

Thematic exploration of *naat* in Urdu literature, focusing on love and devotion to Allah's Messenger (PBUH)

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Abstract

This article delves into the thematic aspects of *naat* poetry within Urdu literature, focusing on the expressions of love and devotion directed toward Allah's Messenger (PBUH). *Naat*, which refers to poetry that extols the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), occupies an important position in the cultural and literary heritage of Urdu. The study traces the historical roots of *naat*, emphasizing the influence of early poets inspired by Sufi mysticism and their contributions to the development of this genre. It analyzes the various themes found in *naat* poetry, including the Prophet's virtues, character, moral principles, and key historical events. Furthermore, the article explores the relationship between love for the Prophet (PBUH) and the adherence to his teachings, questioning whether contemporary *naat* successfully maintains a balance between these elements. Notable poets such as Mir Taqi Mir, Ghalib, and Iqbal are examined for their roles in *naat* literature. Ultimately, the study seeks to shed light on the ongoing significance and evolving themes of *naat* poetry within the Urdu literary tradition.

Introduction

The term "*naat*", which refers to poetry composed in praise of Allah's Messenger (PBUH), has become so widely recognised that its meaning requires no further explanation; the mere mention of "*naat*" conveys its significance. Nonetheless, linguists and scholars have offered definitions to further elucidate its meaning.

In *Farhang-e-Asifiya*, the term *naat* is defined as follows: "*Naat* (a feminine noun) denotes attributes

and praise, admiration and commendation, and approbation. Metaphorically, it is particularly associated with the praise of the Lord of the Messengers and the Mercy for all worlds."¹

Urdu poetry, like other languages, holds a significant place in the tradition of composing verses in praise of the Prophet (PBUH). Urdu poets have established a unique and enduring identity in this genre. As noted by Mawlana Sayyid Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi, "The composition of poetry in praise of the Messenger (PBUH), along with expressions of love for him and devotion to Medina, have been the favourite themes among Indian poets. Following Persian, the finest and most impactful *naats* are found in the Urdu literary tradition."²

The central focus of *naat* poetry is the glorification of the Holy Prophet (PBUH). However, this focus extends to encompass a wide range of themes, including his conduct, character, exemplary behaviour and noble virtues. A thematic analysis of *naat* poetry, from its historical origins to the present, reveals a significant diversity of subjects. Certain verses emphasise the Prophet's (PBUH) blessed personality, pure life, and commendable traits, while others concentrate on capturing the essence of his noble character, teachings and sayings.

In his dissertation, Dr Riaz Majid explores the themes of *naat* poetry, observing that "while determining the theme of *naat* appears to be straightforward—primarily the praise of the Messenger of Allah (PBHU)—a closer examination of it in Arabic, Persian and Urdu reveals a grandeur and breadth. While "*madh*" (meaning "praise") is undoubtedly a central theme in *naat* and has been integral to its form since its inception, formal *naat* writing in Arabic emerged as Muslim poets fervently defended the Prophet against the mockery and insults from the disbelievers in Mecca. Consequently, *naat* as a genre evolved from this linguistic struggle. The panegyric poems composed by the Prophet's Companions, which praised his noble

¹ Dehlavi, Syed Ahmad, (2010). *Farhang-e-Asifiya*, Lahore, Urdu Science Board, p. 579.

² Nadawi, Abul Hasan Ali, (s.n.), *Karwan-e-Madina*, Nadwa, Idara Tahqiqat wa Nashriyat-e-Islam, p. 176.

lineage, exemplary character and virtuous qualities while denouncing the unbelievers, are considered among the earliest examples of Arabic poetry".³

During the Prophetic era, the thematic scope of *naat* poetry was somewhat limited due to the absence of a well-established tradition of *naat* composition; poets of that period predominantly focused on extolling the noble character and personal attributes of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). In contrast, contemporary *naat* poetry has evolved to encompass a much broader thematic range. It now addresses a variety of subjects, including the Prophet's (PBUH) virtues, moral values, characteristics, etiquette, acts of worship, ascetic practices, and his efforts in promoting and disseminating Islam. Additionally, themes related to his migration, battles, and other historical events are also explored. Central motifs in *naat* poetry include expressions of love for the Prophet (PBUH), obedience to him, descriptions of his attributes and the miracles attributed to him. This article aims to provide a thematic analysis of *naat* poetry within the context of Urdu literature.

The origins of *naat* poetry in Urdu literature can be traced back to the arrival of Sufi mystics in the Indian subcontinent, who sought to invite Hindus to Islam by promoting reverence for the Almighty and for the Prophet of Islam (PBUH). Among these early saints, Shaykh Fariduddin Ganj Shakar (d. 1265 CE) is widely regarded as the first Sufi poet, with early forms of Urdu poetry found in his works. Following him, the poetry of Banda Nawaz Gesu Daraz (d. 1422 CE) also features early manifestations of Urdu *naat* verses.⁴

Among the early *naat* poets of the Indian subcontinent, prominent figures such as Mir Taqi Mir (d. 1810), Momin (d. 1851), Zauq (d. 1854), and Ghalib (d. 1869) stand out. As the genre evolved, other notable poets who have significantly contributed to *naat* literature include Mohsin Kakori (d. 1905), Hasan Raza

³ Riyaz Majid, Dr, (1980). *Urdu Naat* (research thesis for PhD), Urdu Department, Punjab University Lahore, p. 73.

⁴ Malisiani, Gohar, (2013). *Asr-e-Hazir ke Naat Go*, Lahore, Kitab Saraay, p. 45.

Barelvi (d. 1908), Josh Malihabadi (d. 1982), Hafiz Jalandhari (d. 1982), Faiz Ahmed Faiz (d. 1984) and Qateel Shifai (d. 2001).

In the context of Islamic teachings, it is evident that love for the Prophet (PBUH) and obedience to him are interrelated concepts that reinforce one another. However, it is crucial to analyse the balance between these themes within *naat* literature. This article will investigate whether *naat* poetry effectively promotes a harmonious relationship between love for the Prophet (PBUH) and adherence to his teachings. Do some poets primarily focus on the expression of love for the Prophet (PBUH) in their compositions, potentially neglecting the significance of following his example? Conversely, is there a tendency among certain poets to inadequately address the love of the Prophet (PBUH)? This study will analyse the works of notable *naat* poets, including Mirza Ali Lutfi (d. 1814), Mawlana Ahmad Raza Khan Barelvi (d. 1921), Sayyid Bidam Warisi (d. 1936), Allama Iqbal (d. 1938), Hafiz Mazharuddin Mazhar (d. 1981), Sufi Afzal Faqir (d. 1994), Iqbal Azeem (d. 2000), Bechain Rajpuri (d. 2001), Sayyid Wahid al-Hasan Hashmi (d. 2001), Hafiz Taib (d. 2004), Sayyid Nasiruddin (d. 2009) and Muzaffar Warisi (d. 2011). The examination will focus on how these poets address with the themes of love and obedience, exploring the interplay between these concepts in their poetry.

