

Chapter: 17

أَوَّلُ خَاتِمٍ

The good names **أَوَّلُ** (The First) and **خَاتِمٍ** (The Last) of Muhammad (PBUH) may be explained by a hadith in which the Noble Prophet said that "I was characterized by **خاتم النبیین** (The Last of the Prophets) even before the creation of Adam. It is narrated by Hazrat Arbaz bin Sariya that the Noble Prophet (PBUH) said:

"I was with Almighty God (even that time)

I was the **Last of the Prophets** in Umm Al-Kitab (لوح محفوظ), when Adam was still in the form of soil dust before his creation."

With reference to this hadith, the famous Sufi scholar Sheikh Mohiuddin Ibn Arabi says in his book "Fusoos al-Hakam", that:

"The specialty of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) is his **individuality**. Because he is the **most perfect person** of this human race. Therefore, in fact, the Prophecy began with him and ended with him. He was a Prophet and Adam was still in the process of formation. Then (he) is the Last of the Prophets in terms of his arrival to this Material World".

Thus, in terms of creation, the Almighty God made Muhammad Mustafa (PBUH) the "**First of the Prophets**", and after that, in terms of appearance in this world, he was declared as the "**Last of the Prophets**". In other words, he was given the highest priority for giving the Prophecy, but in the manifestation of the Prophethood he was positioned as the Last of all the Prophets. So that all the virtues and perfections of the **First and the Last** may be integrated in his base of the Prophethood.

خاتم means the Last or the End. It also has a meaning of seal, and the seal is placed at the end of the letter for authentication. Some people even deduce the meaning of this word as **افضل** (Superior). Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) is indeed **the Best of the Prophets**, but he is also the **Last of the Prophets**. It is not appropriate to take only the meaning of the "Best prophecy" and deny to the "Last prophecy".

The Noble Prophet (PBUH) himself states this distinction of being the **Last of the Prophets** as follows:

"My resemblance in comparison with the other prophets is that of a man who has built a house completely and excellently, except leaving a place of one brick.

People used to be surprised and say, it would have been better if there was no space for this brick.

I am that brick, and I am the Last of the Prophets.

(Sahih al-Bukhari, Hadiths 3293 and 3294,

Narrated by Jabir bin 'Abdullah and Abu Hurairah)

The Holy Quran says:

إِنَّ الدِّينَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ الْإِسْلَامُ

{Indeed the only true religion in the sight of Allah is Islam (03:19)}

From this Holy Verse and the Hadith mentioned above, it is clear that all the religions that have come so far have been Islam. The Almighty God continued to issue

orders to each of His Prophets according to the needs of the time. And whatever all the Prophets used to present to the people, in the name of religion and Sharia, all were from Allah. The Prophets only do and say that thing what they are commanded.

وَمَا يَنْطِقُ عَنِ الْهَوَىٰ . إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا وَحْيٌ يُوحَىٰ

{And he does not say anything by his own desire.

It is but a divine revelation, which is revealed to him (53:03,04)}

It is narrated by Jabir ibn 'Abdullah in Hadith 326 of Sahih al-Bukhari that the Noble Prophet said that every prophet is a Messenger for a particular nation, but I am a Messenger for all mankind. So now Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) has been sent as a Prophet/Messenger, not for any particular nation, but for all human beings, and till the Last Hour. In the Holy Quran, the Almighty God says:

مَا كَانَ مُحَمَّدٌ أَبَا أَحَدٍ مِّن رِّجَالِكُمْ وَلَكِن رَّسُولَ اللَّهِ وَخَاتَمَ النَّبِيِّينَ

{Muhammad (PBUH) is not the father of any man among you, but he is the Noble Messenger of Allah and the Last of the Prophets (33:40)}

This religion of Allah has been completed on Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). The Noble Prophet is given a perfect religion which is now sufficient for all the mankind. Therefore, there is no more need for any other religion. The only perfect religion is "Islam". In the Verse revealed on the occasion of the Last Pilgrimage, the Almighty God declares that:

الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتْمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي وَرَضِيْتُ لَكُمُ الْإِسْلَامَ دِينًا

{This day I have perfected your religion for you and completed My favor upon you and have chosen Islam as your religion (05:03)}

The Sharia of the Noble Prophet (PBUH) abrogated all the earlier Sharias before him. Now only the "Sharia of Muhammad" will be followed. Allah Almighty has given us a book which is a complete system of life for us. This

Quran will remain in its original form till the end of this world, because Allah has taken the responsibility of its preservation on His own hand. In connection with the protection of Quran Allah says:

إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا الذِّكْرَ وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَحَافِظُونَ

{Indeed We have sent down the Quran and indeed We ourselves surely are its Guardian (15:09)}

Along with this proclamation of the completion of the religion, the promise of protection of the Quran by the Almighty God indicates to us that this nation no longer needs any further "Prophethood". Thus, this chain of Prophethood has also been terminated on the Noble Prophet (PBUH). The following hadith narrated by Anas bin Malik, which is recorded in Tirmizi, confirms this point that:

إِنَّ الرِّسَالَةَ وَالنَّبُوءَةَ قَدْ انْقَطَعَتْ فَلَا رَسُولَ بَعْدِي وَلَا نَبِيٍّ

{ Now Prophecy and Prophethood have been terminated, so no Messenger or Prophet will come after me}

There are many Verses in the Quran which support the doctrine of the end of the Prophethood. Muhammad Mustafa (PBUH) is "خاتم النبيين" (the Last of the Prophets) and he is given this name and this place by the Holy Quran. Therefore, we all must have faith in this **End of Prophecy**.

نبوت ختم ہے تجھ پر، رسالت ختم ہے تجھ پر
ترادیں ارفع و اعلیٰ، شریعت ختم ہے تجھ پر

{The Prophecy is ended on you, the Apostleship is terminated on you
Your religion is high and lofty, the Sharia is over on you}