would ask him playfully as she gave the nuts,

²¹⁶Seerat-o-Swaanah Sayyeda Nawab Mubaraka Begum Sahiba, Lajna Ima’illah Lahore, 2001, Prof. S N. Saeed, p.196.

“Tell me Abdul Salam for the sake of how many walnuts are you a servant?”

He would daily respond:

“I am a servant for two walnuts”

One day his older brother, Mian Abdul Hai, uttered angrily:

“Abdul Salam, why do you say servant? Are you a servant? Say that you are not a servant”

Hazrat Maulvi Sahib^{ra} happened to overhear the conversation of his sons from inside another room. ...He reproached his son with great passion and anguish:

“Abdul Hai, what have you said?...He is a servant...Abdul Salam come inside!”

She recollected accompanying her young friend inside. Hazrat Maulvi Sahib^{ra} then sternly told his son to repeat after him, ***“I am a servant.”*** Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} was truly astonished at the passion and the intensity of Hazrat Hakeem Maulvi Noor-ud-Deen’s feeling. This emanated from his respect and love for the Promised Messiah^{as}. Truly, he was an individual of great dignity and honour, a man who never lowered his head for anyone except his beloved master. Despite this, he could not tolerate his children saying to the young daughter of his blessed master (i.e. the Promised Messiah^{as}) that they were not her servants, even as a joke. Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} would remember the face of Hazrat Maulvi Sahib^{ra} upon hearing his son’s words; words that

were not intended to be disrespectful but could have been interpreted as so. She recollected:

“...I can remember his face to this day. It was affected not just with anger and displeasure, but also with shock.”²¹⁷

Such was the devotion of Hazrat Maulvi Sahib^{ra} to his master that even the slightest intimation that his children could forget the high status of the family of the Promised Messiah^{as} disturbed him. Incidentally, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} has related that he was so affectionate and familiar with her like a parent; she would not have been offended in the least, if he had reprimanded her for encouraging his son to say such things, even light-heartedly.

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum's niece, Amatul Basit Sahiba recollected her and her husband sitting with her aunt on some evenings and enjoying her anecdotes about the Promised Messiah^{as} and Hazrat Khalifatul Masih I^{ra}:

“Whenever she mentioned Hazrat Khalifatul Masih I^{ra}, it was always with great love and respect. I cannot remember ever having gone [to meet her aunt] and that the mention of Hazrat Khalifatul Masih I^{ra} had not occurred alongside the mention of the Promised Messiah^{as}. She used to say that whenever she was unwell, she would call Hazrat Khalifatul Masih I^{ra} over. He would immediately leave all his tasks and attend to her despite being

²¹⁷Seerat-o-Swaaneh Sayyeda Nawab Mubaraka Begum Sahiba, Prof. S N Saeed, Lajna Ima'illah Lahore, 2001, p.197.

the khalifa. She said that she would feel reassured that alongside the medicines, his prayers would also be included.²¹⁸

It is touching to learn of the extent of the love and respect Hazrat Khalifatul Masih I^{ra} had for Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra}. Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} acknowledged that it was difficult to express the feelings of affection and allegiance Hazrat Khalifatul Masih I^{ra} had with her family. She said of him:

“When anyone was unwell in our family, Hazrat Khalifatul Masih I^{ra} would come to visit them or whenever he would come to visit (at other times) a chair would be presented to him to sit on, but he would instead sit on the carpet near the bedstead because of his deep feelings of allegiance and affection. He possessed unparalleled feelings of love and alliance in his heart for all of us. One could see the rays of love and respect beaming from his face and eyes. Due to his deep affection for Hazrat Masih Ma’ud^{as}, he would care for us more than his own children. He had sacrificed everything for the sake of his love for his master.”²¹⁹

²¹⁸ibid, p.198, original source - Misbah, Special Ed., p.24.

²¹⁹Seerat-o-Swaaneh Sayyeda Nawab Mubaraka Begum Sahiba, Lajna Ima’illah Lahore, 2001, Prof. S N Saeed, p.198.

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum's Relationship with Hazrat Khalifatul Masih II^{ra}

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} had a unique relationship with Hazrat Khalifatul Masih II^{ra}. Not only did she respect him as the second successor of the Promised Messiah^{as} and as the 'Promised Son', but also as an affectionate and attentive older brother. It was both a brotherly and a paternal relationship, based on love, respect and mutual interests. The pair were highly intelligent and intellectuals; both composed poetry with flair. Their interests were similar. The respect Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} had for her elder brother was heightened by the awareness of the Promised Messiah^{as} of the future status of this beloved son. On one occasion, when she asked about the future of Ahmadiyyat, the Promised Messiah^{as} declared that it would be ***"The era of Mahmud."***

Allah the Almighty had conveyed to Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} in a dream the knowledge of her brother's high status which was published in the "Al Fazl" newspaper (April 4, 1970):

"One night I saw in a dream that Hazrat Masih Ma'ud^{as} was standing in the courtyard. I was standing near him. I lifted my head and looked in at his face and asked the question, 'Abba, (just as I would address him in childhood) which boy is it that is your special sign?' (In my mind I thought a sign of mercy etc.) He lowered his head towards me so that our gazes met; the special light of that gaze,

***the special depth, the special love, I can never forget. Although this is an old dream of mine, even so, I am still vividly seeing it all now and hearing it. He said in a very sweet voice; 'They shall all in their own time experience the bounties of my prayers, but this era is the era of Mahmud.' From that very moment my heart firmly believed that that special son was my beloved brother Mahmud.*"²²⁰**

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} recollected that Hazrat Musleh Ma'ud^{ra} was very kind as an older brother; neither did she ever witness him displaying any harshness to his younger brothers nor arguing with them. She recollected that they (Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} and Huzoor^{ra}) were always very close and informal in their relationship, and she would confide in him as well as her father - the Promised Messiah^{as}, as indeed he would confide in her. Her parents were aware of her closeness with Hazrat Musleh Ma'ud^{ra}. So, at times when the Promised Messiah^{as} felt his eldest son was worried about something, he would ask the young Mubaraka^{ra} to talk to her eldest brother. There were never serious issues but honourable desires e.g. on one occasion he wished for a complete set of the Bukhari (Book of Ahadith) and on another he wished to subscribe to a newspaper. Another time, he admitted to his younger sister that he was missing his wife who was away in Lahore.

²²⁰Seerat-o-Swaanah Sayyeda Nawab Mubaraka Begum Sahiba, Lajna Ima'illah Lahore, 2001, Prof. S N Saeed, p.206.

It was a closeness that lasted throughout their lives and became a close friendship in adulthood. Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} related that after she married and visited Qadian, Hazrat Musleh Ma'ud^{ra} would see her almost daily. When she lived in Malerkotla and Shimla, he would also occasionally visit her there. He would often invite his sister to travel with him on trips. She recollected that Hazrat Musleh Ma'ud^{ra} was always very caring and considerate whenever she returned to Qadian after her marriage. He would ensure that his sister's favourite dishes were cooked and would personally bring her fresh fruit. Together, they would sit and enjoy eating them. Hazrat Musleh Ma'ud^{ra} had a fondness for making perfumes and whenever his younger sister visited, he would enjoy giving her samples to try.



Hazrat Khalifatul Masih II^{ra} (1889-1965)

She recollected that this benevolent brother gifted her so many of his perfumes that she never needed to purchase any.

Upon her brother's demise, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} wrote many poems and articles. In one of them she affectionately remembered her brother with great admiration:

“My brother, my very dear brother! Throughout your life you endured the arrows thrown at you (by the opponants). Your innocent heart which was full of love and compassion endured many kinds of accusations. You only had the one passion and the one objective - that the true religion (of Islam) be understood in its true form and meaning by the world. The servants of the Promised Messiah^{as} continue to raise the standard of the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{sa} which the Gracious Allah had entrusted to the Promised Messiah^{as} in all corners of the earth.”²²³

She continued that her brother had withstood the opponents of Islam throughout his life, and he had persisted in this mission, forgoing his personal desires and anguishes. She continued:

“You always cast aside your personal pains and anguishes and kept the cause of the true Faith established in your heart.”²²¹

²²¹Al Fazl 19th Dec,1965, p.10.

The profound respect Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} had for her brother and his mission in life became apparent from her reaction upon his passing in 1965. His death shook the Jama'at like a formidable earthquake. Ahmadi members were incredibly grief stricken and yearned for some reassurance. At this critical juncture in the Community, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} acutely felt the loss of a beloved brother, one who had been so paternal in his care and like a best friend, but more importantly the spiritual successor and the 'Promised son' of the Promised Messiah^{as}. Yet, she put aside her personal loss and gave courage to her family. Her daughter Mahmuda Begum Sahiba related that her mother's forbearance at this difficult time was incredible. As other family members struggled to cope with the grief, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum's^{ra} reaction was extraordinary:

“Suddenly, a strong voice reverberated in our ears. I saw that Umi Jaan had raised both her hands. She stood by the bed of Hazrat Musleh Ma’ud^{ra} and said... ‘Listen! Be silent and listen to what I have to say. I remember the time when he was the one who stood up at the funeral of Hazrat Masih Ma’ud^{as} and promised, ‘Even if everyone leaves my side and I am left alone, I promise you that even then I will fulfil that mission for which you (i.e., the Promised Messiah^{as}) were sent.’

Look, I have seen with my own eyes that he fulfilled this pledge in every aspect. Until his last breath he remained determined upon this objective and he

gave his life in the service of the faith. This is not the time for crying but for praying. Make a pledge before God that you will also follow in his footsteps. Now this responsibility from God is upon you.²²²

Mahmuda Begum Sahiba, her daughter recollected that everyone stood silent and dumbfounded by what they had heard. The scene was a strangely unique one that ignited and rekindled the faith of those who had heard Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra}. She recollected that her mother's patience and self-restraint were astonishing, as she knew the intensity and scale of her grief. Before her beloved brother's passing, her mother would pace around the house exhausted by fatigue, as she had recognised that the final days of Hazrat Musleh Ma'ud's life had come. Yet afterwards, she had the steadfastness and resilience to console others and to advise them to pray, remembering the troubles after the demise of Hazrat Khalifatul Masih I^{ra}. Putting aside her own deep grief, she continued to help fellow Ahmadi Muslims at this critical time. The next day, she also wrote a letter of support and advice for all the Jama'at members which was read aloud in Mubarak Mosque.

"Our hearts are filled with grief. This separation seems to be beyond endurance. However, at this critical time, more than crying it is a time for praying. This is the third earthquake for the Ahmadiyya Jama'at."²²³

²²²Seerat-o-Swaaneh Sayyeda Nawab Mubaraka Begum Sahiba, Lajna Ima'illah Lahore, 2001, Prof. S N Saeed, p.200.

²²³Seerat-o-Swaaneh Sayyeda Nawab Mubaraka Begum Sahiba - Prof. S N Saeed, Lajna Ima'illah Lahore, 2001, p.202.

She then continued to explain that it was a critical time because the Community was now spreading. Consequently, weaknesses could arise in members. In this instance when a khalifa who was constantly advising, had been unwell for some time and this resulted in forming the root for neglect and weaknesses for some spiritually ill persons. [to discuss] She urged that at this time of important decision-making (i.e. electing a new khalifa) it was a time for great prayer, of cleansing one's heart, forgetting one's grief, and resolving to strive to become righteous examples of Ahmadiyyat.

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} advised the Jama'at to be thankful to Allah the Almighty, as she truly recognised the blessings that khilafat brought and the unity it maintained within the Jama'at. Her daughter has related that after the election of the next khalifa, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} was to say:

“Thank Allah the Almighty, Allah has protected us from every kind of trouble - again the Jama'at has been united on one hand.”

Indeed, her daughter observed of her pious mother:

“She fully recognised the truly high status of Khilafat.”²²⁴

²²⁴ibid, p.201

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum's Relationship with Hazrat Khalifatul Masih III^{rh}

Despite Hazrat Mirza Nasir Ahmad^{rh} being a nephew and a beloved son-in-law (he was married to her daughter Hazrat Mansoorah Begum Sahiba), this did not detract from the respect and honour Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} showed him once he was divinely appointed as the third khalifa of the Community. It was a relationship that superseded all others. At the time he became khalifa in 1965, his aunt and mother-in-law, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra}, was 68 years of age. By that time, due to frailer health, she did not listen to the entire Jalsa Salana (Annual Convention) within the tents where it was hosted. Yet, she would always attend and sit on the stage for the duration of Huzoor's speeches. She would listen most attentively with deference and love, uttering prayers. Mahmuda Begum Sahiba writes concerning her mother's relationship with the third khalifa:

“Despite Hazrat Khalifatul Masih III^{rh} being a son-in-law and nephew, as soon as he became Khalifa, Umi would take his name with immeasurable devotion and respect. She would address him saying ‘Aap’ (a polite form of “you” in Urdu). She would say to everyone, ‘Look, he is now in a position worthy of great respect’. Similarly, Hazrat Sahib^{rh} also expressed great respect towards her as she was Hazrat Masih Ma’ud’s daughter and his paternal aunt. Umi Jaan’s state was such that she forgot that he was a younger relation. She only

remembered the relationship which had been created by God in spiritual terms

Initially, if someone out of their old habits informally said or mentioned something (for Hazrat Khalifatul Masih III^{rh}) she would be greatly offended. Only last year she called me quietly to herself and said, 'Look how so-and-so has spoken, about him and has called him by name (i.e. of the Khalifa) and has spoken in a manner which illustrates disrespect. This is very bad, really bad.' I explained to her: 'Umi Jaan you misunderstood, no such conversation happened.' Then she was reassured."²²⁵

Hazrat Khalifatul Masih III^s daughter and Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum's own granddaughter, Amatul Shakoor Sahiba, wrote concerning her grandmother's loyalty to Khilafat:

"She had infinite love and faith in the Ahmadiyya Khilafat. When after the death of Abba Huzoor (i.e., Hazrat Musleh Ma'ud^{ra}) Abba became khalifa, she immediately called me and sat me close to her and turned my ear gently and said: 'You are very informal with your father and keep chatting with him without hesitation - now his station has changed - he has become khalifa and is incredibly respectable. Now speak to him with respect and

²²⁵Seerat-o-Swaanah Sayyeda Nawab Mubaraka Begum Sahiba, Lajna Ima'illah Lahore, 2001, Prof. S N Saeed, p.207, original from *Misbah* magazine, Dec1977-Jan1978, p.40.

***do not dare to disrespectfully beckon him as 'Abba'.*"²²⁶**

Amatul Shakoor Sahiba wrote that she was close and informal with her grandmother and was thus able to challenge her that she too had also called her father, the Promised Messiah^{as} - "*Abba*", although he had been even superior in his status to a Khalifa as a Prophet of God. Her grandmother - Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra}, was amused rather than angered by her granddaughter's argument. She replied chuckling that her manner of speaking with the Promised Messiah^{as} was always respectful unlike the casual tone of her granddaughter's address. She explained that she meant that her granddaughter should now stay within the parameters of good manners.

The above conversation is a wonderful illustration of the personality of Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra}. It demonstrated her humility and empathy with the young, apart from her profound veneration. It demonstrated her humility and empathy with the young, apart from her profound veneration for the khalifa of the time. She approached her granddaughter in a gentle but firm manner.

²²⁶Seerat-o-Swaanah Sayyeda Nawab Mubaraka Begum Sahiba, Lajna Ima'illah Lahore, 2001, Prof. S N Saeed, p.208.



Hazrat Khalifatul Masih III^{rh} (1909-1982)

Amatul Shakoor Sahiba continued concerning her grandmother's relationship with the third khalifa:

“Barri Umi had great humility in her character. I have never to this day ever heard anything from her mouth which had the unpleasantness of pride. In the presense of the Khalifa of the time she was the embodiment of humility. After the (appointment of) khilafat of Abba, I never heard her call Abba by name. If she addressed him, she would say, ‘Mian’. When she spoke to us, she would say, ‘Your Abba’. Whilst speaking with others and with household helpers, she always referred to him as ‘Hazrat Sahib’. When she moved to Rabwah and she needed to travel, she would only do so after gaining Huzoor’s permission. She would seek advice (from Huzoor) if she had any issues she had; and Abba (i.e., Huzoor) would also seek advice from her.”²²⁷

In 1976, Hazrat Khalifatul Masih III^{rh} travelled to Europe and America in order to convey the true message of Islam. He prayed for the success of his trip as did the Jama'at. On this occasion, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} penned a poem for him which expressed her deep respect for his high status and blessed lineage:

²²⁷Seerat-o-Swaanah Sayyeda Nawab Mubaraka Begum Sahiba, Prof S N Saeed, Lajna Ima'illah Lahore, 2001, p.209.

خدا کا فضل ہے اس کی عطا ہے

This is God's Blessing which He has bestowed

محمدؐ کے وسیلے سے ملا ہے

It is through Muhammad^{sa} we have attained him

”مبارک“ تھایہ امُّ المؤمنین کا

**He was a blessed one (the” Mubarak” of Hazrat
Ammā
Jaan^{ra})**

ہو اقبال رب العالمین کا

Who has been chosen by the Lord of all the Worlds

نوید احمد و تنویر محمود

**He is a glad tiding of Ahmad^{as} and the light of
Mahmud**

یہ ”موجود ابن موجود“ ابن موجود

**He is the promised one, the son of a promised
one, Who is the son of a promised one²²⁸**

²²⁸Misbah magazine, p.6,1966 (Seerat-o-Swaanah Sayyeda Nawab Mubarak Begum Sahiba, Lajna Ima'illah Lahore, 2001, Prof. S N Saeed, p.210)

In many of her speeches and writings addressing ladies, Hazrat Nawab Mubarak Begum^{ra} would stress remaining close to khilafat and ensuring one's family also remained attached. She would advise Lajna members to maintain and protect the *Nizaam-e-Jama'at*²²⁹ and to avoid petty criticism and thinking ill of other. She emphasised keeping oneself and one's family pure of hypocrisy and regularly writing to the khalifa to request prayers. She also highlighted the importance of maintaining strong links with the Centre of the Jama'at and visiting it regularly.

²²⁹The infrastructure and system of the Ahmadiyya Movement.

An Intellectual and a Great Poet

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum's natural inclinations were intellectual and one of her favourite pastimes was the acquisition of knowledge. Her nephew, Hazrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad^{rh} (the Fourth Khalifa of the Ahmadiyya Community) recollected scarcely seeing this aunt and her sister without a book in hand. He related:

“We saw in our family that Hazrat Choti Phuphi Jaan (Hazrat Amatul Hafiz Begum) and Hazrat Barri Phuppi Jaan (i.e., Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra}) had very basic education in worldly terms. Despite their education being almost non-existent, they had such enlightened minds and their study was so extensive. I remember that often whenever I visited, I would see books in their hands. When they would start to speak, they would put the book down by their side, so that at the end of the conversation they could again pick up the book. As a result their speech was polished.”²³⁰

“Hazrat Choti Appa”, her cousin and sister-in-law, wrote about Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum's aesthetic taste in literature:

²³⁰Seerat-o-Swaanah Sayyeda Nawab Mubaraka Begum Sahiba, Prof S N Saeed, Lajna Ima'illah Lahore, 2001, p.384. (orig. from *Hawaa kee Beytiah* or *Jannat Nazeer Moashirah*, p.150.)

“Allah the Almighty also blessed her with the special quality of having very pure taste in literature. Her poetic work was extremely subtle and completely overflowed with spirituality. Also it was of very high calibre as far as literature is concerned.”²³¹

She continued that her sister-in-law’s prose also had a special quality and “unique beauty”. She felt that the delicacy and purity of her poetry which was filled with both passion and spirituality, was influenced by the impassioned prayers of her father, the Promised Messiah^{as}, and the beautiful moral upbringing of her mother – Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra}.

She added that each of her sister-in-law’s poems published in the collection ***“Durre Aden”*** was worth reading and inspired devotion to Allah the Almighty and a love of the Holy Prophet^{sa}. Furthermore, the poems Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} wrote for her children were beneficial for both Ahmadi ladies and their children.

Her daughter, Mahmuda Begum Sahiba, was to write of her mother’s intellectual abilities:

“Umi Jaan’s study was very extensive. She would read every type of book. Her poetry was also excellent and she was spontaneous. I was amazed when she taught me some Urdu course books; it

²³¹Seerat-o-Swaaneh Sayyeda Nawab Mubaraka Begum Sahiba, Prof S N Saeed, Lajna Ima’illah Lahore, 2001, p.385.

***was then that I realised how extensive her knowledge was. She had also studied a little English, sometimes from one person, sometimes another, and she could read substantial books. Additionally she knew Arabic and Persian very well.*"²³²**

Hameeda Sabira Sahiba, a teacher related that Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} had told her that when she read the Holy Qur'an and came across a word she was unsure of, she would immediately check its meaning in the dictionary. That would confirm the meanings she understood (originally). She also recollected that if Hazrat Begum Sahiba^{ra} liked a book, she would graciously present it to Hameeda Sahiba to read. Likewise, she also gave Hazrat Begum Sahiba^{ra} books to read. Hazrat Begum Sahiba^{ra} was very particular about taking care of the books she borrowed.

Professor Naseem Saeed personally recollected that when Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} lived in Lahore, she would request her to bring her books of pure and pleasant nature. Often, she would request books written by women. Professor Naseem Saeed a young student at the time would bring books for Hazrat Begum Sahiba^{ra}. She would keep certain books if she had particularly enjoyed the quality of the writing or the good use of proverbs etc. Clearly, she had an insight into the stylistic merits as well as the contents of the books she read.

She expressed her interest in English books to Professor Naseem Saeed recollecting:

²³²ibid

“I was in Malerkotla when I developed an interest in studying English and it was within a short period that I learnt English. Then I read such and such books. Now because of my health and weak eyesight I cannot read them, because the English books contain very small script.”²³³

Amatul Shakoor Sahiba has reminisced how her grandmother’s relationship and friendship with her was enhanced by their mutual interest in books and especially when she reached the age when they could exchange reading material. She recollects that her grandmother had a great appetite for learning and quite a command of the English language. When Amatul Shakoor Sahiba reached the age of 13 or 14 years, her grandmother began giving her English books. She would lend her granddaughter books on condition that she did not fold the corners of the pages and maintained them in good condition.

The value she placed on books and learning is clearly illustrated by the fact that when Amatul Shakoor Sahiba left Lahore for Jhelum, she gave her books and magazines to her grandmother who had a cupboard emptied and neatly arranged her granddaughter’s books in it. She further reassured her granddaughter:

“This is your trust with me...I am permitted to read them, am I not?”²³⁴

²³³Seerat-o-Swaanah Sayyeda Nawab Mubarak Begum Sahiba, Prof. S N Saeed, Lajna Ima’illah Lahore, 2001, p.386.

²³⁴Seerat-o-Swaanah Sayyeda Nawab Mubarak Begum Sahiba, Prof. S N Saeed, Lajna Ima’illah Lahore, 2001, p.387.

Her granddaughter responded “*Of course*” quite incredulously, for it had been her intention to leave them for her grandmother. Amatul Shakoor Sahiba also reminisces that later when her cousin was visiting her grandmother, her grandmother wrote to her requesting permission to allow her to give her cousin books to read from her collection. She explained that he had an interest in detective novels. Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} reassured her granddaughter that her books would be put back safely in the cupboard. Amatul Shakoor Sahiba was amazed at the great consideration her grandmother gave to her books. Surely, it was this value of knowledge which contributed to her great wisdom and understanding of the wider world and of her Supreme Creator.

Not only was Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} a competent reader in English but she also spoke it confidently, much to the surprise of her granddaughter. Amatul Shakoor Sahiba recollected that in 1961 her American penfriend “Peggie” visited Lahore, to whom she had given her grandmother’s address. Unfortunately, Amatul Shakoor Sahiba could not visit her penfriend in Lahore due to an urgent commitment that her father was asked to attend. She apologised to Peggie on the phone, who though disappointed said she would still visit her grandmother there. Perhaps from her she could see her friend’s pictures and gain some insight into her culture. Amatul Shakoor Sahiba informed her grandmother of her friend’s intentions.

Consequently, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} prepared a welcoming tea for her granddaughter’s penfriend. She

warmly received Peggie and talked to her most attentively, answering all her questions in a relaxed manner. When Peggie asked Hazrat Begum Sahiba^{ra} to meet her husband, she gently explained to her the practice and philosophy of 'purdah'. The reception she gave Peggie left such a profound impression on the American tourist, that on her return home she wrote to her penfriend, Amatul Shakoor Sahiba expressing that she had enjoyed meeting her grandmother so much that she felt she could not have possibly enjoyed meeting her penfriend as much! Complimenting the refined and appealing manners of Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} she wrote:

“I was amazed at her English. How easily she speaks a foreign tongue; and upon my asking she told me that neither had she studied at school nor college, nor had she ever gone to Europe or America. Your aunt also speaks English, but your grandmother was speaking it without hesitation.”