Keywords: *naat*, poetry, poets, Qur'an, themes

Necessity and Significance

Islamic teachings place great emphasis on following the Messenger of Allah (PBUH). His conduct, known as the Sunnah, serves as the cornerstone of religious teachings. Historically, poets and literary figures have highlighted the themes of love for the Prophet (PBUH) and adherence to his Sunnah in their *naat* poetry.

However, an essential question arises regarding the relationship between love and obedience to the Prophet (PBUH) in the themes of *naat* across different eras. Have the literary figures of each era maintained a balanced approach in nurturing love for and obedience to the Prophet (PBUH)? While some poets evoke

feelings of love for the Prophet (PBUH), their verses may lack the element of obedience to him. Conversely, there are poets who emphasise the importance of following the Prophet (PBUH) and emulating his character, yet their compositions may lack genuine love for him. The present article aims to explore and analyse this delicate balance.

In contemporary society, gatherings dedicated to *naat* hold substantial significance in promoting adherence to the Prophet (PBUH) and nurturing love for him. These gatherings serve as platforms through which Muslims are educated about these concepts in poetic form. However, there is a growing concern about their effectiveness. A primary reason may be the prevalence of *naat* poetry that expresses love for the Prophet (PBUH) while failing to emphasise the need to obey him. It is crucial to assess the balance between love and obedience in *naat* poetry across different historical periods. This evaluation will explore how such poetry has often fallen short in inspiring genuine feelings of both love and obedience. Additionally, it will offer recommendations aimed at reinforcing these authentic sentiments within the community by encouraging *naat* poetry that strikes this balance, ultimately contributing to the improvement of moral character.

Fundamental Questions of the Topic

1. What is the significance and status of *naat* poetry within the context of religious literature?
2. What are the central themes of *naat* poetry?
3. How is the balance between adherence to the Prophet (PBUH) and love for him reflected in the themes of *naat* poetry?
4. What are the broader implications of the interplay and balance of these themes on religious literature and society as a whole?

Review of Previous Research

Significant research has been conducted on various aspects of Urdu *naat* and the works of different poets.

Notable contributions include:

- Dr Riaz Majid wrote a PhD dissertation titled "*Urdu Naat*"⁵ at the Urdu Department, Punjab University Lahore, in 1980, discussing the beginning, evolution, and thematic analysis of Urdu *naat*.
- Professor Dr Muhammad Shoaib authored a research paper titled "*Islamic Naat Poetry and Shah Waliullah*"⁶ to document the thoughts of Shah Waliullah regarding Islamic *naat* poetry, which was later published as a book.
- Dr Muhammad Ishaq Qurayshi published a research paper in 2002 titled "*Arabic Naat Poetry in the Subcontinent*,"⁷ published by the Centre for Ma'arif Awliya, Department of Auqaf.
- Dr Abdul Naeem Azizi authored a research paper titled "*Urdu Naat Poetry and Fazil Barelvi*," which elucidates the scholarly insights of Mawlana Ahmad Raza Khan Barelvi within the context of Urdu *naat* poetry.

Sabih Rahmani wrote a paper titled "Dr Aziz Ahsan and Studies of *Hamd* and *Naat*,"⁸ which was published in 2015 by the *Naat* Research Centre in Karachi.

- Dr Shabbir Ahmad Qadri authored a research paper titled "the Perspective of Scholars on *Naat Rang*,"⁹ published in 2009 by the Naat Research Centre, Karachi.

⁵ Riyaz Majid, Dr, (1980). *Urdu Naat, Tahqiqi Maqala Baraye PhD*, Urdu Department, Punjab University Lahore.

⁶ Muhammad Shoaib, (1991). *Islamic Naatia Shairi aur Shah Waliullah*, Lahore, Shah Waliullah Academy.

⁷ Qurayshi, Muhammad Ishaq, Dr, (2002). *Arabic Naat Poetry in the Subcontinent*, Lahore, Centre for Ma'arif Awliya, Department of Auqaf.

⁸ Rahmani, Sabih (2015). *Dr Aziz Ahsan and Studies of Hamd and Naat*, Karachi, Naat Research Centre.

⁹ Qadri, Shabbir Ahmad, Dr, (2009). *the Perspective of Scholars on Naat Rang*, Karachi, Naat Research Centre.

- Shamsi Muhammad Haydar wrote a research thesis titled "A Critical Review of Important *Naat* Poets in Urdu"¹⁰ for his MA in Urdu at the University of Mumbai in 2022, where he critically examined the *naat* poetry of Mohsin Kakuri, Amir Minai, Altaf Husayn Hali, Mawlana Ahmad Raza Khan Bareilvi and Shaur Azmi.
- Gohar Malsiani authored the book "Contemporary *Naat* Poets,"¹¹ which discusses the meaning and significance of *naat*, its place within poetic genres, the gradual development of Urdu *naat*, and selected verses from chosen poets along with their interpretations. This book was first published in 1983 by Kitab Saray from Lahore.
- Dr Muhammad Ismail Azad Fatehpuri wrote the book "*Naat* in Urdu Poetry (from the Beginning up to the time of Mohsin),"¹² wherein he discusses the origins and evolution of *naat* poetry, highlighting selected works of poets of various eras and providing interpretations. This book was first published in 1992 by the Naat Research Centre in Karachi.
- Dr Khalifa Abdul Hakim authored a book titled "Iqbal's Thought," which explores various aspects of Allama Iqbal's *naat* poetry. This work was published in 1993 by Azhar Sons, Lahore.
- Khalid Ali Ansari wrote the book "Thematic Selection of Urdu *Naat* Poetry,"¹³ which delineates various themes in *naat* literature.
- Dr Matahir Shah, Dr Nahid Akhtar, and Tariq Rashid published a research article titled "The Praise of the Prophet (PBUH): An Overview of Understanding, Thematic Distribution and Creative

¹⁰ Shamsi, Muhammad Haydar, (2022). A Critical Review of Important Naat Poets in Urdu, Urdu Department, Mumbai University, India.

¹¹ Malsiani, Gohar, (1983). *Contemporary Naat Poets*, Lahore, Kitab Saray.

¹² Fatehpuri, Muhammad Ismail Azad, (1992). *Naat in Urdu Poetry (from the Beginning up to the time of Mohsin)*, Karachi, Naat Research Centre.

¹³ Ansari, Khalid Ali, (2021). *Thematic Selection of Urdu Naat Poetry*, Lahore, Fareed Book Stall. _____

Motivations"¹⁴ in the journal *Ilm*, issued by the Department of Arabic and Islamic Studies at Government College University Sialkot in October 2021. This article discusses the meanings and concepts of *naat*, its motivations and thematic distribution.

- Muhammad Shahzad Mujaddidi and Dr Khalid Madani authored a research article titled "A Critical Review of Thematic Traditions in Urdu *Naat* Poetry,"¹⁵ published in the journal *Abhath* by the Department of Islamic Studies at Lahore Garrison University from October to December 2021. This article identifies thematic traditions within Urdu *naat* poetry.

While considerable research has been conducted on Urdu *naat*, there is a notable absence of scholarly work that examines the interplay between love for the Prophet (PBUH) and adherence to his teachings within Urdu *naat* literature. This subject holds great significance for the reform of the Muslim community, making research on this topic crucial.

Research Methodology

The methodology of this article is both narrative and analytical. The introduction, including the necessity and significance of the study, as well as the review of previous research, is presented in a narrative style. Conversely, the thematic analysis of *naat* within Urdu literature and the examination of the balance between love for the Prophet (PBUH) and adherence to his teachings are approached through an analytical framework. This article draws upon the Qur'an, Hadith literature and the works of selected poets.

Importance of Love for the Prophet (PBUH)

The fundamental requirement for composing *naat* is a deep love for the Prophet (). It is a well-

¹⁴ Mutahir Shah, Nahid Akhtar, Tariq Rashid, (October 2021). *The Praise of the Prophet (PBUH): An Overview of Understanding, Thematic Distribution and Creative Motivations*, Majallah al-Ilm, Department of Arabic and Islamic Studies, Government College University, Sialkot.

¹⁵ Shahzad Mujaddidi, Khalid Madani, (October-December 2021). *A Critical Review of Thematic Traditions in Urdu Naat Poetry*, Majallah Abhath, Lahore Garrison University.

established principle that one cannot genuinely fulfil their obligation of obedience to a leader unless they hold a profound affection for him in their hearts. The fundamental motivation for *naat* is rooted in the emotion of love, which serves as the cornerstone of faith. Without love for the Prophet (ﷺ), the realization of complete faith is unattainable; indeed, without this love, all acts of worship and spiritual endeavours are rendered invalid. The Holy Qur'an illustrates the point:

قُلْ إِنْ كَانَ آبَاؤُكُمْ وَأَبْنَاؤُكُمْ وَإِخْوَانُكُمْ وَأَزْوَاجُكُمْ وَعَشِيرَتُكُمْ وَأَمْوَالٌ اقْتَرَفْتُمُوهَا وَتِجَارَةٌ تَخْشَوْنَ كَسَادَهَا
وَمَسَاكِينُ تَرْضَوْنَهَا أَحَبَّ إِلَيْكُمْ مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَجِهَادٍ فِي سَبِيلِهِ فَتَرَبَّصُوا حَتَّى يَأْتِيَ اللَّهُ بِأَمْرِهِ وَاللَّهُ لَا
يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْفَاسِقِينَ

“(Esteemed Messenger!) Say: ‘If your fathers (and forefathers) and your sons (and daughters) and your brothers (and sisters) and your wives and your (other) kith and kin and the riches that you have earned (so hard) and the trade and business that you fear may decline and the homes you are fond of are dearer to you than Allah and His Messenger (blessings and peace be upon him) and struggling in His cause, then wait until Allah brings His command (of torment). And Allah does not guide the disobedient.’”¹⁶

This verse emphasizes that love for the Lord and His Apostle (PBUH) should surpass all worldly attachments and is recognized as a hallmark of true faith and a sign of guidance. The Prophet (PBUH) himself affirmed this notion by stating:

لا يؤمن احدكم حتى اكون احب اليه من والده وولده والناس اجمعين

“None of you truly believes until he loves me more than his father, his children and all mankind.”¹⁷

The love for the Blessed Messenger (PBUH) is the foundation of perfect faith. That is why Companions pledged allegiance based on love to him. An illustrative example can be seen in the actions of

¹⁶ Qur'an 9:24

¹⁷ Qushayri, Muslim b. Hajjaj, (1954). *Sahih Muslim*, Beirut, Dar Ihya al-Turath, Vol. 1, p. 49.

Safwan b. Qudamah, who expressed his wish to pledge allegiance to the Prophet (PBUH) by stating:

يارسول الله ﷺ ناولنى يدك ابايحك، فناولنى يده فقلت يارسول الله ﷺ انى احبك قال المرء مع من احبك

“Messenger of Allah (PBUH), extend your hand so I may pledge my allegiance to you.” Upon extending his hand, he added, “Allah’s Messenger of Allah, I love you.” The Prophet (PBUH) responded, “A person will be with whom he loves.”¹⁸

Naat composition fundamentally serves as an expression of love for the Prophet (PBUH). Poets convey their devotion to him through their verses, employing various styles and forms of expression. Love for the Apostle (PBUH) is the sole emotion capable of truly inspiring even the most skilled poets in this genre; in its absence, even the most talented poets may struggle to compose impactful *naat*. Driven by profound love for the Messenger, the preeminent poets of the Indian subcontinent have offered heartfelt tributes to him.

Hafiz Mazharuddin Mazhar articulates the significance of love for the Prophet (PBUH) in the following lines:

تیرے فیضانِ محبت تیرے اکرام کے بعد

اور اللہ سے کیا مانگوں اس انعام کے بعد

"After Your grace of love and Your honour,
What else should I ask Allah after this blessing?"¹⁹

In this verse, Hafiz Mazharuddin underscores the significance of love for the Holy Messenger (PBUH). Indeed, there are innumerable blessings bestowed by the Lord of Glory, yet, having received the blessing of love for the Prophet (PBUH), one becomes indifferent to all other gifts. This reflects a profound

¹⁸ Maliki, Iyad b. Musa, (1977). *Al-Shifa*, Beirut, Dar Al-Kitab Al-Arabi, Vol. 2, p. 565.

¹⁹ Mazhar, Hafiz Mazharuddin, (1983). *Tajalliyat*, Lahore, Zia-ul-Quran Publications, p. 33.

truth: whoever attains the treasure of love for the Prophet (PBUH) gains the greatest wealth available in the universe, a wealth that is reserved for a select few.

Mawlana Ahmad Raza Khan Bareilvi elucidates the significance and benefits of love for the Messenger (PBUH) in the following lines:

انہیں جانا انہیں مانا نہ رکھا غیر سے کام

اللہ الحمد میں دنیا سے مسلمان گیا

"I recognized him, I acknowledged him, and I did not engage with others.

By the grace of Allah, I left the world as a Muslim."²⁰

Ahmad Raza Khan emphasizes that a worthy life in the sight of the Lord is one that is devoted to love for the Prophet (PBUH). Those who lead such lives die sincere believers.

Allama Iqbal, a passionate lover of the Messenger (PBUH), highlights the significance of love for the Prophet (PBUH) through these lines:

اقبال کس کے عشق کا یہ فیض عام ہے

رومی فنا ہوا، حبشی کو دوام ہے

"Iqbal, from whose love does this universal blessing flow?

The Roman has perished, while the Ethiopian gained eternity!"²¹

In this verse, Iqbal compares Bilal, a black Companion, with Alexander the Great, illustrating how love for the Prophet (PBUH) endowed Hazrat Bilal with a lasting legacy. His call to prayer, performed five times a day at mosques, serves as a perpetual reminder of his remarkable character. In contrast, the memory

²⁰ Bareilvi, Ahmad Raza Khan, (2012). *Hadaiq-e-Bakhshish*, Karachi, Maktabah Al-Madina, p. 55.