Peggie concluded her letter by saying:

“She is an amazing and wonderful woman.”²³⁵

Had she known of the distinguished lineage of this “wonderful woman” perhaps she could have better understood her outstanding personal qualities; qualities so extensive that they could have only been a divine blessing. This was a blessing that continues to benefit us today - as

²³⁵ibid, p.388.

the recipients of her prayers and written guidance. Indeed, her learning teaches us a valuable lesson; it is not a long list of qualifications which determines our knowledge and wisdom but our own personal actions. By nurturing a lifelong connection with our Supreme Creator, Allah the Almighty, Who is “**Al Aleem**” - the All-Knowing and “**Ar Raheem**” – the Ever Merciful, we can be blessed with His Supreme knowledge, whenever He decrees.

Siraj Bibi, a lady who worked in the Lajna office for a lengthy period, has written that when Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} came to live with her son - Nawab Masood Ahmad Khan Sahib and his wife Tayyaba Siddiqua Begum, she would regularly order books from the Amatul Hai Library through her. She had a bag sewn especially for the transport of such books and she would consider each book thoughtfully and would say:

***“First of all, I look at the conclusion of a book,
whichever has a good ending that one I keep.”***²³⁶

According to this principle, the author would like to reassure the reader that the conclusion of this book is nothing but “good”. The main character, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} was decreed a happy destiny as the bearer of a name which literally means “blessed”.

²³⁶*Misbah Khaas* No. p.64

A Lifelong Love of Books

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum's niece, Sahibzadi Amatul Mateen Sahiba related that whenever she visited her aunt in Rattan Bagh, she would beckon her to her room and would give her books and magazines to read aloud. She would then guide her niece regarding how to improve her elocution. She also recollected how her aunt would discuss literature and poetry with her beloved brother who was Amatul Mateen Sahiba's father - Hazrat Musleh Ma'ud^{ra}. It was a common interest they enthusiastically shared, often whilst strolling in the gardens. They would discuss their personal poetry with each other as well as books. She remembers that she used to love solving riddles as a child and once she sent one to her father and aunt as they walked. Subsequently, her father and aunt both began discussing and composing riddles for Amatul Mateen Sahiba which they would then send her. Amatul Mateen Sahiba regretted that she had lost the notebook in which she used to keenly record these riddles as a child. She related that her aunt would also pen religious riddles from which children could benefit.

Once whilst they were in Sindh, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} or "*Phuppi Jaan*" as they addressed her; wrote a letter to their father -Hazrat Musleh Ma'ud^{ra}. In the letter she requested him to relate this riddle to the children for them to solve:

"There are two Kalimas which are very light on the tongue but are very weighty on the scales (and) in the sight of the Gracious One they are very dear."

The answer as according to Ahadith²³⁷ is of course:

سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَبِحَمْدِهِ سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ الْعَظِيمِ

*“SubhanAllah wabihamdihee, SubhanAllah hil
Azeem.”²³⁸*

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} had written that she would give one rupee as a reward to whoever solved the riddle first. Mateen Sahiba relates that she easily did so and stated the answer within seconds. Subsequently, she was happy to receive the prize money from her aunt upon their return to Lahore.

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum's niece Fozia Shameem Sahiba, reflects that it is hard to imagine that this pure pair of sisters married at such a young age. Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra}, her “*Barri Umi*” was only 12 ½ years of age, whilst her own mother was around 13. Yet, they both continued the pursuit of knowledge after marriage; reading Urdu, Arabic, Persian and English to the extent that they could compete with graduates of such subjects. She also remembers how her aunt - Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra}, shared her intellectual interests with “*Barray Mamoo*” (i.e., Hazrat Musleh Ma'ud^{ra}).

²³⁷Sayings of the Holy Prophet^{sa}

²³⁸This means “*Holy is Allah and all praise is His, Holy is Allah, the Greatest.*”

She recollected her aunt often descending the stairs and mentioning that she had just recited one of her compositions to her elder brother. Fozia Shamim Sahiba states that her aunt built up a respectable library which she meticulously maintained. She allowed her nieces and nephews to borrow her books and Fozia Shamim Sahiba personally borrowed many English books from her aunt.

A Great Poet

Hazrat Nawab Mubarak Begum^{ra} was an inherently talented poet. Indeed, her lineage may have influenced this as through her maternal line she descended from Khwaja Mir Dard – a skilled poet. Her maternal grandfather - Mir Nasir Nawab Sahib^{ra} had also put his poetic gift to good use by employing it to appeal to the Jama'at members to make financial sacrifices. Her father - the Promised Messiah^{as} was unquestionably a great literary phenomenon in both secular and spiritual terms, having written over 85 books and penned numerous lectures and articles throughout his lifetime.²³⁹ He had also composed heartfelt and passionate invocations in the form of poetry. Hazrat Nawab Mubarak Begum's poetic flair and intellectual tastes were evident

²³⁹Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad's^{as} literary skills were well acknowledged by those outside the Ahmadiyya Community also e.g., in the Newspaper Wakeel, Amritsar, he was described as "*...a colossal man...whose pen was magic and diction enchanting, theman who was paragon of the marvels of the mind...*" see quote from Al Badr newspaper, June 18th, 1908. Also, the Curzon Gazette, Delhi, was to write upon his demise; "*...His forceful literature is unique in its majesty, there is no doubt that by reading some of his writings one is thrilled in raptures of ecstasy.*" (Quoted in Silsila-e- Ahmadiyya, p.189. Taken from "Tabligh guide" Naseem A. Bajwa, p.100, Green Leaf printers 2009.)

from a young age. Her intelligence and linguistic ability meant that she completed her first reading of the Holy Qur'an at the tender age of 4 years. She also began her poetic compositions at an early age, almost as soon as she could write.

Her poetry was unpretentious, sincere and spontaneous. Whatever thoughts and emotions flowed through her heart and mind, she would quickly transfer them to paper. In this interest she had a true soulmate in her older brother – Hazrat Musleh Ma'ud^{ra}, also a well-respected poet. Sometimes, Hazrat Nawab Mubarak Begum^{ra} would write a poem in response to one of Hazrat Musleh Ma'ud's poems, or would suggest a word or phrase for his compositions. Her nephew Hazrat Khalifatul Masih IV^{rh}, himself a highly regarded poet, had written that in reading his '*Phuppi Jaan's*' poetry, one would be overwhelmed with awe. Even the great poets of her era could not rival his *Phuppi Jaan* in the eloquence and rhetoric of her poetry.

Her niece, Shahida Naseem Begum Sahiba, has recollected an incident from 1955, which illustrates her aunt's distinguished poetic skills. Shahida Naseem Begum Sahiba was a second year Home Economics student at University. She entered a poetry recital competition that was held at her college. The chairperson of the competition was to be the renowned poet - Faiz Ahmad Faiz. Shahida Naseem Begum Sahiba wished to participate and mentioned it to her aunt in passing. "*Barri Umi*" reassured her niece: "*Oh, I'll write you a poem.*" She then effortlessly penned her poem of 7 couplets, which was in response to a line from the famous poet Ghalib, which had been given by the

organisers of the competition. Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum's poem began:

پھر دکھا دے مجھے مولا مرشد اداں ہونا

Yet again show me happiness, My Lord

صحن خانہ کا میرے رشک گلستاں ہونا

Making my courtyard the envy of other gardens

Shahida Naseem Begum Sahiba recollects that she read her poem from behind a screen at the competition (which her headteacher had considerably arranged for her). Faiz Ahmad Faiz actually stood up in appreciation of her poem and praised its sublime level of thought. Consequently, she was awarded the first prize.²⁴⁰

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum's granddaughter, Amatul Shakoor Sahiba has related that her grandmother's poetry was unique, with spontaneity and spirituality that would overwhelm one like overpowering waves of water. She presented two couplets to illustrate her point and to convey how her grandmother could so vividly express the condition of her heart. Her poetry comprised simple language, yet it was so creatively arranged that it overwhelmed the reader. She wrote of it:

²⁴⁰For full poem see Durr-e-Aden, Hazrat Syyeda Nawab Mubaraka Begum Sahiba, Qadian, 2002, p.90.

“Her poetry was unique and there was such spontaneity and spirituality in the poems which overcame one like flooding waves of water...There was simplicity and depth in it, it expressed the condition of the heart. A person is immersed in it because this condition is experienced by every individual, but not every individual can express it.”²⁴¹

She then quoted the following as an example:

درد کہتا ہے بہادو خونِ دل آنکھوں سے تم

Pain urges to let spill the heart’s pain through tears

عقل کہتی ہے نہیں! آہ و فغاں بے سود ہے

Sense says “no”; pointless is lamenting

خوف ہے مجھ کو لگ جائے نہ اشکوں کی جھڑی

I fear lest my tears may flow incessantly

آج میرا مطلع دل پھر غبار آلود ہے

For today the horizon of my heart is murky once again!

Evidently, it is difficult to capture the beauty of the imagery, rhythm and rhyme of her original Urdu poetry in English. Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} would

²⁴¹Seerat-o-Swaaneh Sayyeda Nawab Mubaraka Begum Sahiba, Lajna Ima’illah Lahore, 2001, Prof. S N Saeed, p.136.

spontaneously switch to poetry when she desired to invoke prayers. At times, poetry was the best tool for her to express the passion of her prayers. Her poetry has now become a wonderful treasure of prayers that are often quoted on special occasions such as weddings. Hazrat Nawab Mubarak Begum's poetry was of a loftier station than most because she experienced revelations in the form of poetry. Sometimes this occurred in her dreams. In 1924, the following verse was revealed to her in a dream:

مایوس و غم زدہ کوئی اس کے سوا نہیں

Hopeless and sorrowful is none except he

قبضے میں جس کے قبضہ سیف خدا نہیں

Who does not possess the hilt of the Sword of God.²⁴²

One night as she slept after prayers, she heard these words in a loud voice:

خیر ہی خیر رہے خیر کی راہیں کھل جائیں

**May all remain well, May the avenues of good be
opened**

When she awoke, she saw Hazrat Amman Jan^{ra} offering Salat near her. Later, she formulated the couplet into a full verse:

²⁴²Durre Aden, pg88

وہ کرم کر کہ عدو کی بھی نگاہیں کھل جائیں

**Grant such bounty that may open the eyes of the
enemy**

“خیر ہی خیر رہے خیر کی راہیں کھل جائیں“

May all remain well; may the avenues of good be opened

On another occasion in 1945, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} found herself reciting the following verse which she had also heard in a loud and clear voice:

مبارک ہو فرزند عالی دماغ

Congratulations, a son of high intelligence

سلامت رہے تیرے گھر کا چراغ

May the light of your house be ever protected

She stated that she was unaware of which of her progeny, current or future, the verse referred to.

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum's heart overflowed with the love of Allah the Almighty. Day and night His remembrance rolled off her tongue. It was something which influenced all her words and deeds in life. It was the subject which dominated her poetry. Her collection of poems "Durre Aden" abounds in poetry expressing her love

of Allah the Almighty and His Prophet - Muhammad^{sa}. She wrote a lengthy poem titled “*The Garden of Love*”. It is divided into four parts: “*The Effects of Love*”, “*The Secrets of Love*”, “*The Standard of Love*” and “*In Respect of the Lord of Love*”.

In “*The Effects of Love*” she contemplated how one can recognise one’s love for Allah the Almighty:

دل جس کا ہوا حائل اسرارِ محبت

چہرہ پہ برسنے لگے انوارِ محبت

The face of one whose heart is a recipient of the secrets of love

Exudes the spiritual light of Divine love

In “*The Secrets of Love*” she conveys what the secrets and mysteries of this true love is:

ہر بندِ غلامی سے وہ ہو جاتا ہے آزاد

کہتے ہیں جسے ”بندۂ سرکارِ محبت“

One known as the servant of the ‘Lord of Love’

Is freed from all bondage of slavery...

رہتا نہیں پھر کوئی دل و عقل میں جھگڑا

ہو جاتے ہیں دونوں ہی گرفتارِ محبت

**...There remains no conflict between the heart and the
mind**

Both succumb to [the power of] love²⁴³

In "*The Standard of Love*", Hazrat Nawab Mubarak Begum^{ra} reflects on what is the real measure and level of the true love of Allah the Almighty:

جو عشق میں کامل تھے

Those consummate in ardent love

ہوئے یارِ پہ قرباں

Sacrificed themselves for their Beloved

تکمیل ہوئی

Having thus accomplished

بن گئے "معیارِ محبت"

They became the 'Standard of love'

محبوب کو دل دے کے

...They gave their heart to the Beloved

²⁴³ibid, p.139/ Durre Aden, Qadian, 2002, pp31-32

بنے ”دلبر عالم“

And in turn became beloved of the world

سر دے دئے

Having offered their own heads

کہلا گئے ”سردارِ محبت“

They became the “leaders of Love”.²⁴⁴

In the fourth part – “*In Respect of the Lord of Love*”, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} invokes her Lord’s love in such passionate and vivid imagery and with such humility that the reader cannot help but be affected:

ہم کو بھی عطا ہو کہ تری عام ہے رحمت

Your Mercy is common for all, so bestow upon me too

اک سوزِ دروں خلعتِ دربارِ محبت

A passionate heart as a “Robe of Honour” from Your court of love

ہاتھوں میں لئے کاسہ دل آئے ہیں مولا...

...I have come before You My Lord with my heart as a begging bowl

خالی نہ پھریں تیرے طلبگارِ محبت

²⁴⁴Durre Aden, Qadian, 2002, pp32-33 (Taken from Seerat-o-Swaanah Sayyeda Nawab Mubaraka Begum Sahiba, Lajna Ima’illah Lahore, 2001, Prof. S N Saeed, .140.)

Those who seek Your Love are never left empty-handed²⁴⁵

Thus, her passionate invocations also render hope to the reader that our worship and efforts to please our Lord are never wasted. Her invocations convey a great humility and a depth of emotion that few could express. Calling upon Allah the Almighty in "A Call" she implores Him:

کیا التجا کروں کہ مجسم دعا ہوں میں
سرتابہ پاسوال ہوں سائل نہیں ہوں میں

**What can I implore for; an embodiment of prayer am
A plea am I from head to toe, not just a supplicant...**

...دحشت مری نہیں ابھی ہم پایہ بجنوں

...My devotion does not quite match insanity yet

اہل خرد پیہ بار ہوں عاقل نہیں ہوں میں

A burden am I for the wise, for sense I have not

میرا کوئی نہیں ہے ٹھکانا ترے سوا

I have no other sanctuary except You

تیرے سوا کسی کے بھی قابل نہیں ہوں میں

Without You I am not worthy of anyone

²⁴⁵Durre Aden, p34.

مٹی ہوئی خودی نے پکارا کہ اے خدا!

My diminishing ego has called out “Oh God!

آجا کہ تیری راہ میں حائل نہیں ہوں میں

Come to me as there is no obstacle in Your path to reach me...”²⁴⁶

There is a sense of desperate urgency and helplessness; a sense that the supplicator is on the brink of a catastrophic fall without divine help and an expression of the poet’s complete lack of self-worth. Truly, the humility of this poet’s supplications is astonishing.

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} seemed to compose poetry for all occasions, which is apparent from perusing her collection in “*DurreAden*”. For example, on the completion of the Holy Qur’an by her niece, Amina Tayyaba Sahiba, she wrote on the unique beauty of this book of God:

اسی سے منور ہو سینہ تمہارا

...May your heart be illumined by it,

کرے دل میں گھر نورِ قرآنِ طیب

May the pure light of the Qur’an dwell in your heart

بٹھادے گا دل میں محبتِ خدا کی

²⁴⁶*Durre Aden*, Hazrat Syyeda Nawab Mubaraka Begum Sahiba^{ra}, Qadian 2002, p.86.

...It will instil love of God in your heart

تمہیں یہ بنادے گا انسان طیب

And it will make you a pure person

ملا دے گا یہ تم کو آخر خدا سے.

It will ultimately unite you with Allah

نکل جائے گے دل کے ارمان طیب

It will realise the pure yearnings of your heart

اسی راستہ پر چلو میری پیاری

Walk only on this path, my dear

یہی راہ ہے سب میں آسان طیب

This path is the easiest of all, the best.

جہاں کام دے گی نہ اے بی نہ سی ڈی

...Where neither "A", "B" nor "C" or "D" will avail

وہاں کام آئے گا قرآن طیب

There, the pure Qur'an will be of use

مسلمان بن کر دکھانا جہاں کو

Demonstrate to the world as a real Muslim

بنانا بہت سے مسلمان طیب

Make many others pure Muslims

خدا سے دعا ہے کہ بن جائے اس کی

My prayer to God is that she may become His

مری پیاری طیب مری جان طیب (آمین)

My dear Tayyab, my beloved Tayyab! (Ameen)²⁴⁷

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum's poetry, of which the author has only highlighted a few extracts from her prolific collection, is both spiritually inspiring and intellectually stimulating. Translations fail to do its beauty and complexity real justice.

Both her poetry and her writings became an invaluable resource for the moral training of the Jama'at. It is fascinating to learn that it was intimated to Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} through a dream that her writings would bring great blessings. At the beginning of one dream, she saw the Promised Messiah^{as} reclining on the floor against a bolster cushion. One of his companions - Hazrat Anaiyat Ali Sahib^{ra} presented himself before the Promised Messiah^{as} and requested him to elucidate concerning "tabarakaat".²⁴⁸ The Promised Messiah^{as} responded:

²⁴⁷*Durre Aden*, Hazrat Syeeda Nawab Munaraka Begum Sahiba, Qadian 2002, pp44-46. "Tayyab" refers both to her niece "Tayyaba" and the Arabic word which means "pure".

²⁴⁸Articles/objects belonging to Prophets and saintly people from which people seek blessings.

“As an example, one who has even a piece of my inkstand, Allah will give blessings to his pen.”

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} recollected that in the dream she then asked her father for a piece of the inkstand. By his right hand was a wooden inkstand. He picked up some pieces of it and gave them to her. She vividly remembered that the pieces were as white as fresh coconut and milk. She could also see that the inkstand was still intact by the side of the Promised Messiah^{as}, although he had given her some pieces of it.²⁴⁹ The dream seemed to indicate that Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum’s literary compositions would have unique blessings, a share of the immense blessings of the inspirational writings of her father, the Promised Messiah, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as}.

²⁴⁹*Tehriraat-e-Mubaraka* – Lajna Ima’illah Pakistan, Zia-ul-Islam Press, P55.

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum's Relationship with her Mother - Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra}

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum's mother - Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra} - was no ordinary woman. She was a blessed individual; a lady who had been especially appointed to be the mother of the progeny of the Promised Messiah^{as} - ***"The Mother of the Faithful"*** as well as the biological mother of Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra}. She was to play a fundamental role in instilling a deep faith and lifelong devotion to Allah the Almighty in all her children. She was a mother whose moral training was so effective that when her 12-year-old daughter who had recently lost her blessed father when married, conducted herself as an exemplary *"mo'minah"*. Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} was to become a devout practitioner of Islamic values and a great ambassador for the revival of Islam through the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community. She was a worthy wife and a model mother, both to her stepchildren and her biological children. Some of the credit for these good qualities must be attributed to her mother - Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra}.

The unique status of Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra} was conveyed to Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} in a profound dream shortly after her mother's passing. In it she saw a picture of a boy on a wall who seemed to her to be her late brother, Hazrat Mirza Mubarak Ahmad^{ra}. The child in the picture

then came alive and Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} was naturally delighted to meet her brother. The first thing she asked him was if he lived near their mother. To this question her brother responded: 'I have not been called there yet.' She then asked him if their mother had as of yet had the chance to meet the Holy Prophet of Islam^{sa}. Hazrat Mirza Mubarak Ahmad^{ra} responded that their mother actually lived with the beloved Holy Prophet^{sa}! He then enthusiastically explained that their mother not only lived in the same palace as the beloved Holy Prophet^{sa} but also in the same room. Such a response caused a wave of happiness to surge through Hazrat Nawab Mubarakah Begum^{ra}. She then reflected in the dream that her late mother would also be living alongside the Promised Messiah^{as} in the room of the Holy Prophet^{sa}. Her late brother then elaborated with a childish enthusiasm and great happiness that their mother's abode was an amazing and unimaginable place. It was like a palace made of pearls.²⁵⁰ Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} was left speechless by this information and then awoke whilst in a state of wonder. One can only attempt to understand the rare and beautiful qualities of Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra}, the spiritual mother of the Jama'at from such a dream.

This exalted status of Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra} becomes even more apparent if one studies her life and that of her children. Her progeny was to produce four of the five spiritual successors (Khalifa) of the Ahmadiyya Community to date. She was also divinely described as the "*Khadija*" of the Promised Messiah^{as}; thus was blessed with

²⁵⁰Seerat-o-Swaanah Hazrat Ammaa Jaan, Prof S N Saeed, Lajna Ima'illah Lahore, 2005, p.650.

the same faith, loyalty and spirit of sacrifice as that eminent lady - Hazrat Khadija^{ra}. The latter was the first person to accept Islam and became an unwavering support to the Holy Prophet of Islam^{sa} throughout her lifetime. Like Hazrat Khadija^{ra}, Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra} was to be a role model for a new Community of strong and pious Muslim women.

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} related that her mother always appreciated the unique blessings of Allah the Almighty upon her. It is interesting to learn that Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} mentioned that until the point of the Promised Messiah's death, his influence and kindness upon her was more prevalent. Yet, after his passing, her mother's love became more apparent and her affection towards her children, especially her daughters increased. She strived to prevent her daughters ever feeling the loss of their loving father - a father who had so graciously considered them as venerable "guests" within his home.

So, Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra} endeavoured to rear her daughters in the same loving manner. Of this experience, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} said in her own words:

"During the era of Hazrat Masih Ma'ud^{as} the impact of his kindness upon our hearts was far greater than that of Walidah Sahiba (i.e., their mother). However, after him she became the most loving mother in the world and even now that love and kindness continue to increase daily. It always

remained her goal, especially with the girls, that she should fill that void created by the absence of their gracious father.”²⁵¹

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} did not recollect her mother ever behaving harshly towards them, yet she remembered that her mother had an innate “*special authority*” which actually made them more formal in their relationship with her. In fact, it is amazing to consider that they were closer to their father despite his Divine appointment as a Prophet. This respect and formality were partly instilled in them by the Promised Messiah^{as} himself, as he displayed a great respect for his wife. Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} has written concerning this:

“I remember that because of the great respect and love shown by Huzoor Aqdas for Hazrat Walida Sahiba (i.e. her mother), respect for her increased in my heart.”²⁵²

Such was the astounding humility of one of the honourable prophets to have walked this earth. He indeed was a role model for men as well as being a unique link with our Supreme Being for these modern, troubled times.

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} was to write in detail of the numerous good qualities of her mother which were to help shape the virtuous character of this daughter. Of her distinctive qualities she said:

²⁵¹*Tehriraat-e-Mubaraka* – Lajna Ima’illah Pakistan, Zia-ul-Islam Press, p.6. (Published in Al-Fazl newspaper, April 25th, 1952)

²⁵²ibid

“Her special quality is that she is incredibly steadfast and grateful. All the time, utterances of gratitude to Allah roll off her tongue. She is very accustomed to praying.”^{255b}

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} was to relate the incredible fervency of her mother’s prayers and that she would be personally embarrassed by the sheer length of her mother’s formal prayers (*Salat*):

“Looking at the length of her prostrations (of formal prayer), sometimes I feel extremely disappointed and embarrassed at the condition of my own.”²⁵³

She was to further mention that her mother performed her obligatory prayers with a meticulous beauty. She described how Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra} had a lifelong passion to serve humanity and help the poor. Regarding this fervour in her mother, she wrote:

“Her heart throbs especially for the poor. All the time she is preoccupied with sending assistance to someone or other. In terms of charity, she is the

^{255b}*Tehriraat-e-Mubaraka* – Lajna Ima’illah Pakistan, Zia-ul-Islam press, p.7.

²⁵³*Tehriraat-e-Mubaraka* – Lajna Ima’illah Pakistan, Zia-ul-Islam press, p.8.

***first to extend a helping hand the moment she hears of someone's condition.*"²⁵⁴**

She continued that her mother had "a maternal love for the Jama'at" and that she felt the pain of each individual of this Community just as "the heart of a mother throbs" for a child. It was a quality which it appears her daughter shared as Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} was to also become a great spiritual mother for the Jama'at.

On the extent of Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum's love for her mother - Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra}, her own daughter Mahmuda Begum Sahiba observed:

"She had tremendous love for Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra} and Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra} for her. I remember when we were in Malerkotla, whenever we had news of Hazrat Ammaa Jaan's being unwell, albeit ordinarily - Umi would get extremely anxious. She would immediately depart for Qadian. On one occasion, (whilst Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} was) in Qadian, Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra} became very unwell. The moment she heard (i.e. Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra}), she became very anxious.

She put on her burka²⁵⁵. As far as I can remember, she started walking by foot towards Darul Masih. We also followed behind and we witnessed Umi Jaan in a

²⁵⁴ibid

²⁵⁵A long, loose-fitting outer-covering often worn by Muslim women in Asian countries.

strange condition. She was holding her back with both her hands; she was going in and out of the house. She would pray with great anguish during her Salat. Until her condition improved satisfactorily, she stayed there day and night.²⁵⁶

Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra} also loved her daughters greatly. She had a spare room permanently prepared in case one of them visited. When they did visit, she would ensure everything was arranged for their convenience and their favourite dishes were prepared. Mahmuda Begum Sahiba recollected that they would all eagerly await a visit from their grandmother - Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra}. She would come laden with gifts, bags and baskets which would include treats such as "*halwa sohun*".²⁵⁷ This she would personally make, knowing it to be a favourite dish of her son-in-law - Hazrat Nawab Muhammad Ali Sahib^{ra}. The household would buzz with excitement upon the arrival of Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra} as if filled with the joy of an *Eid* festival.

During Hazrat Ammaa Jaan's final illness, Hazrat Nawab Mubarak Begum^{ra} stayed with her mother continuously. Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra} was incredibly considerate of others; despite the ailments of old age. She endeavoured to remain independent and personally did her chores whenever possible. Of her other fine qualities, Hazrat Nawab Mubarak Begum^{ra} has related that her mother had a "*revulsion*" for faultfinding and telling lies. If anything unsavoury reached her ears, she would pretend that she had not heard the offensive comment.

²⁵⁶Seerat-o-Swaanah Sayyeda Nawab Mubarak Begum Sahiba, Lajna Ima'illah Lahore, 2001, Prof. S N Saeed, p.191.

²⁵⁷A sweet dish made from ground semolina.

Just as she was pure of mind, so was she pure of body. Her home was always neat and pristine and the duties of household management were never neglected. Yet, Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra} managed to maintain a fine balance between enjoying the pleasures of this life without ever neglecting her duties of worship. Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} related:

“She liked clean clothes, a fresh bed and perfume very much. However, her fondness of these things never reached the extent that they became an obstacle in the way of Salat²⁵⁸, verbal prayers or in the remembrance of Allah the Almighty.”²⁵⁹

Her youngest daughter, Asifa Begum Sahiba, related that both her mother and father - Hazrat Nawab Muhammad Ali Khan Sahib^{ra} had deeply loved and respected Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra}. Thus, although their grandmother was very affectionate towards them, even providing her grandchildren with snacks on demand as she rested, they were still acutely aware that they could not disobey her. They knew that their parents would not tolerate such disobedience.

Amatul Shakoor Sahiba has related the extent of Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum’s love for her own parents:

²⁵⁸The physical acts of worship that are obligatory in Islam. They consist of 5 daily prayers.

²⁵⁹*Tehriraat-e-Mubaraka* - Lajna Ima’illah Pakistan, Zia-ul-Islam press, p.21.

“She loved Hazrat Masih Ma’ud^{as} and Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra}. Often on occasions as she talked, she would mention them both. She had complete faith in Hazrat Masih Ma’ud^{ra} and a similar belief in Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra}...”

She continued:

“If ever Barri Umi (i.e., Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra}) wished to explain something, she would always make a reference to Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra} to us as an example. For example on one occasion, I was telling the children off for making their clothes dirty while playing, but Barri Umi stopped me. She said that Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra} used to say especially about boys, that it was by playing roughly outside in the earth that children become strong.” ²⁶⁰

In this manner Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} would relate Hazrat Ammaa Jaan’s daily tips and advice to her children. She would also recollect incidents from her own childhood with reference to her father, the Promised Messiah^{as}. Amatul Shakoor Sahiba rightly reflected that people tend to quote those individuals they revere the most, illustrating Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum’s respect for both her parents. Mahmuda Begum Sahiba recollected that her grandmother’s death had a profound effect upon her mother - Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra}. She was grief-stricken and became subdued by her

²⁶⁰Seerat-o-Swaaneh Sayyeda Nawab Mubaraka Begum Sahiba, Prof. S N Saeed, Lajna Ima’illah Lahore, 2001, p.193

heartache and prayers. She grieved not only for the loss of a mother but also for the loss of an invaluable link with the Promised Messiah^{as}.

In 1952, the year of Hazrat Ammaa Jaan's demise, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} published an article in the *Al-Fazl* newspaper (April 25th, 1952). She wrote that there was so much she could write about her mother and that the subject could never be fully covered. However due to ill health, she could now only mention a few of her distinctions. The first she considered was her unique and auspicious distinction of being "*picked*" by Allah the Almighty for the Promised Messiah^{as}. Indeed, few could boast of having this distinction. Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} continued that she would not elaborate her fine qualities just because she was her mother but because she was "*the mother of the mo'mineen*".²⁶¹

Although it was a divine blessing and favour bestowed upon her to be a Prophet's wife, yet Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra} always conducted herself in a way to be deemed a worthy wife. Nor was she ever complacent about the great honour bestowed upon her.

She related that even though Hazrat Masih Ma'ud^{as} was very considerate of Hazrat Ammaa Jaan's wishes and likes, she never forgot his exalted station. She had a complete and firm conviction in the status and faith of the Promised Messiah^{as}. This faith was unwavering. Throughout her married life of over 24 years and thereafter, this was

²⁶¹Qur'anic term for "believers".

reflected in her every word and deed. Hazrat Ammaa Jaan's love for the Promised Messiah^{as} was so deep and profound, that she would always pray that Allah the Almighty would not let him depart this world before her. Alas, the Promised Messiah^{as} also prayed that Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra} should remain after him and that he should leave her in a well state. Consequently, her prayer remained unanswered.

Highlighting the fine, laudable qualities of Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra}, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} firstly mentioned that her mother was both greatly patient and full of gratitude for Allah the Almighty. Often, she would be muttering expressions of gratitude for Allah during her daily routine and she was accustomed to uttering prayers abundantly.

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} has further written about the great humanitarian acts of her mother and her heartfelt compassion for those suffering in poverty. She was always keen to help others. She would be the first to give charity whenever she heard of someone's affliction. She was especially kind to her household staff. Throughout her childhood Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} had witnessed that when her mother, Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra} had to reproach a household helper who had been neglectful of her duties, even then she would be eager to console her afterwards, often giving her a small treat. She was always mindful of the happiness of her household members. If the household helpers were asked to go upstairs several times, she would then tell her family to stop summoning them so frequently. In fact, Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra} tried her utmost not to burden her household attendants even during the final months of her life. Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} herself reminisced about this time:

“She would do most work with her own hands, again and again, even in the condition where her legs would be trembling with weakness. She would pick up a chair herself and would go to the Hujra (the name of a room) and bring back whatever she had wanted to fetch. The younger girls (attendants) she would address as ‘beti’ i.e., ‘daughter’ and she would personally take care of their clothes, food and drink. It was not her habit to leave this to other ladies. In fact, she was so affectionate that often they became quite high-handed.”

Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra} greatly detested complaining and gossiping. Neither did she partake of such habits nor did she like hearing such things. In this respect Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} remembers the superior dignity of her mother. She did not acknowledge it when she heard complaints or if someone said something hurtful to her, nor did she like others to express a reaction to offensive words. She also disliked her children hearing insults or gossip about others.

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} said that she did not feel that her mother was solely hers, but felt that she was a “mother” to every individual of the Jama’at. She was a person who would pray with heartfelt fervour for the missionaries of the Jama’at. She recollected that when a letter would come to her mother requesting prayers, she would sometimes begin praying instantly and with such passion that those around her, including Hazrat Nawab

Mubaraka Begum^{ra} were affected to offer similarly passionate prayers. She remembered how she would herself often pray for the people who had requested prayers from her mother by letter, because she would be the one to read the letters aloud to her.

Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra} would pray intensely even for those people who did not make a particular effort to keep in contact with her whenever she remembered them, even whilst sitting in company. In such gatherings, she would often supplicate to Allah the Almighty in a quiet voice and would implore His forgiveness throughout the day. The young Mubaraka^{ra} would feel quite embarrassed at the thought of the quality of her own prayers by comparison to her mother's passionate supplications. This was especially the case when she witnessed the lengthy prostrations her mother made during her Salat.

She further related that Hazrat Ammaa Jaan's good manners and refined nature were far superior to that of ordinary women. She would advise women how it was important for them to maintain their personal dignity - a delicate possession. She discouraged women from being over friendly with each other and making distasteful jokes amongst themselves. Indeed, she was happy to learn of women who greatly loved their husbands.

In the *Al-Fazl* newspaper article, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} was to continue writing of her mother's great fortitude and gratitude to Allah the Almighty. Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra} was incredibly pure-hearted and

magnanimous. Irrespective of however hurtful anyone was to her, she did not allow this to breed ill-feeling within her:

“The patience with which she would suppress any spiteful comment which came to her ears evoked amazement.”²⁶²

Furthermore, if any complaining or gossiping began in Hazrat Ammaa Jaan’s presence, she would immediately stop the person. She disliked it if her own household helpers were commented upon, even if it was a question of her own comfort being discussed.

Her compassion and kindness for others was extensive and a lifetime’s occupation. Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} recollected that her mother raised many orphans under her kind, considerate care and would personally help them. Not only did she care for their daily food and shelter but also for their moral training. She would advise them just as she did her own children. She recollected that one particular girl would get up from the time of Tahajjud Prayers²⁶³ and would begin questioning Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra} about the meaning of words. Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra} would respond smilingly to every question of the girl. At the time, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} was visiting her mother’s home. So she explained to the girl not to disturb Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra} at such an inconvenient time (i.e., the early hours of the morning).

²⁶²*Tehriraat-e-Mubaraka* – Lajna Ima’illah Pakistan, Zia-ul-Islam Press, p.15.

²⁶³A voluntary pre dawn prayer in Islam.

Regarding the superior level of her mother's worship, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} gave a first-hand account. She recollected that her mother would meticulously observe her prayers with due care and preparation.

She wrote:

“She was one to observe her prayers with great joy and delight and very meticulously. She prayed a lot. I never saw her observe her prayers in a rush. Tahajjud²⁵⁴, indeed even Ishraq,²⁶⁴ she would observe regularly whilst she had the strength. At other times she would also immensely pray. Prayers would often escape her lips in a loud voice involuntarily, as if she was exhaling after having held her breath. She would utter these prayers with a great restlessness and throbbing. Sometimes, half her words would be uttered in poetic words, or her prayer would form a poetic line or verse. Yet, still with the same pain and fervour.”²⁶⁵

Sometimes, she even prayed in poetry or couplets, yet always with the same intensity. Her prayers would be for the whole Jama'at and all who requested them. She had a special place in her heart for the companions of the Promised Messiah^{as} and their offspring. In May 1952 a few weeks after her mother's passing, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} was to poignantly write that the world was now

²⁶⁴A voluntary mid-morning prayer in Islam.

²⁶⁵*Tehriraat-e-Mubaraka*, Lajna Ima'illah Pakistan, Zia-ul-Islam Press, p.19.

deprived of a “*superior blessing*” who was “*a mother better than a thousand mothers.*”

Another great quality of Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra} was her empathy for everyone in the Jama’at, young and old. She partook in both the joys and griefs of the Community. She would often visit ladies in their homes each morning whilst she had the physical strength (until her migration to Rabwah).

Whenever she cooked something special, she would make larger portions and distribute the food amongst neighbours and friends. During the time of the Promised Messiah^{as}, when the followers of the Community were fewer, she would invite the Companions to her home to share in their meals. Similarly, she gave charity copiously and she loved to feed the poor. She would be especially delighted to make them the dishes that the Promised Messiah^{as} had particularly enjoyed.

Hazrat Ammaa Jaan’s nature was to remain busy and self-sufficient. Whilst she had the physical strength, she would often cook herself and performed her own household chores. As she grew frailer, ladies would offer her a supporting arm, but this she refused insisting that she walked independently. She also kept herself active, walking in the garden and organising trips for the ladies of her household and Community. They would walk and picnic in the nearby countryside. She was often preoccupied as a welcoming hostess to the constant ebb and flow of visitors to their home, apart from her own

children and the orphans she raised. One of the less appealing tasks of removing head lice from the hair of these orphans she would also personally do, despite her own high standards of personal hygiene.

Her deep attachment to her household helpers is clearly illustrated by an incident of her final days. Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} has recollected that her mother once heard *Mai Ayesha's* (mother of Majeed Ahmed Sahib - a Darwesh of Qadian) raised voice as she lay resting. Consequently, she saw her mother open her eyes with great difficulty and inquire with concern, "*Why is Mai crying?*" Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} reassured her mother that she was not crying merely speaking loudly, yet she recalled:

"But the pain that was in Hazrat Ammaa Jaan's voice at that moment for Mai (Ayesha) - to think of it distresses me even to this day."²⁶⁶

Writing of her mother after the Promised Messiah's death, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} was conscious of a profound change in her mother. Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra} then endeavoured to be the most loving mother to her children, especially her daughters. She remained acutely aware of the fact that they no longer enjoyed the affectionate love of their father. However, one aspect of her character now

²⁶⁶*Tehriraat-e-Mubaraka* – Lajna Ima'illah Pakistan, Zia-ul-Islam Press, p.15.

changed. It was as if she was awaiting something restlessly. It was as if she was of this world and yet not of it. Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} felt that Hazrat Ammaa Jaan's attitude was of one attending to the completion of her matters before a departure. Her thoughts were undoubtedly immersed in the memory of the Promised Messiah^{as} and the prospect of a reunion with this blessed Prophet, her beloved husband. Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} wrote of her mother's grieving:

“After Hazrat Masih Ma’ud^{as} she displayed an example of great patience and steadfastness. Nonetheless, the way she felt his separation so acutely - those who knew of it - would look upon her patience with even greater amazement and respect.”²⁶⁷

Although her grief and restlessness were apparent, Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra} tried to suppress her emotions in public and always remained considerate and attentive to her children's needs. Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} knew that every new child born in the family would provoke mixed feelings in her mother. Alongside the great joy, Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra} also felt a sadness reflecting that the Promised Messiah^{as} was no longer there to enjoy the happy occasion. However, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} also felt that her mother became “*a fountain of love*” after her father's demise. This was partly due to her mother's awareness of how much the Promised Messiah^{as} had loved

²⁶⁷ibid, p.16

his daughters, as she would relate to the young Mubaraka^{ra} repeatedly:

“Your father would listen to everything you said and when I objected, he would say: ‘Girls are only guests for a short time - what will she remember (of her home)? Do as she says.’”²⁶⁸

After this great trial, the next difficult period in Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum’s life was to be the loss of her beloved husband - Hazrat Nawab Muhammad Ali Khan Sahib^{ra}. She relates that it was during this time of profound grief that she was to once more experience that wonderful “*fountain of love*” in the form of her mother - Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra}. Her mother was a personification of “*mercy and kindness*” and after Allah the Almighty she was to become the loving companion who alleviated the wounds of her heart like a soothing balm. Indeed, to read such a description of a mother from an adult daughter is inspiring.

The vicissitudes of time did not seem to affect this mother-daughter relationship. The two women did not drift apart, instead their bond grew stronger. Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} felt as if she was returning to her “*mother’s lap*” after a long absence. Such was the comfort and support Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra} gave her at one of the most difficult periods of her life. She felt her mother’s loss deeply when

²⁶⁸Ibid, p.17

the time came, for she had now lost the one person who was constantly there to love and care for her throughout her life. She was the one who had tried so hard to compensate her children for the loss of their father, the Promised Messiah^{as}. After her mother's death, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} lamented:

“There is now no one in the world who will look at my face to see if I am sad. There is no one to perceive my emotions, to feel my pain as though it is hurting their own heart.”²⁶⁹

She continued that Allah the Almighty Himself has not created any replacements for mothers as they are unique. However, her own mother was also unique because ***“She was the Mother of all the Faithful.”*** She poignantly wrote:

“She is now silent but until Allah the Almighty reunites us, I shall constantly feel the pain of her separation.”²⁷⁰

²⁶⁹*Tehriraat-e-Mubaraka* – Lajna Ima'illah Pakistan, Zia-ul-Islam Press, p.17.

²⁷⁰*ibid*, p.18.

The Role of a Stepmother

A woman may undertake many roles throughout her life. Undoubtedly, one of the most challenging is that of a stepmother. Stepmothers are often caricatured as figures of ridicule at best or as cruel and calculating at worst. Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} had this difficult role to play at the age of 12. Not only did she have to adjust to becoming a wife, but also to the role as the stepmother of four children; one daughter and three sons.²⁷¹ Furthermore, these children were all senior to her in age. (Her stepdaughter, Hazrat Bu Zainab Sahiba, was to become the revered grandmother of our present khalifa - (Hazrat Khalifatul Masih V^{aba}). Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum's daughter, Mahmuda Begum Sahiba, has shed some light upon the relationship between her mother and her siblings from her father's first marriage:

“From our first mother who had passed away we had three elder brothers and an older sister, Bu Zainab Sahiba. Umi loved all of these stepchildren so much, as much as one does one's own biological children; in fact, she showed them even greater love than us. When we came to learn of the difference of our two mothers, we felt both surprise and envious that Umi Jaan cared more for them than for us. Some might even complain, but the marriage vows she made at the time of her wedding she fulfilled with the greatest resolve. Consequently, they

²⁷¹These were the children of Hazrat Nawab Muhammad Ali Khan Sahib's^{ra} first wife, Bu Mehr Al Nisaa Begum.

also (her stepchildren) loved and respected Umi Jaan so much; it was she in whom they would confide all their worries. Despite being very affectionate, Abba Mian had a formidable authority over everyone. That is why they would express all their needs to Umi Jaan; she would somehow get the matter agreed. They knew that Abba Mian would never reject what Umi Jaan said. Likewise, after Abba Mian's passing, all of my older (half) siblings especially cared for Umi Jaan for as long as they lived and were very respectful."²⁷²

Indeed, it is a description which provokes wonder and awe. Mahmuda Begum Sahiba has described an ideal family dynamic, whereby there was a beautiful balance of love and respect reciprocated from all sides. There was no concept of a "step" relationship being any different to any other family bond. It appears that Hazrat Nawab Mubarak Begum^{ra} was to be a great unifying force within her family. She was an exemplary wife, a wise mother, a kind sister-in-law and a sincere advisor. In truth, her wisdom and compassion stemmed from a deep faith, a faith based on the Islamic teachings that her father, the Promised Messiah^{as}, had come to revive. It was the reason why she was so well equipped to deal with a situation which could have potentially been one of great conflict. Mahmuda Begum Sahiba continued that her mother's respect and love for their eldest sister - Hazrat Bu Zainab Sahiba was immense and she did not like her own biological children saying anything against her stepdaughter.

²⁷²Seerat-o-Swaanah Sayyeda Nawab Mubarak Begum Sahiba - Prof. S N Saeed, Lajna Ima'illah Lahore, 2001, p.327.

Mahmuda Begum Sahiba related an incident from her childhood from when she was about six years old that was as vivid now in her memory as when it occurred. Mahmuda Begum Sahiba related that she had no idea of the concept of “stepchildren” but began to hear mention of them in children’s stories or when one of the household attendants made an indirect comment. This aroused her childish curiosity. She asked one of her close playmates what “step” meant. The girl was a good, honest girl. She candidly told the young Mahmuda - who was three or four years her junior, that her older brother – Mian Abdul Raheem Khan Khalid - who was abroad studying at the time, was her “stepbrother”.²⁷³

The young Mahmuda Begum Sahiba considered this statement and contemplated that this older brother was a very elusive and mysterious figure; a brother whom she had not seen (he had left to study abroad when she was a mere 1 or 2 years old) for several years and she could not recollect. She concluded that being as perplexing as the word “step” was to her, he must surely be a “stepbrother” as her playmate suggested.

Some days passed and Mahmuda Begum Sahiba wished to share her new discovery concerning her older brother, Khalid Sahib. So, when two of her cousins visited both with whom she was very close, she confided her new information. She repeated what her playmate had said. Her cousins were surprised and immediately went and told their aunt - Hazrat Nawab Mubarak Begum^{ra}.

²⁷³In Urdu there is no concept of “half” brothers and sisters, so the word “step” is used in this context here.

Instinctively, Mahmuda Begum Sahiba was aware that she had said something wrong. When her mother summoned her, she clung to a tree! It was not until she received the message that she would be punished by her mother if she did not come to her that the young Mahmuda went reluctantly, crying and trembling. She imagined that she had committed some terrible cruelty. When she reached her mother, some time had elapsed. The young girl went and clung to her father – Abba Mian, as if to seek his forgiveness. Her father enquired of Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} what had occurred, and she simply said:

“Today, she has uttered something really bad from her lips.”²⁷⁴

She then told her young daughter to eat her food quietly and that they would talk later. Indeed, she must have confided in Hazrat Nawab Sahib^{ra}, for it was then that *Abba Mian* who beckoned his daughter in the evening and affectionately explained to her:

“From now on do not utter such a thing and do not think such things in your heart. All children are the progeny of their mother and father - there are no ‘real’ or ‘step’ children.”²⁷⁵

²⁷⁴Seerat-o-Swaanah Sayyeda Nawab Mubaraka Begum Sahiba - Prof. S N Saeed, Lajna Ima’illah Lahore, 2001, p.329

²⁷⁵ibid

He then asked her to tell him who had told her such a thing. The young Mahmuda remained quiet to protect her beloved friend, who was the daughter of her father's foster brother. Years later, Mahmuda Begum Sahiba was to vividly remember the incident and still recollected the awful fear she had felt in her heart when she suspected that she had committed a wrong deed. Thus, the practical conduct of Hazrat Nawab Mubarak Begum^{ra}, the fact that "actions speak louder than words", meant that her children intuitively knew that there was complete equality amongst all their siblings. There was never any concept of "step", "half" or "real" siblings within the family.

It seems that Hazrat Nawab Mubarak Begum^{ra} was exceptionally considerate of her children and went to great lengths to maintain and strengthen the bonds between them. Mahmuda Begum Sahiba recollected that she had a close rapport with her older brother, Abdul Rahman Sahib. They spent almost every day together whilst she was young. He would affectionately tease her, sometimes addressing her by funny names. Mahmuda Begum Sahiba would also banter with her elder brother. On one occasion, Abdul Rahman Sahib had been teasing his little sister about the same thing for several days. Irritated, Mahmuda Begum Sahiba went to tell her mother. However, she recalled that she only had to say, "*Look, "Barre Bhai" (Elder brother) said something to me today...*" when her mother sternly admonished her that she was tattling of her elder brother and that she never wanted to hear this again.

Mahmuda Begum Sahiba realised with hindsight that there was great wisdom in her mother's attitude because she

nipped the bud of telltaling within her. Indeed, hundreds of such little squabbles occur in a family but backbiting should be discouraged. It should not become a means of weakening family bonds or a habit that our children develop.

Similarly, her youngest daughter, Asifa Begum Sahiba, with whom her mother was the softest,²⁷⁶ recollected that she once enquired of her mother what “step” meant. She recalled that at once her mother became very stern in her voice and asked, “*Why? Who has used the word ‘step’?*” She then sternly admonished her never to use the word again.

Asifa Begum Sahiba described the close relationship Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} enjoyed with her stepchildren. The youngest of her stepsons was Abdul Raheem Khan Sahib. In fact, he was two months older than Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} herself. During their childhood, they had even played together in Qadian. Of their relationship, Asifa Begum Sahiba related:

“From her behaviour, Umi Jaan did not consider him a “step” relation in any way. She had a maternal and friendly bond with him. He also respected and loved her very much and would tell her every matter of his. If he wished to express something to Abba Mian (i.e. his father), he would convey it through Umi Jaan. All his worries and

²⁷⁶A reason for a little more leniency with Asifa Begum was the fact that she was only 15 years old when her father - Hazrat Nawab Sahib^{ra} passed away.

anxieties he would confide in Umi. We too always considered him a biological brother.”²⁷⁷

Asifa Begum Sahiba continued that their other older brother, Abdul Rahman Sahib, was also extremely close to their mother – Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra}. In Malerkotla, he would sit with her for several hours each morning and evening. He enjoyed intellectual discussions with their mother and sought advice from her. Asifa Begum Sahiba related that in fact all her brothers and sisters respected Umi Jaan in a unique way.