²¹ Muhammad Iqbal, (1990). *Bang-e-Dara*, Lahore, Iqbal Academy, p. 79.

of Alexander, despite his imperial status, has faded to the extent that not only is his name rarely mentioned, but he is scarcely thought of by anyone.

Sufi Muhammad Afzal Faqir emphasizes the necessity of love for the Prophet (PBUH) in the following manner:

عشق نبی جو ہر ہے فقیر آئینہ ایمان کا
جس سے ہم اپنے دل کی رگ رگ کو گرماتے ہیں

"The love of the Prophet (PBUH) is the essence, Faqir, of faith

With which we warm every vein of our hearts."²²

He asserts elsewhere:

آپ کے عشق سے کھلتے ہیں معارف کے باب
اہل دل ہی سر ہر باطن و ظاہر پہنچے

"Through your love, the doors of knowledge are opened,

Only the people of heart reach the secrets of all that is hidden and evident."²³

In these verses, Sufi Muhammad Afzal Faqir characterizes love for the Prophet (PBUH) as the fundamental key to belief. He believes that the secrets and mysteries of the universe are intertwined with this profound affection. Those who attach themselves to the love of the Prophet (PBUH) gain insight into the deeper truths of existence.

Sayyid Wahid al-Hasan Hashmi articulates the necessity of love for the Prophet (PBUH) by stating:

ہمارا کام ڈوبے رہیں عشق پیغمبر میں

²² Faqir, Muhammad Afzal, (2014). *Faiz-e-Habib*, Sheikhpura, Astana-e-Aaliya Qadriya, p. 26.

²³ Ibid, p. 25.

محبت کو غذا تو روح کے اندر سے ملتی ہے

"Our obligation is to remain lost in the love of the Prophet,

For love is nourished from within the soul."²⁴

Hashmi holds that the ultimate purpose of a Muslim's life should be to remain immersed in the love of the Muslim. When an individual becomes intoxicated with this love, worldly pleasures become irrelevant, and they grow indifferent to the material world. This sentiment is echoed in a couplet by Iqbal Azim:

عشق رسول کیا ہے میجا کو کیا خبر

اس درد جانفزائی دوا ہی کچھ اور ہے

"How may a healer know what the love of the Prophet (PBUH) is?

The remedy for this soul-piercing pain lies something else."²⁵

He writes that the patient of the love of the Messenger (PBUH) cannot be helped by medications or physicians; the sole remedy for this illness lies in the mercy of the Messenger of Allah (PBUH).

Sayyid Nasiruddin Nasir affirms the obligation of love for the Prophet (PBUH) by stating:

اعلان ہے یہ نصیر رب کریم کا

عشق رسول شرط ہے اسلام کے لئے

"This is an announcement from the Generous Lord,

Love for the Prophet is a condition for Islam."²⁶

It is a well-established truth that love for the Prophet (PBUH) is not only a fundamental requirement

²⁴ Hashmi, Wahid-ul-Hasan, (2006). *Tahirain*, Lahore, Al-Hassan Publications, p. 87.

²⁵ Iqbal Azim, (1999). *Zabur-e-Haram*, Karachi, Hassan Naat Council, p. 353.

²⁶ Nasir, Sayyid Naseeruddin, (2014). *Deen Hama Oust*, Islamabad, Mehariya Naseeriya Publishers, p. 341.

of belief but also the essence of faith itself. Reciting poetry in praise of the Prophet (PBUH) serves as a means to express this love. In this context, Nasiruddin emphasizes love for the Prophet (PBUH) as the core of faith, referencing the Scriptural revelation (Qur'an 9:24), which commands prioritizing love for the Prophet (PBUH) above all worldly attachments.

Baidam Warisi aspires to the love of the Prophet (PBUH) in the following lines:

تعلش كجئے اپنا عنایت یا رسول اللہ

نہ ہونا غیر کی مجھ کو محبت یا رسول اللہ

"Allah's Messenger, please grant me love,

Let me not have the love of anyone else, Allah's Messenger."²⁷

Individuals seek things that are dear to them, and the requests of true lovers centre exclusively on love for the Prophet (PBUH). In this couplet, Sayyid Baidam Shah Warisi presents a heartfelt entreaty in the court of the Prophet (PBUH), seeking the blessing of His love while requesting refuge from worldly attachments.

The preceding discussion has underscored the significance and necessity of love for the Prophet (PBUH) through the verses of various poets. The conclusion is that love for the Prophet (PBUH) is a fundamental condition for complete faith. The Almighty has associated all goodness and the secrets of the universe with the love for the Prophet (PBUH); thus, those who attain this love gain access to abundant blessings.

Obedience to the Prophet (PBUH)

A central motivation behind the creation and publication of poetry in praise of the Prophet (PBUH) is the spirit of obedience to him, which emerges from love for him. Just as complete faith cannot exist without

²⁷ Qadriyya, *Um Haya Al-Mustafa*, (s.n.) *Kalam Baidam*, Lahore, Bahar-e-Islam Publications, p. 17.—
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love for the Messenger (PBUH), obedience to him is also a primary condition for the validity of faith. In the Glorious Qur'an, Allah, the Exalted, commands obedience and submission to His Blessed Prophet (PBUH) in numerous verses, some of which are quoted below.

وَمَا آتَاكُمُ الرَّسُولُ فَخُذُوهُ وَمَا نَهَاكُمْ عَنْهُ فَانْتَهُوا

“And whatever the Messenger (blessings and peace be upon him) gives you, take that and whatever he forbids you, abstain (from that).”²⁸

The Almighty has made obedience to the Prophet (PBUH), acceptance of his authority, and recognition of his decisions as the condition for the completion of faith. For perfect faith, it is necessary to regard the Prophet (PBUH) as the lawgiver and the enforcer of sharia, and to consider Islamic laws as obligatory and to act upon them heart and soul. When someone's love truly fills every part of our lives, their words naturally inspire and lead us. With the love of the beloved Prophet (PBUH) reigning supreme, a true follower is always devoted and obedient to him.

In the Holy Qur'an, Allah emphasizes the importance of obedience to the Prophet (PBUH):

فَلَا وَرَبِّكَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ حَتَّىٰ يُحَكِّمُوكَ فِيمَا شَجَرَ بَيْنَهُمْ ثُمَّ لَا يَجِدُوا فِي أَنفُسِهِمْ حَرَجًا مِّمَّا
قَضَيْتَ وَيُسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا

“So, (O Beloved,) by your Lord, they cannot become true believers until they make you a judge in every dispute that arises amongst them, and thereafter they do not feel any resentment in their hearts against the judgment that you make, and submit (to your decision) gladly, with total submission.”²⁹

The previous blessed revelation underscores the duty of obedience to the Prophet (PBUH), calling upon Muslims to attain faith through their loyalty and submission to the

²⁸ Qur'an 59:7.

²⁹ Qur'an 4:65.

Messenger of Allah (PBUH).