It is interesting to learn of the special attachment of Hazrat Bu Zainab Sahiba to her stepmother, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra}. Despite being almost 4 years her senior, a potential cause for conflict, no tension ever occurred between the pair. Just as their father immensely respected his wife - the blessed daughter of the Promised Messiah^{as}, likewise so did his children. Hazrat Bu Zainab Sahiba was blessed to become the wife of Hazrat Mirza Sharif Ahmad^{ra} and thus became a sister-in-law as well as a stepdaughter to Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra}. After the birth of her three sons, she became unwell and came and lived for nearly 10 years in her parental home. Asifa Begum Sahiba observed that even then there was never any complaint between the ladies. Upon the death of Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} whom she respectfully referred to as “Begum Sahiba”, Hazrat Bu Zainab Sahiba wept profusely and said:

²⁷⁷Seerat-o-Swaanah Sayyeda Nawab Mubaraka Begum Sahiba, Prof. S N Saeed, Lajna Ima’illah Lahore, 2001, p.330.

“Even if I go and search in the depths of my heart and mind, even so, I cannot remember a single moment when I ever received any pain from ‘Begum Sahiba’. Despite being younger in age she showed the kindness of elders; being senior relationship-wise, she still conducted herself humbly like a younger person.”²⁷⁸

The middle son of Hazrat Nawab Muhammad Ali Khan Sahib^{ra} – Nawab Abdullah Khan Sahib, was to be blessed by becoming both a brother-in-law as well as a stepson of Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra}. He married her younger sister - Hazrat Amatul Hafiz Begum Sahiba^{ra}. Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} also greatly cared for him during his critical illness in Rattan Bagh, for a period of 12-18 months. Asifa Begum Sahiba related that during those difficult days, her mother only went to her own room to shower or change her clothes, devoting the rest of her time to her stepson/brother-in-law. She also sacrificed her time caring for her grandchildren, Fozia and Mustafa, to such an extent that it seemed as though she temporarily forgot her own children.

Asifa Begum Sahiba related that her mother forgot her personal desires and became very attentive to her sister and Abdullah Khan Sahib’s children. Asifa Begum Sahiba recalled that sometimes it felt as if their mother was neglecting them; but their mother had the wisdom to realise that even if her children were upset it would be

²⁷⁸Seerat-o-Swaanah Sayyeda Nawab Mubaraka Begum Sahiba - Prof. S N Saeed, Lajna Ima’illah Lahore, 2001, p.331.

shortlived. However, caring for her nieces and nephews at that time was a priority during their father's critical illness. Likewise, her treatment of her "stepchildren" was based upon the same philosophy. Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} had the discerning wisdom to realise that non-blood relationships are more delicate and thus need greater care.

Her niece Tahira Siddiqua Sahiba, highlighted the great respect Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} showed her stepchildren. She recollected that her aunt never took her stepsons' names without the respectful prefix "Mian". She was also very affectionate with her in-laws. Her niece, Nasira Begum, related that she personally felt that Abdul Raheem Khalid Sahib - the youngest of her stepchildren, was the dearest to Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} out of all her children. Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} was to write a prayerful poem for him when he was greatly agitated after failing his academic exams in London. It conveys her sincere concern for him:

مقبول دعائیں ہوں، سب دور بلائیں ہوں

...May your prayers be accepted, may all evils be averted

لے آئے خدا تم کو اب خیر سے، عزت سے

May God now bring you back safely and honourably

رحمت کا رہے سایہ بڑھتا ہی رہے پایہ

May the shade of God's Mercy remain and may this support continue to grow

ہر وقت خدا رکھے آسائش و صحت سے

**May God keep you in comfort and good health at all
times,**

...راضی ہو خدا تم سے، شیطان ہو جدا تم سے

**...May God be always pleased with you, May Satan be
kept afar**

لبریز رہے سینہ ایمان کی دولت سے

May your heart be filled with the wealth of faith

--- سب فضل خدا ہو گا امید رکھو قائم

**...All (matters) will be blessed by God, keep your hope
alive**

گھبرانہ کہیں جانا افکار کی شدت سے

**Do not ever become overwhelmed by the intensity of
your worries.²⁷⁹**

Fahmida Lateef Sahiba recollected seeing Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} grief stricken at the news of the passing of Abdul Raheem Khalid Sahib. She related that Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} held her hand and sorrowfully told her of the situation of her beloved stepson, who in his final letter had wished that some of his life be given to Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} - a more beneficial life.

²⁷⁹Durre-Aden, Hazrat Syeda Nawab Mubaraka Begum Sahiba, Qadian, 2002, pp82-84.

Poignantly, it was a letter which she did not receive until after his passing. Fahmida Lateef Sahiba related that Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} felt the loss of this son so acutely, that she expressed wishing that she had not been tried with such a grief. For the first time, she detected a noticeable weakening in the health of this virtuous lady, triggered by the terrible bereavement.

By the Grace of Allah, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum's grief at the loss of this son was assuaged by Allah the Almighty when she saw a felicitous dream concerning him.²⁸⁰ She dreamt that he was in a happy condition in a beautiful room or garden in the company of her ownblessed mother - Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra}. Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra} was slicing pieces of fruit for him to eat. Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} was elated to learn that her son had been bestowed an abode in a beautiful place by Allah the Almighty's Grace and that he was in the loving care of her mother. It illustrates the depth of the attachment Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} felt for her stepchildren. Consequently, she was reassured by the dream; it helped heal the broken heart of a mother.

Indeed, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} is a role model for all women who undertake the great responsibility as second mothers, which can be challenging but also hugely rewarding.

²⁸⁰Seerat-o-Swaanah Sayyeda Nawab Mubaraka Begum Sahiba - Prof. S N Saeed, Lajna Ima'illah Lahore, 2001, p.335.

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum's Relationship with her In-Laws

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} was to be a rare daughter-in-law of a pious and kind nature, who conducted herself with a unique blend of humility and dignity. She was to win the respect and regard of all her “in-laws” despite her young age. She had the wisdom and understanding of matters people twice her age may have never grasped, even in a lifetime. Indeed, this was the blessing of growing up under the influence of the Promised Messiah^{as}, who was a fountain of divine insights and knowledge.

It is fascinating to learn of Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum's relationship with her husband's mother-in-law from his previous marriage.²⁸¹ The mother of Hazrat Nawab Muhammad Ali Khan Sahib's^{ra} first wife was also Hazrat Nawab Sahib's maternal aunt, and so was closely involved with the family. She had already suffered the grief of the loss of a daughter and the worry for her orphaned grandchildren. There was the likelihood of great tension upon the arrival of a new young bride. Furthermore, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum's daughter has related that this grandmother of theirs was of a frank nature; something which could have potentially led to arguments.

²⁸¹Hazrat Nawab Muhammad Ali Khan Sahib^{ra} had been married twice previously. His first wife was Bu' Mehr Al Nisaa Begum Sahiba, with whom he had 4 children. It is the mother of this lady who is being referred to here. His second wife was Bu' Amatul Hameed Begum Sahiba, who died young and by whom he had no progeny.

Yet as Mahmuda Begum Sahiba reflected, her mother had the wisdom to always deal kindly and affectionately with this grandmother and her extended family. Indeed, her daughter has related that people would be amazed at her attitude towards her mother, as she was renowned within the family for her strict manner. However, with Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} she seemed to be uncharacteristically soft. What was even more surprising was that she would offer fervent prayers that were heard by many, for this new wife of her son-in-law. This was despite the fact that she was the girl who had replaced her daughter within their household.

The truth is that the virtue and piety of the young Mubaraka^{ra} was obviously apparent to all. Her forbearance to overlook any unpleasant comments and her constant and sincere love for her new stepchildren - children whom she was to put above her own biological children, meant that she was to inevitably win the hearts of even the most inflexible members of her husband's family. It meant that this "Nanni" (grand mother) was to come to rely on Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} as a support and advisor when facing problems with her own relations. She witnessed that this virtuous, young woman considered her husband's family as her own. This profoundly affected her and by the Grace of Allah she was to accept Ahmadiyyat and relinquish her idolatrous ways. They were practices which had greatly irritated Hazrat Nawab Muhammad Ali Khan Sahib^{ra} and could have been another source of conflict had not the wise Mubaraka^{ra} initially overlooked them.

In fact, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} was to strengthen the bonds between her husband's families. She gently but persistently strove to do so. Her husband had always detested the unIslamic rituals and customs which had become innate in the culture of Malerkotla. This distaste increased once he accepted Ahmadiyyat. Apart from links with his sister (Bu Fatima Begum - who accepted Ahmadiyyat before her death), he broke off ties with his relatives whom he only met when necessary. This was though he once had a great attachment to his brothers. However, with her kindness and sincere advice, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} won their hearts. These relatives would come to her seeking counsel, expressing the grievances they had with others and asking for her mediation in their conflicts. Their respect for her meant that they were never disrespectful of Ahmadiyyat in her presence, despite their personal feelings. Likewise, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} became a genuine sister to these relations. She never backbited about them nor did she tolerate listening to others do so. Her daughter, Mahmuda Begum Sahiba wrote:

“Onlookers would be astonished by such love; that despite being from another family, she was so loving.”²⁸²

She continued that it was quite incredible how her mother united their family despite having fundamentally differing beliefs:

²⁸²Seerat-o-Swaanah Sayyeda Nawab Mubaraka Begum Sahiba - Prof. S N Saeed, Lajna Ima'illah Lahore, 2001, p.335

“Our uncle’s family (father’s older brother) were Shia, our younger uncle’s family Sunni, and Abba Mian was Ahmadi. Consider in these circumstances how much conflict could have arisen? However, in all their hearts they had so much respect and regard for Walid Sahib (i.e. her father) and Umi Jaan. So much so, that they did not have that level of respect for anyone else in the family. They were so impressed by Umi Jaan’s behaviour and benevolence, that in front of everyone and even behind her back they would compliment Umi. They would say: ‘We do not attain such peace even from our own mothers that we receive in her company.’”²⁸³

She continued that although her mother cared for all her in-laws and their children but she had a special place in her heart for their paternal uncle’s daughter, Qudsia Begum Sahiba. Upon Hazrat Nawab Mubarak Begum’s passing, she seemed more heartbroken than one would imagine a grieving daughter would be. On Hazrat Nawab Mubarak Begum’s passing, one of the male relatives from in-laws visited her daughter; he was so upset and distressed that she had to console her cousin over her mother’s death, rather than vice-versa.

Indeed, Hazrat Nawab Muhammad Ali Khan Sahib’s younger brother and family felt a great deal of respect for the Promised Messiah^{as} and admired Hazrat Nawab Sahib’s courage and faith. He would tell his children:

²⁸³ibid.

“I do not have the strength like my brother to combat the world (i.e. accept Ahmadiyyat) but still do not ever dare insult him (i.e. Hazrat Masih Ma’ud^{as}).”²⁸⁴

Hence, he admired his brother’s courage to openly accept the Promised Messiah^{as}. Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} had great attachment to the children of this brother-in-law, which no doubt increased his respect for the Promised Messiah^{as}. She was eternally kind to them as their beloved “*Taii Jee*” and shared their every trial and tribulation. Yet, when a matter of someone’s rights being abused or injustice arose, she did not undermine such principles merely to please her relatives. Thus, she was respected as a lady of principle and wisdom. Even her distant male relatives would seek her counsel from behind a curtain.

Indeed, she was to exert a profound and positive effect upon her in-laws. Her husband’s nephew, Nawab Ehsaan Ali Khan, a Shia Muslim forbade any sort of unislamic customs and entertainment from his daughter’s wedding so that his sister-in-law i.e. Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} would attend. Her youngest daughter Asifa Begum Sahiba related that this was the first occasion for them to participate in a wedding of their non-Ahmadi relatives in Malerkotla, upon the assurance from the bride’s parents. Asifa Begum Sahiba’s observations of her mother’s impact upon her in-laws summarises Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum’s with her husband’s family:

²⁸⁴ibid, p.339.

“I am often amazed to think that from such a young age and with great wisdom, my mother maintained incredibly fragile relationships and within a large clan of such rigid beliefs. Yet, with wisdom she managed it, with respect and dignity she passed her life amongst them. This was Allah the Almighty’s blessing upon her and the acceptance of Hazrat Masih Ma’ud’s prayers.”²⁸⁵

²⁸⁵Seerat-o-Swaaneh Sayyeda Nawab Mubarak Begum Sahiba, Prof. S N Saeed Lajna Ima’illah Lahore, 2001, p.340.

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum's Marital Advice for Girls

- Girls should be taught from a young age to pray for their happy future.
- Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} advised that when a marriage proposal comes, it should not be rejected quickly. One should consider it thoroughly and pray about it.²⁸⁶
- Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra} gave some advice to Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra}, which had been conveyed to her by her mother and by her grandmother before her, that after the marriage initially the wife has to serve her husband; later her husband will serve his wife.²⁸⁷
- Both men and women should not share private matters between the spouses with their friends. By doing so they destroy their dignity.
- Wives should feel it is their duty to obey and keep their husbands happy. (Unless something is against Shariah or would displease Allah the Almighty.)²⁸⁸
- Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} advised women to maintain a good state in the presence of their husbands; otherwise husbands can grow discontented with them. She further advised that

²⁸⁶Seerat-o-Swaanah Sayyeda Nawab Mubaraka Begum Sahiba, Prof. S N Saeed Lajna Ima'illah Lahore, 2001, p.256.

²⁸⁷Ibid, p253.

²⁸⁸Ibid, p256.

whilst speaking to husbands in the morning, wives should take care that their breath is fresh. For this purpose, she recommended chewing green cardamoms.

- The wife's should be in a presentable state both when the husband leaves and returns home. This is so that when the husband imagines his wife, he recalls a pleasant image rather than that of a dishevelled, unfragrant woman.
- Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} advised that whilst one's husband is angry, one should not argue with him. When a husband's temper has cooled, then one can point out any mistakes to him.²⁸⁹
- Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} advised that when the husband returns home, the wife should not immediately begin to challenge him about something despite her anger, but should let him rest first and then discuss the matter.²⁹⁰
- When a husband and wife are alone in a room together, the wife should not shriek at anything as outsiders may misinterpret it.
- There should be no false pride between the husband and the wife. There is no disgrace in admitting one's mistakes.
- The wife should never threaten to leave home in case her husband indeed tells her to go in a fit of anger. It would be a matter of great shame and one should only return to the family home if God forbid, there

²⁸⁹ibid, p.254.

²⁹⁰ibid

really is no returning. Otherwise, such threats cause the wife to lose dignity rather than to gain respect.²⁹¹

- Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} advised that the wife should not do anything while keeping it a secret from her husband. If there is something a wife is tempted to hide, then she should avoid it. If her husband discovers it, he will then lose trust in her for ever and will have no respect for her either.
- The wife should not discuss matters from the parental home with her in-laws and vice versa. The wife may forget the matter, but the elders in the family will develop a grudge.
- Asifa Begum Sahiba related that her mother, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} never enquired from her how she was treated by her in-laws. Even if her mother saw a worried expression on her children's faces, she would not directly enquire from them but would simply guide them to pray.
- If Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} witnessed a small disagreement between her daughter and her husband, she would always side with her son-in-law. She would explain to her daughter that one's daughters always remain so, but one should take care that a son-in-law's heart is not embittered (i.e. because he does not have the same permanent blood bond).

²⁹¹Seerat-o-Swaanah Sayyeda Nawab Mubaraka Begum Sahiba - Prof. S N Saeed, Lajna Ima'illah Lahore, 2001, p.254.

- She advised that a wife should share in her husband's joys and be supportive in his sorrows. His respect, his money and his progeny are all a trust for her to safeguard.
- A wife should consider her husband's relatives as her own and his parents as her parents. She should avoid troublemaking and tattling. She should rely upon Allah the Almighty only and beseech His help through prayer.²⁹²

²⁹²Seerat-o-Swaaneh Sayyeda Nawab Mubarak Begum Sahiba - Prof. S N Saeed, Lajna Ima'illah Lahore, 2001, p.257.



Hazrat Musleh Ma'ud^{ra} (Hazrat Mirza
Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad^{ra}
(1889-1965)

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum's Love for her Brothers

Hazrat Musleh Ma'ud^{ra} (Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad)

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} and Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad^{ra} were especially close siblings. Apart from a mutual love and respect, they shared a strong faith and similar intellectual pursuits which moulded their views and shaped their lives. Their bond was unique. Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} shared the worries of her exalted brother. This brother, a spiritual leader, was to bear the weight of the Jama'at's problems, facing strong opposition and attacks - both verbal and physical - throughout his eventful Khilafat of 52 years.

Throughout those years, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} was an adoring younger sister and an advisor, a rock of support and a like-minded believer of the highest calibre. Her typically wise counsel and comfort to her brother is beautifully illustrated at the time of the death of Hazrat Musleh Ma'ud's second wife, Hazrat Amatul Hai Begum^{ra}. She sadly passed away at the young age of 24, leaving behind three young children. Hazrat Musleh Ma'ud^{ra} was understandably grief-stricken although submissive to the Will of Allah the Almighty. Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum's wise words to her brother at this difficult time have been related by Hazrat Musleh Ma'ud^{ra} very affectionately:

“My sister, Mubaraka Begum, said: ‘Amatul Hai has turned out most fortunate for whom so many prayers have been said and for whom such a large gathering observed her funeral prayers. Hence, on her death how can one grieve and how can one cry?’”²⁹³

The wisdom of her words at that difficult time was remarkable. It was a sensitive response at a critical time in her brother’s life. Regarding their close relationship, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} herself wrote:

“From childhood, he was informal with me. He would discuss every matter with me and every new thing I heard or things beyond my comprehension, I would ask him. My frank discussions would either be with Hazrat Masih Ma’ud^{as} or with my elder brother – Hazrat Musleh Ma’ud. Hazrat Masih Ma’ud also knew that between us two there was a greater affection and frankness. On one occasion he said three or four times, ‘Mahmud is rather quiet; he never expressess his needs; nor does he ever ask for anything. You ask him what it is that he needs.’”²⁹⁴

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} recollected that her three brothers never squabbled with her nor her younger sister; it was considered inconceivable to them. (Although, the brothers did occasionally tease each other especially

²⁹³Seerat-o-Swaanah Sayyeda Nawab Mubaraka Begum Sahiba - Prof. S N Saeed, Lajna Ima’illah Lahore, 2001, p.212.

²⁹⁴ibid

Hazrat Mirza Bashir Ahmad^{ra} and Hazrat Mirza Sharif Ahmad^{ra}.) She reflected that Hazrat Musleh Ma'ud^{ra} had a paternal, protective relationship with her whilst she was younger, but as she grew older this then developed into a close friendship. She related that Hazrat Musleh Ma'ud^{ra} had a special affection for her from her childhood. He was always considerate of her wishes and never cast her irritated look even if she committed a mistake. Consequently, she felt she could turn to "*Barrey Bhai*"²⁹⁵ like she had her father, if something troubled her.

The two siblings would share and comment on each other's poetry. Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} remembered that the very first poetry she wrote was concerning this elder brother of hers. Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad^{ra} had ventured outside to attempt to sail a boat in a pond. Two boys came in and said that "*Mian*" (i.e., Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad^{ra}) was asking for a tub. The young Mubaraka^{ra} gave one to them and was then inspired to write her first couplet of poetry about the incident. When her beloved brother returned, she excitedly told him that she had written a poem for him. He responded enthusiastically, asking her to recite it. Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} proudly recited her childish couplet:

مب لینا تھا بے لے گئے
کشتی چلانی تھی کشتی چلا گئے

²⁹⁵literally means "elder brother" in Urdu.

***“He wanted a tub, he took a tub
He wanted to sail his boat, he sailed his boat”²⁹⁶***

She reminisced that he still remembered her first attempt at poetry many years later and would laugh kindly about it.

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} recollected that her eldest brother and her maternal uncle would often sit together and discuss various topics. Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} would eagerly sit and listen to their discussions. She related that she never heard them say anything distasteful or silly.

She reminisced that once she was married whenever she returned to her family home, Hazrat Musleh Ma’ud^{ra} would immediately come and greet her upon hearing her voice. He would recite any new poetry he had written and sometimes she would suggest a line which he would add. When this final collection of poems - ***“Kalaam e Mahmud”*** was published, he asked her to tell him candidly which poem she liked best. She chose:

حقیقی عشق گر ہوتا، تو سچی جستجو ہوتی

**If you truly loved then you would truly investigate
(i.e. for God)**

²⁹⁶Seerat-o-Swaanah Sayyeda Nawab Mubaraka Begum Sahiba - Prof. S N Saeed, Lajna Ima’illah Lahore, 2001, p.214.

تلاش یار ہر درہ میں ہو تیکو بگو ہوتی

**The search for the Beloved (i.e. God) would be
in every town and every corner²⁹⁷**

Hazrat Musleh Ma'ud^{ra} was also a very considerate host on his sister's trips back from Malerkotla- the city of her marital home. He would have Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum's favourite dishes cooked and would personally bring her fresh fruit, which they would enjoy together. Sometimes, he would do this whilst taking a break from his intense work schedule. He would also share jokes and relate funny anecdotes about his children.

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum's youngest daughter, Asifa Sahiba, related how during a stay in Lahore (*Rattanbagh*), Hazrat MuslehMa'ud's door was only a few rooms away. Huzoor (Hazrat Musleh Ma'ud^{ra}) enjoyed making perfumes and he would often bring them to Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} to try. Asifa Sahiba recollected that whenever she herself smelt and enjoyed one, her uncle (Huzoor^{ra}) would immediately give it to her. Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} stated that her brother would generously gift her so many of the perfumes he had created that she never needed to purchase any.

Hazrat Musleh Ma'ud's daughter, Amatul Basit Sahiba, also remembered the very close relationship of her father and her aunt:

²⁹⁷*Swaaneh Fazle Umar* - Hazrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad^{rh}, pp142-144, (taken from *Seerat-o-Swaaneh Sayyeda Nawab Mubaraka Begum Sahiba*, Prof S N Saeed, Lajna Ima'illah Lahore, 2001, p215),

“She had great love for Abba Jaan and was informal with him. Whenever they went somewhere together, they would walk in the evenings together and chat. Sometimes, they would share poetry. Phuppi Jaan (i.e. her aunt) would let him hear her newly composed poems and Abba Jaan would let her listen to his poetry. Both their faces would be overcome with a childlike happiness. However, on Abba Jaan’s death, she displayed such exemplary patience. There was so much pain on her face, but she remained resigned to Allah Almighty’s Will and she prayed for the Jama’at, for their steadfastness and for their correct decision-making.”²⁹⁸

Hazrat Nawab Mubarak Begum’s middle daughter, Mahmuda Begum Sahiba, commented of her mother’s great attachment to her brothers and consequently her sisters-in-law:

“Umi Jaan had a great love for her brothers. Mothers, fathers and brothers are dear to all, but in this love there was also a spiritual aspect; and especially with Hazrat Musleh Ma’ud, to whom she was devoted. It was fascinating to witness whenever these siblings would sit together; religious and Jama’at discussions would take place, they would recite their own poetical compositions, there would be laughter and jokes. She also had a special attachment to her sisters-in-law. She had a great love for both Hazrat Umm-e-

²⁹⁸Seerat-o-Swaanah Sayyeda Nawab Mubarak Begum Sahiba, Lajna Ima’illah Lahore, 2001, Prof. S N Saeed, p.216.

Nasir and Hazrat Sayyeda Umm-e-Tahir...later she also developed a great love for Choti Appa, Sayyeda Umme-Mateen.”²⁹⁹

She continued that whenever her uncles, Hazrat Musleh Ma’ud^{ra} and Hazrat Mirza Sharif Ahmad^{ra} visited Malerkotla, it became as lively as a wedding gathering. She reflected that both her parents would be overjoyed and worried for the care of their guests. Similarly, her granddaughter, Amatul Shakoor Sahiba, related that her grandmother liked all her brothers but especially “*Abba Huzoor*”, and that she talked most of her “*Burrey Bhai*” after her noble parents. She would consult her brothers for advice. Understanding the different personalities of each of the three, she would ask a different brother for advice on certain matters. She also recommended their counsel to other people, recommending the brother she felt particularly suited for a specific problem.

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} herself recollected that she could not remember an instance from her childhood when any of her brothers had upset her or even looked at her with hostility or aggression. She recalled that her middle and younger brothers did at times play-fight. Using cushions, Hazrat Mirza Bashir Ahmad^{ra} would sometimes tease the youngest of their brothers - Hazrat Mirza Sharif Ahmad^{ra}. Hazrat Musleh Ma’ud^{ra} would invite his younger sister, Mubaraka Begum^{ra}, on most of his excursions. She would happily go, whenever possible.

²⁹⁹Seerat-o-Swaanah Sayyeda Nawab Mubaraka Begum Sahiba, Lajna Ima’illah Lahore, 2001, Prof. S N Saeed, p.219.