The significance and obligation of obedience to the Prophet (PBUH) are described in the following hadith:

عن ابى هريرة رضى الله عنه ان رسول الله ﷺ قال: كل امتى يدخلون الجنة الا من ابى، قالوا يا رسول الله ﷺ ومن ابى؟ قال من اطاعنى دخل الجنة ومن عصانى فقد ابى

“Abu Hurayra reported Allah’s Messenger (PBUH) said: ‘All my nation will enter Paradise with the exception of those who refuse.’ They asked, ‘Allah’s Messenger, who would refuse?’ The Apostle replied, ‘Whoever obeys me will enter Paradise, and whoever disobeys me has refused.’”³⁰

Although this hadith establishes the obligation of obedience to the Prophet (PBUH) for every Muslim, those who profess love for him have an even greater responsibility to make obedience to him their guiding principle to demonstrate genuine love. Therefore, poets have not only expressed their affection for the Prophet (PBUH) in their verses but have also emphasized the significance of obedience to him. Bechain Rajpuri articulates the necessity of obeying the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) as follows:

کاملہ طاعت ہو آنحضرت ﷺ کی پیارے دوستو

سرورِ کونین کی طاعت ہے رضوانِ خدا

اسوہ حضرت ﷺ کے اپنانے سے پاتا ہے بشر

اس جہاں کی زندگی کا ہے جو قصد و مدعا

از دل و جاں ان سے لازم ہم کو از بس اجتناب

³⁰ Bukhari, Muhammad b. Ismail, (1401H). *Sahih Bukhari*, Damascus, Dar Al-Qalam, Vol. 6, p. 2655.—
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!فعل وہ جو مصطفیٰ ﷺ نے ہیں بتائے ناروا

"Complete obedience to the Prophet (PBUH) is essential, dear friends,

For obedience to the Lord of the worlds is the pleasure of Allah.

By adopting the example of the Prophet (PBUH), humankind attains

The aim and objective of life in this world.

From the depths of our hearts and souls, we must absolutely avoid

Actions that the Chosen Prophet (PBUH) has deemed unlawful!"³¹

Here Bechain Rajpuri makes reference to a verse in the Qur'an that states that obeying Allah's Messenger (PBUH) is equivalent to obeying Allah and leads to divine pleasure. He further elucidates that the fundamental purpose of human existence to fulfil the obligations of divine obedience and to follow the teachings of the Prophet (PBUH). Therefore, those who fulfil this duty have, in fact, realized the true purpose of their existence on Earth.

Hafiz Mazharuddin elaborates on the importance of obedience to the Messenger (PBUH) in the following lines:

خالق سیرت و کردار ہیں تیرے افکار

ضامن عدل و مساوات ہے تیری تعلیم

اُن پہ دنیائے محبت کے خزانے قرباں

تو نے جو گنج گہر بار کئے ہیں تقسیم

"Your thoughts are the creators of character and conduct,

Your teachings are the guarantors of justice and equity.

³¹ Rajpuri, Sayyid Muhammad Husayn, (2003). *Lama'at Murtaz Hira*, Lahore, Maktabah Bechain, p. 2.

The treasures of love in this world are sacrificed upon them,

The gems you have distributed."³²

Hafiz Mazharuddin underscores that the noble thoughts of the Prophet (PBUH) transformed the character of the illiterate people of Arabia, elevating them to the status of the finest human beings. Given the Prophet's (PBUH) beautiful character, conduct, and noble thoughts, one must question why obedience to him should not be a priority.

Allama Iqbal emphasizes the importance of emulating the blessed character of the Prophet (PBUH) with the following lines:

ہو قید مقامی تو نتیجہ ہے تباہی

رہ بحر میں آزاد وطن صورت مائی

ہے ترک وطن سنت محبوب الہی

دے تو بھی نبوت کی صداقت پہ گواہی

گفتار سیاست میں وطن اور ہی کچھ ہے

ارشاد نبوت میں وطن اور ہی کچھ ہے

"If confined to a locality, the result is devastation;

Freedom in the ocean is similar to that of a fish.

Leaving one's homeland is the tradition of the beloved of God.

You also bear witness to the truth of Prophethood.

In political discourse, the homeland signifies one thing;

³² Mazhar, Hafiz Mazharuddin, (1983). *Tajalliyat*, p. 96.

In the command of Prophethood, the homeland signifies something else."³³

Allama Iqbal takes the position that true Muslims are those who follow the Prophet (PBUH), who willingly left his homeland to establish and uphold the truth. He suggests that, in the context of politics, the homeland can be perceived as an idol; Muslims worship Allah, staying away from the adoration of idols. A Muslim derives the concept of homeland from the teachings of the Allah's Apostle (PBUH) rather than from worldly philosophers. Iqbal holds that politics should be subservient to religion to establish the system of the Prophet (PBUH) in this universe. He consistently guides Muslims to obey and emulate the Prophet (PBUH).

Hafiz Taib reflects on the esteemed character of the Prophet (PBUH), observing:

شہ دیں کے فکر و نگاہ سے ملے نسل و رنگ کے تفرقے

نہ رہا تفاخر منصبی نہ رعونتِ نسبی رہی

"The ideology and vision of the master of religion removed the distinctions of race and colour; There was no pride of status nor arrogance of lineage."³⁴

Prior to the advent of the Messenger (PBUH), the people of Arabia were afflicted by numerous spiritual maladies, with pride based on race, colour, and status being paramount. The Prophet (PBUH) eradicated these ailments through his exemplary character and instilled values such as justice, fairness and equality within society. He established piety as the standard of excellence. Even today, to eliminate these evils from our society, we must adopt the character of the Prophet (PBUH).

Iqbal Azim further underscores the necessity of acting according to the blessed character of the Prophet (PBUH):

حبِ سر تاجِ رسول ﷺ دل میں بسا کر دیکھو

³³ Muhammad Iqbal, (1990). *Bang-e-Dra*, Lahore, Iqbal Academy, p. 172.

³⁴ Taib, Hafeez, (1978). *Sallu Alayh-hi Wa Alih-hi*, Lahore, Seerat Mission, p. 42.

ان کی تعلیم کو معیار بنا کر دیکھو

دعوتِ دین نبی آج بھی دشوار نہیں

شرک و الجاد کی دیوار گر کر دیکھو

سیرت نبی پاک کیا ہے؟ نبی خود کیا ہیں؟

پوچھتے کس سے ہو؟ قرآن اٹھا کر دیکھو

"Nurture love for the chief of the Messengers in your heart,

Make their teachings your standard.

The call to the Prophet's religion is not difficult today;

Tear down the walls of polytheism and atheism.

What is the character of the pure Prophet? What is the Prophet himself?

Whom do you ask? Open the Qur'an and read."³⁵

Iqbal asserts that the essence of all virtue in the universe is contained within the teachings of the Apostle (PBUH). For anyone seeking to embody these virtues, adherence to the Prophet's (PBUH) character is necessary. Allah has appointed the character of His beloved Prophet (PBUH) as a model for life in the Noble Qur'an, commanding us to follow this conduct.