Hazrat Mirza Bashir Ahmad^{ra} (1893-1963)

Hazrat Mirza Bashir Ahmad^{ra} - “Manjhalei Bhai” (i.e. middle brother)

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum’s daughter, Mahmuda Begum Sahiba, related of her mother’s relationship with her middle brother:

“For Manjhalei Mamoo Jaan (i.e., Hazrat Mirza Bashir Ahmad^{ra}) Umi Jaan also had great respect and love. However, there was a certain reserve in his personality so she was not as informal with him. He also took great care of Umi Jaan. It is so sad that all three brothers one by one left this world before her very eyes. These bereavements deeply affected her heart.”³⁰⁰

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} recalled that her very first memory of this brother was when he came running in to see the Promised Messiah^{as} and Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra}. He was a healthy boy, with a cheerful, beaming face and a red, velvet cap (*topi*). High-spirited and exuberant, he began to run and jump around his beloved father - the Promised Messiah^{as}. In response, the Promised Messiah^{as} smiled and with paternal affection said, “Indeed, he is a Jaat.”³⁰¹

Another childhood memory of her *Manjhalei Bhai* was that of how he used to address his father the Promised Messiah^{as}, with the informal Urdu word for “you” i.e. “*tu*”. Their mother - Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra} admonished him not

³⁰⁰Seerat-o-Swaaneh Sayyeda Nawab Mubaraka Begum Sahiba, Lajna Ima’illah Lahore, 2001, Prof. S N Saeed, p.220.

³⁰¹“Jaat” is a Punjabi word for a rustic villager used affectionately here. Mubaraka kee Kahani, Mubaraka kee Zabani – Amatul Shakoor Sahiba, Islam International Publications, 2008, p.70.

to use this word as he grew older. However, the Promised Messiah^{as} found it endearing and said: ***“Don’t stop him, I find it endearing when he utters ‘tu’.”*** As her brother grew older, he himself ended the habit of speaking informally with his father. However, due to his reserved nature he would express himself without using any pronoun when addressing the Promised Messiah^{as}. Hazrat Nawab Mubarak Begum^{ra} related of this brother:

“In his nature he very quickly developed a solemnity and reserve. He spoke very little, and he would seldom come forward casually. Even so, he still had a sense of humour in his personality from his childhood right up until now. He would quietly say such a thing that everyone would start laughing.”³⁰²

Even his mother Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra} recollected the disarming sense of humour of this son^{ra}:

“Firstly, I would never hit my children. However, if even I rushed to them if they were mischievous, ‘My Bushra’ would say such a thing that I would begin to laugh and I would not even get the chance to express my anger.”³⁰⁶

This was illustrated on one occasion when the young Bashir Ahmad^{ra} came in with his clothes drenched. Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra} lifted her hand as though to reprimand him

³⁰²ibid, p.70 ³⁰⁶ibid

for his mischief but the young boy wittily remarked to his mother:

“No Amma, what if your bangles break?”^{303b}

This wit did not mean that Hazrat Mirza Bashir Ahmad^{ra} was at all disrespectful of his mother. On the contrary, he had a great reverence and love for Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra}. Whenever he was passing her house on his way to the mosque at prayer times, he would come to greet her and sit with her, however briefly. His respect for his mother extended to her household helpers whom he also addressed with great humility, sometimes to the embarrassment of the attendants themselves. His care and concern for Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra} paralleled that of his older brother, Hazrat Musleh Ma’ud^{ra}. Even when he earned a little, he would regularly give something to his mother in a quiet and unassuming manner. Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra} had no need for her son’s money, but she accepted it to please him and respect his wishes.

Hazrat Mirza Bashir Ahmad^{ra} passed away in 1963. It was a great loss for Hazrat Nawab Mubarak Begum^{ra}. Only two years earlier she had endured the loss of her youngest adult brother - Hazrat Mirza Sharif Ahmad^{ra}, “*a diamond*” whose loss had been made more bearable because of the support of Hazrat Mirza Bashir Ahmad^{ra} or “*Manjhalei Bhai*”. He had reminded her that their fortitude was crucial so that their older brother, Hazrat Musleh Ma’ud^{ra}, the Khalifa of the time, should not be adversely affected by

^{303b}ibid, p.71

witnessing their grief. With the passing of Hazrat Mirza Bashir Ahmad^{ra}, another pillar of strength for Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} left this world.

Upon his passing, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} described this brother of hers:

“This beloved brother of mine - my Ammaa Jaan’s ‘Bushra’ (Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra} would sometimes affectionately call her son ‘Bushra’) had a successful life, served his faith and remained a tower of strength in every real sense for our elder brother (i.e., Hazrat Musleh Ma’ud^{ra}) and a guiding light for all of the Jama’at.”³⁰⁴

She continued:

“...My brother spent a very successful life - just as it should have been. He spent a beneficial life just as Hazrat Masih Ma’ud^{as} had desired; and had a good end...”

Our elder brother, Hazrat Khalifatul Masih II^{ra}, was like the loving father of the Jama’at - but a father for the purpose of moral training, ultimately has to keep a careful watch and maintain his authority. So, he sometimes remains reserved. A mother however, covers the weaknesses of a child. She quietly admonishes him; she instils the fear of the father’s displeasure in him. If she reprimands him, she also

³⁰⁴Seerat-o-Swaaneh Sayyeda Nawab Mubaraka Begum Sahiba, Lajna Ima’illah Lahore, 2001, Prof. S N Saeed, p.223.

immediately embraces him and expresses affection and says kindly: 'Look, I say it for your own good, what your Father will say if he sees you?' Such was his (Hazrat Mirza Bashir Ahmad's^{ra}) maternal-like love for all the family and all the Jama'at. It was a natural understanding (between the two brothers), a responsibility which remained with Manjhalei Bhai and which he always performed."

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} continued that Manjhalei Bhai was "***righteous, polite and gentle of temperament.***" He was very considerate of other people's sensibilities:

"...He was intoxicated with the love of Allah the Almighty and the Holy Prophet^{sa}; but he was always fearful, he was always worried that he was sinful. He was caring and kind to the poor. He was a collection of good qualities - a bouquet of virtues."³⁰⁵

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} poignantly admitted that although she was resigned to the Will of Allah the Almighty, she would continue to miss her brother Hazrat Mirza Bashir Ahmad^{ra} throughout her life.

³⁰⁵ibid



Hazrat Mirza Sharif Ahmad^{ra} (1895-1961)

Hazrat Mirza Sharif Ahmad^{ra} “Chotey Bhai”- (i.e. younger brother)

Of the youngest of her elder brothers - Hazrat Mirza Sharif Ahmad^{ra}, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} related that he too was blessed with great intelligence and capabilities. Despite not having had a formal education like his brother Hazrat Musleh Ma’ud^{ra}, Allah the Almighty blessed him with extensive knowledge. He seemed to have mastered all aspects of religious knowledge. It seemed an inherent part of his nature rather than something he had laboured to acquire. He was a natural teacher. Indeed, it was this kind brother of Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra}, who helped her acquire competence in Arabic. On one occasion, Hazrat Musleh Ma’ud suggested to the young Mubaraka^{ra} that she attend the newly opened Islamic School for girls to improve her Arabic. Much to his surprise, she declared that she had already learnt to read Arabic from Hazrat Mirza Sharif Ahmad^{ra}, “Chotey Bhai”, the younger of her elder brothers. Consequently, Hazrat Musleh Ma’ud^{ra} challenged his younger sister to a test. She happily undertook the challenge and confidently read two Arabic novels in front of him.

This quiet, humble brother would offer Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} good, honest advice. His knowledge was detailed and he had a gift for the interpretation of dreams. Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} has related that she always asked this brother concerning her dreams. She recollected that Hazrat Mirza Sharif Ahmad^{ra} once expressed a wish to write a new book regarding the interpretation of dreams. Unfortunately, due to ill health he was unable to do so.

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} related that there was just under a two-year age gap between herself and Hazrat Mirza Sharif Ahmad^{ra}, and so they would often play together alongside their younger brother, Hazrat Mirza Mubarak Ahmad^{ra}³⁰⁶. She never recalled this noble brother ever teasing her. They would also study together. This quiet brother of Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} was simple and informal in his manner. Yet, because of his knowledge and nobility, her respect for him increased with age. She described him as possessing a very pure heart, a humble and patient personality, and a capacity for the highest degree of fortitude. After his passing, she poignantly said of Hazrat Mirza Sharif Ahmad^{ra}:

“He was a unique diamond. He was the embodiment of nobility. He was a moon that often remained hidden; he has quietly departed. He has reached the merciful Lap of Allah the Almighty.”³⁰⁷

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} fondly recollected:

“There was very little difference in age between us. All the time we played together, and our younger brother (Hazrat Mirza Mubarak Ahmad^{ra}) was very mischievous, but none of us ever squabbled. He never

³⁰⁶Hazrat Mirza Mubarak Ahmad^{ra} (1899-1907) was 2 years younger than Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} and passed away at the age of 8 years.

³⁰⁷*Al Fazl* newspaper, Jan 14th, 1962.

annoyed me, not even once. In fact, he would accept whatever I said. After his marriage, we had a double bond. He became the son-in-law of my husband and for many years he stayed with us due to the illness of Bu Zainab Begum^{ra} (his wife). We lived together in the same house. Just as it happens sometimes in the world, it could have happened that in such a time of stress that some unpleasantness might have occurred between us or a difference developed in our sibling relationship. However, that never happened between us, and my brother always remained my brother.³⁰⁸

Upon the sudden death of Hazrat Mirza Sharif Ahmad^{ra} in 1961, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum's daughter - Mahmuda Begum Sahiba related the incredible fortitude her mother displayed. She trembled with shock. She had to overcome her personal grief to break the news to her elder brother, Hazrat Musleh Ma'ud^{ra} in the best manner possible, as she was reminded by Hazrat Mirza Bashir Ahmad^{ra}. Her daughter reminisced that she did not know how her mother communicated the news to Huzoor^{ra} but on her return her eyes appeared red and swollen. She thought that perhaps her mother had cried alone. She recollected that this brother and sister had both lost a sibling, but they decided to put their personal grief aside. They composed themselves so that their elder brother -

³⁰⁸Mubaraka Kee Kahani, Mubaraka Kee Zabani – Amatul Shakoor Sahiba, Islam International Publications Ltd, 2008, p.74.

Hazrat Musleh Ma'ud^{ra}, the Khalifa of the time, would not have his health adversely affected by witnessing their grief.

Such was the love and concern imbued in the heart of Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} for all her brothers. This love for them is captured in a poem she was to write about her brothers at the request of someone. As it was published in 1963, it suggests that it refers to Hazrat Mirza Bashir Ahmad^{ra} and Hazrat Mirza Sharif Ahmad^{ra}, who had both passed away by that time:

جو مجھے چاہتے تھے، چاہ کو پہچانتے تھے

**Those who loved me also recognised my reciprocal
love**

ان کی فرقت میں وہ تصویر کہاں سے لاؤں؟

**In their absence from where shall I bring that
illumination?**

کاغذی عکس بھی ہیں دل پہ مرے نقش مگر

Their images are imprinted upon my heart

بولتی ہنستی وہ تصویر کہاں سے لاؤں؟

Where shall I bring those cheerful images from?

وہ کہاں پیار، وہ آپس میں دلوں کی باتیں

Where is that love? Those heart-to-hearts?

آه اس خواب کی تعبیر کہاں سے لاؤں؟

**Alas, where shall I find the interpretation of that
dream?**

دل پر سردہ میں باقی نہ رہی زندہ دلی

In this aggrieved heart there is no liveliness left

اب میں وہ شوخی تحریر کہاں سے لاؤں؟

**Now from where shall I bring those vibrant
writings?³⁰⁹**

³⁰⁹*Al Fazl* newspaper, Sept 11th, 1963, pp1-2

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum's Attachment to her Nieces and Nephews

The eldest daughter of Hazrat Musleh Ma'ud^{ra}, Sahibzadi Nasira Begum Sahiba, related concerning her aunt Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra}:

“Hazrat Sayyeda greatly loved all her brothers' children and also the children of her sister. She would give them beneficial advice and would pray for them.”³¹⁰

Another daughter of Hazrat Musleh Ma'ud^{ra}, Sahibzadi Amatul Basit Sahiba, also affectionately recalled her aunt's conduct towards all of them:

“She was a person who supplicated (dua) abundantly, so full of love that every person felt that she loved them the most. She was so kind that one felt a unique sense of peace when one went near her. I don't know how to write an article, nor have I ever written one before. I shall just write of a few incidents. Sometimes she would admonish us, she would also get angry, but it never seemed harsh because it comprised a mother's love and a father's kindness. Temporarily, it would feel

³¹⁰Seerat-o-Swaanah Sayyeda Nawab Mubaraka Begum Sahiba, Lajna Ima'illah Lahore, 2001, Prof. S N Saeed, p.226.

unpleasant, but my heart soon recovered. Upon reflection, I missed Abba Jaan very much. She would become angry like Abba Jaan and would reproach us like him, she would also then try and reconcile our hearts. I would then become embarrassed thinking why I had ever felt affronted.

She dearly loved my husband. She also expressed great love for my husband. During his illness when we came to Rabwah from Pindi, during his illness in the summer she would often stay from around 4 pm until after dark. She would also visit in the mornings. I remember she came to me after his passing, tears flowed from her eyes and her body trembled. She embraced me and said, 'Having seen your exemplary fortitude, I am very pleased, and I have great respect for the fact that you have displayed an example of the highest standard. Why shouldn't it be so? After all, whose granddaughter are you? Whose daughter are you? Which husband's wife and which father-in-law's daughter-in-law are you?' She continued to visit me for several days."³¹¹

Similarly, her niece Sahibzadi Amatul Naseer Sahiba wrote:

³¹¹Seerat-o-Swaanah Sayyeda Nawab Mubarak Begum Sahiba, Lajna Ima'illah Lahore, 2001, Prof. S N Saeed, p.226.

“She would love us beyond expectation. I was unwell and was being administered injections. One of my injection sites became septic. Consequently, I became very ill. As soon as she found out (i.e. Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra}) despite the heat, she came by foot with Apa Nasira to enquire how I was. I was struck again and again by her love and asking after my health. What a loving personality she was.”³¹²

This affection for her nieces and nephews and concern for their wellbeing was reiterated by Tahira Siddiqua Sahiba. She related that when her husband, Mirza Muneer Ahmad Sahib (son of Hazrat Mirza Bashir Ahmad^{ra}) was unwell, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} wrote to her regularly, providing both reassurances and prayers. She wrote that despite the distance, her nephew was always in her thoughts and she prayed for him daily. She prayed for his health and a peaceful life and success in his business matters. She also thoughtfully and discreetly aided her niece with a monetary gift. The extract below from one of her letters demonstrates this unique aunt's thoughtfulness, tact and awareness of the sensibilities of others:

“...Your hospital fees etc. are all being dealt with from every aspect by the blessings of Allah the Almighty. Your mother is also there, but this insignificant gift of 500 rupees for your personal expenses I am sending you on account of being your Khaala Jaan. I hope that in consideration of

³¹²ibid

my affection for you, you will accept it. Wassalam Mubaraka.³¹³

Sahibzadi Amatul Basit Sahiba also recollected her aunt's thoughtfulness and care in even the most minor of matters. She wrote that her "*Phuphi Jaan*" (i.e. paternal aunt) would sometimes enquire what she liked to eat or if she liked a particular dish. If she replied in the affirmative, then the next morning she would hear a knock at the door and would discover that her aunt had lovingly sent that particular dish with one of her drivers.

She also recollected that on the wedding of her daughter "*Gugu*", her aunt sent a note expressing that she was unwell and that she knew that her niece was also indisposed. She suggested that if her niece sent a car, she would come and spend the day with her and they could rest in the company of each other. Her niece relates that her *Phuphi Jaan* was so attentive and considerate that day, that in her company she felt that she was her aunt's guest rather than vice versa. Her aunt kept offering her various dishes at lunchtime. This was her beloved aunt's final visit to her home.

Sahibzadi Amatul Basit Sahiba further related how one day her aunt mentioned that she had a sweater - worn only once - which had accidentally shrunk whilst being washed. Her niece requested it. Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra}

³¹³Seerat-o-Swaaneh Sayyeda Nawab Mubaraka Begum Sahiba, Lajna Ima'illah Lahore, 2001, Prof. S N Saeed, p.227.

was such a humble individual despite her greatness of lineage and intellect, that she felt embarrassed giving her niece her worn sweater. Her niece desired it for the very reason that she felt it would be blessed having touched the righteous personage of her aunt. The next day Hazrat NawabMubaraka Begum^{ra} sent the sweater to her niece with a note which read: ***“I am feeling very embarrassed but because of your insistence I’m sending it.”***³¹⁴ Such was the humility of this blessed lady. Any request she could fulfil however insignificant, she did so earnestly.

Her niece Fozia Shameem Sahiba writes:

“I had the good fortune to have been very close to “Barri Umi”³¹⁵ in my childhood. From her moral training and company, I benefited according to my capacities. It is human nature that when one gets something easily then one does not recognise its value at the time, but as one develops in wisdom, the lovely memories of those blessings plague one with regret. Then one wishes one had properly taken advantage of the bounties of such righteous elders.”³¹⁶

She reminisced that her childhood was another world; a world with pure enjoyments, a life free from heartbreak and filled with casual but enlightening discussions. There

³¹⁴ ibid, p.228

³¹⁵Her way of addressing her aunt and grandmother – Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra}. It literally means “Elder Mother”.

³¹⁶Seerat-o-Swaaneh Sayyeda Nawab Mubaraka Begum Sahiba, Lajna Ima’illah Lahore, 2001, Prof. S N Saeed, p.275.

was great affection as well as moral training, troubles and afflictions were shared. She reflected that both the daughters of Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra} adopted her methods when training their children. Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra} advised that first one must simply instil a habit of obedience within a child, then everything else follows. Fozia Shameem Sahiba relates that her “*Barri Umi*” (i.e., her maternal aunt who was also married to her grandfather) had a very engaging manner of advising children. She would present very vivid examples, some of which had remained with Fozia Shameem Sahiba throughout her life. Her aunt could relate to their young minds and realised when concepts were too advanced for them. Consequently, she would say to them at times:

“There are some things which cannot be understood at a young age. When you grow up you will realise yourself that the experience of your elders was correct. Adults and elders in the light of bad experiences explain things to children to protect them from similar difficulties.”³¹⁷

She continued that both her mother and “*Barri Umi*” would deeply reflect upon their children’s upbringing and remained vigilant about it. They were careful of what their children read. She relates that by herbed there were short, moral stories, such as stories of the Prophets and sayings of the Holy Prophet^{sa}. *Barri Umi* and their mother would read them stories which improved their Urdu language alongside formal Urdu-learning books. *Barri Umi* was

³¹⁷ibid

conscious of the fact that their Urdu pronunciation could suffer as a consequence of attending an English school. Thus, Fozia Shameem Sahiba recollects regularly visiting her aunt in the evenings and reading books such as “*Miratul Uroos*”³¹⁸, pure biographies and religious magazines with her. She developed a love of books from Hazrat Nawab Mubarak Begum^{ra} and a subsequent respect for books.

Barri Umi would not allow them to fold the corners of books as bookmarks. She recollects that both sisters were like scholarly companions and neither of them would sleep at night without some form of reading. Once they had read a book, they would often reread it to each other in the mornings and would exchange views. Sometimes, they recited poems of a pure nature which one of them had particularly enjoyed. Thus, they lived in a pure and intellectual environment. They had no radio or television and if they occasionally heard the radio, it was more for the pleasure of others. Their recreation, their leisure and pleasure, lay in their books and feeding their insatiable appetites for knowledge. Fozia Shameem Sahiba also relates that her aunt particularly enjoyed reading English novels and that both sisters would read English books of good taste.

Fozia Shameem Sahiba said that spending time amongst her intellectual elders made her academically advanced

³¹⁸This book title is translated as “The Bride’s Mirror.” It was an Urdu novel written by Nazir Ahmad Delvi and published in 1869. It contained themes which promoted the cause of female education in both Muslim and Indian Society.

beyond her years. Her advanced vocabulary would sometimes arouse a chuckle amongst the adults, much to her perplexity. An interesting point of her moral upbringing was that she was strictly forbidden to ever utter anything negative. If she did, her aunt Hazrat NawabMubaraka Begum^{ra} would be displeased. She would explain to them that Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra} was also very strict in this respect and that sometimes what one says can indeed be fulfilled.

Fozia Shameem Sahiba continues that she had the rare honour and good fortune to be the daughter of the youngest daughter of the Promised Messiah^{as}-**“Duktey Karam”** or the **“daughter of the noble”**³¹⁹ and that she entered this world through the hands of his elder daughter - Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra}. This occurred when her aunt helped deliver her when, as often is the case with nature, her birth did not go according to plan. Of this event, her aunt, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} would say:

“Do you know Kukko Jani (i.e. Fozia Sahiba), that I helped bring you into the world and that when you opened your eyes, I was the first person you saw .”³²⁰

³¹⁹Allah the Almighty was to bless the Promised Messiah^{as} with the good news of a *“nobledaughter”* after the death of a daughter, Sahibzadi Amatun Naseer in December 1903. This daughter - Hazrat Amatul Hafiz Begum^{ra}, was born in June 1904. (Further details of the revelation can be found in *Haqiqatul Wahi*, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as}, Islam International Publications, 2018, p277, Sign No. 40 or Seerat-o-Swaaneh Hazrat Sahibzadi Sayyeda Amatul Hafeez Begum Sahiba, Prof. S N Saeed, Lajna Ima’illah Lahore 2008, pp27-29.)

³²⁰Seerat-o-Swaaneh Sayyeda Nawab Mubaraka Begum Sahiba, Lajna Ima’illah Lahore, 2001, Prof. S N Saeed, p.278.

It is interesting to read that the young Fozia replied in her childhood naivety:

“And may Allah make it that as I leave, I also see you.”

Fozia Shameem Sahiba vividly recollects her aunt's reaction to this comment. Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum's complexion paled, and she admonished her young niece for her rash words albeit innocently uttered. Fozia Shameem Sahiba relates that years later when her father passed away she became seriously ill exacerbated by the grief. Many of her relatives came and sat by her bed, but “*Barri Umi*” was nowhere to be seen. When Fozia Shameem Sahiba missed her beloved aunt, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} explained to her why she did not visit:

“You will be thinking that Barri Umi has not cared to ask after your health. I remembered the words of your childhood and so I could not come before you. Although it has been years since that conversation.”³²¹

It was then that Fozia Shameem Sahiba realised the depth and extent of her aunt's love for her; she did not wish the negative comment of a naive child to be fulfilled by any means.

³²¹Seerat-o-Swaanah Sayyeda Nawab Mubaraka Begum Sahiba, Lajna Ima'illah Lahore, 2001, Prof. S N Saeed, p.278.

Writing about the unique qualities of her maternal aunt, Fozia Shameem Sahiba relates that Hazrat Nawab Mubarak Begum^{ra} excelled in her organisation and management of household matters. It was from this aunt and from her mother that she learnt a great many ways to make a little money go far. Despite having household attendants who were aged, her aunt still ran her household in a very efficient manner. She would be constantly creating new and exciting dishes by carefully reusing old meals. For example, if a spinach curry was left-over, she would have it mixed into some dough to make some tasty, fresh flatbreads of spinach. Likewise, she would do the same with left-over lentils. Left-over mince she would make into mince and potato cutlets (round kebabs) or perhaps combine with macaroni pasta. In this manner, food was neither wasted nor was there excessive expenditure in the home.

There would always be a dessert at mealtimes such as stewed, seasonal fruit jellies served with custard. Furthermore, meals would be attractively presented. Fozia Shameem Sahiba recollects that her aunt loved feeding people and would only eat a little herself. Her aunt knew the recipes for a vast number of dishes which she taught her household attendants.

Barri Umi was also very neat and tidy at home. This was apparent when at the time of the partition of India, the family was compelled to eat and sleep in one room. Despite the difficult circumstances, her niece recollects that neither

she nor any visitors ever saw *Barri Umi's* room in any sort of disarray. It was simple but always neat and tidy. Above all else, what Fozia Shameem Sahiba remembers of her aunt was her great piety, high levels of worship and "*taqwa*"³²²:

'In the afternoons before lunch, she would observe Zuhr Prayer in a separate room. She would spend a very long time in prayers. Her Maghrib Prayer would be of another level. After Maghrib, she would continue Nawafil (voluntary prayers) until Isha Prayer. I never saw a change in this routine. From so much worship, she would sometimes suffer weakness...

So, by the time of Maghrib Prayer the atmosphere would become very spiritual. People would request her prayers in abundance and I saw that her life would be burdened with their problems until she had reassuring news from them."³²³

She recollected that there would often be a discussion about dreams in the mornings. Consequently, she learnt something of this subject. An interesting incident that Fozia Shameem Sahiba relates is that one morning her *Barri Umi* called her into her bedroom and gave her a gleaming silver coin of one rupee. Her aunt explained:

³²²i.e. a fear of losing the love of Allah the Almighty or displeasing Him.

³²³Seerat-o-Swaanah Sayyeda Nawab Mubarak Begum Sahiba, Lajna Ima'illah Lahore – Prof. S N Saeed, p.280.

“Last night I dreamt that you said to me, “Barri Umi, put a rupee in my hand.”³²⁴

Thus, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} was always eager to fulfil good dreams. Her niece reflected that maybe it was the blessing and meaning of that dream that she never had any financial problems in life. She was to be extraordinarily blessed in her provisions, a fact which she alone fully realised.

She also reflected how intelligent and advanced in thought her aunt was from a young age. She commented that reading her poetry in “*Durre Aden*”, one is astonished at the high level of spirituality she had attained at such an early age. Fozia Shameem Sahiba was to once ask her aunt if she ever felt the age gap between herself and her husband (Fozia Shameem Sahiba’s paternal grandfather). Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} replied:

“I never felt any ill match because of our ages, my intellect was at the same level as my husband’s, but he did continue to improve me on certain matters.”

Fozia Shameem Sahiba observed the very close relationship her aunt shared with her parents. Since she was both her mother’s sister and her father’s mother-in-law, she had a double-faceted relationship with them. With her father, she had a sisterly relationship. Informally, she would tease her brother-in-law, yet also had a great affection for Hazrat Nawab Muhammad Abdullah Khan

³²⁴ibid, p.281

Sahib^{ra} as her stepson. During his illness, Hazrat Nawab Mubarak Begum^{ra} came and stayed with them and her round-the-clock care was exemplary.

She also had a special relationship with Fozia Shameem Sahiba and her siblings (both as their paternal grandmother and as their maternal aunt). She reminisced that their beloved aunt would feel the smallest of their anguishes. She was a great support to her parents at those difficult decision making times when considering marriage proposals. Especially at the time of her own proposal, *Barri Umi* was a great pillar of strength to her mother both emotionally and spiritually, offering her sincerest prayers. This was a particularly difficult time for her mother (Hazrat Amatul Hafiz Sahiba^{ra}) as her husband had passed away.

Fozia Shameem Sahiba finally relates another fundamental characteristic of her aunt - her profound respect for the institution of Khilafat. This was despite her having a very close relationship with Hazrat Khalifatul Masih^{II}^{ra} as a sister with similar interests and a close friendship. She recalls that she was to be married at the end of October 1965. Her *Barri Umi* wrote her a letter in which she guided that she should of course be happy and celebratory in the days of her marriage. However, she should realise that these were also the final days of a khalifa and so she should be particularly praying for him. During her celebrations, she should show a consideration for the present situation.

Fozia Shameem Sahiba reminisces that the passing of her aunt felt like the end of an era; a golden age of happy gatherings when her aunt would beautify all occasions

with her presence. She was one of those rare individuals who shared their every heartache; but would also kindly rebuke them as children and explained to them their duties and responsibilities. She was the one they would spend many a long summer's afternoon with, relaxing and reading and discussing books they picked from her collection. It was an age of pure and good pastimes - a golden age - one that she now greatly missed.

Another niece – Zakia Begum Sahiba (the wife of Col. Sahibzada Mirza Daud Ahmad), had similar fond recollections of the very loving and close connection she had with her maternal aunt, who was also her grandmother. Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} was to become a great spiritual role model for her. Like Fozia Shameem Sahiba, Zakia Begum Sahiba also recollected casually lying on her aunt's bed and sharing her inner thoughts and emotions:

“Lying on her bed with her I could tell her all the matters of my heart, even though I was not so intimate with my own mother.”³²⁵

It is heart-warming to learn that this niece also felt that her relationship with her aunt, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} was like a deep friendship. It seems that all who knew Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} became greatly attached to her. Zakia Begum Sahiba related that her aunt was a great comfort in times of need, a reassuring voice, a great confidante and a fountain of wisdom.

³²⁵Seerat-o-Swaanah Sayyeda Nawab Mubaraka Begum Sahiba, Lajna Ima'illah Lahore, 2001, Prof. S N Saeed, p.285.

Zakia Begum Sahiba recollected her aunt's great consideration for her feelings during her father's illness. Zakia Begum Sahiba went to visit him. However, once her father's health stabilised, she decided to return home as her husband's leave was limited and she was due to give birth imminently. However, her perceptive aunt realised her niece's anxiety and concern for her father, but also the factors compelling her to leave. Thus, she determinedly declared one day:

“Zakia, you won't go - I will myself care for you during your 'chilla'.³²⁶ Do not worry about anything in your heart. How will the child travel, when all the time her heart is troubled with the worry of her ill father?”³²⁷

Zakia Begum Sahiba recollected this incident with sincere gratitude and prayers for her aunt. Her aunt did indeed then take great care of her, sleeping in her room for 40 days after the birth of her daughter. In her free time aside from caring for Zakia Begum Sahiba's father, this benevolent aunt would employ herself caring for her niece. Zakia Begum Sahiba reminisced that her baby daughter was affected by her own worried state and often had stomach problems. Some nights she would cry persistently. Yet, her compassionate and selfless aunt never once expressed any discomfort or frustration. Instead, she worried for the sleep deprivation of her niece and tried remedies and prayers to improve her situation. Zakia Begum Sahiba was

³²⁶A 40-day rest period after the birth of a child.

³²⁷Seerat-o-Swaaneh Sayyeda Nawab Mubarak Begum Sahiba - Prof. S N Saeed, Lajna Ima'illah Lahore, 2001, p.285.

grateful to have had the opportunity to stay with her ill father without having to burden her mother because of her aunt's great kindness.

This aunt was to be a constant rock of support. Even at a mature age, when her husband had retired and had dedicated himself to the Jama'at in Rabwah for some time, Zakia Begum Sahiba felt some anxiety moving into a new home. She requested her aunt's prayers and her aunt reassured her niece by saying:

“Why do you worry? Be grateful to God. He has given you your own home. By the Grace of Allah, it will be very blessed.”

The day Zakia Begum Sahiba moved into her new home, her aunt was there to support her as she had been throughout her life. They were to enter the new house arm in arm, where her beloved “*Khala Jaan*” (maternal aunt) then fervently prayed for her. Zakia Begum Sahiba then requested her aunt to name the house. In consideration of her niece's worries, she aptly named it “*Baitul Aman*” (i.e., “House of Peace”). Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} then prayed that the house and those connected to it always remain blessed with peace and safety.

Zakia Begum Sahiba was to later reflect that there was now no one to cleanse her heart with such love and prayers as her beloved *Khala Jaan* had done for so long. So, she implored the One and Only Allah the Almighty, for help and protection. Indeed, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} seemed to leave a large vacuum in the hearts and minds of

her relations, for many of whom she was a spiritual role model, a maternal voice, a caring friend and a source of many sincere and potent prayers.

It was Hazrat Nawab Mubarak Begum's niece, the late Qudsia Begum Sahiba, who was to begin the practice of addressing this beloved aunt as "*Barri Umi*" rather than Aunt. It was because she thought this aunt loved her so much and was like a mother that she started doing so. In fact, she related that she was more reserved with her own mother and she did not like to express any of her worries to her. On the contrary, she would request prayers from *Barri Umi* for any problems she was experiencing. One day, her aunt tried to reassure Qudsia Begum Sahiba who was very anxious about her home and kept requesting her prayers:

"Why do you worry? When I list and pray for Hazrat Masih Ma'ud's progeny you are included. When I pray for my husband's progeny, you are included (her husband was Qudsia Begum Sahiba's paternal grandfather). When I pray for Hafeez and Abdullah's progeny, you are included. When I pray for Manjhalei Bhai's progeny (i.e., Hazrat Mirza Bashir Ahmad^a), you are included (Qudsia Begum Sahiba was married to his son - Sahibzada Mirza Majeed Ahmad). Apart from that, I specifically take your name and pray for you. Do not worry, Allah the Almighty will take care of all your matters."³²⁸

³²⁸Seerat-o-Swaanah Sayyeda Nawab Mubarak Begum Sahiba, Lajna Ima'illah Lahore, 2001, Prof. S N Saeed, p.290.

Not only do her words illustrate the multiple aspects of Qudsia Begum Sahiba's relationship with her aunt, but also they are an insight into the multitude and extensive nature of the prayers of Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra}. She prayed not only for her own family and her husband's, but for the Promised Messiah's progeny and their future generations. She also found the time to pray for her relatives as individuals. All this she did in addition to her prayers for hundreds of Jama'at members as well as the Jama'at in its entirety.

Qudsia Begum Sahiba recollected that her aunt loved reminiscing about her childhood with her and relating funny anecdotes from that time. Clearly, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} had an infectious sense of humour and Qudsia Begum Sahiba remembered the sheer pleasure and joy apparent on her aunt's face as she retold them. Like her mother, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} had a pleasant, cheerful nature and her piety did not restrict her from enjoying the funny side of life.

She remembered *Barri Umi* relating incidents of her and Asifa Begum Sahiba (her youngest daughter) playing and fighting as young girls, as there was only a two-year age gap between them. On one occasion, the cousins who were as close as sisters, quarrelled which escalated into a scuffle. This was apparent to their mothers from their dishevelled clothes. However, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} had the wisdom not to over interfere with other people's children. Qudsia Begum Sahiba recollected that because it had occurred in her house (i.e., the family of Hazrat Amatul

Hafeez Begum^{ra}) Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} asked Qudsia Begum's mother what had occurred but did not say anything to Qudsia herself. Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} maintained that fine balance amongst her relations whereby she greatly cared and prayed for them but was also wise enough not to over interfere with other peoples' children or relatives.

Qudsia Begum Sahiba recollected: ***“We would pray ourselves but without worrying. We had the reassurance that our elders were also praying.”***³²⁹

She reminisced that it was an era of sharing simple enjoyments with their precious elders like Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra}. The simpler lifestyle of their pious elders profoundly influenced and moulded them into individuals who were grateful for the smallest of blessings from their Almighty Creator. They were happy and content even with a frugal lifestyle when it was demanded of them. Qudsia Begum Sahiba^{ra} related concerning this golden era of their youth:

“When I remember how Barri Umi would relate funny anecdotes from our childhoods and enjoyed them, the thought crosses my mind how our pious elders enjoyed even the smallest of happinesses. Perhaps it was why they were so far removed from malice, envy, etc. and they did not feel the need for many things. They were content. Nowadays, happiness has become very expensive – hundreds

³²⁹Ibid, p.293

***of thousands of rupees are spent going to Europe, eating dinners in hotels, making new clothes according to the daily changes in fashion.*"³³⁰**

Qudsia Begum Sahiba also highlighted the humanity of her aunt; how she used to care for the families of her household attendants as though caring for her extended family. Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} had witnessed a lifetime's service to the poor and orphans by her mother, Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra}. She had fostered, raised and arranged the marriages for such individuals and had maintained a lifelong connection with them just like a real mother. Similar was the attitude of her daughter - Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra}. Qudsia Begum Sahiba recalled a lady who she could not remember before marriage, but clearly recalled her visits to her aunt after marriage and the birth of her children. She would visit as if she were returning home to her mother's house and there was no difference in the treatment of her children and the rest of the family. When she visited, her husband would be sent food with consideration as an honoured guest. After the move to Qadian, she was also given a portion of the house to live in. Her daughters developed a great closeness to the girls of the family such as Qudsia Begum Sahiba.

Qudsia Begum Sahiba reflected that both her aunt and mother did this. They brought up children from decent families to financially assist them. However, they also cared for their spiritual and moral welfare and even arranged their marriages amongst good families. Qudsia Begum Sahiba related:

³³⁰Ibid, p.293

***“The family atmosphere was one of equality.
Nobody was thought less of.”³²⁹***

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum’s attitude to those in need was akin to that of her mother - Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra}, who had raised and supported numerous orphans and the needy throughout her life.

It is perhaps one reason why after the demise of her mother, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} was to learn in a dream that Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra} had the blessed and inimitable distinction to be living in the same place as the Holy Prophet^{sa}. Indeed, our blessed Holy Prophet^{sa} was to say that in the Hereafter he and the nurturer of an orphan would be as close as the two adjoining fingers of one hand.³³¹ He also taught:

“Of your homes the one that Allah likes best is the one in which an orphan has an honoured place.”³³²

Undoubtedly, the righteous qualities of Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra} were not lost upon her daughter - Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra}. She was then to instil these moral values within her own children, nieces and nephews. In doing so, she left them with the fondest memories of their loving and noble aunt.

³³¹Wisdom of The Holy Prophet – Muhammad Zafrulla Khan, 2nd ed., 1981, p.21.

³³²ibid

An Appreciation of Fellow Lajna and Kind Treatment of All

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} was a rare individual whose piety was matched by her humility and appreciation of others. She did not consider herself superior to other women despite having the unique and exalted position as the daughter of the Prophet and Imam of our age. Hameeda Sabira Sahiba, the tutor of her youngest daughter Asifa Begum Sahiba, has related that Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} once sent her an apologetic letter stating that due to unforeseen circumstances, she had been delayed in the payment of her tuition fees. Thus, she was sending her three months wages collectively. The incredulous Hameeda Sabira Sahiba returned the fee, explaining that she had provided the tuition due to her faith and love, and so required no financial compensation. She only desired Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum's prayers.

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} responded by letter that she greatly appreciated this tutor's love and respect but that such an insignificant fee would not affect these sentiments and should be considered a completely different issue. She then convincingly persuaded Hameeda Sabira Sahiba to keep the money by writing that if she did so she promised that her love for her would increase. In this affectionate manner, she ensured that the rights of her employee were safeguarded.

Indeed, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum's consideration for her employees was similar to that of her virtuous

parents. On one occasion, her parents completely astonished the Arabic tutor of her sister Hazrat Amatul Hafeez Begum^{ra}. On her first completion of the Holy Qur'an, they presented her tutor with a gold necklace of the value of 350 rupees.³³³ Such was their appreciation of the favours done by others. Indeed, they and their blessed daughter were to prove the truth of the Hadith that;

“He who is not grateful to people is not grateful to Allah.”³³⁴

Both the Promised Messiah^{as} and Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra} were ever grateful to their Creator and the favours of His Creation. They also duly appreciated and valued those who helped in the acquisition of knowledge, especially knowledge of the Holy Qur'an - a Divine Scripture.

Razia Ghauri Sahiba, a Lajna member from East Africa, related that she would visit Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} on her trips to Pakistan. On one occasion, “*Begum Sahiba*” (i.e Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra}) liked the material of the suit she was wearing. Razia Ghauri Sahiba had purchased the cloth in East Africa. After some time, she was able to obtain a similar material which she duly presented to Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra}. Begum Sahiba^{ra} was very appreciative and asked if she would like some cloth for a tunic in return. Razia Ghauri Sahiba responded that what she truly desired was a tunic worn by

³³³Seerat-o-Swaaneh Hazrat Ammaa Jaan, Prof. S N Saeed, Lajna Ima'illah Lahore, 2005, p600.

³³⁴Wisdom of The Holy Prophet – Muhammad Zafrulla Khan, p.65, 2nd Ed. 1981.

Begum Sahiba^{ra} herself. Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} then immediately left the room and personally picked out a tunic and scarf from her wardrobe to give her. She applied perfume to the tunic and then affectionately presented it to Razia Ghauri Sahiba. Razia Ghauri Sahiba later saw Begum Sahiba^{ra} wearing the suit she had given her at a prize-giving ceremony in Nusrat Jahan School, Rabwah. Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} clearly appreciated her gift by publicly wearing it and consequently giving great joy to the donor.

Razia Ghauri Sahiba also related that whenever she met this noble lady, the latter always met her warmly like a close relative, and would speak to her in a friendly and relaxed manner. On another occasion, Razia Ghauri Sahiba visited Hazrat Begum Sahiba^{ra} accompanied by a relative. Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} happened to be dining at the time. The attendant who had announced their arrival, soon returned with food for the two guests. Razia Ghauri Sahiba explained that they had previously eaten. However, they would be gratified to receive something from Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum's plate in order to acquire some blessings from it. The attendant conveyed their request and within minutes she had returned with Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum's plate with some food to fulfil their request.

Yet on another occasion, Razia Ghauri Sahiba visited Begum Sahiba^{ra} on the occasion of *Eid*³³⁵. She appeared very pleased to see her and explained that she had sent one

³³⁵A Muslim festival.

of her attendants with some “*Eidi*”³³⁶ for her daughter – Saliha. Unfortunately, the attendant had failed to find her house. She then asked her attendant to quickly fetch Razia Ghauri Sahiba’s portion of “*Mitthai*” (eastern sweetmeats) which she had also intended to give her. She then affectionately told her young daughter Saliha to eat some of it. She related that thereafter Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} would always keep a portion of *mitthai* aside for Razia Ghauri Sahiba’s family at *Eid*.

Indeed, her care and attention to this one Lajna member was representative of her care and concern for all the ladies of the Jama’at.

There was a duality to her kindness; she acted both as a spiritual and physical mother to *Lajna* members and as such gave them gifts as well as guidance. She had a distinctly affectionate and jovial manner which made each lady who visited her feel special and appreciated. Indeed, as the “***Community of the Servants of Allah Almighty***” (which is the literal meaning of “*Lajna Ima’illah*”, the auxiliary association established by her brother, Hazrat Khalifatul Masih II^{ra}), Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} valued each and every member. She understood the pivotal role of Lajna members in establishing the strong foundations of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam.

Her care and concern for the ladies of the Jama’at did not mean that Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} had no

³³⁶A money gift given to children/juniors on the Muslim festival of Eid.

concern for the men of the Community. On the contrary, she also shared their joys and sorrows and sought to alleviate their problems to the best of her abilities. Another member of the Community, Professor Naseer Ahmed Khan Sahib has related that once in 1969 when he was admitted to Fazl-e-Umar Hospital Rabwah for about six weeks, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} would honour him by sending one of her male attendants to enquire of his health every two or three days. Furthermore, on one occasion on the festival of *Eid*, which was obviously dull for the patients in hospital, Professor Naseer Ahmed recollected being pleasantly surprised when suddenly there was a knock at the door. A messenger from Begum Sahiba^{ra} had come to express her *Eid* greetings and prayers. This message greatly raised the spirits of the patient, who genuinely appreciated this small but thoughtful act. He also relates that whenever his wife visited Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra}, she would instruct her to take care of her husband.

Likewise, Razia Dard Sahiba, the daughter of Hazrat Maulana Abdul Raheem Dard Sahib has related that her father's passing was a great loss to both the Jama'at and his family. His family was especially affected as the children were still young. However, their worries and trials passed with the gracious help and support of Hazrat Musleh Ma'ud^{ra}. When the time for her brother's *Nikah* (marriage ceremony) arrived, she requested Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} to fulfil her mother's wish and put the ring on the bride's finger. Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} compassionately obliged, although she admitted that she had a fever at the time. Yet, acknowledging her

mother's past trials and the great service Dard Sahib had done for the Jama'at she commented:

"...I have a temperature and feel quite unwell. However, because there has now come a time of happiness and joy after a long period spent in grief and sadness in the house of the late Dard Sahib, who was devoted to the Jama'at, so despite feeling unwell I will definitely come - Insha'Allah. Give your mother my congratulations, poor thing, after a lot of pain she has now been blessed with happiness."³³⁷

Razia Dard Sahiba related with admiration and amazement, the incredible consideration Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} showed them on account of their father, many years after his passing. This was all because of his service to the Jama'at.

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} cared for the Jama'at members' secular as well as spiritual progress and would offer invaluable advice for this purpose. Abdul Sami Noon Sahib of Sargodha related that he would regularly write to Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} requesting prayers and would try to serve her. On one occasion, he wrote requesting prayers to be able to purchase a car. Indeed, he was then able to do so. Subsequently, he wrote to inform Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} of his happy news. She was to guide him:

³³⁷Seerat-o-Swaaneh Hazrat Ammaa Jaan, Prof. S N Saeed, Lajna Ima'illah Lahore, 2005, p362, taken from *Misbah* Special Edition, pp.68-69.

“I am sure you will have given some ‘Sadqa’ (charity for the poor). If you have not, then do give it now and treat such poor people to some excursions in the car who could not even imagine sitting in a car. This is the best Sadqa to give for a vehicle.”³³⁸

Abdul Sami Sahib related that he did indeed follow Hazrat Nawab Mubarak Begum’s wise counsel and gained blessings from it. He widely shared this advice amongst his family and friends. Everyone who heard it also resolved to act upon it. Abdul Sami Sahib duly appreciated this guidance from the blessed daughter of the Promised Messiah^{as}, who always taught that one should include the less privileged groups of society in one’s joys.

³³⁸Seerat-o-Swaanah Sayyeda Nawab Mubarak Begum Sahiba, Lajna Ima’illah Lahore, 2001, Prof. S N Saeed, p.363.

Service to Lajna Ima'illah

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} was to devote her energies to the service of Lajna Ima'illah in whatever capacity possible and whenever the opportunity arose. She had the distinction to be one of the first 14 Ahmadi women to join this auxiliary organisation of the Ahmadiyya Movement when it was established in 1922, under the direction of Hazrat Khalifatul Masih II^{ra}.

Her involvement and contributions to Lajna Ima'illah spanned a lifetime and can only be touched upon in this brief biographical account. Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} typified all that Lajna Ima'illah represented as a true ***“Servant of Allah”*** and as one of the pioneering members of this auxiliary association. She was indeed one of the first 14 Lajna members who had the honour to attend the very first Lajna meeting of January 1923³³⁸. She then attended countless Lajna events over the decades such as Annual Ijtemas, Annual Conventions, prize-giving ceremonies, days to commemorate the fine character of the Holy Prophet^{sa} and celebratory events such as the 50 Years Jubilee of Lajna Ima'illah (1972). She either presided over such events or addressed the Lajna with guidance. For example, at the closing address of the Annual Convention of 1963, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} reminded Lajna of the importance of developing a love and loyalty to Khilafat. At the ladies' Annual Ijtema^{339b} of 1964, she

³³⁸Lajna Speaks 1922-1972 Souvenir 50th Anniversary', The Central Lajna Ima'illah, pgs 38 & 41

directed Lajna concerning their responsibilities as Ahmadi Muslim women.

It is interesting to learn that Begum Sahiba^{ra} not only reminded Lajna of their spiritual responsibilities but also their patriotic duties, when in 1946 she encouraged ladies to vote in the national elections of India. This was something Hazrat Khalifatul Masih II^{ra} had directed every Ahmadi member to do. Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} had the honour to also serve the Jama'at and benefit it during her influential span as Sadr Lajna Ima'illah Lahore for nine years (1958-1967). It was a role she adopted diligently. Despite ill health, she would still preside over the Lajna "*Majlis Amila*"³⁴⁰ meetings, offering invaluable advice. The meetings she could not attend she would subsequently study their reports and gave pertinent advice accordingly.

The office bearers profited greatly from her guidance and this auxiliary organisation continued to progress under her supervision. During her office, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} was to stress the importance of regularly reading extracts from the Promised Messiah's books at local meetings. She explained that it is only the teachings of a Prophet that outlive him and thus to keep his message alive it must be repeatedly studied and made a current topic. On another occasion, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} was to give an important reminder to the Lajna of one local community about the objective of serving the Jama'at. The

^{339b}An annual gathering of Lajna Ima'illah which includes religious and secular activities to enhance their faith and knowledge.

³⁴⁰Meeting of the office bearers of Lajna Ima'illah.

death of the ladies' local president had provoked discord and disunity within the local group. She thus sent a specific message to this group of Lajna members:

“You should all remember that every religious work is done purely for Allah the Almighty. This organisation (Lajna Ima’illah) is not a political organisation. Personal feelings and enmity amongst yourselves should be forgotten. To work purely for Allah the Almighty one should be ever ready, not for a worldly office or position. May Allah the Almighty reform all your hearts and protect the Jama’at from enemies who rejoice in its tribulations. Ameen.”³⁴¹

This message had a profound effect on the Lajna ladies to whom it was addressed, who subsequently reformed their behaviour.

Hazrat Nawab Mubarak Begum^{ra} was to offer practical advice to the *Khidmat-e-Khalq* Department (for the service of humanity). She advised them to avoid the habit of excessive questioning and to develop the habit of hard work to raise money for the needy. She also wrote to the Central *Majlis Amila*³⁴² and the Secretary of *Khidmat-e-Khalq*, pragmatically advising them that whatever money they raised should not be arbitrarily distributed by individuals or ineffectively used. She directed that all

³⁴¹Seerat-o-Swaanah Sayyeda Nawab Mubarak Begum Sahiba - Prof. S N Saeed, Lajna Ima’illah Lahore, 2001, p.381.