Sufi Muhammad Afzal Faqir elaborates on the virtues of obedience to the Prophet (PBUH):

رسول اللہ ﷺ کی طاعت میں ہے کونین کی شاہی

علاج اس میں زمانے بھر کے آشوب و فتن کا ہے

"In the obedience to Allah's Apostle (PBUH) lies the sovereignty of both worlds;

³⁵ Iqbal Azim, (1999). *Zabur-e-Haram*, Karachi, p. 108.

In it lies the remedy for the chaos and turmoil of the world."³⁶

In this couplet, Sufi Muhammad Afzal Faqir expresses that freedom from sorrow and grief in this life is attained by adhering to the obedience of the Apostle (PBUH). Every affliction, hardship, and turmoil in the world finds its remedy through loyalty to the Prophet (PBUH). True peace of heart and salvation, both in this world and in the Hereafter, are achievable solely through unswerving loyalty to the Prophet (PBUH).

Nasiruddin Nasir highlights the importance of obedience to the Prophet (PBUH) by declaring:

رسول کوئی کہاں شاہِ انبیاء کی طرح

مطاعِ خلق ہیں قرآن میں وہ خدا کی طرح

"There is no Prophet like the Leader of Prophets;

In the Qur'an, obedience to him is akin to obedience to Allah."³⁷

Allah has commanded obedience to the Apostle (PBUH) in various verses of the Noble Qur'an, underscoring its significance by indicating that obedience to him is synonymous with obedience to the Lord. As stated in the divine command:

مَنْ يُطِيعِ الرَّسُولَ فَقَدْ أَطَاعَ اللَّهَ

"Whoever obeys the Messenger has indeed obeyed Allah."³⁸

Sayyid Nasiruddin Nasir interprets this blessed verse from the Word of Allah in his poetry, suggesting that Allah has not sent any other Apostle like the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) because obedience to him is equated with obedience to the Creator.

From the preceding discussion, it is evident that while numerous poets have composed verses in praise of the Prophet (PBUH), they have also articulated the significance and necessity of obedience to him,

³⁶ Faqir, Muhammad Afzal, (1435H). *Jaan-e-Jahan*, Lahore, Maktabah Jadeed, p. 21.

³⁷ Nasir, Sayyid Nasiruddin, (2014). *Kulyat-e-Nasir Ghilani*, Islamabad, Mehariya Naseeriya Publishers, p. 84.

³⁸ Qur'an 4:80.

along with its rewards. This demonstrates that the Qur'an and the Prophetic traditions render obedience to the Prophet (PBUH) obligatory, and blessings in this world and the Hereafter are contingent upon it. Consequently, it is vital for every Muslim to emulate the character of the Noble Prophet (PBUH) in all aspects of life.

Characteristics of the Prophet (PBUH)

Allah Most High has endowed His beloved Prophet (PBUH) with not only a high rank, spiritual perfection, and inner virtues but also unparalleled beauty and grace. He is the most beloved and esteemed Apostle of Allah (PBUH), which is why the Almighty has combined all the characteristics and merits of previous Prophets within his noble being, making him the ultimate standard of superiority and completeness. Regarding the comprehensive and perfect stature of the Prophet (PBUH), Allah has proclaimed:

أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ هَدَى اللَّهُ فَبِهِدَاهُمْ أَقْتَدِهِ

"Those are the ones whom Allah has guided; so follow their guidance."³⁹

The guidance mentioned in this blessed verse does not refer to the legal rulings of former Apostles, which were annulled with the advent of the Final Prophet (PBUH). Rather, it points to the noble ethics and Prophetic perfections that elevate him above all creation. Thus, the collective qualities and distinctions manifested individually in prior prophets were embodied entirely in the Last Prophet (PBUH), establishing him as the epitome of all prophetic attributes. Witnessing the unmatched perfection and characteristics of the Prophet (PBUH), Companions openly extolled his exalted status in their poetry.

Jabir b. Samura describes the blessed person of the Prophet (PBUH) as follows:

رأيت رسول الله ﷺ في ليلة اضحيان فجعلت انظر الى رسول الله ﷺ والى القمر وعليه حلة الحمراء فاذا هو عندي احسن من القمر

"I saw Allah's Messenger (PBUH) on a clear night, so I looked at him and at the moon, and he was

³⁹ Qur'an 6: 90.
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wearing a red-striped cloak. At that time, the Apostle looked better than the moon to me."⁴⁰

Abu Bakr Siddiq illustrates the exalted status of the Prophet (PBUH) in poetic form:

كان المصطفى في الاخلاق قد علموا
وفي العفاف فلم نعد به احدا
نفسى فداؤك من ميت ومن بدن
ما اطيب الذكر والاخلاق والجسدا

"The Chosen One is renowned for his noble character;

In purity, we have not deemed anyone his equal.

My soul is a sacrifice for you, whether in death or in life;

How pure is your remembrance, your morals, and your form!"⁴¹

Companions observed the beauty of the Prophet (PBUH) day and night, in travel and at home. They depicted his unmatched beauty, which will remain unparalleled until the Day of Rising. Nonetheless, poets throughout history have followed in the footsteps of the Companions, drawing inspiration from their eloquent expressions. They have certainly depicted the qualities of the Apostle (PBUH), perceiving their poetic compositions as a source of honour and deliverance in the Hereafter. Below, we present some verses by poets inspired by the characteristics of the Prophet (PBUH).

Mirza Ali Lutfi references the strength of the Prophet (PBUH) when he discusses his characteristics:

شق القمر انكشت كادني هـ اشاره
اے صل علی وقت بازوئے محمد

"The splitting of the moon is merely a hint,

⁴⁰ Tirmidhi, Muhammad b. Isa, (1998). *Jami Tirmidhi*, Beirut, Dar Al-Gharb Al-Islami, Vol. 5, p. 118.

⁴¹ Ibn Sa'd, Muhammad bin Sa'd, (s.n.). *Al-Tabaqat Al-Kubra*, Karachi, Nafis Academy, Vol. 2, p. 353.

Allah, bless the arms of Muhammad."⁴²

In this context, Mirza Ali Lutfi alludes to the remarkable miracle of the "splitting of the moon," emphasizing the power bestowed upon the Apostle (PBUH) by the Lord. He suggests that the Prophet (PBUH), by merely pointing at the moon with his blessed arm, caused it to split in two. This act serves as a testament to the extraordinary strength of the Prophet's (PBUH) arms, representing only a glimpse of his divine power.

Bechain Rajpuri articulates his love while highlighting the characteristics of the Prophet (PBUH):

محمد مصطفیٰ ہاں مظہر شانِ خدا تم ہو

مہ و خورشید تا باں بزمِ انجم کی ضیاء تم ہو

" Muhammad Mustafa, you are indeed the manifestation of Allah's glory.

You are the light of the moon and the sun, the brilliance of the stars."⁴³

Allah has made the noble character of the Prophet (PBUH) a guiding light for all of humanity. Those seeking guidance and a closer connection to the Lord should follow the light provided by his person, thereby attaining both guidance and divine proximity. Bechain Rajpuri expresses his admiration for the Prophet (PBUH), likening his noble essence to that of the moon and the sun, which serve as symbols of the light through which individuals find their path to guidance.