³⁴²Central body of office bearers.

income should be routinely recorded and that before its distribution at least three Lajna members should sign and witness the transaction. These should include the President of Lajna Ima'illah and the Secretary *Khidmat-e-Khalq*. Permission should first be granted before funds were ever taken. She also advised that should someone require money in an emergency, it should be given. However, three secretaries such as the President, Vice President and General Secretary, should witness it.

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} gave practical and constructive advice to aid the efficiency and smooth running of Lajna Ima'illah. She advised Lajna that when they gave charity to their fellow Ahmadi sisters and brothers, it should be done discreetly so as not to hurt people's self-respect. She counselled them to care more for those who would not ask but were in need. To identify those in genuine need was one of the fundamental tasks of the *Khidmat-e-Khalq* team.

Those of the poor who were able to work, she guided that they should be encouraged to do so, because it was much better for their self-respect. She encouraged that a balance should be struck whereby all those who were in genuine need should be helped, but also that the Ahmadiyya Community should be discouraged from becoming a society that was not embarrassed by begging. She advocated that people should be helped to gain employment and advised in a pleasant manner that the deserving children should be educated and helped. She also suggested that the deserving girls should be supported

during their weddings. She advised that at the time of a wedding, Lajna should ask the family to also donate items such as cloth, jewellery, crockery according to the family's standard to Lajna. This collection should then be donated to assist deserving girls on their marriage.

She also encouraged the making of handicrafts to raise funds. Once, she advised the Trade and Industry Department:

“My advice from now on for exhibitions is that every sister makes something or gets something made and takes it, which if is not sold, she can use in her own home or is something she needs...So, if it does not sell then it may stay in her own home. It should not become a burden upon Lajna. Even if 200 ladies take one item each, then 200 items without any risk, without any burden and of a nice quality, can be made. If you wish, you may even make an appeal three months in advance and give reminders in every meeting. In fact, the Head of the locality should do so in each meeting.”³⁴³

Thus, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} was to guide and advise Lajna Ima'illah in all aspects of their work. She did not consider anything below her attention and worked conscientiously with passionate dedication and commitment; she served the Jama'at in many roles and capacities. Consequently, the Lahore Lajna Ima'illah greatly flourished under her supervision. It was during her

³⁴³Seerat-o-Swaanah Sayyeda Nawab Mubaraka Begum Sahiba - Prof. S N Saeed, Lajna Ima'illah Lahore, 2001, p.382.

presidency that the offices of Lajna Ima'illah Lahore were permanently established in April 1963.

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} was to leave Lahore only to serve another Lajna Community – in Rabwah. On the death of Hazrat Umme Nasir (the wife of Hazrat Musleh Ma'ud^{ra}), Hazrat Mirza Bashir Ahmad^{ra} suggested that his younger sister come to Rabwah as it was a great loss to the Lajna members there. Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} dutifully did so and became a unifying force within the Lajna. Members from across the social spectrum would visit her without formality, requesting prayers and advice. Her niece, Sahibzadi Amatul Aziz Sahiba has recollected that her arrival considerably boosted the happiness and morale of the Lajna in Rabwah.³⁴⁴ There she became an honorary member of Central Lajna Ima'illah and would regularly attend the Aamla meetings, giving pertinent advice.

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum's fundamental role in guiding Lajna Ima'illah over the decades was acknowledged when she was requested to write the *Foreward* to the Third Volume of Lajna History by Hazrat Sayyeda Maryam Siddiqua Begum, the International Sadr of Lajna Ima'illah at the time.³⁴⁵

³⁴⁴Seerat-o-Swaaneh Sayyeda Nawab Mubaraka Begum Sahiba - Prof. S N Saeed, Lajna Ima'illah Lahore, 2001, p.383

³⁴⁵She was also a wife of Hazrat Musleh Ma'ud^{ra}, informally known as "Choti Appa".

Care for Employees

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} treated her employees with great care and consideration, like members of her extended family. Habiba Begum, wife of Malik Muhammad Isma'il Sahib, related that her family had served Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} for three generations beginning with her grandmother – 'Niaz Bibi'. Her description of Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} is an honest testimony to her character. Having lived with her she had great insight into her employer's daily routine, habits and values, and perhaps had greater objectivity than a relative. Habiba Begum lived in "Begum Sahiba's" (i.e. Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum's) household in Malerkotla alongside her grandmother. Her mother - who was of similar age to Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra}, had the distinction of being a wet nurse to Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum's first son, Nawab Muhammad Ahmad Khan Sahib.

Habiba Begum related that Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} got clothes for her and personally dressed her in these clothes when she was born. Sadly, her mother passed away when she was very young. Thereafter, she was raised in Hazrat Nawab Sahib's household. She reminisced that Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} was always very affectionate with the girls within the household. Sometimes they would squabble with Begum Sahiba's children, but she never reproached them. There was a strong tradition of caring for the "*pardah*" of the girls of the family. Habiba Begum related that the household helpers' girls would be cared for in this respect just as much as the actual daughters of the family. She recollected that she developed a love of sewing and embroidery and that

Begum Sahiba^{ra} herself taught her how to sew a buttonhole stitch.

She further related that Begum Sahiba^{ra} and Hazrat Nawab Muhammad Ali Khan Sahib^{ra} would both take an active interest whenever a marriage proposal came for her. Hazrat Nawab Sahib^{ra} interviewed the suitor and Begum Sahiba^{ra} observed him whilst observing *pardah*, just as she would for her own daughters or nieces.

Habiba Begum reminisced that Begum Sahiba^{ra} showed the same concern for the future of all the girls within her household. She related that because her mother was a wet nurse to Mian Muhammad Ahmad Sahib, Hazrat Nawab Sahib^{ra} (Hazrat Nawab Muhammad Ali Khan Sahib^{ra}) rewarded her parents with a house. Later, when Mian Muhammad Ahmad Sahib was himself blessed with his first son, Begum Sahiba^{ra} celebrated by getting clothes made for all the household attendants and the relations of any wet nurses and included Habiba Begum's brother and father. She recollected that over time, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} had many attendants within the household. Yet, whenever their children were married, she always gifted them some clothes. She would share all her employees' joys and sorrows.

This faithful employee also reminisced that she was fortunate enough to have had the opportunity to care for Begum Sahiba^{ra} for some nights during her final illness. She remembered that once when she arrived, she bid "***Assalammo Alaikum***" but Begum Sahiba^{ra} did not reply. Then, her daughter-in-law, informed Hazrat Nawab

Mubaraka Begum^{ra} of Habiba Begum's arrival. Despite her weakness, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} responded, ***"Yes, I'm aware."*** Habiba Begum was gratified by this acknowledgement as Begum Sahiba^{ra} then slipped back into a state of drowsiness. The fact Habiba Begum was thankful to have had the opportunity to care for Begum Sahiba^{ra} suggests that Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum's affection and care for her female attendants was genuine and they felt this. Indeed, Habiba Begum also took Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum's advice when considering marriage matches for her sons. She later requested that Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} pray on the engagement ring of her future daughter-in-law, which she happily did.³⁴⁶

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum's niece, Amatul Basit Sahiba has related an incident which also shows her aunt's consideration for her household employees and their families:

"Phuphi Jaan had great ties with her household helpers and she treated them in a beautiful manner. Despite the fact that after the Partition most of them left, I remember that whilst we were in London, a youth came with a letter from my Phuphi Jaan in Mir Daud Sahib's name (her husband)³⁴⁷It said (he was Hazrat Nawab Sahib's distant relative...) that his

³⁴⁶Seerat-o-Swaanah Sayyeda Nawab Mubaraka Begum Sahiba – Prof. S N Saeed, Lajna Ima'illah Lahore, 2001, p398.

³⁴⁷Mir Daud Sahib was the son of Mir Isaac Sahib, the maternal uncle of her father,
Hazrat Musleh Ma'ud^{ra}.

^{350b}Seerat-o-Swaanah Sayyeda Nawab Mubaraka Begum Sahiba, Lajna Ima'illah Lahore, 2001, Prof. S N Saeed, p398.

father had done a great deal of service for Hazrat Nawab Muhammad Ali Khan Sahib^{ra} and he had come here for employment, and to help him, however much was possible.”^{350b}

She also cared for those who had attended her mother, Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra}. She was to tell this niece of hers:

“At one time Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra} said to me, ‘Ayesha (the wife of Muhammad Isma’il Sahib) has served me greatly, so send her a gift of a tunic every now and then, even if it has been worn.’ Consequently, every year I send Ayesha a tunic.”³⁴⁸

Similarly, “*Siraj Bibi*”- who worked for many years in the Lajna Office, recollected how she loved watching the blessed family of the Promised Messiah^{as}. She especially enjoyed the scene when after the evening prayers the Promised Messiah’s daughters would congregate at their mother’s house alongside Hazrat Khalifatul Masih II^{ra}. She once requested Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} to pray for her daughter’s good future and that she never witness any misfortune of her daughters. Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} then began praying for her daughter immediately and fervently, putting her hand on her daughter’s head. Thereafter, she was delighted to learn of this daughter’s marriage and attended the wedding. She also sincerely prayed on the bride’s ring at the wedding function.

³⁴⁸Seerat-o-Swaanah Sayyeda Nawab Mubaraka Begum Sahiba, Lajna Ima’illah Lahore, 2001, Prof. S N Saeed, p399, taken from *Misbah* magazine, Special Number, pp23-25.

Kindness to Kin

“Be mindful of your duty to Allah, in Whose name you appeal to one another and of your obligations in respect of ties of kinship.”

(Holy Qur’an, Ch4:V2)

In accordance with such Quranic commandments, Hazrat Nawab Mubarak Begum^{ra} was conscientious of keeping in contact and maintaining good relations with all her relatives. It was something she encouraged all Lajna members to do. Certainly, she would enquire of the relatives of those ladies who came to meet her. If the ladies were ignorant of the state of their own relatives, then they would themselves realise their personal neglect in this area. Razia Dard Sahiba has related that she was greatly influenced by this quality of Hazrat Nawab Mubarak Begum^{ra}. She knew that whenever she would meet Hazrat Begum Sahiba^{ra}, she would enquire about the circumstances of the pious elders of both her maternal and paternal relatives. Hence, before visiting her she would ensure that she knew of the wellbeing of her local relatives. Begum Sahiba’s questioning made her conscious of the fact that she should regularly ask about the welfare of her elder relatives and that it is a meritable deed to visit them both on account of them being relatives and elders.

Razia Dard Sahiba would indeed feel incredulous at the deep and sincere interest Hazrat Nawab Mubarak Begum^{ra} seemed to take in her family whenever they met. She wrote:

“... She asks questions about them with such interest that one feels as if they are not the relatives of one’s own house but the individuals of her household (i.e. Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum’s^{ra}) and that more than me she has a connection with them.”³⁴⁹

Indeed, strengthening the ties of kinship is something which should be a priority for every Muslim. Benevolence to our kin can open the door to a whole plethora of further good deeds which can earn us the pleasure of Allah the Almighty.

³⁴⁹Seerat-o-Swaaneh Sayyeda Nawab Mubaraka Begum Sahiba, Lajna Ima’illah Lahore, 2001, Prof. S N Saeed, p402, taken from *MisbahSpecial* magazine, p.67.

The Financial Sacrifices of Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra}

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} like her mother before her – Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra}, was to set an example amongst women when it came to making financial sacrifices. Apart from the compulsory monetary contributions she made within the Community (e.g., *Zakat*, *Lajna Chanda*, *Wasiyyat etc.*³⁵⁰), Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} was also eager to contribute to any of the financial appeals announced by the *Khalifa* of the time. She would always contribute to every appeal, however large or small her donation, in order to reap the blessings of such sacrifices. Indeed, in 1923 she excelled amongst the ladies of the Jama'at when an appeal was made to fund the building of a mosque in Berlin. For this project she contributed.1000. It was reminiscent of her mother, Hazrat Ammaa Jaan's exceptional sacrifice for the building of Minaratul-Masih in Qadian, an appeal personally launched by the Promised Messiah^{as} in 1900. At the time, the Promised Messiah^{as} appealed to 100 rupees individuals to contribute 100 rupees each. Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra} donated an impressive amount of 1,000 rupees for

³⁵⁰*Zakat* is a prescribed levy in Islam for the care of the poor and is one of the Pillars of Islam. *Chanda Aam* is a compulsory financial contribution of 1/16th of one's income

within the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community in Islam. *Lajna Aam* is a compulsory financial prescription to the Auxillary Ladies' organisation of *Lajna Ima'illah*. *Wasiyyat* is a blessed scheme initiated by the Promised Messiah^{as} (Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad) himself, in which the participant bequeaths between 1/10 and 1/3 of his income and property for the Jama'at throughout his lifetime and in his Will.

this project after selling some inherited property in Delhi³⁵¹. Indeed, Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra} had also contributed to the building of the Berlin mosque.

Due to a change in circumstances, the funds for this mosque were then redirected to Fazl Mosque London. This is a mosque which thousands of UK Lajna members and Nasirat enjoy to this day, and which had the honour of serving as the residence of Hazrat Khalifatul Masih V^{aba}, and before that of Hazrat Khalifatul Masih IV^{rh} for many years. Such commendable conduct in terms of the financial sacrifices of both Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra} and her daughter - Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} illustrates the fundamental role a mother plays in influencing the behaviour of her children.

Indeed, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum's financial sacrifices were also a testimony to her exalted lineage as the daughter of a blessed Prophet. In 1923, she was to make another significant financial contribution. When Hazrat Khalifatul Masih II^{ra} appealed for funds to help the untouchables in Malkana³⁵², she gave 200 rupees - a significant amount at that time.

In 1933, when an appeal was made by the Community Kitchen ("*Langar Khana*") to raise money for new pans for the *Jalsa Salana* (Annual Convention), Hazrat Nawab

³⁵¹Seerat-o-Swaaneh Hazrat Ammaa Jaan, Prof. S N Saeed, 2005, Lajna Ima'illah Lahore, p474.

³⁵²A Muslim Rajput Community found in the states of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. The Shuddi Movement of the Arya Samaj Sect aimed to reconvert this community to Hinduism in the 1920's which led to political tensions and violence.

Mubaraka Begum^{ra} presented one new pan as a gift.³⁵³ This was in line with the extraordinary sacrifices her father, the Promised Messiah^{as}, had made for the initial Annual Conventions of the Movement. The Promised Messiah^{as} had personally paid for the food for guests who came to such blessed events.

In March 1944, Hazrat Musleh Ma'ud made an important appeal to the Jama'at for 150,000 rupees for the Talimul Islam College. For this appeal, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} contributed another large sum of 500 rupees.³⁵⁴ In December 1944, when Huzoor requested Jama'at members to dedicate their inheritance to the Jama'at for the cause of the Ahmadiyya Movement, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} made a significant sacrifice from her property and assets to the Jama'at³⁵⁵.

One cannot help but pray for the elevation of the soul of such a person who appeared to do everything possible to serve the Jama'at. Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} was to also pay the 1/10 contribution from her earnings and property in accordance with the *Al-Wasiyyat* Scheme initiated by the Promised Messiah^{as}. This was despite the fact that it had been revealed to the Promised Messiah^{as} that the members of his immediate family had already been granted a place in "***Bahishti Maqbara***", the "***Heavenly Graveyard***"³⁵⁶, irrespective of whether they paid Chanda or the Wasiyyat prescription.

³⁵³Tareekh Lajna, Vol 1, p.316. (Taken from Seerat-o-Swaaneh Sayyeda Nawab Mubaraka Begum Sahiba, Prof S N Saeed, Lajna Ima'illah Lahore, 2001, p.378)

³⁵⁴ibid

³⁵⁵ibid

³⁵⁶<https://www.alislam.org/book/will/> (p.40, clause 20)

These are but a few examples of the financial sacrifices this virtuous lady was to make throughout her life. There were many more and no doubt countless donations which she made privately. Indeed, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} realised the importance of financial sacrifices to please her Creator. She was aware of how Allah the Almighty has stressed this to mankind in the Holy Qur'an with declarations such as:

“Never shall you attain to righteousness unless you spend out of that which you love.”³⁵⁷

³⁵⁷Holy Qur'an, Ch3:V93.

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum's Final Illness

Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} naturally grew weaker with age and had various minor ailments. It was not until 1975 when she suffered severe back pain that the onset of her final illness occurred; that which was decreed to take her away from this world. The pain spread to her legs, her blood circulation weakened and slowly her head and limbs were adversely affected. Other weaknesses and the inevitable consequence of old age affected her. Dr. Mirza Munawar Ahmad Sahib (her son-in-law and nephew), alongside his colleague Dr. Lateef Qureshi, laboured to relieve Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra}. They could only temporarily alleviate her pains and after February 1976, Begum Sahiba^{ra} became bedridden.

Her daughter-in-law Tayyaba Siddiqua Sahiba, the wife of Nawab Masood Ahmad Khan Sahib, then cared for her. Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} was reluctant to leave her house, "***Bait-ul-Zafar***", until her son persuaded her. Nawab Masood Ahmad Sahib was to also become unwell during that period. However, her daughter-in-law kept this and other worries away from her mother-in-law, who remained mentally alert. Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} lived with her son and daughter-in-law for approximately 16/17 months. Her daughter-in-law recollected that although Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} missed her home and was restless, even so, she never expressed this in the presence of visiting ladies.

As her health declined so did her memory and she began to increasingly recollect her blessed mother - Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra}. She would then attribute all her belongings to her mother. She accepted any food or drink only from the hands of her daughter-in-law, Tayyaba Siddiqua Sahiba. Her sister-in-law, Mahmuda Begum Sahiba paid tribute to Tayyaba Siddiqua Sahiba's care for her mother at this challenging time. At the time, her husband was also unwell. She would feed Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra}, administer her medicines and perform all her miscellaneous jobs.

Such care suggests that Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} had been an exemplary mother-in-law, who then aroused such devotion from a daughter-in-law. Her other daughter Asifa Begum Sahiba also witnessed her mother's dependence on Tayyaba Siddiqua Sahiba^{ra}:

“Our sister-in-law, Appa Tayyaba Siddiqua, fulfilled her duty to care for Umi Jaan. Indeed, it was ‘Tayyaba, Tayyaba’ that Umi Jaan would call out during her illness.”³⁵⁸

Mahmuda Begum Sahiba related that her mother's health slowly declined after the death of her beloved brother, Hazrat Khalifatul Masih II^{ra} in 1965. Her health then significantly deteriorated in the final 18 months of her blessed life. Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} lost her appetite, became restless and increasingly weak. She began missing her dearly departed relatives and frequently mentioned them as if old memories were vividly re-

³⁵⁸ “Seerat-o-Swaaneh Sayyeda Nawab Mubaraka Begum Sahiba”, Prof S N Saeed, Lajna Ima'illah Lahore, 2001, p274.

emerging. Hazrat Khalifatul Masih III^{rh} (her son-in-law) visited her whenever possible. If due to Jama'at commitments he was unable to attend for five or six days, Hazrat Begum Sahiba^{ra} would call for him as she would for her own daughter, the wife of Hazrat Khalifatul Masih III^{rh}, Mansoorah Begum Sahiba. Similarly, she greatly missed her youngest daughter, Asifa Begum Sahiba, whenever she returned to her home in Lahore. Likewise, she would make her daughter - Mahmuda Begum Sahiba - promise a swift return whenever she went home, although she visited her daily.

“Hazrat Choti Appa” (Hazrat Sayyeda Maryam Siddiqua), her sister-in-law, like Tayyaba Siddiqua Sahiba, also dedicated herself to the care of Hazrat Nawab Mubarakah Begum^{ra} at this difficult time. It was a blessing for Hazrat Nawab Mubarakah Begum^{ra} and proof of her lifelong virtue that all her close relatives wished to be with her as much as possible at this critical time.

It is heartwarming and poignant to learn that even during her final illness, Hazrat Nawab Mubarakah Begum^{ra} never lost her instinctive compassion and kindness for others. She remained unselfish until the end. Safia Begum Sahiba, the wife of Sheikh Mubarak Ahmad Sahib, recollected visiting her at this difficult time. Looking at Hazrat Nawab Mubarakah Begum^{ra} tears began to flow uncontrollably. As she lay there, the blessed patient beckoned Safia Begum Sahiba, embraced her and placed her face next to her own. Because of her weakness, she could barely speak but was able to ask, *“Whose wedding is it?”* Safia Begum responded that it was indeed her son's wedding. This illustrates how even in her final days, Hazrat Nawab Mubarakah Begum^{ra}

took an interest in others and continued her lifetime habit of thinking and praying for them.

In the last six weeks of her life, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} became feverish and slipped in and out of consciousness. Even at this final stage of her physical life, her deep faith was apparent as she constantly uttered *Tasbeeh* and *Durood Shareef*³⁵⁹ and sought Allah the Almighty's Forgiveness. She also offered many other prayers. When her fever subsided for 7 or 8 days due to her medication, she would intermittently speak when conscious. Then her fever became persistent as did her unconscious state. On May 22nd 1977 her fever intensified and her breathing became irregular. The Holy Qur'an was recited several times in her presence. Hazrat Khalifatul Masih III^{rh} remained all day alongside her close relatives. Around midnight, the Holy Qur'an was again recited and Huzoor^{rh} came and affectionately placed his hand upon his beloved aunt and mother-in-law. After a short while, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} departed this world to be reunited with her beloved Creator. ***To Allah we belong and to Him shall we return.***

The Funeral Prayer

The funeral prayer was scheduled for 6 pm the following day. Before the burial, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum's blessed body was visited by thousands of devoted ladies, each desiring a final glimpse of her; most of them felt that they had personally known this virtuous lady.

³⁵⁹Glorification of God and invocations for the Holy Prophet^{sa}

People travelled from far afield and gathered in thousands on the streets outside the home of Nawab Masood Ahmad Khan Sahib. Once Huzoor^{ra} arrived at the home of Nawab Masood Ahmad Sahib, family members of both the Promised Messiah^{as} and Hazrat Nawab Muhammad Ali Khan Sahib^{ra} carried the coffin in a funeral procession. The coffin itself was put on a wooden frame so that as many family members as possible could have the honour and opportunity to carry the box on their shoulders to the “*Heavenly Graveyard*” (***Bahishti Maqbara***). Hazrat Khalifatul Masih IIIth also carried the coffin. A procession of thousands of prayerful mourners followed the coffin bearers in what must have been an incredibly unique and emotional scene; a scene of a grieving town brought to a standstill. In ***Bahishti Maqbara***, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum’s body joined the graves of her blessed mother Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra} and her brother – Hazrat Khalifatul Masih II^{ra}. May Allah the Almighty be pleased with them all. Ameen

Throughout her life, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} had fulfilled the divine revelation that she would be a lady “**raised**” amongst the “**ornaments**” of virtue alongside the physical gems of this world. She was to be one of the first believing women to fortify the foundations of Ahmadiyyat. She left behind both physical and spiritual progenies who continue to support the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community today. By the Grace of Allah the Almighty, this blessed Movement continues to grow from strength to strength. It has now spread beyond a humble, Indian village to over 200 countries worldwide.

Top Tips from Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra}

- Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} related that as a child, her father, the Promised Messiah^{as}, would advise her to pray whenever she awoke at night and turned over in bed.
- Like her mother, Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra}, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} stressed the importance of meeting people with the Islamic greeting of peace ***“Assalammo Alaikum.”*** On one occasion, she made her youngest daughter, Asifa Begum Sahiba, re-enter their company from quite a distance and bid ***“Salam”*** because she had not done so on her first arrival.
- Like her mother Hazrat Ammaa Jaan^{ra}, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} believed that focussing on the good moral upbringing of the eldest child in a family is important. This child positively influences younger siblings.
- Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} allowed her children to play with their friends anywhere in the house. However, she forbade them from closing the door of a room whilst playing. She advised her own children to do the same with their children. She reflected that bad actions are more likely to occur in a hidden environment.
- Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} advised children never to keep secrets from their parents. She also

guided them that even if a playmate insisted that they keep a secret from their parents, they should not. If some matter troubled their minds and they did not wish to convey it to their parents, then it was most likely to be a sin and should be avoided.

- Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} related that her father, the Promised Messiah^{as} forbade her older brothers from going out in the evenings after Maghrib and Isha Prayers.³⁶⁰
- Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} recollected that on one occasion, the Promised Messiah^{as} made her break her fast when she was around 10 years old. He advised her not to fast at that young age because she was physically weaker.³⁶¹ This incident suggests that young children should not be permitted to observe fasts.
- Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} encouraged her daughters and nieces to sew and learn this skill by buying them fragments of cloth to make miniature clothes for their dolls.
- Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} always presented herself in a clean and tidy manner. She advised the children of her family to also do so. Her granddaughter, Amatul Shakoor Sahiba, related that her grandmother encouraged her to maintain a smiling and pleasant countenance rather than an angry expression on her face.

³⁶⁰The Islamic Prayer immediately after sunset and the late evening Prayer.

³⁶¹*Tehriraat-e-Mubaraka*, Lajna Ima'illah Pakistan, Zia-ul-Islam Press, p.228.

- Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} would read the Holy Qur'an regularly. If she did not initially understand a verse, she would repeatedly read and reflect upon it until she did. She would also regularly read religious books and always had one by her bedside. She would read a few pages of such a book, before she read something else for leisure.³⁶²
- Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} advised Lajna that they should take care when providing food for their Ahmadi brothers and sisters as charity. They should ensure that they do not injure the self-respect of the people they are helping.
- Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} advised Lajna to donate items of clothing, jewellery, accessories etc. according to their means, whilst they shop for their own daughter's weddings. This was to assist the girls of less affluent families at the time of their marriages.

³⁶²*Mubaraka Kee Kahani Mubaraka Kee Zabani*, Amatul Shakoor, Islam International Publications Ltd, 2008, p107.

Tributes from the Khulafa

On May 27th, 1977, a few days after the passing of Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} her nephew and son-in-law, Hazrat Khalifatul Masih III^{rh}, was to highlight the distinctive qualities of this blessed *“mo’mina”*, the daughter of the Promised Messiah^{as} in his Friday Sermon.

He said that his aunt had enjoyed a unique and elevated status. She had offered prayers abundantly and was a constant pillar of support for the multitude of people who wrote to her. She would supplicate for all such individuals. She had no ego. Huzoor^{rh} related that there were such people who would not have even witnessed 1/1000th proportion of the true dreams that his *“Phuphi Jaan”* had experienced and yet they considered themselves very godly. Even so, his aunt did not ever consider herself anything special. She was of the attitude that it was no skill on her part but Allah the Almighty’s blessing. She believed that if Allah the Almighty accepted one’s prayers and showed a person true dreams and visions, then it was purely His blessings upon an individual.

Huzoor’s^{rh} *Phuphi Jaan* had experienced clear dreams from her childhood. Hazrat Khalifatul Masih III^{rh} related an example of the splendid and extraordinary dreams Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} witnessed, such as dreams where she had the blessed opportunity to witness the Holy Prophet^{sa}. Yet, there was never a trace of pride in her character. Explaining the reason for this phenomenon, Huzoor^{rh} remarked that his aunt truly understood the

concept of ***“Alaisallaho bekaafin abdohu”*** (i.e. ***“Surely God is enough for His servant”***) and desired to be one of those servants of Allah Almighty for whom He Alone is truly sufficient.

He continued:

“Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} was an example for men and women and she was an excellent one. We are the worshippers of the One and Only God and it is the duty of every Ahmadi woman and every Ahmadi man to follow her example.”³⁶³

A fortnight later in the Friday Sermon of June 1977, Huzoor^{rh} continued to express the special distinction of this virtuous mo'minah which was acknowledged by the Promised Messiah^{as} himself:

“Hazrat Masih Ma'ud^{ra} said: ‘This child of mine sees many dreams, so many of these dreams prove true.’”

Hazrat Khalifatul Masih III^{rh} continued,

“Now reflect, as this is indeed the splendour of ‘Rahmaniyyat’ (i.e. Divine Grace). Hazrat Masih Ma'ud^{as} was the witness concerning such a young

³⁶³*Tarikhi Lajna*, Vol.4, pp496-498. (Taken from *Seerat-o-Swaaneh Sayyeda Nawab Mubaraka Begum Sahiba*, Prof S N Saeed, Lajna Ima'illah Lahore, 2001, p.430)

girl, on whom maybe Salat was not even compulsory yet and Fasts were not obligatory. There was no question of Hajj or Zakat (being obligatory), and yet Allah the Almighty's treatment of her was such that He showed her manifestations of His Power abundantly and gifted her with true dreams...

God the Gracious manifested this splendour because of which worship? God manifested His splendour as a consequence of which sacrifice, as she became the recipient of many true dreams at such a young age? Then, throughout her life, God Almighty treated her with love, affection, blessings and mercy. And she never considered these things the consequence of one of her own good qualities. In fact, after every blessing of Allah the Almighty, she always felt in her heart that it was not the result of any good personal quality. In fact, after every blessing of Allah Almighty, she did not feel it was due to a quality of hers, rather it was something bestowed by God Almighty Himself."³⁶⁴

³⁶⁴ibid, taken from *Al Fazl*, 29 June 1977, p.3, *Tareekh Lajna* Vol.4, p.500.



Hazrat Khalifatul Masih IV^{rh}(1928-2003)

Hazrat Khalifatul Masih IV^{rh} was to continue mentioning the divine favour upon Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} as the recipient of true dreams. Whilst addressing the Lajna at the UK Annual Convention in 1993 he said:

“It was not only upon the Promised Messiah^{as} that the revelations, visions and dreams of Allah the Almighty descended. As a consequence of his cascading spirituality, Allah the Almighty also had a connection with the ladies of Jama’at Ahmadiyya.”³⁶⁵

He then presented two dreams of Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra}. In one dream, Hazrat Khalifatul Masih I^{ra} told Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} that in a book of revelations he possessed it said: ***“I am Abu Bakr”*** concerning himself. In the other dream, a companion of the Promised Messiah^{as}, Hazrat Maulvi Abdul Karim Sahib^{ra}, said to the young Mubaraka^{ra}:

“Bibi, call your Father. Huzeer (i.e., the Holy Prophet^{sa}) and his Companions are calling him.”³⁶⁶

Huzeer^{rh} also made the point that the Promised Messiah^{as} would request Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} to pray for certain tasks of his. He wished to instil the firm belief in

³⁶⁵Seerat-o-Swaanah Sayyeda Nawab Mubaraka Begum Sahiba – Prof. S N Saeed, Lajna Ima’illah Lahore, 2001, p.431.

³⁶⁶ibid

his daughter that she could have a living connection with God. The virtuous and noble life of Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} was to illustrate that he did indeed succeed in this objective.

Yet, Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum's most distinguished quality as explained by Hazrat Musleh Ma'ud^{ra} - the Promised Son, the Second Khalifa of the Jama'at and her elder brother - was that she was the recipient of blessings due to the proximity she had to a Prophet. She had a special distinction of being a Companion of the Promised Messiah^{as}. Hazrat Musleh Ma'ud^{ra} explained the unique, exalted position of such individuals:

“Those people who had the honour of serving the Promised Messiah^{as} since the early years were such individuals who became a kind of amulet and means of protection for the world...It is Allah the Almighty's Law, that something which is close to a blessed thing can also partake of the blessings which that thing is honoured with...In this way, there is a Prophet of God, he is His Prophet, but those who keep in contact with him: hiswives, his children, his daughters, his friends, his relatives - all such people partake of the blessings. Those who attach themselves to a Prophet, those people are a beautiful protection from Allah the Almighty; because of them the world is protected from many evils and catastrophes.”³⁶⁷

³⁶⁷ibid p.432, taken from Ashaab-e-Ahmad , Vol. 2, pp13-14

Sadly, this blessed individual is no longer present in this earthly world to help us against such evils and disasters. However, blessings are not exclusive to certain individuals and we too can enjoy them by following in the footsteps of Hazrat Nawab Mubarak Begum^{ra}. How? By worshipping our Creator as she did, by following the practices of the Holy Prophet of Islam^{sa}, by obeying Allah the Almighty's Khulafa and by serving humanity. May Allah the Almighty enable us to win His pleasure and may He grant Hazrat Nawab Mubarak Begum^{ra} her desire to live amongst her parents once again, her virtuous husband and her righteous siblings in Paradise. May we learn to **"Trust in Allah"**³⁶⁸ and depend only upon Him as Hazrat Nawab Mubarak Begum^{ra} did throughout her life.

فضل خدا کا سایہ ہم پر رہے ہمیشہ

ہر دن چڑھے مبارک ہر شب بخیر گزرے

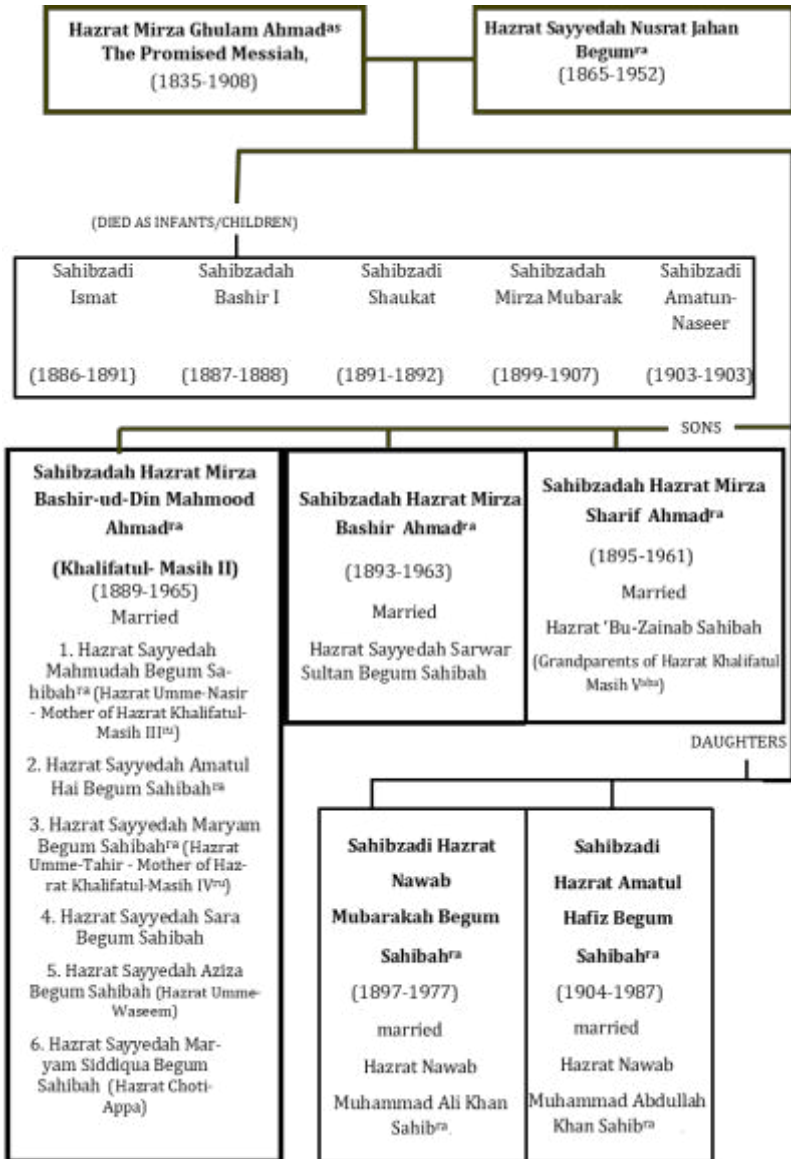
May the Shelter of Allah's Blessing remain on us

May every day begin felicitous always and may every night pass safely³⁶⁹

³⁶⁸Seerat-o-Swaaneh Sayyeda Nawab Mubarak Begum Sahiba – Prof. S N Saeed, Lajna Ima'illah Lahore, 2001, p58.

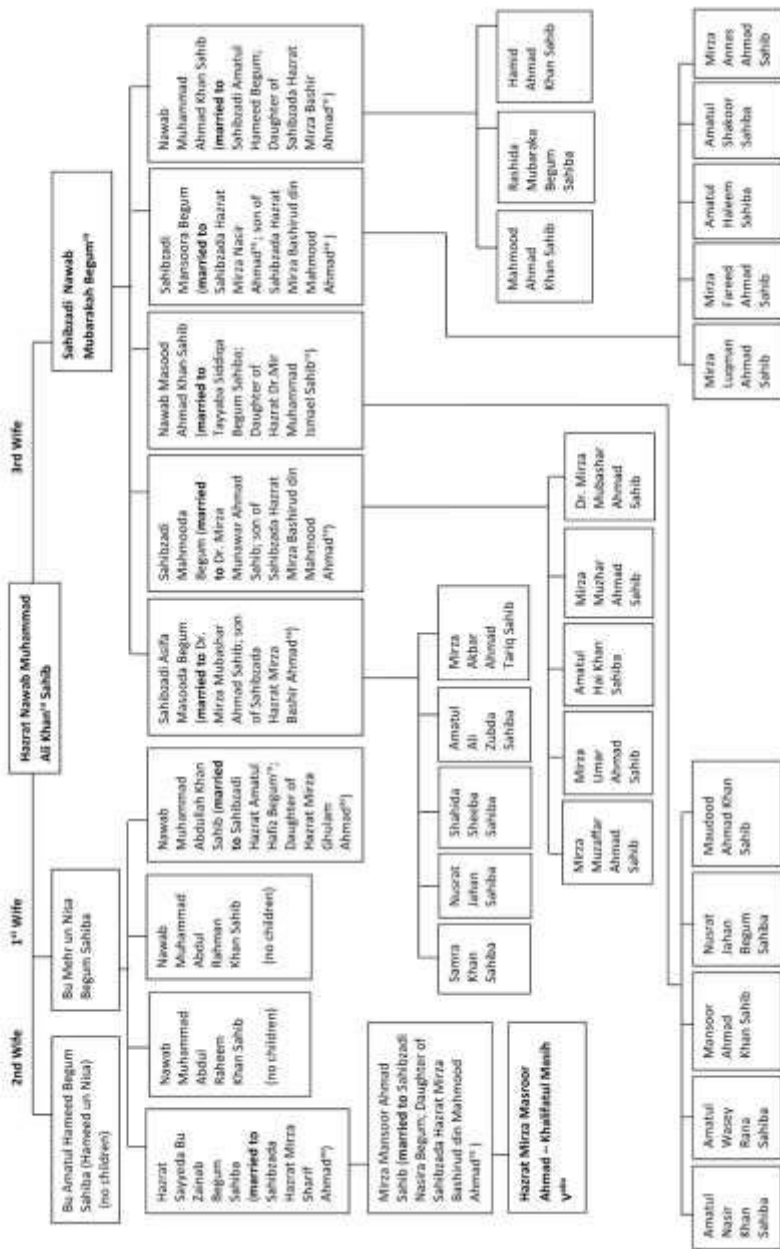
³⁶⁹Seerat-o-Swaaneh Sayyeda Nawab Mubarak Begum Sahiba – Prof. S N Saeed, Lajna Ima'illah Lahore, 2001, p.126.

**Appendix I: The Children of the Promised Messiah^{as}
(Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad)**

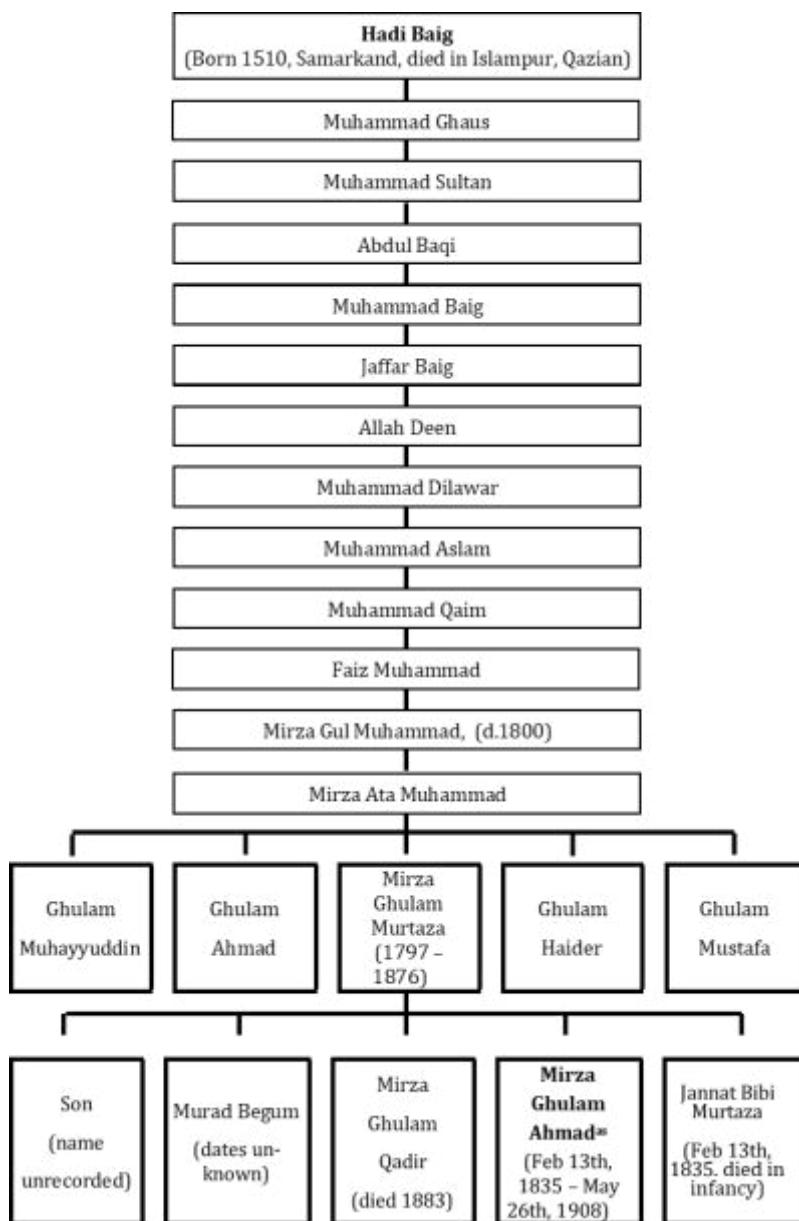


THE PROGENY OF SAHIBZADI HAZRAT NAWAB MUBARAKAH BEGUM**

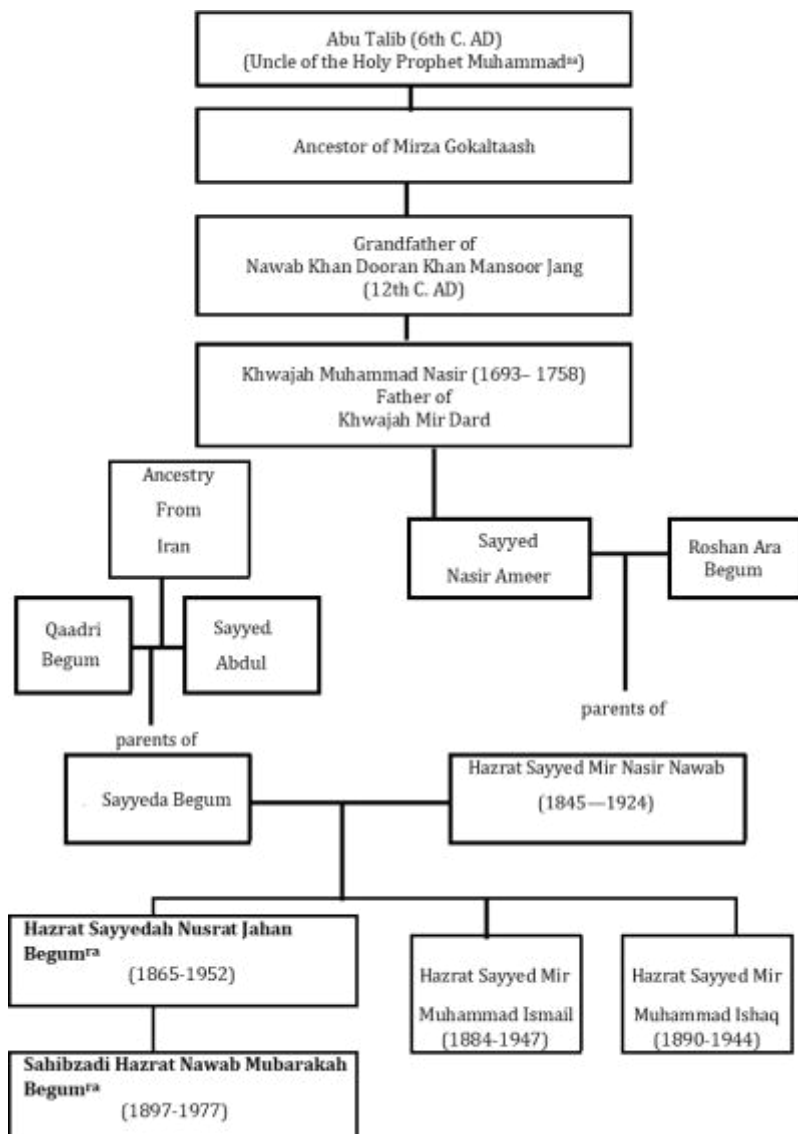
(simplified)



Appendix III: The Paternal Ancestry of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as} - The Promised Messiah(Father of Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra})



Appendix IV: The Ancestry of Hazrat Nusrat Jahan Begum^{ra} -Mother of Hazrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum^{ra} (simplified)



Glossary

Allah - Allah is the personal name of God in Islam. To show proper reverence to Him, Muslims often affix it with ta'ala, meaning "The Most High" or "The Almighty".

Ahmadi - a member of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community

Ameen - "May Allah make it so".

Assalamo alaikum - "Peace be on you". An Islamic salutation.

Begum - a term of respect for a woman. The English equivalent would be "Mrs" or "Madam".

Eid - a Muslim feast day; Islamic celebration at the end of Ramadhan and at the conclusion of pilgrimage.

Hadith - a saying of the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{sa}. The plural is ahadith. **Hazrat** - a term of respect used for a person of established righteousness and piety.

Holy Prophet^{sa} - a term used exclusively for Hazrat Muhammad^{sa}, the Prophet of Islam.

Holy Quran - The book sent by Allah for the guidance of mankind. It was revealed to the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{sa} in Arabia, in the 7th century AD.

Huzur - Your holiness; his holiness.

Insha'Allah - an arabic term meaning "God-willing".

Jalsa (Jalsa)-Salana - a convention or gathering, (annual).

Jama'at - Literally means community. In this book it specifically refers to the Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama'at.

Khalifatul Masih - Ahmadi Muslims refer to each successor of the Promised Messiah - Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as}, as khalifatul Masih. "Khalifa" in arabic means "successor" and Khulafa' is the plural of this.

Mahdi- "The guided one". This is the title given by the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{sa} for the awaited reformer of the latter days. Ahmadi Muslims believe this person

to have been Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as} (1835-1908).

Maulvi (Maulavi) - Religious teacher/Imam

Mian - A term of respect for a male.

Mo'min/Mo'minah - A Quranic term meaning a true believer/one of

faith

Nafl (Nawafil) - Voluntary prayers that a Muslim may offer apart from the 5 prescribed daily prayers.

Nikah - The public announcement of marriage in Islam.

(The) Promised Messiah - This term refers to the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama'at, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as} of Qadian. He claimed that he had been sent by Allah in accordance with the prophecies of the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{sa}, concerning the coming of *al-Imam*, *al-Mahdi* and the Messiah from amongst the Muslims.

Purdah - The Quranic injunction for Muslim women to cover their head and bodies with an outer covering, amongst all men outside their immediate family. (See Holy Qur'an, Ch24:V32)

Sahib - A term of respect for a man, the English equivalent being "Mr" or "Sir".

Sahiba - A term of respect used for a lady.

Sahibzada - A term of respect for the male progeny of a holy person.

Sahibzadi - A term of respect for the female progeny of a holy person.

Salat - The prescribed prayers for a Muslim.

Shirk - Associating partners with Allah. (idolatry)

Sunnah - Traditions/practice of the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{sa}

Tahajjud – A voluntary prayer of great merit offered in the latter part of the night.

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The Life & Character of
HAZRAT NAWAB
MUBARAKAH BEGUM^{RA}

Hazrat Nawab Mubarakah Begum^{ra} (1897-1977) had the distinction of being the daughter of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad^{as} (1835-1908), the Promised Messiah and Mahdi, and Hazrat Sayyedah Nusrat Jahan Begum^{ra}. Hazrat Nawab Mubarakah Begum^{ra} enjoyed the inimitable privilege to spend the first 11 years of her life in the blessed company of her father, the Promised Messiah^{as}.

She was an incredibly devout lady, who was blessed with many true dreams and spiritual insights from childhood. Her piety, keen intellect and poetic flair were recognised by those who met her. She was one of the “felicitous women” to fill the household of the Promised Messiah^{as} in accordance with divine revelation.

Hazrat Nawab Mubarakah Begum^{ra} was an exemplary Ahmadi Muslim as a daughter, wife, mother and spiritual guide. She was obedient to Khilafat throughout her life and she demonstrated how prayer and a trust in Allah the Almighty are the keys to success. Truly, she is a timeless role model for everyone.