Hafiz Mazharuddin Mazhar reflects on the blessed forehead of the Apostle (PBUH):

لوحِ محفوظ ضیاء ہے تیری پیشانی کی
تیرے ایوان کی زینہ ہے سر عرشِ عظیم

"The Preserved Tablet is illuminated by the light of your forehead,

⁴² Lutf, Mirza Ali, (1983). *Diwan-e-Lutf*, Hyderabad, Idara Shair wa Hikmat, p. 17.

⁴³ Rajpuri, Sayyid Muhammad Husayn, (2003). *Tajallaye Haram*, Lahore, Maktabah Bechain, p. 91.

Your abode's throne is at the height of the great throne."⁴⁴

Hafiz Mazharuddin asserts that the book known as the Preserved Tablet, which contains the secrets of the universe, is illuminated by the light emanating from the Apostle's holy forehead. He suggests that the Prophet's noble abode has its throne positioned at the highest level, indicating that the Messenger (PBUH) occupies the utmost status in the universe, endowed by Allah with unparalleled characteristics.

Mawlana Ahmad Raza Khan Bareilwi describes the pure body of Allah's Apostle (PBUH):

اللہ رے تیرے جسم منور کی تابشیں
اے جانِ جاں میں جانِ تجلا کہوں تجھے

"Allah, how bright is this body of light!

Essence of all souls, you are brilliance itself."⁴⁵

The poet describes the Prophet's radiance, suggesting that his presence was a source of light, from which the rays of brightness spread across the world.

Allama Iqbal reflects on the Prophet's (PBUH) significance, likening him to the "Tablet and the Pen":

روح بھی تو قلم بھی تو تیرا وجود الکتاب
گنبد آئینہ رنگ تیرے محیط میں حباب

"You embody the Tablet and the Pen; your presence is the Book.

The heavens are but fragile bubbles in your grandeur."⁴⁶

In this verse, Iqbal conveys the unmatched importance of the Apostle (PBUH), suggesting that without him, there would be no Tablet, Pen, or Book, and the heavens are merely like bubbles before his

⁴⁴ Mazhar, Hafiz Mazharuddin, (1983). *Tajalliyat*, p. 96.

⁴⁵ Bareilvi, Ahmad Raza Khan, (2012). *Hadaiq-e-Bakhshish*, Karachi, p. 174.

⁴⁶ Muhammad Iqbal, (1996). *Bal-e-Jibril*, Lahore, Sheikh Ghulam Ali and Sons Publishers, p. 113.—

vastness.

Sufi Muhammad Afzal Faqir speaks of the magnificence of each aspect of the Prophet's (PBUH)

blessed form:

سرخ ڈورے حسین آنکھوں میں
امن و تسکین سورۃ ایلاف
دردِ ندائ کے نور سے تاباں
شام کے وقت حجرہ کی اکناف
بازوؤں میں شگرف تاب و تواں
کامل عزم، جامع اشراف
مظہر شانِ سرمدی، خاتم
وہ نبوت کا بے مثال مضاف
سینہ مبارک سے فروزاں ہیں
ادبیات کی تمام اصناف

“With crimson threads in eyes so pure,

Calm and peace, like Sura al-Fil's embrace.

Your radiant teeth, as pearls aglow,

Illuminate the chamber's twilight glow.

Arms endowed with strength and grace,

Perfect resolve, where noble virtues are arrayed.

The Seal of Prophethood, resplendent, rare,

A crown of divine favour, beyond compare.

From your blessed chest, like a sacred stream,

Flows all art and knowledge, a timeless gleam."⁴⁷

Sufi Sahib describes the Prophet's eyes as remarkably beautiful, with dark pupils and bright whites marked by fine red strands, bringing a unique sense of peace. His teeth were luminous, lighting up his surroundings. His powerful arms embodied strength and honour. The Seal of Prophethood was a symbol of his unmatched status. His broad chest was a source of knowledge and eloquence, with a sacred line of hair extending to his navel, signifying his perfection in every aspect.

Muzaffar Warisi extols the exalted form of the Prophet (PBUH) in the following verses:

حقِ نِما حقِ صفاتِ آپ کی ذات
شاہکارِ حیاتِ آپ کی ذات
خالقِ کائناتِ ذاتِ خدا
مقصدِ کائناتِ آپ کی ذات
شرق و غرب آپ کے نشانِ قدم
جہتِ شش جہاتِ آپ کی ذات

"You are the embodiment of truth, the essence of divine attributes,

The masterpiece of life is your being.

The Creator of the universe is Allah,

The purpose of existence is your being.

East and West bear your footprints,

Your essence spans all directions."⁴⁸

Warisi emphasizes that the Prophet's (PBUH) blessed existence is a unique masterpiece fashioned by the Creator of the universe, underscoring that no other being has been endowed with such qualities. His existence serves as the very purpose of creation, with his grace illuminating every corner of the universe.

⁴⁷ Faqir, Muhammad Afzal, (1412H). *Ata-e-Muhammad*, Lahore, Maktabah Jadeed, p. 31.

⁴⁸ Warisi, Muzaffar, (1988). *Nur-e-Azal*, Lahore, Mawaara Publishers, p. 35.

The Prophet's (PBUH) presence is evident in all directions—east, west, north and south—as well as in the heavens and on earth, symbolizing his universal influence.

Through the poetic verses cited above, the characteristics and attributes of the Prophet (PBUH) have been articulated, illustrating that the Almighty has fashioned his blessed form in an unparalleled and unique manner. In this universe, the Prophet (PBUH) stands as the epitome of divine creation, a true masterpiece that embodies the highest virtues and perfections.

Miracles of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)

The Creator of the universe appointed His chosen servants as Messengers for the guidance and reformation of humanity. To distinguish them from ordinary people, the Lord bestowed upon them unique qualities and miracles. These divine attributes set the Apostles apart as venerable and revered figures. Among them, Allah made the Final Messenger (PBUH) the culmination of all miracles and perfection, which appeared individually in other prophets. Throughout his blessed life, the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was the source of numerous miracles. His greatest miracle is the Qur'an, a perpetual source of guidance for humanity until the Day of Rising. Additionally, miracles such as the splitting of the moon, the opening of his chest, water flowing from his fingers, and trees bowing before him are among the many signs that attest to his prophethood. Another extraordinary and unparalleled miracle of the Prophet (PBUH) is the Night Journey and the Ascension into Heaven during which he was miraculously taken from the Sacred Mosque to the Furthest Mosque and then ascended through the heavens to the Divine Presence, where he witnessed the vision of the Lord. The Qur'an refers to this profound event in the following verse:

سُبْحَانَ الَّذِي أَسْرَى بِعَبْدِهِ لَيْلًا مِّنَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ إِلَى الْمَسْجِدِ الْأَقْصَى الَّذِي بَارَكْنَا حَوْلَهُ لِنُرِيَهُ مِنْ آيَاتِنَا
إِنَّهُ هُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْبَصِيرُ

“Holy is He Who took His (most beloved and intimate) Servant in a small portion of a night from the Sacred Mosque to the Furthest Mosque, whose surroundings We have blessed, in order that We

might show him Our signs. Surely, He is the One Who is All-Hearing, All-Seeing.”⁴⁹

This verse recounts the first stage of the Night Journey, detailing the Prophet's nocturnal journey from the Sacred Mosque to the Furthest Mosque. The subsequent stages of this miraculous event are further elaborated upon in authentic hadith literature, which describe the Prophet's (PBUH) journey through the heavens and his encounter with the Divine.

The Companions who spent their days and nights in the presence of the Apostle (PBUH) bore direct witness to His miracles. Numerous reports from Companions recount these extraordinary events. One such example is narrated by Anas b. Malik, who details the miracle of the splitting of the moon:

ان اهل مكة سالوا رسول الله ﷺ ان يريهم آية فاراهم انشقاق القمر مرتين

"The people of Mecca asked Allah's Messenger (PBUH) to show them a sign, and he showed them the moon splitting in two."⁵⁰

Throughout history, poets have expressed their profound love for the Prophet (PBUH) by commemorating His remarkable miracles in poetic verse. Mirza Ali Lutfi, for instance, alludes to the profound miracle of Ascension into Heaven:

قوسین کا تھا فاصلہ حق سے شبِ معراج
ادنیٰ سایہ ہے رتبہ اعلائے محمد

"The distance between the two bows was from the Truth on the night of Ascension into Heaven;

The lower shadow is the rank of the exalted Muhammad."⁵¹

This verse refers to the Scriptural revelation (53:9), describing the Prophet's (PBUH) intimate proximity to the Divine during Ascension into Heaven, when he beheld the Lord at a distance of two bows' length.

⁴⁹ Qur'an 17:1.

⁵⁰ Bukhari, Muhammad b. Ismail, (1407H). *Sahih Bukhari*, Beirut, Dar Ibn Kathir, Vol. 3, p. 133.

⁵¹ Lutfi, Mirza Ali, (1983). *Diwan-e-Lutf*, p. 18.

Similarly, Bachain Rajpuri reflects on this momentous incident in his poetry:

ہوئے جن سے موسیٰ کہ بے ہوش و بے خود
وہ جلوے ہیں دوشِ شہِ دوسراپ

"From whom Moses became unconscious and overwhelmed;

Those manifestations are on the shoulder of the second king."⁵²

Here, Rajpuri draws a comparison between Prophet Moses (peace be upon him) and the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). While Prophet Moses (peace be upon him) longed for a vision of God, an event that ultimately left him overwhelmed when Allah manifested Himself at Mount Sinai, the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was uniquely granted the supreme honour of witnessing the Lord directly during Ascension into Heaven.

Mawlana Ahmad Raza Khan Bareilvi captures the miracle of water flowing from the Prophet's (PBUH) fingers:

انگلیاں ہیں فیض پر ٹوٹے ہیں پیاسے جھوم کر
ندیاں پنجابِ رحمت کی ہیں جاری واہ واہ

"The fingers are a source of grace; the thirsty sway with joy;

Rivers of mercy flow in Punjab, oh how wonderful!"⁵³

This verse alludes to the miraculous event at Hudaybiya, where, after the Companions found no water, they appealed to the Prophet (PBUH). He placed his blessed hand into a vessel, and, by divine grace, water flowed from his fingers like springs. The Companions drank, performed ablutions, and provided water for their animals. This incident stands as one of the remarkable miracles of Allah's Apostle (PBUH).

Hafiz Mazhar al-Din commemorates the miracle of the pebbles speaking in the hand of Abu Jahl:

⁵² Rajpuri, Sayyid Muhammad Husayn, (2003). *Idwa-e-Rahmat-e-Rahman*, Lahore, Maktabah Bechain, p. 8.

⁵³ Bareilvi, Ahmad Raza Khan, (2012). *Hadaiq-e-Bakhshish*, p. 134.

بول اٹھے بو جہل کی مٹھی میں بھی کنکر
یہ واقعہ اعجاز لبِ سرور دیں تھا

"The pebbles spoke in Abu Jahl's fist;

This incident was a miracle from the lips of the Messenger of the faith."⁵⁴

This verse refers to the famous event in which Abu Jahl, a staunch opponent of the Prophet (PBUH), challenged him to reveal what was hidden in his fist, vowing to believe if he could. By Allah's will, the pebbles in Abu Jahl's hand spoke, bearing witness to the truth of the Prophet's (PBUH) prophethood.

Sayyid Nasiruddin Nasir recalls the great miracle of the splitting of the moon:

اک اشارے سے فلک پر چاند دو ٹکڑے ہوا
معجزہ یہ کون دیکھے گا؟ دکھا سکتا ہے کون؟

"With a gesture, the moon split into two in the sky;

Who will see this miracle? Who can show it?"⁵⁵

This verse alludes to the event where the Prophet (PBUH), upon the demand of disbelievers, pointed toward the moon, causing it to split into two distinct halves. The people of Mecca witnessed this astonishing miracle, leading many to embrace Islam. However, those predestined to persist in disbelief continued to deny the truth, sealing their fate in the Afterlife.

In this discourse, we have explored various poetic expressions highlighting the miracles of the Noble Prophet (PBUH), demonstrating that Allah bestowed numerous miracles upon His him. Among these, the most significant is the event of *Miraj*, during which the Prophet (PBUH) was divinely transported from the Sacred Mosque to the Furthest Mosque and then ascended through the heavens to the Divine Presence. Other

⁵⁴ Mazhar, Hafiz Mazharuddin, (2013). *Kulyat-e-Mazhar*, Lahore, Arifah Publishers, p. 1025.

⁵⁵ Nasir, Sayyid Nasiruddin, (2014). *Kulyat-e-Nasir Ghilani*, Islamabad, Mehariya Naseeriya Publishers, p. 105.

notable miracles include the flowing of water from his blessed fingers, the splitting of the moon, and the pebbles speaking in the hand of Abu Jahl. Each of these miracles affirms the extraordinary status of the Prophet (PBUH) as Allah's Beloved Prophet (PBUH).

Summary of the Discussion

In Urdu literature, the genre of *naat* occupies a unique position. Through this poetic form, poets express their devotion and reverence towards Allah's Messenger (PBUH), offering tribute and admiration. While the themes of *naat* were relatively limited during the prophetic era, they have evolved and expanded over time. In contemporary *naat* poetry, the themes of love for, obedience to, the characteristics and the miracles of the Chosen One (PBUH) have gained prominence. In this paper, we have endeavoured to outline how various poets have articulated their devotion to the Apostle within these thematic frameworks.

1. Urdu poets consider love for the Prophet (PBUH) as a deeply meaningful theme.
2. They perceive the expression of this love as a means to convey both obedience and devotion.
3. The theme of obedience to the Prophet (PBUH) been explored in depth as it holds substantial importance in their poetry.
4. This theme represents a profound connection between faith and artistic expression in Urdu poetry.